

Inuvik News: Canadians Meet On Land Freeze & Claims

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The ice didn't go out here till the 31 of May — and then suddenly it was summer — with the instant green that seems to happen only in the far north. And also about that time the mosquitoes and black flies, those constant irritants which accompany warm weather appeared

in abundance. I've always felt it was quite unfair that in the north, where the summers are so short anyhow, the beautiful weather is marred by one having to constantly fight those vicious attackers.

We have 24-hour sunlight here from the 24th of May until the 19th of July. Theoretically, that is — this year there has

been quite a lot of rain in June — and on the 29th, Inuvik even had a hailstorm, which is quite a rarity in this area, and which did some damage to the few gardens around here.

On the 29th of May, Sam Raddi, president of Cope; Victor Allen, one of the vice-presidents, and I went to Whitehorse for a meeting of the Federation of

Natives North of 60. Representatives were present from the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. (James Wah-Shee), the Metis and Non-Status Native Association of the N.W.T. (Carl Carpenter), the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (Victor Allen, substituting for Tagak Curley, who was unable to attend), the Yukon Native Brotherhood

(Elzhaz Smith), the Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians (Joe Jacquot), the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) (Sam Raddi), and the Alaska Federation of Natives (Al Ketzler).

James Wah-Shee, president of the Federation, chaired most of the sessions. Topics under discussion were the land freeze recently put into effect by the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T., Canadian land claims, and future meetings and structure of the Federation. Al Ketzler gave an account of AFN involvement in native land claims in Alaska.

Shortly after the meetings were concluded on June 1, Sam Raddi suffered a serious heart attack and was taken to the Whitehorse General Hospital, where he remained until June 20th. He is now home in Inuvik, where he is recuperating.

Preparations for Northern Games have been progressing, but funding is a very definite problem this year, and therefore final plans have not yet been completed. The dates for the games are August 3, 4, and 5, and it is hoped that there will be enough money available to hold them in at least two locations, Coppermine and Fort Good Hope.

We've had letters and phone calls from Alaska asking if a group from Inuvik will be coming to Fairbanks for the Eskimo-Indian Olympics this year. We are trying very hard to make this a reality, but there is no way of telling at this point if there will be enough money available to make the trip. Edward Lennie and the Northern Games boys, and Billy Day and the Mackenzie Delta Drummers and Dancers are hoping that things will work out so they can get there.

The barges have started coming in, and new supplies are appearing all over town. There has also been an influx of people working on summer projects, making films, and touring the north.

This week a number of local people have left for the coastal areas to set up whaling camps. The first whales were sighted at Tuktoyaktuk on June 29th, and Vince Steen went out in his boat and shot two of them.

Fishing in general is reported to be good, but this has apparently been a poor year for muskrats — complaints about ratting have been heard all through the area.

On the 24th of June the annual meeting of the Inuvik area Hunters and Trappers Associations was held. Members of the executive board include Alex Gordon, Alex Greenland, Colin Allen, Johnny MacDonald and David Rowland. At a subsequent meeting of the board, Colin Allen was elected president. Former president Edward Lennie declined to run for office this year.

The last of the spring jamborees was held at Holman Island on the weekend of June 15-17. The Kingalik Jamboree (Kingalik being an Eskimo word meaning Eider Duck) attracted about 300 people, including two DC-3 planeloads from Sachs Harbour and Inuvik. Louie Goose of CBC, who is originally from Holman Island, went to the Jamboree and gave an interesting report on the festivities over my weekly radio program, Delta News. This was the first Jamboree held at Holman, and from the sound of it, it definitely will not be the last.