

Governor Should approve Museum

The Tundra Times has always felt that perhaps the most important function of our editorial column is to relate the news of the day to the rich and varied heritage of the Native people of Alaska.

Heritage is an important word defined by Websters as: "property that descends to an heir."

During the thousands of years that Native people have lived on the land, raised their children and developed their societies in Alaska their "properties" were sparse.

There were seldom more than a few small dwellings, the hunting and fishing implements necessary to their collective survival, and the occasional ivory, stone, or wood carvings by which they sought larger meanings in the harsh environment of Alaska.

Few of these properties remain to those of us who are heirs. With the rapid development of Alaska's resources, more are now being gathered and catalogued than in the past. Those pieces that have and will be found will, together, form a mosaic by which we may trace the origin and development of Native culture.

Unfortunately, unless the 8 million dollar appropriation for the University of Alaska museum is approved, the mosaic will not be available to us for study in Alaska but will be sent outside where there are proper facilities for storage, sorting, and display.

This would be a great loss to all Alaskans. A new museum building has been proposed several times in the past, each time with price tags far in excess of the 8 million now before Governor Hammond for final approval.

Governor Hammond and his staff are making their final decisions on this appropriation as we go to press. The deadline for final action on the State's budget will occur Thursday, tomorrow, at Midnight. We urge Governor Hammond to approve the full 8 million, and hope our readers will also advise the Governor of their support for this facility.