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Anaktuvuk Pass recording with Roosevelt (Rosie) Paneak, Rachael Sikvayugak, Lela Ahgook

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> **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 tape begins by interviewer [Roger McPherson] asking someone [Later identified as Roosevelt Paneak] what he has been doing today. He says he's been hunting caribou and waiting for caribou. He got 2 caribou in the morning and one in the afternoon. He was waiting for them above the village, about 3 miles north-east of Anaktuvuk. There's a rock where he waits for caribou.

The interviewer wants to know how close he let the reindeer come before he shot one, and he tells that the first 2 were about 75 yards away and the second one was about 50 yards. He has a 6-millimeter Remington and it took him about 6 shots to kill the first two caribou since it was snowing and he didn't have a good sight.

The interviewer says he noticed it was snowing the morning and the interviewee says he is desperate for caribou. He wants to get enough before they start running. The interviewer asks what he did with the two caribou he shot this morning. He says he kept both of them home and put them in the meat cache. The interviewer asks if he gut and skinned them in the field but he says that he just took them home whole and skinned them there.

At 2:20 the interviewer asks when he went back out after he finished skinning the caribou. He says he went back about 1 pm in the afternoon. The weather was still snowy and there was light snow with about 2 miles visibility for most of the day. He

went to the same place where he was in the morning and there was one caribou that came fairly close and in 50-yards the speaker shot him. It was a bull and the interviewee got him with one shot this time. Visibility was better than it was in the morning.

The interviewer wants to know if he skinned the bull there or if he took it home. He says he skinned it in the field this time.

3:45 The interviewer asks what a hunter has to take into an account when hunting caribou around Anaktuvuk Pass and what conditions a hunter has to be aware of. The interviewee says that one thing is weather, then there is temperature, time of day, if there are caribou present or seen, and one has to consider the type of terrain the caribou are in.

One has to make evaluations before going for the kill. If the caribou are traveling in a known direction the hunters evaluate their speed, if they are grazing or if they are traveling fast or slow. These [evaluations] are all done just by instinct and there is nothing more involved than instinct. They take it more for granted than most people would because they know the country and the type of terrain that is out there. In early morning the caribou tend to move “more so” [the speaker is possibly illustrating the direction or speed with his hands.] During the afternoon they tend to graze or lie down for the day. In the evening they start again. [The amount of] daylight is considered too if there is to be a hunt. It takes some time to clean the killed caribou. 10 or more will take quite a bit of time to skin and clean.

At 6:31 the interviewer asks if men shoot more caribou than they can handle in one day. The interviewee says that they do sometimes and that that has happened in Anaktuvuk. One may kill as many as 10 or more in a day but they can be taken care of if they are killed in the early part of the day. If one catches that number in late evening, one has to gut them out and leave until the next day. Another way meat is cared for in the evening is to cut the caribou in half right from the diaphragm and the pelvic bone. The head is taken out.

The interviewer asks how the interviewee learned to hunt caribou. The interviewee says he was about 10 years old when his father started taking him out. Then he corrects himself saying that he was more or less alone that morning [when he killed his first caribou?]. He had a single-shot .22 and that was all he had. He got a cow for

his first kill. From thereon he can't remember how many he has got. It's been quite a few.

The interviewer asks how long he went out with his father in order to learn from him. The speaker says that actually his dad more or less just taught him to shoot and from thereon it was just natural to him. The speaker continues that his father showed him how to go on about hunting caribou but from thereon it came naturally.

9:26 The interviewer asks about some of the important things the interviewee's father taught him about caribou hunting. He tells he was taught how to evaluate the type of ground and the speed of the caribou and the wind. The interviewer also asks if the interviewee was taught to take care of the carcass by his father. He says yes. That might be all he learned from his father and rest came naturally. Right now he does things automatically.

His name is Roosevelt Paneak and he's 25 years old. He has lived in Anaktuvuk Pass off and on. [Break in the recording.]

At 10:37 the interviewer asks someone [Later identified as Rachael Sikvayugak] which caribou are the best ones for making masks. Rachael says bulls have the best skin for making masks. Young ones are easy to tear and not good. Rachael says she hasn't tried that but always uses bull caribou.

The interviewer asks Rachael what the best time of the year is for getting the skin. She says the best time is fall and that in spring they don't get skin for anything because it's not good at all [possibly due to hypoderma tarandi, warble fly infestations]. In fall they get skin for everything. They store it away and use it.

Now the interviewer asks what time of the year Rachael starts making masks. She says she does it mostly in winter because in summer they are camping. The interviewer asks what he does with a bull caribou's hide once it is killed. Rachael says they spread it outside where it's killed so the wind and sun can dry it. Some people bring it into the house so that it dries. It's left flesh side up. It is very hard to dry skin in fall-time. In springtime it would be easier. After the skin is dried one brings it in and spreads in on the floor for a while and then one can start scraping it. It's better to start scraping the hide right after it's brought in, because then it gets really hard and dry from the heat. [There are clonking noises in the background.]

At 13:35 the interviewer asks what kind of a scraper they use for scraping. They use a scraper with a wood handle and metal for scraping. The interviewer asks how the skin looks after its scraped and Rachael tells that it's white. Without scraping it's dark. They estimate how many masks they will be making and scrape accordingly. After scraping, they cut the pieces out for masks. They just put the mould [for mask making] on top of the hide and cut it out. Then they take hair off the caribou with an Eskimo ulu. Some people use knife and know how to use it but Rachael says she always uses ulu which is an Eskimo women's knife. They take the hair off and put the skin in boiled tea or coffee. They let it sit in there. Some just put it [the skin] in and then put it on mould but Rachael always lets her skins sit in the brew for a while to get a color.

The interviewer clarifies that Rachael can choose the color she likes and she confirms. Rachael continues that there are two ways to choose colors: If one wants really red one doesn't boil it much. When one boils it really well it becomes brown like Eskimo skin. With coffee one gets really dark color but Rachael hasn't used that before. Then, after one puts the skin in tea and lets it sit there for a while, one can put the skin on the mould and put stitches in the eyes and mouth and all around the mould.

At 17:00 the interviewer clarifies if the mould is made of wood. Rachael says it's all made out of wood. Then the interviewer asks Rachael to tell if the skin sticks to the mould. Rachael says the only way is to sow it on and that there are little holes in the mould where one can put the needle through to stitch in eyes and mouth and right besides the nose. As long as one puts in those stitches, the skin stays on.

The interviewer asks if they do anything to make the skin stay on the sides of the mould. Rachael tells they sow it all around the face and that that's the first thing they do. Then the eyes and the mouth are the last things they do. The interviewer clarifies that this is done when the hide is very wet so it stretches, and Rachael confirms this, saying that they get it real wet and put the skin in. Then one has to leave it for quite a while so it can stretch. It depends on the temperature on how long they have to leave the skin to dry. With Rachael's heater the drying time is overnight.

At 19:22 the interviewer asks which side of the skin is outside when they put it on mould. Rachael says the hairy side is the inside and scraped side is outside. After the

skin has dried, they take it off and hang it and then start making eyes and mouth with a really sharp pocket knife. They put a hole in and take all the stitches off the mould. There are lots of them and they are all taken out.

After putting the holes in, Rachael always puts in eye lashes with needle and sinew. She doesn't use glue or dental floss like some people do. She's afraid that things would fall off if she used glue and so she uses sinew around the eye lashes. Rachael says it's really hard when one first tries it but gets easier when one gets used to it. Then she puts in eye brows and hair from caribou. For women she puts bull caribou around the neck. That's where they get white hair. Caribou have really white hair in fall time. Sometimes they use wolverine tail when they want to make the women look young. After eyelashes, she puts in hair and after that she puts in mustaches.

The interviewer asks if all the mustaches, hair and eyelashes are made of caribou. Rachael says yes, but that sometimes one can use wolf's legs and that some use wolverine or anything that looks good on masks. As long as it's something that's good for mustaches or eye lashes. Wolf's legs are really pretty on masks. The ruff is put in after everything in the face is done. They use wolf and wolverine, fox, lynx or anything that is good for the ruff. They mostly use wolf hair. Some men hunt wolves in the fall and that is used for masks but the skin is not good for anything if they are killed in summer.

24:32 The interviewer asks how long they have been making masks. Rachael says they've been making them for about 4 years. She started making them when she was 27 years old. She had trouble at first but she got better when she started all over again. When she made the first ones, she didn't really know how. She learned from her brother and sister-in-law who were the ones to start mask-making. Their names are Justus and Ethel Mekiana.

The interviewer asks how Rachael got the moulds for making her masks and she tells that the first one she got was from her brother who made them. [Child's voice and noise in the background.] Now she has more moulds than before. She gets them from friends and relatives. There are lots [of moulds] around now and Rachael has been learning to make them. She says that lots of women make moulds now.

The interviewer asks her name and she says it's Rachael Sikvayugak. Her maiden name was Rachael McKenna but she married a man from Point Barrow and they

lived there for a while before coming back and starting to make masks. [Break in the recording.]

At 36:34 the interviewer asks who does the skinning of the caribou and a woman's voice [Later identified as Lela Ahgook] tells the men do that. They also cut up the meat or the women do that. When a woman cuts up a caribou, she takes off the head first and then the legs and sinews. The sinew is found from the back of the caribou. After that, the stomach is taken off and after that the meat is cut. They take off ribs too.

The interviewer wants to know what is done with the meat after it's been cut and Lela says it is put in racks so it can be retrieved in wintertime. Some take it home to be dried. It will be frozen too. When people take meat home, they put it in cache that is off the ground, some higher and some lower. Other things that are made of caribou are sinew, mukluks, some make them for parkas and some for masks after the hides have been dried.

29:47 The interviewer and Lela talk about sinew: After the sinew has been taken off the back of the caribou, it's put in water so it will be whiter. They take the leftover meat off the sinew and then put the sinew on the porch to dry. It dries overnight and it's put away for later use.

Sinew is used for sowing mukluks and parkas, masks. They use sinew for everything. The interviewer asks what they do with the sinew if they want to make it really tough. Lela says she hasn't done anything like that with sinew but some older people have. [A child screams playfully in the background.]

31:16 And what kinds of things are made with caribou skin? Lela lists that it's made into parkas or Eskimo socks, Eskimo mittens, or pants. It's made into lots of things to keep warm in winter. They scrape the hides to prepare them, soak them with flour or some liver oil and after where they sit overnight, then they are scraped again so they will be soft and not stiff. It will make soft mittens. They use water and flour in softening. People use the whole caribou hide for sleeping on or in sleds. When one packs ice, one can use hide so they won't fall when tied with a rope.

The speaker's name is Lela Ahgook. She's lived in Anaktuvuk Pass all her life. [End of the recording.]