



Nuchalawoyya, a time to celebrate

By MARK KELLEY

The Nuchalawoyya is a time for Tanana to open its doors and celebrate, a time for friends to gather from up and down the river, a time for people to meet new friends, and a time to participate in games, dancing and singing.

Nuchalawoyya literally translates as where the two rivers meet (the Yukon and Tanana) and has come to mean an annual festival put on the Tanana people.

During this year's festival, the young people honored all of the older people and their music.

Although the present festival started back in the early '60s, it evolved from a much older celebration.

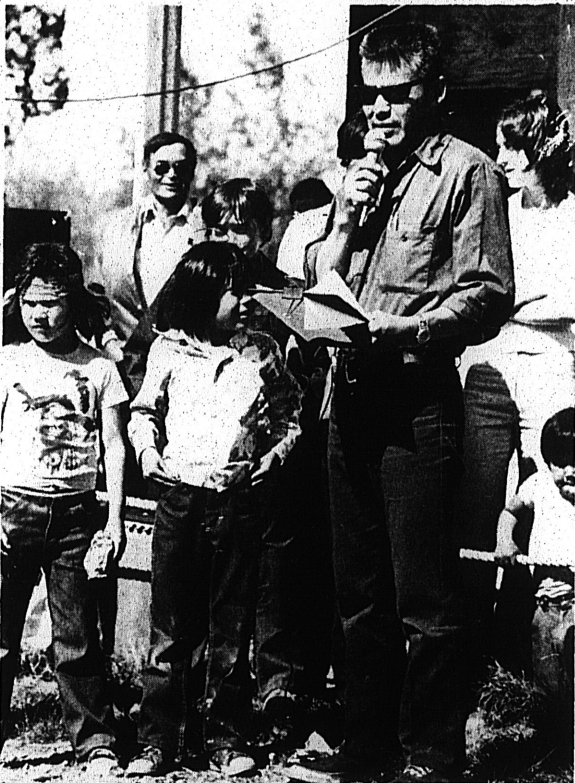
One idea behind the origin of the festival was that the Nuchalawoyya was a sort of fur

rendezvous, but Joe John, a 76-year resident of Tanana, remembers going to Nuchalawoyyas as a little child and says the festival honored the dead.

He remembers some of the spring potlatches lasting two

weeks.

This year approximately 150 people visited Tanana (a community of 500) during the Nuchalawoyya and from all accounts a good time was had by all.



ARLAND DICK announced the schedule of contests which included canoe racing, arm wrestling, foot racing, tea making, bike racing, egg throwing, muskrat skinning, and spear throwing.

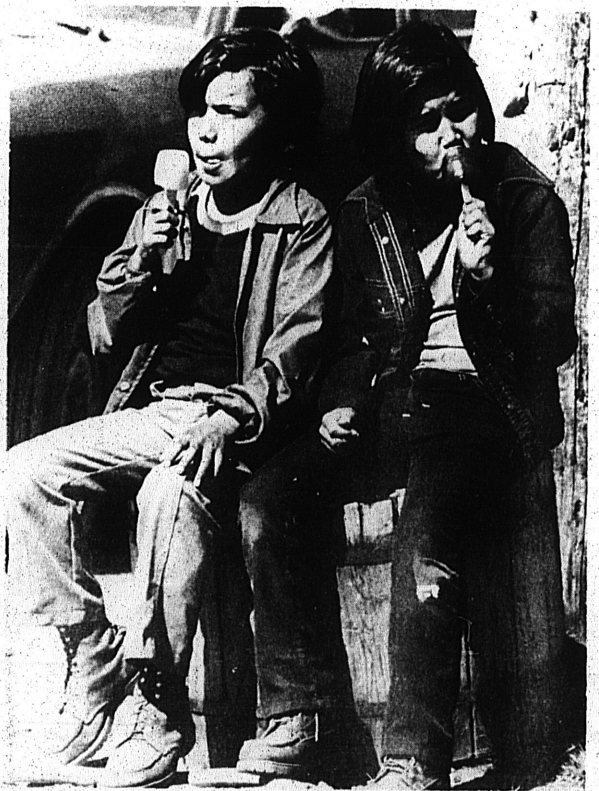


HARPER ANTOSKY, alias Donkey (left), Mike Andon, and unidentified man prepared the moose soup for Saturday night's potlatch.

Photos and story by MARK KELLEY



EVERY NIGHT Athaskan dancing and singing filled the community hall.



TWO YOUTHS pause for a moment's break in the busy weekend and cool off with popsicles.