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The voice of America, Studio 1, Alaska: the Final Frontier, a program dedicated to the 100 year anniversary of the purchase by the United States.

Among the most unusual men to live in Alaska are the Eskimo. Tom Brower from Barrow is discussing the Eskimo. They had all types of fish, the bearded seal and the smaller seal. They also had the eider ducks. The eider duck was the main source of food. The Eskimos hunted walrus, seal and caribou and caught the great bowhead whale. Brower says 30 miles from the coast there is sweet grass like lettuce. The Alaska Native people use that as a vegetable. They would pick salmon berries and blueberries 60 miles from the coast. Pete Sovalik then speaks. Inland people used a sod house framed with willow. Winter time we moved all the time following the caribou. In the winter, they lived in ice houses. They trapped foxes, hunted caribou for meat and skin. The summer was fishing time. Pete Sovalik says summertime was for building canoes made from skin. Sovalik says Eskimos are some of the happiest and nicest people on Earth. Dr. Max Brower is director of arctic research facility at Barrow. Dr. Brower says up in Alaska an unhappy person wouldn't survive very long. Dr. Brower says that the people are also very practical because a person who isn't practical wouldn't survive very long. For 17 years Dr. Brower has been at the laboratory operated by the Navy department and University of Alaska [Naval Arctic Research Laboratory or NARL]. He believes that Eskimos have unusual talents. They have one word that is extremely important, it is the word "maybe". It can mean "yes", "no", or "maybe". If you ask an Eskimo to do something foolish he will suggest maybe an alternative approach is desirable. Or that maybe the weather may not be so good. The alternative approach allows giving you a chance to change and realize you made a mistake. If it does not come off as you planned he has not lost face. Traditional life is rapidly changing because of modern communication and transportation. Evan Hopson is one of the leading citizens in the town of Barrow which has a population of 2,000 Eskimos of the 28,000 Eskimos living in Alaska. Hopson has served in the state legislature and is now president of the Barrow City Council. He described how life has changed from a nomadic lifestyle to a settling in the village. Even with the pressures, perhaps what you call a struggle for survival, the Alaska Natives have begun to realize that sooner or later they are going to give their children the opportunity to go to school. People traveled with dog teams and ended up in Barrow and started moving here because of the want of education for children, starting in the 1830s. One of Hopson's sons, Charles, lives in Barrow. Charles went to a primary school in Barrow and then a high school in Southern Alaska for Native children. Charles says the BIA has a grant for Natives from Alaska if they want to go to college that pays

for everything. Charles Hopson plans to go to college in a couple of years. Charles Hopson is a field assistant at the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory. He guides and assists scientists who conduct research in the Arctic. Without the Eskimos the scientists would perish.

When the Russians discovered Alaska in 1741, Alaska was open to the world for the first time. After the U.S. purchased the land 1867, most of the Russians left. There is still however, Russian Orthodox Churches. St. Michael's Orthodox Church in Sitka is mentioned. Most members of the church are Tlingit who maintain the church today. There are two major Indian nations that are native to Alaska, the inland Athabaskan and the Tlingits of southeastern Alaska. There are about 14,000 Natives among Alaska's 270,000 people. A specialist in Indian lore and art is Charles Hindmiller [sp] of Port Chilkoot on the southeast coast. The Tlingit range from Ketchikan to Skagway and as far as Yakutat. The majority of the villages, which is about 17, are all mostly on islands. These people possibly came over from Asia around 1,500 B.C. Apparently these Natives moved from Asia via boat. Great carved totems are a testament to the culture. In the Arctic Circle are the Athabaskan Indians. They are thought to come over from the land bridge. They are connected with the Apache and Navajo because of language. The artwork varies from tribe to tribe.

In 1880, gold was discovered near the capital city of Juneau. The Fortymile River had its great gold strike of 1886. In 1898, over 4,000 gold prospectors traveled across Alaska to the Yukon. Most of the traveling was done in the ice cold and temperature 32 degrees below zero. Frank Young climbed the pass on his father's back. After they got over the pass, they got to the lakes and onto Whitehorse. His dad packed him most of the way and the going got tough because he was just a youngster. His father was a man who weighed 185 to 190. He was physically fit. He was a man of 25 years old. Bobby Sheldon is discussed and also mentioned is how his father had followed the California gold. In the late 1850s, the elder Sheldon heard there was a gold strike in Canada known as the Cassiar County. He took a ship up to Wrangell up to Stikine River known as the Cassiar Country. He didn't find any gold, but he was a good cook so he started a road house. He became a partner of one of Alaska's favorite pioneers known as Jack McQuesten. They operated in Cassiar Country for years. Because his father served at survey work for so many years, he worked for the Canadian government on highway projects. In the 1860s, Bob Sheldon's father went to New York, married his wife, of 8 children 2 of them live today. Bob Sheldon, 84, lives in Fairbanks. As a boy of 14, Bobby went to Yukon in search of gold. Sheldon's father, 70, had a heart attack and died. Bobby became an orphan and sold newspapers. He went to the gamblers and sold papers to them. Skagway was not only the gateway through which the gold stampeded passed on to the Yukon and Alaska. It became a frontier den of gamblers and thieves preying on the unsuspecting Cheechako. Bobby Sheldon never became a gold prospector but became a marine engineer in Skagway. Having never seen an automobile, he built the first car in Alaska, installing a marine engine into a two horse carriage.

Frank Young stayed in the gold mining country after they came across the Chilkoot Pass in 1898. For almost 50 of his 75 years, he prospected and hunted throughout inland Alaska. Most of the time, Young carried his sourdough pail from camp to camp. It was this method of making bread in a bucket where the gold miners got their nickname "sourdough". Young says people came from all over the country and they came from different countries besides the United States. They were all young men with

determination. They were loners alright, but still they'd like to get into civilization and see the girls at the dance halls. You can't beat that.

They did come from all over, particularly from Ireland. Gold was discovered all the way from Dawson to Nome on the west coast. Maurice Kelleher begins talking and mentions that his father came from Dawson around spring break up through Yukon in June in 1900. Maurice had been in Dawson with Australians in 1897. Maurice's father had gone to Australia at 13 at the gold fields in Western Australia Coolgardie. A lot of Australians came up through the Fiji Islands up through Seattle and Vancouver and up through Skagway and over to Chilkoot in February when they heard about gold in Alaska in 1897. Garret Schneider [sp], a Dutchman, came to Alaska in 1909 and he was a steward on the steamboat "Dolphin" the first winter he prospected Thistle Creek by digging a hole in the frozen ground in order to find golden nuggets. Herb Ingstrom, the Swede, a former mechanic, was here since 1933 using hydraulic then came to the tractor and after that we come in using dredge. "That is how we mine now, we use dredge." Ingstrom's claim is 15 miles up the river in Nome.

Frank Young is now a retired engineering manager and Bobby Sheldon is one of the directors of a banking institution in Fairbanks, Garrett Snyder became a politician, writer, and humorist, Maurice Kelleher is the district judge in Nome, Herb Ingstrom is still mining gold in Nome. For 10,000 years, men had move through Alaska by road, foot and dogsled.

After the big gold stampede in Klondike the first railroad bed was hacked out of White Pass from Skagway to White Horse. Later the government created a railroad from Seward to Fairbanks. Another era changed everything in Alaska, the airplane. The age of the bush pilot began. Bob Reeve is speaking and says when he was born the weather was so bad that no airplane could take to the air. Owen Meals from Valdez was one of the early pilots in Alaska. Meal's father [Andrew Meals] came looking for gold and brought his family. Owen used flying to sell cars. He began flying prospectors and machinery into the snow and ice filled mountains for gold mining. We had lots of mining interests that were anxious to get going and that was a good way to get service to them. Bob Reeve had a little more nerve than some of the rest and he got landed on some of the glaciers. There wasn't enough money in gold though to keep it up. Bob Reeve says he first saw Alaska in 1921 when a plane he was flying was forced down from the Orient. Reeve came to Alaska to stay in 1932. In those days Alaska was standing still. The main economy was gold mining, fishing, and fur. Reeve first settled in Valdez. Valdez used to be an old transportation and mining town. Reeve made a specialty of landing prospectors up in the mountains which was very risky. Reeve modified skis of his small Eaglerock and Fairchild airplanes so he could land on snow and ice on the mountains. Most men walked away from crashes with slow landing. A fast landing could kill a pilot. There are stories of pilots doing a dozen forest landings in one trip. Reeve did five in two days once.

Some died at their work. Carl Ben Eielson came to Alaska in 1922. He died in a crash on a rescue mission to Siberia in 1929. Russ Morrow who pioneered air service in Anchorage died in September 1929 on flight from Anchorage to the Interior. Ralph Wien of the flying Wien family died in a crash in Kotzebue in 1929. Harold Gillam learned to fly in Fairbanks in the 1920s. He died from injuries and exposure while walking out to mountains on a flight the Ketchikan in 1923. Gillam was known for being

daring. The bush pilot brought a new era of transportation, replacing dog sleds and river boats. Bush pilots picked up and spread all over Alaska. Robert Atwood, editor of the Anchorage Times, explains that it used to cost \$1,500 dollars and 30 days to go from Anchorage to Nome with a dog team. Bush pilots could do that in 2 or 3 days so the airplane replaced the dog team first. Communities developed along the rivers of Alaska. Before pilots, the mail was delivered by river boats. Bush pilots began to outbid the river boats because they could do it quicker. Many of the bush pilots were given specific aviation routes when the national Civil Aviation Agency organized flying in the Territory. Early flyers are now owners and managers of successful airline companies.