



**DENNIS COMES HOME**—Fifteen years after he was adopted by an Air Force family, Dennis Stover, 20, returns to Alaska with B.I.A. traveling art exhibit. —TUNDRA TIMES Photo

# Poignant Reunion Of Mother and Son

By SHEILA TURNER  
Staff Writer

Dennis Stover, 20, knocked at the door of Mrs. Katherine Theodore of Eklutna two Saturdays ago. She opened it and stared at the slim young Athabascan facing her. Suddenly she started to tremble and sob. Could it be?

Yes! The young man, smartly dressed in the fashion of lower 48 students, said he was her son, Daniel Nikita, whom she had not seen in 15 years.

The boy had been adopted by an U.S. Air Force family when he was five and Mrs. Theodore had not seen him since. Though her only son,

she had given him up for adoption because of poverty and disease in her village of Knik.

Dennis left the state with his new parents, Master Sgt. and Mrs. Dolton B. Stover II, and traveled all over the world. He graduated from high school in Tokyo, Japan two years ago and enrolled in the New Mexico School of Arts and Crafts. When he heard a school exhibit was traveling to Anchorage for the centennial this summer, he applied for and received

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permission to come along.

"One reason for coming was to find my real mother," Dennis said. "I remembered her name, Katherine Nikita, but I had no idea where she was."

In Anchorage, Dennis met Albert Yakasoff on the Cook Inlet Native Association. Yakasoff knew the mother, now remarried and living in Eklutna. He took Dennis to her home, without advance warning.

Apparently none was needed. "It was a real special feeling to meet my mother," Dennis said. He reported a bit an awkwardness at first, but that soon disappeared. "We talked for several hours,"

he said. "I started to wonder what things in life really are important. My mother's house has no electricity. She cooks on a tiny coleman stove. But she's happy. She's had a good life."

Dennis planned to attend college in California this fall, but now he is thinking of going to the University of Alaska. He wants to be a social worker.

"I've been asked to go back with the tribe," he said. "They say they need people like me. I'm thinking about it. I might do it if I don't have to give up my adopted parents. They are real wonderful people. You owe a lot to people who rear you."

Dennis will remain with the craft show at the Kalon building in Anchorage until September.