

Miss Eskimo Olympics Competing in Pageant

The current holder of the title Miss World Eskimo Olympics is a pretty, 21 year old Junior at the University of Alaska. Miss Audrey Ambrose will be going to Anchorage Saturday morning to compete in the Miss Alaska contest. The winner of this event will go on to seek the title of Miss America.

When asked how she felt about the contest, Miss Ambrose replied, "There will be some tough competition. I am going to do my very best to win."

The Miss Alaska contest will involve three events: evening gown presentation, bathing suit presentation, and a talent display. In the talent event, Audrey will draw an Eskimo child in pastels.

Miss Ambrose is an Elementary Education major. She was born in Galena and now makes



... Miss Alaska Contestant

her home in Huslia. Questioned about her future, Audrey said, "I would like to go back to one of the villages to teach after graduation."

Unemployment Compensation

JUNEAU—Sen. Ted Stevens informed Thomas J. Moore, Commissioner of the Department of Labor, that on Saturday, February 8, 1969, the U.S. Senate approved 36 million for the payment of unemployment compen-

sation for Federal employees and ex-servicemen.

This action will prevent a delay in the payment of unemployment insurance benefits to Federal employees and ex-servicemen.

Pollock Confident...

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Affairs Committee join with the House committee in those hearings. He said this could perhaps speed up the process and reach a final solution earlier.

"This is not going to be an easy job," Pollock stated. "It's going to be difficult and I think it's extremely important that we here in Alaska arrive at a single, acceptable solution."

"First, all segments of the Alaska native community will have to agree on a single approach. And then the native community and the state will

have to agree on an acceptable solution.

"And then finally, it will be necessary for us to find some agreement and accommodation with the position of the Department of the Interior. Unless we can all agree upon a unified acceptable approach, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get the United States Congress to approve legislation which will once and for all fully and finally resolve this complex issue."

Pollock said that it was obvious that there will have to be some compromise by all parties along the way.

"Nevertheless, the final solution in this manner will be far more satisfactory, I'm sure, than long and uncertain litigation through the courts."

"I have," Pollock concluded, "pledged my best efforts on behalf of the natives of Alaska and will continue to do everything in my power to assist them. After the 101 years under the American flag, I think it's high time we wind up this matter which has divided our people."

"There are plenty enough problems confronting us even when everyone is working together."

"We have a Secretary of Interior who certainly knows our problems and our desires, because Secretary Hickel was governor of Alaska."

"This is our time of opportunity. Let's make the best of it."

New Land Bill...

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ator Stevens asked for, though seemingly a very short time to prepare a bill for native land claims legislation, is not so impossible when it is remembered that the bill produced by the land claims task force contains a great deal of agreement and there are only a few sections which must be worked out," stated Notti.

Notti said he felt that he would receive the cooperation of the Governor and the Legislature as it is certainly to the benefit of the State to have an early solution to the Alaska Native land claims problem.

Plucky Eskimo Woman Finds Calling Despite Hardships

By LYDIA FOHN-HANSEN

Katie Tootkaylook's life unfolds a true story of the indomitable courage and patience of the Eskimo people and inspires respect and admiration for a truly great person. Katie, witty and warm-hearted, has triumphed over many hardships to become a leader and friend to all in her small village of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island.

Katie married at 16, experienced the many hardships of an isolated village, but somehow managed to overcome accidents and epidemics and survive with only one of her sons, now married and living in Mekoryuk. Her husband died in 1956.

She suffered surgery five times. The last surgeon Katie remembers remarked they should have put in a zipper. Katie laughs easily and often, admits that everyone likes to tease her.

Recently she became famous in the Arctic areas when she sold a sweater of muskox wool for \$200. How Katie made it gives an interesting insight into Katie's intelligence and resourcefulness.

Her first contact with muskoxen was in the 1930's, when she was a young child playing with her sister far out on the tundra. They saw this strange animal, but knew it was not a reindeer. They thought it must be a cow like the one pictured in their first grade reader.

When the animal came toward them, they fled in terror. At home their father explained the animal was the "oomingmak" which white people had brought to the island.

Katie, at that time, could not know it was part of the herd of muskoxen brought from Greenland in 1930 to the University of Alaska by the Biological Survey to eventually restock Alaska with this rare and valuable animal. The herd was transplanted to Nunivak in 1935.

Through the years the herd increased and Katie only saw them when the villagers went to fish camp in summer. They often gathered the wool blown about by the wind. No one knew how to use it for anything except for stuffing pillows. Not even the white teachers knew how to make yarn.

Eventually, an Eskimo teacher taught Katie to knit and she could see the possibilities of making yarn from the wool which they called "Musskoat," but in other places called "qiviut."

She had never seen a spinning wheel but figured she could make yarn by the process used in making 2-ply sinew for sewing. This is a very tedious method of twisting a 2-ply thread, but she kept at it making a coarse, but even yarn and from it knit a beautiful sweater weighing 5½ pounds.

Mr. Leman Ellis bought it for \$200 and says it is the best sweater he ever had. It sheds rain and snow and is very warm. It had taken her a year and a half to complete it.

The sweater aroused a great deal of interest. The teacher, John Armstrong, got Katie a spinning wheel, and since she had never seen a wheel before, she taught herself to spin, though she was not pleased with her yarn and had no cards for carding the wool.

Bob Stevens gave her some cards, but she was not sure how to use them.

At this point, a walrus hunter, Mr. Geo Plack, visited Nunivak, and when he returned to Fairbanks, began inquiring for possible ways to finance a trip to Fairbanks for Katie. Also Mr.



PLUCKY ESKIMO WOMAN—Katie Tootkaylook of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island, despite many difficulties throughout her life, has learned to be a fine "qiviut" or "musskoat" (musk ox wool) spinner and knitter. After persevering to work with the wool, Katie finally finished a musk ox wool sweater which she sold for \$200 after spending a long time at it. Interested people in Fairbanks made it possible for her to train on the processing of the wool which she can now do expertly. In the past, Katie has had five surgery operations which she laughs off when she remembers the last surgeon remarked to her that "they should have put in a zipper."

Delbert Neuhaert, Agriculture Extension Specialist with the BIA in Bethel, became interested and began writing letters in an attempt to obtain assistance.

He eventually wrote the Yukon-Kwim District agriculture agent, Virgil Severns. With the help of Mrs. Jean Burand, Home Economist for the Extension Service, a proposal was written, after attempts for help elsewhere had failed.

The proposal was sent to Mr. Ross Miller, area Industrial Development Officer with the BIA in Juneau. Miller contacted the branch of employment assistance and the immediate response was positive. Plans were made for Katie to learn the skills necessary.

It was arranged that Katie would stay with Lydia Fohn-Hansen; that Mrs. John Savela, an expert spinner, would instruct Katie in the use of carders and spinning wheel.

Mrs. Clyde Geraghty would show her how to use a spindle and Vena Clark would help her with knitting problems.

Katie arrived in Fairbanks on October 19th and returned home November 4th. The spinning lessons proved her a very apt pupil, a case of instant spinning due to her early efforts of teaching herself to spin.

In a few days she spun and twined a large bank of 2-ply yarn. She also mastered the spindle and carding. During the week

she gave several demonstrations to the Homemakers Councils and to the Home Economics Association.

When asked what she plans to do, she replies, "I will teach anyone who is interested in learning and we will collect a lot of wool. Maybe we can sell some of it and maybe we can make sweaters and mittens. Maybe we can have a 4-H club and I'll teach them to spin and knit. Maybe we can get money for our work."

This self-help project will in no way compete with the Kellogg Foundation project at the Yankovich farm operated to produce breeding stock for villagers to supply a high-quality qiviut for luxury trade as a source of cash income.

While this project is developing under the directions of Mr. John Teal, the people of Nunivak should be encouraged to use a valuable resource within their reach even if it helps only one village to live better.

Katie extends to all who helped her a grateful "Thanks!" "Kuana" she says to the BIA agencies, the teacher and the clubs and families who entertained her.

"Everybody is so friendly here," she said.

It is easy to be friendly with Katie, who radiates interest and good humor and told fascinating stories of life on Nunivak Island.

HENSLEY CAUTIONS...

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date to scour around for funds from any possible source.

The Division of Lands would be the zoning authority for the six unorganized boroughs and its decisions would be final unless disapproved by concurrent resolution of the legislature.

"It is questionable whether

the Governor's plan is a workable one. Every town council in an unorganized borough area should study the proposal and make its opinions known to their legislators—otherwise, we may have a monstrosity that will only clutter further our units of local government," stated Hensley.