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Jim Cassady, Jr. describes the aftermath of the 1964 Alaska Earthquake.

April, 1964

Anchorage, Alaska

Jim Cassady, Jr. reports on the Alaska Earthquake. His home had very little damage. His business had a little damage. He was on Adak Island when the earthquake happened. He flew by Navy transportation to Adak. Friday evening they were told that a tsunami was coming. They went up to higher ground, but the tsunami never came. The only news they could get about the earthquake was from radio broadcasts from the lower forty-eight states. Things sounded pretty bleak. The next morning they got up and he got a navy transport to Elmendorf Air Force Base. They arrived in Elmendorff at night and the city was dark. Parts of Elmendorff had damage. He rode into Anchorage and the business district was under marshal law. They wouldn't let anyone enter. He got his bags and went home. He learned the next day that the Air Guard had gone active. When he got to the Air Guard he could see some damage. He worked on an airplane for several hours. He said the majority of downtown was hit the hardest. That area was five to thirty feet lower than before the earthquake. The streets were ripped up. He thought it was lucky that more people weren't killed. There were a lot of two story new buildings that can now be entered by their second floors. He said the geologists claimed that the city is sitting on gravel with layers of clay. It was the clay that caused the gravel to slide. He described damage to apartment buildings. In Turnagain some of the homes have disappeared into the earth. He describes the damage to many of the houses. He wasn't sure how many people were killed when the earthquake hit. The Turnagain Arm area was hit the hardest. He thought rebuilding Fourth Avenue in downtown area would be a good thing compared to its previous state. He said there was a fault line out on Boniface Road that formed a six inch gap on the road and split a tree in two. He continued to describe the damage to individual buildings. He said they are working on restoring power and services to the city. The Anchorage International Tower is now one story high. All the bigger apartment houses have been condemned. He said people were optimistic about rebuilding. He comments on the damage to Seward, Kodiak and Valdez. He hopes that Seward is rebuilt completely. He heard that Adak had tsunamis after he left. He rented a plane to take a ride around Anchorage and down to Girdwood with a couple of people. He looked at a lot of bridges that were knocked down. He talked about the damage in Portage. Whittier had damage to the gas tanks at the tank farm. He thought the majority of the damage was from a tsunami. He said a couple of places in town have rigged their own little seismographs. There have been aftershocks in the past three weeks since the earthquake.

Alaska Earthquake, Alaska, 1964.

Earthquake damage |z Alaska |z Anchorage.

Earthquakes |z Alaska |z Anchorage.

Buildings |x Earthquake effects |z Alaska |z Anchorage.

Anchorage (Alaska)