

# Arts, Crafts Evaluation S.E. Timber Cutting Questioned

(Continued from page 2)

so eager to learn of a new way of carving but could not understand what I said until I spoke louder; for others it was simply the fact that reading and writing does not start at home—it is pounded to them like other normal readers and writers at school and punishment to them for lacking reading or writing skills is considered a puzzling but accepted occurrence to be expected from new teachers.

SOME OF THEM spoke very fluent Eskimo and seemed to be more able to read and write. Others spoke very bad English and knew very little about even the most elementary spelling. Still others thought that the only means of showing drawing ability emerged from knowing how to draw snow igloos which do not exist in Nome. Very few experimented with other things such as flowers, houses, or automobiles. The most popular objects to draw were animals like polar bear, walrus and seal and figures such as Eskimo hunters or fishermen—the subject matter used by the elders for making carvings for sale.

DRAWING ABILITY to all of them meant a strenuous trial and error method on a very small piece of paper, with much erasing and redoing, to form the smallest image of the various types of ivory carving positions of man and animals.

WE LEFT NOME feeling that there should definitely be some changes made. One of them being our length of stay; it was not nearly enough to prove anything. Three short weeks is too short to try and work out some changes towards the betterment of such an organization as the Sunarit Associates.

WE ONLY SHOWED that the Nome King Island youngsters have not yet learned to mistrust outside help. (Inside help not excluded, but we have not yet seen who is interested enough for inside helping. We did talk with the Vista workers and with the Nome Public Schools' Art Teacher, unfortunately for only a short while.)

THE INSIDE HELP is available through the association's members if they are aware of the possibilities. And if they agree on some sort of an organizational policy which would enable responsible and able youngsters to form their own sub-organization.

MR. PETER SEEGANNA is the Assistant Supervisor of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board. His job is to be the advisor for the Sunarit Associates and act as overall overseer of the building and its contents which are for the most part property of the U.S. Government.

HIS MAIN shortcomings seem to be: his duties are written down and they are the only specific duties apparent in the operations as it is now; they are too easily overpowered by the elders of King Island Village who are used to the system of elder respect before allocation and recognition of powers by the younger; the workshop is so close to the King Island Village that others who may be interested are not encouraged to assimilate themselves to specific King Island Village problems; King Island Village pre-school children, much like other pre-school children, are a rambunctious lot and yet the parents allow them into the place of work, mainly because of the lack of play room at home or elsewhere; his family will not separate his working time from his obligations to his immediate family—since acquiring the use of a vehicle, this problem is twice-fold in its complicity—at all hours of the day, he is called upon to act as a chauffeur. If he does not do this, he may be further estranged by his own

village as a disrespectful bureaucrat; his effectiveness as an advisor is lessened all the more by the lack of a strong organization of the Sunarit Associates, Inc. itself. PETER MAY BE able to overcome some of these problems in time, but for the associations beginning at efficiency, they should be resolved very soon.

MR. BERNARD KATEXAC is a fine printmaker himself and his post as president of the Sunarit Associates might well benefit from this ability. We had asked him if he would continue the instruction of printmaking to the young group and his reaction did not seem very enthusiastic. He also has to make his position felt to the King Island Village and he tends to identify more with the elder group.

THE IMPORTANCE of carrying on what was started during our three week stay has therefore been left quite up in the air due to the three or four different age groups of King Island Village. We also suggested scrap ivory collages, combination of soapstone and wood sculpture, Nome beach pebble and drift wood assemblages, hide prints, and tin can engravings utilizing hand wringers (the roller-type) for make-shift presses to experiment and keep the young people interested in expressing themselves.

THE OLDEST GROUP feel that their traditional habits are lost in a world of progress. They will leave the new things to their young. The mature but still young feel they understand the life patterns of both the elder and the younger groups and can make do with a little hunting, a little fishing, a little working and a little relaxation.

THEN THERE IS the 18-25 age group who feel left out from mostly everything. The ones left in Nome feel they need not cater to any group and being too old to play childish games, usually revert to drinking excessively and frequently as a pastime. This pastime further alienates this unfortunate age group when the elders give up hope for them to only name them worthless ingrates. This group also absorbs some of the very young—the last group of the age groups—by being influential as slightly older with a pastime to offer.

IN A NUTSHELL, this has been our experience in Nome and much has to be done in order to educate such youngsters as those we had a fleeting glance at in Nome. There is no longer a strong

ANCHORAGE— John Borbridge, Jr., President of the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska, sent letters last week to the Secretary of Agriculture, Clifford M. Hardin, and the Secretary of the Interior, Walter J. Hickel, calling attention to the fact that while travelling around Southeastern Alaska recently, he has received several expressions of concern from Native leaders about timber cutting on lands in the vicinity of certain Native villages that are proposed for grant to the Natives in the settlement bills now being considered by Congress, including the bill sponsored by the Administration.

In these letters, Mr. Borbridge pointed out that if the merchantable timber has been stripped from the lands prior to their transfer to the villages, the value of the lands in the hands of the Natives will be greatly reduced.

He asked both Secretaries to advise him with respect to timbering and other exploitive operations in progress or in contemplation on lands within any township in which a Native village is located or on lands within any township which shares a border or corner with such a township and to take such steps as are necessary to prevent such acti-

elderly chief who traditionally took upon his shoulders the brunt of all the responsibilities of efficiently running the village.

TODAY THE CHIEF is a young man who has other obligations—work outside of Nome, a family of his own and a dissipated clan.

FOR TWO AND a half weeks, Jan and I were able to present ourselves to the younger group as persons they needn't feel uncomfortable with, persons who didn't have exploitation or personal promotion in mind and last but not least, persons they could learn something from of themselves and of their own potential.

Sincerely yours,  
Joseph E. Senungetuk

cc: Mr. Peter J. Seeganna, Assistant Supervisor, Indian Arts and Crafts Board

Mr. Bernard Katexac, President, Sunarit Associates, Inc.

Mr. William Byler, Executive Director, Association on American Indian Affairs

vities in the future. Commenting on his action, Borbridge said, "If the exploitation of lands being considered for transfer of full title to the

villages is allowed to go on while Congress is acting on the claims settlement legislation, the Natives may find themselves the owners of little but stumps and tailings."

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