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Dr. Ivar Skarland Interview, Accompanying paper reads RI/12/83, No Location, Interview by Mrs. Geri Shakura [sp]

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Jerry Shakura of the Telefact and College Women's Club is getting a tour of the University of Alaska Museum Director with Dr. Ivar Skarland. In 1951, there were over 12,000 visitors registered. They come from Alaska, Canada, and the United States. 3,000 people came from Alaska, 8,000 from U.S., 189 from Canada, about 71 from other foreign countries most from England. The two bears at the museum are the most popular for the visitors. One bear was killed by Bob Lee out of Cold Bay in the Alaskan Peninsula four years ago and another one was killed by Arthur Johnson who was killed around the same place. The Arthur Johnson bear (a brown bear, the biggest land animal in the world) weighed about 1,500 pounds and is about 10 feet tall and was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Rasmuson. He was shot by an ordinary government rifle. There is a two headed caribou that was found in the Yukon near Whitehorse a few years ago. Mr. Geist secured it. Two headed animals are very rare and the animal died at birth.

Mr. Charles Lucier is now being interviewed. At the end of the museum there is a large display of masks from various places in Alaska including Nunivak Island and St. Lawrence area. The larger masks have semi-human faces and many appendages that are very articulately made and used in dances. St. Lawrence masks are simpler and most of them are more human looking faces. Another display is mainly on Nunivak.

Ira [no last name given] describes large Umiak or Eskimo whaling boats made of skin donated a couple months ago. They could put as much as 30-40 people in these boats. The boat was actually used for whaling. A white moose was received quite a few years ago from Chandalar country and was killed by Chief Christian of the Chandalar tribe near North Yukon. The moose was partially albino. There is a discussion about the Alaskan flag. The original design of the Alaskan flag was created by a school boy named Benny Benson who is still alive and a very young man.

There are lots of bones on the floor. The bones are from extinct animals who lived here during the ice age. This part of Alaska was never ice covered so we have a number of animals who have been extinct. The bones being described in the interview are of a hairy mammoth. Otto Geist has collected many bones from the FE mining operation from Fairbanks.

A lot of beautiful baskets were given by Mr. Van Valken of Cordova. Some of them are made from grass that aren't made anymore and they are very finely woven. Some Indian baskets are made from spruce roots. Some of the colors are from different berries and some are from more contemporary ink.

Ann Rogers is going to discuss a new collection of paintings at the museum. The paintings were presented by Dr. and Mrs. Terris Moore. The paintings consist of about 10 framed pastel portraits of individuals in the territory. Mrs. Nina Crumrine is the artist. Her daughter, Josephine Crumrine is the famous artist who does the dog heads. Mrs. Crumrine depicts the ratios so well it's easy to decipher who is who. Descriptions of the paintings were written by Mrs. Crumrine herself. Old Chief Kiyon of the mighty tribe of the Tlingit Indians has on his Potlatch dress. His Chilkat blanket is of mountain goat wool, made by the women, and tells whether he belongs of the Raven or Eagle group. His hat is trimmed with the representation of the dorsal fin of the killer whale, the great power of Alaska Native people. Old Chief Kiyon did not know his age which must have been in the 80s. Another painting is of a Siberian Eskimo named Mrs. Thomas who migrated from Siberia about 15 years from when the painting was made. She was living at Gambell about 35 miles from Siberia. She was beautifully tattooed. The process is to dip sinew threaded through needles into soot and draw it under the skin.

Ivar discusses the Parkas in cases. Some of them are unusual because they are made from bird skins such as duck. The duck has an advantage because it is light in weight and nice looking but does tear easily. It's a kind of "Sunday Parka." Ivory tusk covered with gold was presented to President William Howard Taft by the Chamber of Commerce in Fairbanks. It was made by a local jeweler who spent most of the winter preparing it. It was returned to the University by President Taft's children.