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World Eskimo Olympics

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Series: ATS-1 Educational Satellite Project Tapes

Notes: Original in 7-inch tape, master copy on CD. Produced by Roger McPherson. THESE TAPES WERE PRODUCED AS A PART OF AN EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM NOW DEFUNCT AND WERE BROADCAST OVER THE RADIO FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

The recording starts with competition noises, applauding and cheering. The announcer says Mickey Gordon's name and that he's from Inuvik. [Applause, unclear talking, more applause.] The announcer encourages everybody to give Mickey a standing ovation for a new record.

2:54 Another man's voice says that many of the Indian people didn't plan on coming and that's why they don't have their costumes on. Tonight, there are people from Minto, Tanana, and some people from Chistochina. They are from all over the Interior and the first song they will do was written by Dorothy Titus from Minto. It tells a story of a group of people who see a moose across the way. They see the moose and want to attract it so that they can have a party. They call the moose to them, and the song is about calling a moose so that they can have some meat.

3:55 [Mainly women's voices start singing and there's drumming too. They sing two songs.] [Applause. Roger says something unclear.] A man's voice tells that someone used to pull a toboggan with sled dogs. They have a new invention, the snow machine, that Minto people make songs out of these days. Following song is made by Selena from Minto and it is about snow machine operators.

The man says that he will go dance with the Minto people. [Singing and drumming.] The man says that the final number is a rhythm dance, which is an invitational dance and if someone wants to try Athabaskan dancing, they are invited. [Singing and drumming starts again.] They will dance around the area, singing, and everybody is invited to join the big circle. [Says something unclear about John Sackett. Signing and drumming. Applauding.]

13:23 A man counts to three. [Blanket tossing? Audience is cheering and applauding.] [Unclear announcing.] The next competitor is Donny [Unclear]. Again, a man counts to three. [Tossing sounds, cheering and applauding.] [Break in the recording.]

14:44 Roger asks someone how he likes this year's Eskimo Olympics. He says it's been very good. [Unclear talking, break in the recording.]

[Singing and drumming followed by applause.] The announcer says that the next dance is called the Raven Dance. [Singing and drumming.] [Break in the recording.]

18:08 The announcer says that the next competitor is [Unclear]. [Applause, unclear talking.] Jenny goes pretty high. [Unclear competition noises and a break in the recording.]

[Long break in the recording.]

20:40 The announcer says he has the Urban Native United Dancers from Anchorage, and encourages everybody to applaud their wonderful performance. [Applause.] The announcer says that they are unique in that they are self-sponsored, and thanks them once again. [Applause.] He continues that next on the program will be the marching of the queens. They ask Barrow Dancers to sing while the queen contestants march around the floor. [Unclear talking.] One of the rules is that there can be no twisting or jerking of the stick. [Breaks in the recording.]

At 21:50 Someone [doesn't quite sound like Roger McPherson but could be] says he's talking with lamp lighters and asks what their names are. The first one is Edith Tegoseak and the other one is Poldine Carlo. The interviewer says that he heard that Edith has been lighting the lamps ever since the Olympics started. She says that's correct. The interviewer asks if the lamps were used when she was young. Edith tells that her grandma used them when Edith was a little girl and they lived in a sod house. That was a long time ago. Then the interviewer asks Poldine where she is from and she tells she is originally from Nulato. They didn't use to have seal oil lamps. The interviewer asks what her opinion about seal oil lamps is and she thinks that it's wonderful that Edith shows people how her people used to get light and heat for cooking. [Break in the recording.]

Roger asks Edith how long she has been using those kinds of lamps and Edith tells that she has had those since she learned to trim them. She learned from her grandmother when she was 8 years old. She is now 69 years old.

Roger asks her to tell how she lights them and how she uses the wick. Edith tells that she looks to the ground, searching for a certain type of moss, not the one that reindeer eat, but some kind of gravel [she means grass?] that they dry and crumble into power. They use that for a wick. Roger asks how they control the flame. Edith tells that they have a little piece of wood with which they work the wick so that it is at the edge of seal oil and not inside it. The light has to be at the edge.

24:57 Roger asks how long a lamp lasts, and Edith tells that it depends on how wide the fire is, and if it's long or short. Roger describes the lamp that Edith has: It's about 2 inches long and Edith tells that it would take 24 hours to burn it like that if it was full of seal oil. Roger thanks her. [Break in the recording.]

A man's voice tells that they have a group of people from all through the Interior and the first song they do this evening was written by Dorothy Titus from Minto. [The story of the moose calling song begins again.]

The next song is a rather sad song that was written by Neil Charlie who is one of the singers. He was in Creamer's Field near Fairbanks, watching the geese fly south, and he thought it was sad that the next spring when the geese return, some of the people who watched them fly away aren't around anymore.

[Applause.] The third dance is a very modern dance. In older days they used to have dog sleds but now they have snow machines [the snow machine song introduction again. Also the introduction to rhythm dance is given again. The invitational dance is introduced and people are asked to join the circle.

[Various breaks in the recording.]

29:09 [Unclear talking.] Roger asks someone if he could ask some questions from someone. His name is Reddy Joe. Roger asks how come his arm is so sore, and he says it's from stretching the [unclear] while he is doing the high kick. One gets up there and jerks both of their arms out there. [Unclear talking.] He got hit on his hip when he fell. It just happened so fast. Roger asks where he is from and he says he is from Kotzebue. He doesn't practice sports with other people but he tells that he's been practicing about once a week for 2-3 weeks, or even a little bit more. One has to keep in some kind of a shape.

Roger asks where Reddy first learned about the high kick and he tells that it was in Point Hope. [Loud applauding in the background.] He tells that he went to their celebration on Christmas break and they had something different [for activities] all during the Christmas break. One day they played games all night and one of them was high kick. That's where he learned. [Applause.]

[End of the recording.]