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Unidentified people talk with Lael Morgan

Lael Morgan, recorder

Series: Lael Morgan Collection

SIDE A

1972

Greetings to residents in Pt. Hope, Alaska from residents of Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska

Lael Morgan tape records Raymond Paneak sending greetings.

Several people speak in Inupiaq including Amos Murray, Ned Nusinginya, and Zachariah Sigra,

Mrs. Zacharia Sigra sends greetings to people in Pt. Hope in English and Inupiaq.

Group singing a hymn in English

Mikey Markel, a teacher, sends greetings to Charlie and Bernice Sheldon.

SIDE B

Tom Snapp and Howard Rock with Lael Morgan

1972

The Tiki Cove in Fairbanks, Alaska

Recording starts in the middle of a conversation.

[lots of background voices and noise]

Tom Snapp said he wanted to cover history, education, land claims and hunting and fishing rights. He said "they" [News-miner?] gave him other duties. He covered the court, state offices and wasn't allowed to travel. The newspaper was putting in a lot of personal columns to the detriment of the other news. He said what happens when the issues aren't being covered. How will problems be solved? He was frustrated. He was told to edit the columns, but not to edit them too much. Howard Rock said they would correct the spelling and punctuation. He said there was a lot of information about people arriving. When he was working at the Daily news-miner he didn't think the space was being properly utilized. Morgan asked about a reporter going up to the meeting in Barrow. Snapp said he was the only reporter there. Howard said that he and Tom ended up being roommates up in Barrow. They talked about where they met in Fairbanks. Howard said he went to visit his folks in Pt. Hope in 1961 and they were very worried about Project Chariot. They were looking for people who they could depend on for help. Someone pointed at him and he said he didn't know one thing about the project. He realized that they

did have a very big problem that would affect their way of living. They were concerned about pollution going into sea and the people lived off of the sea. They depended on the sea for whales, seals, walrus, etc. Morgan said she was surprised that the people in Pt. Hope didn't speak much English including Sam Rock. Rock said he picked it up fairly easily when he was a little boy growing up there. He was able to talk to the sailors on the Polar Bear ship. Morgan asked him when he returned to Pt. Hope the people were still not speaking English very well. [music becomes very loud and it is difficult to understand the conversation] Rock said when he returned to Pt. Hope he could still speak his language, but he had been away for many years. He would start speaking Eskimo and finish in English. At that time he stayed in Pt. Hope for three weeks and he was speaking his language very well. Tom said they got a copy of a paper from Greenland and Howard could read the paper because it is the same language. He said he never learned to read his own language at school. Morgan asked Snapp how he came to Alaska. Snapp said he came to Alaska in 1959. His sister and her husband lived in Alaska. She had to convince Tom to come up for a visit. His sister sent him a round trip ticket to him in Missouri where he was attending graduate school in journalism. Snapp said when he got to Fairbanks he wasn't impressed. He took a temporary job working for the city directory. He had to go into people's houses for the job. He noticed how everyone was so friendly. He decided he liked this city. He only had a little bit of information to collect, but he ended up talking to people for much longer. He met a lot of interesting people. One of the streets he had to go to was Kantishna Way where the editor of the newspaper lived. He sat and talked with him. They talked about journalism together. The editor said one of their reporters was leaving and he could offer him a temporary position and a week later they called him about the position. He gave his other job a week's notice. He said he was only going to work in the summer. He kept working and working and they didn't get a replacement. He kept getting more and more stories to do. They asked him to work for them for the semester and then he could return to Missouri. He had another year for his masters. Morgan asked him about him attending the meeting. Howard Rock said it was good he attended the meeting. It was the first big meeting of the Native leaders up there (Barrow?). Snapp said he had started to develop information and it had taken him a year to collect the information. He had started to write a series about the Project Chariot. He went through the copy that the News-Miner had received about the project. He had been gathering material and interviews and it didn't match the copy material. The information that had been put out on the AP (Associated Press) had all these errors in it. The AEC (Atomic Energy Commission) had come out with the decision that June was the best month for the blast. The people doing the preliminary studies said they hadn't even started to study in June yet. Morgan asked in Don Foote had blown his career in defense of Pt. Hope and that area. Rock said Bill Pruitt and Don Foote had started out working for AEC in good faith as they went along they started to see things were all wrong compared to the information on AP. Snapp said there were about fifty of the researchers and many were starting to get very concerned. They had found radiation in the food chain and the AEC had been trying to cover this up. Morgan made a comment about the AEC men that have been coming from Washington, D.C. She said she received a letter from someone in the AEC complaining about the Tundra Times. Senator Bartlett didn't believe what the AEC was reporting either. Snapp said that the University of Alaska was caught in the middle. They had been given the contract for the research and the research was supposed to come out a certain way. [abrupt end of recording]

