

# Goodnews Bay Eyes Musk Ox Industry

In response to a letter from the Village Council of Goodnews Bay, the Musk Ox Project recently sent a textile field worker there. Miss Helen Griffiths, a native of England, said the village received her very well and was interested in becoming part of the Project.

Village Council President, John Small, was enthusiastic about establishing a herd of muskoxen in the village, when it is a Fourth Class City and as soon as the immediate projects of laying sewer and water lines and a village electricity supply are complete. Other members of the Council were also keen on the idea.

Goodnews Bay is located just north of Bristol Bay and last year two co-operatives were establish-

ed there, one handling groceries, the other selling salmon to Japanese freezer ships. They are both successful.

When the musk ox industry is started in the village it will probably form a third co-operative to handle the business, pay the herdsman, have the wool (known as 'qiviut') spun, distribute yarn among the knitters, control the quality of the garments produced, package them and ship them to fashionable stores in the Lower Forty-eight.

At first the business will be handled by the Musk Ox Project's staff who will later advise the co-operative when they are needed.

Villagers of Mekoryuk, Nuni-

(Continued on page 6)

# ***Goodnews Bay..***

(Continued from page 1)

vak Island, are already earning money from the musk ox industry. The women there are knitting fine, lacy scarves of qiviut with a design taken from an antique ivory harpoon head.

They are also producing sample garments to show to fashion buyers who will determine which garments will sell best and should be made in quantity.

During her visit to Goodnews Bay, Miss Griffiths showed the people the Mekoryuk knitters' delicate work and they were very impressed.

"They passed the scarves around exclaiming how beautiful they were," she said. "I showed them the patterns we use, which are symbols on squared paper from which you can see the design at a glance, and many women were interested in learning this lacy knitting.

"Some of them preferred to speak Eskimo, and I had learned a little at the University, so we had a lot of fun. Susie Bavilla and I went through the knitting pattern together, she speaking Yupik and telling me what the symbols meant."

Helen showed several women how to spin qiviut with a spindle, which looks like a wooden top. They picked up the art very quickly and when Helen later showed the yarn they had spun to the Fairbanks Weavers' Guild they were very impressed.

Possibly older women with poor eyesight might learn to spin rather than knit since they cannot see the knitting pattern.

When the market's requirements are known Miss Griffiths will return to Goodnews Bay to conduct a workshop in making and finishing garments so that the women may start earning money from the musk ox products.