



BILL McKINNEY
Grew up in Anchorage

McKinney recalls the early years

by Janice Weiss
Times Writer

Bill McKinney, director of the Port of Anchorage, remembers when Anchorage had only two roads, Loop and Spenard.

He remembers the planes landing on Delaney Park, and when everything beyond the strip was wild.

He remembers when jobs were easy to find for anyone who wanted to work.

He remembers walking along the muddy streets downtown and hearing the different accents, especially Swedish from the people who came here from Minnesota.

McKinney and some other people who've spent a long time in Alaska reflected on these and other memories at an informal gathering Thursday at the Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum. McKinney presented a slide show of the Port of Anchorage in the early days plus other slides of early Anchorage.

McKinney, 58, has lived in Anchorage all his life, observing its growth and changes from a small town to a still-growing city.

He was raised on a homestead between C Street and Fireweed Lane when Fireweed was a narrow dirt road, lined on both sides with colorful fireweed, which is how the road got its name, he said.

McKinney, who liked Anchorage as a small town, said Anchorage has gone beyond the point of growth that saddens him. "That point was when the wild was gone," he said.

What does sadden McKinney is that the older people who have lived in Alaska and lived the changes the state has gone through are dying, and their stories haven't been recorded.

"Every time an oldtimer dies, it's like a chip off Mount McKinley," he said.

McKinney said it upsets him to find out his own children and other young people in Alaska today don't know anything about the oldtimers who shaped the state to what it is today.

McKinney likes to listen to the stories the oldtimers tell and he enjoys telling a story or two himself such as the tale of an incident that happened when he was only five years old.

His dad was taking him duck hunting with Henry Emard who owned Emard's Cannery (now Whitney-Fidalgo Seafoods Inc.). They went up the Beluga River and then went on shore to hunt.

While McKinney and his dad were hunting, Emard was asleep in the boat. A tree came down the river and snagged the anchor chain. Emard grabbed an axe and managed to break the anchor chain, but then, of course, the anchor sunk.

"He had another anchor, though, so the boat didn't drift off."

On the way back to Anchorage, they went through a terrible storm. McKinney said he remembers they were by Fire Island when he woke from a nap. The water was up to his bunk and the pots and pans from the galley were floating.

"I climbed up on deck and saw my dad with one arm around the mast, pumping like crazy with the other arm on a pump to try and get some of the water out of the boat."

Several times after that trip, Emard said he was going out to drag the river for the anchor.

"What he really was doing, of course, was going fishing," said McKinney.

McKinney also remembers bank nights at the Empress Theater when on every Wednesday a movie cost 15 cents for kids and 55 cents for adults.

On bank night, McKinney explained, there was a drawing for money. The prize started at \$50, but if the person whose name was drawn wasn't there, the next week the prize was \$100. It increased \$50 each week, up to \$500.

The theater was always crowded. Besides the movies, McKinney remembers the fires that plagued the 3,000 residents of the town.

"The whole town turned out for fires," McKinney said. "The fire department was volunteer, so when the fire alarm sounded, the store owners would rush out of their stores, butchers with their aprons still on, and rush to get on the fire truck and to the fire."

"Everyone in town would already be at the fire, watching. It was really a big deal then."

Union challenges 'secret' permit

By SHEILA TOOMEY
Daily News reporter

Local longshoremen Friday challenged the legitimacy of a dock permit that allows strike-bound Anchorage Cold Storage to unload its own barges at the Port of Anchorage.

In a three-hour hearing before Superior Court Judge Brian Shortell, witnesses for shore Union Local No. 1 testified that a use permit issued to the Odom Corp. Oct. 2 was authorized in unusual secrecy, through other than normal administrative channels and in violation of the municipal code.

Longshoremen sued the city over the issuance of the permit, and Anchorage Cold Storage has joined the city in its defense.

Attorneys for Anchorage Cold Storage and the city offered no witnesses Friday, indicating they will present their

case Feb. 1 as an argument in favor of a motion to dismiss the longshoremen's suit.

John Odom, Anchorage Cold Storage general manager, used the permit on Oct. 30 to bypass union longshoremen and hire non-union workers to unload a barge filled with freight bound for the firm's warehouses. Anchorage Cold Storage and the Teamsters Union have been locked in a strike since June 29. Odom's use of the permit sparked a near riot on the dock which was quelled eventually by police with the help of fire hoses.

If upheld, the permit is good for one year. Odom won't say when the next Cold Storage barge is due in Anchorage but his lawyers are under a court order to notify Shortell at least seven days before it is scheduled to dock.

Continued from Page A-1

Chief municipal aide Ron Garzini testified Friday that he authorized the challenged permit after a conversation with then-mayor George Sullivan. Such permits are normally authorized by the Anchorage Port Commission after a recommendation from the port director.

Garzini said that in order to circumvent normal permit procedure he "assumed the duties of port director with regard to the (Odom) application."

Port Director William McKinney testified that he was never consulted about the Odom permit. Chris Gates, acting port director from Oct. 5 to Oct. 25, testified Garzini told him on Sept. 30 that a permit for Odom was being consid-

ered. "He told me to keep it absolutely quiet," Gates said.

Time pressure and "public safety" concerns made the unusual procedure and secrecy necessary, Garzini testified.

On Oct. 16, Transportation Director James Dunn informed him the permit already had been issued, Gates said. He and Dunn discussed the problems the permit was likely to cause because of Odom's labor problems, Gates said.

The permit issued to Odom did not contain a paragraph covering union contracts and working conditions included in all other dock permits issued by the city, according to Friday's testimony.

On Oct. 21, nearly three weeks after the permit had been signed, Odom's applica-

tion was given to the port commission for its consideration. However, it was not listed as an item on the commission's meeting agenda.

Garzini said he sent the application to the commission because he thought the permit might be challenged someday.

The Teamster-affiliated Longshoremen's Union closed its case with testimony from two port commissioners who said they were puzzled by being presented with an application for a permit that had already been granted, something neither remembered ever happening before.

The absence of the omitted paragraph was not brought to the panel's attention, testified Commissioner Arne Michael-

ANCHORAGE, AK — The Port of Anchorage has expanded its staff with the added position of assistant port director.

Named to the newly-created job was Tyler Jones, previously executive administrative assistant to Anchorage Mayor George M. Sullivan.

Marcie Vojt
1/30/82

ANCHORAGE HISTORICAL AND FINE ARTS MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY

1982

COOK INLET HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The development of the Anchorage waterfront or *Personal Pictures of the Port of Anchorage* by Bill McKinney will be the subject of this month's meeting of the Cook Inlet Historical Society on January 21, 1982 at 8:00 p.m.

One of the most impressive aspects of the Anchorage coastline today is the Municipality owned Port of Anchorage. The manager of the port, Bill McKinney is a man who has spent his entire life in Anchorage. He will serve as a moderator for a panel discussion by his former classmates about the history of the Anchorage waterfront and will also illustrate his remarks with a collection of historical slides.

Mr. McKinney was born in Anchorage February 21, 1923, the oldest of five children. His father worked most of his life for the Alaska Railroad. Mr. McKinney attended and graduated from the Anchorage Public Grammar School and the Anchorage Public High School in 1940. After graduation Mr. McKinney was employed by the Alaska Railroad where he worked for more than fifteen years with a three year interruption by service in the U.S. Army Air Corps. His work experience has been exclusively in the field of transportation in positions with trucking firms, and airline and a steamship company.

The Anchorage Times, Wednesday February 10, 1982

Judge OKs cold storage dock permit

Associated Press

A Superior Court judge has upheld the municipality's dock permit issued to Anchorage Cold Storage to use the Port of Anchorage to unload barges carrying food and beverages.

Judge Brian Shortell on Tuesday dismissed a lawsuit by Anchorage Independent Longshore Union 1 against the Anchorage Port Commission and Port Director Bill McKinney.

The union maintained that the permit was illegal because it was issued secretly last October by Ron Garzini, the municipality's chief of operations, instead of by the port commission.

The city agreed that the procedure was unusual, but said it wasn't illegal. The city said it was handled

that way because the barge was only a few days out of port and there wasn't time to go through normal channels.

When the barge finally arrived at the dock, it provoked a near-riot by longshoremen and teamsters, who are on strike against Anchorage Cold Storage.

Meanwhile, a barge with \$4 million in goods bound for the wholesale

distributor sits idle at the dock in Seward.

Longshoremen have refused since Friday to cross a picket line set by a third union in the continuing labor dispute. An arbitrator ruled Tuesday that the longshoremen are violating their contract, and a company official said a court order would be sought if longshoremen don't report for work.

Anchorage Daily News Tuesday, February 2, 1982

Teamsters challenge city docking permit

By SHEILA TOOMEY
Daily News reporter

The legality of a dock permit that allows Anchorage Cold Storage to unload its own barges in the Port of Anchorage depends now on the ruling of a Superior Court Judge. The permit, issued Oct. 2 to Anchorage Cold Storage owner Milt Odom, has been challenged by Anchorage Independent Longshore Union Local No. 1 on the grounds that it was issued in secret by Mayoral aide Ron Garzini instead of publicly by the Port Commission.

In final court arguments Monday, union lawyer John Bradbury accused the city of deliberately conspiring to keep information about issuance of the permit from the public. Bradbury also charged that a clause requiring permit holders to try to "achieve work conditions...better than or equal to those prevailing at other ports in Southcentral Alaska," was left out of the Odom permit as

a special favor to the strike-bound wholesaler.

Union affiliated longshoremen have refused to cross picket lines to unload Anchorage Cold Storage barges since June 29 when Teamsters Union Local 959 struck the firm.

Attorneys for Odom and the city argued Monday that the permit was issued through unusual — but not illegal — channels because an Anchorage Cold Storage barge was only days away from port and there was insufficient time for normal procedures.

The barge subsequently was delayed in Yakutat for 10 days by mechanical problems, according to lawyer Doug Riggs.

Use of the permit to unload the barge when it arrived Oct. 30 sparked a near riot on the dock. Another Odom barge is currently headed north, but will not dock in Anchorage, Odom lawyers told Judge Brian Shortell Monday.

Anchorage Daily News Wednesday, February 10, 1982 A11

metro/business/classified ads

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Judge dismisses Teamster claim of illegal move by city

By JOHN LINDBACK
and ANN CONY
Daily News reporters

A Superior Court judge Tuesday dismissed claims by local longshoremen that the Municipality of Anchorage in October illegally issued a dock permit to strike-bound Anchorage Cold Storage.

Judge Brian Shortell's briefly worded order dismissed a lawsuit filed against the municipality, the Anchorage Port Commission and Port Director Bill McKinney by Anchorage Independent Longshore Union Local 1.

The judge's order stated only that there was "no genuine issue of material fact" in

the case.

The order was challenged by the union on grounds that it was issued secretly by Ron Garzini, the municipality's chief of operations, instead of publicly by the port commission.

Attorneys for the city argued that the permit was issued through unusual, but not illegal, channels because an Anchorage Cold Storage barge was only days away from port and there was insufficient time for normal procedures.

Anchorage Cold Storage Attorney Mike Dundy said he was not surprised by the ruling.

"I thought it was a winner going in. We just did what the

city told us to do," Dundy said.

The permit allows Anchorage Cold Storage to unload its own barges at the Port of Anchorage, bypassing striking longshoremen.

Unloading of the barge when it arrived Oct. 30 led to violence at the port. Arrival of other Anchorage Cold Storage barges at Seward has prompted picket lines and court battles.

Union-affiliated longshoremen have refused to cross picket lines to unload Anchorage Cold Storage barges since June 29 when Teamsters Union Local 959 struck the firm.

Milt Odom, owner of Anchorage Cold Storage, said Tuesday that his company was pleased

by Shortell's ruling.

A barge carrying \$4 million worth of food and beverages bound for the wholesale distributorship has been sitting idle at the Alaska Railroad dock in Seward since it arrived Friday afternoon.

A labor arbitrator ruled Tuesday that Seward longshoremen were violating their contract with Northern Stevedoring and Handling Corp. by refusing to cross a picket line to unload the barge.

Chuck Flynn, attorney for the stevedoring company, said Tuesday that his client is ready to go to court today if longshoremen do not report to work.