

# Calista is Proud of Howard Rock Ballroom

The Calista Board of Directors and the present management team remember Howard Rock as a great man. They are proud to name the elaborate new ballroom in the Sheraton Anchorage after an "Inupiaq" a "real man," a true human being.

Friends often call him teh "The Rock." His name was Howard Rock and he was the founder-editor of the Tundra Times. He was also one of the most widely honored Native leaders in Alaska.

"The Rock," who was the heart and soul of the Tundra Times, lost a battle with cancer in 1976. He is gone but not forgotten in the hearts of many Alaskans who knew him as a good and great man, a close and trusted friend.

Perhaps Agnes Pete Griffith, a former Tundra Times reporter, said it best at the time of his death in April of 1976. She states, "I was thinking that though he has died, he still lives

on in the minds of men. Great men don't fade away easily and I am sure Howard will be remembered for many years as the great editor of the Tundra Times."

The Howard Rock Ballroom is the largest ballroom in Alaska. The Native-owned hotel reflects the rich heritage of the Native culture that "The Rock" wrote so often about in the Tundra Times.

Howard (Weyahok) Rock was born in the village of Point Hope, an ancient tiny village in northwestern Alaska. He was one of eight children and can recall being cold and hungry many times during his childhood in the village.

Howard Rock was extremely proud of his Eskimo heritage and his family background. He wrote often of the Native culture and customs.

"The Rock" also had a great love of Native art. He was a great Eskimo artist as well as a writer,

editor and Native leader. For this reason it is only fitting that the lifesize marble etching of the Eskimo Blanket Toss stands in all its marble splendor alongside the entrance doors of the Hooton Hotel.

Every true Eskimo festival and many non-Native occasions in Alaska include the Blanket toss. The blanket toss features a walrus-hide blanket grasped by a number of people in a circle who toss a person on a blanket as high as possible for as long as the person can remain upright.

All future festivals in the Howard Rock Ballroom will begin with the marble rendition of the Eskimo blanket toss. Thousands of guests in the years to come will view the creative artwork of a talented Eskimo artist as they walk into the Howard Rock Ballroom named after a great Eskimo leader.

Eskimo artist Robert Mayokok created the original pen and ink drawing of the blanket toss.



HOWARD ROCK