

ORAL HISTORY 01-81-06

Howard Cutler

University of Alaska

Fairbanks, Alaska

Convocation 1979

Recording starts with an unidentified speaker reporting on the goal for fundraising. Impact of the university on the city is discussed.

Howard Cutler said one of the most alive programs on campus is the museum. Last year he asked the library and the Senior Affairs Office to make a report on their activities. He asked Lou Lewinski to report on the museum. Lewinski said he would like to talk about the program that is going on at the museum and the new building. They are known for their collections, research activities and their public service program outside of the campus. On campus they are known for the congestion in the summer, the different spaces they occupy across campus and construction problems. They try to serve the whole campus. The materials are used for teaching and research. He talked about the different groups that use the collection beyond the campus. They serve communities throughout the state. He is asked how many items are in the collection and it is difficult to answer. He will show some of the materials as he talks about the collections. They have a problem counting things because of the way they are cataloged. He is also asked how much of the collection is on exhibit. There are about a million and a half items in the collection. They don't show a high percentage, but there will be more on exhibit with the new building. The museum is administratively located directly under the chancellor on campus. It is run by a director who has a staff of curators, technicians and student assistants. Many are part-time with split appointments. The permanent exhibit program reaches the community and the public in general. They have visitors from throughout the United States and the world. They have a museum outreach program. Curators spend a great deal of their time dealing with public inquiries. The staff presents lectures for various groups. They prepare information for exhibits and carry on research activities. They are supported by grants and contracts and they have about \$750,000 this year. He said he will comment about each of the collections. The archaeological collection is the oldest and largest collection. Jim Dickson is the curator. The collection was started in the late 1920s and early 1930s from university sponsored research expeditions to St. Lawrence Island under Otto Geist. The largest unit is material from St. Lawrence. Since 1970 the growth of this collection has increased under federal and state legislation which requires salvage archeology in the state. Materials from the pipeline are deposited in the museum. All of the collections requires cataloging. It takes a great deal of time to catch up with the materials that have never been cataloged. Current work in this collection involves site inventory, cultural resource surveys, and potential construction sites. The ethnographic collection has about 13,650 items made and used by Alaska Natives. It includes baskets, beadwork, ivory carving, Eskimo masks and material from St. Lawrence Island. They collected materials from modern Native Alaska culture and put together an exhibit. Dinah Larson serves as curator of the history collection of 2600 items. They have Eielson's airplane, Russian American materials including two block houses, and fountain pens. The art

collection is found throughout campus because they do not have an art gallery in their present building. The terrestrial vertebrate collection consists of mammals and birds. The bird collection ranks nationally. The herbarium is located on the lower floor of the Chapman Building is a collection that never appears on display. They are used by graduate students. There is a vascular and nonvascular collection. It is a national resource collection. The paleontology collection was also started by Otto Geist. There are approximately 3,100 large Pleistocene animals and about 2,000 smaller ones. They have fossil invertebrate and plant collections. Carol Alison is the curator. They have a minerals collection. The aquatic collection was established in 1972 through the Sea Grant Program. George Mueller is the curator. They are working on a basic inventory of Alaska's marine flora and fauna. The new building is designed to bring together all of these collections and provide adequate work space. It is unique on campus. They had a direct appropriation from the legislature. The building is designed to protect the collection with climate control. He shows slides of the present museum location and the new building. He talked about the selection of the site for the new building on Yukon Drive. Compact shelving will be used in the new building. [much of this section of the talk is difficult to understand]

Howard Cutler thanked Lou Lewinski. He said there are three things he would like to talk about: planning, budget and enrollment. He introduced Woodrow Solomon, the academic vice-president. In August 1976 he asked each college to list high priority items based on the academic development plan. In January 1978 he asked each unit to report on what they had accomplished and what they planned for in the future. They made an analysis on what remained to be accomplished in the academic development plan. They reviewed 96 recommendations. He discussed what had been accomplished and listed highlights. In June 1978 they established a committee to prepare and outline for master planning for the university. The committee reported in September. In October they requested a statement of mission from each college and unit. The plan is the first step in their master plan for the campus. On November 10<sup>th</sup> the chancellors met with the academic vice president and went over an outline for a preparation of a master plan for the total university. There are five basic parts: statement of mission, environmental assessment, goals and objectives, internal strengths and capabilities, and setting program offerings and priorities. He discussed each part. They hope to have the first three parts ready to present to statewide by March 1. He said planning is for changing. It will be a continuous process.

He discussed the budget. They found that they had a tremendous need for the library. The athletic program had not been meeting their budget. They had a new policy statement concerning the athletic program. He discussed the blue and gold fund and how it was used. He said their first priority was debt service in the physical plant. He found that it was not due for another year and used the money for the library and the athletic program. This changed the priorities of the budget. He listed the priorities of the campus. He said he didn't want coaches recruiting and then reneging on their promises. They not have adequate funding at a minimum level.

Cutler discussed enrollment from fall of 1977 until 1978. The University of Alaska Fairbanks has had considerable growth across the board in full-time equivalent students. They are up 18 percent. Credit hours are up 19 percent. Head count is up 17 percent. The University of Alaska Anchorage has more graduate student credits than the University of Alaska Fairbanks by 14 percent. There are 4382 students

at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. There are 2600 full-time equivalents. One of their concerns is retention of students.