

Artist Mayokok dies

Eskimo artist Robert Mayokok, whose ivory carvings, pen and ink drawings, and books depicted the lifestyle of his Native people for decades, died Feb. 7 at the Nakoyia Health Care Center in Anchorage. He was 79.

The well-known world-travelling artist from Wales on the Bering Straits was remembered in a memorial ceremony on Feb. 10 as "very frugal, very proud but a sweet man too," who was never heard to say a bad word about anything.

Mayokok's memorial service was so filled with friends and

admirers that they filled the chapel and spilled out of the Evergreen Memorial Chapel in Anchorage.

Mayokok's many friends were earned by the gentle man through a life of artwork, writing, and world travelling.

"He had experiences that few have had and that none will ever have again, said the Rev. Richard Miller, pastor of the O'Malley Road Baptist Church.

Mayokok was born June 1, 1903 in Wales. He lived on the Bering Sea until the flu epi-
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demic of 1918 killed his mother and father along with 229 of the 500 village residents. His father had sent him outside the village to tend reindeer. Then he left the village to travel through America and Siberia.

His travels were numerous and included many forms of transportation and many reasons for the trips.

He took a boxcar ride across the Lower North American continent on one trip, transported reindeer to the 1939 World's Fair in New York City and to Boston, and travelled many times to eastern Siberia.

One Siberian trip was with the well-known Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen.

But it was for his many artworks that Mayokok was best known.

His art depicted the Eskimo life that he had, for a time, left behind him. Although he began drawing at an early age, his work flourished when he returned to his home of Wales and he did ivory carvings

of hunting scenes and then switched to paintings and ink drawings.

He used as his base seal, reindeer, caribou, pig and cow-hide skins in addition to canvas.

He also drew Christmas cards, drew for reproduction on pottery and designed for wrapping paper and for shopping bags.

For the last 18 years of his life he worked for the Alaska Treasure Shop in Anchorage.

His wife, Seelook, preceded him in death. He is survived by sons Thornton Mayokok of Anchorage and Everett Mayo of Los Angeles, and daughter, Mary Jane Folkins of Boston, Mass.

He was to be buried in the Anchorage City Cemetery.

Robert Mayokok and his family appeared at the 1939 Sportsman's Show in New York City and were shown in this Timely News Flash poster.



NEW YORK—Robert Mayokok and his Eskimo family shown at Grand Central Palace, New York, where they drew the attention of opening day visitors to the Annual National Sportsmen's Show. They are from Cape Prince of Wales, on the northwestern tip of Seward Peninsula, Alaska. The father teaches ivory carving. The mother, Seelook, makes all of her children's clothes.