

**Interview with
Doris Peak
by Rose Simms,
June 2, 1983**

**Oral History Interview
West Virginia State Archives
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Doris Peaks Interview

JS: This is an interview with Doris Peaks on June 2, 1983 by Rose Simms . The first time you came to work at the Camp, who was director?

DP: John D. Jones.

JS: Why did you come to work at the Camp?

DP: They hired me. They called me and asked if I would work.

JS: Where did you live at the time?

DP: Here in Winona.

JS: Were you hired for the job by recommendation or by an advertisement?

DP: Some of the main help had quit during that time and I came in.

JS: How long did you work here?

DP: Approximately 10 to 12 summers.

JS: What was your job at that time?

DP: I worked in the dining room and assisted in the kitchen when necessary.

JS: What was your daily work routine like?

DP: Sitting the table and serving the table.

JS: What did you do on your off-time?

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DP: We went to our quarters and relaxed. During our rest period, we were free to do what we wanted to do with our time.

DP: No, I only stayed when I desired. I had a family, and I only stayed out there when it was too late for me to drive home. I had my room and my bed. I went upstairs.

JS: That was in the Lodge?

DP: Yes, that was up over the Lodge.

JS: Do you remember how much you were paid at the time?

DP: I can imagine around three an hour, around the minimum.

JS: Did you live full time at the Camp?

JS: Did you have any job benefits (health care, retirement)?

DP: No, not that I know of.

JS: Did you get overtime pay?

DP: No.

JS: How many days a week did you work, and how many hours a day?

DP: Well, I worked from 7 to 10 at night, and I was paid by the hour. Some of the kitchen help was salaried, like Mrs. Elizabeth Jones, assistant cook, and Newassa Choice, cook. Mrs. Elizabeth Jones was dishwasher and assistant cook. I worked in the dining room and helped in the kitchen when necessary.

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JS: About how often did you get a new batch of campers?

DP: Well, we had some groups that would come in and stay two weeks, and some a week. We had groups, like the Methodists, that would come in different age groups, like the Senior Methodists and the Junior Methodists. That usually was a large camp. We had the Beckley Child Care Center. We had groups from Chicago, West Virginia State College, and different areas. We had plenty to do.

JS: What period did you work in the summer?

DP: I worked ROTC. I have worked from April till October, because I worked ROTC. The boys from West Virginia State College would come up and go on maneuvers out there. I worked that.

JS: Did you attend church and go to social events?

DP: In between camps; for instance, if a camp would check out on a Friday, we would have the weekend free. Well, that was my free time, but sometimes one camp would check out on a Friday and a weekend camp would check in.

JS: What was the camps relationship with the community?

DP: It was good.

JS: Who ran the Camp at the time you were here?

DP: Mr. John D. Jones.

JS: Anyone else?

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DP: No, I worked with several other girls that came in from time to time, like college students or high school students, or students that would work for the summer.

JS: The Camp had more than 500 acres of land at one time. Do you know if all that land was used for the Camp program?

DP: I don't really know about that.

JS: Where did the campers come from mostly?

DP: Well, all over the state of West Virginia. We even had some campers come from the Kennedy Center. We had the Crippled Children's Society. The disabled children, I think, came from Logan county.

JS: Do you remember any events that may have happened while you were at the Camp?

DP: Indeed I do!

JS: Would you like to tell me some of them?

DP: Well, they had a festival there, and the guest was Tajmahal. They had the John Henry Festival, which was a gala event. It was a beautiful event. They had a lot of Africans, and they had the Ebony Review that you see on television. Oh, They had a lot of gala events out there.

JS: Can you remember anymore?

DP: They had several concerts. They had a music professor. Dr. Thompson was musical professor at West Virginia State College, and I think he's in Maryland now. We also entertained high school bands and had musical festivals out there. We use to have square dances.

JS: What did it mean to you working at the Camp? Did it have a special meaning?

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DP: The work was hard, but it was pleasurable too, because I met a lot of people. It wasn't bad, but sometimes you were going puffing and blowing because you had so many. There have been times that I have served as many as 20 people myself. There were days like that.

JS: Do you have any pictures or things about the Camp?

DP: I can imagine Mrs. Choice had some. She had different pictures. They had the Shriner's Ball, and they had formal dinners. They had plenty to do.

JS: Can you give me names of anyone who worked at the Camp?

DP: I worked for a short time with Barbara Hall, she lived on the Old Stone House road. For a short time I worked with her.

JS: Did you say you worked with Mrs. Choice?

DP: Yes, she's deceased. Mrs. Jones, who lives in Edmond, was dishwasher and assistant cook. During that time they come and they go. A lot of college students worked here; Paris Michael Coleman, he lives in Toledo; Herbie Maul; Floren White; Mr. Wright, from Beckley; Mr. Dillon, from Beckley; and Mrs. Willis, who was over arts and crafts; Christine Hirman, arts and crafts; Mrs. Townes, the Hostess over the music department; Mrs. Joylett Chiles; Mr. Crawford; Mr Tom Banks, who was the handyman around there. I think Jack Davis is out there now?

JS: Yes.

DP: I worked with him. He worked out there during the time I worked out there. Oh, so many of them.

JS: I thank you for your time, and that's all the questions I have for you.