

'Husky Help' Helps

The two dozen families in the little Eskimo village of Wales on the western tip of the Seward Peninsula were benefited last week from the delivery of building materials brought to them by a team of men from Fort Wainwright.

This special service to the natives of this remote community on the Bering Strait involves mushing across the snow in mechanical monsters known as "car-

rier cargo tracked, 6 ton M548."

They carried the major parts of an Air Force surplus wooden building that was dismantled at the site of the 710th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron at the tent city some months ago.

When the old structure was no longer required, the Eskimos asked to have the lumber for construction use in their village, and it was made available to them by the Alaskan Air Command.

The residents of Wales had no means of transporting the large and heavy load of material and appealed for military aid. The U.S. Army, Alaska was given the job of towing or carrying the lumber from Tent City to Wales.

It is seven miles as the raven flies but 17 by the twisting route the tracked vehicles had to take around a 2,300 foot prominence according to a preliminary reconnaissance of the area recently made by Lieutenant Colonel T.M. Small, Jr., Deputy Commander of the 171st Infantry Brigade.

Unless weather conditions improved the Army team faced problems of limited visibility and a wind-chill factor of -75 degrees or colder. But it was a job that could not be done across this terrain except in winter.

"Operation Husky Help" was the name given to this community relations project and was directed on the scene by 1st Lieutenant Gary L. Shoup, Executive Officer, 559th Engineer Company (Combat).

Assisting him was 1st Lieutenant H.W. Keitzman and nine enlisted men. All are from units of the 171st Infantry Brigade stationed at Fort Wainwright.

Last week two C-130's of the Alaskan Air Command's 17th Tactical Airlift Squadron took the 11 men and vehicles from Fort Wainwright to the Air Force strip at Tin City. While the soldiers were engaged in this community relations project they were given logistical support by the 710th AC&W Squadron.

The village of Wales, though tiny (population about 120) has been an active settlement for more than 140 years.

First reported in 1827 by British Naval Captain Beechey, its inhabitants were later described by him as "some of the most cleanly and well dressed people we have seen anywhere on the coast. Their residence was at King-A-Ghee, a place which, judging from the respectability of parties from that place whom we had seen elsewhere, must be important among the Esquimaux villages upon the coast."