

Interview completed on: June 17, 2014  
Venue: Home of Margery Kniffen, 100 Kniffen Road, Fairbanks, Alaska  
Margery Kniffen interviewed by Leslie McCartney  
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Leslie McCartney:

So today is June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and we are in Margery Kniffen's home and her little dog is outside providing the background noise and we are going to talk today Margery about developing property in Fairbanks and naming streets but let's start off with your background; if you can tell me a little about where you are from and how you came to Alaska.

00:00:31

Margery Kniffen:

I was born in Cleveland Ohio but never lived there. I guess it was an unfortunate birth because I ended up in an orphanage and was adopted by people in southeastern Pennsylvania and that was very helpful. So through grade 11 mainly I went to school in the southeastern Philadelphia, Delaware and Chester County areas. Then I went to the University of Chicago after that and while I was there married and had one daughter.

00:01:12

LM: What were you studying in Chicago?

00:01:15

MK: Oh I was part of the Hutchins era and the usual answer to that was they told us we could specialize later. So it was a general liberal arts program with 14 required courses and you either placed out in them or you took them all. Well, I took them all. So anyway I was there for three years. Then I went back to southeastern Pennsylvania and in due course got into a Ford Foundation program at Temple University for people with liberal arts degrees who did not have any teacher college preparation. So we spent the summer indoctrinated and then got thrown into classrooms. And the classrooms were in central Philadelphia which was at that time low income, lots of projects ...

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LM: This was for high school and elementary school?

00:02:29

MK: I don't think there were any elementary school people in this program, I think we were all high school but I ended teaching 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade with insufficient material, insufficient access to materials and things and more than sufficient numbers of students. They sat on whatever they could find to sit on in the classroom and it was interest experience. If anyone had evaluated my teaching skills at that point they would have said she's not going to make it.

00:03:09

LM: What decade was this in then?

00:03:11

MK: This was in 1954, '56 somewhere in that range. Must have been 1956, yes. '56 to '59. I taught at one Jr. High for two and half years then moved to one of the high schools which in many respects was even worse than the Jr. High but it was all low income and lots of truancy and things like that. Anyway the requirement was in order to get the proper documentation and so on and get credit for the year of teaching when you came to Alaska you had to have 140 days and on the 141<sup>st</sup> day I left.

00:04:07

LM: So you needed 140 teaching days in order to teach in Alaska?

00:04:12

MK: You had to have that credit so you could buy up in Alaska onto the teacher's retirement system. We left for AK very shortly thereafter. My daughter and I drove up the highway with another friend.

00:04:29

LM: Why Alaska Margery?

00:04:33

MK: I always wanted to go to Alaska and I had a friend who had, was two year ahead of me at school and she had moved to Alaska and she moved to Alaska for an interesting reason. Her father was a functionary of the Pennsylvania Railroad. All the railroads gave their families passes and the Alaska Steamship line was part of the railroad therefore your pass was good for that so she could get to Alaska with very little funds and the only reason I relate that is as it turns out when my husband and I were married it came it out, well I'd known it before that, his reason to come to Alaska was his father was a functionary on the Great Northern and he could come on the railroad and the boat so he came that way. Anyway, no, I just wanted to come to Alaska. When I was between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade I think it was, it was just after the war, we had new car and we had gas and my father taught summer school but we had the month of August. Schools in those days used to only started after Labor Day so he had the month of August and we were taking the grand trip of the west. We got to Calgary and I wanted him to go so badly on up and look at the Alaska Highway and he said no way I can't, we just don't have time.

00:06:13

MK: So anyway, I had had that interest for, long before this friend came up here but it turned out that it was good to have a friend here because then I had a place to land even though it was in the mud on Chena Ridge. But, yeah, so anyway, after I put in my 140 days and put in my resignation here I came. We arrived May 8 of 1959 which was just after statehood which was of course as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1959. So all the programs that said you had to be here before statehood I just fell out of. That's what it was. And, I'm very happy that I did that.

00:07:12

LM: So you came up, that must have been quite the drive at that time on that early Alcan.

00:07:15

MK: I had a VW bus, we had a trailer with a four foot tongue and that's noteworthy because the shorter the tongue the harder it is to back them up and you always had to figure a place where you could go forward. Because otherwise, you would jackknife the silly thing and most of the stuff in the trailer was books. And I think there are a lot of them downstairs here that are still in the same boxes they were boxed in to move 55 years ago. When I arrived here I went in to talk to the Superintendent of Schools and the discussion went on and I said well I've been teaching at the high school most recently in

Philadelphia and before that I taught Jr. High. He said well, I have fourth grade class. I said I've never dealt with students that young. I'm not interested in fourth grade. I don't think it would work for me. So I went away and got on the list of substitutes and was teaching at various Jr. High and the High School periodically that following fall. I got called into the Principals office in the Jr. High one day which was right next to the Superintendent's Office; the principal was on the left hand side of the stairs and the Superintendent was on the right hand side. He said by the way, stop by and see Dr. Ryan before you leave today. So I meandered down the hall, he said I've got a fourth grade. So since I had been subbing periodically but it wasn't steady so I said okay, I'll do fourth grade. He said go over to Denali and see, talk to them over there and meet the people and so on. This was early December and the teacher for whom I was the replacement was Virginia Gilmore and she was 40ish and pregnant and she was leaving and she was not coming back after her confinement, so the position, I would be lucky to have the position thereafter.

00:10:04

MK: That wasn't very helpful so anyway, we go through the last five months of school and the kids I think learned something because they weren't disrespectful and weren't jumping on the desks and saying we don't ever get anything done and they could read a book. One day Dr. Ryan came down and he was wandering around seeing various classes at Denali and he came into a class, a reading class that I was teaching. I had never really taught reading but we were struggling along with this reading class and we are standing at the back of the room with the class in front of us and he puts his arm around my shoulder and pats my rear end and says you are doing well and goes out the door. Well today that would be considered inappropriate but it was fine. So at the end of the year it looked like there may be a vacancy at Nordale for sixth grade so that was moving up. I went into the first meeting which we always had on the day after Labor Day and all the teachers would meet over at Lathrop in the auditorium and sing all five stanzas of whatever it was of the Star Spangled Banner and listen to the invocation and all that. When we got done, I guess it was the principal from Denali that pulled me aside and said you need to go and see Dr. Ryan so I went over and he said we have a vacancy in math at the Jr. High which was right down the hall again. That was very much of interest to me because my father taught math for 41 years and although I was not a math major, I could certainly do 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade math. So I said oh, that will be fine, I'll do that then I was there for the next 10 years.

00:12:34

MK: Until I managed to injury myself and then ended up retiring on disability. So, at the end of that period, at the end of the 10 years we were doing, my husband was doing other things preparing for his retirement.

00:12:54

LM: So your husband came up before you to Alaska?

00:12:56

MK: Oh, he was here, he was an Alaskan already.

00:13:00

LM: Oh, he was, when did he come up?

MK: He came up in 1934.

LM: 1934? So is this a different husband than the one you were married to in Philadelphia? Is this the same husband? I'm mixed up?

MK: Let's not go there.

LM: Okay, fine, we won't. We won't ... I was just getting mixed up. That's all we need to know. I was just confused there for a moment. So tell me ...

MK: I left him back in Philadelphia.

LM: Oh, okay, then, gotcha ...

00:13:23

MK: However a funny aside to that is I had met his mother and couple of his brothers while we were in Chicago and I was leaving him, he was in a Ph.D. program at Temple and Polle my daughter and I, came up here and I'm driving down College Road one day, I hadn't been here more than two weeks I don't think when this old beat up truck pulls right in front of me and stops and out gets somebody who looks sort of familiar but I wasn't sure who it was and he says remember? I'm Art, Shea's brother. He told me you were coming. So at one point we even had grandmother living in the house with us, that is, well it was Polle's real grandmother but I wasn't expecting to find relatives 5,000 miles away. That was just an aside.

00:14:31

LM: So tell me more about your husband.

MK: My husband came in 1934.

LM: And where would he ...

MK: He came from Minot North Dakota at that point. He had lived along the Great Northern because when you are going up in the railroad business apparently you move from station to station before you get to the main headquarters which is where his father ended up as an Assistant General Road Master or something like that. He was 17 I think when he came. Like my other friend he came on passes and while he was on the Alaska Steamship, they stopped in Juneau and Earl Beistline<sup>1</sup> got on and he was, there was two or three other people that were all coming to the university and they went to ... I thought he said Seward but it must have been Whittier, I'm not sure ... I had this failing repeatedly of turning him off after I had heard the story 50 times and I'm very regretful of that now. But, that's what I did then and I think other people probably do the same thing. You think oh, I've heard this one and you go about doing something else, so anyway, he had lots of information. It just isn't the same when you try to tell it, the things that he told in my presence so I don't even try in most instances. Anyway, I met him the first day I was here just by accident. Well my friend from back east was an aspiring artist and she should aspired a little harder, she was President of the Farthest North Art Guild and he was General Secretary.

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MK: His then wife was a very good artist but anyway, they were having a showing up at the university in what was the old post office and so I managed to get there in the afternoon, we arrived here at noon

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<sup>1</sup> Information about Earl Beistline can be found at <http://alaskamininghalloffame.org/inductees/beistline.php>

and by 3 o'clock on the afternoon I had already shaken hands with the President of the University and then later in the day we went to see that the paintings were all taken care of properly and it happened to be at what was then not my husband, residence because he was boxing them up to ship them off. So anyway, that was just an interesting note. But I think you came more to find out about some historical road names.

LM: We'll get there ....

MK: Not to hear about my longevity and what happened ...

LM: No, it's good because in order to get to telling me about building, it's nice to know how you got here. What was your husband's name, sorry?

MK: Darrell Kniffen.

LM: Darrell, so he, what was ...

MK: He only went by Duke though.

LM: Duke, okay. So what was his business then Margery?

MK: He worked on Fort Wainwright during the time we were married. He had started out in mining/engineering while he was at the University of Alaska. Like most other students worked for the FE Company in the summers and I guess they came back about October and went out in April and took their books with them and came back to do their final exams and so on but he was there until he went into the Service then, he enlisted here at Fort Wainwright just down the hill from us and he served all his time in the United States, half of it in North Dakota teaching cold weather survival but he had enlisted here. Then when he was discharged he went back to the FE Company for a short while but they were having labor problems and there was, I think there was a strike, if not there was a lot of talk about a strike. But he was in the ... he was the Forman of a section and did not want to participate as the company's representative so he left that when an opportunity came for him to work on Fort Wainwright which was then Ladd Air Force Base. In fact it was Ladd Air Force Base when he and I were married in 1962. It became Fort Wainwright I think very shortly thereafter, maybe two or three years. But it's been Fort Wainwright ever since.

00:20:21

LM: So then how did you get into the business of being developers?

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MK: He was transitioning in a way. He knew before too long I'm going to retire. He was significantly older than I was.<sup>2</sup> In fact he came to Alaska when I was six months old! So there's a difference there. But he was, he had had his 20 years at that point in Civil Service and the Army combined, those times you moved your service time over to your civil service time and then after we had been married about six years, five or six years, he was able to retire and he did. And I'm sure he was looking forward to that, I don't think he ever articulated to me but one of his friends was Bud Meyers who was Meyers Realty and Bud came out one day and tried to sell us on a piece of property. We thought about it and Duke

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<sup>2</sup> Duke passed away on July 31, 1982 Margery later told Leslie.

said yeah, I think I would like to do that. So that was our start of subdivision, down you know where KFAR's old tower is that is sinking into the ground on Farmers Loop? That subdivision, Sunrise, directly across the street was our first.

00:21:56

LM: So how many acres were there when you purchased ... ?

MK: there were 65 at that time. We bought it on a purchase or release contract, one phase after another as you paid off a little bit you got back a few more acres and things were certainly different in the subdivision process than as to what they are now.

LM: Right, so was it pretty easy back then? Was there not as much permitting I supposed that had to be done?

MK: You still had to have a preliminary plat, it could almost be hand drawn one. Just an aside, I saw a hand drawn one for a waiver just this spring from somebody. But there was the caveat that well you have to bring us something better when you are ready for your final plat but it didn't have any ... that particular one didn't have any dedications or anything, it was just a piece a paper saying I want to divide this into four parcels so it was relatively simple. But anyway, we did that. We did Sunrise in a number of phases.

00:23:06

LM: How did you have the experience for doing that, I mean that's, you know ...

MK: You learned. You learned, it was OTJ. On the job training. That was the Fowler property originally and she had had a country-club type restaurant there. I've heard people say oh yes, we used to go out to Fowler's sort of like you would say I'm going to Ivory Jacks or I'm going to the Turtle, I don't think it was as nearly as fancy as those but we found lots of dishes in the old house when we ... we bought it and we got the house which was, to our detriment, we had to tear it down.

LM: So how did you plan the subdivision then? Just sit down and look at it and measurements?

MK: Yeah, you just draw lines of a piece of paper at the start. This is what we think we can do with it. And since I was teaching I didn't spend a lot of time on that. I would cut survey lines with him on the weekends and things like that but I didn't spend nearly the time he did laying it out and then of course after you take your idea and that's what it is at that point, you take it to a surveyor and somewhere between the two of you, you come up with something. Our plats initially were all hand drawn. And now they are all machine done, everything's done from the closure of each lot dimensions to the whole thing, it's all done ...

00:25:01

LM: So let's look at some of the street names that you would have had in that one Margery. I brought a map here, do you want me to turn it around. You know where it is. And I had to bring a magnifying glass because I can't really see. So we are looking at Farmers Loop.

MK: Just for the heck of it, because we've been talking about old things, here goes McGrath Road and there's Farmers Loop ...

LM: And here's Sunrise ...

MK: It's over by the golf course.

LM: That's right, all up in here. This one ... ?

MK: It's this one here, yeah, anyway, when I first came here which was in 1959 we located on Grenac Road which is this road here and the school bus came around Farmers Loop, it went up McGrath Road to about this far, then back down, came around, there was none of this was here, it went up Grenac Road and picked up whatever was there, it went over to Ballaine Road which ended just at the top ... didn't go to the top of the hill, it only went to where Yankovich Road is and Yankovich Road was just muddy track going out to I believe, Pete was his first name, Pete Yankovich's property which is now the musk ox farm. Then it went on to University Park and in this whole area it picked up everyone from first grade, because kindergarten did take them at that age, it picked up every student and dropped them off at the various schools. It went to University Park, then it backtracked back up College Road and picked up some more people I guess, I don't know, and then it went on to Lathrop. Then schools started ... that was one school bus. One school bus.

00:27:00

Now ... well there are probably 20 buses that go on those routes which of course have been extended into the hills and so on and they pick up lots of kids. The elementary students do not ride with the middle school and the middle schools do not ride with the high school because they all have different times for their school day.

00:27:34

LM: Yeah, so the streets on the Sunrise Subdivision ...

MK: We have Rise Road, Fall Road which goes downhill, Rise Road goes uphill.

LM: That's original ...

MK: At the top between the two of them is Ookpik and Ookpik is our adopted daughter's middle name. She had to have a road so she has Ookpik Drive.

LM: Where is that here? Just trying to look, here it is, Ookpik Way and Fall Road and Rise Road.

MK: Then there was Sun Way because this was Sunrise Subdivision and Sun Way was due north and south and therefore you should be able to see the rising sun.

LM: So did that involve, now that's just that one ...

MK: Just that little 65 acres and I think we did it over, well, it was in the three main phases and they were probably three years apart. We were basically out of Sunrise by 1975. We had started in there about '66.

LM: So how many houses a year would you try to build?

MK: We didn't build them ...

LM: Oh, you didn't building them ...

MK: All we did was subdivision. We didn't start building houses until somewhat later.

LM: Oh I see, you just did the subdivision, then you sold the lots, people would buy the lots ...

MK: People would buy the lots, come in with their own contractors and do whatever.

00:29:09

LM: So at that time, there probably wasn't actual running water, like town water up there, was it all wells?

MK: There never is, still isn't. No, it doesn't go beyond Ballaine Lake Subdivision and they've had problems with it ... I think they bonded about five years ago to extend College Utilities to that area where the house is sinking into the ground across from Ballaine Lake but that's the limit of what was municipal utilities at that time and it's now Aurora or whatever the water system is in town. No, we have never had any properties that were on anything other than individual wells and septic systems.

LM: Right, okay. Then how about the electricity? Who brings ... ?

MK: Golden Valley go around Farmers Loop and they went into the subdivision and asked people, people applied and they would hook them up. MUS was a somewhat different circumstance.

LM: What is MUS?

MK: We were on Grenac Road and our neighbor worked for one of the electric contractors but before that he wanted a phone so he ran his own line over the top of the hill for two miles and there was coming down the hill.

LM: Now you said the one road was named after your adopted daughter's middle name ...

MK: Yes, that's Ookpik [Way].

LM: Can you tell me a little bit about her? Your adopted daughter?

00:30:53

MK: Well, she's one-quarter Eskimo, her birth mother was from Kotzebue and interesting enough she has siblings and she knows her siblings and spends a fair amount of time whenever she's in town running around with them and then she's now living in Palmer, she was in Wasilla but now she's in Palmer. I think it was more of a change of the post office than anything else but she has all sorts of siblings and shirt tail relatives down in the Anchorage area and she has met a number of them. After the mother of her birth mother died there was a request regarding that person's estate and Kim got a chance to meet a lot of the people which she was there to tell them I'm not interested in taking any of her estate, but I want to meet you all. That was, she said they were a bit leery of her at first when here

shows up this other one with two that we know were granddaughters but here comes another one? Anyway, she was able to dissuade them.

LM: Wonderful.

MK: So she met some more people that were in the Anchorage area and so she hasn't been completely deprived of that part of her heritage and she's a, we enrolled her in the Kotzebue Corporation so ...

LM: So how old was Kim when you adopted here then? Really young?

MK: I would say she was relatively young. I was playing baseball the last day the students were at school which was May 17<sup>th</sup> that year and the Principal at Denali, this was the 4<sup>th</sup> grade now, the Principal at Denali came out and said oh we got a call from the hospital. You are to pick up your daughter when school is over today.

LM: Oh my!

MK: So that's old ... yes, we've had her since she was a newborn, a couple of days old.

LM: Oh, how lovely, and when was she born? What year Margery?

MK: 1960. I had been here a whole year.

LM: So a sister for Polly.

MK: Polly was very interested in having a sibling at that point so Polle was 7, she had just had her 7<sup>th</sup> birthday.

LM: Lovely.

MK: She went to University Park and then to the Poison Mushroom which is Joy School. One of the things you did the first day of school was you asked the child when they got home, now where did you go to school today? Because remember we had this bus load of kids and you can take them anywhere, sometimes they went to Hunter, sometimes they went to Nordale, but she happened to go to Joy. So anyway, but she started out at University Park. Then later, our other children went to Nordale and University Park but never went to Joy.

00:34:43

MK: Well it was a way of balancing numbers of students. If you had them on the bus, it doesn't really matter to the school district where you put them. It may matter to the parents because they have to go an extra four or five miles to collect their child when there's an event but it didn't seem to matter ...

LM: So it wasn't like you went to school because you lived in this particular area ...

MK: If you were not a walker, you were at the mercy of this balancing act to get the right number of students with the right teacher, grade level.

LM: So moving on from Sunrise ...

MK: From Sunrise, the next thing we did was Viewpointe ...

LM: Oh, one of my favorite streets ...

MK: We did Viewpointe, we had an opportunity, took us a long time to get this person to sell us the land.

LM: Oh really ...

MK: Yeah, then from '75 on through probably our last iteration there was about 1980 but we started in 1975 and did Viewpointe with the exception of the south-west corner which was 10 acres which we left off at that time but it was part of the preliminary and we followed the same layout for, for the first addition we had used on the rest of it so it's all basically ...

LM: And how many acres was that then?

MK: That was 80 acres and there was about 12 acres below it between the section line and Farmers Loop Road which we could not get the person who sold us the 80 acres to sell us that. And then the area, there was another 5 acres in front of it also which we couldn't get her to sell us, this was Fern Palfy but she would sell it to our kids. So our kids bought that and then there was, oh, the caveat was that we had to buy the property across the road.

00:37:06

MK: She also owned. Well we did and we got rid of most of it but we turned it into Candamar ...

LM: Oh, okay.

MK: Which we had a friend, Candy Walker who is now Candy Waugaman and has been for many, many years and so that's where the name Candmar came from ...

LM: Oh, I see ...

MK: Between all of us it's the first two letters of everyone's name.

LM: Oh, interesting, I've often wondered where that came from, yeah ...

MK: Then after we were, it's just across from Viewpointe ...

LM: Yeah, it is, were are we here, there's Candmar Road, right there, yep ...

MK: I wanted to name all the roads with the Latin names for various flora that grew in them the only one I got on that was Pyrola<sup>3</sup> ...

LM: Okay ... and the Overhill Drive ...

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<sup>3</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrola>

MK: Because it went over the hill ...

LM: Then Darrell Drive, that must be after Duke? Your husband?

MK: No, after my son ...

LM: After your son, oh ...

MK: Who is also Duke, Duke the second ...

LM: So where does he fit into the line of your children then?

00:38:25

MK: He's the last of the ... And we had another adoptee, Peter and Peter has Peters Road down here but you can't put in an apostrophe for some reason, they don't like that, the powers that be, street naming people so people can think it's anything they want to but it's really Peter's Road.

LM: When you were laying out your developments then, in the early days ...

MK: By that time we had a little more knowledge of what we wanted to do to let ... it doesn't always work to lay everything out on a grid. But once again, for the most part, Viewpointe is even rectangular, thin lots. Every so often you had to move ...

LM: Realign ... ?

MK: You do a preliminary plat that you hope worked and then you would, when you got on the ground, if you found that you put the best part of the lot in the middle of draw, you would move it and as long as it tends to conform to the preliminary, we haven't had an awful lot of problem when we present a final plat that has some differentiation in it.

LM: Now, when you were naming the streets in these two particular subdivisions, was it a pretty easy process then? Do you remember? Do you just pick any name?

MK: You could just pick any name you wanted as long as it didn't exist somewhere else and even at that time, they didn't look at the rest of the area because we didn't have either 911 or Enhanced 911. Now, and I do not agree with this philosophy myself, because I think they know where the phone calls are coming from at the emergency center. If it's a 488 number it's not coming from almost to Nenana. But anyway, now they have naming process such that if it exists anywhere in the Borough, which is why you come up with some of these strange names because it's easy to have two people decide, one at either end of the Borough, I'm going to have Spruce Drive. Well, you can't have Spruce Drive because there's Spruce Drive somewhere else. The only place that seems to be exempt from this is City of Fairbanks which is a First Class A city and North Pole, they both have numbered streets.

LM: And that seems to be okay ...

00:41:21

MK: Have you ever looked at the street signs down here at the bottom of the hill on Trainor Gate?

LM: Yeah ...

MK: Over on the Old Steese, it's Trainer, on the New Steese, it's Trainor.

LM: Oh, I never noticed that before ...

MK: And I don't really know if it was somebody's name or whether ... you go down this road and you either go to the train or the gate to Fort Wainwright.

LM: Right, could be ...

MK: One of the gates.

LM: Interesting ...

MK: If you look at the 'or' you say okay. Anyway at the time we were doing Viewpointe then we just didn't have good sense. There was a parcel available on the Nenana, what was the Old Nenana Road at that point, not the Parks but the Old Nenana and so we bought that and did some subdividing up there and then at the same time we bought a piece from the State at one of their State auctions which probably 15 years thereafter I subdivided ... I was told you have to have a name on this plat, I said oh. Well, I had, I was in talking to the people in the planning department and they said you have to have a name. Okay, I said, we'll call it ONH, Old Nenana Highway. And that's what it is ...

LM: And that's out of town now, quite a bit out of town ...

00:43:03

MK: It's about 6 miles up the, if you turn off onto the old road by Ester and wind you way up the hill, it's up there and there's Panorama Subdivision which is about 4 miles up and then ONH is another mile and half or two miles.

LM: Right, so ...

MK: And all we did on that was, all I did, was make four long lots that still conformed with the requirement that they ... then length did not exceed the width by more than four times ...

LM: Oh, okay ...

MK: The way the road went there all of them had access off what had been an old gravel pit road which was in the right of way so we didn't have build any road on that, or I didn't have to build any road, by that time my husband was deceased and so ...

LM: So you carried on with the business ...

MK: Oh yeah, I ... well ... I got to the point where I wondered, looking back on it, at that time, looking back, who had been doing the subdividing. You know, I found a piece on Chena Ridge that I was not overly able to traverse as well as I should have, it was a fine piece of property but Duke had always said, well, if anything comes available on Chena Ridge, we'll buy it. So I bought that 120 acres.

LM: Wow, where on Chena Ridge?

MK: That's Ridgepointe.

LM: Oh, that's Ridgepointe.

MK: Yeah, so anyway, so that was after, well after his death, that was in 1983 [Margery later corrected this to 1982] and I was doing that. But anyway we are still on Farmers Loop and while we were finishing up on Viewpointe, we bought 160 acres to the north of that in Section 10 and wait, was that Section 10? Yeah, and it was Spring Gl ... it turned into Spring Glade.

LM: Okay.

00:45:30

MK: Our only access originally was up Ski Boot Hill Road and across, on a section line easement, you want to go off the record?

LM: No, no, I'm just looking ... there's Ski Boot Hill Road, so here's all the streets here.

MK: Yeah, and the only access was this one off of Bruhn Road and Art Bruhn had taught with me at Main School at the Jr. High and I said Art, we are going to have use your section line easement but we'll upgrade it for you. Well he had building sitting in the right of way and all sorts of trucks and vehicles there, some of which we managed to get him to move slightly so we had this 160 acres in here ...

LM: Right, so Bruhn Road is named after Art Bruhn who was a teacher ...

MK: Yeah, it was Art's driveway and it was just a driveway. Well to get any sort of approval you had to have at least a descent road to get there plus it doesn't make a lot of sense to try to sell lots when the road is going to wash out or it's going to be so full of holes that they are going to have to have a four wheel drives to negotiate it on a dry day. On a wet day they might ... yeah, anyway we talked with Art about that and we upgraded his driveway and turned it into a what was an acceptable road for a subdivision, once again we did it in phases and as we moved along the roads got extended.

LM: Right ...

MK: However that was not the best access so we knew Steve Kerner because I had bought property from him back in 1959, went to Steve and said gee, we would love to build a road across your property and since you have about 60 acres down there, or whatever it was, you can subdivide off of it too. So he gave us an easement which later he dedicated along with us and so that's how Spring Glade gets to Grenac. He has, or now his kids, who were all Jr. High and smaller when I first arrived and first knew them, but they are located right in that area.

00:48:09

LM: So how did you come up with Spring Glade Road?

MK: Well, there was glade down here which had a spring in it. That's how my husband said, I think that would be a great name for that so we did that for, oh, we worked on that for a number of years. Somebody once told me, well, if you are competent subdivider, you get in and get out and you hold the

property for more than 5 or 6 years, you just aren't doing it right. Well I think it was 20 years until we sold the last lot. But anyway ....

LM: So the other names in this area, so we have Upland Drive ...

MK: That's the up side ...

LM: Going the up side, and then we have Eriophorum<sup>4</sup> Drive ...

MK: Eriophorum ...

LM: And ...

MK: Eriophorum is the Alaska Cotton you see growing along the road. Well, this was low area down here where the glade was with the spring in it and there was a lot of Alaska Cotton down there so I managed to get that ... I've never managed to get anyone to let me do Epilobium,<sup>5</sup> or Angustifolium<sup>6</sup> or some of those ...

LM: And Deer Valley Road ...

MK: That part is not ours ...

LM: That part isn't yours there, okay, so it was just all up in here ...

MK: If you want to see what pioneer access roads were like, drive around this Deer Valley. It's been upgraded somewhat but when Spring Glade Service Area was established, first of all there was nobody living in there so the Borough, and I don't think they do that now, but they let us establish a road service area with no residents so there was nobody to build in it and we were the Commissioners and we didn't live there, we lived over here.

00:50:08

MK: But anyway, later these other roads off of Ski Boot, not Deer Valley but the other two, wanted to be part of and we had already picked up Bruhn Road because it served Spring Glade, they wanted to be part of the road service area and then ... so there was an election and it included properties down over the other side of Farmers Loop. However, Deer Valley and the lower part of Ski Boot Hill Estates was not permitted in because the roads were in too bad of condition.

LM: Really?

MK: They had to spend all the money on them. So anyway, just before my husband died, Don Bennett who was then Senator Bennett called in and said hey Duke you are doing some subdividing and we have some road money that we would like to put into the Fairbanks area, can you suggest anything? Well that's an open invitation. Suddenly Spring Glade, the original access, was all upgraded. It's been added

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<sup>4</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eriophorum>

<sup>5</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epilobium>

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epilobium\\_angustifolium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epilobium_angustifolium)

to since but under State appropriation here comes Spring Glade, got done. Also, we got a road in Fairhill done.

LM: Did you really?

MK: We did. Yes. And there was a third one, oh, it was over, no it wasn't Viewpointe, I have to think where that third one was. But anyway, that was the days when people could bring home bacon. You know, unfortunately Don died fairly soon thereafter as did my husband but we did have, we did have roads that received ... City Lights had not been much of a road. It was up to code but the code wasn't very stringent at that time. So anyway, the state upgraded it and part of the rationalization for that was there is no access road to the Steese Highway on the east side so that didn't look like a complete bit of bacon.

00:52:44

MK: So that's how that came about. And you know, all along we had been buying various land as it became available because as my husband often reminded me, well I could have bought all this for .25 cents an acre when I came but nobody had .25 cents.

LM: That's right, yeah.

MK: And they were large parcels. But even as late as 1980 I think Chena Hot Springs Road, everything was \$100.00 an acre.

LM: Was it really?!

MK: Yes, now look at it.

LM: So what was your next development then after ...?

00:53:29

MK: After Spring Glade, well between Viewpointe and Spring Glade, we were also over here in Fairhill also doing this one.

LM: How many acres is this one then Margery, it looks big?

MK: 160.

LM: 160.

MK: 160 minus the Steese Highway which was only a two lane road at that time. We have, it included all the way over to CREEL which is the Cold Weather Test area there behind the dumpster. Yeah, and the property line was what would be along the side of the fence at the dumpsters and then the thing in front of it was something that the Borough had gotten on municipal land entitlement and at one time we had a lease on that from the Borough but after Duke's death, I didn't really want to do anything down there. The reason we got the lease from the state and the state gave it to the borough, was somebody who was suggesting they wanted to put in a trailer park down there and we thought it was worth our money to lease it, to keep that away and now it wouldn't be acceptable. So somewhere, maybe 10, 12 years ago, the borough was hunting for a dumpster site and this was theirs on a lease. We

had lease on it so I said I'll sell you your lease back and we had done some improvement but not much to it. And they said we don't want the 40 acres and I said well, I don't want it either. You either buy it from me and get the 40 acres and get me out of this lease. It wasn't bad but you know I didn't need it. So they did. The property where the Farmers Loop market is and where the Coffee place is, those were part of that original 160.

LM: Oh were they, oh wow, huh.

MK: Mocha Dan was located at that time, before he came out here, he was located in Old Fred Meyer, remember?

00:56:09

LM: No I don't, I wasn't here. Where was the old Fred Meyer?

MK: The old Fred Meyer is now where REI just located in one end of that building and the other end is the hospital's out-patient therapy, physical therapy. So on the corner of the Old Steese and College Road. Across from Sam's Club.

LM: Right. So let's look, we are here on Fairhill. So you named all of these streets too?

MK: Oh yeah.

LM: So we have Kniffen Road, well we know where that comes from.

MK: Well that came significantly later actually. It came because there was a duplication. When I was first on the Platting Board they decided we are going to have no duplication of names which meant we were going to re-name lots of streets.

LM: This was about the 1980s was it?

MK: This was '86, '87, something like that. Yeah. And so, the one that was the most difficult was Pioneer Way. There was a Pioneer Way off of College Road and then there was Pioneer Way where the Borough is located. So we now know that the Borough is on Old Pioneer Way. Yes ...

LM: That's how they go around that one.

MK: That's how they go around ... well, it's quite common it turns out not only in Alaska but I was driving around down in the Dakotas and Nebraska and Oklahoma and there were a number of old this's and that's there also. The other thing that is funny about those roads out there though, you'll be out in the middle of nowhere and you'll find 250<sup>th</sup> Street. Huh? From where? We don't do that here at least and I'm glad we don't.

LM: So was Kniffen Road called something else before?

MK: Yes, it was Peters Road.

LM: Oh, it was Peters Road.

MK: And, but we had to do a change, so since he had recently died I said well, I would like to use that and we would use that and we would put Peters Road somewhere else so that's how ... Gruening got its name simply because Senator Gruening was a friend of my husband.

00:59:39

MK: And he chose that way to honor his friendship. He was a devotee of Governor and Senator Gruening.

LM: And was City Lights Boulevard named by you guys?

MK: Yes, it's pretty obvious. You can sit on the Road and look at the city lights although I can see more city lights up here if I cut some of my trees but I'm not going to cut my trees.

LM: Fairhill of course, because it's a fair hill.

MK: Exactly.

LM: So tell me about your son Peter. You said he was the youngest?

MK: No, Duke is the youngest.

LM: Sorry, Duke is the youngest, you said Peter ...

MK: Peter was another adopted son and unfortunately when he was 16 he got in a little bit of very minor trouble at school and he decided that that was too embarrassing and he left us.

LM: Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that ... that's very sad, oh dear.

MK: Yeah, but it was an interesting thing because I went down to talk, he was downstairs, I went downstairs to talk to him after he gotten suspended and said well you know we suspend people all the time. I was on the school board at the time. Well that may have exacerbated the situation. And told him, you know, it's not the end of the world. Well, I guess I was talking past him. He had one thing on his mind and I had a different thing. And, that was that.

LM: Dear oh dear ...

MK: Anyway, we still gave him a road. Actually he had the road before he died so he knew he had one.

LM: Yes. And was Lazelle part of this?

MK: No. Lazelle is an old, old name and I don't know where, what it is but I think it's probably the name of some person over here. Excuse me (mobile phone rings).

LM: No problem. I can turn this off.

01:01:02

MK: I'll turn her off. I can talk to her later.

LM: Okay, so that's this are here then, where we are right now.

MK: Right to this line. That is the Fairbanks base line and the initial point, if they were going to have a 250<sup>th</sup> street, it would start from here, the initial point on the Fairbanks quadrangle is up here at the top of the hill where you see all those dishes, it's common to Fort Wainwright, common to our corner, no, it's not common to our corner, it's 2600 feet beyond it and then the Fairbanks meridian goes the other way. On Fort Wainwright you will notice that there is a Meridian Avenue, well that's because it's on the Fairbanks meridian and down in Palmer, there's a Meridian Avenue because that's on the Seward meridian and the meridians and the base lines are the starting point for designating sections.

LM: So that's your surveying post. That's where it all comes from.

MK: That's your initial point and everything ties back to that so when you have a township and range, contains 36 sections, and then they keep throwing whatever surveying error they have to the northwest corner so where ones at the initial point will contain 640 acres, by the time you get out a fair amount because of convergence, they may not contain the whole 640.

01:03:01

MK: 640 is a mile on each side.

LM: A mile on each side, right, yeah. And so that's the meridian for here and where's the next one or are they really far apart.

MK: They are really far apart. I am not sure. There's one out somewhere close to Kotzebue and there's the Umiat Meridian, way north. Yeah, I can't tell you.

LM: So then, you did all of those and you did Fairhill and what next?

MK: Oh, what next. They are out of chronology. We did Fairhill in '69.

LM: Oh, it was an early one too.

MK: We were doing it along with Sunrise ... yeah.

LM: So then those two together, then Viewpointe ...

MK: Then we moved into the '70s doing upper Farmers Loop and I had had some property on the other side of the hill here and we had, well I just plain sold that and somebody else did the subdivision. I was actually over there the other day and I had never been to some of that property ... well it was a mile long and a quarter mile wide and I was not able to navigate a lot of it. When we bought it, Duke the elder, walked around the whole thing and that was about it. But it was at that time relatively inaccessible and so I was fortunate enough to be able to sell it without having to do anything to it virtually.

LM: So when you were looking for property to buy to subdivide, what were some of the key important things, like you were saying you need a descent road in and out that's not straight up and down ...

01:05:13

MK: Well, yeah, this one was fairly straight up and down and I frequently hear it maligned, well now there's Fairhill Road and it's 17%, well, people seem to get up and down it and they got up and down it before it was paved. You know ... it doesn't seem to present problems to them and I was down in Matsu a couple of weeks ago, their roads go up and down hills and they don't seem to think that they have to do switch backs all the time to make this magical 10% grade.

LM: That's the requirement today is it?

MK: Anything beyond that you have to get a variance and they're not always granted. We did an addition to Gold-something estates which was out here at the intersection of Ballaine and Goldstream, well, we had 100 and some odd acres that we bought there and we added to those roads, it's off of Goldstream.

LM: There's Goldstream there, was it Solstice and Sunshine?

01:06:33

MK: No, no, up above.

LM: Up above, okay ...

MK: So it was Goldpointe [Drive] ...

LM: Yes, Goldpointe, Cordes ....

MK: Cordes was already in ...

LM: Okay, there's Golden View ...

MK: We extended Golden View and we extended Skyflight [Avenue] ...

LM: Right, so they were semi there and you just did them ...

MK: Yeah, Goldpointe was not, that was a whole new road we put in.

LM: And then, just down there, Debbie Way, Stevens Ave, Franklin, that's all someone else ...

MK: I don't know anything about those roads ...

LM: Sargents, Collins, Nugget ...

MK: I know how Propwash [Drive] but its name because I knew the person who lived on the end of it.

LM: Oh, how did it get its name? Propwash? Did it have an airport?

MK: Well it had a little airport ... and ... Puppet you could be quiet [speaking to the barking dog] ...

LM: So what years did you do the ones up in Goldstream there, do you remember?

01:07:32

MK: About 10 years ago. That is, there was already a start there, it's the newer section that we did and we were doing in addition to Ridgepointe at the same time ...

LM: Right, which is down here on Chena Ridge ...

MK: Yeah, which is on Chena Ridge ...

LM: Not sure if that's on this map here or not.

MK: It should be.

LM: There it is, Ridgepointe. Did you do Ellesmere and Forest?

MK: No, Ellesmere was the university.

LM: Oh, was it?

01:08:01

MK: We have always felt a bit put out that the university using state money can build subdivisions.

LM: Why would the university build ... how did that work?

MK: Well they go the land because as a land grant college, they were granted a certain amount of land exclusive of the municipal entitlement lands which went to the borough to fund their programs, or, well, to fund their construction and now I hear that they at 50 million short on the engineering building or something, they got 5 million this year but they wanted 50 more apparently. So anyway, yeah, they had these lands and they've been selling land periodically ...

LM: In order to fund stuff ...

MK: The three major sources of land, well maybe there are four, are the state, which gave land to Mental Health, to the university and to the boroughs and they gave it to them requiring it be surveyed before they could get full title so since the borough for example hasn't surveyed all of it, didn't have the funds really to survey all of it, they haven't got full title to all of their lands but they have some that are tentatively approved, they are called TA lands and mental health has been sort of a thorn in the side because they don't want to let go of any of theirs and they haven't surveyed some of theirs but it's designated that these are mental health lands and then the university had lands and they were supposedly sources of income for these three entities. And the next layer up of course is the state which got a portion at Statehood from the feds, so, so things that aren't federal are either state or subsequently some of these other entitlements.

LM: So, Ellesmere was part of the university, I did not know that.

MK: Yes, they had, section 16 and 36 were school sections, were set aside I think in the original Homestead Act which dates back to 1860s. They were set aside as school sections so wherever you had sections laid out, these sections were supposedly either for school sites or they could be sold with the funds being used for education purposes. And then of course the university got other lands. I

understand one of the stories that I did listen to that was repeated often, but, Dr. Bunnell had a number of students whom he supported at the university in the 30s and maybe into the 40s, I don't know, but they would all go homestead and when they left they would deed the property back to, I don't know whether it went directly to the university or whether it went to Dr. Bunnell who then moved it on. I don't know that.

LM: Huh, that's interesting ...

01:11:45

MK: That was one of the ways the university got more land that it could add to ... usually they were in the area to the top of Ballaine hill or out in what is now to the west there of Lawlor Road and Sheep Creek, that area.

LM: Okay, so you just did Ridgepointe itself then, none of the other streets down from ...

01:12:12

MK: We did Ridgepointe and then Forest Drive that goes off of Ridgepointe, and we had another 40 acres right there so we did that part. My son has a couple of lots over there, I don't have any anymore, I've sold all of mine.

LM: So would that include Langford Street and Moominvalley [Court] ...

MK: A very little bit, Moominvalley, that was one I managed to get by people.

LM: Okay, what's that come from?

MK: Well, you are probably too young to have remembered about Kilroy<sup>7</sup> ...

LM: No, I don't remember.

MK: During WWII, I guess, I didn't pay attention to it because I was less than 10, well I was 10, 11 when it ended but the GIs would go around marking up things saying Kilroy was here and draw a little face on, much like a happy face but Kilroy was different and it was say Kilroy was here. Well, Moominvalley, there was these little moomins, they are, I never learned her name, but there was a Finish author who wrote children's books and she had these little characters moomins, they sort of looked like schmoos but not exactly and I was in Denmark when my daughter and son-in-law and grandchildren were there. They were both teaching at the University of Aarhus and I was exposed to these books and I came back and just after that I needed a road name and here went down into this little sort of dark gully area, it's a nice place, it looked like a place where moomins should be so that's how Moominvalley got its name.<sup>8</sup>

LM: That's interesting, very interesting, very interesting.

01:14:22

MK: And actually people live on Moominvalley, they have that as an address.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kilroy\\_was\\_here](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kilroy_was_here)

<sup>8</sup> The author is Tove Jasson, for more information about Moomins, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moomin>.

LM: Wow, so Hillary would have been off your ...

MK: Hillary was not, that was Mike Crafts little ...

LM: And the Red Ridge Road, that wouldn't have been ...

MK: Red Ridge I think is Ted Kegler's Road. Ted Kegler was married to Mary-Anne who was the friend I came to visit back in 1959 and stayed in their driveway for a couple of weeks living in the VW bus while I was getting situated with other things.

LM: So what other places ...

MK: I first thought I was going to homestead about 18 or 19 mile on Chena Hot Springs Road and Chena Hot Springs Road was a two line track of mud that, if you needed something to pull you through or didn't have four wheel drive, put on your chains or whatever and after I thought about it, it didn't make sense to try to drive to a teaching position in Fairbanks from there everyday; So that's when I bought the property on Grenac Road.

LM: Right. So what other areas then Margery that you guys have been involved with?

01:15:47

MK: Well we've been to Goldstream, been up the Old Nenana Highway, and now I'm working on, oh I bought some land out on the river that didn't have any access except river access which is an acceptable form of access so we had a subdivision up there which is Riverpointe ...

LM: And where is that?

MK: Riverpointe is off your map here ...

LM: Off the map to the east then?

MK: Yes, east. It's about three river miles from the Nordale boat landing, it's actually very close but if you have to go on the river you are serpentineing your way around and it was, it was a funny looking little piece that stuck out into the middle of the river so Riverpointe was appropriate. We had Goldpointe, Viewpointe, the ones that end in 'e' frequently, with the exception of Westpointe which is down off of Chena Pump, which is mainly condominiums.

LM: Where is that? Oh, I know the ones ...

MK: Down by Chena Small Tract, Tract [Road], it ends in a 't' and you see it frequently in the ads for garage sales as Tracts and you wonder, Chena couldn't make tracts. It was an old slough bed but it was one of those government operations where they made a bunch of small tracts down there. It's across the river from the Princess Hotel.

LM: Yes, yes ...

MK: So we did Riverpointe out, you can actually look at it if you go up Blue Spruce Road which is off of ... it's off of Freeman which is off of Nordale, just after you cross the river on Nordale Road, about a mile

down is Freeman Road and Freeman actually runs up to the river at about 3 miles out on it. Well, Blue Spruce is about half way and you can look across the river and there's Riverpointe but you can't get there by road.

LM: So, how did ... so quite a few people bought those lots then?

MK: Oh yeah, we've sold the lots, I have two that we're not selling. We've had offers on them but I'm not interested in selling them. I want to have something on the river for myself.

LM: Right, yeah.

01:18:31

MK: Well then just a couple of years ago we bought another piece right across from the boat landing on, on the river, part on the river and part down into the woods and we spent last summer building a road there and will have some more river frontage lots that you can drive to. And then the last one we've been working on is Fox Bluffs which is ...

LM: Where's that?

MK: It's up off the Steese Highway, right off Bullion [Drive] ...

LM: Oh yes, I know the area ...

MK: And you go up Bullion to about here, and then there's Fox Bluff's Drive, goes down the section line, and off of Fox Bluff's Drive is Polka dot. Well, I couldn't sell anyone on Epilobium or Angustifolium, I tried again and since my son was a half partner in this property, he got to the name that one and he said so I'm going to call it Polka dot. So that's what it is. And last summer we built another smaller section off of it that is Engineer Creek and it's above Engineer Creek. Engineer Creek is where the pipeline crosses ...

LM: I think we went and looked at property up there at one time so I know the area. So your son has kind of taken over from your husband as a business partner then? And which son is this?

MK: This is Duke, Duke the Younger. Well it used to make a difference, it doesn't now, most people know if I'm talking about Duke in the present tense then I'm talking about my son. If I'm talking about something that happened pre-1964 it's his father. But, yeah.

01:20:39

MK: There was a long time back after I had done part of Ridgepointe that he didn't seem overly interested in what I was doing and I thought I was going to, I still had the property that was in Goldpointe but I thought I was going to retire. Well, then we started on Goldpointe and suddenly he started showing up at noon to see what we were doing each day and he became more interested in what I was doing and he will be the one that will be left as the Executor of whatever properties are left and actually on Fox Bluffs he's half owner on that.

LM: Are you still buying property then Margery or you just trying to wind ...

MK: Well the phone call I shut off was about a property purchase so the answer is yes. You know, it goes in cycles both your development and your so called peddling of the property. For many years Robert Fox represented our properties as well as I took a lot of individual sales; my agreements have never been exclusive agreements with any realtor so that always leave the right to sell and Robert did a very good job for me. Robert decided to retire though, and he had his business, he sold his business to his niece and she was here for two or three years and she's gone back to Anchorage and Robert is now working for Kirk Maynard because when you let your license lapse, and I couldn't have thought this to be true, but when you let it lapse you have to start out as two years as a salesman when you've been a broker for 30 years.

LM: Oh, my heavens ...

MK: Yeah ...

LM: And yet I still see Robert Fox signs up ...

01:22:58

MK: Those are his signs, he's an agent for Kirk and Kirk is Century 21 I think, so I think he's put in his two years so now he'll be able to re-open his office as the broker. So he had a pile of signs I'm sure when he decided to retire and then there's also this thing, a lot of signs never come down for a long time and the property may not be for sale or it may not be listed with that agent anymore. If the next agent was not diligent to come and remove the sign it may still be there.

LM: Yeah, so has it cycled here in Fairbanks you know you have years where you can get rid of lots very quickly and then other times where they sit for quite a while?

MK: Yes it has been that way. Back in the early 80s we had some, some times that didn't go so well and things picked up in the 90s then we had another cycle and they weren't going too well and ... you just live with the cycles ... it evens out and of course in land development I don't suppose you tell the person who bought the lot in Viewpointe that's in the gully, you don't tell him you know that wasn't our favorite lot and it wasn't anyone else's favorite lot until it was the last lot and you wanted it. Yeah. The times, people are not stupid, they can find your best lot and after your subdivision has become a desirable place or undesirable, some ... there are lots of lots in Fairbanks that are platted but they are platted on poor ground, inaccessible or not as accessible as people would want and unfortunately they languish. You also find when you buy 160 acres, it's not all going to be prime land. You are going to get some that is less desirable and you may even get some cabin sites out of it. I tell people up front, look, the best thing to do on that particular piece, if you like all those small trees, that's fine, but build above ground. Don't play in the permafrost. And then some will and some won't and then they ask you, they say, well, I'm having some settling here. And you say, yeah, your permafrost is melting and with this last subdivision Fox Bluffs over here off the Steese, just below Fox, that was the first time we had ever run into the core of engineer, the Engineer Core. They're just a whole 'nother thing to deal with.

LM: Are they?

01:26:27

MK: Yeah. There are, well it's another layer and now there is mitigation required. You build in wet lands, you have to either pay a large fee and I hear, now I'm not sure of this number but I've heard it's \$15,000.00 an acre, well you can't build too many roads if you are putting out \$15,000.00 before you

put any gravel on the road. But you can mitigate with other land that is not going to be touched or something and I just sold a piece last month that was down on the river and it's for somebody else to use as mitigation. They're going to say we aren't going to do anything to this, we'll keep it in its pristine condition which is, it was so pristine that when I took my son down to look at it, he said you better put that right back on the market and that was 10 years ago, 8 years ago. Yeah, he wasn't at all impressed with it. He said it will flood. It hasn't since they did the Moose Creek dam but it certainly has low portions as low as some of that stuff over on Perkins and off of Rosy Creek, down toward the river, the Tanana. And there's some places out on Piledriver Slough which is, in Salcha, there are places there that have flooded every year for, they should call their subdivision flooded acres ...

LM: Well I'm surprised they let anybody build on them to begin with ... floodplains

MK: What a minute, they didn't have any right to tell you you couldn't build on them. Now, the person who controls that is the banker. Now the banker may look at it and say we aren't going to give you a loan, then you run around to Farmers Home Administration and they are a little more lenient and you get something and you build in the flood zone. There's a new set of flood maps out which I have not seen yet but they became effective I think it was April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year and they have changed what areas are now considered flood zones because after the '67 flood ... they had a lot more considered flood zone than now they have the dam up there.

01:29:19

LM: So you don't have, like where I'm from, they have conservation boards and the conservation boards will say no building is allowed in this area because it is a flood zone, but that's maybe more urban ...

MK: Don't have exactly that but actually the group that bought that property that I mentioned was the Delta Conservation, Delta-Salcha Conservation and they were going to use it for mitigation for something, I don't know where they were going to go and have theoretically promised that they won't do anything there. But all it is ... and it wasn't even wetlands. But it's something, well it's under another problem, it's over here and there are the runways of Fort Wainwright and it was right under the runway ... it was right in that green spot there but it was not flood. Now, it was probably flooded in '67, I'm sure it was, I'm sure it was. Steel Creek comes down over in here somewhere down into, it comes way from up the top of the hill down into the river there. Yeah.

LM: So what's ... I imagine ... you said you were on the Planning Board at one time?

MK: No, I was on the Platting Board and I still am. I haven't managed to get off yet. And they are three year terms.

LM: Are they really?

MK: Yes, I've been there since '87 I think, I really ought to look that up.

01:31:21

LM: And what's the responsibilities, are you guys the ones that official give the plats?

MK: The Platting Board is the one that you get your preliminary approval from and they are the ones that go over the plat, not the Platting Board but the platting staff goes over the plat before they record it to make sure everything is supposedly correct and I have one plat that ... one side of a property line

for example is 390 feet and the other side is 360 feet. Well, they didn't catch that. I only noticed it well after the thing was platted so I don't know which it is. However I have a pretty good idea because I know what the adjacent lots were and it's not going to be 390 when they are all in the 350 to 370 range. And it's not that much different.

LM: So does this get registered on a title somewhere ... the plats? How does that error ever get fixed? I used to work in the Land Registry Office that would have just been ... you would have had to have that resurveyed and R-Plans drawn up, everything to fix that.

MK: Where you were you?

LM: In Ontario, Canada.

MK: Ontario, oh, the Canadians a lot more fussy aren't they?

01:32:41

LM: Yes, they are a lot more particular, especially with the Land Titles [Act].

MK: They're fussy except when you are driving down the Alaska Highway and you have three cats in your car and you had them all your vet certificates, oh, we don't want those.

LM: That's funny ...

MK: You took your cats to the vet, you paid money, you got these certificates, they don't want them ...

LM: But when I used to work in real estate law, if something that had happened, you ...

MK: You would do a resurvey ...

LM: You definitely had to do a resurvey, register an R-Plan, have it all redone, there's no way that would be allowed to go through, in fact, you wouldn't even be able to see your property again.

MK: They didn't catch it, that was the whole thing. We have a chorus [Puppet continues barking].

LM: I imagine he's pretty quiet when no one is around.

MK: You think he'd get hoarse and tired.

LM: Yes, you really would.

MK: He's a nice little dog. I got him and then I went, very shortly thereafter, and had a hip replaced so he did not get the upbringing and training that he should have got. Consequently he thinks that anytime anybody comes to the house he can decide whether he's going to bark or whether he's going to make up to them and we were afraid he might not been amenable to this so consequently ... I mentioned my husband had served his time here at Fort Wainwright when it was Ladd Field, he was in the Air Corps before the Air Force existed.

01:34:31

MK: Our property line which is 200 feet below the house here is the Fort Wainwright boundary.

LM: I saw the fence coming up.

MK: It's also the city boundary because Fort Wainwright was annexed into the city, they did not object that's probably more the way to put it, and then at our back ditch here which is just behind the barn and the garage is maybe 15 feet from the back property line, that's Birch Hill Park and that's city, well it was city property but it's now borough property so this is the last of the private lands that were not in the city but were close to the city and I will fight annexation to my dying breath and will ... I don't want to be in the city, I have no interest.

LM: You want to be in the borough?

MK: No, I didn't want to be in the borough either but that's alright. We've been here 45 years ...

LM: Are they trying to annex you then into the ... oops [dog comes running in] ... Otis ...

MK: Did Duke come home?

LM: Must be ... are they trying to annex you? Hello [Duke comes in]

Duke Kniffen: Do you have dog allergies?

LM: No, but I'm fine with him.

MK: This is my son, Darrell Kniffen, Leslie ... I forgot your last name ...

LM: Hi, I'm Leslie McCartney, like Paul, it's pretty easy to remember ...

MK: Well you didn't say that when you introduced yourself the first time. You didn't say like Paul.

LM: Didn't I?

MK: Then I might have remembered. I have very poor short term memory anymore.

DK: Would you like a drink?

LM: I'm fine, thank you very much.

MK: I offered her drinks to start Duke.

LM: Just fine. So, they want to ann ... are you saying they want to annex this into the city right now?

MK: They haven't made any moves lately, they did an annexation, um, 8 or 10 years ago, however when they readjusted the election district boundaries, they took this one stretch and just part way up the road and put it in the city and they wanted me to go down and vote at Tanana Valley Jr. High or Tanana Middle School and considering there was a polling place at Fairhill Church here, I absolutely refused. I went once but I didn't go the other times, I voted on an absentee ballot. Well I told them, I get down

there I would get a city ballot and I'm not entitled to vote for city people and furthermore I don't want to be in the city. So ... Duke you can stay ...

LM: Yes.

DK: I'll do something with Puppet.

MK: Well Puppet is quiet for the moment.

01:37:31

MK: See now that you are home ...

DK: I might get you off topic. I wanted you to remember Miller Road or the Miller Steakhouse ...

MK: No, Fowler. Yes, I did, we already covered that and ...

DK: And Delphinium and Eriophorum ...

LM: No, we haven't talked about Delphinium ...

MK: Delphinium was not one of mine but it's a road over here that is ... it was the driveway for friends of ours, the Tordoff's ...

LM: I know Dirk ...

MK: You know Dirk? Well, Dirk was just a little red headed kid when I arrived and his mother used to tie him and his brother to the birch trees out front so they could play out in the yard but wouldn't wander out to Farmers Loop. Farmers Loop has been redone three or four different times and the area, you are probably familiar with the area down by the university parking lots?

LM: Yes.

MK: How many times has that been surveyed Duke?

DK: Oh! How many times have the parking lots changed, and the entrances and the exists ...

MK: Yes, but how many times have Bill Mendenhall's classes gone out and resurveyed ...

DK: It's true!

MK: Bill Mendenhall is also on the Platting Board. He and I are the two oldest members. But it was a good thing for the students to be able to go out and survey and I wouldn't be at all surprised if they got differing values each time. So you are Canadian?

LM: I'm Canadian.

MK: Well, that's great.

LM: Well going back to Delphinium Lane?

MK: Delphinium was the driveway for Tordoff's and they lived in a house that was built out of railroad ties, it's still there, but it's now owned by Jean Crank who sells flowers ...

LM: Yes, I've been in there.

MK: Okay. You know Jean. Jean was one of my students many, many years ago. She's now retired. So, Oz Tordoff used to have a fountain in his yard with a narwhal on it, paper mache or something, well it couldn't have been paper mache because it spouted water. But anyway he had that in his yard for many years so it was something that people looked at but the base of it, I understand, came out of a boys or men's lavatory, was it actually Duke a urinal?

DK: I have no idea.

01:40:21

MK: Or was it a hand wash ...

DK: I really don't know ...

MK: You choose not to know! But it came from one of the lavatories when somebody was renovating something and it was this large circular thing with a stand so he put this ... recreation ...

DK: Yeah, the was probably this big and tusk on it was ...

MK: It had a long tusk and it spewed water and it was really quite the thing.

MK: The tour buses would like at it and they had delphiniums in that bed on the side which Jean told me just earlier this year, you know I've got to get out there and weed that bed again, well our delphiniums here are offspring of those and you know, it's sort of nice to have that memory of those two people. They had been here before Statehood and because of her asthma and COPD, they had to move out of state, they couldn't take the winters so they went to Nevada and lived at 8,000 down there just outside of Reno.

LM: So that's how Delphinium Lane got its name.

MK: So Delphinium was named because it went by their delphinium bed which was, they kept it very neatly weeded.

DK: Ullrhaven?<sup>9</sup> Ski Boot Hill? Bender Mountain ...

MK: They were named, frequently things were named for whatever near them or wherever they ended up.

LM: Right ... Gerald Lizotte?

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.alsap.org/Ullrhaven/Ullrhaven.htm>

DK: Gerry Lizotte has been here since before ... he came up in WWII, I've worked with him and I worked with at the [inaudible]? Hall in '80s and '90s, he now drives school buses and he and his wife remember these little roadhouses, the place like Fowlers ...

MK: So that's somebody you might want to call ...

DK: If you ever, when I have a question about where something was, he could tell me, oh, there was an old place called the Cabaret over there, there was a place ... you know ... and there used to be an old racetrack right down where about where Home Depot is with tarmac and set a bleachers and he can tell me, oh yes, and there was a little restaurant out there too. This was now, and we used to come up what is the Old Steese now and go by, right where the Mormon Church is, it was country-like and then you hit the cemetery and everybody called it Dead Man's Curve because it was really quite the curve, you know, then you were going of town ...

01:43:35

MK: Well off of Farmers Loop, and you can see it from here, there were bunkers full of ammunition and things they couldn't store on Ladd Air Force Base at that time and they even had a group of soldiers that were deployed out there into those Quonset huts and up on Bender Mountain which is the top of Ski Boot Hill, that's Bender Mountain, nobody knows that anymore, you talk about Bender, oh we've talked about Eriophorum, Epilobium and Angustifolium ...

DK: Yeah, but you didn't get that one ...

MK: See, I told you I didn't get that one ...

LM: Maybe the next development ...

DK: Anybody that drives a bus or taxi or [phonetically] Ear-o-from? Or Your-ear-ee ...

LM: I even pronounced it wrong ...

DK: They don't even come close, they give up but there are others that are worse for her. There's nothing hard about it if you took Latin.

MK: I was trying to know how many buses go around Farmers Loop. I was telling her about when Polly first went to school there was one bus that started here at this end of Farmers Loop and picked up everybody including the little bit of Ballaine Road to Yankovich.

DK: It's an issue of scheduling and it's an issue of who's going to what school because some people have the ability to go to different schools which requires a different ...

MK: A different bus ...

DK: And they all happen at the same time and so there are plenty of times when you would think that when somebody has to squeeze in a pick ups so they end up on Farmers Loop Road because they are going to the right place, at ... you know it seems odd but it really is what it takes ... and so ...

01:45:24

MK: But anyway, there are that many more people and of course some of it, if we hadn't done it, somebody else would but overall we've had over 600 acres of stuff on the Farmers Loop area, more than that, that we have been responsible for the initial subdivision and then of course people build and they end up in road service areas.

DK: So you've done Joe Vogler<sup>10</sup> and Viewpointe and the Paulpheys?

MK: We didn't talk about Joe Vogler.

DK: Paulpheys and Walker?

MK: Yeah, I mentioned them.

DK: What was her name, was her name Walker?

MK: Candy?

01:46:07

DK: No, not Candy ...

MK: Oh, Fern Palfy ...

DK: Who had the little by Barney's ...

MK: Sherus [sp?], the one you went for cookies and milk?

DK: No, I'm thinking Barney's Piano Shop right there, Reed ...

MK: Yeah, Irving Reed.

DK: Irving Reed and his wife had a little farm there just before the golf course ...

MK: Just the others side of Ballaine Lake ... right where the two churches are, that's Reed Acres, so, now, it wasn't subdivided at the time of his death.

LM: So and you guys bought that? Or was that them?

MK: No.

LM: That was them.

MK: No it wasn't for sale at that time and we were doing something else.

LM: You mentioned Vogler?

MK: Joe Vogler, University Heights was Joe.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe\\_Vogler](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Vogler)

LM: Oh, he did that one did he?

01:47:01

MK: Yes.

DK: Fern Palfy and Viewpointe ...

MK: Yeah, I did mention Fern as the one we had to really work on her to get her to sell.

DK: Was she a Creamer child?

MK: No, she was not Creamer, her husband had a sheet metal shop in town and he actually, it was actually Claus Johnson who homesteaded the property and he borrowed money from Palfy and signed a note and ended up losing his property to Palfy who I hear was not given to many extensions, if you didn't pay I'll record your deed or I'll foreclose. But Claus Johnson was there when we first arrived and he had goats and we got two goats from him. Of course the goats got killed, the bear came and killed the goats.

01:48:10

LM: Well that brings up something interesting, how about the financing for this, you've always been lucky to get financing for the developments? Has that been problematic?

MK: Financing has not been a problem, we do not get financing.

LM: Good for you.

MK: If we can't pay for I don't get it.

DK: Yes but doing something right the first time, that was Sunrise.

MK: Well that financing was your grandfather.

DK: Well, there you go.

MK: But it wasn't running out and getting bank financing ...

DK: And stuff was very inexpensive and not developed, there wasn't an option besides ones and two doing things on their own, there wasn't an option on Farmers Loop near the university.

MK: It was expensive for the times but it was not expensive when you look back on it. We paid \$65,000.00 for 65 acres at Sunrise.

DK: That was expensive, that we very expensive for the ...

MK: It was expensive and our roads were, well we were paying .25 cents a yard for tailings and whatever Jim Thurman charged, he's earthmovers ...

DK: We've got the old bill for the material on that ...

MK: For delivery but it was certainly not \$110.00 an hour for a load of gravel which did not include, no it would include the gravel, but that's what you pay now per load ...

DK: It's truck time and material ...

MK: That's the truck time and ... yep, so you can see why lots have to cost \$30-40,000.00.

LM: Down where we are ...

MK: You can spend next to nothing on the land actually and then buy the time you give away the roads, after you have paid for what's on them, you have a sizeable investment there.

LM: Right, yeah.

MK: Because of the inaccessibility at the time we bought it or the presumed inaccessibility it turned out that after three or four years in court we had access after all. But the land, the underlying land at Fox Bluffs wasn't all that wild in its initial cost but the cost of the roads and the surveys and all the other stuff, you end up with ...

LM: Yeah, sizable investment ...

DK: Yeah, you go from \$100,000.00 to \$500,000.00 in no time.

MK: ... in no time ...

DK: Then you have 20 year or 30 year tail ...

MK: ... window. I told her about the comment I had heard that if you aren't out in 5 or 6 years you're just not a very good subdivider, you just aren't doing it right ...

DK: It depends where you are.

LM: Maybe in the lower 48 somewhere, probably ...

DK: Or down in the valley and you can also be right there with the tide and the tide goes out and now you've got to wait your five years ...

MK: And your boat didn't rise with it ...

DK: No, Joe was one of the ... you came up and then Joe on the road ...

MK: I met Joe within the first three weeks of being here. Have you ever heard of Joe Vogler?

LM: I've heard the name but, I don't ... I've heard the Vogler name but I don't ...

MK: Yeah, you need to ask Joe about sometime ...

01:51:50

DK: Joe was the Alaskan's for Independence and he was a gubernatorial candidate for, under the Alaska for Independence party ... at odds with the National Parks Service ...

MK: He was at odds with everybody.

DK: Or mining claims and access in the Circle Mining District.

MK: At Woodchopper.

DK: At Woodchopper. And Joe and my dad were great pals but also ...

MK: We also had adjoining subdivisions ...

DK: Also competitors but competitors and allies and political friends because ... you know, because their politics aligned, do things for yourself, others don't need to get in your way, you'll be a good steward of your property and what you do, you know, that sums up part of it, not the notion that ... and Joe was very much about mining, but ...

LM: Interesting.

MK: By the way, this road is shown here but it stops here at ... it stops right about ... that's an interesting thing. That was a state subdivision and they did paper plats at that time, it was all on paper, we don't know whether it works on the ground or not but we are going to sell it to you and we didn't have to build any roads, it was the state.

DK: Same way on Murphy Dome. Great big place, complex of plots on Murphy's Dome that way, maybe a whole section, 660 acres ...

LM: So what happened when they got up here, they realized that they just couldn't build or get the roads through?

01:53:47

MK: No, what happened was they sold the land and people started ... they must have had some sort of ...

DK: We are talking Wolverine?

MK: Now, we are talking about Tungsten. Wolverine was another state subdivision, over Musk Ox ...

DK: But it had some infrastructure that got to it ...

MK: Yeah, it had a few dirt roads that got to it but no, I think people just extended the road as they needed it to get to it themselves.

LM: So the Wolverine one you said was a state one too?

MK: Musk ox was a state subdivision.

LM: Because we actually used to live over there, off Red Fox. We were house-sitting for somebody over there when we first arrived.

MK: You drove Red Fox didn't you?

DK: Yeah, drove down that every day.

LM: Well Margery, thank you so very much, you are a fountain of information. It's wonderful.

MK: Well, you didn't learn much about road names.

LM: Well we did actually, we did learn a lot about road names but it's the stories that go with the road names that are of importance too.

DK: What sort of theme did Joe have for naming his roads?

01:55:06

MK: Oh, his were universities.

DK: Oh, his were universities.

LM: His was University Heights, right? And there's another one in town there behind Safeway that's all the Presidents names.

MK: And there are also some more university names down off of Chena Pump.

DK: Now, how did Joe pick his universities?

MK: I don't know.

DK: Are they all east coast universities?

MK: No, they aren't ...

LM: Let's take a look ...

DK: Catholic Universities? Gonzaga?

MK: They may be Catholic universities, I never knew until I went to his funeral that he was Catholic, he certainly didn't ...

DK: De Paux ...

MK: Is that a Catholic school?

DK: I don't know.

MK: I think it may be ...

LM: De Paux ...

DK: They might be Jesuit Schools ...

LM: They might be, that sounds more Jesuit ...

DK: Or is it De Paul ...

MK: D-p-a-u-x, there's no 'l' in there ...

LM: I'm just trying to find them here, I know exactly where it is yet I can't seem to ...

MK: No, there's Ithaca, and I think ...

DK: Ithaca, that's right.

01:56:06

MK: Ithaca is ...

LM: Cambridge, Baylor, Baylor is a university of course ...

MK: I don't think they're all Catholic ...

LM: Holy Cross Drive and Ithaca, yes, Holy Cross Drive and Joliet [Drive], Eton [Blvd], Gonzaga .. I don't know that name.

DK: That's a Catholic college ...

LM: Is it? Gonzaga ...

DK: It's in downtown ...

LM: And Fordham ...

MK: Is it in Spokane?

DK: You're right, it's a west coast one, we had to look it up because I was watching the NCAA and I didn't know where they were from ...

MK: It think its ... if it isn't in Spokane it's certainly in that area, that general area of Washington state.

LM: I'll look them and see if there's any geographical similarity or if they are just ones that he knew ...

MK: Well, they are spread all over the place because Ithaca of course is in New York and Cambridge is in England so I don't think there's an Oxford there, there might have been an Oxford already as a road ...

LM: Somewhere else, because you would have thought Oxford and Cambridge would have been in tandem.

01:57:14

DK: And Jim Magoffin does ski slopes.

MK: Yeah, he does ski ... his are relatively new, last five years, he has property adjacent to the musk ox farm down in there, between Dalton Trail and the musk ox farm off of Yankovich.

LM: Yes, I know that area.

DK: He's got Sunvalley Drive ...

MK: His father had homesteaded that and Puppet, get out of the rose bush ...

LM: And then there's the whole area that's all bird names, Swallow, all the bird names ...

01:58:00

DK: What do you remember about Ullrhaven ...

MK: I remember going up Ullrhaven in 1959 ...

DK: That's Ester Dome right?

MK: Yeah ...

DK: And there's a subdivision up there that's called ...

MK: It's an old, old subdivision and it may have been something that ... I don't know about its ideology ...

DK: There may have been born of the folks that collaborated to have Ullrhaven and I think it's got a German name that means winter ...

MK: It's some sort of a ski, it's associated with ski slopes in Europe I think, I think.

DK: It's compact, everybody is right on top of each other ...

MK: They were little half acre lots.

DK: It's an oddity in that respect because here you are out in the country but you are also pushed into one little ... you know, right on top of your neighbor.

MK: I think it was the group ...

DK: Nordstrasse ...

MK: Nordstrasse, that would be North Street. I think it was probably the incorporates of Ullrhaven ski slope, saved one little portion for residential or for our ski cabins.

LM: Right.

MK: It's got beautiful view ... so ... yeah ...

DK: u-h-l-r, right? U-l-l-r?

MK: Well when you came home you quit barking ...

LM: Yes, thank you.

DK: What do you remember about Chena Hot Springs Road, how far it went?

MK: It went to ... it went to ... stop that [Puppet scratching at the window] ... Jenny M Creek which was at 23 mile or something like that and it followed every hill. If the hill was 30% it was 30% grade.

02:00:19

LM: He's discovered something new ... [Puppet scratching at the window]

MK: And you see, if you go out Chena Hot Springs Road, you'll see these large cuts, well just think driving up and over the top, that's how you did it.

LM: So here we have it, it's spelled u-l-l-r-h-a-v-e-n. Yes, look at how small the lots are. I think it's a German ski slope or something or maybe it means something in German.

LM: I'll look it up in my German dictionary.

MK: I don't know.

LM: Oh, very compact.

MK: I probably have a German dictionary, it's probably in one of those boxes that's downstairs that's never been opened. I didn't have any need for a German dictionary after I got here.

LM: So who was it that named all the streets after all the Presidents in town?

MK: I don't know ... don't have the slightest idea. That was all just woods when ... for the longest time that whole area there.

DK: The other one is old man Phillips ...

MK: Yeah, Phillips Fields, we just talked to his grandson a couple of weeks ago and Phillips Field Road, that whole area where the Johansen is, after you got over the slough, not too much farther out from that, all the way out to the other side of the slough, the ... where the slough crosses again by Dead End Ally, out there, that was Carol Phillips' property and there was an air field there ...

DK: That was Metro Field right?

MK: No, that was Phillips Field ... Metro Field here is down by the dyke, and then the old airport for Fairbanks used to be where the library is.

DK: Yes, Weeks Field.

MK: And I don't know who Weeks was but Marion Weeks married Stroecker

LM: I think she has Weeks in here ...

MK: That's the dissertation? [Referring to Sharon Kesseys' thesis].

LM: That's the dissertation, yes, and I'm positive she had Weeks Field ...

MK: Printed and bound ...

LM: It was named after John W. Weeks who was the Secretary of War under President Warren Harding in the early 1920s.

02:02:59

MK: Okay, I didn't know that.

DK: Was he ever here?

LM: No, half of these people, most of the people the streets are named after in Fairbanks never set eyes on Fairbanks ...

DK: I thought there would be a story about the family called the Weeks ...

LM: No, it's not that romantic ...

DK: You know, I don't know, in the early '70s I certainly remember ...

MK: There used to be some airplanes sitting out there ...

DK: What was the name of that building, Phillips Fields had plenty of traffic and it didn't have big stuff but I might have had DC-3s in there ...

MK: Oh, I don't know about that ...

DK: A lot of light planes ...

MK: Oh yeah, they were tied down ... there are a couple of old hangers out there, a green one ...

LM: Yeah, a green one that says fur trapping supplies or something ...

MK: It was a hanger and there used to be planes sitting there.

DK: And I think Air North used to fly out of there then moved over to Metro Field or maybe that didn't happen ...

02:04:00

MK: I don't know where Air North started ...

DK: But I don't know why they cut it up, we love the Johansen but how did they manage that? How did they manage to cause ...

MK: I don't know whether they, I don't know, I don't know if they came and said we are either going to buy your property or we are going to condemn it, I don't know if that was the case ...

DK: Usually that doesn't happen when there's such a high activity in a spot, they usually try to go around you know ...

MK: But there's be a move to move things like that away from, it's like the move now that's out there every so often, let's move the railroad, so somebody will come along in a 100 years and say I heard the railroad used to be here, now how did it get moved?

02:04:58

LM: Usually it's urban places, they sprawl out and stuff that is still in the core gets moved out like airports and train stations and stuff.

MK: So you are from Canada?

LM: Yes, I am.

MK: My grandson went to McGill.

LM: Oh, in Montreal, McGill, yeah, that's in Montreal. Sorry I get that and McMaster mixed up.

MK: He left after a year.

DK: I think it was, you're 18, what do you know. Maybe he didn't want to be downtown or maybe the weather wasn't any good.

MK: Well, he didn't like the weather ...

LM: Well, lots of snow there.

MK: Yeah, he didn't like that particularly ... so now he's in southern California at Claremont ...

LM: Oh, much warmer ... well Margery I think we are done, thank you.

MK: I'm glad you were able to come.

LM: Thank you so much too Duke.

MK: I'm sorry I put you off so long ...

LM: No, no, I've enjoyed ...

MK: I'm sure your letter is in that stack. Let's turn this off.

[end of recording 02:05:56]