

Call Number: 02-00-62-04 Pt. 1

Interview with Morrie Smith and Mayor Darell Brewington in November, 1962, Tiny's Restaurant, Fairbanks, AK.

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Notes: Original on 5 inch reel, copy on CD

The recording of the show "Meet the People" starts with music playing. A man named Chuck is discussing visitors of Fairbanks and how Fairbanks must do enough so people go back home and tell people they must visit Fairbanks. Morrie Smith tells the story about two caravans meeting on the desert. Two caravans meet each other in the desert and one asks about the city where he is headed. The man driving away from the city says that the city is very, very poor and he doesn't like it. He then asks the same question to the other guy about the city he is going and the guy says that it's about the same way that the guy described the other city. The man says the point is that a lot of people have an attitude about a place and they're not going to get along regardless of the place. He says there is a mutual relationship between the military and Fairbanks. Smith says he thinks Fairbanks should develop industry. He says he has a lawyer friend named Frank from Indiana who took a trip to Porcupine River this summer. Frank has been driving 1800 miles from Indiana to Manitoba to a place called the Paw for many summers. Frank recently started visiting Alaska via plane with a friend of his. The tourist market and its importance is discussed. Smith says the midnight sun is probably the greatest tourist potential.

Music is played at 8:05 then the recording resumes at 8:18 and Chuck is talking to a gentleman named Herb. The recording stops and resumes and now Chuck is talking to Morrie Smith. City management and the need for leadership in Fairbanks are discussed. Strong leadership in a committee is discussed. Urban renewal is discussed and the Smith says urban renewal takes the spark out of people and their ability to do it themselves. Smith says he has been in Alaska for 25 years. Chuck asks Smith if he has any opinions of the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Creature comforts at the research center are discussed including developments and scientific investigation. Smith says the University of Alaska is going to play an important role in Fairbanks. Smith says he grew up on a university campus because his father was and is a college professor. Smith says he dislikes how there is resentment between some of the community and the university. Smith says there are always people who think they are better than others. Smith says he remembers standing in a clothing store when he was 12 in Greencastle Indiana near DePauw University. He said he heard clerks talking about his father [O.H. Smith] and how he doesn't do anything practical. His father was a physicist and developed a number of the graduates. Smith said he wonders if any would say that what his father was doing is practical now. Chuck says the time is 8:27 and Santa Clause is coming to town.

Chuck asks Smith if he reads a lot. Smith says that's one thing he does do. Smith says if you don't know how to entertain yourself then Fairbanks isn't the place for you. He talks about the importance of reading. Smith says he reads "Saturday Review." He says he gets current thinking on what books are being written. Root Harpers and Atlantic and Current are also read. Smith says when he leaves the interview he is going to go up to his cabin on Ester Dome. He enjoys chopping wood. Smith talks about an idea for the midnight sun. He wants a midnight sun festival that would host different groups that could play music in Fairbanks. Smith talks about the Golden Days and there was a group on Second Avenue who had guitars. The music festival in anchorage with Robert Shaw and Julius [Inaudible] is discussed. Smith says he contacted the head of the music department back in Indiana and Smith says they are interested. Chuck says if there is any group with an activity in mind, Fairbanks has the greatest opportunity in the world because Fairbanks sends out more mail and packages than any other place. Smith says one of the best advertising is the person who comes to Fairbanks and talks about how great their visit was. Chuck says they are going to take a look at the weather.

Chuck asks Morrie what the most important steps Fairbanks will take in the next few years. One thing most people are concerned with including Paul [Garvin?] is that Fairbanks doesn't prize itself off of the home market. Smith says the cost of living can't go up any more than it is. Recreational facilities are going to need money and the University of Alaska is going to need money. He says the higher cost of living is going to make it difficult for people to make their homes in Fairbanks. The name of the current Program is "Meet the People." Chuck says he has a question for Morrie that is asked to many of the guests. Chuck asks Morrie if he has any opinion on "capital relocation." Morrie laughs. Smith says there are two sides to the capitol move. There is one organization pulling one way and another pulling the other. Morrie says there should be a commission where the actual figures as they exist can be taken to the people of Alaska on a way that isn't bias. Morrie thanks Chuck and says Tiny's [Café] coffee is very good. Chuck says the show will start again Monday morning.

At 36:57 of the recording a man says the time is now 9:10 AM of November the 17th 1962 in Fairbanks. Harry Hughes says the tape is for personal use only. He says he called Morrie Smith and complimented him on the discussion. A news broadcast then begins from the radio. The radio is discussing a meeting in Fairbanks. The Conflict of Interest Ordinance is discussed. Barry Jackson, city attorney, is mentioned. Councilman Boucher is mentioned regarding the Conflict of Interest Ordinance. Councilman Leflafore is mentioned.

Mayor Darrel Bloomington cuts into the recording and says he would like to thank John Griffin and KTVF Channel 11 for the opportunity to bring forward a series of talks. The talks will go into the city government and how it operates, the budget, the services that the people receive from the government. He says he believes it's important that people know where the government stands. He discusses the city manager form of government and how it works. The council and the mayor hire the city clerk and the city attorney. Their responsibilities are discussed. Mayor Bloomington discusses some of the interesting things about government that he finds. He says this year Fairbanks is in a financial bind. He says there is a feeling from people in the city of concern for bond issues. He says the government feels the people are at a high limit and feel they cannot go any further on expenses. He says there are 13,500 people in the city and 4,000 are property owners. Bonded indebtedness is discussed. He discusses the budget

that was given by the city manager. Costs are broken down. The total amount of interest and principles on general obligation bonds from the date of 1963 down to 1982 is mentioned. Public improvement and sewer bonds are mentioned. The cans and cant's of bonds is discussed. He mentions talking about surplus and laws with the city attorney. He says the budget is going to be cut down to the bear minimum. He says some services will have to be deleted. He discusses some of the things that government does for the people at 58:05 of the recording. The needs of Fairbanks is discussed along with the decision making of the city council. He says the city manager controls the departments of the city and the council cannot tell him whom to hire or fire nor can they tell a department head what to do and when to do it. He says he'll be discussing for possibly 30 minutes. The recording ends.