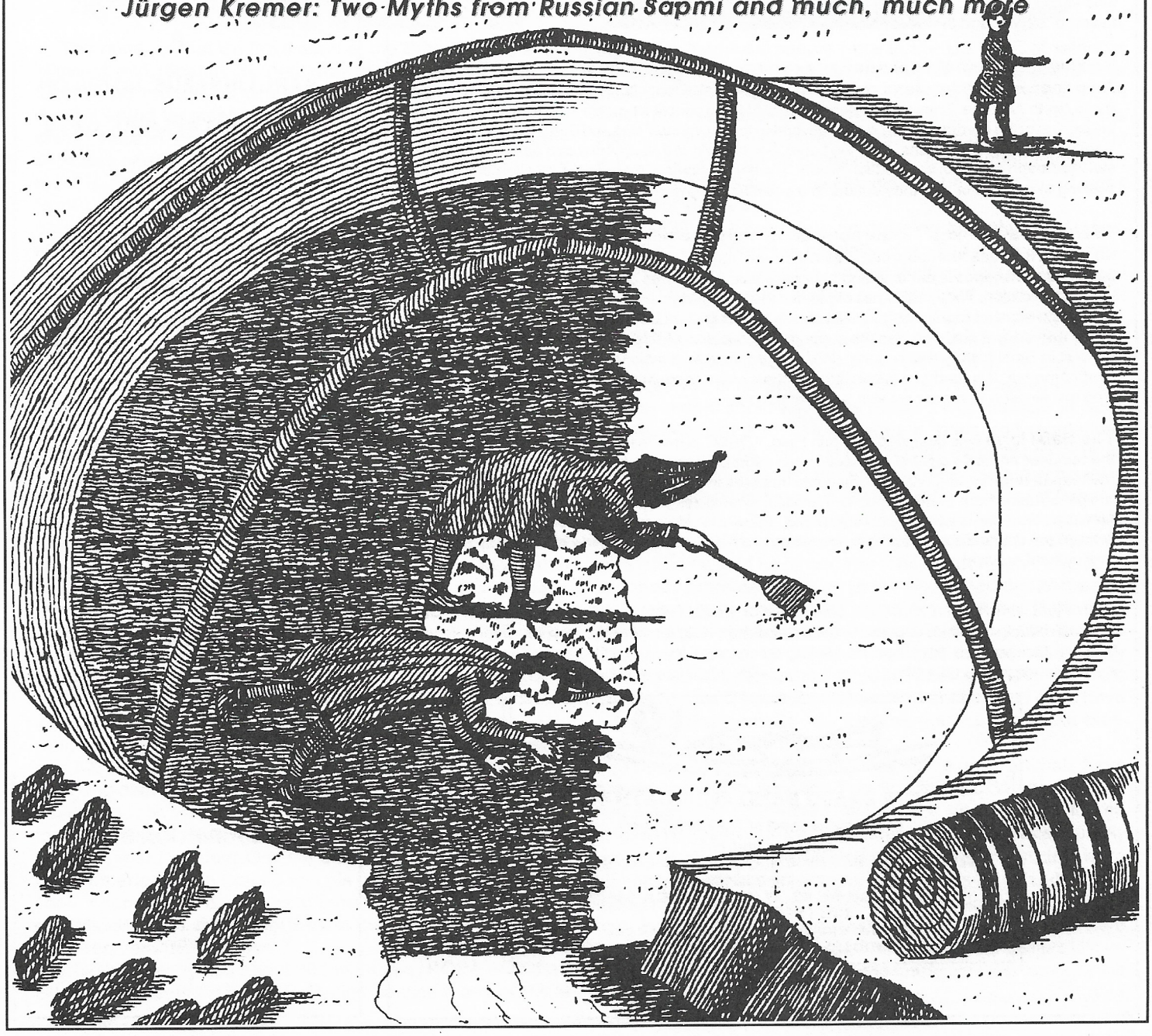
BAIKI

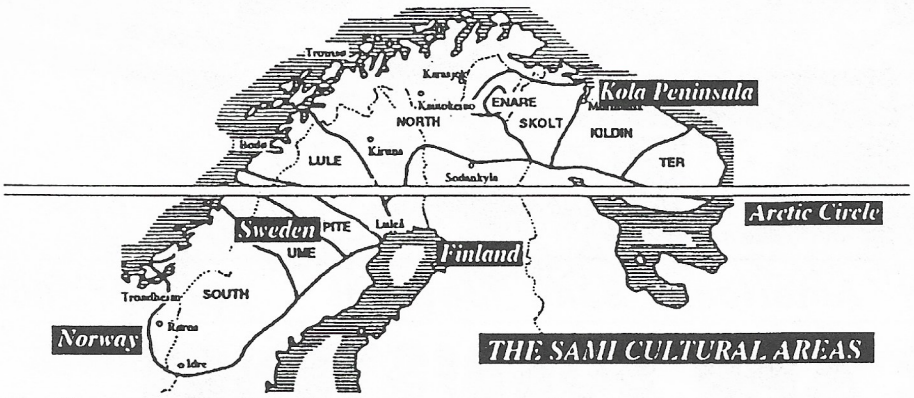
Issue #22 The North American Sami Journal Spring 2001

REINDEER AND SUBSISTENCE

Mel Olsen: Karl Linnaeus' Notes on Swedish Lapland
Subsistence in Alaska: Reindeer Nomadism
Jürgen Kremer: Two Myths from Russian Sápmi and much, much more



WHO ARE THE SAMI PEOPLE AND WHAT IS "BÁIKI?



The Sami (Saami or "Lapp") People are the Indigenous inhabitants of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. About 100,000 Sami people live in the Nordic countries today, half of them in Norway. The map shows the nine cultural areas where nine versions of the Sami [Finno-Ugric] language are spoken. The North Sami word for the Sami nation is *Sápmi* and the South Sami word is *Saemien Eatneme*.

Báiki is the international quarterly cultural magazine that grew out of the North American search for Sami roots. We estimate that at least 30,000 people of Sami ancestry live in North America. They are the descendants of Sami people who, due to cultural genocide and the closing of the borders in their areas, emigrated to the United States and Canada as Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Russians. Until the publication of *Báiki: the North American Sami Journal,* their story has been left out of immigration history. The descendants of these immigrant nomads are now seeking to reconnect with their culture in a meaningful way.

"*Báiki*" ["ba-hee-kee"] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for cultural survival. It means "the home that lives in the heart" as one travels from place to place, the invisible bond that transcends linear time and physical space. *Báiki* was begun in 1991 as a simple eight - page publication. Today *Báiki* has expanded to a twenty-eight page magazine. With little publicity other than word of mouth, our first seventeen issues generated a worldwide readership of over 2000, and a loyal circle of creative support. The success of this magazine is a sign of growing interest in Sami history and culture. *Báiki* is recognized as a major source of Sami information in North America. It is read and quoted by members of the academic community as well as by those who are seeking to reconnect with their Sami roots.

The *Báiki* logo was designed by Faith Fjeld. A "báiki" is the basic traditional Sami survival unit, the reindeer nomad's cultural connection that migrates with them from place to place. Nils-Aslak Valkeapää referred to a báiki as "the home that lives in the heart." The symbols in the *Báiki* logo are pictographs from Sami Drums: The reindeer symbolizes physical support. It faces east toward *lavvus* or Sami tents which symbolize home. These are located at the base of a mountain which symbolizes spiritual support. All are connected to a *njalla* or storage shed which symbolizes group and cultural survival.

Faith Fjeld and Nathan Muus are co-editors of *Báiki*. Thanks to Eric Carlson, Anne Dunn Krissa Fredrickson, Aino, Leo and Ursa Nakai, Sarah Holmes, Jennifer Hyypiö, Jolene Jacobs, Marilyn Jackson, Ed and Darlene Mentz, Becca and Keenan Mikkelson, Elaine Rasmus, Karen Sanders,and Lois Shelton for helping with this issue and the work of *Báiki*.

THE SAAMI BÁIKI FOUNDATION
(a nonprofit project of The Tides Center)
Delivery address:
1714 Franklin St. #100-311, Oakland, CA, 94612
Mailing address:
1430 32nd St. #2. W. Oakland, CA 94608
tel: (510) 547-0350
e-mail: saamibaiki@sinewave.com
http://members.Tripod.com/ Baiki/index.html

BÁIKI
THE NORTH AMERICAN SAAMI JOURNAL

ABOUT THE COVER:
from Knud Leem's *Breskrivelse Over Finnmarkens Lappen, 1767,* layout by Faith Fjeld and Nathan Muus

Báiki is published by The New Fillmore Publishing Co.

BÁIKI'S "SIIDDA" PAGE

COULD REINDEER DISAPPEAR FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN SAMI CAMPS BECAUSE OF FLAWS IN THE LAWS?

"The laws in Norway against the Lapps are like a veil through which the sharpest eye cannot see."
— Johan Turi, Sami reindeer herder, 1910.

"The real issue, as usual, comes down to the way the bureaucrats try to regulate us."
— Tom Scheib, Wisconsin reindeer breeder, 2001

The reindeer that we have seen at the Sami Camps in the Midwest and recently in Montana are a long way from the tundra and mountains where Johan Turi says their "Lapp" owners found themselves increasingly restricted by bureaucracy. Here in the US, rules and regulations regarding reindeer also seem to be on the rise, partly because the government is confused as to whether reindeer are "domestic" or "exotic." This has been creating problems for the owners and breeders of reindeer and seriously threatens their presence at Sami events in some states. In most cases it seems to be a lack of education.

Reindeer are the oldest domesticated animals on the planet. For centuries they were vital to the subsistence economy and nomadic lifestyle of the Sami extended-family siiddas. Reindeer were their life. Although only 10% of the Sami have reindeer today, Americans still tend to think of all Sami as reindeer herders. This is a stereotype that irritates the 90% who support themselves in other ways. But reindeer help Americans connect with Sápmi [Finnmark].

Domesticated reindeer were imported to Alaska from Siberia and Sápmi in the 1880s and 1890s for the purpose of introducing reindeer husbandry to the Alaska Natives, whose subsistence economy was based on hunting and fishing until commercial trappers and whalers from Russia and the United States destroyed their natural sources of food and clothing. Herding domesticated reindeer instead of hunting wild animals kept them from starvation and freezing to death. Chances are, the reindeer you see at the festivals are the descendants of the Alaska reindeer.

There are 6000 to 8000 domesticated reindeer in the "lower forty-eight" today [i.e., the US not including Alaska and Hawaii] with an average of 30 to 40 reindeer per farm or ranch, and the number is growing. Even so, most government officials who deal with husbandry rules and regulations know little about reindeer, their history, their biology, or what is required to raise them, according to Tom Scheib, a founding member of ROBA (the Reindeer Owners and Breeders Association of North America). Tom Scheib and his partner Liisa Mayo have spent hours online dealing with bureaucratic problems. "The real issue, as usual, comes down to the way the bureaucrats try to regulate us," he says.

ROBA currently has about 200 members. ROBA president Ethel Evans feels that misinformation causes many of these problems "because people here in the US think of reindeer as fantasy animals," she says, "except in Alaska, where [outsiders] think of them as caribou." Both reindeer and caribou belong to the same species *rangifer tarandus*, but there the similarity ends. The difference between reindeer and caribou is that reindeer can be domesticated and caribou cannot. In fact, herders in Sápmi consider them to be two different types of animal altogether.

In 1893, when reindeer were being brought into Alaska, the 52nd US Congress officially classified them as "domestic" (HR No. 1093). But the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), passed in 1970 to protect the health and safety of captive animals, doesn't even list the "domestic" classification — only "farm," "wild," and "exotic." So reindeer have been defined by the AWA as "exotic" by default. This puts them in the same category as the lions and tigers that are held captive in zoos. This oversight could effect the presence of reindeer at Sami events because it means changes in rules and regulations with regard to such things as fencing and medical procedures.

Tom Scheib says that the AWA requires owners who raise "exotic" animals to have an additional fence at least 6 feet in height that must be at least 3 feet away from the primary enclosure. "What that means is that outside my 8 foot woven wire fence I would need another fence 6 feet high — quite an expense. I threatened to go to jail first! I had the Wisconsin state vet out to inspect my place. He said that if the feds pushed the issue he would indicate in writing that *he* runs Wisconsin fencing requirements. I told the feds that. They backed down and issued a paper that exempts me from double fences." He adds that several states don't even have a fencing requirement. "As long as you can keep the reindeer in, it's fine with them."

The new medical tests required for "exotic" animals have proven harmful to reindeer. Tom Scheib says, "We have never had a naturally TB-infected reindeer, but we have been forced to use TB testing procedures that were never scientifically validated on them. Some animals failed the test and were slaughtered (the bureaucrats called it 'euthanized') even though later cultures and different tests indicated the animals had no TB. The herds these test positive animals were in were quarantined, so no animals could be moved, their owners lost income, and they were not even compensated in most cases for the

(SIIDDA PAGE continued on page 20)

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

VIKINGS & THE SAMI

Here is portion of my letter to the editors of TIME Magazine in response to their feature on the Vikings was printed in the June 26, 2000 issue:

Although I'm a Norwegian citizen, I am a descendant of the Sámi (Lapp) people, one of the targets of Viking expansion.

Norwegians boast that they are the inventors of skiing, but they learned it from us. They also came north to learn from us how to build good boats. They added trolls and nisse to their folklore, both of which are caricatures of Sámi people.

Seeing that we were a people with no weapons of war, the Vikings took advantage of us, first by taxation and later by taking our land and resources. Whatever positive status we have now as Indigenous people has only come through our immense struggle with the descendants of the Vikings. And when the Norwegians who boast of being descendants of the Vikings go abroad, they see a view of the Viking that is completely different from what they have been taught in Norwegian schools, where the positive aspects are stressed and the negative aspects are toned down.

Colonialism had its roots in the Viking system of conquest, [which] lead to British imperialism, and later, to the colonization of North America by Europeans and to German imperialism — nazism — with its ruthless expansionism and racism equalled in Russia by Stalinism. Common to all of these was a system of violent barbarism well-organised to maintain itself as introduced by the Vikings. Still today this system provides [a] recipe for world dominance.

Not that there is nothing good to say about the Vikings. An example of peaceful exchange between our cultures is that some of the patterns in Viking decorations are also found both in Celtic and Sámi culture, proving that there also was a fruitful exchange.

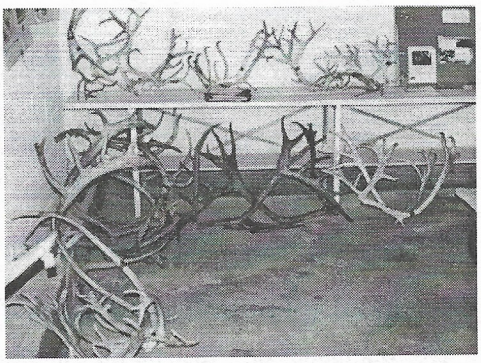
Hans Ragnar Mathisen
<kevipro@online.no>

Hans Ragnar Mathisen is a well-known Sami artist, poet and environmental activist. His work has frequently appeared in Báiki.

RELATIVES OF SAMMOL [SAMUEL] BALTO

I would like to get in touch with relatives of Sammol Balto who first skied across Greenland with Nansen and then came to Alaska. Sammol Balto was one of my great-grandparents.

Rauna Kuokkanen, Vancouver, BC
<rauna@interchange.ubc.ca>



Antler competition at Moon Deer Ranch

ROBA AT MOON DEER RANCH

The 3rd annual ROBA [Reindeer Owners and Breeders Association] seminar was held June 9-11 at the home of David and Ethel Evans in Parker, Colorado, also known as Moon Deer Ranch. 77 people attended. The event began on Friday evening with a barbecue buffet dinner and a chance to meet old acquaintances and make new friends. We were paid a visit by "Redtail," the Colorado Mountain Man (AKA Bill Lee, a ROBA member), followed by a terrific country and western group.

Tom Scheib and Liisa Mayo had their lavvu set up and on Saturday Sami presentations were given by Joanne Oullette, Gordon and Jean Poest, Ron and Dawn Peterson and Tom Scheib and Liisa Mayo. Although most of our members are not Sami, many are very interested in the Sami culture because it is so intertwined with the history of our reindeer. It was a real treat to meet Joanne Ouellette and hear her tell about discovering her Sami heritage and seeing the many Sami items she had with her. The stack of *Báiki* magazines that had been donated quickly disappeared, and many attendees were asking where they could get a copy.

There were several informal demonstrations going on during the lunch breaks and the crowds around them attested to their popularity. Mindy Coates and Sheila Rasmussen demonstrated how to make an antler wreath with dried flowers, Liisa Mayo showed how to make antler jewelry, Jerry Piper showed how to tie flies for fishing and Doug Vincent worked on a leather harness.

Antlers were brought in for competition and the most unusual antler award was won by Tom Scheib for a set that was shed in one piece.

Saturday afternoon was spent viewing several videos relating to reindeer care and training, and *The Reindeer Queen* documentary. A report from Rose Fosdick, program director of Kawerak, Inc. Reindeer Herders' Association in Alaska was also read.

Sunday was devoted to reindeer health and herd management. Tom Scheib and Pat Lavery did an excellent job of covering the many aspects of these issues.

The annual meeting and dinner were held at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Thanks to the many generous donations, the auction was a huge success. $2140.00 was raised for the treasury. The highest selling item was a reindeer hide that Ron and Dawn Peterson brought back from their trip to Norway.

We are planning regional meetings and the readers of Báiki are always welcome at these events — in fact we would love to see you there!

Gordon Poest
corresponding secretary, ROBA
<gpoest@novagate.com>

NORDLAND ROOTS

I have been looking at my family and others in the 1865 census in Mosjøen, Nordland. Vefsen parish appears to have at least 81 different groups/families that are listed as "Lap." The neighboring parishes also. I am looking at it in the English, and will go back for more in Norwegian. (I think that I found only four or five families that had reindeer.) This is a lot of people unless I am reading it incorrectly. Like Native Americans without buffalo, what did the Saami in that part of world do in those years?

I have friend in Norway trying to find more information. Unfortunately, some of the family that I am now somewhat connected with, don't know/admit/whatever. So I am not sure how to approach them. I do intend to pursue this. What I find now in information is so much about the current situations with reindeer herd-

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

Pixel folk and reindeer by Franz Allbert Richter

ing, and other current concerns. Yes, I am very interested in these, also.

I am very proud and interested in this part of me. I think it answers many questions a lot of us "Jensens" (Lukkassen in Norway) have had about who we are. Looking forward to your thoughts and comments about this project.

Here is an excerpt from something I am writing:

"We cannot escape
the shadow of those who
came before us.
They are with us all of our lives.
We reflect them in the
color of our hair,
the shape of our hands,
the characteristics of our skin,
our inner spirit and
the music within us."

Carole Jensen Sass
<GMASassy@aol.com>

BACK IN SAUSALITO AFTER SURVIVING LAPLAND

We looked forward to returning to Sausalito (93 degrees today) after Jukkasjarvi, Lapland, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, where the temperature was minus 5 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Ice Hotel where we stayed is built as interconnected igloos every November and melts every spring. It has thousands of visitors during the season, and they sleep on beds carved from ice. Visitors stay warm because of good sleeping bags and because the ice beds are covered with reindeer skins, which serve as insulation.

Lapland is sparsely populated, quiet and beautiful, with extreme weather conditions. We visited in the "off season," early September, and the leaves had given up, turned color, and fallen off the trees. Fortunately, the huge and numerous summer mosquitoes were dead!

Most people visit Lapland in summer and hike the many hundreds of miles of wilderness trails. They wear special hats with a veil of mosquito netting over their faces! In winter people come for the dog sledding. Reindeer used to be harnessed but today sled dogs are used instead. [This is because] in the old days, reindeer were herded by Saami people on skis but today they are herded by Saami people on snow mobiles and in helicopters, so they are less tame, and hard to harness!

The trains heading north were almost empty. We met a lot of locals and ate the same food that they did — moose, reindeer and cloud berries. The vegetable sections of the markets were sad, just a few root vegetables and cabbage. I also tried the local "caviar" or fish eggs. The English translation on the menu is not very appetizing, it is "fish spawn."

Even in Lapland there are pollution problems. Scientists are studying the melting of the glaciers due to global warming and also the ozone hole in the atmosphere. The reindeer have been over-grazing the tundra, causing other animals such as eagles to die out. The herders of the reindeer had to kill 30,000 reindeer after Chernobyl due to nuclear contamination. Today there are still health concerns about eating too much reindeer meat, the mainstay of the Saami diet.

Each new day in Lapland was amazing. We saw reindeer wandering around, waiting to be herded into their winter quarters. We saw the strange Northern Lights. We went to a moose sanctuary for abandoned baby moose (mooses??)! It was a great fall, but we looked forward to resuming our so-called normal lives on our houseboat.

Jan & Kristyan Pehrson
<JanPehr@aol.com>

Knifemaker Eric Bergland at Libby

BERGLAND KNIVES SAVE THE DAY AT LIBBY

We were putting up the goahti (curved pole Saami tent) at Nordicfest, Libby, Montana, when we realized that one of the kids had walked off with one of the side poles to the tent. Anna-Stina Svakko had recommended making them thicker anyway.

Eric Bergland was there displaying his Saami knife exhibit. Several of us borrowed two Eric Bergland-made "leuku" (larger) Saami knives, and proceeded to "whittle away." We can testify to the edge holding quality as well as the excellent balance of his knives. We had new side poles cut out in no time.

A CANADIAN CONNECTION

Would you please let Saami folks know that the Scandinavian Community Center in Burnaby BC, Canada at 6540 Thomas Street V5B4P9 is hoping to connect with organizations and individuals in the Pacific Northwest? We now have a full program of festivals. To contact us call (604) 294-2777 or fax (604) 294-5932.

Henry Lahti
#219 3462 Kalyk Ave.
Burnaby BC Canada
tel / fax (604) 873-1934

HOW DO YOU SAY "WE GOOFED" IN SÁMIGIELLA?

We received the journal which contains the article on Kawerak. Thank you. It reads well, however there are several errors which you could correct in your next issue. "Kawerak" doesn't mean "of the people." It is the Inupiaq Eskimo name of a specific area located on the Seward Peninsula.

The current reindeer population is down from previous years but the following statement contains the wrong number: "... down from an estimated reindeer population of 500,000 four years ago" should read "...down from an estimated reindeer population of 25,000 four years ago."

I enjoy reading your journal. We will have two Sami people visiting Nome April 29 and 30. They are traveling to Fairbanks to attend the Arctic Council meeting and then will come to Nome overnight.

Rose Fosdick
<rfosdick@kawerak.org>

Rose Fosdick is program director for the Reindeer Herders' Association (RHA), Nome, Alaska. We thank Rose for her kind words in spite of our mistakes.

THE JENS KALSTROM SKI (CONTINUED)

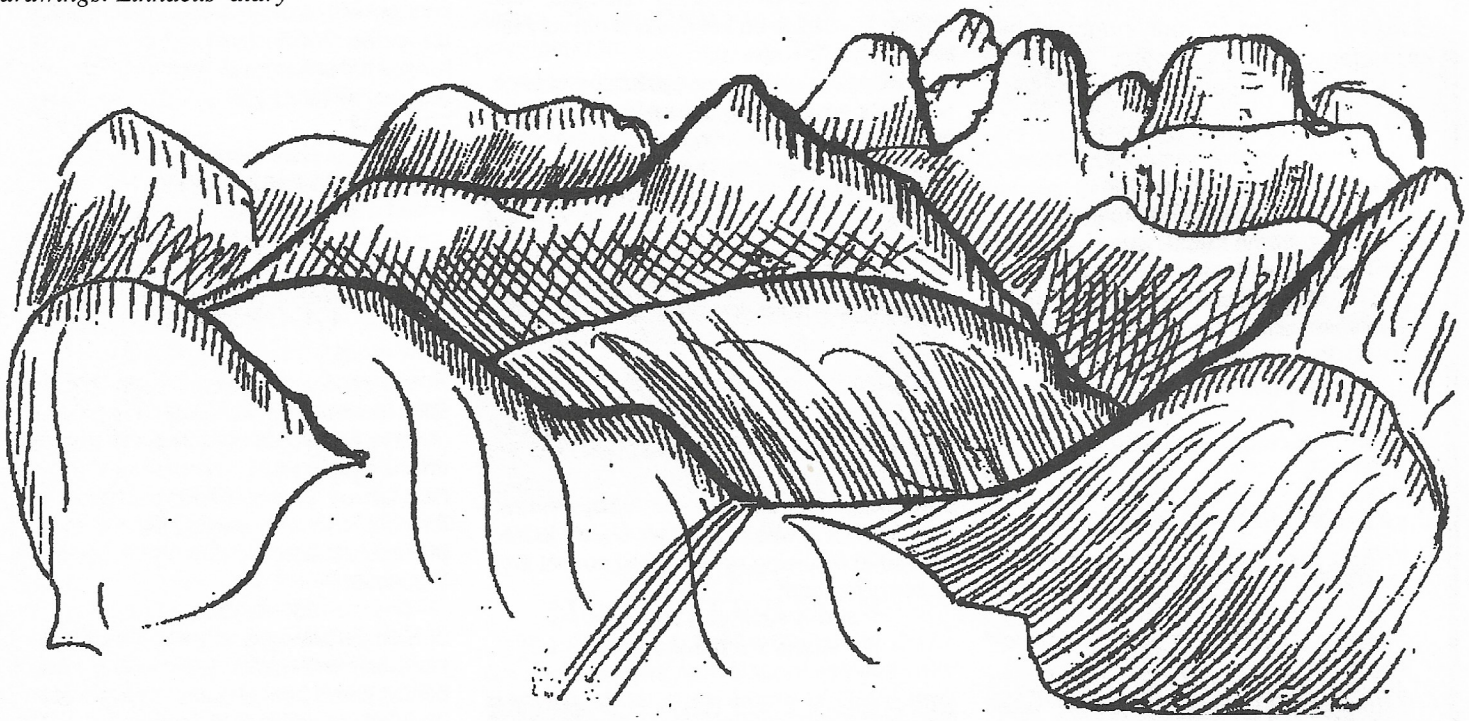
Hello from S W Minnesota. Wanted to bring you up to date on the Swedish American farmstead East of Milan, Mn.; the barn in which a beautiful single Sami style ski was found. The old Jens O. Kalstrom place is now the Easy Bean Farm. 100% Organic ! This farm has been supplying organic produce to our Upper Minnesota River Valley area as

(SAAMI CONNECTIONS continued page 18)

KARL LINNAEUS NOTES ON SWEDISH LAPLAND

part 3

by Mel Olsen
drawings: Linnaeus' diary



At the place where I stopped to rest after my fatiguing journey, they gave me swordfish, which very much resembled salmon in flavor. The next day it blew so very hard that I didn't venture to leave this place by sea. The Laplanders have become cultivators of the ground. It was a very hot day with a few raindrops in the afternoon. The weather now being calm, we ventured to sea in a boat and soon caught, with a hook and line, plenty of sey fish - so numerous and voracious that we had no sooner thrown out the hook, than they swallowed so quick we could hardly take them out fast enough. The hook was steel without any kind of bait.

Torfiolme, where I was now, is entirely encompassed by lofty mountains covered with snow. Between their summits dark grey clouds were here and there, but the summit was clear.

Close to the borders of the bay and creek are many little villages scattered among the hills. Each has but a small valley adjoining and not more than a cornfield (grain) or two — with small plots of pasture-ground attached to each house. The inhabitants could therefore not subsist, were it not for the vast plenty of fish within reach — for food and for sale. The people were continually talking to me about the whale fishery. Here I had the opportunity to see how salmon are caught. Some piles are placed in the mouth of a cove or creek, adjoining to a small fence. Close to this a perpendicular net is placed in the water, in a curved position, one end being fastened to the shore. The other end is attached to two cords. With a buoy at the middle of the net, it is floated out towards the sea. When the fish swim up the creek they are entrapped in this net, now being pulled with the cords by two people who are stationed to watch it.

The church of this place is but small.

In the morning I returned with the master of the boat to Torfjorde. I had now before me the whole of this western archipelago and was told that if we were to steer directly westward, we would arrive at Greenland.

Tun bread is made of barley and chaff, dried and ground. The wealthy grind corn alone, others use two thirds chaff and one third barley. The meal is moistened with cold water to a dough without yeast or fermentation. It is kneaded and a lump placed flat on the table with a considerable amount of flour sprinkled over then it is stretched until thin as parchment. It is then pricked all over with an instrument of bird wing feathers, and one at a time put into the oven. Little time is needed for the baking and the cake is then hung over a bed post or other rail so that the two sides hang down parallel to each other.

Some people make bread of the bark of fir trees. They choose a tree with few branches, thus the material is less resinous and strongly flavored. The bark is removed and the harsh outer bark peeled away. Stores of this bark are often laid away for winter use. The bark, when laid over a slow fire, becomes thickened and very porous. It is next ground and baked in the same manner as the barley-chaff bread., but it has a bitterish taste.

Missen bread is made from the roots of a water plant (calla) in the spring before the leaves come forth. The roots are well-washed

and dried in the sun then cut up with a sour kraut spade, to the size of peas. They have a pleasant sweetish smell. In water, these are boiled until it grows thick, and the pot is left standing for three or four days - the longer the better to allow the bitter qualities to go off. When mixed with flour, this forms a bread that is tough, but perfectly sweet and mild.

Nordskbröd is made of rye, or barley with one-third rye. It is mixed with cold water, kneaded for a long while and flattened into a round shape furrowed longitudinally. It is then turned with the hands as fast as possible. The edges spread out and are repeatedly turned-in - then the whole, as thin as paper, is laid on the table. It is baked on an iron, turning in the process, smoothing and polishing with the heads of rye straw dipped in water

In this part of Norway the cheese is made by boiling sour milk until a thick sediment subsides. It is strained through a linen cloth to get rid of the water, then put in a covered vessel for eight days. It is then mixed with cream and formed into a conical shape, covered with cloth to shut out the air, then stored in a cool place for a month or two. It forms a thick, rugged, cellular crust which is removed before the cheese is eaten.

July 15

In this part of Norway the fields are not enclosed, wood being very scarce. There is no distinction between meadow and forests. A woman always attends the cattle which are not driven home at night, but enclosed in a moveable pen. It is moved around in order to manure the ground. Horses range at large and hogs are yoked. The cows are milked thrice a day and the sheep and goats follow the cows.

It is impossible to traverse the Lappland alps in winter. In the first place the cold is so intense that nobody could endure it. Next, no reindeer are there at that season, but are in the forests where there is food. There are numerous obstacles to the cultivation of this alpine tract. The cold exceeds that of any other country and the snow is lying so long on the ground. Frosts are frequent even in summer. The soil is a turfy kind, composed of mosses decayed by frost and impregnated by standing water. Lofty trees cannot be raised because of the excessive violence of the wind — so wood is scarce. The Laplanders treasure up the snow water as if it were the choicest wine. The Lapland water is indeed uncommonly grateful to the palate.

When lately sailing on the coast of Norway, I was amused by observing my Lapland attendant dip his ladle into the water forgetting that the sea was salt. These people always carry a ladle and I took to the habit too.

Now I set out on my return from the low grounds of Norway. The heat was powerful as we began to ascend the mountains. When we reached what we perceived to be the summit, we saw just as lofty an eminence before us and this was the case nine or ten successive times. I had no idea of such mountains before. Our clothes which were quite wet from perspiration in the beginning of our journey, were now frozen stiff upon our backs from the cold. We determined to seek a Laplander's hut. On reaching this hut I noticed some of the reindeer whose horns were not more than a half inch long, the brom-fly having bitten them while quite tender; for these insects are worse than the gnats of Swedish Lapland.

The girls here, especially when they wish to appear to advantage, divide their hair into two braids, one above each ear, which braids are tied together at the hind part of the head, so as to hang down the back. A tuft of ribbons is appended to the extremity of each braid.

We undertook to cross the ice mountain. We observed a dense cloud above and below us and at length it approached as a thick mist moistening our clothes and making our hair quite wet. We could neither see sun or moon, nor the summits of nearby hills. The Laplanders consider the situation we were in as one of the worse that can befall them. We were fortunate to discover the track of a reindeer which directed us safely to a Lapp tent.

All the Laplanders are usually bleary-eyed, so that one would think the word Lappi was derived from lippi (bleary-eyed). The causes of this are various, but chiefly the following:

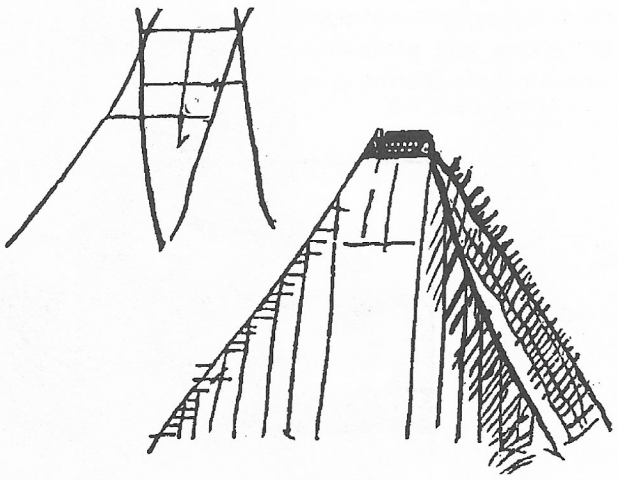
1. Sharp winds. In the early part of my journey repeated exposure rendered my eyes sore and I was obliged to keep them half shut. How much more this must be for those who dwell in the perpetual wind!

2. The snow, the whiteness of which, when the sun shone upon it, was very troublesome. Alpine Laplanders are constantly exposed.

3. The fogs. This day I found the fog and mist that came about me rendered my eyes so weak and relaxed that I couldn't open them without an effort. Such must often be the case with Laplanders.

4. Smoke, How is it possible that these people should not be bleary-eyed when they are so continually shut up in their huts where the smoke has no outlet but by the hole in the roof, and consequently fills everybody's eyes as it passes!

5. The severity of the cold in this country must also contribute to the same inconvenience.



MOUNTAIN TENT

The mountain Laplanders, or those who live in the alps, build no huts; they have only tents made in the following manner. The first figure represents two connected beams, which compose the framework of one side of the hut; and these meet at the top with two similar ones forming the opposite side. A solitary beam is placed on the two sides and in the center and slender sticks form the ribs. Over the whole is spread the covering of the tent made of wool. The usual height is about six and one-half feet and the breadth, twelve feet. A flap of cloth is left so as to open and shut by way of a door.

When they lie down to rest, and are fearful of being too warm, they fix a hook through the middle of the coverlet, which raises it above them, and under this canopy they repose.

[continued on page 17]

SUBSISTENCE IN ALASKA THEN AND NOW

***"I wish I was herding today, I miss it, when you go way up high — away from everything."* —Anna Twitchell**

by Faith Fjeld with Lois Stover and Mary Eyman

Lois Stover in her greenhouse.

It's early June, 2000, in Kodiak, Alaska. The springtime sun has brought lengthening, ever warmer days, and with the thawing of the snow, a green almost tropical lushness of foliage and profusion of native flowers. Lois Stover is on vacation from her job as purchasing agent for Sutliff Hardware. She is making use of her time off to loosen the soil on the hillside terraces and low-lying furrows that occupy every available space around her home. She is getting ready to transplant the seedlings that she started several months ago in her prefabricated greenhouse before the weather warmed up and the ground thawed. Soon cabbage, turnips, cauliflower, beets, Swiss chard, potatoes, and onions will take root in the Kodiak Island soil that has been enriched with her household's compost and irrigated with the melted roof snow she has been collecting in barrels.

Lois lives in the two-story ranch-style house that she and her late husband Smokey built themselves. Here they raised their son and daughter while running The Kodiak Disposal Company on the outskirts of town. Their junkyard/recycling center was famous for its free Friday clam chowder feeds with clams from their fish camp at Onion Bay.

The Stover homestead sits on a narrow strip of land between a natural inlet and a small fishing lake. Next door a deep and slightly ominous square hole — partially filled with water from snow melt and seepage and cluttered with a hodgepodge of building materials — marks the spot where their son Alan, now in his thirties, will build a cabin for himself when he returns in the fall from the fish camp.

A gravel road leads past all this to the top of a wooded hill where their daughter Cherie, in her early forties, lives with her two young sons and her teenage daughter in a cabin that Lois and Smokey also built. After school, Lois' becomes the hangout for the two boys and their teenage cousin, the son of Lois' sister Hannah Broussard who lives across town. The three boys take over the living room to watch TV until Lois says, "That's enough violence for one day."

Photo taken near the Kuskowim River in the winter of 1938 shows Anna Spein Twitchell with her baby Esther in the komsa *that her mother Ellen Sara brought to Alaska from Sápmi. Her oldest daughter Mary is standing next to her.*

Mary Eyman, Lois' oldest sister, lives in the Stover home as well. In the late afternoon she sits at the kitchen windows overlooking the lake and starts a game of solitaire. She is the family genealogist and the piles of family photos and newspaper clippings she has been going over have been pushed aside to make room for her card game.

Mary, 65, Lois in her late 50's, and Hannah ten years younger, are part of a Sami-Yup'ik extended family. Their parents were Anna Spein Kvamme, the daughter of Sami reindeer herders from Norway, and Tim Twitchell, the son of Yup'ik and American reindeer herders from Alaska. Their family, and the stories that follow, grew out of the Alaska Reindeer Project.

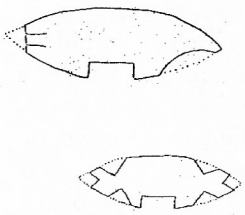
A PRACTICAL RESPONSE TO AN ECOLOGICAL DISASTER

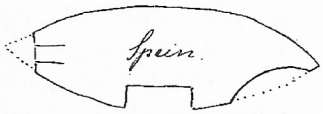
For thousands of years Indigenous Peoples all over the Arctic — including the Samis and the Yup'iks — subsisted in their harsh, often bleak, environments because they knew how to utilize what they could harvest from the forests, the tundra, the oceans and the rivers without depleting these precious and sustainable resources.

Then, in the 15th and 16th centuries, an environmental crisis occurred in Finnmark [Sápmi] when Russian and other European trappers began the wholesale slaughter of the wild life there in order to capitalize on the growing European market for furs. The introduction of firearms among the Sami further intensified the exploitation. This altered the traditional Sami way of life by using up their natural sources of food, clothing and implements. In response to this crisis, reindeer nomadism — the domestication and herding of reindeer — became the new subsistence alternative for the Sami by the 17th century.

With the annihilation of wild game in Sápmi, the territory of Alaska became the new target for environmental exploitation. In the 18th and 19th centuries commercial trappers, sealers and whalers from Russia and North America brought Alaska's wild life and its Native Peoples to the same point of extinction. In the 1890s the United States government, having "purchased Alaska" from Russia, who had previously "claimed it," initiated the Alaska

[continued overleaf]





the Spein ear mark

the Sara ear mark

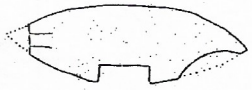


Photo of Anna Spein Twitchell taken at the Palmer Pioneer Home in the 1970s She is holding her reindeer harness. In the foreground is the komsa *her mother brought over from Sápmi. These items along with the reindeer bell and Sami hat, also shown here, are now in the archives of the Anchorage Museum.*

"claimed" it, initiated the Alaska Reindeer Project to introduce nomadism and reindeer herding to the Indigenous Peoples of Alaska. Domesticated reindeer were first imported from Siberia and then from Sápmi as a renewable source of food, clothing and transportation, not only for the Alaska Natives, but also for the miners who were pouring into Alaska looking for gold. Families from Sápmi signed up for two year tours of duty.

The Yup'ik and other Native Alaskan Peoples survived their period of crisis. The number of reindeer in Alaska grew from a few hundred at the start of the program to 7000 two years later. By 1910 there were 27,000 reindeer in Alaska and by 1930, there were 500,000.

The Saras, from the village of Avzzi, were among the 113 Sami herders who signed up for the Reindeer Project. Nils Persen Sara and his wife Marie [Lois, Mary and Hannah's great-grandparents], their fifteen year old daughter Ellen Maria Clemetsen [their Grandma Sara], and their sons Mikkel, Morten, Klemet and Mathias left Sápmi for America in 1898. Also in the group was twenty eight year-old Per Mathisen Spein from Kautokeino, who was to become Ellen's first husband. When their two year tour of duty was over in 1900, the Saras and Per Spein were among the herders who stayed on in Alaska. That same year Ellen Sara and Per Spein were married. It was the first Alaska wedding between members of the Reindeer Project.

By the next year Per Spein had become the main herder at Eaton Station and by 1902 his father-in-law Nils Sara had become the main herder at another reindeer station established on St. Laurence Island. Nils and his family returned to Eaton Station in 1903 and the following year, both families drove their reindeer south from Eaton Station over the mountains to the Moravian Mission at Bethel on the Kuskokwim River to strengthen the herds there and to establish a home base for themselves.

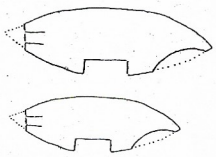
ELLEN SARA: FAMILY LIFE ON THE KUSKOKWIM

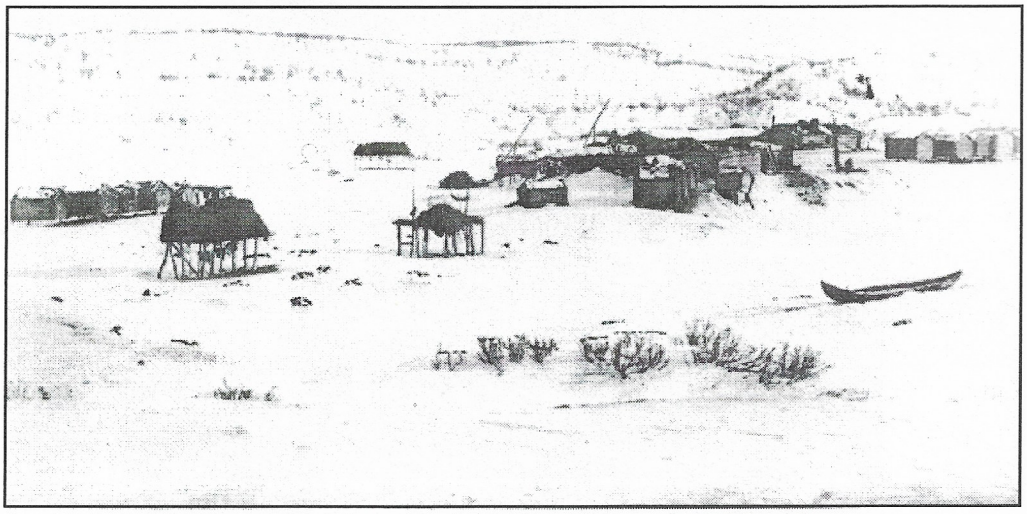
Ellen Sara at age 18. The apron means she probably was baking bread.

Ellen Sara was Lois, Mary and Hannah's grandmother. Her daughter Anna Spein — their mother — was born in 1916 in a tent at the Crooked Creek Reindeer Camp on the Kuskokwim River near Bethel. Later her parents divorced, and her mother married Jens Kvamme, a Norwegian trader who became Anna's stepfather. Anna Spein Kvamme grew up at the Aniak Reindeer Station on the Kuskokwim River and from an early age participated in nomadic herding from the Aniak Range all the way to Napaimute. She remembers this as a time of hard work for her mother:

"[Ellen] herded the reindeer in the day and took care of our family at night. She sewed boots, made parkas, wove cloth, even made butter. She did band weaving using the strings she recycled from flour and sugar sacks. She'd hook one end of her loom to her belt and the other end to a door knob and make *komsa* [Sami cradle board] straps and the webbing to hold pairs of mittens together and the shoe bands that kept out the snow. She also trapped for small animals and fished for food.

"There was little division of labor in a Sami family. The men sewed, tanned and would sometimes care for the children. Every member of the family herded. Daughters and sons inherited equally. A reindeer would be branded on its ear upon the birth of a Sami baby and that deer and all its offspring would belong to the newborn. From birth on, the family's first priority was always the herd and no matter what difficulties they faced, the family traveled and stayed together. The family was the focus of the Sami's life. Marriages were often arranged by Sami parents with an eye on enlarging the family herd with a new union. The hus-





Avzzi, Sápmi, Ellen Sara's home village at the turn of the century

marriage. The family was isolated for much of the year. Once a year the colony of Samis in Alaska would meet for two weeks in Akiak. There would be dances, sewing parties and lots of gossip." — *Anna Spein Kvamme*

ANNA SPEIN KVAMME: BEAVER HUNTING AT TIMBER CREEK

Spring hunting camp around Aniak - Cripple Creek. Anna was born in such a camp.

By the time she was a teenager, Anna could cook, bake, shoot, skin, tan hides and butcher, skills necessary for subsistence survival. She was only 15 when the following incident took place:

"My brother Jim, Uncle Mikkel [Mike Sara] and I went hunting for beaver at Timber Creek up the Aniak River. We moved up the creek to some new beaver houses. We got there about 4:00 and the beaver were swimming already. They left me behind while they went to bring in some reindeer meat to make jerky and told me to watch the creek.

I was alone and cooking supper when I hear a 'splash' and I look up from the tent and there are beaver swimming. I took the gun and went down. I shot one beaver, looked around and saw another beaver. Then I had to rush back to the tent to turn around the meat that was cooking on the stove.

"I went back down and shot the beaver and got it. I was going to turn around and go back to the tent when another one came and I shot that one too. Then there came two more but I saw that they were just pups so I let them go. I went back up to the tent and finished making supper and waited for my brother and my uncle. They came with a load of meat for jerky and they went to get some more.

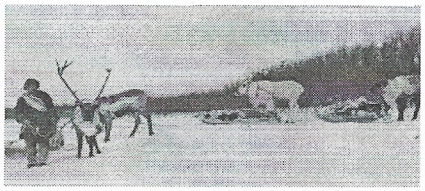
"I looked down to the creek and saw two big beaver coming over the hump by the beaver house. I shot and got those. I got six beaver before the guys came back. I said, "Look what I got while you were getting the meat!" They were kind of jealous because I got all the big ones.

Then we ate and I finished cutting up the meat and salting it down for overnight. I mixed the blood for blood sausage and made brain bread from the heads. [Then] they said, 'She's through cooking so we can put her on the other side of the river at those big beaver dams.'

"They left me on the other side and it was getting dark. I got no more beaver and was ready to go. This was around breakup [when the river ice thaws] and the water was rising all around me. Pretty soon I had no place to sit, everything was covered with water. I tied up the beaver to a heavy branch and stood there waiting. I was cold and wet and thought I was going to drown.

"Then I heard Michael coming and he picked me up with the canoe. I said, 'Gee whiz fellows, you never think of me, I could have drowned out there.' Michael took his gun and was going to cross the [beaver] dam to the other side. But he fell through the dam and got soaking wet, his gun too. He had to wring out his clothes. We were laughing at him as he went up to the tent, it was so funny. We skinned all the beaver that evening. I only skinned two. I had too much else to do." —*Anna Spein Kvamme*

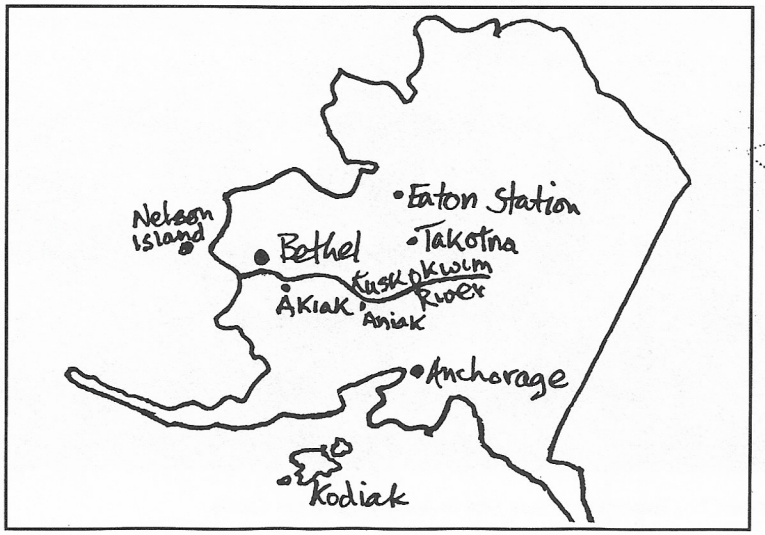
TIM TWITCHELL: ON THE TRAIL OF THE REINDEER



TimTwitchell's father, A. H., and three of the family reindeer

Tim Twitchell, Lois, Mary and Hannah's father,was born in Bethel, Alaska in 1906. He was named after his great-great grandfather, a British soldier who had fought in the Revolutionary War. Tim's father, A. H. Twitchell, had come to Alaska as a trader from Jamaica, Vermont, and his mother, Ireena Kochek [their Grandma Ireena], was a Yup'ik Eskimo woman from Nanivagnatlek, Nelson Island. Together, Ireena and A. H. ran the Takotna General Store, kept a herd of reindeer, and raised eleven children. One of Tim's responsibilities while he was growing up was to help tend the family herd:

[continued overleaf]



"It was a hard life when time was measured by the seasons and our life followed the trail of the reindeer. We lived nomad style, moving from camp to camp during the seasonal changes when the hooves of thousands of these animals echoed across the tundra in their search for new pasture.

"We packed the reindeer and packed the dogs, anywhere from 50 to 100 pounds each. In May we'd herd the animals to high and dry areas — or what we called the fawning range — to keep the young reindeer away from the swamp areas where they might drown. We'd also watch closely to keep the grizzlies and the eagles away. When the animals were about a month old they were branded and herded to the summer range, an area where southerly winds and plenty of precipitation kept the vegetation plentiful and succulent.

"Then we would work the animals back to the rutting range where they would be allowed to spread out as much as possible for about a month before the winter range. After the autumn frost had killed off most of the plants and foliage, the animal's diet consisted solely of lichen and dried food. We had all the meat we wanted, but vegetables were at a premium." —*Tim Twitchell*

As a little boy, Tim had stayed in the first grade for three years because he refused to learn English. His mother Ireena finally told him that if he didn't learn English he'd still be in the first grade when he was thirty.

When he actually *was* thirty in 1937, Tim Twitchell became one of the first Eskimos to graduate from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, although his mother never lived to see it. She had died of tuberculosis at the age of 38.

Ireena Kouchek, Tim Twitchell's mother.

Tim's degrees were in business administration and education. A year after his graduation he married Anna Spein Kvamme. During their first year of marriage, Anna would often leave her husband to go hunting and trapping with her brothers in the hills where, as she later described it, "I recaptured the pure pleasure of being again in the wilderness."

Then tragedy struck. In 1939 the US government appropriated funds under the Reindeer Act to purchase all reindeer from non-Native owners for $3 or $4 a head. This was an immeasurable loss for the Sami who the US government considered to be "non-Natives."

They had devoted their lives to the reindeer. Anna Twitchell was still angry forty years later when she said, "It was like they brought us here to Alaska and put us in the garbage."

The loss of the herds robbed the Sami of their livelihood and pride, but it did not destroy the emotional ties the herders felt towards the animals they guided and lived with, and they would often visit their herds after they were sold.

Mary Eyman was a little girl at the time: "Mother never trusted banks. She said to me, 'If anything happens, grab my crochet bag.' Years later, after her funeral, I said, 'Get Mom's crochet bag.' She had folded the bills from the sale of her reindeer in thirds, rolled each bill up, and wrapped yarn around it." Lois remembers the excitement. "Kids were unwrapping yarn like crazy! There was over $2000.00 in her bag."

Anna and Tim Twitchell on East 14th in Anchorage in the 1950s.

Mary Eyman at the window at Lois' house

APPLES AND ORANGES ARE COMING!

For Mary Eyman, growing on the Kuskokwim River was filled with pleasures that might seem exotic today. Her first play house was a set of moose horns which her Grandma Sara turned over to form a dome and covered with a blanket. The river was the main thoroughfare and the arrival of a steamboat from Seattle in the summer was a cause for excitement:

"The boat brought things we could not hunt, grow or make — like Klim Powdered Milk, Hills Brothers Coffee and Sperry Brand Flour. Grandma Sara would send me down to the dock to see what had come in. One time a woman got off the boat wearing an outfit she had made out of Reliance Flour sacks and the word was printed on her skirt. I could read English. I told Grandma that 'Reliance' had come in. From then on that woman was known around Aniak as 'Old Lady Reliance.'

"Back then we only got fruit once a year and it would come in by steamboat around the Fourth of July. Kids would go running down to the shore yelling 'apples and oranges are coming!' We'd pray for apples and oranges because they came individually wrapped in tissue paper that we'd use for toilet paper. The tissue was much softer than the pages of the Sears Roebuck and the 'Monkey' Ward catalogues we'd revert to when the tissue was used up.

"We'd order things from the mail order catalogues and some of the Yup'ik men believed you could order the models in the catalogues too. They'd wait and wait, but just the clothes came." —Mary Eyman

While Lois, Mary and Hannah were growing up, their parents followed the Sami and Yup'ik tendency to wear many diverse hats. Anna and Tim served as midwives for the communities of Aniak, Akiak and Takotna and did healings with Native herbs, Tim was an English teacher for Native students, served as the postmaster of Takotna [the town that his father helped found], and before he retired, worked as a warehouseman for Union Oil in Anchorage. Anna raised their 10 children with a sense of pride and connection to their Sami as well as their Yup'ik heritage and taught them Sami as well as Yup'ik skills.

Anna Spein Twitchell died of emphysema in 1985 at the age of 69. Tim Twitchell, now 95, lives in the Pioneer Home in Palmer. He cannot hear or speak. The couple had 22 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

In our next issue:

THE FISH CAMP AT ONION BAY

The author's research trip to Anchorage and Kodiak was made possible by The Thanks Be To Grandmother Winifred Foundation, to whom she is very grateful. Information for this article came from conversations and interviews with Lois Stover and Mary Eyman, Kodiak, Alaska, June 3 - 10, 2000, and from the following published sources:

Maria Brooks, "Anna Twitchell: The Last of the Lapp Herders," *We Alaskans, Anchorage Daily News Magazine*, May 23, 1981, pp 6; **Sheldon Jackson, *Introduction of Domestic Reindeer Into Alaska*,** US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC: 1900; **Ladonna Lindley, "On the Trail of the Reindeer,"** *The Great Lander: Shopping News and Sourdough Classifieds*, April 12, 1978, pp 1;**Nathan Muus and Faith Fjeld, "The Reindeer Project Families," and "Following the Reindeer,"** *Báiki: the North American Sami Journal*, Issue #19, 1999, pp 6 and pp 7; ***Snow on the Mountain: Short Stories by Pioneer Home Residents*,** Palmer Alaska; **Berntina Kvamme Venes, "A History of the Sara Family, Saami Reindeer Herders in Alaska,"** Bethel, Alaska: 1991;**Ørnulv Vorren, *Saami, Reindeer and Gold in Alaska: the Emigration of Saami from Norway to Alaska*,** Waveland Press, Prospect Heights, IL: 1994

Hannah Broussard and her niece Cherie.

They say that you had to be a strong woman to live the nomadic life. Women who lived up north fixed the food, packed the dishes, herded and hunted, raised the children and even birthed their own babies. But there's alway another side to everything:

HANNAH'S GOING BANANAS

Hannah is going bananas
Way up in this cold cold place.
No trees, no mountains, no men
The only good thing about it is
There is no rat race.

Hannah is going bananas
Waiting for Mr. Right
Will he come driving a dog team?
In the day or in the night?

Will he drive a 4-wheeler
Or maybe a Snow-go?
Or will he come on snow shoes
When the wind gusts and blows?

Will he come in the summer,
Winter, spring or fall?
Will he be handsome or homely?
Will he be short or tall?

There are only two requirements
To win her admiration.
All in the world he needs
Is a pulse and respiration.

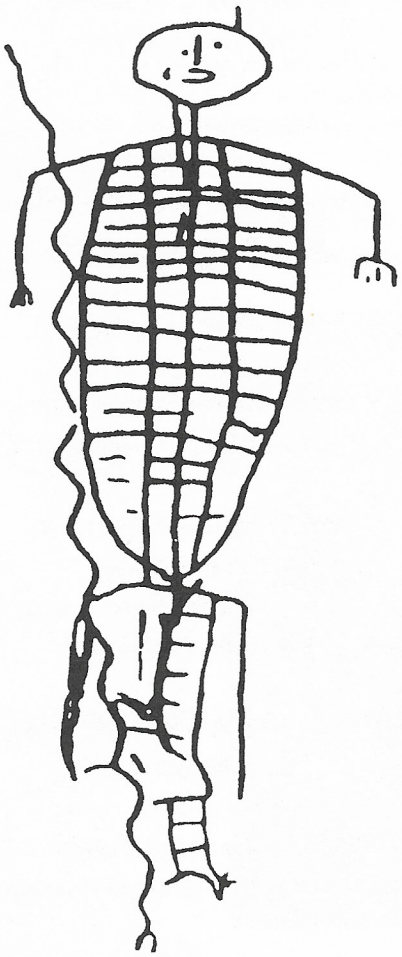
-Hannah Broussard

MJÁNDAŠŠ-PYRRE

translated by Jürgen Kremer

These two stories are from the cycle of narratives about Mjándašš, the mythic reindeer. Twenty-nine of these stories from the Kola Peninsula are known. V. Charnoluski collected the largest number of these stories in 1927 and they were only published after the death of the storyteller in 1962 in Moscow. They have since been translated into Finnish, Swedish, and German. The English translations here are based on the Swedish (Kerstin Eidlitz Kuoljok, Den vilda renen, *Ájtte 1993) and the German (H. U. Schwaar,* Sápmi, *Waldgut 1996) translations from Russian.*

The electronic journal Folklore, *published by the Institute of Estonian Language, recently published a two-part article on the Mjándašš myth cycle: <http://haldjas.folklore.ee/folklore/> vols. 11 and 13).*



rock carving from Kuoljok, *Den vilda renen*

Mjándašš Pyrre

From the other side of Kamenskij, from the other side of Jmandra, from the inside of Mother Earth leaps Mjándašš, the wild reindeer bull. His name is Mjándašš Pyrre. This is where the origin of the good, wild reindeer is. Land and life are based on Mjándašš Pyrre. He leaps on earth from one place to the next, from a region that is not ours. His path is that of the sun, that is where he is leaping to.

Mjándašš Pyrre, the reindeer with golden antlers, flies. White like snow it flies from Norway — far away from Limandra — and flies directly in the direction of the Kameskij lake. Its hoofs became soiled — it does not like the ground, and even less the water. He leapt to Syjvyn and stood on a rocky hill.

Here!

From here you can see the high Kejva, Oajmkezjpoallas rich grazing grounds. Here he stood, put his legs apart, and pissed on the earth, rested, and rose.

The thoughts, the ruminations gnaw at my mind. I look to all sides, to three, four sides, to all sides, to three, four sides ... I don't know... where shall I go now?

His hoofs clattered on the smooth stones, and he leapt anew.

The grass and the white moss, his nourishment, they murmur. Mjándašš Pyrre leaps, Mjándašš Pyrre flies ... Mjándašš Pyrre arrives! The hills of Oajmkezjpoallas grow between his legs, Letnij Navolok arises under his legs.

He loves the hills, came to the summer grazing areas, and washed his hoofs in the springs. And here he ate and lived and rested. And his antlers, his golden antlers fell off … And he said:

"This area where there are good reindeer, it is Mjándašš' tundra.

Mjándašš Woman

On the bare mountain fjell and on the low, thinly wooded hills, in hills and on the tundra, where no humans live and never have, there live the Mjándašš Beings.

Mjándašš Woman lived there — the woman who was also a reindeer. She gave birth to a calf, a little son. He soon became a young reindeer, Mjándašš Bárdni, a Mjándašš Youngster.

Mjándašš Bárdni went hunting. One day, as he came home, he went up to his mother and said:

"Mother, we want to live in a goahti made of reindeer skin. The threshold shall be made from neck vertebrae, the poles from reindeer ribs, the support beams from leg bones, and on the sacred place we shall put the backbones, and the fire place shall be as smooth as the liver."

He built the goahti and said: "This is the Mjándašš Goahti."

He changed and took on his human form. Mjandašš Woman also changed and stood as person in front of her son.

Mjándašš Bárdni said to his mother:

"I want to marry and I want the daughter of a human as wife."

Mjándašš Woman told him:

"My little son, you cannot live together with a human daughter. She has a different smell. She is not clean like you are. You are a Mjándašš — a wild reindeer. You will never get to like her smell. You will never develop the patience to live with her."

But Mjandašš Son, the young man, said:

"Fetch me the daughter of a human being. We shall live together. She will care for me."

Then Mjándašš Woman went into nature to find a wife for her son. She changed into a reindeer cow, and swam across Mjándašš River, the bloody river. The waves of Mjándašš River are made from lungs, and the stones are made from livers. She swam across, and leapt and leapt and leapt, and came to a human goahti. There she changed and entered as an ordinary woman. She took off her shoes and asked:

"Which daughter shall come to my son as wife?"

The old man who lived in the goahti had three daughters. The oldest replied:

"I come."

"Now, if you want to come along," said Mjándašš Woman, "then put my shoes to dry. Stroke them until they are smooth and

dry them" — but she herself stepped out of the goahti.

The shoes were not like others, on the inside they were made of reindeer fat, and the inner sole was of the finest, best reindeer lard. During the night Mjándašš Woman slept, but she awoke as morning approached, and said to the eldest daughter:

"Give me my shoes and the smoothened sole."

But the girl had eaten the fat in the shoes! Instead of the fat she had put grass, and she had made the sole from ordinary hay. She gave the shoes to Mjándašš Woman and said:

"Slip in!"

Mjándašš Woman began to put on her clothes, but in the shoes was hay, and the sole was no longer the same. But Mjándašš Woman said nothing.

Mjándašš Woman and the daughter of the old man left and came to Mjándašš River. Mjándašš Woman said:

"How can you, know-it-all, cross Mjándašš River, the river of blood, where the waves are from lungs and the stones from livers?"

The girl said: "I will pull myself across in the same way you do."

Mjándašš Woman said nothing. She changed into a wild reindeer, swam across the river, and leapt away. The girl remained on the riverbank, then groped forward, groped and groped, disappearing again and again, and barely saved herself to the riverbank.

Mjándašš Woman got home. Calves were leaping around the goahti. "Go and get the girl," Mjándašš Woman told them. They ran. Their hoofs cracked hard on the ground. But the girl had a walking stick in her hand. With it she blooded all their snouts.

The girl went to the Mjándašš Goahti, opened the door and said:

"I am entering the Mjándašš Goahti — and I am stepping over the threshold made from neck vertebrae! On the Boaššu, the innermost, sacred place, are the back bones. And the supporting beams are made from leg bones! And the roof is covered with skins!"

Then said the Mjándašš Woman:

"Turn to stone!"

And the girl turned to stone.

Mjándašš Boy returned from the hunt. He asked his mother:

"Did you not bring a wife along for me?"

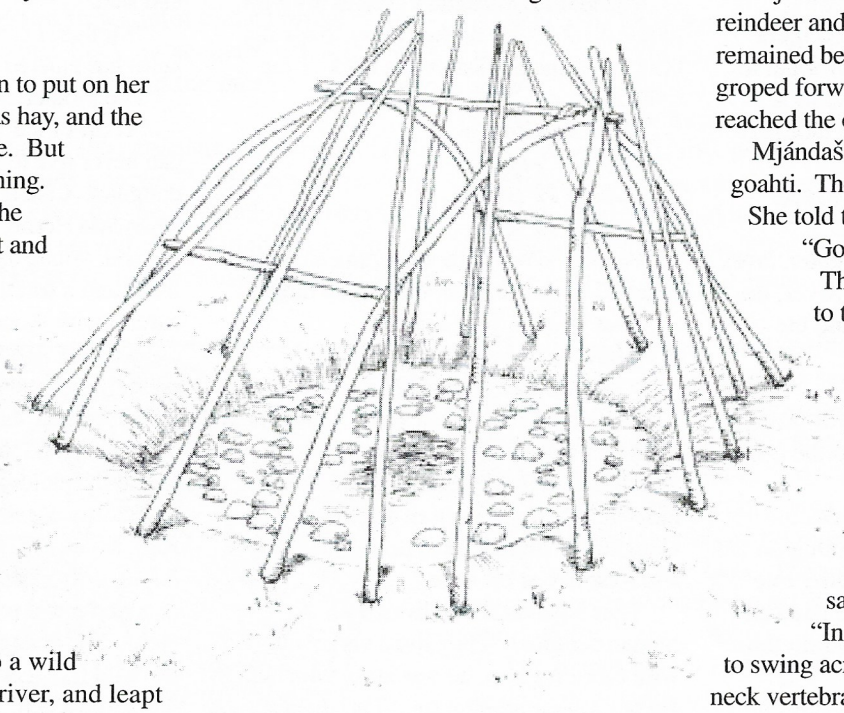
Mjándašš Woman replied to her son:

"There she stands as stone."

Then Mjándašš Lad said:

"If you turned her to stone, then fetch me another one."

Then Mjándašš Woman changed into a reindeer cow and ran back to the same old man. She swam across Mjándašš River where the waves where of lungs and the



stones of liver, and she arrived at the goahti. She changed into a human being and entered. The old man had two daughters left. Mjándašš Woman said:

"Who will come to my son as wife?"

The middle daughter called out:

"Me!"

"Well, then come along" — said Mjándašš Woman. She took off her shoes and gave them to the girl.

"Take these shoes and dry them. Straighten the sole so that it is smooth and put them to dry."

The girl took the shoes and the sole, and they were made from the very best reindeer fat. She put the shoes out to dry, but she ate the reindeer fat herself.

Mjándašš Woman slept during the night, but she got up in the morning and told the middle daughter:

"Now help me get into my shoes!"

But the soles had been eaten. Mjándašš Woman started to get dressed, but it no longer was the same sole! In its place was merely hay. Mjándašš Woman got ready for the journey.

"Well, let's leave now!" she said.

Then they came to the river and Mjándašš Woman asked:

"How do you get across Mjándašš River, the bloody river? In it are waves of lungs and stones of liver."

Then the girl answered:

"I will do as you do!"

Mjándašš Woman changed into a wild reindeer and swam across the river. The girl remained behind on the bank, then she groped forward, sank and, finally, barely reached the other side of the river.

Mjándašš Woman went home into her goahti. The calves were playing there. She told them:

"Go and fetch the girl."

They all leapt to meet the girl and to take her along. But in her hands she had a small walking stick. With it she beat their muzzles bloody. They leapt home to their mother and said:

"This is how the girl met us."

The girl went to Mjándašš Goahti, opened the door and said:

"In the Mjándašš Goahti you have to swing across the threshold made from neck vertebrae. The floor is covered with back bones. The stones of the árran, the fire place, are smooth as liver and the supporting beams are made from reindeer legs."

Mjándašš Woman said:

"Turn to stone!"

And the girl turned to stone.

Mjándašš Bárdni came home from the hunt and went straight to his mother:

"Mother, where is my wife?"

Mjándašš Woman answered:

"Here she stands as stone."

"Well, if you also turned her to stone, then go and fetch a wife for me."

The mother changed into a wild reindeer cow and leapt away. She swam across Mjándašš River, changed into a human woman and went to the goahti of the same old man. The old man had one more daughter. Mjándašš Woman asked:

[continued overleaf]

"Do you want to become my son's wife?"

The girl answered her: "What a terrible housewife I would be for your son. I am no use as wife for Mjándaššš Son."

"Go, human daugher, and live in Mjándaššš Goahti," said Mjándaššš Woman. "Take my shoes and straighten the sole smooth."

The girl took the shoes, carried them away for drying, straightened the sole, hung them up, and dried them.

During the night Mjándaššš Woman slept, but when she awoke in the morning she said:

"Fetch my shoes and soles!"

The girl had dried and greased them well and she helped Mjándaššš Woman to put on the shoes with soles. And look, then the Human Daughter came along to Mjándaššš Goahti.

When they got to Mjándaššš River, Mjándaššš Woman asked the girl:

"How can you, Human Daughter, cross Mjándaššš River? In Mjándaššš River, the bloody river, lungs are waves and the smooth livers are stones."

The girl said:

"Go, Mjándaššš Woman. I will probably make it somehow across to the other bank."

Mjándaššš Woman swam across the river, but the girl remained standing on the bank. She peeled bark off an alder tree and sat down by the water. She fried an eel, chewed the alder bark, spat into the river, and sang:

Dry, dry Mjándaššš River
Waves of lungs
Stones of liver
Bloody river!

Mjándaššš River dried up entirely and Human Daughter went across. Then she bit into the eel, chewed alder bark, spit into the river bed and sang:

Run, run Mjándaššš River
Waves of lungs
Stones of liver
Bloody river!

And Mjándaššš River began to flow again.

The girl went straight ahead. And there, far away, she saw Mjándaššš Goahti. Then she sat down. But Mjándaššš Woman went home. The calves were playing around the goahti.

"Children, go and fetch the girl," said the woman.

They leapt and clacked their hooves and found the girl. They leapt toward her and stood in front of her. She did not hit them. She tied a little red scarf to the ears of each calf. Merrily they leapt home and called out:

"This is how the girl met us. She tied little red scarves to our ears."

And Mjándaššš Woman said:

"That was good."

Then Mjándaššš Bárdni returned home from the hunt. He asked:

"Where is my wife?"

Mjándaššš Woman said that she was waiting by the bog.

Mjándaššš Lad begun to run in his wild reindeer form. He dashed away to see his bride. But the girl sat on the bank of the river and sang:

There he leaps
There he leaps
Mjánda ššš Bárdni
Mjánda ššš son

He circled her without getting close and returned home. The mother asked him:

"Did you see your bride?"

"I saw her," said Mjándaššš Lad.

"Can you live with her?"

He said: "I have lived in the wind and in the lee of the wind. I can live with her."

Mjándaššš Bárdni built a goahti for himself. He stood in front of Human Daughter in human form in all his beauty and took her as his wife.

Thus Mjándaššš Son lived with the human daughter. They lived very well. The wife cared for him, he was strict with her. He gave her a prohibition: "The skins for sleeping are not allowed to be soiled with child's piss."

They had many children and many skins for sleeping. There they lived. They lived very well. But one day she did not pay attention — a little child pissed on the sleeping skin.

Mjándaššš returned from the hunt and went into the goahti; he had not yet turned into a human when an unclean smell entered his nose.

He sneezed and said to his wife, Mjándaššš Kab:

"I admonished you, sleeping skins should not be wetted, but now one of them is wet! It stinks! I can no longer live like this. A heavy spirit is entering my ears; I am trembling and quaking because of it."

He cantered home, came to his mother, and said:

"Mother, I can live no longer! An evil spirit has entered my ears!"

The mother said to him:

"Didn't I tell you? A son of Mjándaššš can never live together with a human daughter. Listen, my child, return to Mjándaššš Home. There are mother animals for you, young animals, a first, a second, a third, and a fourth. Live! My little son, be careful with those with black skin, watch out for bears, and fear wolves and humans behind trees and red stones."

And when she said this, Mjándaššš Woman turned into a wild reindeer cow and led all the children out of the goahti. They leapt away as wild reindeer. But Mjándaššš Kab, Mjándaššš Bárdni's wife, wrapped the damp, dirty sleeping skin around herself, changed into a reindeer cow and followed them. She changed into a leading animal of the wild reindeer and her antlers became for them like a bell. And they spread many hundreds of wild reindeer across the tundra and valleys of our earth.

Jürgen Kremer, Ph.D, is a frequent contributor to Báiki. He is currently preparing a Sámigiella-English dictionary for publication.

BASIC LAYOUT OF A SAMI TENT

1 Šielbma - threshold
2 Bearpmehat - dividing beams
3 Uksa - doorway
4 Árran - fireplace
5 Ovddaldasčoska - log-in-front
6 Uksacággi - support beam for the entrance
7 Duorggat - birch twigs on the ground
8 Soggi - space nearest to the wall
9 Boaššu - innermost part of the tent, kitchen area, sacred area
10 Loaidu - sitting and sleeping places to the right and left of the fire place
11 Uskogeahči - outward facing part of the goahti space

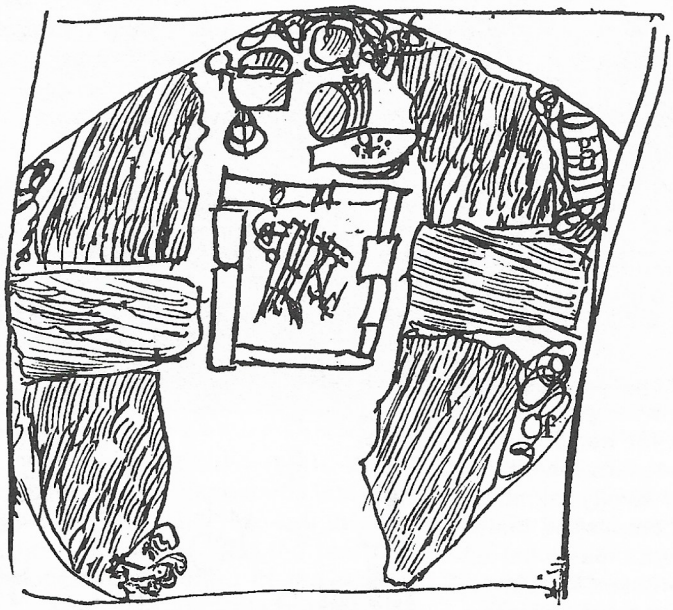
from Buljo, *Goadastallan*, Sami Oahpahusraddi 1994

The women wear several things attached to their belt, [such] as 1. a leather bag containing a spoon as well as a pipe. 2. A knife in a case. 3. (the pipe) 4. A thimble made of leather. 5. A pin cushion with a brass cover which pulls down over it like a cap. 6. Several large brass rings. The belt itself is ornamented with tin (pewter) or silver embroidery and beads.

The men wear, instead of the above, a kind of bag hanging down exactly in front. This is divided internally into two pockets, containing their tobacco-pipe, tinder box, tobacco, and a spoon made of reindeer horn of an oblong, flattish shape. Women often also wear a similar bag but of a smaller size.

When the reindeer are milked, as they cast their coat during the course of the summer, the hair flies about very inconveniently, often covering the milk in the pail. Whenever it happens that one of the reindeer strays from its master's herd to that of a neighbor, the person to whom it comes milks it without any offense to the owner. Such an accident often happens because these animals love society and the more of them there are together, the better they thrive.

The furniture of these Laplanders consists of kettles and pots, sometimes of brass, sometimes copper. Plates they have none, but instead, oblong boards used for meat; which previous to its distribution among guests, is served up in round pails. Closely plaited baskets or tubs, always circular, are used to keep cheese in.



Within the tent are spread on each side skins of reindeer with the hair side uppermost, on which people sit or lie, for the tent is not lofty enough to stand upright. In the center of the whole is the fireplace. The back of the tent behind the fire is brushwood and branches.

In the roof are two racks upon which cheeses are laid to dry and towards the entrance, rennet bags filled with milk preserved for winter use.

I sat myself down at the right of the entrance with my legs crossed. Opposite me sat an old woman — she had a belt embroidered with silver. Her grey hair hung straight down and she had a wrinkled face with bleary eyes. Her fingers were scraggy and withered. Next to her sat her husband, a young man 36, who for the sake of her herds, had already been married ten years to this old hag.

In wintertime the women wear breeches made exactly like those worn by men, as well as boots that come no higher than the knees. It is wonderful how they are able, in the severity of winter, to follow the reindeer who are never at rest, but keep feeding by night as well as day. They have indeed small sheds of huts, here and there, into which they occasionally drive their reindeer, but with the greatest difficulty.

During winter we passed over the beautiful lake of Wirisiar. The weather was very cold and foggy. After passing the alps I grew thirsty and my Laplander took his knife and cut a lump of ice to suck for refreshment. I observed that Laplanders, both men and women, pass a lighted pipe from one to another, retaining a mouthful of smoke as long as possible. Old men chew tobacco.

When the children are taken from the cradle they are dressed in a reindeer skin garment. By four months old they are able to stand on their legs and turn their heads with a degree of intelligence — hardly ever seen in our children at that early age. I have never met any people who lead such happy lives as Laplanders. In summer they make two meals of milk a day and after the tasks of milking or cheese-making they resign themselves to indolent tranquility. In winter their food is cheese, but in the evening they eat meat. One reindeer feeds four persons for a week.

I left this place in the evening, proceeding on foot all night (the sun was shining without setting at all) and at three in the afternoon of the next day arrived at another hut. The people here use a bread called blodbrod. Blood bread made of small, fresh fish, bruised and mixed with a little flour. This is baked on a jack over the fire, but used only in hard times.

The Laplanders know no musical instrument except a lur or pipes, made of ash bark. They are not accustomed to sing at church, except those who are among the great or learned of the community.

The names by which time of day is distinguished: Midnight, *kaskia*; remainder of the night, *pojela kaskia*; morning dawn, *theleeteilyja*; sunrise, *peivimorotak*; two or three hours after sunrise, *areiteet*; hour of reindeer milking (8 or 9 o'clock), *arrapeivi*; noon, *kaskapeivi*; 5 or 6 in the afternoon, *eketis peivi*; sunset, *peiveliti*; and night, *iä*. Sunday, *Sotno peivi*; Monday, *Mannutaka*; Tuesday, *Tistaka*; Wednesday, *Kaska vacku* (middle of the week); Thursday, *Tourestaka*; Friday, *Perietaka*; Saturday, *Lavutaka*.

Mel Olsen is a weaver and Professor of Art and Art History at the University of Wisconsin, Superior. He is founding editor of Árran: the Newsletter of the North American Sami Siiddat *and his work frequently appears in* Báiki.

LINNAEUS BIBLIOGRAPHY

• **Blunt, Wilfrid, *The Compleat Naturalist: a Life of Linnaeus*,** Collins, St. Jame's Place, London, 1971

• **Linnaeus, Karl, *The Lapland Journey, Iter Lapponicum 1732*,** edited & translated by Peter Graves, Lockharton Press, Edinburgh, 1995

• **Linnaeus, Karl: *The Original Manuscript Journal, Lachesis Lapponica, or a Tour In Lapland*,** White and Cochran, for the Royal Linnaean Society, London, 1811

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

well as selected outlets in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Sami Spirits!!! The large barn has been fitted with a new metal roof. The small smithy / wood shop has been converted into a sauna and there has been a new farm pond dug at the base of a local spring. The summer kitchen northeast of the house has been drywalled and changed to a guest house / intern housing.

Recently a Kalstrom relative came to the farm and stated that she had a number of family and farmstead photographs in her keeping. These she would kindly make copies of. For more information contact Mike Jacobs and Malena Handeen at Easy Bean Farm, 5075 100th Ave. NW, Milan, MN 56262 or e-mail <easybean@inforlink.com>.

Franz Allbert Richter
RR2 Box 95
Clarkfield, MN
56223

Franz Allbert Richter is currently building a boat using the traditional Norwegian Lapstrake construction.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

SUBSISTENCE IN ALASKA: The Fish Camp at Onion Bay

WILL SALMON SURVIVE?

BÁIKI PROFILE: GRETE KVAAL, photographer of Sami Women Who Herd Reindeer

and much, much more

WE WELCOME YOUR SUGGESTIONS AND YOUR IDEAS FOR ARTICLES

GLADYS MUUS

Nathan Muus with Gladys. He is wearing a sweater she knit for him.

Grandma Gladys Muus (1906-2000) from Grand Marais, Minnesota, matriarch of the Minnesota Muus family, passed into the spirit world on October 27th at age 94. Gladys, grandmother of 9 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren, was known for her countless Norwegian style sweaters which she made for each of her family members. She was also an accomplished pianist and organist who played music her entire life. She deeply enjoyed keeping up with what everyone was doing. Her husband, Herman I. Muus, served as a Lutheran pastor in Spokane, Washington during WWII, and in St. James, Fergus Falls, Wilderness Canoe Base and Grand Marais, all in Minnesota,.

Her father Aksel Trygstad was born in Steinkjar, Norway of a fishing family originally working from the Lofoten Islands in the Norwegian coastal Sami area. They claimed to have been there more than 1000 years. Upon the crashing of the small family fishing boat and the death of one of the relatives, they moved to America. Aksel then became a Lutheran minister. Her mother Anna Broe Trygstad was from Nommedal area nortrh of Trondheim, Norway.

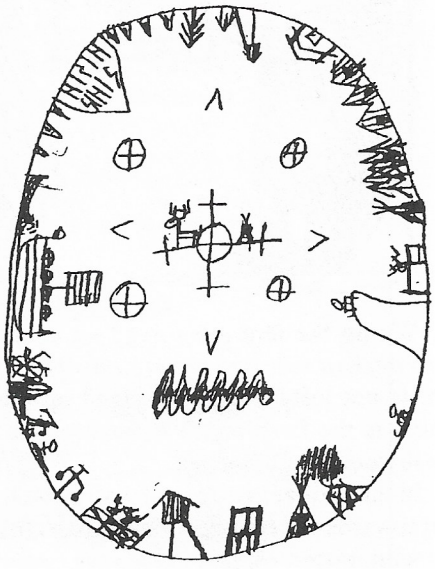
Gladys was a faithful reader of *Báiki*, and supportive of the efforts to identify North Americans with Saami roots. She was a life-long friend to many, and an irreplaceable enthusiastic light to her family and community. She will be deeply missed.

AIDEN JÖNSSON'S DRUM

My son Aiden drew this in Stockholm just tow hours after we landed. With no Saami Drum pictures or symbols to copy he just drew it. I had asked him to design our own family Drum. The runes are the ones we have on a small rock we found in southern Sweden. I see from other sources that the Saami used runes. Does anyone have more information on this...how far back, etc.?

Donna Matson
<dmvortex@hotmail.com>

Donna Matson is a film maker. Her son Aiden is nine years old.



SAAMI CONNECTIONS

SANDRA NILLUKA

Sandra Nilluka standing in front of the house in Valjok, Sápmi where her great grandmother died.

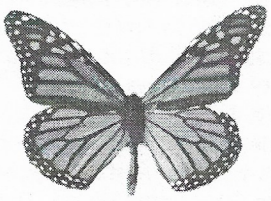
Sandra L. Nilluka (1948-2000) passed away unexpectedly last September. She was the daughter of Pete Nilluka who was the last full-blooded descendant of the Alaska Reindeer Project. Pete had passed away the previous January. Both had recently travelled to Sápmi to reconnect with relatives there and visit family homes and burial sites.

Sandra's passing is a great loss. She embraced her Sami heritage with her whole heart. She had a great love for her *Saami fuolki* — her family — and was in the process of documenting their history and learning their language.

Sandra was a typical Sami: she wore several hats. Those of us from the North American Sami community who attended her memorial service in Los Gatos, California, found that she was very much part of the dot com world of Silicon Valley and the international business community as well.

We who have only seen Sandra in full dress Kautokeino gakti were surprised to find out that she was an internationally-recognized software engineer who designed a computer systems program that is in use worldwide. We had no idea that she had devised a tree-planting scheme, called "The Sandra Nilluka Butterfly Project," that has been accepted by international corporations with poor environmental track records who do business in Mexico. Her plan will be instrumental in reviving and protecting the forests that are home to Monarch butterflies.

A week before she passed away, Sandra drove up to Emeryville, California where visiting crafter Anna-Stina Svakko was putting on a program. Afterwards some of us went out to eat. When we were seated in the restaurant, Sandra brought out a large stack of photos she had taken the previous summer during her visit to Sápmi, and passed them around the table. They were pictures of happy times with loving relatives and when she showed us the photo taken beside her great-grandmother's house, she said, "This is when I felt I had really come home!"



CARRIED ON THE WIND: TO SANDRA NILLUKA

I only met her once, yet she was our Sister, she was my Friend. I dedicate this poem to the memory of Sandra Nilluka.

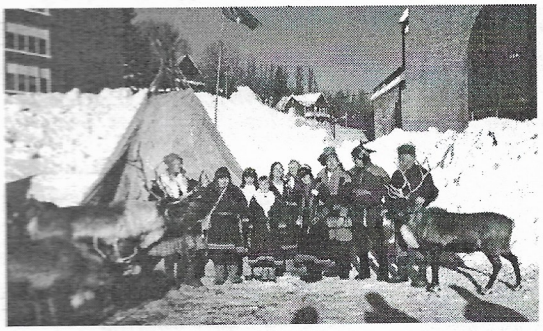
A Call From Above
Loss of Friendship
Where Once Was Life
Emptiness And Disbelief
Gone Is The Being
Voiding Our Feelings
Photographic Images
Now Left Behind
Shadows On A Wall
Is That All?
A Circle Is Made
Firewood Laid
Flames of Light
Makes Things Bright
On Columns of Smoke
Bellowing High
Sacred Words
Are Now Heard
Honoring Those
Who Have Died
Let Us Not
In Our Sorrow
Forget Them Tomorrow
Within Our Hearts
Will Their Memories Dim?
We Shall Meet Again
Carried On The Wind.

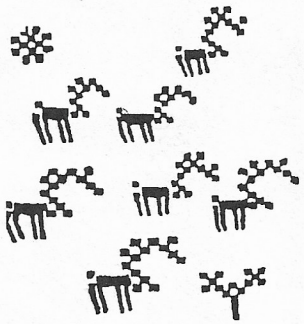
— Ed Mentz, Sr.

(SIIDDA PAGE continued from page 3)

BÁIKI'S "SIIDDA" PAGE (cont'd)

"The rules and regulations discourage us — who would want to enter this field?"
— Gordon Aus, Montana reindeer breeder, 2001





loss of the non-infected but euthanized animal." However, tests are now being conducted at the University of Alaska to determine actual sensitivities to serum for artificially-infected reindeer.

Tom Scheib says that for many of the ROBA people, the problems are not too hard to deal with where the regulators are understanding and flexible about adjusting policy. But others, "mostly on the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife side," as he puts it, "are extremely firm and uncompromising in policy." Montana is such a place.

Gordon Aus is a rancher and ROBA member from Plentywood, Montana. "There's always been a controversy here," he told *Báiki*. When we got our reindeer from Minnesota in 1992 they didn't want to let us into the state. We had to bring them in as 'elk!' This made us the only 'game ranch' east of the Continental Divide and we had to adopt all the rules for keeping 'game.' I thought to myself that this is ridiculous! Reindeer are the oldest darned livestock in the world! But we couldn't fight them so we went ahead and put up an 8 foot high fence and got all the tests that were required — at considerable cost." Had Gordon Aus decided to fight, he would have found himself challenging the State of Montana Department of Fish and Game, the National Wildlife Federation, the United States Plant, Animal and Health Inspection Service, the Sierra Club, and Greenpeace — every one of them with a different agenda.

Last September, Gordon Aus and his brother-in-law Manuel Vazquez crossed the state of Montana with two of their reindeer to join our Sami Camp at Nordicfest in Libby. It was the first time we had live reindeer there, but it could be the last — because there was trouble from the start.

To drive from Plentywood at one end of Montana to Libby at the other, you must cross the Continental Divide. The government only allows caribou to live West of the Divide. Gordon Aus' reindeer-masquerading-as-elk live East of the Divide. When given half a chance, domestic reindeer and wild caribou will mate. The Montana Department of Fish and Game was apparently concerned that the two reindeer from eastern Montana — secured in a livestock trailer en route and under the watchful eyes of two adult males while enclosed in a display pen in Libby — would become so filled with lust for the caribou of western Montana that they would find a way to run off and mate with them. "We almost didn't make it to Libby," Gordon Aus told me as he and Manuel Vazquez set up the reindeer pen next to the *Báiki* lavvu. "We're here, but we can't be in the festival parade," he said. "We need to stay out of the limelight," he explained as they added three beautiful panels hand painted with pine trees and mountains by his wife and her grandmother. "Fish and Game thinks reindeer are 'wild'," he said as they coaxed their two shy reindeer out of the trailer.

I raced to the Nordicfest headquarters where I put in a call to Ethel Evans. Even though she and her husband were flying their plane in from Colorado the next day, she immediately put together and faxed us a one-page document on a ROBA letterhead citing legal proof that US reindeer are domestic. For the first time in Sami Camp history we found ourselves having to display a legal document at a reindeer pen.

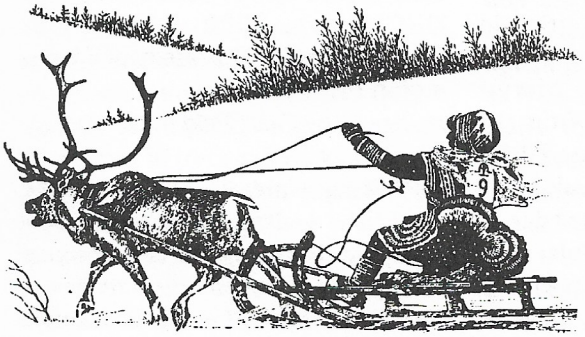
"Apparently they still didn't trust us," Gordon Aus told me later over the phone. "A month after Libby, Fish and Game passed Legislative Bill I-1-43 that basically eliminates any new people who want to start a 'game farm'. This means our ranch can't be sold — even to our kids. As far as I'm concerned, it's taking away our property rights! And at Christmas we had to add 3 more feet to our 5 foot fences. It's so frustrating! The rules and regulations discourage us — who would want to enter this field?"

Live reindeer have been an important part of the Sami cultural reawakening in North America. They were a part of the first two Báiki educational festival presentations in the US back when many people were still calling the Sami "Lapps." Tom Scheib, who, with his reindeer, has been part of this reawakening, speaks from fifteen-year's experience at raising them, first in Finland, Minnesota and currently in Milltown, Wisconsin. He says that they are ideal for festivals because they do not require large areas or exotic facilities, their fencing needs are minimal, they thrive on commercial feeds, and they are friendly animals who are easy to train to pull pulkas, the traditional Sami sledges that kids and their parents love to get rides in.

Since 1992 when it all began, Tom Scheib and other members of ROBA have worked side by side with *Báiki*, first at Ironworld USA, near Chisholm, Minnesota, and the following year at The First North American Siiddastallan and Reindeer Festival at the Minnesota Zoo near Minneapolis, where we had demonstrations of herding skills by real herders from the US, Canada and Finland. Before this, most of us had never seen a live reindeer!

After that reindeer became featured attractions at most of the Norwegian-, Swedish-, and Finnish-American cultural festivals in the Midwest every year. They became the stars of the festival parades and the magnets that drew people to the educational "Sami Camps" that sprung up. Reindeer brought us closer to the realities and attributes of the reindeer-based subsistence lifestyle — and they brought us closer to each other.

I have noticed that people who keep reindeer develop a serious interest in the Sami culture. Every year they get someone else to care for their other livestock so they can load up their reindeer and haul them long distances to join the Sami Camps for a weekend. Once set up, they stand by their reindeer for hours in all kinds



Illustrations p. 3 (l - r): ROBA logo; Tom Scheib with school children; festival logo by D'Arcy Allison-Teasley; Brad Nelson sterling silver reindeer pendant with braided reindeer thong by Anna-Stina Svakko; **p. 20 - 21 (l - r):** Heikinpaivää Sami Camp, Hancock, MI; Franz Allbert Richter reindeer pixels; (l - r) Gordon Aus and Manuel Vazquez at the Sami Camp, Libby, MT; Kurt Serberg drawing from his *Saami Spirit Calendar.*

of weather to answer questions. Much of this they do out of their own pockets. The Sami community and the reindeer owners are always happy to see each other at these events. It gives us all a chance to share information, trade crafts — and for those of us who don't have them — to be with reindeer.

The earthy presence of live reindeer and the people who own and breed them would be sorely missed if they were no longer part of the Sami Camps. They have a grounding effect at events where such things as Oof-dah buttons and Lutefisk Power tee shirts still seem to be customary.

But sometimes the realities of the subsistence lifestyle can trigger strange responses in a country where clothing and tools are factory made and food comes in packages. The second year *Báiki* and ROBA set up a display at Ironworld, our *Báiki* table was draped with reindeer furs to set off our growing collection of duodji, gakti [Sami crafts and clothing] and handmade implements and tools. We were proud of our display.

There were scrimshawed fishing knives, hunting knives and needle cases all made from antlers. There was a warm winter hat festooned with little tabs in the Sami colors of red, blue, yellow and green, made from fur as was our pair of skaller [Sami boots], and there was a komsa [Sami cradle board] and several leather coffee bags and backpacks, all made from hide and decorated with tin embroidery and beadwork.

The items on the table not made from reindeer parts still reflected the needs of reindeer nomadism: a lasso, a birch burl milking bowl shaped to capture every drop of milk, and brightly colored shoe bands woven on a loom that were designed to keep snow from working into boots.

A group of teenage girls who had been hanging out at the reindeer pen came over. I assumed that their introduction to reindeer prior to their visit to the Sami Camp had been "Rudolph," so I told them that our items came from real reindeer like the ones they had just seen — not from cartoon characters — and that for centuries reindeer had provided the Sami People with everything they needed to survive. "Much like the buffalo did for the Indian Peoples here," I said. I told them that the Sami made ingenious use of every part of the reindeer, "even the toe nails," I joked, trying to make the point that nothing was wasted.

Picking up the skaller, I showed the girls how the fur on the bottom of the boots was sewn in two opposing directions so that the wearer would not slip on ice and I mentioned that the boots were designed to be worn on either foot in order to wear evenly. I added that in the old days the up-turned toes made it possible to hook securely into the straps of the wooden skis and at the same quickly and easily slip out of them.

"So why are the boots still that shape?" one of them asked. "Because in some parts of Sápmi they're still made from the reindeer's head," I answered, turning one of the skaller upside down so she could see how its shape corresponded.

She looked at me in horror. "Oh gross!" she exclaimed, and with that they hurried away. But in one afternoon, those teenage girls already knew more about reindeer than many bureaucrats seem to.

Maybe we should invite them to our Sami Camps.— *Faith Fjeld*

Thanks to Tom Scheib (Dancing Reindeer Farm, Milltown, WI); Ethel Evans (Moon Deer Ranch, Parker, CO); and Gordon Aus (Big Sky's Li'l Norway Reindeer Ranch, Plentywood, MT)

MOTHER REINDEER

This poem was written in the spring of 2000 by a poet who has lived in Swedish Sápmi, is married to a woman from Tonga and who now lives with his family in San Francisco.

When this world was created, God needed to rest. Everything seemed perfect to Him and so clear. Though He was at peace and His desires were fulfilled, next to Him were a coconut, a buffalo and a reindeer.
He gave the coconut to the South Pacific,
The buffalo to the Indians, and the reindeer to the Sami.
The coconut for the Islanders is the Spirit of God sent to give them food, shelter and clothes to weave.
The buffalo was the same for the Indians
And so for the Sami with their reindeer.
It was the gift of His spirit to His favorite People in the north.
He taught His ways — to Him they are so dear, they live a simple life and they know the way
despite oppression from modern cultures and the hardships they bear
The Great Spirit is always guiding His favorite folk.
Like the scent of a flower, they feel His penetration without fear. Isn't He everywhere in everything He created?
Then no need for a pilgrimage to a Holy Land every year. Look at the trees, the rivers, the mountains and the sea,
The flowers, the birds, the fish and reindeers.
Isn't it He who created Mother Earth and all she contains? Isn't He the one who showed us the way and put music in our ears? The voices of our ancestors are implanted in our minds Their spirits are in our hearts, watching us from far and near.
The reindeer is coming back from a long journey. She carried our burdens, consoled us, took away all fear.
She wandered with our ancestors — a pilgrimage — and now, coming back, she brings blessings and tears, the tears of happiness, the joy of being reunited.
The Great Spirit's gift to the Sami, of all deer for the Sami; the Earth is our Mother, not to be desecrated by pollution, wars and taxation.
What's the meaning of goodness unless there is badness to overcome?

To grow a beautiful rose, a lot of manure is needed and pollinating bees. The stream becomes the river which becomes the sea. So we follow the same way no matter where we steer and a moment of something is better than a lifetime of nothing for life and death are the one path not to fear.

For all the Sami, flowers that grow here or in the snow form a circle, unite and tell our story for others to hear.

BÁIKI REVIEWS

Dáiddaduodji: The Art Handicraft of the Sami, Kurt Kihlberg. Forlagshuset Nordkalotten, Sweden. 1996

Reviewed by Eric O. Bergland

Well, it happened again: for the second or third time, I've picked up my copy of *Dáiddaduodji* to study its outline and structure for this review and become entranced by Kurt Kihlburg's outstanding black and white and color photography. How am I ever going to finish this review?!?

This reviewer is probably typical of most Sami Americans interested in that aspect of our cultural background. English is my first language and I can only struggle my way, dictionary in hand, through materials written in the Scandinavian or Finno-Ugric languages. This version of *Dáiddaduodji* has text chapters in both Swedish and English. That has been most helpful, of course, and the picture captions are in both languages — a particularly effective means of learning the Swedish nouns.

But I digress — language is not the main subject of Kihlberg's book — it is the fabulous art handicraft of the Sami. That which inspires many of us, right? For when all other aspects of an ethnic group's culture succumb and blend in, in that ever-increasing, ever-advancing progressive entrapment of the generic world culture and economy, the art hangs in there.

Ethnic art changes and evolves, to be sure, but when it is "authentic," it remains recognizable, evocative and compelling. And thus it is with Sami art. A Sami 200 years ago (and a Sami 200 years from now) could behold that art handicraft and find a piece of home.

The book is divided into chapters organized through time and via topic. Thus, there are chapters dealing with various handicraft forms (i.e., bowls, knives, basketry, clothing) as well as general Sami introductory materials. The English text versions are well written albeit brief. The book remains primarily pictorial in nature. And therein lies its great strength, as well as some of its fundamental limitations. One particular strength, and one which sets it apart from "coffee table books," are the portraits of the artists in their milieu.

Here, for example, we see Margit Kitok-Astrom hoeing tree roots from the very ground of Samiland for material for her coiled basketry, and Lars Pirak in his work T-shirt, scrimshawing at the edge of his work table. We see their tools, their workshops, their shop lights on extension cords, their belt sanders, their kitchens. Modern duodjars — our link to the past...

Well, sort of modern. Many of the pictures appear to be 1970s-80s vintage, suggesting that perhaps the author went through his unused prints from over the years to put together this book. But no matter. To me, one of the excellent values of those particular photos is that I can identify with the artists: real people in real homes and shops, not just a group of gakti portraits. Very earthy, like most of us...

As noted in the earlier *Árran* review, the historic focus is limited, in that the author focuses on two Swedish Sami duodjars, Nils Nilsson Skum and Jon Palsson Fankki. They are legendary figures who appear to have raised the "art market awareness" of Sami craft above the level of inexpensive tourist market trinkets and set the stage for the highly developed and often expensive crafts we can see today.

But in my view, the book's limitations are inconsequential in comparison to its contributions to a broader understanding of modern art handicraft and fine art. We see sections on flat art, textiles and other modern departures from the traditional handicrafts of our ancestors. There's also a listing of contemporary duodjars and their marks, which includes Finnish and Norwegian Sami.

In summary, this would be $40 of your hard-earned money well-spent (if it is still available). A highly recommended book!

Dáiddaduodji: The Art Handicraft of the Sami

can be ordered from
The Swedish Institute Bookstore,
Minneapolis, MN
1-612-871-4907

Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision, ed. Marie Battiste. UBC Press, 2000. 314 pages, $24.95 from the University of Washington Press.

Reviewed by Faith Fjeld

"We are witnessing throughout the world the weaknesses based on science and technology. It is costing us our air, our water, our earth; our very li ves are at stake." — Marie Battiste

This book is a collection of essays that grew from the 1996 International Summer Institute at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. The essayists are sixteen Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, lawyers and Aboriginal rights activists from North and South America, New Zealand, Australia and Europe who see the 500-year colonization of Aboriginal peoples as a failed experiment that has lead to the environmental crisis. [Sákéj, 253]

The book's focus is on Aboriginal renewal, or "post colonial theory," the right of Aboriginal peoples to decolonize themselves and reclaim their own cultures. Aboriginal teachings, stories, perspectives and reflections point to the benefits that the Western world can derive from such decolonization. The outpourings are passionate, scholarly, poetic, painful, practical and visionary. They are based on the realities of the streets and the reservations. There is a consensus that the restoration of Aboriginal power and solidarity can only occur when the assumptions of modern society are challenged. [Sákéj, 252]

Little Bear writes that language (Indigenous voice) embodies the way a society thinks (Indigenous vision), and that by learning and speaking a particular language, an individual absorbs the collective thought processes of that people. Aboriginal languages are for the most part, verb-rich languages that are process and action-oriented. They are generally aimed at describing "happenings" rather than objects — they allow for the transcen-

BÁIKI REVIEWS

dence of boundaries and do not make use of dichotomies such as either/or, black/white, saint/sinner, etc. There is no animate/inanimate dichotomy because everything is animate. Consequently Aboriginal languages allow for talking to trees and rocks — an allowance not accorded in English. If everything is animate, then everything has spirit and knowledge. If everything has spirit and knowledge, then all are like me. If all are like me, then all are my relations. [Little Bear, 78]

The use of Indigenous language to express the cultural profundities that the dominant society dismisses as impractical abstractions is illustrated in the following anecdote: "Some years ago when I was in Australia, I heard an Aborigine talking to some visitors about his desert homeland: 'I tell'im, you don't belonga this country! You got no *tulku* ['song']! *Tjukurrpa* ['dreaming']! Only I got'em *tulku*. We bin live along this country. We know this country. I don't know where you come from. You not boss for this place'!

"The issues he raised are clear, and the essential authority of his statement comes from two Pintupi words, *tulka* and *tjukurrpa*. The two words represent all that is most significant about the relationship between his people and their land, between their past and their present, and between one another. They are impervious to the enticements of European ways of seeing and saying." [Chamberlin 131]

There is an underlying unanimity among the essayists with regard to the natural world, the place of humans in that world and the disruptive effect of "cognitive imperialism" — the dominant society's enforcement of one language, one culture and one frame of reference: theirs. [Battiste, 198] This distorts reality and produces alienation: "If our words and...modes of imaginative representation are replaced by others that are not the reflections of our hearts and minds and experiences and the heritage of our people, then so is our sense of reality. This is the central insight of post colonial theory, and it is why the 'peopling and placing' of that imaginative world by others is so dangerous, for they alienate us from ourselves and our home — especially when, as is so often the case, we still live there." [Chamberlin, 127]

Since the function of Aboriginal values and customs has always been to maintain the relationships that hold the creation together, these values and customs must now serve as guidelines for the West as well, if future generations are to survive the mistakes of Western science and technology. [Little Bear, 81]

The writers do not suggest a return to the past nor do they advocate resistance to change. Indigenous languages are founded on the belief that all life forms were created to adapt to change, and the Indigenous world view has always been influenced by an ecosystem that renews itself. [Sákéj, 260] Instead, the writers suggest new approaches for protecting, healing and restoring the rights of long-oppressed peoples and for respecting their cultures and languages, namely, "decolonization."

For Laenui, decolonization is a five-step process which this reviewer sees as a game plan for the reawakening North American Sami community. They are: 1) Rediscovery and Recovery, learning as much as possible about one's cultural history and foundations; 2) Mourning, dealing with the anger and shame of having been victimized; 3) Dreaming, exploring one's own culture, experiencing its aspirations for the future, and considering its traditional structures of government to express the community's hopes; 4) Commitment, combining the voices of one's community to make a clear statement about its desired direction; and 5) Action, using the necessary means to carry out the dream once a consensus has been reached. [Laenui, 158]

Hogan sees dreaming and the resultant culture-based mythology as the mind and heart of creation. "In recent times, the term 'myth' has come to signify falsehood, but when we examine myths we find that they are a high form of truth...the deepest innermost cultural stories of our human journeys toward spiritual and psychological growth. An essential part of myth is that it allows for our return to the creation, to a mythical time. It allows us to hear the world new again." [Hogan, 117]

I highly recommend this absorbing book, which should be seen as a wake-up call for immigrant Indigenous communities such as ours, and also for those who have never left their homeland.

Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision
can be ordered from
U. of Washington Press, $24.95
1-800-441-4115

Wimme Saari joiking in Monterrey at the World Music Festival. (photo by Nathan Muus)

MUSIC ROUNDUP

by Nathan Muus

Here are a few of the Saami music releases currently going 'round the world:

From **FRODE FJELLHEIM** and his group **TRANSJOIK**; we have their latest CD entitled "**MEAVRAA**" meaning in South Saami, "the ancient voice." The secondary title of the album is "throat joik, shaman frame drums, ambient sonics." Upon a first listen one

[BÁIKI REVIEWS continued next page]

IS IT TOO LATE TO BOYCOTT DENTYNE?

This ad for chewing gum ran in 1939 magazines:

BÁIKI REVIEWS

realizes immediately that this is no traditional Saami joik CD with traditional drums and a few "ambient sounds." This is indeed a CD with joiking overclad by many electronic sounds, and incidentally, there are some shaman frame drums in the mix also.

Frode, of South Saami background, has been involved in a number of CD projects, this one perhaps his most successful ever. "Meavraa" delivers a potent punch of tuneful melodies delivered with forceful percussion and blended in an electronic wash. There are dashes of older Saami traditional joik, Tuvan (Mongolian) throat singing, even nods to the current string based traditional Scandinavian folk music renaissance. I could use adjectives to describe the music as "hypnotic, exciting, transient." I will not. You must determine this for yourself. All in all, the melodies stick in your mind — which is reason enough to recommend this CD as easily one of the best recent Saami releases. The group Transjoik has a sound which is truly original from previous Saami music releases mixing traditional with modern. (**"MEAVRAA"** by **TRANSJOIK**; Atrium/ Warner Music Sweden 8573-85273-2)

Keeping up with **WIMME**, the Finnish Saami joik artist, is no small task. Recently Báiki met him in Monterrey, California, where he was performing with his group in late September, as part of the 4th Annual Monterrey World Music Festival. He played an evening performance to a sold-out audience of 1,000 people. The group was on a multi-city tour of the United States. Dubbed as "Shamans of the Midnight Sun —Trance Dance," they shared the bill with the Scandinavian traditional string band Hedningarna . The dance floor was filled by young pogo dancing "'trance dancers."

Wimme has one of the most ecclectic bands ever — a bass clarinet, an acoustic string instruments player, a keyboards and electronics sounds player, and a bass/ percussionist. Of course they played the current hit tune "Texas," from their latest and third CD **"CUGU."**

Electronics seemingly tend to take over on this album, but it stands up better with repeated listening. Rolling Stone magazine recently dubbed the album "one of the best under the radar and off the map CD's of the year." Way to go Wimme!!!! (If you have not heard the first or second CD's — they're highly recommended). Midway through his long set, Wimme stopped the show with five unaccompanied traditional joiks. The trance dancers stood still and listened intently. The joiks were about reindeer mostly, and the audience, who hardly knew who "Saami" were, seemed awestruck.

BÁIKI REVIEWS

Wimme is down to earth and easy to meet. Reports from friends in Minnesota — the same. He's a regular guy who has truly defined his own sound. (**WIMME, "CUGU:"** NorthSide/Zen Master/ Rockadillo Records, NSD6048)

VILLDA is a four piece group from Finland featuring Saami vocalist **ANNUKKA HIRVAVUOPIO.** The songs follow a medieval musical revival bent, and the lyrics are in north Saami language. One feels transfixed into another time while listening to these songs, accompanied by ancient drums and stringed instruments. There are also several traditional joiks, and some songs with an excellent pop feel, such as "Biegga. "

However, this is indeed a young band. Watch out! As they progress in their abilities to blend past and present, with better production budget and experience — this band will be something to reckon with. In the mean time — check out their debut CD! ("**VILLDAS**" by **VILLDAS**, Wood Productions #024, www.vilddas.net)

Question: Where can I find these and other Saami/ Sami CD's? Also- where can I find the more "traditional" unaccompanied Saami joik CD's?

Answer: In North America you can often find the better known Sami CDs by such artists as: Mari Boine, Wimme, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, and Angelin Tytot (The Girls of Angeli) in larger music stores like Tower Books and Records. Finding the more traditional unaccompanied joik music CD's can be more difficult. Many of the CD releases on the DAT and IDUT labels are traditional joiks. There are tons of connections via the web of course. When in doubt call Ingebretsen's in Minneapolis toll free: 1-800-279-9333. They have consistantly maintained a good selection of Sami joik CD's.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

check the address label of this Báiki

for an "It's Time to Renew" sticker

MOVING?

be sure and let us know your new address

We thank **The Thanks Be to Grandmother Winifred Foundation** for helping us get to Alaska and **Finnair** and **The American Scandinavian Foundation of the Bay Area** for helping Anna-Stiina Svakko visit the US

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR SPONSORS:

Fred Bialy
El Cerrito, California

Solveig & Roger Franklin
Pinole, California

Julie Hansen
San Jose, California

Bob & Doris Hendrickson
Pleasant Hill, California

Laurel Hillier
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Jolene Jacobs
Oakland, California

Niilo Koponen
Fairbanks, Alaska

Doris Kornfeld
Williams, Iowa

Desiree Koslin
New York, New York

Gracie Larson
Mountain View, California

Nancy Lurie
Greenfield, Wisconsin

Joan Miller
Edmonds, Washington

Pearl and Ham Muus
in loving memory of
Gladys Muus
Grand Marais, Minnesota

Scott & Solveig Muus-Chambers
Glendale, Arizona

The Late Sandra Nilluka
San Jose, California

The Norwegian Cultural Foundation

Roger Olsen
LIberty Lake, Washington

Joanne Ouelette
Arvada, Colorado

Mary Pentinnen-King
Bellingham, Washington

Ron Peterson
Colfax, Wisconsin

Franz Albert Richter
Clarkfield, Minnesota

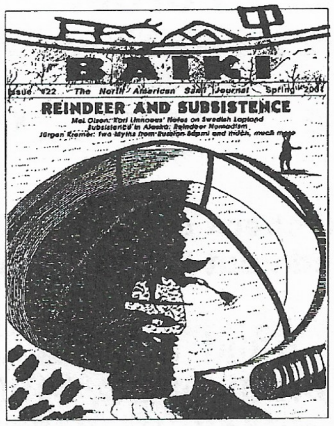
Mats Sexton
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mia Stageberg
San Francisco, California

Peter and Jane Suri
Berkeley, California

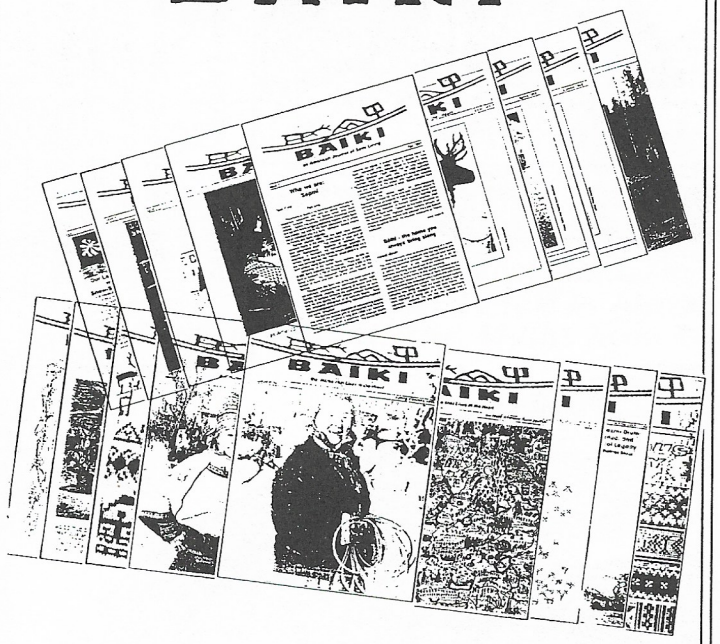
Alberta Tenorio
Hercules, California

Barbara Wheeler
Port Royal, Virginia



ORDER THE BACK ISSUES OF

BÁIKI



Báiki back issues #1 - #9 and #10 - #18 are now available in two xeroxed spiral-bound volumes of nine issues each for $37.50 or $75.00 for both, postpaid. Reprints of individual articles are $.50 per page. Issues #19 and #20 are still available for $7.50 each.

Please send your check or money order made out to: "Tides Center / Báiki" to:
BÁIKI SUBSCRIPTIONS
1714 FRANKLIN ST. #100-311
OAKLAND, CA 94612

ORDER A SUBSCRIPTION TO

BÁIKI

DATE:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY:

STATE: **ZIP:**

E-MAIL:

❑ *I'm a new subscriber*

❑ *I'm renewing my subscription.*

Kind of subscription or sponsorship:

❑ *1 4-issue subscription $25.00*

❑ *1 4-issue elders & students subscription $20.00*

❑ *1 8-issue subscription $45.00*

❑ *1 8-issue elders & students subscription $35.00*

❑ *I would like to help sponsor 2 issues $50.00*

❑ *I would like to help sponsor 4 issues $100.00*

❑ *I would like to order a gift subscription sent to:*

Please send your check or money order made out to: "Tides Center / Báiki" to:
BÁIKI SUBSCRIPTIONS
1714 FRANKLIN ST. #100-311
OAKLAND, CA 94612

The Saami Báiki Foundation
(A Nonprofit Project of The Tides Center)
1714 Franklin St. #100-311
Oakland, CA 94612-3408

Return Postage Guaranteed

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Oakland, CA
Permit No. 1872