

88-49-07

Eskimo dances, Roger Lang, Mitch Demientieff

Unidentified interviewer

Series: Potlatch series

Music from "Alaskan Eskimo songs and stories" produced by Lorraine Donoghue Koranda is played. Jeff Kennedy talks about Eskimo dancing and the differences for women and men. Common dances are also called the muscle dances. Diomedes Island started the bench dance. Special songs are composed for the bench dances. The bench dance song is sung by Joseph and Nellie Sikvaoyungak from Barrow and Dick Bolt. Blanche Lincoln from Kotzebue sings a bench dance song. Rose Ann Negovanna and Nanny Kagak from Wainwright sing the women's dance song. Jeff Kennedy talks about where dances were held in the past and in the present. Drummers sit in a line on the floor and in front of the singers. Gloves are used by the dancers. The dance mitt song from Saint Lawrence Island is played and sung by Hazel Omwari. Ornamental dance gloves had amulets attached to them. Head dresses are described. Two ancient loon songs are sung by Joseph Sikvaoyungak from Barrow and Dick Bolt. John Oalanna sings a song from King Island about the king loon.

Mitch Demientieff talked about banning hunting by non-Natives near villages. He said you had to go by a specific case and it should be decided by the local community. It is the immediate resource of the community. In the past the decisions were made by the Fish and Game with consultation with village people on a sporadic basis. The decisions are made outside of Alaskan villages. He believes that there are exceptions to state laws. Donald McQueen talked about guest lectures at the trooper academy by Dr. Soboloff discussing cultural problems. They are expanding their academy. Roger Lang said the cultural gap is discussed but it is a two-way street. It never hurts to learn something good. The Native culture is a law abiding culture. Chuck Reed talked about the salaries of troopers and village policemen. Roger Lang discussed the salaries and the problem of the village being able to pay their policemen. The highest priority of state spending should be for its people. Mitch Demientieff talked about understanding between the troopers and the villagers. Councils are sometimes consulted. They want to enhance communications. Troopers are sometimes considered racists. Native groups as a whole are probably the most law abiding people. Donald McQueen (?) said troopers must take into consideration the cultural changes they are working with. Roger Lang said there has to be awareness in the communities in Alaska when the representative of the law comes to their community. Cooperative communication needs to be enhanced. Familiar language needs to be used. Donald McQueen said in the past there have been instances of ignoring the courtesy of contact with the village council. Sometimes calls come from the councils. He talked about use of their own aircraft now and improvement with contact. He said there are Natives on the oral board presentations for troopers. The basic entry exam is given in English. Mitch Demientieff said many Alaskan law enforcement officers could be bilingual. There has to be considerations given to cultural backgrounds. Donald McQueen talked about minimum qualifications for troopers.

Jeff Kennedy said Potlatch is produced in the KUAC studios in College in cooperation with KTOO Juneau, KOTC Kotzebue and KYUK Bethel under Title One of the Higher Education Act.