

EEL 3

Series: Tanana Yukon Historical Society tapes

Reel 3 opens with talk about Miller House (old roadhouse near Central) auction being held this date in Fairbanks. Talk about the Pullen collection being divided and going a thousand different directions.

Back to 1904 and 1905. Owen had jobs shoveling snow, stacking wood. His brothers Bill, George and father freighted to Copper Center

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and lots of times into McCarthy where the Kennecott Co. was mining copper. Never freighted as far as Fairbanks.

Discuss Vide Bartlett whom they have known for many years.

Talk about annexation of their 10 acres to the City of Valdez. Also about some vacations they have taken (not too many).

Meals served on the city council for 10 to 12 years. Was a volunteer in the fire department for 25 years (engineer on the steam fire pump). Says the current mayor of the town is Fred Harding.

Any other disasters in Valdez besides the earthquake? Couple bad, bad fires. One big fire burned most of the business district one time. Then once before 1910 a businessman with a grudge set four or five fires simultaneously and the entire business district went up in smoke. No possible way to save the town. The businessman was all packed and ready to go when he set the fires, Owen says.. also he was searched and found to have evidence that proved he set the fires, but because the authorities did not have a warrant for search, he was allowed to go and the evidence seized was not admissable (even back in those days???). Amazing thing about the episode is that the man got on the outgoing ship alive. Owen didn't know if he made it to Seattle alive, however.

Any people still here who were here March 27, 1964? Kelseys, Derringers, the Day family, Walkers, Wyatts, Parkers, Gilsons, Truck Egan and sister and many others.

Nancy Meals tells about Hunt Gruening and his little wild kids visiting the Meals show place of a home (modernistic showplace of Alaska!). Kids running all over the place!

It's raining and it is very evident by the background noise on the tape.

Meals' flying career: Meals and Bill Schmidt went to Fairbanks and went up with Ed Young in Young's airplane. The flying bug bit Meals about 1926. He took couple lessons from Joe Crosson in Crosson's Jennie which had dual controls. But George King washed out the Jennie in a stump field so that ended the flying lessons for awhile. Then Meals went to Denver and took lessons with the Eaglerock group. He brought back an Eaglerock plane to Valdez. Flew it to Fairbanks once and cracked it up on the way back home (at Gakona). Meals had an A and E license by then so he helped re-assemble lots of aircraft that were shipped to Alaska via Alaska Steam to Valdez. Meals' plane was the first one in Valdez.

Some of the first pilots he remembers are Gillam, a Nome pilot whose name he could not recall, Bob Reeve later, Noel Wien, Nick Ross, Hans Myrill (sp??).

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After Meals cracked up his first plane he got another (did not get make or model). Nat Brown used it in the Bethel area. Then Bob Reeve started on it (his first plane in Alaska). Reeve flew it into the Chisana area and other interior and coastal points. He had flown in his home state and also had flown in South America for Pan American-Grace and had many hundreds of flying hours before coming to Alaska, Meals said. Meals took movies of Reeve taking off on skis from mud flats of Valdez and heading off to the glaciers where he hauled freight for mining operations...Gillam made quite a few trips on skis, leaving interior on snow and landing on slick mud in Valdez bay.