

# Smithsonian Grants Village of Kasigluk to Film Its Village Life

The village of Kasigluk, 30 miles due west of Bethel on the Kuskokwim River has received a \$300 grant from the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

The purpose of the grant is to assist the village in making an 8 mm pilot film on Kasigluk village life. The grant was awarded to the

village in the form of Super 8 mm film equipment and film.

A copy of the completed film is to be sent to the Smithsonian Institution. The equipment is to remain in the village and may be used by any person in the village.

Comments Alexie Pavilla, Jr., vice president of the

village council:

"I think we should make a film that starts 100 years back. We need a film on the history of our village. But this is up to the people. Any person can borrow the equipment and make films of their children or whatever they want.

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# Smithsonian . . .

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"They can also take the camera with them when they go on short visits to other villages. It will help us learn more about life in other villages."

The Smithsonian grant was made possible on application to that Institution's Wenner-Gren Small Grant Program by VISTA Volunteer at Kasigluk, Mr. Joli Morgan.

In his application, Morgan stressed that the film follow average everyday life in the village and "seek to show the influence or lack of influence upon the Eskimo culture by the 'imported' Russian-American culture."

He said the purpose of the film would be to "determine whether or not the present village culture is at such a point in its cross-cultural transition" and that the finished product would be of anthropological value.

Morgan pointed out that the village of Kasigluk was a new village and that very few of the villagers were born at the village. The village was established because the people wanted to send their children to school.

Formerly, the people lived by nomadic nature moving between fall, summer and winter camps.

Morgan said Kasigluk being located away from large waterways and away from the coast, its people has retained many of the customs of the near past and that the dress, language, cultural patterns, transportation and some tools were still used as they were in the past.

"But intermeshed with these old ways is America, 1968. On the hunting trail, dogteams are passed by

snow-go; family-made fur parkas are being replaced by store bought down parkas; mukluks by rubber boots; hand made items by factory items," said Morgan.

He expressed concern that many of the cultural values would be gone in not too distant future; that some of the villages in the area felt that "white" culture was best and that this was "not yet true of Kasigluk."

In the application to the Smithsonian Institution, Joli Morgan expressed personal urgency that the filming project be started as soon as possible because his tour of duty as a VISTA Volunteer would be up in July.

"I would like to devote as much as I can of my free time to the making of this film and the training of the film crew," he said.

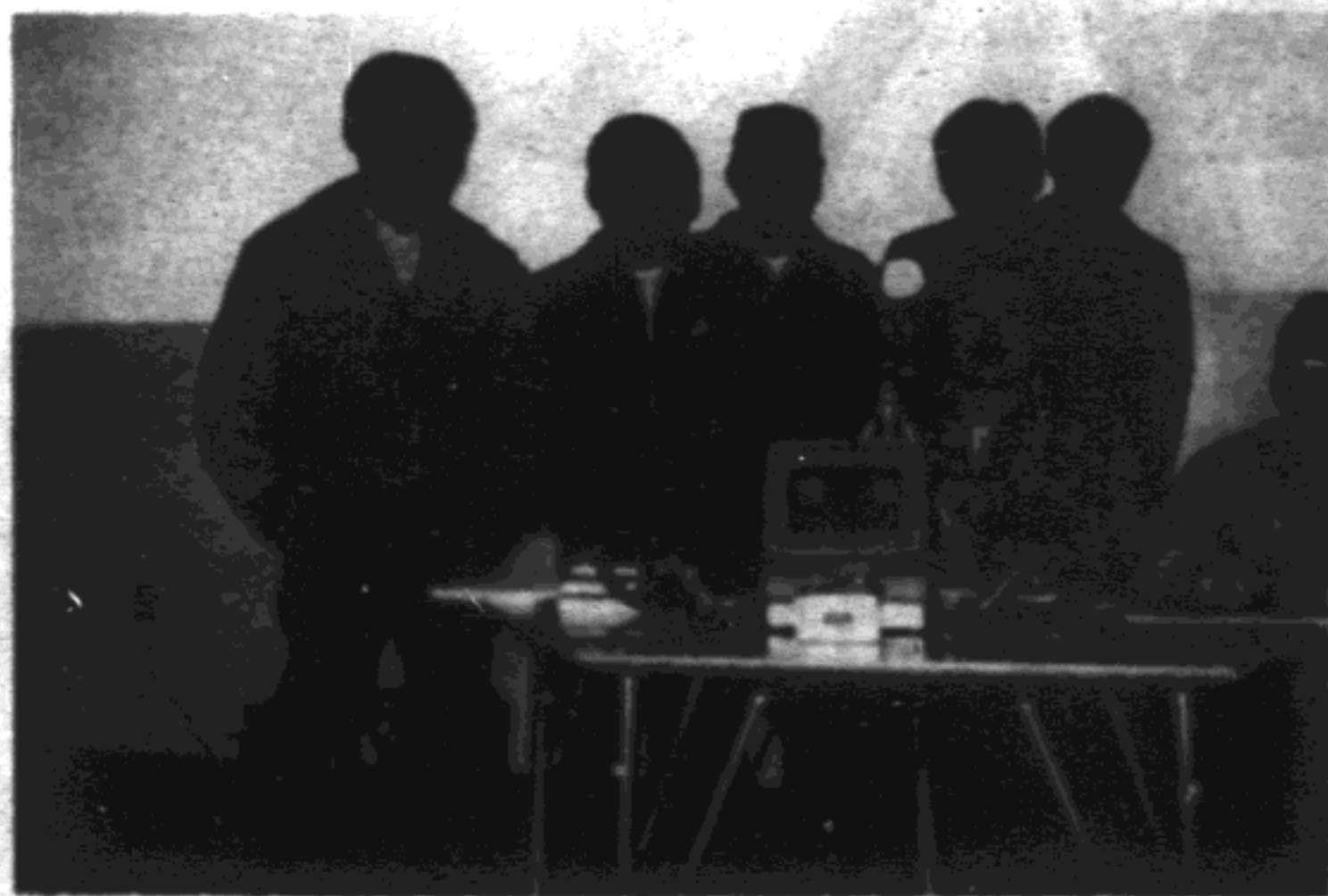
Before the application was submitted, the Kasigluk village council endorsed the filming project. The village will furnish buildings, people, and ideas that will be used in the film.

In return, the people requested that they receive a copy of the completed film as a permanent possession of the village.

"I was happy to help the village obtain the grant," Joli Morgan said.

He is hoping that the project will be a step toward a bigger project.

"I hope that the completed film will be a major step toward obtaining money to make a 16 mm sound film about our tundra village," he said. "I believe that when you make a film, you learn to see all over again. It is an exciting venture for the village."



**FILMING EQUIPMENT**—Kasigluk village council members are happily posing for a picture with the 8 mm filming equipment they received as a grant from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. the villagers will use to film a cycle of a year's activity of the Kasigluk people. From left to right: seated, Irvin Brink, president; Nick Martin, secretary; standing, Nick Pavilla, policeman; John Nicholas, policeman; Yako Andrew, member; Alexie Pavilla, Jr., vice president. Yako Tinker, treasurer, was not present.

—Photo by LEVI HOOVER