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Tape Number: H90-06-74
Collection Name: Alaska Native Elders in Residence Program
Date: March 5, 1985

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[side one]

Dennis Demmert [DD]: Let's see today is--you're going to be gone...

Hannah Solomon [HS]: Thursday.

DD: Thursday. Next week what I'd like to do, Hannah, is--we're having Charlie Brush coming up, but I'd like to have he and you and the classes together, as well, next week.

HS: Um hmm. Is that on Thursday?

DD: Tuesday and Thursday, yeah. In the past we've done that, we've had the elder...

HS: Who is he?

DD: He's from Nulato. He's worked with Eliza Jones in the Language Center from time to time. I've never met him, but he's worked with the Language Center, and he has agreed to come. In the past it's worked to have two of the elders in the same class. So that's what we'd like to do next week. So we have two more classes.

HS: Two more. Next week, uh huh.

DD: Right. Even though we haven't had much time to talk, Hannah, we talked about new things that you've seen and also about the

river boats coming in and bringing supplies before the planes started to come in. And we were talking about, oh, when they first brought electricity in to Fort Yukon. Do you remember that?

HS: I remember things, but I never remember years. But it was in early '40's. That's when we got our electricity. They had it uptown, in the business places. And then it took quite a while before it went down to the Native village. But the first electricity we had, boy, everybody was so happy. We used to--first I remember when I was growing up, lot of time we run out of kerosene. We use candle. In those days they have only one room log cabins. There's no partitions in those little--the cabins might be--some cabins are even smaller than this. They have wood stove there, little table. Just wooden beds. And they have kerosene. And when they don't have kerosene, they use candle. And later on, they start using gas lamps. And that gas lamp, it just burns so many hours. And we have--if we want to stay up longer, we have to fill it up again. And I remember there was one time they were dancing. They had kerosene lamps in the corners to give out light for the dancing. And when first start having our electricity, boy, it was wonderful. My boys laugh about it several years ago. We went to the movie. We left the kids at home. And the power house caught fire. It was a separate from the main one that we have, but it belongs to the men that was in charge of that power. They said their older brother grab a broom and standing under the bulb. And he told those--those little ones were standing behind him. This is what they told me. The little ones were standing behind the older one. And the older one was holding a broom stick, and he said, "If it start sparking up there, I'm going to hit it. You kids run out!" [laughs] Just because there's a fire uptown, and we got electricity, they think it's going to be

affected down here [laughs].

DD: [inaudible] fire?

HS: Yeah! [laughs] And there's other--lot of things that came into our village that I remember. There was one time--well, like I said, we celebrate only some few holidays. We don't know anything about Halloween. And there was one night. Everybody was home, I suppose. All of a sudden a bell start ringing. And when a bell ring, that means there's a fire or something going on. And we always have to--the Native people seems like always run up to where the white people are. We probably think that they're smarter than we are. Find out things from them, probably. Because down the village, we just grab our coat, and we were all running up! So slippery, too. And by the time we got close to town, somebody says, "That's just a Halloween jokes." Well, we didn't know Halloween then [laughs]. That was my first time to find out about Halloween [laughs]. A ghost came in and starting ringing the bell.

And, you asked me about steamboats. Well, steamboats are the ones that bring the supplies to the villages. It starts up at Dawson, and it stops at all the villages. It goes down to Saint Michael's and then come back up again. And I used to--I remember that us kids always get on the boat when it lands. And we didn't--you know how kids just want to go everywhere. We go everywhere. And they used to have animals on each side on the bottom part of the boat. Like cows, chickens, and whatnot. They probably take them down where people are farming. We don't know. And the cooks on the boat used to be so good to the kids. They give us cake, piece of cake, or donuts or--oh, the kids just go in there and just want to be there. And they have several other boats, like there'd be one for the Army. The army boat has a--the pipe is brown, and

we know what it is . And us kids used to be so scared of them!
And like now, you go out and you see airplane lands, you see mostly
old people. Like, well, I just found that out by my only
experience. That old people did their work in their lifetime. Now
they want to go out and see the world. We used to wonder why
there's no young people and no young kids. And when we see nuns on
those--among the tourists, boy we used to be scared of them. We'd
run back [laughter]. I don't know why. We run back in the brush,
and we just look at them from back there [laughs]

DD: So they came on the tourist boats?

HS: Uh huh. I remember, talking about Army boats, I remember--and
another thing, when we see steamboats, we know steamboat going to
get there that day. And they see the smoke way over the trees, you
know. Everybody start hollering, "Steamboat!" [laughs] And
during that--the boat that sunk, Titanic? That I just had to--
after it happened, it was so sad when I thought about it. I was
still young. I don't remember--I don't know what year that
happened. But the Army boat came up, going up the river. And when
they left Fort Yukon, way until they went around the bend, they
just whistled, you know. They blow their whistle. Saying good-bye
to everybody. And lot of people--I spoke about Archdeacon Stuck.
Walter Harper was with him climbing Mount McKinley. Walter Harper
got married to Fort Yukon, at Fort Yukon, with a nurse. And they
got on that boat. They were on that boat. And they traveled along
with them. And one of our Native boy was there, too. And they're
the one that got in the boat and sunk. That boat that sunk,
Titanic?

DD: Oh, is that right?

HS: Yeah. And Archdeacon was the one that raised that Walter Harper. Boy, I remember he took it so hard. He just couldn't believe it.

DD: Walter Harper was on the Titanic?

HS: Uh huh. 'Cause Archdeacon just couldn't believe it. 'Cause he said he's a well swimmer. And he just can't believe it. But they found--they just sink. It shows that he dragged his wife to the shore, and that's why they both died. So they think that he was saving his wife. And he worked so hard and just couldn't make it after that.

And steamboat, people used to cut wood for steamboat. It burns wood. They'd be a lot of people on the river cutting wood. And the steamboat used to stop there to get the boat. We got our fish camp six miles below Fort Yukon. And there was one old white man cut steamboat wood. And it lands there. Boy, we used to be glad. And when we want to go to Fort Yukon, they take us up. Sometimes we get stuck, we don't know how to get back home, but we just want to ride on steamboat, so we get on [laughs]. They used to get the boys to do the work. Just all hand work. No machine work at all.

DD: What kind of work? Cutting wood or...

HS: Cutting wood. Sure, cutting wood with their hand saw.

DD: So, did the people sell wood to the...

HS: Uh huh. To the steamboats.

DD: To the steamboats. So they made a little money that way.

HS: Uh huh. Even unloading the boat, there's no machine. Everybody has to work. They hire a lot of people to unload the

boat.

DD: Yeah, and what they had was mainly for the two stores? Is that right? Or the stores?

HS: The mission, too. The mission and the hospital.

DD: Oh, the mission as well. Yeah.

HS: The school.

DD: There's a question over there.

Student: Do they actually pay them, or did they give them goods in exchange for their labor?

HS: Well, I don't know. I couldn't say. I spoke about our first Christmas, one time. We had this Christmas tree in the church, and all the school kids used to be the one to decorate that tree. What we decorated it with paper color. Rings. You know, those strips where you just strip it and, uh huh. And string popcorns, and those were the only two decorations we have on our Christmas trees. One spring we went out trapping in the springtime. Everybody goes out ratting in April. And one of the boys went down to Fort Yukon, came back up, and Archdeacon Stuck sent me a package. And I open it, and it was a popcorn, but it's yellow like. And I open it, and I stuck it in my mouth. Oh! Boy, that was good. That's Cracker Jack. [laughter] I remember, I took off all my clothes, and I got under the blanket. I just chew and chew [laughter] all night long! And while I'm eating it, I found something in there. It was a little toy [laughs]. 'Cause we know only popcorn, plain popcorn, before. And anything new, Archdeacon Stuck used to treat kids so good. Anyway to make them happy.

DD: Was that when you were a little kid? When that first brought that Cracker Jack?

HS: Yeah, uh huh.

DD: It really surprises me how similar some things are. I have an older brother who--well, my grandmother owned a store. And the thing that he liked most of all is Cracker Jack. And once he was able to get a little sailor suit. Remember they guy with the sailor suit? And he would do the pose with the salute for my grandmother. And there was no way she could do anything but give him Cracker Jack. But that was his favorite. He really enjoyed them.

How about some other first, Hannah. People used to dress mainly in things that they made. Wools for wintertime. What about summer wear. What did they wear for the summer?

HS: Well, I don't know.

DD: Were they already using cotton when you were growing up?

HS: Oh yeah, uh huh.

DD: And so even before you can remember, they started bringing cotton in, the cotton clothing.

HS: Uh huh. Well, people always tell us they used mostly skins, but that was way before our time. So my time, we just--things are just in already.

DD: There was another question, on another kind of thing, and it has to do with: all over the world, in different parts of the world, there are supernatural beings. Like in the Himalayas there's--what's that called, the Abominable Snowman? And then in,

is it Ireland where the Loc Ness, or is that Scotland? Scotland. The monster in the lake, Loc Ness monster, and then in different parts of the lower '48 there are stories of the--what do they call their...

Students: Sasquach.

DD: Yeah, Sasquach. Were there any things like that in your area...

HS: I don't think so.

DD: Were there anything that people--anyone out there. Oh, and with some of the Inupiaq people, there's the little people. And you don't remember anything that--any kind of supernatural being that people...

HS: No. Only thing I remember is--they call them brush men.

DD: Brush men? Yeah.

HS: This is just what I was told.

DD: Yeah.

HS: There's a woman older than I am, they think that brush man stole her. And they used to say the brush man don't like half-breeds. And she was a half-breed. Well, I think that after that I hear the people talk about it. They think she just lost and lost track, what it was. Because they found her sleeping under the tree. And my mother said that my father's brother died just before that. And he was still feeling low when somebody came in and said that the brush man stole a child. So everybody ran in the woods and look around for her. My father grab a gun and said--he was so bitter. I think he just felt low, yet. He said, "I'll kill him if

I get to see him." And everybody just look, and they found her sleeping under the tree. And the people used to say that the brush man found out that she is half-breed, so he just left her [laughs]. That's the only one I know.

DD: Yeah. So they did talk about a brush man, then. Yeah.

HS: Uh huh.

Student: What did brush men look like? Did they have [inaudible]...

HS: I don't know.

Student: They're just regular people that...

HS: They're regular people, but just wandered away from the people and just stay out there in the woods, I guess.

Student: Yeah, they left civilization [inaudible].

HS: Yeah. Lot of people say they seen tracks or their doing out there in the woods. Mostly up at Chandalar area. They say--I think that's the last place, I think, that we heard things like that.

Student: They say they really do eat [inaudible]. I don't know about any more. They said the last two died or something a few years ago.

HS: They said they used to steal from people when the people have camps. And they'll be missing lot of things.

DD: And they would figure that the brush man took their things, then, huh?

HS: Uh huh.

DD: Was the hospital there in Fort Yukon when you were born--even before you were born? Can you remember that being there all the time?

HS: I don't think so. I think it was built afterwards.

DD: Oh, I see.

HS: Because Archdeacon Stuck climbed the mountain, what year? Way later. And he wrote a book and built that church up, because I remember all the men were working, building it.

DD: Yeah. Do you remember anytime, before the hospital came in, when there were accidents when people got hurt, like breaking an arm or a leg or something?

HS: People treat one another.

DD: If somebody had a broken arm or leg, they could take care of each other and set it themselves...

HS: Yeah.

DD: ...even though they didn't have a doctor's degree?

HS: Yeah, I think so. Because--I don't know, they just--whatever, they took care of one another.

DD: Yeah.

Student: There wasn't anybody special in the village that they would go see?

HS: They probably did. That part I don't know.

Student: Like in the schools, did the teachers have [inaudible]...

HS: Teachers, people depend on teachers a lot, and missionaries. I been talking about Dr. Burke so much, I brought his picture out.

DD: Oh!

HS: He became a preacher for us, too, later. He's the one that build at Fort Yukon.

DD: Is this from a newspaper? Or a magazine?

HS: Well, I don't know. I just had it. And I brought a picture out that my granddaughter made for herself. Just thinking that they used to dress like that in early days. She made that for herself. And she got married in it. And this is when my grandson wore his father's things. So they were both dressed like in the early days. All with moose skins.

DD: Everything is moose skin and beads, and her foot gear is moose skin?

HS: Uh huh.

DD: And then they both had headbands. And are those--oh, that's on her hair. I thought...

HS: Um hmm.

DD: That's all beaded.

HS: Yeah.

DD: Are they both in Fort Yukon?

HS: She's married and in Fairbanks, now. He's at Fort Yukon.

Student: [inaudible]

HS: [inaudible] uh huh.

Student: [inaudible]?

HS: Uh huh. Yeah.

Student: I'm kind of curious about what kind of land was around there. Whether it was trees [inaudible].

HS: Oh, we do have lots of trees up there.

Student: Well, [inaudible] along rivers is so flat.

HS: It is flat. Fort Yukon is really a flat country.

DD: What kind of trees--they're both kinds...

HS: Like the kind we have here...

DD: Like spruce and the leafy trees, too, birch. Lots of birch.

HS: Um hmm.

Student: Hannah, can we see those pictures?

HS: Sure. And I brought a council that came out several years ago when they honored Chief Isaac. I just wanted to show it so that the potlatch, the memorial potlatch, that they have, when they have a lot of gatherings like that, they bring in all the supplies, guns and blankets and whatever. They have an open party for everybody. This is just, it's still going on, so this is not an old one.

Student: Are there special rules about who gets certain kinds of gifts?

HS: I think so, the way I see them doing it, I'm pretty sure.

Student: Hannah, where is the strap? What is the [inaudible]?

HS: That's it.

Student: Dentalium?

HS: Dentalium [inaudible], uh huh.

Student: Where did you get dentalia?

HS: You can buy it.

Student: From white people or from the...

HS: Um hmm. Well, in early days they had it. I don't know where they--I couldn't say where they get it. But they do have it. I think that's the one that they really think the world of. Anymore questions?

DD: Do you remember ever seeing an accident when someone did break an arm or a leg, and how they took care of them or--when someone was hurt?

HS: Not really. I don't think so. Because my old man's nephew has a scar down this way. Lois will remember him. And my husband said that he was the one that did it. They had double pick axe in those days, you know. And he was splitting wood, and that kid came up behind him. He didn't know it. And he cut him right open. And he said that his mother sewed that up with her hair.

DD: And who was this that was cut. Was...

HS: His name is Daniel Roberts?

Student: Who?

HS: Daniel Robert, eh? Daniel Robert. You see the scar.

Student: I don't remember.

HS: You don't remember him, eh?

Student: I mean, I don't recognize [inaudible].

HS: The scar. You don't remember, uh huh. Yeah.

Student: I didn't go to Venetie for many years, you know.

HS: Yeah.

Student: I always go to Arctic Village. Since my mother moved [inaudible].

DD: Did you grow up in Venetie or Arctic Village?

Student: No, Arctic Village.

DD: Other questions?

Student: Hannah, last time you were telling us about the first time you saw a black person, and how you used to call them nigger babies because you didn't know any better. And, sometimes for me, being a white person, we don't always know--we use words sometimes that we don't know that hurt other people's feelings. And I wondered if there were some words--if I call you Native, does that make you feel like a nigger baby? Is that the same kind of word? Or is it...

HS: Well, you know there's a lot of people have different feelings. We're Indians. And sometimes people will say, "You're Eskimo." Some people think that--they don't like that. But, for myself, I

don't. But, believe me, it does bother people's minds.

Student: We didn't call colored people nigger babies...

HS: It was just games. We don't know, uh huh, it was just a game.

Student: It was a game. We didn't call them, you know...

HS: We don't dare...

Student: We didn't even know what it meant.

HS: We don't--Native people have respect for people. And we just always have to watch what we're saying. That's what we were taught, anyway. We always was told, "Watch what you're saying." So we always have respect for the people.

DD: In villages in Alaska, before there became a general awareness of black people as negroes, which is what they were known as then generally, the term that we learned, and it was the same in Southeast, was just nigger. It was not negro. I didn't know there was a word, "negro." I knew there were black people and they were called niggers. That's all. I mean, it wasn't meant as a pejorative. That was just the term that was known.

Student: That's why I was asking about the term Native. Because everybody uses it, and I wouldn't know how that would feel; if that's a bad term.

DD: Well, there's one thing I would say about that. And that's that the Eskimo people don't like to be called Indian, even though...

HS: Uh huh. Yeah.

DD: ...Congress defines Indian as including Eskimo people. And so

whenever a law says "Indian," that means Eskimo as well. Eskimos don't like that. And Indian people--what's the stereotype of Alaska? The Native people are Eskimo, right? And Alaskan Indians don't like to be called Eskimo, either. And Aleuts don't like to be called either.

Student: I wonder if Eskimos like to be called that.

HS: They do. They do. They got feelings, too.

Student: Yeah, well, I used to live up north, you know, in Selawik. They used to call me Indian [inaudible]. And they were like bush men. They were considered a ghost that would come in and take little children and stuff. But it wasn't their own, it was the Eskimo [inaudible]. [inaudible] you know. It was really fun. [inaudible].

HS: Funny thing, about three years ago I was with one Eskimo woman. And what did we talk about? Blueberries. I asked her, "Have you been out to pick blueberries?" She says she never want to, because she feel like there's an Indian behind all those trees. [laughter] And she doesn't know that I'm Indian! [laughter]

Student: She put her foot in her mouth, huh?

Student: Talking about the tundra, and stuff like that, when you went berry picking--did you berry pick?

HS: Uh huh.

Student: Did you go berry picking? What did you do when, like, I know in my experience that the bees, maybe like up north in the tundra where the beehives are in the ground? And maybe in the trees, up in the trees. But, what did you do for bee stings?

HS: Oh, we chew leaves. We chewed leaves and put it right on it.

Student: [inaudible]

HS: Uh huh.

DD: What kind of leaves.

HS: Just anything, anything that we grab. We have to do it right there. Uh huh.

Student: I should have done that.

HS: Yeah. [laughter] Talking about berries, we used to go out picking berries where there's no lakes or no rivers, and they'll be swampy place. And we used to get water, as much as we can. Now the people just so scared to do things. And we don't carry much. Maybe handkerchiefs, or sometimes we have dish cloth or something. And we used to drain that water through. And we use it to drink it out there on tundra where there's no way to get water.

DD: Other questions?

Student: Do they hunt bear, at all?

HS: Oh, the bear just comes around. I don't think they go out hunting for it [laughs].

Student: Did they ever shoot them in the fall and take the bear grease? [inaudible]?

HS: Uh huh, yeah. They make nice grease. You mix it with moose grease. Nice and rich.

Student: Do you know if they ever mix it with tar and--pine tar?

HS: I don't know.

Student: Put it on your roofs.

HS: I don't know.

Student: Is that what they did in Sweden?

Student: Yeah.

DD: How did they use the grease, when they mixed it, then? Were there certain foods that you ate it with?

HS: Well, we used to fry and bake with it, too, uh huh.

DD: Just like lard, then?

HS: Uh huh. In Fall time, when people go hunting, there's no waste of anything. We use up everything. The marrow you pound and make a grease out of it, and then you pound the bones, and you pound that, and boil it, and get the grease from the top. There's nothing that we waste. And the moose hair, we save that for dog house. So there's no waste whatever.

Student: What do you do with the hoofs?

HS: What's that?

Student: To the dogs? Hoofs?

HS: Hoofs? They boil them. They boil hoofs.

DD: There's a little village in Canada, just off the highway, where what they do with their hoofs is to make cups out of them and sell them to the tourists.

HS: I know. Uh huh.

Student: I was at a house this week, and they had ashtrays and a table, three legs and a little stool on top. I couldn't sit in it. It was so strange. [laughter]

DD: Other questions? How about taking about a ten minute break.

[tape begins again after break]

DD: Hannah, you were telling us about the caribou herds in the past. They went somewhere near there? And you went on some of the hunting trips, is that right? Was that as a girl, that you went out on those trips?

HS: No, after I was married.

DD: After you were married? Could you tell us about going on a caribou hunt?

HS: Caribou crossed above Circle. After the highway got so busy, they don't come over like they used to anymore. But I went along with my husband when they went out for caribou hunting. We had a big barge and a big boat that has an inside motor. And it has a canvas cover, so it's just like a house. Well, me and the kids went along. And we were up there. We see a few caribou passed. And they just let it go. And they know what is good. They know the one, the bull caribou, is coming in pretty soon. So when that comes in, they kill enough to take back down to Fort Yukon. Well, we started off. We got enough meat and we start off. Below where we were it is was so thick going across the river, we just have to land! Let it pass. We just can't travel along while the caribou is crossing. They wouldn't stop. They just have to go. And we...

DD: What river was that?

HS: What's that?

DD: The Yukon River?

HS: The Yukon River.

DD: Yeah.

HS: We ran into one herd like that up at Old Crow River too, Porcupine. And Paul used to do a lot of trading up to Old Crow. And I go along, too. And we came across to a herd that passed through the Porcupine River, too. Oh, it--the boat is wide. The boat is real wide. The barge. And the caribou is just right on the side of the boat. Whew! I got so scared. We were just inside. They couldn't land. We couldn't do nothing. We had an awful time to land on the bank.

DD: Did they swim right up to the barge?

HS: Uh huh! Well, it--like I said, they won't stop.

DD: They just kept going right near the barge, huh?

HS: They just have to keep on going. So those are the only two big, heavy herd of caribou I've seen. And they used to go up to-- from Fort Yukon to hunt for caribou, and they take a, oh, lots of meat back to Fort Yukon. Fort Yukon we don't have no caribou, just only moose. And, like I said the other day, that the widows take care of their families by themselves. And when they get back down to Fort Yukon, the men give them lot of meat that they can use for their kids. So the ladies will go out trapping and hunting and rabbit snares and cut wood, pack water. No BIA help, no nothing. People never got any help. So they had to do all the work by themselves. The only people that goes hunting that long from Fort

Yukon are the ones that has the boat and the engine. And they used to--people always share with one another. They never looked down on each other. They always shared.

DD: So whenever there were widow women, they'd help them [inaudible]?

HS: Uh huh. Help them as much as they can.

DD: Question?

Student: You said that when the road came [inaudible], the caribou didn't come anymore?

HS: Well, there's hardly any up that way. There's few, but not a big, heavy herd like they used to. I think mostly now those caribou travel from Arctic Village up to Old Crow, over the border, I think, on that side. I don't think there's too many on this side, now.

DD: And that was after you were married, when you went both of those places, huh. The Yukon, above Circle, and then...

HS: Um hmm, up the Porcupine.

DD: How long did it take you to get up to that? Do you remember?

HS: I don't remember.

DD: To the Porcupine. That was...

HS: The only thing I remember is, I think it was maybe '77. '77 or '78 or sometime. My son, Mardo, worked here for the winter. And he bought a boat and a motor. And we said we going to travel to Fort Yukon with the boat. Three of my grandchildren went with

us. We started here, over at Graeh!, and we went--we stop in every village. We stayed overnight at Rampart--I mean Nenana. And then all [inaudible] Nenana. And just way up the--we just kept going. When I think of it, it's so funny. It's right after break up time, and the water was just topped full. Just--it was so high that when we crossed the Yukon River, water was just like boiling. Those drift woods and everything. Even that we just crossed the river, just like we--we acted like we just had to get there! And there was one time, they were having trouble with engine. We couldn't land. We just went so far in the brush, and they had to walk in the water to get the motor fixed. And way up to all the villages we stay overnight. And from Beaver, we went to our old camp. And we stayed up there two weeks. Then we went back down to Beaver, then Steven's Village. And then--no, Beaver is the last village. From there we made a side trip. And we stayed over at Beaver and then Fort Yukon. And from Fort Yukon, I came over with the plane and [inaudible] and everything. And then we went back with boat, up to Old Crow. We traveled 1700 miles that summer. Boy, it was a long trip. But it was good! Going up the Porcupine River, that's the best channel that you can go on. The cliffs is so beautiful on each side. And it's so nice to travel in the boat in summer time. We never run into bad weather. We had nice weather all the way through.

DD: Your husband, Paul, fished and trapped both, huh?

HS: Yeah, uh huh.

DD: How far did he go from Fort Yukon when he trapped? Did he have to go a long ways?

HS: Well, like I say, we do some beaver. And then twenty-five

miles down the river, and then a hundred and fifty miles up the Beaver River. That's where we trapped.

DD: So that was a long trip.

HS: Uh huh.

DD: Did you--I don't remember, did you ever leave any of your children at the mission when you went trapping?

HS: No.

DD: You took them with you, or...

HS: Uh huh. We took them along until they was--three of them were school age when we move into town.

DD: And what did Paul do after that? Did he still go trapping?

HS: He started working in Fairbanks. Yeah, he works up here where there were building Ladd Field. He's a carpenter.

DD: So things really changed, then, with school. And children had to go to school, and you quite the trapping life to [inaudible]...

HS: My stepson was in the school, and what little he know, he taught those three kids. So they didn't have any trouble getting into the school.

DD: Any other questions?

Student: Yes, with boating being your only means of transportation, did your parents take you out to the [inaudible]?

HS: They never. They won't let the kids swim.

Student: Oh, my.

HS: Well, they just don't want them to. They're scared. They're scared of their just drowning, I think.

DD: Other questions?

Student: Do the people there learn how to swim at any age? Do you know how to swim?

HS: No. I was never taught. Uh huh. They just won't let us.

Student: Were there many drownings in the village.

HS: That I don't remember. When I first saw some boys dive, whew! Oh, my heart almost stopped! [laughter]

Student: Was that here in Fairbanks [inaudible]?

HS: Well, you know, there's puddles everywhere, where you can't stop kids from doing things. There's a lot of kids, when I grew up, they knew how to swim. They get out there to do it. Not everybody was not going to do it. It's just some.

DD: You had a question?

Student: [inaudible] Did you--was that like a hereditary thing and you just passed your trapline on to your children. Or did you buy it or...

HS: What do you mean?

Student: Well...

DD: Did Paul own his own trapline?

HS: Oh yeah. He cut his own trapline trail. He owns it.

Student: And then did you give that to your children? After...

HS: Well, we left it. It's just out there.

Student: And now anybody can use it?

HS: Probably [laughs]. We put in our Native allotment out there. We think we own it, but we don't know who's out there because we never been out there. People just go all over the place, so there might be some people living over there.

DD: Where did you select your allotment? By Beaver?

HS: Beaver Creek.

DD: Yeah. That's how far up the...

HS: One fifty.

DD: A hundred and fifty miles?

HS: A hundred and fifty miles from the mouth.

Student: How long did you camp there when you were trapping?

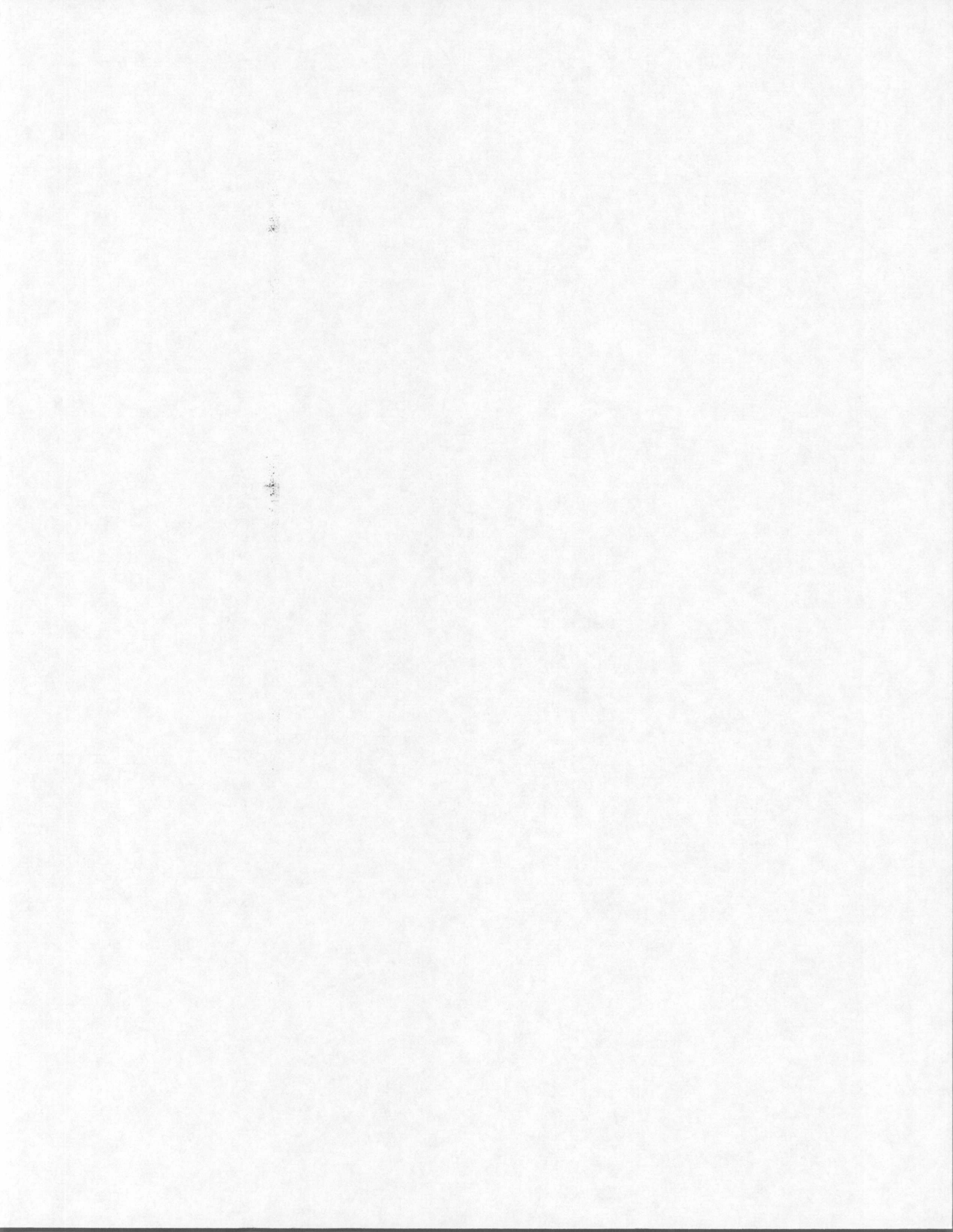
HS: Oh, September to June.

[side two]

HS: There's some more pictures that I brought out. I thought I'll tell you about it before you folks get to see it. I work--I never went, like I said when I sent for my birth certificate, they said I was up to seventh grade. But we never was graded when we were in school. We just getting through school in Fall time. School over in the springtime. We don't get no report cards, nothing. So we never know what grades we were in.

But the work I did was through the experience. I worked. I did

a lot of different kinds of work. I even cooked. I was a cook at the school, and I was in with lots of different organizations. Like I said, when I opened the Native Center here, it was all by myself. And then when I became sixty-five years old, when I was still working, that was the happiest. Now all you folks in here are young. That is the happiest days of my life. When I became sixty-five. Because it's so sad when we see the people just ruining their life. When they should be enjoying their health and their life. I'm not bragging about myself, but I'm a person that never took a drink in my life. My father used to love to drink. But when I became, we call it a woman, when I became a woman, he took me aside and talked to me the next day. He told me, "You're up to the age where you're going to do things the way you wanted to. But, I don't want you ever to drink." And that just stays in me. And I grew up with teenagers that drinks, have parties. I'll be right out there with them. I love to dance. I'll be out there with them all night long, but they never made me take one drink. And up to now, I never did. So I, when I became sixty-five years, I was so happy. So thankful. Even at the church I said it. Our church asks for a birthday prayer that they will say for us in church. And when I went up there, I told the preacher that I wanted to say something. And I gave thanks that I came that age. Now there's lot of ladies that get up to the age and they keep telling me, "We didn't know what you meant when you said that at church. But now we're up there, and we're so happy." So being old is a wonderful life. When we were young we never think. We never worry about anything. And I had so many kids, and when I was having the kids, I just look forward to their birthdays. So my birthday don't mean nothing. Now, after all my kids are grown, my kids start thinking of my birthday. So I'm just being paid for



what I did. [laughter] So this is the picture that was taken of me when I became sixty-five years old. And the birthday cake. And the gathering we had at Traveler's Inn.

Student: When is your birthday, Hannah?

HS: October the 10th. I'm seventy-five, now.

Student: What a big party!

HS: Um hmm. We had a big dinner. Having that many kids and having that many grandchildren, they're the one that come back to think of my birthday. And when I was growing up, when I was a child, people used to tease me lots, because you don't see too many half-breeds in those days. Very few. And this old lady used to rub my hair and said, "We can even build fire with your hair!" Because it's not the color of--it's not black. And they honored her here at the Doyon meeting, one time. They brought her in. You probably heard about this old lady that lived a long time. She died when she was a hundred and twenty-nine. Belle Herbert. And I sneak up there when they were having--they had her sit up there in the front. I sneak up there, and I told her who I am. She raised her hand and praised God, and she prayed for me right there.

Student: Did you know her?

HS: Always. I knew her always.

DD: And she recognized you at the meeting, at that Doyon meeting?

HS: Uh huh, yeah. My voice.

Student: [inaudible]

HS: What's that?

Student: When was that [inaudible]?

HS: Oh, I don't remember the year, but... Years is what I never remember.

DD: Was that about five years ago, or so?

HS: Well, probably.

DD: Yeah, I think so.

HS: [inaudible] Oh, longer than that. It was quite a while ago. She died about three or four years ago.

DD: Yeah.

HS: So it was way before that they brought her over.

Student: She lived in Fort Yukon [inaudible].

HS: She was living at Chalkyitsik at the time.

Student: Ah, she used to always carry that stick?

HS: Uh huh. Beaded cane.

Student: Yeah. Huh.

HS: So when you folks get up to sixty-five years remember me [laughs].

DD: Other questions? No more questions? I'm surprised.

Student: [inaudible]

HS: [laughs]

Student: I kind of wondered, one time you said that you'd given a

sermon for a boy who died, or a prayer for a boy who died. And you said that the people really appreciated that. And that you had done that many times and people always appreciated it. I wondered how they showed you that they appreciated it.

HS: Well, by saying it to me or--I know their feeling.

[tape ends]