

Inuvik Town-

By LOIS KEATING
Inuvik, N. W. T.

December 1 - A series of tragedies struck the Inuvik area this fall, beginning with the plane crash I mentioned in my last column.

Then on October 6th, Jonas Meyook, 53, and his son, Jimmy Meyook, 28, of Aklavik, went off on a hunting trip from Hershel Island, off the northern Yukon coast. According to reports, they had a successful hunt and were heading back home in their heavily laden scow. Shortly after their departure from the mainland, heavy winds sprang up. The two men never reached Hershel Island. Air searches for them continued for many days but no sign of them has ever been found.

On the last weekend in October, two young women from Inuvik - Lillian Lester and Mary Harry, both 21, died in a skidoo accident. They were riding on a toboggan behind a skidoo, on the ice on the river, when they hit open water. The two men with them, Harry and Wilbur Pfeffer, somehow managed to get out of the water but the two girls couldn't make it. They went under the ice and their bodies have not been found.

On the evening of October 9th, Neta Raddi, 18 year old daughter of Sam Raddi, president of C.O.P.E. (Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement) went to a party and did not return home. An intensive search was started, but it was not until the 29th that her frozen body was found in the willows at the north end of the airstrip. She had apparently wandered off by herself and fallen in the bush.

Local council elections are being held December 10th in Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk and Aklavik and on December 17th in Fort McPherson. The Inuvik election includes a race for mayor. The two candidates are L. P. "Hank" Holman, the incumbent mayor and Agnes Semmler, former president of C.O.P.E. and also a former town councillor.

The ice road to Aklavik has been open for over a week now. I had a chance to ride over on the 29th of November - my first trip to Aklavik - and my first experience on a road was on the middle of a river. There's been very little snow so far, so the road was good, with little drifting. The following day there were heavy winds and it is now virtually impassable.

I spent a couple of days in Fort McPherson early in November, and recorded some tapes in Loucheux for CHAK, the Inuvik radio station. It was my first visit to the Peel River settlement. I'd heard so much about Fort McPherson for so long that it was good to finally get to see it for myself.

The local taxi companies and the Town Council got into quite an impasse the other night regarding the raising of cab fares. Then for two days, the companies operated with only one car each, in protest of Council's refusal to grant them immediate consideration of the situation.

For three years now, the single in-town taxi rate has been \$.75, which is much lower than anywhere else in the north - and during this time costs have increased considerably. The companies want to raise the basic price to \$1.25, to bring them more into line with other areas. Town Council has agreed

to have a special meeting with them next week to come to some kind of an agreement.

Two alcohol workshops have been held recently in the Mackenzie area, in Fort Norman and in Fort McPherson. These were sponsored by the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. and they discussed all aspects of the problem of alcohol in the local communities.

The first week in December a conference on recreation and culture is being held at Fort Providence, sponsored also by the Indian Brotherhood. The purpose of this conference is to find out the needs of native people for recreation and cultural program - and to work on the development of such a program.

The Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T. has received funding from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to carry

out a study on the Alaska land claims settlement. They feel that a lot can be learned from the Alaskan experience and they hope that a better understanding of what has happened in Alaska will aid them in negotiations regarding their own land settlement.

Tuktoyaktuk now has television. Following the lead of Ross River in the Yukon, the hamlet managed to pirate a CBC television station from Inuvik to Tuk without the permission of the Canadian Radio Television Commission (RTC). CBC had promised Tuk a TV station by next October - but they couldn't wait that long, so they put up 100 foot towers and caught the broadcast signal from Inuvik. The whole venture cost them about \$23,000. They expect that the CRTC will approve the station in the near future.

Representatives from Northern Games met recently with Ray Goulet, N.W.T. coordinator for the 1974 Arctic Winter Games in Anchorage. Edward Lennie, Doug Dittich and I discussed with him the new rule book for the Arctic Sports section of AVG. We told him that at a recent Northern Games meeting, the committee was very much against setting an age limit for participants for Arctic Sports.

It was felt that not only was this contrary to the traditional aspects of the games, wherein players of all ages take part, but that an age limit would prevent some of the best players of the N.W.T. and Alaska from participating.

Sam Raddi, president of C.O.P.E., and Rosalee Tizya, also from C.O.P.E., both of Inuvik, have just returned to Canada after attending the

Arctic Peoples Conference in Copenhagen. This was a meeting of native people north of 60 from Canada, Greenland and the northern European countries. Unfortunately Alaska was unable to send delegates at this time.

James Wah-shee, president of the Indian Brotherhood of the N.W.T., and also president of the Federation of Natives, north of 60, has been elected to head the new circumpolar organization.

Fishing and hunting have been reported to be very good at Aklavik, Sachs Harbour and Paulatuk, but so far have been very poor in the Fort McPherson - Arctic Red River area.