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Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2008 9:52 AM
To: fek9wnr@yahoo.com; Ruaro; Randall P (GOV)
Subject: Update on the Book

An Alaskan Scrapbook

Here's a report in a nutshell...

Yes, I'm still writing! In October I went up to Fairbanks on personal business, but spent some time with Candy Waugamann in her amazing house/museum, and spent a day at the UAF archives where I found wonderful letters from Dorothy Gruening to her mother, all about the house and exactly how it looked when they arrived, and in the years that followed. I'm still working on the Gruening years, which included wartime, victory gardens, the children's co-operative preschool Mrs. G. set up on the third floor, and of course the statehood campaign. I have a nice sidebar on Marguerite Doucette, the European housekeeper who came with the Gruenings and stayed through the Hickel administration; that's complete, so I'll send you a copy just so you'll see what it's like.

I just spoke with Bill Sheffield this afternoon; he and I have been playing "you're in town, but I'm not" since October, but will both be in the same place at the same time in February, so have an interview set up then. Katie Hurley says she has some great photos (and memories) of early statehood years, so we're trying to get together as well.

I was so sorry to hear Tom Stewart passed away; he'd been on my list to people to talk to.

In terms of editing, I've found someone here in Anchorage who has experience getting permissions for historic photos. Usually there's a charge (\$20-25) to reprint a historic photo in a publication, but since we're a non-profit, and since the money's going to a good cause, and since we'll be using lots of photos, I'm told we should be able to negotiate and get reprints at a reduced rate or possibly for free, depending on ownership. This lady just finished a project that's nothing but historic photos and she has great contacts, so she'll be a handy resource. She did warn me to "estimate how much time you need to get your permissions, and then triple it!" It's all about paperwork...

I've also spoken with Kent Sturgis at Epicenter Press about the project in general. They're based in Seattle, but most of their titles are out of Alaska. He agreed that, considering the topic, we should look at an Alaskan publisher first if possible, but offered to help with advice anywhere along the way, which is great. My preference is still to try for the University of Alaska Press, which is actively seeking new titles, but they do want a finished manuscript before making a decision.

Obviously, this is taking far longer than we originally anticipated; I had hoped to have it

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done in a year, which was definitely over-optimistic. (Jane Haigh, who wrote "Searching for Fannie Quigley," told me she spent 20 years on her historic research and writing--yeowch! Don't worry, that's not me!) If I had no children, no husband, no other work and someone to do the vacuuming (my most-despised chore), I don't know that a year would have been enough; so often, one interview leads to another, or an unexpected photo leads to a new interview. The biggest problem is that I am working on my own, without an editor and someone to set specific deadlines. Kent said that would be the hardest part, and he's right.

That's the down side; the up side is that this way is free! Although you've agreed to set money aside for publishing, I think all you've actually spent so far is reimbursement for one plane ticket to Juneau for me. However, I do understand if you're getting frustrated with the slow pace. I'm just tossing all this off the top of my head (in case the meeting is this Thursday), so am still trying to get a feel for a practical deadline we could all work with. I've got a contract with a non-profit that is keeping me working part-time through April 4. That allows me to keep working on the book, but not full-tilt until after the 4th. Can I have the manuscript wrapped up by mid-summer? I think so. Do you want a finished product by a specific time, considering statehood celebrations and the 2012 house centennial? A set deadline would really help kick me into high gear.

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