

Tragic fire claims Merculief Family at St. George Island



(Andy Klamser)

CYRIL AND ANASTASIA MERCULIEF AT ST. GEORGE, SPRING 1980

Cyril, Anastasia and four children are lost

The family of Cyril and Anastasia Merculief, including their four sons, Pribilof Aleuts from St. George Island, perished in a fire at their home early Sunday morning, June 8. The Merculiefs were prominent leaders in their island community. The fire was discovered by a relative shortly before 6:00 a.m. Thick smoke and noxious fumes prevented efforts to rescue the family.

Smothered in the tragic fire were Cyril and Anastasia, both 32, and sons Cyril, Jr., 9, Cordell, 8, Creedence, 6, and baby boy, Nicodemus. Services and burial were held at St. George late last Sunday evening.

Officials investigating the tragedy said the Merculief home was too extensively damaged to positively determine the cause of the fire.

Cyril and Anastasia attended Mt. Edgecumbe High School and are known to many Native people throughout Alaska. They

were active in the affairs of the St. George Tanaq Corporation. The family were members of the Orthodox Church of St. George, where Anastasia sang in the choir.

Cyril was a member of the board of directors of St. George Tanaq, and had served several terms as President of the Aleut Community of St. George.

Anastasia is survived by her parents, Andronik and Ella Kashevarof, and by sisters Beverly, Bonnie and Clara Kashevarof and Gladys Merculief, and brothers Andronik, Jr., Gilbert and Jeffery.

Cyril is survived by his father, Bill Merculief, brother Mark, and sisters Lucy and Sandra.

The Merculiefs were highly respected in the community. A tribute to the Merculiefs is published in the center pages of this newspaper.