

A Bishop They Toss; He Forms a Cross!



ARCTIC OBSERVES DIAMOND JUBILEE

By Howard Rock,
Times Ed for

The residents of the small village of Point Hope in the far Northwestern part of Alaska, will never forget the recent celebration of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Episcopal Church in the Arctic. The people of Point Hope were at once happy and a little bit awed by the many visitors. Some of them were notable visitors including, Bishop John E. Hines, presiding Bishop of the Episcopalians in the United States, Governor William A. Egan of Alaska, William J. Gordon, Bishop of Alaska, and Robert L. Bennett, Area Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in this State.

Tony Joule, one of the first missionary teachers at Point Hope and later a teacher under the Bureau of Education, summed up the feeling of his people:

"Oh, I feel so humble—I feel so

humble really being as one of you and taking part in this 75th anniversary of our church. I'm so happy and so humble. Everyone of us should feel we have reason to be thankful because this church has really started us in our religious education."

"It is so good to have visitors from all over and we, especially today, are so lucky to have with us Bishop Hines, our presiding Bishop of all Bishops, and Bishop Gordon, our beloved Bishop. It makes me feel so good."

THE NALUKATUK

On the third of July, the feeling of happiness was demonstrated by the local populace and the visitors when games were performed. The children and the young people raced followed by a rousing Nalukatuk, or blanket jumping.

Not to be outdone by the Eskimos, the non-native visitors took to the Nalukatuk amid squeals of delight. One of the more able performers was Bishop Hines himself who did his jumps without falling.

When the Nalukatuk was over, everyone gathered in the Browning Hall of the Episcopal Church in a mass communal feast. Bowhead whale muktuk and frozen meat were served along with caribou stew, and plenty of cake, coffee and tea.

A red-headed male visitor from Cordova took to muktuk with a will. He was given a healthy hunk of it which he ate with relish. Finding the taste to his liking, he ordered another.

MUKTUK MELTED

"I was hungry and as I chewed on the muktuk, it sort of melted in my mouth and it really came down easy," he said.

Alice Cook of the BIA in Juneau was another enthusiastic eater:

"I didn't care too much for the muktuk but I sure liked the whale meat," she said.

After feasting, the crowd went home briefly to rest and about 10:00 p.m. it came back to watch and perform the Eskimo dance. As the drummer's boomed on their drums in tune with the chant, the dancing was started by David Frankson, postmaster of Point Hope, doing a superb "motion dance."

THE DANCE

He was followed by Guy Oomituk, Patrick Attungana and others.

Although he had been saddened by the recent death of his wife, Christopher Tingook, 83 years old, could not contain himself as the dance progressed. Looking very distinctive with his white hair, brows and mustache, he rose and did his

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EPISCOPAL BISHOP of the United States John E. Hines joins in the Nalukatuk celebration at Pt. Hope on July 3.

—Tundra Times Photos by Howard Rock

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exemplary performance—his beloved Eskimo dance.

When he finished, he sat down amid shouts of cheers and loud clapping of hands.

When the motion dances were over, the drummers went into chants of the "common dance" where anyone may participate. This was amply accommodated when the happy dancers filled the dancing space taking up every available dancing room.

Unable to resist the contagious effect of the dance, many white people joined much to the delight of the Point Hopers. They included two girls from England and many others. Alice Cook was one of them who exclaimed, "I did another first—I danced!"

When the evening's performance was finally over, and as is the long established custom of the Point Hope people, the audience rose to its feet and chanted, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow..." This was followed by the Lord's Prayer.

A visitor asked, "Did they always do this after the dance?"

When told that they did, she said, "How wonderful."

CHURCH SERVICES

Fourth of July was the day of commemoration and falling on Sunday, it had an air of solemnity. The day began with the services at the St. Thomas Church. Rev. Milton Swan of Kivalina officiated at the outset and Bishop John E. Hines gave the sermon.

As one of his opening remarks, Bishop Hines said:

"I deem it a great honor to be able to come to St. Thomas and to be able to find you as a part of our great church in this wonderful and historic place. I am entirely new to Alaska in terms of my personal bodily presence but I am not new to Alaska in terms both of spirit and also in terms of knowledge of someone who has known Alaska."

Gov. William A. Egan's plane had landed about an hour before the church services. He sat with the people in one of the front pews.

He was welcomed at the airstrip by the members of the Company D of the National Guard along with their color guard.

Later at Kotzebue, the Governor said privately, "I was busy greeting the people when we landed and I didn't notice the boys at first. When I did, I was very impressed. Boy, those boys looked sharp and snappy."

He reviewed the group and then went on to the mission buildings.

When the impressive church service were over, the people went home to lunch. The visitors were served sandwiches, doughnuts and coffee at the Browning Hall.

At 3:30 p.m., the commemorative program got underway. Bishop Gordon served as the master of ceremonies.

As one of the early speakers, Tony Joule seemed to have set the stage for the succeeding speakers when he talked about education.

"Education—we should feel proud today the field of education is open to each one of our boys and girls."

"I am also directing this to the parents. And this is our opportunity. This is our chance. With effort we can obtain it. There have been many inventions accomplished. These days, many things, wonderful things we build. And those people who learned—the more they learned the more they seemed they don't know. Today, education is not much unless we have God. Everyone of those wonderful inventions are His creation. How wonderful it is, we have reason to be thankful."

"Yes, I tried by best to help my own people. Well, I worked so hard in trying to make them understand—here in this Browning Hall where you see that little platform up there—that original Browning Hall—that's where I managed to put 67 children and one teacher."

QUITE A HANDFUL

"Sixty-seven children is quite a handful I think—don't you? Yes, and I had to be strict. And everyone of those boys and girls who had come to school under me, said, 'He's pretty severe.'"

"Yes, I meant all right. I didn't mean to be mean. I wanted my folks to learn..."

(Editor's Note: The size of the room Tony Joule talked about measures about 20 feet by 24 feet.)

Robert L. Bennett began his afternoon speech by presenting to Elijah Attungana, who represented the village council, a bronze plaque from Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall commemorating the famed Ipiutak, an old settlement site a mile east of Point Hope. The inscription read:

HISTORICAL LANDMARK

"Ipiutak has been designated a registered national historical landmark under the provisions of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. This site possesses exceptional value in commemorating and illustrating the history of the United States and U. S. Department of the Interior National Park Service, 1961."

Bennett stressed that the Natives must make change through education:

"... Yet, if we are to be concerned of our next generation, your children, their needs, their desires, their hopes, we must make change. Your young people need your understanding, encouragement and support as they seek ways and means through education to understand what the world around them is about and how they can fit into it..."

Gov. Egan was next on the rostrum. As did the other speakers, Egan eulogized the works of the late Dr. John B. Driggs, a physician from Wilmington, Delaware, who established the St. Thomas Mission at Point Hope in 1890.

The Governor lauded the Christian missionary and educational efforts of the early missionaries:

"... I am well aware of the great contribution and dedicated service of the Christian missionary, not only here, but along the Yukon river and in other areas of our great land. Today, we are taking a close look at what has been accomplished here and at other villages along the Arctic coast since 1890."

"What we find in the historical record is that selfless men have willingly given up material comforts to bring education, medical care and the word of Christ to a place far removed from others they have known—a place where all human energy and resourcefulness were required in order to survive..."

WONDERFUL DAYS

Having given a lengthy sermon earlier in the day, Bishop John E. Hines gave a brief address in the afternoon program. After making appropriate remarks of having spent "several wonderful days in the State of Alaska—in the largest state in the union and among such happy, wonderful friends," the Bishop recalled the time he went to Brazil.

When he returned he had been given a card in which was inscribed, "This man has been exposed to typhoid fever, to typhus, to yellow fever and to the plague."

When he got home to Greenwich, he told his wife, "Touch me not, I'm contaminated."

She answered, "Hush up, you've been that way all your life."

"... As far as the question of home is concerned," the Bishop continued, "I will carry home the best kind of contamination, the contamination of the wonderful friendship and fellowship and worship together and have common interest in education and also the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in his Church amongst. So thank you again for re- it has been my privilege to be amongst. So thank you again for receiving me..."