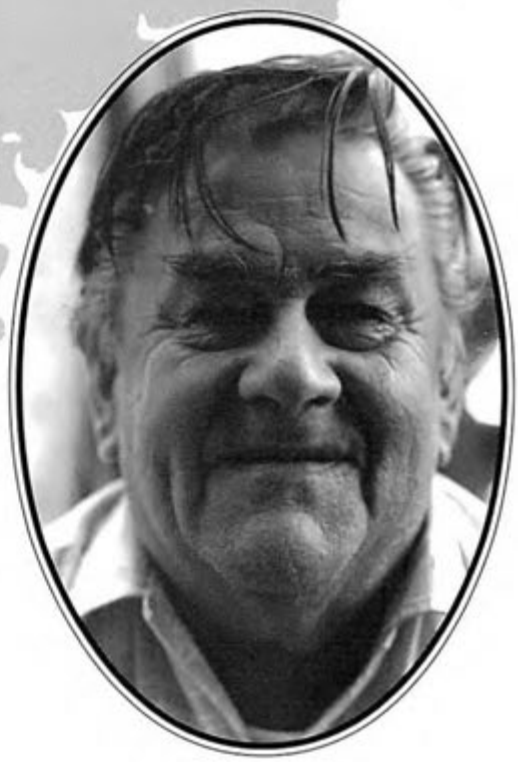
Iluani

Inside the Life and Culture of Kodiak Island



May 2003

Acknowledgments

The week of April 6th – 11th, 2003, high school students from Old Harbor, Port Lions, and Ouzinkie gathered in Kodiak with oral history articles they had written. The purpose of the week was to publish the third issue of *Iluani* magazine. Students from Larsen Bay, Akhiok, and Chiniak also contributed articles.

Throughout the week we worked on the layout and design of our oral history articles. We couldn't have done it without the help of many people. A special thanks goes to Dave Kubiak for his continued support of the oral history project by sharing his time, and teaching us the basic principles of publication.

Another thank you goes to Alisha Drabek (Kodiak College) for providing information on how to enhance photographs using Adobe Photoshop. Cherie Osowski (Kodiak Daily Mirror) and Shawna Hegna (Alutiiq Museum) taught us basic publishing skills using Adobe Pagemaker, and Lola Durham (Kodiak Daily Mirror) helped set up templates for our pages.

We also learned the basic skills of marketing and promoting of the magazine thanks to Pam Forman from the Kodiak Island Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Everyone helped with editing and revising, but Sue Jeffrey, Sally Wilker, Eric Waltenbaugh, Amy Peterson, and Gabe Azuyak spent an especially long time wading through text with us.

Thank you to the Kodiak College for providing a facility for us to prepare the magazine for publishing, especially the use of the new computer lab.

To the Kodiak Island Borough School District, thank you for providing transportation, food, and a chance to show off our achievements.

All monies from the sale of the magazine beyond the cost of printing will be withheld to continue with the publication of the magazine in the future.

The Acknowledgment Committee,
Crystal Bartleson, John Ignatin Jr., Andre Moseley, Jon Panamarioff

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Note to the reader: The spelling for the title of our magazine has changed a number of times over the years - almost as many times as the Alutiiq alphabet has changed! But now we hope we have a spelling that will work for good. The most recent spelling, *Illuani*, was correct for using the English alphabet to make the proper Alutiiq sound. But in the Alutiiq alphabet, the **ll** is a special letter that sounds more like an *sh* that comes out the sides of your mouth instead of the front (the tongue is placed against the back fo the front teeth, and air is blown out the sides of the tongue). Using the current (and hopefully final!) Alutiiq alphabet, *Iluani* is the best spelling. But what does *Iluani* mean? The root of the word is *ilua*, which means "in it or inside it." According to Elders, *iluani* means "to be inside it, or to get inside it." The "it," here, is the story. So sit back and enjoy, as our young historians get inside the stories told by our honored elders.

-April Laktonen Counceller, Alutiiq Language & Educational Outreach, Alutiiq Museum

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Cover photos:Zack Chichenoff (photo by Hope Chichenoff), Marie Skonberg (photo by Michelle Johnson), Nickoli Katelnikoff (photo by Jon Panamarioff), Sven Haakanson, Sr. (photo courtesy of the Haakanson family)

Dedicated
to
Sven Haakanson, Sr.

In loving memory
of all the stories
Sven shared with us.

We will always miss him.

Iluani

Inside the Life and Culture of Kodiak Island

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World War II: Memories from Chiniak

I have lived my whole life in Chiniak. Behind my house is a Quonset hut. Down the road is a runway built by hands of long ago. I have been surrounded by these remnants of World War II, and I have never wondered about the history of them. Where once stood a vast base of airplanes, bunkers, and soldiers, now lies an old airstrip and a bunch of trees. Even though it's not much to look at today, vivid images of it still live in the minds of Walter Dangel and Gresham Pace, World War II veterans who served in Chiniak.

-Desireé Schmidt

Story by:

Ben Christman
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Chiniak

The interviews with Mr. Dangel and Mr. Pace not only expanded our knowledge of Chiniak, but it sparked an interest. That interest lead us to want to know more about our town's importance, history, and role in World War II.

(photo: Ned Griffin)

A decaying Chiniak Quonset Hut

Walter Dangel: Searchlight Commander

We walked into our teacher's ham shack and gathered around his radio. He contacted Mr. Dangel with a flurry of letters and numbers, which make up his call sign. We waited a few moments. Static shrouded the voice that responded to us, the words were barely intelligible; static would bother us throughout the interview. We were all a little anxious, for none of us had talked over a ham radio before. Our teacher introduced us and we started the interview.

Walter Dangel, an 81-year-old World War II veteran, now lives with his wife in Sitka. One of Mr. Dangel's favorite hobbies is speaking on ham radio, which is how we came about this interview.

He was raised in California, and joined the California National Guard in 1938. He was shipped up to Sitka at nineteen. He liked the country and was transferred to Kodiak in September of 1941. From there he was sent to Fort Smith at Cape Chiniak as searchlight operator.

"I was a searchlight commander. There was four men on the searchlights crew: commander, searchlight operator, a control station operator, and a generator power plant operator. I was in charge … of the group and it was my duty to see that all of them did their jobs."

(photo: courtesy Walter Dangel)

Corporal Walter Dangel in Germany, 1945

(photo: courtesy Walter Dangel)

Dangel, second from the left, with his entire searchlight crew

"G" Battery, 250th Coast Artillery

Corporal Dangel mentioned to our astonishment," When you were standing by the searchlight you were overwhelmed by the brightness of it. They were 800-million candlepower. You … figure your flashlight [is] probably running about four or five thousand candlepower. Due to the extreme brightness, Mr. Dangel explained to us that they would have to stand back a hundred yards and aim the searchlight with a DEC (Distant Electric Control).

When he wasn't on duty, the corporal spent much of his leisure time outdoors, fishing, hunting, hiking, skiing, skating, and target practicing. Mr. Dangel stated that he ate mostly army rations because the deer were protected, but there was plenty of other wild game to hunt, or fish to catch.

After his service in Chiniak, Mr. Dangel was retrained for field artillery and transferred to Germany where he saw live combat in the Rhineland. Because the Germans surrendered soon after he came to Germany, Mr. Dangel facetiously stated that, "They saw me and they surrendered."

After he was discharged from the army, Mr. Dangel returned to the United States and moved to Sitka. Mr. Dangel, who is now retired, worked for the Sitka Fire and Electrical Departments for about 35 years. Out of all the places he had been, he loved the country so much that he decided to spend the rest of his years in Alaska.

Gresham Pace: Combat Engineer

We also interviewed Gresham Pace, another World War II veteran. We first met him on the fall of 2000 when he and his wife were making their first trip back to Chiniak since he had served in World War II. He originally came by our school to see the changes in Chiniak, but when we found out he was stationed here we knew we had a great opportunity to learn of our past.

Two years later we decided to do an interview with him because of the interesting things he told us. When interviewing him, we learned many new interesting facts about him and what he did during the war.

He joined the army through the Alabama National Guard and was sent to Louisiana. According to Mr. Pace, his commander said, "he heard so much complaining about the heat he decided that he would take us to Alaska to cool us off." His company was sent to Fort Lewis, Washington; from there he was shipped to Alaska. He was stationed right here in Kodiak where he was a combat engineer. He helped build the runway, position the guns, and was involved in putting in a small dock for boats taking supplies around the island.

The airstrip was necessary because pilots needed a place to land when it was too foggy in Kodiak. While building the airstrip, problems arose. First, instead of finishing it in one year's time, Mr. Pace's commander wanted it finished in just three months. In order to meet that

(photo: used by permission of Kodiak Military History Museum)

Miller Field during the war

deadline, the troops had to work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Due to constant use, there were many equipment breakdowns. "The only time you shut an engine off was when you was checking the oil and gassing it up for the next shift to take over. You got out, the next driver got in, and kept things rolling."

After we been working for oh just about the first month - one morning I go on my shift to come up. I went out and there was a plane with the landing gear down and that was the signal that it couldn't land in Kodiak. It was an emergency. So we got all the equipment on one side of the runway. The first two planes come down on the runway just fine and the third plane, he come in a little bit too close to the middle of the runway. He hit some gravel and the plane bounced up in the air and stopped just a second and come back down the runway and pieces flying off. When it stopped, there was the fuselage right up to [where] the wings were beat off. We got a bulldozer to come and turn it over. We got the canopy up and they was all slumped over in there. The other two pilots come running down the airfield. They tried to get the cockpit open but it was jammed and they couldn't get it open, so they needed a crowbar or something. The captain, he was there [with] a pry bar to change the angles of the [bulldozer] blade and he gave that to them. Just about the time that they broke it loose, well the pilot in there raised up and looked around and saw the pilots that he knew. [He] started unbuckling his gear and getting out. They broke a little piece of metal trying to open the cockpit and he [the stuck pilot] got caught on that and so he was bleeding a little bit. He got out, took a breath, and started looking out at the pieces of plane flying every which way, and he said' gee whiz, you know a fella could get hurt doing that'."

The runway wasn't the only thing that Mr. Pace worked on. Because Kodiak had the first LORAN (Long Range Aid to Navigation) station, and because the town was a vital part of the West Coast Defense Command, the combat engineers built a fake village in Middle Bay. They did this in case of an attack on Kodiak.

"[We fixed] a place up in there and put up a fake Kodiak. We had a big generator... up on the hills where they put in you know, like windows. When the lights were on, I would be up at the cabins or houses back up on around side the hills... at night. Why we would light up the generator lights up there [so that they would] bomb that fake city away from Kodiak."

In the possible event of an attack, Fort Smith in Cape Chiniak was prepared. Bunkers were filled with all sorts of munitions. We asked what their purpose was, and his answer amazed us.

"Well, that was where we had the supplies stored. An' also, uh we had ammunitions stored in there, we had chemical warfare. We would dig the back of the mountains, put in a Quonset hut there, and load it with stuff that we would use if we had to during the war. There was a lot of chemicals. The warfare, [ammunitions, chemical warfare, etc.], was out there and we would lock it and put a little sign on there says chemical warfare sticker on it."

After building the Chiniak base, Gresham Pace was assigned to Europe. He was sent to New York. From there he was supposed to go to France. But his convoy was diverted to England and they didn't get to France until December 27. When he was in France, he helped Patton's 3rd Army cross the Rhine River. He was discharged from the army in October of 1945. He now lives with his wife, Hope, in Olympia, Washington.

DRIVEN BY BOREDOM

By: Hope Chichenoff and Larissa Panamarioff

(photo taken by Hope Chichenoff)

Driven by boredom at the age of eighteen, Zack Chichenoff and his good friend Johnny Panamarioff enlisted in the United States Air Force. In the course of his adventures he traveled from Alaska to our country's capital. During the interview he told a very interesting story. He began with his parents and moved on from there to include his childhood, high school, fishing, meeting his wife and his military experiences.

"My parents were Peter and Katherine Chichenoff, as far as I'm concerned they were real nice people. I was born... on Afognak Island in the village of Afognak... I claim the seventeenth of September as when I was born because that's when I was christened, 1927.

"There was ten of us [kids], there was eight girls and two boys." When asked about when and why he moved here to Ouzinkie, he replied, " I was about seven years old, so that would be 1934, I guess. Well, It wasn't because I wanted to [move here]. My parents had to move here because there wasn't any work in Afognak. There were three canneries operating here in Ouzinkie, so my mom came to work in the cannery and my dad went fishing.

" Somewhere around [1942] they were building the naval station in Kodiak. At the time my dad decided to go to work at the naval station, you know as a laborer. So we went to Kodiak, and I continued my education. I started high school in Kodiak." Zack went on about the problems of attending school in town. " My problem was I used to fish salmon, crab, and everything. While I was on the salmon boats they wouldn't stop fishing 'til fall fishing,

which was in September. So I was late for school in Kodiak and I couldn't keep up with the rest of the students. After I graduated from the tenth grade I just decided to forget it, because I was having such a hassle trying to keep up with the other graders. I'm sorry I didn't finish high school, but I did it because I wanted to continue working.

"My friend Johnny Panamarioff and I were really the best of friends. But he's gone now and I miss him. Anyway, when we were eighteen years old we didn't drink or smoke in those days. But anyway we'd go fishing, both crab and salmon. We got sort of a little bored around here, and we were sitting down one time... I don't know which one of us said it first, but we both thought of it [enlisting]. That we should get out of here for awhile and find out how the rest of the world lives. So we decided to go and enlist in the service.

"It used to be Fort Greely in Kodiak. It was still operating in 1946, so we went there. We enlisted and then after we were there for about two weeks doing KP [kitchen police], we finally got shipped out of Kodiak to Seward... on army boats. They took us to Seward. From there we had to take a train to Fort Richardson in Anchorage and there we stayed for about two weeks. That was the last time I saw Johnny Panamarioff [until we got out of the service], because I got shipped to Fort Lewis, Washington and I stayed there for a couple weeks. In the mean time, these old veterans were coming back from the Second World War, and we were helping to move them and get them settled down over there in Fort Lewis. From there I went on a train to... Denver, Colorado, and that's where I started having my basic training at. From there, of course, I went to Radio School in Scottfield, Illinois, and from there I got stationed in Andrews Air Force Base in Washington D.C... for about a year and a half. Then they changed our station to Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha which was a Strategic Air Command, and that's where I got out of the service in 1949." Zack was in the service for a total of three years, from 1946 to 1949.

> *"We got sort of a little bored around here"*
>
> ***- Zack Chichenoff***

He met his wife Tania "Tiny" Chichenoff in 1959, but knew her for years because she stayed at his parent's house in Kodiak quite often. "We just happened to get together and we were married in 1960," explains Zack.

"I lost my only brother, Roy, in the Korean War. He was about one and a half years older than me... he didn't get in the service. He was eligible during the Second World War but he didn't pass his examination. I had no idea he tried to get in. I was at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, and I got a phone call[from Roy] saying he enlisted in the service.

They put him in the First Cavalry Division. When I was in Kodiak this one big troop ship came through. I forget the name, but he was on it. Then from there they headed down to Japan, and that's the last we saw of him. They brought his body to Kodiak. I forget the... exact date, but anyways he's buried over in Kodiak. That was in about 1950 I guess, Korean War."

When questioned about what he thought when he realized he was going to be flying in a B-25 Bomber, Zack's response was, "It didn't really bother me, in fact that's why it doesn't scare me to fly in even these small planes anymore because I flew for eight hours at a time when I was going to Radio training in Scottfield, Illinois. It would be windy up there and the old... C-47 would be bouncing. I almost got air sick a couple times, but I just toughed it out. I

graduated from Scottfield, then I was shipped to Andrews Air Force Base. That's where I started flying these bombers. I was coming on leave so I got out on a B-25 Bomber, the ones they used on airplane carriers when they were bombing Japan that time. We flew all the way from Washington D.C. to Ladd Air Force Base. Talk about cold in the back of that little plane. We were wearing parkas, and stuff like that. We had no heat. Just a little two motored bomber."

In the summer of 2001, Zack flew on a B-17 again after 52 years. He was asked what it felt like to fly in one after so many years and he replied, "Well, actually it was all together different, because they didn't have seats in them like we had before you know, and of course [being a radio operator] I was never in the back end where they had the gunners positioned. Actually, those planes that we flew on, they took the guns out of most of them because there was no war at the time. They just kept flying them to keep in contact with flying those kind of planes just in case there was a war. The bodies [of the planes] were the same, but like I said they took most of the equipment out of the airplanes. That's where I... think I lost my hearing, because they never gave us any ear plugs or nothing. BOY those things were noisy. In fact during the Second World War, I used to stand out here when I was a kid, and watch those P-40's, Flying Tigers they called 'em, flying by here right between The Narrows when they were heading down to Adak and all those places." "Yeah, I believe I did [enjoy my time in the service]. I'm glad, and I wish many of these younger people would just enlist in the service and not wait to be drafted. Then you have your choice of what service you want to join. I'm glad that Danny Clarion Jr. decided to get into the Navy at least. It keeps you out of a lot of trouble too now-a-days. You learn respect, and you learn how to take orders from people.

> ***"You learn respect, and you learn how to take orders from other people"***
>
> ***-Zack Chichenoff***


(photo taken by Hope Chichenoff)

"Oh, one other thing, I never proved to anybody and I can't prove it except to myself, that Charles Lindbergh, The Spirit of St. Louis, flew in the same bomber that I flew in from... Andrews Air Force Base to Houston, Texas. Like I say, I can't prove it though. I also spent twenty-one days with Admiral Byrd's Expedition up North above Hudson Bay. He used to have expeditions to the Antarctic. See, a lot of this stuff I never write down or anything. That was the coldest twenty-one days I spent, I guess. Anyway, I had a good adventure, and I don't regret it, and like I said before, I wish some of the younger people would think about that too!"

It was a great honor interviewing Zack. He has lived in Ouzinkie for most of his life, and has been gladly serving his village as the Mayor for the past thirty-two years. He has raised eight children and now has over thirty-five grandchildren.

The Subsistence Uses of Sea Otters

By Matthew Jones
Larsen Bay

When I was a young child I slept on a pelt my dad made for me. Now that I'm older I know that the furry bed was a Sea Otter pelt. It made me wonder how my dad, Roy Jones Jr., would make them.

Roy Jones, Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) of Larsen Bay, was born in Kodiak, Alaska, in 1952. "Well I spent the majority of my life in Larsen Bay. I was born in Kodiak and when we moved to the villages I lived in the village of Karluk for four years, and then the rest of the years I lived out here in Larsen Bay. When it was time for me to go to high school we didn't have high schools here in those days so, we had to move into Kodiak so I could finish my education."

I asked him how he got started in his sea otter subsistence hunting. "Ah that was back when I was fifteen years old, and I was here in Larsen Bay. My aunt saw one sea otter down on the beach, down near close to the shore. She asked me to go out and get it and I did. She showed me the different ways of skinning 'em. There's two ways of skinning. You can either tube 'em or open 'em all the way open. It depends on what you're going to do with the animal. Now that was my first one; I was pretty little."

"When it was time for me to go to high school we didn't have high schools here in those days so, we had to move to Kodiak so I could finish my education."
~ Roy Jones

(Photo: Matthew Jones)
Roy pulling sea otter aboard

My dad explained to me that tubing the sea otter is not really used for much except looks. All you can do with a tubed pelt is hang it on the wall. You can't make garments or things with it. If you want to make things with the pelt then you have to open it all the way up.

Roy's Aunt Dora was his inspiration and taught him how to skin sea otter and many other subsistence activities. Roy states that he doesn't sell the pelts, but makes them for other people in the village.

"If you don't harvest them in your area, if you get an overabundance of sea otters they wipe out the crab, and they wipe out the clam beds."

~ Roy Jones

"My Aunt Dora who lives here-who lived here in Larsen Bay – she's passed away now, Dora Aga. She used to tell me all kinds of things that I don't know, deer hunting' anything to do with subsistence she was teaching me as I was growin' up, and I skinned my first sea otter with her, she showed me how to do it. Anyway, it just went on from there."

I asked Roy how he does it differently now versus when his Aunt Dora taught him. "Since I started doing sea otters it's just been with a standard knife. The only thing is different that I do now is I started tanning my own hides and everything because of the cost of having taxidermists do it. I started doing it my own home style way. I hand sew 'em. I have patterns and things. I make my own stuff too."

I asked my dad to share other uses of the sea otter pelts. "Well, there are two things that I was taught by my aunt, and number one was they make good garments, make good gloves. The way the down is on them and stuff, the wind doesn't blow through. They're waterproof, naturally waterproof."

The second thing his aunt told him is that it's important to harvest them because they will affect the other subsistence foods. "If you don't harvest them in your area, if you get an overabundance of sea otters they wipe out the crab, they wipe out the clam beds in the area and if you don't subsistence hunt the sea otters it affects the other subsistence food that you eat off the beaches."

I asked him if he used the other parts of the sea otter. "The uses are pretty much the same. Sea otter isn't edible. It's not very appetizing, but the pelts are just used to make garments. I think that we should be able to make things the traditional way."

Roy thinks that many people don't understand why we hunt animals for their furs. "Some may think it's appalling. But if they were to look, certain things are made with animals so it's something people they have to get used to."

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Roy holding up the finished product

How to Harvest and Process the Animal

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Step 1: Harvest a Sea Otter.

Harvesting a Sea Otter is a little difficult because Roy was in a boat, and if you try to shoot something while you're in a boat it is almost impossible if the only thing you see is a head and it is only out of the water for five seconds. You also have to hit it in the head or it will just hiss and spit at you like I learned. Oh, and don't forget to keep your gun fully loaded at all times.

Step 2: Skin the Sea Otter.

Skinning a Sea Otter is a lot easier than trying to hunt one. My dad showed me how to skin it. First he made sure that the Sea Otter was straight and centered. Second, he cut right down the middle, from the neck all the way to the rectum, careful not to cut anything else but the skin. The only part I had trouble with was skinning the feet and tail. I had my dad help me on those parts. I was curious as to why people don't eat Sea Otter meat and he said it tastes like dog, I don't know what dogs tastes like and don't plan to either.

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

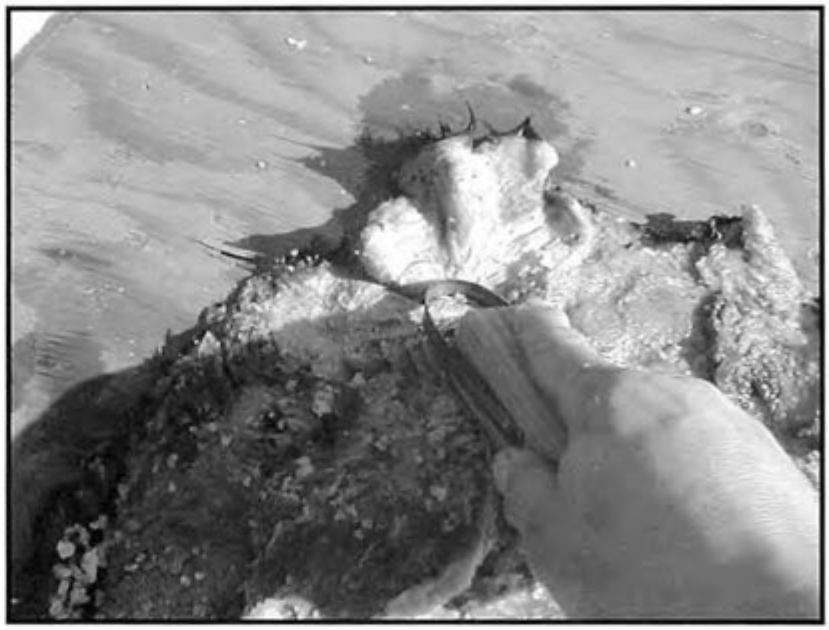
(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Step 3: Salt the hide

My dad put a layer of rock salt on it, folded it up, put it in a bag, and threw it in the freezer. But, he said that it didn't matter if it was in the freezer or not. Store the hide until you have time to flesh it.

Step 4: Flesh the pelt.

The tool used is a block of wood with a saw blade bent around it. You grab the pelt and apply pressure as you pull in the opposite direction of where you are holding it. It isn't difficult but the time will depend on the amount of excess fat and/or meat. This will comb the meat off the pelt.



(Photo: Matthew Jones)

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Step 5: Soak ithe pelt

Soak the pelt in a bucket of white gasoline to rid it of oils and odors for 15 - 30 minutes.

SAFETY NOTE!!!!
Always add acid to water NOT water to acid.

Always wear protective eye goggles, rubber gloves and a plastic apron when working with acid.

Step 6: Mix tanning solution:

Mix a tanning solution: 2 pounds salt, 1 ounce battery acid, 5 gallons of water

Step 7: Soak the pelt again

Soak the pelt for at least 12 hours in the tanning solution.

Step 8: Rinse in neutralizing solution

Rinse the pelt well with a mixture of water and baking soda or detergent that contains sodium (1 cup baking solda/5 gallons water). Let it soar for one hour.

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Step 9: Stretch the hide

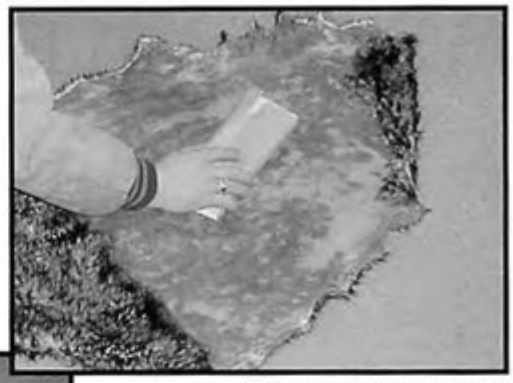
Stretch the hide over a board with nails to hold it in place.

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Pull the hide to the tops of the nails to allow air to flow on both sides of the pelt. Allow the pelt to dry in a well-ventilated area.

Step 10: Sand

When the hide is completely dry, sand the leather to the desired thinckness. You can just touch it up at the end or you can make it thin, but you have to be careful not to sand too thin or you might run into the hair bubbles or hair pores and then the hair will fall out.



(Photo: Matthew Jones)

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

STEP 11: USE THE PELT HOWEVER YOU LIKE.

You are looking at the finished product, a sea otter pelt turned into a hat. Sea otter is very valuable and is close to being put on the extinction list. **Only Native people that are enrolled in BIA can hunt them.**

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE !!!

When working with acid ALWAYS use plastic containers - acid will eat away metals.

ALWAYS wear plastic gloves, goggles, and plastic apron, acid will eat clothing and will harm skin.

If acid comes in contact with skin immediately rinse off with water.

If acid comes into contact with eye immediately flush out.

(Photo: Matthew Jones)

Tidal Wave of 64

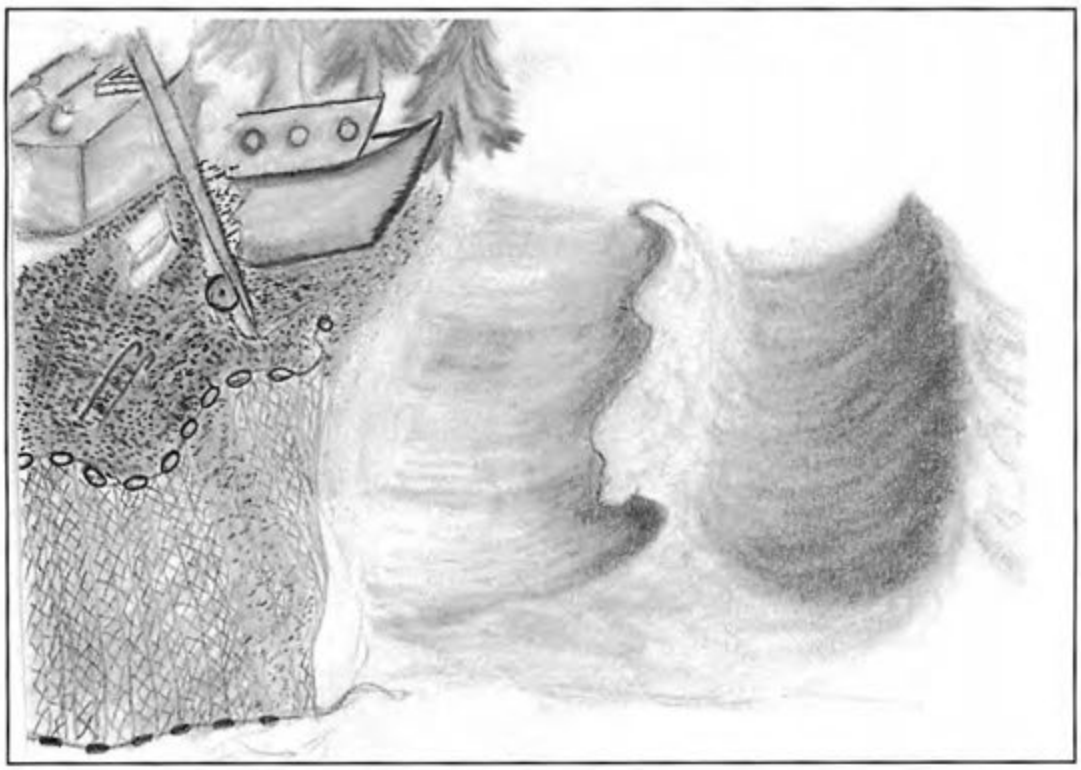
Written by: Kevin Mullan

One summer day my dad and I drifted by his home village, Afognak, in his Boston Whaler. I saw a small church building standing broad side and crooked on the end of a point on the ocean. I asked him if they rebuilt that church after the tidal wave. He told me in happy voice, "You see that church there, son. I was baptized in that church and it stood right through the earthquake and tidal wave!" That is when I became very interested in my father's village.

"Yes, but there really was no actual Hawaiian style breaker, there was just a bunch of massive waves that kept coming in and out thrashing on our village", said David Mullan.

March 20th, 1964, two-hundred and twenty people evacuated the village of Afognak. At the time of the earthquake my father, David Mullan, was in Raspberry Strait in skiff. When asked if he had seen the wave he replied, "Yes, but there really was no actual Hawaiian style breaker, there was just a bunch of massive waves that kept coming in and out thrashing on our village." Luckily there were no

Illustrated by: Kevin L. Mullan



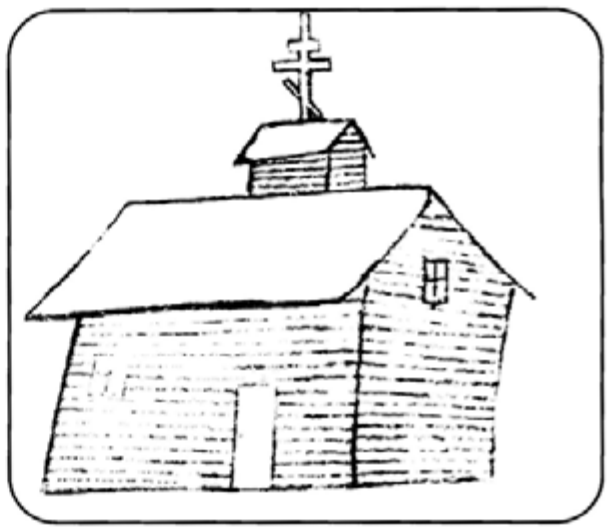
human casualties from the earthquake and the tidal wave, but Dad said that many people lost a lot of livestock such as: cows, chickens, pigs, and other animals. Many people had also lost their homes and belongings. One unnamed boat, that he mentioned, was completely thrashed and their docks were mangled.

After the ocean's fury had settled down the people of Afognak went down to the junk yard of the horrific mess which was once their beautiful village. They salvaged as many things as they could; helping each other with their water soaked tangibles and made do with what they had. Then and there the people knew that their village could not be saved due to the erosion from the tidal wave.

So the Afognak Tribal Council sent out a crew of a few men to scout for new land to build on. They looked everywhere such as: Litnik, head of Kazuayk Bay, Soldiers Bay, and Antones. The Kodiak Lions Club sponsored the Afognak village move and provided stuff to use to build the new village. After much searching they found Settlers Cove. They named the village after the Lions Club, Port Lions. It took the Afognak people from April of 1964 to a few days before Christmas to move into their new homes.

My father had once said, before the interview, that he had a lot of fun with his friends building the roads. They got to use dynamite to remove obstacles such as rocks and hills. The only thing they had trouble with was removing tree stumps. There were few roads when Port Lions was built they managed with what was available. There was one loop around which is now known as Knots Landing, down to the store, up past the post office and beyond the clinic, and then the Bay Road across to the ferry dock.

When I asked my father how the people felt living in a new place such as Port Lions, he remarked "Well, the old timers wanted to move back to Afognak and the youngsters really liked the new place because it was something new and exciting." After sometime the people prospered in this new village. They started to build docks, a cannery, the Port Lions from its old location, Port Wakefield. It was suffering from erosion and had begun to fall apart. The people from that place really needed the workers, otherwise; they would have gone out of business. Some years later the cannery burnt down. The cannery dock became very useful for those people. It had allowed them to transport lots of things from their old village and also allowed them to bring in houses on barges. From one great disaster led to one great out come of a new and beautiful village, Port Lions.



Illustrated by: Kevin L. Mullan

MARIE SKONBERG AND THE ART OF BEADING

By Michelle Johnson & Lovett Panamarioff
Ouzinkie

"The more of us native people who know how to bead the better off we'll be."

- Marie Skonberg

Marie Skonberg, an elder in Ouzinkie village has always enjoyed beading. She started beading as a child, and is now teaching it to anyone who is willing to sit down and learn. Marie has been invited to teach beading to Ouzinkie, Port Lions and the Larsen Bay schools. She also teaches Alutiiq dancing to the kids in Ouzinkie.

She began beading as a small child with a little beading kit. She got into tiny seed beads and started to make things with them. There was no one to teach her how to bead. She would get an idea in her head and go with it. Marie tells us, "I buy my own beads for my own stuff that I make." She took pride in making something that she could wear, sell, or give to someone else. Marie summed it up best when she said, "... It's kind of like starting from nothing, I guess I just wanted to be creative..."

While she was attending a camp sponsored by the Afognak Native Corporation, Doug Inga showed her two different ways to make a headdress. The first way is with an oval top and four strips of suede or leather. You sew the beads between the strips and make whatever design you want. The second method would be to just have the pieces of suede or leather cut and sewn to fit and bead one row at a time. Start from the top, set the pattern, attach the Suede, bead the next level and so on, including the fringe. She has never attempted to make a headdress this second way.

(Photo by Michelle Johnson)

Marie is modeling a traditional native dancing outfit.

Marie's creativity is a gift to be cherished. With amusement in her voice she tells us about a job she was offered, "A couple of years ago Paul Panamarioff at the Tribal offered

(Photo by Michelle Johnson)

Marie displays a headdress she is working on.

me a job doing what I was doing anyway, dancing with the kids and making stuff for them..." She and some of her friends have made all of the headdresses for our Ouzinkie Alutiiq dance group.

Marie expresses, "... I wanna continue, the more of us native people who know how to bead, or make beaded headdress, the better off we'll be. The headdress is a....symbol of what we are..."

She also believes that we would have much to gain from learning how to bead a headdress, we listened as Marie continued, "... A sense of who you are and a sense of pride for making and completing something and you can make a beautiful thing or it is um... where you, learn a skill that no one can take from you..."

Although she has made many beaded headdress, she has never sold one. She says that the going price for one headdress would be twenty-five hundred dollars, the earrings that she makes would run from twenty to thirty-five dollars, and the necklaces would cost somewhere around seventy-five dollars up to two hundred. These figures would depend on the types of beads and the amount of work that was put into the final product.

Marie enlightens us in understanding how beading is an important expression of all native cultures, ".... Our native people had beaded practically forever. In any of the archaeological sites you can find beads so... our people used them as decorations with the headdress. If you were like a chief's daughter or something like that, you would have a really fancy one because he could afford to trade for really fancy beads, and in our culture today, wearing a beaded headdress is kind of a connection to the past. In the museum when "Looking Both Ways"(an exhibit about the heritage and identity of the Alutiiq people at Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum) was there, the headdress or the headdresses that were there were very similar to the ones that we make. There's four , four parts to it, signifying the four directions, the four seasons and also the, trains and the fringe on them, help frame your face and make you look more attractive..."

It was a pleasure to interview Marie Skonberg. She was interviewed at the Community Hall by Lovett Panamarioff and Michelle Johnson, while holding a beading session for the community. When asked for a special quote she shared "Whenever you do a beading project let it come from you. You are in charge of your artwork, always do it from your heart."

(Photo by Rod Sehorn)

Marie is busy helping students bead headresses.

It Was A Total Loss

by: Chantelle Bartleson

Have you wondered about the jobs your parents have had that led them to where they are today? Well I have, and that led me to lining up an interview with my dad, Marvin Lyle Bartleson, Jr.. So over dinner one evening he took me through a memorable event in his career as Port Lions V.P.S.O. Marvin Lyle Bartleson, Jr., a twenty-three year old V.P.S.O. woke up to a phone call around 5:00 a.m. It was Sergei Sharatin saying that the sky was burning orange near the school. Something was wrong, so he asked Sergei to call the local fire fighters and anyone who was willing to help and tell them to head up to the school.

> "Flames were lashing out and everything was breaking and melting."
> Marvin Bartleson

Rushing over to the fire department, he started the fire truck and drove up to the school. By the time he reached the school, it was engulfed in flames, and there was no one in sight. Where was the crew? He started the water flow by himself, but it didn't take long for the fire truck to run out of water, so he had to hook it up to a water main. When he did that the water main broke, so he had to pull the hose down a steep hill to a fire hydrant.

Soon the fire fighting crew arrived, and everyone from the community was helping fight the fire. Marvin's main job was to maintain the equipment and crew and to keep his crew and the community members safe. He also had to make sure the fire didn't spread onto the new foundation that was being built. So the crew placed themselves in between the buildings, and used a cooling effect to stop the flames from going any further. The cooling effect is when a hose is used to make a fine mist between a burning and nonburning building. Marvin said, "It was really hot and hard to work, because the flames were lashing out at them, and everything was breaking and melting."

Marvin, the crew, and the community worked for hours to put the fire out. However their efforts weren't good enough. The fire finally consumed the entire building and it burnt to the ground at around 5:00 p.m. After the fire finally stopped, they had to wait for a few additional hours because there were many tanks under the building that could explode. Marvin said, "There were some things that they just couldn't leave."

I asked my father how he felt about the fire and he replied, "I feel like I didn't do my job, because I wasn't able to stop the fire, or save anything from the school. It was a total loss." However, the local residents think that he did a good job dealing with the situation, considering that the school was engulfed in flames when he arrived on the scene. Although the cause of the fire was never proven, rumor had it that it was an electrical fire. The community of Port Lions will never forget the tragic year of 1987.

As I sat and listened to my dad, I could hear his sense of commitment to his work in his voice and couldn't help but wonder why he'd left that job. It's a funny thing, as we discover answers, we are often led to even more questions.

The Boxcar Flies Again!

Written by Zack Strong and Crystal Bartleson.

Have you ever heard of or seen a C-119? Probably not. That's because there are only three of them left in the world that are able to fly. Port Lions was the home of one of the three for over thirteen years. In 1990 John Reffett, the owner of the Port Lions C-119, and the pilot were carrying 30,000 pounds of fresh red salmon over our little village when one of the engines failed. The pilot was forced to land here because the engine on the right side failed.

They tried to fire up the plane's jet to try to compensate for the loss of the engine. In the process of doing this the jet drained all the power out of the plane's instruments and the good engine's generator. The flight booklet for C-119's says that if you lose an engine and are over weight to bail out. Well, they didn't have any parachutes so they stayed with the plane. With that option there was a chance of surviving but the other option of bailing out was certain death. So there they were flying in the dark with one engine, no instruments, and were 6,000 pounds over weight. During the flight they almost rolled over several times but the pilot was able to recover. At one point they came out of the fog and saw the Port Lions airstrip and landed.

Marvin Bartleson Jr., the Village Public Safety Officer at the time, saw the plane land. "I saw the plane through a clearing in the fog and noticed the black smoke trailing behind. That's when I knew there was something wrong." It was an extremely foggy day, like the dense summer fog that we've all seen. "I hope everyone lives through this," Marvin thought. He saw the pilot as soon as he got off the plane. "The pilot was scared to death. Both people flying the plane were very pale and frightened."

Not much damage was done to the plane in the landing. But they had lost an engine and all their instruments. So the plane was parked at the airstrip in wait to be repaired. Over the next thirteen years John and others fixed the plane and replaced its engine. When they were doing their final tests on the plane they found that they had an imbalanced propeller. The part they needed to fix it wasn't made any more. Never the less they got it fixed and ready to

Photo taken by Zack Strong.

C-119 finally getting ready for takeoff after thirteen years.

make its voyage out of Port Lions. On November 7, 2002, the C-119 was scheduled to depart. The weather was overcast and it was a little rainy. After making flight preparations, the C-119 rumbled down the runway. After the left engine partially failed and the C-119 nearly ran off the runway and almost crashed, it rose into in to the air, the left engine smoking, and made its way to Kodiak.

After making additional repairs to the engine the C-119 took off from Kodiak. In the air the left engine failed and they had to return to Kodiak and make the appropriate repairs. After fixing the engine again, they took off towards Palmer. In flight the left engine failed again but this time it totally self-destructed. In Kodiak once more they replace the engine and started for Palmer. On their third attempt the C-119 flew smoothly to Palmer, its final destination.

The almost landmark of Port Lions was 45 years old or more when it left our airstrip. There are only a few C-119's left in the world and only three that are capable of flying, the rest are in museums; therefore, we were very lucky to be able to have one in Port Lions for so long. At this present time the C-119 sits in Palmer being fixed and rehabilitated. John's plan is to use the plane for hauling building materials and parts to the Alaskan Interior Bush. It is a miracle that this plane can still fly and will keep on flying for a long time.

Photo taken by Norm Ursin.

C-119 firing up its engines.

Close Encounter

Written by Erling Ursin.

That November 7th day of 2002 started out like any other day for my brother, Lars, and I. We got up, took our showers, and ate our breakfast before going to school. We were excited because on that particular day the C119 that has been sitting at our airport for thirteen years was supposed to take off. Neither of us thought that it was possible for that thing to actually fly away.

The weather was overcast and there were frequent rain showers. Not a day to be flying if you were to ask me. The runway was wet and soft.

Our class went out to the airport in different people's vehicles. I went to the airport in my truck and Lars went out there in Kathy Nelson's Arrow Star. People were driving with parents, and the bus was running kids to the airport. The whole village was there waiting for that C119 to take off.

My dad, Norm Ursin, asked the pilot if he could go down at the end of the runway to get a good picture of the plane flying over. The pilot said go ahead and not to be afraid because they were going to use the whole runway and take off right before the end. He rode his 4-wheeler to the end of the strip and got ready take his picture.

Lars and I were already at the end of the airstrip on top

of a hill with some of our classmates and teachers. I had run down to the boat harbor to pick up my two cousins who had come over from Danger Bay to watch the plane take off. They went on the airstrip to talk to my dad and to watch him take the picture. Lars went down because my dad was having trouble with his camera and Lars wanted to video the takeoff instead of just taking a picture.

My friend Art and I went down on the airstrip to be with them. My teacher started screaming at us to get off the runway, so Art and I walked over to the side.

Then the plane started to take off. The engines roared as it raced down the runway. About a quarter down, the left engine failed and was restarted. The C119 swerved to the left and took out some lights before correcting itself and running my brother, dad, and cousins over while I watched from the side. The C119 ran off the runway and into the swamp where it bounced and flew up into the air. "That was the scariest thing I have ever done!" was all I heard from Lars who was still recording.

The copilot saw one person go under the wing, but what he didn't see was Lars' guardian angel. The whole town came down to the end of the airport to make sure that we were all right. Luckily, none of us were injured.

The pilots made it to Kodiak. They didn't know if they had killed anyone.

The C119 is now in Palmer where it is used to transport parts by the owner.

About four months later, I finally asked Lars what was going through his head when the plane was going over him. His response was, "I'm going to die! Then there was a big blank spot (in my head)."

I also asked him why he didn't run when the plane was coming at him. He said, " I wanted to get good footage, plus, he said that he was going to use the whole runway and I figured he would take off."

Photo taken by Zack Strong.

C-119 almost hits innocent bystanders while taking off in Port Lions.

Loss of Afognak in 1964

by Amber Maughan

I often overheard folks in our village refer to the "Big Quake" in their conversations with others. However, they never go into much detail about it. I remember long-time resident, Betty Nelson, talking about her experiences with the earthquake of 1964, so I decided to interview her. She started her story quietly but soon got louder as she grew more emotional as she remembered what had happened in the earthquake of 1964.

"We had just finished dinner, and we didn't have any indoor plumbing so we had to heat our dish water, and I put a big pan of dishwater on the stove. We were in the living room visiting when all of a sudden there was this big lurch. We had had small earthquakes before, little tremors, so we didn't think too much about it, and after that it started rumbling and everything in the house was shaking.

"It was the most horrifying thing I have ever experienced in my life, and I hope I never have to go through that again."
Betty Nelson

"So we ran outside on the porch and Abner (her husband) jumped down from the porch and it almost knocked him down. He could hardly stand up because the ground was in waves. The trees were bending back and forth. There was a very light snow, other than that, it was a clear day. So we all ran outside and Jessie and Vicki were at home. They were pretty young, Jessie was ten years old. Abner, Jr. was gone, out to see a movie, but he came home right away. So we ran outside and tried to walk, and the ground was just going in waves, and you could actually step over the waves in the ground. In Afognak there's a lot of rock there, and it sounded just like a freight train rumbling underneath.

"It was the most horrifying thing I have ever experienced in my life, and I hope I never have to go through that again. Anyway, then we looked out in the bay and the tide started going out and coming in, and we could see rocks and reefs that we had never seen before even on the lowest minus tide.

"So I told Abner, 'I think we better get in the jeep and take off for the hills.' Then Alfred, his brother, was listening to the shortwave radio and they said Seward was washed away, Chenega was washed away, and it was ninety feet up on the hill and it was washed out. So we decided we better get going to higher ground. We got in the jeep and picked up people along the way who didn't have a jeep. So we threw some sleeping bags and some canned things in the back of the jeep and we took off. As we were going up to the other side to the saw mill, the tide began coming up and there was a little creek with a bridge, so we crossed that and there was the airstrip right there. As we were heading up toward higher ground we could see the tide coming in and all that debris floating. Other people had told us that just after we had passed there and went to the saw mill, the bridge had washed out.

"We were up there for three days. We were up there all night in the hills and it was cold. I was too afraid to come home. I thought that if we got down there and another one came we wouldn't be able to get back. All night long while we were up there, there would be big tremors.

"The people that were on the other side of the village, the Aleut town side, they could see the wave coming in. It would come in and gain height, and then go out again. Every time it did that it would wash out houses, boats, banyas, sheds, turned houses around. It took quite a few houses out. About twenty -five percent of the houses were washed out. It pushed the chapel against the trees. They had built a brand new community hall and that also washed out. So when we came back down from the hill the familiar land marks that we grew up with all our lives were gone, and it was March 27th 1964, so everything was frozen. When the wave came in it just lifted all these big, huge pieces of ice and frozen ground, and they were just piled all over the place. When we came back down from the saw mill, the store was washed out; some of the houses were filled with water. All the frozen ground around the bridge just lifted out, so there was this big open piece of water that you couldn't just hop across. So when the school opened the kids had to go to school back and forth from the saw mill in skiffs, because you couldn't get across this big wide opening."

She explained to me how long they had to wait until they could move to their new home, which was Port Lions, and also how they made their move. "It was about less than a year, when the earthquake happened in March. In December we were moved into Port Lions. For a while, about a month or two, there were only two families there that stayed and we were one of them. Our house was not damaged so we just stayed and waited 'til our house was built. When we stayed there, every time there was a big storm we would sleep with our clothes on and have flashlights and lanterns by the bed, everything ready to go. Even today earthquakes really scare me. All the men got together, and at first they thought about settling in Afognak on higher ground, but then the ferry began coming to Kodiak between Kodiak and Homer. So they wanted some place where it would be deep water so the ferry could come in. The island sunk five to six feet so everything that was there before began flooding, so the Wakefield Fisheries Cannery in Raspberry Straits started flooding out. They asked the people if they could move to Port Lions. So… the men wanted some place where they could have an airstrip, deep water for the ferry system, good drinking water, and some place where they could have a dam. They thought about Anton Larsen Bay, but that freezes in the winter time so they decided that that wouldn't be a very good place for their boats. So they decided on this spot because it had a good river, source of water, and a good stretch of land for the airstrip. The only bad thing about this place was it was a very bad harbor. Some of the men lost their fishing boats because there was no breakwater out there, no place to anchor the boats in a safe place. The Mennonite Disaster Service, The Lions Club, and The Red Cross came and they helped rebuild and brought in furniture, refrigerators, and things like that. The interesting part about the Mennonites is they had a big cross about ten feet tall and they dedicated Port Lions to the Lord that we would be safe from further tsunamis. So, that was a comfort."

An interesting thing about Betty's experience was that when the earthquake was all over her house was still standing, but she didn't move back. She said that there was no point in living over there because everybody moved over to Port Lions. This experience has allowed me to see what the 1964 earthquake was really like. Now I have a vivid picture in my mind of what went on in Afognak during the earthquake. After interviewing Betty Nelson, I gained admiration for her strength and courage.

(Photo: Jaron Carlson)

Uyak Bay Lodge sign

There is more to the lodge business than you think

By Jaron Carlson and Arnold Charliaga
Larsen Bay

(Photo: Arnold Charliaga)

Larsen Bay Lodge Sign

We walked in the Uyak Bay Lodge's unfinished addition. We were a little nervous. Right away, you could smell the fresh stain on the walls and ceiling in the air. Brad Aga, owner of Uyak Bay Lodge, and his buddies were chit chatting as they finished up work for the day. There was sawdust on the floor and there was no furniture. We wondered where we were going to sit down. I asked Brad where we should sit and he said, " Just put those boxes over here." So we sat on boxes, put our equipment on the homemade table, and started the interview.

Larsen Bay is changing. The cannery closed last summer. With the fishing industry declining, lodges are becoming more popular. We wanted to find out where the lodge industry is heading. We interviewed two of the more successful lodge owners.

Brad Aga is the owner of Uyak Bay Lodge. He is 32 years old. He was born in

Anchorage and was raised in Larsen Bay. He knows Larsen Bay real well. I asked him what he did as a kid.

"Oh, I was raised in the bow of the skiff with my Uncle Vic picking gill nets and I started hunting at nine years old and used to always go out in the boat fishing."

He also has experience working as a carpenter, on roads, and as a heavy equipment operator, but he's always liked hunting and fishing.

Mike Carlson at the age of 37, is the owner of the Larsen Bay Lodge. Mike grew up in Bonnie Lake, Washington, before moving to Federal Way, Washington. He moved around to different parts of Washington before settling permanently in Larsen Bay at the age of 13.

Mike remembers working as a teenager for his dad at the lodge. These years were influential in his professional development, " It was good to grow up and learn work ethics."

Mike has been running the lodge for 14 years. It sounds like Mike has a lot of experiences with the changes that have taken place in Larsen Bay.

" You know you look back at it, we took a lot of big steps in the last twenty five years in Larsen Bay. We have new roads now, new housing projects. You know when I got here our old housing project wasn't even here.

"I was here when the Borough of Indian Affairs was putting the roads in. My dad actually worked on putting the roads. Lots of changes, but it's made it more convenient to live here."

Water and electricity were also more challenging back then.

"I was busy every day. After school I'd come home and I had chores to do. When I was growing up here we didn't have the

(Photo: Jaron Carlson)

Unfinished addition to Uyak Bay Lodge

(Photo: Arnold Charliaga)

One of Larsen Bay Lodges guide sheds showing some of the fishing poles they use

(Photo: Arnold Charliaga)

As you can see Larsen Bay Lodge doesn't take clients out in wood skiffs anymore.

"I was running 16 foot skiffs with 25 horse outboards."

-Mike Carlson

(Photo: Jaron Carlson)

"The water is unforgiving."

~ Mike Carlson

(Photo: Arnold Charliaga)

Larsen Bay Lodge

(Photo: Jaron Carlson)

Front view of Uyak Bay Lodge

electricity and sometimes the septic didn't work. We had to carry the water that would be used to flush the toilet because our water line would freeze up."

A lot of things have changed from then to now. With the cannery closing and the economy lagging, there are only lodges and tourism keeping Larsen Bay on its feet. How did the lodges start?

Mike started differently from Brad. His dad began it and then he took it over so Larsen Bay Lodge is a family business. From the beginning, Mike has had a good relationship with his clients.

Brad started his business at the age 16. He spent his summers commercial fishing. Then he took the money and built a 20 foot by 20 foot cabin with six bunks and a bathroom in it. All of the lodges started as small business and grew to be bigger.

" When I first started working, when I was running sixteen foot wood skiffs with twenty five horse out boards and loading them up with deer, the deer hunting used to be really good back then, I think you were allowed five. Four or five deer. And we used to have quite a few hunters and we would take five or six guys out in December and there would be so many deer we would load the skiff completely full of deer. And of course during that time of the year the weather was rough so a lot of my early memories of first starting is being out in the rough chop with a wood skiff full of deer and hunters. Things ran a little bit different back then but that would probably be one of my more memorable ones.

Today it is a lot different. Brad has more than a 20 foot by 20 foot cabin and Mike doesn't take clients out in wood skiffs. He has several 25 ft boats. Everything is a lot easier.

Mike and Brad tell us that they were just trying to pull away from commercial

fishing. As they grew over the years the lodges did with them. Making a living in Larsen Bay without commercial fishing was becoming a reality. Now it makes us wonder what it takes to make a lodge successful? According to Brad Aga his lodge is a success because, of the area it is located in, the amount of nature and wildlife, the lack of people, smog....and pollution." Larsen Bay has a reputation for being a popular fishing and hunting destination. But the location's natural advantages alone are not what keep the clients coming back.

According to Brad Aga, "People come back because the crew is real great. Clients love the people. We've got top of the line equipment, top of the line everything and it's what people are looking for." Each year that the same clients come back they build a stronger relationship with the lodge owners. The relationship with the clients may be more important than hunting and fishing.

Mike Carlson shared a story with us about his first client. " My first fishing client when I took over the business came up with his wife and his boss. There was two couples and we had a great time. The trip went well and to this day, that was fourteen years ago, to this day he comes up every year and we talk on the phone every two weeks. This is the kind of friend I became with him. He caught a lot of fish, halibut, and salmon. Everything we did was a hit and from then on he booked. [He is] a very important person, he has done a lot for me and my business over the years helping me arrange things for shipping and stuff. I do very much remember and cherish that. He is a great guy."

Brad has similar feelings about the importance of the relationship with clients. One thing that Brad is saying that Larsen Bay is a great place to fish and hunt for the game you are here for. According to Brad that is not what it is all about. Brad says, "When you have the good things in between it, ...that keeps them coming back.

Mike Carlson has the same point of view. " I think we got a great service, professionalism, we got some good fishing grounds around here. We treat our clients good."

All these factors contribute to making both of these lodges successful. When Mike was closing the interview he passed advice on to us that his dad passed onto him. " The water is unforgiving." Safety is an important consideration in the lodge business. It's important to be careful at all times with yourself and others. One mistake out there and you are risking your life and others.

Another bit of advice Mike shared with us is, " to get a good fast start on things you want to do. Life is not forever lasting, it is short. Enjoy what you do and work hard so when you grow older you can relax and enjoy life. Put a lot of time and effort in what you do and treat people with respect. As a result of respect, someday it will return to you."

Brad and Mike help us understand that the lodge business is not just knowing how to fish and hunt. You have to know how to manage a good business and have good relationships with others.

Put a lot of time and effort in what you do and treat people with respect. As a result of respect, someday it will return to you."

- Mike Carlson

Have you heard of a fisherman by the name of Theodore Squartsoff? He's considered to be a highliner in gillnetting and I'm proud to say that he's my uncle. I've had the great opportunity of fishing with him for three years. I've learned some tricks of the trade from him that you would never think of in a life time.

After working with my uncle I would have to say that he is incredibly strong; smart; and immune to pain, cold, and the forces of nature.

Gillnetting in the past, present and future

By Scott DeTorres

He used to pick nets with his bare hands. A man like Theodore must have a good story or some insight into the world of fishing. I decided to arrange an interview with him and get at some of his wisdom about gillnetting in the past, present, and future near Ouzinkie. I sat down with Uncle Theodore in his home and listened to his story unfold.

"I fished all my life since I was a kid," Uncle Theodore said. "I'm sixty years old and still fishing. I started when I was five or six years old. We beach seined first, purse seined a big part of my life, and turned to gill netting when I started to raise a family." As far as I know, Theodore has done every kind of commercial fishing that is around Alaska. He has fished for herring, salmon, cod, crab, and all kinds of shrimp.

During the interview I asked him about his father. I wanted to know if his father was like he is now. "Yeah, he fished all of his life and worked in canneries," he said.

Then I asked him, "What do you think he would think about commercial fishing today?"

He answered, "Boy, I don't know. It's a big change. Well, when we were small we beach seined mostly and that was a lot of hard work. Now we get fish, we ice them as soon as we get them. There's a lot of difference in what we do now and what we did then. We had dory loads in the old days, but now we catch them. They are handled good. We ice them and the tender picks them up twice a day, and still no money for them." I asked him about the changes in the fish market and he shook his head. "Oh, they're dropping drastically and still going down. Last year was the worst. I've never seen a red [salmon] price down to fifty cents a pound. That is dirt cheap for a Red salmon. It is getting harder and harder to fish."

When I asked him how it used to be when he went fishing and how it's different from now, he smiled. "You knew the prices and they were pretty steady and it was a lot easier. I fished with my family when I started, but our lifestyles have changed, too. We have more modern appliances now, so we're paying more. Long ago it was easier to make a living. Also, there's no money [in the market] now. You're not bringing anything home and that's the bottom line. [Fishing] is going to be a

dying thing in the next few years."

Then I asked my uncle if he would still go commercial fishing. He said, "Yeah, I think so. I think someday it's going to get better I really do. You know, people have got to eat. There's a lot of people and it's a reliable resource. They [the fish] keep coming back, we're in a good location. We've had tough times before, but I don't think that I've ever seen prices this low. Five cents for Pinks [salmon] has never been in the books. In 1987 we were getting forty-two cents a pound for pinks [salmon]. It's a lot of difference. Ten years ago it was probably down to twenty cents a pound."

> ***"The fish farms really flooded the market. There are so many boats out of the buisness now,it's not funny."***
>
> ***~ Theodore Squartsoff***

I was thinking about the fishing business. It seemed like fishing would have been a lot more fun ten years ago than today. Things like higher prices and stiffer competition would have made you work really hard, but it would have been a living and one you would enjoy. When I asked Theodore about this he replied, "Yeah, well, it was a lot of fun because there was always that chance that we could make more money in a different area and the prices would go up. Now you know they're not going to go up. You know what you're going to get from the start. It's harder to get crews, and it's not so much fun, but I still enjoy it. I will probably fish until I cannot go any more. It's getting harder and harder because gill netting is a lot of hard work. Nobody wants to work for nothing. It looks brighter like it's going to change.

My Uncle shared some more thought about the hardships in fishing these days. "The fish farms really flooded the market. It's harder to survive. There are so many boats out of the business now, it's not funny. If you don't have all the gear paid for you won't make it because the prices are too low. Gas is at two dollars a gallon and still going up. They are talking about going up to three dollars this summer. If a motor breaks down, it is just crazy. It's a good thing that my wife was working last summer or I would have went in the hole [in debt]. It's getting harder and harder to survive. I enjoy fishing as well as watching the kids grow up. They turn into men before your eyes. It's good, hard, clean work and they are really fun to watch."

> ***"I fished all my life since I was a kid."***
>
> ***~Theodore Squartsoff***

My Uncle talks about handing the gill netting over to his son, J.R., but I'm pretty sure he has a couple of more years before he gives it up. He probably won't stop until he has no choice. I've certainly learned many things from him that I wouldn't have learned from anyone else and for that I feel pretty lucky.

Akhiok Alutiiq Week:

How it started, what it means, and where it is going

(Photo Eric Waltenbaugh)

Akhiok Dancers Ryan Amodo, Duane Eluska, JR Amodo show off their drum, masks, and regalia as guests at the 2002 Larsen Bay Alutiiq Week. All items were made during past Alutiiq Weeks.

Alutiiq culture is very important to the people in Akhiok. We are finding ways to include it in school so it will not be lost. Now with the information we've learned about Alutiiq Week, we want to share it with others to help them understand more about our culture. In the following interview, we asked Linda Amodo to tell us how the idea of Alutiiq Week began back in 1991, and what the plans are for the future of the week.

By Marcella Amodo, Ryan Amodo, Amanda Phillips

Akhiok

I think the way it started [was by] a good friend of ours, Father Serges Gerkin. He was the Parish priest and a monk. He was the priest for Old Harbor and Akhiok. Whenever he came down, we did a lot of things together. As far as him and the villagers, they liked to go out clam digging. You know, just doing a bunch of stuff together.

Then one day, he brought up something that was really good at that time. He said, "Wouldn't it be nice if we had something going on down here as far as Native People learning about their Native Heritage, their traditions, [and] their values."

He said, "In the mean time, while they're learning about all this stuff, make it fun to where everyone will be doing something. They will all be learning, but they will all still be having a good time."

When he brought up the Aleut culture, I was thinking, 'Well you know, I don't know too much about it - and yeah, I think it would be a good idea to learn about my own culture ...my heritage.' As far as my family traditions, those are, different with each family and unique. I think that if people brought their own family traditions together and learn about the culture and traditions, that it would fun. So Luba [Eluska] and I kind of sat around and we talked about different people that we knew of that did different types of art and crafts. We thought about different people that we'd want down here to help teach the history. For example, [the] first year, we had Father Serges talk about the history of the Orthodox Church. We've had different corporations' presidents like AKI [Akhiok-Kaguyak Inc.]. We had Ralph Eluska, when he was president, teach the kids and the adults the importance of the Native lands, the importance of the organizations, any tribal entity, and how we are responsible for what we do and how we do it.

Our leadership is different from the western world leadership. [The Alutiiq culture] needs to be taught if [it is] going to continue. Otherwise, we're going to lose out on who we are [and] what we are. That's why we felt Alutiiq Week was important.

Yes, a lot of us live in the western hemisphere, so some of us adapted in some sort of way [to] the western life style. It varies in different degrees in each home, and [we] can't overlook who we are. If we don't remember who we are as a people, we lose our pride, our dignity, our self-respect, our self-esteem, our morals, and all our family values are lost. I personally felt really strong that we need to continue on knowing what the Aleut people know. [Such as] who we are and [what's] our roots.

As far as having fun, we did arts and craft. Luba Eluska, I'm real thankful for her. It was '91 when we started and Luba Eluska heard about a lady in Kodiak that does beautiful skin sewing. She makes a whole bunch of things and I'm not sure how Luba heard about this lady, but she mentioned this lady and we all know her today as Susan Malutin. She has been down here [every year] since the Alutiiq Week first started in 1991.

It was October when we started talking [about] Alutiiq Week. One of our purposes for having Alutiiq Week during Lent [forty days prior to Russian

"If we don't remember who we are as a people, we lose our pride, our dignity, our self-respect, our self-esteem, our morals, and all our family values are lost."

~Linda Amodo

Orthodox Easter] is [that]... during lent, the kids aren't running around outside and the men are not out hunting. This is supposed to be a time when families stay together, families work together in a quiet andloving community and respect great Lent during that time.

So the reason why we picked Lent [was] to... give people something to do as a community. [During Lent] they are not being boisterous, they aren't being loud, they're not dancing, and they're not doing all of that stuff. So we are all sitting quiet, all together, all learning, and parents are learning right along with their kids. The parents are right up at school helping their kids,... overlooking everything that's going on [and] helping keep an eye on the little ones.

We learn to do fur sewing and we learn to do beading. Judy Simeonoff had beautiful bead work. She was able to give some of her time to help teach the beading and had elders [participate]. One elder, Ephreim Agnot Sr., would spend a whole week up at the school during Alutiiq Week and it was during Lent. He would spend a whole week up there teaching the younger generation about the Alutiiq language [and] helping them [learn] the Aleut words. My dad spoke Aleut and my mom understood what he said, but she never spoke it and so I never learned the Aleut language. I could understand some words.

So Ephreim went up to the school every day. He's even had a school curriculum to where he would be able to go up to the school for about 45 minutes a day and try to teach the Aleut language to the kids. That's how he wanted to preserve his Aleut history.

So there was a lot of different ideas... [that went into] Alutiiq week and I hope I don't forget all those people that... made the Alutiiq Week [what] it is today. People that were behind this [were], Father Serges, Luba Eluska, and myself, Linda Amodo. Thanks to Mitch and Judy Simeonoff for allowing it to continue and [also to] other volunteers that have taken time... to go up to the school and ... do planning, make calls, write letters, and just make sure that Alutiiq Week keeps going.

I thought [Alutiiq Week] started off rather well for the first time. When it started,... we wanted to try keep it targeted towards academics- ... that was kind of hard. We weren't to sure how to incorporate sewing into math; it was hard to do that. Recently they came up with bead work to incorporate it into a math project and that's good, because it's during school time so the kids won't lose out in their academics. We're all working together to get the Aleut

Recently they came up with bead work to incorporate it into a math project and that's good, because it's during school time so the kids won't lose out on their academics.
~Linda Amodo

(photo: Sven Haakanson Jr., Alutiiq Museum)

Marcella Amodo works on her beaded headdress.

tradition and cultures to be passed on to the kids.

I think one of my main things when we... started all of this was [for] the Alutiiq Week committee would find a way to make this all self-sufficient. If we're going to buy the furs, we should do all of the art work and stuff. If people do a lot of beautiful work, why don't we sell them, make some money, and teach the boys how to [do] taxidermy, skin their own furs [and] tan their own hides. That way the boys are out doing stuff together instead of sitting in front of a TV...instead of riding 4-wheelers. [Then] the boys are doing something constructive and they are learning [about taxidermy]. [Then] they're volunteering time in the community and learning how to trap fox, trap otter, learn about fish and game laws, about subsistence, [and] what we [can] and cannot do.

[We want Alutiiq Week to] be self-sufficient, to where we don't have to call every year and ask people for donations. Hey, that's fine, and people who donate, that's real nice, that says a lot about those different... companies and corporations that are able to donate money. Without them... we would have a hard time. Once we learn to be self-sufficient [and] how to make [our] own money [from] Alutiiq Week,... we won't have to call around to ask for donations. That was my plan back in 1991 and it's still not too late.

(photo: Sven Haakanson Jr., Alutiiq Museum)

Dustin Berestoff carves his throwing board during this year's Alutiiq Week.

After our interview we were able to understand just how important the Aleut culture is to the people of Akhiok. Alutiiq Week is very exciting where the whole community comes together to do arts and crafts. But Alutiiq Week isn't just fun and games. We learned the traditional Aleut art work, Aleut games, Aleut dances, and just [how] important Alutiiq Week is to all of us.

"Why don't we...teach the boys how to [do] taxidermy, skin their own furs, tan their own hides. That way the boys are out doing stuff together instead of sitting in front of a TV...instead of riding 4-wheelers."

~Linda Amodo

After completing the boards and spears, students designed and conducted their own scientific experiments with them.

(photo: Sven Haakanson Jr., Alutiiq Museum)

The Development of the Ouzinkie Native Corporation

By George Shanagin and Chris Boskofsky

As people go, James Skonberg seemed like a person we could learn a lot from about our very own Native Corporation. James is a member of the Ouzinkie Native Corporation Board of Directors. The next step was to set up an interview and think up some interesting questions. James welcomed us into his home where we jumped right into Ouzinkie Native Corporation "101."

James began by giving us a little background.

"Why was the Native Corporation formed? It was formed probably for a number of reasons, but one was to give the natives back their ah… land status and ah... I think all, the corporation throughout the state regions ah... villages all had a different amount a land given back to them. They had to depend on the amount of shareholders each village had."

"I believe it changed the village of Ouzinkie a number of different ways"

We asked James when the Corporation was actually formed and how the Ouzinkie Corporation affected the village of Ouzinkie. He told us it was formed in 1971 when ANSCA was signed. Then he went on to tell us about how it affected our village.

"Oh a number of ways. One of course, was you know through dividends and ah... another of course was ah... employment. You know it created some jobs in the village ah...not enough to go around through everybody of course but ah...there's been a number of full time positions and part time jobs through out the years, and also through scholarships it's affected the village."

Chris and I were curious about present assets in the Ouzinkie Native Corporation.

"Present assets well we own ah... the office building, the store; we own the dock, we own some land, you know, and then ah...we also own some businesses in Anchorage. We use to own the tank farm up here, but now we just manage it. Now we don't own it any more. It belongs to the Tribal Council, but that, plus what ever we have left in our stocks and bonds portfolio."

James explained the leadership of Ouzinkie Native Corporation and how Ouzinkie Native Corporation has changed our village.

"The present boards there's nine of us, there is ah... Jackie Muller, Roy Wolkoff, Clifford Panamarioff, Howard Torsen, Evelyn Mullan, Herman Squartsoff, myself, Ted Panamarioff yeah, and the last one I couldn't think off hand, but it's Nick Pestrikoff he'd make the ninth director."

We didn't realize how much the Ouzinkie Native Corporation had changed the Village until James shared his thoughts with us.

"Oh I believe it changed the village of Ouzinkie a number of different ways. One, it's given everybody a sense of independence you know we never had previous to 1971. And then with the bigger dividends in the past of course; but they are getting smaller and, people were buying things they probably wouldn't normally be able to afford otherwise. Like I said earlier, we help people out, you know through local jobs and then the store of course. We purchased the store from Columbia Ward Fisheries a number of years ago otherwise we would have been out of a store. Now it's going

"There's been a number of full time positions and part time jobs through out the years, and also through scholarships it's affected the village."

to be up and running again in the near future. Right now it's shut down. The fuel, you know, we had to haul the fuel from Kodiak and charter skiffs and boats. It would cost a lot more if we had to roll it home versus just picking up a telephone and getting the fuel truck to deliver it. So I think the corporation contributed an awful lot as far making life easier for every body in the village."

James shared that he thought Paul Panamarioff would be managing the store when it opens.

We learned about the role the Ouzinkie Native Corporation plays in everyday things like fuel.

"Well ah... back before when the corporation took over, it was owned by Columbia Wards and they sold fuel in the village here and ah... when they were pulling out the corporation bought it. I remember back when we had to go down and buy a drum of oil and roll it home. You know and ah... before we had roads, and a fuel truck, and stuff like that, not to mention the 24 hour electricity we have now. Years ago the lights would come on at 7:00 in the morning and shut off at 10:00 at night. If somebody for some reason or another needed to have electricity all night. Then I was more or less talking about the village in general back when I moved here in 1968. You know life was much more different than what it is now. Like I have already said, we didn't have roads; we didn't have a, air strip; we didn't have a boat harbor. We had a dock; there was no crane down there. The corporation put in a 20,000 dollar crane after we purchased property from North Coil, and then the city got a fuel truck and leased it to the corporation cause, we had the fuel business. It wasn't cost effective for the corporation to buy new ones; we would of had to raised the price of fuel up so high nobody would be able to afford it so what we did is we turned it over to the Tribal Council, and they got a grant for new fuel tanks and we were trying to lease from them so that was a real big plus, and it took away a big risk from the corporation having those old fuel tanks ready to erupt and a make a tremendous spill down in our bay...

"Well anyway you know I guess with a little more time to think about some of these questions I probably would have came up with some better answers but then like you know earlier you asked who was on the original board I don't know who was on the original board but I could name some people from years past that served on the board. Some of them are still around but some of them went on to the next life but some of them that come to my mind are like John Panamarioff Sr., Andy Anderson, Arthur Haakanson, they were some of are elders Herman Squartsoff, Fred Chernikoff, ah... Dorothy, I'm not sure what her last name is now. Pestrikoff! And ah... it's just a number of people that aren't from around here anymore and some of them like I said had gone on."

At the end of the interview, James recapped some of the key information he shared with us. The Ouzinkie Native Corporation improved the quality of life for the residents of the village. Some of the most significant changes provided oil delivered, and pump service; electricity, twenty four hours a day; roads instead of little trails, and the store. These are some of the positive changes. In addition, the corporation supplied job opportunities for the citizens of Ouzinkie.

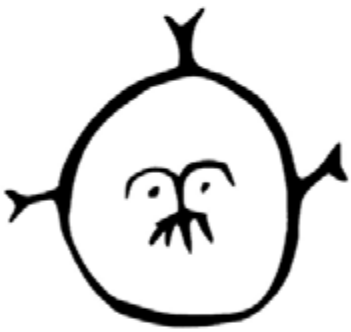
As Ouzinkie Native Corporation "101" came to an end we thanked James for his time. As we walked away from his home our heads were spinning with a new appreciation for what the Ouzinkie Native Corporation was all about.

Words Of Wisdom

by: Lisa Squartsoff, Chantelle Bartleson, Shane Knagin, Lars Ursin, Andre Mosley, and Jonathon Brandal

"We had to learn the retail buisness. We knew absolutely nothing when we started."
Melvin Squartsoff

"We brought in about five to six thousand pounds of kings and tanners a day."
Peter Squartsoff



"It takes so much of our time, especially when we could be doing other things. But we take pride in providing a needed service to the community. We have learned a lot about running a small buisness. It's also nice to be able to go to the store whenever we want to."
Melvin Squartsoff

"The spill effected the community in other ways, taught the people how to stick together in hard times."
Marvin Bartleson Jr.

" I think it's important for everyone to dance because it gives them joy and is part of our culture."
Judy Simeonoff

"We live in a good town with good people and that's probably the best comment I can make."

Marvin Bartleson Jr.

"I had to run the entire community clean up crew, by myself."

Marvin Bartleson Jr.

"It never really went back to normal. When the young children came close to the spill they could have gotten sick or some kind of illness."

Marvin Bartleson Jr.

"Everyone really showed something, they showed what they were made of."

Marvin Bartleson Jr.

"The Wakefield seafood cannery in Port Lions looked like a two million dollar ski chalet." Patricia Pestrikoff

"Jessie Wakefield was an influential lady in the community. She and some other women cleaned a little tool shed out and had some shelves built to hold the books that were donated by the people of Port Lions."

Jessica Ursin

Fishing With Nickoli

By Jon Panamarioff

During an interview conducted by high school student, Jon Panamarioff, with Ouzinkie resident Nickoli Katelnikoff, a lot was discovered about Nickoli's life as a fisherman in the Kodiak waters. The interview took place on his boat "Lady J," a fifty-three foot steel super crabber that was converted to a salmon boat through the sweat of his own labor. When Jon went to do the interview, Nickoli, Nickoli's brother Robert, and crewman Ronnie Ray, were all there preparing the boat to go long lining for halibut. Nickoli is a humorous man who has many great stories to tell. The sight of the digital recorder put him off in the beginning, but in the end he became more comfortable.

The interview began with Nickoli recalling his childhood experiences on the boat. "A long, long time ago, when I was four years old, I managed to get on traveling around with my dad." He went on to explain about the boat they were on. "When I was four years old it was 'Lulu,' the boat 'Lulu'.

"I was eight years old for my first actual crew member job. I was pretty used to boats by then." The boat he first worked on was his dad's, the "GPC-21." "Oh, things were easier the first time we ever had a power block," he reminisced. "I was scared first when I first started pitching fish. I was covered with scales from head to toe. I was so short. I was really short at that age.

Photo by Jon Panamarioff

Nickoli Katelnikoff on his boat the 'Lady J'

"Then we got the 'Cape Cheerful,' that was a company boat, we just leased it for a couple of years. Then we turned around and bought the 'Pafco 12.' My dad had that for quite a few years.

"After I got out of the service, we got the 'Eagle Cape,' that was when I got my first salmon boat and started fishing on my own. Boy, was I ever tickled to get one. It was 'Libby 26' just rip raring to go, happier then heck, to be away from him for a little while. Yeah! We had a successful salmon season that first year. I got to beat my own dad; who was one of the top fisherman in Ouzinkie, at the time.

"I guess after that, I got rid of that boat and ended up running the 'Cape Ugat.' I ran that one for three years or so and then I ended up off of that one and onto a boat called 'Cape Spencer,' ran that boat for a couple of seasons. Then I wanted to buy my own boat so I ended up getting the 'Cape Horn' and I've still got it. It just didn't pack enough fish for me so I went hunting for another boat. And I ended up with the boat the 'Lady J." Nickoli says he hopes this is his final boat, and he won't have to buy another. It has to be hard leaving one boat for another.

"Now moving on to my crab fisheries, I ran the 'Kingfisher,' these are bigger boats. She was a sixty footer. Then I got the 'Chadam,' about an

eighty-eight foot barge and I also got to run the 'Alaska Challenger' for one year." He said this was the first super-crabber he had ever been on. "Talk about running gear! Those things can run gear! Running big boats were some of my best fishing days.

Photo by Jon Panamarioff

'Lady J' at her home port in Ouzinkie Harbor.

"Starting off with my dad, we didn't do salmon, we did crabbing. I went crabbing with him when I was sixteen years old.

"If you want to see one lucky little boat, there it is." *Nickoli Katelnikoff*

We were fishing Jap Bay in the months of January and February. It was on a thirty-six or thirty-eight foot boat. We put in over half a million pounds of king crab. Boy, did I ever have fun that year! That was my very first year ever going out crabbing. I quit school just to do it. It's hard for me to tell about my best fishing days because the whole works are good. I enjoy it all! But then you know I went on the 'Cape Ugat'. I spent most of my time in Kiluda Bay the first few years of my fishing career. From there we went to Karluk, oh God we had a ball down there. Little 'Cape Ugat', I think it held forty-five hundred fish completely plugged. We did that every day we were there. I think we were down there for about a month. We [really] enjoyed it. When I broke down, I didn't even have to leave there. The cannery had a mechanic right on the fishing grounds. It was neat because it was their boat I was leasing that year.

I moved on to the Cape Horn, you want to see one lucky little boat, there it is. Every time we turned around it was completely full of fish. Like the time we went to Cape Ugat, we get in there and red salmon are jumping everywhere.

You know you get a lot of competition out there when you're salmon fishing, heck they'll laugh at you until you fill up and laugh right back. Especially with the Ripple and Puget, I used to love the competition with those guys when they were around. I sure like Red River in the later days of my life. I really enjoy fishing down in that country.

"You've got to take the good with the bad. When you're getting stressed out it's real good to go fishing. Because what ever you're worried about... you'll get your good day, stress

Photo by Jon Panamarioff

will go away, and it'll feel like you made a million bucks.

"We had some real good fishing days on the boat the Lady J with Jon Panamarioff, Roy Chichenoff and another old guy called John. We got to deck load this thing for the first time and they got to see it. Boy did we all want to jump for joy. My favorite fisheries is always salmon, then comes crab. Halibut pays the best, but I still put it on the bottom of the list."

Jon asked Nickoli about some of his roughest trips on the boats he ran. "There's not too many of them. We listen to the weather [if it's bad], we don't go out. But there were a few times I did get caught. My first time would be with the Kingfisher. We were coming from the mainland, during crab season, we though it was northwest across there. Well northwest, that runs sideways across Shelikoff. We got half way across and the wind switched to the southwest. I don't know, it must have been blowing sixty or seventy, that made for some pretty good sea, maybe twenty or twenty-five feet, and we were rolling so hard, we turned her fair sea. The only reason why I turned her fair sea is because a big comber was coming right at us. So I swung her and that comber kept a' coming, she rolled completely over that boat and there was just the cabin sticking out of that baby. That kind of scared me and the crewmembers.

"The worst one was on an eighty eight foot barge, it was the 'Chadam,' we were fishing between fifteen and twenty miles off of Cape Chiniak, you know it was a big boat, fifty knot winds didn't mean nothing to it. But one day it blew fifty, than it was sixty, than it was eighty, I think she hit a hundred knots that day. We tried to run away from it, but we were so far off shore it took a long time, the boat wasn't that fast. By the time we got into about ten miles, I swear that sea was getting up there to about fifty foot. Then tide went against the wind and made the swells sharp. We got into it for a few miles, and a comber hit us from the back end and caved the whole stern in. Talk about one scary situation. We had to run down to the engine room and turn all the bilge pumps on, you could see the outside right from the engine room, and that was scary. Then when you're sitting inside the wheelhouse, you're a good twenty feet out of the water, and you're still looking straight up at swells. Now that was some rough weather, which I hope I'll never see again."

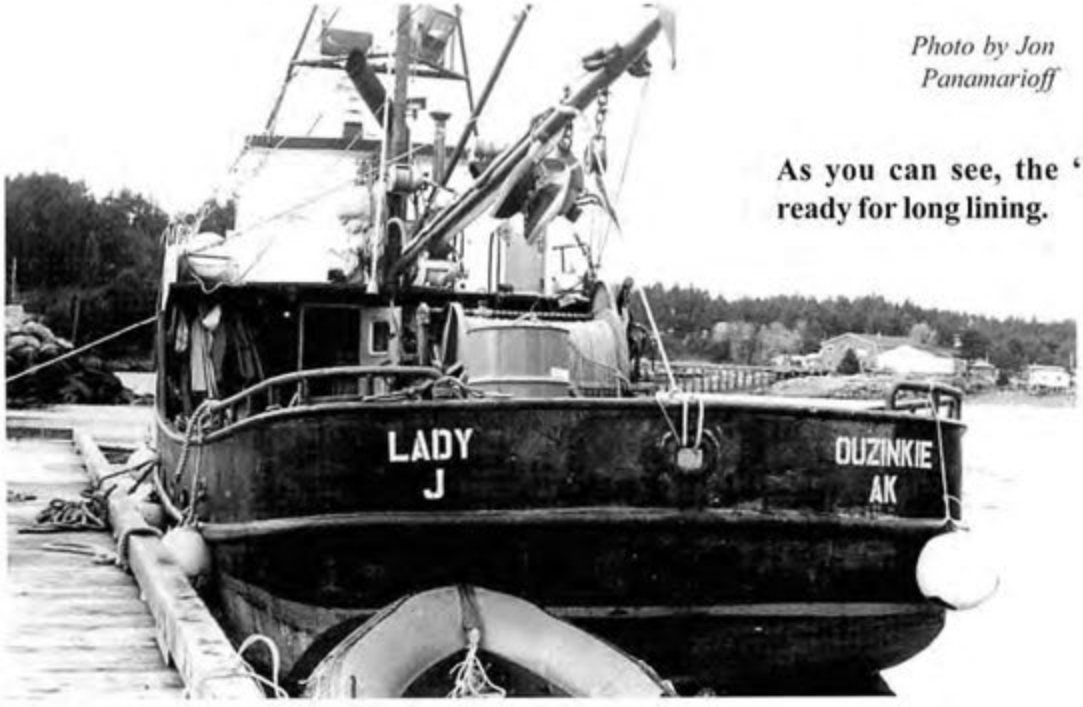


Photo by Jon Panamarioff

As you can see, the 'Lady J' is ready for long lining.

(drawing: Dustin Berestoff)

How A.T.V.'s Have Changed Life in Akhiok

By Dustin Berestoff, Richard Rastopsoff
Akhiok

Layout: Sean Moe
Larsen Bay

(Photo: Eric Waltenbaugh)

Teenagers waiting at the Akhiok airstrip.

Today ATV's are a very important part of village life. They are important for hunting and transportation. Also, many community members use ATV's for recreation. It may come as a surprise to some, but ATV's were not always being used for hunting and recreation in the village.

Mitch Simeonoff was born and raised in Akhiok and hunted all his life in his early years he hey experienced life with out ATV's and has seen how ATV's changed the village. He explains what the village was like before ATV's. "The village was pretty quiet and everybody got good exercise from walking wherever you needed to

go. The village was a little smaller back then, but it was pretty good without the ATV's around. There was a lot of interaction between the different age groups in the village because everyone was walking around instead of riding."

Mitch explains how the use of ATV's may be abused. "I see people get on their four-wheeler just to go across the street, it is only sixty feet." He makes it clear that he does not like to see people get on their bikes just to get to the other side of the road. Mitchell continues, "when you don't have ATV's around you want to go out and do [things.] I didn't rely on ATV's, I walked where I had to go."

"I see people get on their four-wheeler just to go across the street, it is only sixty feet."

~ Mitch Simeonoff

"Well when we first got started using ATV's, we found out we could stay longer. When we walked there we would stay for a little while and then we would have to come back home. Because of the time it took for us to go there, we would leave early and come back early. With ATV's we could leave any time and stay as long as we want and come back at any time we want. It has increased the time we stay out hunting."

ATV's have allowed Akhiok residents more hunting freedom. However, Mitch doesn't necessarily think hunting was hard before ATV's. "I would say it was easy before ATV's came. We walked, we didn't mind walking wherever we went. We walked even when we went ptarmigan hunting. We had to go between the mountains and hiked around back that way, and you know that was easy cause now you ride ATV's every day. If you walked from here to the water tanks you would probably get tired. That's how ATV's affect the physical aspect of hunters."

Mitch also explains that ATV's do not always improve hunting, he told us they would walk slow and quiet, but they would get there. There would be ducks where we would wana watch for them and we would get a lot of ducks just by walking slowly and being quiet. Sneak up on the ducks that sit around and get more if more come around. The only thing that the ATV's help us on is getting us to the hunting grounds faster. Before we get to the hunting grounds the ducks would be long gone, so we would have to sit there a lot longer for the ducks to come back. The only thing the ATV's did was get us there faster, but it did not improve the hunting."

Mitch has explained how ATV's have been around for a number of years. Our community relies on ATV's for hauling, transportation, and hunting. For some people, ATV's are a big help and others use them when needed.

(Photo: Eric Waltenbaugh)

Akhiok: A small village on the south end of Kodiak Island.

Keeping The Study Alive

By: Willie Nelson

Even in a small village like Port Lions, art is important. Kathy Nelson has spent her time helping Port Lions preserve some of the Alutiiq Arts of Kodiak Island. She has come to school not only to learn more about the Alutiiq culture, but also to help teach the students of Port Lions School about the culture. She first told us how she was interested in the culture by the help of her father.

"I was born and raised in Kodiak. My father, Gil Jarvela, flew for Kodiak Airways. He flew many interesting individuals to villages and remote areas on Kodiak Island. He began flying in 1948 and over time flew archeologists to many different sites on Kodiak. My father created in me an interest for the people that lived here and the tools that they made and the ways they learned to survive. My mother taught me to appreciate art and to be proud of where I was from. I enjoyed listening to my father's stories about the people that traveled with him and the people he stayed with when weathered in a village. My children have Alutiiq ancestors and I am proud of their heritage.

"In 1982 I graduated from college with a B.A. in Fine Arts. I have had the pleasure of exploring a variety of art forms such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, clay, and woodcarving. I concentrated my art efforts on drawing classes 'now and then' at the Port Lions School as a volunteer since 1984. Around this time Jim Dillard was teaching woodcarving to the Port Lions students. A variety of cultural items were carved such as masks, visors, bowls, and spoons. The students accomplished many beautiful carvings. This renewed my interest in Alutiiq artwork.

"The school began Culture Week about six years ago. I naturally enjoyed learning along with the students and volunteered to help with these activities. I believe gaining knowledge from our cultural history strengthens our self-esteem. It makes us feel good about who we are and where we came from. The fact that I live here and can gain a greater understanding of my surroundings by studying the history of the people that lived here for thousands of years is one of the reasons that I like being involved in cultural activities. The Alutiiq people used what they had and often made the best use of it in a beautiful way. I believe art is the best way to learn about the past and present. Art is a universal language that can communicate to us what others knew and how they felt.

"The men worked wood, bone, and stone while the women worked skins and fibers. A man's tool kit had straight-edged knives, crooked knives, adzes, punching tools, awls, and polishing stones. The men made stone lamps, masks, harpoons, fishhooks, and kayaks. The adult males had kayaks and hunted seals, whales and sea otters. The most common weapons were harpoons or darts thrown with a throwing board. Blades were made of stone, slate, or obsidian. Women gathered grass and prepared it for making baskets and mats. They sewed fur skins and bird skins for clothing. Gathering plants for making nets was another activity for women. Children's toys or games related to the activities of adults. For example the whale hunting game was a whale carved out of wood, hung from a string and small darts were thrown at it.

"The masks, spoons, bowls, visors, and throwing boards are carved from local

wood with straight edged knives, crooked knives, and adzes. Jim Dillard has come to Port Lions several times to teach us how to use these knives. He did an excellent job of teaching us how to sharpen these knives. Jim made and donated to our school a traditional Alutiiq drum and a bentwood visor. We have carved halibut hooks from red cedar, alder, and devil's club root. Spruce root was gathered and used to tie the wood together and attach the barb for the hook. Willow was gathered to make hoops for masks carved from cottonwood bark. Grass is gathered, separated, and dried properly to prepare it for basket making. Sven Haakanson, Jr. and Arlene Skinner taught us how to make Alutiiq grass baskets. We used raffia to learn the traditional basket-making techniques. Spruce root can be used for basket-making as well.

"The cultural activities are very important to me. Alutiiq cultural activities have become a part of my everyday life. I have learned to gather materials from the beach and the woods. Gathering material has made my walks a learning experience. I have learned to pay attention and be on the lookout for the early spring plants that have good medicine. I learned the differences in the trees and bushes. I have experimented with the alder, willow, and cottonwood for carving. I like to use spruce root for making baskets, to tie wood together for masks or tools. I gather willow branches, bark, and the leaves. The leaves have vitamin C and aspirin in them. The branches I use for hoops when making masks. The bark is good medicine for allergies and sore feet. We are fortunate to have plenty of willow in Port Lions. I have noticed there are other places on Kodiak Island that do not have it. When I go for a walk on the beach, I gather cottonwood bark, red cedar, and study the variety of stones we have here. I have used the local rocks to make Alutiiq tools. I enjoy using a variety of plants in the banya and like to scrub with the roots of the beach grass. All of these activities have given me a great appreciation for the accomplishments of the Alutiiq. I am never bored here."

"All of these activities have given me a great appreciation for the accomplishments of the Alutiiq. I am never bored here."
-Kathy Nelson

You can find Kathy, hard at work in her studio carving a mask, bending willow branches, or just whittling away at a piece of cedar.

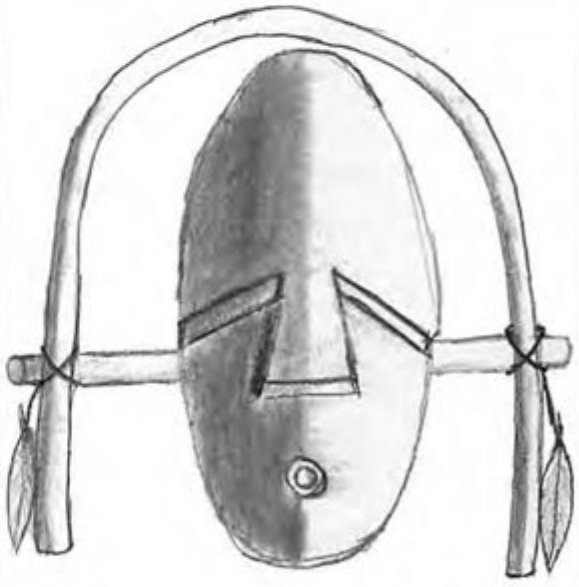


Illustration By: Willie Nelson

Sven Haakanson, Sr.

July 8, 1934 -
November 23, 2002

As Sven entered the room, the class became quiet and attentive. We'd been anticipating this interview for a couple of weeks and were excited about the fact that we'd finally have the opportunity to explore the man that we've lived with most of our lives yet knew so little about. Sven's appearance had changed a lot since we'd last seen him. His battle with cancer was taking its toll; he'd lost considerable weight and was clearly weak. In spite of his difficulties, Sven insisted on conducting the interview and, to our surprise, insisted on spending not one, but three hours with us. In the end, though, there was a clear sense of finality. Sven's voice was weak, and his eyes were filled with emotion as he looked to us, each of us and said, "I'm just proud I worked for everybody. It makes me happy all of the time."

photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

That's How We Met

By John Ignatin, Jr.,
Ashlee Cratty, and Arliss Abalama

Old Harbor

(photo courtesy of the Haakanson family)

Sven and Mary Haakanson at their wedding on April 27th, 1961.

Sven is well known for his stories and story telling talent. He's used his stories in everyday conversations with friends, business meetings, and strangers. On this day, Sven shared with us an exciting story about two strangers who met as young men, traveled the world, came to Alaska and changed their lives.

Everybody wants to hear the story about my dad and Mary's dad Ralph, and how they met. It was quite a coincidence; it was really unbelievable the way they met each other. My dad left Denmark when he was fourteen years old. His parents wanted him to work in the post office but he'd wanted to be free and travel. So he went on a sailboat to Iceland and Greenland. About the same time in Norway, Mary's dad got on a sailboat and sailed to Russia up the Volga River. While waiting to get freight to go to another port, the river froze up and they got stuck there the whole winter. Eventually both boats came to New York, my dad on a Danish ship and Mary's dad on a Norwegian ship. That's where they met.

Both men were young at the time so while the rest of the crew headed for the pubs or bars, my dad and Mary's dad went to shows, zoos and all kinds of things that they had in New York. They became good friends. My dad and Mary's dad thought it was just a coincidence that they had met and, later, they both sailed away on different ships. Sometime later, they met up again in New Orleans. My dad was on what they called a tramp steamer that hauled cargo. You would go into one port and you wouldn't know where your next port was going to be until you checked the warehouse to see where

"Everybody wants to hear the story about my dad and Mary's dad Ralph, and how they met." ~Sven Haakanson Sr.

My dad could have of been rich... but he said he's glad he left anyway.

your load was going. You might end up in Timbuktu or something.

Most everything went in barrels. There were barrels of beans, barrels of coffee and barrels of tea. Everything was in barrels! When you would go to the store the clerk would weigh out the product and you would buy products in a bag. So, that's how they shipped things around the world in those days.

Anyway, my dad and Mary's dad met again in New Orleans and they were happy to see each other. After that, they sailed back and forth across the Atlantic. I don't remember all the ports they went to, just the ones that my dad told me where he met Mary's dad.

There was an island halfway down to South America called Antabagaska. This is where they made oak barrels; like I was telling you everything was shipped in barrels. The company sent the ship there to get oak barrels to take to another place because people needed barrels to ship things. There was quite a factory there where they made the oak barrels. Eventually, they cut all the trees down on that island and grew sheep. They killed all the trees off, all together because they needed so many barrels in the world. I looked it up and it made history when they cut down all the trees on that Island. My dad and Mary's dad met there again. Both ships were there loading up with barrels.

They both wanted to jump ship on that island. It was a big thing with all the sailors to jump ship in America where they could find good jobs and stuff. My dad said, "There were beautiful girls there, Spanish with dark hair and pale white skin." They thought maybe they'd jump ship there so they went and asked how much money they'd make a day cutting down those big oak trees. They told them they'd make ten cents a day. My dad and her dad said, "Awe them girls aren't that good looking," and they left. After delivering the barrels I am not sure where they all sailed to.

There was a big boom going on in California with the gold rush. People were ordering a lot of stuff by ship because there were just wagon's going across from New York at that time. In fact, when they got down to Cape Town, Africa there were twenty-one ships all going to San Francisco with freight - big stuff like furniture. Stuff they couldn't bring in a wagon. I guess it was pretty rich down there.

So anyway my dad sailed up and met Ralph in Cape Town. They had to wait a month in Cape Town because of the winds. That's why twenty-one ships sailed at once — they waited until the Equinox. That's when the sun passes the equator and it changes the wind directions so the winds are favorable going around Cape Horn and coming up the Pacific side. They sailed up the Pacific and my dad jumped ship in San Francisco and went to work for a Danish family on a farm in San Rafael. He always told me this old couple couldn't have any children and they told him that he could have the whole farm and the whole valley when they passed on but my dad was just turning eighteen and he was too lonesome on the farm and so he left. Later on, that family in San Rafael all

(photo courtesy of the Haakanson family)

Mr. and Mrs. Christiansen (Mary's parents)

became millionaires. My dad could have been rich. Ha, ha, ha. He always mentioned that but he said he's glad he left anyway.

He went down to San Francisco but the only job he could find at the age of eighteen was a bartender on what they called the Barbary Coast. That's where all the sailors who sailed around the world came and hung out. He said he was working there one evening and a whole bunch of Norwegians came in from a ship. He looked over and there was Ralph, Mary's dad! He was glad to see him. Ralph told him, "Arthur, you better go to Alaska. They're making twenty dollars a month up there." So that was real good compared to three or four dollars that they were making in San Francisco; maybe ten or fifteen cents a day. So twenty dollars was a lot of money.

My dad looked around and he found a ship that was sailing to the Aleutian Islands. He went cod fishing on the schooner 'Hunter'. They loaded up that summer and were sailing back to San Francisco. By Castle Cape, just outside of Chignik, they hit a reef. The reef was uncharted because the American Government or Corp of Engineers where still making maps of all reefs in Alaska.

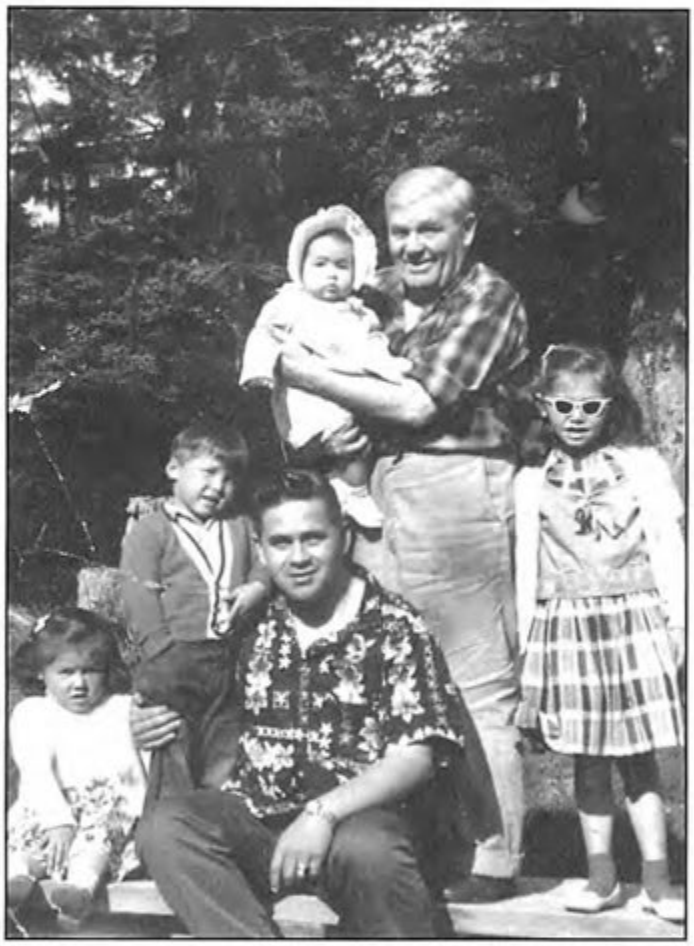


photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

Sven (center) with his family

They had one reef that wasn't marked. It was called "uncharted reef." They say to this day that that reef they hit is called Hunters reef on the chart. They always name a reef after a boat that hits it and sinks on it.

The crew was saved because they were good dorymen. They jumped in their long boats and rowed to the village of Chignik. Alaska Packers were building a new cannery there and they said they would get them to Kodiak to catch a ship when they got done putting away the cannery stuff for the winter. When they were done they finally took them to Kodiak. There were forty men in this little tug boat; just standing room only but they made it to Kodiak. Low and behold, when they got to Kodiak, they found out that the last ship going south had left three days earlier. So they were stuck in Kodiak.

Kodiak was only about three hundred people at the most then, because people traveled around to the villages and stuff. Woody Island, I think, had almost as many people as Kodiak. Anyway, there was a Russian mission there that they closed down in Kodiak. It's where the Griffin buildings are. That's where we stayed. For a little town like Kodiak to put up forty men that was a big deal.

Anyway the next spring when they came to take the forty men back there were fourteen of the sailors from the ship that fell in love with Kodiak and stayed back. My dad was one of them. Most of the fourteen people that stayed back became major families in Kodiak: Anderson's, Kraft's, and Erskins.

Right around this time the first war started. My dad joined the army because he heard Denmark was invaded and he wanted to go fight. They sent him to Port Liscum in Seward and he laid wires from Port Liscum to Seward and that was the biggest thing he did. That was only war he saw.

They discharged him when the war was over. He bought a little boat and went down the chain. Later he came back to Kodiak and then he worked on the Romany Cutter, the Discoverer. Romany Cutter is what they called the Coast Guard in that day. My dad was a bowson on that cutter. In 1912, when the Katmai erupted, he was on the ship that took all the people out to sea. I talked to old men in Ouzinkie who said, "Ah, your dad was on that boat, working!"

Going back, there was a cannery in Three Saints Bay and Kraft and Erskine needed someone to be a manager or superintendent to run it with herring so they hired my dad. He went down there and was running it and, of course, he had Norwegian, Dutch, and German girls that worked at what's called herring chokers. The girls had to cut guts out of every herring and put them in barrel because they would spoil. Anyway, they said, "There's a village up in the narrows that we passed when we came down. It has a nice big schoolhouse and they have dances on the weekend." They asked my dad if they could go up because there was no herring coming in. My dad said, "Sure, I'll go too, we'll all go and we'll take the long boats and row up there if the weather's good". So they all waited and it turned out to be a nice day. They rowed up to Old Harbor and my dad fell in love with the village as soon as he got there.

Low and behold, a year later, they got married in a double wedding.

The people were sitting on the beach and there was a big one room schoolhouse. Guys were piling up their accordions and tuning up guitars on the beach. Someone told them there's another ship in Port Hobron that's doing herring. That ship had come from Prince William Sound, Seldovia, and all those places. Their crew was going to come over and join the dance. They were happy they were going to meet new people. Pretty soon the long boats came rowing through the channel. My dad said they were sitting on a log and they looked down and here comes Rolf Christiansen. The guy that told him in San Francisco, twenty years earlier, to go to Alaska. My dad said, "Where have you been?" Rolf said that he came up to Prince William Sound and fished around Valdez, Homer, and Seldovia until he came over to Port Hobron on a herring schooner. They were happy to see each other. Soon it came time for dancing and they went up to dance. They were having a good time and they met two Aleut girls that were best friends. Low and behold, a year later, they got married in a double wedding- that was my mom and Mary's mom. Yeah, that's how they met.

Listening to Sven you can hear the admiration and respect in his voice for his father and father-in-law. The love and attention he expresses in his stories reflects his pride in his ability to recollect years of family history. Sven may no longer be with us, but his stories will live on in us for generations to come. We think that he'd be proud of that as well.

The 1964 Earthquake Shakes Sven's Life

By: Amanda Johansen, Basil Larionoff, and Alex Shugak, Jr.

In 1964, an enormous earthquake that registered 9.2 on the Richter Scale hit Alaska. The impact was different depending on where you were in the Alaskan Gulf Coast. Kodiak City and many of the surrounding villages were devastated. Particularly hard hit was the community of Old Harbor. Sven Haakanson was in Old Harbor during that time and the following is his account of that catastrophe.

(Photo courtesy of Haakanson family)
Sven Haakanson, Sr. and family.

"The tidal wave took Old Harbor out. It just left the school, the church and one house that was on a cement foundation. At the time, I was at Port Hobron getting wood for my coffee shop in Old Harbor. I wanted to add on to the coffee shop so I went to Port Hobron to get lumber from the whaling station. Under the ribs of the warehouse roof were really good 40 foot yellow and red cedar planks.

"They have never been wet; they were just as good as the day they were put up there. We were taking out every other plank so the roofs wouldn't fall down. We piled them on the 'Kiska' [Larry Matfay's boat] to bring them home to use. When we got them all loaded, we went down to the boat to have tea and sandwiches.

"Jeez, I'd hate to be in here during an earthquake!"
-Sven Haakanson, Sr.

"There was a big ramp next to us that they used to pull the whales up on. Once they got them on top of the ramp they'd cut them up and shove them down a shoot. After 75 years of being up, the ramps were getting pretty rotten and grass was growing on top of them. Someone quoted me saying, 'Jeez, I'd hate to be in here during an earthquake!' And they said 'Yeah.' I think it was Whitey or Andy, somebody.

"Anyway, we went down to the boat to have some tea and sandwiches after loading up the boat. It was then that the earthquake hit. We all ran out on deck and we had to go on our knees. The boat was banging against the pilings. I hollered, 'Let the bowline go so we can get away from them.' We looked back and watched the whole Whaling Station collapse. If we were in there we never would have been found. We'd still be under there to this day. That entire ramp, and all that grass and alders on top just tumbled down. The whole dock just caved in — good thing none of us were on there. I hollered to Andy, 'Start the engine! Let's get out of here!' It was like low tide by the time

we were heading away from Port Hobron and then it was high tide going to Old Harbor. In all that commotion a bunch of water just bubbled up.

"The ride usually takes an hour and fifteen minutes to get back from Port Hobron but this time it only took us fifteen to twenty minutes because the water would go out then come back in. I was crossing myself because I was scared. I saw barnacles and a whole bunch of stuff I'd never seen before. You know the water went down twenty some feet but it didn't go completely dry. If it did we would've gone to like Spruce Cape on that boat.

Photo by Laverne Haakanson

Sven, Sr. and Mary after their son's graduation.

"When we got to Old Harbor we tied up to the dock. Carl's dogs jumped overboard and we were watching as they were going up the bay trying to swim to the beach. We got in the skiff and started going to shore and there was that dog coming by us going out. While he was swimming towards the beach the tied up boats looked like they were going full speed. That's how fast the water was going out! After a while the whole bay was dry, clean across.

"Start the engine! Let's get outta here!"

-Sven Haakanson, Sr.

"We looked for the people but they were all up on the hill. I ran to the house and got sleeping bags. Then I went up the hill and tried to get things organized. Just recently I was elected on the Council. That's when George Inga had joined and I asked him to start organizing people between waves to run down and get food, radios, gas lamps, blankets, and sleeping bags and haul them up the hill. I think we made about eleven trips.

"There was an old guy called K.K., Kulumpi Kup, he eventually moved to Kodiak because he had to be close to a hospital. He was the warden at the church here. He was a stubborn old man; he wasn't going to go up the hill. He said the wave wouldn't come. When it did come he was going up towards where the pump house is; there was a little trail there. The water was right behind him. So he turns around and looks back and sees the water bump the church door. He said to me, 'Sven, when we get back, we have to get some young boys and clean up the church out of respect.' So I said, 'Yeah. I'll try, don't worry.' I wanted to get the old ones on the boats first where it was warm.

"Mike Tunohun and Larry went down to Mike's house to make radio calls. They were calling back and forth to different places from the radio. Mike had a gas lamp on the table. When he heard another wave was coming he ran out the door and left the lamp on. Later, when he looked down the hill, his house was floating in the bay; you could still see the lamp shining out the window. Mike and Larry went out to the house on a skiff. I guess he was worried about it burning. So Mike and Larry got on the Kiska and they tried to tow it in but eventually they gave up. He was using the radio on the boat to call someone when they heard a crunch. They went outside and the whole bay was dry. They were

Photo by Herman Squartsoff

Sven and Mary on their way to Dig Afognak 2001

out there right in the middle — the bay was dry clean across. Mike jumped down and was waiting for Larry to jump off. While Mike was standing on the bottom of the ocean, he said, 'Look at the clams, look at the clams Larry!' Larry said, 'To hell with the clams, get up the hill!' It was comical, they were just laughing. Can you imagine the bay dry out there? All the reefs that we didn't even know were there. They looked like islands; like ships coming in from Barling Bay.

"Anyway, once everyone was taken care of, we went to the church where the wooden slat doors were; there was grass, wood, cans, and all kinds of junk piled up by the door. We pulled it all away [the trash] so we could open doors. I was gonna walk right in and open the next door when Larry told me, 'Adaku, adaku!' Which means 'Wait!' but I was tired and half asleep so I wasn't paying attention. When I finally looked they were all kneeling down and I noticed that the floor was dry. Not a drop of water came in. We opened the next doors and went in. There wasn't a candle that fell — not even an icon. It was just the way we left it.

"When I tried to tell the CBS [news] people what happened they said that the water gathered up all the trash and that it plugged the doors so the water wouldn't get in. They all came up with their logical explanations. I told them, 'Bologna! That was a miracle! You can do it a billion times. There will always be a drop of water that'll get through that big of a thing.' All the old people said Kuguyak just built a new church and that it washed out. In fact they went in through the window while the church was floating and took their banners and stuff out. So all the old people there said, no, they won't go back to Kaguyak but Old Harbor's church stayed and so they came here instead.

"What's really amazing is that only one person died down here. There was only one old man named James Pemanson. He was a Scotsman that lived across the straight in Port Otto. He liked being alone; he wanted to be a hermit. At first he was a cod fisherman and a jailer in the jail house in Kodiak for a long time. Later he wanted to be alone. He found out about Port Otto and lived in an old house that was there. He really liked it.

"Carl and I and somebody would go and visit him and take him mail. He was the one who used to tell us, 'Get out of Alaska in '64!'

"He was kind of a psychic or whatever you called it but he's the only one who should've got out of Alaska! He's the only one died here, poor guy."

In the months following the tidal wave, Old Harbor residents lived in tents provided by the Army Corps of Engineers. Life was difficult yet the community remained strong. It took nearly a year for the village to be rebuilt. People say that Sven moved into his new home only after everyone else in the community was settled.

"To hell with the clams, get up the hill!"

- Larry Matfay

'I'd Do It All Again'

by Brianne Johnson, Ronnie Tunohun and Josh Wilson

Old Harbor

In times past, Alutiiq elders used story telling as a means to pass on native ways of knowing. Sven Haakanson Sr. maintained the story telling tradition blending humor and history along the way. In this last segment of the interview, Sven entertained us with a collection of stories of his adventures (and misadventures.)

Photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

We didn't eat the beavers. That was really funny because the people here didn't know that beaver was good to eat. When I was in Larsen Bay I met a family that lived in Washington State. When they went back home I went down to stay with them. They brought beaver home; I couldn't believe it. They had pickled beaver and beaver stew and everything. When I got home I was telling everybody, "You guys are throwing good meat away!" Beaver straps and everything, good meat, but we just never knew they were good. Nobody told us. We thought they were like cats and dogs.

We tried to hunt quiet a bit in Ouzinkie. We saw bears but there were too many trees. By the time we'd go after them they would be gone. I never got close to one. Most of the guys I grew up with hunted bear professionally. They would know how to go after them with all the spruce trees. The only time I went bear hunting was when I went seal hunting. I went with Wilford Alexanderoff and his son Moses who has since passed on. We were in Kiliuda Bay at the time.

"Bang, bang, bang!" I emptied mine.

When we went ashore we saw a bear. We all went up on the hill after it. Moses had a big slug in his shotgun. Wilford had three rifle shells and I had a .22 hornet. I loaded it on the boat but I forgot to bring the pliers with me. My gun was old and rusty and I had to open it with pliers. We were up on the hill and "Bang, bang, bang!" I emptied mine. I shot twenty shells. Wilford shot three shells but Moses hit it first, "Bang!," then it fell. We were going to walk down to it. It was probably here from the school (about one hundred feet) but it jumped up! I was hollering, "Shoot it!" but no one could shoot.

Moses cocked his rifle real fast and jammed it up. Wilford was out of shells and I couldn't load mine because I forgot my pliers.

I took off. I ran right down the bluff — almost straight down to the skiff. Moses and Wilford ran straight down the hill and then came along the beach. Moses was hollering, "Where's Sven?" I said, "I'm right here! I'm at the skiff already!" I wasn't going to wait around for that bear; it was scratching around trying to find us. We couldn't see over the bank so I said, "Let's go out in the boat!" I was thinking that we could climb up on the bridge and maybe we could see back where it was.

We just got on the boat and there the bear comes over the bank. It came running right into the water towards the boat. Boy we got scared! I was going to run down go under the engine or something! Wilford was dropping shells, shooting his rifle and hollering to Moses. Moses was just sitting there and the bear was nearly to us. All of sudden, the bear stopped and started biting its side because it had a big hole and water was running in. That's when Wilford was able to get the gun loaded and he shot it. It died right there in the water.

That's when Wilford was able to get the gun loaded and he shot it.

By the time Moses and I were loaded we would have been too late.

We put a rope on the bear and twisted it up. Once part was that there was one or two busted ribs and you could see a big hole where part of his heart had been taken off. After all that, he still got up and ran. I would think that once he was shot in the heart he would die but I guess they get so mad they keep running on with all that adrenaline. I don't want to mess with those things; they don't want to die even with all the shells we put in that thing.

Photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

I don't want to mess with those things; they don't want to die...

Anyway, we were out of fresh meat so we soaked some of the bear for a while and made bear stew. Moses and Wilford really loved it. That night we anchored up with the bear hanging out there. I couldn't sleep at all. I just kept thinking about the bear coming out of the water. I couldn't stop thinking about the water coming in through the bears wound; me climbing on the boat; the bear coming. I never messed with a bear again. One things for sure though, none of that meat went to waste.

Times were different back then. In fact, you'd still see barabaras around town. A guy named Pete Nickefernoff used to have one. He used to come see us in Trap Point when I was a little boy. We had one too. My dad had a house built by the pasture but there was a barabara near it. Pete, though, he'd stay in them.

They used to call him One Lunger Pete...

He liked banyas and he liked staying in the barabaras. Pete was originally from Kodiak. He ended up living down here on the south end. Pete used to take the mail into Kodiak on trails over the mountains.

They used to call him One Lunger Pete. I don't know why they named him that. He used to like to walk to Kodiak all the time. He had another brother who liked to trap, and he'd come stay in the barabara with Pete. Those barabaras looked just like the ones you kids built up by the corporation building. Those barabaras used to stand up here real good.

Costya Inga used to put all his salt fish in one that was down where they built the first airstrip. It was still standing when they built the strip. In Eagle Harbor they still had a lot barabaras even after they had frame houses, same as Old Harbor. They said a lot of people used to still stay in them. In the summer time, everybody would to say "Eeee! Lots of spiders!" but, no, there wouldn't be any spiders because they'd spread out red cedar sawdust and chips. They'd shave the red cedar that they'd find on the beach. Then they'd chop it up or grind it up then throw it all around in the grass inside the barabara. It worked pretty well.

As Sven went on, the conversation shifted to work. It was immediately clear to us that Sven was proud of his many years of hard work. He began this segment with pride and confidence reflecting in his eyes.

"Eeee! Lots of spiders!"

"I worked all the time. When I was in Ouzinkie, a couple of old guys were mad at me when they came home from fishing. The fuel company brought a hundred and twenty drums of oil down to the dock. In Ouzinkie it was a dollar a drum to move them. I took it upon myself; I hired myself and rolled them all up the hill to the storage area. Sometimes there was one little hard part. I used to get some friends to help me. Then, after that, it was just rolling. You'd make a hundred and twenty dollars. In them days that was a lot of money. I bought a bicycle, a phonograph, a twenty- two, clothes and everything with that hundred and twenty. Then those guys, when they came back from fishing asked "How come you touched those drums?!"

After the tidal wave, I went on a roll for Old Harbor. I pushed as hard as I could to get everything for Old Harbor: Schools, water, a dam and everything. Now they're all rotten and torn down. New ones were built after that but that was a big thing for Old Harbor to move forward.

I was just proud I worked for everybody. They really make me happy all the time. I had a great life and, you know, I'd do it all again.

Photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

The obvious fatigue in Sven's voice was our cue that this interview was over. Sven was tired. We were particularly struck by the subtle sense that Sven was speaking to us as if this would be the last time we'd ever see him. Perhaps he knew what we wouldn't; a few months after the interview, Sven lost his battle with cancer. Sven died in Kodiak on November 17th, 2002.

Photo courtesy of the Haakanson family

"I had a great life and, you know, I'd do it all again."

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