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Harrie Hughes' personal memorandums.

November 27- December 12, 1961

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Series: Harrie Hughes Collection

Notes: Original on 3-inch reel, master copy on CD.

The recording begins with a Harrie Hughes' personal memorandum about Pioneer Visiting Committee visits. Andrew Wicken, Frank Young and Harrie Hughes were involved in the visitings during which they saw: Johnny Erland [sp? Can't find his name!] and several others in St. Joseph's Hospital, then they visited Frank Mussano in his home, saw that Mrs. Sherwin's wood was cut, took a look at Victor Hugo and Rasmuson [or Rasmussen?].

Now it's November 27, 1961 and Frank Young is going to give a memorandum note. Frank Young starts talking about the Pioneer Hotel that was at 1st Avenue. It was established by David Petrie. Dave ran the Pioneer Hotel and Bar for a number of years and before he died, he sold it to George Weber who was one of the first moving picture –men in Fairbanks. Dick Thorne [sp?] was the first picture man who had a show on 2nd Avenue. Weber had the Pioneer Hotel for a number of years. He sold out to Tibbets [Charles] and Bill Keller who later bought Tibbets out. Bill ran the place for quite a number of years and Charlie [Charles?] Petersen who used to be a mechanic for the NC-Company's machine shop ran it for a number of years after that. He sold out to George Gilbertson and Art Anderson during whose time it burnt down and was never rebuilt.

Harrie asks if Frank remembers the famous bar that they brought down from Dawson. Frank says it was a very famous piece of furniture, all made out of mahogany. He doesn't remember if it burned in the fire, to which Harrie says it did. Frank says it was one of the bars of old M&M that was built in Dawson in early days, in 1898 or 1899. Frank was told that it cost \$150,000 dollars and Harrie seconds that.

Harrie asks how it was brought down by the river, to which Frank tells it was brought down by a boat and its parts were kept in large sections. It cost a lot of money to bring it down to Fairbanks in 1905. When they unloaded it, at what was called the Pioneer Dock, the White Seal Dock that was in front of the Pioneer Hotel, it took 40-50 men to get it inside and in place. Harrie says that if the bar could talk, it would tell some real history because there were very few miners who didn't go into that bar. Frank says he used to play in an orchestra there. Scotty Dalton, who was related to Jack Dalton of the old Dalton Trail, is mentioned.

A fellow named Fred Swift came up and made a stake at the Wild River at Koyukuk. He stayed there [at the Pioneer Bar?] for two days and nights and spent over \$40,000 dollars, drinking champagne. Harrie says it wasn't unusual for a miner to come in and feed the town. Fred just told everybody to come in and have it on the house and he paid for everything. Harrie says there was more mining done at the bar than there was at the creeks. Frank seconds that, after which he says that he has told all he can remember. [Break in the recording.]

At 6:55 Harrie says it's November 29th, 1961 and the following is a memorandum of information concerning the Pioneer Park by Igloo no. 4.

Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Commission of the City met and gave their approval to the Pioneer Park project. Also they voted to send a letter of endorsement to the State of Alaska Division of Lands. Also, Harrie has a copy of minutes of the meetings of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Committee, as well as the City Council in November 27th, 1961, in which the recommendation was read to the Council. [Break in the recording.]

At 8:04 Harrie says it's a memorandum of Harrie Hughes and Earl Pilgrim with whom Harrie spent the evening at the UAF in the assay office. They reminisced over old mining information and the university assay office has a complete set of the geological and mining reports, going back to 1908. Harrie had obtained some of those since he wanted to read everything before entering an area. He claims that he was never lost in Alaska. He had a wonderful afternoon, meeting some people at the University. They talked about some old days when there used to be lots of people at Kantishna –area and McKinley Park, and about some of the old trappers there. [Break in the recording.]

Now it's November 29th, 1961. Harrie and Frank Young attended a meeting at the Denali School regarding the water development and other development around the area where the Pioneer Park is going to be. The City has redrawn their water distribution systems so the water will pass alongside the Airport Road through the Pioneer -project. Around 25 people from Taku and West Gate and immediate area showed up. They discussed the cost of distributing water in a sparsely inhabited area and whether the people can afford it. The council is placing the question on the Ballot. No matter what, the Park Project will make the area more desirable for development. The State Department of Lands is holding the school just south-west of the project for future development, and it hasn't yet been subdivided. It will probably be sold as residential development area. About other areas near the Pioneer Park. Peger Road will be in an industrial zone, according to planning.

At 13:07 Harrie says it's December 3rd in 1961 and him and Frank Young are visiting with Mother Oats out at 33-mile on Richardson Highway, at her home. Mr. Oats passed away some time ago. He was a very famous old-timer who worked on Nome and Fairbanks –areas in early days. Mother Oats talks about the Nenana Bridge and says that he was building it. Harrie Hughes [?] says that that was in 1923. That fall, around September, they got married. Mother Oats was born in Koyukuk and her maiden name is Lillian Marx [Marks?]. She met Mr. Oats in Tanana in 1912, after which they went all over the Interior [Alaska]. He worked for NC-Company to build the first powerhouse “here”. He was a blacksmith and an engineer in Koyukuk, after which he freighted for NC.

Harrie asks how many children she raised and who was the oldest. Mother Oats names all her four children. Her son lives close by to her. Mother Oats occupies her time with making fur garments and packing her own wood. Harrie says she must be lonesome since her husband died, [Mother Oats has a sad tone in her voice when she agrees with Harrie]. Harrie suggests that she feels like things are not the same anymore.

Frank asks her if Joe was coming down from Koyukuk when he found Blueberry Kid's boat. Mother Oats says she was in Tanana then. Frank says Joe was the one who found the boat. Mother Oats says it was John and Dayken [sp? Daigler?]. The bodies weren't on the boat. The boat sank. There was Dutch Marie and other two guys who all got gold on them. Frank asks if they were killed for gold. They didn't

know who did it. Frank says they figured it was Blueberry Kid. Mother Oats says Blueberry Kid was with them when they pulled out of Wiseman. Frank says they never found him after that. Mother Oats says she heard from her old man about 6 years ago that Blueberry Kid was in Alaska again. [Harrie says he will play the recording back to Mother Oats.]

18:08 Harrie Hughes says that him and Frank Young are at the mile 33 and they are visiting with Joseph Baulge [sp?] of the Little Salcha Store. Harrie asks when Joe came to the area and he responds that it was in spring of 1946, the month of April. Then Harrie asks how he took the land and Joe wants to know if that's on Harrie's range of study. Harrie says that the reason he is asking questions because Joe has done "what a true pioneer does" by developing the country. Harrie asks how many youngsters he has, and he responds by saying there's three. Then Harrie asks what his wife's name is and he says its Bree, and names his children. Harrie asks if Joe has been able to raise any profitable crops since he has been on his land and he says he has: He has had potatoes, celery, cabbage, tomatoes, corn from seed which was a sweet midget type of corn, pumpkin in long vines. Harrie says that when Joe took over the land, he had to clear every bit of it by hand. "Every inch," confirms Joe. Harrie thanks Joe for his few words and says his name will go down in history. [Break in the recording.]

20:37 Frank says it's December 3rd in 1961 and that Harrie Hughes and himself have returned from a little trip out to the highway, to mile 34 where Harries homestead is. They visited Mrs. Joe Oats. Frank tells that from the time since he first saw that country, it has changed. Back then it had no homesteads or hardly anybody living along that trail that is now the highway. There are new homesteads and modern, electric lights along the highway. When he used to go out there, it would be with old Model-T [Fords] and it would take a better part of the day to drive those 40 miles, but now traveling is faster. Frank talks about the weather. [Break in the recording.]

Frank says Harrie asked him about the moose situation now, compared to the early days. Frank remembers the time when moose would go down the main drag [of Fairbanks] and recalls a story about when he was building his house on 3rd Avenue and a moose walked by. There were many more moose than there is now, especially bull moose. "Them days" one could go out a couple of miles and get a

bull moose when the season was open. Harrie says he's going to play back the memorandums. [Break in the recording.]

24:19 Harrie says Frank is going to tell a bit about snaring game instead of using guns to shoot them. Frank tells that in early days, there was a tribe of Indians at the mouth of the Salchaket River by the name of Salchaket Tribe. They lived pretty close where the river flows into the Tanana. Frank went out there one day to see an Indian he knew there. He used to buy fur them days. The Indian's name was Johnny Sam. Frank went to the Old Chief Moses and asked him if Johnny was around but he said that Johnny had gone hunting. Frank told him that he had been there a week ago to see Johnny who told him that h has no gun or ammunition. The chief told that Johnny doesn't need a gun and explained about snaring moose. He told Frank where Johnny was, a couple of miles inland from the village, and Frank found him quartering a big cow moose that he had snared. When the snow gets deep in wintertime, the moose make a trail where they walk regularly so Johnny set the snare of ½ inch hemp rope on the trail. Harrie says he needs to turn the tape over. [Break in the recording.]

The recording resumes by Harrie saying the recording will be about trapping without firearms. Frank continues by telling that he's going to start from the beginning and starts talking about Salchaket Indians who snared moose, and tells again how he found Johnny with a moose. Nowadays Salchaket Lake is called Harding Lake. [Explaining the story and snaring methods again.] The hemp rope was tied to a tree and camouflaged with some brush. When the moose walked into the snare it would catch on the neck, or just above the legs. The moose would make a wild jump when being caught and choke to death. Frank saw this himself. When the ammunition was short, the Indians would sometimes use bow and arrow and sometimes snare.

There were 100 people in the tribe at the Salchaket River but now there are only 2 left. There's an old Indian graveyard on the side of the hill and the highway from Fairbanks to Big Delta passes close by. That's located right where Aurora Lodge is today. A saw-mill was put there in 1908 by two partners. One's name was Heller and the other ones' name he doesn't remember. They were both German fellows who bought the roadhouse where the bridge stands now. It was Montson [sp? Monson? Monsen?] Roadhouse. Heller still has a son in the Interior whom Frank

saw not too many years ago. He's a young man. Montson Creek is named after the man who had the roadhouse. That's about 38 miles from town. [Break in the recording.] Harrie says that's the end of comments about the Montson's Roadhouse.

32:00 Harrie says it's December the 4th, 1961 and the Pioneers of Alaska Igloo 4 had an election. Adolf Stock was unanimously elected to be president for 1962 and William Schafer was to be the vice president. Harrie Hughes was re-elected to second vice president. Andy Wicken was elected to be the chaplain and Andy Anderson to be the historian, Jack Linck to secretary, George Begooney [sp?] to be the treasurer and Frank Young, Ted Loftus and Frank Chapados were re-elected to his office as a trustee. They had a pretty good turnout and some people who hadn't come in in a long time. When one gets to the ages of 50 to 90, it's pretty good to have a turnout of 200-300 people like they did tonight. Auxiliary no.8 also had a good turnout. [Break in the recording.]

At 33:55 Harrie Hughes says it's December 6th, 1961 and he is giving a memorandum about a meeting of city Park, Recreation and Cemetery Commission at the Chamber of Commerce log cabin in Fairbanks. Only Jim Bishop who is a chairman, John Holm, and Mrs. Boucher and another lady, also, Dick Straight [sp?] of the park project was present. Frank Young Sr. and Harrie himself appeared from the [Pioneer] park project. They were talking about quite a number of projects and the budget of the Pioneer Park was questioned. Harrie asks what the budget is and if it's a sum of money that can be acquired. Harrie is dumbfounded by some of the proposals, and talks more about City Council members. Then he quickly tells that his views don't represent the views of the Pioneers. The regulatory bodies are nothing more than a socialized dictatorship, opposed to the rights given in the Constitution. Harrie hopes that that mode of thinking dies a natural death and gives room for individuals to create for themselves.

Frank Young Sr. says he also attended the meeting of the city Park, Recreation and Cemetery Commission on December of 7th at the Chamber of Commerce log cabin. There were lots of things he didn't approve of, especially regarding the Graveyard Commission. He says that the people who work there thawing during the winter months are not familiar with old-style thawing and removing dirt. Frank says that if he had the contract for digging graves for \$75 dollars a grave, he could make

himself a big bunch of money. Now an individual is charged \$120 dollars for the same work.

Frank says he spoke a few words about the Pioneer Park, but that he was interrupted and didn't get to say what he wanted to say. Since he's been to Fairbanks, he's seen lots of amusements started by the City of Fairbanks but the lack of maintenance from the City to take care of the parks and playgrounds deteriorated them and let them become weed patches. Frank says that if the Pioneers could get the land "down there," the state would help in financing a part of it and perhaps the University, the University will be eligible for grants and they could make a go for the Pioneer Park. Frank doesn't think too much of the City Council who never think where the money comes. It comes from the taxpayers, not from the people who don't own properties in Fairbanks [Apparently many of the City Council members didn't live within the city limits]. Harrie Hughes talks a little bit about Frank Young who was brought up in Alaska and who has held various offices in the Pioneers of Alaska.

At 43:38 Harrie says it's December 12th, 1961 in Fairbanks, Alaska. It's a special meeting of the Pioneer Park and Museum Board of Igloo no. 4. Present are: Ted Loftus, Frank Young, Jack Linck, Andrew Wicken, Harrie Hughes. Tom Jones, Sig Wold. Forbes Baker said they couldn't attend but would agree with anything that was decided. [Break in the recording.]

Harrie tells again who were present and says they read a letter from the Department from Natural Resources. Ted Loftus says they should agree to the intent of the letter and it was unanimously voted that they will go with the suggested resolution from the land office. [Break in the recording.] They are presenting the letter to the Historical Society and take it to the next regular meeting of Igloo 4. They want to vote for it and then present the Land Office with a letter that states the result of their vote. [Break in the recording.]

46:05 Harrie says that Collin McDonald wishes to report that he will vote in favor of the letter that will be sent to [Fairbanks] City Council. [Break in the recording.] They will now adjourn and proceed with their visiting [committee]. Harrie states the date and that it's the end of the report.

The recording resumes by Harrie saying that he's recording his personal memorandum of the meeting. They agreed with the letter sent to them by the State Land Office, Mr. Joe Ladler [sp?]. The Pioneers talked about a question about the total amount of land on the south side of the Airport Road that they wanted to make into a Pioneer Home. They will sent copies of the resolution to the [Tanana Yukon] Historical Society and the Pioneers of Alaska. Then they will try to set up a meeting with Dr. Wood of the University of Alaska and the Board of Regents to get their support. They hope they can do everything before spring. [End of the recording.]