

# Aleut artist, anthropologist dies

Simeon Oliver, an Aleut artist and anthropologist whose inability to speak his Native language became a driving force in his adult life, died in his Spokane, Wash. home on June 22.

The 80-year-old Oliver had spent his life involved in many pursuits including seal hunting, art, as a concert pianist, anthropologist and lecturer as a result of being deprived of learning his Native language while growing.

The son of an Aleut mother and a Norwegian father, he was placed in the Unalaska's Jesse Lee Home, a Baptist orphanage, at the age of two when his mother died.

He was raised in the orphanage by missionaries who didn't speak Aleut and he, therefore, never learned the language.

This left him with the lifelong drive to encourage his fellow Aleuts and other Natives to "maintain their own heritage, by digging into their

background for legends, and languages of their people."

Educated in a Midwestern college and a Chicago music school, Oliver returned to the Aleutians in the late 1930s to find out more about his ancestors. He said he never found any legends or folklore because "It's gone," but he said at the time that he remembered the dances.

As part of his writing career, he wrote "An Aleut Lullaby" (Continued on Page Four)

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by," and two-part autobiography "Son of the Smoky Sea," and "Back to the Smoky Sea."

Flore Lekanof, president of the St. George Corp. said he met Oliver years ago in a visit to the Aleutians after World War II but had lost contact with him years ago.

"It's quite a loss to the

Aleut Community. He was one of those few who made deadlines," said Lekanof who said that Oliver's "small fame was never spread across the state as well as others such as Gordon Gould (who helped Alaska Pacific University become established.)

A memorial service was scheduled for June 30 in Spokane with burial in Spokane.

The family suggests that memorials be sent to the Alaska Children's Services, 1200 E. 27th Ave., Anchorage 99504.

Oliver is survived by daughters Juanita List Boures of Spokane and Cora Goins of Mount View, Calif., and four grandchildren.