

Mildred Sparks

Mother of the Year

A woman from Haines, Alaska has been selected 1968 Mother of the Year.

Mildred Hotch Sparks, born and raised in Klukwan, Alaska was chosen over other nominees as Mother of the Year for her long and continuing interest in young people and in community and statewide affairs.

Mrs. Sparks has five children who have all served with the Chilkat Dancers and who are active in community affairs and work with the younger generation. Her youngest two children are teachers.

In 1957 Mrs. Sparks helped train a group of Boy Scouts who wished to form a Thingit dance group. This group eventually became known as the Chilkat Dancers who have toured in Europe and extensively in the United States. She still assists the Chilkat Dancers.

The Sparks home in Haines has well-planned grounds bright with flowers attesting further to the homemaking abilities of the Alaska Mother of the Year.

The community leadership exhibited by Mrs. Sparks is long and varied: PTA; fund-raising for the High School Letterman's Club (for which she received an honorary membership); Haines Health Council for ten years, as Treasurer in 1952-53 and President in 1954; member

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of the Women's Club since 1953 and now serving on the Museum Board for the Chilkat Museum; long-standing member of the American Legion Auxiliary; organizer of the cannery workers of Haines Packing Co; and representative to the National GOP Convention, 1956, for which she received Party citation.

Mrs. Sparks joined the Haines Presbyterian Church in 1938, translated services from English to Tlingit, taught Sunday school, served

as an elder and deacon, was recently elected to Elder-Deacon, and has held office in other church-related groups.

The 1968 Mother of the Year has attended a total of 25 Alaska Native Brotherhood grand conventions as the Klukwan representative, served as president of the local Sisterhood for 25 successive years, served three terms as president of the Grand Camp of Alaska Native Brotherhood and

Sisterhood and 12 years as Grand Camp treasurer.

She was treasurer of Klukwan Mercantile Store for seven years; since 1955 has been agent for National Congress of American Indians for her area; and was a member of the Indian Reorganization Act from 1954 to 1958 and vice-president in 1957.

As a member of the Indian Reorganization Act she was instrumental in acquiring for her people the Iron Ore Lease.