

50th Anniversary, Completion Alaska RR

July 15, 1973

REEL 1

President Warren Harding came to Nenana July 15, 1923 for the purpose of driving the golden spike in Alaska Railroad, signifying the completion.

John W. Ingram of the Federal Railroad Administration present. Also hear Jack Coghill, mayor of Nenana. Ceremonies by the depot that is also 50 years old.

Walker S. Johnson, current manager of the railroad is present. Also Don Samuelson, former governor of Idaho and currently representing the secretary of Transportation; James E. Sherril, commanding general of Alaska; Maj Gen. Charles Gettis, U.S. Army, Alaska.

Mary Diemietieff, mistress of ceremonies, who introduced the Native dancers of Nenana (they danced).

About 500 people were invited and about that many attended. They all were fed a picnic lunch served from makeshift tables down Main Street between the Mochers Bar on one side and the Corner Bar on the other side. Menu was baked salmon, many kinds of salad, hot rolls, draft beer. All prepared by the people of Nenana.

Mike Dalton reads the invitation. Talks about people invited. On back of program remarks of President Harding made in 1923. These remarks are read on the tape (he was made an honorary member of the Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo No. 17, Menana).

Describes Kobe (now called Rex) and Healy and Nenana River Canyon.

Walker Johnson invites Ingram and Coghill to place the symbolic golden spike in the monument next to the railroad station. John Ingram talks, saying that President Taft recommended construction in 1913. President Wilson chose the route from Seward to Fairbanks 1915 and Prs. Harding commemorated the completion July 15, 1923.