

88-49-164

The last ATS-1 transmission to Allakaket; Ron Mallottt on what makes a successful Native; A story by Emily Brown

Jeff Kennedy, moderator

Fairbanks, Alaska

1978

Series: Potlatch series

Unidentified song

Jeff Kennedy said high school students from small villages have to fly over much of Alaska to get to high school. Jeri Moses has to fly from Allakaket to get to high school in Fairbanks. On the last ATS transmission on first Monday in October Jeri had a conversation with her parents in the family home she hadn't seen for two months. Moses said she talked on the satellite program with her parents. Kennedy asked if she felt the satellite program served her personally. Moses said yes, it made her feel closer to home. Kennedy asked how the satellite served Allakaket. Moses said it has probably saved a few lives. They were able to get transport to take someone to the hospital. The health aides were able to talk to the doctor for about an hour a day. The aides would report on the patients they had during the day. On the weekends they had medical traffic, too. Kennedy asked what village people can do to restore service. Moses suggested that they write to the newspapers or directly to Juneau, but sometimes the government doesn't respond.

Unidentified song

Jeff Kennedy interviews Ron Mallottt in Fairbanks. Mallottt was in Fairbanks advising the Alaska Federation Native's representative to a committee giving advice on how to design television programs for Alaska Natives. Mallottt said he was born in Yakutat, Alaska. His mother was also born there. His father was a mayor of Yakutat and a commissioner. He did a lot for Yakutat and it rubbed off on the rest of them. They have become active in Native affairs. He had a deep concern for the treatment of Alaska Natives. They were being shuffled from one agency to the next without anything being done. He conceived of the idea of conducting a government agency workshop to see if they could iron out some of the problems and create a better atmosphere of providing these services that the Alaska Natives are entitled to. He did this as a consultant to the Cook Inlet Native Association. He developed a communications and comprehensive planning workshop. It was successful in that there were several hundred participants from various government agencies. Senator Gravel and Senator Stevens sent representatives. He said everyone went back to their jobs and weren't interested in following up. They are still back to the bureaucratic regimes. They do their own jobs and don't get down to the problems that are most dominant in the Alaska Native society. He then became an employee of AFN and have been with them ever since. Kennedy said Mallottt discussed the term "successful Alaska Native" – who decides what success is and how does one decide – by traditional Native

standards or by western standards. Mallott said you have to remember that Alaska is a small state population wise. Everyone seems to know everyone else and what they are doing. This has the result of Natives gaining prominence. Kennedy asked who decides success. He said it is the Natives who decide. It will be by the standards of Native traditions because this is what we have been born into and this is what they strive for. They want to maintain their culture and heritage while living in western society. He feels this will create adverse effects in the western society, but it is something they have to live with. Kennedy asked if the person with traditional skills is considered more successful than the person with white man skills. Mallott said they are talking about two different types of success. He is more successful in the sense that the individual that wants to do something and feels like he can do it and he does a good job of it and he manages to support himself while doing his job then this is where success comes. Success is doing something you like and being successful at it and still being happy about it.

Jeff Kennedy said in the last report Sheri Moses expressed little optimism about Alaska Native political power and Mallott disagrees. He said he thinks that they can get things done and they can get legislation pushed through that will accommodate their needs. The Land Claims Settlement Act is proof of this. Congress voted in 1934 not to award Alaska Natives anything and it was a congressional act. Through the combined efforts of many Alaskan Natives they managed to get that reversed. The result of that is Public Law 92-203. Alaska Natives have already received their first checks. The Native corporations have been developed. Natives are in the state legislature. There is a Native candidate for U.S. congress. An Alaska Native is the commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He thinks they are increasing in stature, power and authority. He thinks they can put pressure where it is most needed in order to release funds for some of the programs that are necessary for the welfare of Alaska Natives. The best thing that the people in the villages can do is write people such as Mallott, Willie Hensley, or Roger Lang or other leaders and express their concerns. He said if you have a concern affecting your region you have congressional delegates and legislative delegates. You can write them and put pressure on them. They do listen. They remain in office by your vote. He said they should become registered voters to help themselves and the advancement of all Alaska Natives.

Emily Brown tells a story about the little people who lived many thousands of years ago at Pitmikmittalik (Pikmiktalik), Alaska. One afternoon a family of little people came into the village. At the end of the village there was a family. They came directly to their igloo. Their host and hostess asked them to come in and eat. As they took off their parkas the hostess noticed that the father had a parka on made of two white fox skins. The wife had a parka made from two rabbit skins. This was just the right size for her. They had a little son. He wore a parka from two muskrats. Brown pronounced the name for the little people. The little people family sat down to eat. It was not polite for the host and hostess to watch them eat and they went outside. In just a few minutes they went back into the house and they were all through eating. The people in Pikmiktalik decided to have a feast for them. The other people in the village were interested in seeing the little people. It was the first time that the little people had visited the village and they were going to give them a big feast and then a dance. After they were through eating the man took care of his only little son. He wanted to train the boy to hunt oogruks and other animals. He taught his little boy how to dance Eskimo dance. The men train their boys how to do things together. The next day when the little boy was playing outdoors there was a stray dog. The dog thought the little boy was an animal and killed the little boy. Everyone was mourning the death

of the little boy. The father made a little box for his son. Before that the people in the village didn't bury their dead. They left them out in the tundra and the animals would scatter their bodies over the tundra. The people watched the father making the box. They placed their son in the coffin. They put his toy in the coffin with him. They buried him and the village people thought this was nice of the little people. This story is an object lesson. They taught the people to love their dead even though they are gone from their presence and to make boxes for their dead. They taught the people how to treat their dead. After they buried their little boy then they made a sled. It was so tiny and it was perfect. This was the first time the people were taught to make a well-made sled. The little people took their little sled and filled it with their belongings and left. Ever since that time the little people have never been seen. Mrs. Brown said she hopes that the listeners will learn to be good to their parents. The little people are called Yuggathinniagat.