

Symbolic lamp lit to honor Alaska Native culture

By **BETSY BRENNEMAN**
Staff Writer

At the formal dedication of the new Heritage Park on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus Thursday, July 29, it was often difficult to tell which was being honored more, Alaskan native culture, or one of its biggest boosters, Emily Ivanoff Brown.

Over 100 people attended the outdoor, late afternoon ceremony under clear, sunny skies which made the freshly planted grass in the little park look almost too green, and its flowers brilliant.

Elaine Ramos, Vice President for Rural Educational Affairs, introduced both speakers and native leaders present in the audience. University President Robert Hiatt praised Emily Brown for her inspiration and perseverance that made the park and its symbolic bronze Eskimo lamp possible and called her a "perpetual student in the best sense."

He cited her intellectual accomplishments and commented that her M.A. thesis, "Grandfather of Unalakleet," is in its third printing. Calling the new park a symbol of the unity of all cultures, Hiatt said, "it is an extraordinary expression of the native peoples of Alaska."

The symbolic lamp, patterned after a traditional Eskimo and Indian source of wintertime

light and heat, was conceived by Emily Brown and cast in bronze by Stan Zielinski of the university art department. Lit by Olympic athlete Reggie Joule of Kotzebue, the lamp

blazed strongly as Willie dedicated it as a "fitting symbol" and one that he hoped will "keep alive native culture."

Daphne Gustafson explained both the history of the lamp in

native culture and of the Alaska Heritage Writers' Association, the group led by Emily Brown which had dreamed for ten years of placing the lamp on the university campus.

Overcome with emotion, Gustafson's voice broke as she said that the reality of what was once a dream would serve as a reminder of "the spirit and determination of a fine Alaska lady, Emily Brown."

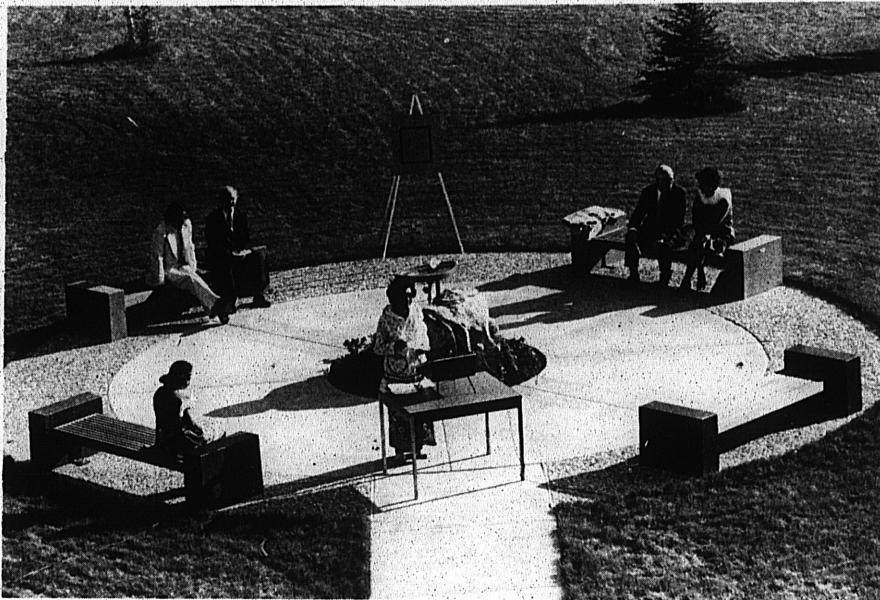
The fine little Alaska lady then approached the podium, turned to give President Hiatt an embrace of thanks and sang three songs to the delight of the audience. First was "Eskimo Good Man," a whimsical satire on the native vs. the white way of life. Just as whimsical was the response, "White Man Good Man," which celebrated the cooperation of the two cultures. Finally, she sang the rhythmic "Kobuk Love Song" in both Eskimo and English.

Closing remarks were offered by Dr. Howard Cutler, chancellor of the Fairbanks campus, who proudly cited the number of native students who have attended the university and those who have received advanced and honorary degrees.

He stated that the function of a university is "to help each to define, examine, and renew our heritage," and that the University of Alaska was especially fortunate to have such rich heritages "with us, among us, and reviving us everyday." He concluded, "this park, this lamp is a rededication of the honor and responsibility we are proud to receive and accept."

A reception followed in the Upper Lounge of the Lower Commons where mukluk, smoked fish, and several flavors of agutak were served to the great delight of many and the hesitant curiosity of others.

The symbolic Eskimo lamp could be seen burning brightly throughout the weekend festivities of the 1976 World Eskimo-Indian Olympics and will be lit in the future for special native events occurring on the campus.



EMILY IVANOFF BROWN sings "Eskimo Good Man" for the audience gathered at the dedication of the new Heritage Park while the symbolic Eskimo lamp burns in the background. Others who spoke at the dedication look on. Left to right: Elaine Ramos, Willie Hensley, Dr. Howard Cutler, Dr. Robert Hiatt, and Daphne Gustafson.

1976 World Eskimo-Indian Olympics results

EAR PULLING

1. Louis Paukan, St. Mary's
2. James Itta, Barrow
- Joshua Okpick, Jr., Barrow
- Billy Ahalik, Barrow

INDIAN STICK PULL

1. Robert Aiken, Barrow
2. Billy Nashoalook, Sr., Wainwright
- Johnny David, Minto
- Rosman Peetook, Wainwright

MEN'S BLANKET TOSS

1. Reggie Joule, Kotzebue
2. Tom Fields, Kotzebue

SEAL SKINNING

1. Rhoda Nageak, Barrow (1:18)
2. Helen Peetook, Wainwright
3. Mary Ann Warden, Barter Island

BABY CONTEST

1. Dawndee Marie Ipalook, Fairbanks
2. Sammie K. Kenton Jr., Barrow
3. Donna Andon, Fairbanks

KNUCKLE HOP

1. James Itta, Barrow (69'6")
2. Kenny Mekiana, Anaktuvuk Pass (63')
3. Orville Lind, Chignik (58')

PARKA CONTEST

1. Rhoda Nageak, Barrow
2. Francis Wright, Fairbanks
3. Elizabeth Frantz

FOUR MAN CARRY (631 pounds)

1. Sheldon Driggs, Wainwright (96')
2. Lester Keller, Nome (84')
3. Leonard Menka, Koyukuk (47')

EAR WEIGHT CONTEST

1. James Itta, Barrow (1,680')
2. Freddy Titus, Minto (1,590')
3. Billy Killbear, Barrow (880')

FISH CUTTING

1. Mary Walker, Anchorage (1:40)
2. Ida Ross, Fairbanks (1:49)
3. Rhoda Nageak, Barrow (1:48)

MEN'S GREASED POLE WALK

1. Tommy Smith, Inuvik, NWT (9'6")
2. Johnny David, Minto (9')
3. Reggie Joule, Kotzebue (7'8")

WOMEN'S TWO FOOT HIGH KICK

Camille Conwell, Kotzebue

WOMEN'S GREASED POLE WALK

1. Camille Conwell, Kotzebue (5'6")
2. Dee Olin (5'3")
3. Debbie Jessup, Kotzebue (4'6")

MEN'S TWO FOOT HIGH KICK

1. Joshua Okpick, Jr., Barrow (7'½")
2. Reggie Joule, Kotzebue (6'9")
- Lester Bodfish, Wainwright
- Anthony Sarren, Wainwright

MEN'S ONE FOOT HIGH KICK

1. Anthony Sarren, Wainwright (7'11")
2. Joshua Okpick Jr., Barrow (7'11")
3. Robert Okpeaha, Barrow (7'11")

QUEEN CONTEST

Bea Ballot, Kotzebue (Queen)
Shurina Jager, Anchorage (1st Runner Up)
Salina Gooden, Kiana (2nd Runner Up)
Faith Peters, Tanana, (Miss Congeniality)
Shurina Jager, Anchorage (Miss Photogenic)

WOMEN'S BLANKET TOSS

1. Emma Levitt, Barrow
2. Eva Kowunna, Kotzebue
3. Dee Olin, Ruby

SEWING DEMONSTRATION

Mabel Charlie, Minto
Polly Tegoseak, Barrow

MUKTUK EATING

Roy Harding Katairoak, Barrow

RACE OF THE TORCH

Peter Solomon, Ft. Yukon

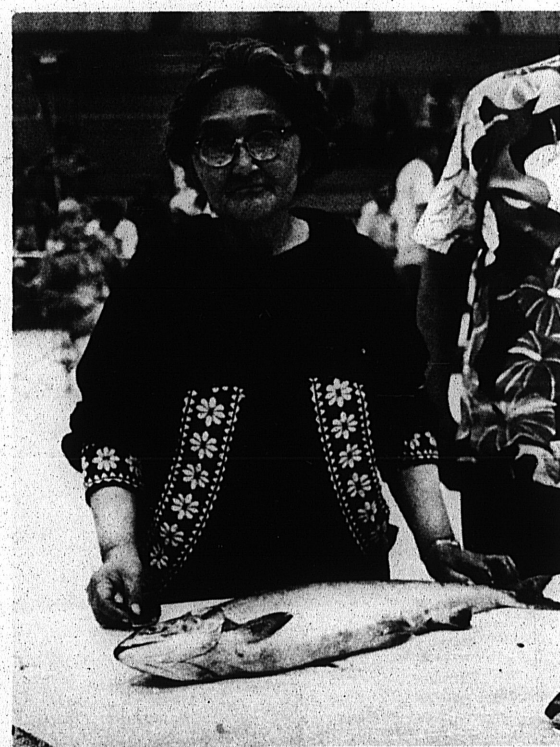
DANCING:

Indian:

1. Minto
2. Tanana

Eskimo:

1. Barrow
2. Wainwright
3. Oliver, Olga, Bernice Amouak, Fairbanks



RHODA NAGEAK (Barrow), record holder in the Seal Skinning contest and perpetual winner of the Parka Contest, is a 62-year-old mother of nine and grandmother of 18.

She has been sewing and skinning seals since she was 12 years old and was taught by her mother Susie Akootchook.

Although she didn't beat her 1967 record of 57 seconds,

Rhoda won the Seal Skinning Contest again this year: "Every year I win. Nobody beat me."

Her nine-year-old, hand-sewn parka won first place for the fourth time, she came in a close third in the Fish Cutting Contest, and danced with the first place Barrow dancers. Does she plan to be back next year? She laughs, "If I'm alive!"