



Alaska Governor Jay Hammond, flanked by Charlie Joseph (left), Eddie Jack and Dr. Walter Soboleff (right). During the Angoon Bombardment Commemoration ceremonies, Governor Hammond was adopted into the Bear Clan of the Tlingit/Haida Tribe and given the name "TI Yeik woo doos daya ch," (roughly translated meaning, "The brown bear you don't see coming until he's already on the

beach with his arms swinging.") The Governor was presented with a Bear totem replica erected during dedication ceremonies for the new Angoon museum/cultural center that was built with funds awarded to Angoon from the U.S. Navy for "property damage" resulting from the Angoon bombardment 100 years ago.

Hundreds commemorate Angoon Bombing

United States naval forces bombarded and burned the village of Angoon on Oct. 26, 1882. Today, 100 years later, the southeast Alaska village remembers that tragedy that history calls "a grave misunderstanding between two cul-

tures."

Several hundred people, including Gov. Jay Hammond, participated in the ceremonies that marked the attack by forces led by Navy Commander E.C. Merriman.

The three days of events commemorating the bombard-

ment have become a source of pride for the residents of Angoon. They take pride in the fact that their culture has survived and is flourishing. "We believe the traditional ceremonies will demonstrate the strength of our culture today and renew in us the pride that

our ancestors felt," stated Cyril George, director of the Kootznوو Heritage Foundation.

Kootznوو is the Tlingit name for Admiralty Island meaning "bear fort."

Few people outside the Tlingit culture are aware of the (Continued on Page Fourteen)



Entering his second term as Tlingit and Haida Central Council President, John Hope of Juneau, a lifetime ANB member, believes that "Indian politics can't get much rougher."

Angoon Bombing Commemorated

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bombardment. The people of Angoon remember. It is a part of their oral history, and most of Angoon's residents have parents or grandparents who lived through the bombardment.

The confirmation between the Navy and the Tlingits stemmed from the accidental death of Tigh Klane, a highly respected medicine man. Tigh Klane, while working as a crewman on board a whaling boat belonging to the Northwest Trading Co., was killed when a whaling gun exploded.

The loss of their medicine man meant a great deal to the people of Angoon and, according to mourning customs, they asked the Trading Co. for 200 blankets as compensation for Tigh Klane's death. The company refused. The people continued mourning, painting their faces black and not returning to work.

Reasons as to why the trading company sent word to the

Navy commander E.C. Merriman are purely speculative. They may have been alarmed, but they certainly wanted the local Natives to return to work.

Merriman had previously ordered the Tlingits not to ask for blankets to compensate for deaths in their dealing with white men. Upon Merriman's arrival, he demanded 400 blankets from the Tlingits as an apology. When the blankets were not offered, the commander gave orders to open fire on the village.

The bombardment leveled the village, soldiers looted and burned what was left. Six children suffocated in the smoke. The products of hundreds of years of Tlingit culture were destroyed in a single day.

The commemoration festivities today, 100 years later, pay tribute to the culture that survived. The small Tlingit community of about 500 residents is attempting to rebuild and restore the cultural aspects that were lost in the bombard-

ment 100 years ago.

The Kootznookoo Heritage Foundation is attempting to restore 12 of the 14 tribal houses and the Angoon community house with financial aid from the state and federal governments. The foundation has been successful in building a new \$500,000 museum/cultural center. Gov. Hammond and his wife Bella helped dedicate the new center as part of the 100 year commemoration ceremonies.

The Center was built with funds awarded to the community by the U.S. Navy. The \$90,000 award was made in 1973 for "property damage." The Navy is not on record for an apology to the community. Angoon residents still feel the insult of the attack.

An Angoon delegation traveled to Washington, D.C. last year to seek an official apology from the Navy and ask that a ship be named "Angoon" or "Kootznookoo" to show respect for the people who were killed or injured in the attack.