

--CENTURY NOTES--

Ray Nielsen in Sitka might be rubbing his eyes in wonderment if he had the time, but he's too busy helping with arrangements for the first All-Alaska Native Dance Contest set for the week of June 12 in Sitka.

Ray's dream of such an event, made vocal through this column last fall, is indeed about to come true and it represents a cultural event of great significance.

Besides the pleasure to viewers and participants, the contest will serve as a means of preserving the heritage of Native singing and dancing by having the older people learned in this art teach the younger generation.

Local area competitions among the various dancing groups are to be completed prior to May 15 in each of the four judicial dis-

tricts. Two dance groups will be selected from this elimination to compete in the Sitka festival.

In addition, Haidas and Tsimp-sians will each bring forth one group from their communities. Sitka, being host to this fine "First," will be ceded a place in the contest. It is possible that some Canadian groups will also come to perform, but not to compete.

Ten persons will comprise a dance group and members can sing their own songs, use recordings or bring additional singers. The Alaska State Centennial Commission will arrange transportation and Sitkans will provide housing.