

Call number: ORAL HISTORY 02-00-64-10 CD 2

Narrator: William Cashen and Jean Kennedy

Date:

Place: Jean Kennedy's residence

Summary created by: Varpu M Lotvonen

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Notes: Originals on cassette tapes. Master copies on CD.

Series: William Cashen Collection

Jean Kennedy and William Cashen are talking about some pictures Jean has: Bunnell was a baseball fan and he liked to listen to the games. According to Jean, he was a farmer at heart and loved to pick up wheat at the Experiment Station and show it off. Picture of Harriet Hess at Goldhill is mentioned. Cashen says he'd like to have that one. Jean finds Dempsey's letter to Bunnell, and Cashen says they already had copies of it since Bunnell took copies for the FBI. Cashen reads Dempsey's Christmas card for Bunnell in which he stated he was a better Christian than Bunnell was and wished him a happy Christmas. Mentioning Arthur Nagasruk [sp?]. Cashen mentions a picture he is looking at, which is of Bunnell when he was really ill with diabetes without even knowing it. Jean says that when he got the honorary doctorate, he was very thirsty and beer would quench it but it was the worst thing he could have had. Jean says one would think everybody knows about the great thirst in diabetes, but they didn't. Mentioning some other pictures of them and their family. Stones mentioned. Jean's baby pictures from Valdez. Their house in Valdez was given to some mission and it became a children's home. Later it burnt down. 1915-1916 –pictures of their house in Valdez. Discussing about some pictures about Charles Bunnell and other people.

About someone who was a student when Cashen was. She came in with the Duckerings in 1934 or 1935. It was tragic to lose Henry Gesting, Louie Giddings, Ivar Skarland, "all that bunch", and some of them relatively young. Tommy Campbell too got cancer of the upper lung. He didn't smoke either. Cashen's brother Tom died of the same thing a 1 ½ ago, and Cashen tells about his death.

Discussing someone who turned out to be an uninteresting man, and talking about which pictures Cashen will take with him. Jean always shunned publicity like mad perhaps because her father was such a public figure.

Cashen and Jean are talking about a picture with a Jean and a dog sled in front of the Bunnell House on Lacey Street. She is about 10 years old in the picture that is taken around 1919. Dog's name was Rod and it was a gift from a man named Olson who lived along the Yukon. He was a lead dog. He pulled them like mad and Jean had no control over him, but he was a very nice dog. The dog wanted to fight other dogs walking on street.

Discussing other pictures that Cashen thinks the archives would like to have. [A dog is barking.] Going through some memorabilia.

Cashen tells how he lost lots of his albums and diplomas in the flood. They managed to save 2-3 albums, but their high school things got lost. Discussing some other pictures.

From 16:06 Cashen and Jean talk about Rainey house that was built around 1936-1937. Cashen was going to write about it in the Cashen's Corner. It was at the Rainey Ridge, and it was built around the fireplace. The Alumni asked the Board of Regents to save it as a museum. Mentioning Penelope whose student Cashen was. Name Frohlick is spelled out. Jean mentions a nice study of Otto Geist.

Cashen gets a phone call from Elizabeth who is offering him pictures [Elizabeth's end of the discussion is barely audible]. Cashen convinces Elizabeth that he will save everything.

Cashen says that his only regret from last night [dinner party at Kennedys'] was that he didn't talk to Florence much, but the others got to him first or vice versa. Talking again about some pictures and if Cashen would like to take them or not. Jean says she has lots of Otto Geist memorabilia. His brother was an artist, Sigmund Geist. About Otto Geist's other siblings.

Jean has a good picture of the Rainey House and Cashen will write a story about it. Ivar [Skarland] lived there later. About Mickey Rainey. [Break in the recording.]

In 24:54 tape resumes with a discussion between Cashen and two women, another one is identified by Elizabeth [Hastings, nee Grigsby] and the other one is Jean [Kennedy, nee Bunnell]. [Sounds like they might be in a café.] Elizabeth tells a story on how somebody asked if she wants to make a round trip up to Seward. Elizabeth did that, got out in Seward and went to Fairbanks. He [later identified as Elizabeth's stepfather?] came along with another fellow. [Unclear.] This happened around 1926, 1928 or 1929. Elizabeth attended the College for two years. Cashen explains his book project.

Jean says that Bill drove the Buick for many years. Elizabeth says that she drove it too after Jean left. [Unclear discussion, break in the recording.]

Cashen asks when Elizabeth was there, and she answers that she was there 1928 to 1933 [?]. Jean says she was at Stanford, and visited Elizabeth at Berkley. Cashen also asks Elizabeth if she was born in Ketchikan but she says she was born in Nome. Cashen says Elizabeth's father was there as the district attorney, or practicing law. Elizabeth says he was the Delegate to Congress, and Cashen confirms that he was for one term, but he also had a position in Nome. One of the ladies says he was the mayor of Nome. [Elizabeth's father was George B. Grigsby].

Elizabeth offers Cashen instant coffee but he declines saying that they are just quickly stopping by, and explains her trip to visiting different [UAF] Alumni groups. Elizabeth tells about her experiences with Alumni gatherings: full of children of the people she went to school with. Elizabeth tells about young man who she invited for dinner, and they all discuss former Alaskans who live in Florida, such as the Loftuses. Mentioning Elizabeth Daily and Art.

30:00 Elizabeth talks about all the hard work Jean's father did to get the College going. When she drove the car and Elizabeth [unclear] came to Alaska [unclear]. Jean says he [Bunnell?] had special feelings for Elizabeth. [Unclear.] Elizabeth says he kept her out of trouble, and Jean says that he liked Elizabeth even when she got into trouble.

Jean mentions Maurice Shirag [unclear, sp?] [unclear]. He [Bunnell] was whistling [unclear] had just been out to Washington and came back [unclear] movies. The president was whistling the latest hits all along the campus. Cashen remembers that he had some favorites [tunes], like Let Me Call you Sweetheart and some others. Jean says that he also had his favorite students and that she always thought that Elizabeth was one of those. [Unclear.] Cashen says that Bunnell knew Elizabeth's father quite well, both being Democrats.

Cashen asks if Elizabeth has any favorite recollections of Bunnell and she remembers hearing him talking to the Senate Investigation team there about the railroad business. She heard him talk with them about the future of Alaska, and trying to get money to develop the airport and the schools. He predicted almost everything that happened. This was back in 1929 or 1930s. Everything they did he was trying to get them to do. Cashen tells that W.K. Keller said that Bunnell was always 6 months or more ahead of everybody as far as thinking was concerned, he anticipated things. He was almost a prophet.

In 34:10 Elizabeth remembers how she and Jean along with several of them were spending the summer at the dormitories while also the Committee stayed there. They were the chambermaids, and the waitresses and the hostesses [for the Congressional Committee mentioned earlier]. Elizabeth remembers how Senator Lang caught her making his bed. They'd go upstairs quickly while the Committee members were having breakfast. And they were hostesses, and the next time the Committee would see them, they were waitresses. The Committee stayed several days.

Elizabeth asks if Jean remembers the teacher from China who taught business. [Unclear.] She taught Chinese[unclear] and had all her furniture, sheets, pillow cases and all Chinese things stored there, so Jean decorated her room with that stuff while she was gone. And some of the daughters of those people were with them [unclear what she is referring to]. She remembers her dorm was a lovely Chinese set up. She had lots of fun up there and they were quite daring at the time, walking to town and walking back.

37:20 has discussion about Elizabeth's places of residence while Jean and Cashen start taking their leave and encouraging her to keep up with the Alumni Association.

Cashen says he didn't know that Elizabeth had been a driver too. Elizabeth tells about how one night when Elizabeth was supposed to drive Bunnell somewhere, he had forgotten where he was going. Bunnell prompted Elizabeth to telephone all the usual suspects and ask if Bunnell was there until someone said that he wasn't but that he was expected to arrive soon. So Elizabeth called all the possibles until someone said they were expecting him, and that's where they knew to go.

Cashen tells that he was from Douglas and that he went to the University after Elizabeth had already left, and that a good portion of the student body was from Douglas.

[End of the recording.]