

Call number ORAL HISTORY 02-00-67 SIDE B

Arctic Village School dedication

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Notes: Original in 7 inch tapes, master copy on CD. Tape 02-00-66 is a partial copy of this recording.

A man's voice says it is Arctic Village, March 15th, 1960 with special guests: Mrs. Rudder Thomas, Mr. Paul Nelson and Mure [Muir? Moore?] P. Mutt who is its principal teacher, and Robert F. Mutt. Service begins with a candle light ceremony by the children holding candles and the National Guard presenting colors. There is also some music.

Around 4:18 there is a pledge of allegiance to the USA. [A baby is crying but nothing much seems to be going on before 5:25]. A woman's voice states that the invocation will be given by Mr. Paul Tritt. Mr. Tritt doesn't seem to be present so the woman asks James to say the opening prayer. [Quiet speaking, perhaps in Gwich'in.] A woman's voice says that was Mr. [unclear, Esaiah?] James giving the welcome. [A man is talking in Gwich'in.]

A woman's voice says she would like to talk about the meaning of dedication. When one dedicates something, it is set aside for a special purpose. Tonight they are dedicating their school, setting it aside as a place for the whole community where they can learn and get together for the good of the village. It's for meetings and other things to take place in. [A woman's voice is translating in Gwich'in.] Most importantly it's a place where children and children's children can be educated so that they can [unclear] with the rest of the children. [Translating in Gwich'in.] It's a place where children learn many things so it's an important place, but the children can't take the full responsibility for the school. Everyone has to help in keeping the place in good condition so that they can be proud of it even when it's been used time and time and again. [Translating in Gwich'in.] The teacher can't do it alone, the grown-ups can't do it alone and the children can't do it alone. Every one of them has the responsibility to work together to keep the school so they be proud of it for many years. If they don't take care of it it won't look good or be a good building. [Translating in Gwich'in.] They are at the school tonight to dedicate the school for the whole community and to set it aside as a place that everyone can use. [Translating in Gwich'in.] They must remember that it's everybody's responsibility to keep it for their grandchildren so they can be proud of it. [Translating.]

At 18:16 a woman's voice says that Gilbert [unclear], Sarah Tritt and Maggie Gilbert will tell a little bit about the history of the Arctic Village and how it started: A woman's voice tells that she came to the Arctic Village first time in 1928 and started to work together with [unclear] to [unclear] and now [unclear] all here with them. During those times, Albert Tritt tried to direct them according to what the Bible says about getting together as a community. In 1941 was the first time [unclear] schools and then Captain [?] carried it on until 1948. The speaker doesn't remember if they paid them or not. During

those times they were working together in building a school and went through a lot of hardship. She says everybody is very thankful [unclear]. All these kids here “will sure remember all these things for us”.

[Talking in Gwich'in.]

At 30:54 a woman says that she [the previous speaker] is telling that [unclear] they received there officially. She said her step-father was the one and his name was Chief [?] [Unclear] and they had some kind of a ceremony. They gathered on a boat and somebody started waving a flag. They gathered there and started praying [unclear]. And she said that afterwards they all started [unclear] Chief that they are going to have a dance that night and everybody was happy because they were going to have a dance and a potluck. They just took the baskets off, put boards down and danced on toboggans. They danced all night and had a potluck with mostly meat and nothing else. While they were dancing they still had their fur parkas and fur pants on. [Unclear narration. Discussion.]

In 35:18 Dancing on toboggans –story continues by the woman saying that not all here remember that time. She also remembers when they gathered [unclear] Chief [unclear]. We all should be very thankful of this [unclear] there are many great things that are coming to us also.

[A man's voice speaks in Gwich'in.] At 52:14 a translator says he had a long story. He talked about when he first came up here [unclear]. He said he's not originally from here [from Arctic Village] but when he got here [unclear] and that he used to just travel around and hunt. He said he just wandered around. He came up here in 1907 and said there was one old cabin around [unclear]. After he built a cabin almost everybody visited him [unclear] put up a house [unclear]. They were going to have a dance at the cabin [unclear]. They all had to run out. Six people built that house, Albert [unclear] and him and [unclear], the next one that built a cabin. Most everybody were [unclear]. About building the church: it was to be a place for prayer or holy service and most everybody gathered there to read the Bible. He said that last time he came up, he realized that [unclear]. [Unclear talking in Gwich'in.]

[A man is talking in Gwich'in.] [End of the recording.]