

ALASKA LEGISLATURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE / SUBJECT FILE 8672
1774.5 SCOMM 71: SEN. SPEC. COMM. / JNT. COMM. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 1988-90

VI. Vehicle for Learning

The student will be able to demonstrate use of computer-assisted learning programs in the basic skill areas of reading, language arts and math.

Evaluation:

The student will demonstrate mastery through actual use of the computer for the above skills. Vocabulary knowledge may use either actual computer use and/or a written section of the criterion-referenced test.

UINIQ ^{THE} OPEN LEAD



Summer 1988

Vol. 3, Issue 2

Sometimes, a look back makes the future more clear

I'm certain everybody remembers those three, great days last winter, when North Slope residents numbering in the thousands got together for a three-day revival in Barrow. It was a cultural revival — a rebirth of a celebration which had fueled the spirits of our people for who knows how many centuries, but which had not been performed locally for about 80 years. Kivgiq, the messenger feast, was in danger of being lost forever. The success of the event is demonstrated by the still-constant demand we get for viewing of the tapes, made by our NSB video department, and the enthusiastic plans and preparations being made across our villages for a second gathering next year.

Many gifts were given and received, and many hearts warmed. I look forward to an even improved performance next year.

How did this event come about? I had been meeting with Rex Okakok, one of my special assistants. We had been discussing the problems of alcohol and drug abuse in our communities, and

the steps being taken to battle these problems. We also talked about holding some kind of celebration, just for the North Slope. How often had we sent our dancers out for the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics, the AFN convention, and other events? Yet, when was the last time we had held a great dance celebration just for our people — all the people — of the North Slope?

Rex and I remembered the Elders discussing a great feast called Kivgiq. Messengers, runners, would be sent from one village to another in advance, with requests from friends in the villages for certain gifts. Any effort necessary to get those gifts would be made, and they would be exchanged during the great feasting and dancing which followed.

Perhaps we could do something about both questions. We would hold our gathering for the people of the North Slope. At the same time, out of respect for our culture, no alcohol or drugs would be allowed at Kivgiq, and people under the influence



Mayor Ahmaogak is joined by Rex Okakok and others in dance at Kivgiq.

would be removed. We were very successful in carrying out this program, and people were pleased about it. Sometimes, people get to thinking that, without alcohol, you can't really have fun. The pictures appearing in the following pages, all of sober, happy people, defy that argument.

Rex picked up the ball on this one, going all out in organizing and raising funds. He did a super job. I commend him for it. Also looking at abuse problems, we have established a treatment center here in Barrow. Residents there agreed to appear in *Uniq* to promote the services of our Substance Abuse Treatment Services, and to draw attention to the problem, and the fact that something can be done about it. We thank them for their courage. Certainly, there are many among us who enjoy an occasional social drink, and have no problems. Yet, we cannot deny the hardship abuse brings to our community. SATS is one tool we have to fight it.

In this issue of *Uniq* we also begin a project which I find very exciting. For the next year, or two years, however long it takes, our editor will be following the family and whaling crew of Jonathan Aiken with his cameras. In the end, we hope to produce a photo essay which speaks both to the spirituality and necessity of whale hunting to our culture.

And, on the subject of whale hunting, I was privileged to be in New Zealand this past June when the International Whaling Commission agreed to up our bowhead quota from 35 to 44 strikes per year. This was done directly as a result of the ambitious ten-year scientific study of bowheads spearheaded by the Borough. We have proven that the bowhead population is far healthier than the world believed. There is no reason to restrict us to anywhere from zero to ridiculously low numbers such as 18 strikes, which were inflicted upon us in the past.

We seek further improvement, but are pleased with the progress. Special thanks goes to Tom Albert, Mike Philo, Craig George, Geoff Carroll and all the other scientists and observers, Inupiat and non-Inupiat, who have dedicated so much time, effort, and thought to our cause.

Quyanaq!
Mayor George N. Ahmaogak Sr.

Inupayauram itqaguusugnagaat ukiutqik pinasuni uvluni aggiqpagmata Utqiagvigni, Kivgigniq atuumarjaisanaj sisamakipiani ukiuni, tammagasugipiallaktanaj. Aasiin uvva ukiupak pilluatahaagñaigasugirut uuktuavsaq-parrun.

Maglaktuutiqpaktutun quviasunajut. Qanuqtuni taamna nalautinnava? Uqatigitiikkaluagamnuk Rex-lu uqautigiv-lugit taannagniq, iiragapaftuktug niglu nunaqqiurallaani, qanuglu iluaqsilaagniksrananik uqagaluagamnuk, kiisaim-maa kasimaqatigiyumaalliipavuk North Slope-miut. Atacamik allanun nunanun aegirit aullaqtutik Olympic-

nun, AFN-nun allanunlu, qanaaglaan aasi agginavat pisi-givlugi inuvut.

Itqaallagmivlugi utuqqanaavut kivgignikun uqanaruat, aqpatallu nunaqqinun kiliksiyyaqtuat. Siggaqiraqtut aitchuqtutiksramignik aasi taimma simmiqsuutivlutik niqinaqipagmatalu aggiqpagmatalu aquagun.

Katinniaqtugut inunillu North Slope, tavraniisii qut-chiksuagilugu Inupiaquniput, taannaqtuaqagnianitchuq naagga iiragapaftuktutuaqagnianitchuq, ilimanaqpan anitauniaqtuq. Pilluatapiallanarugut, inuit quviagim-migaat. Ilani inuit isumasuurut taannailagutin aliasunijnianijnasugilutin, qinigaat aasi tautuktasi ukunani iminanjitchuat quviasuktut inuit akiiligaat taamna qapiqtuun.

Rex savalluatajaruq, nangallakkiga. Qiniillagmilugi taannaqpaifnikun inillainammiugut ikayuqsaglugi iminagñiuraqsaqtuat. Suli taavaniittuat piyummataqatutin tautugniagmigisi tavrani maqpijarriami ikayuutausaq-futigli, quyanaaqpakvivut.

Uumanna isagutilugu, malgugni ukiugni naagga naalgataqtillugu savaaq maliquutiniaqtuq Kunut-kua yaanik qiniagaqtikput, qiniagaqslugi aasi taimma savaana naalgataqpaun qiniqtuaqniagivut qanuq Agviqsuigniq ilaupiagataqtilaanjanik inuuniagniptignun.

New Zealand-nammiuna kasimasagmata International Whaling Commission-kuayaat, tavrani 44-njugai agvak-taaksravut. North Slope Borough-tkuayaat savaanaj nuimanalgitchuq tavrani. Tanjaqtitkikput agvigit inug-iathaaqtut inuit ukpiganannin. Patchisiksraitkaluaqtut killiksriqsugamisigut qanapak. Ilaqsruvsagumiinaqpan aglaan quviagivlugun iglignina. Quyanaaglugit Tom Albert, Mike Philo, Craig George, Geoff Carroll allallu savak-tit, qiniqtillu, Inupiallu inupianilaallu.

Quyanaq!
Nasuayaaq, Mayor

The Open Lead is published by the North Slope Borough, P.O. Box 69, Barrow, Alaska 99723. The NSB was incorporated as a first-class borough July 1, 1972. A Home Rule Charter was adopted by the Borough on April 30, 1974. It is the regional, local government of Northern Alaska, with mandatory powers of taxation, assessment, education, planning and zoning. All submissions and correspondence to the Open Lead should be addressed to Bill Hess, Editor, at the Borough offices. Unless otherwise indicated, all text and photos are by the editor. Copyright © 1986 to all Bill Hess photos is held by the photographer, certain reprint rights reserved by the North Slope Borough.

Cover photo: Point Lay Elder Paul Tazruk at Kivgiq.

Notes from the NSB Assembly-July

Upicksoun on KIC Board

Following a recommendation by Mayor Ahmaogak, the Assembly unanimously reappointed Joseph Upicksoun to serve on the Kuparuk Industrial Center Board. Upicksoun's term will expire in March of 1991.

Best interest determination.

A \$190,000, sole-source contract was awarded to LBL, Inc., for professional services to provide technical assistance on assembly equipment, initial installation, provide specialized training of local residents and necessary quality control of window products.

Atqasuk residents seek help in dealing with health hazard.

In a letter addressed to the NSB Assembly and Mayor Ahmaogak, and over a teleconference hook-up, Atqasuk residents told of a recurring health hazard. According to the residents, every summer their community must deal with disease-carrying flies, which feed on honey bucket waste, garbage solid waste, and gray waste-water drainage.

The residents spoke of the existing disposable cardboard-polyethylene-lined boxes disintegrating in the summer warmth. They requested the Borough and State to jointly attack the problem by spraying insecticide in the affected areas.

The Assembly agreed to take the action. The NSB Health Authority and the Department had already undertaken the task of finding and administering the proper insecticide — one deadly to the flies, yet safe to humans. The Utilities Department is looking into replacing the current dumpster system with some type of daily pickup.

A check with Atqasuk's NSB Health Authority Clinic revealed that, so far this year, no illnesses linked to the problem have been found in Atqasuk.

Assembly adopts goals maintenance, renovation and replacement goals for capital projects facilities resolution.

In a resolution noting that the majority of capital facilities planned by the Borough have been completed and that fund-

ing for future projects is limited, the Assembly adopted a number of goals for the future.

The resolution also noted that it would take a considerable amount of funding to keep the current facilities operating and in good repair, and to continue providing related public services, be they educational, health related, or for public safety and welfare.

The goals and policies were mandated as the guideline for present and future fund-

ding of waste water, sewage, and solid waste.

3. The Borough will continue to seek new housing, and upgrade existing housing.

GOAL D: The Borough will manage capital funds to live within the projected revenues of its six-year capital improvements program.

1. Decisions in adding, deleting, advancing and deferring CIPs will follow established procedure in compliance with

The Assembly agreed to take the action. The NSB Health Authority and the Department had already undertaken the task of finding and administering the proper insecticide — one deadly to the flies, yet safe to humans.

ing, scheduling, and management of CIP projects.

The goals are summed up as follows:

GOAL A: The North Slope Borough will give priority to the repair and replacement of its capital facilities infrastructure.

1. The Borough has essentially completed its capital improvements program, placing basic facilities, equipment, services and installations needed for the health, education and welfare of its residents.

2. Scheduled and adequately funded repair and replacement of the infrastructure is essential to the maintenance of the health, education and welfare of NSB residents.

GOAL B: The Borough will complete capital projects which provide for the health, education, and welfare of the people of the North Slope.

1. Critical needs identified in the CIP goals of 1985 have resulted in priority and design modifications; construction has begun and equipment purchased for these utilities and services.

2. These projects will be completed.

GOAL C: The Borough will manage capital funds to enhance residential employment and living improvements.

1. The Borough will continue to enforce a local hire, training and employment policy.

2. The Borough will continue to improve methods and efficiency in the han-

the regular NSB voter referendum process. Circumvention of the procedure will be strongly discouraged.

2. A policy committee will be established to make recommendations on Capital Improvements to the Mayor.

3. The NSB will support increased state and federal grant participation for the villages.

4. The NSB will coordinate all village Capital Improvement grant applications to State and Federal agencies.

5. The NSE will use competitive bidding procedures to keep Capital Improvement cost low and project management will be allowed to use incentive and bonus programs where they are accountable and legitimate.

6. The NSB will establish the most accurate means to estimate the cost of projects.

7. Notwithstanding Goal A, when projects are accelerated or advanced, projects of equal funding will be deferred with the same sections of the ordinance. Any shifts between sections will require voter approval.

8. The NSB will establish a comprehensive land acquisition policy requiring no new major appropriations. When most other factors are equal, land availability and cost will determine project priority and scheduling.

9. The Borough will be fiscally responsible in its CIP expenditures.

GOAL E: The North Slope Borough will evaluate life cycle costs as a prerequisite to construction.

1. Where materials have not already been purchased or delivered, every new project will be evaluated to determine future operating costs.

2. The NSB will incorporate available funds from existing energy, water, and conservation efforts into assessments of life cycle energy costs prior to project approval.

3. The NSB will project future operating budget needs required to maintain and staff new improvements. Lower operating cost projects will be given priority.

GOAL F: The North Slope Borough will support village self determination.

1. The NSB will utilize local village residents and corporations to the maximum extent possible.

2. CIP contracts will be written promoting local hire.

3. The NSB will adhere to the desires of each village regarding industrial development infrastructure, project design and priorities. Each village will determine its own priorities on traditional versus modern needs.

4. The NSB will support termination of inappropriate projects, according to voter referendum.

5. Exact CIP budget amounts will be developed for each village. Local residents

will have a major role in determining projects under these budget guidelines.

6. The NSB Planning Commission will serve as major facilitator and advocate for village priorities.

GOAL G: The North Slope Borough will promote long-range planning efforts.

1. The NSB will educate villages, the state, and the financial community about the management and objectives of the CIP.

2. The NSB will establish a private sector economic development advisory committee to help increase private development and private sector jobs and services in the Borough.

3. The NSB will provide sufficient funding to maintain the long-term planning project.

4. Long-term fiscal, economic, energy, social, cultural and community planning will be reflected in short- and long-term CIP decisions.

GOAL H: The North Slope Borough will sustain and expand affirmative vocational training programs directed to capital facilities support and operation.

1. The NSB will utilize appropriate, existing vocational training programs which will enable residents to effectively maintain and operate public facilities.

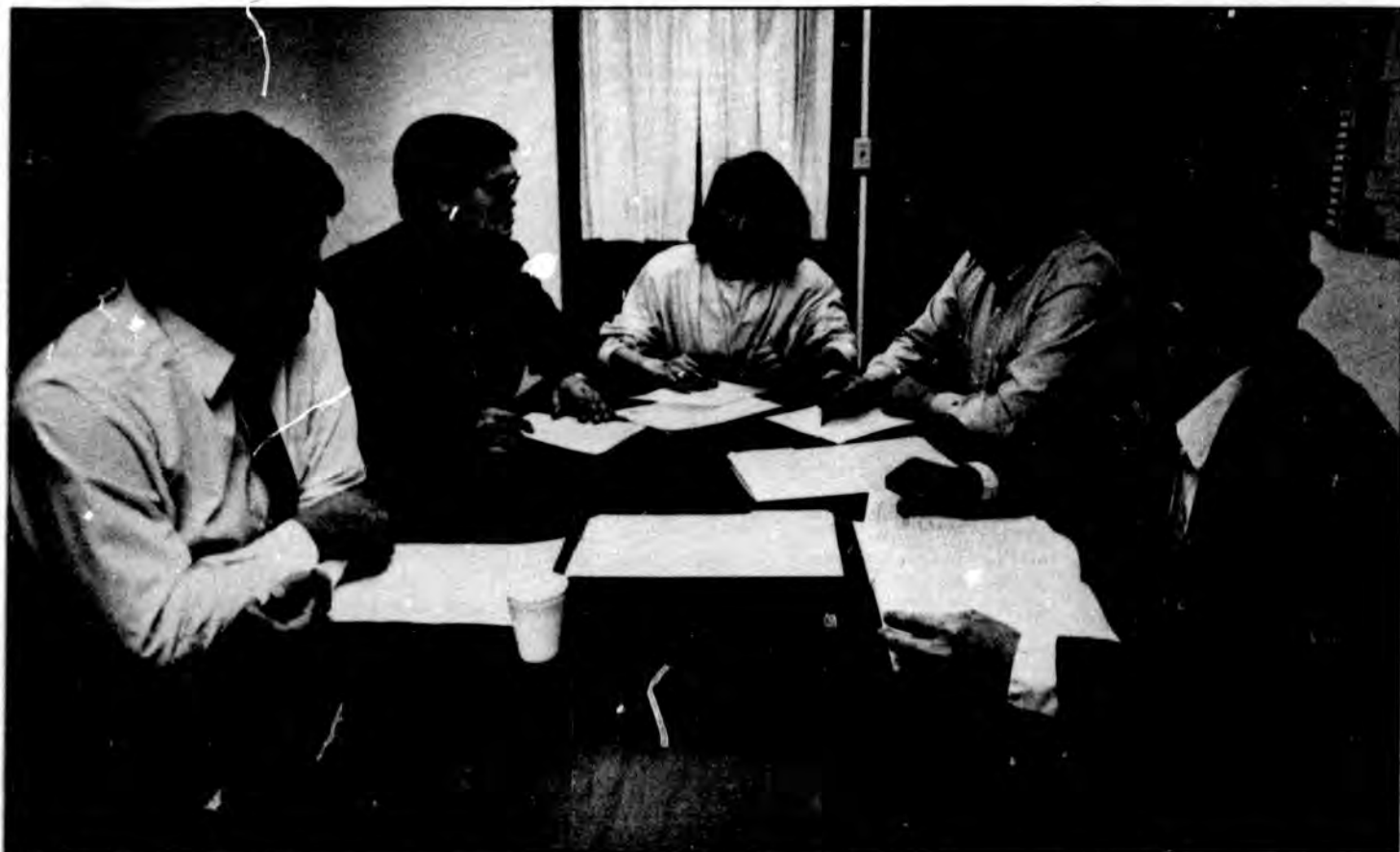
2. The NSB will seek to provide these vocational training programs where they do not exist or are not practically available to residents.

3. Participation in approved vocational training activities and in sustained programs for vocational qualification or certification will be non-prejudicial to employees in good standing.

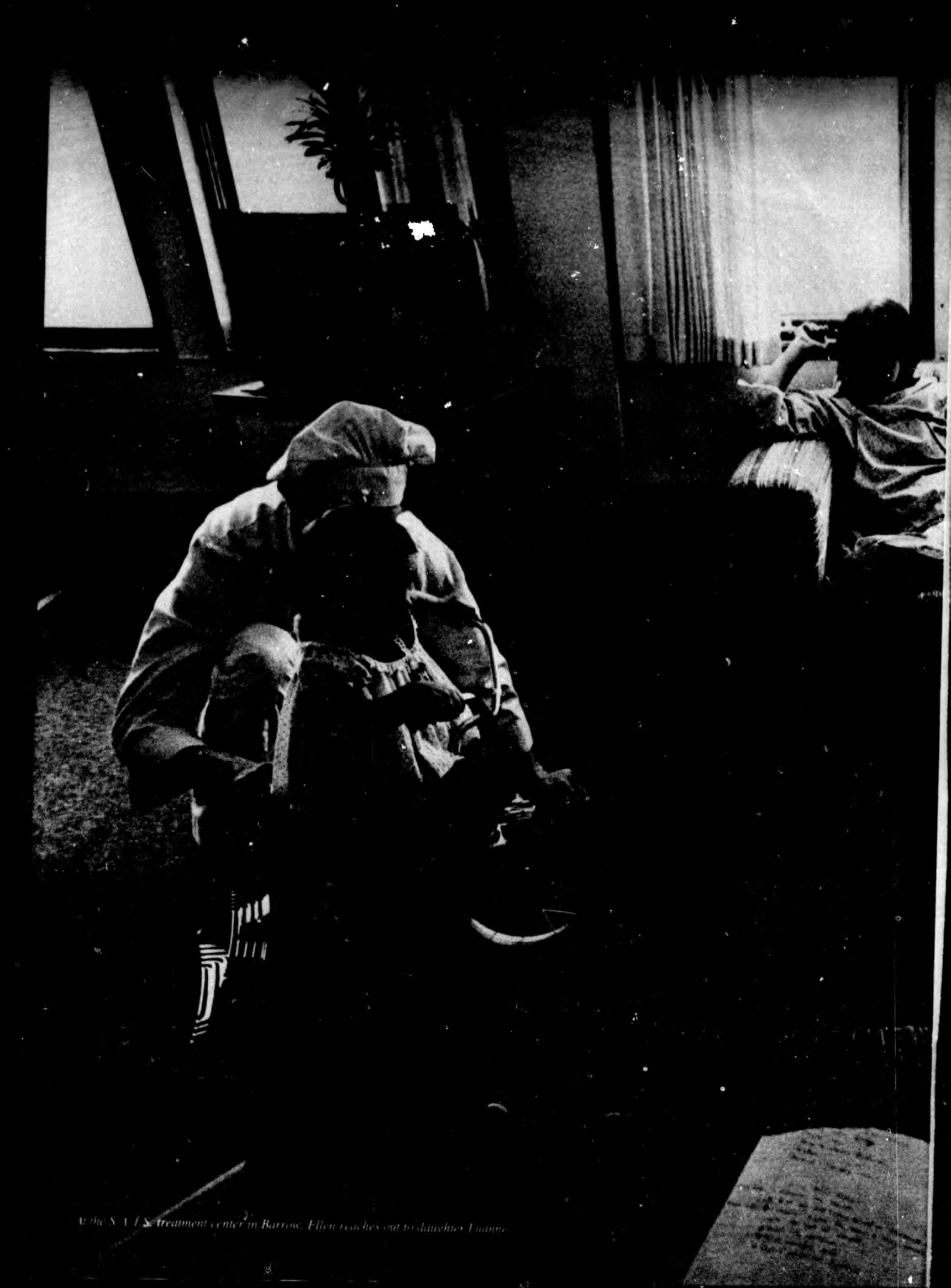
In other action:

The Assembly accepted increases in appropriations and revenues of \$656,733 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989. The Assembly also agreed to rezone two residential lots near the Senior Center in Broerville to allow Robert Langmade and Mr. and Mrs. Julian Ferreras to build a store.

The NSB will establish a private sector economic development advisory committee to help increase private development and private sector jobs and services in the Borough.



Mayor Ahmaogak joins assembly members Jacob Adams, Oliver Leavitt, and Barrow City Mayor Nate Olemaun in a meeting with former assemblywoman Eileen MacLean. MacLean is now a candidate for the Alaska House, District 22, which encompasses the North Slope Borough and NANA regions.



At the S. A. I. S. treatment center in Barrow, Ellen reaches out to daughter, Luanna.

S.A.T.S.

A chance to pull lives together again

Editor's note: All participants in the NSB SATS program are protected with the strictest confidentiality. Those appearing on these pages felt the problem of alcohol and substance abuse must be dealt with, and so agreed to be included in this article. Doing so was an act of courage, and Unity thanks them all.

It was among the darkest nights of Ellen's life, yet with it came a thin, hazy edge of light, gleaming in the blackness, ready to slice through despair and pain to a brightness which had so far escaped her. Ellen had violated a Barrow

law by appearing in a restaurant with an open container of liquor. She dumped it into a sewer, then found herself being hauled to jail by NSB Public Safety officers.

The shame, the humiliation, and the physical pain of her addiction seemed unbearable. Yet Ellen was able to think beyond the moment. She remembered the pain and confusion of growing up in a world where crowds of adults would gather for a good time, and then get miserable. Some among them would advise her not to drink, then get drunk themselves. No

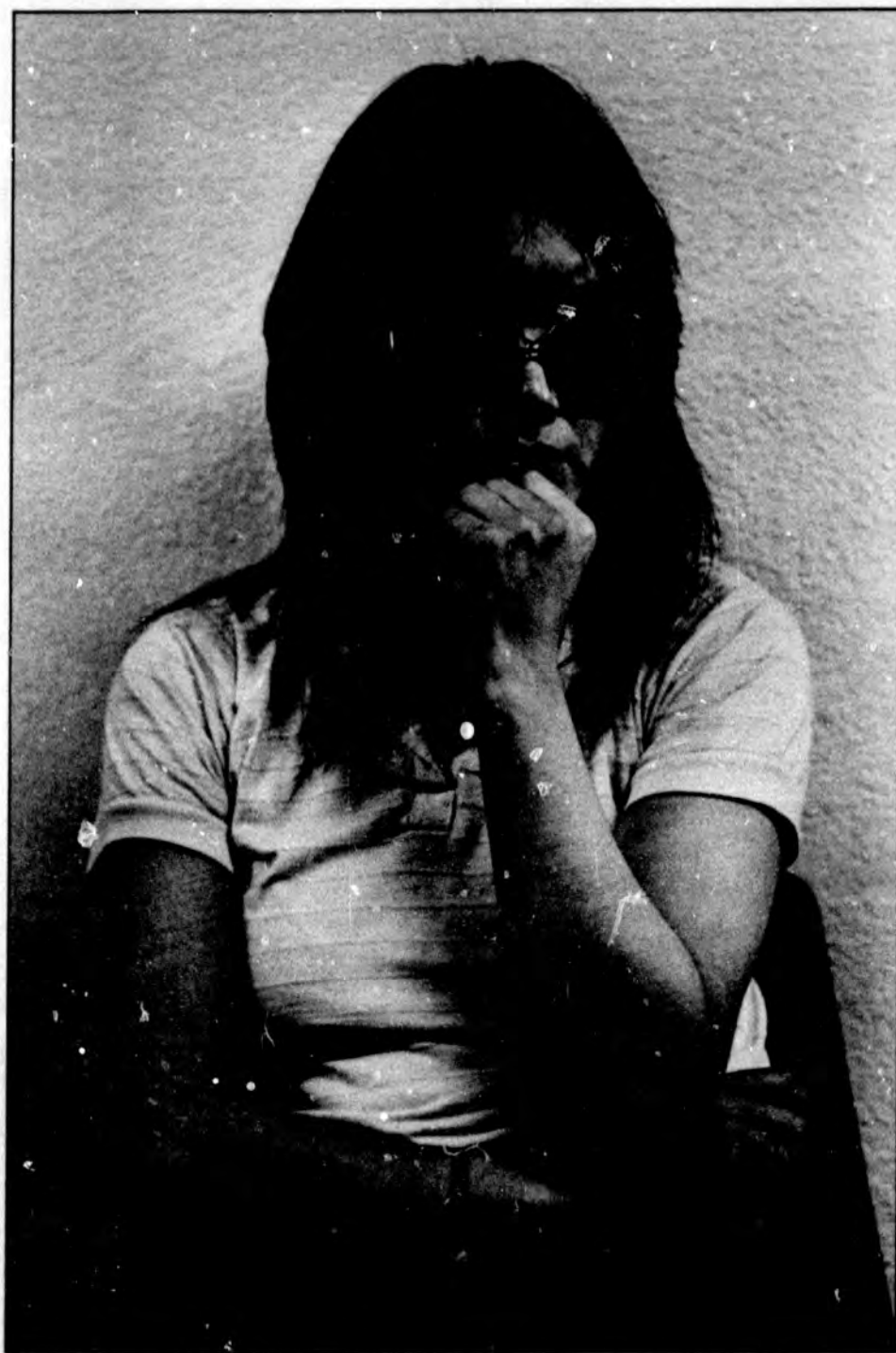
thought of her own little daughter, Luanne, barely out of infancy. She felt horror at being separated from her, and even deeper horror about some of the times they had spent together. She had put Luanne upon her back, and then oriented a blanket, unable to remember when she had done it. What could she have been thinking?

It was a long time to do it. She felt a time to do it. She felt a time to do it.



"Here, we don't hide things. We have morning therapy where we pour out our inner feelings. It is all confidential. I can say what I feel without feeling like somebody's laughing at me; nobody's pointing fingers at me. Yes, it hurts. There is crying, screaming, laughing, hugging. You have to get the pain out for the healing to begin."

— Ellen, a single mother
and recovering alcoholic.



Ellen joins residents of SATS, above, as they listen with pain to the story of another resident, sitting on the other side of the room. It is a story filled with hurt, and suffering. It will also be held confidentially among them, and not repeated elsewhere. While it brings tears to Ellen's face (left) such a release is necessary before a resident can begin to reconstruct his life, and deal with his substance abuse problem.

After a very short stay in jail, Ellen enrolled in SATS, the NSB Substance Abuse Treatment Services program. When Mayor Ahmaogak's Blue Ribbon Panel on Alcohol and Substance Abuse released its findings just over two years ago, it became clear that North Slope residents wanted a residential



treatment center established in Barrow.

An old apartment building in Browerville was renovated to accommodate up to 10 residents at a time. SATS moved in and operates under the NSB Health Department, directed by Cindy Young. A new, full-service center accommodating 25 is under construction and is scheduled to open next year.

Ellen found the healing process rough. "I didn't get sick overnight. I couldn't get well overnight," she explains. At first, it was hard to do anything but sleep. "I had been using alcohol to escape facing up to my pain; now I used sleep." Then, as her body was denied the alcohol it had become addicted to, withdrawal and anxiety set in.

Now, Ellen could not sleep. "I was really afraid that if I went to sleep, I would die. The counselors told me there was nothing physically wrong with me, that I could sleep, but I couldn't believe them."

Even when this passed, it was hard. Ellen found herself getting angry with the counselors. "They were trying to get me to face up to my problems, and I didn't want to."

When she had been small, Ellen had tried to shut out the pain and confusion by closing her eyes as tight as she could, clasp her hands over her ears, and running into a corner and screaming to drown out the confusion.

Now, she had to reverse the process. Those who had been through similar experiences

proved her biggest help.

Each morning, she met with the other residents for two hours of therapy. Here, alcoholics and drug abusers in search of a better life would unload their frustrations and problems on each other. Many stories would be horrible, recounting years, decades, filled with sorrow, abuse, and tragic death. Whatever was said would be left in the room.

"There was a lot of crying, a lot of anger," Ellen recalls. "There was also laughter, and hugging. Sometimes, you have to allow yourself to go through pain."

Gradually, Ellen began to see that she was not alone. Others shared her problem. "We became like family. We learned to trust each other."

"I feel now that I understand myself. I can express my feelings."

Before enrolling in SATS, Ellen says she did not really know how to express her feelings. Without expressing her feelings, she could not deal with them, and she could not find solutions to her problems.

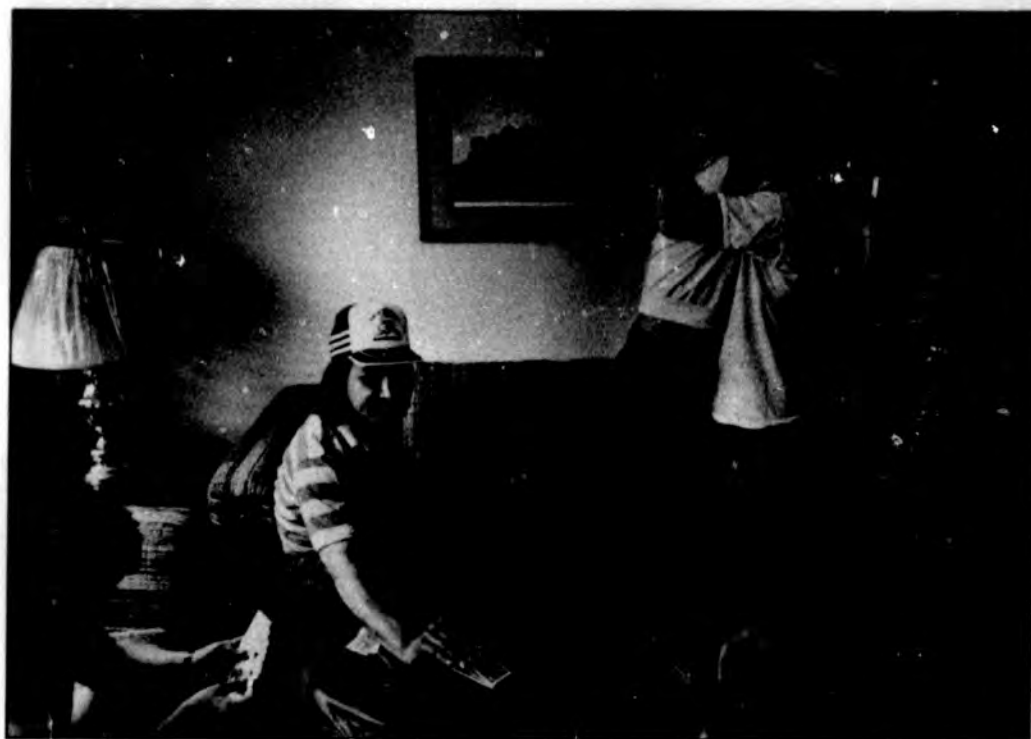
"I've learned to take each day as it comes," she says. "Before, I did things that I am not proud of. I learned to hate myself. I drank, so I wouldn't have to deal with my problems, and my problems only got worse. Here I have learned it doesn't have to be that way.

"I still have problems, and life still can be frustrating, confusing, but I can deal with these frustrations and confusions.

"Some people think that I've been through

the SATS program so I am all better now, no problems. It isn't like that at all. I have to deal with my life one day at a time. I can't take a drink to help me do it because I am still an alcoholic. I can never be a social drinker. Alcohol stays with me a long time."

Ellen found that some of her friends put down her SATS treatment as "brainwashing." "It's not brainwashing at all. It has all been a learning experience about who I am, what I am capable of doing. I think some people just didn't want to accept me as a sober person. They wanted me to be the same, comfortable old Ellen, drunk every weekend, all weekend."



The therapy sessions all end (large photo) with residents clasping hands in a circle and offering a prayer. Residents are encouraged to seek help from their "higher power."





Ellen (above left) takes a break from a card game to give a hug of encouragement to a fellow resident leaving the program, then later attends a moon class, helps with dishwashing, and writes a "letter to myself" to help her understand her life.

In fact, notes SATS director Chris Cobb, one of the biggest trials many clients face is going home to friends and relatives who don't want to lose their old drinking companions.

He related the story of one client who, after returning home, noted a biting taste in her orange juice at breakfast. Asking about it, a close relative admitted spiking the juice with alcohol. "What do you think you are, too good for us now?" she chided.

"All she really wanted to do," says Cobb, "was to be able to lead a reasonably happy life."



"The best part about being here, is, it helps us to reach out to other people."

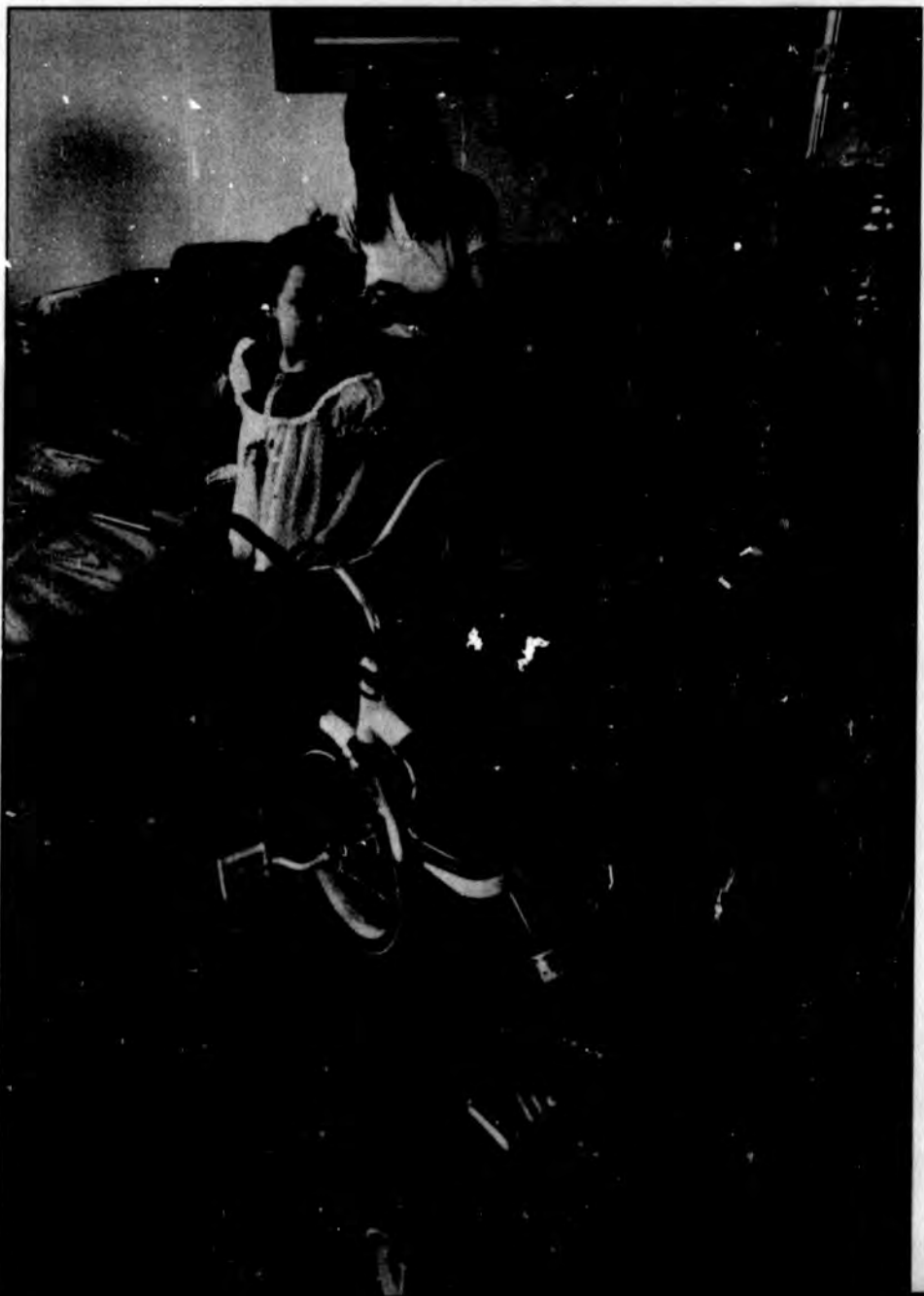
One of those people is her daughter, Luanne. "I'm learning from her also, little things. Like the moon being there. I see how excited she gets just looking at it, then it gets me started looking at the moon, and thinking about it. I find myself thanking God for all the little things he put here for me to look at."

Ellen also feels a desire to reach out to her people, her culture. She believes the problems of alcohol and drug abuse faced by the community stem largely from separation from that culture. "The way I see it, people just didn't want to accept the changes, the way Barrow was growing. Suddenly, there were so many rules."

As a child, Ellen spoke some Inupiaq, but now finds herself unable to truly communicate in her Native tongue. She would like to get it back, but wonders how. Ellen never finished high school, and is now working on her GED. At the time, school seemed boring, unimportant, and uninteresting to her, although one thing she did enjoy was traditional Inupiat dancing.

"What I found out now is that I really enjoy listening to the Elders, their stories, the way they were brought up. What I hear in their stories, I want back.

"There was a lot of caring, sharing, in our culture, a lot of good. We are losing too much of that. I want us to start changing that. Our community has to face the problem of alcohol abuse. If we are going to beat it, we have to reach out to one another. We have to share. We have to care."



Shortly after Ellen had given Luanne a new tricycle, the little girl tumbled to the SATS floor, and burst into tears. Ellen (opposite page, top) rushed to the rescue. After comforting her daughter, she righted the trike, then sat down on the couch and left Luanne to deal with the situation. Luanne, (opposite page, bottom) eyed the trike with misgivings. Then, gathering her courage, she climbed back on to try again.



Last Stop to Nowhere

"When I realized that everybody had always known that I was an alcoholic, it was as embarrassing as hell. When I finally accepted the fact, it was a pretty humbling experience. I wanted to dig a hole in the ground, and just bury myself. But you can't live with your head in the ground. I figured I would just have to start all over, see what pieces of my life I could put back together, and go from there."

— Don Long

"I am powerless over alcohol. There is not a damn thing I can do about it, except stay away from it." Don Long says this now, and means it. Yet, it was only a short time ago that he refused to accept such a statement as fact. Shortly after his last drunk on August 14 of last year, Long walked out his door to enroll in the NSB-SATS Alcohol Treatment Center. Even then, he refused to accept his alcoholism as fact.

Since 1974, Long had enrolled in six other treatment centers, scattered about in locations as far flung as Sitka, Seattle, and Portland. These were known as some of the

best treatment centers in the country. Long had enrolled because it meant the difference between keeping a good job or losing it, or because family problems had driven him to it.

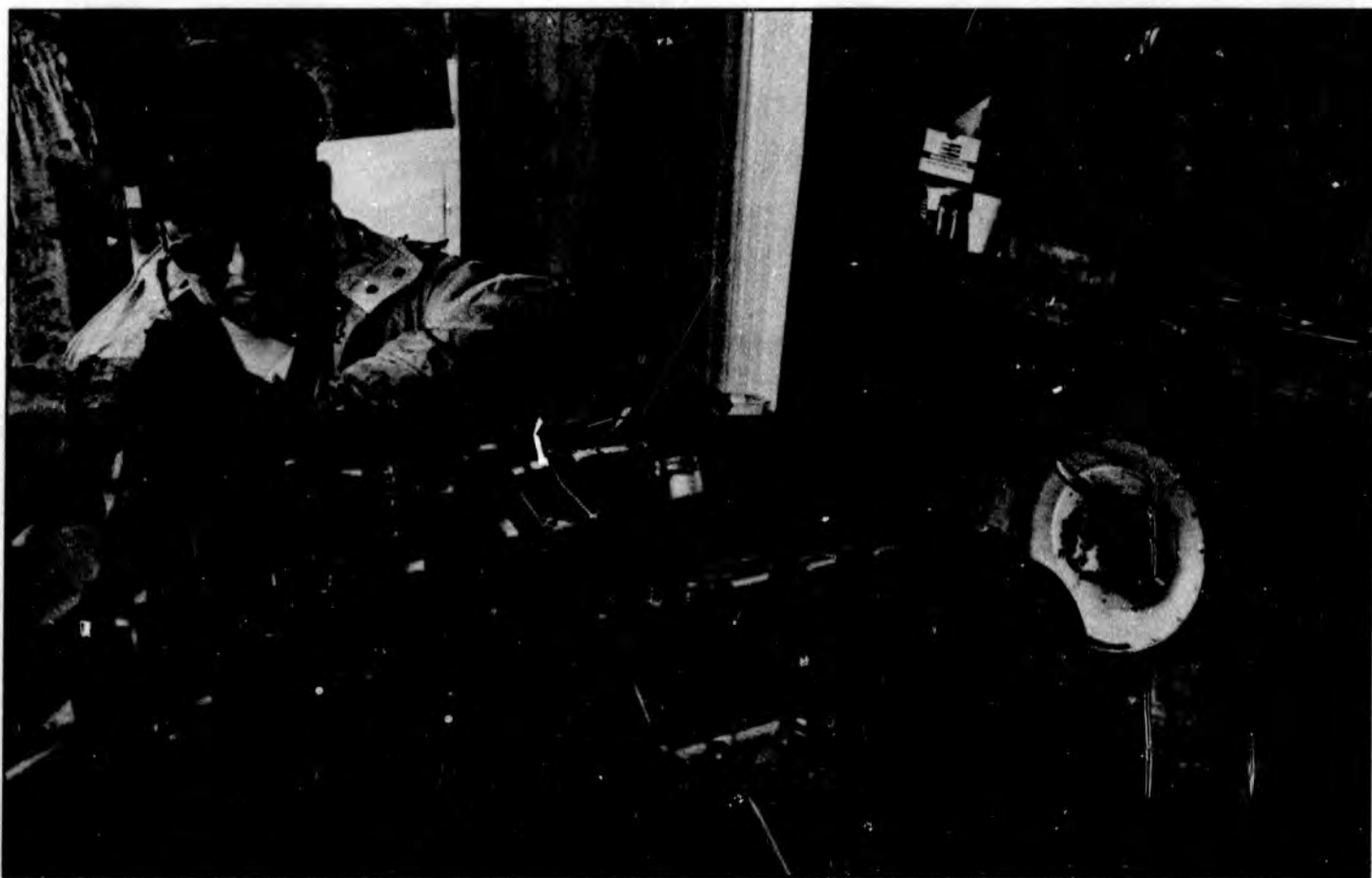
Always, he had dried out, come home, stayed sober for a while, and then gone back on the bottle. Always, he had refused to accept as fact that he was an alcoholic, powerless over strong drink.

"I would start back on the road to drinking just a little at a time," Long recalls. "If I have a drink now, I would tell myself, 'I won't get drunk.' Then I would have a drink, maybe one beer, and I wouldn't get

drunk. 'See,' I would reassure myself. 'You had a drink, but hey, you didn't get drunk! You can go for a week now, two more weeks, without taking another drink, then have one, or two, and still not get drunk.'

"And I would! But then, finally, I would get this craving, this psychology, and then my addiction takes over and I am drinking again."

The problem, says Long, was that while he had attended a few Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and gone through the routine of saying, "Hi, my name is Don. I'm an alcoholic," he had refused to accept the concept in his heart, and had insisted to



Don Long at work on Barrow Air Cessna 175.



Since he has accepted his disease, and determined to fight it one day at a time, Long has once again learned to laugh with his family. Here, he shares a happy moment with daughter Pokey.

himself that alcohol was something he could control.

After all, he had a good wife, seven great children, a fine home, and had always managed to hold down a good job. He had served as Lands Director for the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and as Director of Utilities for the North Slope Borough.

He had been active in politics. His name had been seen on different ballots, running for offices as high as Mayor of the North Slope Borough.

"I was doing everything that I had to. I was making a good living. I supported my family. I did all the things normal people do — it's just that I was drunk doing it. When I had to attend a meeting, I would take a lot of Certs, to hide my breath, to hide my alcoholicness. What I didn't know was that I wasn't hiding anything from anyone.

"What I didn't know was that even as I was giving what I thought was a good presentation, that everybody else knew I was drunk, that they snickered under their breath, and smiled at each other. The only person I was hiding anything from was myself."

Even at home, Long figured, the problems were not that bad. He knew of so many men who beat their wives and abused their children when they were drunk, but

he didn't. "Maybe I mentally abused them, though," he says, looking back. "It was like there was more of a quiet frustration around the house. Nobody says anything. We don't talk together, or laugh, it's just quiet. After all, I don't have a problem."

That was how Long still saw things when he opened the door to the SATS treatment center and walked in.

"Then I looked around and I thought, 'how many more of these doggone places am I going to have to go through?' I told myself, 'This may be my last stop to nowhere!'"

Finally, Long found himself ready to accept the fact that he was alcoholic; powerless over the substance. Thinking of how the community had always known it, he felt like he was drowning in shame. "Then I thought, 'there is no use to feel like that.' The community had always known I was an alcoholic. No, I was going to do this for me. Before, I had went through the programs for the wrong reasons. Because of my job, because of family problems. This time, I was doing it for me. Because I wanted to break free from the control of alcohol."

It was a struggle. Long watched as others, who had come thinking enrolling in SATS was like entering a hospital — all they had to do was get treated and be well —

dropped out.

"That's not what the program does. Even after SATS, life is still hard. The bills still come in every month. You still have that disease of alcoholism, and if you take a drink to relax, it still will take you right back down."

What Long had now, though, was the desire to fight it, and support to help him. When he feels weak, there is now someone to call, to chat with over a cup of coffee, someone who understands. There are AA meetings to go to, and now when he goes, Long accepts his disease as real — one that he must deal with day by day, each day, for the rest of his life.

Life has improved. Feelings are better at home. Family members talk together, laugh and joke. Friends used to come by with a bottle. When they met sobriety, some quit coming, but others just started coming without a bottle. "It's no fun being with someone who is drinking," Long explains.

Long does not have the high status jobs he used to. He works in the BUECI shop, and moonlights as an airplane mechanic at Barrow Air. "I look at it like I lost ten years of my life. I am starting over now, just where I left off ten years ago. Only I am ten years older now. Right now, my first goal is to learn to live sober."

Kivgiq—looking back in hope of a better future

Traditionally, alcohol and drug abuse posed no problems for the people of the North Slope. Such problems began only when new forces intruded in from the outside to eat at and erode away the old traditions and values; to create confusion where once there had been confidence.

Thinking about this late last year, Mayor Ahmaogak called special assistant Rex Okakok into his office for a chat. It had been a long, long time, the Mayor noted, since the Inupiat people had put on a great dance and gathering just for the people of the North Slope. True, the Borough, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and other organizations had sponsored dance groups from the villages to travel to and perform at the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO), the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, and at other gatherings many times.

Yet, no big gatherings just for the people of the North Slope. The Mayor and Okakok recalled the descriptions Elders had made of Kivgiq, the messenger feast, a great traditional celebration where gifts were exchanged, and much joy experienced.

Could such an event, not held in the Barrow area for 80 years, be revived?

It was decided to give it a try. Dance groups from all the villages would come. Most importantly, no alcohol, drugs or intoxicated persons would be permitted at the event.

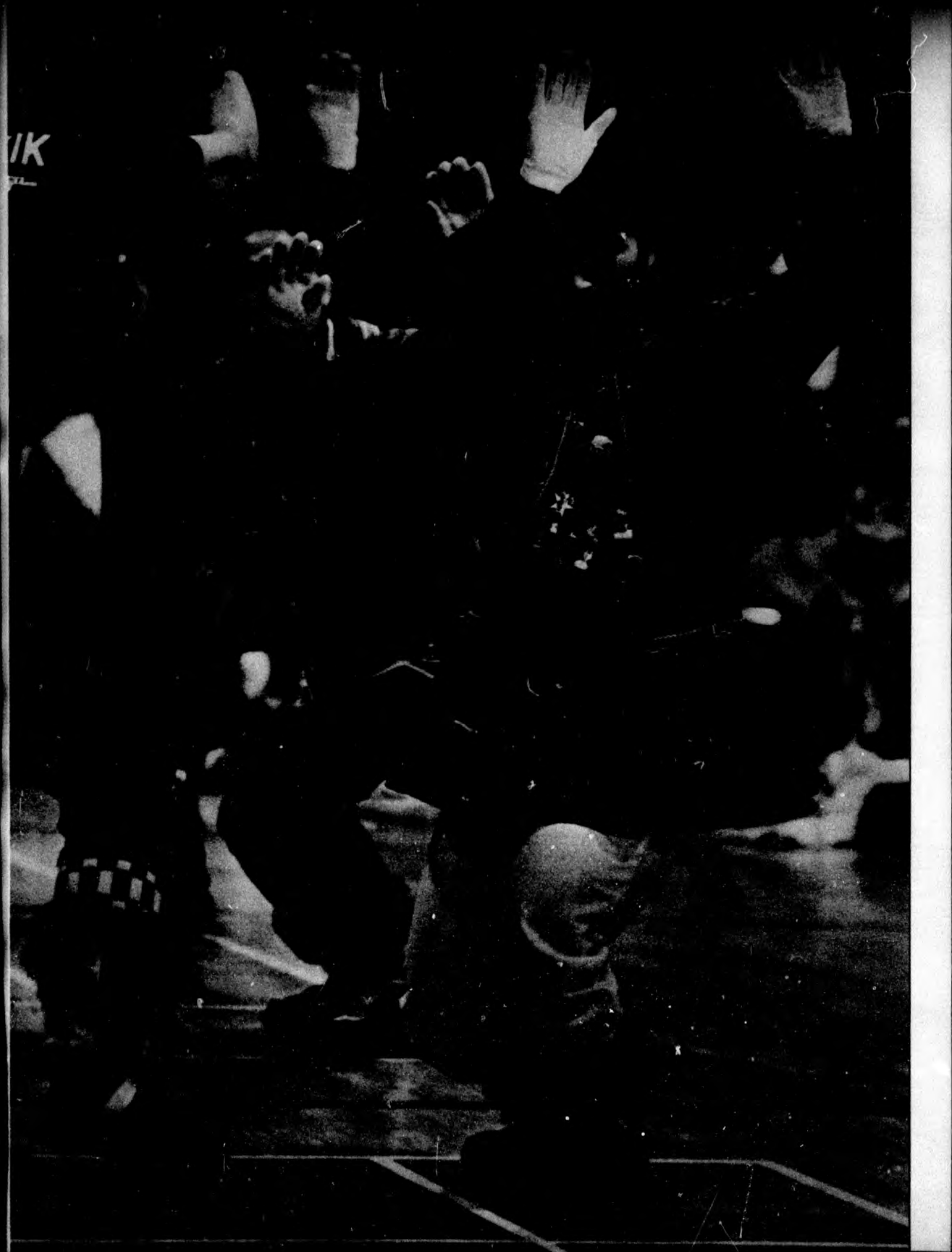


Before Kivgiq ended, Dinah Frankson announced that it had been many years since all the people of her village of Point Hope had danced together. Thanks to WEIO rules limiting the number of dancers permitted in groups participating there, the village had long ago split into two dance groups. A feeling of competition arose between the two groups, and was felt at other events and gatherings.



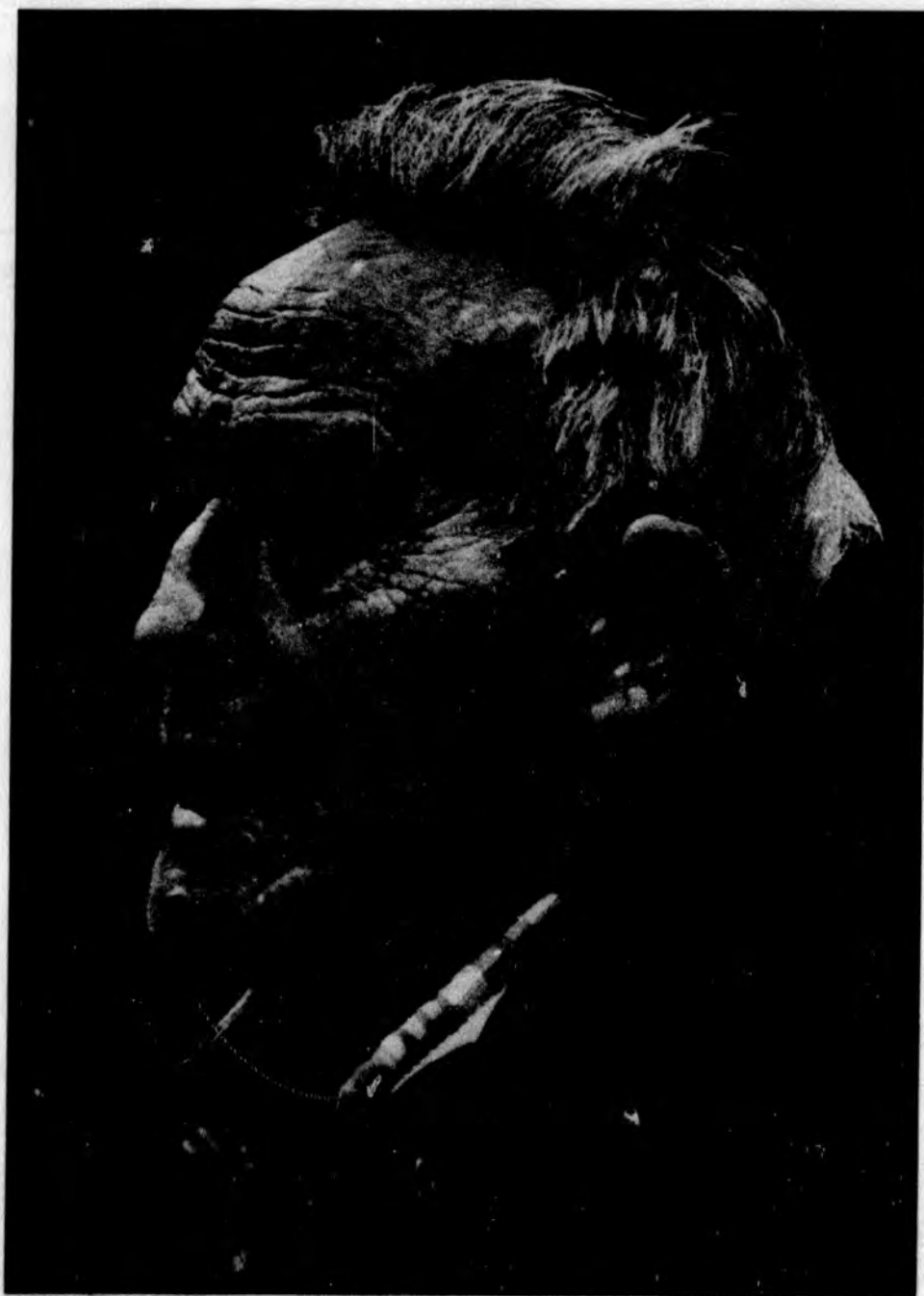
including church meetings. Before Kivgik ended, the dancers decided to cast down this wall. Led by Patrick Attungana (above) they joined together as one group once more, united by a drumbeat of great power. "When we danced together, that was beautiful," said Jakey Kunuk. "It was just like a stereo in a small room. It was a fantastic feeling."



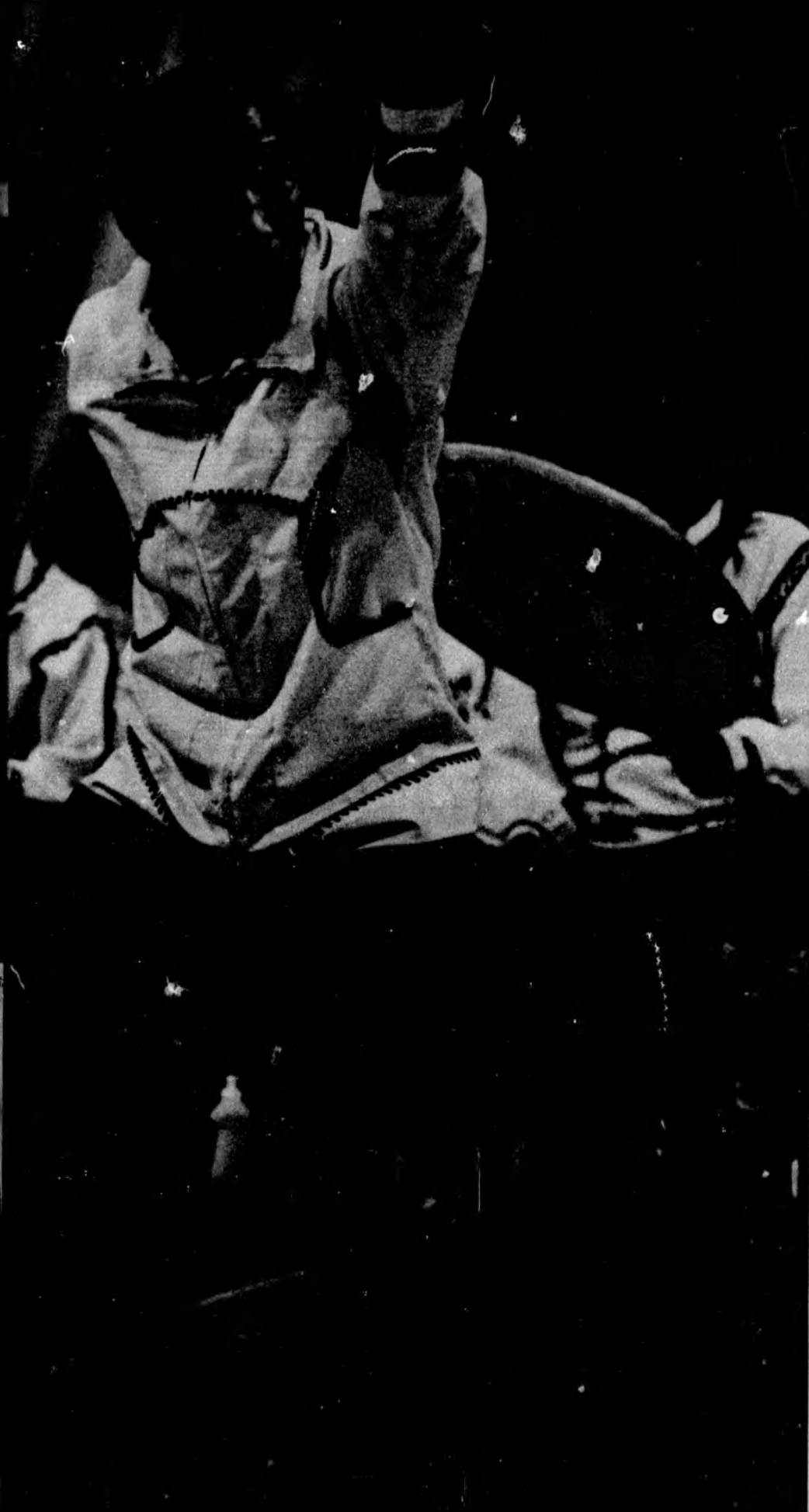


"Getting together, getting to see friends, relatives, old classmates. That was really nice. That used to happen long ago. . . Dancing is an experience of trying to translate a story. You have people sit around, tell you a story. Just by listening, you could feel everything in that story, that they are telling you. Dancing puts those words into motion, into music. Again, you can feel that story in the dance." — Jakey Kunuk, Point Hope

"Not only did I teach Eskimo dancing, but I also made a hanging, box-type, drum called 'Kalukaq,' which also included a line-up of dancers of both men and women. So the school children soon learned how to do that also. That is my pride and joy, to see my Native village youngsters involved in our traditional manner." — Weir Negovanna, Wainwright



Weir Negovanna.



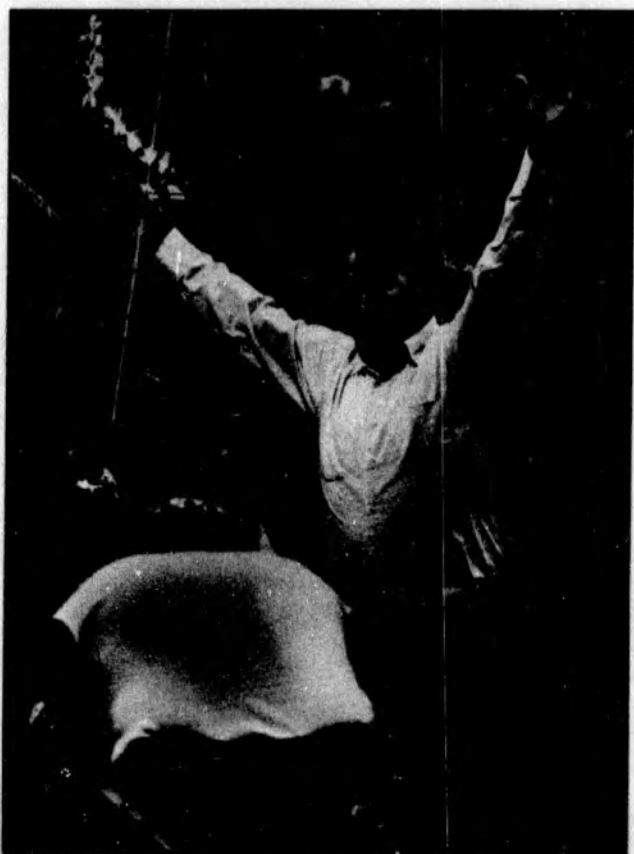
Jakey Kunuk, left, motion dances. Bertha Tazruk and Jimmy Tazruk, above, perform for Point Lay.

The task of organizing the event went to Okakok. By any measure, his efforts proved successful. Over 200 dancers came, representing every village on the North Slope. At least a thousand, maybe 2000, more people showed up to watch and take part in invitational dances. Taking place in the Ipalook school gym, it had to be the most people ever gathered together in one place on the North Slope.

For three days, there was dancing, singing, and the giving of gifts.



Frozen fish for the feast.



One good problem faced by *Uiniq* was that we wound up with literally hundreds of photos we wanted to use, along with much information. This proved impossible, of course. So here we include just a sampling of photos, with no real attempt to fully explain Kivgiq. At Okakok's suggestion, the editor will, funding provided, prepare a special book with more photos, and as thorough an explanation as possible, for next winter's Kivgiq.



"Kivgiq also means a joyous occasion, a reunion of long lost friends and relatives. It was looked upon as an all-important occasion . . . people would come in to attend no matter how much distance one had to travel."

— Roxy Ekowana.



In the spirit of gift giving, Tommy Pikok of Barrow (right) receives gifts from Evy and Ernie Frankson, and joins them in dancing (above). Perry Akootchook of Kaktovik (below) dances with gift.

"The messenger runner poles would have a tie-on message sometimes as long as the pole itself, that was the people's request. All kinds of scraps were tied on to the messenger poles, requesting of his trading partner that he would like this particular item sent to him. Every scrap would be untied by the messenger then related to this trading partner of what was requested of him . . . the tie on requests were many and varied. It did not matter how much it costs, or if it wasn't available at the moment, one would go to any lengths to get the request available."

— Roxy Ekowanna







Young men from the Barrow dance group perform a variety of moves during motion dancing. On the following two pages, participants are caught doing many things, from looking at themselves on a tv monitor, to trying to cool off, as an Anaktuvuk Pass invitational dance comes to an end. No alcohol, no drugs, just happiness.





"So after everyone gets together, selections are made amongst the young men for messenger feast runners. Only those who are strenuous and agile are selected. So, in each village each one has a very close friend or trading partner whom they have gotten to know and trust. At Kivgiq time, these trading partners would try to outdo each other in exchanging gifts."

— Waldo Bodfish







"The qargi was made of cut-up blocks of hardpacked snow; the walls were made of snow blocks. We had seen it, in fact, we played in it after the occasion was all over, as we were old enough to run around by ourselves. There was a support beam in the

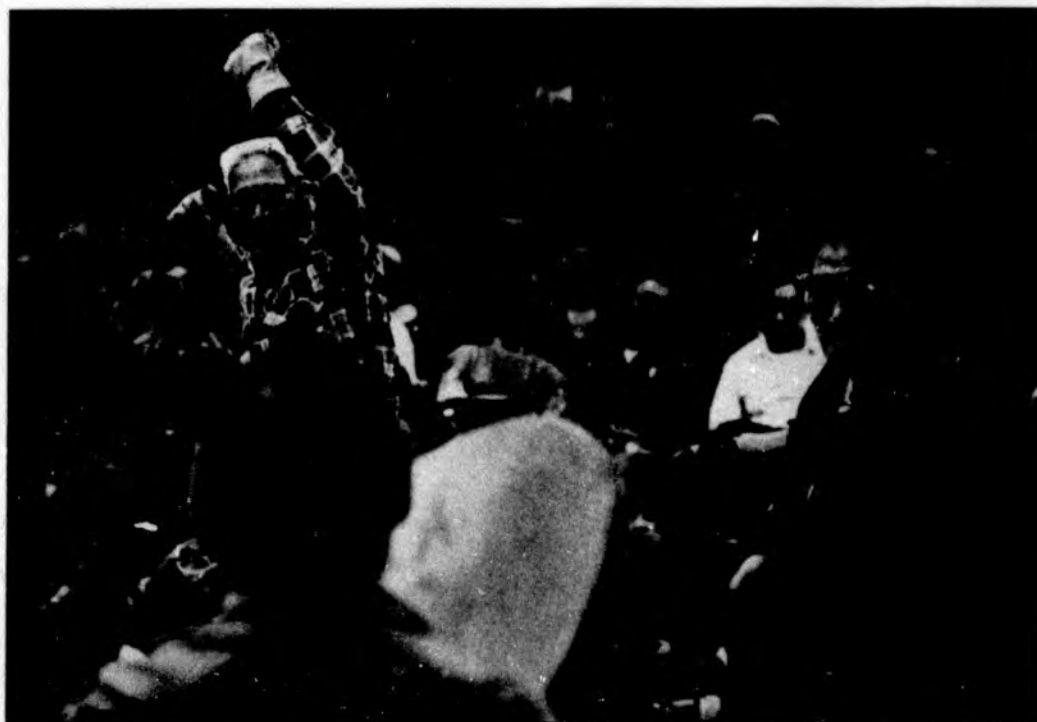




middle, and so several wooden bits and pieces were attached to the beam as a framework to hold up the hides and boat sails to cover the top. That was what the qargi looked like, the one I saw, where the last qargi was held here in Barrow."

— Roxy Ekowana

Harry Kignak is joined on the dance floor by Wesley Aiken; then the two demonstrate their moves.



"One of the events during kivgiq is the 'ulugiaqtuq' bow and arrow duel consisting of both men, and it is done outside of the qargi. It seemed like the men were aiming at each, sidestep each other, with their bows drawn. In my mind, I thought surely one will be killed, as I did not know any better. You did not know who they were, as their faces were all white, powdered on with flour . . . The one whose bowstring broke, things like that are always noted, as a mishap would occur shortly thereafter.



Wainwright dancers perform the ulugiaqtuq, bow and arrow duel. On the following two pages, the audience enjoys a performance by the Nuiqsut dancers.





"Things usually occurred while the anartug, and the mediums, were in full swing. The arrows are always aimed right above the spectators' heads. One of the contestants was going to do just that when his bow string broke. There was nothing one could do, but to stand there in stunned silence.

"These I have heard my mother tell us."

— Roxy Ekowana



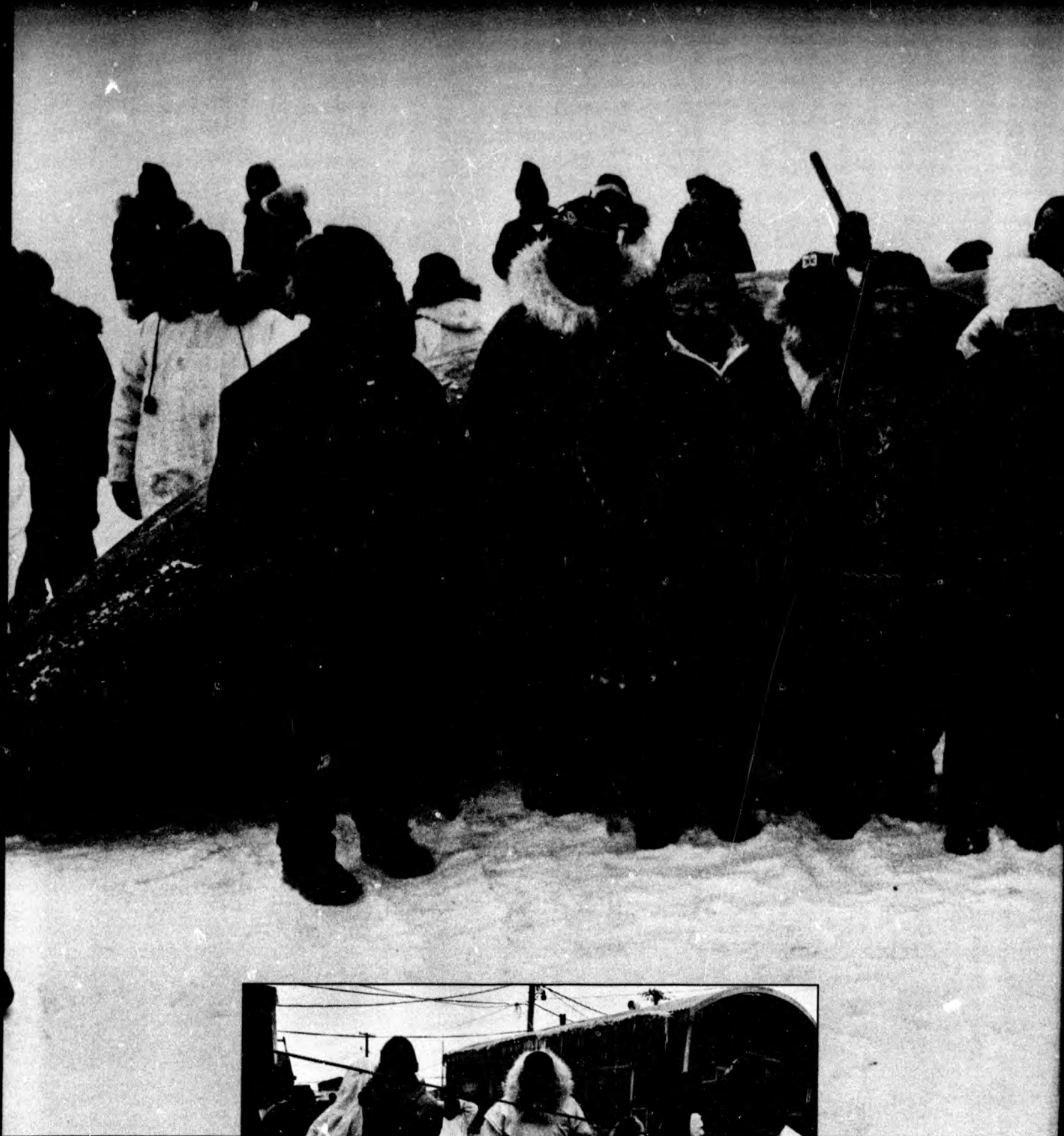


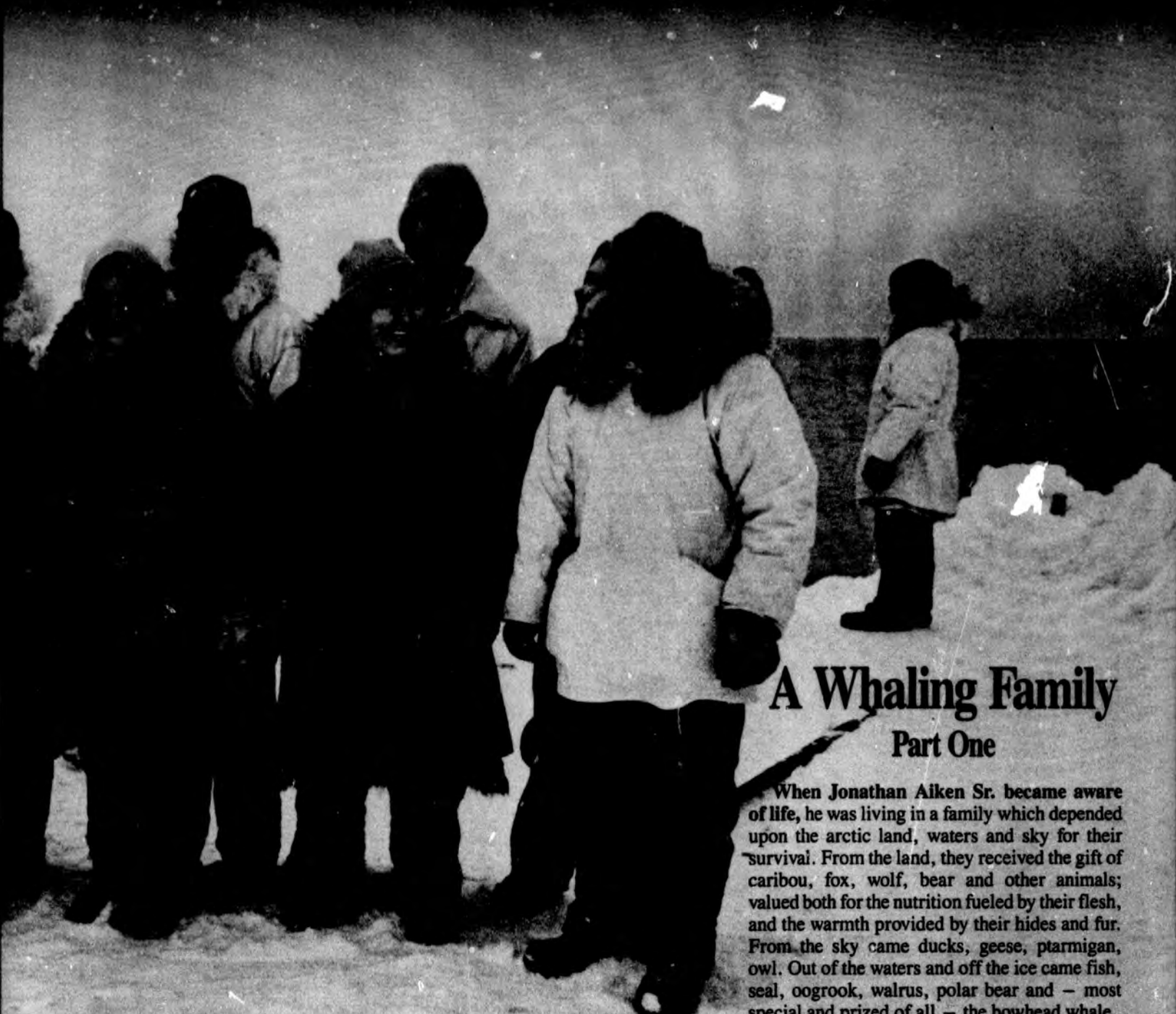
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— Roxy Ekowana







A Whaling Family

Part One

When Jonathan Aiken Sr. became aware of life, he was living in a family which depended upon the arctic land, waters and sky for their survival. From the land, they received the gift of caribou, fox, wolf, bear and other animals; valued both for the nutrition fueled by their flesh, and the warmth provided by their hides and fur. From the sky came ducks, geese, ptarmigan, owl. Out of the waters and off the ice came fish, seal, oogrook, walrus, polar bear and — most special and prized of all — the bowhead whale.

Today, Jonathan continues the tradition. Along with wife Mabel, he heads one of the most respected and successful whaling crews on the North Slope. This year, *Uiniq — The Open Lead*, was privileged to join Jonathan and crew for the spring bowhead hunt. Off and on over the next year, or perhaps two years — however long it takes — it is the intent of *Uiniq* to continue to drop in on the Aikens. By the time this project is complete, *Uiniq* hopes to have put together a sequence of pictures and words that will stand as a lasting tribute not only to the whaling family and crew of Jonathan Aiken, but to an entire culture.



Members of the Aiken family and crew gather at the sight of freshly killed bowhead to pose for a quick portrait. Flanked by son Johnny Lee (inset, left) and gunner Eli Solomon, Captain Jonathan Aiken makes a final check of the oogrook skin-covered umiak. Crew members then pull and push the boat onto the sea ice outside Barrow, where their snowmachines wait for the journey out to the lead.



Ned Nelson and Randy Edwards carry caribou skins for the tent floor. Also helping are Violet Aiken and Jonathan, Jr.

Setting up a home on the ocean.

Although overcast, it is a pleasant, calm, late April evening with only light, easterly winds of about fifteen miles per hour blowing as the crew moves out over the sea ice. While there are some small pockets of open water, including a good sized lake of salt water in which a number of bowhead are said to be waiting for more water to open in front of them, the lead remains mostly closed.

Still, the winds are favorable to opening up more water. With Jonathan on his Skidoo pulling the umiak at the head of the line, the crew travels several miles to the southwest, and then sets up camp on a broad plain of ice not far from the lead. There is much work to be done. The tent, floorboards, foam panels and caribou skins must be set up, along with Coleman cook stoves and kerosene heater.

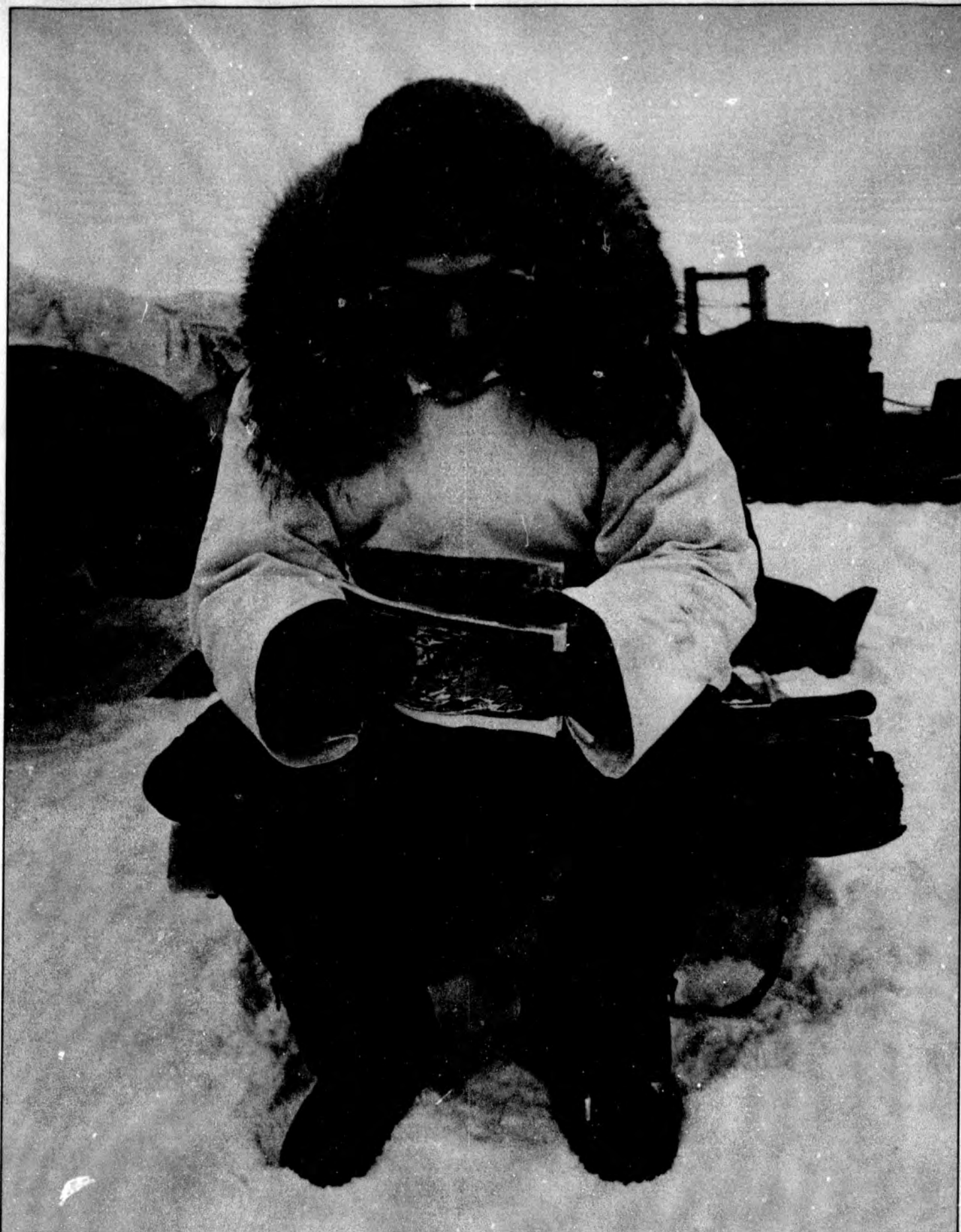
The CB radio and antenna are put in place and turned on to ensure that any reports of open water, whales spotted or harpooned, weather and ice information

can be shared among the hunters, along with any other news of importance. Randy Edwards and Ned Nelson, both 14 year old apprentice hunters, are sent back down the

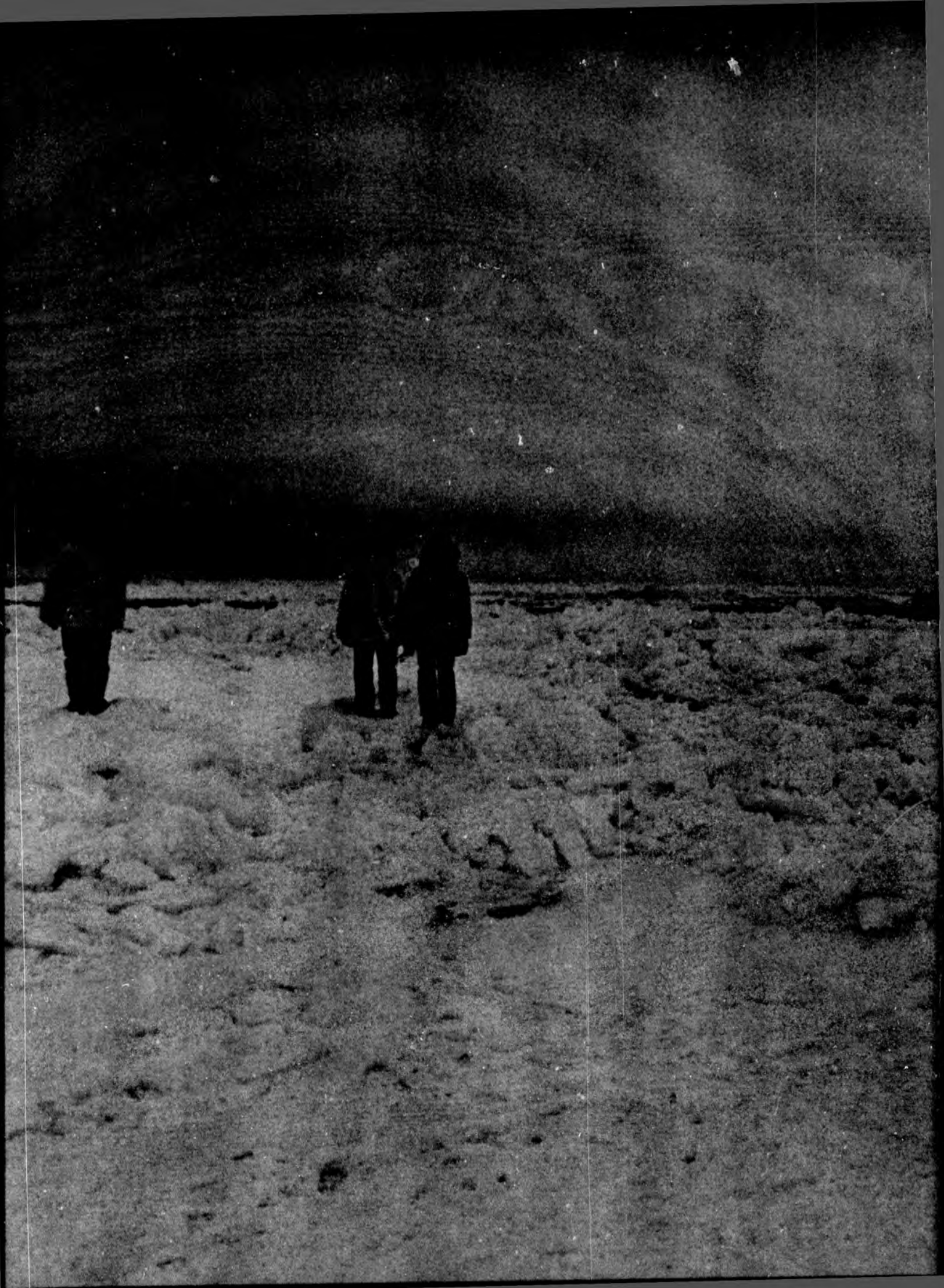
trail a couple of miles to chop chunks out of old, rounded humps of ice which indicate fresh water, necessary for cooking and for making hot coffee and tea.



On the way to camp, Claybo's snow machine began smoking and then shut down. He quickly discovered why.



After camp is all set up, Claybo takes a break and catches up on the World War II adventures of Sgt. Rock.







Final Preparations

Good feelings float about the air as crew members not on the night shift awake to a fine Sunday morning. Everyone is happy, working together, and there is a very special atmosphere about that is hard to describe to anyone who has not felt it before. Tradition says it is not enough to just go after a whale. Things must be done right. Before leaving, the crew had thoroughly cleaned the ice cellar, just as they should have, demonstrating early that they carried the proper respect for any bowhead which might choose to give itself to the community through them.

From then on to the present time, they had worked closely together, in good harmony. There was no bickering, no fighting, no one trying to look better than anyone else.

"A whale is coming," says William Sielak. "I can feel it. By maybe a little after noon today, a whale is coming. Someone is going to catch a whale today." He does not say, "we" are going to catch a whale, but there is a feeling that a whale is coming to the Aiken crew. No one says it. All feel it.

Jonathan leaves camp for a while and finds a better site. Then last minute preparations are made. The float (upper left) is made ready by Claybo and Jonathan Jr. Jonathan Sr. (center) constructs bombs for the shoulder gun, and everyone works on cutting new trails to the new camp site. Then Jonathan tows the umiak down as Claybo runs alongside to act as a shock absorber, protecting it from being punctured or broken.

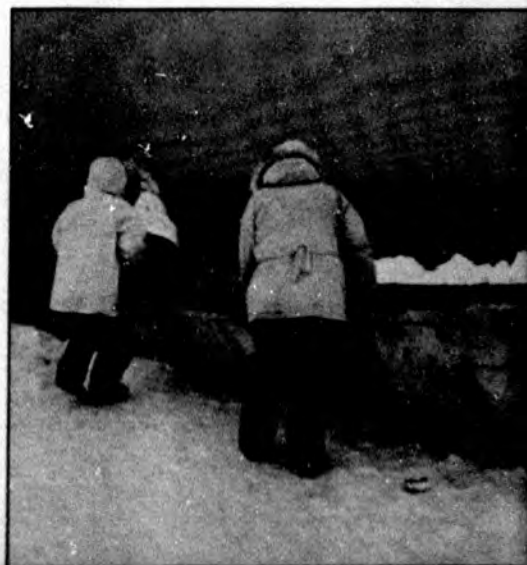
Near the water's edge, (bottom, right) Jonathan inspects one of the new darting gun bombs developed by the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission as Eli makes certain no obstructions block the spot where it will be attached to the harpoon.



Agviq appears

Even before the tent can be pitched, Jonathan (at right) spots agviq, the bowhead whale, as it surfaces and blows spray into the air not far from camp. Close though it may be, this whale has already passed to the north of the campsite, and so will not be pursued.

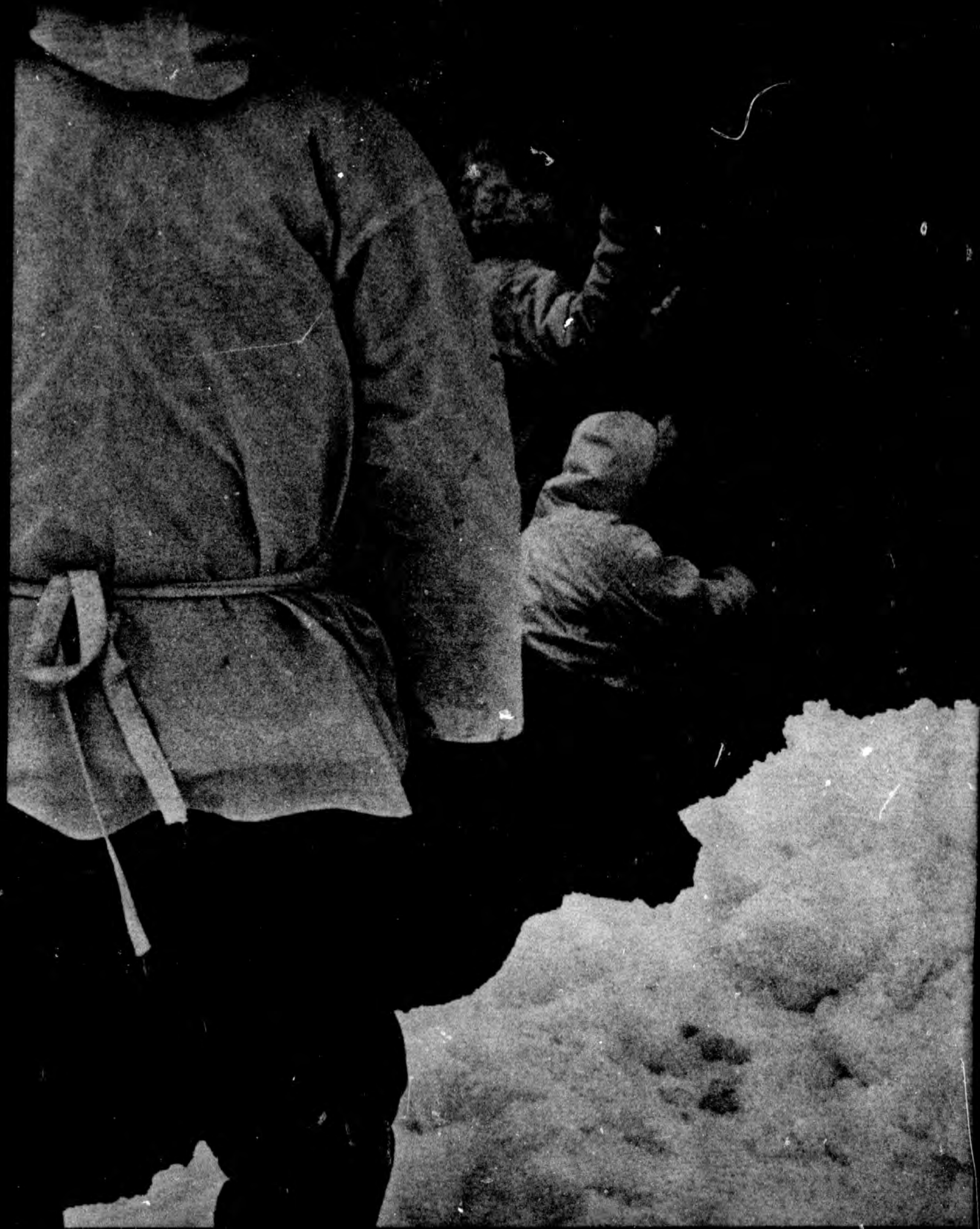
Only minutes pass, however, before another breaks the surface of the water, approaching the camp. The umiak (below, left) has not yet been readied in its final hunting position, and so is rushed to the water's edge. Johnny Lee Aiken (middle), Jonathan's eldest son, signals to other crew members bringing gear to the campsite to keep their snowmachines quiet and shut off. Then the crew pushes off in pursuit.

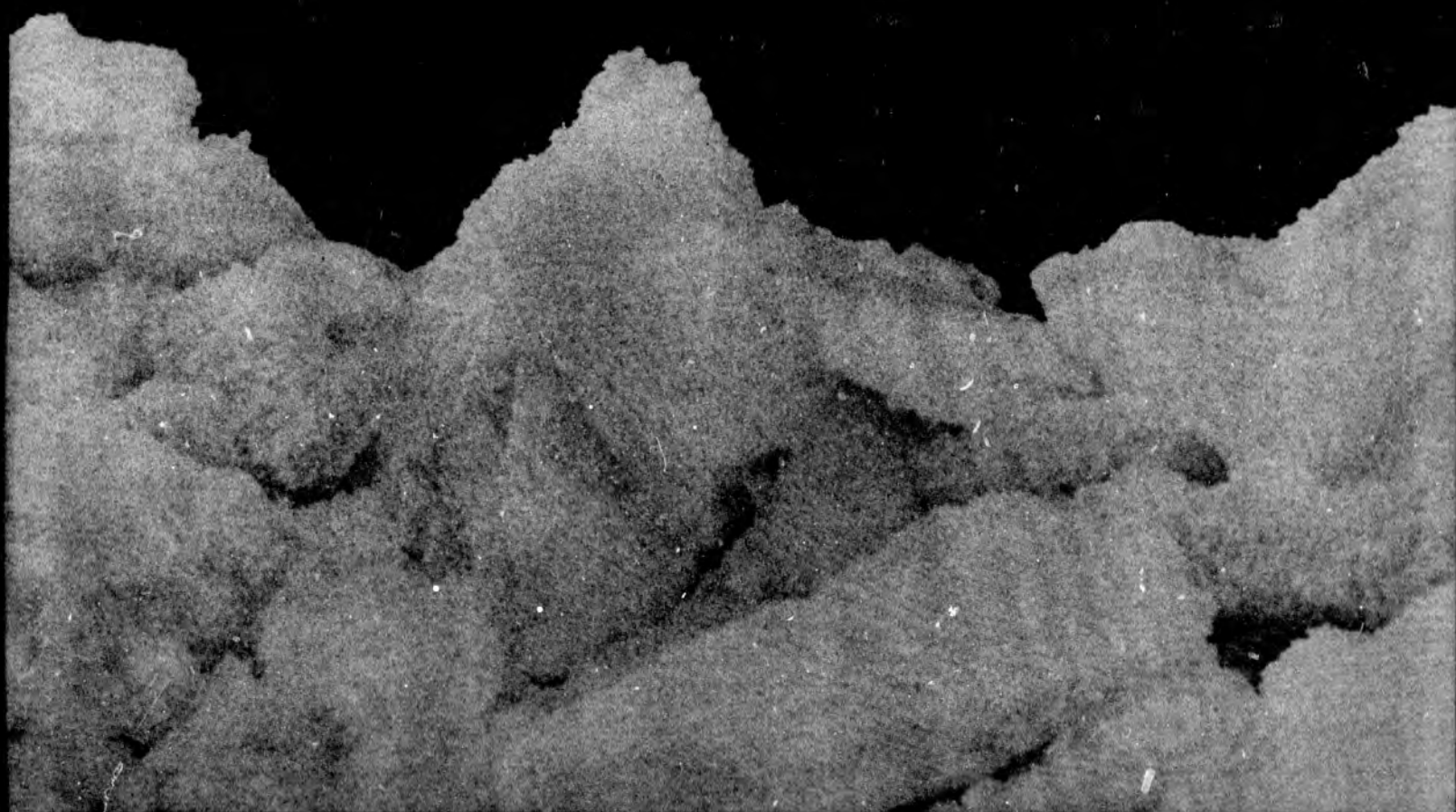


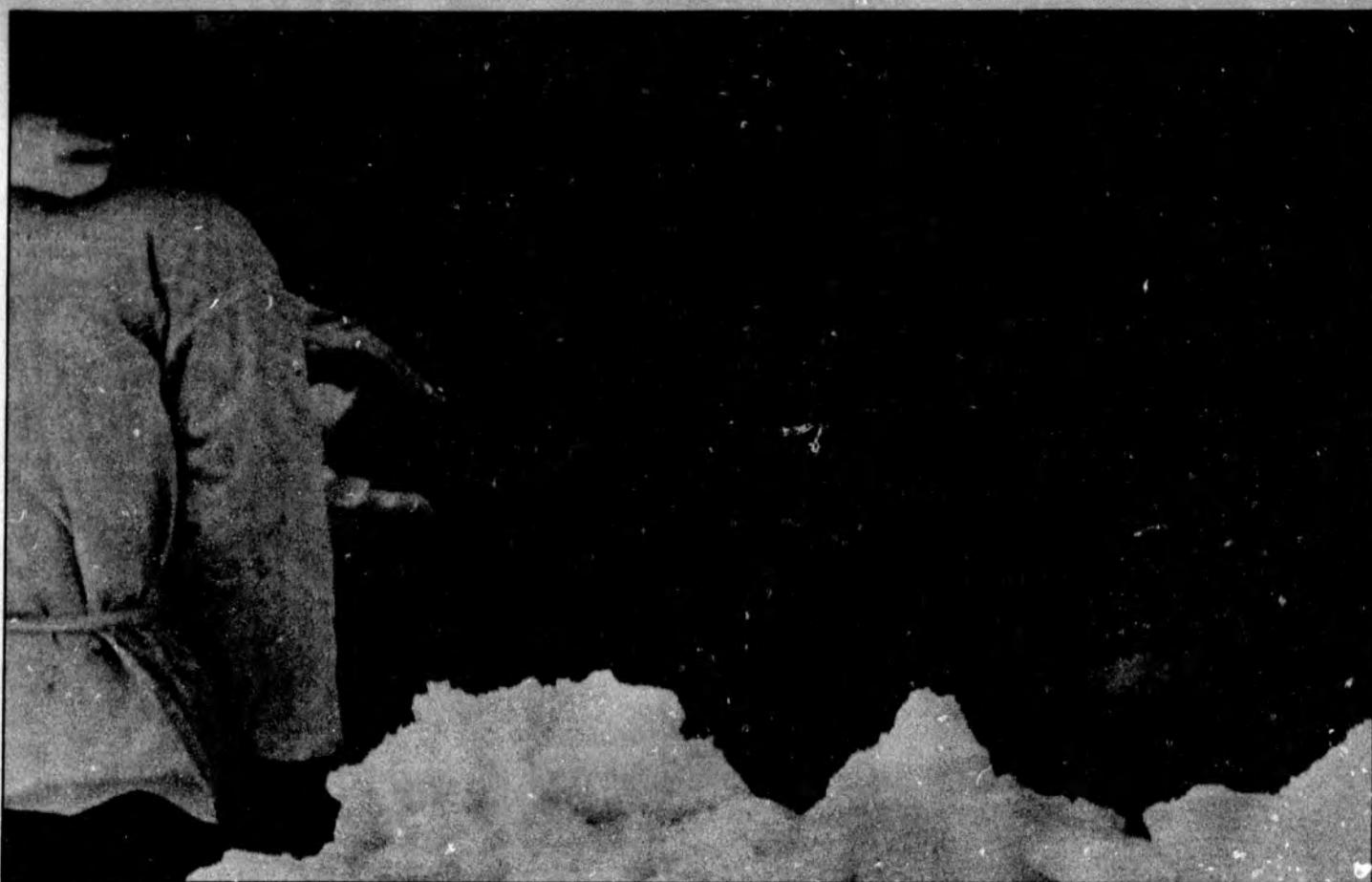


The whale does not surface again. The crew returns, and finishes setting up camp.

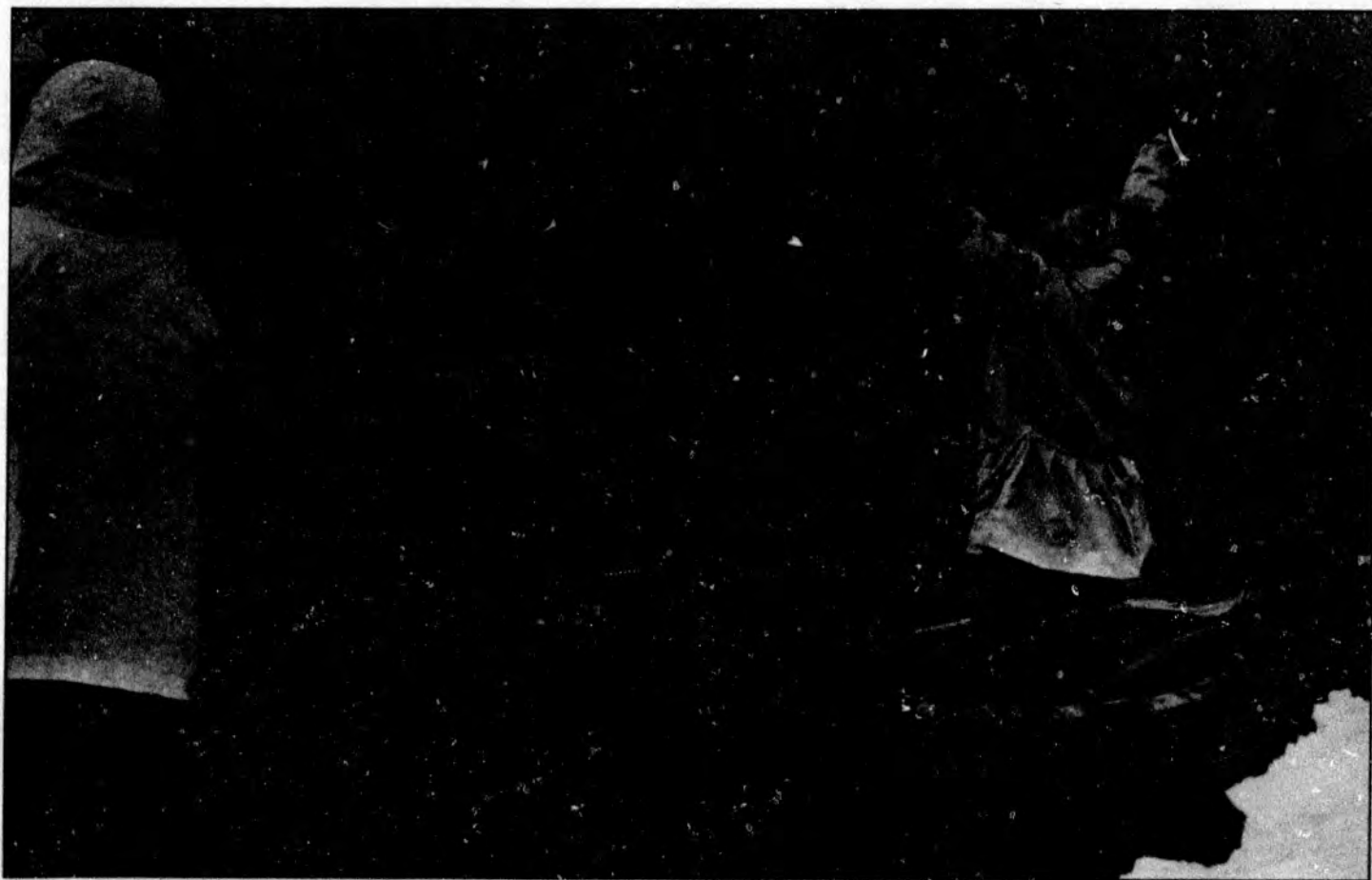




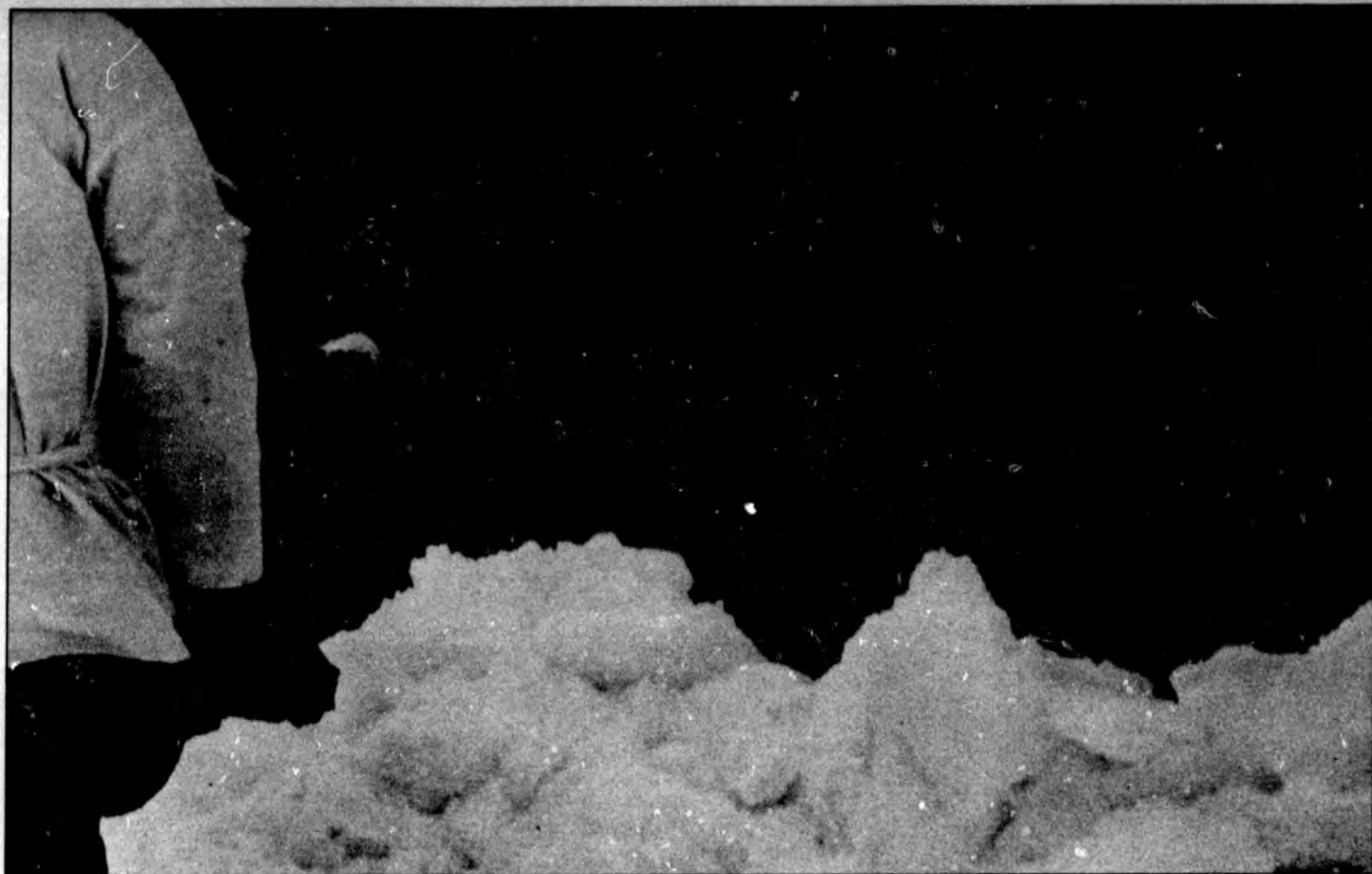




. . . as it does, Jonathan hurls the harpoon. It sinks into the whale and as the trigger to the darting gun begins to make contact, Eli readies himself to fire the shoulder gun. . .



. . . overcome with emotion, Jonathan lifts his hands and shouts in joy. . .



... Eli fires, the kick knocks him backwards in the umiak, and the bombs from the darting and shoulder guns go off in the whale. ...



... William Sielak and Johnny Lee Aiken rush across the ice with the float, hoping to anchor it and stop the whale if, injured, it flees seaward or under the ice. ...



... it is, however, an instant kill. "There's Red!" Someone shouts, Jonathan gives instructions as the whale rolls to the surface, and Jonathan Jr., rushes off with flag and paddle to tell the community of the season's first whale.



The joy of the catch

Exploding with joy Johnny and Claybo (top right) embrace. Jonas (middle right) extends a happy handshake. Then he and Johnny (lower right), join together in digging an anchor for the block and tackle. It is

hard, tough work, but there are no complaints, only smiles. Later, the women of the family reach the campsite after having been informed of the success over the CB radio.

Jonathan and Mabel share the joy of success, as does Johnny and sister Violet in the background.

"I am happy," Jonathan says. "We will feed the community tonight."



When a bowhead gives itself to the community, everyone is happy. There is no time of greater joy along the Arctic Coast.



Kiita! All hands! Walk away!

The whale has been dead but a short time when Charlie Brower and brother Price arrive with block and tackle. Under Jonathan's direction, Charlie, below, attaches the ropes to the tail of the whale. Then as Price (above) and others pull, Jonathan shouts instructions.





While it might look like Price, left, is trying to be a superman, there are actually many more pulling behind him. Finally, the whale is brought up. It measures 29 and-a-half feet in length. All whales taken in Barrow this season will be close to the same size, though sometimes a landed whale can measure 55-65 feet. Above, Jonathan and crew are joined by Arnold Brower, Jr., of AEW, in inspecting the harpoon and bomb wounds of the whale.



After arriving at the Aiken camp, Ronald H. Brower, Sr., joins other members of the community in helping the Aiken's butcher their whale.



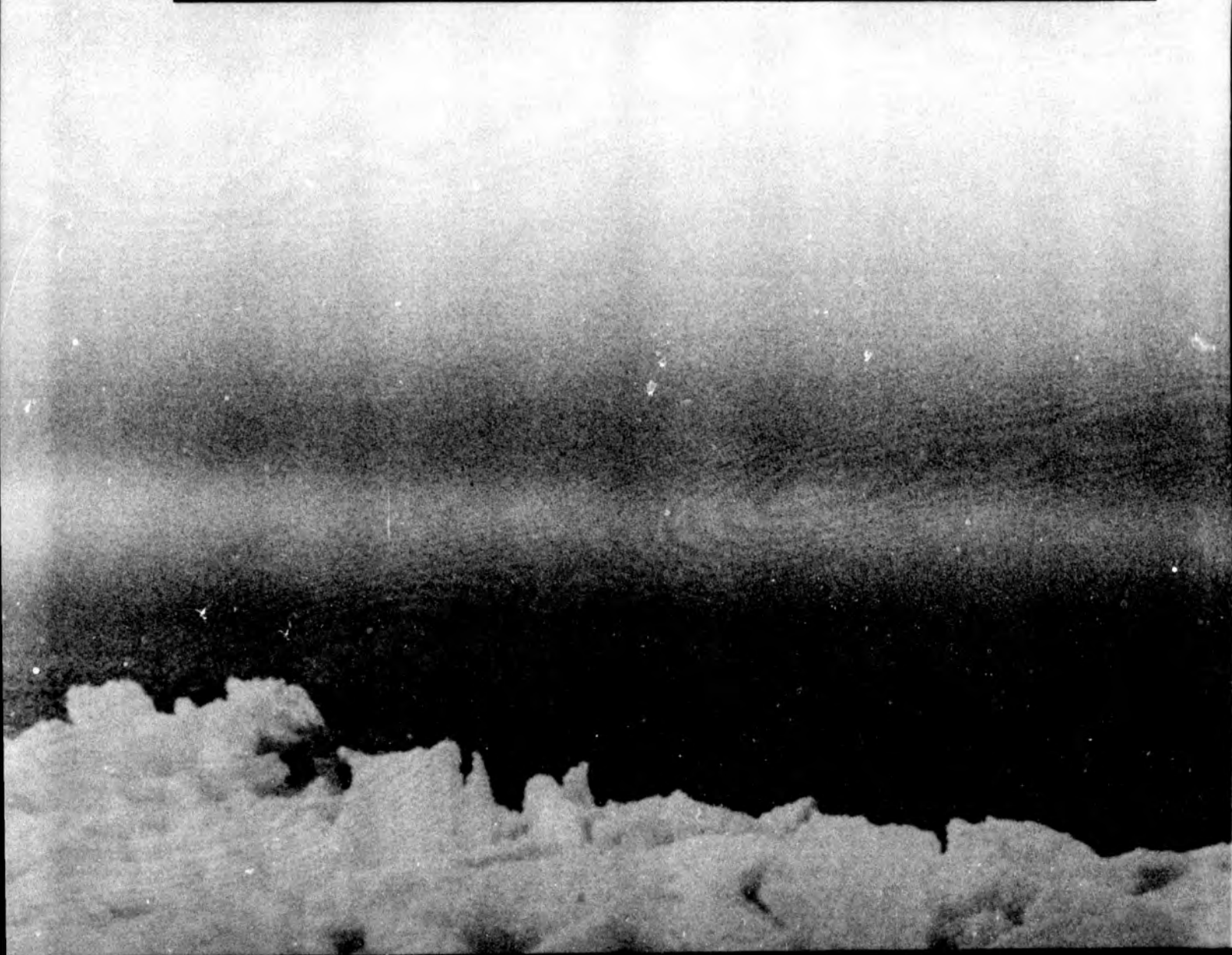
Saqiq, the tongue, is cut and divided. The whale will be shared among the entire community.



Violet is joined by Billy Kaleak and others, as she drags off the first slab of maktak.



Juko Aiken tows a jawbone by the Aiken flag. Shares of the whale will be divided among every crew sending members to help out.





Sharing the first bite

Even before the butchering began, Robert Aiken (near left) shared the first bit of whale with Violet and others. It was taken from a hole cut in the tail, allowing ropes to be attached to position the bowhead for landing. Later, Violet distributed the first helping of uunaalik — boiled maktak — the first to be tasted in Barrow in many months. Johnny and Claybo, below, feast on uunaalik. Martha Aiken (opposite page) joins other women in sharing tea. All while this was going on the crew of Jacob Adams kept launching in pursuit of bowhead (large photo). The next day, they would find success.

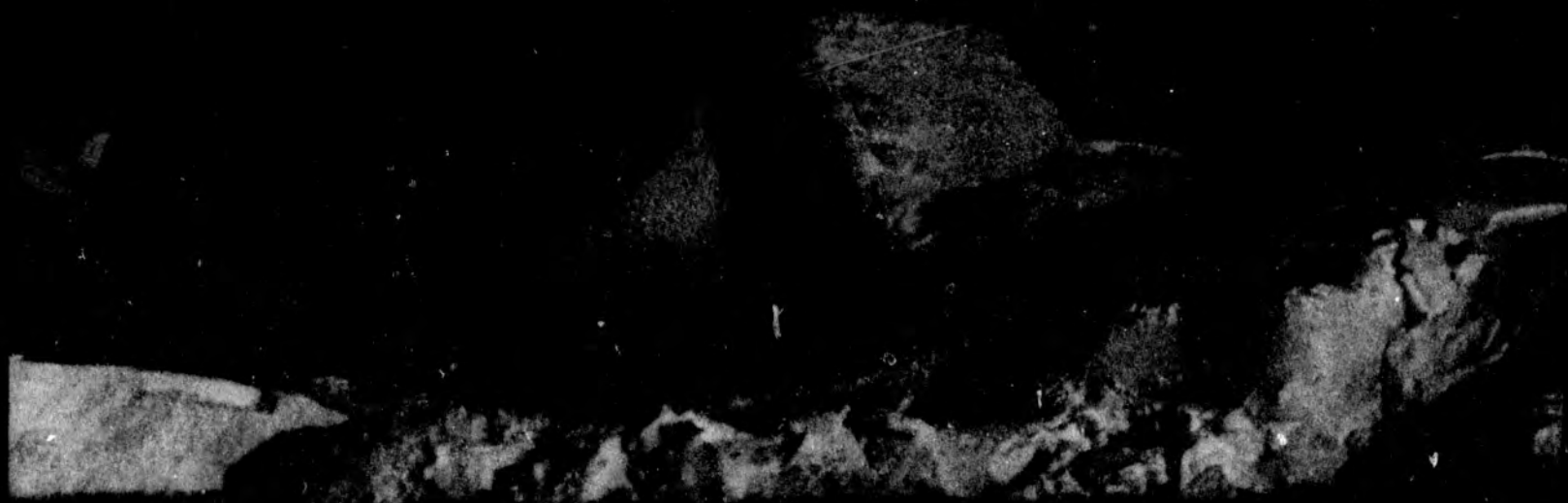


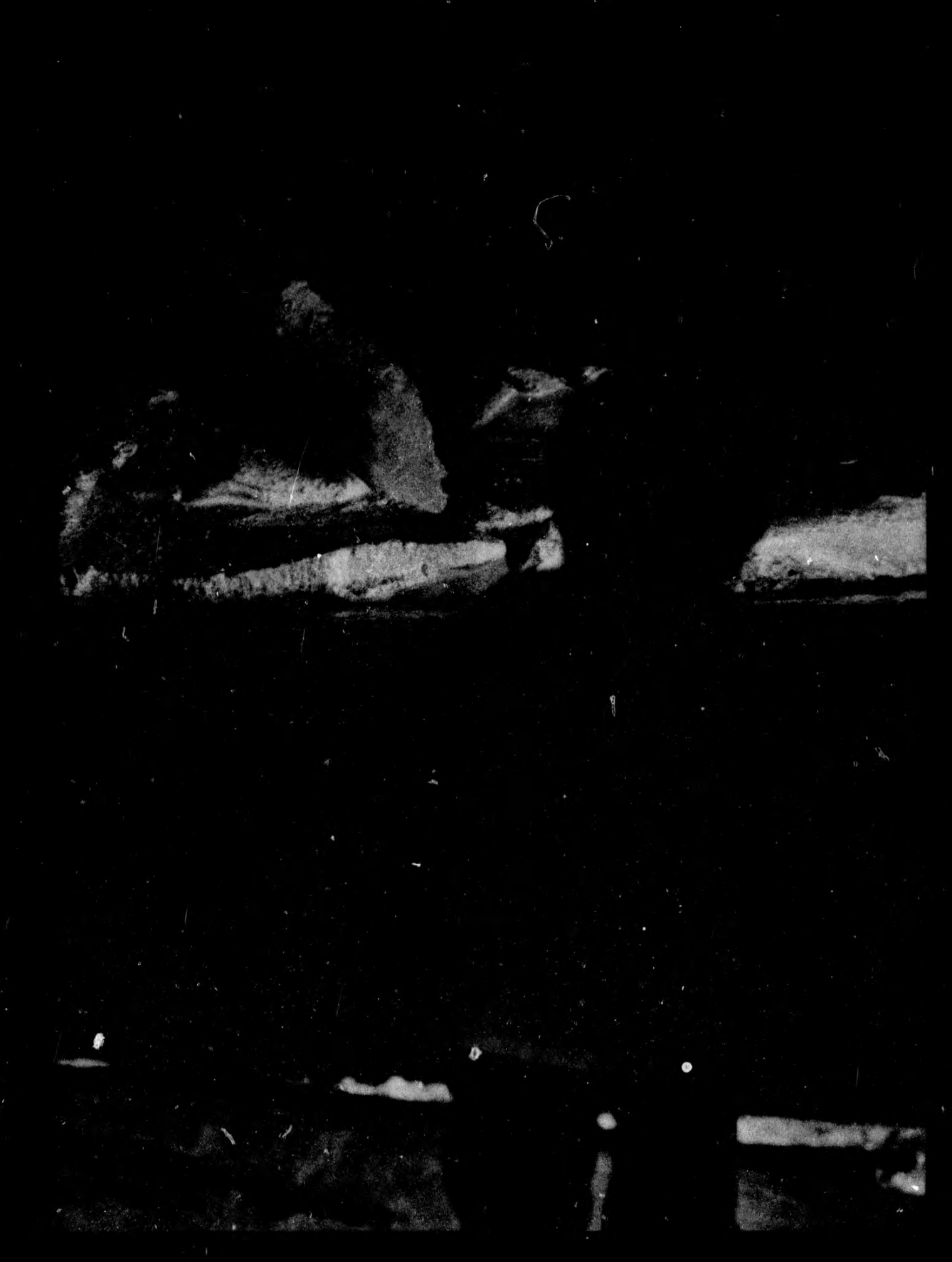


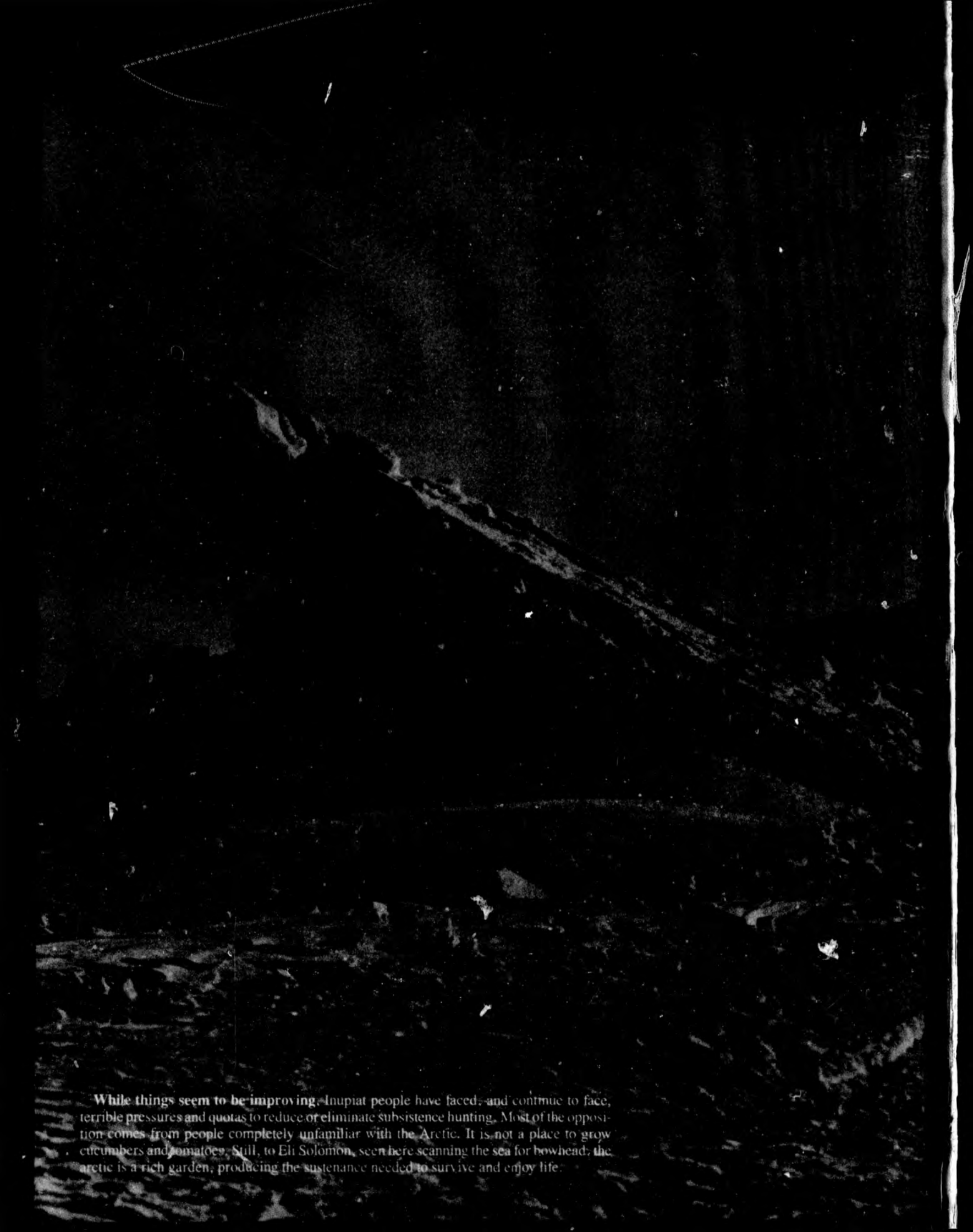
A fast dash to safety

After the feast (which, thanks to cameras which were too frozen to use indoors in warm, moist air, *Uniq* was unable to photograph) the crew moved back out onto the ice. Camp was set up (far left) but 30 knot winds made it unsafe to be near the lead, and so camp was moved to seemingly safe ice closer to shore. Barely had the tent been pitched when word crackled over the CB that the ice had cracked much closer to shore, and all those out in camp risked being blown out to sea. It took only minutes (near left) to break down camp, pack sleds, and go. The crew (large photo) then followed Jonathan as he pulled the boat several miles down the trail towards safety. Members from another crew (bottom) cross the crack. Some crews chose to ignore the warning. The crack grew quickly (as is seen on the next two pages, where Eli Solomon watches ice drift through the lead the crack became) and those crews which had stayed out either had to struggle through open water to safety, or be rescued by the NSB Search and Rescue, which deployed a helicopter capable of slinging boats and snowmachines. Still, some snowmachines were lost.







A dark, grainy, black and white photograph showing a person, identified as Eli Solomon, scanning the sea for bowhead whales. The person is visible in the lower right, looking out over a dark, choppy sea under a dark sky. The image has a high-contrast, almost abstract quality due to the low light and grain.

While things seem to be improving, Inupiat people have faced, and continue to face, terrible pressures and quotas to reduce or eliminate subsistence hunting. Most of the opposition comes from people completely unfamiliar with the Arctic. It is not a place to grow cucumbers and tomatoes. Still, to Eli Solomon, seen here scanning the sea for bowhead, the Arctic is a rich garden, producing the sustenance needed to survive and enjoy life.



Kunuk

I, the Editor

of this publication, feel I must write for a brief couple of paragraphs as myself, and express my thanks and appreciation to Jonathan Aiken — Kunuk — and to his entire family and crew.

I thank them for allowing me, a restless tanik who has spent his life drifting from place to place, culture to culture, learning a little bit about a lot of things, but a lot about nothing, to join them in a world in which Kunuk, by my judgement, has more knowledge than do most college-educated PhD's in whatever subject they are supposedly experts in.

It has been a bit over six years since I first wandered into Barrow on assignment for the *Tundra Times*. In that time, I have made several stabs at venturing out onto the ice and learning about subsistence in the arctic. My knowledge remains small — I figure maybe I have reached a kindergarten level of understanding — though my desire is great. I know it takes a great deal of patience for a man such as Kunuk to accept me among his crew.

I can only express the greatest thanks, and admiration. I judge Kunuk to be among the toughest men I know. When I am horribly cold — heavily bundled and shivering, wondering how I am going to survive until I can get warm again, wondering if my cameras will fire the next time I press the shutter — I look at Kunuk and his hood is down, he is wearing no hat, there is ice caked in his crew cut hair, yet he seems quite happy.

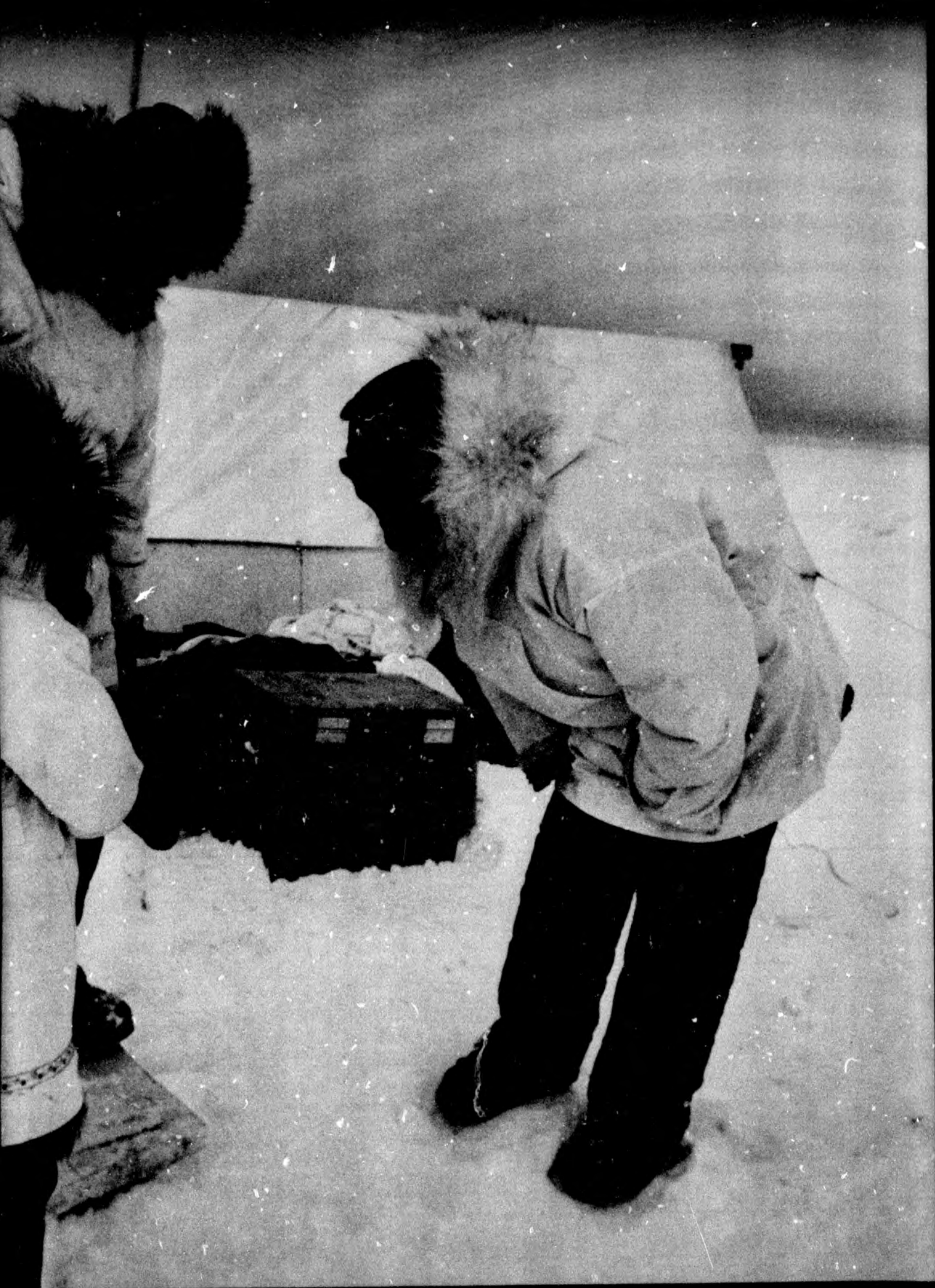
When a whale comes, he is all business, and if he gets wet and uncomfortable in the process of catching and landing it, he pays the discomfort no attention.

I also must say that Kunuk is among the most gentle of men that I know. In our time camped on the ice, I heard him utter not one harsh, angry word; yet I never saw anyone challenge his authority. After the whale had been caught, landed and butchered, I observed a young girl, Harriet Marie Leavitt, tiptoe shyly up to Kunuk to offer her congratulations.

He was deservedly tired — it would have been understandable if he had just brushed her aside with a nod of the head or a quick thank you, but he didn't. He bent down to her eye level, and showed great interest in what she had to say, as is seen in the photo at right. With Harriet is her father, Johnny Leavitt.

To me, that said something about the kind of man Kunuk is — I am proud to have been out on the sea with him, hunting whales.





Arctic Slope Students

Barrow Woman is Outstanding U.S. Student

Editor's note: Uiniq recently visited a few of the more than 60 North Slope residents attending college in Alaska and elsewhere. Following are a few brief glances at some of these scholars who hold so much promise for the future of our Borough. Uiniq would like to extend special thanks to Elsie Itta, for her invaluable assistance in locating our students.

For a family nourished by the flesh of whale, seal and caribou, it was hard to accept the fact that the future survival would be as dependent upon knowledge found in books, as past survival had been on knowledge of the land and sea.

Yet, facing what they knew to be true, parents and child made a sort of pact together. The parents would fully support, encourage and enhance the child's academic life, and the child would dedicate her strongest effort and do her best possible work. If this meant occasionally clashing with educators themselves, then so be it.

From this pact sprang a Barrow High School valedictorian, 3.98 grade point average, who went on to attend Wellesley, a prestigious Massachusetts school. There, last year, Geri Sakeagak was named "Outstanding College Student of America," by a national educational organization based in Washington, D.C.

"I would advise any high school student, even though they are in the rebellious stage of life, to find someone older than them, who they can trust, to help them form goals," Sakeagak says. "My parents always supported me, and backed me up. It is also important to have one or two teachers in high school who especially support you. I thank Mrs. Irene Murphy, and especially Mr. Richard Wilson, for the special support they gave me."

The support of parent and teacher proved especially important to Sakeagak when, in high school, she found that her own educational goals clashed with school policy.

"Mr. Wilson gave me the idea — that the schools and teachers are there for us, the students. We're not there to be puppets. Every student has a right to voice her opinion, honestly. Mr. Wilson encouraged me to think for myself. If he saw me reaching a wrong conclusion, he did not try to stop me, but let me work it out for myself."

After participating on the Rural Alaska Higher Institute Honor project, where she took to

heart Paul Ongtooguk's advice that future college students must learn to study effectively, and take good notes of class lectures, Sakeagak decided she would gain more benefit by taking a special course in speed reading, than a required course in career exploration.

"I was thinking ahead to college. With speed reading, I would be able to take notes on everything the professors lectured about. It would also help me concentrate on what they said. The school said no. They couldn't show favoritism to one student. To me, it wasn't showing favoritism, it was enhancing my education."

The issue had to be taken to the school board. Out of personal principle, Sakeagak refused to attend the meeting, but was supported by her parents, and Mr. Wilson. The board approved the request unanimously.

"I still use what I learned in that class, every day at Wellesley," Sakeagak says. "It has benefited me greatly. So, I would encourage the parents, and the students, to go ahead and do what they want to do, no matter what opposition they may get."

Sakeagak also expressed thanks to Murphy, praising her for letting her and other students move through Algebra II and other classes at their own pace. It kept the class interesting, and even benefited other students by allowing those who had forged ahead to take time to give them special tutoring.

Sakeagak had also been accepted at Stanford and Princeton, but chose Wellesley because she felt there was more history at its Boston location. Sakeagak was also impressed by the fact that, with an all-female student body, Wellesley had a tradition of turning out aggressive, tough-minded, professional women, unintimidated by a man's world, and equal to it.

"It's not something that we get vehement about every day, but we do discuss how women have been oppressed in everyday life, in different cultures all over the world. Wellesley has produced some of the most respected women in America today. Sixty-five percent of the professors are women."

"One of the most important things I have learned is not to have a closed mind, but to be able to confront an issue, and deal with it, and not give an excuse."

Sakeagak received the "Outstanding" award as much for her involvement in extracurricular



"Outstanding College Student of America" Geri Sakeagak

activities and leadership potential as for her academics. She has been working as a campus radio station disc jockey, active in sports, and in Mezcla, a political action group of Native Americans, and Latin American students.

"We staged a grape boycott," Sakeagak notes, explaining that migrant workers, many of whom are of Latin and Native blood, have had to work with grapes sprayed with an insecticide harmful to their health. "We con-

Challenge a New World



with family. Left to right, Willie, Morgan Jr., Geri, Lia, Cora, and Morgan III.

vinced food services to take grapes off their menu."

The Native students also look out for each other, and aid each other when they get discouraged. "Because of this, no one stays down for long."

Sakeagak is studying Economics, and East Asian Studies — she excels in the Japanese language although she has yet to learn Inupiaq — Sakeagak plans to go to law school. Perhaps

at Stanford, but maybe elsewhere.

"I became interested in law largely because of ANCSA (the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act). It is a law which can be interpreted in many different ways, by different standards, case by case, and has such a big impact on our people, on our culture, and our ownership of the land. I want to do work which benefits my people."

Sakeagak does not claim to have answers to

the problems of ANCSA, but feels that overall, "It is more detrimental than good. Yet, compared to other things Congress has done to other Natives across the country, I think that we got a pretty good deal."

Good or bad, Sakeagak intends to make it better.

And, she promises to one day add her Native Inupiaq to her repertoire of English, French, and Japanese languages.

First year brings hardship, fun, and discovery of new freedom

Dementia

A poem by Christine Ballot

Confusion.

Internal agony.

I am going crazy.

Teetering on the brink,

the very edge of the

great abyss of insanity.

Tears.

Beaten Pillows.

To relax is death.

Relief will be mine,

if I only let go of reality,

but certain death awaits

my mind.

Pain.

I fight.

Desperately, I reach

for the light, the ever

light of reality and life.

I reach to once more grasp

the safety and security

that the beautiful light offers.

I strive to hold, again and again,

the promising light.

Will it ever be mine?

College got off to a rough start for Christine Ballot and Patty Coumbe. They had no friends. Growing up in Barrow, they had heard stories about life in the big city. Walking the streets, they feared, was an activity which could get them mugged, beaten, murdered, or worse.

Coumbe especially dreaded the encounters with moose on the woody trails between dorm and class. One of these giant creatures could easily knock her to the ground, and stomp her into the earth.

They had almost no money. Some of the staff at the financial aid office struck them as indifferent to their plight, and slow to act to get them the checks they should have had weeks earlier. Without money, they had little to eat except for cold cereal, and an unreasonably huge cache of Top Ramen.

Tasty as the curly little Oriental noodles were, after a month-and-a-half of dining on little else, the two young women felt as if they were flirting with *dementia*. Were it not for the life-long friendship the two had cultivated growing up in Barrow, it seemed they would likely plunge right off the very edge of the great abyss of insanity.

"It got to a point," Ballot relates, "where we had to do something about it."

"We wanted friends," Patty adds. "You

have to meet people to make friends, and we weren't meeting anybody. So, one day, two boys were walking by and I leaned out the window and said 'hi.' Just like that, we had two friends."

The two began saying "hi" to other students at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, by the dozens. They started going to dances, movies, and concerts. "We've got a hundred friends now," Ballot says. "We've got fat friends, skinny friends, Native friends, black ones, white ones, Orientals, Indians." They learned that, as long as a certain amount of good sense was used, young women from Rural Alaska could get about Anchorage safely.

Friends more experienced with moose let them know that, almost always, the big animals were more interested in keeping a safe distance away from them than they were in stomping on them - certainly, they were not so hazardous as are the polar bears that sometimes roam into Barrow.

With courage growing, they decided it was time to take on the bureaucrats at

Patty Coumbe plays a tune on electric keyboard, while

financial aid.

"Their attitude there was the worst," Ballot claims. "It seemed like they thought Natives were stupid. Well, we decided to show them that Natives were not stupid."

When Coumbe went to see about a check from the City of Barrow, which should have been in her hands three weeks earlier, she was sent walking out the door empty handed, and feeling that she had been treated badly. The two decided it was time to fight.

"This one lady was really condescending to us," Ballot relates. "We stood up to her, and said we want this to happen, we'll be back on this date, we want our checks ready. She backed down. She said she would try and get our checks to us. After that, they knew Natives were not stupid. They knew we could stand up for our-

Growing up in Barrow, they had heard stories about life in the big city. Walking the streets, they feared, was an activity which could get them mugged, beaten, murdered, or worse.



Christine Ballot contemplates college life.

selves, and that we would."

Yet, the two feel that on campus, they have encountered little racism, and have found a world where students tend to view each other as equals. There are exceptions. "It doesn't feel good at all when you say 'hi,' to someone on campus, and they don't say anything back," Coumbe says.

A white friend she had dated a few times told her to stay away from a black student. "He's no good," he warned. Ballot and Coumbe got to know the Black. "He is a fine human being," Ballot says.

Another time, the same fellow informed Ballot he could no longer go out with her, "because you're Native."

"I said, 'forget you!'" Still, they kept him among their associates, and, at times like when he comes by to borrow cigarettes, continue to educate him on the basics of racial equality.

"We love it here," Ballot now says of college, and Coumbe agrees. "It is an independent life. We get to cook our own food, wash our own dishes." A drudgery at home, the tasks now symbolize

independence.

"We study, maybe not as much as we

should, but we're getting A's and B's," Ballot says. She is majoring in journalism, and envisions herself going off to New York, getting into broadcasting, and anchoring the national news. Or, perhaps, coming back to Barrow and starting up her own newspaper.

If she does, Coumbe, may run it with her. Coumbe is a budding photographer, although she has not yet decided on being an art, journalistic, portrait, commercial or advertising photographer.

"I might change my major," she adds. "There are so many things to do in this world, I want to do them all. When I was younger, I wanted to be a veterinarian. A teacher in Barrow told me I couldn't, to forget it. So, I dropped that goal. Now, I don't believe that teacher anymore. If I want to be a veterinarian, I can. I can be anything I want to be."

Journalism, photography, veterinary medicine, auto mechanics — whatever;

"You have to meet people to make friends, and we weren't meeting anybody. So, one day, two boys were walking by and I leaned out the window and said 'hi.' Just like that, we had two friends."

both women show great promise. As long as they strive to hold, again and again, the promising light, it ought, one day, to be theirs.



A fine art photo by Patty Coumbe.

Hot Eskimo donuts, from home

It was springtime, two years ago. Ron Panigeo still hadn't gotten used to the way the season struck the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. He should be on the ice, hunting bowhead with his father, Joe Panigeo, instead of looking at green grass sprouting under a warm sun.

His loneliness was broken by a phone call from his sister, Hazel Pebley, in Barrow. In the background, he could hear people screaming. His father had caught a whale. "She said they had sent uunaalik on the plane, and I should go to the airport and pick it up."

He did, and found a box packed with great love and care by his mother, Mabel. Inside, the uunaalik was still steaming. "Nothing could have tasted better to me. Nothing could have made me feel better," he remembers. "Mom is a real supporter. I know she really cares about what I'm doing. It just makes me want to go out, study hard and succeed, knowing she's there."



Ron Panigeo, who loves Barrow, with Professor James Nageak.

Other times, Mabel would send him Eskimo donuts, still warm.

Panigeo is a senior, studying administrative management and economics. He sees a new age of management coming for ANCSA regional and village corporations such as ASRC and UIC. "Very shortly, the people in the upper management of those organizations will have college backgrounds," Panigeo

explains. "When that time comes, I want to be there. That's why I'm here."

"Barrow has a really unique economy," he adds. "Barrow is there because of whaling, and the economy is built around that. Now, you also have the Borough, and the oil economy and, as the Borough goes, so goes the community. We need people who know what's going on — the turmoil we've seen in

recent years demonstrates that.

"I want to take a leadership role . . . I definitely plan to return to Barrow. I was born and raised there, I just can't leave it. Barrow is such a unique community, you get hooked. It's such a desolate place, an arctic desert. No trees. Yet, there are the people there. So open hearted, so vibrant. Such a community exists nowhere else."



Good friends Helen Albert, Kirsten Bagne, and Gretchen Charles.

Old friendships remain strong

They came as three friends to UAF two years ago, a bit puzzled

and bewildered. "At first, I was really shy," relates Helen Albert, echoing the sentiments of all three. "At Barrow High, we had made good friends we hated to leave. I was scared to death

coming here, where there were so many new faces."

Albert credits the friendship she shared with Kirsten Bagne and Gretchen Charles for helping her get through those

early days. All soon made new friends and began planning lives taking them down different paths. They see less of each other now, but remain strong friends.

Albert is majoring in Elementary Education. "I want to teach younger kids, second or third grade. I love watching them figure things out. I have done some student teaching here in Fairbanks, and at the Barrow Day Care center. At first, I felt kind of intimidated by the little kids. But they responded well. I liked helping them learn."

Kirsten is studying Wildlife Management. "At first, I was going to major in forestry. My interests haven't really changed. I'm really interested in nature and biology. In high school, I

took a career exploration class, and a personality test to see where I was highest. It was nature, forestry, and animals. I might come back to the North

Slope, if I could get a good job. I know I want to work in Alaska or the Northwest."

Speech is Gretchen Charles field of study. "I'm thinking of

travel, public relations type work. I'm also thinking of getting into politics, and writing speeches for other people. I had been thinking

about law; I'm not sure now. I have a friend here at school who is getting into law. I hadn't realized that a lot of lawyers have speech degrees."

A battle with algebra, Taco Bell a delight

Tina Stevens wants to land a good job, or maybe even create one for herself. She believes earning a college degree will help her reach this goal. "If you want to get a good job, you have to get education, you have to get experience," she says.

"I would really encourage the kids back home to go to college, and earn a degree. A lot of people, they complain, and say they never hire us for the good jobs on the North Slope. But we need to get the education, the experience.

"If more students from Barrow and the villages go to college, it'll get better. If more kids get their degrees, they will know a lot more. They will get into more of the good jobs. This will make Barrow a better place."

Stevens is in her third year studying business at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. "I chose business because it is the backbone to everything," Stevens says. "You've got to know business."

Even while attending school, Stevens has also been building job experience. In the summer-time, she returns to Barrow where she works for the NSB Planning Department. During the school year, in addition to carrying 12 credit hours, she works part time for the North Slope Geographic Information System, which also falls under the Planning Department.

There, she edits different types of maps covering the North Slope, and digitizes them into a computer system.

To accomplish all this, Stevens rises early in the morning, arrives at work by 8 a.m., attends classes in the afternoon and early evening, and wraps up her studies oftentimes as late as 1:00 a.m.

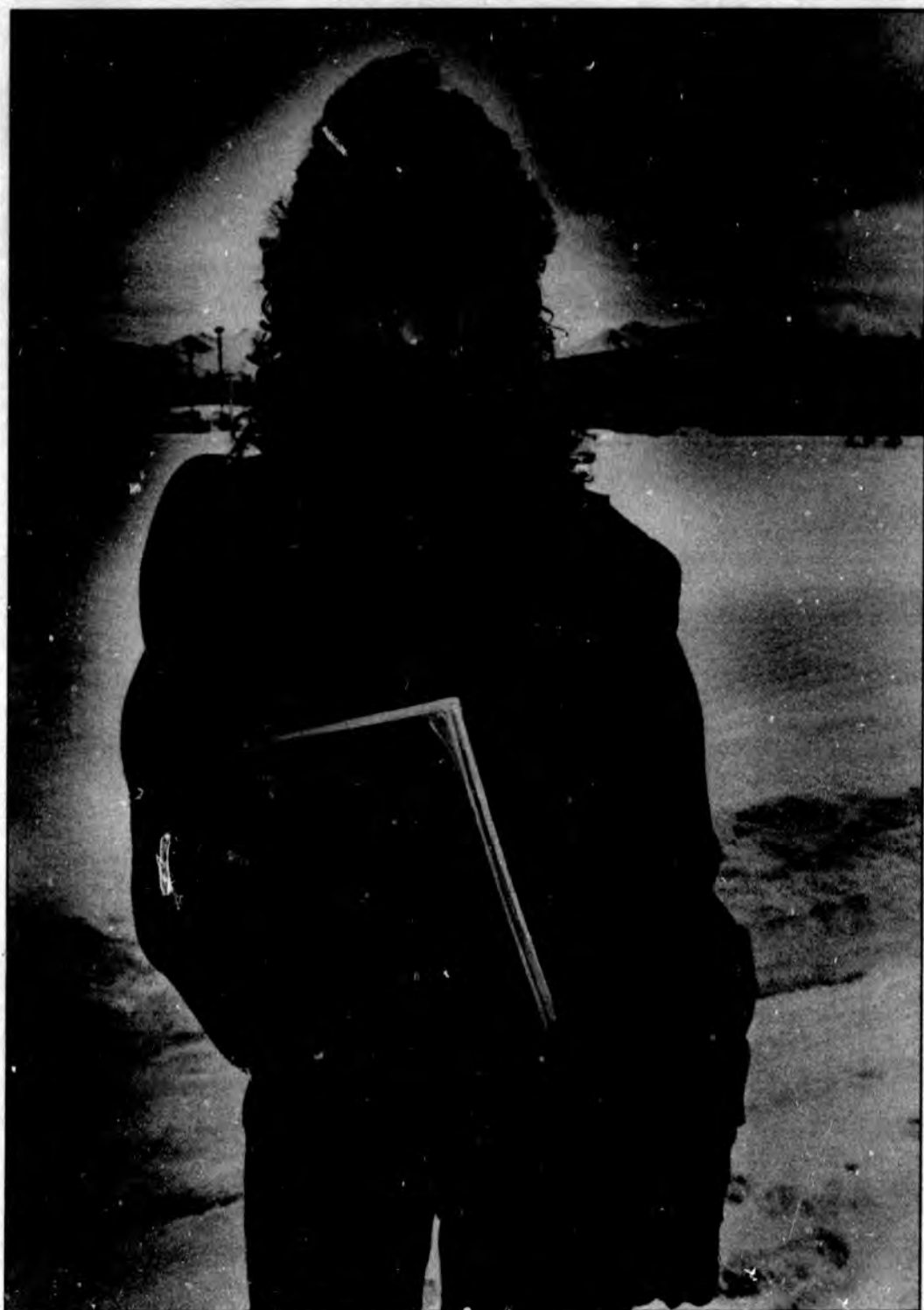
It hasn't been easy for her. "After

living all my life in Barrow, where I knew so many people, I came to a big place where I knew nobody. Lots of times, I felt like giving up, especially when I was running low on money. But then I would get a lot of support. I would come home

for Christmas. People would tell me how proud they were of me. It made me want to succeed."

Her first year, Stevens also felt the distraction of suddenly being in a big place, with so many things to do. "It was hard to study. I just

wanted to do everything — go bowling, go to movies, shopping, eat at Taco Bell. But, then I got used to being here. I really want to finish college and get my degree. I knew I had to put a lot of fun things aside for awhile."



Tina Stevens on campus at UAA, where she masters college algebra.

Nursing Student Had Butchered Seals and Whales, but Slicing Cat Was Hard to Do

Arriving just in time for the birth, Gene Young caught the new infant and handed it to Donna Johnson, with instructions to suction out its mouth, and clean it up a bit. It was the first time Johnson had ever been in such a situation. The baby was tiny, slippery, and seemed so fragile.

Just as she had been trained, Johnson took the blue syringe—the kind that all new parents soon get familiar with—and began to clear the obstructions from the baby's mouth. "I tried to handle that baby so fragilely, but I was so nervous," she remembers. "I knew I had to be careful, but I felt like I was suctioning the baby's brains out!"

Everything turned out fine. All of the infant's air passages ended up nice and clear. It cried aloud while its mother, Johnson, and Young oohed and aahed, smiled and laughed, and said comforting things. It had been a bit close, though. Working as an Emergency Medical Technician for the NSB Health Department, Donna had barely time to join Young for the flight from Barrow to Nuiqsut, get off the airplane, and attend to the birth.

Before she left, the new mother gave Johnson a warm thank you. "It felt good, to

know I had helped people like that," Johnson remembers.

In response to another emergency call, Johnson entered a house along with Cindy Young, director of the NSB Health Department. A man lying on the floor stopped breathing and turned blue. This was also a first for Johnson. The man was obviously in desperate need of the CPR heart massage and artificial respiration techniques that she, as Emergency Medical Services training coordinator, had taught to many students but never had actually had to use.

With no hesitation, Cindy Young flew into action. She positioned herself over the man's chest to give him heart massage, and readied Johnson to give him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Young began the CPR, repeatedly compressing the man's chest with the palms of her clasped hands. Ready for her turn, Johnson looked into his face. Everything seemed larger than it should be. His mouth seemed too big to cover with her own, his nose too large to pinch shut so she could push breath through his mouth. She could see and smell vomit, and knew he might vomit again, even while she was breathing for him.

"Breathe!" Young commanded at just the right moment. Johnson hesitated. For an instant. Then, she went to work. "Once I had started, I could think of nothing but helping this person," Johnson remembers. They worked on the man as he was carted up and loaded into the ambulance, and in the ambulance all the way into the emergency room of the Barrow PHS hospital. There, he was pronounced dead.

"I was a little shook up," Johnson recalls. "The realization hurt — you can't save everybody. I hated myself for hesitating, even for just a moment. One thing did make me feel a little better, though. When it was all over, his wife came up to me. She thanked me for trying to save her husband."

Those experiences, plus others she had working as an EMT and training coordinator in Barrow, convinced Donna that she wanted to devote herself to medicine, and to helping people.

"It made me want to learn more," she explains. "It made me want to be better."

So, having already spent some time in her younger days taking short stabs at college, Johnson enrolled in a four-year nursing program at UAA.

Johnson recently finished her first year



Nursing student Donna Johnson concentrates on cat dissection.

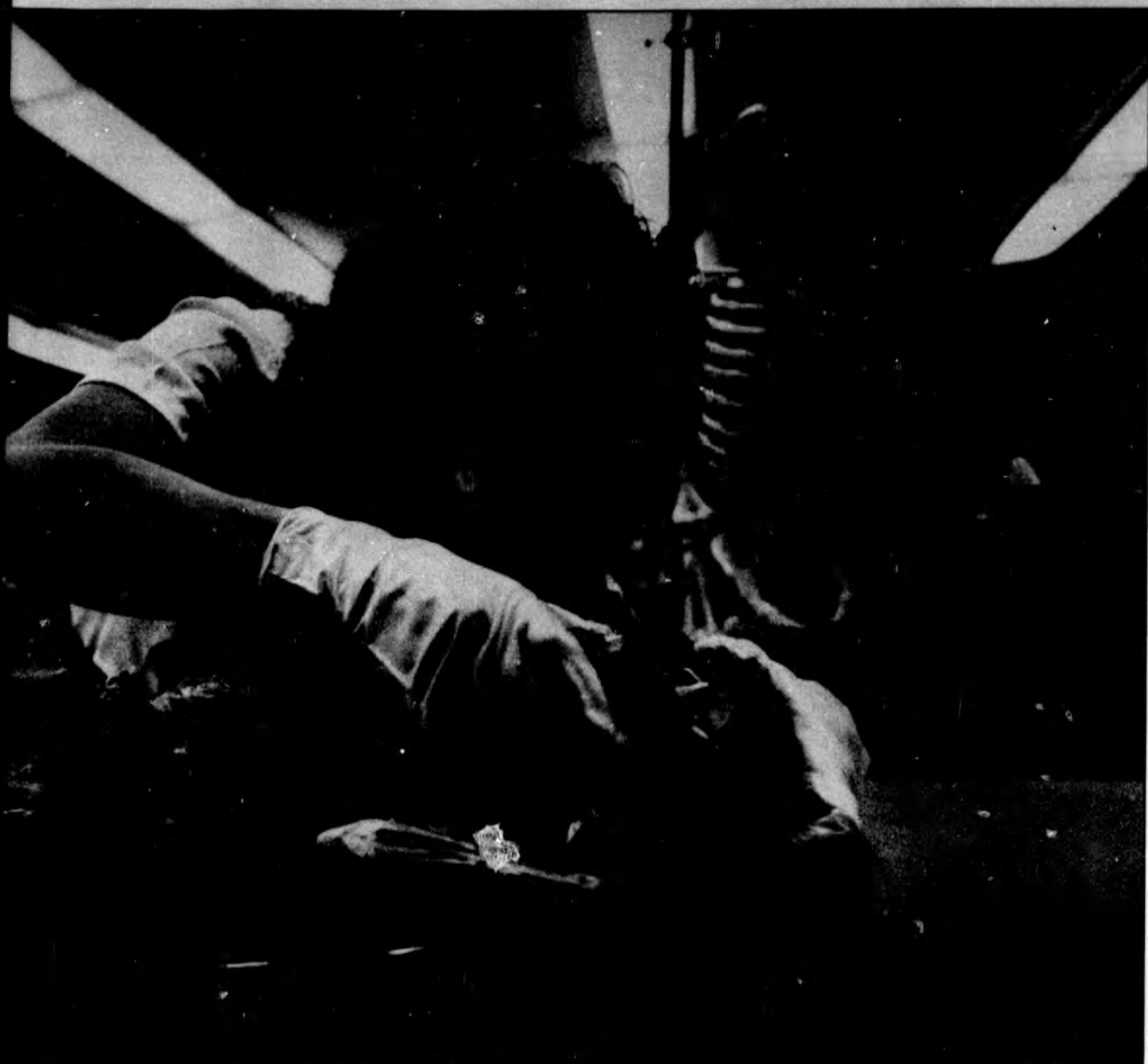
of the program. Most of her classes so far have had little to do with nursing. Before they really get into the practical side of medical work, future nurses are treated like any other students, and must get the basics of math, history, English, and other core classes out of the way.

Still, Johnson has found college satisfying.

"I love school," she says. "Now that I am a little older, I know what I want. I've run on the ambulances, I've done CPR. I've helped deliver three babies. I enjoy helping people, and want to be able to give them more help. Knowing all this makes me more serious a student than when I first went out."



Johnson returns cat to storage shelf.



ction.

"When you first go out, there is all the excitement of being in a new place. A bigger place, with big shopping centers, a place with trees, which you are not used to, movie theatres, lots of people everywhere. You get more interested in having fun than in your studies."

She still does find time for fun. She and husband Eric attend movies, UAA sports events, and she still visits shopping centers. Studying, however, comes first. In addition to the time she spends in class, Johnson figures she averages 20 hours a week doing homework.

Tuition her first semester was paid by grants from ASRC and the City of Barrow,

and she covered the rest of her expenses. After that, she was able to get a Bureau of Indian Affairs grant, which has helped greatly.

After graduating, Johnson hopes to work for a couple of years in a big hospital, either in the emergency room or obstetrics, and then to return home to Barrow, or one of the villages.

Growing up in the Inupiat way, Johnson often found herself involved in subsistence activities — butchering seals, caribou, whale. Still, she felt a bit squeamish when, in a biology class, she had to dissect a cat.

"Seals, caribou, whales — those are all animals you eat. But a cat? A cute little cat,

which was once a furry little kitten? A cat is a household pet! I was supposed to cut it up with a knife?"

Still, Johnson pitched in and did it. When it gets tough in obstetrics, or in the emergency room, a nurse just has to pitch in and go to work.

"When it was all over, his wife came up to me. She thanked me for trying to save her husband."

To be a Coach, a Teacher, and Maybe a Beautician

Loving basketball, René Opie loved the trips, the tournaments, and the competition during her days as a star at Barrow High. "I especially loved the teamwork. It was totally different than just shooting around, playing rag ball.

Albert's mind may not be totally made up, but one thing is certain. His hair looks fine, thanks to René Opie.

Opie has kept up her basketball after entering college at UAF. She plays with the Rural Student Services women's team, and studies the sport in some of her P.E. courses. When she returns to Barrow, Opie works with little girls at Piuraagvik, breaking them up into teams, sometimes challenging and even beating little boys.

"They are so small," Opie exclaims, "but they put the ball in the basket! I watch them, and find myself thinking how good they can be when they get bigger."

It was all quite natural for Opie to decide that she wanted to get her degree in Physical Education, come back to Barrow, teach a bit of P.E., coach girls' basketball and aim for the state championship that her team just barely missed.



René Opie often cuts Tom Albert Jr.'s hair.

"When a student from the town of Barrow goes off to college," Opie adds, "the community is very supportive. The community is willing to do anything to help you."

At college, Opie made another discovery: she enjoyed cutting hair. Other students would come by for a cut, and be pleased with the result.

Another idea struck Opie. Perhaps she could get a degree in business. She could also enroll herself in a beauty college, and combine the two skills into one good job. There were other businesses she might start as well, like opening a fur shop in Barrow.

One thing bothered her, though. "When you go to college, it's like you are on a pedestal. People are counting on you." Would some of her supporters feel let down?

Opie ponders this question from inside her dorm apartment in Fairbanks, and as she does so, in walks a young lad, also from Barrow, Tom Albert Jr.

Albert sits down for a quick hair-trimming demonstration. He is studying Mechanical Engineering. "I was interested in general science and physics at first," Albert says. "That lasted about one semester."

Albert changed his major be-

cause he had long been interested in engines and machines, and in working with his hands. During his high school years, he had tampered with autos, cycles, and other engines.

"A mechanic works on a machine," Albert explains his goals. "He can take it apart, fix what's wrong with it, put it back together. He understands how it operates. A mechanical engineer designs the machine."

Albert envisions himself designing highly specialized machines and parts for things such as race cars blasting down drag strips, or enduring hours of tortuous driving on the Indianapolis 500. Or maybe he'll get into industrial robotics — designing machines to take over manual work now done by humans. "It's the wave of the future," Albert explains.

Albert's mind may not be totally made up, but one thing is certain. His hair looks fine, thanks to Renee Opie.

She figures she'll probably take up business, and hair cutting and styling, maybe start her own business, and get a minor in PE. "I definitely want to coach girls' basketball," she explains.

When the championship is won, the stars can come to Opie and be made beautiful. What could a community feel, but pride?



René boards plane with sister, Taqulik, for basketball games in Tanana, where she will be high scorer and MVP.



Tom Albert Jr., wants to design the machines he has always loved.

Mother and Son Continue Family Tradition

When her father sent her off to school at Sheldon Jackson in Sitka, the girl growing up to become Emily Wilson was most unhappy. "I wrote to father, and told him to make me a ticket home," Wilson remembers.

"He wrote back, 'No, you're there to finish school. You're going to finish school.' I did, and he was so proud." Wilson's father was the late Fred Iplook, an Inupiat who taught school in Barrow for 20 years, went on to become a supervisor and principal and, after his death, had the largest elementary school on the North Slope named in his honor.

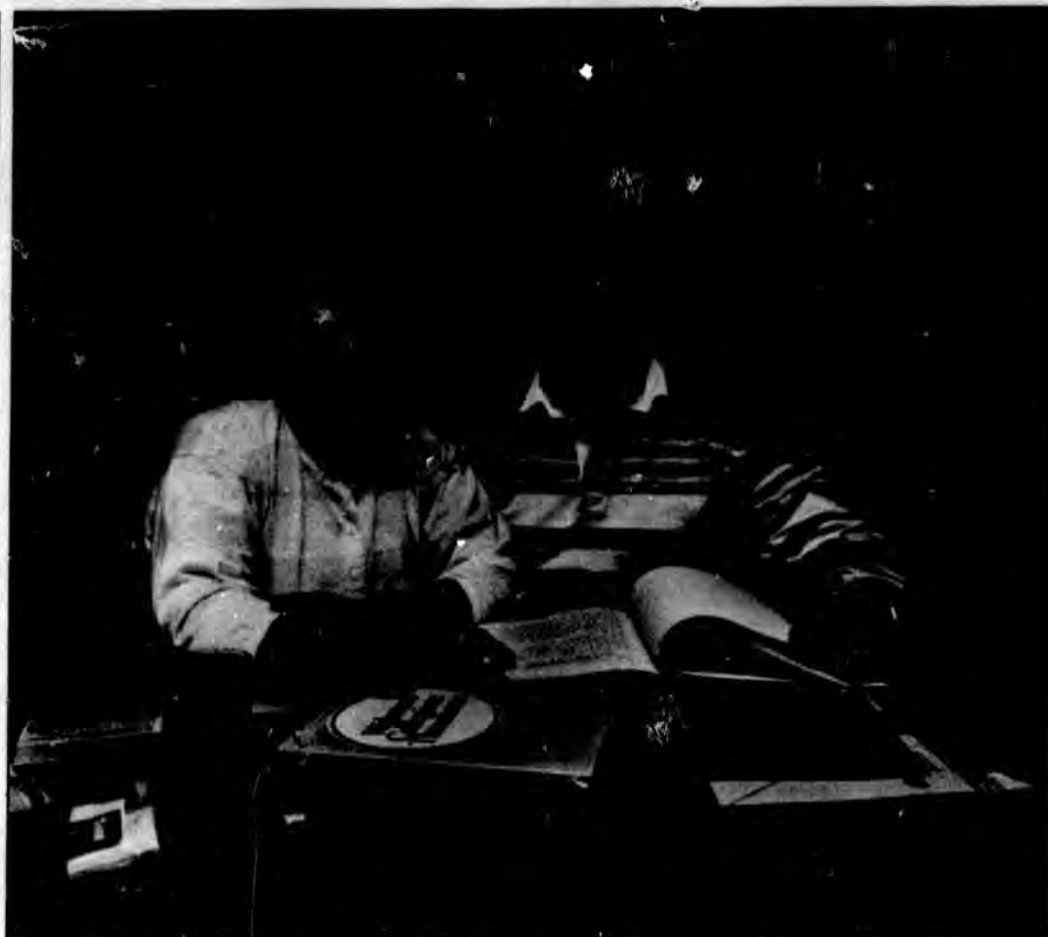
In grade school, her father had made Wilson fluent in two languages. At home, he spoke with his children in Inupiaq. At school, he taught them, and the other children of the community, English. No education was available in Barrow beyond elementary school, so he sent her to Sheldon Jackson for high school.

"He encouraged me to go to college, too, but I was too stubborn," Wilson relates. "I wanted a job, and went to work for Wien Airlines. He knew though, that someday I would graduate from college. I know he would be really proud if he could see Richard and me right now."

Richard Reich is Wilson's oldest son, and her classmate at UAF. Wilson already holds a bachelor's degree in Inupiaq and Elementary Education. After several years of teaching on the North Slope and working as a bilingual specialist training other Inupiaq teachers, she decided it was time to go back to school and earn her master's degree.

By the end of summer, Reich expects to graduate with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

"I think its great seeing Mom going to school," Reich says. "It takes a lot of courage to go to graduate school. I feel its im-



Fellow students Emily Wilson and Richard Reich; also, mother and son.

portant for a lot of Eskimo people, Native people, to go after a college education. You always see all these consulting firms come up and make a lot of money. There is no reason we can't do it ourselves if we get the education."

Civil engineers design and build roads, bridges, village improvements and similar projects. Reich recalls childhood visits to the ice cellar with his grandfather, and the super-insulated, energy-efficient construction of traditional Inupiat homes. Then there are the "box houses" developed in warmer climates and brought en-masse to the North Slope today.

In his work, Reich hopes to combine elements of the two to produce more energy-efficient, warm, comfortable homes. For an Arctic Engineering class term paper, Reich made a study of the Inupiat ice

cellar. He gathered most of his information by interviewing his Elders, such as Luke Saganana and Ross Ahngasuk.

"I wondered how they were built," he explains. "When I interviewed the Elders, I was exposed to a lot of knowledge. I did not know too much about permafrost, but I did a lot of research and learned a lot about different aspects of permafrost." Reich feels that with what he has learned, he could construct an ice cellar. "Still, if I was going to, I'd like to go out with an elder first."

Reich remembers an incident many years ago in which some people died in an ice cellar. He researched the subject and learned they were killed by a lack of oxygen. "I'd like to help make sure that this type of accident never happens again," he says.

His mother plans to return to

home and get an administrative job in education. "I would be happy going to any of the villages," she notes. Her big concern is to reach students with talent, but who are dropping out before finishing school.

"Some of our very best, our very brightest young people, drop out. Some of them later go on and succeed, but some of them never do. What I want to do is encourage these kids. I would like to help them decide to at least try, to put it in the back of their minds that they can succeed."

"I'd like to see more of them go on to college. When I walk around school here at UAF, I like to see more Inupiat faces. I see lot of Yu'pik, lot of Indians."

"The thing I would like for students to realize is that if they come and fail, they can try again, and try again, until they succeed."

Young family balances jobs, child rearing, graduate and undergraduate degree seeking with a yearning for home

Inside a small log cabin in Fairbanks lives a young Inupiat family, intently seeking to combine the knowledge of their traditional culture with Western education. Once thus armed, they dream of returning home to help an ancient society thrive in a futuristic world.

The husband and father is Richard Glenn, a graduate student at the University of Alaska, about to complete his thesis on the geology of the Brooks Range, and earn a master's degree. He hopes to take that knowledge home to a job, preferably with the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation.

"For a long time, it's been true," Richard explains, "that whoever has the information about the land, has the power in that land."

The wife and mother is Arlene Akpik Glenn. Arlene is in her third year at UAF, majoring in Inupiaq language. She has taken a break from her own studies,

however, to help Richard finish his master's thesis by staying home and caring for their daughter.

Arlene plans to return to class in the fall, with Richard's help. "I'm glad I'm able to go to school here," she notes. "UAF is the only university in the world where you can get a degree in the language of our parents. I'm not fluent in Inupiaq. I wanted to learn more."

After graduation, Arlene hopes to get a job working with the NSB Inupiat History, Language, and Culture Commission. "I want to get more exposed to our history, and into reading and writing Inupiaq," she explains.

"It's part of my culture. It's important, because it's in me, and I don't know enough about it."

Patuk, age four, is the daughter. Already, she is an avid reader of children's books. Although hundreds of miles from Barrow, she hears her parents practicing their Inupiaq at home, and is learning her ancestral language herself. Thanks to an Inupiat food-chain of sharing, she finds Native food upon her table.

During his years growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area of California, Richard had found it much the same way. "There are certain places in California that are culturally closer to Barrow than are most places in Alaska. It was that way in my mother's house. It was just the way she raised us, by being herself."

There were about eight other Inupiat families in the Bay Area, and they kept close contact with each other. "There was a good food chain reaching from Barrow to California," Richard adds. "Our freezer was kept full of maktak, tuttu; all the good food."

Robert grew up during the Native struggle to win a land claims settlement. That struggle pulled many Inupiat leaders out of their whaling boats, fish camps, and caribou cabins, and sent them traveling to the Lower 48. Many wound up stopping in the home of Robert and Alice Glenn, his parents.

There, Robert listened to their concern for the future of what, even then, he



In the home of Richard, Arlene, and Patuk Glenn, the

considered his real homeland -- the Arctic Slope. "Sometimes, when we had Barrow visitors working for a land settlement, my dad would joke with me. 'Someday, you'll be carrying this man's briefcase,' he would say."

Richard decided that he had to go North, and, in some very real way, help his people build the best possible future. "I knew I had to learn about the land to do this," he says. "There are two ways to learn about the land. You can go to college, and read books."

"Or you can grow up with your family, on the land. The family can teach you as much, or more, about the land in as many topics as any professor can."

Richard felt that no educational discipline could teach him more about the land than could geology, the study of the earth itself. He earned his undergraduate degree in Nebraska and California. In California, he also married Arlene, whom he had gotten to know during travels north,



Complementing his schooling, Richard finds work studying the ice of the Tanana River.



re many books.

and there, Patuk was born.

Richard has not been content to get his learning strictly from books and profes-

sors. He has spent close to two years living, camping, and hiking in the Brooks Range, and in doing aerial surveys. Assisted in his

field work by Walton Ahmaogak and Frankie Akpik, he has mapped many of the folds of broken rock and other structures inside the Brooks.

Richard's completed thesis will not be just a rehash of work already printed in other books, but will be filled with new maps and information about the creation and structure of the Brooks. It could one day prove valuable to ASRC or other North Slope organizations interested in promoting and protecting Inupiat interests in their homeland.

He has also gained family-type knowledge by joining with the members of Savik and George Ahmaogak's whaling crew in many different types of hunting expeditions.

Richard notes that he has received considerable financial support from the City of Barrow, and especially ASRC. "If you're serious about going to school," he explains, "ASRC is going to help you all they can. That's one reason I feel I want to work for them. I owe something to the community which has supported me, as well as to both mine and Arlene's parents (Frankie and Jeanette Akpik)."

Richard and Arlene admit to having felt discouraged, almost ready to return home, many times. Yet, they knew they had to stick it out. "Our grandparents didn't have much school at all," Richard explains. "In our parents' generation, a lot got to go, but didn't make it all the way through college. Many of them would have, but they were seeking their educations during the land claims movement.

"It was more important for them to come home, and help out, than to go after degrees. Now, with ANCSA behind us, and big challenges to our culture, land ownership, and government ahead of us, it is important that we get our educations."

It can be tough for a young family. "College life for Patuk is a little hard," Arlene explains. "It was real hard when we would both be going to classes at the same time. I really like staying home with her. She is not around kids very much, so I take her to the library. They have a children's hour, and she gets to meet other kids. She was scared at first, but she isn't so much anymore."

There, Arlene also spends time reading with Patuk. When they go home, there are books everywhere — Richard's geology books, and Arlene's books on Native history, literature, culture and language. There are also many books for little people, and Patuk spends much time with them.

She may not know it, but Patuk is already walking the path to higher education.



Arlene takes Patuk to the Fairbanks library almost every day.



Learning U.S. Law to Strengthen Inupiat Government

When Rodney Pederson was in high school, he observed a troubling situation. A new world was exploding on his people — ANCSA, corporations, oil development, borough government, strange laws passed by far-away people trying to control Inupiat hunting. It

was a world which suddenly made lawyers very much in demand in the Far North.

What troubled Pederson was that there were no Inupiat lawyers to meet the demand. His people had to hire outside attorneys and consultants, and hope they would truly serve with



the best interests of the Inupiat at heart. "I figured a lot of these people would only be interested in lining their pocket books."

At the same time, Pederson also observed his friends leaving high school and landing construction jobs which paid them as much as \$60-

70,000 a year. Why go to college?

"A leader has to look into the future," Pederson says. "I looked into the future, and I could see that these high paying construction jobs would be around for only a short time."

Pederson ventured off to school.

Supported largely by comparatively humble grants, primarily from ASRC and the City of Barrow, he studied first at Florida Keys Community College, and then at the University of Northern Colorado, earning a B.A. degree in political science.

By his own admission, it was not all work. In Florida, he took time out to enjoy the beach, the sea, and all the associated fun. "In Colorado, I think I spent more time skiing than I did studying," Pederson laughs.

Still, he dedicated his mind enough to school work that he was readily accepted into law school at Lewis and Clark in Oregon. There, he quickly became a serious student. "The first year of law school is when they weed out the students who really aren't that serious," Pederson explains. "You have about 100 pages of reading to do a night, three or four cases to analyze, in depth. You go through a lot of sleepless nights."

Early in the year, a teacher with a tough reputation called on Pederson to explain an assignment of which he had only read half. "There was about 15 minutes of class left, and I tried to fill it up explaining the first half. It didn't work. He asked me to explain the second. Everyone could see I wasn't prepared, but that was the last time. After that, I was always ready."

In his second year, Pederson took time to learn about Native law. Now, he is more interested in working for the Native Village of Barrow, or perhaps the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope after he earns his law degree.

"We need local lawyers here, to work for tribal government. Tribal government is a neglected entity. Everybody is so busy working for the Borough, or ASRC. They don't realize the importance of tribal government."

Pederson believes that if Native culture and land are to be preserved, tribal government will ultimately be the entity to do it. Regional corporations, he explains, own only dirt and money. While he says Native people currently control the Borough, he does not believe they always will. Looking into the future, he sees more and more oil workers coming into the Borough.

"It doesn't take a genius to see who will be running things then . . . but with tribal government, we can have a lot more power. We can make our own decisions. We don't need to have them made for us in Juneau or Anchorage. We should be managing our own game, not the state." The fight will be tough, Pederson figures, but he is readying himself for it.

"I always knew I was going to make it. It was confidence, I guess. I was just confident."
