

September ²⁷ 29, 1988
Knowledge of Native Elders
Edward & Margaret Penetac
By: Arlene Glenn

Edward and Margaret presented two books to the class, the first was titled Goodbye My Island. The author of the book had arrived to King Island by the North Star Boat. Edward remembered that the North Star had requested him to go to the other side of the island to pick someone up. Edward's bother-in-law accompanied him over the island and they picked up Jean Rogers (Author of the book).

The second book they presented was written by a priest they both knew when the priest moved to King Island. In it they showed the class an Eskimo lamp that all the houses on King Island used at one time. This lamp heated the whole house and was used to cook their meals and make their coffee. Some homes had two lamps at each side of the house. The lamp used seal oil as fuel sometimes mixed with moss to burn the oil slowly. They also used seal blubber and old muktuk in the lamp to last longer. They also baked bread in an oven made from stovepipes pieced together. Kerosene lamps and coleman stoves later replaced the seal oil lamps.

Foggy weather sometimes covered only the bottom half of the island. At one time two of Edward's sons went up the island with sling shots hunting for birds. He had told them not to go up while it was still foggy. He had to go and search for them and spotted them. The boys didn't know he spotted them and he caught them from behind, then took them back home to the village.

Both men and women go crab fishing in the Fall. They would dig a 5-6 inch hole which is sometimes 5-6 feet deep into the ice.

They have similiar Eskimo Dances like the North Slope with differences in the motions and songs. Any person, especially elders, made new songs and the motions of the songs. Women also made songs. Whoever makes a new song make the dance motions for the song and teaches the other community members the dance when they gathered together. Margaret was a dancer in the King Island group when she lived there. They once travelled down to Washington for a dance performance.

The most difficult job that Margaret thought was the job of scraping skins. Skins they used to make clothing from. Ugruk (Bearded Seal) skin was used to make mukluk soles. Reindeer skin for parkas, mittens, mukluks, and socks. The hair was cut off the ugruk skin before drying it for a water proof type of material used on mukluks and mittens. The

mukluks had no lining but rather they used Reindeer leg skin socks. Grass was used for insoles. Grass was gathered by everyone before winter. Knives were made from a certain type of steel that kept its sharpness longer. Ulu (women's knife) were made from handsaws.

The women and girls wore homemade dresses with rickrack and bias tape for decoration. The material came from Nome. A pattern was used from their old dresses. The hand was used to measure size for mukluks. Women sewed individually and the girls learned to sew by watching the older women. Carving was also learned by watching others and "playing" with ivory. Edward used a bow and mouthpiece to carve. He carved what he saw.

There were three qargi (Club Houses) each with it's own name. A person belonged to only one club house, the club house that his father and family went to from generation to generation. There were no club houses in Nome.

The King Island people stayed at the east end of Nome. They gathered in a certain building for Eskimo Dances. They used to gather outside at a turned skin boat to carve, now they carve individually at home.