

Code	517056
Subject:	Dean Perry
Date:	6/24/2008
Interviewer:	
Special Notes:	grounds and trails work,Cuyahoga Valley National Park,Dean Perry,John Debo,Gleason Farm,tow path trail work,flooding in valley

Minutes:

0 intro and personal background infor
 family moved from Birmingham AL during "great migration" when Perry was in 2nd
 1 grade

2 Perry always interested in nature, grandfather was gentleman farmer in Alabama,
 began working as seasonal motor vehical operator in park twenty five years ago,
 3 worked up to heavy equipment

worked up through ranks, learned various maintenance work, became supervisor
 4 of grounds and trails, park encompasses 33.000 acres and 127 miles of trails
 duties include: bridges on trails, park buildings, farmsteads, mowed grounds,
 5 David Sperry trail workleader, Carl Franks grounds workleader

worked directly under Perry along with twenty seven workers, including seasonals;
 6 high point of career has been seeing park develop from rudimentary beginning
 Virginia Kendall became major picnic area, original maintenance area in Virginia
 7 Kendall; tow path trail began as just a thought,
 trail had been overgrown, washed away and developed, had to be reclaimed and
 8 redone; weeds often six feet high;
 tow path defined and cleared, drainage areas and bridges built, surface tread for
 9 multiple activities created

Canal visitor center had been rundown decrepit building, may have been
 brothel/general store; lock gates were just remiments; historians, engineers, and
 10 architects worked together under great direction, especially John Debo
 funding from Ralph Regula and John Seiberling influence in congress, Debo
 11 worked on fundraising all over area and in Washington

tow path took over 8 years, working in segments, hundreds of trees cleared off
 12 path and inside locks, minimal impact to surrounding environment

13 immense planning and many meetings involved in creating tow path trail
 14 south carriage trail bridge put in during extreme cold winter weather
 trail features: Columbia Run,Canal Visitors Center, Lock 29 in Peninsula,

15 boardwalk over swamp north of Lock 29,

16 Gleason Farm restoration

17 Evert Village restored to mostly original state; Hawkins Library,
 flooding effects on park;2003 "Great Flood" affected trails, overflowed banks of
 18 stream up to eight feet

19 some bridges destroyed, Virginia Kendall lake flooded

20 Visitor Center flooded more than once

some steps taken to divert flood waters, pumps installed to empty buildings which
 21 flood, raised buildings, and rerouting of trails

Horshoe Pond area good for families, handicapped accessible, pavillion, pond,
 22 fishing, scenic

23 importance of volunteers

24 how to volunteer

25 John Debo as motivator and innovator

Cuyahoga Valley has been within top ten parks in nation for several years; still
26 many people do not know we have a national park
27 more visitors needed at Canal Visitors center, Jait and Red Lock
park has added many comfort stations and people should take advantage of park
28 which is there to enjoy
many people worked to make park what it is today, and continue to make it better
"we had one major goal, try to make the park better, to make it what it is today,
29 and hopefully even better yet, one day."

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