

Mural Depicts Missionary Activities in Alaska



MURAL DEPICTING MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN ALASKA now hangs permanently in the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library on the University of Alaska's Fairbanks campus. Looking over the

new acquisition are, from left, Ted Ryberg, the university's director of libraries, and Sister Judy E. Morin and Robert Nelson of the United Campus Ministry. (UA Photos)

FAIRBANKS—A mural painted for the Alaska Purchase Centennial depicting missionary activity of the Christian churches in Alaska is now on permanent display in the University of Alaska's Elmer E. Rasmuson Library here.

Done by well-known Alaska artist Rie Munoz of Juneau, the mural is on loan to the university from the Alaska Christian Conference and the United Campus Ministry at the university.

It was commissioned for the 1967 centennial by the Alaska

Christian Conference (then known as the Alaska Council of Churches) under a grant from Mr. and Mrs. Rasmuson.

The mural hung in the old Presbyterian Church (the first church built in Fairbanks in Alaska), then known as A67,

during the centennial year. Then it toured Alaska and the other states and was last displayed during the jubilee celebration of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska and at a private showing of the artist's work at the Alaska State Museum.

"It is felt that because of its historical and ecumenical value it will make a significant contribution to the collection at the library and to an understanding of the role of the churches in building of Alaska," said Bob Nelson, director of the United Campus Ministry.

"It is also appropriate that the mural hang in the Elmer Rasmuson Library because Jennie Olson Rasmuson is one of the missionaries featured in the mural, Mr. and Mrs. Rasmuson commissioned the painting originally, and the library is named for Mr. Rasmuson, former president of the university's Board of Regents," he said.

Mrs. Munoz' work is based largely on the book, "Cry in the Wilderness," by Tay Thomas. The design was selected by a committee composed of Mrs. Norma Hoyt, Mrs. Thomas, Bert Hall and the Reverends Ken Smith and Walter Hays, in cooperation with the Alaska Council of Churches and Mr. and Mrs. Rasmuson.