

INTERVIEW WITH NANCY ANDERSON

Nancy Anderson grew up in the community of Sitka and after graduating from Mt. Edgecumbe in 1949, moved to Chignik and within a year, to Kodiak. She has been involved in Native profit and non-profit organizations since the early 1970's. I, Mike Rostad, interviewed Nancy Anderson in her home at Bay View Terrace on November 22, 1994. Information that was added to the transcript but not part of the interview is enclosed by an asterisk and parentheses (*.)

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER OF SITKA, NANCY?

When I was in grade school, it was a very small town. A group of us lived in cottage settlement. A land lease was given to our people through Sheldon Jackson. That's where we ended up. Our neighborhood was right in the area where the Historical Park was. In the neighborhood was Indian River where ...Tlingit Indians and Russians had wars. We were very close to the ocean. It was a very beautiful town: Mt. Edgecumbe, Arrowhead, (Vestovia) Mountains. They're big mountains. It's a very beautiful place.

WHAT KIND OF THINGS DID YOU DO AS A KID?

We played games. Those days (some) had battery operated radios. Not many of us had that. So we mainly played games (ie.) Hide and Seek, Jump Rope, ordinary things that kids did. We went to matinees...every Saturday afternoon. We always went to Sunday School at the Presbyterian Church by Sheldon Jackson School.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A FONDNESS OF THE TLINGIT INDIANS TOWARD SHELDON JACKSON.

There was. Mainly...because of the land lease. A lot of our relatives had a land lease for 99 years. We were not able to purchase the land, but we were able to build our homes there. Eventually that..when I went back years later, there was only a few houses left.

WAS SHELDON JACKSON INSTRUMENTAL IN PROVIDING THE LAND LEASE?

I don't remember all of that because I was very young when that happened. As far back as I could remember, Sheldon Jackson did. He had educated a lot of the Tlingit Indians. I assume my parents were part of them. I knew my family was.

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YOU HAD SAID EARLIER THAT WHEN YOU WENT TO A MOVIE THERE WAS SOME SEGREGATION GOING ON; THAT THE TLINGITS HAD TO SIT IN ONE PART OF THE THEATER AND WHEN THEY WENT ON THE BUS, THEY HAD TO SIT IN A CERTAIN PLACE. DO YOU REMEMBER THAT?

I remember that very distinctly. They had the territorial school which was for non-Natives..all throughout high school. Then they had the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs,) which was for Tlingit Indians. After the 8th grade, we were not allowed to go to the territorial school. So we had to pay tuition to either attend Sheldon Jackson or go to Wrangell Institute, or some place far away as Chomowa (An Indian School in Oregon.) There was a lot of segregation because of that. We had separate schools and we had one movie theater. On the left hand side is where the non-Natives sat. The right hand (side) was where the Indians were supposed to be seated. If you crossed lines they asked you to leave the movie house. So we just stayed in that one section. We never created any problems or nobody else did either. As far as bus service (goes) we had no bus service. We had to walk. There were busses to provide for the other schools, but all us Indians had to walk.

WAS THERE ANY RESENTMENT AMONG THE INDIANS? DID THEY TALK ABOUT BEING TREATED AS SECOND CLASS CITIZENS?

Yes, there were a lot of hard feelings. It seems like there were always fights after school. Everything was segregated.

YOU HAVE SAID YOU LOST YOUR PARENTS AT A YOUNG AGE. YOUR FATHER, FIRST OF ALL. YOU SAID HE WENT OUT ON A HUNTING TRIP IN THE FALL OF THE YEAR.

I remember that pretty specific. I remember the date. I still have his death certificate. He died November 7, 1937. There were three other relatives that also drowned on that same hunting trip. I remember when they were dragging for the bodies. But I don't remember beyond that. I remember the funeral, but...I don't remember much after that.

WAS IT AT A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OR AT A HALL OR LODGE?

I don't remember. I was six years old at that time. I'm sure there

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were services at the Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall, because they always had functions of that order. There must have been some service at the Presbyterian Church, but I just don't remember.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A PRETTY HARD CHRISTMAS

It was difficult to begin with, and even moreso after my dad had drowned. My mother was pregnant at that time. Corinne was born the following March. Several of us were at home; five or six of us.

YOU HAVE A VERY TOUCHING STORY ABOUT THAT CHRISTMAS EVE.

Christmas was very sad, because my mother was pregnant and there was no work. Several of us at home. We had no presents underneath the tree. I remember a knock at the door with carolers outside. It was whole student body from Sheldon Jackson. They each brought little trinkets; they each brought a gift. Several different stores in Sitka had provided apples, oranges, turkey and all the trimmings. It ended up to be a very delightful Christmas.

IT WASN'T LONG AFTER THAT YOUR MOTHER DIED.

My mother died in April, 1943. I believe I was around 13 years old. It's something I don't want to discuss how it happened. We were all left orphaned, so we all went different places; grew up different...lifestyles. From 1943 my whole family - my brothers and sisters...have never lived in the same house.

DURING YOUR TIME IN SITKA, THE ALASKA NATIVE BROTHERHOOD WAS QUITE ACTIVE. YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU HAD MET WILLIAM PAUL WHO WAS VERY INSTRUMENTAL IN THAT ORGANIZATION. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT HIM?

I remember him as being a big Native leader. At that time, there were very few leaders from our heritage. He was one of them. He was more my mother's age group. I remember him as being a leader. I probably spoke with him through the years at AFN (Alaska

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Federation of Natives) conventions, but nothing to any great extent. We were never real close friends.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THE ALASKA NATIVE BROTHERHOOD DID WHILE YOU WERE A YOUNGSTER IN SITKA?

They formed in 1912. Probably two years later the Alaska Native Sisterhood formed. Their main function was to fight for the Indian rights where we wouldn't have segregated schools, where we'd have bus service, where we would be considered citizens. We were not allowed to vote until 1924. Because we were not considered citizens. A lot of this..had to be pushed through Juneau and Congress. As they expanded they helped each other moneywise. I was never really involved with that until years later.

YOU HAVE A SPECIAL PLACE IN YOUR HEART FOR MOUNT EDGE CUMBE.

After our parents died, I ended up in Wrangell Institute until February, 1947. Then Mt. Edgecumbe merged at that time. Then we went to Mt. Edgecumbe. I also have a lot of good things to say about Wrangell Institute. It was very nice. The staff members were more like a family. They treated us very well. They helped us. They taught us many things: how to open up a bank account, how to keep track of our little finances; and they taught us how to cook. All the high school students had to take one week off every month. We ran our own dormitory, our own health center, our laundry. We all had special detail. We did our own cooking, our own baking. The student body ran the school. Physically we did. I ended up working in the bakery....That meant baking for 250 students, plus 10 staff members. There were many of us that did that. I asked the cook if I could double the recipe and give each student two cookies instead of one. She said, 'Go right ahead.' We had a break between 1:30...until about four. But I didn't have a break because I baked over 500 cookies. The cook had kind of a chuckle out of it. She came back the next day and asked if I wanted to double the recipe again. I told her 'No, that's too many cookies.'

I ASSUME YOU DEVELOPED SOME LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS AT WRANGELL.

I kind of lost track of some of the students. Gertrude Hope from

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Unalaska, to this day we keep in touch. Emily Williams was there one year. I knew her when I was going to grade school in Sitka. When we were in the 5th and 6th grade we became good pals. After 50 years (after being reunited in Kodiak,) we remembered a lot of things we did in grade school.

HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU GO TO WRANGELL INSTITUTE?

1943 to 1947.

WERE MOST OF YOUR TEACHERS AT WRANGELL CAUCASIAN OR DID YOU HAVE ANY NATIVE TEACHERS?

No, we didn't have any Native teachers. But we had a cook...Millie, whose brother (Alfred Hansen, Sr.) lived in Old Harbor. She was very strict, very stern, very clean. She taught us how to work and keep a very clean kitchen.

Mt. Edgecumbe and Wrangell merged Feb. 22, 1947. From Wrangell the freshmen and seniors went to Mt. Edgecumbe and the others remained until after the school year. After that they joined us at Mt. Edgecumbe.

IS WRANGELL NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE?

They started up as a grade school, but I haven't kept up to see if it's still in existence. It was a very nice school.

WHAT WAS MT. EDGECUMBE LIKE? IN WHAT WAYS WAS IT DIFFERENT THAN WRANGELL?

It was different by far because in Wrangell we had about 250 students. When they merged...we're looking at over 700 students. In Wrangell it was mainly Southeast (Alaska) students. When we merged with Mt. Edgecumbe...it was all of the state of Alaska. That was very different.

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WAS THIS YOUR FIRST CONTACT WITH YUP'IKS?

We had a few in Wrangell, but not like we did in Mt. Edgecumbe.

WHO ARE SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO STICK OUT IN YOUR MEMORY FROM YOUR DAYS AT MT. EDGECUMBE?

Mainly...Mrs Ripley, our history teacher. She made you learn. She was very stern, very strict, but we had her for our home room teacher. She was basically very nice. Some of my friends, like Christine Littlefield (from Wrangell) we keep in touch, (as well as) Alice Lohr from Kodiak. Those are the ones I remember. Hubert Vinberg went to school in Wrangell Institute. He was an upper classman. We became very good friends later in life.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES THAT MADE MT. EDGECUMBE SUCH A MEMORABLE TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

I think the student body. I was with the first graduating class. There were 48 of us: 24 girls, 24 boys. The senior class was almost like one big happy family. We helped each other. We had many activities. Different students got to run the student fountain (which was an ice cream parlor, and sold soft drinks and school supplies.) There were details there. They were not paid positions. Whenever they were running low on supplies, they got to do all the ordering.

They taught us quite a bit. The gym classes were excellent. They taught us how to do the minuet. I don't why we had to learn it, but we did. And they taught us how to square dance. Our group was the best one, until we had to perform, then we got all mixed up. Our senior prom, senior balls were excellent.... We had a lot of good politicians that came out of Mt. Edgecumbe. We had a lot of educated students.

WHO ARE SOME OF THE POLITICIANS AND STATE LEADERS?

In my class there was Richard Stit. Al Adams went to Mt. Edgecumbe. Bretta Etta was in the dorm when I worked there. (Students went on to be) high school coaches, teachers, politicians.

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**WERE THERE ANY NATIVE TEACHERS OR ADMINISTRATORS AT MT. EDGECUMBE
AT THE TIME YOU WERE GOING?**

We had Miss Davis, a home ec. teacher...from up North. She was very strict. She was one of our own, but she made us learn how to sew. She wanted us to do things right. Beyond that, there weren't any others until later.

**YOUR BROTHER, GILL TRUITT, BECAME AN EFFECTIVE LEADER AT MT.
EDGECUMBE.**

My brother went to school in Searsy, Arkansas, (when) we were all orphaned. He took two years off to earn his own money for schooling. At the very last the Alaska Native Brotherhood pitched in to help him finish his schooling. He came out as a high school coach and he was a great history teacher. To this day a lot of students...brag about what a good teacher he was. And I believe he was an assistant principal. We don't keep in touch. I know from things I read and from different people who tell me what's going on.

**HOW DID HE END UP DOWN THERE (IN ARKANSAS,) SO FAR AWAY FROM
ALASKA?**

Some staff member at Mt. Edgecumbe recommended that college. He had to raise his own funds to go, because, in those days, there were no scholarships for any of us.

**WE SEE IN THE MAP OF YOUR LIFE, THE NEXT PLACE YOU LIVED IS
CHIGNIK. HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO GET TO CHIGNIK?**

When I went to Mt. Edgecumbe I met Viola and Louise Erickson, whose parents are Henry and Lilly Erickson. They're from Chignik. They asked what I'd be doing after school was out. I said I'd have to find a job and a place to stay because I had nowhere to go. They asked if I wanted to come home with them. I said, 'What will your parents say?' They said 'Just board the North Star and come up.' The North Star was a government supplier that took supplies to villages, such as Unalaska, Dutch Harbor...probably as far up as St. Lawrence Island. Most of us didn't have the funds to travel back and forth, so they had a contract to take the students. It

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cost us a dollar a meal if we ate. So that's how I ended up in Chignik.

When I ended up in Chignik I had seventeen dollars. Henry Erickson...made sure we applied at the cannery. We were hired by Emil Norton. That was his first job of being a superintendent.

THAT'S VERY INTERESTING, BECAUSE NOW, IN 1994, YOU AND EMIL SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE NATIVES OF KODIAK. WHAT WAS THE CANNERY HE WAS WORKING FOR?

Chignik Fisheries at that time.

WAS THIS YOUR ^KFIRST PAYING JOB?

No, when I was in Wrangell, I had just turned 14 years old, and our principal...wanted us all to work.... He applied work for all of us at Todd Cannery, letting the superintendent know that we were all age 16. But most of us were 14 and 15 years old. When we all got off the boats, they said we were the youngest 16-year-olds they ever saw. We worked long hours. But it was nice. We had fun out of it. We had coffee breaks. We had our own dormitory to stay in. That was the first job I had. Then I worked in Ketchikan General Hospital. They were strict with us (at the hospital.) They were in charge of us. They made us learn. (*I also worked at the Laundry at Mt. Edgecumbe.)

WHAT KIND OF WORK DID YOU DO AT CHIGNIK?

I worked as a filler. They have a big bin where all the fish are stored. You line all the fish up...It goes through the machine where it's gutted. All the heads are taken off. It's a pretty strenuous job for someone that's young. You handle every fish that goes through that line. You get tired at the end of the day, and it was very cold.

(NANCY CAME TO KODIAK AND MARRIED HENRY ERICKSON'S BROTHER, CARL, WHOM SHE LATER DIVORCED)

I wasn't too fond at that time of Kodiak, because I was probably not used to the adults. I grew up with nothing but students and to come into an adult world was kind of difficult for someone right

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out of high school. I had a hard time adjusting. I went back to Wrangell and Sitka and stayed in Anchorage (after that.) I was gone for about two years, and I missed Kodiak so much that I came back and I never left again.

WHAT WAS KODIAK LIKE IN 1950?

It was a very small town, more like a village. The buildings were all old. Pretty quiet. The main things that were going was salmon fishing, and later on, crab fishing, and of course, the Navy base. But it was more like a sleepy little town. Peaceful, quiet. Everybody was friendly, which they still are, but at that time, it was moreso. There were mainly local people here.

WAS IT A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE KIDS?

I think it was, because when I came back the kids were happier. They had all their relatives and their friends, which they still have, that they grew up with. My family was very happy to get back, and so was I.

WERE YOU IN KODIAK DURING THE 1964 EARTHQUAKE AND TIDAL WAVE?

Yes. It was kind of a spooky thing. We had friends at our house. The dogs kept barking and the seagulls were flying high. All of a sudden, you could vaguely hear a rumble. It was so fierce when it hit that the cars were moving and the trees were swaying back and forth. My neighbor, Lita Ecklund, was at work at the dry cleaners. When that earthquake hit, her kids were at home, waiting for her....The ground was moving so fast, her two little daughters were hanging on to a stand that kept the oil drums off the ground. It was shaking and rocking so bad. So we ran over there and brought them to our house, but here comes Lita, driving home, because she was concerned about her family. We all headed for high ground by request. A bunch of us were up by the high school. We looked out toward Spruce Cape and you could see this great big wall of water coming in.

(The disaster) was spooky. You could hear reports on the radio. about Seward burning, the dock going down. We even heard that Kodiak Island sunk on the radio. I wasn't close with my family, so I didn't make contact. But through the Red Cross, my brother,

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Gill, made contact to see if we were fine.

THEY SAY THAT WORLD WAR II CHANGED KODIAK FOREVER. I'M SURE THAT THE TIDAL WAVE BROUGHT ABOUT CHANGES THAT WERE IRREVOCABLE. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHANGES?

The reconstruction, for one thing. Everything down town was wiped out. That was a major operation to rebuild the town. The crab industry brought an influx of people. It was no longer a sleepy little town. Now it was lots of activity. The town grew, more strangers kept coming in. To this day we still have an influx of many people from many different places. It's a big change, because the culture is altogether different. It's no longer a quiet little village where people go and have cups of coffee, cups of tea (which) was the main thing in Kodiak. No matter where you went there was always baked goodies, always tea served. Any more, you don't see that many people. Because of reconstruction of town, the crab industry, shrimp industry, salmon, many different people getting fishing sites.

YOU HAD A FISHING SITE AT UGANIK (ON THE WEST SIDE OF KODIAK ISLAND.) YOU MAKE NO BONES YOU DON'T HAVE THIS GLAMOROUS VIEW OF FISHING.

I ran the fishing site and I had a crew of two. I had to be the cook; I also did canning. I helped pick kelp out of the nets. In my opinion, that's no job for any lady. You have cold feet, sore hands, your back aches, the weather is rough, and if a lady wants it, more glory to them, because I didn't like any part of it.

HOW MANY SUMMERS DID YOU SPEND AT UGANIK?

Ten. I didn't like it. I was friendly with quite a few other couples. Most of us women felt....we were very captive. We were stuck on the beach. None of us liked it. Maybe a few did, but the majority didn't. But the men liked it. We were under their thumb. They got to deliver fish, they picked the nets, and ran from site to site, while the majority of us were stuck on the beach. So I literally say I was stuck on the beach for ten summers.

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THERE WAS A LOT DRINKING AT THE SITES, WASN'T THERE.

Lots of drinking. The Fourth of July was a very big function at Uganik. Everybody from the very young to the old attended this. They were pretty wild. (Life at the fish site is) not like a dream, but it's a nightmare.

YOU WERE INVOLVED IN THE CRAB FESTIVAL

At one time I was appointed by the Koniag Board to be a coordinator, because one of our shareholders was a candidate, and they preferred to have a Native lady that would be willing to coordinate. I helped to get sponsors. It was rather interesting.

YOU MENTION KONIAG, AND THAT BRINGS US TO ANOTHER FACET OF YOUR VERY INTERESTING LIFE AND THAT'S YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH NATIVE POLITICS, WHICH HAS CONSUMED QUITE A BIT OF YOUR TIME FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS. YOU WERE ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE KODIAK AREA NATIVE ASSOCIATION (KANA.)

They started in 1966. There was Harry Carter, Karl Armstrong, Delores Padilla, Mary Gallagher, Tina Monigold. I was encouraged at the beginning to be involved, but I did not get involved until 1969, by the request of Tina Monigold. She thought I would be a help.

TODAY WE SEE KANA AS A MULTI-FACETED, NON-PROFIT, ASSOCIATION, THAT SPONSORS SOCIAL SERVICES FOR NATIVE PEOPLE. THEY PUT ON CULTURAL EVENTS, THEY HAVE THE CLINICS FOR DENTAL AND MEDICAL. IT IS VERY BROAD IN SCOPE. IN 1969 WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

It was at the formation, trying to get all the villages to form their own chapters, elect their own officers. KANA would have one from each village seated on the board. (KANA served) social, health and education purposes. It was very small at that time. All board members attended seminars. We did some traveling. We learned the ethics of formation and how to proceed, and we expanded to AFN.

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YOU MENTION AFN (ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES.) THIS BRINGS US TO THE ERA OF NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY, NATIVE PRIDE, NATIVES ASSERTING THEMSELVES AND TAKING CONTROL OF THEIR DESTINIES, AND NATIVE LAND. THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT. YOU WERE AGAIN ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THAT

The first AFN convention I attended was in 1969. That was held in Fairbanks. There was a big battle (over) who would be the chairman of the board. They were fearful that someone from Southeast would take over. They didn't want someone from up North. So it was a pretty big battle, without realizing that all the land would be delegated (by Congress.) Each group pushed for the chairman for their region. Southeast delegated for quite awhile. They hold the bulk of the votes.

WHEN DID AFN FORM?

I believe it formed in 1966. I believe Willie Hensley was attending college in Fairbanks doing some history and research on his homework and he read parts of something regarding land, and we were already here, so he figured we were entitled to a land claims settlement act. Between him, Emil Notti, John Borbridge, William Paul and his son, that's how it became about. The only way they could reach everybody in Alaska, with different regions, with all our different cultures, was by newspaper, which was started by Howard Rock: *The Tundra Times*. It was all volunteer, more like flyers until it became a recognized paper. Howard Rock did a lot of work on that. He's been recognized for all his efforts.

DID YOU KNOW HOWARD ROCK PERSONALLY?

I did not know him personally. He was a big leader. He was always surrounded by (other) big leaders. Although he spoke to people, very few of us got to sit down and personally talk with him. But we knew his history, and all the people had good things to say about him.

YOU'VE BEEN GOING TO AFN MEETINGS SINCE 'DAY ONE,' HAVEN'T YOU?

I have been going to AFN conventions since 1969. I enjoy it, because I like the politics. I like the social events. They have

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the Native dancers. They have many functions going on...Mount Edgcombe reunion dance. *Tundra Times* banquet. There's many activities during the week, plus, you get to see all your old friends and you get to meet many new people. You meet a lot of politicians. I enjoy all of this.

WE CANNOT TALK ABOUT ANCSA, WITHOUT MENTIONING KONIAG, INC. YOU ALSO WERE INVOLVED IN THE BEGINNING PHASES OF THAT CORPORATION, WERE YOU NOT?

I was on the interim board and I chose not to go that first election. But I did get elected in 1971 (1977,) and I served three terms. We met a lot of high powered politicians. Bill Sheffield (former governor of Alaska) had many functions for the Koniag and KANA groups. Many times we sat with (US Representative) Don Young at the Old Kodiak Inn. We just shot the breeze. We didn't discuss politics, but we got to know each other. (US Senator) Frank Murkowski was another one. (US Senator) Ted Stevens has done a tremendous job for us, but he didn't socialize too much with us. But he did work for us.

YOU MENTIONED A NAME THAT THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED IN KODIAK A LONG TIME, CERTAINLY REMEMBER, AND CERTAINLY WAS A PERSON WHO WAS CONTROVERSIAL, WHO WAS VERY MUCH ALIVE. THE PERSON IS KARL ARMSTRONG. COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT KARL ARMSTRONG AND HOW YOU GOT TO MEET HIM?

Karl in my opinion, and (in the opinion of) several others, was a very good leader, and he was a good lobbyist in Washington, DC. Although there were many people that disliked the manner in which he went about it, he did get a lot of land for the Kodiak area. He got massive amounts of land. On many issues he was never recognized, but he was a very good leader, and we had many good leaders: Sven Haakanson, (Old Harbor,) Ivar Malutin (Kodiak,) Perry Eaton, Pete Olsen, Jack Wick, Allen Panamaroff, Harry Carter, Allen Heitman. Neil Sargent was there at the beginning. (*Also involved were Kelly Simeonoff, Jr., Nick Pestrikoff, and Frank Pagano.) We had quite a change on the Koniag board. They did provide very well for training for the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. That one year after the Act was passed, they had probably 110 of us go to Alyeska for a five day training session

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(regarding) the Act; how it was set up and what we could expect....It was more or less like a crash course. So if you were interested in expanding...you pretty much had to do it on your own.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS KARL ARMSTRONG DID FOR THE NATIVE PEOPLE?

Our big issue at the formation of Koniag was to get all the land, which was successful...mainly through Karl Armstrong's efforts by lobbying in Congress. We had our differences many times like any other corporation, but it stayed right there at the table. We remained friends. We were able to discuss what we thought, with no hard feelings. Karl was a very good leader. He was an excellent lobbyist. He was well known all over Washington, DC.

NOT ONLY (WERE YOU INVOLVED WITH KONIAG,) BUT WITH THE NATIVES OF KODIAK, WHICH YOU NOW ARE SERVING AS ONE OF THE DIRECTORS. COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT NATIVES OF KODIAK.

At the formation there was no money. It was all given to the villages, so we had to lobby Congress for our own grant dollars. Our board, through the efforts and help from Juneau, Ketchikan, Kodiak and Kenai, sent telegrams down to me, and I sent it off to Congress, so Congress awarded each of us \$250,000 to start our operating costs, our business license, everything that pertains to a corporation. We started holding meetings. It has expanded. Right now we're involved in the new building right across from the Russian Church. KANA will have the bottom floor (of the building for an Alutiiq Museum.) That was a dream years back. We started with Mary Gallagher, Tina Monigold, Julie Knagin, and myself. There's been a changeover in how that museum started. We set up a bingo fund that was held in Anchorage...\$90,000. Now we're looking at \$2 million. Through many efforts we got it off the ground. (*In 1977, Andy Anderson from Ouzinkie and I had a joint meeting with Natives of Kodiak. That's when KONCOR was founded.)

ARE YOU SAYING THAT MONEY WAS BEING RAISED FOR THIS MUSEUM BACK IN THE LATE 60'S AND EARLY 70'S THROUGH BINGO?

Early 70's. Through bingo, which was being held in Anchorage. We got a permit. I think we raised about \$90,000 in a year. It was

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put in a special fund. It had seed money. Tina Monigold was a big pusher on that. So was Mary Gallagher. They're passed on. They'd be proud now if they were able to look at that building, because we worked on that for years. But it took a lot of effort.

YOU'VE BEEN A BUSY LADY, NANCY, AND THIS IS JUST SKIMMING THE SURFACE. I'LL JUST MENTION A FEW ORGANIZATIONS YOU'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH, AND ONE IS THE ALASKA TRIBAL COUNCIL. TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THAT.

Like I mentioned earlier, the four main cities, Kodiak, Kenai, Sitka and Juneau, we were only given one township of land and they had seven reservations in Alaska. We needed a ground base to try to find out how to get funds to start our corporation. This is where we ended up getting our \$250,000, through the efforts of mainly Juneau and Kenai. They had attorneys working for them (and) we did not. So they encouraged us to send telegrams. We were called Alaska Tribal Council because it was an ad hoc (organization.) After we got our grant dollars, we did away with it. But there were quite a few of us, and we worked very hard to try to get funding. We have gone a long ways starting with \$250,000. Now NOK (Natives of Kodiak) is doing pretty good. The reason why we called it Alaska Tribal Council is because we had to have a name and there was no tribal council at that time. We had to have a name to seek funding and in order to hold meetings.

ALSO YOU'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN OTHER MUNICIPAL AND INTERNATIONAL GROUPS. ONE OF THEM WAS THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR CONFERENCE (SPONSORED BY CONGRESS.) COULD YOU TALK ABOUT THAT?

That was in 1977. I believe there was Esther Mulcahy, a banker's wife; Betty Wallin, borough mayor. Pat Jacobson, a school teacher, could not attend, so the alternate was Madelyn Poland (a former school teacher.) We received letters from Anchorage (saying) that we were being asked to sit on a women's conference and to hold meetings in Kodiak, so we could take the results back to Anchorage. After we went back to Anchorage, women from all over the states had met. They were going to be electing delegates to go to Houston (Texas.) There were only four of us from Kodiak. The ladies decided to sponsor me. I happened to be one of the delegates to go to Houston. There were 18,000 delegates in Houston. All colors,

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sizes. Lots of women. That was very interesting. Being in Houston was altogether a big change. The temperature was one hundred and some degrees. When I left Anchorage it was 10 below. Here I get at the airport with a big parka. The traffic was out of sight. When you're from Alaska, Texas is a big place (as far as population goes.)

YOU DID MEET SOME SEVERE RACISM IN THE OUTSIDE, DIDN'T YOU?

Yes. Cabs were very scarce. There were two ladies in one cab (as well as) three of us were going to the convention hall. We politely asked these women 'Would you mind if you shared cab fare with you, because cabs are hard to find.' They looked at us and said, 'We don't want to ride with people with dark skin. So we'll get out.' I said, 'That's okay with us. We'll take the cab then.' So we did. We wore our buttons. I went down four days before the conference. We had Alaska buttons on. You should have seen the people point (and say) 'That's an Eskimo from Alaska!' That was interesting. Cab drivers would tell people, 'We have real Eskimos in the car.'

YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT. GOING THROUGH HARDSHIPS HAS NOT MADE YOU A BITTER PERSON, BUT A VERY LIFE-LOVING AND PEOPLE-LOVING PERSON, AND I THINK THAT'S DEMONSTRATED IN YOUR LIFE (DURING) THE HOLIDAYS, IN PARTICULAR CHRISTMAS. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS SEASON IS SO SPECIAL TO YOU?

(It) stems back to my childhood. Thanksgiving was kind of sad, and other people started getting ready early and we weren't. After Sheldon Jackson (School) and the whole town of Sitka provided all those gifts and the turkey, trimming, apple and oranges....It just touched me. To this day, for Christmas, there's a special place in my heart....I always want to share (gifts such as) canned fish. I don't have that much to share but, subsistence food, I like to take to special friends. I think Christmas is neat. And I think everybody should enjoy it. Everybody should share.

Interview with Nancy Anderson

YOU STAND OUT AS ONE OF THE FEW PEOPLE IN THE AREA WHO CONTINUE TO PREPARE FOR THE WINTER LIKE THE NATIVES OF OLD. WHERE DID YOU GET THAT FROM?

It probably stems from Wrangell Institute. I spent a few weeks with Mary Lanting. They used to can salmon. Always cut up venison. Always had their own garden. That's something we didn't have at home. For years I think about all that. All the things that are there for the taking. So after I got involved at Uganik Bay, fishing, I started doing canned salmon, kipper, smoked fish, now it's expanded to berry picking. We put up a lot of halibut. We barter around for what we put up. If people want our canned salmon if they have king crab, we'll make a trade. I'd encourage people to do that. It's so excellent. (It's) good for the holidays (as) special gift for the family and friends.

WITH THAT TIP, WE'RE GOING TO WISH EVERYBODY LISTENING TO THIS A VERY MERRY AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND ESPECIALLY TO NANCY, WHO HAS TAKEN TIME TO SHARE HER LIFE WITH US.

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