National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

FINDING AID

Dale H. Nuss Papers
1963-1999 (bulk: 1963-1975)

Prepared by
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Yellowstone National Park Archives
P O Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190-0168

Catalog Number: YELL 184461

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HISTORY

Dale H. Nuss was born in 1925 in Kansas City, Missouri. He grew up near the East Entrance to Yellowstone National Park, where his father worked at Pahaska Teepee lodge. In 1931, Dale began accompanying his father on two-month long horseback tours of the park as part of a boy's camp based at Pahaska Teepee. After serving with the U.S. Army Air Corps in Europe during World War II, Nuss worked as a seasonal fire control aid and seasonal park ranger in Yellowstone in 1947-1948. After working as a park ranger at Shenandoah National Park, Nuss returned to Yellowstone as a permanent employee in 1953. During his long career in Yellowstone, Nuss worked as a park ranger at Old Faithful, Bechler, Mammoth, Northeast Entrance, and Lake. He served as West District Ranger, South District Ranger, North District Ranger, Assistant Chief Ranger, as well as a specialist in forestry, fire management, and bear management. Nuss was involved in most aspects of park management, particularly the elk reduction program of the 1960s, which he supervised. Nuss retired in 1980 to Bozeman, Montana. He died in 2008.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Dale H. Nuss Papers
1963-1975

CATALOG NUMBER	YELL 184461
VOLUME	0.5 LF
DESCRIPTION	Photocopies of Dale H. Nuss' diaries detailing his work as a Park Ranger, social activities, and travel within Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding communities. These journals were recorded in standard issue green Park Service logbooks and contain information on Nuss' daily activities, both work-related and personal. Most entries are handwritten. Notes from Nuss' personal life are intermixed with notes from his professional life, generally on a day-by-day basis but occasionally together in a single daily entry. Topics covered include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Recurring themes are bear management, facilities repairs, park policy, and personnel. His entries relating to park workers, policies, and park guests can at times be strongly opinionated and seem to have served a cathartic purpose.
ORGANIZATION	Arranged chronologically by date of entry.
PROVENANCE	Probably copied from the originals during one of the oral history interviews; gift of Cara Lee Patmore in 2010.
RESTRICTIONS	NO
ASSOCIATED MATERIALS	Two oral histories, one conducted in 1989 (#05-1) and the other in 1999 (#05-8), are located in the Oral History Collection. Official records created by Nuss may be found with the Yellowstone National Park Archives. Boxes A-325 (YELL-01955), N-237(YELL-01955), and N-329(YELL-02037) are

most likely what Nuss generally refers to obliquely "office work" or "desk work" in the journals. A firefighter's handbook belonging to Nuss is in RG 03.

Box P-92 features items produced by Dale R. Nuss, father of Dale H. Nuss and might have information pertaining to Dale H. Nuss' oral histories.

The Camp Trails Collection, donated by Dale H. Nuss and documenting the the wilderness boys camp run by his father Dale R. Nuss is located at the McCracken Research Library, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming.

FILE UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

1/8 - September 2, 1963 to October 23, 1964

This is a photocopy of a green log book containing the journal of Dale H Nuss. Topics covered include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Recurring themes are fishing, skiing, winter equipment and vehicle maintenance, and trail maintenance. Notable entries mention: an interaction with a Persian (Iranian) student on 9/16/1963, viewing the Northern Lights (9/22/1963), the birth of Lori Susan Nuss (11/23/1963), the death and funeral of President Kennedy (11/22/1963 & 11/25/1963), an airplane crash (7/12/1964), forest access roads (8/19/1964), and a meeting with a Geographic Society photographer named Osburn (9/22/1964).

File 2/8 - May 1, 1965 to November 17, 1965

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Notable entries mention: a Pine Beetle infestation (5/11/1965), electronic equipment (6/11/1965), a Gallatin National Forest plane crash with dignitaries on board (6/12/1965), a Japanese group (7/9/1965), law enforcement (7/15/1965), and a meeting with Washington dignitaries (10/5/1965).

File 3/8 - April 24, 1967 to December 10, 1967

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Recurring themes are Grizzly sightings and facilities repairs. Notable entries mention: an FBI investigation (6/9/1967), an Old Faithful steam injury (7/13/1967), the Dr. Barmore elk trap survey (7/14/1967), and the Glacier fire (9/11/1967).

File 4/8 - January 15, 1968 to December 11, 1968

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Notable entries mention: a Grizzly sighting (5/10/1968), Grizzly problems (7/14/1968), fires (7/26/1968), and a lost boy (7/25/1968).

File 5/8 - April 6, 1969 to December 24, 1970

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Grizzly Bear management is a recurring theme. Notable entries mention: ranger funding (6/2/1969), kayaks (7/4/1969), a boating trip (9/6/1969), stranded boys (10/2/1969), the funeral of a Wyoming Highway Patrolman (12/10/1969), illness (March 1970), Asian tourists (5/21/1970), an auto wreck (7/6/1970), a talk with a German university professor (7/20/1970), and a Los Angeles Times article (8/26/1970).

File 6/8 - January 1, 1971 to April 30, 1973

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Bear management is a recurring theme. Notable entries mention: equipment repairs and shooting during February, a ski-do injury (3/7/1971), physical therapy (5/19/1971), an oil spill at Canyon (6/3/1971), Richard Nixon (6/8/1971 and 8/12/1971), a boating trip (7/8/1971), park policy (8/2/1971), a drowning (8/9/1971), illegal logging (3/2/1972), a television appearance (4/11/1972), illness (5/1972), fish spawning (6/16/1972), B-25 maintenance (6/21/1972), SCUBA (7/6/1972), bears (7/14/1976), a drowning (7/23/1972), a law enforcement incident (7/27/1972), a visiting congressman (9/17/1972), and a training conference (1/1973).

File 7/8 - May 1, 1973 to April 22, 1974

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Notable entries mention: New York tourists (5/30/1973), gun policy (6/3/1973), a missing boy (6/5/1973), crime (6/9/1973), an oil spill (6/10/1973), a Pakistani tourist (6/24/1973), a suicide at a waterfall (6/20/1973), LDS scout troop deaths (7/19/1973), escaped felons (7/29/1973), a fire at Glacier (8/6/1973), and a snowmobile accident (1/26/1974).

File 8/8 - May 26, 1974 to July 29, 1975 and other entries where dates are unclear

Topics include professional duties and interactions, personal leisure activity and holidays, and family and friends. Grizzly bears are a recurring theme. Notable entries mention: visiting Russians (5/27/1974), a fishing violation (6/23/1974), a large firefight (7/18/1974), fires (7/28/1974), a fisherman's death (8/13/1974), a motorcycle fatality (7/12/1975), the TODAY show (7/22/1975), and a lost boy (7/25/1975). Also included is a 6-page section of selected aphoristic quotations from famous figures such as Mark Twain and Robert F. Kennedy.

Oral History 1/2

The first oral history (Oral History 05-1) was conducted by Bob Haraden (Yellowstone Assistant Superintendent, 1972-1978) on April 13, 1989 at Nuss' home near Bozeman, Montana. There are two tapes. The tape speed is slightly fast on Side 1 and the beginning of Side 2 of Tape 1 but the words can be understood. There is no transcript available.

Oral History 2/2

The second oral history interview (Oral History 05-8) was conducted on July 23, 1999 by Sally Plumb at Mr. Nuss' home near Bozeman, Montana and spans two cassette tapes. A transcript is available. Mr. Nuss begins his story with his parents' move to Pahaska Teepee in 1924 and includes reminiscences from throughout his life and career. The tape ends with discussion of his opinions and thoughts on the state of the park and the park service for the time period since the 1988 fires. Notable segments from Tape 1 include: mention of a boy's death and a grizzly incident from his childhood days at camp (p. 2 of the transcript); the death of the last wolf from the original population in 1932 (p. 4); early park organization (p. 8); the Mammoth School (p. 11); and elk, bear, and bison reduction (p. 12).

Notable segments on Tape 2 include mention of the “weasel” vehicle (p. 23); park life in winter and use of a snow plane (p. 26); the Soviet ambassador (p. 29); thoughts on resource management (p. 32); thoughts on the role of rangers (p. 33); and thoughts on rifles (p35).

CONTAINER LIST

Series Nbr **Series Title**

File Unit Nbr	Title
1	Dale Nuss Journals 9/2/1963-10/23/1964
2	Dale Nuss Journals 5/1/1965-11/17/1965
3	Dale Nuss Journals 4/24/1967-12/10/1967
4	Dale Nuss Journals 1/15/1968-12/11/1968
5	Dale Nuss Journals 4/6/1969-12/24/1970
6	Dale Nuss Journals 1/1/1971-4/30/1973
7	Dale Nuss Journals 5/1/1973-4/22/1974
8	Dale Nuss Journals 5/26/1974-7/29/1975