

## 90-06-350

Elders in Residence Collection. Elder Grace Slwooko is interviewed in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Keywords: Siberian Yup'ik Eskimos, St. Lawrence Island, gender roles, Eskimo dance, walrus stomach, walrus hide, fats and oils, storage, Siberian trading, drum preparation, bird clothing, bird food, bird hunting

Release agreement: Yes, no Internet

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Summarized by Cecilie R. Ebsen

Summary date: 10.23.14.

Length of recording: 00.49.37

00:00:38.20

[Recording starts mid-conversation]

### Students

00:01:15.58

Where jobs segregated according to gender in the old days?

### Grace Slwooko

00:01:33.11

Yes, the men would hunt and the women stay home. Often a man only got daughters and he had to take his daughters out hunting too.

### Grace Slwooko

00:03:41.73

Men are always looking for the movement of ice. The ice appears from the north. It gets stormy and windy and when the ice hits the island the weather clears up. No more storms. It will be cold and the men will be watching and go hunting. If a boat is made from walrus hide it won't break when it hits ice. Wooden boats will break.

### Students

00:06:47.24

Did they use to have sails on the boats?

### Grace Slwooko

00:06:55.00

Yes they did. They were made of walrus stomachs.

### Grace Slwooko

00:10:00.35

They used to use ivory for needles when they were sowing walrus skin onto boats.

## Students

00:10:20.26

Asks if Grace knows any medicine men?

## Grace Slwooko

00:10:28.62

She did, but the missionaries turned on them and so most people stopped using them as well. Her grandmother was a healer.

## Students

00:11:13.70

Asks if Grace's grandmother used different herbal things to heal people?

## Grace Slwooko

00:11:28.61

She did. She used different herbs to heal in connection to for example diarrhea. Or when children are sick with chicken pocks or fever, she used a kind of clay to put on them.

## Grace Slwooko

00:16:25.50

Grace talks about eating seal meat and how to prepare it. They also pick salmon berries on the island. They fill whole walrus skin with berries.

## Unknown

00:18:13.78

[Recording is disconnected and then comes back on as the teacher says that it's time to wrap up. It is not clear if he meant for a break or if the following recording is from a different day]

## Grace Slwooko

00:19:01.48

Grace talks about dancing.

## Grace Slwooko

00:20:07.45

When the ice arrives there are herds of walrus on it. The men get out and harpoon the walrus. All the walrus move towards the shore. [Grace demonstrates how to cut walrus on the board]

## Grace Slwooko

00:23:15.66

[Grace shows on board how they make walrus boats]

## Students

00:26:11.93

Asks if Grace has a favorite song or dance?

### Grace Slwooko

00:26:21.71

Grace explains how her people come from Siberia and they have songs from there. [Grace talks about dancing and show different movements it seems like] A man will sing a song as it comes to his mind. People dance signs that stand for their families. For example polar bear or whale. it is important to show which family one belong to when dancing.

### Students

00:30:59.89

Asks if they still have an organized dance group?

### Grace Slwooko

00:31:09.76

They do. The schoolteacher learns who likes to sing and can practice and then he asks them to come and teach the students.

### Grace Slwooko

00:34:05.86

[Grace sings a song]

### Grace Slwooko

00:35:15.14

Only men play the drums and sometimes a few old women.

### Grace Slwooko

00:41:46.59

Grace talks about skin clothing and bird parkas.

### Grace Slwooko

00:47:25.44

Grace talks about hunting and eating different kinds of birds

### Unknown

00:49:13.57

[Recording ends midsentence]