



BERING STRAITS AGLUKTUK

Vol.XII, No.8 December 1985

BERING STRAITS NATIVE CORPORATION



LOVE, PEACE, HEALTH... MAY THEY ALL
COME TO YOU THIS HOLIDAY AS WE
SEND OUR VERY BEST WISHES FOR A...

MERRY CHRISTMAS



HEY RUDOLPH, I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE TURNED RIGHT—Santa's reindeer stop at the homes in the Bering Straits region FIRST on Christmas Eve.

Looking back

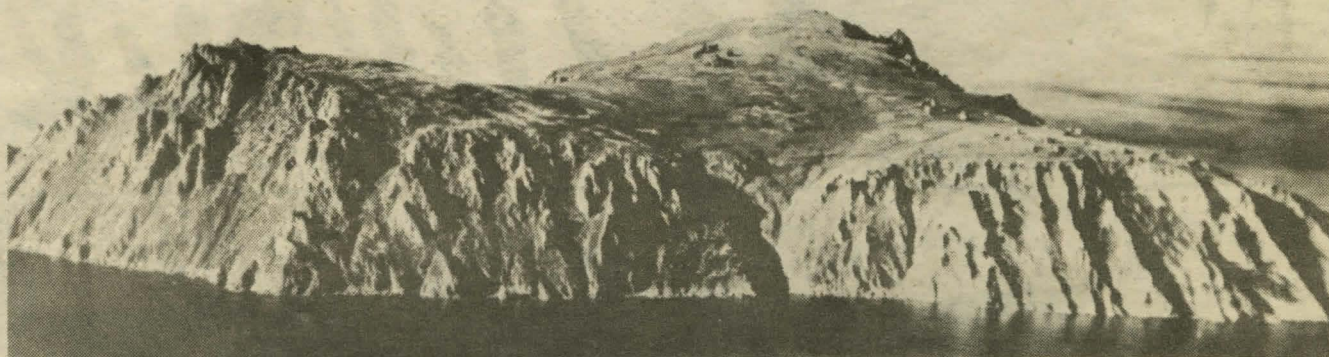
The old King Island photos in this issue are printed with permission from Kawerak's Eskimo Heritage Program. They were taken on King Island in 1937 & 1938 by Father Bernard Hubbard S.J. This Catholic priest spent two years on the island documenting the native lifestyle. He encouraged the people to continue their culture and dancing. Hubbard was unusual in that he understood the King Islanders' religious belief in Manaqsr, the Great Being. He believed that anything that made the people happy was not evil.

The following passage from the book "Pioneer Missionary to the Bering Strait Eskimos: Bellarmine Lafortune S.J." tells the story of the Christ the King photos displayed in this issue.

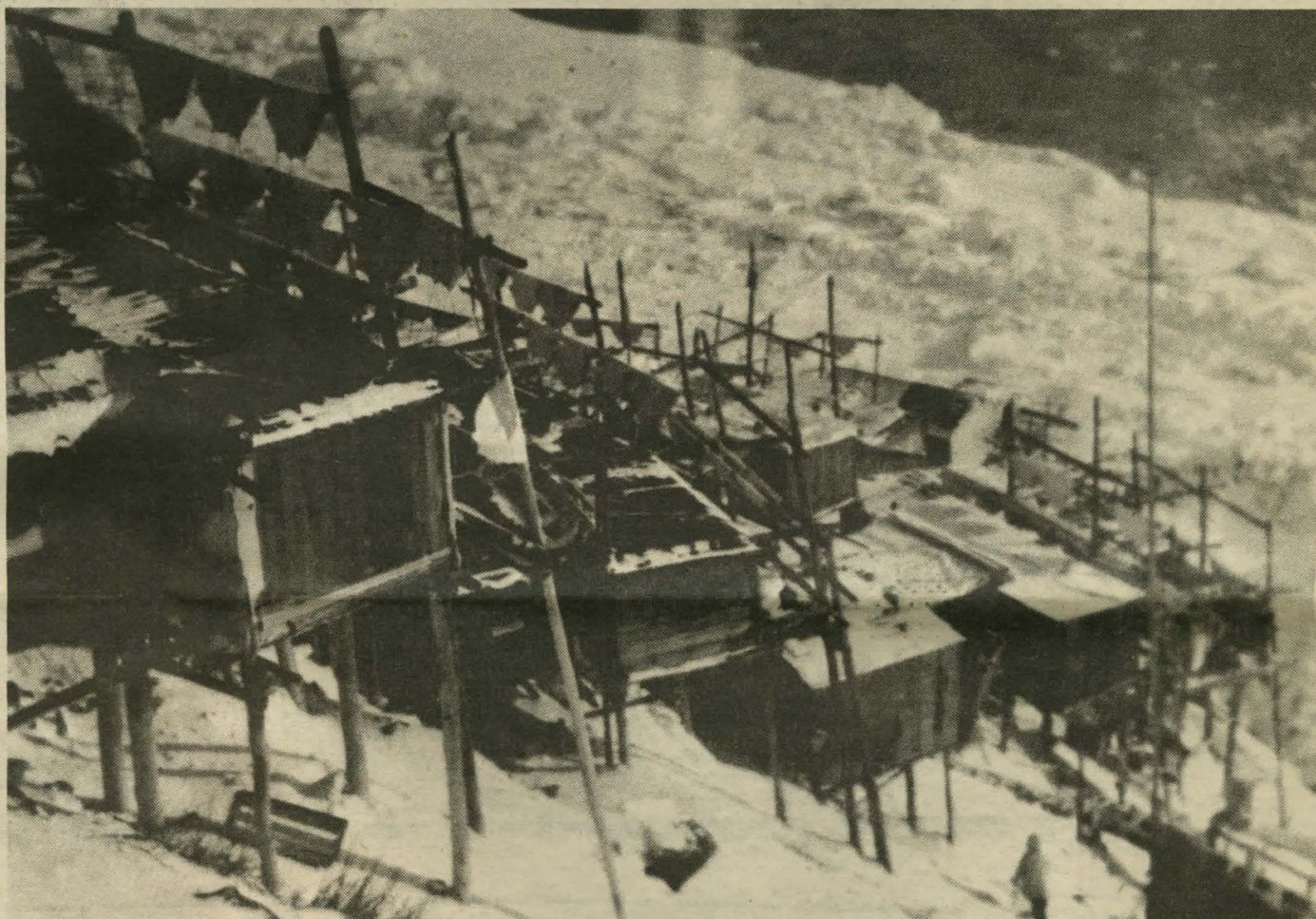
"One of the most enduring contributions of the Hubbard party to King Island was a large bronze statue of Christ the King, about six feet tall, which was placed on the top of the island. Hubbard's gift had originally been made in clay by Samuel J. Kitson in 1904. (Kitson died in New York City in 1906.) Early in 1937, Hubbard asked Hilda Gavin of Boston if she would bear the expense of having the statue case in bronze. She consented, and Hubbard brought it with him to the island. On 17 October 1937, the statue, which weighed about 900 pounds, was hauled up 700 feet of a 50 degree grade by almost all of the men and boys of the island in about an hour and a quarter."

The last day of October was a Sunday and the feast of Christ the King, "a day that the natives will not forget for many generations. The statue of Christ the King is put in place and blessed by Fr. Hubbard. The whole population was present with the exception of a few sick and one or two cranks. Right after, the hymn 'Be Thou King, O Lord' was sung, then the consecration of the island to Christ the King was read, then the hymn, 'Blessed be God'. The weather was good enough to allow Fr. Hubbard to take lots of pictures. Our wireless gave the news of the proceeds to the Catholic world."

The descriptions of the photos of King Island were obtained by the fieldworkers of the Eskimo Heritage Program after lengthy discussions with the King Island elders.



This photo of King Island was probably taken by the U.S. Air Force. In the summer, the men of King Island used to carve ivory on the beaches of Nome under an upturned skinboat. Sometimes the Air Force would bring pictures of what they had taken and trade them for ivory carvings.



The village of King Island during wintertime. There are many hanging sealskins being bleached and freeze dried. Some of the shore ice has been blown out by the north wind.



When the men caught polar bears the women cleaned the fat off the hide. The hide was taken down to the ice where a hole had been chipped open. The hide was tied to the middle of the pole to keep it from sinking. Then the pole was set sideways across the opening. The hide was kept in the Bering Sea overnight.

The next day, the hide was taken out and given to the children. The child whose father got the polar bear was given charge. The children took the hide up a snow slope and slid down with the hide hair against the snow. This was to dry the hair out. The children did this repeatedly. The polar bear in this picture had been a huge one. Shown are John Qilagruaq, John Taxac, Tony Koezuna, Martin & Francis Katexac, Peter Adsuna and Tommy Pushruk.



When the men of King Island got the statue of Christ the King to the top of the island, most of the community was there waiting. From left to right—John Kalarzaruk, Paul Anauliq, Charles Mayac, Stan Muktoyuk, Peter Ayuyauanna, John Qutunazuk, Frank Ellanna, Charles Pullock, Leo Kunnuk, Jr., John Thomas, Leo Kunnuk, Sr., Thomas Asila, Qiaqtak, Gregory Ayaaq, Frank Yuyumi, Fr. LaFortune, Tony Pushruk, Bernard Stanley, Ed Levin, Agnaiyaq, Bridget Aulaganna, Father Hubbard, Mary Tattayunna, Peter Nuyagaq, Mary Asila, John Aulganna, Mary Agnes Ellanna, Ursula Ellanna, Philip Tattayunna, Catherine Kasgnac, Cecilia Nattanguk, Stanislaus Ignatius, Edward Penatac, Bernard Katexac.

MANAQSRI - The Great Being

By Margaret Seeganna, Eskimo Heritage Program

Natives of Alaska, as everywhere else, lived very closely with their environment.

They believed all nature was alive.

Everything had its own being.

Animals had their own special spirits, their own source of life.

For that reason they were treated with respect.

Natives lived in fear of offending these beings and spirits.

Natives first of all believed in an all powerful being or spirit.

This Great Being of Spirit was in control of all nature.

This Great Being of Spirit was the Great Provider, the Overseer and Controller of all Nature's Fruits.

The moon, sun, stars, the earth, each had beings of their own.

The land, water, sea, air and even rocks had beings to keep them alive.

Natives said that anything that grew or moved was alive.

Sea mammals were believed to have very special and powerful spirits.

These spirits were very highly respected

Because it was believed that the spirits of the dead animals would return to their own kind and report that they had been treated very favorably in the village where they had been killed.

And the spirits of the dead mammals would tell the living mammals, "Do not be afraid to give yourselves because you will be treated very kindly!"

There was a custom on King Island that when a hunter caught a seal or other mammal: on bringing it home his wife would cut and clean it up.

She would snip off a little piece of meat and blubber, and throw it away outdoors.

This was to release the spirit (or source of life) of the sea mammals in hopes that it not be offended that it was killed.

Then its meat and blubber was all used up.

Having good intentions for survival, the people were always very grateful to the animal spirits. And especially to the Great Provider.

The custom of the people was to share with others of the community.

The attitude of a good hunter was the "The Great Provider gives me more than my share. It is only right that I share with others. After all, it was given to me free. And while I am able I can go out and get more. The more I have the more I can share!"

This attitude towards sea mammals and the sharing of them was in thanksgiving to the Great Provider.

Among the laws of nature and sea was the preservation of animals and the environment.

When killing sea mammals, methods were taught.

The hunter was to try to take the most direct aim possible so that the mammals would not suffer more torture than necessary.

Another occasion of importance was when a young hunter got his first seal or other sea mammal.

The catch was given away to a close relative or to a needy widow with young children.

This was a sacrificial offering to the mammal spirits.

It was hoped that by this sacrifice the young hunter involved would someday become a great hunter.

Children were taught at a very early age not to harm or torture dogs, birds and even insects. Because the spirits would see them and know about it.

When teaching children not to harm animals or insects, they were told that they would make poor hunters if they tortured or harmed any creatures.

The weather spirits were constantly pleaded with.

All the spirits and beings were closely intertwined in the ceremonial rites and dances in either petitioning or in thanksgiving.

Animals and birds were depicted as human beings in these ceremonial rites and dances.



Picture of "Christ the King" when it was put in place. The statue faces the village, looking down on it and facing Siberia. Father Hubbard and his crew went to King Island in the fall of 1937 and brought the statue with them. It was hauled up that same fall.

Bering Straits Agluktuk

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Contents include contributions by staff and stockholders of BSNC and its affiliates; edited, with photos and stories by Laura Kosell except as indicated. Letters and articles are welcome if sent to the above address by the second Friday of each month.

Bering Straits Native Corporation, through the staff of AGLUKTUK, reserves the right to edit any and all articles, notices or other items submitted for publication for length, libel, and adherence to the Bering Straits Agluktuk general editorial policy.

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Meet the staff

Just who does what at Bering Straits Native Corporation? There have been some staff changes in the last year. We would like to take this opportunity to show you just who we are.

By the way, BSNC is your regional corporation. The staff is dedicated to make you proud of this organization. Should you ever need any assistance or have any questions do not hesitate to contact any one of the staff at (907) 443-5252. If we can't help you we can point you in the right direction.

The next time you are in Nome, stop and visit the Bering Straits Building at Seppala and C Streets. We are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

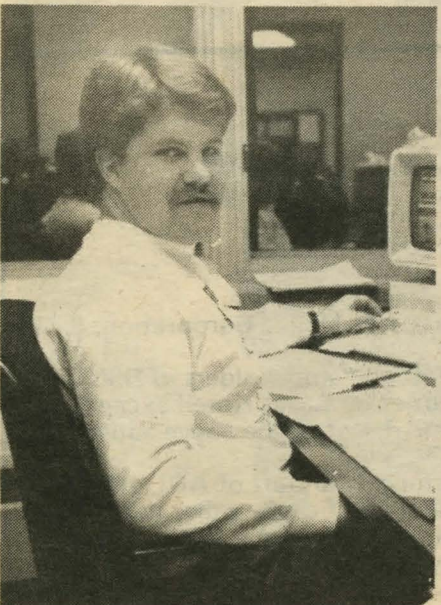
The friendship of those we serve is the foundation of our progress. The staff of Bering Straits Native Corporation wishes you a wonderful holiday season with happiness and prosperity throughout 1986.



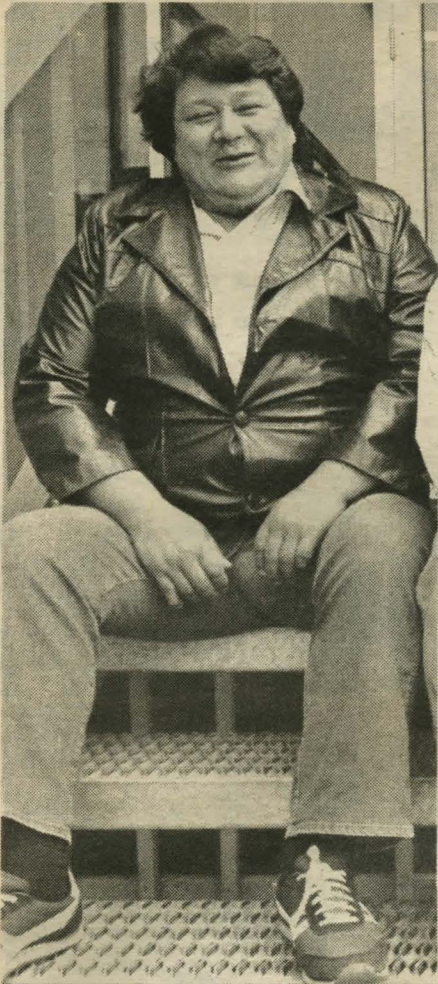
CATHERINE TOBUK is the first person you see at the Bering Straits Building. She is the receptionist for BSNC and Kawerak, Inc.



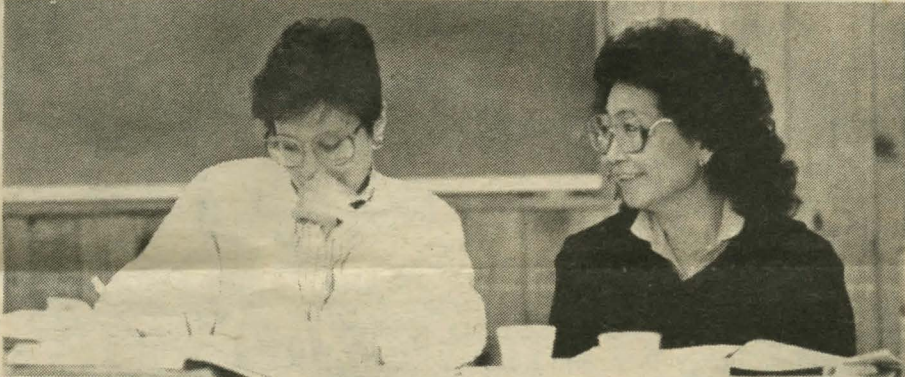
DAN FONDELL is Chief Executive Officer of the corporation.



DAVID DEPAUW serves as Accounting Manager at BSNC.



HENRY IVANOFF is President of Bering Straits Native Corporation.



RUTHE STREETER (left) is Assistant to the Vice President of Land & Resources. On the right is DORIS KALOKE, Administrative Assistant to the President and Board of Directors.



Clerk Typist CHARLOTTE SENUNGETUK and Bookkeeper JAMES "KIMPY" TOCKTOO.

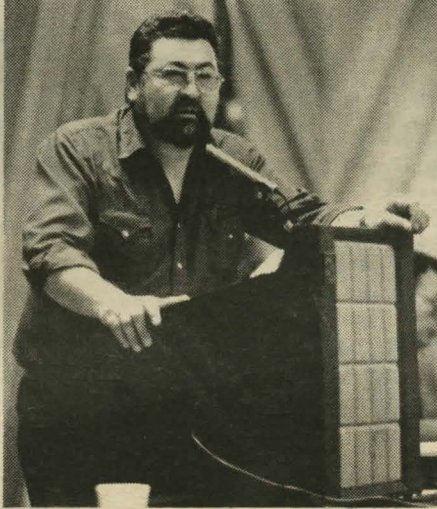


Photo by Thomas Johnson

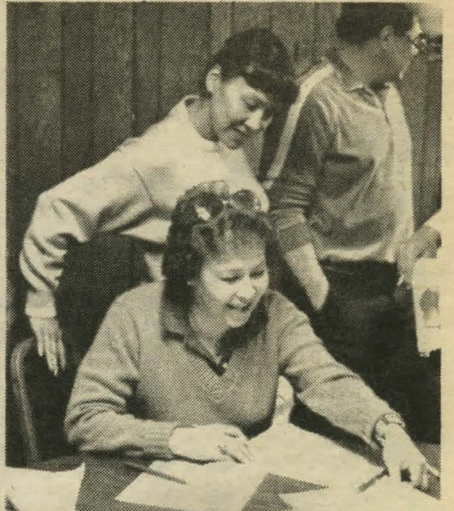
LAURA KOSELL is Editor of Bering Straits AGLUKTUK/Kawerak NIPLIK-SUK and Director of Shareholder Relations.



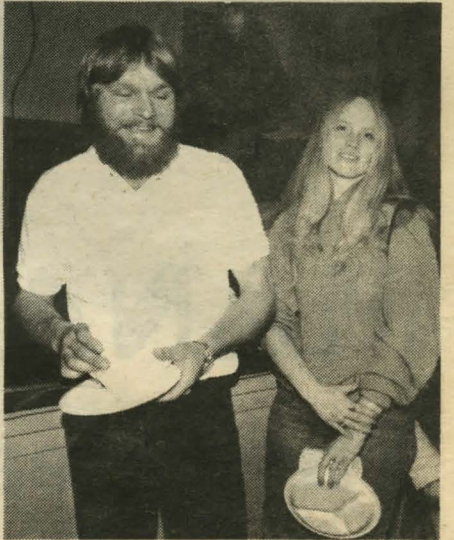
VERN OLSON is Vice President, the man in charge of all departments at BSNC.



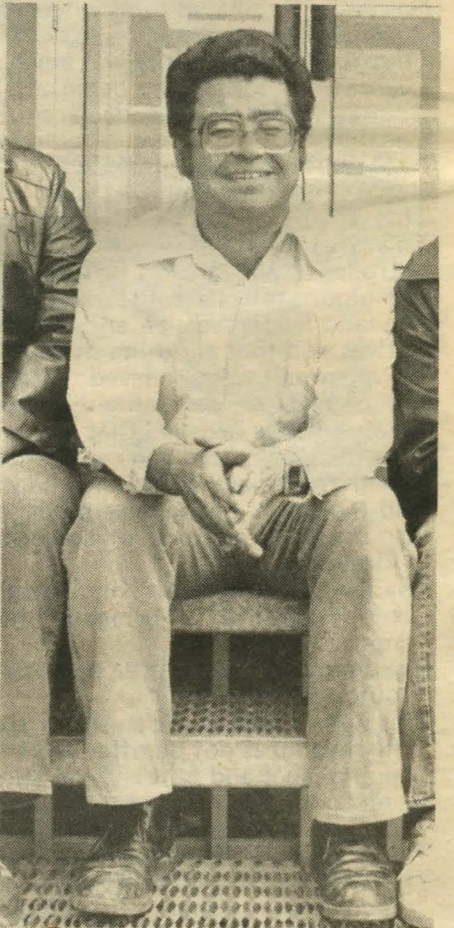
GOOD GUY MARTIN is Director of Renewable Resources in the Land Department.



Assistant Shareholder Registrar PEGGY HARDY works with Shareholder Registrar HELEN BELL.



RICK & SKEETER BALLOW manage BSNC's profitable South Central Mobile Park in Valdez, Alaska.



LONNIE O'CONNOR is Chairman of the Board of Directors.



WALTER ANALOK helps Building Superintendent WILFRED ANOWLIC keep the Bering Straits Building spic and span.