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Alaska Heritage Association Initiation of Dr. William R. Wood. Chuck Keim, Host.

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Series:

A man welcomes everyone to the first, formal, public meeting of the Alaska Heritage Association. Mrs. Edith Degusiak(?) gives the invocation.

The man speaks again saying that about two and one half years ago a group of native cultural leaders in Alaska gathered to think of ways to preserve Alaska's cultural heritage. Out of this initial meeting was born the Alaska Heritage Association. The man says that Alaska is undergoing the last manifestation of the westward movement, the last wave of "manifest destiny." The man says that the trauma that is between the white and aboriginal members of our nation did not occur to a great extent in Alaska.

The man speaks about the lack of written language and strong oral tradition on Alaska natives. The Alaska Heritage Association is extremely interested in documenting and "preserving for all time their contributions to help us move across the cultural bridge together." President Wood and the Regents have done much to encourage Native culture. A partial list of President Wood's achievements include encouraging the establishment of the Alaska Heritage Association, hiring Professor Ron Senungetuk of Point Hope to establish a Native craft program of statewide services, seeing to the establishment of the student orientation service program (S.O.S.) which enables Native students to take courses to assist them with their entrance in the university and their stay there, hiring Dr. Walter Soboleff to coordinate the Native studies program which is a part of S.O.S., seeing to the establishment of a Bachelor's degree program in Northern Studies, establishing a program in Native languages, getting funding for a publication in the Native languages, hiring an Alaskan Indian to be director of Ketchikan Community College, authorizing the establishment of special courses of study in Alaska Native culture, encouraging the establishment of exhibits dealing with Alaska Native culture and having them circulated through the state and elsewhere, appointing a part-time Indian professor to be the dean of the college of arts and letters for seven years, and encouraging professors to obtain grants to study native language and culture.

The speaker introduces Emily Ivanoff Brown or Ticasuk, the founder of the Alaska Heritage Association. The speaker asks Ticasuk and President Wood to come forward.

Emily Ivanoff Brown speaks. She thanks Mr. Keim. She introduces herself with her Eskimo name, Ticasuk. "Ticasuk" means a hollow in the ground. When Ticasuk found this out when she was a little girl she cried. She did not want to be a hollow in the ground! But she did not fully understand the meaning. Her mother told her that it means when the wind is blowing from the north, south east and west and the

hollow in the ground fills with the wealth of the nation. She says she is not wealthy yet. But when she came to the University of Alaska, her name kept tugging at her: "Fill the hollow!" And now, she hopes, that hollow is brimming over with knowledge. She reads out a statement by Henry Nashalook in the Eskimo language and then a translation of the statement in English:

"Know all people that I, Akawaluk(?) or Henry Nashalook of Malimiut (also spelled Malemiut and Malemute) tribe of Unalakleet, am with my people aware of the many significant contributions made to Alaskan culture by Dr. William Ransom Wood, President of the University of Alaska for many years. These contributions have included the establishment of educational programs for Alaska's Native people to help them to bring their meaningful contributions, too, across the cultural bridge between all our Alaskan people. Because you have strengthened this bridge for all time, you rightly should walk it from one end to the other, as white man, Dr. William Ransom Wood and now, as the Eskimo Nashalook, a name great among the Malimiut, which I now give you in accordance with the traditions of our people."

Mr. Keim speaks again. He says he has heard of only one or perhaps two other white men who have had the honor of being named into an Eskimo clan or family group in Alaska's history: Dr. Otto William Geist was initiated into a clan or family at St. Lawrence Island in 1927, we are also told that Senator Gruening was initiated into one of the tribal families of Alaska. This could not be verified because of lack of written records.

President Wood speaks. He says he is speechless. He is very appreciative of this expression and treasures it. It only reinforces his determination to preserve Native culture and tradition. He speaks of plans for a great museum of the north and a North Pacific peoples' cultural center. He says thank you again and adds that he was lured over her to say "hello" to the summer school faculty.

Mr. Keim introduces Linda Boden(? Baughton?) of St. Lawrence Island. Mrs. Baughton expresses her gratitude to William Wood for the contribution he has given to Alaskans. He has unlocked the doorway to enlightenment by giving all Alaskans who have aspirations to achieve for themselves, the knowledge to find their place in the world. She expresses gratitude at being able to study her own cultural language and unique background which will help Alaskan Natives identify themselves and look forward to a brighter future. On behalf of all Alaskan she presents a symbol of enlightenment [presumably an oil lamp] to Dr. Wood. He thanks her, saying he will treasure it.

Mrs. Wood reads Emily Ivanoff's original poem.

Dr. Keim thanks Mrs. Wood for reading the poem. He thanks everyone for their participation.

Another invocation is said.

The program concludes.