

H94-13-17

ORAL HISTORY BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME: Charlotte W. Ames
(first) (middle) (last)

(NICKNAME:) (MAIDEN NAME:) Wehner

MAILING ADDRESS: 1220 Fifth Ave. Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(city/state/zip)

DATE OF BIRTH: 4/13/13 BIRTHPLACE Fairbanks, AK
(city/state)

SPOUSE: Robert E. Ames

MARRIAGE DATE: 1938 PLACE: Fairbanks

CHILDREN: Donald Ames

ALASKAN RESIDENCY: lifelong

OCCUPATION/PROFESSION: musician, homemaker

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT IN RELATION TO ORAL HISTORY:

Ames talks about her pioneer parents, Adolph and Barbara Wehner, both having lived in Dawson before coming to Fairbanks where they met at a local club that held weekly dances. She read a letter written by her father at age 14 in 1884 to his parents in Germany shortly after his arrival in the United States.

As a child, Ames had her first piano lessons on the old Kimball piano given to her father when the local club disbanded. Her teacher was William Gorbracht who was also the Fairbanks Community Band leader.

Ames also read the proclamation in which she was honored by Mayor Bill Walley for more than 50 years of playing the piano for community events such as the Winter Carnival, the USO dances during WWII, and local organizations such

INTERVIEWER: Margaret Van Cleve

DATE OF INTERVIEW: May 25, 1994 TAPE NUMBER: 577

as the Pioneers of Alaska Auxillary.

She also recalled early childhood Christmases written in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner's Heartland section in which she was interviewed, reading excerpts of that article describing one incident in which her sister Louise's dress caught fire from one of the candles on the tree, the flames quickly extinguished by her father.

Ames also describes the family home, a three room log structure not far from her present house on 1220 Fifth Avenue, contrasting how easy life is today compared with that of Fairbanks during her youth.

Names mentioned on tape

The Rust Family
Adolph Stock
Adolph Wehner (father)
Barbara Wehner (mother)
Lil Angerman (half sister)
Irene (half sister)
Louise (sister)
Chuck Wehner (brother)
Jack Bailey
William Gorbracht
Bertha Moody
Alaska Linck
June Sidars
Earl Borland
Ken Wade
Johnny Lons (sp?)
Ben Eielson
Don Adler
Verta Siebenthaler (sp)
Jane Clausen