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



Alice Gryskiewicz
October 12, 1978

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

- Dorothy Huyck: 00:00 The date is October 12, 1978. I am Dorothy Huyck. I will be interviewing Alice Gryskiewicz who is the administrative officer at the Western Archeological Center Tucson.
- Dorothy Huyck: 00:19 Can I ask you how you first became acquainted with the National Park Service?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 00:28 My first job was clerk typist GS-3 with Morristown National Historical Park in New Jersey.
- Dorothy Huyck: 00:35 When was that?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 00:37 1967, and it was just a quirk of fate that I did wind up in the National Park Service. I had worked for private business organizations, and I completed all my social security quarters and I thought well, I had some time with the federal government so I thought, "Well heck, I finished all my social security quarters so now it's time for me to pick up on my federal government because I had too many years to go before I could even think about retirement. There was an opening. I went to Picatinny Arsenal and took my civil service clerk typing test. I got my rating and I just waited for a vacancy with a federal agency, anyplace in the area.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 01:34 I got a call from Morristown National Historical Park, and they interviewed, they looked over my application and my rating and they wanted to know if I was still interested in a job. I said, "Oh yes, very much." Well, when I went to Morristown for my interview, I forgot that the Park Service ever existed in Morristown. But as soon as I got in the area for my interview, I noticed the Ford Mansion over there, and I knew immediately. I had been there years before with my daughter and other family friends. And I thought oh my goodness. At the time I visited just like so many people, I never dreamed, never thought anything about it associated as being a federal agency or the Park Service itself. Of course, that's changed no
- Dorothy Huyck: 02:24 Now long were you at Morristown?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 02:25 I was at Morristown until 1973.

Dorothy Huyck: 02:28 As a clerk typist throughout that time?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 02:31 No. I advanced to administrative clerk, and I took on more specific responsibilities for maintaining the budget and physical records of all the programs in the park. My first major responsibility was managing the general files. I was a file clerk and then I worked myself up there. Then after my husband passed away, I was free to move. Then I really had to think about a career, really concentrate on a career.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:07 Your husband died when you were working at Morristown?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:08 Yeah, he did.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:10 Where did you go from Morristown?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:11 To Boston Group which is now no longer existing.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:15 What year was that? '73?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:18 Yeah, that was in '73.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:18 And what position did you have?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:22 Administrative assistant. It was one of the first upward mobility training positions in the – at that time it was the Northeastern Regional Office. Now it's North Atlantic.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:35 What was the upward mobility situation like as the possibility for advancement?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:40 In administrative office positions, management. A supervisory position.

Dorothy Huyck: 03:45 And therefore, you went there as what grade?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 03:49 I started there as a five and then, of course, after your training period I got my seven.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:01 Still in Boston Group?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 04:02 Yeah, it was Boston Group. But I have to say the Boston Group I think it was in January, they formed a new regional office, the North Atlantic Regional Office. And until their space was available and made ready in Boston, they came to our office. And then that was the headquarters of

Minuteman National Historical Park. So, they stayed with us for three months until their space was available and they could move in. And we did perform all administrative services, procurement, and everything else to get their supplies and equipment and help get them established.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:43

Once they were established [crosstalk 00:04:43].

Alice Gryskiewicz: 04:43

The Boston Group, right. Now, the Boston Group was then deleted. It was just dissolved. That's all there was to it.

Dorothy Huyck: 04:54

Where did you go?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 04:55

I got absorbed and let me put the word absorb in because that's exactly what happened to me. I was absorbed by Minuteman National Historical Park. And it is in writing someplace that I was absorbed by the park, and I think that's quite funny.

Dorothy Huyck: 05:11

So you did not go to the regional office?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 05:17

Yes, I did. I worked while I was working for Minuteman National Historical Park I split my time, my weekly time and I used to go into the Boston regional office there to help them out at least two days a week to help get established and set up. And then I was accepted – I got transferred.

Dorothy Huyck: 05:46

Here?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 05:47

To Gateway National Recreation Area in Brooklyn. And I supervised – Well I went there as a general supply specialist and I supervised all the procurement, property management, quarters maintenance. Anything to do with supplies and equipment services for the whole area. And that's quite a unique area because it encompasses two states and we do have four park operating units under supervision of a superintendent at each one. So, it was quite a big job. And for a newly established park – I went there in May '74 – and they just opened up their doors to the public – Well, they opened up the doors. They established the park March of '74 and I got there at May of '74. I think it was something around the 27th or something like that and it was the holiday Memorial Day weekend.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 06:57 Well, that was the day that they officially opened up to the public and they had nothing. They had nothing. Had nothing in the way of equipment, staffing, supplies, anything to open up your doors and it was really bedlam. It was bedlam, but you'd be surprised at how innovative and how you can make do with what you have.
- Dorothy Huyck: 07:20 Now when you walked in [inaudible 00:07:23]?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 07:23 Yes, I was.
- Dorothy Huyck: 07:24 And what innovations did you bring about where you coped with this?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 07:29 Well, whatever equipment was leftover by the city or buildings, anything. Anything in the way of supplies, buildings. Anything until our orders came through. We had furniture. Some furniture was received, some was still on its way in. But whatever we had that was available whether it was old – most of it was old and used – but whatever it was we just made do. We made do until our supplies came in.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 07:58 And we could get our buildings rehabbed. The buildings had to be remodeled. We didn't have enough plugs, you know, or we didn't have enough lighting fixtures. The windows were rotting out. I'll tell you it was really bad. One of the better Navy buildings was being remodeled and in the process of being rehabbed for the U.S. Park Police. So, everybody was crammed in this general headquarters building. We had the Park Police upstairs and we had Jamaica Bay Unit downstairs. And upstairs we had the administrative offices and the superintendent's office there. It was really a unique experience. But we made do and whatever equipment we had; we made do with that.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 08:47 And we had some of the older Jeeps that the military didn't want anymore, and they felt "Well heck, they weren't going to bother excessing or surplusing it off, it's not going to serve us, it's not useful to anybody." Well, we just made sure that we patched up – we had a bunch of mechanics or machinists or anybody who had any little bit of knowledge to fix things up we did. And we used them. And we opened up on Memorial Day and let the people in on the beaches.

- Dorothy Huyck: 09:16 That's what [inaudible 00:09:19] let them in on the beaches.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 09:19 Yeah, well not only that but they came out to Floyd Bennett Field because Jamaica Bay Unit was there, and Jamaica Bay went ahead and started their program. It was an environmental study program for school children and a lot of other neighboring – I imagine they're private organizations or they could have been run by the city-the day camps. We had an awful lot of children in day camp visitation out there. And you know how Jamaica Bay was spread out. The unit just didn't operate on Floyd Bennett Field. They operated at different areas like Plumb Island and Plumb Beach location and Jamaica Bay, Horse Bay – I think that's what they call it – section. But all these little different inlets.
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:24 What was the status of the refuge that's near [inaudible 00:10:25] at that time?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 10:25 Well, they had private birdwatching associations and organizations that used the refuge and, of course, the city really could not keep up. They just didn't have the facilities, it didn't have the manpower, it didn't have the money to keep up all these facilities.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 10:45 Oh, Frank Charles tennis courts and park. That's another part of Jamaica Bay Unit.
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:50 That was open initially also?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 10:52 And that was open initially also. However, there was quite extensive work that had to be done because the city just closed up its use. They just couldn't keep it up. So actually, all we were – what we really took over from the city and from the Army and Navy at these bases or at these areas – were a bunch of old, broken down barrack type buildings and a bunch of the broken down equipment.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 11:23 As a matter of fact, a lot of the buildings didn't have any power to them because they just ripped the switches off and everything else and just left the wires hanging there. But they stripped everything clean. And this is what we were left with to operate. Broken windows and everything else. But we made do. We really made do.

- Dorothy Huyck: 11:42 Were you also involved with [inaudible 00:11:44] technically speaking in New Jersey?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 11:46 Oh yeah. Sandy Hook, sure. We administered all the supplies and equipment and the operating programs. Anything that they needed. Contracting work was also handled through our office. All procurement was handled through our office. So, we were liaison with all these areas.
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:06 And that was in '74?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 12:09 Yeah, that was in '74 and I worked there two years and three months until '76. August 27, 1976, I came to WACC. I came here to the center. My first trip out West. And a new region and that's part of my career goals anyhow to work in every region of the Park Service. I'm going to say within the Park Service. It's the best agency I know of to work for.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 12:41 It's very diverse, it's interesting, I like people, I like traveling and since I'm alone that's my career goals just to continue working, traveling around until I retire.
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:55 When you came here you came as an administrative officer?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 12:58 Yes, I did.
- Dorothy Huyck: 13:04 And what grade is that?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 13:04 That's an 11. I'm finding difficulty right now trying to – I apply for vacancies, and I think I'm sort of high graded and I'm outclassing myself or out pricing myself if you want to put it that way. The jobs that are open now for the 12s and the 13s are all management and somehow it's very, very hard – I don't know whether it's because I'm a woman, but it seems to me that all the management jobs are really given, you know, the ones that I apply for may send me the letter thank you for applying, don't give up trying – they don't know me very well anyhow, I've been in the Park Service too long to ever give up – but they never tell you why you weren't selected. What's your weak points? And yet when we evaluate our employees, we have to point out their weaknesses and their strengths and I think they ought to do that too, when you apply for a vacancy.
- Dorothy Huyck: 14:13 So you currently have already applied for other vacancies?

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 14:13 Oh, you bet you. Yes, I have. Well, right now I've got applications in. They haven't evaluated them yet. As of two weeks ago I filed in Washington for the management trainee. What are they called? They call it senior level management trainee positions and they have, I think there's three positions in each region that's open with the exception of North Atlantic Region. And North Atlantic Region had their own vacancy open.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 14:51 So, I applied to all nine regions, so I figured heck, I ought to hit one of them. But I don't really – I'll take a lateral transfer if it's within my interests. I don't say, "Well I'm going to hold out for a 12 and it's got to be a 12 and it's got to be a management position." I'd just as soon go and be a contract specialist. I'd just as soon go into a non-supervisory position because it's very important to me to be able to specialize within my field of knowledge and experience.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 15:33 Being an administrative officer is very difficult because I've got so many operations that I have to supervise and be aware of and I'm not giving them my full attention. I feel as if I'm cheating. I really do. I feel as if I'm cheating the Center because I'm not really giving them my best efforts that I feel I can that I do have skills and abilities for. And if I am weak in these skills and abilities that are needed to do the job properly the way it should be done, and for the best interest of the agency, then I can study on it and concentrate my efforts on it so that I do a better job. But being an administrative officer, you just can't do this.
- Dorothy Huyck: 16:25 You're spread too thin.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 16:26 I am spread too thin, and it bothers me because there's an awful lot of areas that I really would like to spend more time and I would really like to contribute toward the development of some of these new programs like Upward Mobility.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 16:48 We have our first Upward Mobility position was filled in the procurement office and that's fine. But do you know that I don't have really enough time to sit there and spend with this person who has had no Park Service procurement training whatsoever. And that's what the Upward Mobility position is all about to take her out of the field of a secretary into the administrative field and open up new

doors for her for advancement. But I can't give her the benefits of my knowledge and experience. I don't have the time to sit there, and it bothers me not to be able to do that.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 17:31 Personnel management is being reorganized; the whole program is. There's a lot of areas there that really do need some comment and deep in-depth study on it. I'd like to do it. I don't have the time to do it.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 17:47 Contracting. I take care of all the contracting administration functions that go on here in the Center and I'll tell you, we have some very, very difficult and complex contracts.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:00 Such as?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 18:02 For any type of professional services, studies, research, investigations, archeological investigations done on Indian reservations. Hey, that's a touchy subject today and very, very carefully. You have to tread very carefully. You also have to be very, very aware of the evaluations. You really do. You have to give your thorough attention when you evaluate proposals for any of these contracts. You really do. You just can't skim over them. I really think you do have to devote an awful lot of time.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 18:49 And you must read these proposals through. You must read the qualifications of these people who are proposing to do the work for you because they're entering into or trespassing – actually I would say they're going into the private life of other people and boy, they have their own cultures and they have their own religions and it's very, very important that you don't trespass upon them.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 19:23 It's the same thing as if you were having a perfect stranger just feel that they can walk into your house anytime because the government is saying that yes, they can. They're giving them a right of way. Well, that's how you have to view these contracts. That's why I say you need background information before that contract is let out, I think it's very important to study these proposals and learn as much as you can about the person who's going to do the work for you before you ever allow them or make any determinations as to whether they are qualified to do it.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 20:01 I'll tell you that's difficult because you can make a – Well, there is a team of evaluators, but you may influence others

in your opinions and your viewpoints. And you can guess wrong. Or if you're not going to take the time and feel that it's important enough to study thoroughly, you could discredit them without even knowing it. And I really think that if you're going to do that, you're not going to take the interest in it then don't go into that field or don't even take part in it. At the same time, you don't want to hurt these people or give them a feeling as if well, we're going to disturb your private life because we have a right to enter into your privacy. I don't think that's right either. I don't know what else you – Boy there are a lot of things. You get me starting, a lot of things I could talk about.

- Dorothy Huyck: 21:00 Can I go back in your own history and ask when and where you were born?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:04 Oh, sure. I don't mind. November 18, 1927, Elizabeth, New Jersey.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:14 And how many other children were in your family?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:17 I have a sister four years older. Now she's different. As a matter of fact, one of the members of the family even based his thesis on the difference between my sister and I and our personalities and our habits. We're as different as day and night.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:43 Did you grow up in Elizabeth, New Jersey?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:45 Oh yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:46 Did you graduate from high school there?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:47 Yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:49 Was either of your parents a college graduate?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:52 My father.
- Dorothy Huyck: 21:54 And what was his occupation?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 21:56 My father was a machinist, and he was educated in European schools. And he graduated college there because his father had died, and his mother had gone back to Czechoslovakia with him and his two brothers to the town where her family. You might as well say the family was

well established in the town. They had all the official offices, and they managed the bank over there, so it was a family affair. That's where she took the three boys back.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 22:36 So that's how come he was, but he was a U.S. citizen. He was born here.
- Dorothy Huyck: 22:41 Your mother was not a college graduate.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 22:43 No, my mother isn't. My mother was born in Hungary, and she came here when she was 14. And they settled in Ohio.
- Dorothy Huyck: 22:51 Did she have any professional interests of any kind? Any business interests?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 22:54 No, she didn't have the time because my dad got ill, and she had to go out and work.
- Dorothy Huyck: 23:00 Oh, she did work.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 23:01 Yes, she did. She worked in dress factories because she knew how to se Of course she worked at different jobs when she lived in Ohio. But my grandmother had a restaurant and a boarding house and that was her business and my mother helped her out.
- Dorothy Huyck: 23:21 Did you have any further studies after high school?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 23:24 Yeah. Right after high school, first of all I wanted to go into the nursing profession and at that time World War II was still raging on and I was accepted to the government nursing program and that was a five-year course that would have led to a BS degree I think if I can remember back at that time. That was the plan anyhow. But I had qualified in my studies, and I had enough credits, and I was just after graduation I would be automatically be accepted into this five-year program. However, unfortunately when I was a junior in high school, I had an ice-skating accident and I messed up my back a little bit. It did give me trouble in my senior year. I had to be in a plaster cast for three months trying to straighten it out. It did but the doctor would not pass my physical exam because he said that I would never be able to handle the patients. At that time, you had to pick up the patients and move them around and everything else. Now you do get orderlies, or you do get help.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 24:49 But in those days it was incumbent upon the nurse to do it all by herself. And he said I would never be able to do it. And so, I had to quickly change my plans because all these years I had been preparing myself to go into the nursing field.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 25:03 In the meantime while I was trying to make up my mind as to what I wanted to do in life, I took a bookkeeping – I had shorthand and typing in school and that was only to help me in my college days to transcribe notes from the lectures that I would have to take. I never thought it would ever be my bread and butter. That was never within my career plans to ever work in an office and to use my shorthand and typing as a means or a way of living. And by golly, that's just what turned out, so you really don't know.
- Dorothy Huyck: 25:48 You never went to work in an office after high school?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 25:52 Yeah, right after graduation for the summer months and then I took courses at the – Well, I took courses over at NJC, but I didn't finish the courses, so I don't even use that as any background. Another thing too, it was in home economics. Now home economics is fine if you're going to be – Well, I thought that perhaps maybe I would go into study as a dietician since I couldn't be a nurse. I thought well that was the next best thing or closest related field. Well, I didn't think so after – I changed my mind. I really got discouraged and another thing too, I had a poor counselor, guidance counselor at high school.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 26:45 All she kept on saying was at that time they had an overabundance of teachers, and the teaching field was the worst field to go into. It was the worst field to go into. You wouldn't get a job. I mean history does repeat itself. It's the same thing today too. Don't plan on a teaching career because by golly, they just don't have – The field is just overloaded with teachers.
- Dorothy Huyck: 27:08 So where did you therefore take your initial job?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 27:13 I started in a manufacturing company in Elizabeth, New Jersey and, of course, after the war was over – they manufactured hoists for the Navy vessels – and of course after the war was over the government contracts canceled and they closed down a lot of their operations. And then I had, geez I've got to think of where I went after that.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 27:49 Oh, I got a job in a brewery. I had very fascinating jobs. I'll tell you. I learned an awful lot though. I learned a lot about accounting concepts and principles, time and study analysis, being a statistical secretary for a traffic manager. Now that's unusual. And working in a brewery. I learned an awful lot about that. And then the brewery closed down.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 28:18 I got married and we moved to the Lake area. And then I went into Picatinny Arsenal over there.
- Dorothy Huyck: 28:28 Let's go back to high school if I may for just a bit.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 28:29 Yeah, sure.
- Dorothy Huyck: 28:31 During the time you were in high school, was there someone who encouraged you? You spoke about a counselor who was discouraging. Was there anyone in your family or a teacher who was encouraging or maybe not?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 28:43 My family. Both my mother and father always encouraged us to go on to higher education. It would have been difficult for them to have us to go a college away from home. We would have had to commute which was NJC – That was College for Women now, back then it was NJC.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 29:11 As I said I took bookkeeping and general business courses in Elizabeth right after graduation and that sort of prepared me for office work which I really did not have any background education. I didn't study toward that. Your high school subjects, you know, if you were going in the field of nursing or a specialized field those were the subjects you were going to take and, of course, I wasn't going into office work, so I didn't have any of those.
- Dorothy Huyck: 29:43 In high school did you also take math and science courses?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 29:46 Oh yes. Biology, chemistry and all the – and in math I had the algebra, trigonometry. All the math and sciences.
- Dorothy Huyck: 29:58 Geometry?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 29:59 Yes, ma'am. Oh yes, required.
- Dorothy Huyck: 30:02 Advanced [inaudible 00:30:02].
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 30:02 Yes.

- Dorothy Huyck: 30:03 Were these courses everyone took or were these—
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 30:06 No, just those that were going on into the career fields. Higher levels. They called them higher levels of education. Those were the fields.
- Dorothy Huyck: 30:16 Were they courses that were more frequently taken by boys?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 30:21 Our high school was unique. We were all girls.
- Dorothy Huyck: 30:23 Oh.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 30:27 I took a navigation course over at the boy's school. I got three extra credits and that was in preparation with wartime and if I ever got lost at sea or something like that and then I would have to find my way. So, I took the navigation course that they were teaching over at the boy's school, and I got up an hour earlier in the morning and I took my classes in the morning. I got very good marks. I got my three extra credits and I'll tell you that when I was working at the Boston Group – It's really funny. In Massachusetts I got lost a block away from my home taking a shortcut through a wooded area that I was not familiar with. And I got all twirled around and I got lost in this one block area. Here I've always been teased because I can get lost very easily. And here I had this navigation course. Two girls started out taking that navigation course and I wound up being the only girl.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 31:39 The other girl dropped out and being at an all boys school they said, "Well, you're only doing it because of all the boys over there." And well, I just proved that wasn't the reason. I was really sincere about and interested in this course but by god, you would never know it the way I get lost no
- Dorothy Huyck: 32:02 Going back to your childhood, when you were a child did you play with boys?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 32:08 Oh, sure.
- Dorothy Huyck: 32:09 Were you by any chance considered a tomboy?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 32:11 Yes, very much so.

- Dorothy Huyck: 32:14 As you became a teenager, were you expected to become more of a lady?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 32:22 No, you mean as far as the family was concerned? Yeah, probably as far as my sister was concerned, yes. But I told you she was this – I was interested in sports and I was in the city and state band and orchestra.
- Dorothy Huyck: 32:36 Did you rebel to some extent against this idea of becoming a lady?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 32:43 Yes, I'd say yes because I didn't like to be restricted or I just didn't want to get hamstrung with conventional ways. I guess I maybe had to exercise my freedom and I had my own ideas. And this is what I resented if people didn't respect me for my own personal ideas and viewpoints.
- Dorothy Huyck: 33:09 Now were there extracurricular activities you were involved in in high school and have been helpful since then in working at the National Park Service?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 33:18 Well yeah, the extracurricular, yeah sure because being in city band and the state orchestra I used to – We used to play at all sports functions but then I used to make acquaintances and I used to go on to school groups, dances, meetings. We used to go square dancing. We had a square-dancing team. We had a jazz band that we used to play over at the – One of the members in our jazz band happened to be Jewish and we used to go over to the Jewish Y and we used to practice over there.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 34:07 We used to go swimming. I was on swimming teams.
- Dorothy Huyck: 34:13 Are these things that have been helpful in some ways working for the Park Service?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 34:16 You betcha because I got to meet people and I got to know people. I got to know what they're like and what they looked for. I got to know – I learned through them about some of them moved in from different areas of the country. I got to know about the country. I got very much interested in places and people and things and how their different environments affected them and their habits. Their work habits. So yeah, I'd say much so.

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 34:46 And my family was in business. My father's family has been in business in Elizabeth for a long, long time. We were well known, and my grandmother was the first lady butcher in Elizabeth. I don't know what that says but I just grew up in an atmosphere where we were well known by everybody. I came in contact with people in the area and I just had a natural interest for them. I didn't live in a shell, and I wasn't cut off from anybody.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 35:24 As a matter of fact, I was allowed, and I was exposed to all ways of life and people. And we had no class distinctions or anything else like that. So that's why when they were having all these racist problems – Well, I've been on EEO for goodness sakes ever since Morristown days. When I hear of discrimination complaints, there at the beginning I just couldn't understand what was happening because I wasn't used to this. I wasn't exposed to it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 35:59 When you say you've been on EEOs since Morristown days—
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:02 EEO committee.
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:03 Oh, okay.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:04 At Morristown I was elected EEO counselor and that's when we first started with EEO programs in the Park Service.
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:13 Can I ask you a question about your Park Service career now?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:19 What about it?
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:20 Several questions. I'd like to ask about any persons who have been your supervisors since you've been in the Park Service.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:27 And who helped me on the way up?
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:29 No, just a minute.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:29 My mentors?

- Dorothy Huyck: 36:31 I'd like to ask you whether or not you found your supervisors only in the Park Service to be encouraging or discouraging or whether you've met some of both?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:40 Well, I've been fortunate. I've been one of the lucky ones. Every single supervisor I've had has done nothing but encourage me.
- Dorothy Huyck: 36:48 In what way was that shown?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 36:51 If I expressed an interest in learning something new, any new operation or I wanted to expand, I wanted to know a little bit more and I started asking questions, they always were there to answer me and they helped me expand as much as I wanted to.
- Dorothy Huyck: 37:08 Would it be correct to say that they encouraged your growth?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 37:11 Yes, I would say my growth and my development. Sure, without them I could have never gotten this far because I just have a natural instinct. I like to investigate, and I like to find out a little bit more than what's on the surface. My job at Morristown I took care of all the central files so everything came across my desk. Anything concerning the Park Service operations either at Morristown, regional offices, any other areas all came across my desk. I also when they had short staffing and they didn't have any help to greet the visitors and take them around on tours at the museum, at the Ford Mansion or in the museum building itself, or to work at the visitor's services desk, I used to go up there and help out.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 38:08 It was fascinating because I got to meet everybody. This is where my Park Service experience began. And my supervisor, the AO, who just recently retired, she encouraged it. She didn't mind because she knew that whatever time I might have taken over there I would make up for it or I couldn't keep on with my daily schedule. I'd say she was encouraging.
- Dorothy Huyck: 38:40 There are some people who consider the National Park Service as a rather male oriented organization—
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 38:45 It is. It is but I never felt that way because I had three women supervisors and the other supervisors, and I worked

with men most of the time, and it was male oriented. Let's face it. And I never had any problem though. I'll tell you one thing. It's a heck of a lot easier to work for a man than it is – to work for a man and to work with a man – than it is to work for a woman.

Dorothy Huyck: 39:20

Why is that?

Alice Gryskiewicz: 39:21

I don't know what it is. Is it because of hidden jealousies? I don't know? Is it because perhaps maybe the one woman perceives the other woman should behave in a different way? Maybe they have certain prejudices. Maybe they have certain inborn controls that were imposed upon them through childhood and they just can't understand. I have a gay, open attitude. I don't have a narrow minded. Heaven help me if I ever do get a narrow view or perspective.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 40:02

I like to be open. I like to see everything around me. I like to see a little beyond that. And then that way I think I can do my job better and I've got a better life, too. I'm happier and I learn more so maybe some women aren't like that. Maybe they've been too restricted in their childhood. Maybe that's what it was. I could say maybe the actions or reactions to some of the things that I've done on two of my supervisors probably have been a result of this.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 40:44

They probably look at me. I don't know how to explain it but I've got this free, open, almost carefree attitude. Maybe they think for my age I should act differently. I don't know, but certainly now one of them is younger than I am, was younger than I am and I never think of age as a barrier or making any difference.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 41:08

But maybe she did because I think she would stiffen up and say – Maybe she viewed or associated me with older members of her family saying, "Oh well. They act like that. She should act like that too." I don't know what it is. It's strange. I would like to someday when I have a little bit more time, I'll think about it a little bit more and maybe I'll find the answer. I don't know Maybe I'll make an evaluation and I'll really think about the actions or the attitudes that these other people have shown to me. Maybe I'll find the answer, but I don't really care because it doesn't bother me one way or another.

Dorothy Huyck: 41:50

Has anyone acted as a mentor for you?

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 41:53 Yeah, I'd say I really didn't know what a mentor was until I took my first – Last year I took a course here at the U of A, Women in Management. And they started talking about a mentor and mentor/mentee and how to get ahead as a woman to compete against all the men in business, in management, supervisory positions.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 42:24 I thought I knew what a mentor was, but I wasn't too sure and I said, "Do you have to have a mentor to get ahead in business, in management?" And they said, "Well, for women, yeah. You really should. Almost everybody's got a mentor." I said, "Well, is it sort of like a teacher or a maybe a guidance counselor or somebody who really has a personal interest in you and wants to see you get ahead."
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 42:54 And they said, "Yes, that's what a mentor is." And then I said, "Well-" So they said, "Well, who is your mentor? Do you have any mentor?" And I said, "Really no, I don't." Everybody I worked with ever since I got from my first job after graduation of high school, be they male or female, I seem to have just gotten along with them and they've always had my interest at heart. And they just taught me, and they trained me. They asked questions. Whatever I wanted to know they did.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 43:27 They took special time out to see me and help me get along. And so, I really don't. I can't really say that I have a mentor, one specific person. The only one – And this was a question I asked in class, how about my mother and father. Could I consider them as a mentor?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 43:49 Well no, it had to be somebody that you were associated with in your connection with business or in school, but not your personal family or close family. So, if there is a mentor in the Park Service then I say yes, I've got one and that is the deputy superintendent of Gateway National Recreation Area. He was my superintendent when I was in the Boston Group. Terrific administrator. I think the Park Service is fortunate to have him and I'm most fortunate that I worked under him, really.
- Dorothy Huyck: 44:28 You referred to having taken this course on women in management from the University of Arizona. Have you taken other courses or training center programs that the Park Service has sent you to?

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 44:37 Yes, the administrative workshop courses. I took a communications course. That was a two-week in-depth study course. That was rough. That course was rough.
- Dorothy Huyck: 44:52 Where was that given?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 44:53 At Harpers Ferry. Andy Cardos was our instructor. He's a terrific instructor. He really is. The first week though was really a mind-bending thing and it had a very traumatic effect. As a matter of fact, so much so that some people didn't even get over it the second week. And I resented very much the first week that people should dare to invade my privacy and try to look inside me and see what makes me tick.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 45:24 And that's what the course was really all about. That's how intense it was. It was a two-week intense course and I understand they had one that was even worse than that.
- Dorothy Huyck: 45:37 When did you take this course?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 45:40 I was at Gateway, and I must have taken that course in 1975. And the reason I wanted the communications course was because I was so buried under paperwork and the technical aspects of my job that I was referring to myself as being chained to my desk. Like I lived there at Floyd Bennett. I was only two minutes or three minutes in the wintertime when the wind was blowing strong from the office. And as I said, we were a new area just getting on our feet and I had so much of a workload that I used to work from--It was nothing to work 10 or 12 hours a day.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 46:29 But if I'm really interested, I throw my whole self right into the job and that's it. And I've been criticized for that. As a matter of fact, my mentor who if I have to have one, whom I regard as my mentor and responsible for achieving any sort of success in the Park Service as a woman, and getting very close to management, said, "You know what? Alice, I don't know what I'm going to do with you. You're a workaholic." But you know he is too because he's guilty of doing the same thing.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:12 But he said, "You're just a workaholic. I don't know what I'm going to do about you." And I just look and say, "Et tu."

- Dorothy Huyck: 47:20 This being the case would you say that the Park Service is using well your specific talents and training and abilities?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:31 I don't know if they recognize it or not when I do go into a new area.
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:37 But do you feel that the Park Service uses your abilities well?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:41 Yeah, I think they do. I think they do.
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:44 Do you think that being a woman has affected your opportunities for added responsibilities and promotion?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:51 I think so now that I'm up there in the graded area. Okay, to do a little bit more—
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:55 Is that a pro or con?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:55 Huh?
- Dorothy Huyck: 47:58 How does this affect your—
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 47:59 It's hard for me to say whether it is affecting me because as I said, I've got these positions, these applications in for these management vacancies. I applied to the mid-level management training program last year and it was returned. I was not selected. John Klonce [?] was selected from our area, but a woman was selected for that and that made me very happy. It happens to be Phyllis Shaw in Programs and Budgets in the regional office. And I was so happy for her that she was selected because everybody over here tells me okay, now the other females over here in WACC, they tell me that you'll find out your age has an awful lot – is a drawback for you and the fact that you are a woman. You're never going to get ahead. All the higher-level jobs are going to go to men.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 49:00 "Well," I said, "that's a lot of bunk and nonsense. I'm going to be evaluated for what I know and what I can do, and for all the help that I can give to the area that I'm working in. That's my main concern." I said, "That certainly is what we're supposed to be evaluated on in our vacancies or our applications." And they said, "Well, you'll find out. You'll find out."

- Alice Gryskiewicz: 49:28 So I don't know I haven't found out yet whether this is the case.
- Dorothy Huyck: 49:33 Looking back over your past career with the Park Service then would you say that being a woman has affected your opportunities?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 49:39 It has not because don't forget, I was mainly concerned to perform clerical menial duties, not supervisory and management duties. And I can't tell you whether this is going to affect me now later on to go into a higher position.
- Dorothy Huyck: 49:56 So you do not feel like you've been out of the clerical role long enough to know whether or not this is affecting you?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 50:01 Right. I really don't.
- Dorothy Huyck: 50:06 Do you think there are any jobs in the Park Service that a woman really should not tackle?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 50:14 No, as far as the Park Service is concerned, I think that any positions that would require strenuous activities such as climbing or hiking or going for days – living for days in isolated areas. I think if the person is not of physical health, okay. I don't think it makes any difference whether they're a male or female. And another thing, too. With the age of improving equipment and having so many facilities available to us, I don't think there's any problem. I don't think there's any distinction anymore. There used to be but I don't think there is anymore. We have too many mechanical tools and machinery to help us out so what difference does it make whether you're a male or female. It's how you approach the task, I think.
- Dorothy Huyck: 51:21 Do you see anything like an old girl network evolving among women in the Park Service?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 51:29 I'm not too sure I understand what you mean by that.
- Dorothy Huyck: 51:32 Well, men frequently form what you might call an old boy network. They keep in touch. They inform each other about opportunities and so forth.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 51:41 Women are not apt to do that.

- Dorothy Huyck: 51:44 If you could look down the road say five years from now, how do you see the opportunities for women in the Park Service?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 51:51 Oh, I'd say 50% better than what they are today.
- Dorothy Huyck: 51:55 Why?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 51:57 Because women are coming out of their shells and the younger women have been grown up, okay. Being exposed to all this talk it's almost, I suppose, back in the days when what was it, the 1920s when the women earned their right to vote. The children back in those days grew up hearing nothing but their mothers, all the female members of the family, close associates, the only topic of the day was voting. Voting rights. Being able to vote.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 52:29 This is what children of today are growing up with too. And children who are in high school, they're learning this. They're learning this in school so why shouldn't it be any better for the women. Why shouldn't it? Because all kinds of opportunities and doors will be opened up by then and I'd say yes, in about five years 50% better for the women. And maybe the ERA will be in the Constitution too by then. It'll have to be. It's inevitable.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:07 I'd like to ask about when you were married.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:10 Yeah.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:11 What year were you married?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:12 1946.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:14 And your husband died in 1970?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:17 He died in 1972.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:19 Have you remarried?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:21 No.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:21 Have you children?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:23 Yes.

- Dorothy Huyck: 53:23 How many children?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:24 I have one girl. She's 29 and she's got a boy. I have a grandson and he's nine years old.
- Dorothy Huyck: 53:38 If a young woman approached you and suggested she might be interested, someone just out of school, but she might be interested in joining the National Park Service. Would you encourage her?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 53:49 Absolutely. By all means. I'd encourage anybody to come into the Park Service. Unfortunately, the National Park Service doesn't have enough jobs open. It's true.
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:05 Do you currently have any financial responsibilities for anybody other than yourself?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 54:09 Yes. My daughter and my grandson live with me. She's divorced and she has found it very hard to get a job here in Tucson. You know women are regarded only for one thing here in Tucson. You know that. They'll take the menial jobs or else they're only good for sex or something else like that. They are not – The man is the only sex that's really considered.
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:42 Is that particular to Tucson?
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 54:45 Yeah, well it's not only particular to Tucson but it seems to be part of the Old World cultural heritage.
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:52 Of the Southwest.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 54:54 Of the Southwest, right.
- Dorothy Huyck: 54:55 And this, in turn, affects the opportunities for women.
- Alice Gryskiewicz: 54:59 I think so. I think here in Tucson, but over here in Tucson too, don't forget, we have an awful lot of people coming in during the seasonal, the best seasons of the year. And we've got an awful lot of retired people coming in and these people who have established themselves years back. They do. They get the part-time jobs. It's just automatic.
- Dorothy Huyck: 55:23 I've been asking you quite a number of questions. Is there something about the National Park Service and your experience as an employee that I have not asked about, but

that you would like to comment on. I know you mentioned a couple of things before we started taping.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 55:42

Oh, I think I covered most of them. As I said I'm at this point right now where I don't know how being a woman my age is going to affect my career. I don't know because as I said, I've got these applications in for these top level positions. If I am not selected for them then I might start thinking why? Is it because I'm a woman? Is it because of my age? Is it because of my supervisory evaluation? Just because Carla's my supervisor and I'm working under her for this agency it doesn't mean that we see eye to eye on different things. And, of course, Carla is younger than I am too. I don't resent the fact. As I said, I don't even take age into consideration as to who my supervisor is.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 56:48

It's just working for the benefit of the agency. That's my concern and I get my satisfaction that way. And doing the best job I can. But if that's what's going to happen and if I find out, if I start suspecting that it may be because of my sex and it may be because of my age that's keeping me from getting any advancing in my career.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 57:13

Then I'll start – I'm known for being an investigator and I'll start digging into it to really find out, to confirm my suspicions to find out whether I'm right or wrong. But I hate to see that because I think National Park Service is the only federal agency where this should not happen and it really shouldn't because our main concern is providing the public and that means all types of people, both sexes providing the public with places for their enjoyment.

Alice Gryskiewicz: 57:53

And areas for them to visit. That makes no difference what you are, what age group you're in. So that's why I don't – I'd hate to see that happen in the Park Service, you know, where they start making the distinction between these jobs are for men only and a woman can't do it. Because there isn't any job in the Park Service that a woman can't do really. So, I'd hate to see that happening. It should not happen. There should be no class distinctions in the Park Service because the main mission of the Park Service is to serve all the people and let's not make any distinctions about sex.

Dorothy Huyck: 58:34

Thank you, Alice.

[END OF TAPE]

[END OF INTERVIEW]