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Alaska Linck, Frank Young, and Dolly Young talk with Philip Lelli about Felix Pedro

Fairbanks, Alaska

1990?

Alaska Linck talks about losing original documents due to fire and flood. All she has on file about Felix Pedro is he was a charter member [Pioneers of Alaska?]. Philip said he ran into someone in 1952 named Nate Sporon. Alaska Linck said she would introduce Philip to someone who knew Mary Pedro. The person's maiden name was Chris Bernetti. She lived next door to the Sporonis. Mrs. Bernetti was good friends with Mary Pedro. Philip asked what kind of person Mary Pedro was. Alaska Linck said she was a very strong Catholic and was severe looking in nature. Alaska Linck said she was at Mary Pedro's funeral and reported that Frank Young said he was the altar boy at Felix Pedro's funeral. Alaska Linck said she would call Frank Young. Philip Lelli said he would like to go out to Felix Pedro's monument. Philip Lelli said he was in the International Bar and someone at the bar told him about someone who had worked with Felix Pedro. Philip Lelli said Pedro had died of pneumonia and in his family it was suggested that there was something questionable about his death. Alaska Linck said Pedro had been buried at the Clay Street cemetery. Pedro was buried in Fairbanks and his body was moved to California. Still later his body was taken to his home in Italy for burial. Alaska Linck said she saw a newspaper article about Mary Pedro being made the executor of Felix Pedro's estate in 1910. Alaska Linck said that he must have died shortly after he joined [Pioneers of Alaska?]

Short footage in front of a house where the dedication of the Felix Pedro monument took place in 1954.

Filming at the Pedro Monument on the Steese Highway north of Fairbanks. The monument is shown and the general direction where the creek is located where Felix Pedro discovered gold in 1902.

Filming at the Clay Street Graveyard where Mary Pedro is buried.

Frank Young talked about Joseph Usibelli. He and Philip Lelli talk about the coal areas in Washington including where Felix Pedro worked. In 1906 Felix Pedro came back to Washington and married and built a house. Lelli's grandmother bought the house when Pedro returned to Washington. Lelli's relatives did not like Mary Pedro. Her maiden name was Dorn. Joe Doran, Mary's nephew, took Felix Pedro's body to California. Pedro was buried in Holy Names near San Francisco. Lelli said there was a lot of mystery about Pedro's body. It disappeared between Alaska and California. Frank Young said a consul general from Italy came to get the Pedro's body to take it back to Italy. Frank Young talked about knowing Felix Pedro. Lelli said he drove out to Fox in 1952. Frank Young said he lived in Fox for a while. He used to sell papers up and down Goldstream and Pedro Creek including to Felix Pedro. Frank said Felix Pedro was a friendly man. He spoke broken English. Frank Young said he always had a friendly expression on his face when he talked with you. When Felix Pedro died in 1910 Frank Young was the altar boy with Father Munro at his funeral. Frank said Pedro was kind of a stocky man. He wasn't a big man. Philip said he met Nate Speroni. Nate Speroni said Pedro didn't take care of himself and died of pneumonia because of a

lack of care. Pedro died at St. Joseph's hospital. Frank said Pedro had the Discovery claim. Next to him was John Costa. They were together a lot. Costa moved over to Vault Creek. Pedro eventually got Costa's claim. Mary Pedro later sold the ground to a couple of brothers. She then had her husband's body exhumed and moved to California. Frank Young explained what a pup was (a small creek running into another creek). Pedro had climbed up the pup and could see the steam from Barnette's steamboat. They named that area Steamboat Gulch. Philip Lelli asked about the Italian men that Pedro brought up to help him mine gold. Philip said his grandfather came up to work in the area for a while.

Philip Lelli sits next to Frank Young and introduces him.

[recording from a different unknown date, perhaps even several years later]

Frank Young, Dolly Young, and Alaska Linck talk with Philip Lelli. Cap Lathrop and Usibelli are discussed. Frank Young said he rode a bicycle up to Fox to sell newspapers. He sold papers in 1910 and 1911. Frank said he would see Pedro out on his mining sites. Philip Lelli asked again about the Italians that he brought up from Washington to help him. Frank said the Conte brothers helped him. Pedro's claims were bought by brothers. Philip asked about Joe Usibelli's father. Frank Young said he was a coal miner. He was around Healy. Frank talked about them hauling coal with horses. Philip said Pedro came to this country as coal miners. They worked in Illinois and Washington. Pedro was a good shot and would go hunting all the time. He combined hunting and prospecting.

Frank said the gold claims were sold to the Hanot brothers. Pedro had some good ground on Cleary Creek, too.

Philip asked about Mary Pedro and understood that she stayed in Fairbanks and died in 1930. Alaska Linck said it was about that time, but she wasn't sure. Frank Young said Bill Cashen made a small booklet about the early days of Fairbanks. Frank said Cashen died five or six years ago. Alaska said Frank gave a talk at the Pedro Monument in the past year. Frank talked about almost going Outside for M.D. training. He talked about going out to Chisana for gold mining. Philip asked about the Kuskokwim. Dolly Young said it runs parallel to the Yukon and runs south to Bethel. Dolly said it is 360 miles to McGrath from Fairbanks. Dolly was taken out to Portland, Oregon for her education. Philip talked about a boarding school in Tacoma.

Frank and Dolly said they have seven children. One of their children lives in Guam. Frank talked about his work. Dolly said their youngest child is 36.

Philip, Frank and Alaska talk about the Gyas and Mellow families.

Philip Lelli asked if they have the Pedro rededication every year. Alaska Linck said yes they have it every year on July 22. She said Frank Young was the speaker this past year and he is 94 years old. Alaska asked if Pedro was a big man. Frank Young said he was five foot nine or ten and 160 pounds. He said Mary Pedro had a nephew in Fairbanks named Joe Doran. Philip said he went out to the college the last time he came for a visit. He shared photos and newspaper articles. They look at the photos.

Philip Lelli commented about the Igloo no. 4 souvenir coin for their 50th year celebration. Philip said he worked out at Ladd Field for about five months in 1952. He saw the Pedro Monument at that time. Philip commented about Howard Smith who had come up to Fairbanks area in the 1920s.

Frank Young talked about George Rayburn.

Philip Lelli asked about the economic situation in Alaska. People said there are soup kitchens and Red Cross and Salvation Army taking care of those in need.

Philip Lelli, Alaska Linck, and Frank Young talked about Mrs. Ford. Frank Young said Mrs. Ford's husband had a hotel in Nome and Mrs. Ford moved to Fairbanks after he died.

Frank Young talked about Johnny Dolan predicting his own death.

Alaska Linck talked about ivory carvings called tupilaks.

Frank Young and Alaska Linck discuss unidentified people.

Philip Lelli asked about the bush pilot who went down to the Grand Canyon. Alaska Linck said that was Sam White and everyone knew Sam White. Frank said he had some photos of Sam.