

National Park Service (NPS) History Collection

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Harpers Ferry Center's 50th Anniversary Oral History Project



Winnie Frost
December 20, 2019

Interview conducted by Betsy Ehrlich
Transcribed by Rev.com

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NPS History Collection
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Interview Date: December 20, 2019

Interviewer: Betsy Ehrlich

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START OF RECORDING

Betsy Ehrlich:	00:00:01	So, I'm going to start off by introducing us here today. I'm Betsy Ehrlich at Harpers Ferry Center, and we also have--
Winnie Frost:	00:00:09	Winnie Frost and I'm a veteran with the Park Service, and been retired for four years.
Betsy Ehrlich:	00:00:16	So we're here today to chronicle Winnie's career. It's December 20th, 2019, we're here at the Mather Training Center in the Storer College Room with an R in it. S-T-O-R-E-R. It sounds like store, but it's Storer. I noticed that in your email. So do we have verbal permission to do this interview?
Winnie Frost:	00:00:39	Absolutely.
Betsy Ehrlich:	00:00:40	And we also have signed agreements.
Winnie Frost:	00:00:42	Yes.
Betsy Ehrlich:	00:00:43	And if there's any questions you don't want to answer, you don't have to. It's totally voluntary.
Winnie Frost:	00:00:48	But take the Fifth Amendment or something?
Betsy Ehrlich:	00:00:51	Just say, "I don't want to answer that question."

- Winnie Frost: 00:00:54 Okay. Well, now I'm so into all this Constitution stuff.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:00:56 Right. So let's get started. Tell us what led you to a career in the National Park Service.
- Winnie Frost: 00:01:05 Okay. Well, I lived quite a number of years in Italy when I was growing up, and my parents really liked to take us to fabulous castles and historic homes and things, and so I really got interested in history. So I got my degree in history from UVA, and while I was in college in the summertime, I thought, "Well, let me go up to Arlington House," which is right across the Memorial Bridge in Virginia where Robert E. Lee announced that he was going to join the Confederacy in 1860. So I thought, "Oh, let me get a job over there. This looks interesting." So I went over there, and they informed me I had to go to the National Capital Regional Office to get an application, the old 171. So I did and they hired me. Well, not to work at that historic house which is what I wanted to do because I love talking about history and talking--they put me on the Mall. So I went to the Mall--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:02:09 The National Mall.
- Winnie Frost: 00:02:11 The National Mall, and I was referred to as a kiosk cutie. It was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:02:15 Now, officially?
- Winnie Frost: 00:02:16 Officially, we were called kiosk cuties. There were about ten of us and we would work in different kiosks around the Mall, like at the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Lafayette Park, which is right where the White House is, down along the official Mall and the Smithsonian and the Jefferson [Memorial]. And so anyway, we were working around there and sharing with people about what was going on in the Mall, activities, mostly where to go to the bathroom. We were just information, an information booth, but we were all referred to as kiosk cuties.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:02:51 So there was an actual physical structure that you stood inside?
- Winnie Frost: 00:02:53 We were inside a kiosk, yeah, and they were very cute, adorable looking little things. They were about eight sided, had the cute little steeples and--

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:03:02 They don't exist anymore today?
- Winnie Frost: 00:03:05 Well, I think there are a couple of them that are now little postcard places, but this activity doesn't exist anymore. Where they would have all these young girls--I said this in quotes--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:03:20 Air quotes.
- Winnie Frost: 00:03:22 Be picked up at the Survey Lodge, which is at the Washington Monument, and then be brought around to different sites to be in those booths all day. So that's--but that program doesn't exist anymore and those kiosks either are taken down or a few of them, I think, are the book or postcard shops. So that really then convinced me, because I did that all through college and it was good paying job--it was a GS-4--which was great for back then, that was a good paying job. And so I did it every summer. And then when I graduated, I'm like, "Oh, I really liked this Park Service. I still want to do more history stuff even, so I did some on the Mall." So, they were starting a big program called the Summer in the Parks, which was a program that started because of the riots in 1968 until they felt like the Park Service has so much land in D.C. "Why don't we start a program for youth in the summertime?"
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:04:22 So, what year was this? '68?
- Winnie Frost: 00:04:24 Well, this was in '72.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:04:27 Okay. After you had graduated.
- Winnie Frost: 00:04:28 Yeah. Yeah. So, they hired me in the Public Affairs Office. I was still not getting over to the history stuff, assigned me to the public affairs office and gave me a mobile kiosk. This was an old mail truck that was converted into an information kiosk, and the backs flew open and all the brochures were on it of all the parks in the National Capital Region. And my job was to go around to all these Summer in the Park events that were going on around the region, and then put up my little kiosk and talk to people about the National Capital parks and everything is available in the Washington area to see and enjoy. So in that respect, that did include a lot of history because there were a lot of historical places in D.C. and in the vicinity. And so some of the events that included where every day they had a noon

hour concert in a downtown, what I call parklet, all right? And I was to go to each one of those concerts and set up the booth, and then talk to people about other parks to visit in the Washington area.

- Winnie Frost: 00:05:52 So that's when I started really entering into the Park Service, and it was all because of living in Italy and loving going to its castles and wonderful palaces and things. So you asked me that question and that was a long-winded answer.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:06:07 No, that's great. You're in a portable park.
- Winnie Frost: 00:06:09 I'm in a portable park--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:06:11 You're bringing your park to the people.
- Winnie Frost: 00:06:13 Yes, and I would go everywhere. In fact, I went to a lot of national symphony concerts in Rock Creek Park or down at Prince William Park, or at Catoctin Park. I would drive that mail truck out there, set up. I wouldn't get home until like 1:00 o'clock in the morning, and on those days, I would just take the vehicle home with me. And of course I was living at home. My parents were like, "We don't really want this thing parked outside in front of our house." So I did that for one summer, the summer I graduated, and then--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:06:52 Were you the only one in that truck? That was your truck and--
- Winnie Frost: 00:06:54 That's correct.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:06:55 You took care of it, you stocked it, you--
- Winnie Frost: 00:06:57 That's correct. I brought it out to Brentwood if it needed any maintenance. I had to get a two-ton truck license. There wasn't much to that, but then--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:07:07 So you were a truck driver?
- Winnie Frost: 00:07:08 I'm a truck driver. Yeah. Yeah.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:07:11 That's a side of Winnie I didn't know.
- Winnie Frost: 00:07:12 But it was really fun, and this was a big mobilization this Summer in the Parks effort. And it went on for a number of

years and Congress gave it a lot of money as a reaction to these terrible riots that had gone on in the D.C. area. So besides the mobile kiosk, we had Reading is Fundamental, we had a library truck, we had a plant mobile, we had a music truck and they would go out to different areas, particularly in Southeast and Northeast, those trucks. I wouldn't go into those areas. I was more into the performing arts component, to the concerts and we had Earth, Wind and Fire one time. We had--oh gosh, I can't remember their names. Another African American group that was very--they did Aquarius, that song Aquarius.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:08:06 Yeah. Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:08:07 Yeah. Yeah. Can't remember their names right now, but they were really great. So there was a guy that I worked with in the Public Affairs Office, who was really connected to the entertainment business and they had brought him in from Hollywood. And so he was getting all these wonderful performers and I had to go out with my truck.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:08:28 What an opportunity.
- Winnie Frost: 00:08:29 Yeah, it was really great. And I of course--my uniform was wearing this Park Service Summer in the Parks t-shirt, and it had a big laughing tree on it.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:08:39 Okay.
- Winnie Frost: 00:08:41 And also my truck had a huge laughing tree on it and that was a symbol of Summer in the Parks, having a good time, maybe learning a few things and being entertained, I guess. And maybe learning more about our different parks.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:08:57 So you weren't in a uniform?
- Winnie Frost: 00:08:59 No, I was not in a park ranger uniform.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:09:01 What about when you were a kiosk cutie?
- Winnie Frost: 00:09:04 Yes. I was in a ranger outfit, which was the dress with the go-go boots. It was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:09:12 It's in our history collection.

- Winnie Frost: 00:09:14 In fact, I went over there to look at it, I was just laughing. I couldn't believe I wore that get up. But yeah, that's what the kiosk cuties wore, they wore the airline looking dress with boots.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:09:25 A stewardess.
- Winnie Frost: 00:09:26 And then the year before, the first year I did it, it was a green skirt and a white shirt and a pillbox hat. And that was what was worn before they switched into this kind of mod-looking beige dress with the white rings around the collar and the sleeves. And we didn't have a hat, we just had boots and short skirts. Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:09:54 So Summer in the Parks--
- Winnie Frost: 00:09:55 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:09:56 So that was one season?
- Winnie Frost: 00:09:57 Summer in the Parks was one season, and then--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:10:00 Were you a full-time employee at that point, and that was just a--
- Winnie Frost: 00:10:07 No, this is all a temporary employment. They would call the 180-day appointments, which lasted approximately maybe six months. So once that was starting to end, I was in the Public Affairs Office and a new program, new Summer in the Parks program was initiating. It was called the Green Scene, and that program was all about horticulture and plants. I'm still not getting to my history. So they asked me to get on that, and so I got another appointment and that took me out to Rock Creek Park, to Klinge [Pierce-Klinge] mansion which is where they set up their operation. And it was an environmental education program where we go into schools and teach biology stuff, and also, I was put in charge of starting youth gardens with inner city children. Now, I had never planted a tomato plant or anything in my life, never had a garden. And they said, "Well, guess what? You're going to be in charge of gardens with inner city children."
- Winnie Frost: 00:11:15 I had never taught, I had no interest in being a teacher, and I'm going, "God, this is really--I'm really loving this Park Service but I am just out of my element here." So they said,

"That's what your main job's going to be, and you need to work with the D.C. Recreation Center because they have a demonstration garden for children." I think it was off Georgia Avenue or something. So I developed a rapport with the guy who ran that, and he really taught me. In addition to doing the children's gardening, believe it or not, I answered the phone calls about plants, and so I had a huge dictionary right there--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:11:56

Was there a reference library?

Winnie Frost: 00:11:57

Yeah. I had a reference library. People asked me in particular about houseplants, and I really spent a lot of time in Johnson's Flower Center talking to the people there to learn about different indoor plants, and I got a lot of calls on that. And then the third thing I had to do is--You'll get a kick out of this one. I had to be the Green Scene Lady at a new noon hour concert. They were still having these concerts and they would announce that the Green Scene Lady would be there and tell you about or help you with your problem plants. So I would go to these concerts and I'd have a display, making terrariums or different container gardening and things like that, and people--I had an outfit on, it was a green flower dress with a--If you could see Betsy's eyes, I think she's losing it. She had no idea. We spent many years working together. A green dress and then I had a white hat with a big flower on it, so I could be identified as the Green Scene Lady.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:13:04

Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:13:05

And so I would talk to people about their plants. Now, most of them were government employees because we'd go to these little downtown parklets, like Rawlins Park which is outside Department of Interior. That always used to make me really nervous because all these Interior people were coming out to talk to me. Many of them would bring dead plants thinking I was going to touch it and revive it magically but that didn't happen. So those were the three main things I dealt with, was on the phone, which I learned a lot by doing that, going out to these concerts and then running these inner-city garden programs with children. And I would go into the park starting in February. It was great because I could work on that and I couldn't go out to parklets in the middle of the winter. I'd worked with the kids, and then get them all excited so that they would be

ready to come out to this area where we had set up a demonstration children's garden, and that was in Rock Creek Park.

- Winnie Frost: 00:14:05 So I had to bus them from Southeast to Rock Creek Park, and they each had five by five feet, little plots to grow different things. So we all talked about different plants we were growing, tried to come up with a layout. So each kid had their own little plot, and there were 60 of them, these wonderful children.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:14:34 That's huge. It's a big project.
- Winnie Frost: 00:14:35 And guess what? I was by myself.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:14:37 With 60 kids?
- Winnie Frost: 00:14:38 With 60 children and two bus drivers.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:14:41 And garden tools.
- Winnie Frost: 00:14:43 Now, Betsy is very intuitive. Obviously, she has children. Yes, I had garden tools which were actually weapons of mass destruction, because as soon as I got out there and I had put up a big toolbox, and I had all the hoes in there, and I guess the ones--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:15:03 Shovel, rakes and--
- Winnie Frost: 00:15:04 Yeah, all those kinds of things, and every kid got their own. We'll start out with a hoe, all right? Because they were going to till the soil a little more prior to planting stuff. Well, within one minute we had had sword fights going on and I ended up having to leave to take a kid to the hospital--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:15:27 Oh, geez.
- Winnie Frost: 00:15:27 Yeah.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:15:27 You left 59 kids.
- Winnie Frost: 00:15:27 Yeah, with a bus driver, because the other bus driver--I didn't have a car.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:15:30 Had to take--

- Winnie Frost: 00:15:31 Had to take me. So that was the first day. Now, it all calmed down after that because I went back to my boss, said, "Hey, I got to get some volunteers or somebody, I can't be going out there with two bus drivers by myself. It's impossible." So he did agree with me and hired two local guys who are wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, I'm still friends with them to this day because the three of us went through a lot. But the kids did actually grow wonderful plants and got lots of fruit and we had a harvest festival, but the problem was they did not like to weed.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:16:11 Who does?
- Winnie Frost: 00:16:12 Nobody likes to weed. So that was a challenge constantly, and we would bring in more mulch and stuff to try to calm that problem down, but actually the worst thing was, and maybe I'm telling a little out of school, is that the Park Police had their stables right by this area where we had our plots, and the Park Police, on occasion we discovered, were coming over to this little garden and getting some things that were almost ready for the kids to pick the next time they came out.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:16:46 Oh, no.
- Winnie Frost: 00:16:47 So we had to work with them to be more of a patrol of it, than a thief--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:16:55 Consumer, yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:16:56 A consumer. So, I did that for five years, that program with children.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:17:04 Was it the fourth grade? What grade was--
- Winnie Frost: 00:17:06 A very good question. Yes, it was a third grade and a fourth-grade class.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:17:09 Okay.
- Winnie Frost: 00:17:10 So I decided after the first year I had to do some experimenting. So the next year, I put a third and a fourth grader together and they had a larger plot, and obviously the fourth grader is bossing the third grader, and that seemed to work okay. And then the next year I went to--I was told that Gallaudet really wanted to get involved in

something like this. Now, I don't know sign language, and they wanted to bring their college students to come out and work with the children. So I went, "Okay, that's great. So I'm going to have a person that has hearing disabilities work with an inner-city kid. Hmmm. How is that going to--" This is the third year, and so we were doing that together. I was able to hire a woman who was lovely, who could read lips and she was kind of like my interpreter for me, working with the Gallaudet students and I just loved working with them.

- Winnie Frost: 00:18:15 They were wonderful and they really were good with the kids, they were very good with the kids. But the most wonderful experience was the Park Police nearby were getting ready for a big parade and all, and so they are practicing and they're practicing to music. And all of a sudden, these students, Gallaudet students, were dancing.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:18:42 Interesting.
- Winnie Frost: 00:18:43 And I was blown away. They could feel the music in their feet, and that's what the wonderful interpreter told me. I was like, "Wow, this is something." And the kids got it. Of course the kids were--they could hear the music, but they were all dancing together. I wish I had a smartphone back then.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:19:06 Yeah, to film something like that.
- Winnie Frost: 00:19:08 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:19:09 Special moment.
- Winnie Frost: 00:19:09 Those are special moments that you never forget.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:19:12 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:19:13 Then the next year, more experiment. This definitely was a demonstration garden and experimenting. So I had a new group of kids every year. It was a new group of kids. I did keep some third graders that became fourth--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:19:27 Moved up, yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:19:29 Those that wanted to, and the teachers, I should mention, really took a back seat. I really tried to get them to get more

engaged, but I don't know, they seemed so overwhelmed with everything else that this was a break for them. So I was kind of--didn't get too far with them. But here's the fifth year, we decide that we are going to have a senior citizen with a kid working together. So, set that one up, and I had seniors from a number of community centers that they were mobile and everything. Their buses would bring them out there and I'd bring in the kids, and so it would be one adult and one child, and that had a range of experiences. We had some that were very bossy, and then wouldn't really give the kids too much produce. There were others that found working with a kid so enjoyable, and I think it made them feel really good, and so that was really what--and that's what I was hoping for, generally. But you have the range of personalities.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:20:50 How often were they together and out on this plot?
- Winnie Frost: 00:20:53 Twice a week.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:20:54 Okay.
- Winnie Frost: 00:20:54 Yeah. It was a very, very draining job, and by the fifth year I was really trying to find another job because this thing was just really exhausting, and they kept wanting me to try different things, and I didn't think a summer was really enough, but--and they made such a big deal about it. I went to the White House a number of times with the kids and also taught them how to make terrariums. And so, we brought some terrariums to the White House and there's pictures of us with Julie Nixon, and they're giving her a terrarium, and those times when we went to the White House, I had to dress up like the Green Scene lady. But those were different days. Those were the '70s, and there was a lot of money in the Summer in the Parks program. So in total I probably worked for Summer in the Parks, maybe six years or something, and that was the true heyday of the Summer in the Parks.
- Winnie Frost: 00:21:57 And they started losing that momentum and the funding, and I felt like I had been around for enough, and I had-- I'm still temporary and I'm still looking for a permanent job, and they were very few and far between. So I went to the Ranger Skills Program that they call now, but it was really the Intake Ranger Program out at Albright for three months.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:23 Okay. The Grand Canyon.

Winnie Frost: 00:22:23 Yes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:23 And what year was that?

Winnie Frost: 00:22:23 That was '77.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:23 Okay, yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:22:23 And remember I'd started in the Park Service 1970. So in '77 I went out there, and while I was out there, I really learned the breadth of the National Park Service, how so many different options and opportunities, and how exciting it was.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:48 Was it a two week class?

Winnie Frost: 00:22:51 Three months.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:52 Three months, okay.

Winnie Frost: 00:22:53 Yes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:22:53 Wow.

Winnie Frost: 00:22:54 And included field trips to many parks, like Petrified Forest, Mesa Verde, Navajo. It's Navajo, right? Isn't that what--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:05 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Winnie Frost: 00:23:06 Fabulous parks, things I had never seen in my life.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:09 So you were with how many in your class?

Winnie Frost: 00:23:11 The intake program usually had about 40 people--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:14 For the full three months?

Winnie Frost: 00:23:15 For three months, yeah.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:17 So you must have gotten to know those people--

Winnie Frost: 00:23:17 I did. I did.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:17 --extremely well.
- Winnie Frost: 00:23:20 Yeah. And we did a lot of weekend trips, some people drove there so they had vehicles, so we would go to different places. But one of the things was people were always finding it amusing because every week I would get a bouquet of roses brought into the--and it was this guy I was engaged to which I quickly got out of that one. But anyway, when I got out of the school.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:48 What a reputation.
- Winnie Frost: 00:23:49 So was that--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:50 Winnie, the one with the roses.
- Winnie Frost: 00:23:51 Yeah. Well, actually it was kind of good because I was only one of three women in the class.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:55 Oh, my gosh.
- Winnie Frost: 00:23:56 Yeah.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:23:57 Out of 40.
- Winnie Frost: 00:23:57 So it was probably good that I was getting roses all the time.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:24:00 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:24:01 I hope that it says something to you. The big experience for me besides going to all these parks while we were out there and all the wonderful people that they brought in to speak to us because we had class every day, included a week of back country hiking trip through the Grand Canyon, and I signed up for the hardest one. I don't know why. So I was with 11 guys and myself, and it was a very rigorous trip down the Tanner Trail which they have since closed because it's so difficult. I had got some climbing training and repelling training in this class too, and we had to do some of that. So I was basically getting what they call sewing machine legs all the time, because it was hairy. All right, and we have this week and we're living--We don't have tents, we're sleeping on the ground by the river.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:25:06 Why didn't you have tents?

Winnie Frost: 00:25:07 Too much to carry.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:25:09 So you just carried all your gear, no mules with you?

Winnie Frost: 00:25:12 No, we had to carry everything on our back. Basically, we ate gorp and I had lemonade treated water. So I became the most popular person in that group because I had that lemonade with me to put in that horrible water. So, that was good, and I must have brought a lot because I was happy to give people that. That's mostly what was in your backpack. I don't think I barely ever changed my clothes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:25:41 Food, water, sleeping bag--

Winnie Frost: 00:25:43 We had a sleeping bag and we had a sleeping mat, and then we each had a little, uh, not each of us, people divided up some things like the little--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:25:56 --stoves?

Winnie Frost: 00:25:58 --stoves. What are they called--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:01 Yeah, little camp stove?

Winnie Frost: 00:26:02 Yeah, those little camp stoves. There's a name for them and I can't think of it right now. Because we always had to boil our water because we didn't stash water anywhere. I was with all major, major law enforcement western rangers.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:18 So that's who most of their career, their career orientation was toward law enforcement.

Winnie Frost: 00:26:24 That's correct. That's correct, and search and rescue.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:27 So you were--

Winnie Frost: 00:26:28 So I was totally out of water.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:30 Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:26:30 Totally.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:31 But you hung in there.

- Winnie Frost: 00:26:32 But I totally hung in there, and the reason why I even bring this up is because we had two rescues on this trip, that's how rigorous it was.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:26:42 Within your group.
- Winnie Frost: 00:26:42 Within our group, the people that were our tour people, which were also instructors at Albright, there were three of them that came on this trip. They had radios, so they had to go. One of them would go ahead to where he knew maybe there would be connection, and we had two helicopter rescues and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:27:05 People were injured or fell--
- Winnie Frost: 00:27:07 One got bitten twice by scorpion--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:27:10 Oh, my gosh.
- Winnie Frost: 00:27:10 He was really, really sick, and the other guy got so dehydrated that he was delirious. So both of them had to be rescued, and each time they said, "Oh, that girl from D.C." that, "Why the heck did she go down there?"
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:27:24 Well, you were never rescued?
- Winnie Frost: 00:27:25 And I walked out of that thing, eight hour hike out of there. Oh, my goodness. It was so exhausting. And of course, as soon as we got to the top, somebody had brought beer, and we all just sat there and drank beer and I don't even like beer but that--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:27:42 You earned it.
- Winnie Frost: 00:27:42 But that day I liked it a lot. So when I got back from that training which also included how to do your 171, your KSAs, Knowledge, Skills and Abilities, a component of 171, they really taught you a lot about that. So when I got back, my 171 was much richer.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:28:04 So you're still in a seasonal status when you're out there at training?
- Winnie Frost: 00:28:08 I am, I couldn't believe--everybody was permanent employees, so I don't know how I got out there. And I think why was because a woman came to work for me, and she

had political connections and she was absolutely a terrible worker. She was so bad, I started disciplinary procedures on her and she--and suddenly I didn't even apply to go to this ranger school. Suddenly I get a notice.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:28:33 They just got you moved.
- Winnie Frost: 00:28:34 I think they wanted to get me out of there, because this lady was a political person.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:28:39 Yeah. Yeah, thinking maybe you wouldn't make it perhaps.
- Winnie Frost: 00:28:42 Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I'd never return. Yeah. So when I did get back, I always hot to trot to get out of this project, in this program. So, I was constantly applying, and I got into an intake program and the intake program is for people they believe could go into management, that kind of stuff. And they had a 50 people, I think, for this intake program for the Service.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:29:15 This is after rangers' course.
- Winnie Frost: 00:29:15 After the three months at the ranger school.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:29:19 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:29:19 So I--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:29:19 More training.
- Winnie Frost: 00:29:20 I applied for that right away, and I applied for park ranger interpretation and personnel management because I knew in personnel management, first of all I'd learn a lot. Also, I wouldn't have to leave the D.C. area because it was all Main Interior and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:29:41 And you wanted to come back to D.C.
- Winnie Frost: 00:29:42 Yeah. Because I was going to be getting married so--and my husband worked at the PBS in Washington D.C., so if I had to go two years to an isolated park--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:29:55 A remote park, right.
- Winnie Frost: 00:29:56 Right. So, when I was offered both--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:30:00 Both trainings?

Winnie Frost: 00:30:01 Both, yeah. Either going to a park, I was accepted in that, but it was going to be randomized. I didn't know what park it would be.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:30:07 Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:30:07 And I was accepted in the personnel management program. I wanted to be risk-free, so I picked the personnel manager program and I ended up going to the Washington Office for their service-wide seasonal employment program, and that was a big thing. That was the heyday of the Park Service, to mid to the late '70s, heyday. Everybody, well, everybody in the world wanted to work for the Park Service. Somebody was in the news constantly; hippies were constantly in Yosemite. I don't know, it was just young people wanted to work for the Park Service. So it was quite an ordeal managing this personnel management intake, excuse me, seasonal employment program. It was for, basically, summer seasonal employment in parks around the country and a small one for winter seasonal employment for the southern parks.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:31:08 So you went through how much--how long was the training for that program?

Winnie Frost: 00:31:12 Well, I worked for the guy that ran it. I was assigned to work with him. And--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:31:17 So that was your training?

Winnie Frost: 00:31:18 That was my training--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:31:19 Basically the job, on the job--

Winnie Frost: 00:31:21 Yes. That was in staffing and placement. They were going to move me around to different parts of personnel management, which everything's different now. Classification, staffing and placement, employee relations. Now, I did have little stints in each one of those, okay? But then they brought me back into staffing and placement because they wanted me to run that employment, that seasonal employment program, and I really liked it. It got a lot of attention because--let's be honest with you, a lot of congressional people wanted--their kids wanted to work in

the seasonal program with their children. So I had to always hand grade their applications because this was a computerized application based on self-evaluation. So you'd have all these skills, let's say 100 skills, you know, spelunking, rate yourself, and then it would be put in a processor and you would get a score based on how they rated themselves.

- Winnie Frost: 00:32:26 So it was all personal evaluation which some people can inflate it and other people may not. But those that didn't inflate and did a good job on it, maybe were children of congressional people, so I had to come in and redo them and talk to each one of them. And maybe they were too honest, or they didn't realize they knew more than they did, and it also included going to Denver for three months. So I moved out there and I had a group of people that worked for me and we processed this. It was very busy. We'd probably get 7,500 applications for maybe 2,000 jobs. So it was highly competitive, and I really enjoyed it. I loved the people that worked for me during that time and I liked being out in Denver. It was wonderful. So I did that, and then I got a permanent job, believe it or not, in classification.
- Winnie Frost: 00:33:33 And I liked evaluating positions. I found that intellectually stimulating. I know that sounds boring, but it actually is kind of stimulating. And my major assignment was to do all the White House gardeners.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:33:51 Oh, perfect.
- Winnie Frost: 00:33:52 I know. So, I had my own card to get in the White House and I'd observe what they were doing and talk to them all and figure out their classification levels and I just loved it.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:34:05 So this job was located back in D.C.?
- Winnie Frost: 00:34:07 Yeah, sorry.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:34:09 You left Denver, you were back in D.C.
- Winnie Frost: 00:34:09 National Capital Region.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:34:10 And you're--
- Winnie Frost: 00:34:11 Regional office.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:34:12 Okay. Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:34:12 They had a whole personnel department and they had a classification division, and they had staffing placement [inaudible]. I did end up really liking--

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:34:21 So this wasn't national classification, this was just for the National Capital Region?

Winnie Frost: 00:34:24 For the National Capital Region because that job--the intake program was two years, so I was in training for two years and at the end of two years, they helped me find a job and let's face it, I wanted to be at D.C. I had been going out to Denver for a couple of years for a number of months. I wanted to be at D.C. because I had now gotten married. So I didn't want to keep going other places. So I accepted that job and I really did enjoy it, and I did it for about maybe two years. And then I finally got into the 025 series, the park ranger series. That's when I finally get into it by getting a job as a manager of Turkey Run Farm on the GW [George Washington] Parkway.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:35:15 So you went from this personnel classification job--

Winnie Frost: 00:35:19 Yes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:35:19 --to manager?

Winnie Frost: 00:35:19 To park ranger.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:35:21 Park ranger.

Winnie Frost: 00:35:22 Yes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:35:23 Of a site.

Winnie Frost: 00:35:23 Yes. And as a manager of a site, you deal a lot with personnel management because I had a staff of 10 people.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:35:29 Well, you certainly had a lot of experience with the kids and the gardening and--

Winnie Frost: 00:35:35 Yes, and we did--this whole project, this whole park was a kind of a make-believe park because it was built for the bicentennial of George Washington, to show what people at the other end of the income strata lived, the poor people.

And none of that's preserved in our story of our American history for the country, because those buildings aren't around anymore. So this was a little cabin, made-believe people that live there and it was a farm, and we did a lot of environmental education with kids, and it was gardening. So there I am, back with that gardening--

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:36:20 But historical gardening, right?
- Winnie Frost: 00:36:22 But it was historical gardening and it was also about the clothing, about the people's way of life--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:36:29 The tools.
- Winnie Frost: 00:36:31 --tools, the animals there, and gosh, one time I was called at 2:00 AM by our regional director of the National Capital Region, "One of your pigs are loose in McLean, Virginia." "What the heck am I supposed to do?" I didn't say that to him of course, I said, "Oh, I'll take care of it." And so my husband and I, who he grew up on a farm, he and I go out there and he says, "Where's the feed for the pigs?" And I said, "Oh, it's over here," he goes, "Just watch this." And he just starts putting out food and makes a little trail from the pig pen out a little way, and within 10 minutes, [pig snorts] they're coming back. They're coming back to roost they want to get their food. So that worked out really grand.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:37:22 So you're a truck driver and you're a pig rescuer.
- Winnie Frost: 00:37:25 Pig rescuer, well, I--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:37:26 And a kiosk cutie.
- Winnie Frost: 00:37:28 I totally give my husband all the credit for that one. So after--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:37:33 But you were in training at that point too, right?
- Winnie Frost: 00:37:36 Yeah, I was in training.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:37:37 Just learning how to be a pig rescuer.
- Winnie Frost: 00:37:38 Yes. Yes. You're never too old to learn something new, but this Park Service was throwing it at me on a regular basis. So after two years working at Turkey Run farm, the Park Service decided it was costing too much money to run this

program, that really was a park that really was talking about history, but really was not really historical. So the County of Fairfax, which is where the park was located were very upset because so many of their school groups would come there for day long activities and it was wonderful. They all dressed in period costumes. I dressed in--[break in audio]

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:38:29 Want to start again. There we go.
- Winnie Frost: 00:38:32 So after two years at Turkey Run farm, they decided to close it down. All right. Because of the uproar of the congressional rep from that area and the senator from Virginia, Senator John--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:38:47 The uproar about its closing?
- Winnie Frost: 00:38:48 Yes. I was asked to set up a special use permit for Fairfax County to take over the operation of the park. Again, I'd never did that before, so it was really great. I went down to Washington and people really gave me some good advice on how to write it and everything, and we did have--it was a 25-year agreement for Fairfax County to take over the management of the park and any employees that were currently working for the Park Service could switch over to a county position.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:39:21 Interesting.
- Winnie Frost: 00:39:21 And then those that didn't want to, I would help them find other positions, including the lady that was working here, Jerry Hall. Did you ever know her?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:39:31 I don't remember her.
- Winnie Frost: 00:39:32 Yeah. Well, she's still working here. Yeah, she was one of my employees.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:39:37 At Mather.
- Winnie Frost: 00:39:39 Yeah, Mather, but she works a lot out at Albright, but now she's moved here so she comes in here. So there were only two people that wanted to stay in the Park Service, the other eight wanted to stay with the Turkey Run. So they migrated over.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:39:59 Switched over.
- Winnie Frost: 00:39:59 Yeah, we had a big ceremony, we had the congressman there, we had the senator, we had the director of the Park Service, and one of my employees was so talented, he made a beautiful antique key that we turned over to the state of Virginia. It was a lovely little ceremony. And, this is in 1982, I think it is. And now they've gone to a series of these special uses and I got a letter about eight months ago saying they are going to close it. So finally, after all these years, they're finally going to close it, and the Park Service wants the land back. They don't want to do another use agreement with them. So that's what's happening with them. So the superintendent of the GW [George Washington] Parkway, which this Turkey Run was a sub site of, said, "Winnie, you can do whatever you want now. You're working from my office." So I was really very interested in resource management and anything related to the historic sites.
- Winnie Frost: 00:41:02 So I did a lot of resource management plans for the historic places like Clara Barton, Arlington House, those were the only--so the monuments, like Teddy Roosevelt Island. So that was very fascinating, and while I was there, I was approached about maybe coming into the National Capital Region as the interpretive planner, while somebody was out on maternity leave. So I did that as a--what do you call it? -acting capacity for six months, and I really liked that because I worked with all the parks at National Capital Region and so many of them were historical parks. And I'm thinking, "I'm finally getting there, telling the good stories and getting into history more." And so I finally ended up getting the job only because when the person came back, she didn't want to work full time. And you know that person is Jane Radford. So she and I concocted this thing called job sharing.
- Winnie Frost: 00:42:16 Now, it's happened in other places, but it had never happened in the Park Service. So she and I came up with this idea that we would each take six parks in the region, and we would manage those interpretive programs, and be the conduit to Harpers Ferry Center for exhibitry work. And that way we could really divide up this job. It's almost like two little jobs that equal one. And--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:42:45 Were you both part time then?

- Winnie Frost: 00:42:47 No, she was full--yes. No, no. We were both full-timers.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:42:50 Oh, okay.
- Winnie Frost: 00:42:50 I was at Turkey Run, she had returned and she called me up and said, "I don't really want to work full time," and I said, "Oh, I'd love to work with you at this job, I really like--" So we spent many weeks writing up a proposal and had an audience with our regional director and he really liked the idea. He thought, "Double enthusiasm here." So, we were selected but we became part time employees instead of full time. So now, I went from seasonal to full time permanent to part time permanent, and by that time I had just had a child. So, it was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:43:35 It worked out well for you too.
- Winnie Frost: 00:43:37 I think, for both of us, and actually, they got more out of us because we were so dedicated to having this work. We even got a desk from the Washington Office that was a two-sided desk. So we faced each other on either side, this huge desk, and they had the chairs on either side. So we would always come to work together on Wednesdays and share information with each other about our parts. So in case somebody would call the off day for the other person, she or I would be able to respond to them or get copious notes and then pass it on. So, we really made it work. So we did that, and then she got a job up here at Harpers Ferry Center and said, "Hey, I think they got openings up here," and during that time I had also worked on waysides with the National Capital Region to help the parks do waysides.
- Winnie Frost: 00:44:38 So the manager of the Wayside Department up here knew who I was, because I would ask him to review stuff. So, they did have an opening and I was reassigned to Harpers Ferry Center.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:44:53 As a wayside planner?
- Winnie Frost: 00:44:54 As a wayside planner, so I left my own ... No, wayside planning was for O25, park rangers still, as a planner, not as a designer, but as a planner. He was still O25. So I came up here to work, but--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:45:07 What year was that?

- Winnie Frost: 00:45:09 Well, Jack Spinnler, who you'll hear from later, knew exactly the day because he had it written in his calendar.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:45:17 It must have made an impression on him.
- Winnie Frost: 00:45:19 No, because I was going to sit in the same office with him. He opened up his office and we shared the same space. The only reason why is because after Jane Radford left and I was alone at NCR, National Capital Region, as an interpretive planner, I didn't want to work full time. Jack Spinnler said, "I'll come in and I'll work the other half time." So that's what he did.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:45:43 At National Capital Region?
- Winnie Frost: 00:45:44 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:45:45 Okay.
- Winnie Frost: 00:45:45 Because he didn't have a full time job for some reason, I'm not clear on what--well, I don't remember what the circumstances were. So he came in and then when he left and came to get a job at the Wayside Department, he too was saying, "Hey, I think you could come up here and have a position," and I really wanted to get up here. I really wanted to tell the stories at different parks around the country. So, that beautiful opportunity came along and I came up to Harpers Ferry. Is that a long-winded answer for one question you've asked me? How did you get interested in the Park Service? I'm so sorry. I feel bad because you're not--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:46:26 No, no, that's perfect because I think what you're describing is so Park Service. You filtered it through so many different parts of the organization. You dealt with people firsthand, so you're dealing with kids and the public directly, and then you're shifting into more of the back-office planning and preparing materials for the public without working directly with them, but you've at least had that experience. So--
- Winnie Frost: 00:46:48 Yeah, I did have frontline experience and I forgot to say that even when I worked on the GW [George Washington] Parkway, sometimes I would go and fill in at Arlington House. So I got back to Arlington House and I actually got to wear a uniform--not a uniform, a costume because by this time, I was wearing a park ranger uniform. So my

career basically has been wearing uniforms until I came to Harpers Ferry Center, and I really liked that because all through school I always went to Catholic schools and wore uniform. So it was really easy to go to work. But when you come to Harpers Ferry Center, you have to--

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:47:22 Have a wardrobe.
- Winnie Frost: 00:47:23 You don't have a wardrobe, but we found a way to have wardrobes, didn't we? When we went to our conferences.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:47:30 Yes. We have T-shirts.
- Winnie Frost: 00:47:31 Yeah, we had--or nice shirts. Yeah.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:47:33 Nice shirts, yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 00:47:34 I still wear those.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:47:36 So you mentioned a couple of people along the way that had some influence or that were important. Are there other people that, along the way, have been a big influence on your trajectory to Harpers Ferry Center?
- Winnie Frost: 00:47:51 Well, one person that I crossed roads with a lot was a gentleman named Bart Truesdale, and he was Chief of Interpretation at National Capital Region. He also was my boss in the Green Scene when I did all the garden programs. He was a horticulturalist, thank God, because I could talk to him about things relating to plants, and then he was the chief ranger on the GW [George Washington] Parkway, and I ended up working for him again. So, throughout my career before I came to Harpers Ferry, I pretty much worked with Bart Truesdale and he's a wonderful person that had way more confidence in me than I had in myself, and threw me into stuff, starting with the gardens. "No, Winnie, you can do it."
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:48:43 So he knew you well enough to know even though you were not a horticulturalist, you could handle--
- Winnie Frost: 00:48:48 Yeah. Well, you know what? I think throughout my career it's been, "You don't know enough, but you'll be really good in explaining it to others since you'll have to learn it," and that's exactly what the wayside manager said to me. He said, starting with the first few jobs I had, he said, "Well,

you don't know anything about that, that's good because then you'll be able to--" I said, "Yeah, dumb it down, right? So people can understand quickly, and in about five sentences." "You got it."

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:19 So who was that wayside manager who first hired you?
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:22 Oh, my goodness. Do you remember his name? You know. Phil--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:28 Phil Musselwhite.
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:29 No, Phil Marley--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:31 Myerly.
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:32 And then who was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:33 Ray--
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:33 Ray Price.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:34 Price.
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:34 Thank you. Yeah, it was Ray Price.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:49:36 So Ray Price hired you.
- Winnie Frost: 00:49:38 He did, but he was also the person that I worked with when I was an interpretive planner at NCR because I would give him wayside stuff that I was working on independently with the parks to review to see if it made sense. We couldn't always get jobs up here at Harpers Ferry Center. So, as regional planner, I was responsible for helping the parks do things on their own. Yeah. Because we couldn't really wait, couldn't get on this long waiting list.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:50:11 So there's always been a long waiting list.
- Winnie Frost: 00:50:13 Yes, there has always been, and we didn't feel that--we had the money at certain times--so we had to get moving on it, regardless. So we had to pick up that role and we tried to do things that were in compliance with Harpers Ferry Center's standard at that time. It certainly greatly improved with you getting there, Betsy Ehrlich. So I would say Bart Truesdale was my main person. Another person that had a lot of

influence on me that was very helpful was Francesca Huxley. Did you ever know her Betsy?

- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:50:52 I don't remember that name.
- Winnie Frost: 00:50:55 Her father-in-law was Aldous Huxley, Brave New World. She's a wonderful lady, and she was brilliant. She was also a horticulturalist and historian, and she helped me a lot with the gardening program and I worked with her in the National Capital Regional Office and in the Interpretation Office. And back when she left and retired, she encouraged the manager to have me take over her job to work with our cooperating associations in the National Capital Region. And so I ended up taking that on too. She was very helpful for me, both--in my real formative years were really working with Bart. He's great.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:51:44 And he gave you opportunities that--
- Winnie Frost: 00:51:46 He gave me so many opportunities, I think I--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:51:49 He trusted you.
- Winnie Frost: 00:51:50 I think I was just a body there, and he had some marching orders and he was looking for a body. I shouldn't be that hard on myself, but it seemed kind of overwhelming a lot of times.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:52:04 Well, and at the time as you described, you're one of few women.
- Winnie Frost: 00:52:09 Oh, very few. Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:52:11 So was there something going on there that you recognized that was different about your experience, your work, or what you brought to the table? That--
- Winnie Frost: 00:52:20 Well, I think I mostly brought enthusiasm and getting people riled up to want to do something, and I think that's really what he saw in me. Because every single time whenever we'd get awards, that word was constantly used. So I'm assuming--even the regional director, he would go on about that. Bob Stanton, did you remember Bob Stanton?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:52:42 Yes, yeah.

- Winnie Frost: 00:52:43 He was the regional director after Jack Fish and he's a great, great man. He's still with us, and he would say that all the time too. So I guess that's what it was, was the enthusiasm more than really being any particular sex and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:53:04 Or even experience? You--
- Winnie Frost: 00:53:07 Yeah, yeah. I think they felt like, "Well, she'll get it done," and it is true. It took me two years, but I got done-- removing a former park policeman that was given to me as an employee because he couldn't crack it, and he was a really terrible employee. So, because I knew a lot about the disciplinary system, I was finally able to remove him. And when the regional director called me in to thank me for that, he said, "I assigned him to you because I knew you'd get it done," and actually it upset me because the guy had a gun. I didn't really like that. But anyway, I would always be out jogging, and I'd be looking around hoping he's not around.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:53:53 That's terrible.
- Winnie Frost: 00:53:54 I know it was a very scary two years, it was really scary. So that comment kind of got to me. But anyway--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:54:02 So Waysides, we're going to talk more about this afternoon and I don't want to shortchange your opportunity to talk about your personal experience in Waysides, but I also want to get to your time as a project manager, which followed your career as a wayside planner.
- Winnie Frost: 00:54:16 Oh right. Yeah.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:54:17 So can you tell me, do you want to talk a little bit about your personal experience? I think your early years in Waysides, that work is not being done the same way today. So I think it's worth talking about.
- Winnie Frost: 00:54:33 You mean regarding the technical assistance kind of thing?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:54:35 Well, the technical assistance program and the fact that there was an office of Wayside Exhibits that you worked with, and there were a number of people. And you had certain roles and ways of doing work and--yeah.

- Winnie Frost: 00:54:44 Yes. Well, when I was first hired by Ray Price, wonderful, wonderful manager, he did talk to me about trying to stimulate their wayside technical assistance program. But before I would get it--he said, "Before you get into that, you need to do some wayside planning yourself." So just like Jack Spinnler and Rich Helman, I did that, and they helped me along the way too because--actually, Rich actually went out on some trips with me to get me familiar with the process and the best way to probably handle it. I appreciated that a lot. So I actually did hands-on wayside exhibits for a number of years, and then Ray Price left, and Phil Musselwhite came in and he was saying, "Hey, we got so many jobs that people want to do, but we can't take them on. But maybe if you give them guidance on how to do--" which I had already done at NCR, so I started doing that and I think we created a fairly robust technical assistance program. And Betsy, you were so helpful with me too.
- Winnie Frost: 00:55:56 So the parks would send in draft text, they decide where the waysides would be, they'd send in the draft text, they would send us some money to do the follow-up work and they would provide photographs. And then, I would work with the in-house designers on doing kind of a fast, quick wayside project, and then our department, which was like 18 people, right? I think, easily.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:56:26 Is that right?
- Winnie Frost: 00:56:26 I think so. Got so busy that you worked with me ... Remember you were the one that helped me do this contract, you basically put it together for me, because I wasn't even a COR at the time. You had been the COR for years, I think. Contracting Officer's Representative, right?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:56:48 Right.
- Winnie Frost: 00:56:48 I don't know what they call them now.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:56:49 No, that's COR is still--
- Winnie Frost: 00:56:50 So, you helped me write up a contract that we went to see a designer who was a small business or whatever--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:01 8a is what that--
- Winnie Frost: 00:57:03 8a, was it?

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:03 Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:57:04 We went to see her and kind of liked their work and you said, "Okay, maybe we can set up a contract with her and that she can do this design portion while I just work on the writing component--"

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:16 Because the parks are providing texts. So we really--

Winnie Frost: 00:57:18 That's correct.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:19 It's editing.

Winnie Frost: 00:57:20 It's editing and of course review.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:22 Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:57:23 My boss, Dick Hoffman, would always review everything. I didn't go anywhere unless he reviewed it, which was very good.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:32 So, even though it was a different track, technical assist track was different from a regular in-house project--

Winnie Frost: 00:57:36 That's correct.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:57:37 It all got reviewed by the same people. So the quality level should have been the same.

Winnie Frost: 00:57:41 Yes. Yes. And I think you probably worked a little bit with Ruth Bilbucky who was our outhouse--outhouse, that doesn't sound right--contractor, who was our wayside contractor for design, and you and I visited her a few times and gave her guidance. I think you probably looked at a lot of her stuff. She'd give us a print blown up and we'd review them and then I'd go back, literally sitting next to her, to make sure all the corrections were done and the movement of the graphics, the actual layout was more to our standards. But I think that was a wonderful solution. That way, you'd have somebody doing the fast track small projects, and we would be servicing the parks. Many parks had that need, they didn't need big, full park-wide wayside plans.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:58:39 Hundreds.

Winnie Frost: 00:58:39 Hundreds.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:58:40 They needed seven or fewer.

Winnie Frost: 00:58:41 Yeah. Yeah. I tried to keep it around seven to 10 and an open season. So I had a limited amount of time you can apply.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:58:53 Little window of time.

Winnie Frost: 00:58:54 Little window, so get your act together. When you call me, you're on the list and then I'll send that material how to do this, and then get your stuff in by this date. Of course, with your money. I think we were charging what, \$100? I don't know, \$100, 200 per panel or something. Something.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:59:14 I don't recall the funding side of the project.

Winnie Frost: 00:59:16 Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:59:16 You probably handled all of that.

Winnie Frost: 00:59:17 Yeah, that was complicated, that was so complicated. I had five million account numbers to put on the contract.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:59:24 I bet. All the different projects, yeah.

Winnie Frost: 00:59:25 Yeah. But it was a real great way to deal with small projects because we got so many requests for small projects and we had limited people, and they can't keep working on all these small projects. So I thought it was a really good solution, and it was pretty popular. So I did that for a number of years, really, that was--and then I ended up moving out of the Wayside Department because we were moving into a new kind of way of working.

Betsy Ehrlich: 00:59:57 The whole organization was restructured.

Winnie Frost: 00:59:59 Right, the whole organization was being restructured and they looked at the wayside technical assistance program, and made me a program manager and took me out of the new organization, and I was led and put into the workflow management. I don't know why, but that's --"I'm going." So I left Waysides, but the majority of my time in Waysides after the first few years was really, particularly with Phil coming in, really getting robust technical assistance

program and Phil was really seeing there were too many small projects coming in. We needed a different way to handle it, and before that Ray Price, who was the guy who hired me, he talked very vaguely about it, but then there wasn't any push to do it. But, again, Phil gave me that assignment and I just jumped on it. Go, "Okay, that's what I'll do."

- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:01:03 So how long were you in Waysides before you moved into project management?
- Winnie Frost: 01:01:11 Was that around 2004 or something Betsy? I'm--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:01:15 When you became a project manager?
- Winnie Frost: 01:01:16 Oh, a project manager. I'm sorry.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:01:19 Or is that different from when you're--so you're a program manager over the technical assistance program in the Waysides--
- Winnie Frost: 01:01:24 In the workflow department. I left Waysides and what do you think that year was? What was it called? I can't really even remember. Aiming for Excellence?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:01:33 Well, that was the re-organization, the name of the reorganization that we went through, but then you applied for and got a project manager position. It was different, or was that just a--
- Winnie Frost: 01:01:45 No, it was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:01:45 --an evolution of the job.
- Winnie Frost: 01:01:48 No, it was different. The technical assistance program in the workflow department went on for a few years, and then, something--what happened? Oh, the manager at the Center said, "We want to try a pilot program, a new-- and now another way of operating". This is what? The third or fourth reorganization? I never went through--God bless you. I never went through each of those reorganizations like Jane did so well, because I wasn't that involved in them except for moving into workflow.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:02:29 And that's okay. If we want to come back to the notes, the transcripts, we can add a date in here if you could add a note in here--

Winnie Frost: 01:02:34 Okay. I would say I became a project manager for the pilot team in 2004, 2005, somewhere around there. And it was the manager's effort to try to have a project manager that would have a team of people in specialties, like a writer, editor, a designer, a contracting officer, exhibit planner, exhibit producer, and an AV person.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:03:14 On a single team.

Winnie Frost: 01:03:14 On a single team doing projects around the country, and I was leading it, and the real beauty was we had our own contracting officer. So our projects were moving pretty fast because we had meetings once a week, these six people and myself--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:03:37 And you're in charge of the group.

Winnie Frost: 01:03:38 And I'm in charge of this group, this project pilot program. And in all honesty, the manager of the Center gave me the most outstanding employees.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:03:51 So who did you have in your group?

Winnie Frost: 01:03:52 I had Paula Beale, Kaitlin McQuaid, Michelle--It's Michelle--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:05 --Hartley?

Winnie Frost: 01:04:06 Yes. Oh, my God. I just think the world of her, I--Bob. Was his name Bob, the contracting officer? He left.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:17 Right.

Winnie Frost: 01:04:17 Can't remember--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:18 Can't remember his last name. We can look that up too.

Winnie Frost: 01:04:21 I don't remember his last name. Susan Barkus--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:28 Okay. From--

Winnie Frost: 01:04:30 And Susie.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:34 Susan Haynes.

Winnie Frost: 01:04:35 Yes. So is that six or something?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:39 Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 01:04:39 Yeah. That was the team.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:04:41 So, you were a pilot group team.

Winnie Frost: 01:04:43 We are a pilot, so they all reported to me. Whatever groups they were in, they were no longer in those groups. And there was a little bit of frustration about that. They liked being in their stove pipes, but the stove pipes were all changing anyway. And the manager thought, "Now, I think this might be a better way of managing at the Center." So, we tried it out for a year and a lot of stuff got completed. It was really remarkable, having a conduit to the contracting office to get these things moved out of planning and design, and into fabrication. So that was pretty cool. Well then, there was a position open for a project manager at a 13. Now, I was operating at 12 level still. I thought I should have gotten some kind of promotion because I was doing something totally new and it was a pilot effort.

Winnie Frost: 01:05:43 But anyway, so, I did get the position of the project manager and the manager of the Center thought this was a good way of operating but without the contracting officer. But having a project manager have a team of people, and furthermore, dividing the country into these teams would be by region. So all the media people knew who the six project managers were, me being the newest one, and they could give their three choices as to who they wanted to work for. Do you remember that, Betsy?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:06:29 I do.

Winnie Frost: 01:06:31 For some reason you were in the Midwest?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:06:35 I got assigned to the Midwest Region?

Winnie Frost: 01:06:37 Yes.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:06:37 We chose by region, I don't think it was by project manager, I think--

- Winnie Frost: 01:06:41 Was it by region?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:06:44 --the choice of which region we were interested in. Then we were asked to list our top three.
- Winnie Frost: 01:06:50 Okay, thank you. I had no idea how people were doing this. I just knew that they wanted six teams, and then basically, the manager and the division chief reviewed all those and they tried to do people's first choices, I think. I'm not that clear on all this. But anyway, each of the six project managers got a team of media specialists, and the project managers were asked which regions they would want to manage. And I was very interested in the Pacific West and Alaska Region, and they said, "Sure, you can do that," and then I got a wonderful, wonderful team of people to work with. So I took over that region, and took the first year really developing rapport with the chief of interpretation of that region, Pacific--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:07:51 And who was that at the time?
- Winnie Frost: 01:07:53 --West and Alaska, there were two regions. That's the regions I was supervising. Supervising, I don't mean managing their interpretive media.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:04 Right. Mary [Luvervee], is she--
- Winnie Frost: 01:08:06 She was the interpretive specialist. So I ended up working with her quite a bit. I don't remember the--and also Lynn, Lynn Nakata.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:16 Yes.
- Winnie Frost: 01:08:17 Those two, but they were both in the--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:20 Pacific West.
- Winnie Frost: 01:08:21 Pacific West. In Alaska, I can't remember their names, I'm sorry.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:29 No, that's okay. So you had traveled quite a bit doing your wayside planning work.
- Winnie Frost: 01:08:35 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:36 Now you're going to be traveling--

- Winnie Frost: 01:08:38 Yes, to--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:08:38 --or because you were a project manager did you not travel?
- Winnie Frost: 01:08:41 I did travel. I always thought it was best to participate in the kickoff meetings because that's when the superintendents are around, where you meet with them and you find out what their--we're going to be using their money. They're paying for this, including our travel that comes out of the pot. So, we would always have a kickoff meeting and after I understood the scope of the job because all the jobs would come directly to me, of the Pacific West and Alaska Regions, and after I understood the scope of the job by talking to the park and to the regional offices, I would set up a team. I'd review what was my workload for the people in my department--in my group--and then I would assign people. And certainly, I would meet with everybody and say, "Here's this project, are there any of you that think you'd really fit?" I wasn't doing this in a vacuum air. I don't do anything in a vacuum, that Betsy.
- Winnie Frost: 01:09:51 So I thought it went really well, and we had quite a few projects and luckily I had a really fantastic project specialist, who managed everything for me, Terry Smallwood, and we really could have our lists and review everybody's work plans, and keep monthly budget accounts of all this stuff, because there's a lot of things going on. And if you have 25, 30 projects, you got balls rolling all over the place, and you just got to keep on track of what's moving, what could end up being overspent.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:10:28 And how much of those methods that you use to keep track of things, was Center-wide or was that all something that you had come up with on your own?
- Winnie Frost: 01:10:41 No, we were applying what was already created.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:10:43 Okay.
- Winnie Frost: 01:10:44 Actually, what was created by that David guy, don't remember his last name. He was in Exhibits.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:10:49 David Javier?

Winnie Frost: 01:10:50 Very good. Yes. You see, you're still employed. You have a fresher mind than I do. Yes. He created that whole work plan thing, which I don't even know. Do you still use it?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:11:03 I don't know, in development--

Winnie Frost: 01:11:05 Oh, you're in Publications, yeah.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:11:05 They're not used in Publications.

Winnie Frost: 01:11:08 In the place where they have lots of money, and not the place where the parks are counting recounting, what you think--We had to send him project report updates every month. The status of the funding and everything.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:11:21 Send the reports to whom?

Winnie Frost: 01:11:22 To the parks.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:11:23 Okay.

Winnie Frost: 01:11:24 And to the region. So because most of the money that we were using for media development, media projects, was from the maintenance department. They would give a portion to Interpretation, so they wanted to know too, what's happening with this money. We also got money from the associations, donations from the book sales and everything, the bookshops, to be used towards projects.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:12:03 So had--

Winnie Frost: 01:12:04 So we had to identify each source of funding and make sure those groups had copies of our monthly budget reports.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:12:13 Had you had to deal with maybe, perhaps at Turkey Run, that kind of financial management of a group or an organization? Or--

Winnie Frost: 01:12:21 Yes, I had my own budget managing the people and their-- but they were all 40 hour a week people working at one park. So--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:12:31 So this is much more complex than what you had dealt with.

- Winnie Frost: 01:12:34 This was way more complex because each employee was using a certain number of hours which costs money from a particular account number and we tried to ask them, "Estimate how many hours you're going to need in order to complete this task." Now, that's a really hard thing to do. And so, some people would way overestimate and we'd have to have a little discussion about that. Some people I was concerned. "Do you think you got enough? How many trips do you have to take?" Are you sure you just need that one trip or--?" So it was a lot of balls--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:13:10 --in the air.
- Winnie Frost: 01:13:12 --in the air, for sure. For sure. I think I spent a lot of time working with my employees to get them to really keep track of their hours and make sure they record their hours for the payroll. So that the money was coming out of the correct accounts and not out of overhead.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:13:35 Yeah, yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:13:36 I forgot about that word, a very important word because we were always encouraging us to reduce the amount of hours our employees are using against our Center.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:13:47 Harpers Ferry Center overhead.
- Winnie Frost: 01:13:48 Overhead. Encourage them to use the park accounts and stay on these park projects. We were no longer--these groups were not base funded; they were mostly project funded and some time was given to the overhead because we had administrative things, we have to do that can't be charged in the parks or nickel and diming for every little thing. Filling out your time sheet? Come on. So it was quite cumbersome, I felt, and complicated but there was never something that would make the system a little easier. So the project specialist spent a lot of time recalculating money, a lot of time, and I spent every two weeks really reviewing everybody's time sheets because as you know, they have to be approved before they can get certified for pay. Not that anybody's not going to get paid, but I don't think--I don't know.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:14:53 Well, I guess one it would all have to come out and be correct at some point.

Winnie Frost: 01:14:57 Yeah. Yeah.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:14:58 You spent time making sure--

Winnie Frost: 01:14:58 Right. Right.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:15:01 So, to shift gears a little bit--

Winnie Frost: 01:15:02 Sure.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:15:02 --I'd like to hear more about your work directly with the parks. So is there a project that you worked on that stands out, a really excellent example or something you really enjoyed? Something that you felt particularly successful at.

Winnie Frost: 01:15:21 Well, I think it's yours as well as one of our favorite parks and that would be Glacier. I remember Betsy telling me all about Glacier before I went out there, and Glacier had a visitor center that they needed done at St. Mary's.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:15:39 So this is in your project manager role?

Winnie Frost: 01:15:43 Mm-hmm (affirmative). So, I went out there with the team and after having had discussions with the chief of interpretation, Dave who worked here, Dave--Dave, he worked here at Mather for a while.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:15:59 I thought it was Matt Graves. Matt Graves? Dave Doland?

Winnie Frost: 01:16:04 Yeah. Dave Doland.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:16:05 Oh, okay.

Winnie Frost: 01:16:05 Yeah, Dave Doland moved out to Glacier and he was my original contact on this project. So, I go out there and meet with the superintendent. This started when I was at the project running the pilot team, and then it moved into when--because within a year I became a project specialist so--but Glacier moved from one first position to the next position I had. And the reason that was because it was a complicated project. We had to deal with three American Indian tribes that didn't see eye to eye, but we wanted to be able to tell all their stories. It got to be so complicated that it had a year hiatus while we brought in Washington tribal--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:17:08 --liaison.

- Winnie Frost: 01:17:09 --liaison person. We had to go out there a number of times and meet with all the tribes and get some level of collaboration. So this made what I thought a two-year project into probably a four-year project, and it went from one chief of interpretation to another chief of interpretation, from one superintendent to another superintendent. And it was pretty complicated, but in the end, it was probably one of my most memorable projects because I learned so much about being around and working with different tribal groups and the sensitivity connected to that, and the respect. And how to listen to them without really bugging them or anything. I don't know how to--you had to be very, very respectful.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:18:14 So you just learned by doing, by going to these meetings--
- Winnie Frost: 01:18:16 Yes. Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:18:18 You didn't necessarily get--
- Winnie Frost: 01:18:20 No, no, I didn't have any--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:18:21 --any training.
- Winnie Frost: 01:18:22 --any training. I went out there, I thought, "Oh, good. I'm sure all these tribes are going to be excited," but one tribe was raping and pillaging the other tribe, and I'm just saying, "Oh, fine, they're all going to get along," "Well, no." And of course the Blackfeet, which was the predominant tribe of Glacier, was planning on taking the park back in 1999. No, no, 2009, I think it was 2009, I think. So they're saying, "Why are you doing all this? Because we're taking back our land." It got really complicated, but it ended up being just the most wonderful project, and I've had many people that have gone out there that I know, because I'll say, "Hey, stop at this--" And they can say, "Oh, it's just so great. The design was lovely." It was done by edX.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:19:14 Okay. Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:19:17 Not David, but the other gentleman, I can't remember his name.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:19:20 Yeah, one of the principles of edX.

- Winnie Frost: 01:19:23 One of the principles, there were two principles of edX, which was one of our design contractors.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:19:29 Are they located in the Pacific West?
- Winnie Frost: 01:19:30 They are, they're located in Seattle. Yes, and Paula was the planner that worked with them and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:19:40 Paula Beale.
- Winnie Frost: 01:19:40 Then Kaitlin got involved in it too. So they were basically our exhibit planning design crew. And then I got very heavily involved because the lead had a baby. So, there was no one to really replace her because Kaitlin left. So I ended up taking the lead to get it through production, and I learned a lot there too. So it was a marvelous experience, and the other marvelous one was Sitka, Alaska and--oh no, you weren't there, but you did that lovely slideshow on me and that's what you showed at the beginning. Ringing the bells at the steeple of the Russian church. Yeah. Yeah. That was a great experience because we worked with the Tlinkit Indians.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:20:31 That was a wayside project? Or an exhibit?
- Winnie Frost: 01:20:34 This one was a wayside project with Chad Beale and Carol Petravage, who was the writer so--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:20:42 And you were the Pacific West Alaska team.
- Winnie Frost: 01:20:43 That's right, yes. And that was really a wonderful experience. We spent a lot of time with the members of the Tlinkit Nation, who were, unlike at Glacier, were very actively involved and because there was only one tribe and they were so glad we're going to tell all their stories. And so many of them came out and they walked the trails with us and told us great stories. I'm sure Chad and Carol would agree on this. It was just really a great experience and well, it was fun too. Unlike you and I, we stayed in decent park housing.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:21:26 We had a rough experience in park housing in Sequoia and Kings Canyon. So yeah, I'm glad you had a good experience.

Winnie Frost: 01:21:31 We had a very good experience there. It was a very nice house and it was just a really great experience, a nice project, and included a number of features for people that had sight impairments or sight disabilities that Chad worked on and I thought that was a very cool element.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:00 And was that being pushed by the park? Or was that a Harpers Ferry Center initiative too?

Winnie Frost: 01:22:05 That's a good question.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:06 Work toward accessibility as aggressively as you could--

Winnie Frost: 01:22:10 You know what? I think you're absolutely right. There was the Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center effort to get more accessible for everybody in our different medias, and we hadn't done much of anything with waysides, really, to invite the sight impaired to enjoy the exhibits. So I think, yeah, we really--and Chad did a great job working on that with Carol. So that was a good experience. I remember one experience with you, which was hilarious, was when we were going to do some outhouses at the Chincoteague.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:52 Right.

Winnie Frost: 01:22:53 You remember that?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:54 Yeah. Assateague.

Winnie Frost: 01:22:55 Was it Assateague?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:55 Assateague.

Winnie Frost: 01:22:56 Oh, was it Assateague.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:22:57 The portable bathrooms.

Winnie Frost: 01:23:00 Yeah, the portable bathrooms, and they were supposed to be--were they solar powered or something?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:06 Yes. Well, they had--the showers were solar powered.

Winnie Frost: 01:23:09 Oh, is that what it was?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:09 That's because there had been hurricanes, so they were going to take out the infrastructure and make everything

portable, so should a hurricane come, they could put things on trailers and truck them inland, store them, bring them back out after the storm.

- Winnie Frost: 01:23:27 Yeah. That was--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:29 That was unique.
- Winnie Frost: 01:23:30 It was so unique. "Okay, we're going to do waysides about outhouses."
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:34 Bathrooms and showers. Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:23:38 Okay. We stayed in that great little hotel that they did--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:41 Berlin, Maryland.
- Winnie Frost: 01:23:41 --did that movie with Julia Roberts.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:45 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:23:46 The Runaway Bride. The Runaway Bride, we stayed there. Remember they had some pictures of Richard Gere and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:23:55 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:23:55 We don't need to go into that. Yeah, that was fun. And you were so fantastic with the climate change project. My goodness. Oh, wow.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:03 That was a big one. Well, that was your sort of your closing project--
- Winnie Frost: 01:24:07 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:07 You carried that on into rehired annuitant status.
- Winnie Frost: 01:24:10 That's right. That's right. I did. So, finally it was over. Well, nothing is ever over in reality, but basically--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:19 You turned the project over, the climate change response program office now owns all that.
- Winnie Frost: 01:24:24 They own it after December of 2015--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:28 --is when you retired.

Winnie Frost: 01:24:29 --is when I retired, and that was pretty much the end of it and I think Perez, is that--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:30 Larry Perez.

Winnie Frost: 01:24:38 Larry Perez, are they still trying to do some of these--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:41 Well, I don't know that they've done more, I haven't heard about additional waysides.

Winnie Frost: 01:24:47 Well, you were just the backbone of that entire project, Betsy.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:50 That's a big one.

Winnie Frost: 01:24:51 It really was, and we covered a lot of places. How many parks was it?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:24:58 12 different parks, but many more different sites because some parks, like Everglades had multiple sites.

Winnie Frost: 01:25:04 Yes. Right, right. Yeah. So that was of sea level rise and phonology. Right?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:12 Correct, those were the two themes. Yeah, there were to be more themes, but--

Winnie Frost: 01:25:16 Yeah, there were supposed to be what? Like five or something?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:19 Right, initially, yeah.

Winnie Frost: 01:25:20 So we got through the first two themes and then basically it's dead on transfer.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:27 Yeah. I've been running and live, but yeah, I think the scale of that was pretty overwhelming, and I--

Winnie Frost: 01:25:33 It was overwhelming. It really was.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:36 It was a big effort. A lot of people, I think we had 70 something people on that project.

Winnie Frost: 01:25:40 That's right.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:40 So, for you to project manage that--

Winnie Frost: 01:25:42 And all these people and scientists and just all over the place.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:47 Right.

Winnie Frost: 01:25:48 But it was such a worthwhile thing to do. And then of course, Betsy and I had our great experience in Sequoia Kings Canyon--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:25:57 It was part of that project.

Winnie Frost: 01:25:58 --staying in the park housing, they were very generous giving us park housing, but we barely lasted there one night because it was rodent infested. It was just--you didn't feel like even taking your coat off or anything. So--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:13 And we arrived late at night.

Winnie Frost: 01:26:14 We arrived--that's right.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:16 With bed sheets from one of the project people there in the park, and--

Winnie Frost: 01:26:22 Yeah, we had to go to her house and pick up bed sheets. Oh.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:26 Needed a flashlight to find the front door and get it unlocked.

Winnie Frost: 01:26:29 I know. So this is what you get in the Park Service. All kinds of levels of experiences--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:34 But if you can survive a week with a bunch of men in the Grand Canyon without a tent.

Winnie Frost: 01:26:39 Without a tent.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:41 Hey--

Winnie Frost: 01:26:41 The day I finally said I got to take a bath, they said, "Okay, well, you go down there, we won't--" I said, "I need to get cleaned up," and they all agreed they wouldn't. And then of course, as soon as I get to this place where I think, "Oh, nobody's around," here come boy scouts--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:26:58 Oh, no.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:00 --coming up the trail. I'm like, "I don't even believe these boy scouts." But anyway, back to Sequoia Kings Canyon. I thought that was a joy. I thought that was an enjoyable project. I'm trying to--we did two different things there, didn't we? We did two sites.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:19 Yes.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:21 One in Sequoia and one in the--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:23 Well, there were two in Sequoia Kings Canyon.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:26 Yeah. Yeah. One was at the Grove, right?

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:28 Right, one was in a meadow, and the other was at-

Winnie Frost: 01:27:30 That's right, the meadow, I forgot about that.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:32 The Manzanita. We have the one around the Manzanita.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:35 Yeah, that's right. Right at that visitor center.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:38 Yeah. Yeah.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:39 I don't know. Is that the eastern end? I don't--southern end or something.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:44 Yeah. We came up from the south.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:45 Was it from the south? And then I remembered my biggest decision I ever made was when I said the next morning, the first night we were there, and it was so horrible. I said--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:27:56 We're leaving.

Winnie Frost: 01:27:56 "Girls, ladies, we are leaving this place and I'm making an executive decision. If it costs more, it costs more. We are paying for rooms."

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:05 And I so appreciated that.

Winnie Frost: 01:28:08 Because we were with the--

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:10 Angie Richmond.

- Winnie Frost: 01:28:10 Yes. And Angie Richmond was the overall manager of this climate change initiative, out of Fort Collins, correct?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:21 Before Larry Perez took over.
- Winnie Frost: 01:28:23 Before Larry Perez, and she was the one giving us the money, but I just thought "Hey, we're not going to be functional in this rodent infested place here. I'm shocked they even let us stay there." So I just made it--and she was happy too.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:42 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:28:43 Okay. We had increased our budget or a few dollars because we had to stay in something--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:48 But she could see firsthand why your budget goes up a little bit.
- Winnie Frost: 01:28:50 Yeah, that was the silver lining, wasn't it?
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:54 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:28:54 Yeah. Anyway, so--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:28:55 So I do have to ask you, professional women sometimes face challenges different than men. So where along your career path, points at which you recognized either challenges that were unique to you being a woman, or limitations that arose because of your gender? Or did you just bust through all of those?
- Winnie Frost: 01:29:20 Well, actually the only time that I was aware of a potential problem--well, I had two times, one I'm not going to talk about. I'll claim the Fifth on that one. The other one was the manager of the Wayside Department, not Ray Price, but Phil Myerly.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:29:43 Myerly.
- Winnie Frost: 01:29:43 Yes. There was an IP trip to Alaska, to Wrangell St. Elias, and--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:29:53 Interpretive planning.

- Winnie Frost: 01:29:54 Interpretive planning trip, this is a group of people from different disciplines, media disciplines, they all get together, and they go to the park and there they meet the park staff as well as the regional person, and they go through the park and they come back with a report that recommends different kinds of media and themes. That's the basic gist of an interpretive plan. Well, anyway, I was asked to go by the region and my boss said "No", and I said, "Well, they're paying for it, why are you saying no?" And he said, "Well, they're going to be all guys, so I'm not going to let you go." I said, "Well, I'm going down to employee relations then." Because I thought that was absurd, that just because they're guys--hey, I have my own specialty. Why?
- Winnie Frost: 01:30:56 So, it was a little bit of a tough moment there, and I waited a day and I went back to him and said, "I really think that this is not appropriate." So he finally backed down. He and my boss were totally against me going, you know who that is. So I did go, and I was really mad about it, especially with the answer that was because I'm a woman. And yes, I did go with all guys and yes, we all had to stay in compromising places, I guess you could call it, a couple of places just had two rooms. So all the men were very kind. They stayed in one room and let me have the other one. That was very nice of them. And we had to stay at this back-country place near MacArthur, which is in Wrangell St. Elias. This is all in Wrangell. This was out in the woods and it was basically one big, huge room with bunk beds.
- Winnie Frost: 01:32:04 And the guys were very nice. They said, "Where would you like to be? Or we'll move one of these for you." And that's what they did, and I always had my privacy, and I thought nothing of it except there was a lot of snoring. That was the only problem, I don't care that I'm a woman, I just don't like the snoring.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:32:25 You needed ear plugs.
- Winnie Frost: 01:32:27 I needed ear plugs. I wasn't going to be able to find them out there because we were flown into this location and they only had an outhouse. So I was very nervous about bears up there, and when I went out to use their outhouse and I was kind of not very comfortable about it, I opened the door and there was so much stuff in there that it was above the toilet seat. So I said, "Well I guess I'm going to be something for

a bear because I can't walk in this place." So yes, again, the Park Service and its generosity opens up all kinds of experiences for us, doesn't it? And then I always knew who the guys were at Harpers Ferry that really snored. Maybe we better take out all that stuff!

- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:33:18 Well, you don't have to name names. We just know some of them snore. So is there anything that we haven't covered that you want to touch on, that we might've overlooked? That's a highlight or unique to your experience?
- Winnie Frost: 01:33:33 Well, I'm even amazed as our friend from the last interview said, "I can't believe I'm remembering all this stuff." I'm kind of amazed that I'm remembering it too, because it seems like something in the distant past. But I do want to say though, that the Park Service has been very generous to me and I had a great opportunity, and I learned about the beauty of our parks, and how important they are for our overall history, and what people before us did when they came here, and how grateful we should be and how fantastic it is that brilliant minds came up with the idea of, "We got to save these lands." So--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:34:16 Well--
- Winnie Frost: 01:34:16 --you can't get better than that. It sounds so mushy, but--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:34:19 No, I think that's not unusual in the Park Service that this is a job people can be passionate about, and that you can weave together your initial passion, which was history--
- Winnie Frost: 01:34:31 Yes.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:34:31 --what you were exposed to and learned about on the natural history side and in the end of your career working on both, all the way through.
- Winnie Frost: 01:34:39 That's--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:34:40 So it all came together.
- Winnie Frost: 01:34:41 It did, in some ways didn't it? I hadn't thought about that, even with my personnel management training too, coming in along the way. Yeah, I really am thankful for all the different kinds of experiences. My parents would always go, "What are you doing now? How do you know what

you're doing?" Say, "I don't know, but I'm learning." I really felt like it was getting a total education.

- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:03 All the way through.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:04 All the way through, what you learned was way better than sitting in classrooms and just one way communication.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:13 Yeah.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:13 So--
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:14 You figured it out.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:14 Yeah. So I recommend the Park Service to anybody and take whatever experience it is and go for it, and you know what? The more you go for it, the more opportunities that seem to happen.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:25 Open up.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:25 Yeah, I think so.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:27 That's great advice.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:28 I really think it's--although I was very nervous about so many different things because I didn't know how to start, don't be afraid to ask people. They were always willing to give their suggestions, and opinions.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:44 And you tapped a lot of important and good people.
- Winnie Frost: 01:35:46 I felt like I met some really wonderful people along the way. I don't even know who to say. I really--I don't know. I felt like I met really good people, very talented people, including yourself, my goodness.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:35:59 And we'll be talking to two others this afternoon.
- Winnie Frost: 01:36:02 Oh, those people. You don't know about that.
- Betsy Ehrlich: 01:36:07 Well, thank you Winnie.
- Winnie Frost: 01:36:08 Oh, thank you Betsy, I'm glad we could talk this morning. I'm sorry I did all the talking.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:36:12 No, that was the point.

Winnie Frost: 01:36:14 Oh, okay. Poor Betsy has to do this all the time. My stars.

Betsy Ehrlich: 01:36:17 All right.

END OF RECORDING