

# Point Lay Biographies

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# Point Lay Biographies

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Alaska OCS Environmental Studies Program

Point Lay Biographies

**Impact Assessment, Inc.**  
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It is expected that there will be at least one future printing of these life histories. Corrections or other comments by readers are welcome. Please address such comments to:

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## PREFACE

This is the second volume of the Point Lay Case Study, sponsored by the Minerals Management Service. Unlike the first volume, which is a technical report intended for a professional audience and especially interested readers, this volume is intended to appeal to a wider range of people. It is issued as a separate work to facilitate its distribution. We hope in this small way to help repay the community of Point Lay in particular, and all other North Slope residents in general, who were so generous with their time in our study.

The recording of oral life histories has been one type of research that many Inupiat have strongly supported in the past. The North Slope Borough Commission on Language, Culture, and History coordinates most of this work on the North Slope. Such life histories are also a good way to understand the processes of change as they have been experienced by individual people. Putting the two objectives together results in a research project useful to both sponsor and participants. Two forms of this volume will be available because of this dual purpose. One will contain this introduction and the biographies and is intended for wide general distribution. The other will contain an additional short analytical section after the biographies which presents a chronological summary of the biographies of each of the participants and then discusses each in the context of "typical" North Slope life experiences. This is of course only a preliminary sally into this area, where others have a broader and deeper base of knowledge. The biography of Waldo Bodfish of Wainwright being prepared by Dr. William Schneider is but one example. Our small attempt at a contribution is not meant presumptuously, but as an expression of pathways we wish we could have followed but did not have the time or resources to pursue.

The biographies themselves are the work of Yvonne Yarber working with each of the people themselves. A series of interviews with each person were taped, transcribed, edited, checked by the person interviewed, and approved in the form seen here. Most interviews were in English, but several (probably the most productive) with Pualu were held in Inupiaq with the aid of a local interpreter, his daughter Bertha Tazruk. James Nageak of the Alaska Native Language Center aided immeasurably by translating these tapes and giving advice on Inupiaq usage and spelling in general. It must be stressed that although this work was done through Impact Assessment under a contract sponsored by the Mineral Management Service, the biographies are mainly the work of Yarber and the several Point Lay individuals involved. Galginaitis provided clarifying information where he could and assisted with contextual information when possible, but took a distinct secondary or tertiary role in this part of the research. Any analysis of the biographies, however, is a product of Impact Assessment and Yarber should not be held accountable for any errors that it may contain.

The subjects of the biographies were chosen by the community of Point Lay, after Yarber first discussed the project with Leona Okakok of the NSB Commission on Language, Culture, and History. The consensus of the village IRA Council was that these three Elders be interviewed. It is to be hoped that it will be possible for other researchers to expand this work by including other members of the community in the future (adults of different ages, adolescents, children), but given the limitations of this project the community wanted a focus on the Elders. There are only five Elders in Point Lay. One not included in this work had contributed greatly to an earlier work, To Keep the Past Alive (Neakok et al. 1985), was married to a woman who did participate, and did not wish to take a major part in the research as much of it would have been duplicated effort.

It is also interesting to note in this regard that his wife remarked that his book (Neakok et al. 1985) concentrated mostly on the male side of life, and she welcomed the opportunity to speak of life events from the female perspective. The fifth Elder was not actually in Point Lay at the time research began and so was unavailable.

Yarber visited Point Lay three times. Two times (May 1987, July 1989) she was accompanied by Curt Madison, who took photographs of the village, some of which will appear when the biographies are printed in book form. Her first visit was some time after the start of the project, once the primary researcher had acquainted the village with the research and introduced this aspect of it. This first trip in May, 1988, was when the first round of interviews took place. The second round of interviews, in May of 1989, was to check information obtained the year before and follow up on various questions. The primary researcher was in Point Lay at the same time as Yarber for these visits. Her last trip, in July 1989, was to finalize the biographies and to obtain permission to print them. She and Madison were the only researchers in the village at the time. Since that time Yarber has been preparing the biographies for final publication.

The format of the biographies has been chosen to enhance their use. A large typeface will be easier for students and other readers to use than the normal form of MMS technical reports. When published in book form the text will be accompanied by photographs. Unfortunately, the limitations placed upon MMS publications make the use of such photographs impossible.

When this project was initiated, it was hoped that it would be possible to produce a number of detailed biographies which would illuminate the present and past social and cultural dynamics of Point Lay and the North Slope. The three biographies that follow certainly do so. However, a more detailed chronological analysis of these life histories, while desirable, would have required a great deal more time devoted to systematic interviewing and an emphasis upon the analysis of this material at the expense of the other sources of information used for the Point Lay Case Study. Resources for the full development of both approaches simply were not available. The raw transcripts of the life histories contain too many gaps or areas of uncertainty that could not be rectified during fieldwork to serve as the basis for the production of such critical biographies, although they are certainly the start of such work. It is extremely important, now that the Elders have begun to document their lives, that younger decision-makers also enter into this process so that a comparison of generational life experiences (differences and similarities) becomes possible. In the best of all worlds this would include all age groups, including children. It became obvious in the process of this project that it was not possible, at least for us, for the same researcher to combine the collection of life histories with the collection of other information, at least not on the North Slope. The project was indeed lucky to have as competent an oral historian as Yvonne Yarber to conduct this phase of the research.

Brief narrative summaries of each life history are included as Appendix B. A map of the Point Lay area with the NSB Traditional Land Use Area sites, and a list of such sites, is included as Appendix C.



## INTRODUCTION

The Point Lay of today is very different from that of the past. The Point Lay Case Study provides a good deal of detail about contemporary Point Lay, its history, and its place within the context of the North Slope. Not all readers will want or need that much detail, but a short introduction to frame the life histories which follow should prove helpful to the general reading public.

### The North Slope Borough

The North Slope of Alaska is now politically organized into the North Slope Borough (NSB). Within the NSB there are eight Native communities (Point Hope, Point Lay, Wainwright, Barrow, Kaktovik, Atkasuk, Nuiqsut, and Anaktuvuk Pass) as well as a number of industrial enclaves (Prudhoe Bay/Deadhorse being the largest). The NSB is a centralized borough, with all communities having ceded most municipal powers to the NSB. That is, the NSB provides police and fire protection, electrical and water service, hauls away the trash, operates the schools, maintains the streets, and basically provides all the daily services that are required to run a community. The central offices for the NSB and all these services are in Barrow, the largest community in the area, but within each community there are of course village offices staffed by local people hired by those in Barrow to actually provide the services. This is the main source of employment in the villages. Construction projects, also funded by the NSB, are the other main source of village employment.

The money to run the NSB, fund the services and construction projects, and in turn support the villages, ultimately derives from taxes on oil production facilities on the North Slope (primarily Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk). The NSB was incorporated in 1972 (home rule charter adopted 1974) in response to the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), the construction of the oil pipeline, and oil development on the North Slope. The history of Native land claims is rather long and complex and can only be alluded to here. One result of this process was the formation of the NSB through the efforts of Inupiat active in the lands claims movement. ANCSA provided the legal and economic reasons to resettle Point Lay (as well as Nuiqsut and Atkasuk, and certainly solidified Anaktuvuk Pass), but the formation of the NSB provided the economic means to support this resettlement. It is doubtful that the resource base provide by ANCSA would have allowed for the construction of communities from the ground up. Certainly in the absence of the NSB the “new” NSB communities would be very different, and much smaller, places with a much less developed infrastructure.

The Native communities of the NSB can be divided into two groups, Barrow on the one hand and the other seven villages on the other. Barrow is by far the largest (1988 population of 3223) as well as being the most ethnically diverse (sixty one percent Inupiat, thirty nine percent non-Inupiat, with eighty two percent of the regions total non-Inupiat population). The seven other villages range from Point Lay, the smallest at 158 people, to Point Hope, the largest at 591 people. These seven villages are predominately Inupiat. Nuiqsut’s population is six percent non-Inupiat, while Kaktovik’s is still only twenty percent non-Inupiat, well below Barrow’s percentage. Point Lay is in the high end of this range with a population that is seventeen percent non-Inupiat. The numbers themselves are not so important, however, as the nature of the non-Inupiat populations

in Barrow and the other villages differ in certain characteristics. Outer village non-Inupiat are much more transitory than in Barrow, and seldom stay for long periods of time. There are exceptions, but even these exceptions are most often married to Inupiat and intend to leave at some point. Barrow, on the other hand, has developed a resident non-Inupiat population and this in combination with the development of a full spectrum of services and retail outlets has changed the atmosphere of the community. Barrow, for all of its Inupiat heritage, is a modern city. The outer villages, for all of their modern infrastructure, are still Inupiat villages. While the actual situation is much more complex and many qualifications could be made, this basic observation lies at the center of North Slope social and cultural dynamics.

### Point Lay Today

As mentioned above, Point Lay is the smallest of the NSB Native communities. As such, it is not representative of the other six outer villages, in the sense that certain socioeconomic measures are different in Point Lay than in the other villages. There is almost total employment in Point Lay, and in fact there are times when there are more jobs available than there are people to fill them. There are relatively few Elders in Point Lay, and the population pyramid is irregularly shaped. These factors are understandable in terms of Point Lay's small size, however, as some of the other NSB villages in the 200-300 person range demonstrate these characteristics, although in a much more moderate form. Point Lay is a component of the same social, cultural, and economic system as the other villages. What appears behaviorally in some respects as a different or extreme case is more properly a result of this same system operating upon a different set of "starting conditions."

In terms of infrastructure and services, Point Lay is quite typical of the other villages. There is a modern school, a state-of-the-art clinic staffed by competent Health Aides, a massive fire station, a public safety building with holding cells, an earth station for telephone and cable television service, a modern generator plant, water treatment facilities, a community hall, and a construction camp that can be used as a hotel by outside visitors. Housing is for the most part recent and quite good. All of this is quite recent, as Point Lay was only resettled in 1972. Facilities in the other communities are just as new, however, as these services were basically not provided by either the state or the federal government prior to the formation of the NSB.

People first began to move back to Point Lay in 1972. They settled in or by the "old village" on the barrier island, commonly called the "old site" or the "old village." The NSB deemed this an unacceptable place to rebuild the community. There was not enough land available at that location for all the planned facilities (school, power plant, new houses, storage tanks), there was no convenient water source, and the danger of floods or ice overflow were considered too great. The site chosen was in the mouth of the Kokolik delta, commonly referred to as the "new site" or the "river site." Ten houses and other public buildings were completed here, but after several years it was obvious that this site was not acceptable either. There were yearly flooding problems and problems with adequate land for community expansion. Point Lay was then moved to its present site, sometimes referred to as the "DEW Line site" (indicating that it close to that facility, but not that it is part of it). This move involved the physical relocation of the buildings already built at the "new site" as well as constructing many more. The final stages of this construction are just about over in Point Lay. A few buildings may need some finish work but most large scale village projects are now over. Since 1972, most able-bodied Point Lay adults have been nearly totally involved in

this process. Now they are in a period of transition to a state where employment is mainly provided by service jobs maintaining or using the facilities just constructed, supplemented by temporary jobs created by the NSB for housing improvements and other locally desired programs. In Point Lay this is still likely to provide nearly full employment, but may require some adjustment or rescheduling of other activities such as subsistence hunting.

There are about thirty three Inupiat households in Point Lay, and an additional four households where one of the parents is Inupiat and one is non-Inupiat. There are also on the average of ten non-Inupiat households in the village at any one time, but they are in general so transitory as to make specific numbers meaningless. Households in Point Lay tend to be small. Inupiat households average 3.4 (June 1988) or 3.7 (NSB census, November 1988) people per household. "Mixed" households average 4.25 people. The overwhelming model for each household is the nuclear family. Most households are composed of either single people or nuclear families (or a simple derivative such as a single-parent family or a couple without children). The range of household sizes in Point Lay is also much more restricted than in other NSB villages (the largest household has seven members). All households have some member with a steady cash income. Most have at least one wage earner. All Elders have independent households and receive pensions, old age benefits, or investment income. Only one Elder is part of a three generation household, composed of the Elder, two teen-age grandchildren he has raised as his own children, and the infant son of one of these grandchildren. Of the other Elders, one couple lives in their own house, another shares a house with her adult son and occasional visitors from out of town, and the last shares his house with a granddaughter. Sharing occurs at one time or another between any two households of the village, but takes place on a more regular basis between the households of Elders and those to whom they are most closely related. Visiting is frequent and difficult to separate out from redistribution in some cases, but for the most part households function as independent entities (for a fuller description the interested reader is referred to the Point Lay Case Study).

At the time Point Lay was resettled, only one couple was still living in the area. Dorcas Neakok relates her life experiences in one of the life histories that follows (her husband Warren provided much of the information that appears in To Keep the Past Alive, Neakok et al. 1985). Many of the adults currently living in Point Lay had spent part of their previous lives in Point Lay, however, and were returning from those other places when given the opportunity to do so. Many are from Wainwright, Barrow, or Point Hope. Some were living in Anchorage or perhaps Fairbanks. At least a few were in California. Some who returned for the first several years have since left once more, but the core of the village is comprised of families who resettled the village in 1972. A significant number of individuals have migrated to Point Lay and married into the village, primarily from the south. These people are mostly men who originally came to Point Lay to work on construction, and usually already had a relative or friend in the village. Several are members of the same family and through their marriages and more distant relationships are integrated into the kinship network of the village.

### The Point Lay of the Past

The stories of the Elders which follow speak of Point Lay's past in a way that an outsider cannot. What is sketched here is a brief chronological orientation for the reader. A fuller treatment is included in the Point Lay Case Study.

In aboriginal times, before direct contact with Europeans and Americans, the Point Lay area had no permanent population as such. The archaeological record and first ethnological accounts describe a pattern of seasonal use by rather nomadic small groups of people. Houses were built at various places in the Point Lay use area and these sites were used repeatedly, but no permanently settled community existed as such. Icy Cape may well have been more of a central population site than the Point Lay area, as it is a richer area for subsistence resources and the Elders say that in the past it was a good whaling site. It is still a potential whaling site, but is relatively far from population centers and has eroded, and so is no longer a preferred whaling site. Icy Cape is a very productive caribou area. In the summer it is a popular camping area, while in the winter it is used more for day trips.

After contact, but before the whaling period, little of the pattern of life on the North Slope changed all that much. New foods and technologies were introduced, but the overall pattern of a mobile existence based on the harvest of subsistence resources continued. Once whalers appeared in the late 1800s, however, change accelerated. Most North Slope Inupiat were involved with whaling in one way or another and most traditional use areas were depopulated as the population concentrated in those locations closest to the whalers (Point Hope, Wainwright, and Barrow). Some subsidiary sites around these locations also held populations, but for the most part the remainder of the North Slope was used seasonally. The area between Wainwright and Point Hope still contained a mobile, but small, population. Schools were established and reindeer herds started in the early 1900s. This further consolidated the Inupiat population into the settlements of Point Hope, Wainwright, and Barrow. In 1906 a school was also opened at Icy Cape, because of the significant number of people who were at least seasonally there (for subsistence resources and/or reindeer herding). This school had a checkered history, however, as it was closed in 1913, opened again in 1925, closed in 1926, and moved to the "old village" at Point Lay in 1929 or so. Until the school was moved, Icy Cape had always supported a larger population than what is now Point Lay. Once the school moved, Icy Cape's population dispersed to other communities, mostly Wainwright or Point Lay. The reindeer herd which had at least in some years used the Icy Cape area extensively now concentrated on Point Lay and the area south of it. The population of Point Lay in the 1930s was the highest that it was ever to be again until the 1980s. Unfortunately, there are no good histories of this period for Point Lay. Although reindeer herding activity was important until 1940 or so, studies of the Alaskan reindeer industry have concentrated on the Seward Peninsula. The industry further north was less developed in terms of markets and distribution, which is probably why it collapsed faster on the North Slope than elsewhere. In any event, after the decline of reindeer herding, and perhaps partially because of it, the Point Lay area began to lose population. Informants say that older people began to die, other people moved away, and that the village gradually withered away. That the village was still a going concern in 1946 is demonstrated by the vote in that year of the village to adopt an IRA constitution and set of bylaws. People remember oil exploration activity in this period, but were still mainly subsistence oriented. In the early 1950s construction on a DEW Line station near Point Lay began. This offered some local employment but was also perceived as a disruptive influence on the community. In any event, people continued to leave and in 1958 the local school was closed. This in essence marked the end of Point Lay as a community and by 1964 there was only one couple living in the area. When everyone else had relocated to a larger community (Wainwright, Barrow, Point Hope, Anchorage, out of state) this couple physically moved from the "old village" on the barrier island to a quonset hut on the present site of Point Lay. This facilitated employment at the DEW Line station and was more convenient overall. This state of affairs lasted until Point Lay was refounded in 1972.

## Kinship in Point Lay

Perhaps the essential nature of Point Lay (or at least one of its core aspects) is summed up by two observations made by Dorcas Neakok. On the one hand Point Lay is anybody's (everybody's) town, since people have moved to Point Lay from all sorts of different places. On the other hand, everybody in Point Lay is related and treats everyone else as family. All three Elders interviewed for this volume are related, although not always very directly. Similarly, almost any Inupiat in Point Lay claims a relation to one or more of them. This connection is not always directly traceable, but is mutually acknowledged. Most "outsiders" (non-Inupiat as well as Inupiat) who have become residents have done so at least in part because they have married a Point Lay resident. A full discussion is not possible here, partly due to its complexity and partly due to reasons of confidentiality. A general discussion of kinship, relatedness, and the *ethos* of Point Lay is contained in the Point Lay Case Study, the companion volume to this. The central point is that many diverse parts do go into the Point Lay mix, but that the village is indeed in a fundamental way "all one family." The dichotomy is very real, and affects behavior in many different situational ways. The reader is again referred to the Point Lay Case Study for the full development of these points.

## **DORCAS NEAKOK**

---

**Dorcas** was born May 15, 1919, the daughter of **Adela** and **Christopher Tingook**. She spent her early childhood in **Kiana** where she is known as **Dora**. Her earliest impressions were of communal subsistence activities and parents hard at work.

Reindeer herding kept the family on the move. This provided **Dorcas** with childhood memories of traveling with reindeer herds to a variety of villages **such as Selawik, Buckland, Kotzebue, Kivalina**, Poin Hope and finally Point Lay at the age of eleven. It is in Point Lay that **Dorcas** began regular school attendance and lived with the schoolteachers while her parents continued working as reindeer herders. From the age of eleven until marriage, **Dorcas** stayed with her large family only in the summer on a **parttime** basis.

Responsibilities as a mother came too quickly when, at the age of eighteen, **Dorcas** became the second wife of **Allen Upicksoun**, a thirty-nine year old widower with many children. **Allen** and **Dorcas** had four more children of their own. Suddenly, at the age of twenty-eight, **Dorcas** became a widow with eight children to raise. Those were tough days at the "Old Village" across the lagoon when **Allen** died. Work was hard to come by and there were many widows with large families.

**Warren Neakok** was taking care of his mother and younger siblings at the time. His father had died when he was fourteen, forcing him to quit school to hunt and trap for the family. He continued those responsibilities as an adult and then helped take care of **Dorcas** and her children after the death of her husband.

**Warren** and **Dorcas** were married in 1947 and had six more children of their own. Through hard work and resourcefulness they survived difficult times. The worst, described by **Dorcas** as the forced departure of the village children to distant schools for their education after the closing of the Point Lay school.

Lonely years best describe life for **Dorcas** as she and **Warren** became the only residents of Point Lay through the '60's until it's resettling in the early 1970's. Relief from that loneliness came with the children's summer visits and time outdoors fishing, hunting and camping. When asked if she likes how the village has grown, **Dorcas** answered with a smile, "I always knew they would come back. That's what we were getting ready for all those years. We're all family here. All related."

**Dorcas** was interviewed by **Yvonne Yarber** at her home in Point Lay in May 1988 and 1989. Transcripts of those English tape recordings were edited by the interviewer to reflect **Dorcas'** speaking style. Grammatical changes were made to clarify intent. This manuscript was read to **Dorcas** for corrections and approval in May and July 1989.

It should be noted that **Dorcas'** first language is *Iñupiaq*. Whenever *Iñupiaq* words appear in italics they have been translated into the current orthography by **James Nageak** who listened to tape excerpts. Refer to Appendix A for the pronunciation guide to the *Iñupiaq* personal names that are not italicized. Brackets indicate notes from the editor or *Iñupiaq* definitions by **James Nageak (J.N.)**.

**WAKING UP IN KIANA**

When I first remembered people it was as though I was just waking up. Before that was like there were no people, nothing. I was about five years old when I first remembered things. That was in Kiana where I had lots of playmates, cousins — the Jacksons, Hopes, and Bob Mulukson. Some of them have died.

There weren't too many people. Just two little villages close together — the Eskimo village in the old place and another village by the school house with stores and some White people married to Eskimos. Like Clara Rotman. Clara's daddy named Lee, had a little store in Kiana. Later Clara married Rotman and had a store in Kotzebue. She's still alive but getting old, in her eighties. And the Fosters in Kiana had an Eskimo mamma. Those were my playmates, but I don't remember some of them.

My daddy had four sisters in Kiana. That's the reason I remember Kiana when I was small. I guess my daddy took me from Point Hope to Kiana by dog team but I don't remember. He moved there to see his sisters. When they were children they lost their parents in the Kiana area. Their daddy died and then one week later their mamma died too.

Six children were left behind, five girls and some of them were babies — the youngest was just born. That was too many children so the people just divided them up by whoever wanted them. The five girls went to people around Kiana but one of them died. My daddy was next to the oldest and he ended up in Point Hope, his name was Christopher Willie Tingook — they called him Willie Tingook. Daddy and his sisters were all orphans. I never even saw pictures of his parents.

I know I went to school in Kiana but I don't know how many years. I don't remember much. I know they called me Dora in Kiana, even now. That's what the teacher had on my birth certificate. I turned into Dorcas when I came to Point Lay.

The schoolhouse was just one room with benches. They made them out of trees, long benches and short benches. They must have had lots of trees. But I don't really know how they made them. I didn't care about those kinds of things.

I don't even remember my teacher. He was a single man. I remember my first school Christmas there, I sang a song in English all alone. Even when I was through with school I used to sing it for my children, They didn't understand what I was singing. I must have been poor in English when I learned it. I've forgotten that song now and couldn't sing it. Anyway, we had Christmas day there. Christmas was about like anywhere else, I guess. But it was the first time I'd seen decorations like that.

Even with school going on, I went out with my parents hunting. They just took me in and out of school. Before the river would breakup we went on what you call a muskrat hunt. They took us out of town to where there were little ponds.

I remember rabbits and fish, things like that. An old lady, *Miiyyuuraq* was one of the Barre's, she was related to Susie Barre. I remember her fishing under the ice with a fishnet. When we got out of school we used to run to her and pull her sled. She fed us fish eggs with fresh snow. I liked those eggs. It was just like ice cream, cold.

I followed my daddy rabbit hunting. The whole town went by dogteam to an island where two rivers forked. People would line up and walk between the willows from one end of the island chasing the rabbits ahead. When they reached a clear place, people waiting at the other end shot the rabbits with shotguns or .22's. That's how they hunted them. Rabbits were killed by sled loads. I remember picking up rabbits till I couldn't drag them anymore. Then the people divided them up. Everybody got the same amount — even if they didn't use a gun and just helped drive the rabbits by making noises to scare them.

They did the same thing in Kiana with fishing — all the people got together. They made a big net, like a trap. It was a big hoop with a net the shape of a big sleeping bag closed at one end. They put the fish trap in a big hole in the ice and built like a willow fence on both sides under the water so the fish would go in that trap. When it filled up, the people pulled it out and put all the fish on top of the ice. Then they divided it all up just like with the rabbits.



Then I don't remember much else except one summer when we were staying in tents among the trees. There were tents for three families — three tents. That was with my uncle *Aayuksaq* and his wife; *Avirṅṅaq* and his family; *Qargigruaq* and his family whose only daughter Martha is living in Kiana. I don't even know her father's English name, just *Qargigruaq*. That time, I didn't know anybody's English name.

We went out there with dogsleds before breakup and traveled upriver so we could drift down. They cut up logs out there and made a raft. After the ice went out, we drifted down with the raft in the Kobuk River — the one that goes to Kiana, Ambler and Shungnak. We put sleds and dogs on the raft, even setup the tent on the raft. I took care of my little sisters. To make sure they didn't fall off, I kept them inside the tents. If we went out of the tent we had to sit down. I got seared once in awhile.

Lots of people went out because that was the only way to get a dollar — muskrats. It must have been early spring because whatever they hunted they made into *paniqtaq* [dried meat or fish]. When they got back to the village they sold those rafts to the store for wood. I must have been five or six because when I was seven we left Kiana.

### Different Places

Those whaling ships and trading ships in the early 1900's used to get Eskimo laborers to work on them. It was a lot of heavy work. And those White whaling ships worked them really hard. They had to make seal oil pokes for the whale oil they melted down. That's a lot of hard work to do the flippers in the poke — all the bones have to come out, otherwise they rot. And that ship work took them far away from home. My daddy did lots of that work, especially before I was born or could remember.

I know Papa met Greenlanders when he was working for Captain Pederson who had a ship with all kinds of food and supplies, just like a store. That ship used to go up to Hershel Island as soon as the ice broke up. Daddy was staying at Point Hope then. Pederson hired Eskimos to help him like *Atarṅauraq*,

Lane, *Miliq*, and Papa. (I used to call my father Papa all the time. It took me a long time to learn what's "dad and father" — not until I started learning to read.) They were all about the same age. They never reached Greenland but some Greenlanders would be there close to Hershel Island. That's how they got to know each other.

They could understand each other's language. They spoke the same Eskimo dialect, only really slow. I can understand them way before they finish their words. My brother went to Greenland to be in the **army** or air force there. He said he could understand them but he had to really slow himself down so they could understand him. He told me when he wrote letters to me. He was the youngest boy and close to me. He used to write me wherever he was. I wrote him too,

Most of the time Papa made a living hunting and trapping because there was no place to work for money except longshoring in Kotzebue. I know we went to Kotzebue every summer when I was about seven and eight. He was longshoring on those store barges with scows that brought in all the everyday things like coffee, tea, flour, groceries, ammunition and crackers. That time I never saw Sailor Boy crackers, only Skookum. Daddy worked longshoring for Tom Barriman and Archie Ferguson who had a store before Rotman got there. Rotman took over Barriman's house and repaired it.

While my daddy was longshoring, my mamma sewed. She was a good sewer. Some Point Hoppers would always bring her *ugruk* skins to make waterproof mukluks out of seal skin. Sewing was just automatic for her, like twisting her sinew, I used to help her split the sinew. She'd tell me whether they were smooth or not and whether to make them soft by hammering. Mamma chewed the *ugruk* to make the bottoms. She made so many of those mukluks, sometimes she would hardly sleep. She sold them or traded for meat or fish or anything to eat because Daddy wasn't making much longshoring on the beach.

I saw what was supposed to be the frost plane to go to Kotzebue. I heard Mrs. Barriman paid how many dollars to just fly around for a ride and land again. She was so fat they had to push

her in the door. I know I watched that because I wanted to take a ride too. I was between seven and eight years old, maybe. I saw Bishop Rowe the first time he went to Kotzebue too, but that was later.

Our family never stayed in just one place. We moved to different places. I remember Papa taking me to Selawik with reindeer and a sled. I'd stay in the sled and my daddy would drive. I don't know how he got the reindeer. He must have been helping with reindeer herding. I liked to travel with my daddy. He took me along because I was the oldest and he had no son until later.

I remember seeing Laps at Buckland . They had reindeer herds in Buckland. I traveled with them too, with my father. I saw those Lap people had log houses up in the air. The houses were made of logs up in the air. But now that I think about what I've seen, maybe I've fooled myself. People wouldn't make houses like that. But I remember climbing up and down; and seeing people going in and out.

We were driving reindeer. They used good reindeer to pull the sleds — reindeer trained to never run away or go around the sled. I know one time I liked; the sled was too full so for fun my daddy took a dry reindeer skin and put it on the ground, hair side down. It was just like a sled and he put me on top of it.

Then he tied the neck of the reindeer skin to a rope he hooked onto our dog — what they called a sheepdog. I don't know if he was really a sheepdog, but that's what they called him. He was the kind of dog the reindeer herders trained really good to obey. Daddy made sure I wouldn't drop out of the sled by leaving extra rope where he tied it to the reindeer skin neck. That was for me to hold so even if I tipped over I could still hang on, stop the dog and climb back in the skin sled. It was fun.

I just don't know where we were going from there. We were driving reindeer. I know we stopped and maybe after I ate I went to sleep for how many years until I remembered again.

Sometimes when we traveled, we stayed in tents, but not always. Mamma had to do all the cooking because often lots of other reindeer herders traveled with us. Sometimes she had to sew

patches for whoever wore a hole in their boot bottoms. When we traveled with the herders in the winter, Papa always cut square blocks of snow with a saw or long knife.

He built a snow house about the size of a tent — big enough for everybody, Papa put snow blocks all the way around for walls, except the doorway. On the top he put a canvas tent or skins — whatever we had. We didn't have money for a good tent all the time. Making the snow house was pretty fast and I helped fill the joints with fresh snow to block the wind from going in.

All my life was outdoors — because we came from Kotzebue and Kiana by dogteam, all the way from Kivalina to Point Hope and then here. When we came to Point Lay, that's where I stopped. When my parents went back to Point Hope I was already married with children. I said I wouldn't go back because I was tired of traveling.

### ***Kali***

When we first came to Point Lay it was 1930. I was born May 15, 1919 so I was still a young girl, eleven years old. The first school was half built. And there were three houses; one on top of that *Kali* and two in Point Lay, up by the flat part going toward Utukok. The hump is *Kali* where the graves are and the ice cellars. Everything right there they call *Kalimiut*. Where Point Lay is now, this little hill up to DEW-line is *Kayuqtualuk*.

*Kali* means somebody dragging. The story we heard all the time was about an old lady that lived down there with her grandson. Her grandson wanted to eat the green leaves he knew were on this side, those round sweet leaves called *ippiqsan*, and the bittersweet ones called *quṇulliq*. He wanted to eat all the good ones; *ippiq* [large long sweet leaf], *quṇulliq* [sorrel leaf, *oxyria digyna* ], *quāgaq* [sourdock, wild spinach, edible willow leaf, *rumex articus* ], *suraq* [willow leaf] Those are the little bitter green leaves that live in the willows close to the ground in little wind. People still pick those in Nome and put them in seal oil. That is what he wanted to eat.

The boy's grandma said to him, "You stay inside tomorrow and I'll go across to get some. If you look out through the door I'll be stuck and won't get you anything. So, no matter how long I stay away, don't peek out."

The next day his grandma got up early and got out her big ulu. I don't know how long it was. Maybe it was jade. I don't know for sure. They called it a big ulu anyway. Well the grandma went out and stayed away all day. She started to get tired. All this time the little boy wanted to look out. He waited but at last, he peeked out.

His grandma was dragging a big piece of ground with all the green leaves, back to the boy. It was cut like a big piece of cake and she was pulling it home. That ground was cut from the low spot over by the DEW-line. You can see the low spot there today. She was trying to pull that ground over to their house on the sandspit. When the ground stopped, she yelled, "Aasraa!" [an exclamation meaning "Oh, no! Too much"] She knew what the little boy had done. ᐁᓕᓴ, that piece of ground is *Kali*. I don't know if it's true or not. It really looks like it's true.

Way before we moved to *Kali* or the "Old Village", Susook and *Tuḡiñ* had cabins right here on this side where we are today. But it was too much trouble living on this side so they went across to *Kali*. That same time, Neakok lived south at the place on the map named Neakok Warehouse. Summertime, they all got together to go shopping at Icy Cape for their one year supply. Later Pederson came here with his big ship so it was easier to get supplies.

When we moved to Point Lay, *Tuḡiñ* and his wife *Samarun* — Johnson and Rachel Toweeña in English — were living on top of *Kali*. They lost all their kids and were living there alone. Down below there was Upicksoun and his wife. Then next door was Charlie Susook and his wife *Tunuallak*. Toweeña and Susook lived here for how many years. I think they came around 1914 from Point Hope when the price of baleen dropped. That was when the White whaling ships were around. *Aḡnasagaq* lived around here

too. That's Amos Agnasagga's grandparents on his mamma's side. That was all — the only people here.

When we first came other people —like my aunty Agnes and her husband Towksjhea, Swans, Stones, Macheena, and Tingook — lived down at the end of the mountains at Kuutchiaq where the big coal mine is operating right now. You see, there wasn't really a town in Point Lay yet, and they just started building the school that made Point Lay. After it was built all those people came and put their kids in school. And the Icy Cape people, *Taksrutkut* [plural for name *Taksruk* ] the ones they call call Tukrook, came here to Point Lay, what we call the Old Site, Old Town or Old Village. There were three Point Lay's; the Old Village at *Kali*; the New Site over by the river, we call that River Site too; and this place now close to DEW-line is the Second or Main Site.

People were taking care of reindeer before we moved to the old town, *Kali*. The Point Lay herders at the time were; Tommy Neakok, Dan Susook, Samuel Agnasagga in Wainwright now, Steven Koenig, his older brothers from Kivalina, and my daddy. Whole families were with the herders.

I helped my daddy with the reindeers when I was a teenager. I ran after them during corralling time. There was a wire fence corral over by the water lake. That road going from DEW-line is by the water lake. There's a narrow spot there where we had the corral.

The whole town, and people from other places helped with corralling. There were over a hundred and fifty people. Most of them were from the south of Point Lay. All the way from Point Hope. Icy Cape people came, people like *Tuurragruaq*, *Tuurraq*, *Taksruk*, *Sagluaq*, and *Agnasagaq*. [see pronunciation appendix]

It was fun work. The hard part was when we chased them into the corral. Every person had a long burlap sack they held together in a big line. Then we tried to push the reindeer towards the big corral. We had to run until we were almost out of breath. Some of the people had to drop out.

And the reindeer would try to jump over us. If we were too far apart, they would jump in between us, over the burlap. Some of the reindeer were wild or mean. People had to protect themselves

from kicking. They had to stay away from the hind legs or hold them down and tie them like cowboys do.

There were three corrals connected together. We pushed them into the biggest one first. Then they let some into the medium size. And the last one was like a little room where the reindeer went out one at a time to be counted according to the kind of mark on their ear. Each place, like Barrow and Wainwright, had their own special mark. If a reindeer had a mark from some other place they just let them alone. Each place had to report how many reindeer they had in their village herd. If there were some from Wainwright or Barrow they reported how many had followed our Point Lay reindeer.

Any reindeer without marks were given Point Lay marks, no matter where they came from. In that last room they cut the ear in a special way to give them the Point Lay mark. All the new fawns were cut that way. I never was part of the cutting so I don't know what they looked like. *Pualu* Tazruk is older than me and he's been there.

In those days, people in the village had their own reindeer in the herd. After counting, they butchered some for meat and gave other ones time to grow. The workers were paid with reindeer too.

I know this village wasn't like Point Hope. In Point Hope, reindeer were shipped on the *North Star* and sold someplace. I've seen them do that. Around here, some of the reindeer were sold to the teachers to get a little money to buy tea or kerosene, whatever. And later there were just like barter stores with the government but I don't really know how it worked. All the old reindeer reports were here when the school was left behind. People picked them up. I should have too.

Then we lost all the reindeer. At first there were no caribou but slowly they started to come in. They blamed the wild caribou that mixed in with the herd. It was easy to see them because they were real tall compared to the reindeer. When the herders saw one they had to kill it real quick or it would teach the reindeer to run away. Still, when the men tried to gather the reindeer there were fewer and fewer and finally nothing was left.

### Point Lay School

My daddy was the chief reindeer herder. He traveled, camping by the coal mine and moved the reindeer around to eat better. The herders had to stay away in the wintertime so the food could build up around here. Then in the spring they were up by the Utukok. The family would travel back and forth between the end of the mountains near Utukok over toward the mountains in the direction of Point Hope and then they stayed up by the coal mine at Kuukpowruk because they didn't know much about the coal mine at Kuutchiaq. The herders had houses there at Kuukpowruk so they didn't have to haul the coal. That's what they heated with. In the summertime they brought the reindeer closer to the coast.

The school opened about the time we moved to Point Lay. When the one at Icy Cape was tom down, they brought the wood here and stored it in a *qanichat*. The BIA built the school but it took several years because they had no materials. They worked on it 1929, 1930 and 1931.

Some of the Icy Cape people moved here around then. The school at Icy Cape closed maybe because it was so close to Wainwright and lots of families were moving there. When it closed some of the people moved south to here. Then there were quite a few people here at Point Lay and another bunch nearby at the end of the mountain at Kuutchiaq. That's why they built the school at *Kali*, Old Town of point Lay.

Some of those Icy Cape people talked about their old place. It was a point like Point Hope but it's washing away. The old people said were lots of animals. They used to go whaling there.

Mr. Moyer was the first teacher here. His wife was Mary, an Eskimo from Point Hope. Mary Moyer's older sister is Reggie Joule's grandma. You know Reggie Joule from Kotzebue? Maybe you've read about him, he's part German. His grandfather Tony was a school teacher here too.

The Meyers took me from my parents when when we first came here. They put me with their children and I baby sat. I played



hard with them, that's all. I never really did anything. The Moyer's kept me in school.

Summertime, I stayed with my parents — parttime anyway. They had lots of kids. Since I was oldest, I followed them around to make sure the small ones didn't go into the lagoon or the ocean. My sisters and brothers were all close in age. Next to me was my sister Marilyn. She's at Golovin. My sister Rose died a few years ago. Irma Oktolik and my brother John Tingook are in Point Hope. Carl Tingook died in the army. And my sister Grace Ekak is at Anaktuvuk. Then me, herein Point Lay.

Mostly, my mamma did the babysitting. I helped Papain the summer with fishing or whatever he did. Lots of times he was away from home herding reindeer, hunting or trapping. I did chores like keeping the stove going. Mostly I gathered wood for the stove — driftwood or cut willows — anything that burned. We didn't know anything about coal until I came to Point Lay.

I had to be strong to cut the willows. I'd shovel all winter to get to the bottom. Then I cut the willows and pulled them out. Willows aren't good for burning. They finish quick. I like those thick driftwood logs. They stay longer. All summer you would gather wood and pile them in one place for use in the winter.

Most of the winter I stayed with the Meyers and went to school. I tell my grandkids lots of stories about my schoolhouse days. The older ones saw the old schoolhouse before it burned down. They even used it for a school when all the people came back — before we got this new school here on this side of the lagoon. When I was going to school it was smaller than later. There was no storage room on the side. It was two stories but the the upstairs teacher's quarters didn't have inside walls yet.

It was a good school, Mary Moyer was the translator, she helped her husband teach. When we started school we only knew Eskimo. So she taught us the Whiteman words for what we already knew in Eskimo. That's when we learned to say "yes" or "no". Mary Moyer translated for us so we knew what we were reading.

All the different grades were together in one room listening to one teacher. But we learned to do our own work before we

started listening to the teacher talking to the other grades. If we listened too much, we couldn't finish our work. That's why we had to finish first and then listen. I learned a lot by listening to the higher grades. That way I found out what I would be doing next. I learned fast and forgot fast.

We worked in school but we had fun sometimes too. We played *akkuagauraq* with partners which was like football where we kicked the ball and tried to take it away from each other. Whoever caught the most, won. We played during our fifteen minute recess and ran as fast as we could. Sometimes old ladies in the village would be close by where we played. They would go after the ball when we were chasing it and keep kicking it too. Even if they had no partners, they would kick it. They made us mad. I guess they were just having fun with us.

Another game was *nuliqsitauraq* where partners had the ball instead of trying to take it away from each other. And then in *mana mannaa* we had two groups that fought, like in basketball. We kept the same two groups all the time we grew up. We marked two big circles in the snow that were the little jail rooms. Each side would chase the other and whoever was tagged was put in jail on your side. Then the partners would try to get them back without getting tagged too. It was lots of fun. The only Eskimo game I see the kids play today is *nuliqsitauraq*.

While I was a teenager and still in school, we got an Eskimo man for a teacher. That was Tony Joule who was married to Mary Moyer's sister Annie. After Annie died he came to teach us here and married May Upicksoun. He's the one that tried to fix people's Eskimo names. That's when some people didn't have Whiteman names, just Eskimo. And then when they got last names like Whiteman names, lots of that came from the White whalers. It got all mixed up. Tony Joule tried to fix it so people would use their daddy's Eskimo name for their last name.

Like these three brothers: Michael Kayutak, Patrick Tukrook and Samuel Agnasagga; their father was Agnasagga. Those brothers' last names were supposed to be Agnasagga. Amos' dad,

Samuel, is the only one that knew better. Tukrook was stubborn about it and used his own Eskimo name for a last name.

My first husband just had the name Upicksoun and no last name. He started to use the name Allen for a Whiteman last name, from his brother-in-law, Jim Allen. Upicksoun Allen sounded funny to Tony Joule I guess. He told me he switched the name on the papers to Allen Upicksoun.

*Puala* was the same way. He used his daddy's name Tazruk. His older brother Henry was supposed to use Tazruk but he used Peetook. And the Neakoks changed their names too.

My second husband's grandfather was Neakok [*Niaquq*] which means 'head in Eskimo. His wife *Kimmik* means 'heel' in our language. Somehow the whalers gave Neakok the last name Knox. That's how he got to be Neakok Knox. The place they lived, Neakok Warehouse, is on the Alaska map. They had a big warehouse that held their groceries for the whole winter. Warren's daddy was called Tommy Knox. And then my second husband was 'Warren Knox but he fixed that to be Warren Harding Neakok.

### Whaling at Point Lay

People don't hunt whales at Point Lay. But Tony Joule put a whaling crew out when I was a teenager here. Amos Agnasagga's uncle Alvy was adopted to Shaglook so his name is Alvy Shaglook. He lives in Kotzebue now. Well this uncle had two skin boats here. Tony Joule got a crew together for each of those boats.

The open lead was way out so they had to travel far. I don't know how many miles out they had to go. You couldn't see land from out there — only the mountains way to the south. Maybe twenty-five miles? They each got a whale but it was tough work.

They cut the whales in pieces in the water because there were not enough people here to pull them out. There were over a hundred people but that wasn't enough for those big whales. Everybody went out to help except a few woman taking care of the babies back at the village. We had to cut fast so the whales wouldn't get smelly, They didn't have to cut every little thing. Just what they could take home.

All the students helped too. We did the cooking for the whalers and whatever had to be done. That was part of our schooling. Tony Joule wanted us to learn outdoor things too. When the weather was bad — even on weekends — we had school to makeup the days we missed in the classroom. We added up days fast that way. And when the weather was good, we went outdoors.

All the dogteams were working hard. Every family had their own dogteam because that was the only transportation. That's how I got tired out — hauling meat back and forth. Some of us took turns. The dogs would get so tired they couldn't move anymore. We would stop and let them sleep. Then we'd start again. There must have been ten to twenty teams.

That was the first time I saw much of a whale. When I was in Point Hope I never saw any whales. When they killed one I didn't go out to look. I just ate the meat. So when I went out to the whales that first time at Point Lay, I wasn't used to it. I guess I ate some. When we were through cutting it up and hauling meat we went home. I couldn't eat for three days. I threw up. I had looked at that raw meat and smelled it so much that I couldn't eat. Maybe it happened because I was so tired.

Lots of people were tired because while the men were first out — before the crews got the whales — all the ladies went thirty miles away to get coal at Kuukpowruk. If the men were home they would have hauled the coal. But the woman had to get the supply before the rivers started to flow.

Whichever women had dogteams went in a group to get loads of coal from the mountain. The coal was in a bluff and hard to get. But it was good hard coal. Some of it was pretty hard to pick. That is how they got it out, with a pick.

There were two old ladies who went with the other women. One was Mrs. Macheena from Point Hope, The other one was Kignak. They were both way over sixty years old. With old people, it was hard to tell how old they were. They were lively. Well, one of them had two dogs in her team and the other had three.

Coming back from getting coal, they were the last ones. It turned really foggy. They knew when they crossed the lagoon and hit ground again. They knew they were close but somehow they passed the village. They passed each other in the fog and went to each end of the spit. They went the wrong way but knew they were close so they just stopped on the beach, you know that sand spit in the lagoon. That's where they camped overnight. When the fog lifted the next day, they could see the village in between them, right in the middle. Those old ladies laughed about it — they didn't know how they did that.

All that hard work hauling coal and then hauling those two whales is what tired us out. Still, after we got the whales, we did everything just right. Our store manager Fred Forslund, went to Icy Cape and got a whale. So we had *Nalukataq* that spring, just like anybody else. This teacher Tony Joule came from Point Hope so he let us do it Point Hope style. We made *mikigaq* for the feast, just like I'm making now with the whale meat Amos Agnasagga brought back from Wainwright for me.

*Mikigaq* is made out of whale meat, tongue and *maktaq*. You put it all together in strips and keep it about a week until the juice gets thick. It kind of preserves it, just like it was cooked. But there's no salt in it. It depends on how old the whale is whether it turns out good. Some whale meat doesn't turn out right. Maybe when the whale is too big the meat is too coarse and there's not enough juice. It seems like the small ones they call *ijutuq* [round bowhead whale] is good for that. They're the small round ones.

For *Nalukataq* we cut those flippers Point Hope style by slicing the whole thing in about half-inch slabs. When there are lots of people at the Point Hope *Nalukataq* then they cut the slabs in half. Barrow and Wainwright cuts it up in little pieces a little at a time and dishes it out during the feast instead of letting people go and get it.

People here liked getting whales because most of them came from places that always hunted. But that time with Tony Joule was like a test to see if they could get whales. They could, but it's so far out. We needed more people to do all the work but the

village started getting smaller. People started moving away. They got married to Point Hoppers and things like that.

### Taking Care Of Babies

The school at *Kali* just went to the sixth grade. Then the kids would be sent off to school somewhere else if they wanted to. They sent my sister out. But I had to stay behind. I finished school when I was eighteen. It was in April, one month before I turned nineteen.

I got married to Allen Upicksoun. That's why I quit school. He was thirty-nine, way older than me. I was a babysitter for his children because his first wife died. His older children were on their own. They didn't want to babysit and they kind of forced me to marry their daddy. Martha was oldest and married to Leo Attungowruk. Next was Arthur. And May was the teacher, Tony Joule's wife. Martha and Arthur died but now I laugh and tell the other ones, "I'm not going to do anything for you. You were lazy to babysit your sisters."

When I got married I just started babysitting. It was just like I never went anyplace. There were four of his children with him, Molly, Joe, Alma and Rachel. The youngest ones were sickly like their mother before she gave up. The mother had stomach cancer for quite a long while. The kids had a lot of food alright but were just sickly. They were well-to-do people because the daddy hustled for everything. Maybe she worked too hard, she was so clean.

It was rough for me. I just got out of school and started to be tied down. But I made it anyway. I had to teach myself how to sew for all those kids. I copied my husband's first wife's patterns and her sewing. I used cardboard to copy his mukluks. When I got stuck I went to my stepdaughter Martha who was older than me. She willingly told me anything. She'd do anything for me when I got stuck. I hardly slept when I first learned to sew. I would only sleep when the kids took a nap. That was the only way I got rest. In the middle of the night I sewed when the kids were really sleeping.

My husband worked as a mail carrier with his dogteam. He did whatever he could to make some money. He went to Kotzebue to make a house for Sig Wien. I don't know if he ever made money. But he kept us going. Summertime he stayed home and hunted. He put all the food in the ice cellar.

In the wintertime, he never stayed home. He was always working. I would walk across from *Kali* to this area where the village is now for ptarmigan. This was way before DEW-line came in. I used a shotgun or .22 and put lots of winter ptarmigan in a sack in the ice cellar. We'd eat those in the springtime because they don't store away long like ducks. Summer and falltime we'd hunt new fresh ptarmigan.

We had four more children after getting married, Jack, Gordon, Eleanor and Allen. Jack and Eleanor died but Gordon is in Barrow and Allen is in Oklahoma going to school.

My kids went to elementary school at my same old school. But the village was getting small again. When the reindeer started running off, all those herders moved slowly away. They went back to the people they came from. And then the other people started leaving, like Kate Peterson with her first husband Susook. Lots of the old people were dying along the way. Some people were still here - Agnasagga, Tukrook, Toorak, Shaglook and Neakok's.

Pretty soon we were all widows here with lots of kids. My husband Allen died when I was twenty-eight years old. He was forty-nine. He worked on starting an inboard motor when his intestines moved around and got tied. His intestines closed. That's what his doctors explained. It was painful — he couldn't swallow anything anymore. It happened at the Old Village.

### ***Tunuallak***

Other women raised lots of kids here too. Like Amos' grandma, *Tunuallak*, her husband's name was Susook. *Tunuallak* Ada Susook — she raised lots of kids. Gee, she was a fun old lady. Her son Tony Susook is in the old people's home in Anchorage. And her son Dan Susook is gone. He was married to Kate, they

have children here, Jack Susook and Ione Eastwood the health aide.

Lots of the people from back then are gone now. The two old ones still living are really old. Alvy Shaglook is a dancer in Kotzebue entertaining the tourists. And Ruth Susook married Samuel Agnasagga, they're living in Wainright. Alvy and Ruth are both making their own living even though they're older than me.

That little old lady *Tunuallak* made her own home. Her husband died while we were corralling reindeer. He got so tired, we took him home. Then he went into a coma for a few days and died. He was kind of old when it happened so he wasn't chasing the reindeer. You know, everybody had their own job. Certain people sharpened the knives, others did the skinning, some cut the meat, one person rustled the reindeer and others pushed them towards the corral. Everybody had a job. But they didn't push the old people at that time. The old people told us young ones what to do. The young ones did the work.

*Tunuallak* lived with her grown children when her husband died. But her children were moving away so she wanted to live by herself. She had a warehouse on top of *Kali*. It was up in the air but then they put it on the ground and covered it with sod. She stayed in it for several years.

Then her son moved away with his wife Kate and her father Samarualook. They went to be with Kate's brother, Johnny Evak in Kotzebue. Samarualook was my first husband's older brother. Johnny Evak was that brother's adopted son from Taalak in Barrow. When Samarualook moved to Kotzebue he gave *Tunuallak* their little sod house that was right next to mine.

I kept watch over her to see what she was doing. When she was doing heavy work, like dumping her honey-bucket, one of us went to help, She couldn't sit still. In the summer she walked on the beach picking edible shells — *imaniQ* [clam] — and worms with gold whiskers at one end. She picked greens, the big leaves with long stems and little round seedlike flowers. Kotzebue gathers those, *quagaq* [sour dock, *rumey articus*]. *Tunualuk* would cut



them up, cook them and put it in a barrel with sugar and some kind of berries.

Most of the time she picked dry wood and put it in a pile — like little beavers, piling up wood. But she went at her own pace, trying not to get too tired. When she was too tired to walk, she had places to visit. She never laid down in her house in the daytime — she didn't nap like me. She'd visit with someone and when she was ready to go, she left.

*Tunualuk* knew when it was time to eat, she'd come over and enjoy. But when she didn't want to, she'd look through our window and wave her hands to say she wouldn't come. That old grandma made me real happy, especially when all my kids had to go away to school.

Springtime, after the ice would breakup, her son-in-law, Samuel Agnasagga would bring her across the lagoon to this side or wherever she wanted to be to hunt squirrels. That was before this new village was here. They did that as soon as a boat could come over. Sometimes they came even earlier with a dog team. Her daughter Ruth and Samuel would put up a round bent willow frame tent with canvas tied on top, a *qaluugvik*. It wasn't a wall tent — those blow away in the wind. That old lady wanted to be close to the river so she could get squirrel skins to make a parka for herself or someone else. Squirrels stay close to the river banks and that was where she could get willows for her little stove for cooking.

That old lady told me about Point Lay when she was young and still packing babies. She had lots of sons. Her husband was still living. They would go up this river Utukok or Kokolik when the water got high. But not until they had the spring season hunt to fill up the ice cellar in *Kali* with ducks and ugruk. And not until the big ships came with all their groceries for winter. All the Point Lay people, like Susook and Neakok had big warehouses to store all the food and supplies. They put padlocks on and then went away for part of the summer hunting caribou, squirrels and fishing. They stayed away from the ice cellar so they wouldn't use it up.

They packed up their dogs and kids and everything in a boat to go away for part of the summer. They let the dogs pull the boat from the bank with the people inside. Someone would be steering and someone else was in the front pushing on the bank with a pole so it wouldn't run into the ground. Like anybody who traveled rivers, they knew what to do. When it was a good trail the dogs pulled the boat fast enough.

Lots of times there was a big load so some of the people had to walk. People didn't have rubber boots. They used waterproof mukluks with *ugruk* bottoms. While they traveled *Tunualuk* kept sewing mukluks. That's because she had a big family. Everybody used mukluks. Eskimos didn't use shoes. People walked lots in those days. After awhile the mukluk bottoms got holes. And there was still snow. You can't walk around with a big hole under your foot. Yet some of them had to for a little ways. They couldn't help it, somebody had to patch it.

Some bottoms were tender and could wear out in one day on rough ground. Some *ugruk* bottoms were tough and hard to put holes into. They knew this too. The beluga skin under the *maktak* is the stronger one. That's the kind they used for walking on the rocks up on the mountains when they could get them. People needed more than one pair of mukluks. Some people's didn't look good but they covered their feet.

That is why *Tunualuk* sewed mukluks while they traveled. She was a good sewer. But when her husband and boys were walking all day she had to keep sewing because they kept getting holes. She was either patching bottoms or making new ones.

These rivers here have some really big bends where the river almost meets again. When she got to those kinds of bends she would get out of the boat on the side where the river comes back around. Then she walked over to the other side and sat down to keep sewing while they took the boat all the way around the bend. Sometimes she had enough time to sew the bottom to the top and finish her one mukluk. She had no time to rest with her husband and so many boys. Big families are like that. Especially when the women don't have anyone to help them.

## Mothers Club

In the older days there weren't many accidents besides sprains and cuts. There were no gun accidents like we have now. Because they only had one or two guns, maybe a rifle and a shotgun. The younger ones didn't own anything unless they were big enough. They couldn't afford to give guns to the young ones at that time. One gun passed from daddy to son and by the time it got to the grandson it was old. They didn't use them to play with. Just to kill what they ate. They didn't shoot anything they didn't want.

The Eskimos knew how to take care of themselves long ago. I talked to Eunice and Mickey Toorak about how the old people took care of a big cut. They said they tied it above the cut. And they knew how to sew them too, with somebody's long hair for thread. I wonder what kind of needles they used, maybe bone.

I've seen the old people put broken bones back in place. They gave them lots of water and made hot pads with heated sand put in a bag. That's a good one. And I've seen the dried up *ugruk* gut they used for enemas when they couldn't *anaq* [defecate]. My parents used that. They made the end for the enema out of a willow carved smooth with a hole in the middle. The hole was made the same way they hollowed out pipes. My papa used a long wire made hot in the stove to bum a hole in the core of the wood.

They tied the carved willow end to the dried *ugruk* gut that was wet first so it would stretch. Then someone would help pour the water in the *ugruk* gut for the enema.

What else did the old people do? They used plants, the leaves and little flowers. They put it with water and drank the plants for colds or sore throats. I never really got to see that kind. The first time I tried any of those plants was yesterday. Somebody gave me a certain kind of leaf [artemesia, stinkweed] for my swollen knee. It's been hurting and I couldn't even bend it.

Last night I wrapped those leaves on top and went to sleep. Now today I can bend it. It sure helped. I don't feel my knee hurting. It's like those leaves sucked it out. They told me I can

even pick the leaves in the wintertime when they're dried up. I never believed much in those myself — till I tried it now. I'm going to start collecting them. I know they grow by my sister's house in Kotzebue.

When the teachers came to Point Lay they were like health aides. We had midwives when I was growing up — what we called Mothers Club. The nurses would come through to teach us all. The Mothers Club was the health aides. In those days you didn't get paid. They were glad to get a little box of bandages, scissors and string or whatever to tie the cord when a baby was born. Each one got a little box like that.

When I got to be fifteen, I started helping midwiving. The teacher usually was the midwife and I was with her all the time. That's why I helped around. And she knew I got around fast for cleanup or whatever. I was midwife for my sisters when nobody was here. I told them to go to the hospital but they didn't want to.

I remember one time when Jim Macheena's wife Elizabeth broke her back. She went up the Kukpowruk River with *Pualu's* - wife when the water was high to fill the boat with sacks of coal, forty sacks or something. She was on the side of the mountain when a big block slid down and half buried her. It broke her back and hips so she couldn't walk too far. I don't know why they had to go way up on the mountain.

She lived only about ten more years. She was young too. None of her children lived except an adopted one. When Jim Macheena died she remarried *Nukapigaaq*. It was a good thing a boat came that was going south. It picked her up and took her to the hospital in Kotzebue. That's where she healed up.

You know I was talking about those people Macheena who came down below us at Kuutchiaq. That's where the coal mine is open now close to the ocean. Those people were living there using coal instead of always looking for driftwood. Wintertime it's often too cold to look for wood. Maybe that's why I stopped getting wood around here and started using coal.

I never learned to use that blubber for heat. It gets all over me. Point Hoppers are the ones that used seal oil but not anymore.

Long time ago around here, the people from Point Hope used blubber but the people from the north mostly used wood. They didn't like the smell of blubber. It gets on your clothes and makes you smelly all over. Point Hoppers knew how to keep their hands away from their clothes because they were born with that.

### Relatives

*Tunuallak* husband Charlie Susook was from somewhere around here. *Aanguyuk* was the little mamma that raised Charlie Susook, Neakok Knox and Johnson Toweena. Susook was the other two's half-brother, or adopted or something. This little mamma came here with her husband long ago when they were working for the White whalers sometime in the 1800's.

Lots of the people in this village are related to that one little lady *Aanguyuk*. She's over in the graveyard to the south with a fence around her small grave. Her legs were bent when she died, that's why it's small. Her son, Neakok Knox married Kimmik whose brother Amos Agnasagga had those three boys, Samuel Agnasagga, Patrick Tukrook and Michael Kayutak. Kimmik's younger sister, Louise Kanikyuk had a daughter Eunice who married Mickey Toorak. And Kimmik and Neakok Knox had two children: first was Tommy Knox (Frederick Thomas Neakok) who married Eva Papiglook and had Billy, Benny, my husband Warren, Eugene, Donald and Ida; second was a daughter Annie who married Towksjhea. So you see, all those third generation names are cousins; Tukrook, Agnasagga, Neakok, Toorak.

Then on my family's side is the Stalkers. Their grandma was my daddy Christopher Tingook's sister. So Stalker's mamma was my first cousin. Now her children are right here in Point Lay.

My first husband Allen Upicksoun was Kate Peterson's uncle so those two families' grandchildren are all related. Kate has Jack Susook and Ione Eastwood. And then Allen's daughter Martha married Leo Ahtungowruk so that name is in here.

Benny Neakok married *Pualu's* daughter Alice and stayed here. Then when Alice lost her mom her sister Ruth who married Danny Pikok came to Point Lay. They needed to make a living.

That's how *Pualu* and his family moved back here from Barrow. That filled up Point Lay!

When you get down to it, they're all related here. The main thing I try to tell the kids that want to get married, is if they're close cousins. I tell them not to do that. Sometimes they didn't know. I tell them they have to go some place, to another town to get a mate. It's not right to marry your real close relatives.

### Warren

After my first husband died, Warren Neakok wanted to help me with my kids. He was taking care of two families then. Warren was fourteen when his daddy died. He was the oldest one of four boys so he stopped going to school and started traveling, trapping. He took care of his mom, brothers and sisters. He was a grown man when we got married in 1947. But we made it. I got help from here and there. My parents were here too but my brother John was a little too young. Anyway, when you share with people, you make it. Now we take it easy.

Warren knew how to live off the land all right. His grandparents and parents were good trappers and hunters. Just like the Indians that talk about their traplines, each person had their own ground to trap. Sometimes they might have partners if somebody else wanted to trap with them. That's why Warren knew how to do it.

We worked the hell out of ourselves. I cooked and took care of the pooh-pooh babies. I had six more children with Warren — Nancy, Lilly, Marie, Juanita, Alma, and Harding. That was ten children altogether with the four from Allen. We had no baby bottles so the little one would nurse right there and go to sleep. Warren did the hunting.

The other kids took care of themselves. When the older ones are trained to take care of the younger ones, they do it. And they do it happily too. It was good for them. They never asked for twenty-five cents. The kids right now want five dollars for maybe two hours of babysitting. I never left my kids at night. I stayed with them.

Most of our living was off the land from Warren's trapping. Fur prices weren't much in those days. Fox were fifteen to thirty bucks depending on how clean they were. Polar bear was pretty good, five to ten dollars a square foot. There was quite a bit of polar bear but not as many as right now. Sometimes they travel eight in a bunch now. It looks like the whole family with young ones and old ones.

I did the sewing for Wien's pilots, the teachers that came, and sometimes for BIA people. The travelers came to me for mukluks, skin socks, mittens, whatever. Those long reindeer legging boots with ugruk bottoms and skin socks inside were twelve dollars. I made lots of those. And now they cost around two hundred dollars. I never make them anymore!

Warren's first job was in the late 40's, maybe 1949, for the Geodetic Survey, mapping the coast up to the Demarcation Point. He was the first one hired because they knew he was a good worker. In between hunting, trapping and getting coal, he worked in the school for the teachers as a janitor. He never stopped except sometimes on Sunday.

There was an Episcopal church here and sometimes Point Hopers came for the services, like Antoni Weber, Herbert Koonak, Patrick Attungana and Donald Oktollik who were layreaders or helpers used to bring the archdeacon here for confirmation or to marry people. Sometimes they came without the archdeacon to help us before we got our own lay readers like Samuel and his brother. Bishop Harris came from Fairbanks every June. I don't remember the preacher's name that came through one spring long ago and traveled up to Barrow. And in 1919, I was baptized by a preacher that was killed — Dr. Hoar — he gave me a bath on my head. He signed my birth certificate. Anyway, sometimes Warren stayed home for church and if the weather was good he'd go back to work on his dog team Sunday night.

Warren just started working with the Geodetic Survey when the whooping cough hit the kids here. My daughter Lilly got it. I had it too. It was a bad spring with almost starvation in the village. Our stove was broken and we had no salt, no coffee, tea or

any kind of Whiteman food. Just meat to eat. The kids were really sick, especially Walter Toorak and Frederick Tagarook. Those two and Jack Simon barely made it. Frederick was about one year old and Walter maybe two, they got it bad.

Work gave Warren four cans of milk every Saturday. I kept two for my kids who weren't that sick and sent the other two cans over for the other Point Lay kids who might not make it. We had to share with all the sick people. That was a bad one but all the kids made it. Later that spring we had a Coast Guard cutter bring in Darigold dried milk and oatmeal.

Warren worked with the Geodetic Survey every year until they finished. Each spring he traveled with them to Barter Island and further. I stayed here at the Old Village while he worked. The school was still going and there were quite a few people yet.

We started getting new teachers every year from Outside. They were people who had never been to Alaska and I had to teach them over and over. There was no bread in the store and they didn't know how to make it. They didn't even know how to make bannock.

This one new teacher couple from New York came over one day and said 'What are you baking in your stove?'

"A big pan cake," I told them. "Just like bread." It was sourdough I made slowly. I mixed it with soda, salt and grease to make a real thick sourdough. I put it in my thick iron skillet and cooked it real slow on top of my wood stove. "I make this so the kids will have something good to eat. And when one side of it's already done, I turn it over. It slowly cooks."

"When is that pan cake done?" the teacher asked me. I asked him, "Why?" He said he hadn't eaten bread and has been missing it a long time. Again I asked him why.

They told me, "Because we don't know how. We have lots of flour."

I thought, "Now I know how to catch them." So, I said, "Bring ten pounds of your flour over here and I'll show you how to make bread. After I make dough. I give you half of it." That's how I cheat them a little bit too you know. I told them to bring yeast,



lard and salt. After I got all of the bread stuff I made a big batch of dough. I baked some of it and made donuts with the rest. They sure were happy.

But after awhile they realized I was taking too much of their flour. That's when they learned to make their own bread. Then they didn't lose too much. Those teachers were learning themselves too, how to be out in the bush. People that come from New York really don't know how to make a living here. Everytime there were new teachers, I helped them learn. .

But one lady I didn't care to help. She was an Eskimo woman from Wainwright. The first time I ever met her she told me how she knows how to make mukluks, how to cut them. I didn't say, yeah good.

Falltime came around and she came over and asked me to cut mukluks for her to sew. I said, "No way. First time I say hello to you, you introduce yourself you know how to sew. So you're going to do it yourself. I won't help you." Boy, she got mad all right. But that's the way it is. You shouldn't boast when you first see somebody and say, "I'm a good housekeeper you know. I'm a good cook."

A lot of people have done that to me because I'm from an isolated place. They think that I don't know anything. Even White people do that, like when that DEW-line started and Warren worked for them. Some people from there acted as though they didn't like me when we first met. So I never cared about them. But after awhile, they come around and ask for help. They say, "Hi, could I come in?" To some of them I said no.

### Our Kids Go Away

As people kept moving away, slowly the school was emptying out. Finally there was no more school. The government made arrangements for all our kids to go away to Wrangel or some other place. We were told, all we had to do was put a little card in their pocket or purse and another in their suitcase to identify the children. And we were to tell them not to lose their name card.

Here, I never went anyplace and the kids never traveled except to fish camp or hunting. Little kids, six years old, seven, eight, nine, ten years old, had to leave their parents. All those kids in day school — Frederick Tagarook, Willie Tukrook, Donald and Bemy Neakok, Amos and Charlie Agnasagga, Walter Toorak, and my boy Allen Upicksoun — they took care of each other in school when they went out. That's why they're just like brothers.

Before the boys left they'd say to each other, "Stay away from Indians." I told them the Indians never fought us. And they would say, "You don't know how it be there Mom." I told them they would all be partners in the group, Eskimos and Indians. They shouldn't act like funny Eskimos.

You know, I can't remember what year it happened. I know it was when Willard was one or two. All five of my kids went at once. Gordon went to high school and the others to day school; Allen, Nancy, Lilly and Marie. Juanita and little five year old Alma were the only ones left behind. They were all my kids except Alma — there were two Almas. The older one from my first husband's family died at Mount Edgecumbe after she finished school. She graduated and we didn't have enough money to bring her home then so she stayed thereto work. The second Alma we adopted. She's Amos Agnasagga's sister and lives in Wainwright married to David Bodfish.

With all the kids gone at once, I didn't feel like cooking. We missed the kids. Warren was already working at DEW-line so lots of times he brought home leftover food. Juanita died about that time and when Alma had to go away to school I just couldn't cook. With the leftovers Warren brought, it was as though I didn't even have to cut wood for my cookstove.

That old lady I talked about before, *Tunualuk*, she kept me company when the kids went away to school. She knew I wasn't eating. When she came over I had to make something for her. That's how she got me to eat. And I had to chop wood and keep a fire so she could be warm when she'd visit me. She'd kept me going, She kept me alive.

*Tunuallak* wanted us to send tapes to the kids when they went away to school. We had one of those old round tape recorders with the reels. Certain people from different villages sent recordings to each other. That's how they talked to one another instead of letters. We would just talk like I'm doing right now and send them to Point Hope, Kivalina, Kotzebue, Selawik or whoever wanted it. We talked about different kinds of hunting we were doing in our own place. Or talk about what different people were doing.

Mickey Toorak hadn't seen his brother in Anuktuvak for twenty years. They started to talk to each other with the tape recorder. Boy, that was a good one. We laughed. Everybody in town would come over for that. We furnished the recording and light plant — a small one for a small house. Sometimes they came early and waited until Warren came home. They liked to listen to those tapes over and over.

Some of them like Amos and Charlie Agnasagga were that old lady's grandchildren. But all the kids called her grandma. They really liked their little grandma. She sang her little songs for us to tape and send to the kids. I wish I could sing them. They're kind of like Mother Goose songs, only Eskimo. When she would sing, you started laughing. The words were funny. Then she would tell a story or just talk to the kids. The parents talked to the kids too and then sent them to the principal.

When the principal had time after supper or whenever, the kids were gathered together in one room to listen to them. The principal said they would cry and cry when they heard mommy and daddy talking to them. Afterwards they answered back and talked to us on the tape. They talked about themselves. The principal said they cried for a little while and then they started laughing. They answered back that the little old lady made them happy when she sang in Eskimo. They sure were happy. That was part of her work, *Tunuallak* made the homesick kids real happy.

Those songs she said were very old. People sang them, children to children. When she was growing up she learned them. Some she said came from the church when they first had Friend's

missionaries close to Kotzebue. There was a point between Kivalina and Kotzebue where the missionaries stayed and sang a lot. She didn't understand many of the English words but she could almost pronounce them. Sometimes when the kids came home from school she said, "See if you can understand, I'm going to sing like English." She sang loud and had a good voice. When she finished she'd ask, "Do you understand?" She learned this "Little Brown Church In The Valley". She couldn't speak English but the kids could. They knew the song and started to sing it for her.

That was how the kids had a good time even though there were no activities here. She made anything fun. Even washing her hair with shampoo. When they returned from school for summer, they brought her shampoo. They washed her hair and showed her how to put a little bit of shampoo in her hand.

Then one day it was nice weather and she went home to shampoo her hair outdoors. The kids watched her through the window. She used that shampoo, spilled her water on the ground, filled it back up again and rinsed her hair. She put a towel over her head. Then when she fixed her hair she'd come over and say, "Oh, I feel real light!"

She was a nice old lady. She sewed and made bags out of canvas to hold things. She gave them to the traveling boys like my husband Warren. She'd say, "Keep your traps in there. It's a big bag so you won't drop your traps all over." They would pack them up and put webbing around it. Warren kept his for a long time on his dogsled and took it all over. When he needed to set a trap he just took that bag. It was handy. He even used it when he started using the snowmachine. He put his parts in there so they never dropped all over. Finally, when the house burned down he lost it.

We lost lots of things when that house burned. It was the little house we made on this side here before everybody moved here. It was a plywood house and it burned down by itself. The second house we burned on purpose to keep the ground clean after we moved to our quonset hut.

Warren worked hard for the kids. We had nothing except for food, and we ate lots of meat. We couldn't afford to buy diesel. "That will wait. The money will have to go to the kids." We sent them twenty dollars each, monthly. If they stayed in school they got at least twenty dollars a month. And we bought their clothes. Every summer they came home in old clothes and had grown one or two sizes bigger. Either they would out grow their clothes or wear them out. Summertime we picked out new clothes from Sears and Roebuck and Montgomery's catalogs. It would take three months of winter to save that money for clothes. Warren never had a vacation for three straight years. Only then, he took two weeks off. He even worked on Sundays — never had a day off or anything.

But we wanted those kids to stay in school. We missed them all right. But we told them they would never be able to work for money unless they went to school. Their daddy Warren only went to the fourth grade. But still he worked hard and learned. Even though we only went to the fourth or sixth grade we learned how to spell, divide and multiply. Those are the important ones.

I don't know why they aren't learning that today. I ask my grandkids. In fourth grade some don't know how to read. Some of them even graduate without learning how to read. We didn't even find out until they finished school that two of the boys in Point Lay didn't know how to read.

The kids that went out learned. We told them they had to finish. Too many of the older people never even finished day school. When that first school opened here with the Meyers, even some thirty year olds went. They studied hard just to spell their names or learn how to speak English and say yes or no. That's why we had teachers that could speak Eskimo, those first two. The BIA knew we needed an interpreter. That really helped. Maybe we learned how to speak English faster than the Wainwright kids our same age. School was important.

You know when our kids went out to Wrangel or Edgecumbe, it was really hard. Some of those older people didn't have help so they moved out after a few years. Amos Agnasagga's parents, Samuel and Ruth went to Wainwright by boat. They talked to us

about it. We told them to go ahead and move. "If we want to move later we will too. So we stayed here right to the end. Wainwrighters came for Walter Toorak's old parents, Eunice and Mickey.

The kids never came home except for summer break. May 20, they left school and about August 24, they had to go back. The school and airlines tried to make it a fast trip so the kids wouldn't be stopping around in other places. But sometimes they had to stay all night in Barrow when the weather was bad. Then they stayed with Warren's cousin, Anna Aiken. My girls would say, "Aunt Anna, she's bossy. She wouldn't even let us go out." Now they tell her, "Good thing you never let us out! You really want to take good care of us." They realize that.

Summertime was just like Hallelujah! The kids all wanted to find duck eggs and hunt for *ugruk*. When Allen, Donald, Amos and the other ones got to be teenagers we had to watch them close. They didn't know those holes in the ocean. They might just look at the *ugruk* and fall in. They had little accidents and went in the water but they learned to pop back up if they went into a hole. We just watched them close.

Donald went in one time like that. He was out because the older boys had to kill *ugruk*. He got off the sled, fell right in the hole and touched the bottom. He could see the hole from down there and headed right back up through it and grabbed the sled. That was before he learned to swim.

It was hard to keep up with those boys. They would go all over and do anything. They were free. When Amos killed a wolf first then Allen had to do the same thing the next day. They did everything together. They wanted to see who would kill *ugruk* first and would hardly sleep. As soon as Samuel and Ruth and the older brothers went to sleep they would sneak out and go off to do something. They would plan it. Amos' mom would have to wake up early in the morning to see if Amos was asleep. When he was missing she knew he was out on the ocean. Samuel would have to get up and look with his binoculars.

Those kids were always doing something. They made the village lively again. After their summer break it was quiet again and we missed our kids.

### **DEW-line**

We moved over to this side when everybody moved out of the Old Village. It was a little house near here. I had nobody to talk to, just a shepard dog. He wouldn't let DEW-line people come near us, unless I told him not to bother them. The DEW-line had their own rules. It's an Air Force or military warning system. You get along fine if you follow their rules and never go around where you're not supposed to be. People only stay for awhile so there were always new people.

When they had a new movie someone would come get me with a pickup. Sometimes when they had something fresh they would get me for supper. When they killed a moose some of the people would get me to eat with them. After work, sometimes bosses like the station chief or superintendent wanted Warren to teach them so they went hunting with us. We would hunt around with two boats and kill some ducks or belugas, *ugruk* or walrus, whatever was around.

Some DEW-line people who hunted, didn't want the meat so they would give it to me. Lots of them just wanted the skin. One guy killed an *ugruk*, bearded seal. He let it stand in the sand for two days and then came to me to say I could have the meat. I said, "No way. It's no good. Never let it stand. Have to cut them up right away when you want the meat."

He said, "Your dog feed?"

"No way. Even my dog won't eat that," I told him. "You want the skin, you scrape it yourself." He said he'd give me twenty dollars. I said, I'm not doing anything. Not even for money." He did it himself. He didn't want to look at me. He thought I was just an Eskimo he could handle. When I say no, I stand by it.

Even though Warren worked seven days a week, all day long, he always went hunting in good weather. He never ate supper at home. I would make a hot meal and put the pot, or whatever in the

grub box. I'd take it down to the boat along with a thermos. While he was working I would load the guns and everything in the boat. It was right there by the bank all ready. He just took care of the gas. When he came home with the truck we'd go down and get the boat. Go!

We were happy. We'd beach where we wanted to hunt, and started to eat while it's still hot. Then we'd get something like spotted seals. I'd skin them and send those to the tannery. That way I had my own work sewing jackets.

Then I got sick. I had to stay at Wainwright for awhile to be close to the health aide. My nose kept bleeding all the time and I couldn't stay alone. The DEW-line let him switch with a Wainwrighter who came here while Warren went to Wainwright to work.

They did that one other time and we both went to Barter Island. That way we felt better because we got homesick for people with nobody in Point Lay. At Barter Island there were lots of Eskimos like us. I knew a lot of the relatives up there. When I told one person I was going they'd tell me to say hi to their cousin. That's how I have lots of friends north and south.

We stayed in Wainwright for most of the summer and then had to come back. Those kids who went away for school were all older now. They were getting training Outside so they could work as mechanics or whatever they needed to get a good job. I worried sometimes. I would tell them to come home when they finished school, there's no other place.

When Warren and I came back from Wainwright we found out that some new people in DEW-line went looking around our ice cellar. That's where we had our cold storage, ice cellars. We used the same ones year after year. They have those at Point Hope too but they don't stay really frozen in the summer. Our ice cellars at Point Lay really freeze. They stay that way year-round if they stay covered when it's warm,

One big family would have their own ice cellar or maybe two. When they first made them, people helped each other and gave cigarettes or something in return. Warren helped make a cellar for



his aunty while he was growing up. When they moved away they sold it. Warren had money to buy it but he was stingy because he helped the most with it, and it was his aunty. So another man got it. Then this man moved away and the first thing he asked was if I wanted to buy an ice cellar. Warren did, so now it's ours. We had another ice cellar right here on this side by the house, until some new people came around and spoiled it.

All of our family uses the one we have left over at *Kali*. It keeps meat good. We just opened it to put some muktuk down there that Amos brought us from Wainwright. It's no use to keep meat outside and let it spoil. Warren's brothers Donald and Benny use it too.

When people first came back to build Point Lay again the other cellars were closed in. So they used our cellar for how many years. But some people are not shame and take other people's cache. That's when I told them to open up their own cellars. That way there's no fight. They said, "But they're closed." We just told them to uncover it and open the door. it was still frozen under there. They just had to open them in the winter and leave the door open while it was cold so the cellar could air out.

People have been using ice cellars around here all these years. They used ice picks to break out the permafrost and had lots of people *pukuk* [to bend over and pick it up]. That way they made the ice cellar quick to save their meat. We never had refrigerators or freezers.

Well, those new DEW-line people opened our ice cellar that was here on this side, while we were in Wainwright. We had filled it with caribou meat so if the kids came back they could have some. That was when there were no Natives working for DEW-line. We stayed away almost one year. We went to Wainwright with a snowmachine in the springtime and came back the next spring the same way. We sent all our things back with the airplane. That was the longest we stayed away from here.

We knew we were coming back. That's why we wanted to be ready with all that caribou in the ice cellar. We made sure it was all covered before we left so it wouldn't melt during the summer.

But somebody took everything off to see what was inside and then left it open. It just melted — full of caribou.

I guess those new people didn't know what it was. They thought that was where we dumped trash or something. Oh boy, everything was ruined. The ice cellar just filled up with water. There was nothing we could do. Then when winter came it all turned to ice. People told me to sue them but I we didn't want to. We didn't even know who did it.

It was a good thing we had another ice cellar across the lagoon. And it was good they left that one alone. Sometimes I had a board over there that said "Leave Alone. Neakok." That's because I knew DEW-line people sometimes took things from over there.

One time they used a helicopter to pick things up from the Old Site. People took things left behind in the old houses and warehouses. Warren saw that helicopter going back and forth from the Old Village back to the garage at DEW-line. These people with the helicopter weren't DEW-line workers. They were oil drillers or expiration — I don't know what they were doing. There were too many things going on with people coming in and out. I couldn't keep track of them all.

Maybe I shouldn't talk about these kinds of things. But they are not stories. Those are the things I went through. I saw it. And I was telling you about that helicopter going back and forth from the Old Village. Since my husband worked over there at DEW-line, he looked in the garage and saw all the winter fur clothes and skins. He recognized our stuff in the garage.

Warren came home to tell me what was happening. I got a piece of paper and started writing. "Bring all the junks you pick from Old Village and bring them to me here. Right now." Warren took that over to them. Those people had to load everything into trucks and bring them to my house.

Eskimos don't take things when they go to a new town, not unless they are told to take it. And when I go to Anchorage, they don't give me anything. All they want is my money. That's how it is. These newcomers visit the village once in awhile and they think Eskimo stuff is priceless. But they have no right to take things

from between the houses and what's stored inside. Even if no one is staying at the house, that's still their house. They come back sometimes.

When those guys brought our stuff over with the trucks they were full of all kinds of things. And the other stuff, I knew who they belonged to. There were all my old parkies that I never used, old mukluks and hip boots. Some of them had holes in the bottom or the caribou hair coming out. That's why I didn't use them. But they were nice and dry. Some of the people wanted to buy them. I picked out what we still used and sold the others one by one. There, we were happy. I told them not to do that again.

Some of those companies looking for oil came around here. They unloaded about five hundred barrels of diesel and jet fuel over by where Cully Camp is now for when the company came in with their Cat-train. The Cat-train was all their equipment for drilling to see what was around here. You know they even drilled in front of my door! We were away for two weeks and when we came home there was no house around here except one hut. That was the quonset hut we lived in. I said, "How come they dumped sand in front of my steps?" I thought they brought sand from DEW-line. Here they drilled in front of our house and brought up sand. I didn't even know they drilled!

Still, new people would come through. One of the *taniks* from DEW-line took an *ugruk skin* I had stretching on plyboard. It was all dried and bleached real white. This was when we moved over to the River Site. I left the skin outside my hut on this side to freeze-dry and bleach. I told DEW-line that I wanted it back. Well they tracked and tracked that guy. When they caught up to him he said he sold it already. Finally, I said never mind. That's why sometimes I don't get along with the new people that come through. I tell them to leave my stuff alone. They don't like me so I smile to make them more mad. But nice people are nice — it's the other ones I leave alone.

### The Kids Return

It used to be fun in the summertime listening to the kids make their plans to come back to Point Lay. They had to prepare themselves. They made me laugh when they all got together talking about what they would be. One said she'd be secretary, another one accountant, then a mechanic, diesel worker and helicopter frame maker. They kept telling us they would come back. That's why we stayed here. I knew they would come back. We didn't know who, though, because in some of the villages, once they went away to school the kids didn't come back. That's why I worried sometimes.

They really did work hard to be trained. My son Gordon went to electrician school in New York, for four years. He lives in Barrow now. He's worked all over the Arctic Slope on the electric poles. And the girls like Lilly, Nancy, Marie and Alma; they went to school in Anchorage and worked for people there. The way I saw it, they weren't doing much working for the other people. They should be working at home for Eskimos.

Now the ones that came back are working for the Eskimo community. They keep their school, store and clinic going. One of them is mayor, another is the light plant man — Charlie Agnasagga. Lilly is the village coordinator. When Marie comes home she will do something.

There aren't many people here so they have to take turns. If someone doesn't know how to take care of money or the business goes broke, they have to be kicked out of the job. Then one of the others will jump in and keep it going. We have to pick ourselves up. By trying, they find out who is good for this or that. They don't have to feel bad if they're replaced. They can try another job. Some of the kids are scared of jobs they don't know how to do and want to get out. The kids didn't know they would be coming back here to work hard.

When Land Claims started up the kids told us they were coming home. We were happy. By then only Warren and I were here — and DEW-line. As soon as we got word, we started getting ready for them to return. They had to make all of their plans too. They

had almost one year to get ready. Some of them were in Barrow or Wainwright, some of them still Outside.

With Land Claims there was a rush in Barrow to help get things going with Nuiqsut, Atkasuk and Point Lay. They wanted to start up those old villages that people had left behind. Barrow said there was too much space between there and Point Hope. They had to have a little town here in between. That's why the rush was on.

There were so many things to do. We ordered lots of groceries from Lindy's in Fairbanks because there was no store here. DEW-line let us get it through them, freight-free. We got lots of flour and sugar and stacked it up. When DEW-line got new mattresses and threw away their old ones, we put them across the lagoon in a warehouse and stacked them up.

We did lots of extra hunting that fall too and ordered some sheefish from Kotzebue, whatever we could get. I told you about that ice cellar that got spoiled. That was the year before everyone came back. That's why it was full of caribou. We had word ahead of time. So we had to start over again with hunting that winter to fill the other ice cellar across at the Old Village.

It was about March or April when they started coming down here from Barrow and Wainwright with snow machines to start over again. Willie Tukrook and his brother Frederick came from Barrow with their snow machines. They left their parents in Barrow because they had to start their Old Village over. And the Wainwright Agnasagga boys like Amos had their machines all loaded up too.

All of them were coming home to Point Lay. Whoever wanted to follow them was welcome. My son Allen was working in Oakland when he heard all the kids were coming home. He left his wife, grabbed his little car and drove to Alaska, He couldn't stay away. None of them could stay away. All those years going to school they'd been homesick.

So, my husband told Dew-line he wanted to quit and help the young people coming home. Even though they wanted him to work yet, Warren said no. He said he had to work for his own people now. Our own *Inupiaq* builders and carpenters.

Everybody moved into the houses at the Old Village when they first came back. They had plans to build all new houses at the River Site. People stayed at the old school house at the Old Village. Some of the families were in the nurses quarters, some in the kitchen, others in the dispensary of the old school. It was hard to heat that one. And some of them stayed in tents all spring until fall. Quite a few people came back. I wish I knew how many.

My husband made a landing field in the middle of the lagoon. We put a quonset hut at the end of it. In March a Here started bringing building materials. It kept coming back and forth with the materials to build houses.

Everybody was busy. When I say busy, I mean busy. They chose the River Site for the new village. The young people had no time to cook so I cooked for anybody who came in. Some of them lived too far from the building site if they were staying in the Old Village, Others had nothing to eat in their tent. That's why we got all that food ahead of time. I cooked and baby sat while everybody else worked on the houses.

We tried to raise dogs so they could have a dogtear but the dogs were too mean. They were raised when there were no people around. They kept biting people. We had no time for them so they had to be killed.

We built ten houses in that one year. They finished the first one and told me and Warren to move into it. It's this house we live in now, we just brought it from the River Site when the village moved here. We were the first one to move into a new house. Somebody else took over the hut. As soon as a house was done, somebody moved right in.

We were so busy building houses there was no time to go any place except hunt for meat. The meat was divided up and went to the people who cooked, then everyone would eat it. For two years it was like that. It was a good time though.

The only problem was that the River Site flooded. The ground was sinking or something. After just a couple years we had to build a new village again. That's when we moved here to where we are today. Everybody pulled their houses over here and kept on

building for the new ones coming in. We had the Cully School here and afterwards got this big new school.

I know Ruth Agnasagga worried about her son Amos when he frost came back. She asked us to take care of him. She was afraid that since he just came back from California he'd have a hard time because he didn't know how to make biscuits, bread, donuts or whatever. They told us to treat him like one of our kids.

Warren never went back to work at DEW-line. He'd work at different jobs around town like he's doing right now, working on some tractors. That way we had lots more time to live off the land.

Warren and I kept going out for our food to the same places we go now. We have two fish camp cabins on the Kukpowruk River. We use them in the wintertime and stay there one or two weeks looking for caribou and trapping foxes but mostly wolverine. We track them and go further up

Liz A, *Tijmigliaq, Tulugaq*, Cape Lisbourne, Kuutchiaq, Neakok and just stay around the cabins. After everyone came back, Amos and Lisa [von Ziegesar] went hunting with us a lot until she got tied down with her baby. Usually Warren and I go by ourselves. But this winter we missed it because Warren was sick and we stayed away in Anchorage for about five months.

When it was fishing or beluga hunt, duck hunting, seal hunting — that's when we went in a big group. Like beluga, people still do that together — herd them up and hunt. We butcher them across the lagoon on the hill where it's not sandy. The mayor is in charge of dividing the beluga up for everyone in the village. We make a pile for each house and have to haul them up to the ice cellars because they spoil quick. I remember around 1980 we got lots of beluga. Those were happy days but lots of work. We were lucky. A few years we didn't get any beluga.

People don't get beluga other places because they travel in the open lead with whales and sink easy in that deep water after shooting. We herd them to a shallow place in the lagoon so they can't sink. That's why lots of people want beluga. When we have enough, we send lots of bags and boxes to Barrow, Wainwright and

Kotzebue. But not this year, fourteen was not enough for the village. We could only send a little part.

We had lots of fun fishing too when the village started again. Our house at fish camp was too small so whoever wanted to follow brought their own gear and used tents. Fall is the only fishing time, October and part of November. There's grayling, dolly varden, silver fish and dog salmon. You just have to get your fish hook out. It's freezing then so as you take the fish out they freeze.

Just last fall that didn't work. It kept raining and the fish didn't freeze right away. Even though the fish were wet, I kept putting them in boxes because I don't like those ermine to kick them around and play with them. You know those little white animals? I don't like them. They eat the liver and that's all. And when they've had enough to eat they just open them up for nothing. You know, we're out at fish camp. If we left the fish outdoors the errnine kept hauling them away. AS many as they could. They put them in the squirrels' dens while the squirrels were asleep. I've seen them do it. That's why I know. -

### Point Lay Right Now

All those kids are grown up and have their own kids and families. This town really built up. Now I have grandchildren. Things changed from when I was young. When I was growing up I never stayed out after nine during school days. Now they can stay up all night if they want to. When I was a kid everyone was in by nine o'clock, even the parents.

And there was no work and no money. They had to haul something to bum in their stove. There was no diesel like now. And they didn't buy meat from the store. When we compare life a long time ago, back then was just hunting. There was no money so they just had to hunt. It was lots harder than now.

I think that's why kids are loafing now. They don't haul wood or hunt. They have nothing to do when they're teenagers. And I think this drug, marijuana is bad. I don't like it. It gets into the kids, I think. What should I tell my grandkids? I tell them, "You want to try that? Then just look at that boy who spoiled his



mind. I'm scared of that kind of person. Because they don't think If you want to be like that then go ahead." I don't know if I'm right or not but that's the way I see it.

I worry about my grandkids. When I was little, we worked hard until we were tired. I followed daddy hauling wood or hunting. Just when it was dangerous he didn't let me follow. When it was safe, I followed till I went to sleep. The kids hardly do that now.

But they're still Eskimo here. They eat their Eskimo meat. They hunt. If they try to go without it, they can't do it. And they have to have seal oil. When the kids went away and stayed with White people they thought they didn't have to eat seal oil. Of course, they couldn't get it in school and had to eat different kinds of food. But when you come up here and start to eat Eskimo food, you've got to have seal oil to dip your meat in.

When my kids stopped eating seal oil they thought they didn't have to make it. Then in the wintertime they'd say, "Mamma, you have seal oil?" I always told them yeah. But lately I tell them, "You don't 'want to learn Ire-w to make your own seal oil? Okay. I tell you what. You go study from Lisa. She's the only one who listens when I teach you girls. You go study from her. I'm not going to keep on teaching folks one by one." Then they tell me, "No, I know how." Lisa was with Amos Agnasagga and they have a daughter Christina. We used to spend lots of time together. I taught Lisa lots of things whenever we could get together before she started working at the school.

But when my leg started hurting and I couldn't walk, my kids cut up *ugruk skin* in no time. They had a tough time taking the oil from the heavy *ugruk*. So I said, "I'll tell you the easy way. Everything is heavy. You take the skin off when you get the *ugruk* and cut it up the middle. You hold the skin as you're taking it off and leave the oil in the meat. Then you roll the skin and roll it. As you take the skin off, make sure you have something clean under the oil or *uqsruq* [blubber]. Then you have an easy time cutting that oil to put in the barrel.

I want all the young kids to know those kinds of things. We take our grandkids out to fishcamp and find out they don't even

know how to chop wood. They should know that. But they hit it all over instead of in one place. I had to teach them. They had to learn how to build a fire. They thought you just pile wood on top of each other and build a fire. I watched them. They'd say they were going to build a fire like the Indians they read about in a book. After piling up pieces of woods they got a big box of matches to start their fire. Pretty soon the matches are all finished. I started to teach them how and told them it wouldn't start without small pieces of wood. I made sure they learned it.

They have to learn how to cut their caribou meat. My one boy watched us all the time. And then when he could hunt caribou, the first thing he did was skin it his own way — right down the back. He thought he had it all figured out the easy way. Well he had a tough time trying to take things out.

I told him, "You can't do it another way. You have to follow Mamma and Daddy's life. You see, all you have to do is tackle those legs."

"Most of the kids here get to go out and learn. The parents take them out or the uncles and sisters. It depends on how big the boat is. But the kids have to learn all those things."

I don't know what the future will be like for these kids. Is 1991 our future? Whatever comes, I guess we'll just keep on living. It's good that they know about this town and the people from here. We say that Point Lay is anybody's town. The people from here came from different places. Like the two other old people in this book. Kate is three years older than me. She's got different kinds of stories because she came from the north, Prudhoe Bay. That would be a good story. And one came from the south, me. *Pualu* came from Point Hope or somewhere around here. So that makes Point Lay right now.

# KATE PETERSON

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Kate Peterson, born in Barrow, spent most of her childhood subsistence hunting and trapping with her parents at **Prudhoe Bay** and **Beechey Point**. **Those were years of solitude, seasonal travel** and living off the land. Her first marriage to Dan **Susook** provided new social life at the "Old Village" of Point Lay where they raised a large family. Kate's family moved to Kotzebue after a tragedy. An ailing husband required Kate to become the sole economic provider. Kate retired after years of hard **work**. **Today**, in her seventies, Kate lives in Point Lay when not visiting with friends and family in Anchorage or Alaskan villages.

Kate was interviewed at her Point Lay home by Yvonne **Yarber** in May 1988. Transcripts of those English tape recordings were edited by the interviewer in a way that would convey Kate's speaking style. Grammatical changes were made to clarify intent. It should be noted that Kate's first and most fluent language is *Īñupiaq*. Whenever *Īñupiaq* words appear in italics they have been translated into the current orthography by James Nageak who listened to tape excerpts. Please refer to Appendix A for the pronunciation guide to the *Īñupiaq* personal names that are not italicized. Brackets indicate notes from the editor or *Īñupiaq* definitions by James Nageak (J.N.).

**This manuscript** was read to both Kate and her daughter lone Eastwood for corrections and approval in May **1989**. lone credits her mother with keeping the family together after the death of Kate's first husband Dan **Susook**. lone said, "She was determined to keep us together and worked hard to make a living in a situation **that put lots of kids** in foster homes. That's why I try to help her out now.

"My mom taught us a lot. The strongest thing she stressed **was** to share food. Like my son Danny, he takes her duck, caribou, **and** egg hunting when she's home. She's teaching Danny traditional **ways** of snaring squirrels and ducks without using ammunition. And whenever he gets some kind of game, especially if she's out of town, **she's** taught him to share it with with the elders before he brings some home to me. She feels sharing the food we get off the land should not die out **among** Eskimos."

## FOX SKIN **WAS** MONEY

I'm seventy years old. An old lady. My life has been lots of traveling. I was born in Point Barrow, January 11, 1918. I got papers from the magistrate.

There was no hospital. Just Eskimo midwives long ago. I don't know the English name of the midwife that helped with me; *Amiqqaq*, that's Roy Ahmaogak's mother. There were two women. Elizabeth Ipalook was the other one. Both of them passed away long ago. They helped each other.

My mother told me about the little house where I was born at Browerville. We stayed in that house a long time ago. They sold it so now I've got no house in Barrow. Sometimes I wish my aunties and uncles in Barrow were still alive.

The first thing I remember is my relations; *Ipaaluk*, Charlie Brewer, Ray Hobson. I have Whiteman relations. Mamma's sister Mary *Asiarᅇᅇataq* was married to a Whiteman, Charlie Brewer. *Asiarᅇᅇataq* was Tom Brewer's mamma. My uncle, Jim Allen was a Whiteman too. Married to my father's sister Eleanor. I always saw them when I was little, before I got schooling.

I forgot about things those first years. I'm not a smart woman. Silly woman. I don't know how to talk, so just a little bit. Can I talk about anything?

My mother Esther came from Kotzebue. *Purraq* is her Eskimo name. Her mamma and daddy are Lotty Aklachak and Roy Apook. We have lots of relations. Mamma talked about them, from Wales, King Island, Shishmaref and Point Hope too. Her relations moved to Barrow.

My father's name is *Samarualuk*. Simon *Samarualuk* from Kivalina. Allen Upicksoun is my father's brother but he stayed with his really mother *ᅇayuutaq*, my father's mother. Kate is her English name. Their father is *Sirraun*, his English name, Lenny Sizron. Allen Upicksoun lived in Wainwright and Point Lay. Only my father was adopted by Point Hope people. So he had schooling in Point Hope. Attungowruk adopted him. People said he was Captain Attungowruk. They called him Captain. He did lots of whaling. They say he was a shaman too. And five wives. I wonder how many children he got. Lots of boys from around here were adopted by him. *Niqautalik* and my father. That name *Niqautalik* means 'lots of meat'. But I don't know the English name.

My father was young when he left Point Hope to go someplace. Maybe he was looking for a woman. He found my mother Esther *Purraq* in Kotzebue. When my daddy found Mamma, there was no money then. Not like now. The only money was skins. Grey fox, red fox, any kind. Fox skin was money. That's how they made their living.

## FRESH AIR AT PRUDHOE BAY

My father traveled far from Point Hope. He hunted for polar bear and fox. My mother followed. We went to Prudhoe Bay, at Kuparuk, about fifteen miles from Beechey Point. I was too young to remember when we moved there. My mother had two kids, a boy and girl. Johnny and Kate. There were no other people around. No village. Only us. People say that Prudhoe Bay is like a big village now. It's nothing like before. Nowadays when I fly from Barrow to Anchorage we land at Prudhoe Bay, so I can see how different.

Traveling with traps was our life. There was no Ski-doo, no Honda — nothing. Only dogs. Sometimes six dogs. Sometimes nine dogs. Dogteam with a big sled load. We would always feed them good. Cook some fish or make soup outside on a driftwood fire in a big boiling pot. Sometimes my mother put a little bit of flour in there. We had a really tent from the store. Inside, we used driftwood in the wood cookstove. We used any kind of paper with sod on top to light the stove. Sometimes our only heat was a Primus stove. And if it was stormy we'd cook soup in a big pot for the dogs on that stove too.

My brother Johnny Evak was older. He was adopted from Grandma Lotty's brother, Sam Taalak. Pretty soon he went to Barrow for schooling and stayed with our grandma Charlie Brewer, *Asiannaq*. So it was me alone with my parents at Prudhoe. No kids to play with.

I couldn't talk English because there were no Whitemen people in Prudhoe Bay. Our closest neighbors were at the one store at Beechey Point. It was far away all right by dogteam. I remember sleeping out two nights before we'd reach there. We'd only go a few times a year. Thanksgiving and Christmas was the only time we would all see people. Usually just my father would go with his skins for groceries. He'd buy cases to last a long time. Edwardson was the storekeeper. He was married to an Eskimo woman, Dora. Charlie Edwardson is their boy. Dora is Grandma

Lotty's oldest daughter. *Asiarᅇᅇaq* Brewer and my mamma are her sisters. That's why I called her grandma.

My father would buy me sweet pickles and canned fruit; oranges, sweet pickles and a little candy. That was special. My father would tell me, "Babe you gonna eat that sweet pickles? You eat meat too." My mother didn't let me eat much candy. She always scolded me, "That rotting your teeth, Babe. Don't chew it, that candy. We got no hospital." When I got older, once in a while I used that candy. They always scolded me. Later when I was a grown woman and there was no Mamma, I used that candy all the time. Before I'd go to bed too. I'd lay down with that candy just like a little girl.

We had a sod house, *iglu* at Prudhoe Bay. That's wood covered with sod. That place was like around here at Point Lay, always blowing snow. When the weather was good my daddy would always go tier the animals. Mostly polar bear, red fox and blue fox. And caribou to eat.

While my daddy went out happing and hunting I stayed home with mamma. She would stay inside the house working, cleaning, washing clothes, cooking. She'd work on his skins. Wash off the blood, dry them, and clean the hair with oatmeal. The skin would be really clean and white. Mamma sewed mukluks with *ugruk* bottoms, slippers and fur ruffs for jackets.

Eskimos always used seal skins, They made mukluks, and jackets or parkys. They made mittens and slippers too. And they used walrus skins — cut them in half to make it thinner. They covered boats with that — Eskimo skin boat and tents too. And they made blankets for blanket toss, but not around Point Lay. There were too few people for whaling. And they made us eat that walrus meat — ooohhh strong! I always boil it a long time to soften it.

I eat all that Eskimo food; polar bear, walrus liver and feet, blubber, seal meat. And beluga — hang up that muktuk outside for three days, boil it and put it away in a bucket. Dry beluga meat too. The soft meat is easy to break with your hand. I never used a knife. I learned to make that one.

People used the skins and fur for clothes too. We always use the small polar bear skins for ruffs, mittens, and mukluks. The short hair was used for jacket trim. They used fox for ruffs too — just for the young women, not men. But mostly caribou or reindeer skins were used for mukluks, parkas, mittens, socks and pants. Wolverine and beaver too, for jackets. I made a squirrel parka with beaver cuffs. Trapped and tanned all the skins myself. I used a wolf ruff with fancy calfskin and wolverine on the bottom. But that was way later, when I was a woman and learned to sew.

At Prudhoe Bay, while Mamma was busy, I'd be playing out in the fresh air. We were never sick you know. Fresh air was healthy. Later when we were around people that coughed, I remember asking, "How come you look so much sick? How come that cough?" Mamma looked at me with her hand to her mouth and said, "Shhhhhh."

I just never saw sick people before. The only medicine we ever had was that Vicks and Band-Aids my father got from the store. I never got those measles that were killing off people. Guess because I wasn't around people. Mamma and Daddy took care of me good. They had me use clean clothes and always take a bath. They didn't want me dirty. I don't know why some kids now always get sick easy. Maybe not enough fresh air.

I always kept busy outdoors. I wasn't lonesome. There were no toys from the store. Daddy made me balls to play with. And ptarmigan, my mother cleaned up that balloon from it's chest. She'd empty it and blow it big, tie it, and make me a balloon. With seals too, that balloon was really strong. I'd play with those any old way, bouncing them in the air. But that little ptarmigan balloon tore easy. And rocks, my mother would throw me little ones to bounce. She showed me how. I learned to juggle with two or three rocks. Daddy made me a wood toy with a string to swing around. They always made me a kite too. A cloth one out of one sugar calico sack, you know that sugar bag. It had tails and a little hard string that couldn't break. Sometimes they'd hold it and I'd run and play with that kite. Sometimes, just me. Even in the snow.

I was always hunting birds too, with a bow and arrow they made me. It was hard wood that would never break. And the string was braided caribou sinew. The arrow was wood with a small empty gun shell Daddy sharpened for the tip. I would shoot it in the air. They showed me how to hunt with it. I'd get little birds - sparrow, *qupaṭuuraq* [lapland longspur], snipe and *auksruaq* [red phalarope].

After hunting I always cleaned them, threw away the back and cooked just the breast. Mamma showed me how to light a fire. I'd burn wood and boil those birds outside, playing camping. Eat them myself.

Long time ago I ate sea gulls too. Just once in a while at Beechey Point. The sea gulls ate fish from the net by the beach in the lagoon. Clean sea gulls, they didn't eat junk, no dump around. My mother would skin and cook them. Different kind of taste and smell— just like duck meat. But I don't eat them anymore. I just feed them outside my house. I put meat out there because maybe they're hungry. I help, because I know they're hungry.

Sometimes we had owls too. My mother just boiled them plenty to make them soft. They were a different smelling meat. They always ate mice. When I was married and living in the Old Village at Point Lay my mother-in-law would take a walk and put traps on the driftwood. She'd catch and eat owls all the time. That was a really old lady. She had three blue lines on her chin, tattoo. Long time ago ladies always had color like that. Young people changed it, now there's no more of that color. People all have clean brown faces. Except men with lots of whiskers.

I ate lots of fish — whitefish and trout. My mother would boil or fry them in the roaster with grease. I learned to cook that way too. And they always made Eskimo donut, bread, and cake. And lots of caribou meat and ptarmigan. Sometimes as a little girl I got tired of that Eskimo food. Summertime, the snow was slow to melt. In July, little leaves started to grow. Then my mother would pick those clean green leaves from the yard. Like spinach. She'd cook that kind and I put sugar on it. I sure liked that. And



in June we'd eat geese and eider ducks. They'd shoot the mother first and we'd pickup the duck eggs to fix. Long ago there was no law, no game warden, nothing. They always hunted.

I liked shooting too. Maybe I'm just like my father. He was always hunting. I learned from him about caribou, ducks, ptarmigan and squirrels. He was a small guy all right, but really strong. And with all that traveling and tough life they never got lost or hurt — nothing! He was a healthy man.

There were no rabbits in Prudhoe. There were squirrels but not much else. I guess that's why we'd always go fishing. Every year in September, we'd go by dogteam to that Kuparuk River at Prudhoe Bay and put up a canvas tent. It was mostly grayling; big one-foot long grayling, we'd get by hooking in the ice hole. I liked the grayling eggs and always looked for the ones with a big stomach. Sometimes trout and small grayling would be mixed in. Lots of fish. We let them freeze really clean on the ice.

Daddy would make a two-story ice house to put all that fish inside. *Siku igluuraq* , just iike a little ice house [*siku* = ice, *igluuraq* = little house]. It would be about five feet high. He'd saw big blocks of really clean ice as big as a sheet of plywood. My mother and father would pull each block with ice tongs. Then we helped Daddy stand them up next to each other. He'd make all the walls and leave the top open. Then we mixed water with snow and filled it in the cracks—it sticks to the ice really good. That way, no little animals like mice could get in the walls.

Then he would dump the frozen fish inside that *siku igluuraq* . He's a short guy all right, but a strong man. Mamma too. Eskimos are strong. And Mamma and Daddy were young. We'd keep hooking fish until that thing was full. Maybe one or two weeks hooking.

October, he put a net under the ice and would catch lots of whitefish, They'd freeze that fish too. Then he'd put an ice cover on top the *siku igluuraq* . It would keep that fish frozen all winter.

All that time we'd eat frozen or cooked grayling and whitefish. He would go get ice for drinking water and a sled load of

fish from the *siku igluuraq* and bring it home. When we'd almost run out of fish he'd go back again.

The fish lasted all winter for the dogs and us. We finished it all up by April before it spoiled. If there was anything left in April they put them in the ice cellar. You know, where they picked out ice way down in the ground. My brother made that kind one year when he came home from school in Barrow.

## NUIQSUT

From Prudhoe Bay we moved to Nuiqsut. Maybe I was ten years old [about 1928]. I don't know. But we would still go camping with canvas tent. You know, hunting, trapping. And fishing — always fishing, my dad.

Every year all Nuiqsut village went by dogteams to Edwardson's at Beechey Point for Christmas. After New Year's we'd go back home to Nuiqsut. Dogteam was the only way the only way to travel. I stayed warm in caribou skin clothes. Mamma made me parka, mukluks, socks, mittens and caribou skin sleeping bag too. It was really hot — lots of hair.

I forgot a lot about those times. After my family all passed away, I didn't like to talk about it. I would just think about them when I was lonesome. But it's all right now, I can talk.

When I was a little girl, my mother liked hunting too. She liked to shoot ptarmigans and squirrels. I copied her. She used a rifle to shoot that kind, and ducks.

They gave me my first gun when I was ten years old — just a little girl. I learned. It was a twenty-two long. I used it for shooting ducks inland. I would crouch down with my body really low and go to them. Sitting down, I would shoot. Mamma was always glad I got ducks. We'd cook them right away. First I cleaned them, washed and cut the skin, took out a pot and put them in water to cook.

That twenty-two rifle never got old. My father always cleaned it and kept it just like new. I used it seven years. He bought that gun with fox skins. There was no money like today—only fox, and sometimes silver dollar money.

I would go out and meet my daddy when he got home from hunting or trapping. “Mom! Daddy got fox, white fox!”

“Good, now he’s gonna go to store.” We always got happy when he got white fox.

We stayed at Nuiqsut five years. When I was fifteen we went back to Beechey Point a little while. My brother Johnny Evak was working at the store for Edwardson. He got to be a storekeeper because of his schooling. My father started working too. The only other person besides Edwardson and his wife at Beechey Point was Herbert *Aġniñ* next door. Just one. People from all the other villages traveled to the store by dogtear.

Edwardson had a big warehouse. He got everything from a big ship that would come in the summer. He bought people’s furs with groceries. I saw lots of fox in that warehouse when I followed my brother around. Fox hanging up everywhere. That fox skin was high priced for a long time, more than fifty dollars for one skin. People sold them to Edwardson because they had no money. With three or four white fox they could get iots of groceries to take home. The next year when the big ship came back, it left more groceries and filled up with all those furs from the warehouse.

I have one really old picture of that time. You can see the warehouse in the center and the store *qanitchat* is on the left. My father Simon is with our dogteam on the right. My cousin Charlie Edwardson is just a little boy in the picture. My father’s cousin *Aġniñ* is on the left. Herbert is his English name. That picture was just before we went to Barrow. A Whiteman made it and gave it to my father. I don’t know who.

## TWO MONTHS TO BARROW

I was fifteen when we moved to Barrow [1933 ]. We had no motors—just dogs and a skin boat with a sail, an *umiaq*. My mother made the sail with canvas from the store. You know those boats we see in the magazine today with sails blowing in the wind — that’s the kind my mother would make. I used to see Eskimos always use them when it was windy.

That trip took us two months. We went from Nuiqsut in the beginning of July while there was still a little snow and reached Barrow the last part of August. That's way far. We walked slow while the dogs pulled all our stuff and the skin boat on the sled. It was slow and hard work because pretty soon there was no snow and the ground was rough.

Sometimes we would take a coffee break and rest. I'd have tea. Then we'd walk again. When my mother and father were tired we'd stop and put up the tent. I'd always get happy when we stopped, that means I can go to bed early, around nine o'clock. I'd go to sleep right away. In the morning Mamma cooked sourdough pancakes and we'd go again. If it was funny weather we'd stay longer.

We had enough to eat. There was oatmeal, flour, rice, coffee, tea, sugar and milk from the store at Beechey Point. When we were by the water my dad would fish a little bit with a net. My mother would cook us that fresh fish. They gave it to the dogs too. 'M-y father shot just one small caribou for us and dog food. He didn't want a big one because the meat would spoil. We never wasted that meat.

On the way to Barrow we would reach water and then land, water and land. Lot's of water. That's when we used the skin boat — two times. We had to kill three of the dogs because we had too many things to fit in the boat. Six of them were kept alive. Then everything could go in the boat. It was good traveling when we could use the sail. When there was no wind we used oars.

We had to stop for funny weather when the wind was blowing hard. It would make the water wavy and dangerous for travel. We were always waiting for good weather on the water. Usually daytime was the bad windy weather and in the night the water would calm. When the waves stopped we went right away. I got sleepy all right, but we had to go.

When we reached land again it was hard work for my father with only six dogs. He had to help push the sled to keep it from tipping, I remember all kinds of flowers and color. And clean

ground. When it was time to rest they always put the tent in a clean place with good smelling flowers.

It was a hard time getting to Barrow you know. There was foggy weather when we couldn't see. We'd have to wait till it cleared to go again. And one time my father got lost when we went around a bunch of lakes in a big circle. Finally we came to a river and he recognized where we were. We went on to Barrow.

### **MY ABCs**

Fifteen years old and I started going to kindergarten in Barrow. I was ashamed but I wanted to learn English. I never talked English before that. There were no Whiteman people in Prudhoe Bay or Nuiqsut. At Beechey Point, Edwardson tried to teach me a few words but I was shy.

My mother taught me A, B,C's and 1,2,3's before I went to school. She never went to school but was married to a Whiteman in Barrow named Louie Harvey before she married my father. I don't think they had children before they divorced.

My teacher at Barrow was Maggie Panigeo and Fred Ipalook. He's old now with really white hair. I see him when I go to Barrow. My other teacher was Eskimo too. The Eskimo teachers long ago helped me learn because they could speak Eskimo. I got to the second grade. But I only stayed in school two years because we moved again. I just learned a little bit. Later I learned a little bit more English from my father's brother Allen Upicksoun around Point Lay. And then my husband taught me some too.

### A QUIET MAN

We moved to Wainwright from Barrow by dogteam. Mamma had relations there. *Kusiq* [Waldo Bodfish] was her nephew. That's David Bodfish' daddy. Now when I go to Wainwright I stay with my cousins, Bodfish.

I was young, seventeen [1935]. Those young Wainwright guys followed me everywhere. I'd never seen that before. I wasn't around boys.

Pretty soon my parents picked a big one out for me, Dan Susook. They said, "Hey daughter, we like him. You marry that one. They're goma bother you again — those other guys in Wainwright." They thought he was a good hunter and could take care of me. I didn't say yes or no, I didn't want to marry. But I was scared of my mother and father so I married him. I didn't know that guy. I was young, about twenty years old. We never used uniforms for the wedding. He wore caribou skin and I had a calico parky. It was a funny way.

He was a quiet man — fifty years old and never married. His parents, Ida and stepdad Charlie Susook moved to Point Lay from Kivalina. His mother was pregnant from her first Whiteman husband Nelson before she married Charlie Susook. That's why their baby, my husband Dan, was mixed Eskimo and white. Laura Ahvakana is his sister. They had the same Whiteman father but different mothers. Dan never got schooling because he stayed at Point Lay with his family before there was a school, But, he could speak a little English. He always worked as a carpenter or longshoring.

### THE OLD VILLAGE

After we married I left my family and moved to Point Lay with my husband. Point Lay was across the lagoon then, at the place we call the "Old Site" or "Old Village", My uncle Allen Upicksoun was here. He was Dorcas Neakok's first husband. There were lots of people when we moved here. Later they moved to Point Hope, Kotzebue and Wainwright. But when I was just married there were lots of people at the old village. My mother-in-law, Ida Susook,

stayed with us. Her husband Charlie died before we got married so I never saw him.

We moved to old Point Lay because there was no work. My husband Dan Susook hunted polar bear. He always killed those. They used to sell the skins for good money. Now people can't sell polar bear. And he trapped for fox and wolverine up in the mountains by the river. He'd go to the mountains by dogtear and get lots of black and white wolves. He got *siksrikpak* to sell too, marmot. That's the only way we could get coffee or sugar.

My husband went back and forth from trapping in the mountains to Point Lay every few weeks. Sometimes he camped at Kukpowruk and fished. I had to stay home in the old village because my kids started school. Once my husband had a sled load of meat, caribou or grayling, he'd come home with lots of food — maybe three or four sacks of grayling. Before he got home I'd have that walrus, beluga or maktak all ready for his dog food. Then at home he would help with getting coal and ice for our water. There was no *diesei* back then, nothing, except a little driftwood. They had to get coal from Kukpowruk.

When the water was open, people went to Kukpowruk by skin boat. They would go to get their own coal. Sometimes I went with my husband. We'd put twenty little fifty pound sacks in our skin boat and take it to the old village.

Our woodstove and cookstove used coal. At first, I didn't know how to use coal and wood cookstove. But I learned from somebody at the old village. People helped me.

When we moved to the old village I was pregnant and never had a baby before. A midwife delivered my baby right there at the old village. All of my children were born around here with a midwife except the youngest one, Jack. He was born in Barrow because my midwife and frost cousin, Martha Attungowruk passed away.

I had nine kids. All of them saw their grandma before she died — even the youngest one, Jack. Six boys and three girls. There was Robert, Jimmy, Roy, Ione, Mattie, Rhoda, Alec, and two

Jacks. My first little boy Jack died so I made another one, same way with Robert.

They kept me busy all the time. I cooked big pots of soup, washed dishes, washed and sewed my kids clothes. There was no washing machine, just a washer board. I hung the clothes in the house until April when it started to warm up outside. I made their mukluks and parkas, mittens and hats. As my girls grew, they helped me with the dishes and learned how to sew. I'd give them a candy bar when they were done and they'd get happy. The boys would shovel the stairs and clean the *qanitchat* and shake the blankets outside. They always obeyed me but not my husband. I'd go to the store first and get candy bars. That made them happy. I miss those times. My boys left me and passed away. They always helped when they were growing.

I was twenty-one years old with a baby when I wrote a letter to my mother and father telling them to move here too. I missed them. They moved and built a sod house, mud house, you know that *iglu*. We had a house like that too. With paneling inside.

My kids, Jack and Mattie, let our house bum down. I was out visiting and my husband wasn't home. They tried to light the stove with gas. I had washed clothes and they were hanging up all over the house. They caught the clothes on fire. Somebody yelled to me, "Kate, your house burn!" I ran back and saw a big fire. The kids got out okay but I didn't save a thing from inside the house. All my old pictures, everything, burned. Right away the people let us move into an empty house in Point Lay,

### GET HAPPY

When I moved to the old village I followed the people. That's how I learned. They would sing and drum. I watched them drum and I learned. The old ladies would get happy at Christmas time in Point Lay. They'd laugh. After eating first, they'd always Eskimo dance.

Eskimo food is what we'd eat at Christmas. Duck soup, caribou soup, frozen caribou meat, beluga, muktuk, boiled polar



bear meat and Eskimo ice cream was the food for celebrating Christmas. Then everybody would sing and dance.

There were games too. You know, like the ones they have now in Anchorage and Fairbanks at the Olympics. They'd wrestle, finger-pull, high-kick, and ear-pull with a string; men, women, children. A long time ago they always played that way. No more, they don't play that way around here. I forget who was really good at it back then. I didn't watch too good because I had so many kids to take care of. I'd always go home early.

Christmas and Thanksgiving celebrations were at the school. It wasn't too big, but everybody in the village could fit inside. Easter too. They'd dance any old way, not just Eskimo. The teacher there, Tony Joule, had records and let the people dance the Virginia reel and square dance. Then later that jitterbug and slow dance. The old people just watched the young people dancing that kind. The old ladies would clap and laugh and get happy watching the young ones dance.

Fourth of July we'd eat outside first. Everybody would bring food. They'd divide it up. I always made Eskimo ice cream with caribou fat, meat and salmon berries. After eating we'd go inside the school and Eskimo dance. I wonder how many hours? Maybe three hours. Then there would be kids and adults races.

## THE OLD PEOPLE

The old ladies in the old village always hunted. They would take walks and put traps on top of the driftwood. They trapped mice and owls and ate them all the time. They used mice for bait **too**. I **was** married then. I **couldn't** follow them by eating a mouse. I ate owls before, okay. But I just couldn't follow those old ladies. They were those really old ladies that had color on their chins. It wasn't really black. Kind of a blue color. Three lines tattooed on their chin. I used to always see that.

Now young people have no more tattoos. It's changed. People have clean faces all the time. Except men who have lots of whiskers. My husband liked to have long whiskers too. "Shave your face," I would tell him.

He'd answer, "It's okay."

"*Arii*," [Ouch] I'd say. It poked and was ugly. But I gave up.

My husband worked hard. He always brought back extra caribou meat so I could give some to the poor women with no husbands. The old ladies, like Ada Susook and Eunice Toorak. Tony Joule's mother, *Sukaḅnun*, was one of them too. She was a good lady, quiet and nice looking. She was Eskimo from Point Hope with wavy hair, just like a permanent. And nice to people, she never scolded the kids.

*Sukaḅnun* later married again when she was way older than me. An old lady, married an old man — Eli Stone's daddy. His Eskimo name was *Uyaḅak*, which means 'stone' or 'rock'. In English that family is 'Stone'. His grandchildren all live in Point Hope.

My husband told me that long ago there were no people at Point Lay. Charlie Susook and Johnson Toweena moved to the village first. Then, slowly people moved to the old village from nearby places. When I first lived here there were lots of old people in Point Lay. Now there's only me and that old man next door, *Pualu*. Lots of the old people died in the early '50's. Like my mother. She was sick three days with a headache and then passed away quick. There was no nurse or doctor around here in the old village.

Most of the old people moved out to other villages in the '50s. I never asked them why they were going so I don't really know. Fred Forslund and his wife Clara had a store here long ago. When they quit and moved to Kotzebue there was no store, no groceries. People had to go by dogteam or boat to Wainwright for shopping. Later, Ruth and Samuel Agnasagga had a small store but not much stuff. We moved to Kotzebue about that time, 1956. I had lots of fun with all the stores. Sometimes I would go everyday. I didn't know how many kinds of groceries there were! It wasn't like the old village.

## TRACKS IN THE SNOW

People around here died from accidents. Like my husband's youngest sister, Mattie Susook. She was twenty years old and got lost going from one house to another in the old village. It was late, she was going home from visiting somebody. It was stormy with the wind blowing. She couldn't see I guess. When they found her they brought her to my house. I had to take care of her. She was frozen and I had to take off her clothes. I was crying. That was hard work and nobody was helping me. Mattie's mother couldn't help, she was crying so much. Then another lady, Jane Tukrook came in to help. I was so glad.

That happens to people around this part of Alaska. They freeze or get lost because of the wind. Or they drown because of the cold water or holes in the ice. Around here they used to drown in the lagoon. My cousin, Billy Upicksoun, drowned when he fell in the water with his dogteam. He couldn't climb out on the ice. And my husband said that long ago, his uncle Johnson Toweena's kids drowned when their skin boat turned over. And there were aunties that drowned in the lagoon near the river, Bemy Neakok's aunties. That's how they used to die. Not from other kinds of accidents like today. You know, like gun or Ski-doo accidents, things like that.

A long time ago, my two boys drowned. Robert was eighteen and Jimmy was fifteen. It was winter 1954 and they never came home. A helicopter found their tracks going to the Kukpowruk River. That's where they stopped. That's where they fell in. I saw their tracks in the snow but I never saw their bodies. All they found were a couple dogs and empty cups.

I couldn't stand it. People tried to talk to me but I was always crying. Always thinking about my boys. I couldn't do anything, not even lift heavy things. That was so long ago. I still think about, I get lonesome and cry. It's like I was crazy.

While everybody was still searching for my boys is the same time our house burned down. That next year we stayed in Point Hope for a year and then moved to Kotzebue.

**MOVE TO KOTZEBUE**

Daddy was too old to hunt. He had to rest. My mother and I would say, “No more hunting Dad. You get old now. You rest.” My husband and brother hunted for him. Then my brother married and moved to Kotzebue. When my mother died, I was too busy with all my kids to take over for her. So, my brother took Daddy to Kotzebue to live with him. I missed him lots.

When my sons drowned, it was too lonely. I didn't want to miss my dad. I told my husband, “I want to follow my dad. I don't want to stay in Point Lay.” He listened to me and we left the old village for Kotzebue. It was a long time ago. I don't know how many years. I only know it was after my boys drowned.

My husband worked in carpentry and longshoring. I tried to find work too. I was scared at first to work. But not for long. When I told me father I was going to find a job, he kept talking to me. He told me not to be lazy or late.

There were lots of jobs. I worked in a hotel ten years, a restaurant four years and as a guard for the ladies in jail. That's a funny job for me all right but I just obeyed the state police. I'd lock the door and guard the ladies. I never listened to the prisoners.

I was happy to work hard. I didn't have time to think about my boys who passed away. I couldn't drink. I was working all the time. I don't like to work and drink, even if some people always do that. That's why I was never fired. Because, I obeyed my father. I was never lazy and always tried to learn. That's why my bosses liked me, I never gave up. I liked to work.

And every payday I'd go shopping. With all those stores, I wanted to buy things, like clothes for my kids. And when my husband's heart went bad, he couldn't work. It was hard times, I had to work for my kids, take care of them, They were in high school. I always told them, “Don't copy me. I'm dummy, your mamma no school. You folks gonna go to school. You're the first to go to high school.” I took care of my kids and they listened to me. All of them went to high school. I picked up lots of English after my kids started school.

I worked cleaning fish for the big cannery boats in Kotzebue that came up from Anchorage. And then my boss called and told me about work in Naknek. I applied. Even though my husband was alive, I went to work there two summers. It was good pay. He stayed home with the kids since his heart was too weak to go to work. I mailed my check back to my husband and kids every payday.

Naknek is not too far from Anchorage. My job was on the salmon cannery fishing boat in the engine room. I cleaned up and watched the motor to see when the oil got low. Then we'd shut down the engine and I poured oil behind the spark plugs. They'd stop while I poured that oil in. Then I yelled up, "Hey, okay, go!" They'd go back to working.

There were lots of hard people on that boat. There were Whitepeople, Blacks, Filipinos, and Mexicans. When all the workers went home for a two week break, I wanted to make more money. My boss asked me to stay on the boat. She liked my work, List's why. So it was just me alone for two weeks, working on that boat. I was scared all right. But not later on. I was glad to be making money.

### I MISS IT PLENTY

I like Kotzebue, you know. I miss it plenty. There were lots of things to do. Like fishing-hooking tom cod. People would go out to the lagoon in October to hook tom cod. I went too. We caught sheefish that way, and really big whitefish. I liked the tom cod liver and eggs. I never ate too much of the body. We always froze the body for *quaq*. You know, to eat frozen. Sometimes each person would hook one sack full in a day, sometimes more. And I would be hooking white fish too.

People were always camping too. I followed the people. In July we cooked outside on a wood fire, boiling fish. We'd eat outside if it's not cold out or raining. The mosquitos bothered us all right but we killed them. We used mosquito dope on our body, rubbed it on our face and arms.

Picking berries was something else. We'd always take a walk and pick blueberries. We'd get salmon berries to mix with black berries too. Kotzebue people use those black berries to make Eskimo ice cream. I make it that way too. I clean my fingernails real good and then use my hands to stir it up. It's lots of fun.

May to July, Kotzebue people moved across to *Sisualik* to camp. *Sisualik* is where the beluga corral was at. It wasn't too far from Kotzebue so we could always go to the store in Kotzebue by boat. Most people put up tents. A few had sod houses. There were lots of people from Noatak too. Everyone was hunting *ugruk* and fishing for any kind of fish.

There were lots of busy women working. They'd pull the net out on top of the ground — fish bouncing all around. They'd take out lots of fish. They'd wash them first, cut them and then hang them up to dry. I copied the people and learned, I always helped them. It was lots of fun. My cousins Clement Downey and Irene Gallahorn taught me too.

AU those women would be cleaning *ugruk skin* and making blubber. Blubber went into barrels. We had no ice cellars for deep-freeze so everybody had to dry the meat and fish. Busy women, cutting *ugruk* meat and hanging it outside. They had to hang it before it spoiled. I learned to help them. They showed me how to cut that really skinny to hang up. With a woman's ulu we'd cut it skimmy again and again. We used a big stone, a rock, to sharpen our ulus. We'd tell the kids, "You look for that rock, good one."

The kids would get driftwood too. There was lots on the beach. The ladies would cook outside over a campfire, boiling *ugruk* meat to eat. Everybody would eat outside unless it was raining. You know, if it was raining plenty, the ladies would quit working outdoors. They'd cover the meat they were cutting or drying, so it wouldn't spoil. And when the rain stopped, they uncovered the meat and worked on it again.

When the meat and fish were dry, people put them away for later. They were for people and dogs to eat, You know, the dogs would get dry meat or fish to eat and when they finished they got

water. And in November people started getting blubber from the barrels in their *qanitchat*. They'd put it on a big plate and let it thaw out and then eat it. People never got sick from eating that Eskimo food. They had lots of blubber but never got sick.

In August some of the people took their food home. Some went back to their homes on the Noatak River. Others went back to Kotzebue. *Sisualik* was just a summer camp for everyone.

Fourth of July, people from *Sisualik* would go to Kotzebue to play games. It was different from 4th of July here. There were lots of people and beauty contests. They only do that in Kotzebue. The games were the same — races.

I like Kotzebue — always hunting fish — and lots of stores. All really good. *Aarigaa*. Eskimos say *aarigaa*. Really good.

#### JUST ME WITH MY KIDS

My husband, Dan Susook, died of a heart attack in Kotzebue, September 1967. He was in the hospital but that was before they did heart surgery. They couldn't fix people's hearts like they can now. So, it was just me with my kids. One of my boys was killed in Kotzebue too. Somebody shot him before his father died.

I moved back to Point Lay in the early '70's when the village started up again. For six years after my husband died, I never remarried. I waited. Six years later was my second marriage. That's when I married Peterson, 1973, he lives in Anchorage now. I never had children with him.

#### LIFE TODAY

My life is different now that I'm an old woman. I helped my kids grow big and I have an easy time now. There's no more hard work. I can't lift heavy things like before. I'm weak — 70 years old. I never dye my hair so gray hairs have started coming now.

There used to be lots of old Eskimo people when I first moved to Point Lay. I learned from them — how to sing Eskimo songs and drum. I watched them and learned.

Now there's just me and *Pualu*, that old man next door. We used to sing and use two drums while the kids and adults danced. I followed that old man. We danced too. It was lots of fun. I never sang or drummed since two years ago at the school. I don't have a drum and I'm getting too old. Pualu still sings — songs from all those Eskimo villages like Wainwright, Barrow, Nuiqsut, Point Lay, Point Hope and Kozebue.

Christmastime we used to eat Eskimo food and sing. Now I always go somewhere else for Christmas. This year I went to Anchorage. Sometimes I go to Point Hope or Wainwright where I stay with my cousins — *Bodfish*. I went to Wainwright for my birthday, January 11. My cousin, David Bodfish gave me binoculars and his wife gave me Eskimo mukluks. They fed me all kinds of food and gave me canned fruit because I like it.

Fourth of July is the only one I still go to around here. They always Eskimo dance and play games, run races. Last year, old man Pualu and I ran a race in July. Just two of us after the young kids finished their race. The people got us to run. It was funny. I was in tennis shoes. That old man said, "Too heavy my boots. I'm slow. You're younger than me because you're number one." He never lied, gee, he was using those heavy winter boots. That's why I won. I got a six-pack of soda pop and two pairs of anklets. Pualu used to win lots of races in Wainwright when he was young. There were lots of young people then too.

We can't do the same things now that we're old. I like to work but I'm getting too old. My last job around here was in 1984 when they were building houses. I hung insulation and cleaned up after the builders. I started work at eight o'clock Monday mornings. Up at five o'clock and off of work at five o'clock. Even when I was tired I went everyday — even Saturday. I was always on time, everyday. That's why I won an electric stove and cigarette lighter for being a good worker.

That stove is in my sonny's house. I use this propane stove here. And I have this wood cookstove I use when I run out of propane. I like that cookstove. I even made an upside-down cake in that one.



Since I quit working I get lonesome. I don't have to get up early. There's nobody to scold me if I don't clean my house everyday. No mother, no husband. That way I'm free inside the house. There's not much to do.

I get a little social security — only \$469.00. My old age check is \$250.00. I use that to pay for my house every month. The extra money I use for bingo. Monday, Wednesday and Friday is bingo. Sometimes I'm lucky. But if I keep losing I quit and just watch people. They ask, "You gonna play Kate?"

I say, "No, I'm done. I've got little bit money." The money goes fast at bingo. I buy some pull tabs. Mostly I wait for black-out and jackpot bingo. I like to watch people. And my son, Jack is the manager of bingo. He works there every time.

Right now my daughter Ione is Outside. She works in the clinic here as a Community Health Practitioner. She's coming back any day so I just watch for that plane. I listen for it. I think about my daughter coming. I sure miss her plenty.

I like to travel too. I visit my youngest daughter in Kenai. And my girlfriend Anna Towksjhea lives in Anchorage. Her husband passed away. She used to live a little ways from here, in *Sinjgruaq*. Her nephews, Benny, Donald and Warren Neakok are from here. They're her brother's boys. Anna and I were friends at the Old Village when we were young and married. She taught me how to make mukluks and calico parkas. She always called me, "Hey partner!" We laughed all the time. She's a good woman — always happy and never lonesome. Not like me. I get quiet sometimes.

When I get too lonesome, I go to my girlfriend's. Then I get happy. When I go to Anchorage I always give money to her because she likes to smoke. We go out together and have lots of fun. I don't like to go out there alone because I'm scared of drunk people. I hear about the people they kill in Anchorage — Eskimos, white, any kind of people. That's why I only go out with someone, like my daughter or girlfriend.

**HUNTING AT POINT LAY**

I never went hunting this year. I used to always go hunting, you know — never stayed home. If there's no meat — I'd go. A long time ago I killed two walrus myself. Two on top of the sand — not in the water. They looked at me and I shot. After I killed them I went home and said, "I got walrus. Somebody goma help me?"

I was always hunting that caribou too. I used the littlest skin boat, long time ago. It's maybe ten feet long. My boys would get in and I'd oar. Robert and Roy went with me — ten years old and eighteen. Jack was small so I'd leave him with his grandma. You could see those big swarms of mosquitos following the running caribou.

I taught the two boys to help me. I showed them how to hold it while I was gutting that caribou and skinned it. We'd take the skin to the boat and carry the meat. I told them, "Really light one you fellows goma carry. You folk goma help me. You folk gonna eat. I cook when we go home. You folk hungry?"

They answered, "I'm not hungry Mom. I goma help you."

We got two caribou so the skin boat was really low . The top of the boat was only six inches from the water. My two boys were scared all right. I told them not to worry, it wasn't wavy. I was working the oars and so tired.

I was so glad, when I got home I divided that meat. I cut the first small piece and told everybody, "Go get some meat people." They'd go get a little piece from me and take it home.

The people were glad. They said, "Thank you Kate. You hunting." People always share what they hunt. If they got caribou or ugruk, they always cooks some and give small pieces away to people for free. I learned long ago that hunters always give what they have to people. They hunt first, then go home and cut meat and give some to every house. I learned.

August is when I liked to go hunting, when I was young. Now I'm old and tire easy. It's the first time I didn't go. This May has been too stormy with snow blowing around here — funny weather. Usually this time we go for ducks, ptarmigan, geese and squirrels.

I've hunted for all of those but I'm scared of that brown bear and polar bear. I've never killed those. I shot beluga with lots of people in lots of boats. People would go out at the Old Village in July. They still do that. I never used to stay home much in July. I'd just walk around and stay out.

Then in early September the people from here always fish. Hooking under the ice at Kukpowruk. I used to always go too. But not for two years now. My step-aunty, Dorcas and her second husband Warren still go fishing at Kukpowruk. Warren always hunts for caribou and takes home fish. I like them — Warren and Dorcas. They always give me Eskimo food. I visit them. Dorcas and I talk and laugh. We talk anything.

The people in Point lay are always hunting. People get caribou, ducks and ptarmigan. My son Jack hunts too. They take care of me now — bring me good food to eat. Somebody gave me some whale meat, muktuk. I save it in my deep freeze. Once in awhile I boil it for a treat for my sonny. I just boil it and eat.

My sixteen year old grandson, Danny Susook is going to come back this week from school in Portland, Oregon. If the weather is nice with sunshine maybe he'll pick me up. Since it's May, the funny weather should go away soon. I like to take walks and they always pick me up. Maybe we can use my birthday binoculars. I don't think I'll quit hunting yet.

## **PAUL PUALU TAZRUK**

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Paul Tazruk is better known by his *Iñupiaq* name *Pus/u*. He was born in 1905 somewhere near Point Lay to a family of reindeer herders. *Pus/u* followed in that tradition until the 1940s when reindeer herding ended in **Wainwright** where he was living at the time.

*Pus/u* also lived a subsistence life. His training began as a toddler going into the mountains on his father's back. This training enabled him to spend most of his adult life living off the land with hunting and trapping. *Pus/u* became especially adept at getting polar bear and marmot.

Point Lay, **Wainwright**, and Barrow were all home to *Pus/u*. He raised his many children in these villages when they were not out at camp. *Pus/u* has been a single parent since the death of his second wife. Today he still cares for two teenage grandchildren he has raised since they were infants.

*Pualu's* peers recall his athletic skill as a runner and love of story-telling. Here, *Push* tells of a life full of hard physical outdoor work. That life is in sharp contrast to how he lives today as an old man with modern conveniences.

In May 1988, following many hours of interviews in English, Yvonne Yarber continued interviewing in *Pualu's* native language, *Iñupiaq*. *Pualu's* daughter Bertha acted as interpreter. *Iñupiaq* translations were done by James *Mumigana* Nageak and edited by Yvonne Yarber. Chapter One was written from the English interview tapes. Chapter Two comes from the *Iñupiaq* translations. Chapter Three is a combination of both. Text written from the English interview tapes were edited grammatically in keeping with the *Iñupiaq* translations.

### **CHAPTER ONE: THE ESKIMO LIFE**

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#### Those Old Time People

I'm an old man, 83 years old, born April 15, 1905. My life was hunting. My mother and father came from Point Hope in a skin boat and moved to *Aqiaḡuḡnat*, this side of Icy Cape by the big hill on the lagoon. My mother's brother Riley took them in. They stayed here at *Tunusua* reindeer herding when I was young. They lived in lots of places. That's why I never went to school. My father, Tazruk was a reindeer herder. My mother was Alice, *Agliḡuq*.

I learned the Eskimo life from them. If they had no matches, they just used a white rock they carried in a sealskin pack and picked up another from the ground. They hit the two rocks together on a little wood and blew on it. It would start burning. Later, if I

had no matches, I could start a fire with a rock because I learned from my mother and father.

When Riley Ahlook and *Iluqtun* started taking care of reindeer, my mother and father moved to the place they were watching the herd. It was by the Kukpowruk River, maybe five miles from here. They stayed near a place named *Tachim Isua*. My uncle Riley Ahlook was a wealthy man. That is how my father became a rich man — working with his brother-in-law, Ahlook.

There were not many caribou here at that time so the cost of meat was high. They sold the reindeer meat to the big ships. Sometimes ten to twenty reindeer would be slaughtered at a time. They would lasso them and poke them in the chest with a knife. Hang them up on sticks and cut the neck to bleed them. Take out the insides and skin them. That way there was no bloodshot, just good meat. Good to eat.

Only the male deer were butchered, not the females. The females were kept to buildup the herd. They killed the big fawns too because the skins were not heavy and made good warm parkas. My mother made me fawn skin parkas and ski pants, boots from the reindeer legs with ugruk bottoms. The yearling skins were warm.

When I was a little boy, my father took me to the mountains with him hunting and trapping. He took a sleeping bag and a tent my mother made from the ugruk belly — that long part — intestines. She scraped them and hung them up before sewing about ten together. It was a good tent, even when it rained we stayed dry inside. We put the sleeping bag that was just like a mattress on top of willows to sleep,

I helped my father when I was a little boy. I packed wood in the wintertime. I'd get a big load of driftwood from the beach and pack it with sleigh deer. We didn't use coal like right now.

Maybe Eskimo people at *Tunusua* were afraid to go over to the coal because there was fighting there long ago. I heard it from my father and mother. The fighting was long before they were born. There were lots of bones up there. I heard people from all over the place fought there, Indians and Wainwright, Barrow, Greenland

and Kotzebue people. I've seen bones with my own eyes while out hunting,

There's a place on the mountain where I saw a man sitting on a rock with his head back. I was out hunting marmot and saw him with my binoculars. I was scared at first and thought he was a medicine man or something like that. My mother *Agliġuq*, Alice, said there was a medicine man up there. "Sometime he might talk to you," my mother told me. When I came to him, he was just bones, with a spear on his right side. Lots of bones, spears with arrows and old time stone knives. That hill is named *Piŋalu* near the Utukok River.

I found a nice stone knife up on the mountain. It looked good, with a walrus tusk handle. I liked it but a white man came from New York and said he wanted to buy it for 200 dollars cash. I sold it to him. Since so many men were killed up there by spears and knives, I thought I would find another one. But that one was nice. I never found another like it.

Indians and Eskimos fought each other long ago. Even when I was about fifteen years old I heard something happened. A woman from Icy Cape named *Quŋusiq*, had a brother and son that were out near Noatak. They decided to go home and see the sister. When they never arrived, people from Icy Cape went by dogteam to find them.

Three dead people were found on the Utukok. The brother of *Quŋusiq* and her son *Piŋiġluk* were there with an Indian. All dead from knives. The Indian was wearing a *suluktaq* [headress with a feather]. The Icy Cape people think maybe *Piŋiġluk* killed the Indian. That's what I heard.

Those days, there weren't jobs like now. People lived from hunting and trapping. When I was a little boy my father gave me a bow and two arrows. I wanted more arrows but two was all he would give me. I hunted for ducks and ptarmigan that way. When I was thirteen he gave me a .22 rifle and a small .44 or .410 shot gun to shoot brandts — any kind of ducks or geese. Those are the things my father taught me when I was young. He taught me in *the* mountains and on the ice. The inlet down there was good for

hunting spotted seals. Spotted seals made good rope, parkas and ski pants. There are still lots of spotted seals there in the summertime, about August in the lagoon.

There were lots of Eskimo people at Icy Cape which is a little ways from here. I know those old time people because sometimes my mother and father stayed at Icy Cape when they took off from reindeer herding. That village cleared out because there was no teacher for the school. A white man said, "Maybe you better move Wainwright. More better school your kids. That's why." He took them from Icy Cape.

### Reindeer Herding

Since I was a little boy I stayed with reindeer. My father showed me how to make a harness for sleigh deer out of wood and skin — wood around the neck and skin by the shoulder. Sleigh deer pulled everything around when reindeer herders moved with the herd. I remember moving with my mother and father all the time. They would pack a heavy load on the reindeer sled. There were long lines made of *ugruk* or walrus skin rope.

Sometimes we moved every week in the wintertime, looking for food for the reindeer. There were several herders who took turns watching the reindeer, even at night, working twelve hour shifts. We'd set up a snowhouse or tent in one place and then move again in one week. Even when it was stormy we'd move because we had good reindeer skin parkas, ski pants and caribou skin sleeping bags to keep warm. Moving all the time is how I learned the names of all the places from Point Hope to this side and all the way to Barrow.

My uncle Riley Ahlook taught me how to lasso a steer in the summertime when I was a young boy. My father made me a lasso from *ugruk* skin. That's how we caught a deer to train for pulling a sleigh. I could do that in the past. Later when I was out at camp with my wife and family I tried to lasso caribou. The big ones were too strong so I got only a small one with that lasso.

Lots of people would lasso stray deer. But I made them into sleigh deer. When I trained my own sleigh deer, sometimes it only took five days, sometimes ten. It depended on whether the deer

wanted to learn, just like dogs or people. When some people's reindeer didn't want to learn they would kill it.

I used a long walrus skin rope attached to the harness to train my sleigh deer, maybe from here in my house to this side of the school, about 100 yards. I just let them run. People who just used a lasso to train them had a harder time. It was an easy lesson for the sleigh deer with that long line. I learned from my father to get them walking with that line. Pretty soon they learned to stop or take off when I yelled, "Go!" They learned just like dogs. Once they learned, they could be fixed up alongside another reindeer in harness and pull the sleigh together. When I traveled with sleigh deer, they carried everything.

I've had three Lap dogs from Outside too. They were different from sled dogs — small with long hair. They traveled with the reindeer, If I stopped to make coffee on my kerosene Primus stove and the reindeer went off, I'd tell my dog, "Go get reindeer!" I'd have my coffee and the dog would bring back all the reindeer. Sometimes two dogs would work together. And in the wintertime, if some of the reindeer got lost from the herd, the Lap dog would find them. The dog would bring them back to where the people were staying. They knew what to do.

Riley Ahlook also showed me how to recognize the cut mark on the reindeer's ear. That was how the herders identified their own reindeer. The reindeer sometimes wandered and mixed in with other herds. That is why they were marked. My uncle marked his deer with two cuts curved like a C. My father marked his on the left ear with a cut straight across. When I was a little boy that's how I learned to take care of reindeer.

My mother and father retired from reindeer herding and went to Wainwright when I was twelve [about 1917]. My father figured I knew everything about it so let me take care of his reindeer. You know sometimes my uncle laid off from reindeer to go hunting for seal or ugruk. He always made sure somebody took care of the reindeer.

I stayed here to watch the reindeer by myself one time because my uncle Riley Ahlook had to take a lot of reindeer from



here to Lieutenant Allen for his ship. After one month, my uncle Riley gave me five or six reindeer for my father. That's how I got sleigh deer for myself. I trained them. I named all my sleigh deer, like *Nagruagnaaraq* and *Apuġiñ* [Probably descriptive names; *apuq* \*to bump into, or hit' and *nagruaq* 'to break antler'. J.N.].

One time, two boys herding reindeer were lost. They were my cousins, Francis Ahlook and *Matummiaq*. Francis was the same age as me, my uncle Riley Ahlook's son. *Matummiaq* has a brother in Wainwright. They were walking with lots of reindeer and a Lap dog. After a week nobody saw those two young people. They were lost about five miles from Wainwright.

Lots of people went to look for those two young fellows. My cousin Isaac and I went looking together by dogteam. We stayed out there close to twenty days but found nothing. Not even tracks. They disappeared, reindeer, Lap dog and everything. Nobody found tracks, even though it was clear with no wind. It was early October.

Maybe somebody killed those young guys and took the reindeer and Lap dog too. My brother Henry told me, "Maybe some people take the reindeer. With binoculars, I see Lap dog and maybe five people. They go somewhere."

I don't know, maybe that happened. I know a lot of people wanted those reindeer. It was hard to get caribou then. There were none on the coast. People had to go way up to the mountains. My father told me long ago, Icy Cape people would hunt caribou with a canoe way up the Utukok River. Sometimes there would be fifteen or twenty canoes at one time.

Those Icy Cape people would live on the mountain while they got lots of caribou. I know some of those really old time people made a corral *ivruq* [sod] to catch them. I've seen that kind made out of ground leading to the water. Some men would chase the caribou down the hill into the water. Other men would be waiting right there in their *qayaq* [kayak] with spears to kill them. Sometimes they would get ten, sometimes maybe a hundred. But they usually didn't have many that long ago. Even later, with guns, they didn't get many.

Then, when the weather started freezing, the people traveled home together to Icy Cape. They put all their dry meat and fresh meat in the canoes. They carried the caribou skins too. Sometimes there would be a very heavy load of skins.

When they came to shallow places in that Utukok River the men worked together carrying loads. Some women and children helped pack the loads too. Sometimes it took most of the day to carry everything across just a ten yard shallow place. They had to work hard a long time ago. They must have been traveling back in September when the river is deeper from rain and snow. I know in October it's a frozen river.

October 7, was when we used to make a reindeer corral of ice. The ice was seven-and-a-half inches thick by then and good. The reindeer couldn't break through it. The corrals were maybe 100 to 150 yards long, and built to hold many reindeer so they could be counted.

I was a young man when I helped make those big ice corrals. Lots of people helped. It took fifteen or twenty days to build it. In bad weather, maybe a month. They would cut big blocks of ice from a lake, maybe five feet wide and seven feet long. We sawed ice, how many days. One man used a long piece of wood to pry the ice up the long way so the fence would be high. It was so the reindeer who could jump very high, would not get out. Other people put snow mixed with water on to the ice to fill the holes and keep the blocks together. It was just like solder. Water didn't go through our spotted seal mittens when we scooped snow out of the water bucket.

There were so many people working on the corral, they setup a big tent and put about four people to work cooking. There was a Primus stove in there and they kept coffee and tea going for the workers. We would work long days, maybe twelve hours and then go home by dog team or walking.

The corral had a wood door that could be opened and closed. And there was a long chute about three or four feet wide connected to the corral. Only one reindeer was let into the chute at a time. That was how they were counted. Someone would write on the

papers if it was male or female or a baby. They would write down how many were found with other kinds of markings on their ears. When that was all finished, they asked the workers how they wanted to be paid.

Not everybody working on the corral had reindeer. That's how they got so many workers. People got paid with reindeer. The chief herder would ask the workers, "What you want? Female live? Butchered steer?" Some people wanted butchered deer. Others wanted live females so they could get more reindeer of their own. The females had a little fawn around April 15.

After counting all the reindeer they ask some of the people to work on butchering deer. Most of the meat went to the big ships for sale. People liked the job of butchering because they got paid even more reindeer. Sometimes people got paid four females.

I got lots of reindeer by working for females. I know after ten years of keeping females, there are lots of reindeer. Every year they had fawns. That's how I became rich with lots of reindeer. But I lost them all.

As I got older, I became chief reindeer herder because my father and uncles died. I was a reindeer herder over twenty years. I worked with those reindeer until everything started falling off. Wolves packed them off and caribou started ruining off with the reindeer. How many thousand were lost. The reindeer just mixed in with the caribou. That's why the caribou are so small now. They look just like reindeer. Long ago I saw caribou with long legs as tall as me, even the females. Now I never see long-legged caribou. They're too mixed up with reindeer.

There were lots of wolves, that time. They came from the mountains. I think an Indian medicine man sang and made the wolves track the reindeer. We saw tracks right there in the snow. That's how the medicine man took down the reindeer with wolves. My mother and father told me how medicine men would look for tracks and sit down to listen. Then they would sing a song.

Remember I said there never used to be caribou around here. And in the summer when my father hunted, he hardly even saw them in the mountains. Now they come all around here. Last

summer they were all the way down at that old place, *Kali*. They've even come right across the street by my daughter Alice's house. And in June I went up the mountain and lots of caribou came around my tent. They acted just like reindeer. Maybe I should try to lasso one [laughs].

### Jim Allen

Dick Hall and Jim Allen had a big store on the inlet at Wainwright. Dick Hall stayed there. There was a big warehouse. They had everything in that warehouse — flour, sailboats, and launch. Maybe ten sailboats at a time.

The first store owner at Point Lay, long ago, was Pederson. He sold out and went Outside. Maybe he got rich buying Eskimo skins and baleen cheap and selling them for a high price Outside. I heard that from the preacher when I was a little boy. He said Pederson sent those skins Outside by ship and got more than one hundred dollars a skin. He bought all kinds of skins really cheap from Eskimos for the store — polar bear, silver-gray fox, red fox, cross fox.

I saw Pederson with a big sailboat that had no engine. When there was no wind he pulled it with a launch. I watched him out there with binoculars when I was a little boy. That ship with sails had a big load with more than fifteen or twenty smaller sailboats. They pulled it in with a launch.

Jim Allen was a rich man too. He was a storeowner and commissioner. I don't know how much he got paid for being police commissioner. He stayed in Wainwright. He's another one that made money all the time. He sold sugar, coffee, flour and any kind of knife — pocket knife, butcher knife. He had binoculars, rifles, all kinds of things brought in by ship. He had how many rifles in his store — .22, .30.30, .30.06, .30.40. My father got me a .30.40 — that's a strong one, I like it. It's about the same as .30.06.

I moved over to Wainwright when I was fifteen or sixteen [about 1921]. My father had built a house in Wainwright after he retired from reindeer herding. I raised our reindeer and traveled with them. Every month the herders went back to the village for

one week. Commissioner Jim Allen ordered the people herding reindeer to take a break one week a month, sometimes two weeks.

During that one week each month, Jim Allen taught school to the all the reindeer herders. He ran the store during the day and at nine o'clock would close the store. Then he taught school upstairs at night. I never had schooling in my life until Jim Allen taught me. The commissioner taught me A-B-C's and the English names of everything, like the whaleboat and skinboat. I never worked for him but I got nighttime schooling from Jim Allen from the time I was fifteen to twenty.

Jim Allen was Alice Kilbear's father, he taught me all kinds of things, like how to handle a rifle. He was a police Commissioner. If somebody tried to scare or kill me with a rifle, he showed me how to grab that rifle. That's why I was never scared of anything. He showed me how to put a person in jail. He was a good man, that Jim Allen.

Jim Allen finished teaching me when I married my first wife Ruth, *Argaiĭaq*. I was twenty years old [1925]. Commissioner Allen wrote letters for me to Commissioner Joule. Then Ruth and I went to Barrow by dog team to get married. Jim Allen gave me presents — everything I needed — an 8 x 10 tent, Primus stove, pots and lots of cups. After we got married we stayed at *Tachim Isua* a few miles from here where there's a lagoon.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE IMPORTANT THINGS

This chapter was written from *Inupiaq* interviews with Pualu's daughter Bertha acting as interpreter for the interviewer, Yvonne Yarber. Translations were by James *Mumigana* Nageak and edited by the interviewer.

### **Tarruq** Became **Tazruk**

My father's name was *Tarruq* in Eskimo but for some reason it was changed to Tazruk. He was from Point Hope where he was expelled by his father, mother and siblings. It was all because he loved *Agliġuuraq*, my mother.

My father was a wealthy man. They say he was a good hunter, better than his brothers. He killed polar bears which were expensive skins. But his parents took everything away — his rifle, knife, traps — everything except the clothes he wore. His brothers, *Quqquq*, *Iñuagviuraq* and sister *Iñuuraq* went along with their parents. They wanted him to marry someone else. They did not want him to marry "that" woman, the one he loved.

Even though everything he owned was taken away and he was pushed from the family, he married the one he loved anyway. When the family banished him he went to the wealthy older brother of *Agliġuuraq*, — Ahlook, a great reindeer herder around here. My father left Point Hope for *Aqiaguġnat* this side of Icy Cape near the lagoon on the big hill. He left with only his hands.

My father's uncle, *Quņuyuk* took him and *Agliġuuraq* from Point Hope to Ahlook by boat. *Quņuyuk* loved *Tarruq*. They traveled by canoe pulled by three dogs on a line made of ugruk or walrus skin. The dogs walked on the ice with the canoe in the water. It was fast, just like an Evinrude. *Quņuyuk* had a good leader and from the canoe would say "Gee. Haw." Then the dogs would pull that direction.

Ahlook was so pleased that *Quņuyuk* brought his sister and brother-in-law, he butchered a reindeer and gave it to *Quņuyuk*. When *Quņuyuk* was ready to return to Point Hope, he

gave *Tarruq* one trap and one knife. He said, "I have only one rifle. Maybe Riley Ahlook can give you a rifle.

Ahlook gave the bride and groom rifles, knives, a coffee pot, cups, a tent, and everything they needed. He talked to them. Ahlook was happy that my father's parents had taken everything from *Tarruq* because he was then able to give his sister and brother-in-law what they needed. Ahlook said he was happy because one of these days when *Tarruq* became wealthy again, working as a reindeer herder, the family would have to ask for a small piece of meat.

This became reality, because after my father was a wealthy man again, he took my older brother *Pitugviuraq* with him to Point Hope with two reindeer sleds. They carried many fox skins with plans to buy food and goods from the store in Point Hope. They went to the "*nanukasak*" store. [J. N.- Not a familiar term but seems to be a store where polar bear skins were used for trading. ] My father *Tarruq* found that his older brothers, *Iñuaġviuraq*, *Quqquq*, and *Niġruun* wanted to follow him because he was now a wealthy *qurñilaaq* or reindeer herder. *Tarruq* never did make up with his father, *Utugiña*. They never got him back again.

This is how my father became wealthy. They would take care of their reindeer until it was time to slaughter the older ones. Then they would sell the meat to the ships [whaling ships]. Meat was expensive. Hind quarters were about eighty or one hundred dollars, many years ago. And then the skins were sold to Eskimos because there were not many caribou around here at the time.

People from *Qayaiqsigvik* [Icy Cape], used caribou skins for clothing. At that time they had to search very hard because the caribou were only on the other side of the mountains. They would travel for three to five days up the Utukok in the summertime. In the winter they would travel away from the village for many months to catch caribou. They were needed for matting and parkas to keep warm. The thick fur skins were used for mattresses. People were happy to buy reindeer skins instead. That is the way it was around here. And today the caribou are so available.

### Blue Eyes

My father told me when I was only one week old, I died for twenty-four hours. My *aanaa* [grandmother] was the one who brought me back to life. I was dead when my father went to get his mother, *Tukummiġuum* who was a shaman. She brought me back by calling a different name through my ears. She called me *Iññisaq* which is not my name. I was stiff, really hard. [J.N. - Rigor mortis is suggested.] I was a stiff baby when she called me through my ears.

After she called me *Iññisaq* I breathed again. But when I was revived, they say my eyes had turned white because I was dead for so long. They were all right until before that, but my eyes have been blue ever since.

Later, I didn't like anyone to call me *Iññisaq* because whenever that name was said, I could jump over high places. [J. N.- This refers to becoming superhuman.] That is why I don't like to be called *Iññisaq*. My Eskimo name, *Pualuagna* came from Point Hope.

### Hunting With My Father

I know the land and all its names. I learned that from my father. I know that *Tatchim Isua* and mountain names like *Uluaqtuun* [meaning saw], *Pugguk*, *Ikiġġaq*, *Ataniq* . Maybe people don't know the names of these two mountains we have right here named *Ataniq* and *Ikiġġaq*, [meaning cache]. The river by that mountain is *Kuukpaaġruk* [Kukpowruk] and the mountain river that's way north is *Uttuqqaq* [Utukok].

We survived upland for how many years, just by hunting the animals. My father never taught my older brother but he taught me how to hunt, even in winter. When my older brother and I traveled in the winter my brother he asked, "Where can I get water to drink?" When the rivers and lakes froze up and the ice got thick, my brother always said he was thirsty.

I know how to live. I know how to get water because my father taught me while I was young — like my grandson here [age three]. I remember how he carried me when we were traveling. That



is why I know the land all around — the creek's names, the outwaters of Noatak River and the people of the Noatak. I know the places they lived and where the fightings happened long ago.

My father took me there and he would say , “This is a long time ago story. This is the area where they had a big fight. You will find the bones of those that had the fighting.”

Sometimes we would stay out at least a week. He would let me walk and when I got tired he would carry me. He took me everywhere by walking. When he was hunting caribou or other animals he piled up rocks and left me there. They would be high enough so the animals could not reach me. I would look down from the rockpile.

I stayed up like that for the day. There would be a lot of food — dried caribou meat or whatever. My father also left me with a *pana* which was a long metal spear with a sharp point of wood or metal. He told me to spear any animal that started to climb the rockpile.

Animals never reached me because he was a fast runner and usually reached me first. Often I never even saw what kind of animal was coming towards me. He watched me with binoculars and usually knew they were coming. He would run back and keep the animals away.

He also taught me about the sea while I was still young. There was a wide little boat that he carried. When he got a seal he put me in the boat and took me with him to retrieve the seal. I would look and I would learn.

I was never scared when a big animal came because he taught me. As I got older he said, “Here is a rifle.” The rifles were long and powerful with big cartridges that were short and wide. They were forty-fours [caliber] . Those forty-fours could kill big animals, like walrus. I was given an adjusted rifle with a shortened barrel and stock when we were on the boat. I was small, but I had a rifle that was worked on to fit me. If an animal surfaced I could shoot it.

My father loved his uncle *Pualuagna* because his uncle had treated him well. And because I was his namesake, my father treated me good by teaching me to hunt on the ice and upland.

I learned to set traps while I was still young — trapping foxes while their skins were worth a lot of money. A good skin was worth about fifty dollars and a cross-fox more than one hundred dollars. They were our source of income. Silver-grays were valuable but the big black silver-fox with white on the front were the most expensive — sometimes over one thousand dollars. They were scarce and hard to trap.

I was fifteen at the time and just started trapping. When I came to one of my traps it had a big black fox in it. It was like an arctic fox, the fur was thick but it was black, with a white area on the chest. It had died without moving around very much so the fur was very good. I took it home.

While I was reindeer herding, my uncle *Annasugauraq*, took the dried black fox skin from among the foxes I had trapped. I had heard my father talk about that kind of fox being very valuable. I thought my uncle had stolen my black fox. But he gave it back to me. He had taken it to clean because he was proud of me.

My father took the skin to Dick Hall's big store which sold everything. They sold food, rifles, whale boats [dories with sails] and launches with ten or 20-horse motors. Twenty-eight horse was the fastest motor. I asked my father to buy a launch with that skin, which he did. He got the launch and food and things he needed with that one skin.

### ***Tukummiuk, Akiiva***

My *aana* is named *Tukummiuk, Akiiva*. I was a small boy and the way I remember her was through her singing. My mother trapped when my father was away reindeer herding. She was strong, my mother, *Agliuq*. My brother *Pitugviuraq* [commonly known as Henry Peetook] was big enough to follow our mother. I was young so they would leave me with my grandmother.

I followed my *grandmotherTukummiJuk* around when she was working. I remember her climbing on top of the house and

singing after the reindeer herders left. I was old enough to know what was going on. I would be listening from under the house and was so smart that I learned her songs when she sang.

One time she took a pillow and set it out on the snow. This was after my parents went out with my uncle Riley, *Qiugaq*, *Tuuraġruaq* and other reindeer herders. She sat down and started singing. It was a clear day with the sun shining. Right after she sang, the winds came and the weather turned bad. It was so bad that I couldn't even see my legs. I thought she was trying to kill the people who had to make emergency shelters out in the storm. I said to her, "I tell them, my father, my mother, you sing!"

"No! Don't tell them!"

"No more then. Right now. You sing, I tell them. No more wind right now!" I didn't talk to her anymore until it was clear.

She must have made the weather calm again — maybe with a song. The people all returned to camp after the wind died down and the weather was clear again that evening after dark.

i remember, when I was able to think about what had happened. I figured she really sang that song to gather the animals we needed to that area. My *aana* must have gathered the animals by bringing the storm. Her song had words to it, "The ones with the antlers and the ones with blubber, their noises are getting closer." That was what she sang. Those were strong *arġakuaq*, [shaman] medicine man words she made.

There hadn't been any open water on the ocean for a long time. But after that singing and storm, the animals were plentiful. There was open water close to the reindeer camp. The people went out to hunt seals and brought many back.

Right away, many caribou also came very close. They were trying to join the reindeer herd. The hunters killed many caribou. Ahlook, the reindeer herder, didn't like to slaughter reindeer just for their own food. He wanted the reindeer to multiply. So it was good that the caribou came and provided lots of meat for the people.

I have learned that animal gathering song from my *aana*. I started to sing it one time and my father told me, "Don't follow

that devil. That *tuungaq*, Eskimo song, that's devil." I listened to my father. I didn't want to follow the devil. So, I have never sung it again. If I sang the song now, the animals would probably become restless thinking of us. [laughs] That was my grandmother from Point Hope, *Tukummiuk*. She was a strong woman. I knew her. She wasn't any good. I had heard that they were like that long ago.

When I was a little boy and my grandmother — *Tukummiuk*, my father's mother — talked to me; I used to think, "What is she talking about, unimportant things? Boy, she sure can make up stories."

She used to tell me, "When you are eating meat and making noise with your mouth while chewing, like 'y-urn, yum, yum' — any animal will go after you." This is what my grandmother would say. I have all this information in my head. But, I thought my grandmother was lying. After listening to her, everytime I ate, I'd go 'yum, yum, yum' after I put meat in my mouth. Grandmother would scold me, "If a polar bear does something to you, you must bear it."

I would answer her, "Good, if an animal comes after me, I can shoot it point blank." Everytime I ate, I put my grandmother's words in my brain, "Some animal will go after a person that makes noise when they are eating meat." My parents wouldn't say anything, even though they were listening to my grandmother scolding me. They just looked at each other, my parents, *Tarruayaaq* and *Agliuq*. Still, I thought she was lying.

When I became a young man, I experienced what my grandmother said. She wasn't lying. When I started to hunt. I found out. A wounded caribou went after me with all the strength it had. Any animal would go after me everytime I wounded them. That happened with a polar bear too. Even as I grew older. My daughter Ruth always wanted to follow me when I was hunting for caribou at Nauyalik. She liked her father so much, she always wanted to follow me. I would tell her not to follow me. "If an animal go after me, you will be scared. Everytime I wound an animal they go after me." She told me she would run off if an animal was wounded.

That was my grandmother *Tukummiuk* who told me those things. One of my daughters is named for her. I hear things about her and suspect she is becoming like her name, *Tukummiuk*.

My daughter here, Bertha, has a name that was strong too, *Qigñagruaq*. *Qigñagruaq* couldn't be killed, *Nuyaaigña*, the one who couldn't be killed. A person trying to kill her would never succeed.

I know that *Nuyaaigña*, and *Nasuayaaq* always argued, those co-parent-in-laws. This is what I was told by them. *Nuyaaigña*, told *Nasuayaaq* that she had powers to turn into a bear. But *Nasuayaaq* said *Nuyaaigña*, was lying. *Nuyaaigña* wanted to prove that what she was saying was true. *Nuyaaigña*, said to *Nasuayaaq*, "Look at my tracks." *Nasuayaaq* saw brown bear tracks leading to the house and on the window sill. That is when she started believing.

My grandfather, *Utuqiña*, was also a shaman. When he was hunting and saw the tracks of an animal, he would go off to the side of the tracks and hide. Then he started singing a song that would make the animal turn back and return in its own tracks. When it returned to my grandfather, he would kill the animal.

The Eskimos call those kinds of song, "songs that make things return." It even worked on people. If a person left the village and a shaman started singing that kind of song, the person would just turn around and return to the place they had started. Those are the kinds of people we were following. They stopped doing those old things, shamanism. They quit when the missionaries came and told them to stop. I think there are still people living today who have not quit. But we don't know who they are.

### Young And Strong

I became a reindeer herder, a *qunñilaaq*. I was twelve years old when I quit living with my parents and became a reindeer herder with my uncle. We traveled all over with the reindeer. I learned how to take care of them because I had an uncle who was

the first reindeer herder. He taught me what do do so they would survive.

We had to move them around all the time so they wouldn't starve. If an area became covered with snow or the reindeer ate all the food in an area, we would move. That is the way I learned. When I stopped reindeer herding they declined and vanished. All but six starved to death because a person named *Asugiaq* killed them. He did not know how to care for the reindeer and did not move them around. *Asugiaq* killed the last six because all the others had starved.

When I was fourteen I was able to run a dogteam. I remember that time because there was a great sickness. I don't know where it came from. There were no hospitals or nurses and all the people were sick and dying. They were too sick to get coal, so their homes were cold. Because I was young and strong, I got coal for I don't know how many homes. I also built fires in their stoves. That was how I was living at that time; I helped others to live. Many people in Wainwright, like Alva Nashoalook.

I kept going back and forth to the coalmine, trying to keep the houses warm. I carried coal for them everyday. If I hadn't been strong enough, they would have died from the cold and also from hunger, because their stoves would not have had fire in them, Still, people died. Even a married couple, Toorak and his wife, died while they were sleeping together. *Tiŋualuk* and his wife also died like that. There were others, the parents of *Ałak* [David Panik] and *Ikayuaq*. I lived.

I was strong when I was young. I used to walk and run all the time. when I was hunting for caribou or polar bear. One time when I was a young fellow I walked from up on the mountain all the way to Wainwright. It took twelve hours of walking and ruining. I used to run carrying my pack, rifle and sometimes little boat. My father taught me by making me run behind the sled sometimes when I was a little boy hunting with him. That is why nobody could beat me at the Christmastime races even though those people were healthy.

I raced at Wainwright when people from Barrow and Icy Cape would go for Christmas. It was a fourteen or fifteen mile foot race. The winner always got money. I won it all the time because I wanted that money. Even here at *Qayaiqsigvik* [Icy Cape], when there were foot races whether long or short distance, they never could beat me. Because, I was strong when I was a young man.

One time at Wainwright, a half-breed man a little older than me named Weir *Taqalak* Negovanna talked to my cousin *Injilluk*. He said, "That man Paul Tazruk, fool you. First one all the time. Get money all the time. I second one." That's right, Weir *Taqalak* was a strong man and he always came in second on the foot race.

The people that know me could tell you, like *Pisuk* [Henry Peetook, my older brother *Pitugviuraq*. Even he could never beat me. But now it's as though he's getting younger. He's more powerful than me now. That's because he hardly uses Ski-doo or Honda, he just walks.

I was a great hunter as a young man. You should have seen me. The people at Barrow used to marvel at the way my sled would be filled with seals when I went home. I sold the seals. Those hunters would follow me and try to buy seals because they were unable to get any for themselves. I don't know why, They didn't know how to hunt, I guess.

My children, like Bertha here, never wanted for anything. They would play with the skins of the baby seals, even the young bearded seal skins. Their mother would make a slider for them by putting a rope on the skins. The kids slid down the hill and pulled the seals back up again with the rope. They cleaned the blood off the skins that way.

While I was still young, my father taught me how to hunt. When I got married I knew everything about hunting. I could get anything when I went to hunt an animal. When I thought about polar bears, I would see a polar bear. I used my legs. I'd run after it, catch up to it and kill the polar bear.

One time, my younger brother and I went hunting on the ocean. I told him not to leave me. "Stay with me today, Norvin," I said to him. "I want to hunt something somewhere else," he

answered me. He took off, separating from me. When he left, I left too.

He hadn't gone very far yet when I came upon two polar bears. I ran after the polar bears and shot both of them. They were quite far. I wounded them but they were still running fast. I ran after them.

My rifle had begun to jam and was shooting only a single shot. It had been in the water where the ice was moving and making pressure ridges. The chamber had not been cleaned properly. That is why it had begun to jam.

My uncle had told me, "A polar bear will eat you, if your rifle jams up on you. When it jams you will have to use a pocket knife to pry out the shell. It is going to eat you while your rifle is jammed.

I thought to myself and answered my uncle, "I would not let a polar bear eat me. I would jump over it!"

Well, sure enough, I had gone hunting and my brother had left me. I had wounded two polar bears and my rifle was jammed. I was thinking about what my uncle told me. I told myself, "I'll go over the bear if it starts fighting with me. I will not let a polar bear maul me." Okay.

I could see both of them running fast away from me. They were on the clear smooth ice and when they reached an area where I couldn't see them, they had laid down and died. When I reached them, they were both lying down with their legs straight out.

I stuck my rifle on the rump of one of them. Nothing happened. It didn't move. I went to the other one to check if it was dead. I stuck my rifle again and it never moved. When neither moved I thought to myself, "Both of the polar bears have died because they've been shot.

Ready to skin the polar bears, I put my rifle away. I had a spear with a metal tip. The handle was hardwood, difficult to break. My uncle *Kisisaq* had told me, "This will help you. A polar bear will not break it. It is hardwood. Use it as a spear to keep polar bears away. Use it if your rifle jams. If a polar bear starts to fight you, this will help you." He made this spear for me out of



hardwood. I used it for checking the thickness of ice on the ocean. And when I went hunting on the ice and saw a polar bear, I was aware of the spear and had the words of my uncle in my mind. "This spear will help you."

When I saw that the polar bears were dead, I put my rifle away, but kept my spear with me. I was thinking, I didn't want to set down my spear. My rifle was way over there. I would keep the spear close. I took out my pocket knife to skin one of the dead polar bears. Just when I grabbed the leg and lifted it, the bear stood up. Both of them stood up. They were going after me.

I grabbed my spear and used it to keep the polar bears from mauling me. They were tearing at the white snow shirt I was wearing. They were able to touch me even though I was trying hard to keep away. Then, my hardwood spear was broken too. One of them broke it by hitting it. When the spear was broken, it was easier for me to maneuver. Both of them were fighting me but I did not let them touch me where they would hurt me. I kept them away with my shortened hardwood spear.

My uncle had also told me, if a polar bear starts after me, keep going away to its right. He said the left arm of the polar bear is very agile. It would use that arm to slap or grab me. It uses its left to hunt animals. The left arm and rear are very strong. They are just the same. "Remember, stay to the right if a polar bear starts going after you," my uncle told me. I put that information in my brain.

It was springtime too, and warm. Finally, "With this spear," my uncle had told me, "With this spear," he must have been a shaman. "With this spear, if a polar bear is making you weak, poke the polar bear in the eye if it goes after you." I thought of his words, just when I was getting hot.

When the polar bear tried to hit me again, I poked it in the eye. It started going around in circles. I found out I had punctured the eye and burst it. After remembering what my uncle had said, I poked the other bear in the eye with the spear. When they were both going around in circles, I walked over to my rifle and shot them. I was safe.

I was not injured, even though they were trying to maul me. I killed both of the polar bears using my spear in their eyes. I think my uncle *Kisisaq* must have been a shaman, because I was not afraid of anything. He must have let the polar bears go after me like that to teach me a lesson for bragging that I would jump over one.

**CHAPTER THREE: LIFE REALLY CHANGED**

Chapter Three is written from both *Iñupiaq* and English interviews.

**First Married**

When I first got married at the age of twenty [about 1925], about the only kind of work besides reindeer herding was getting coal for the store. Commissioner Allen and Commissioner Morgan from Barrow got that started. There was lots of coal near Wainwright. But it was a lot of heavy work with dog teams. I did some of that.

The coal was underneath so people had to crawl through a tunnel. There was lots of coal, many yards. You had to use a lantern down there. The work was with a pick and shovel. After filling a hundred pound sack, we'd sew it up. Maybe we'd get ten or twelve bags on the dogsled.

A hundred pound gunny sack brought in fifty cents long ago. Then the price went to seventy-five cents. Still that was too little. Flour, sugar and tea cost too much for that small amount of coal money. That's why I just went hunting and fishing.

The lagoon there was good for smelt fishing in the wintertime. You just made a fishing hole in the ice with a stick that had a metal point. We made the hole when the ice was about two feet thick and then used the same hole all winter. To keep the hole from closing the hole was covered with small willows and then snow. I put a snow house on top so it would be warm inside.

I fished all the time when the weather was too windy and stormy for hunting. Sometimes I'd get one or two gunnysacks full for the store. Maybe they would pay me five to eight dollars a sack. Lots of people liked that smelt. When it was fine weather I hunted on the ice for polar bear, seals *orugruk*.

I still have a little old time canoe in my house in Barrow. It's the light kind about three feet wide and four or five feet long. I used to put it on my sled or carry it on my back. I used it for

wintertime hunting or summertime. I used it when I hunted seals. I would shoot them in the water and then get them with my little *qayaq*.

My brother Henry hunted with me on the ice for seals. Sometimes we got ten to fifteen seals in one day. Seal skin money was about fifty cents a skin. That was nothing. It was too much work to clean off the blood and hang them up to dry for only fifty cents. Later, if you dried it before selling it to the store it was a little better price. Polar bear skin was a higher price. Sometimes it was worth fifteen or sixteen dollars a foot. It even got up to twenty or twenty-five dollars a foot. A good sized polar bear was about twelve feet long. A small one about eight feet.

My Uncle Fred Anashugak, my mother's brother, from Wainwright taught me how to run after a polar bear. I would wear my *qatigniñ atigluk* [*qatigniñ* means 'something that makes you white, white outer garment or parka' and *atigluk* means 'cloth cover for parka']. A lot of men want willows to hide behind and wait for the polar bear, My Untie told me if I wanted a polar 'bear, i should stand up and wave my hands in the air. When it starts to run away, run after it. Sometimes I would run for an hour. I'd get tired, but the animal gets tired too. You just have to keep ruining. Maybe my grandson Thomas will be like that too. He's a young fellow and runs good.

Some people died when they didn't see open water, or if the ice carried them out. But I always got home. The only time I had trouble hunting on the ice was if the wind started blowing and made open water. That would happen with young ice. When there was young ice I never slept out there. I always went home. If the ice started moving I used my *unaaq* to paddle myself in on that young ice. When I came close to ground I used a long line I carried to hook onto . That way I pulled myself back in. Still, I would hunt during young ice because I always had to work for money.

Sometimes I'd catch three polar bears out on the ice. Then I would go to the mountains by dog team for skins — white fox, red fox, wolf or wolverine — any kind of skin.

I was a young fellow when I first married. We moved to *Tachim Isua* right hereby the lagoon to the right of the hill. My mother, father, sister and brother moved there too. We hunted for all the animals. My father built an *iglu*, a sod house with blocks of sod over two feet thick. He built it because there was lots of wood down there for firewood. It was a big warm place, about twenty-five to thirty feet long.

At night we didn't light the stove. It stayed warm from the daytime fire. We slept on a mattress made of caribou or reindeer skins. On the top we had a pillow made of duck hair, or down. That mattress was placed on top of small willows piled high. That's what Eskimos used. We stayed there for about five years.

We used dog teams to get the wood. We had three dog teams — my father, my brother and me. I had seven dogs. My brother had nine or ten. My father just had four. We used them for hunting. And we used them to visit other places.

At that time, the old Point Lay village of *Kali*, had lots of people. There was a big store too, run by Fred Forsiund. His wife Clara who's about the same age as me, now lives in Kotzebue. I remember going to *Kali* for Christmas. People came from many places for Christmas at *Kali*. Those living to the south at *Qasigialuk*, or *Tachim Isua* like us. And some people from Wainwright and Point Hope also traveled by dog team.

We had a good time with the Christmas dog races. I had a good leader and a new sled. Samuel *Pamiuq* had a good leader too. I could tell. My brother Henry also raced. We ran a seven mile loop. I freed a hook for my sled. When I pulled the hook, my dogs took off fast. Somebody hollared for my dog to run the wrong way. I told my leader, "Come gee. Come gee!", They listened and turned around for me. Then they really ran fast. Another fast team came right by my leg, I just sat in my sled and let my dogs run. I won the race. They gave me flour and other things. Samuel, from Point Hope came in second.

After Christmas, a man wanted to buy my leader and new sled for 500 dollars cash. I knew he had lots of money because he worked for the schoolhouse for how many years. But I wouldn't sell

my leader because he knew everything. When I was out trapping and would see a white fox, I took my dog out of his harness and said, "Go get it!" He would run and catch it under the neck so the fur was never spoiled. And when I shot marmot on the mountain my dog would bring them back to me. He would leave them right by feet. That was a good dog. I wouldn't sell it.

My wife Ruth, *Argailaq* died after we had our daughter Rose. I don't know what kind of sickness it was but it was the second time lots of people died. Everybody was sick. There was no doctor or nurse. Rose was just a little baby so my mother took care of her so I could hunt and trap.

### ***Nasuayaaq***

I didn't marry again until I was forty or fifty. My daughter Rose didn't want me to get married so I didn't for how many years. Then Rose liked the woman who became my second wife. We married sometime in the '40's. I had the wedding papers but they burned up in my house. My boy Thomas pushed me out the window in that fire. I had nothing but underwear and that little boy Thomas pushed me out the window to save my life.

I was married to my second wife in Wainwright. *Nasuayaaq* Dorothy Taleak, she was originally from there and the daughter of *Anqjaluk*. She has a brother named Lazarus who stays in Fairbanks, his Eskimo name is *Nasaḡniq*. I never knew her mother because she died long ago. She was named *Tuḡmak*. Many of the young men tried to marry *Nasuayaaq* but she became mine. She worked hard and knew how to cook and make everything, like boots and parkas. Eskimos tried to marry hard workers. That was before there were many whitemen or jobs. People lived by hunting on the ice and the land. That is why people tried to marry those who knew how to work,

Every single guy was chasing after her. That's what they used to do long ago. They wanted a wife who could do everything. Nowadays, so many whitemen come around. I guess men just don't look for the ones that work. [laughs]

My daughter here, Bertha, is just like her mother, *Nasuayaaq*. She has the same big face and strong voice. Even though I'm now old and weak, whenever I want to hear my wife's voice I go to Bertha's place. She has the same laugh.

My wife Dorothy, or *Nasuayaaq*, was the same age as me. She was a young lady and I was a young man. We were from the same generation. The church or somebody recorded her birthdate as 1911, they just guessed. But we were born about the same year — 1905. Percy *Panigruaq* Ipalook was the Presbyterian preacher who married us. He was an Eskimo preacher who went Outside for school.

It was the second marriage for both of us. *Nasuayaaq* had several children from her first marriage to Taleak. There was Nita, Kenneth and Irving Taleak. Irving now lives at Wainwright. We raised those children together with our own. After we married we traveled all over by dogsled to hunt and trap. Even when she was carrying a child, we traveled.

My wife Dorothy and I started out as reindeer herders from Wainwright. When we finished, we went by dog team to Utukok in the mountains. It's not too far from here, about twenty miles. We stayed there five summers living on the animals, hunting and trapping. We didn't want to work on getting coal for the store. It was too little pay for the coffee, tea, salt and blubber we had to buy. Bertha wasn't born yet but we had too many children. That's why we went to Utukok.

My cousin and brother Henry helped take us to Utukok by dog team. There were too many of us for just one team, even with our big wooden sleds which were eight or ten feet long.

We stayed in a an *iglu* tent made of willows tied with rope and covered with caribou skin. There was a window of *ugruk* and a door of caribou or brown bear. Lots of people lived in tents back then. They were warm. My wife liked it at Utukok. She wanted to stay. She didn't want to go to back to Wainwright. At Utukok, there were lots of ducks, ptarmigan, marmot, and other animals in the summertime. In the winter there were just caribou, fox and

*ptarmigan*. My wife liked to make soup with the animals we got. She used ducks, geese, caribou, marmot and all kinds of animals.

My wife Dorothy liked hunting too. She knew everything about rifles. She was a good shooter. When I was away working somewhere, she got her own caribou. Sometimes as many as five. I gave her a pistol to protect herself when I was gone. I used to see people like Indians with my binoculars but they never went to my place.

We got our supplies from Wainwright, so sometimes I walked there myself to get things like tea, coffee, salt, pepper, tobacco and ammunition. I'd pack up my dog and walk all the way from my place at Utukok in the mountains.

### Marmot Hunting

We hunted all the time for marmots, *siksrikpak* in Eskimo. Sometimes I caught five hundred skins. That was good money. My brother Henry hunted with me sometimes, even when I was married. And when my wife and children stayed out with me, Henry would take me to the mountains with a launch. He'd bring ammunition, kerosene, flour, sugar and the other things I needed.

I built a house too but when we hunted, we traveled around and set up camp. Camp was with a tent of caribou skins my wife sewed. We put the caribou skins over big long bent willows.

When I was fourteen or fifteen, my brother and I went hunting from Wainwright to a place in the mountains named *Niniġutit*. There were lots of animals up there, marmots, brown bear, moose and on the other side of the mountain were caribou. The moose were near the river where they had lots of willows to eat.

My cousin Waldo Bodfish talked to me one time when I was going from Wainwright to hunt for marmots. He was afraid of that place in the mountains. He said to me, "Maybe you fellows will be killed by Indian. You never come back."

I told him that was all right. "Maybe Indian scared of me too." I wanted money. That's why I was hunting for marmot. Working for coal was hard work and fifty cents for a hundred



pounds of coal was too cheap. Sometimes marmot skin prices were high. I went out April 15, or sometimes just for the month of June and return home soon after the beginning of July.

Sometimes I'd get more than a hundred skins. After skinning them out, marmot would dry in one day. Lots were big three foot marmots. Their meat was good and fat to eat. My brother and I would eat them. We got lots of squirrels too. My brother would chase them with a stick and hit them. He fed lots to the dogs when we were hunting.

My father taught me to make the Eskimo trap for marmots. He used big, long flat rocks held up with a little four inch stick. When the marmot moved under the rock, that stick would move and the heavy rock would drop on the marmot and kill it. It was a good trap. He said a bigger one could be used for wolverine or wolf. Just put a little bait, like caribou fat underneath. I only tried it with marmots though. I used metal traps too. I had lots of them.

The place for hunting marmots is named *Niniguti, Ninigun*. And this side is *Pugguk*, there are lots of marmot there too. When we were staying at Wainwright, my brother Henry went with me up there in June for marmots. We stayed for one month and then July 1, we went home. In July, the marmot lost their hair and got new skin on their feet. The skin was no good then. But in June, sometimes we got three or four hundred skins, that brought lots of money. The skins were worth two, three, or four dollars. Good big ones were six dollars. After marmot hunting, we'd go back to Wainwright.

Most of the people from Wainwright didn't want to hunt for marmots up there. They were afraid of Indians or other kind of people that came around. They wanted to come around my tent. I saw them through binoculars, I had four or five sleds. Maybe they wanted one. But I think they were scared sometimes too. My brother used a small hatchet to chop up one of the small sleds to bum with willow so we could make coffee. That was when we were hunting *siksrikpak*.

We moved to Barrow because I had to work for a contractor. That's why we moved. Bertha was a young girl already. I forgot

what year. I wanted to stay in Wainwright because I liked that life, but I had work with a contractor in Barrow a long time. I have a house in Barrow all paid for. Somebody rents it now.

### Relax, Like **Walking** On Land

When my second wife *Nasuayaaq* and I lived at Barrow, we spent much of our time at *Nauyalik*. I was always thinking about what they were going to eat — meat or whiteman food. I hunted. Then I thought, “If I fish, my children will not want for food. I could sell the fish which they could also eat.” We sold dry fish in Barrow.

I took my wife and my many small children to *Nauyalik* and started fishing. My wife was strong, a good worker and fisherperson. She sewed a canvas bag together. When it was full of fish it must have been worth six or seven hundred dollars in those days. The fish were worth that much when my children were small.

Bertha was small at that time but very active. She was strong. One time she was swimming across the river. We saw her just before she reached the other side. We hollared at her. She was very active. She had learned from us. When I was swimming, she was watching and learned how to swim. She was not afraid of the deep water. Her other sisters were afraid of the water.

I remember how I tried to teach my daughter Ruth and Maria Taylor, the daughter of Roxy and Laura Uyagak. I would swim with them across the deep part of the river and just when I let go of them they would sink.

My father taught me how to swim. He let me practice. When he taught me how to hunt, if I was caught on the other side of the lead, he taught me how to swim. Since he let me swim in the waters, it was just like walking around the village — I wouldn't tense up in the water. He showed me. When he told me to stiffen up in the water, I would start sinking. When I relaxed I would float on top of the water. It's just like relaxing your body to walk around on land. Check this out by getting stiff in the water and see if you don't sink. He would talk to me like that.

He didn't lie. That is why I could swim across if I was caught on the other side of the open lead. People didn't worry about me when the ice started breaking up at Wainwright. The other people on the ice with me were the ones they started searching for. My older siblings, *Pisuk* and them would say, "That person you don't have to worry about. He will swim across. The water isn't freezing anymore. He will swim across, no matter how far. Only the other ones."

They would go after the others with a boat and find them. They wouldn't worry about me. I would get back to the village earlier than the others by swimming across. My brother would always sink.

My father really taught me. How to swim and hunt. He would keep me out in the mountains for days, teaching me how to use little willows to build a fire for cooking meat, or whatever. How many weeks, teaching me the names of the land, walking all over, even to the mountains.

When I was swimming, even while wearing my clothes, my rifle never got wet. I would tie it to my back. It didn't matter how far. Even this lagoon, even if I am old, I could cross this right now.

I am going to tell a story. A fat bull caribou is heavy. When we were up there at Utukok, Bertha was there too, though small. I had a fat bull caribou. Using the skin as a pack I tied in the meat, fat, and leg marrow after pounding the bones and throwing them away. I could carry it on my back. It was heavy, though.

The river there had a fast current though it was not very wide. *Aaguraq* [his stepson, Kemeth Taleak] was with me. I put the heavy pack on my pack and swam with it in the swift river. I kept telling *Aaguraq*, "Hang on. You are going to fall in the water," He was a young man, trying to hang on. The current was carrying me because of the heavy pack on my back.

When I reached camp, I let my wife *Nasuayaaq* try to lift the pack off my back. She was very strong but just folded with the weight and dropped the pack because it was so heavy. She said, "What were you going to do when this heavy load dragged you to the bottom of the river? Why did you swim with it?"

One time she went with the dancers for two weeks in Fairbanks, Eskimo dancing. I stayed and home in Barrow and started thinking, "Maybe I can dance. I don't know. I think, I learn em. I know sing. Maybe tomorrow I go look dance when tourists come." Some Eskimo dancers always danced for the tourists when they came in by airplane.

I went to watch the dancers. It was a woman and man. I watched him drum. I just watched because I wanted to learn. Then I went home to sleep. The next day I went to watch again, to learn. Then one more day. The next day I went to drum and learn the motions. I learned all right.

When my wife came back from Fairbanks, I didn't tell her I was learning how to dance. I told her, "I go look Eskimo dance with you today," She didn't know I had been watching them. I was old, about fifty-nine or sixty years old. Somebody started singing. He said, "Paul, come on!" My wife was surprised when I got up to dance.

I started dancing all the time. I learned all the songs, maybe a hundred. I could drum, sing and dance. I danced with the other people and traveled with them after that. I went to Fairbanks with the others for the Eskimo-Indian Olympics. All the dancers in the state go there to win. All the Eskimo dancers from Point Hope, Kotzebue, Wainwright and other cities all want to win.

Once I made up a song for that Olympics. Six of us went to Fairbanks that time — two women, two boys and two men — my wife stayed in Barrow. We went up first. I started out dancing with another man — Eskimo fight song. We acted it out right there — two men fighting. That's the one I made up. We won that time. Twice we won.

Now, back here in Point Lay, I hardly dance. I have a true Eskimo drum in Barrow that my daughter Rose takes care of. The community hall here has a drum I can use. I play sometimes but I'm getting old. It's hard for an old man to dance.

And my wife died a few years ago. Lots of things have changed. I wanted to marry another woman but she was old too.

She didn't want to start being a mother again when she's old. I think it's because I'm an old man too.

That's okay. I love these kids I'm taking care of. Gertie and Thomas, my grandchildren. Gertie's mother was Daisy Tazruk. My son Ira Tazruk was married to a half-breed woman named Loreen. Their son Thomas was only four or five days old when his parents burned up with their house. It must have been gas or something that caught on fire. The house burned down in about fifteen minutes. I tried to run over there but it was too late. Three people died in that house — my son, my *ukuaq*, [daughter-in-law], and my son's cousin, John Harry. I loved my boy Ira, the father of Thomas. When he died, I didn't want to see his things. He had everything; maybe five rifles, a boat with an Evinrude engine. He was always working on that engine or cleaning the boat. I threw away all the things that belonged to my son. Because I loved him, I couldn't look at his things.

Now, I take care of those two young ones, Gertie and Thomas. I think about their future. Gertie has lots of money in an Anchorage bank and it keeps growing. That young fellow, Thomas is fifteen years old. He has nothing. That's why I want him to have my house in Barrow. It's a big place with six rooms. How many people want to buy it. I rent it out, but I don't want to sell it. I want Thomas to have something.

I want to keep my old fishcamp near Barrow too. It's another place about twenty square miles. I have a brass marker from BIA on that place. My *nijau* [son-in-law] Danny Pikok helped fix that with me. Now somebody in Barrow is trying to get that ground. The Corporation here at Point Lay is trying to help me. Willie Tukrook explained things. I might have to go to Barrow to take care of that for my family.

Life is different now. We used to have to trap and travel with dogs — camp out. Now people have jobs, houses and a big tank for deisal and gas. Airplanes come in all the time. Hunters use those Skidoos. Right here in my house I have oil heat. Long ago, we had nothing. There were no planes. Things only came in big ships or our mail came from Nome, Point Hope and Barrow by dogteam.

I saw *the* first airplane when I was a young boy. Captain Amundsen landed at the Wainwright inlet with Omdahl. Just those two men landed and built a house. Their plane had long hardwood skis. Some people in the village didn't like those planes. I heard somebody say, "I don't like that airplane, too much noise. They have to run away, the animals. More better throw away that airplane." That man wanted to shoot the plane because it made the animals run away.

My father worked for Omdahl and Amundsen because he knew a little English from when he went to school in Point Hope. He worked at putting food on the sleds for Amundsen. They used to go somewhere in their plane every month to get some grub or other things. They brought lots of dried food; oranges, raisins, apple, and apricots in big bags. I never saw cans, just bags about two-and-a-half feet wide by four feet high. They gave some fruit to my mother to boil. It was good to eat. And they had pork in a wooden barrel.

Life really changed from my time of hunting, trapping and traveling with dogs. Sometimes it was stormy and snowing or foggy. Even after traveling all day, you still had to make soup for your dogs and a little place to sleep. There weren't many jobs so you had to do it. That's what I did when I was young.

Today, they bring water to my house with a big truck. They bring me coal, deisal, and check my furnace. It's hard for me to walk now. Life really changed.

# **AMOS AGNASAGGA**

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Amos Agnasagga is presently the Point Lay village council mayor — a position of responsibility he has held for many years. Born in 1943, he belongs to a generation raised in both traditional Native ways and modern western culture. At age twelve, along with other Native students, Amos was sent away by the government for a mandatory western education.

People of this generation have become many of the Native corporation and village leaders of today because of the academic training required to deal with state and federal bureaucracy. However, looking towards their elders as a source of wisdom and guidance has always been a priority.

Throughout Alaska there is an urgency to record elders stories so their knowledge can be passed along to future generations in written form. The interviewer, Yvonne Yarber, shares this concern. At the same time, she believes written materials are needed of Amos' generation as well. This generation is the bridge between traditional values and modern ways, providing important role models for young people.

It was to this urging that Amos agreed to be interviewed and included here. He did this only under the condition that the elders chosen by the village council be interviewed first.

Amos Agnasagga was born in Point Lay and raised by his grandmother until sent away to school. After high school, he attended trade school in Chicago for training as a diesel mechanic. San Francisco was his home in the cities. Amos returned to Point Lay as one of the original group that repopulated the village in the early seventies as a result of the Alaska Native Land Claims.

Although Amos describes Point Lay as home and the place he feels most free, he advises young people to search out a good education and not be afraid of travel.

Today Amos works full-time at the facility which provides electricity to the village of Point Lay. Village council and work-related business often takes him away from home. The little spare time he has is spent hunting and camping.

The following comes from an interview in Point Lay, May of 1988.

November 19, 1943 was my birthdate — back when we didn't have machines. Not like today anyway. We used dogs and sailed a lot — just like those whale boats with canvas sails. They used to have quite a few whale boats from when the whalers were here. The whalers left them behind so then other people owned them. I did a lot of sailing in the lagoon when I was growing up. Maybe they still use those sailboats in other places but not in Point Lay. Some people did have outboard motors for their boats. They weren't speed motors, but just enough to get

by. Those old five-horse and seven-and-a-half-horse motors were pretty powerful and lasted a long time. I remember we just had a five-horse outboard. One lasted for over ten years. Nowadays they don't last very long. That was about it for motors back then except the Geodetic Survey crew had those "weasels" [track vehicles].

I grew up with my grandma *Turuallak* when I was smaller. She was a special person to me, a little lady, and very friendly. She made me lots of skin clothes. That was good, I was never cold, you know. I used to hunt ptarmigan for her quite a bit before school in the morning and after school. I learned how to handle a rifle to hunt sea animals and caribou when I was very young. Matter of fact, I grew up doing that, going out with my dad. I used to do a lot of walking. It was good for me. I'm glad I had a trapline to walk — even my father and grandfather — the people them days used to walk quite a bit in the summertime. Nowadays you don't see any of that. I'm glad it happened that way though. It was a good education . . .

I don't remember getting subsistence time off from school in those days. School was pretty important, it still is. Maybe if we were a whaling community we probably would. But there were not that many jobs in those days so the older people could do a lot of the hunting, That's how they made their living.

I used to walk about a mile to school. Grandma had her house a long ways from the village up on that hill *Kali*. The school was on the upper part of the village. The basement is still there at the old village site but the school building burned down. It was the only school with a basement in the North Slope I guess. A one classroom school with over thirty students, just one teacher and no teacher aide. I guess we were pretty disciplined in them days. That's how we were able to get by with one teacher. The B .I.A. [Bureau of Indian Affairs] teacher used to come in by the B .I.A. ship *North Star*. Usually the teacher and a husband, who stayed all year. They took care of a lot of things like the clinic and work with the B.I.A. The husband used to do a lot of the bureau work and other stuff. We didn't have too many



teacher turnovers like today. They usually stayed here awhile.

The only employment by the school district was the teacher. The kids did all the cleaning. Everything else was volunteer work like all the cooking. The men used to take turns getting ice for the school water. They sawed all the blocks of ice from the water lake. Some of us still use it today for drinking water but our other water is delivered. In them days it was the only way they got water. I remember once some man didn't get ice so the other men went after that person. They used to make sure that everybody did their equal. I figured that was a good way to do it. Today they probably do more volunteer in the Interior but all that money from Prudhoe Bay spoiled a lot of stuff in the North Slope. You can't let anybody do anything unless they get payed nowadays.

The old school closed down around '58 or '59 from lack of students. There was a law that they had to have so many students. We didn't meet that requirement -with only nine students so we all got sent out to school at Mount Edgecumbe. I was twelve or thirteen years old. My sister Alma was six years old that time. She went there all eight years even though my parents later moved to Wainwright. It was a good school with good teachers. Nine of us left at the same time, myself, Allen Upicksoun, Nancy, Lilly, Marie, Alma and Doris Neakok.

I was excited to be going — my first time ever leaving the village. The first few weeks we all got pretty homesick but after we got to know people it was okay. There was a group of kids going "to" the same school from Barrow for the first time too so we mixed in right away. It turned out good and I made some friends fast in Wrangel. My brothers were already away going to high school. At that time, all the village students had to go out somewhere to high school, even kids from Barrow and Kotzebue. Now, whenever I go to any part of Alaska, like AFN meetings, I run into people I know. People from all over Alaska went to that school.

We would come back to the village in the summer. There were no young people's jobs so we would mostly hunt for seals, ducks, whatever. We'd hunt a lot of seals because of all the dogs to feed. Now with Ski-doo's and no dogteams to feed there's not as much walrus or seal hunting — just enough for people to eat for themselves. We didn't hunt that much geese.

After I completed high school I went to Chicago for a couple of years. So I had experience with city life. When I first got there I didn't know anything about street signs. Only place I went was around the block. Then there were some people from Alaska so they showed me how to get along in the city. I went to Chicago because B.I.A. had a program that payed for education in some kind of trade. I think B.I.A. did that because skilled workers were kind of scarce in Alaska. I know some people went there just to work because jobs were scarce in Alaska too. I don't know why I picked Chicago. I was going to gas and diesel school and had a choice of any place. I was the ordy one from Point Lay that went there., But there were a couple people from Wainwright, Barrow and all over Alaska.

I got along okay. I learned to drive and get a license in Chicago because of my trade as a mechanic. I got lost quite a few times but that taught me a lot . Nothing bad really happened. I learned that every city has a slum area. You just have to stay away from those areas. There were always people willing to help you. I learned the best thing to do if you're lost — ask somebody.

I went back to Alaska a couple years after trade school and then moved to San Francisco to work in a machine shop. It was a lot better than Chicago. Chicago was more of a rough city. Groups of people each had their own area or neighborhoods. You had to stay around your own little area. Like all the Alaska people were in one area. Most people did okay. But there were some people who got in to the wrong groups right away. I guess alcohol was the biggest problem. Going Outside is not something to be afraid of if you know you want an education. A person doesn't have to get in trouble out there. It all depends on how you want to

behave. A person can get into trouble in the village too if that's what they want.

I liked San Francisco. Thought I'd live there the rest of my days. I had a brother in California so that helped me a lot. And even though California is noted for drugs, I wasn't introduced to that. That's the way I grew up —not to take that stuff.

There were a lot of things happening there in the 60's; Haight-Ashbury and Berkeley were kind of rough, lots of riots. Maybe I was on the opposite side of all that, being in the National Guard Reserve. Around '66 or '67, whenever they started having problems, I had to put on my uniform. They never did call us though. See, when they had trouble in San Francisco they called in National Guard people from San Jose or some other place. They didn't call the unit living right there. They didn't want people who knew each other on opposite sides. But I went through quite a bit of training of how to handle a riot.

Then one year I took a leave of absence from work to go whaling in Wainwright. Never did go back to live Outside. Best move I made, I think. When I got back to Wainwright in the early 70's, they had snowmachines instead of dogs and a lot of jobs were here. I stayed. There were no problems readjusting. I was used to machinery so my brother's snowmachine wasn't much different from the car I had in California. I knew everybody in Wainwright and they didn't treat us any different. We felt welcome. Back then it was common for people my age to go out to the Lower Forty-eight for awhile. I was glad to be whaling and hunting again.

I liked living in Wainwright but I thought about the place I grew up. After all us kids went away to school the DEW-line [Distant Early Warning military installation] was the about the only thing left at Point Lay. I have to strongly blame DEW-line for part of the village decline. When the DEW-line first started I was growing up, in the 1950's. The first bunch of men were construction workers and they used to come around with alcohol all the time and let the whole village get drunk. At first people thought it was something fun. After awhile the steady workers at

DEW-line did the same thing. There was nobody to see the future of how it was hurting the village. They didn't have local option laws in those days. Pretty soon the steady village people started leaving. Then the next thing you know, it was an empty town. That's why we didn't have enough kids *to* keep the school.

Now DEW-line keeps pretty much to themselves and the village keeps to itself. But we're on a friendly basis and willing to help each other. It's changed from back then and now there's hardly any communication between the two groups.

So back in 1970 a lot of us had come back to Alaska from the Lower 48 and were living in places we didn't really want to be. I was happy when people started moving back here. It was the place I grew up. I know the country and feel freer here. A lot of us started coming back in 7 1', I guess ASRC [Arctic Slope Regional Corporation] started it all, I don't know.

It was a lot of work coming back. We had to haul our fuel from Wainwright and haul everything we owned by Ski-doo. There were maybe fifteen of us traveling in a big group with lots of snowmachines. It was fun going back and forth hauling stuff. But there was no place to stay so we were living in tents that first summer and going through rough times. Then, that first winter people stayed at houses in the old village across the lagoon. I got a house down on the spit. Some houses were really crowded because we lived several families in one house for awhile. There were quite a few different families with kids, like Benny and Warren Neakok.

We had to find a new village site. Even though the old village was a good place to live — especially for hunting ducks and seals or walrus — there was the danger of the ocean. And to get a new school there had to be ten acres of land by law. There weren't ten acres at the old village. Then there would have been water problems and not enough land for an airplane runway. And if the runway were built where there was land across the lagoon from the spit, we wouldn't be able to go across the lagoon at certain times of the year, like right now with spring breakup. We all went around with the boat to look at different locations

for the new village and chose the site up there by the river and water lake which was nice and dry at that time.

That first year there was no construction. I spent the winter out of town working down south. Then that next spring we started building houses at the River Site. Everybody started building ASRC houses. Then the Borough [North Slope Borough] built houses. I think after we moved in and built all those houses the land must of dropped or we disturbed the permafrost. Next thing you know, there was water **all** over. Springtime we'd have to wear hip boots to go around. Some parts, the water was up to our knees. It was wet all the time. We were at that site maybe three or four years before relocating. We moved all the houses over to the present site but they weren't enough because more people were moving in. Seems all we did was build houses for about ten years.

The village has really built up from those days. Even after all that construction we have a shortage of houses today. The last house was built about four years ago and there are lots more children and families now. The Borough hasn't been building anymore. And I think they spoiled a lot of people. It's like they expect it. I built my own house; people can do that. I don't know, money hasn't brought all good things. But it has made life more comfortable. When I was growing up we had to get our own water and take care of our own heat all the time. Nowadays, we just lift the phone and somebody delivers it.

I look around the village today and I feel good. Everybody is pretty well settled. Life is a lot easier now and so is solving our problems. We had a very bad alcohol problem for awhile when we were forming here. There was nobody trying to watch this alcohol thing. There were charter plane loads of alcohol coming in from Kotzebue. And I was included along with everyone in the village. That was fun for awhile but then there started to be lots of trouble. There were quite a few alcohol related deaths, lots of family breakups, kids going to school without sleep, child neglect and then that big killing here. We saw all that and then decided to vote for the alcohol option. It's good that Kotzebue

went dry too. I'm sure it helped the surrounding villages. People don't go to Kotzebue to party and bring back a bunch nowadays. There'll be a one night stand once in a while but it's not really an issue right now. We don't have these things that go on everyday for weeks. You don't see that happening anymore.

"Local hire" really helped this village too. We got some funding one time from Washington D. C., for local hire. That's how we got started on that in Point Lay. I was employed to see that they hired locals and after that we just carried on. Now even these union contractors have to hire a non-union person when they come in here. They have no choice — except leave. People in a small village don't have just one trade. They have to be able to do different jobs. You can't join the carpenter's union for one job and the next thing you know join the operator's union for another. Sometimes the job is building a road and everybody in the village does that. Then the job might be building houses and everybody goes to work there. That union thing wouldn't work around here. I hear funding for local hire is still pretty strong in the Lower Forty-eight.

We only had a problem with contractors not practicing local hire one time. We still have an I.R.A. government here which gives us more power, so we threatened to get rid of the contractors. The next day they hired nothing but local. When a contractor comes in we tell him he's got to hire a local. If a local person doesn't know how to do the work then it's up to the contractor to train him. It's been working out.

You know with Land Claims came lots of money so they tried to -make business-minded people out of subsistence hunters. And a lot of money-oriented people came from the Lower Forty-eight smelling that money. They tried to take advantage of Land Claims that way. A lot of money was taken, even from Point Lay. That's how it is wherever there is money though.

I think Land Claims was all wrong, It wasn't being fair. A lot of people didn't understand it. I don't know how we can change back time or get things straightened out. They should have let

people understand more about what was going on. Here people lived on the land all their life and then just like that — they say no. it belongs to these other people. If I were to go to New York and say I'm taking your land, do you think they would sit still? That's what they did to us basically. They said that Land Claims extinguished all prior claims and replaced them with new ones. What if they do it again? That's a scary thing.

We tried to use our I.R.A. against Land Claims. We made a claim as an I.R.A. in the 1950's — before Alaska was even a state! And the government said that one is extinguished. That's not fair to us! We're trying to make it an issue. I can understand why wars start. The kind of people that made Land Claims, made people fight.

When Land Claims was happening I didn't know or care much about it. I think a lot of people felt the same way. But when people from other places like Barrow started saying, "Hey, that's my land. That's not your land!" Then people started waking up. The fighting hurts this place. A lot of it is with your own people but a lot of those people are from Barrow.

There's been a lot of changes since 1971 and Land Claims. And not all to the good either. If all the jobs on the North Slope were cut out for one year, let's see who stays. Lots of people in Barrow are staying just for the money. I don't know. I'm pretty satisfied with Point Lay though. People are here just to be living here — not for the money. There's a few out for the money but we try to watch who comes in. We do have to send for skilled workers from out of town like lineman, electricians or teachers.

Point Lay has quite a few skilled people because there's been a lot of opportunity for further education. Some people went out to schools — a lot to Seward. Some learned on the job in Prudhoe. Others learned right here in the village by working. Now, it's pretty hard for young people to leave the village for training. They're spoiled by the wages. They might go to training for a little while and get bored and quit. Lots of them complete high school and that's it. But then I'm always surprised when I see some of these young people on the job who grew up here

and they know what they're doing. Sometimes you wonder where they learned.

It's important for our village that the kids nowadays get educated. That way we won't have to send for people from out of town all the time. I think whatever trade they pick is always useful. Administration is an important skill to learn for the village. If they don't get educated, people will take from them. That's how it is nowadays — people taking advantage of others. Even your own people will take advantage of you if you don't know. It's important that kids nowadays get educated for themselves and for the benefit of the village.

Young people can probably get all the education they need right here in Alaska. The Lower Forty-eight is too crowded nowadays. It's too much rush, rush, rush. And you've got to have a job all the time. The way some young people act nowadays — they'd go down there, work a few days and then expect somebody to take care of them. They'd find out that they have to take care of themselves Outside.

It's hard for kids to leave the village who really like the outdoor life here too. Nowadays they like to go hunting. When our village first started the whole village used to go fishing together. The kids were introduced to going camping. Once that gets into your blood you want to do it all the time. Now they're going out whenever they get the chance, I'm glad to see that. Because I believe those subsistence days — before alcohol came around too much — the community was more together. Now after these Land Claims, people are separate in their beliefs.

Mainly, there's two different groups; people that want to do subsistence and people that believe money has more power. I know a lot of us have been down in the Lower Forty-eight and found out that we need money. But a lot of people still don't believe they do. They'd rather go hunting. Well most everybody hunts but what I meant by two groups is, some people would rather see more money come in. The other group just wants enough to get by and try to preserve our land.



Some people don't bother going out to hunt and they don't know how it is. People that hunt all the time see when the animals are scarce. Or they see what some of these crews that come in do. Like these seismic crews that left a big mess behind. It hurts us. You go out in the country and see a lot of that seismic wire laying around that could hurt the animals. Some of these exploring companies just left their mess behind. They didn't have things like the E.P.A. [Environmental Protection Agency] back when I was working for the seismic crew. That was bad when they dropped their oil right on the ground and left a mess. But they're being watched more closely now with more laws, which is good.

One of the first oil companies that came around here left a big mess one time, We asked them to clean it up but had problems with them. The first time, they brought about forty cases of hard liquor and beer — trying to get on the good side of the village with alcohol. They'd get some of our people drunk and have them go see us about forgetting the mess. A lot of us didn't see it that way. I was glad of that. People got caught at what they were doing. That's not playing fair! The oil companies could do better. It makes us leery of who comes in sometimes.

They are getting better nowadays. I just went to a workshop in Barrow and there were people from ARCO interested in training people from the North Slope in their companies. That's good. A lot of that is going on now. These oil companies are attempting to help us. But I think there are still some oil companies that get all their help from the Lower Forty-eight. Some companies are good and some aren't. Some companies came here to the village and out of their pocket sent people to Seattle for welding school, That's good public relations for them because they make a lot of profit out of the North Slope, If they do something like that you kind of want them to come back.

Some of the projects coming up will probably cause the village to grow. There's the coal mine project. Offshore oil leases are coming up too. I don't think they should do any kind of

offshore stuff until they exhaust the land. All of the villages along the coast depend on the ocean. Someday they might have an oil spill they can't control. Then we would have a lot of sick animals around here because that current would move the oil spill all over and affect a lot of animals. I don't see why they can't wait till they exhaust the land before going to the ocean.

There's a lot of pressure even on a small village like this. But quite a few people that have been living in our village a long time know what's happening. When somebody needs help, they help them. They share the work so it's all evened out. When we have to make a major decision we all get together, that way one person wouldn't be deciding anything major. We try to get people involved in anything that's going to affect the village. We either have the Village Council meet or all the people. When you don't do that, one person gets overworked or you get yourself in a lot of trouble. Something can go haywire. When the group decides, then there'll be no problems if there are any complaints. Like just the location of a new building or something. We try to involve the people. I think it's getting to be like that in all the villages now. You don't let just one person decide.

People share in other ways too. Maybe not like long ago but like I say, most people still hunt. If somebody hasn't gotten a caribou for a long time and somebody else got one, he'd distribute it to the whole village. It's still the general practice. Hunters are always willing to share. I know in some of the bigger villages hunters sell their meat. I don't think anyone ever did that yet in Point Lay. I hope it doesn't ever start. The sharing thing is pretty good.

We're having pretty unusual weather this spring with a lot of wind and cool temperatures but at the same time the snow is melting. Everybody wants to get out. Everybody working just waits for nighttime and weekends to go out. And then Borough employees can get subsistence leave so it's not too hard to work and have our hunting life.

We still have all the same animals we hunted when we were kids; all the sea animals like beluga, the land animals and birds. Only ones are these black brandts. I remember when I was small there used to be lots of them. But you don't see many nowadays. I agree with the people who say we shouldn't hunt those black brandts.

Point Lay used to be a whaling community when it was populated but all the time I was growing up we weren't whaling. The decline of the people was part of the reason. The whales go so far away from land here there weren't enough people to pull the whale up. But with modern techniques to pull heavy stuff that wouldn't be such a problem now. There might be whaling again someday. Now it's in the talking stage. Right now I go to Wainwright for whaling along with a few others. Some people go to Barrow and Point Hope. So there are still quite a few that go whaling. But we have to leave. Maybe someday we would be able to do it here.

I think the village is going in the right direction. The village is pretty quiet now compared to how it used to be. And friendlier towards visitors. People are getting more skills. They never stopped hunting. Maybe there'll whaling someday. I wish young people would continue their education. What's wrong today is that a lot of people either don't finish high school or they only go as far as high school and quit. I can see it's pretty hard to leave the village nowadays. It's not like my time when it was easy to leave because there were no jobs. Nowadays they don't have to leave to have a comfortable life. But I wish they would. That way we'd have more skilled people here. I think there are a lot of programs that could probably help. All they have to do is dig into them.

## APPENDIX A - IÑUPIAQ PERSONAL NAMES AND PLACENAMES PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Throughout this collection of oral histories the Iñupiaq family names appearing in plain text are written according to old orthographies. These spellings which represent common or legal usage today most often originated with early missionaries, government representatives or other non-Natives using English to represent Iñupiaq sounds. Often, the old spellings do not provide proper Iñupiaq pronunciation. This guide provides first, the common or legal spelling of names, followed in italics by the correct pronunciation according to current Iñupiaq orthography.

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Aanguyuk	<i>Aanguyuk</i>
Agnasagga	<i>Agnasagaq</i>
Ahlook	<i>Aaluk</i>
	<i>Agniin</i>
Ahmaogak	<i>Amagugaaq</i>
Akligok	<i>Agliguq</i>
Anashugak	<i>Annasugaq</i>
Attungana	<i>Atarjana</i>
Attungowruk	<i>Atajauraq</i>
Ahvakana	<i>Avaqqan</i>
Ekak	<i>Ikaa</i>
Evak	<i>Ivaaq</i>
Ipalook	<i>Ipaaluk</i>
Kayutak	<i>Qayuuttaq</i>
Kignak	<i>Qigñak</i>
Koonak	<i>Kunak</i>
Nashoalook	<i>Nasualuk</i>
Neakok	<i>Niaquq</i>
Oktollik	<i>Auktalik</i>
Panigeo	<i>Panigiug</i>
Peetook	<i>Pitok</i>
Purook	<i>Purraq</i>
Shaglook ,.	<i>Sagluaq</i>
Samarualook	<i>Samarualuk</i>
Susook	<i>Suusuk</i>
Taleak	<i>Taaliaq</i>
Tazruk	<i>Tarruq</i>
Tingook	<i>Tirjuk</i>
Towksjhea	<i>Z% uqsiaq</i>

Toorak	<i>Tuurraaq</i>
Toweena [Turinya]	<i>Tugina</i>
Tukrook	<i>Taksruk</i>
Upicksoun	<i>Ukpiqsaun</i>
Uyagak	<i>Uyagak</i>

## PLACENAMES

Kokolik	<i>Qaqalik</i>
Kukpowruk	<i>Kuukpaagruk</i>
	<i>Kayuqtualuk</i>
Noatak	<i>Nuataaq</i>
Cully	<i>Kali</i>
Utukok	<i>Utuqqaq</i>

**APPENDIXB**  
**Narrative Life History Summaries**

This appendix is included to aid the reader in placing the accounts Dorcas Neakok, Kate Peterson, and Paul Tazruk within the contexts of their lives. These summaries are still quite incomplete, but are ordered chronologically so that they can be more easily compared. In most cases additional detail in regard to the individual involved is available from the transcripts, but little information on the general context of behavior (reindeer herding, hunting, fishing, patterns of movement) can be gleaned from the accounts. Much work remains to be done in this area.

## **Dorcas Neakok**

Dorcas Neakok was born May 15, 1919, "on the land" somewhere between Point Lay and Point Hope. Her parents were Adela and Christopher Tingook of Point Hope. They were reindeer herders, and that is the reason Dorcas gives for her place of her birth. Her first memories are of Kiana, however, as that is where Dorcas spent much of her early childhood. Her father's parents died when he and his sisters were quite young so they had all been adopted out. Christopher Tingook ended up in Point Hope while the girls went to Kiana. Dorcas says that they had moved to Kiana so that her father could see his sisters and that this is where she started school.

Dorcas says that she remembers her father mostly making his living by hunting and trapping (and herding reindeer), with some occasional longshoring in Kotzebue. She says that before she was born (and she is the oldest of her father's children) that her father did quite a bit of work on the ships for traders and whalers. Much of this took her father as far east as Hershel Island, or even a bit further. After Dorcas was born, whaling was no longer a commercial enterprise, of course, and her father was not so much involved with traders as an employee.

Dorcas attended school regularly in Kiana, the first place she has real memories of, but says that there were times when her parents took her out of school so that she could go hunting with them. She particularly remembers communal rabbit hunts and fishing. The main thing Dorcas remembers about her childhood was constant movement along with the reindeer herds. Dorcas remembers Selawik, Buckland, Kivalina, and Kotzebue from these travels. The order of places lived and the duration of each stay are no longer clear in her memory, but she does recall that the her last trip with her family was north to Point Hope and then to the Point Lay area. They arrived in Point Lay in 1930, when Dorcas was eleven. The school had just been moved to Point Lay from Icy Cape.

Dorcas began attending school in Point Lay and stayed for the most part with the school teachers. This allowed her to attend school while her parents stayed with the reindeer herd, and in return Dorcas babysat for the school teacher's children. In the summer, when school was out, -she rejoined her parents. She would sometimes babysit her younger siblings, but states that she would more often accompany her father hunting or fishing while her mother stayed with the children. She also helped with the reindeer when they were near Point Lay and during the annual roundup.

Whaling for bowhead was not a regular activity in the Point Lay area, but Dorcas recalls that the first time she saw whaling at close range was when she was a teen-ager in Point Lay (this would have been the middle 1930s). This was also the last time a Point Lay whaling crew went out. Even then it was an unusual event, and was apparently a test to see if Point Lay was a feasible whaling location or not, and if there were enough people to succeed in the hunt. Two whales were successfully harvested, but there were not enough people to haul them out of the water. This hindered butchering, as the preliminary work at least had to done with the whale still in the water. Nevertheless, the butchering was completed and the meat eventually transported back to Point Lay. This exhausted most of the people and dogs of the village, since the lead was so far out from the village.

Some Point Lay crews had hunted from Icy Cape, a good whaling location but even farther from Point Lay. Dorcas believes that the distance to good whaling spots is why no crews go out presently.

Dorcas' parents eventually went back to Point Hope, but it not clear why they did so. It is probable that this coincided with the decline in the reindeer herd, but Dorcas never explicitly states this. Dorcas remained in Point Lay, however, because she had married. Dorcas married after completing the sixth grade, as far as the school in Point Lay went at that time. If she had not married she may have continued in school by going to some other community, as several of her younger siblings later did. As it was, however, she had to quickly assume domestic responsibilities which made further schooling impossible for her.

Allen Upicksoun had been married previously, was much older than Dorcas (thirty nine to her eighteen), and had a number of children. The oldest was older than Dorcas and was married to a man who is now a Point Lay Elder (she is deceased). The youngest were still infants and Dorcas says that the older siblings pressured her to marry their father so that she would babysit the young ones and they would not have to. Dorcas learned to sew at this time by making patterns from the items that Allen's first wife had sewn. She also consulted with her oldest stepdaughter. This was a period when she was very busy, taking care for children and running a household, with all the sewing, animal processing, and cooking chores that that entailed.

Allen Upicksoun was very well known on the North Slope and was himself in constant motion. This required even more from Dorcas, as she was often left by herself in the winter while Allen was away for work. He served as a postal carrier along the coast and traveled to various communities to work as a carpenter or laborer. He also served as a guide and companion to travelers and scientists (for instance, the ornithologist Alfred M. Bailey) and worked for Charles Brewer as a store keeper and Jack-of-all-trades. In the summer Allen stayed around Point Lay and hunted. Much of this was put away in an ice cellar. It is clear that all meat that they ate came from Allen's hunting, but that Dorcas and Allen also knew that money was an essential part of their life.

Dorcas and Allen themselves had four children, who attended the same school as Dorcas had in Point Lay. Point Lay began to lose population, however, as the reindeer industry declined. Dorcas states that people then went back to where they came from (as her parents went back to Point Hope). People also left for other (unspecified) reasons, but apparently several families moved after the death of a family member. Allen passed away when Dorcas was twenty eight (in 1947, when he was forty nine) and Dorcas recalls this as a time when Point Lay was made up mostly of widows with lots of kids. She herself was left with four.

Dorcas married Warren Neakok not long after the death of Allen. Warren's life history can be found in To Keep the Past Alive (Neakok et al. 1985). Briefly, he was the oldest of four boys, and also had several sisters. From the age of four he lived with his grandparents, as his parents moved around a great deal (apparently with the reindeer herds). From his grandfather Warren learned to hunt and to live off the land. Most of the time Warren lived outside of Point Lay, but he went to school there at the same time



as Dorcas. Warren's father died when he was fourteen (about 1933) and Warren stopped going to school so that he could support his mother, brothers, and sisters by hunting and working. His grandparents were also dead by this time. When his father died Warren took over his trap line and essentially lived off the land. This seems to have continued until 1940 when he settled more in Point Lay proper. He still mostly hunted, but was also the janitor at the school. Warren started to work for the Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1948, and in 1955 for the DEW Line station.

Warren and Dorcas had six more children together and were extremely busy. Warren was very active as a hunter and a trapper, as well as working for wages. Dorcas not only looked after the household but also sewed for teachers, pilots, and anyone else who needed good clothing. This was a period of depopulation of the Point Lay area, however, as the reindeer industry was moribund, fur prices were low, wage jobs were scarce, and few families wished to live completely off the land. Fewer and fewer families lived in Point Lay. As their children grew older, they were forced to leave Point Lay to continue school, and finally the school was closed completely and all the children were sent out. This was in the late 1950s (1958 or so). Some older people remained in Point Lay, but by 1964 or so only Dorcas and Warren were left. They moved from the "old site" on the spit to a cabin on the present site of Point Lay after everyone else had left the old village (Neakok et al. 1985:25).

Relations between Dorcas and DEW Line personnel were friendly but guarded. Warren worked at the DEW Line station, but Dorcas and Warren continued to eat mostly a subsistence diet. Apparently many DEW Line workers found it difficult to understand their way of life (see the examples Dorcas talks about). In any event, for this period of her life Dorcas had Warren and the DEW Line for company. She wrote letters, and the children did come back in the summer, but for the most part she had little company. This changed with the refounding of Point Lay. Even before people came back Dorcas and Warren had to increase their activity to prepare for them. Warren quit his job at the DEW Line so that he could lay in enough caribou for the work force and so that he could help with the construction of the first houses. Dorcas helped with the cooking and babysitting, since everyone ate communally as there was not time for everyone to cook, and few facilities in any event.

The first site of the new Point Lay was in the Kokolik River delta. Dorcas and Warren were given the first house to be completed there. For two years people were so busy with building houses that there was no time for anything else except hunting for meat. Once these buildings were finished, the decision was made to move the village to where it is now because the river site is subject to floods. This required a new phase of building which included a new school and other facilities and is just recently winding down.

Dorcas and Warren are still quite active. Warren never returned to his DEW Line job, but works around the village driving heavy equipment. Both continue in subsistence activities and especially enjoy fish camp. Their two fish camps are the most commonly used sites for everyone in the village, and such use is open to all who do not abuse the privilege. Dorcas and Warren are still the ones who are usually out at fish camp the longest.

## **Kate Peterson**

Kate Peterson was born in Point Barrow on January 11, 1918. Her father was Simon **Samarualuk** from **Kivalina**. Simon **Samarualuk** and **Allen Upicksoun, Dorcas** Neakok's first husband, were brothers but did not grow up together. **Samarualuk** was adopted by Attungowruk of Point Hope and grew up there. He left Point Hope when he was a young man, however, and met Kate's mother in Kotzebue. It is not clear if they ever settled anywhere permanently, as **Samarualuk** made his living as a trapper and soon after Kate was born she says her family was living in the Prudhoe Bay area. Kate's only sibling, an older adopted brother went to live in Barrow to attend school. The closest neighbors were at **Beechey Point** (to the west) at a trading post run by Charlie Edwardson.

Kate's family lived in a sod house in the Prudhoe Bay area. When her father went hunting, Kate and her mother would stay behind and work on cleaning skins or cooking or other chores. **Kate played by herself quite a bit as well and learned how to hunt small birds.** **Samarualuk** was a good hunter, but Kate recalls catching (and eating) large numbers of fish as well.

When Kate was about ten years old (maybe 1928) her family moved somewhat west to the area where **Nuiqsut** is now located (the **Colville River** area). Here they were among other people, but how many is unclear. They still lived in a sod house but went out camping a great deal. They hunted, trapped, and especially fished. Kate remembers her father as a great fisherman and the **Colville River** is one of the most productive North Slope fisheries.

The family still went to the Edwardson trading post at Beechey Point for supplies and to spend the holidays. Kate does not remember a great deal from these times, but she was given her first gun about this time. Kate learned to hunt at this time, copying her mother. They stayed in the **Nuiqsut** area five years, and then went to Beechey Point. Kate's brother was working for Edwardson at the time and Kate's father worked there for a time as well.

Soon after this the family moved to Barrow, however. Kate was fifteen, so this was about 1933. It could be that the short stay at Beechey Point was part of the two month trip from **Nuiqsut** to Barrow. When they arrived in Barrow Kate started school. At first she was embarrassed as she knew so little and had to start in kindergarten. Kate's mother had never been to school either, but had learned English from her first (non-Native) husband. She taught Kate the alphabet and numbers before Kate started school. Kate only advanced to the second grade in Barrow because her family moved again. This was the extent of her formal education, but she later learned more English from her uncle **Allen Upicksoun** and her second husband.

The family moved to Wainwright by dogteam when Kate was seventeen (about 1935). Kate's mother had relations there (**Waldo Bodfish** was her nephew). Kate soon found herself the center of unaccustomed attention from Wainwright's young men. She had never been around so many people before, and certainly not young men. Her parents eventually picked out a man for her, saying that the boys would not leave her alone until she married. Even though she did not want to marry at that time, she did so out of fear (and respect)

for her parents. Dan Susook, the man they chose for Kate to marry, was fifty years old, thirty years older than Kate. He had never been married but was a skilled hunter, a good man, and a hard worker for wages. He had never been to school because he grew up in Point Lay before there was a school there. He still spoke a little English.

After her marriage, Kate moved to Point Lay with her husband. This was about 1938 and Kate reports that there were many people in Point Lay at this time. Until very recently the middle to late 1930s marked the peak in Point Lay's population history. There was little work for wages in any of the villages, but Dan **Susook** was a successful trapper and hunter. He would spend weeks away from the village on such trips, which included fish camp as well. Kate stayed in the village with the children, as they had to attend school. When Dan accumulated a sled load of food he would bring it home to the village. Once in the village, he would help Kate get coal for fuel and ice for water and then get ready to go out again.

Kate and Dan had nine children. All but the last were born in Point Lay (the last was born in Barrow at the hospital). After Kate had her first baby, at age twenty one, she asked her parents to move to Point Lay. They came and built a sod house. Kate remembers these times as happy ones. She learned a good deal from the older people. Kate does not talk about the reindeer or why people in general started to move away. She reports that many old people died in the early 1950s, and most of the others moved out at that time. There was no store in Point Lay, although there had been earlier. The **Forsslunds** had moved to Kotzebue and later stores were very small and people still had to go to Wainwright to buy things. Kate's parents were also getting old and Kate's husband and brother hunted for them. Kate's brother married and moved to **Kotzebue**, and then her father died. She was too busy with children to care for her father as well, so he went to live with her brother. In 1954, two of Kate's sons drowned in the **Kukpowruk** River. Kate was understandably distressed and during the search for the boys her house burned down. Another house was provided for her but she asked her husband to move with her. They went to Point Hope for a year, and then moved to Kotzebue so Kate could be near her father (about 1956).

Kotzebue was not like Point Lay and Kate enjoyed it a great deal. She liked the fishing and the stores especially. When they arrived in Kotzebue, Dan found work immediately. Kate also went to work, after hesitating for a bit, and held one wage position or another in Kotzebue for the next fourteen years. After her husband could no longer work because of his heart Kate became the main support of the family. For at least two years she took seasonal work aboard a fishing boat. Her children went to high school in **Kotzebue** and Kate reports that her own English improved a good deal.

Kate's first husband died in Kotzebue in 1967 and she did not remarry until six years later. Kate and her husband moved back to Point Lay in the early 1970s, two years after they were married, according to Kate. Robert Peterson is a non-Native who was working in Kotzebue when he and Kate married. When they went to Point Lay Kate worked as a cook at the construction camp and Robert worked on the construction projects. Robert now lives in Anchorage and Kate has been splitting time between Anchorage and Point Lay (and shorter visits to other places). It now appears that Kate will be spending most of her

time in Anchorage, as the winters in Point Lay have become especially hard on her. She still enjoys the summer in Point Lay and visiting with her children, grandchildren, and other relatives. She has moved throughout her life, however, and knows that no one home is forever. Kate now maintains a house in Point Lay and an apartment in Anchorage (where she has relatives she can live with as well). She did have a house in Kotzebue, but it burned down.

## **Paul Tazruk**

Paul **Tazruk** is almost always referred to by his **Inupiaq** name, **Pualu**. **Pualu** is named after a **peternal** uncle. To the untrained ears of English speakers, his name sounds like “Polo.” **Pualu** was born April 15, 1905, somewhere in the reindeer herding area of Point Lay. Knowing the exact location is not vitally important for our purposes, but knowing that his parents were reindeer herders is. **Pualu’s** parents, **Tazruk** and Alice, were from Point Hope, but had been forced to leave when **Pualu’s** father insisted on marrying the woman of his choice rather than another woman that his kinsmen for some reason preferred. They left with few resources, aided by one of **Pualu’s** uncles. He helped them to join **Pualu’s** mother’s brother, who was a reindeer herder up near Icy Cape. This man, Riley Ahlook, was wealthy and supplied them with everything that had been taken away in Point Hope. Eventually, **Pualu’s** father became relatively wealthy, in terms of reindeer, and returned to Point Hope to buy supplies to demonstrate that he was a man of means. He never reconciled with his kinsmen.

**Pualu** grew up in the company of his parents and the reindeer herd, which ranged from Icy Cape in the north to Tachim Isua (near **Kuutchiaq**) or **even Omalik Lagoon** in the south. **Pualu** learned the trade of reindeer herding from his father. Point Lay reindeer were never butchered in large numbers at the same time, as they had no large customers or distribution system, but they did sell to large ships that came by. Workers were paid in reindeer and **Pualu’s** father took his pay in female deer so that they would increase.

**Pualu** says that above all his life has been hunting, and his father taught him to hunt at a very early age. **Pualu** says that caribou were scarce in those days, but that furbearers were abundant (and apparently the prey of choice). His father also taught him about the sea as well. When **Pualu** was as young as three his father carried him out in a backpack and it is because of this early training combined with herding reindeer that **Pualu** knows the country from Point Hope to **Wainwright**, and even up to Barrow. **Pualu** says that his father taught him, and not his older brother, because he was interested and because he was the namesake of an uncle who had treated his father very well. In appreciation to this uncle, **Pualuagna**, **Pualu’s** father treated **Pualu** with great care. Even today, although **Pualu** no longer sees well and has hearing problems, he is known as an Elder who knows the land extremely well.

**Pualu** also was acquainted with the supernatural forces of the world when quite young. He was told that when he was a week old he had died for twenty four hours, and was brought back to life by his grandmother. Later, **Pualu** would learn her songs of power by eavesdropping, but has never used them. His father told him that such songs were from the devil and **Pualu** listened to his father. **Pualu** does not doubt the power of such songs.

When **Pualu** was about twelve years old (around 1917), his parents retired from reindeer herding. **Pualu** took over. **Pualu** worked with the herd and built up his interest by taking his pay in female deer. **Pualu** was able to run a dogteam when he was fourteen. When he was fifteen or sixteen (1920 or so), **Pualu** moved to **Wainwright**, where his parents lived. He still followed the herd, but stayed in **Wainwright** one week out of the month. **Pualu** did not go to school but did take lessons from Jim Allen, who operated a large store in

**Wainwright.** This continued until **Pualu** was twenty years old (1925 or so) and he married his first wife, Ruth. They went to Barrow to be married and then settled at **Tachim Isua**. They must have continued to herd reindeer, as **Pualu** says that he eventually became the head herder. They later relocated to a site by Point Barrow and perhaps returned to the Point Lay area. About the **time Pualu** gave up reindeer herding is when the industry went into decline on the North Slope, and **Pualu** lost all of his resources.

It is not certain when Ruth, **Pualu's** first wife, died. It is likely to have been in the early or middle 1930s. This is also probably before **Pualu** gave up reindeer herding. **Pualu** says that his daughter Rose was an infant when this happened and that his mother cared for her so that he could hunt and trap. **Pualu** reports he **did not** marry again for many years because Rose did not want him to. Finally, he married his second wife in **Wainwright** sometime in the late 1940s. Dorothy **Taleak** had been previously married and had children by her previous husband. **Pualu** raised them along with the children he and Dorothy had. Even though both **Pualu** and Dorothy were in their forties when they married, **Pualu** says that they were both young. They lived on the land in the **Utokok** River area for at least five years, since it was too expensive to live in a village and wages were too low. They had too many children to feed. **Pualu** was a good hunter so he could provide all that they needed, and Dorothy was a good shot as well as a hard worker. Selling marmot and other fur provide the money they needed to buy essential supplies in **Wainwright**.

Part of this time, or some time after, they lived in **Wainwright**. Sometime in the late 1950s **Pualu** reports that they moved to Barrow so that he could work for a contractor. He would have preferred to stay in **Wainwright** because he liked how he had been living, but he was offered long term employment in Barrow. This enabled him to buy a house there, which he still owns and rents out.

Even in Barrow, **Pualu** and his family spent a great deal of time out on the land. He tried to harvest as much Native food as he could, and especially concentrated on fish since he could sell it as well as eat it. **Pualu** also worked for wages in the village. When in Barrow, Dorothy participated in Eskimo dancing and singing, but **Pualu** was left out. He had never learned to dance or drum because his life had been reindeer herding and hunting. However, after his wife had taken several trips to different places to perform, **Pualu** began to watch and learn. He eventually became so good that he was one of the preferred performers and is pictured in one of the older tourist brochures for Barrow (early 1970s probably, but it has no date - the picture probably dates from the middle or late 1960s when **Pualu** was in his upper fifties or lower sixties).

**Pualu** moved to Point Lay after a fire in Barrow which killed one of his sons and his wife. This is when **Pualu** and his wife took on the responsibility for two of his young grandchildren who were left without parents. They are now both teen-agers in **Pualu's** household and one has an infant of her own. **Pualu** is now widowed once again, as Dorothy died a few years ago. **Pualu** no longer dances very much, although he is asked to drum for Eskimo dances at every community feast and usually will get up for at least one dance. **Pualu** is starting to feel his age, but remains an essential part of Point Lay. He occupies a unique position of respect as the oldest Elder in the village.

APPENDIX C  
**Point Lay Area Map and Placenames**

This appendix partially reproduces the NSB map of the Point Lay area with Traditional Land Use Inventory sites plotted on it that appears in the Point Lay Case Study. It is intended to be useful mainly to those unfamiliar with the Point Lay area who wish to locate the places named in accounts. Not all of these locations are plotted on the map, as some are out of the Point Lay area. Other locations and names are known only to the Elders who are speaking and thus do not appear on the NSB map. The NSB is constantly seeking to expand their knowledge in this area, with the ultimate goal of recording the place names and wisdom of the Elders before it is lost.

No attempt has been made in the following list to standardize the spelling of names, as they appear in many different ways in the several sources consulted. In no way should the following spellings be considered preferred or definitive. The NSB has not yet published the Traditional Land Use Inventory for Point Lay, so the spellings of the following place names are not definitive as yet either.





## TRADITIONAL LAND USE INVENTORY, POINT LAY, ALASKA

### PL-1 LIZ-A

An abandoned hut was fixed up and is now in use as a stop over place. People lived here before the 1939's. Hunting place for wolverines, wolves, seals, ugruk and caribou. Site of a now abandoned DEWline station (may be used for other research), built in the 1950s.

### PL-2 AMATUSUK

At the **Kakaktak** River going up from Amatusuk. Ruins of house of Jim **Macheen** and second wife plus two girls and one boy. Christopher **Tingook** and wife **Adella** and four children - Irma, John Rose and Carl - lived here in the early 1930s, as did Eli Stone Sr. with his wife Molly and their four children - Howard, Raymond, David and **Aileen** (along with the Macheens, it seems).

### PL-3 KAGLUKTAQ

West end of Sapummik Mountains

### PL-4 OMALIK LAGOON

People moved here from Kakaktak River.

### PL-5 KUUCHIAK (RUINS)

A number of people lived here at one time, in an area known for its subsistence resources: **Galipe Macheena** and his wife Susie, with their three girls and one son, Jim Macheen, Joseph **Towkjhea Sr.** and his wife Agnes and children (Bertha - Jim Macheena's wife, Marie, Agnes, Julian and Joseph Jr.), Peter Stone Sr. and his wife **Aileen** and children (Eli Stone, Lucille) Louis Swan Sr., and his wife Martha and children (Dennis, Bertha, Oscar, Lucy, Edgar, Minnie and Joseph) stayed here about 1929 and left around 1935. Louis Swan and family stayed until around 1940-1950's.

### PL-6 TACHIM ISUA

Sod houses, ruins, hunting brown bears, ducks nesting area, seals, caribou, ugruks, beluga, snow geese, land birds. Reindeer hunting.

### PL-7 KUCHAURAK

### PL-8 POUNGAGRIK

Poungagrik means blackberries, people pick berries here.

### PL-9 KASIGEALIK

Place where spotted seals are.

### PL-10 IGLOORUAK

Eight ruins, plate made of wood found here.

**PL-11 NEAKOK'S HOUSE**

Called Neakok's house, has been redone for the third time. Made out of lumber. Built in 1932 by Neakok. Raised here were Anna **Towkjhea**, Peter and Tommy Neakok, Warren Neakok was raised here by his grandparents, Neakok and **Kimmik**. House still in use, primarily as a hunting cabin and refuge for travelers.

**PL-12 OLD RUINS**

Found here are plate made of wood, wooden ladle and ivory spear.

**PL-13 REINDEER CORRAL**

First reindeer corral was made of wood and burlap. One of main corrals for Point Lay's share of reindeer herd from Wainwright, Herders Chief Christopher **Tingook**, Eli Stone, Jim **Macheena Sr.**, Willie Susook, and Tony **Susook** during the 1930's.

**PL-14 ALEGENAK**

Main camp for the families of the reindeer herders, near coal mine for fuel in 1930's when reindeer herding was a way of life.

**PL-15 KAPKAGISAK**

Pungaruak Adam's old house, now a heap of piled up ruins.

**PL-16 KIKIKTAK**

Still visible about three, not in same place.

**PL-17 KIPPISAKOUK**

Ruins visible, non-Native explorers lived here for awhile looking for North West passage. Also later used by reindeer herders.

**PL-18 SINIRURAK**

Name place, Ada **Susook** and Tounais around 1912's. Later used by reindeer herders.

**PL-19 LAKE**

Fresh water lake, still in use,

**PL-20 LAKE**

Fresh water lake, still in use.

**PL-21 LAKE**

Fresh water lake, still in use

**PL-22 KAYATUALOOK**

Simon **Samroalook's** old sod house. Used fall time during the 1940s during World War II. Hunting ptarmigans and squirrel area.

**PL-23 REINDEER CORRAL**

Reindeer corral made of lumber and wire fence. This was the last reindeer corral used in 1930.

**PL-24 CULLY HILL (KULI)**

Graves, cellars and old ruins. House of Johnson **Tournai** and Rachel **Saghaloon** was here when **Dorcac** Neakok came to Point Lay in about 1927.

**PL-25 POINT LAY**

Ruins, second Point Lay, hunting, fishing, trapping, berry picking, camping and nesting area. This may be where two of the three houses were that existed when Dorcas Tingook (now Neakok) came to Point Lay to live with the Meyers in approximately 1930. People who lived in the houses:

Johnson **Tournai** and Rachel **Saghaloon**  
Charlie **Susook** and Ada  
Allen **Upicksoun** Sr. and **Dorcac** Tingook

After school house built, and the one at Icy Cape closed, (1928 - 1930) many more people came to Point Lay. These families seem to have come from the south (Point Hope and sites between Point Hope and Point Lay) as well as the north (Icy Cape people who did not go to **Wainwright**). Names mentioned are Agnasagga, Tukrook, Turak, **Tugaruk**. School teacher was Mr. Moyer, married to Mary Joule. Tony Joule the school teacher later in the 1930s, helped organize the last whaling done out of Point Lay (according to Dorcas **Neakok**). The period after the school was built was when Point Lay proper had its largest population (until the 1970s) - an estimated 100 to 150. Later in the 1930s the estimate was 75 to 150 (**Dorcac Neakok**). The population in 1951 was 65 (Weed 1957:127). During 1950s population declined to almost zero, school closed. **Dorcac** married approximately 1937, widowed approximately 1947 - Warren Neakok in Point Lay area for some years previous to 1947.

**PL-26 PAA**

Ada **Susook's** and Tounai's old sod houses. First Point Lay around 1912's.

**PL-27 RUINS (IMIANIK)**

All around the coast where there is little grass, there are nesting areas for brandts and all kinds of ducks. Sea ducks, Eider, geese and **aaqhaallich**. Mostly where there is ponds. Also hunting of polar bear, **ugruks**, seals, etc.

**PL-28 NAPAGTAACHIAQ**

Stone age, all around the coast where there is little grass, there is nesting area for brandts and all kinds of ducks. Eider, geese and **aaqhaalliqs**.

**PL-29 TUUNGAICH**

Ducks called **tuungaich** now extinct, polar bear, eggs, caribou and trapping.

**PL-30 MITGUNITCHUT**

Name place for travelers.

**PL-31 ISUNAKUUQ**

Name place for travelers.

PL-32 KANAKUTTQ  
Name place for travelers, fishing.

PL-33 GROUP OF LAKES  
Fishing.

PL-34 KANAKTUUQ NO. 2  
Name of place

PL-35 KAGIAVIK  
Ducks, ptarmigans.

PL-36 IMIK  
Ruins, ancient, families of reindeer herders main camp. Coal near for fuel around 1930's.

PL-37 ATANILAK  
Possible oil seep, burns when lit during winter.

PL-38 TIGGIAT  
Fish, coal.

PL-39 MAGGAKTUUQ  
Name of place.

PL-40 KIMMIKKIRAK  
Sod house made of willows, stayed up for two years. Is now standing and now built with lumber by Warren and Dorcas Neakok. Fishing and hunting area.

PL-41 KAKEAK  
Ruins, fishing, reindeer herders old camp for so long, trapping and hunting area. People left this area in 1960's.

PL-42 KIGRAGHT  
Fishing and trapping area.

PL-43 QAGLUQPAK  
Fishing.

PL-44 ALUAKAT  
Coal.

PL-45 AMAKTUK  
Fishing.

PL-46 ITCHALINAAQ  
Ruins, fishing and trapping.

**PL-47 KOGANAAQ**

Graves, Point Hoper named Koganak's grave marked with a whale jaw.

**PL-48 SAPIMMIK**

Mountains which block west end of flat land, good hunting and trapping area.

**PL-49 UMIAT**

Mountain sign of **Umiat** on top.

**PL-50 ANGILUKTAK**

Deep pond with fish

**PL-51 KUGLUKTAK**

Water fall with fish climbing.

**PL-52 KIASIK**

Name of mountain.

**PL-53 KAGLUKAQ**

West end of **Sapummik**.

**PL-54 QALTUGPAK**

Grave.

**PL-55 IGGACHIAT**

Ruins, graves, fishing and trapping area.

**PL-56 ATANGICH**

Name of mountains.

**PL-57 KAUKAT**

Fishing area.

**PL-58 KEKAK**

Name of mountain.

**PL-59 AGLUTAITCH**

Side curves of mountains.

**PL-60 PINGAUAK**

High mountains.