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**Diane Dayson**  
**January 28, 2002**

Interview conducted by Mark Schoepfle  
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**September 11, 2001**  
**Oral History Documentation Project**  
**Northeast Region, National Park Service**

INTERVIEWEE: Diane Dayson  
Superintendent  
Statue of Liberty National Monument  
(Interview No. 21)

INTERVIEWED BY: Mark Schoepfle, Ph.D.  
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Archaeology and Ethnography Program  
Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEW DATE: January 28, 2002

PLACE: Ellis Island  
Statue of Liberty National Monument

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Chuck Smythe, Ph.D.  
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## START OF TAPE

Mark Schoepfle: And today is the 28th of January, an interview with Superintendent Diane Dayson.

Mark Schoepfle: Here's my first question, and it's a very open-ended question. But essentially from the moment you were aware of what had happened, were aware of the event, what happened, what did you do?

Diane Dayson: Okay. Well, once I knew — once I entered the park and realized what was going on, then I had no time to be horrified or upset. I immediately had to go into a role that showed true leadership and management style. That was a challenge that was brought upon me. And my law enforcement background also from my past with the National Park Service came into being immediately.

Diane Dayson: And once in the park my biggest concern was for the employees because the sites were not open yet to the public but getting the employees safely off the island so that they could get home to their families. And for me that was key. And that was the biggest challenge we had because we do everything by boat, and so we couldn't go into Lower Manhattan.

Diane Dayson: Unfortunately, prior to me getting there one boat had already — one staff boat had already gone into Lower Manhattan and the buildings had fallen by this time. And so unfortunately that set of staff, they had the experience of getting the dust and the ash and being swooped onto the Staten Island Ferry and taken to areas that they weren't familiar with trying to get home. And once I arrived, we had another group of employees who were very upset, who were very concerned about relatives over in Lower Manhattan and wanted to get home as quickly as possible to feel the safety and comfort of their homes.

Diane Dayson: And so, I immediately began to talk with the boat captains to determine where in New York City could we drop people off so that they could feel safe and knowing that they would be in a position to get transportation home. So, we were successful in doing that. We were able to take people to Upper Manhattan and to other boroughs in New York City so that they could get home safely.

Diane Dayson: Those of us who were remaining on the island, we weren't quite sure what was going to happen next. And the park police received the call that we were going to be a triage center and that they were bringing over people immediately. So, what I did at that point in time is I identified who we had on staff who were first response, first responders, EMTs.

- Diane Dayson: We immediately were in contact with the New Jersey EMS team based out of Jersey City and the local hospital in New Jersey, and we began to set up a triage center.
- Diane Dayson: We got all the necessary first-aid equipment. I had staff strategically located and prepared and ready to go once that first boat arrived on the island. We had a majority of what we call the walking wounded. Most people were not badly injured, disoriented, a lot of dust. Some had the fuel from the plane on them and had to be hosed down. Some came who needed T-shirts and water, and so we prepared lunches for them. And we took names and addresses so that we could contact their next of kin to let them know that their family was safe and that they were here at Ellis Island and that they would be escorted to the hospital for check-ups and then they would be released to go home.
- Diane Dayson: So that was the immediate sense of urgency for me on that day was just making sure the staff, you know, got off the island safely and to take care of the wounded that arrived here at Ellis Island.
- Mark Schoepfle: Looking back on these for a couple of minutes. First of all, you were mentioning that the site was not yet open. I mean was this —
- Diane Dayson: That's correct. Right. The site had not opened for the public as of yet. The staff was there doing what we call the preopening, getting ready for the first boat to arrive. Fortunately, the first boat wasn't going to be leaving Battery Park until 9:30. So the incident occurred at 8:45, between 8:45 and 9 o'clock. And that's usually the time that our staff is here getting ready, changing into uniform, opening the sites, checking to make sure they have the video and the audio machines are working correctly, and just waiting for that first boat of passengers to visit both the statue and Ellis.
- Mark Schoepfle: Okay. When you're mentioning that getting some of the video and audio machines, just as a clarification, what does that involve? Why is — what is that?
- Diane Dayson: Just to turn it on and get — to check it to make sure it's working for our tours.
- Mark Schoepfle: For the tours.
- Diane Dayson: For the tours, yes, and for interpretive talks. We do a — we have a video. We have three theaters here and we show videos in all three theaters. And the audio are the headphones for people who do the interpretive. They walk around with the headphones, and the headphones tell them the history of the site and what it means, and it's about a two-hour headset program.

- Mark Schoepfle: I see.
- Diane Dayson: So, it's just a basic setup in getting ready for the visitor for the day. And it's a routine, a standard routine that we go through on a daily basis.
- Mark Schoepfle: You were mentioning also that the — that one group had been — part of the problem was with the staff and part of it was serving as the public. Am I correct on that?
- Diane Dayson: Uh-huh. Right. The three — the two problems were that prior to me getting here there was — staff had made a decision to send staff — to immediately begin to send staff home, not realizing the severity of what had taken place over in Lower Manhattan. So as a result, that boat had already gone to Lower Manhattan prior to — prior to me getting to work because I was having difficulty getting into the park. Because by the time I got towards Liberty State Park, which is driving through, by the time I got through the New Jersey area they weren't giving us access into Liberty State Park. And that's how I access getting here to Ellis Island. So as a result, I had spent a good 30, 40 minutes before I could find a police officer and show my ID to get into the Ellis Island area.
- Mark Schoepfle: I was going to say, how did you manage to get in? That was not an easy matter in and of itself.
- Diane Dayson: No. So, it was very difficult to get in and so by the time I arrived in the park the first boat had already gone over, the second plane had hit, and the buildings were just about to fall down. A good portion. So as that first boat was going into New York, the first building — the first tower fell. And so that boat of staff were exposed, unfortunately, and had the unfortunate opportunity to experience the hysteria that was going on in Lower Manhattan.
- Mark Schoepfle: What did you see? I mean, let's consider some of these staff, these first — this first load of — this first boatload of staff.
- Diane Dayson: Uh-huh.
- Mark Schoepfle: You said some of them were covered with dust, some of them covered with fuel, and —
- Diane Dayson: Because they were — no. No, not the staff. Those were the folks coming here for the triage center —
- Mark Schoepfle: I'm sorry.

- Diane Dayson: Right, from Lower Manhattan. They were swooped onto Coast Guard cutters, and they were brought here to the island for treatment. And then they were taken over to Liberty State Park to await transport headed to local hospitals in the Jersey City area.
- Mark Schoepfle: I see. But this first group of — this first staff were basically exposed. What happened to them ultimately?
- Diane Dayson: Right. They — some of them got swooped up and taken to Staten Island. They were placed on Staten Island Ferries and sent to Staten Island. Even though they lived maybe in midtown or Upstate New York or Upper Manhattan or Lower Manhattan, they were put on the Staten Island Ferry and sent to Staten Island because they — at that point, Lower Manhattan, the key was just to get people out of the area as quickly as possible.
- Diane Dayson: The subway systems were shut down in Lower Manhattan, so they weren't going to be able to get access of the subway system at that point anyway. So, they were just scooped up by — and I mean — when I mean scooped up, they were taken by — police were just directing people onto the ferry. There was no discussion. Everybody's going. That's it, whether you wanted to go or not. So, I think some staff were a little concerned about that.
- Diane Dayson: But the good thing is that for some of those folks, those who did go into Staten Island, they were able to go to our sister park at Gateway National Recreation Area at Fort Wadsworth. We have staff that live there, and they were able to go to their homes and get situated and figure out how they were going to get home, you know, during this time frame. So that seemed to work. So, it wasn't — even though it was devastating, there were opportunities for them to get the assistance they needed in order to get home.
- Mark Schoepfle: They got it from friends of theirs and neighbors who were there and that kind of thing?
- Diane Dayson: Uh-huh. Right.
- Mark Schoepfle: Great. The reason I am wondering about this is that this looked like one heck of a headache. And the ramifications and details of this would be really quite staggering. Then there was another group you mentioned.
- Diane Dayson: Right. And then we had another group of staff that were still here on the island who were very upset. Some of them wanted to stay and they wanted to help once they heard that people were coming from the World Trade Center. Some people were still trying to figure out how they'd get home and they wanted to get home to their loved ones.

- Diane Dayson: Those people who did not have any — even though they wanted to help, those people who did not have first-responder experience or EMT experience, they were sent home. Because I felt that at that time I needed as little as possible in terms of staff on the islands, and we weren't quite sure if we were going to be the next target, the Statue of Liberty. So, you know, once I — once we were able to get as many staff off as possible, then I realized — then it dawned on me that, uh-oh, oh yeah, the Statue of Liberty, you know. I hadn't even thought that far at that particular point.
- Diane Dayson: My concern, like I said, priority was staff, getting them to safety, and then setting up the triage center and then realizing, okay, the Statue of Liberty could be the target. And I think that — well, I know because I recognized the Statue of Liberty could be the next target, my goal was to have as many people off the island as possible. Keep it minimal. And those people who stayed, you know, they were there to help to support those folks. And we didn't know at that time how many people would be coming over helping to assist the city with setting up a triage center here at the site.
- Mark Schoepfle: And basically, once you got everybody off the island, those who stayed behind were like the EMTs and —
- Diane Dayson: We had some EMT support, first responders. We had people who lived in New Jersey so they couldn't get off the island because all the bridges were closed, and all the roads were closed. So those folks became the ones who took — who made the sandwiches, who handed out water, who took the names and addresses and telephone numbers to call the next of kin, made people feel comfortable. We helped make baby diapers out of T-shirts. We gave T-shirts to people. We made makeshift bottles of — baby bottles for water for babies. We had people with no shoes. We had people who just wanted to make sure that we had contacted their next of kin.
- Diane Dayson: So, it was basically taking care of — those people who did not have EMT or first responder, they were taking care of some of the other basic needs. People needed to go to the bathroom, so where was the bathroom. Then we had a long line for bathrooms. And trying to work out all of those details to help people feel comfortable and getting them out of the sun, you know, because it was a sunny day that day and a warm day. And making them feel comfortable until the necessary Jersey officials were able to get them to the nearest hospitals in Jersey City. So those folks were responsible for comfort levels.

- Diane Dayson: So, we had decided — we, those of us who remained, divvied up the responsibilities in terms of who was going to do what, because eventually Jersey City EMT came over to assist us with the triage center. So, we had some relief there and much more professionalism relative to serving those people that were in dire need of medical attention.
- Diane Dayson: And so, as a result of them coming over that also helped us out as well, and it gave us more of a focus. So, we knew we had a medical team, so to speak, that included our staff plus Jersey City folks who were EMT and first responders. Then we had another team who their focus was to make sure people were comfortable and arrest their fears. And then there was another group who took care of the basic needs: food, water, bathroom, making diapers, making — trying to make baby bottles and providing T-shirts, and just making people feel comfortable and making sandwiches and those kinds of things.
- Diane Dayson: And during all of this time we did have — we had very little power, so the telephones weren't working as well. And we — it was very difficult to call out, to call in. The computers weren't working. The televisions weren't working. And so, communication definitely was at a standstill. The good thing was that we had the U.S. Port Police and they had radios and they could access into the New York Police Department. And so that's how we were able to find out exactly what was going on in New York City.
- Mark Schoepfle: A couple of questions that I have from this — from what you're saying. The first question is what did this triage involve?
- Diane Dayson: The triage was a very simple setup with stretchers for those who were badly injured. And we knew who was badly injured before the boat even disembarked from New York City because they would radio over to let staff know that we've got a serious burn victim, you know, one or two. And then the Jersey City EMS would take care of those folks. So, you had gurneys and stretchers that were ready to take those folks on.
- Diane Dayson: Then the other folks who got off, we had chairs waiting for them to sit down, to get out of the sun. We had to hose them down. They all — when I say hose them down, just sprayed them down with water was recommended. They had to be wetted down. The dust and the soot had to be removed from them. So, we had to wet them down. And we took their names and telephone numbers.
- Diane Dayson: But really the setup for first aid was very, very simple. We had gauze and bandages and defibrillators for those people who may, you know, start to have a heart attack, but mostly water, lots of water, and hoses available to hose people down once they got off the boat.



- Diane Dayson: And we did that with each person who got off individually was hosed down and then sent to the volunteer to get their name and address so they can contact. And then they were sat in a holding area. They sat in a holding area, so — out of the sun and given something to eat. We made up little box lunches, so that people could have something to eat while they were waiting. Things that we hadn't anticipated doing, we ended up having to do.
- Diane Dayson: So, the staff is to be commended, I say, just for those of us who were left behind to remain here. I think, you know, we did a hell of a job in terms of putting our emotions aside and our fear and our anguish to deal with the moment at hand. And that was to serve the victims that were brought over from the World Trade.
- Mark Schoepfle: What kind of information were you getting? I know that in several other places that I've been talking this drove several — a couple of superintendents up the wall because they had trouble getting information but felt that it was really necessary for them to have it both for their own workers and also for the public which was around their parks. How did you feel about it?
- Diane Dayson: At that point in time, we were getting very — you know, very little information. We could only make assumptions. And I didn't find it frustrating because we knew we were under attack. So, for me it was like, okay, so you know the country is under attack. There is nothing I can do about that. I'm probably not going to get the information that I need. Everything's down. How am I going to focus in on what I can handle and worry about the rest of it later? And so that's how I got through it.
- Diane Dayson: And as a result of that, the park police would just keep me apprised of what they knew so that we could best serve the staff. And with our standard plan, you know, it's the responsibility of the division chiefs to keep the staffs updated as to whether I come to work, not come to work, what's the status, how we — you know, what are we going to be doing over the next few weeks as we sort through all of this.
- Mark Schoepfle: Uh-huh. How many people were involved in the — just back on one other question, how many people were involved in this triage? I mean, how many people did you — how many staff were involved and how many people did you have to serve, do you estimate?
- Diane Dayson: Yes. We served about 350 people. Out of the 350, maybe about 20 were badly burned. And in terms of my immediate staff that day who did the EMS and in addition to the EMS, first responder, just the volunteer in general, I'd say there were probably about 20 of us in total.

Mark Schoepfle: Wow.

Diane Dayson: Yeah.

Mark Schoepfle: Where were you all of this time? Were you at some command center? Were you at your office? How did you manage to keep your eye on what was going on?

Diane Dayson: Yeah. I spent most of my time right out there in the heart of everything that was going on. I felt it was necessary for me to be out there with the staff, providing them with the necessary support that they needed to move ourselves forward and to feel comfortable about where we were headed relative to moving through the process. So, I spent a lot of time right out here, right out front of the building here at Ellis Island just staying involved to make sure that the staff was okay. People were taking time out for themselves as well, because to me that was just as important as serving others because we had all been through a lot. So, making sure they had water, making sure that they were okay with what they were doing and that they weren't going into any traumatic shock. And so just moving in that vein but staying out there in the pulse of it.

Diane Dayson: And periodically, I would come in just to see if the phones were working. That was kind of — I think that was the most distressing thing for me, the fact that, you know, to me that was the lifeline to everything. Because then I — you know, as we were doing the triage center, I kept thinking about I need to call the regional office, let the regional director know what's going on. And there was no access, you know. And your cell phones weren't working, and the phones here weren't working. It just took a lot, so it was frustrating.

Diane Dayson: And then, on my own personal vein, my kids couldn't get through and they were upset. And my husband couldn't get through and — you know, just to make sure that I was okay. So, having that lack of communication, it made me feel at times that I was out of control because you don't know what's going on in the world out there, and you have no access to support. It's all up to you to make things happen.

Diane Dayson: So, I felt like I was carrying that burden because this is an international icon, and here we are trying to service people and I'm trying to take care of staff at the same time. Immediately after I recognized that we needed to get — to bring in peer support counselling for the staff, and what did that all mean to staff and the importance of immediately instituting that so that the staff had people to talk to and to deal with their fears as they began to come back to work after 9-11.

- Mark Schoepfle: Well, that was another question I was going to bring on. When did the — before I ask what happened in the next days afterwards, how did this first day come to an end?
- Diane Dayson: Well, actually, they decided that they wanted to — as the day was winding down, we were able to get a good portion of the staff home that lived in New Jersey. And there were a handful of us left here, the deputy superintendent, the assistant superintendent, and the lieutenant from the park police, and a handful of park police were here. The challenge was that we were going to be a morgue. They decided that, you know, late in the evening. It's like 4 or 5, and we're starting to wind down. The last of the injured or victims are being taken away. We get a call that says, oh, by the way, we may need you to be a morgue. So, we had to stay back and try to set up like mobile houses in the back on the fuel dock here at Ellis Island for a morgue. Fortunately for us, they were never used. They decided that they didn't need us, but we were set up for that.
- Diane Dayson: And then I guess about 6:30, we finally — everything kind of settled down, and there really wasn't too much for us to do. We still couldn't communicate that effectively with anyone. It was just a matter of going, trying to get home now, and trying to deal with the fact that we all had experienced this tragedy of 9-11. So, we — about 6:30, we got in our cars and everyone kind of headed for home and managed to get home at a decent hour so that we could get home.
- Diane Dayson: And so over the next couple of days, of course, the site was closed and the staff was home and we were able to talk with the regional office and have conference calls and talk about what the issues were and what the challenges and concerns were. And we — you know, then after that there were a series of meetings that were held with the regional director at Fort Wadsworth. She came to Fort Wadsworth and had an opportunity to sit down and meet with us and the other parks, and the national parks in New York harbor, which include Gateway and Manhattan sites. To talk about what it meant to be in this experience and what was our strategy going to be for moving ourselves forward now, because we had to get ourselves open and functioning. So, a few weeks — so that — and that took a few weeks for all of that to happen.
- Diane Dayson: In the interim, staff was back to work, but the site was not open, neither site, Ellis Island nor the statue. So, we had staff who came back. They had an opportunity to have peer support counselling during this time period. And we were able to get a lot of resource projects done because we were closed. Normally, we can't get these projects done because the site is — both sites are open and we're open 364 days a year with one day being closed, just Christmas.

- Diane Dayson: So, in a way, the staff felt that it was a great omen because they got — they were able to do lots of things that they couldn't do, like paint the bathrooms, and you know, put in new stalls, and you know, really take care of the historic floors here. And do some of the work that was necessary inside the monument, and you know — it really — for them, it kept them busy. And we had enough projects to keep them busy during the months that we were closed.
- Mark Schoepfle: Uh-huh. I was about to ask, what were resource projects? Were these things like long overdue repairs and maintenance?
- Diane Dayson: Yes. These were — yeah. There was long overdue maintenance projects. They were projects actually that we were waiting at — waiting for some downtime, the slower periods of the month to get done because you have to work between the visitors and then it becomes overtime. And this way, now these projects were done without the overtime and people were able to do the necessary kinds of things that they did during this timeframe.
- Diane Dayson: The museum also, they had lots of backlog cataloguing that needed to get done. So, between the maintenance backlog and those projects and the museum backlog, they made some good strides and they were happy to fulfil some of the goals that they needed to. And the sites never looked better. I mean, they look — they're great. They look wonderful. I think they did a real good job. And it was good therapy for them to come and actually play an active role at the site as opposed to staying home. So, it gave them an opportunity to come back and to do something while we were trying to figure out how we were going to open and when we were going to open and what the security measures were going to be and how all of that was going to work.
- Mark Schoepfle: Uh-huh. When you were mentioning you got together in the first couple of days afterwards with the regional director and you were discussing things like how to move forward —
- Diane Dayson: Yeah. I was on the phone, right, initially on the phone, uh-huh.
- Mark Schoepfle: — what were some of the issues that came up?
- Diane Dayson: The security was a very big issue and what does that mean and how are we going to move ourselves forward relative to security? We hadn't planned on it. Funding. We're not experts. What do we need in terms of a plan, a strategic plan? When can we officially open back up to the public and feel that we're in a position to do so in a safe and secure manner? And I think that continues to be not just then, but now continues to be a big issue.

- Diane Dayson: And I guess then within a two-week period, we had another telephone conference call with the regional director along with the director. The director happened to be, and the regional director happened to be at a national leadership council meeting where all the regional directors were there. And so, we began to talk about the impact and the devastation that this was having on staff, on the operation, funding issues, how were we going to move ourselves forward, and what it was going to take for us to move ourselves forward.
- Diane Dayson: And because it was felt that we had so much emotion behind our, you know, I guess our intent being the need to be fully safe and secure for a whole host of reasons, then we were able to get the regional director, the deputy regional director, and the director to come visit Ground Zero. Because we had been to Ground Zero quite a bit so we knew what kind of impact it would have on us and it would have on them so that they could have a clear understanding of what we meant relative to security and feeling safe to open. Also, they could see our sister park in National Parks, the New York Harbor Federal Hall, who was close by and was used as a safe haven for the many who were running away from the World Trade. And also, they were able to experience the New York Stock Exchange, because they're a good partner of ours.
- Diane Dayson: So, they got to understand and appreciate how significant an impact this had had on us and why it was just taking us a little bit longer to open our doors to the public. So, once they understood why we were taking our time in terms of thinking this through, they were very supportive because all you needed to do was go to Ground Zero in the first couple of weeks, I'd say the first maybe five weeks, and you really got an impact that just really, really shook you up. And you realized that, you know, it's not just about opening your doors immediately but doing it in a safe and secure manner that people feel comfortable.
- Diane Dayson: And so, once we got that by and it made it a lot easier in terms of beginning to talk about strategy to open the doors. And to open the doors is a, I would say, was a major challenge and continues to be a major challenge today because what does that mean. We're — both sites are located on islands, boat access, air. Now everybody is concerned about the air traffic, you know. And that second plane swooped down around the statue and then came over to Ellis and curved around and went over the Hudson over into the second building, and we were able to see it. The staff was able to see it. We watched the buildings fall down. You saw little dots of people who were jumping out of windows.

- Diane Dayson: So, with all of that, you know, now you're thinking about all of that and the potential for the statue to be hit and what does that mean because it's not a building, you know. It's an international icon. And it is a funnel. It's one way up; it's one way down. And how do you get people out, or do you recognize you're not going to get people out? They're just dead, you know, once you reach a certain point.
- Diane Dayson: So, trying to work out all of those details and trying to figure out whether you do the — where do you do the security. What does it mean to have x-ray machines and metal detectors? Where should they be strategically placed? Who is going to be responsible for them? How much money is it going to cost? All of these management decisions had to be made, and so we had to develop a site plan that the Washington director would feel comfortable with, the regional director would feel comfortable with, and that we would feel comfortable with. And it took us months and months and months of having lots of different experts come in to make recommendations to push us in a direction that, you know, that we could all feel comfortable that we knew that we could move along.
- Diane Dayson: And so, we ended up ended up with offsite screening, which we've never done before. Now you are screened before you come on the island. So, Battery Park and Liberty State Park have x-ray machines and metal detectors. You can't bring any big luggage. You can't have a huge backpack, you know. So, trying to get the message out to people as quickly as possible that there are new procedures and it's going to take a little bit longer now and that you have to be patient with us and that we have to work out the bugs.
- Diane Dayson: One of the things that we never thought that we would have to be are security experts, you know. So, we're learning every day relative to managing security and what does that mean. I mean, we've got canine units. We've got people, plainclothes people. We've got security guards and park police who handle the metal detectors and the x-ray machines. We've got park guides who are watching to ensure and provide information to people about what they can and cannot bring on the islands and that the monument itself is still closed but Liberty Island is open to you to enjoy and experience it from a different way until we figure out how we can open the monument safely.
- Diane Dayson: So, it took a very long time, I think, to get to the point that we're at now. So, it took us until December 20th. And for me I felt that was our gift to the American public as well as our international public or international visitors as well, that we would open prior to Christmas and we did.

Diane Dayson: Not to the full extreme that they — that we would have liked to, but open enough that we feel that people are safe and secure and can still have a positive experience without the monument being open at this time.

Diane Dayson: So now we've got more secret service coming in to analyze the monument, and what that means is should we open it or shouldn't we open it. And so, for me throughout this whole crisis is that it taught me a little more about myself, that I am a stronger person than I thought I could ever be in times of crisis. And it also taught me that you really have to be flexible and you have to allow others the opportunity to assist in helping you to move yourselves forward who have the proper expertise, so that you can move yourselves forward in a positive manner.

Diane Dayson: I think the frustration for me during this whole thing was not having effective communication, feeling like no one was really listening to us because we were experiencing it. And so, if you weren't in Lower Manhattan, then you don't really understand what we were going through. And so, decisions were being made on our behalf that, because people weren't here, so you figure you can make management decisions about security and operations without being here. And so, I guess that's where my anxiety came in as a superintendent. Because I kind of feel, as a superintendent, you should respect me as the person that you put in charge of this resource.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure.

Diane Dayson: And that I wouldn't steer you wrong. So, the staff and I became very frustrated, very burned out because we spent lots of long nights and lots of long hours trying to plan and work with experts in the community relative to security. And at times felt that we were being overridden because there was a need to get open as quickly as possible and to move in a certain manner. And we just kind of felt that slow and methodical would be the best way to assess ourselves, because as soon as we get open, you know, once you get open, that's it in terms of people helping you or assisting you. They figure, okay, you're open, and we'll go onto the next challenge.

Diane Dayson: But my biggest frustration was that I just felt that no one was listening, and no one really understood what we were going through here. And all I wanted, basically, was for people to hear what I was saying and listen to me with an objective ear and understand what we had just gone through. And we didn't get that kind of support. They just really didn't understand. And so, there was that level that, you know, I guess that was patronizing to me and to my staff, and so the frustration levels for us were just unimaginable.

- Diane Dayson: And I think as a result we were disheartened in terms of the kinds of support that we were receiving from the Washington office. So, it left us a little bitter.
- Diane Dayson: And I — you know, and I would say — I said, well, what did I learn from that is that, you know, not everybody is the same and everybody approaches things differently and that you have to understand where they're coming from as well. And then you have to be in a position to articulate your concerns in such a way that they get the point and that they don't react but that they acknowledged and appreciate where you're coming from.
- Diane Dayson: And I don't think that we clearly got our point across, because we — you know, once you get on the defensive then it becomes an emotional thing and so you don't really — all of a sudden, the whole point of being becomes very fuzzy. And so, I think because of that we weren't making the kinds of headway that we could have, and we didn't get the kind of support that we needed.
- Diane Dayson: So, if I learned anything, it's that I needed to extend my guard a little bit further during the whole immediate process itself, you know. I was right on point; not very focused, not into emotion, but dealing with the issue at hand and that was the safety and security of all the people that were on both islands on 9-11. After that point in time, you know, emotions begin to kick in because no one's called to see how you're doing, where you are, you know, are you alive, you know, what's happening. And then calling not initially to find out how everybody is doing but when are you going to be open.
- Diane Dayson: And I kind of felt, I guess because I'm a people person, that, you know, how about — how's the staff doing and what are they doing, and what do you need, how can we better serve you so that you can get the doors open. And that's not how it went. So as a result, then I got emotional and started saying, well, we're not going to open until we make sure that we're safe. And you know, one bad turn turned into another. And so, it was important to get them here, once we had gotten into a defensive mode, to get the right people to the table so that they could visit Ground Zero, see what our issues were, and to move us forward.
- Diane Dayson: So, my emotion and my frustration and my stress level got extremely high, not during the incident itself, not two or three days later, not a week later, but three or four weeks later when I had to deal with the level of bureaucracy that I had to deal with relative to getting this site back open.



- Mark Schoepfle: Could you give me an example? I mean, you've been mentioning here, and I think this is really important, that in fact other people have mentioned it exactly the same way — not in exactly the same way, but similar things like it. And one of them was, you know, that people in the central offices weren't listening, weren't appreciating what it was like down here and made no effort to figure that kind of thing out. And it seemed to simply have one thing on its mind, which was get open, get going, get those visitor counts back up, this kind of thing. Could you go into a little more detail about like maybe a specific example to illustrate, just to give a feeling of this frustration with that kind of thing? I know that's kind of an imposition.
- Diane Dayson: Yes. I would say that it becomes a bit sensitive, because then you can immediately figure out who it is. What I will say to you though, because I'm not going to answer you directly, what I will say to you is this, that I think because it was a new administration, they had just gotten in, so they didn't even have time to really learn. I mean, the director just, you know, hadn't been on very long. Now, all of a sudden you have 9-11. You have a secretary who is brand new. The secretary is just getting their feet wet relative to our level of bureaucracy. Now, all of a sudden you throw 9-11 in the mix and they've got to react very quickly. And they're getting pressures from all sides, so they've got to respond to someone.
- Diane Dayson: And so, in all fairness to them, I would say that they didn't have enough time to really know us and to catch up. They had to react to the situation at hand, and as a result it threw us into a whole different ballgame because here you have people who were still trying to learn the system, who were still trying to learn who we are to understand what their role is. And now they've got the challenges and the pressures of partners, like concessionaires who were saying we're losing money because you're closed or foundations who were saying that we can't operate for you or do any fundraising because you're closed. What are you doing? And so not understanding the broader scope but getting pressures from the outside to open without hearing what we had to say, you know. It was just like we're getting these pressures, we have to do this, and politically we need to get open and we want you to get open now.
- Diane Dayson: So, I think that the new directorate, more so in the director's office as opposed to the secretary, because she was a bit more — she was slower about it in terms of - she wanted us to take our time and to make sure. And she was the one who encouraged us to make sure that we had all the resources that we needed before we even considered opening.

- Diane Dayson: But I think that the new director coming in in July felt the pressures a little bit more and felt that she needed to act a little bit quicker because people picking up the phones, she's new kid on the block. And you know how that goes, when the new person is in you want to get to them first and get your story in. And so that's what was happening.
- Diane Dayson: And so, as a result those stories were listened to more and more and more from concessionaires and partners. And so, there is a certain level of pressure. There is a certain political pressure that has to be met. And so, she had to make some decisions, and we needed to move very quickly.
- Diane Dayson: I just think that we should've just taken a little bit more time. She should've taken a little bit more time to understand where we were coming from. And it wasn't that we were doing the concessionaires an injustice. It was that we wanted to ensure that not only were their staffs safe, but our staff and the visitors are safe as well. But she felt for some reason a certain pressure. And so anyway we ended up opening the site sooner than later.
- Mark Schoepfle: A little more earlier than you would've been comfortable with?
- Diane Dayson: Oh, yeah.
- Mark Schoepfle: What are some of the things you would've wanted to have in place that you didn't get to put in place?
- Diane Dayson: What I would've liked to have done was to map out very slowly and very methodically a timetable for instituting the security systems, because the challenge with us is that we have partners. We're on their property. So, we have the City of New York. We had to get authorization from them to put temporary structures on their property to host the metal detectors and the — the metal detectors and the x-ray machines. And they're not permanent structures. They're temporary structures.
- Diane Dayson: And we know that at some point we're going to need permanent structures. And I would've liked to have developed a plan over say from 9-11 till the end of December, but really work really a phase-in plan that phases in everything very carefully and methodically, so that we didn't have to keep going back to the city of New York or keep going back to the State of New Jersey because we've got to work with the State of New Jersey for Liberty State Park and we've got to work with the city of New York for the city park that we reside in.
- Diane Dayson: So now that we have this interim plan, now we've got to go back to them with another plan because this plan was an interim plan until we got the temporary plan. And now we're getting ready to institute the temporary plan that's still not the permanent.

- Diane Dayson: At some point in time, we're going to have to do a permanent structure which is going to kill the city and our relationship if we don't do it in the right manner. So, I don't think that we had enough time to build, first of all, to create a constructive plan that we didn't have to keep going back to the city or to the State, the City of New York or the State of New Jersey with to get their buy in.
- Diane Dayson: I think if we had a complete package and said, here we have three phases for you to take a look at. We have an interim, a temporary, and a permanent phase. They're going to take time — it's going to take over the next two years to institute this completely into a permanent plan. This is how it's going to impact you. This is what it's going to cost you as the city of New York. This is what it's going to cost you as the State of New Jersey. This is what it's going to cost us as the National Park Service to deal with. And these are the steps. And as we go along, these steps are going to change because we don't know as much as we think we do about security. And so, as we go through this, we're going to have some stumbling blocks along the way. But as it turned out, that didn't happen.
- Diane Dayson: So, we've got a plan now that is, you know, a temporary plan and now we've got to work on a permanent plan. And you know, now we've got a new administration in New York City and a new administration in the State of New Jersey. So, we don't know what kind of relationships we're going to have as we begin this permanent long-term planning process.
- Diane Dayson: And so, to me it just shows, at least for me, a level of unprofessionalism because if you want someone to buy into what you're doing then you should have a complete package that they can look at. Yeah, the package is sure to change, but at least they know it's coming. Now, they're not anticipating any significant changes anytime soon, but we're going to impact them because we realize we can't operate with two machines at Battery Park. We need four machines. So that means the tent has to be larger. That has a major impact on the city of New York. The concessionaires would like six x-ray machines. We can't give them six x-ray machines. We can barely do four. We don't have enough staff and we don't have the dollars. And the dollars that we receive this year are not recurring dollars. So, when this year is over, if we don't get dollars in '03 we're in trouble, you know.
- Diane Dayson: So, all of those things have an impact, not only on us, but they have an impact on our partners. And you know, so when you take it one step further in terms of those relationships that we've cultivated in the community, they're going to be impacted in a significant way.

- Diane Dayson: And now we're going to have to go back and try to convince them that we've got this new plan now and it's going to impact you in this way and are you willing to support it. And that's where the strain on the relationship is going to come, the pull and tug.
- Diane Dayson: And then you have a new administration who doesn't know the background or the personalities of the people that we've been dealing with here, you know, our partners in the community. So now they're going to have to take them on. And I would just hope that they would do the right thing by us, knowing that we didn't have a full plan in place because this is what needed to happen because we were being dictated to.
- Diane Dayson: And so, I would have waited until after the first of the year and had a complete package that all the partners could've taken a look at over the Christmas holiday. They could've bought, you know, buy into it, determine how they wanted to move themselves forward. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. So now we're getting ready to implement the temporary phase, which is we've got the concessionaires. We're going to be meeting with the concessionaires this Wednesday because we promised that we'd have a 30-day status. The concessionaires aren't happy with us because they're not making money. And you know, their goal is to make a profit and that we're standing in their way of them making a profit.
- Diane Dayson: And I continue to say that as far as I'm concerned, the goal here is the safety and security of the employees as well as the visitors; not even so much the monument, because I can't save the monument. If it goes down, it goes down unfortunately. But we've got — you know, I've had Diana Pardue and her staff begin to look at research, at drawings from the past just in case we become a target and we do, you know, go down, because the most frightening thing that we continue to hear is that terrorists have patience and time. So, they may not do it this year, but we are in their radar screen. And who knows, within the next two to three years we may be a target because it's still standing, just like the World Trade Center was hit in '93 and then seven years later both buildings go down. And intelligence continues to tell us that, yeah, some point in time we may be that target because it's an international symbol. And so, you know, when you keep that in the forefront of your mind, concessionaires are not a priority, you know. And they've made their millions because two of the concessionaires have been here for 60, 70 years. And so, with that kind of a track record, I just think you need to appreciate where we come from. And the other one is a big conglomerate. And so as opposed to working against us, work with us to come up with alternative ways to bring people on the island.

Diane Dayson: Before 9-11, we got 5.2 million visitors a year. And that's what the concessionaires want again. They want us to — they want full access, they want the monument open, they want us to go back to the way things were prior to 9-11. But the reality is they can't because first of all we have offsite screening. So that slows, even if we wanted to bring five million people here a year, that slows down the process just in itself because you can only get but so many people through the mags per hour. And having four magnetometers there and two magnetometers at Liberty State Park, you're not going to get the boat loads that they're used to getting. And they're not satisfied with that. And I think that's where we have the challenges. And so strong negotiation skills have to come into play, in turn, to work with them.

Diane Dayson: So, for me, 9-11 has created a new learning experience for me. It was my very first day back to work. I was in the senior executive service career development program, and I spent the last eight months in Washington, D.C. working for the National Park Foundation and Bureau of Land Management. And my actual very first day back was 9-11. And so, it tested all the skills that I had learned over the past year, all the formal training and all of the informal training that I had gotten out of the SES program. It really taught me to — you know, really, it's about persevering and it's about having the strength and believing in yourself and having the conviction to move forward for the better of the resources.

Diane Dayson: And so, I've felt that, you know, from my perspective, and I toot my own horn that in terms of 9-11 that I did a hell of a job in terms of coordinating that effort to calm and arrest peoples' fears, and give the hugs and wipe the tears, and organize and orchestrate, in addition to trying to manage and support a staff that really needed help during that time. Somebody that they could look to who was going to say that it was going to be all right, even though I was wondering whether or not it was going to be all right, but looking for someone who could give them that solace. And then leading the charge and really taking on the pressures of the bureaucracy and challenging them and pushing the envelope and getting them annoyed at me and not backing down because I felt so strongly about where we were headed and the climate of this country at that point in time and still now.

Diane Dayson: And because of that, I just told them, you know, and I made it very clear that I'm not signing anything relative to security stating that things are safe here because at this point in time I don't feel that we're as safe as we could be. And I know that you can only be but so — there's only so much you can do. However, I feel that we haven't done enough yet to get us to that point, to be secure and safe.

- Mark Schoepfle: If I could just stop just for a moment. All right. If I'm tracking what you've said, and this is very important, one of the big problems was the pressure just to get things open that the central administration was feeling, I'm assuming from concessionaires and probably other people as well, foundations, concessionaires, and various other groups that may also —
- Diane Dayson: Sure. There was pressure to get open and why is it taking you so long to get open and what do you need to get open. And so then feeling that kind of pressure and getting back to normal was the buzzword. Let's get back to normal. And my whole position at — that was the wrong word to use for people here at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, get back to normal. Because we felt here that we would never be normal. We would have to create a whole new set of normal, you know. Normal will not be like it was prior to 9-11. Normal would have to be something that we're going to create for ourselves because every day in New York City is different.
- Diane Dayson: You never know if the subway is going to get you to work and it's still going on. You never know if the subway is going to be rerouted or a bus is going to take you in a different direction, or the boats aren't running, or the bridges are closed for whatever reasons. They find — they found somebody that they're chasing of whatever. But every day is different.
- Diane Dayson: So, for people to tell us to get back into a normal routine, for us there was no normal routine. And the question becomes, what — as I continued to say to the staff because we had weekly general staff meetings and daily senior management team meetings, the question was how were we going to create a new sense of normal for ourselves, knowing what we have to go through, knowing what the staffs have to go through, know what our daily lives are going to be like and how we're impacted by 9-11.
- Diane Dayson: And so, for someone to come in and say, well, you've got to get back to normal. No. The question should have been what is it that you need in order to open effectively in a safe and secure manner? Regardless of what you needed in terms of funding and staffing, what would it take to get you open, so that you and your staff could feel comfortable, that you're doing the right thing?
- Mark Schoepfle: What would that be? Because you had mentioned you certainly don't have it now.
- Diane Dayson: Right. What it would have been was to develop that interim, temporary, and long-term plan. Get that off the shelf. Give the experts enough time so that they don't come in here haphazardly. The experts being people from intelligence, like Secret Service, State Department, local police departments.

Diane Dayson: Let them come in and do their own full assessments because they say their assessments take about two to three weeks and then they write up their reports. Have them come in and do their own assessments and determine, you know, what it is that we needed. And based on their recommendations and based on a series of meetings with the Washington and regional directorate, make some determination as to how we can gradually phase in this new way of being, this new way of security.

Diane Dayson: Everywhere you go in New York City there's — you know, you're being rerouted this way or you can't walk that way, or a vehicle can't ride up and down Wall Street anymore near the Stock Exchange. So really, had we had that, had an opportunity to — during this time period from September to the end of December the time period really to try to work all of that through and then come up with a timetable to move ourselves forward, and of funding, some funding sources, some alternatives for funding, because let's face it, Congress can't give everybody money every year, recurring costs. Who's going to pick up these recurring costs? And that's where you look to your partners and you say, okay, partners, here we have this phase plan that we have put together. We had all these experts come in. Now it's your opportunity to take a look at it and figure out how you could best help us help you.

Diane Dayson: So, this is what we need to move ourselves forward. And they can say, well, I know the mayor and I know he will be willing to contribute whatever it takes to get open. Or I know this partner in downtown who's willing to provide the services you need right down at Battery Park or Liberty State Park. But having the time to talk about issues, you know, talk about their losses. How, if we can at some point in time help them to recoup their losses whatever that means. I don't know, but really thinking it through. And I just don't feel that we've given our — we gave ourselves enough time to think it through. So, knowing that you say, okay, be that as it may, the pressure is still on because that means that even if you didn't sign anything, Diane, when push comes to shove, you're the superintendent. So, you're going to be the one held accountable for whatever goes on whether you sign or not.

Diane Dayson: So, I said, okay, well, you do the best with what you have right now. The pressure is still on. You still have to function. You still have to move the site forward. What can you do? And I've realized that — to be perfectly honest, Mark, I've realized at this point that it's not up to me. It's up to the directorate, the Washington directorate. All I can do is provide them with information and they can make the decisions as to how we should move ourselves forward.

- Diane Dayson: It is no longer up to the superintendent to make those that kind of a decision, but to keep them updated on a monthly basis as to where we are and to make the recommendations. And then they can either accept them or overrule them and be responsible for telling us how they would like to move forward. Because that's quite evident as to how we're going to be moving in this new administration.
- Diane Dayson: And so, it takes away a little bit of that autonomy that superintendents are used to having because you would hope that the people that hired you trust in you and feel that you can do the job that they hired you to do. But when that trust is challenged, then you wonder where you fit in the organization and then you wonder is it worth making a decision or just sitting back and saying here are the facts and now you decide what you'd like me to do with them.
- Diane Dayson: And so, I've gotten to the point now where, especially with the security situation, we're getting ready to write this status report. It's like here it is now. If you don't like what you are hearing or seeing here in this report, tell us what it is you would like us to do and we'll try to do the best we can to get you what you need so that you feel comfortable in going back to the partners or whoever you need to put their fears at ease to do. Because we've wasted so much time and so much energy, you know, pushing and pulling and tugging until the staff and I have kind of relented and said, you know, okay, we're at a point where we realize we're not getting anywhere fast. So, the best thing to do is, as I said to my staff, we'll make the recommendations and then they can decide which way they want to go. And if they don't like it then they'll tell us what they want us to do. And that's usually how it goes. And I think that's unfortunate.
- Mark Schoepfle: You mentioned affecting some of the relationships between, say, the city and the other groups you work with. What have been some of the — have there been problems that have resolved with —
- Diane Dayson: We've got challenges with the city of New York because we're taking away their view. They're just beginning to do some revitalization in Battery Park. And one of our partners is a very dear friend and very supportive of us, you know. She was — she had just finished doing — Warrie Price had just finished doing some major, wonderful renovations down at Battery Park, and now we're — and the purpose of the new renovations were so that the people could get a view of the water and view of the Statue of Liberty and to really appreciate what really goes on in Battery Park.



Diane Dayson: And we've obstructed that view because we have this huge tent now that you can't — there's no way if you sit on a bench you can see out into the harbor. We've also impacted the visitor flow because normally people could just walk up and down that area freely in the lower promenade. And now in that particular area they're being impacted because we have our tent there, and we're hoping to make that tent bigger.

Diane Dayson: And so, plus we — now we're going to be impacting power because we need electricity. Right now, we're using generators and generators aren't going to last. That's why I say all of this was done way too quickly. And so, we've been trying to work with the city to get power, and because it's a new administration it's going to take them a long time, you know, awhile to get up to speed on what's going on. In the meantime, we're going to have to try to get it from our sister park, Castle Clinton. They're going to try to give us some electricity and see if that works.

Diane Dayson: But in the meantime, everything is just — you know, I feel, is haphazardly done because we were trying to meet an immediate need of getting open. So as a result, you get what you pay for. So, you want a generator, you know, generators, they need fuel and so they run out very quickly and because of one of the generators, one of the x-ray machines burned out. And so, it took a week to get it fixed. And you know, and this was because we had to get open. So, then the concessionaires complained because one of the x-ray machines went down. But you were the ones who wanted us to open right away and because we opened in a hurry this is what you got; generators as opposed to electricity.

Diane Dayson: So, you know, it's a catch-22 situation. So, every day we eat, sleep, and breathe this. And so, with the city, so it's just working out the, you know, strains in terms of impacting their property. And all the significant fundraising that Warrie has been doing down there benefits us as well. And so, she's a great partner, so we have to keep her a good partner. We need to ensure that she is in this process every step of the way and she's part of the City Parks of New York. Now, the park commissioner just retired, and they just hired a new park commissioner. So now we've got to get up to speed and so everybody is trying to get in his door, including us. Get on his calendar to explain what's going on and why we need him to support us being in his park, building a structure.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Diane Dayson: And the same at Liberty State Park. Liberty State Park is a little bit easier for us to deal with. The city is more complex because most of our visitors come through New York City. So, it just makes it difficult.

Mark Schoepfle: When do you figure — this may be a slightly unfair question because you've already said you haven't returned to it yet and I have asked, you know - when would you feel comfortable with the proper security? When do you sense a new, not a new sense of normalcy, because you said that isn't going to happen?

Diane Dayson: Right.

Mark Schoepfle: But a new kind of equilibrium when things are stable again. When do you figure that's going to happen? And when would you know that to have happened?

Diane Dayson: I would say when we are able to figure out what we're going to do with the monument that will be the — that will give the answer as to our security levels, whether or not we're truly ready. But until the monument itself is open, if it is to open, I think that will be the — that will be the determination, that will say that we're getting into a new sense of normalcy, as I say. Then the routine is different, however the monument is open now, you know. And because with the monument being closed, we haven't reached a level of normalcy, okay. See, with security, you know, we have security breaches.

Diane Dayson: And so, we need to — once we're in a position where we say the monument's either going to be open to the pedestal or going to be open to the crown, but it's going to be on a limited basis or reservations or whatever the decisions are made by this new administration, once that happens then I think we can begin to say, okay, we're starting to get into a routine. We're getting into a new sense of normalcy, you know. We're finally the — we've figured out the — you know, we're experts in the Xray machines and the metal detector business. We can figure that out. And you know, we've got our permanent structures in place. I still think we're taking a big gamble. I think we're literally shooting craps, as I say to my husband. We're rolling those dice, and we're just hoping that we come out on top.

Diane Dayson: And so, for me every day is a gamble, you know, I don't know I'm 24 — I always say I'm 24/7. If my radio, my phone goes off at 3 o'clock in the morning, you know, it's some kind of a bomb threat which, you know, you get on a regular basis anyway, but now we pay more attention because of what happened on 9-11. So, it's going to — and it's going to be a — I'd say it's going to be a long time. I'd say with — I just don't think it's going to happen as quickly as people think it is. If we're forced to open, I think, the monument in a haphazard way, I think it would be a detriment to the site and the resources as well as to the security.

- Diane Dayson: And accountability is something that I just hope that I'm gone by the time they get to that point, that I've moved on to something else. It's somebody else's headache as opposed to mine.
- Diane Dayson: And that's really how I'm feeling right now that I've pretty much had it. And that I've been here six years going on seven years, and I usually don't stay in a park any more than three to four years. But the challenges here have been great, and they've been a lot of fun for me to take on. And I really have enjoyed my stay here. My dad worked at the Statue of Liberty, and I used to work for the concessionaire's father many, many moons ago. And so, I have a real, you know, love. It's like I've come full circle. But because I just feel that I'm not getting the respect that's due me and to this resource that it's better for me, in the next year or so, to look for other options in the Park Service than to stay here.
- Diane Dayson: I just think I'm to that point where I don't want it to be my headache anymore. I've had it and I've been here six years, and I just got out of the SES program and I need to be looking for other opportunities. But I just think that it's — you know, it's unfortunate because there's still a lot that I can do here and there's a lot that's going on. But I think under the circumstances it's better that I go. And I've already told my staff, you know. We joke about it a lot, but I say, you know, it's time for me to go because I don't feel that I'm making the kind of difference that I would like to here. And so, it's time for me to, you know, go.
- Mark Schoepfle: Very frustrating.
- Diane Dayson: Yeah. Yeah. It becomes — you know, and I'm the type of person that as Marie would say, Diane loves taking risks and she'll push that envelope as far as she can. And 99.9 percent I usually win. But in this situation, I feel like I'm defeated before I get started. And so, when I feel that way then it's time for me to back down and then I'm not — you know, then I don't have the type of energy that I could have. And, you know, in a situation when I get to that point it's time for me to move on because the challenge isn't there. You're beat up. You're frustrated. And right now, 9-11 has brought me frustration, not the situation itself, because I think we've done a good job in that area in the counselling and that kind of stuff.
- Diane Dayson: And I'm the first to say that. Immediately I said in order to help my staff I have to help myself, and I went to my therapist. I have my own therapist, and I went to her. And she — you know, and so we worked through all of those issues. And I continue to — I've had her for years, so it's good to have someone you could talk to.

- Diane Dayson: But as I said to her and as I say to my husband who also has a therapist background is that I just feel that I've lost the thunder because I'm not getting the respect. And I work hard and long hours.
- Diane Dayson: And so not to get the respect and feel like you're hitting your head up against a brick wall you start to say, is it worth it? And my whole position at this point is, no, it's not worth it anymore. You know, I've given all I can. I can't give any more to this. I need a new project to move on to, something that has nothing to do with the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. So, I told the staff that, you know, that it's not them, but it's time for me to move on. And I said because my frustration level is high. So, they know that my frustration level is high, and they know why.
- Mark Schoepfle: Move from a calculated risk to a go-for-broke risk.
- Diane Dayson: Right. And so — and I just, you know, and I can't afford to do that because I still have a few more years left in the Park Service. I'm thinking I better get out now. You know, what are my chances, you know, while things are still kind of mediocre maybe I can get out. And I have several staff who feel the same way, and they're dedicated. And you know, the hours that we've put in just on this alone, never mind the years past, but you know having telephone conferences at 7 o'clock in the morning with the director and working on weekends and getting together on weekends to work and working 80 hours just to meet the demand of opening on December 20th, you know, and not being given the credit or being recognized for that is disheartening.
- Diane Dayson: So, I've started recognizing the staff, and I've been going around giving out awards to the staff for — monetary awards for their extended efforts and all the hard work that they put in because someone needs to recognize them. So, I felt that I needed to do that. So, they've — some of them have gotten some nice-sized checks.
- Mark Schoepfle: Have you been appreciated in any of these ways?
- Diane Dayson: No, not even a thank you. So that's why I say it's time for me to go.
- Mark Schoepfle: If it's any comfort to you, and it probably isn't, this observation is not the first time it's been made to me. In this area of service, it's really very surprising.
- Diane Dayson: Right. Yeah. Well, for the Park Service, you know that I always say the reward is, and I tell my staff who says, they didn't reward you. I say, yeah, they tell me I get a paycheck every two weeks. I said the reward is my own gratification and satisfaction, you know, and what I know that I've achieved.

- Diane Dayson: Because otherwise I kind of feel that if I didn't achieve certain things then the regional director wouldn't place me in situations to challenge me even further, you know. And that's how I've moved through the service.
- Diane Dayson: But it just would be nice if they recognized those. You've got superintendents who are in crises right about now. You've got the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, all those, Washington. You've got the Statue of Liberty. You've got Independence. And you know, it would be nice to — all of those high-profile parks, really those superintendents should be recognized even if it's just a thank you for the effort of moving forward. And the unfortunate thing is that that will probably never happen.
- Diane Dayson: And so, you weigh all of that and you weigh all that you've — you know, I weigh all of what I've been through, and I said, you know what, even thanking myself for this isn't worth it anymore. You know, it's like, forget it. I'm out of here. So yeah, so I figured I'll be here for another year and then I'm gone. And I don't think that this place will be fully — I'll be surprised if it's fully operational, you know, by the end of the year.
- Diane Dayson: I just think we have a lot more to do just based on the assessments by all the Secret Service and different intelligence that we have. And we still have, they say we have too many holes, and that we really have to button up, because your water at night. You've got vacant buildings on the south side. There's easy access. People can sneak over it via the bridge here in New Jersey. And at night the waterways, even though they're secure, you know, there are certain sides of the island that are extremely vulnerable. We have no sensor detection or any of that stuff.
- Diane Dayson: So even though the Coast Guard have — you know, they've got a radius force, a security radius that they take 150-yard security radius, that's been very low-keyed recently. You know, people are starting to ease up a little bit, because there are other priorities as we can appreciate, especially when you only have minimum resources you start to say, okay, where are the priorities.
- Diane Dayson: So anyway, and that's not to say that we haven't had lots of people who are willing to come in and provide services for free just to say that they've helped the Statue of Liberty, you know, regain a sense of footing. It's just getting the right people to the table and the right kinds of resources so that we can move ourselves forward.
- Mark Schoepfle: This has been — I do not have any more questions. This has been very, very informative.
- Diane Dayson: Okay. Good.

- Mark Schoepfle: Are there any questions that I should've asked but didn't?
- Diane Dayson: No. I think — I think you covered them all. Like I said the — I would just wrap up by saying that 9-11, the event itself was not the experience for me, you know. And when I say that, that was something that I could handle. It's everything after that. The level of bureaucracy that created my, as if you want to call it that, my post-traumatic stress was not the incident itself, but it was the administration that caused my post-traumatic stress that I'm dealing with now along with counselling.
- Diane Dayson: But that's where my biggest challenge is today is not the event because I went through that with a breeze. And I've had a similar situation not where of this magnitude, but when I was at Sagamore Hill there was an Avianca plane crash. And we were the first on the scene, and we had — we literally became a morgue and our staff had to bag and tag. There were no lights. There was nothing because we were in a remote area.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, that's right. I remember that.
- Diane Dayson: Yes. And I get a call that says can you come out here in the rain, and it's at night and I'm in bed and we come out. And so, we're the first on the scene, and you know, we had to deal with that and so — and it was the same thing for me. You get into a mindset, a mind frame, and I just clicked just immediately like you have to take care of people, make sure they're okay. That's the priority. Then everything else becomes an aftermath, you know. Then you can go into shock later, but right now you have to stay focused. This is what you need to do. And so, I felt very comfortable with 9-11 as I did with the Avianca plane crash back in the late '80s, early '90s.
- Diane Dayson: But in this instance, like I said, my post-traumatic stress unfortunately was the administration. And it's still there, you know. You go home. You have sleepless nights because you wonder if the thing is going to be standing. Did you make the right decision? Why are you open, you know, when you have people come in and say you shouldn't be open yet or this is what you should be doing? And you know, you're getting all these opinions and then you don't have enough resources. And then they throw you a little bit here or there. It just gets like, ahh.
- Diane Dayson: But we persevere, so we try to — now what we just do is we try to get back into the things that we need to get back into. There is some — you know, now that we're open to, for the most part, at least the staff has a new routine, a new set of roles that they're playing.

- Diane Dayson: They can get back into operation, the operational mode, in terms of operation, in terms of developing their interpretive programs, in terms of identifying where the maintenance issues are, dealing with our partners who are doing fundraisers for us on a whole host of different levels.
- Mark Schoepfle: They are able to do all of that now.
- Diane Dayson: Right. They were able to get — normal, right.
- Mark Schoepfle: Sort of back in their normal [inaudible].
- Diane Dayson: Exactly. So that's been good and that's been healthy for the staff. So that's been a great caveat for us all, to not only have to deal with the security issues, but there are other things going on in the course of the day to help not make the day so frustrating.
- Mark Schoepfle: For example, what kind of interpretation has changed as a result of all this?
- Diane Dayson: The interpretation of the skyline has changed because you can see the skyline from here. Now we give talks offsite because we have park guides offsite at Battery State Park — Battery Park and Liberty State Park. While people are waiting to be screened, we start prepping them for when they come over to the Statue of Liberty and what that experience will be and the Ellis Island experience and about the skyline.
- Diane Dayson: And some of the staff now are beginning to look at interpretation in case people are interpreting things in a different way now. If people ask them, well, were you here on 9-11 and what were you doing when it happened and how did it impact you and were you scared for the statue? So, they're looking at programs along that line as well so that they can begin to talk about their experiences because it's healthy for them to do so. And they're pretty excited about that piece of it because they're living history, you know. They become the living history piece. And so that's how they've been approaching it.
- Diane Dayson: And then in terms of our partners, you know, cultivating with our fundraisers, recognizing that the fundraising at least in the next two years is not going to be there for us for some of our projects because of the various relief funds for 9-11. So, most of the donations and our fundraising partners have let us know are being impacted by the various relief funds for —
- Mark Schoepfle: [Inaudible] went to 9-11 instead of you all.

- Diane Dayson: Right. And so, what does that mean for them and what does that mean for us? And how do we move forward and move forward in a positive way to make things happen? You know, so things are a little different, but the partners, those partners, not the concessionaires but the partners who are fundraising for us, are still there with us and are very supportive and are willing to help in any way that they can. So that's a nice feeling to have that support.
- Diane Dayson: But I do thank you. It's always healthy to talk about these issues and the experience. Like I said, the more I talk about it the better it is for me. It's healthy for me to talk about it, and it's also — I keep journals and I'm going to be writing a book. And I'm — it's entitled, "Extraordinary Leadership During Hard Times," and it'll talk about the experiences after 9-11. And it'll be done in a story form, kind of a fictional kind of thing but with some recommendations and leadership qualities that are true to date. But yeah, so I've decided that — I've been asked on several occasions to write a book in my past life, and so this has given me an opportunity to do just that. I keep tons of journals so it's just a matter of organizing it. So hopefully within the next year I'll have a book.
- Mark Schoepfle: You said you were here for about six years now. And you've been — okay, the other place where we had the other plane crash.
- Diane Dayson: Yes, Sagamore Hill. I've been — let's see, I spent a little bit of time in Grand Canyon many moons ago, Grand Canyon, USS Constitution in Boston, Hyde Park at Franklin D. Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt's home, Morristown National Historical Park, Gateway National Recreation Area, Manhattan sites. Where else have I been? I've been down to Glencoe, Georgia, because I've got my law enforcement commission, and then here.
- Mark Schoepfle: You got your law enforcement commission in Georgia?
- Diane Dayson: Uh-huh.
- Mark Schoepfle: Is that where you were from originally?
- Diane Dayson: Huh-uh. No. That's where the training takes place, in Georgia. Home is New York. I'm a native New Yorker.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, New York City?
- Diane Dayson: New York City. Yes. This is home for me. So, I've been back and forth quite a few times, but the interesting thing is I've decided I'm not going to retire in New York though.
- Mark Schoepfle: Where are you going to go?



Diane Dayson: Somewhere south. Not Florida, but south. I haven't decided yet, but I'm going to — you know, my husband and I decided to get on the Internet and see what prospects we had. It's either going to be north or it's going to be up in New England. I like Vermont and Maine, so it's either real cold or real warm. So, it was one or the other, either one of the extremes. So, we'll see what happens.

Mark Schoepfle: Between slush.

Diane Dayson: Huh-uh, no. So, listen, Mark, it was great talking to you. Thanks so much.

Mark Schoepfle: Thank you.

Diane Dayson: Oh, thank you.

END OF TAPE