

A Man of Many Achievements—

A Tribute to Nenana's Alphonse Demientieff

By LEE UPTON

This year for the first time in a decade, Alphonse Demientieff was missing at the recent raising of the Nenana Ice Classic tripod. He had died April 14, 1974. The Classic continues, as does the memory of the many neighbors and friends for this man was so active in this and other community events.

Alphonse Demientieff, of Russian-Athabaskan ancestry, was born January 24, 1905 at Holy Cross. He grew up and was educated at the Holy Cross school.

When he was 14 years old he went to work as a deckhand on the steamboats which plied the Yukon and when he was 18 he got his first job as a river-boat pilot on the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. He also worked as pilot for the Day Navigational Company and also for his brother Nick.

As a young man in the village he played football and baseball during the summer and skied and skated during the winter.

On January 3, 1927 he married Mary Cristo and they made their home in Holy Cross. As the years went by, life wasn't always easy for the young couple and their family of three boys and two girls.

At times food supplies were scarce. There was no sugar, no white flour and Mary had to use the coarse graham flour which was all that was available.

Clothes were hard to get. But the family were healthy and happy and the father managed to provide. He had his summer job on the river and he spent winters trapping and hunting to keep meat on the table.

In 1945 the family moved to Nenana where Alphonse became pilot for the river transportation unit of the C.A.A. and in 1946 he became captain and pilot for the TAKU CHIEF of the Yutana Barge Lines.

From May to October of each year he worked on the river and in winter he made dogsleds, little caches of birch and always went trapping and hunting. Two more boys and two more girls were born to the family at this time.

In 1964 he and his men raised the tripod on the Tanana River. This was for the Nenana Ice Classic — now the annual event which attracts attention from all over Alaska as well as from the "outside".

He began carving miniatures of the tripod; very few were made as this was not a commercial venture. As these small tripods were scarce, they became highly valued. Two of the recent lucky recipients in 1972 were George Atla and the former commander of the Clear Air Force Station.

In 1967 Alphonse built himself a small shop behind his house and he started turning out dogsleds for adults and children and miniature sleds and caches. The first sled he had ever built was when he was fourteen years old in Holy Cross.

He had asked his Dad to show him how and his Dad had replied, "I'll show you just one time." So he built his sleds, harnessed up his dogs and took off. But he came home minus one sled.

Health Schools...

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were allowed to testify before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

The other hearings are scheduled to be held on April 28 before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs and a final three-day hearing before the full Senate Appropriations Committee on May 5-7.



ALPHONSE DEMIENTIEFF

There was nothing left. It had broken up. But he tried and tried again and at last perfected his technique. He loved to work with his hands.

He didn't care to express himself very much with words, but his craftsmanship was superb. Whatever he did, whether it was something for the home, on order for someone else, in his work for the Yutana Barge Lines or for the Nenana Ice Classic, he was never satisfied until it was the best job he could do. It had to be just right. Perfection was his goal.

And in the closing months of his life he realized true happiness surrounded by his nine children, 25 grand-children and five great-grandchildren, some of whom visited him every weekend. His heritage to his family was a busy useful life and each one of his sons and daughters have followed his example. They all live and work in the Interior as:

warehouseman at Ft. Wainwright, heavy equipment operator, counselor for the Alcoholic program, waitress, teamster, lab technician, hearing and speech instructor for Crippled Children's Association, mechanic and oiler on the North Slope.

Alphonse became one of the most respected men in his village of Nenana and his reputation as a craftsman had spread over Interior Alaska. Knowledge about him extended even outside Alaska, too. His memory will always be with us.

Extra GI Bill entitlement is available to veterans and active duty military personnel to complete high school or take certain courses required for higher education and this "free entitlement" is not chargeable to the individual's normal entitlement.

Consumer Alert Warns of Incorrect Re-fueling

Attorney General Avrum M. Gross has issued this consumer alert concerning a very serious problem which has arisen within the field of aviation, and particularly by small plane users.

Gross reported that the Federal Aviation Administration officials in Alaska reported that there have been many instances of re-fueling of aircraft with jet fuel instead of requested aviation gas.

Serious accidents have occurred because of this, he added. Gross said that what was originally considered to be an unusual situation and a very unfortunate mistake has proven to be actually a continuing serious problem.

In many cases, Gross stated, the re-fueling with jet fuel may be due to the distributor of the fuel not clearing his jet fuel tanks properly or of labeling it in such a manner that unskilled workers who are re-fueling airplanes cannot know the difference.

Gross stated that most aviation pilots cannot really know the difference and that the FAA is concerned because there is very little way for the average air plane pilot to be able to tell the difference.

Usually, Gross stated, he relies upon the servicing crew, and this in many cases, especially in remote areas, could be a very serious mistake that can cost a life.

Gross stated that FAA officials have stated that occasionally there has been improper marking of trucks and other vehicles which

do the re-fueling so that, once again, personnel can't always determine the particular contents in the trucks.

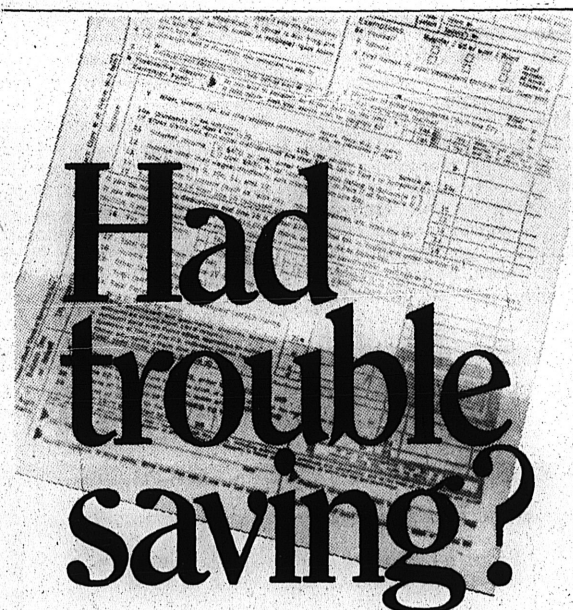
Added to the problem, Gross stated, was the fact that there has been a serious problem with contamination of fuel and also of frozen water.

Gross stated that the FAA is about to do a full inspection of the area and that possibly by alerting the public, as is being done now, and by their inspecting teams going out to individual airports throughout the state, the problem can be decreased.

However, Gross added, there is no way to fully guarantee results unless airport operators and suppliers of fuel are willing to work out the problem. This means that they do have to keep their trucks well manned and keep their equipment in top shape including proper labeling and color coding.

Gross stated that at the present time there really are not any official FAA rules on the subject and that therefore this alert was being issued in order to get the kind of cooperative action from persons concerned without the need of possible state legislative action.

Gross also stated that the FAA was putting out an Alaska Flying Newsletter which will very carefully document the problems and that copies of it can be obtained from the Federal Aviation Administration, Alaska Region, 632 6th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.



Your tax refund could be the start you need.

With the high cost of living...and taxes...these days, we know how difficult it is to start a regular savings plan. Your tax refund could be just what you've been waiting for to start you on the road to financial independence. Rather than letting all that "unexpected" money slip through your fingers, deposit your refund check in a savings account with us and watch it grow with compound interest.

FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION

MAIN OFFICE: Cushman and Gaffney
DOWNTOWN BRANCH OFFICE: 2nd & Lacey
STEESE HIGHWAY BRANCH OFFICE: 400 Steese Highway

KIAK 970



MIDNIGHT TO 6 A.M. — STEVE THOMPSON
6 A.M.-10:30 A.M. — LARRY STEPHENS
10:30 A.M.-3 P.M. — DON BYRON
3 P.M.-6:30 P.M. — DICK LOBDELL
6:30 P.M.-MIDNIGHT — LAN CARSON
ON SUNDAY LISTEN FOR
TOM BUSCH AND JIM HEIM

Heard on KIAK at 6:45 a.m./p.m. and 8:45 p.m. is

PIPELINE OF THE NORTH
ON SUNDAYS FROM 2-5 P.M. Join Jerry Naylor with
CONTINENTAL COUNTRY.
The KIAK Top 20 is previewed every SUNDAY from
6-9 P.M. on COUNTRY COUNTDOWN

LISTEN FOR MONROE RAMS
HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL
WITH DICK LOBDELL AND RICK O'BRIEN

"WORLD TOMORROW" DAILY AT 7:00 P.M.. Sun. 6:30 P.M.
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