

WALT SINN- Fairbanks

A.P. (BOB) BRANDT - Juneau

REEL 1

August P. (Bob) Brandt came to Alaska in 1939 with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He was a security police officer at Ft. Richardson when the first runway was being built. Nine security men went there from Portland and Seattle when Brandt arrived. He had been at the Oregon state prison for two years. He also did some police work in small towns. Acted as U.S. guards and deputized as deputy marshall. Stationed in Portage during the tunnel work (for railroad) to Whittier.

In 1941 he joined the infant highway patrol. About three men in the entire force then. On second thought, there might have been four, Brandt said. He was stationed in Anchorage and then in Fairbanks. Wesley I. Gilma was in Anchorage, too.

When transferred to Fairbanks Brandt drove over the new Glenn Highway. He and Emil File came together, File just for the ride. First non-constructon vehicle over the Glenn.

Brandt was the only highway patrol man in Fairbanks for three years. His district included Valdez, Glennallen, and out to the border. Bill Wilson eventually joined the force in Fairbanks. Later Dickinson came.

Sinn interjects that it takes five and one third men on the force to keep one man on duty 24 hours a day. Brandt did it alone...patrol, investigate, reports. Had no place to keep his patrol car so it was put in the highway department garage in cold months. Long hike in the middle of the night from Sixth Avenue to Illinois Street garage.

Brandts had only one daughter. Millie Brandt worked for E.B. Collins attorney. Then she went to the First National Bank. She gave Bill and Ed Stroecker their first lessons in basic banking procedures.

Talk about Sim MacKinnon of Juneau who was a Captain in the Navy during the last war. Stationed on the Aleutians. MacKinnon claims the book "The Thousand Mile War" is an extremely accurate and thorough book, Sinn and Brandt say.

Walt Sinn was working on Annette Island when it was being built. Lived in tents. Enlisted in the Coast Guard and served in that three years. After discharge in Juneau he worked for a grocery store. He joined the Territorial Police in Juneau...1945. Met his wife Doris (first wife who died about 8 years ago) in Juneau. She was waitress in a cafe and came originally from Chehalis, Wash. She worked in the Gastineau Cafe.

(more)

Alaska Highway Patrol became the Territorial Police and then the Alaska State Troopers after statehood in 1959.

Badges: Brandt solicited designs from school children and paid the \$50 prize out of his own pocket. Walt has badge No. 1. Shoulder patches still being used by State Troopers was designed by Brandt.

Walt came to Fairbanks in 1949, making the force a total of four. In 1946 the force began to grow. On his way back from the states Brandt kept a record of the Alcan and its facilities for travelers. Wrote that up for the department and the Portland Chamber of Commerce. It was such a good detailed report that the police commander had it printed for distribution. So, the first Highway "milepost" was written and compiled by Sgt. A.P. (Bob) Brandt.

On statehood, Brandt moved from police to state public works department in Juneau. Retired in 1969. Lives in the MacKinnon Apartments where he and Millie have lived past 17 years. Gov. George Parks has lived in the apartments long time.

Walt tells about giving Mrs. Ernest Gruening a ticket once. She raised Cain but the governor didn't interfere and Mrs. Gruening corrected her driving accordingly, Sinn said.

Brandt recalls when he gave Hugh Wade, the revenue administrator for the Territory, a ticket for out-of-state license plates...after repeated warnings. Wade was responsible for licensing new cars, Brandt said, making the situation quite ironic.

Both men talk about "The Greek's" murder in Juneau and the subsequent hanging of the two accused (and guilty) men. Dead was Jim Allen, called "The Greek", a robbery victim. George Folta (judge) sentenced to death by hanging. Sinn tripped the trap for Nelson and then he moved to Fairbanks before the other was hung.