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HISTORICAL SOCIETY RESUMES MEETINGS
by Charley Mayse

After a summer's vacation the Tanana Yukon Historical Society resumed its regular monthly meetings Thursday evening.

Featured speaker was Mrs. Bess Chamberlain who recalled many interesting facets of her life in Alaska, speaking with the authority that only 53 years of residence can give.

Newly married she came first to Alaska in 1915, via the Yukon River route. Her then-husband, Sam Magids, was operating a string of trading posts, most of them in the Arctic.

At that time the bride had never cooked a meal, was thoroughly ignorant of the conditions soon to confront her in the North and hadn't so much as laid a wood fire in her life.

But she was Canadian born, of pioneer stock and bound and determined to make a success of her marriage. Within a year's time so thoroughly had she adapted herself to the country that she was handling her own seven-dog team and traveling and camping out like a veteran.

It became the Magids custom to take their furs out for shipment to London in the spring and return north again in the fall by steamer. On one of these occasions she met Roal Amundsen, noted explorer who had the distinction of visiting both the North and South Polar regions. After the death of her husband soon afterward, Mrs. Magids became engaged to Amundsen and was on her way to Norway to

marry him when tragedy intervened.

Word was flashed ~~that~~ that Umberto Nobile and his crew of the dirigible Norge were lost somewhere in the Arctic.

Not one to stand idly by and let a fellow explorer freeze and starve to death, Amundsen hastily arranged for a plane and roared off on a search mission over the Arctic ice from which neither he nor his pilot ever returned.

And the great irony was that on the day Amundsen began his aerial quest, Nobile was found by another search group.

In 1945 Mrs. Chamberlain was elected to the Alaska Territorial Legislature and ably represented her area, Judicial District II for two ~~years~~ ^{terms.}

"I was not a particularly ardent advocate of statehood," she said, "but I felt that it stood for long-term progress and that it was inevitable so I voted for it...Time will prove me right or wrong."

Following its long-standing custom the historical society taped Mrs. Chamberlain's story and will file it away for the benefit of Alaskan historians and students.

The society meets regularly the last Thursday of the month at eight p. m. in the Chamber of Commerce log cabin. It is always eagerly seeking new members andwelcomes interested visitors.

Although it has not met officially since May, it has ^{met} spent the summer in idleness. It joined forces with the Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo Number Four, in setting up a historical museum at Alaskland and has arranged for historic plaques to be placed in the area marking some historic event. //

One marking the location of Captain E. A. Barnette's river-boat landing

around which the city of Fairbanks grew will be dedicated during the next construction season. The plaque is on hand but the city construction crews have been too busy to lay the suitable stone monument which will support it.

Another marking the ~~XXXXXXXX~~ former homesite of Judge James Wick-ersham will be placed at First and Noble by its present owners, the Standard Oil Company in a short time, according to company spokesman.

The dedication ceremony is expected to be held in October Jerome E. Lardy, told fellow members at Thursday's meeting.