

Where to Find Unusual Materials—

For a Beautiful Aleut Raincoat

By LAEL MORGAN
CORDOVA — Mrs. Donia Kompkoff, of Cordova via Chenega and Tatitlek, wants to sew a traditional Aleut raincoat, but she's stumped for materials. What's needed is a black bear intestine and the sinew from a porpoise tail. For the last year

she's been asking friends if they can help out on the project but black bears and porpoises aren't that easy to come by.

Still she hasn't given up hope because a traditional Aleut raincoat is a beautiful thing and very few people still know how to make them.

The seams must be so tight that a man can turn his kyak right over in the water and come up dry. And, also, the coat must be beautiful for no self-respecting Aleut hunter likes to look scruffy.

Mrs. Kompkoff was raised in Tatitlek near the Ellamar mine and she recalls the people there

had forgotten many traditional skills. However when she married a Chenega man and moved to his village, she found the old ways preserved.

The old women of Chenega taught her how to sew seal skins over boat frames with a wonderful waterproof seam and she learned to make raincoats by quietly watching them work. She sewed two for her husband in his hunting days.

Now widowed, Mrs. Kompkoff has no hunter to sew for, but she would like to make one last raincoat so her children and grandchildren can see how it's done. Her eyesight has been bothering her and, although she's planning to have an operation that may help, there's no telling how much time she has to work on the project.

For that reason she's impatient to find the necessary materials. She doesn't need the whole bear, she notes. Just the intestines which could be stripped out and packed in a coffee can.

Anyone who can help with this project should contact Mrs. Kompkoff in Cordova or the Chenega Corporation office there.

Claims Testimony Before Congress

Co-Chairman David S. Jackman and Burton W. Silcock provided testimony to the Interior and Insular Affairs Committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives recently on amendments to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and to the National Resource Lands Management bill, otherwise known as the "BLM Organic Act."

Testimony on the amendments to the Native Claims Act was presented to the House May 12 and 13, and to the Senate May 16. Testimony on the BLM Organic Act was presented to the Senate May 15.

State Co-Chairman Jackman informed the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee that the Commission supports the amendment which would allow the merger of Native corporations within any one region.

"Many village corporations," Jackman said, "appear to lack the financial wherewithal and trained manpower which they must have to survive."

Some village corporations just do not have the supporting resources necessary to establish or

maintain a successful corporation. He went on to say that "it is likely that many village corporations will fail if the merger authority is not provided."

The purpose of Section 8 of the Native Claims Settlement Act, which establishes village corporations, is to provide Native residents with their own corporation to manage the village lands, obtained under the Native Claims Act, for the benefit of the Native stockholders.

In commenting on the Cook Inlet Native Corporation's selection of lands, he said the Commission has made two formal recommendations to the Interior Secretary and has participated in numerous meetings in an attempt to help resolve the corporation's land selection problems.

The Native corporation is unable to file formal land selections, as required by the Native Claims Act, as most of the usable land has not been available for selection.

The selection of land for regional corporation ownership is provided by Section 11 of the Act. Jackman offered to provide additional assistance where possible to help resolve the problem.

The Commission also endorsed the enactment of an amendment to the Act to allow the Federal government and its agencies to deposit into a Native corporation escrow account money that is obtained from the use of the land which has been selected by the Native regional and village corporations.

These lands have been selected for Native ownership under the Act, by the Native corporations, but title to the land has not been transferred due to the large volume of transfer work involved.

In some cases there may be a legal problem that is holding up the transfer of title to the corporations. Meanwhile the land is producing revenue which is being deposited into the Federal Treasury.

The Commission also provided background information on the amendment to extend the life-span of the Commission, which is to expire December 18,

1976.

Federal Co-Chairman Burton W. Silcock, in providing testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on the Environment and Land Resources, said that "the Commission believes that the BLM Organic Act is a well conceived and well drafted piece of legislation."

Silcock said the Commission supports the enactment of the legislation because among other things it would: (1) change BLM from a land disposal agency to a land management agency, thereby turning the disposal of land in Alaska over to the State; (2) repeal a number of old outdated land laws regarding settlement, access and other matters; (3) provide BLM with land exchange authority and a multiple use land management mandate; (4) clear abandoned or invalid mining claims; (5) provide for cooperative land management mechanisms and public participation in decision processes; (6) establish a working capital fund for the management of natural resource lands; and (7) provide the Secretary of the Interior with new authority to resolve conflicts in subsurface ownership of Federal lands which have been transferred to private landowners.

Co-Chairman Silcock also provided the Subcommittee with some suggestions for improving the legislation.

He informed them that: (1) the 5-year deadline for filing a patent application on a mining claim is too short for Alaska as the

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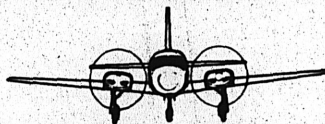
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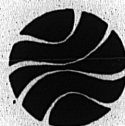
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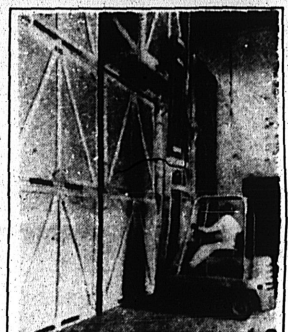
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