

Rhona Nanalook
ANS 401
March 9, 1990

On February 27, 1990, Tuesday, Eliza Jones coordinated the class with the elders, Peter and Elsie John.

The things I remember were questions prompted by Eliza Jones. They were of Athabaskan rituals that I find related to its neighboring Alaska natives.

Long ago women in their menstration and birthing were taken outside away from the community for a couple of months. Until they were considered clean then they were taken back. For young girls, their mothers brought them food for survival. For birthing mothers there was another women along to help with the birth of the child.

Besides rituals there were others that were discussed in this meeting.

On February 20, 1990 Tuesday, Peter John talked about hunting the old ways the Athabaskan's did. Hunting was done with bow and arrows. Butchering the moose was done in a certain way. Besides hunting, the time and weather conditions were told was discussed concerning the position of the moon and the sun.

Steambathing was used alot by Athabaskans to relax the weary muscles. There were other discussions that dealt with dog training, how children played but how much of it was playd down and how gold mining brought bad effects to the land.

Knowledge of Native Elders
March 9, 1990
Peter and Elsie John
By: Rhona Nanalook

Our last meeting with Peter John was a pleasure to attend which I attended Thursday, March 8, 1990. There were various kinds of discussions related to the Athabaskan culture of the past. One thing Peter John talked about were of the pictures Eliza Jones prompted. I found them interesting because Peter John identified them in his Athabaskan language. To me it was like visiting Athabaskan culture of material things and its cognitive relationships.

There was a picture of a cradle made of blanket. It is called, "Teh-see-bee ". Long ago they were made of birch bark basketry and most of them had a rattling object that babies loved. Peter John says that the Athabaskans had them for 400 years or longer. Once Teh-see-bee saved two boys that were drowning, but along the river they floated and were saved.

"T's-etu" -plant gathering for medicine was done portrayed by the picture. It was done by knives, and certain handling to the standing birch tree to get its sap that is used for medicine. The certain kind of birch where medicine is retained is called, "Teh'sit'u".

Many more Athabaskan materials of the past were told by Eliza Jones. They wore rabbit skin parka and how it was prepared, muskrat (Tessin) skin and how it was harvested, the use of caribou skin and its preparation to suit sewing

texture. Winter homes have fire as a heating resource was kept on, how Athabaskans created was kept on. How tools from modern materials were formed associated with traditional items. An example is the knife Peter John brought to class. Another unique Indian home, tee-pee made of caribou skin was discussed of its poles that were tied up in a certain way for the smoke to come out.

Another motivation for courage was discussed. By wishing nothing is done by concentrating on how plans are thought and planned.

In closing statement that made the class time interesting was, "Put up with everything you have to face. Never give up. Always overcome what is before you. Never get mad, you're mad at the darkness. Leave with care and love!" The quotation was quoted by Peter John at the end of the class.