

Knowledge of Native Elders
Larry and Martha Matfay
Summary, February 16, 1989

by: Chris Alexie

This short summary of one of Larry Matfay's lectures during last week in class consists of these subjects: 1) Seal- how the skin is used. 2) Ciqlluaq- materials used for structuring. 3) Igalluk- how fish are prepared and stored. 4) Holidays- few local holidays celebrated annually. 5) Burials- what people in the village do with the deceased body.

SEAL

The class today started with Eliza Jones asking a question that the students turned in. The first question was about whether or not walrus skin was ever used on kayaks. Larry answered that harbor seal skin was used. People on the island did not use walrus skin, because there are no walrus around the island. Continues...Larry's father hunted the biggest seals he can get to use it's skin on kayaks. He skinned and fleshed the skins very carefully, then dried the skins. After the skins were dry he would scrape the fat off; once the fat was off he would roll the skins up and soak them in the swamp some where behind the village. A few days later he would get the skins and rub the hair off from the skins with his hands and wash them in clean water. Then he stretched

the skins on a board using seal hide as a rope. While drying the skins, he would try to keep the skin from becoming over exposed to the sun by keeping the skin in a shaded place. The reason why he keeps the skin from becoming over exposed is because if the skin was exposed to the sun for too long, it would get hard and stiff which would make it hard to sew and also it would make it hard to wrap around the frame of the kayak.

CIQLLUAQ

Ciqlluq also called barabara was usually made of drift wood, mud, and grass. Larry said that they would pick drift wood from the beach and split them for the walls. They used mud for insulation and the roof was covered with grass. The roof was slanted in such a way that it would not leak when it rained. The cooking was done outside and the rocks were heated and brought into the ciquuq for heat. Every one worked to keep their area and of the rest of the ciquuq clean. The ciquuq had a grass flooring that they changed about once a week.

IQALLUK

Larry also talked about fish preservation. During mid summer they would cut and dried salmon. Once the fish were dried they would store them in sheds and some in kegs. They used almost every part of the fish including the roe(eggs) and the head, except the guts. Once the fish was dried they

would get cotton wood or alders to smoke the salmon with. Fish back bone called suniq is taken out with some meat on it and dried. Kac'amaasaq is split dog salmon with the bone left on one side and wave-cut on the other side and hung to sun dry. The qaryat (fish eggs) is put in a sack and soaked in fresh water. They turn white, then once the eggs are white they drain the water out put them in kegs and crush them with a masher. Then it is covered tightly and stored in a cool place. Some of the egg is used to make piginaq. It is mashed together with potatoes, berries, and other ingredients and served. Aged fish egg is called sisuq and kinuwaq is boiled fish. Uumatak is boiled half dried fish and sigaq is half dried smoked fish that is cut up and baked in the oven with some other ingredients. Two whole fish tied together at the tail and hung to dry is called kanartaq. Suluunaq is salted fish, that is soaked in salt water then stored.

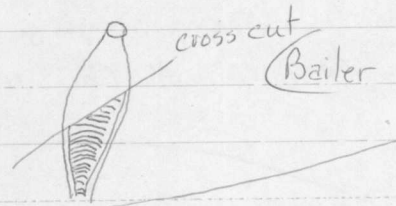
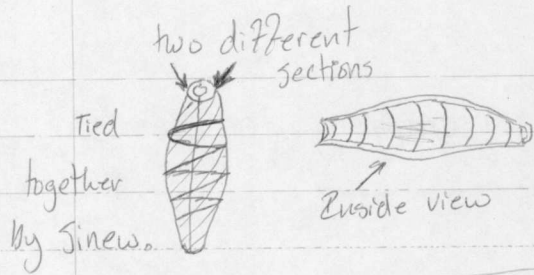
HOLIDAYS

People prepare a few days before Russian Christmas on January seven by baking cakes and pirak(fish pie). They also make a star to go starrng with. The activities last for three days. They go starrng, singing songs in front of every house for about fifteen minutes. They get some candies and some other goodies at each house. Then Russian New Years falls on January fourteen, they ring the church bell. And the young ones have dances, thats about all. Then Easter is

another big holiday. There are other holidays such as the saints days. On saints days such as St. Micheals day the people who are named Micheal would invite people to their homes for dinner after church. The game that people played when the days were longer is called the sun riser, which Larry demonstrated in class one day. He said that his parents played the string game during fall. And they played it to hold the sun back to keep it from setting too fast.

BURIALS

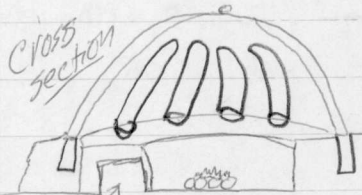
Larry talks about burials next. He said during his time people were buried in coffins. When some one died they brought the body to the church and kept it there for a few days. The men got together to dig the grave then the body was brought to the grave with the people following behind. After the burial the family of the deseased invited the people to eat at their home after the burial.



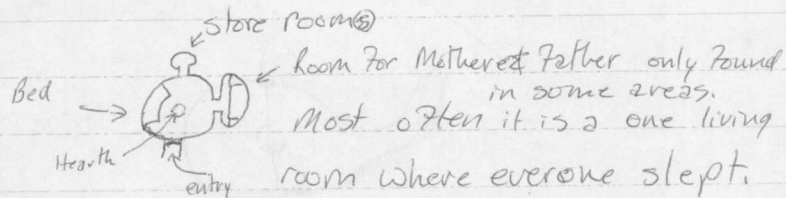
Bailer used in Kayaks.

(Barabara)

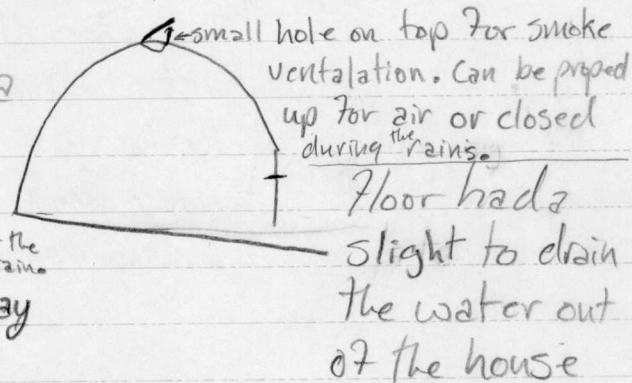
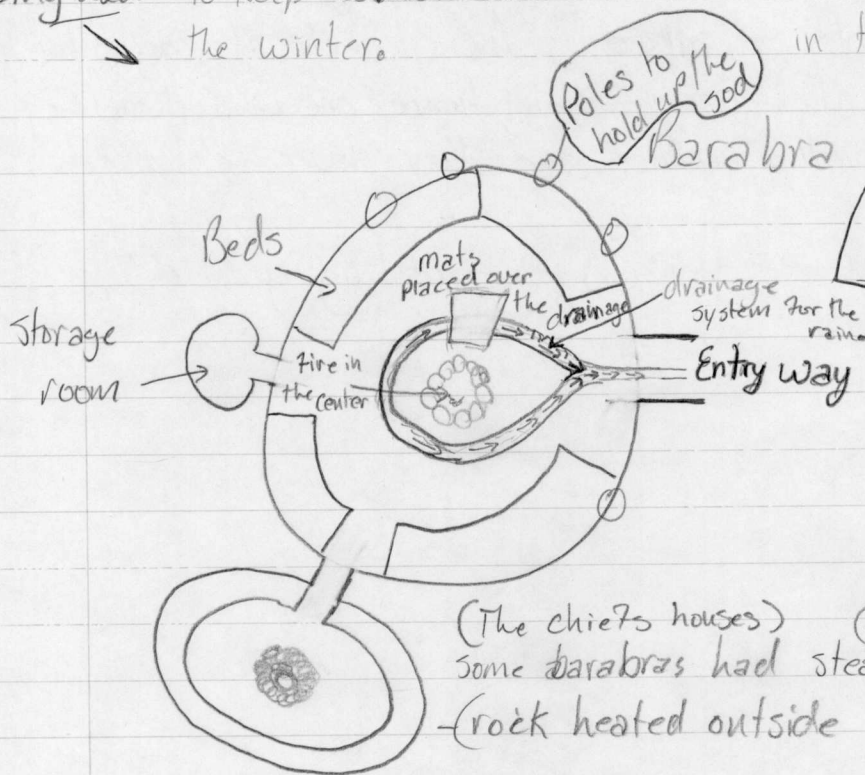
When the Russians first contacted Alutiqs this was the types of housing used.



some had a cold air traps to keep cold air out in the winters.

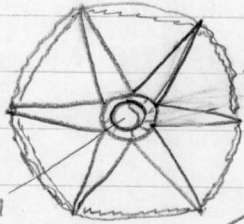


In some sod houses, esp. at Karlok they designed the house that had drainages build in to keep the floor dry.



(The chiefs houses) (hanyas)
Some Barabaras had steam house attached to them (rock heated outside brought inside)

January 7th Christmas Celebrations.



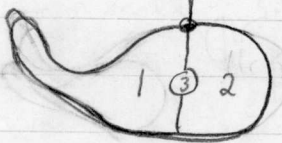
Icon
in the center

twirl it when singing.

← decorated with Christmas wrappings, ornaments.

(ugchaks) ?

Hit the string 7 pts, shape of a whale/or porpoise



Have to get (125)⁽²⁾ pts to win the game.
or used sticks

Kaguyak

- villages | two pilots bombed the Church at Eagle harbor
and when they were flying home the one who did the
actual bombing, crashed, and they never recovered
the body.
during World War II | Navy used Aoginak^{Island} as a testing ground for
bombing runs.
Russian Orthodox