

Allakaket Eskimos and Indians Get Along Fine

Rev. Raymond Oppenheim, Episcopal minister at the village of Allakaket deep in central Alaska, was in Fairbanks last weekend.

"All the myths you hear about Eskimos and Indians not getting along together are not true," Rev. Oppenheim said. "In fact we have an Eskimo in the village council out of five members."

What makes Rev. Oppenheim's remarks interesting is that Allakaket is located on the dividing line of Indian and Eskimo countries. The village is located on each side of Koyukuk River.

Although one section of the village is located on one bank of the river and populated by Eskimos, the other one on the opposite bank has a mixed population.

"They have intermarried through the years and they are

getting along fine," Oppenheim said. "In fact Bertha Moses, an Eskimo, is on the village council and she is married to an Indian. They have 11 children. Bertha is also the village health aide and a school board member."

He said in 1964 to 1966 Frank Sam, an Eskimo, was elected chief. Andy Simon, an Indian, succeeded Sam in 1966 and Eddy Bergman, Jr., also an Indian, is the present chief.

Rev. Oppenheim doesn't know whether the good relationships between the Indians and Eskimos at Allakaket have anything to do with good school records among the youngsters at the village, but he said every 8th grader is now in high schools and there has been no dropouts.

"And the village is still running dogteams," he said.