

From the Gold Rush days and through much of the 20th Century, Juneau was quite a competitive newspaper town. The Empire was not Juneau's first newspaper. That distinction belongs to the Alaska Free Press, which was first published in 1887. But in rough and tumble Juneau, newspapers came and went. The Empire is the only one of perhaps 18 newspapers that survived.

In 1912, when the Empire was founded, there was but one daily newspaper in Juneau, the Daily Alaska Dispatch, which was Republican oriented and reflected the progressivism of Theodore Roosevelt's era.

Franklin Alexander Strong was a Democrat at a time when his party in Alaska was conservative and business oriented. A newspaper man who had already established The Nome Nugget, Alaska's oldest newspaper in 1900, Strong had already relocated to Seattle when he was wooed back to Alaska. There were plans to make Strong Alaska's second Territorial Governor at the time. Fortunately, Strong left a printing press in Iditarod, AK, another Gold Rush town, and moved it to Juneau upon his return to launch the Empire as well as his political career.

In spite of his political aspirations, Strong promised that the paper would be politically independent, "reserving the right to comment or fairly criticize any political party that may be in control of the federal or territorial administrations." Strong had much to criticize.

Strong's initial editorial read in part: Notwithstanding the many disabilities under which Alaska has labored for years past, partly due to ignorance, misinformation and misdirected zeal on the part of the national school of ultra-conservationists, the growth and development of this great commonwealth has been greatly retarded, if not absolutely prohibited in important sections. A change in policy by the federal administration we believe to be indispensable to the end that the people of Alaska may be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their labors, in developing its great latent natural resources.

This is a man who understood Alaska. Sadly, Strong was prescient about the challenges that Alaska would face dealing with the Federal Government in the coming years. His 1912 editorial could very easily appear in Alaska newspapers during this 21st century.

Strong would achieve his dream of becoming Alaska's second Territorial Governor in 1913, a role he would hold until April 1918 when it was discovered that Strong was not eligible to hold the job because he was a Canadian who had never obtained US citizenship. Another of the Empire's leaders, John Weir Troy, would serve as Alaska's Territorial Governor, serving as publisher after Strong from 1914 until he became Governor in 1933. From 1933 to 1955 the Empire's publisher was one of the first women to run a newspaper in Alaska, Helen Troy Bender Monsen. She was followed by William Prescott Allen from 1955 to just after Statehood in 1960 and then by Donald W. Reynolds until 1969.

The Empire's modern period began in 1969 when the Morris newspaper chain of Augusta, Georgia acquired and brought stability to the publication. This would be a godsend to Juneau in its fight to forestall repeated efforts to move Alaska's capital out of the Southeast city. The Empire would be a vehement opponent of the move.

The Empire was unusual at its founding in that it was a non-partisan newspaper, not supposedly favoring either national political party. It made that point in its first edition when it said:

It may well be here to emphasize that the Empire is not in politics. Politics is a mere incidental to a legitimate business industry. As a matter of fact, Alaska has been suffering, and is still suffering from a glut of politics. More work and less talk of partisan politics may accomplish something tangible.

The newspaper was unusual in other ways. While crime news was a fixture—the paper's first crime stories were focused on Robert Stroud, who became famous as the Birdman of Alcatraz after he shot and killed a bartender in Juneau to start his criminal record—became one of the first papers in the Nation to run an obituary of a dog on its front page. On March 31, 1942, the paper ran the obituary of Patsy Ann, a pit bull, who met every steamship to dock in downtown Juneau for more than a decade, often posing for pictures with visitors "with an aloof . . . dignity that befitted her official position," as the town's official mascot, the dog being the only animal that the City Council itself paid for her dog license.

The Empire over the years made its living covering "hard" news—from the town's first industry, gold mining, to fisheries and government affairs, highlighted by World War I, World War II and the Cold War with Russia. But the paper also found time to cover visiting dignitaries to Alaska's Capital City, from President Warren Harding who arrived on July 10, 1923 to movie stars John Barrymore, Ingrid Bergman and Gary Grant and from comedians Bob Hope and Edgar Bergen, to a four-legged movie star—Lassie.

Over the years the Empire has been home to a number of writers who would go on to play significant roles in Alaska public policy issues. Larry Persily, who once served as the Empire's Managing Editor, today serves as Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects. Kim Elton, who served as editor from March 1976 until June 1978 would go on to represent Juneau in the Alaska Legislature and currently serves as Director of Alaska Affairs at the US Department of the Interior under Secretary Ken Salazar.

On behalf of my Senate colleagues, I congratulate the staff of the Juneau Empire on the occasion of the newspaper's 100th birthday and wish the Juneau Empire many more years of service to the people of Alaska.●

#### REMEMBERING RUBY RIDDLE

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, they call Fairbanks in my home State of Alaska the "Golden Heart City." Ruby Riddle, who moved to Fairbanks from North Carolina in 1963 called it "heaven." Ruby would know this. She was designated Official Hostess of the City of Fairbanks in 2001 and of the Fairbanks North Star Borough in 2006. With the Mayors of the City of Fairbanks and the Fairbanks North Star Borough at her bedside, "Miss Ruby" passed away on November 1, 2012. I rise today to speak in memory of a lovely lady who epitomized all that is special about Interior Alaska.

Ruby Lenore Riddle was reportedly eighty something when she died. A true Southern woman never admits her age. She was born on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, in Lenoir, NC. An independent spirit, Ruby came north with her husband in 1963. He passed away in 1989 and she decided to stay in Alaska. Fairbanks was Miss Ruby's home from the day she arrived. She worked for the Northern Commercial Company which later became Nordstrom. When Nordstrom closed, Miss Ruby went to work for Lamont's until her retirement. Retirement, said Miss Ruby, is when life begins.

Miss Ruby lived her life with gusto. She was an impeccable dresser—always. If something was going on in Fairbanks, Miss Ruby was there with a camera. She shot thousands of photographs with visitors and locals at events and functions. After the function she would have the film processed and send it with a handwritten note card. Those notes were signed, "Southern Ms. Ruby." Miss Ruby was involved in the Fairbanks community like none other. She attended the local assembly meetings, city council meetings, chamber meetings, townhalls and military functions. She had a reserved seat in the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly Chamber and rarely if ever missed a meeting.

Following Miss Ruby's passing that reserved seat was adorned with a simple lavender vase holding pink and white flowers ringed by pieces of candy that Miss Ruby would often hand out.

Ruby Riddle was not an Alaskan by birth but she was surely a Fairbanks original, and we miss her greatly.●

#### RECOGNIZING PAT'S PIZZA OLD PORT

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, each year on the November 11, as a nation, we celebrate the service of all U.S. military veterans. Veterans Day is a chance to honor those who protect our freedom while they give others the opportunity to pursue the American dream. It is our veteran entrepreneurs who know the sacrifices and struggles both of military service and of pursuing that dream first hand. Today I rise to recognize and commend two such veteran entrepreneurs, Chris and