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Dorothy Huyck's National Park Service Oral History Project, 1942-1987



Carolyn Sue West
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Interview conducted by Dorothy B. Huyck
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[START OF TAPE]

Dorothy Huyck: 00:00 Can you tell me when first became acquainted with the National Park Service?

Carolyn West: 00:04 Well, like I mentioned, I worked for the concessionaire. I went to high school here in Carlsbad. For high school students, it was an ideal place to work, because they paid comparable wages. They furnished you transportation, uniforms. It was just an ideal place to work.

Dorothy Huyck: 00:22 What did you do for the concession?

Carolyn West: 00:24 Well, I worked in the gift shop, worked in the lunchroom, just clerical sales work really, and a cashier, this type of thing. I worked for them for three summers, I guess it was.

Carolyn West: 00:37 Of course, a uniform always catches anybody's eye. The rangers were just very impressive. I thought this would be the ideal place to work.

Carolyn West: 00:49 Then I went away to college. Really, at that time, you don't plan. You don't think, "Now this is what I want, so this is what I need to do." You don't think that. You're 17 or 18 years old.

Carolyn West: 01:06 My subjects and my interests weren't really geared toward anything that would – Biology, history. I did have quite an interest in history, but not anything that would really help me to get into that part of Park Service.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:21 Where did you go to college?

Carolyn West: 01:23 I went to New Mexico State at Las Cruces.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:27 Let me go back just a minute and ask, were you born here in Carlsbad?

Carolyn West: 01:31 No, I was born in Oklahoma and came here when I was about two years old.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:35 Where in Oklahoma?

Carolyn West: 01:36 McAlester.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:37 And when?

Carolyn West: 01:38 1944.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:42 Were you, by any chance, an only child?

Carolyn West: 01:44 No. No, I have two sisters and a brother.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:48 Are you the eldest?

Carolyn West: 01:49 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:52 How many years older are you than the next child?

Carolyn West: 01:54 Two.

Dorothy Huyck: 01:57 Is that a brother or sister?

Carolyn West: 02:00 No, that's a sister.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:02 Did you grow up in McAlester?

Carolyn West: 02:03 No, I grew up here. I came here when I was two years old.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:06 Yes, that's right. Were any of your parents college graduates?

Carolyn West: 02:11 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:12 What was your father's occupation?

Carolyn West: 02:16 He owned a grocery store in McAlester, and this was after the war. In the war he was in the Air Force. He was a bombardier, first lieutenant, and he owned a grocery store in McAlester, then he came here. At the time, the potash mine were the highest paying things around you, great salaries. He was a mechanic there after – Well, he served an apprenticeship and then became a journeyman mechanic. I suppose that's what he did most of the years out there.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:53 And your mother?

Carolyn West: 02:55 My mother has never worked until just, oh, in the last 10 years.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:00 What is she doing now?

Carolyn West: 03:01 She works in a drug store, in the pharmacy.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:10 When you were in New Mexico state, what did you major in?

Carolyn West: 03:15 My major was English literature.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:17 When did you graduate?

Carolyn West: 03:18 I did not graduate.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:20 How many years were you there?

Carolyn West: 03:21 Well, I have a total of off-and-on of hours, probably of two, but I was at New Mexico State for just one year.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:30 In high school and during that period in college, was there someone who particularly encouraged you with regard to the educational process? A parent, a teacher, or one of your professors at college?

Carolyn West: 03:43 My parents. Education was always – We were always encouraged to further our education.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:53 In high school, did you take math and science courses?

Carolyn West: 03:57 Only the required. I leaned a little more to history, literature, English.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:02 Were math and science courses in your high school something that were more frequently taken by boys?

Carolyn West: 04:10 Yes, really. Generally, they were. And chemistry. That and chemistry just kind of—

Dorothy Huyck: 04:17 Did you play with boys as a child?

Carolyn West: 04:22 Yes, it was just about, I'd say, 50%. The children in the neighborhood were boys. I guess I was a little bit more of a tomboy of the way I was raised. And even now I ride, and my husband and I hunt and go on trips into the wilderness. Things like this. We both are interested in that.

- Dorothy Huyck: 04:45 As you became a teenager, did your family expect you to become something more about the lady?
- Carolyn West: 04:53 No.
- Dorothy Huyck: 04:57 And were there any extracurricular activities that you can look back on that are now helpful in your work for the Park Service?
- Carolyn West: 05:09 No, I really can't think of anything. Of course, anything dealing with people, to me, is important in any job, but I really don't know. I work primarily now with finance, budget estimates, math. I always hated math. I really don't know how I got into this field, but I like my job, because it's a changing thing. It changes daily. As anybody that works with the budget would know that you never know what to expect, and I think that's probably what attracts me most about it. The routine clerical figures and stuff like that gets a little old, but I can't think of anything that I did at the time, because I had no idea that I would ever end up in the field that I'm in.
- Dorothy Huyck: 05:56 You, in fact, apparently didn't flourish on math in the back of the school, but now you're much involved in it.
- Carolyn West: 06:01 Right.
- Dorothy Huyck: 06:03 Were you in any way steered away from math or given the impression it wasn't for girls? You are doing it, apparently now, and doing it.
- Carolyn West: 06:10 No, I think that it was – Now, there were phases of it that did interest me. Algebra or something where you had to learn these formulas and things. It was like working a puzzle. And when I say I wasn't interested in it, I should say more arithmetic I was not interested in. Now, the other fields I was. And I had a good grade average. I had to have – I qualified for a federal loan the first year I went to college, and I had to keep a 3.5 average.
- Carolyn West: 06:48 So when I say that math was one of my worst subjects, I'm still talking about a B or at the lowest, a C average. I guess I really shouldn't say it was terrible, but like I said, I'm just surprised sometimes that I did end up. And then I thought too, with a degree in English literature, I always wanted to write. I always thought I wanted to write, and that's about

all I could have done with that degree. So that wasn't too well planned, either. And sometimes I'm surprised that things have turned out as well as they have.

- Dorothy Huyck: 07:21 When you finished your period at New Mexico State, did you go to work for the Park Service? Was it at that point?
- Carolyn West: 07:28 No, I did not. I came here, and I stayed out of school for about a month. Then I went to work for the concessionaire again, which I applied for the summer, and they happened to want me right then. And I did attempt to take some night courses, which didn't last very long, because it's a 10-hour day when you work at the park, and there's just no study time at all. So, I dropped those, and I got married.
- Dorothy Huyck: 07:58 What year was that?
- Carolyn West: 07:58 That was in 1964.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:00 And you are currently married to the same gentleman?
- Carolyn West: 08:04 No, I'm not.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:04 You were divorced when?
- Carolyn West: 08:06 In 1972.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:06 And you were remarried?
- Carolyn West: 08:09 Later in the same year. I was divorced the first part of the year and married at the end of the summer in the same year.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:14 And that's your current husband.
- Carolyn West: 08:15 Right.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:17 After your first marriage, were you employed at that time?
- Carolyn West: 08:21 I was employed still with the concessionaire at which time I worked for about three months, and I found it very frustrating to try to work and take care of a home and do both the way I thought they should be done, so I resigned with the concessionaire, and then I worked intermittently. When you live someplace where you grew up, there's always somebody that would like for you to – I worked in a dress shop for a friend of mine that owned it, and when

she'd be out of town, I'd operate it for her. I never worked for more than eight months to a year, and then I'd take a little time off and go back to work.

Dorothy Huyck: 08:57 Have you children?

Carolyn West: 08:58 I have two daughters.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:01 And how old are they?

Carolyn West: 09:01 One's 12, and one's eight.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:08 Were there any full-time jobs you kept prior to coming to the Park Service?

Carolyn West: 09:14 I was a bookkeeper at a truck stop restaurant type thing. I lived on a ranch, and this was two, three miles away. I kept books for them and kept their special fuel tax and all this type thing up-to-date and the payroll. And I did that for about two years, I suppose.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:32 When was that?

Carolyn West: 09:33 It was a part-time, a five-hour day type thing. And that was in probably '69, '70.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:47 Was there other employment before you started working for the Park Service?

Carolyn West: 09:51 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:52 When did you come to the Park Service?

Carolyn West: 09:54 The summer of, well, May. I suppose it was May of 1972.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:57 And at what grade?

Carolyn West: 10:03 As a temporary GS-3.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:05 And what is your current grade?

Carolyn West: 10:08 GS-5.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:11 Did you start on the budget area?

Carolyn West: 10:14 No, I did not. I started as a cashier selling tickets.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:17 Oh, where? Here?

Carolyn West: 10:19 At the caverns.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:20 At the caverns.

Carolyn West: 10:21 Right. In the visitor center. It was really my preference, too. They had two openings at the time at the same grade, but I just thought I could not stand to sit behind a desk. There's just no way. That's another thing I wonder about. But I started as a cashier on a three-month appointment about, what, a 700-hour whatever.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:48 And how long did you stay at the visitor center?

Carolyn West: 10:51 I stayed there through the summer. And it was just common knowledge that unless there was something changed, you would be terminated after Labor Day. It was a temporary type thing for the summer travel. And at that particular time, they were moving the headquarters office to Carlsbad, and there was a receptionist type opening here, another temporary job at the same grade. And so, I was able to go from one – I could qualify for either one. So, I was able to go on into this position on the information desk here, which involved the receptionist phone answering, information-type duties, as well.

Dorothy Huyck: 11:38 When did you move over to the budget side?

Carolyn West: 11:41 Well, the position was needed as – See, at the time, they were just the headquarters office for Carlsbad Caverns. And then in 1972, Guadalupe Mountain was dedicated and with three permanent employees. And as this park grew, the administrative duties were just tremendous. And it was a position that I was able to train for and showed an interest in. I could do both: Get familiar with the things and just to see how much interest I showed in it and everything. At the same time, I was working out here.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:21 As the receptionist?

Carolyn West: 12:21 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:21 Were you put in anything like a upward mobility position?

Carolyn West: 12:28 No, you didn't hear much about upward mobility at the time. It was being practiced here, and it could be me. It could be that I didn't hear it. But the job out here was rather isolated from – Because I was the only one on the desk.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:43 The information desk?

Carolyn West: 12:43 Right. So it could be that this was a, like I said, upper mobility was being practiced. Although I wasn't familiar with it with that phrase.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:53 Then how did you get your training for budget work?

Carolyn West: 12:58 I would say that it was mostly on-the-job training, together with the past experience that I had had at just bookkeeping or financial-type work.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:18 Did you shift to a GS-4 at some point?

Carolyn West: 13:20 No, I did not.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:21 You jumped from a three to a five?

Carolyn West: 13:22 Right. Now, that had something to do with the classification in the series, and that I'm not real familiar with.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:28 So, currently you're much involved in finance and budget estimates.

Carolyn West: 13:32 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:32 Anything else in your current operations that we should be aware?

Carolyn West: 13:39 Well, I do handle the – We have two types of cashiers and an imprest cashier and fee collection activities at the park that is probably the largest in this region, I suppose, mainly because of the travel. And I do perform the audits and assure that everything's up to the Treasury manual.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:59 And you also have some responsibilities with regard to Guadalupe Mountains?

Carolyn West: 14:03 Right, the same. In fact, we were just talking the other day when they did have two employees, and now it's like 16

permanent employees. It's really grown. Real busy years. Over the next few years, there's a lot of scheduled construction. We have people whose headquarters right now are in Denver or even some from the Forest Service, the trail specialists. It's just really beginning. The next few years, we're going to start construction on the housing. The visitor center is still – There is a proposal for that. It's just going to be a real interesting five or 10 years, I think.

- Dorothy Huyck: 14:47 Does this pose further opportunities as far as you are concerned?
- Carolyn West: 14:50 I think it definitely does. Definitely. And it gives you more incentive, too. You feel like things are going to change and grow, and there's one drawback of not being mobile. I feel like that it's very advantageous to me, with all the growth that's going on, that I have just really unlimited opportunity right here in different fields. If I show an interest and do anything on my own to further this interest, I just feel like, like I said, I have unlimited opportunity right here. And that, to me, is very fortunate to be able to live where you have your home and where you know you're going to have to be for the next, say five or 10 years.
- Dorothy Huyck: 15:39 Will you be given further on-the-job training? Or will you be sent to courses elsewhere? How will this opportunity for growth be realized as far as trainings?
- Carolyn West: 15:49 The additional duties and training. I have every opportunity for training that—
- Dorothy Huyck: 15:55 Have you already been sent to training?
- Carolyn West: 15:56 I have been to several, most of them dealing with a change in what I'm doing. Well, after I had been working with the financial plans for just on-the-job training, they adopted a whole new financial system: new printouts, new computers. And I was sent to Santa Fe on two different occasions. I was detailed with the budget office up there to work for a week, which to me is the best type of training that you can have. It really beats a classroom. And then administrative conferences, any that I'm eligible to attend, I have been to. Like I said, even some are available that I can't take advantage of, for personal reasons. I can't be gone this long, or I can't go that far or some other reasons, but they're still available to me.

- Dorothy Huyck: 16:48 How long do you find that you can be away from your family at one time?
- Carolyn West: 16:52 A week doesn't pose a hardship on us at all. And if possible, two weeks. The long, drawn out two or three-month courses would just be unrealistic for me to try to attend, I feel like.
- Dorothy Huyck: 17:09 During the time that you have worked for the Park Service, not the concessionaire, but strictly the Park Service, have you found your supervisors to be encouraging or discouraging, or have you encountered some of both? And I would suggest you not name names.
- Carolyn West: 17:27 Right, I won't. The first supervisor I ever had, as a cashier, was definitely encouraging. He was very firm. I mean, we knew exactly what our duties were, but he was very impartial. As long as these duties were performed, I don't think he realized sometimes which one of us was doing it, as long as everything was done as it was supposed to be, there was no problem. I was very impressed with him. And then I've only had one other supervisor. And like I said, I feel like sometimes that my opportunities are just unlimited. It just depends on what I want to put out. And I've never—
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:11 Your second supervisor has given you also that impression?
- Carolyn West: 18:15 Right. Definitely.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:17 So you've really encountered strictly encouragement?
- Carolyn West: 18:19 That's all I've encountered.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:21 That's great.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:21 There are some people, of course, who think of the National Park Service as a rather male-oriented organization.
- Carolyn West: 18:33 Really? I suppose it's – Of course, you deal with your own personal experiences. And I guess that's why I hadn't really thought of it that way, because I've never run into that.

- Dorothy Huyck: 18:43 So, you yourself would not think of the Park Service as male oriented, is that correct? As a male-oriented organization.
- Carolyn West: 18:50 No, I have never thought of it. Of course, I have worked on both sides. I have worked in administration, and I have worked out in the field. And sometimes that gives you a little bit broader idea of what's going on, I think.
- Carolyn West: 19:05 There are some people that have never worked in administration, and they think that all of this paper is just ridiculous. Necessary but ridiculous. Or there's people in here that I work with that think all those people studying those birds and those trees, that's just really far out, or they don't understand that a visitor is why we're here.
- Carolyn West: 19:24 And in turn, the people out there don't understand that we're the reason that they get funding. We're the reason that they can hire. We're the reason that they can do this.
- Carolyn West: 19:33 I feel real lucky to have worked in both areas, because I feel like I have a better understanding of how each portion needs the other to operate as a whole unit. You'd be surprised at really how biased some are, one way or the other, and on both sides, I'd say.
- Dorothy Huyck: 19:51 So with your broader experience, you can see both sides of the issue.
- Carolyn West: 19:54 I think. I've always felt that way.
- Dorothy Huyck: 20:01 Do you think that your specific talents and training are being well used by the Park Service?
- Carolyn West: 20:08 Yes, I feel like they are.
- Dorothy Huyck: 20:11 Has anyone acted as a mentor for you during your work for the Park Service?
- Carolyn West: 20:21 I don't understand exactly how you mean it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 20:22 Anyone who has been particularly supportive and helped you think through opportunities or changes or new possibilities?
- Carolyn West: 20:32 Yes, definitely.

- Dorothy Huyck: 20:39 Do you think that being a woman has, in any way, affected, pro or con, your opportunities for added responsibility and for promotions?
- Carolyn West: 20:51 I don't really think it's entered into it one way or the other. Now, it may depend on my particular field. It may be, like you say, this is male or either, and maybe my particular field is more, but I feel like no, it does not.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:07 Are you aware of any jobs in the Park Service that you think a woman really should not tackle?
- Carolyn West: 21:18 I felt like a laborer's job until this girl worked all summer as one, and she was big. She was able to do the work. I would think that, ordinarily, this wouldn't be the case. She was an extraordinarily large, strong person, and I don't feel like that she should have been hired for that job just to put her in that position, because there was too much trail work that needed desperately to be done, and someone needed to be able to do it physically. And she could and did. So, I can't think of anything after that.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:51 If you look at your own opportunity, say five years from now, and we're drawing out a plan as to where you'd like to be five years from now, have you some ideas as to how you'd like to see yourself situated in the future?
- Carolyn West: 22:06 No, I really haven't thought that far ahead, except that, like I said, I feel like with the growth that will be going on in this area in the next five years, it'll just be up to me. I think that's kind of overwhelmed me in itself. There's all kinds of opportunities and different positions being talked about every day. So, I haven't really thought about that much ahead.
- Dorothy Huyck: 22:28 Have you given any thought to where the opportunities for women, in general, may be five years from now, as far as the Park Service is concerned?
- Carolyn West: 22:39 Well, like I said, maybe I'm not very good judge, because I have been so encouraged and felt like I've had unlimited opportunities, but I don't feel like there's any limit right now on the opportunities available to women. The superintendents have proved that. The women's superintendents. Our associate regional director here is a woman in the regional office. I feel like if there is one that's

qualified and can handle the job, a regional director wouldn't seem unusual to me for Park Service.

- Dorothy Huyck: 23:16 And you think she would be appointed?
- Carolyn West: 23:19 Yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 23:20 If a person just out of school, a woman, came to you and asked you about joining the Park Service, would you encourage her to consider a Park Service career?
- Carolyn West: 23:26 Oh, definitely. Definitely.
- Dorothy Huyck: 23:30 What about one of your daughters?
- Carolyn West: 23:31 That's what I started to say. Even my own daughters I would encourage to. Of course, I'm sure it'll change many times, but the eldest one would like to be an archeologist, and that would just be beautiful.
- Carolyn West: 23:48 And it is especially – There is no better profession, especially for a single woman or especially for a woman with children that she's trying to raise alone. There's just no substitute for the way – If you can qualify, and if you're interested and apply yourself, they will move you any place. They take a lot of responsibility off of a single person, I think. A woman that may find it a little difficult, or even a man would find it difficult to raise children and be away from them all the time and have to plan.
- Carolyn West: 24:18 There just isn't any better profession, I don't think, if you want to apply yourself and work at it, because I feel like that if I were mobile, if I were alone, and I had to face certain responsibilities, that now I have help with, that within a year's time, I could be placed in any part of the country that I prefer. My children would always be in an area where there would be schools, and there is no better education to me than moving them from one area to another and learning about it. I just didn't realize how much I liked Park Service until you sit down and start to talk about it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 24:58 I'm just wondering if, by any chance, that in the administrative fields of women have been acceptable much longer than the other areas, such as law enforcement.

Carolyn West: 25:06 Sure, probably that's true. That's why I say maybe I'm not a real good judge, because—

Dorothy Huyck: 25:11 Well, we're interested in your experience too, of course.

Carolyn West: 25:14 But that is true. The type of work that I do, women have always been acceptable ever since the beginning. Even when they opened the caverns, they had the women that wrote the notes and the superintendent's narrative, this type thing. That's true.

Dorothy Huyck: 25:30 When they opened the caverns, and Mr. Boles was writing his monthly reports, Mr. Boles, did he originate all that?

Carolyn West: 25:36 Pardon me?

Dorothy Huyck: 25:37 Did somebody else write all of his notes?

Carolyn West: 25:38 I thought so. I think they're signed, aren't they? I mean, initialed with the old green copies. I don't know. It's been so many years since I looked at it. And he may have. He may have.

Dorothy Huyck: 25:47 His notes are almost unlike anyone else's.

Carolyn West: 25:50 I know it.

Dorothy Huyck: 25:53 Have you been able to compare what he wrote with other monthly [crosstalk 00:25:56]?

Carolyn West: 25:56 No, I have not.

Dorothy Huyck: 25:59 Well, they're very distinct.

Carolyn West: 26:00 Really? No, I just looked at his.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:03 And that's why I'm curious about whether the fact--I'm sure that somebody put the statistics together.

Carolyn West: 26:09 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:10 And I'm just wondering if someone else actually wrote all the narrative.

Carolyn West: 26:13 No, by that I mean the writing it up or the putting it together. A secretary-type person. That's what I'm thinking.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:19 Yes, I see. Or compiling.

Carolyn West: 26:20 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:21 I'm sure that having read some of Mr. Boles narratives and he must have—

Carolyn West: 26:25 Oh, he must have written them himself.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:28 They're very distinct from other monthly reports. Let me ask about your husband. Does he work for the Park Service?

Carolyn West: 26:37 Yes, he does. In fact, he went to work two years ago, I think. He hasn't been with the Park Service very long.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:45 What is his position?

Carolyn West: 26:47 He is an electrician.

Dorothy Huyck: 26:53 If an opportunity came up in another park that – Well, maybe I should ask have you been offered any other assignments in the Park Service?

Carolyn West: 27:02 There have been several vacancies that we've considered and not applied for. Of course, really, he's only been here a short time for changing position, but there have been two, I think, that we've seriously considered it for one reason or another. He did not apply for.

Dorothy Huyck: 27:24 Now, those would've been jobs that he could've applied for.

Carolyn West: 27:27 Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 27:28 What would happen if you became aware of a job that you could advance in elsewhere?

Carolyn West: 27:32 Well, I feel like this is one good thing about a skill like his. He can work anywhere at any time. In fact, we discussed and thought before he ever applied for this thing with the Park Service, because he just wasn't sure that's what he wanted. And at the time, it was a little difference in salary. Like I said, we seriously discussed it. If I had a position that I wanted to apply for enough, it wouldn't matter, because like I said, he can work any place. So, I think that's really – We're very fortunate in that, also.

Dorothy Huyck: 28:19 So if you were to become aware of an opening that you would fit into, and it would provide you with some new opportunities, he would be willing to consider that and possibly move along with you?

Carolyn West: 28:30 Sure.

Dorothy Huyck: 28:31 Which to a certain degree means you are mobile.

Carolyn West: 28:35 Right, I am to a certain degree. Now, we have some personal responsibilities right now, here. So, we don't feel like we are mobile for a two or three-year period, but either one of us – But should the occasion arise, or should these responsibilities shift from us to someone else right now, then yes, we would be very mobile.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:01 Are you financially responsible for anyone else?

Carolyn West: 29:05 Not financially, no. But we do help with – Of course, both of our families live here.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:11 Oh, they do?

Carolyn West: 29:14 Both families.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:14 Do you have any kind of financial responsibility over them?

Carolyn West: 29:23 No. No, we do not.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:23 So to some degree, you definitely are open to the possibility of moving elsewhere?

Carolyn West: 29:26 Sure. Right.

Dorothy Huyck: 29:28 And there would be no problem, as far as his taking his skills along?

Carolyn West: 29:33 No. In fact, there isn't any place that we could go that it wouldn't be an increase in salary for him, because the thing of it is that in his trade, the skill is very much in demand, the salaries are very high. However, they don't usually include things like health insurance and retirement that I have available to me. See, this is another thing that's just very fortunate for us.

- Dorothy Huyck: 30:04 I'm a little uncertain. Would he be hoping to find a situation where his skill would be applicable within a park or within the community near the park?
- Carolyn West: 30:14 Either way. Either way. So, chances are it would be not in a park. But then again, one position that he considered, I felt like I could—
- [TAPE STOPPED].
- Carolyn West: 30:47 —Tomorrow in the field that I'm in right now, but I feel like I could work it into or be around and available. Like I said, I've just found if you're willing to apply yourself, there are just all kinds of possibilities in my particular field.
- Dorothy Huyck: 31:03 And at this location?
- Carolyn West: 31:04 And at this location.
- Dorothy Huyck: 31:06 How would you go about assessing whether or not that same situation applied in another location? How would you go about looking at the possibilities for your own employment?
- Carolyn West: 31:19 The size of the area, the number of employees or positions, the administrative workload. Really, that would—
- Dorothy Huyck: 31:29 And how would you size up the opportunities as far as your husband's trade is concerned?
- Carolyn West: 31:40 I can't think—
- Dorothy Huyck: 31:41 Not necessarily in the park, but in the community.
- Carolyn West: 31:47 I don't know. I suppose it's the size of the area, the population of the area. However, they do have linemen and electricians in some very isolated spots that are very much – These positions are very difficult to fill. So, you couldn't really – I just feel like he could work anywhere, even in an isolated part of Arizona, where he had a little electric shop where he worked on pumps and things for ranchers and made good money. It was very – Well, the population was practically nil for the amount of square miles. I don't know. I don't what we would do. We've never been faced with that or had to decide particularly on that.

- Carolyn West: 32:36 And like I said, the only two moves that we've considered would have been for him. And I think they were probably attractive to us more, because we thought it was an area that we would like to live in rather than a financial advancement or this type of thing or thinking about financial matters, but more a matter of taste of where we'd like to live.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:02 I assume that neither of these areas was near a national park?
- Carolyn West: 33:06 Yes, both of them were in national parks.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:08 Oh, they were? Oh, he had an opportunity to go work with the Park Service—
- Carolyn West: 33:10 Right. With the Park Service.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:12 —at this time before his Park Service employment.
- Carolyn West: 33:14 No, both of these particular vacancies were Park Service.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:25 We've talked about our collection of subjects—
- Carolyn West: 33:27 Yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:29 Is there anything we haven't mentioned that you'd like to comment about, as far as your experience with the Park Service is concerned?
- Carolyn West: 33:36 No, I think we – Can't think of anything.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:42 All right, thank you very much.
- [RESTARTS RECORDING]
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:46 We've been talking about your decision to work after you were divorced and thinking about the care of your children. Is that correct?
- Carolyn West: 33:54 That's correct. And I mentioned earlier I had always wanted to work for the Park Service, but this was for a different reason. Now that I would decide I wanted to work for the Park Service, I felt like I could make a good employee. And I felt like, like I told you, that they could help me with

housing. That would be one worry that I wouldn't have had. They had housing available.

- Carolyn West: 34:19 Should I decide to move to some other area or take another job, that would alleviate a little of my responsibility of worrying about my travel or having my things moved or having to move my things myself. And they had a retirement plan, because at the time, I was divorced, and I felt fully like I would be single for a while, and I had two children to care for. They had good medical insurance, which with the children, I needed. And like I said, it became a very practical decision to work for them.
- Dorothy Huyck: 34:52 You also needed the income?
- Carolyn West: 34:54 The income, definitely. Well, the income was the primary factor.
- Dorothy Huyck: 35:01 In other words, at the time that you took all the tests and so forth with the objective of becoming a Park Service employee, you were in need of employment?
- Carolyn West: 35:10 Definitely.
- Dorothy Huyck: 35:11 This was not a whim of some sort.
- Carolyn West: 35:13 Oh, no. I didn't mean to give that impression.
- Dorothy Huyck: 35:16 No, I know you didn't give that impression.
- Carolyn West: 35:17 No. And then when I didn't remain single, it was still our decision. Like I said, the price of housing was going straight up. And when we realized the interest that we would have to pay marrying late, we wanted to get this stuff paid for and out of the way, and that made me decide to stay.
- Carolyn West: 35:41 It would've been even easier had I ever been a bored housewife. I've never been a bored housewife, even when I didn't work. I was the busy person, and it's real discouraging to me sometime to hear women talk about being bored, when I can't fit everything, I want to do in a 24-hour period. Very discouraging.
- Carolyn West: 36:02 But like I said, I didn't mean to indicate that I just worked. I have a definite purpose in mind. And so far, everything's

going according to plan. The fact that I have an unusually good job is to my benefit. And I feel very fortunate. But if I was not working at this job, I would be working at something else.

Dorothy Huyck: 36:24 I have heard comments in this part of the country, that wage scales for women are rather low. Not within the Park Service, but in general. Outside of the Park Service.

Carolyn West: 36:35 Yeah, and I wouldn't be a good judge of that, because I'm not familiar with the wage scale. My stepdaughter is working right now and attending – She's a senior in high school. She works a half a day at an abstract company and makes, I feel, a good wage for her experience, for her duties. But I'm comparing it to when I worked about the same age, and I just really haven't kept track of the change in wages enough to judge that.

Dorothy Huyck: 37:06 Well, thank you for adding this.

Carolyn West: 37:09 Yeah, you bet.

[END OF TAPE]

[END OF INTERVIEW]