# BAIKI

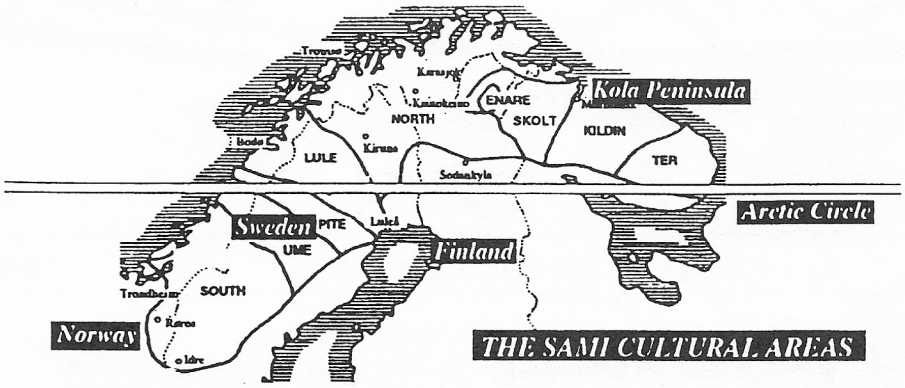
Issue #23 *The North American Sami Journal* Fall 2001

DEDICATED TO WATER & WATERSHEDS

# OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

***"Think Like a River, Think Like a Salmon;"***
***Hans Ragnar Mathisen's epic "Luleju;" Grey Eagle's "The Water Folk;"***
***Carol and Lillian Staats "Between Two Rivers;"***
***Two Water Tales from Alaska and***
***and much, much more***

## WHO ARE THE SAMI PEOPLE AND WHAT IS "BÁIKI?




**The Sami (also spelled Saami and Sámi) People are the Indigenous inhabitants of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula.** About 100,000 Sami 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. Sami history parallels that of many of the world's other Indigenous Peoples who have undergone colonization and forced relocation during the last 500 years. In the Nordic countries the Sami areas (called Sápmi in the north and Saemien Eatneme in the south) were taken over by colonizers who attacked their spiritual beliefs and their extended-family siida system and forcibly removed their children to boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak the Sami languages and taught to think and act like Norwegians and Swedes. This set the stage for the ongoing abuse of natural resources.

**Báiki is the English language cultural journal that grew out of a search for Sami roots.** Its founding editor and publisher was Faith Fjeld. Its appearance in 1991 raised for the first time the issue of the Sami presence in North America, a fact that had largely been ignored. It is now estimated that there are 30,000 people U. S. and Canada who have Sami ancestry. They are the descendants of Sami who came to Alaska as reindeer herders, or who immigrated as "Norwegians," "Swedes," and "Finns."

**"Báiki" ["bah-hee-kee"] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for the cultural connection — "the home that lives in the heart" — that travels with them as they migrate.** The Báiki logo was designed by Faith Fjeld using pictographs from Sami Drums. The reindeer symbolizes physical support. It faces east toward *lavvus* [Sami tents] that symbolize home. They are located at the base of a mountain which symbolizes spiritual support. All are connected to a *njalla* [Sami storage shed] which symbolizes community survival.

**Báiki is produced during the fall and the spring of each year.** Faith Fjeld and Nathan Muus are co-editors. Thanks to Mette Ballovara, Eric Carlson, Norma Dove, Sarah Holmes, Mark Iddings, Jolene Jacobs, Marilyn Jackson, Clay Kark-French, Jürgen Kremer, Rauna Kuokkanen, Ed Mentz, Anno and Loren Nakai, Chris Pesklo, Elaine Rasmus, Randy Rhody, Kurt Seaberg, Harry Siitonen and Rachelle Wing for helping with this issue and assisting in the work of the *Báiki* office and lavvu.

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**ISSUE #23 FALL 2001**

BÁIKI
THE NORTH AMERICAN SAAMI JOURNAL

The cover is adapted from *Breskrivelse Over Finnmarkens Lappen,* Knud Leem *1767.* Layout by Faith Fjeld

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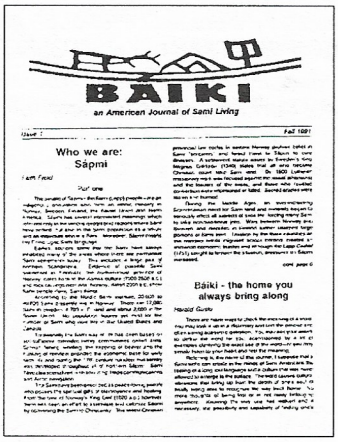
## BÁIKI'S "SIIDDA" PAGE

# OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY

*"They have never been able to eliminate us, nor to erase the memories of what we were, because we are the culture of the earth and sky."* — Declaration of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples

### OUR FIRST ISSUE:



BÁIKI

an American Journal of Sami Living

Who we are: Sápmi

Báiki - the home you always bring along

The first issue of *Báiki,* published in San Francisco in the fall of 1991, had eight pages and contained basic information about the Indigenous Sami culture of the Nordic countries. It also introduced the possibility that there were descendants of Sami immigrants living in North America.

The contents included an introductory article "Who We Are: Sápmi," an article on the meaning of "báiki" by Harald Gaski (Professor of Sami Language and Literature at the University of Tromsø), an article on the colonization of Sápmi by Niillas A. Somby (photo-journalist and political activist), a map of Sápmi, the official Sami definition of who the Sami People are, a translation of Nils-Aslak Valkeapää's poem "My Home is In My Heart," a review of Nils Gaups' *The Pathfinder,* and three essays on North American Sami identity by Sami Americans Rudolph Johnson, Cindy (Balto) Huntington and Maija Hanf.

Within two months *Báiki* had 450 enthusiastic subscribers. We had started what came to be known as "the North American Sami reawakening" and we were proving that Sami consciousness had not disappeared during the process of immigration.

### "HOW LONG HAS BÁIKI BEEN YOUR HOBBY?"

A few years later I met with the chairman of a Bay Area cultural festival committee to discuss the erecting of one of our Sami Camps at their forthcoming event. "How long has *Báiki* been your hobby?" he asked me. Insulted by what I perceived to be his trivialization of our community's often painful struggles to learn about missing ancestral heritage and *Báiki*'s ongoing efforts to revive Sami connections, I looked up the word "hobby" as soon as I got home.

I found out the word means an activity or interest engaged in for pleasure — so in that respect his use of the word "hobby" was correct, because by then, cultural festivals had become annual traditions for the North American Sami community and our outreach work was productive and fun — the characteristics of a good hobby.

But now, after 9/11, I feel a personal need to nurture my Sami Spirit —the "home that lives in my heart." This is not my "hobby," it is my source of guidance and empowerment in these chaotic times.

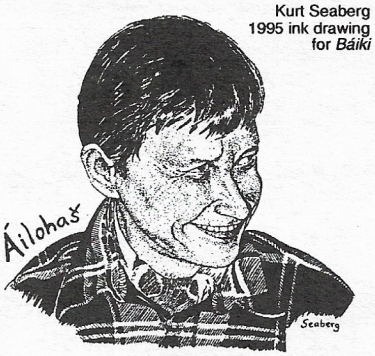
This issue of *Báiki* begins our series on Nature. We hope you like this issue that we have dedicated to water. On the following pages you will read a Sami story about subsistence fishing (Grey Eagle's retelling of "The Water Folk"), learn what happens to people and Nature when a river is dammed (Elle Han'sa's poem "Luleju," a memorial to five lakes), with Philip Burgess and Ruthanne Cecil take a fresh new look at salmon and watersheds ("Think Like a Salmon" and "Think Like a River"), and enjoy stories and poems inspired by life on the rivers of Alaska (the stories of Mary Eyman and Lois Stover, and the poetry of Carol and Lillian Staats). Our next issue, Spring Issue #24, will be dedicated to mountains.

We at *Báiki* thank you, our subscribers and sponsors, and all the poets, artists and writers who have generously shared their good thoughts and creativity with us. We also thank all those who have volunteered in our offices, wherever they have been. Thanks too, to the folks who send us letters and e-mails asking us questions and telling us their stories. Thank you *all* for your continuing involvement in the North American Sami journal!

At this Solstice time I pray for the creative empowerment of all the innocent victims of worldwide violence. As we again draw closer to the Sun, may our Ancestors guide and inspire us to find new ways to work together to neutralize the destructiveness of Man and restore peace, balance and harmony to Mother Earth.

*— Faith Fjeld*

## NILS-ASLAK VALKEAPÄÄ 1943 - 2001




Kurt Seaberg
1995 ink drawing
for *Báiki*

**For a moment I was with you**
**rested for a while**

**And now my friend, my dear bird**
**it is time to leave again**
**It is always like that towards the end**

**And I take out the white reindeer fur coat**
**not so new any more**
**but not worn either**
**And I take out the mottled fur shoes**
**new shoe strings**
**nice dark fur leggings**
**the silver belt the *gákti***
**the silk scarf the cap**
**the fur gloves**
**And the food pack**

**I leave**
**to arrive**
**go away**
**to be closer**

**To the space of your thoughts**
**to your heart**
**I crawl**
**into the heart**

**I journey**
**on the sea of time**
**follow**
**the tracks of the wind**

— from *Trekways of the Wind**

*by Nathan Muus*

Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, (Áillohas), perhaps the most internationally-recognized Saami cultural ambassador, activist, joiker, poet, writer, artist and actor, passed away on November 26, 2001 at the age of 58. He is creditted with helping to re-establish the joik.

During his lifetime Áillohas made numerous CD's, published several books and produced an impressive body of sacred art.

I first heard of him in1975, when he

*[ÁILLOHAS continued on page18]*

# SAAMI CONNECTIONS

## NILS-ASLAK VALKEAPÄÄ

I am shocked to learn of Áillohas's death. His was a voice of sanity at a time when the world is sinking deeper into insanity, and will be sorely missed for those of us who must continue in the struggle.

It is a mystery to me, why so many wise, sensitive souls are passing over at this time. Áillohas was the same age as George Harrison, and died at the same time — a mere coincidence? Both were poets, at any rate, and touched the lives of many. Today I grieve, but I am also grateful to have met such a shining example and will continue to be inspired by the work he left behind. Inspired, that is, to do my own work and hope that it touches people's lives and changes the world for the better, just as the work of this great man has done.

**Kurt Seaberg**
**<kurtseaburg@hotmail.com**

## NORTH NORWAY POWWOW

Hello and greetings from Kirkenes Norway! I am an American, living in Kirkenes, my wife's home town.

I moved to Norway in 1989, and to the north in 1999. Since then, I have been employed in the travel business. by a company called Grenseland. I have a great deal of interest in the Sami Culture. Here where we live, they are known as the Eastern Sami people. I thought your site was rather interesting, so I am going to ask for your help.

I have been trying to put together a Native American and Sami pow-wow! I feel it would be an educational thing for all types of people. I work as a Tour Coordinator for a local tour company called Grenseland in Kirkenes. I have arranged Sami Tours for tourists to experience. I would appreciate any type of help or information you would have for me to put this Native American and Sami pow-wow together.

I thank you very much for any help or advice you could offer.

**Chris Kardoley**
**chris@grenseland.no**

*Dear Chris, Maybe some of our Native American readers will have some ideas or suggestions. Good luck!*

## SÁMEDIGGI OPENS NEW BUILDING

The new *Sámediggi* [the Norwegian Sami Parliament] building opened in Kárásjohkka, Sápmi on October 14th with a ceremony. The impressive structure is shaped like a *lavvu* [traditional Sámi tent].

Sven-Roland Nystø is the elected president. Other members of the new executive council include Ragnhild Nystad, vice president, Randi A. Skum, Svein Peter Pedersen and Johan Mikkel Sara, who many in the North American Saami community have met. He is one of six original members who have been in the Sámediggi since 1989. [Thanks to *Ságat* for this information.]

## 9/11/2001

All Norwegian people are feeling with the American people in these days, and it is difficult to find words to express my feelings.

**Grete Andrea Kvaal**
**<andreak@polarmedia.no>**

We are very shocked at the tragedy, that the most horrible accident befell the American people. We offer condolences in your sorrow.

Ilmari and Anssi Mattus
<ilmari.mattus@ukolo.fi>

## SEARCH FOR SAMI IN ARIZONA

Are there Sami in Arizona? I have joined a Norsk Club here so that I can keep in contact with my Norwegian friends, but I still long to find some Sami people like the ones I met on my last trip to Norway. If you have any information, please let me know.

An additional note: I have read the information in the website and still have a fewquestions. How old are the "elders", the ones listed in the price of the paper? Do you have any small flag pins so it could be worn on a hat, coat,etc.? And, do you have any calendars from last year or for 2002?

**Mike DesChamps**
**<Mtrolld@aol.com>**
**Glendale, AZ.**

*Dear Mike, Our subscribers in Arizona will surely see your letter and hopefully contact you. As to your other questions, the "elder" subscription rate is for people 60 and over. Small flag pins and correct Sami flags are very hard to come by here in this country. Vendors of Nordic articles at festivals say there is not "enough profit" to import them. And the news about the calendars isn't good either. You might contact Kurt Seaberg (see letter on this page) to see if he has any plans to do another calendar in the future.*

## SAAMI BOOKS AND QUESTIONS

I returned to the States about a year ago after living 22 years in Norway, mostly in Northern Norway (Bodø). I am an archaeologist, with a degree from the University of Bergen, and have worked some 20 years in archaeology and "kulturvern," mostly in Western and Northern Norway which provided me with many contacts and friends who are Saami — I have even attended the Saami Grand Pris and the Easter reindeer races in Kautokeino!

Here in the States I have established a company, Skaldaspillar Publications, that translates, promotes, and distributes exceptional books on the history, culture, landscape, and crafts of Norway.

I am working now with the Saami author Roald Wold Karlsen (*Hvor dra de hen,alle disse flyene*? and *Biera Mahtte Bitis Retrett*). We have the following questions which I hope that you can answer.

How many of the American / Canadian Saami population actually speak Saami? Would they be interested in Saami fiction and non-fiction books? Would they prefer to read the books in Saami, Norwegian, or English? Do you have any idea of the size of the Saami population in Canada and the US?

I look forward to your response. På forhånd takk,

**Lisa Gay Bostwick**
**Skaldaspillar Publications**
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**<www.skaldaspillar.com>**

*Dear Lisa, You have asked some good questions and in the light of our*

# SAAMI CONNECTIONS

*article on "Saami Books in English for Young Readers," your timing is excellent! Although there has been a recent movement to learn the North Sami language, very few people speak or read Sámigiella in North America. However, based on the number of immigrants from Sami areas who came over in the last century, we estimate that there must be at least 30,000 people with some Sami ancestry living in the U. S. and Canada. Most of them know little if anything about that part of their heritage, and of course, we are trying to change this situation.*

*Regarding books on the Saami culture, there is an interest in both fiction and non-fiction. We are hungry for all kinds of good books on the Saami — in English! Please read the article on page 24 to get a sense of the situation for young readers. Adults, too, are looking for translations of what is being written in Sápmi today; our experience has been that this interest extends beyond the Scandinavian and Finnish communities. We wish you good luck in trying to meet this need.*

## YULETIDE FOODS IN SÁPMI

At Christmas time we go to church, which here is a highland chapel. The second day of Christmas (December 26) only old people go to church; that belongs to the previous generation.

In the photo (l-r) my neighbor, my sister and I are eating reindeer hooves, marrow from reindeer legs and meat from the reindeer head. Also you see reindeer pudding on the plate, which looks like pancakes. We prepare the dough from reindeer blood and put it into the reindeer gut and boil it. The dough is not as thick as blood pudding dough. When I was young we ate this every Christmas. Now I prepare it when I want something special to eat.

In some places farther south they eat sheep's heads.

**Nora Norli**
**N-9730**
**Karasjok, Norway**

## WATER WORDS IN SÁMIGIELLA

**arvi = rain**

**čáhci = water**

**jávri = lake**

**jiekŋa = ice**

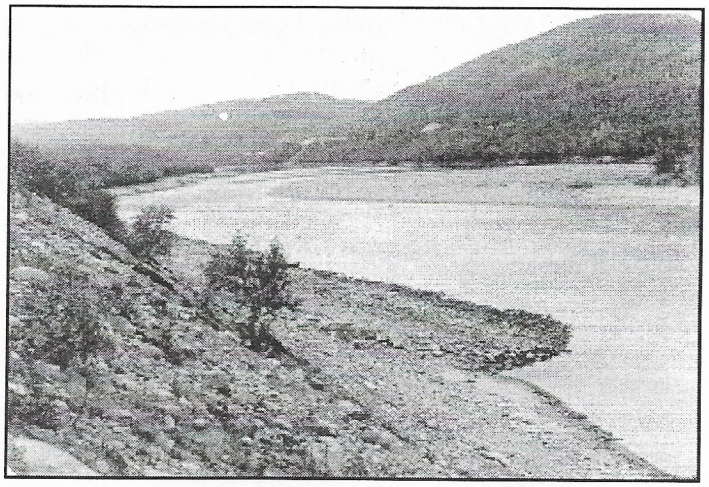
**johka = river**

**luossa = salmon**

**mánnu = moon**

**mearra = sea**

**muohta = snow**

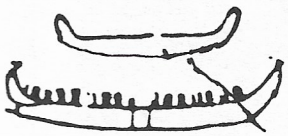


**Deatnu = The Mother of All Rivers**

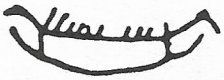
with thanks to Jürgen Kremer

# THE WATER FOLK

*Retold by Grey Eagle*



*I once gave a lecture at the University of Tromsø, Norway in which I told of hearing many stories about real experiences with the little underground and underwater people. After the talk, the Sami students invited me to the canteen. There one student after another told me of their own experiences with the little people. When a Norwegian professor joined us, the students shifted the conversation to neutral subjects like vacations and the weather. As soon as the Norwegian academic left, the students resumed sharing their personal experiences with the little underground and underwater people. They said they only share such stories with those they trust will treat them with respect.*



There are two kinds of Little People, or *Halder*, who live in the land of the Sami. One kind lives underground and the other lives underwater. They are rarely if ever seen except in dreams, but the Sami have many proofs of their existence.

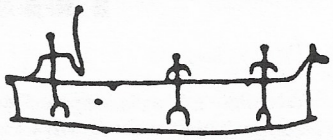
Long, long ago, there was a Sami named Abram Joks who had bad luck with his small reindeer herd. Finally he had to sell the last few animals for money to buy food and clothing. The only thing left for him was to hunt, fish and gather to support his family. For once Abram had good luck since he came to a lovely part of Sápmi where there were wild animals in the forest, fish in the river and berries in the open spaces. Today this place is called Karasjok, but back then no one lived there and it had no name.

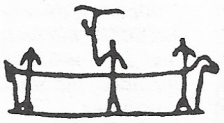
First Abram built his family a *gamme* [a turf house] cut directly from the peat. Then he fashioned a raft which he poled into the river, now called the Karasjok. Before dropping his line in the water, Abram spoke: "I pledge to never take more fish than I need and to dispose of their bones respectfully."

The first fish he caught was small, hardly enough to feed even his youngest child. So Abram released it into the river, saying, "live well little fish. I hope to see you again when you're larger and have had your own family." Later he caught two medium sized fish, which he took to the *gamme* for his wife to clean carefully. After they had eaten the fish, Abram placed the bones respectfully in the river.

The next day Abram tried another spot on the river, but after hours had caught nothing. He was about to give up, when a strong voice said, "fish here." Abram was startled since there was no one about for many miles. He started to pole the raft to another place in the river when he heard the voice again, saying "fish here." This time he !ooked about in all directions but there was no one to be seen. He leaned on his pole, thinking what to do, when the voice spoke for the third time. "Abram Joks, fish here!" On hearing the voice speak his name, Abram dropped the pole into the water.

"Don't be afraid," the voice said. "I only want to help you." "W-who are you?" asked Abram in a trembly voice, "and WHERE are you?" "I am one of the Water Folk who live in the river," the voice said. "We have watched as you struggle to feed your family. We've seen how respectfully you've treated the few fish you've caught. Now we want to help you." Abram recovered his pole from the water,




but he didn't try to move away. He was no longer frightened. "If you drop your line in the water at this exact spot," the voice said, "we'll see that you catch plenty of fish. Come here tomorrow and the third fish you catch will be a special gift from the Water Folk."

The next day Abram dropped his line in the same spot and quickly caught two fine fish. The third fish he hooked shone and glittered in the sunlight. When Abram pulled it from the water, he saw its scales were made of silver coins. Abram poled back to his *gamme*, where his wife scaled the fish carefully.

"Perhaps these coins aren't real," she said. But Abram was certain he'd received a great gift. His wife went to the distant trading post for needed supplies. The trader examined the bright coins carefully and then accepted them as payment for flour and sugar. Over the years, Abram and his wife purchased only necessities, so the coins lasted for their lifetime.

The next time Abram was on the river, he spoke to the hidden voice. "Why have you rewarded me so?" he asked. "We Water Folk have to keep the balance," the voice said. "There must always be enough fish families to produce more young so there will enough for all of us. And the fish who give up their lives as food must be treated with respect," the voice continued. "We saw you release the small fish so it could grow up and have a family. And you have treated the fish caught with respect. We know you keep your promise, speaking from the heart, not just the lips. So, we honor and reward you," the voice said.

For as long as he lived, Abram caught enough fish at that special spot to feed his family well. Later others came and caught fish from Karasjok River, but none caught as many as Abram and no one ever hooked a fish with scales of silver coins. Some caught no fish at all because they made promises to the Water Folk only with their lips, not with their hearts.

The Sami know that the Water Folk are there to keep the balance, making certain that not too many fish are caught. Guttar Eira is certain of this. Several hundred years after the Joks family had come to the area, the Sami had stretched a great net across the Karasjok from bank to bank, held in place by long poles. Guttar Eira was assigned to watch the net, but during the night he grew tired and fell asleep. He was awakened by an unusual noise. When he opened his eyes, Guttar saw that the net had been lifted from the river and salmon were tumbling freely into the water. Some salmon were still in the net when it came back into the river and all was as quiet as before.

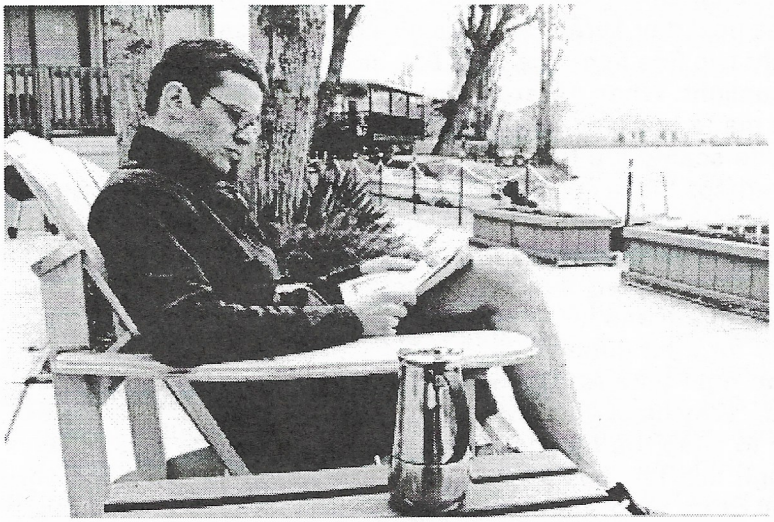
No one blamed Guttar for what had happened. They knew it was the Water Folk making certain that enough salmon made it up the river to spawn.

These stories come to us from the past but have lessons for today. So as many Indigenous people say: "That's how it was, and that's how it is."


# THINK LIKE A SALMON

*by Philip Burgess*

*According to the Norwegian Flyshop website, Sápmi's Deatnu [Tana River] in Finnmark is one of the best salmon rivers in the world. The website promotes the Deatnu as a wonderful wilderness setting for salmon anglers who plan to spend their vacations fishing. But tourists all over the world who catch salmon for sport are creating serious problems for people who need salmon for food and consider their right to subsistance fish part of their spiritual and ancestral heritage. The Sami, for example, consider the Deatnu to be "The Mother of All Rivers." Next year in Ireland an intercultural festival will honor salmon and address this dichotomy of belief systems. Sponsored by the Sustainable Ireland Cooperative and the Coomhola Salmon Trust, the gathering will feature traditional storytellers, spiritual elders and other representatives of Salmon Peoples including the Sami, and also include groups involved in watershed restoration and sports fishing. Irish native Philip Burgess is on the planning committee.*



Philip Burgess photographed in Vancouver B.C. where he currently works on issues relating to environmental sustainability.

Salmon swim through the stories, legends, memories and dreams of people around the northern hemisphere. A source of food, of course, but also source of deep significance to many Salmon Peoples, including the Sami, whose cultures have always had salmon at their heart and in their minds. Along the great rivers of the northern hemisphere, Indigenous Peoples flourished thanks to the salmon that nosed their way up ancient paths in their countless numbers.

Peoples around the North have developed a deep and intimate relationship with this fish that we can all relate to: the fish that finds its way home to the huge rivers and small streams of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, to Hokkaido, Siberia, the Kola Peninsula, Scandinavia and to the salmon-bearing rivers of the North American Atlantic seaboard. Salmon are the very basis of many Peoples' existence.

Everywhere salmon exist naturally they form an ancient link between forest and sea — between fresh water and ocean. Few other species offer such a vivid indication of the health of our collective ecosystems and the state of our local watersheds. Unfortunately today a great number of salmon runs are faced with catastrophic decline, and in some cases, extinction.

Assaults against salmon populations began generations ago, so that by the 1850's the salmon fisheries of the Penobscot River in Maine, for example, had all but disappeared due to dams, clearcutting, industrial pollution, irrigation, fish farming, the injudicious use of hatcheries, urbanisation, roadbuilding and overfishing. As the old fishery science saw goes, there are ten ways to destroy salmon runs:

1: Cut down forests
2: Build dams
3: Fish hard
4: Introduce new predators
5: Dilute genes
6: Add cattle
7: Irrigate
8: Pollute
9: Manage by legislation
10: Wait until the experts agree.

Most Atlantic and Pacific salmon rivers have suffered some or all of these fates, leaving nation states squabbling over a diminished transboundary resource. And while hugely complex regulations and international agreements are being put in place, salmon runs are being further reduced. As they are reduced, people everywhere look for someone to blame.

The loss of salmon and their habitat is an issue that effects us all. We have all played some role in either diminishing salmon runs, or reducing quality salmon habitat. For people

*[**BURGESS** continued on page 23]*

# THINK LIKE A RIVER

*by Ruthanne Cecil, J.D.*

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Dr. Ruthanne Cecil speaking at a conference of the Global Policy Forum in New York City during meetings at the United Nations.

A sense of place may feel natural to those who have longstanding ties to a region such as Sápmi. However, for those of us who are in the diaspora, or who have lived only in urban areas, or who've emigrated to the U.S. or Canada or even to the southern Nordic areas — a sense of place is less natural, or forgotten, or never known.

For me, born and raised in U.S. cities, thirty to seventy years after my grandparents and their parents immigrated, a sense of place had to be discovered. That began in earnest when I left the cities and moved to the mountains, to the backwoods of northern California.

A sense of place is a lens to view life and to understand self, humanity, and spirit. Such understanding may come through a nature religion, a sacred site, or a special spot on the earth — perhaps a wilderness area. For me, it came when I began to think about water and how it flows — when I began to think about watersheds.

It was the practical matter of building a springbox to capture the flow of a small spring above a cabin site: I learned about gravity flow and water lines and siphoning, and presto, clear springwater came out of the faucet of the kitchen I had just constructed!

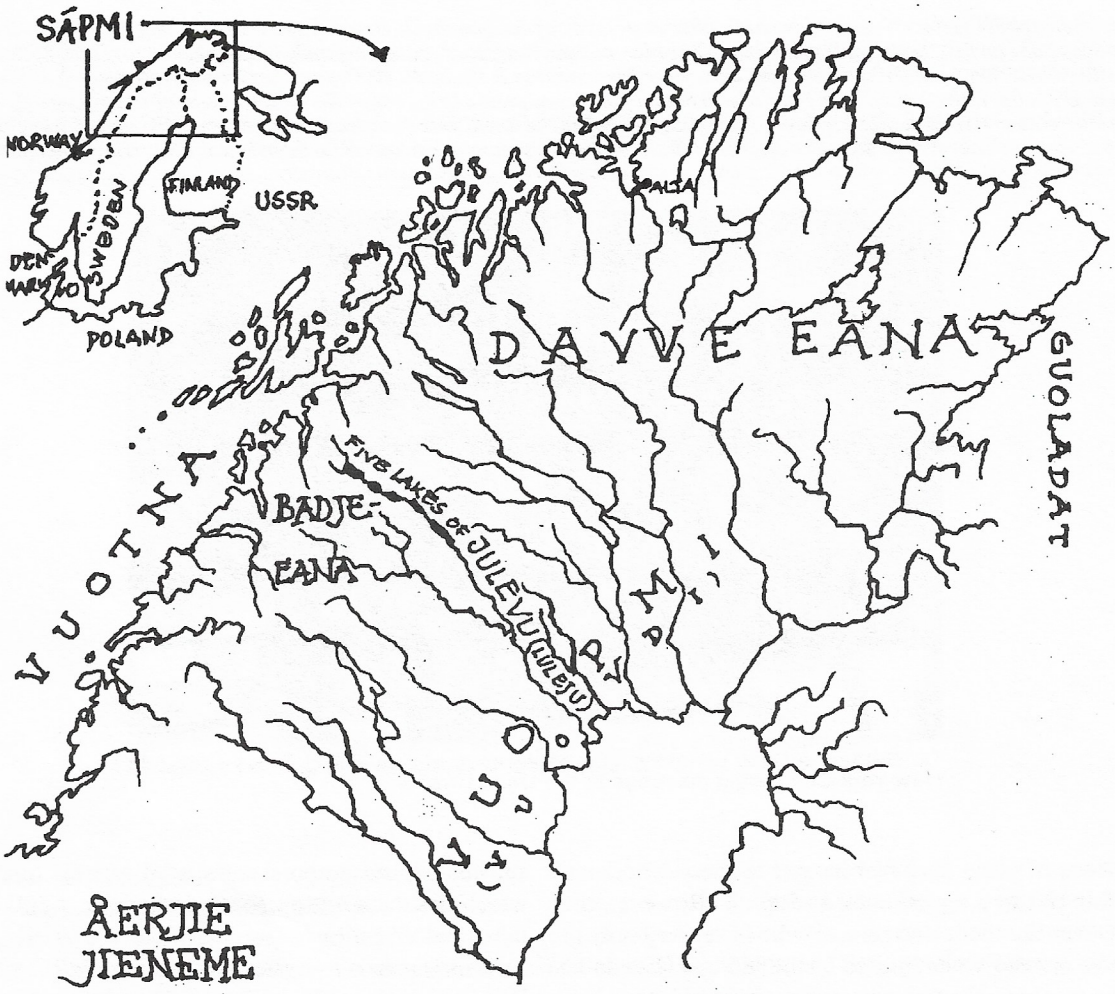
Soon, though, I began to make connections. (Some would call this unified theory, systems analysis, looking at many aspects and meanings of place — cultural, social, scientific, spiritual — and temporal and spatial aspects, too, and the web which ties them all together.) I chose to "think like a mountain, think like a river," as one friend suggested.

A mountain is a physical body, a river is like a bloodstream. Water comes from the mountain, from the headwaters, a spring or a lake. As it flows downhill, it takes a little of the mountain away, along with it, down, down, down, joining with other downflowing streams and rivers, moving down through valleys, finally arriving at its mouth, its destination: a marsh, a bay, a gulf, an ocean. And, of course, through patterns of weather, water returns again to the mountains.

Along its path, and all over the mountains, hills, and valleys, the land is a sponge, absorbing moisture, storing it underground, where additional rivers, streams and lakes are hidden from us, flowing downhill too, carrying water in the same paths over time.

Gravity. Water flows downhill. It sounds so simple, yet entire bodies of science begin to make sense when viewed through this lens: how the terrain was formed, in geological time, by the downcutting action of water making valleys. How rocks and gravel are smoothed by water's action, creating wet, silky nesting beds for salmon returning upstream.

*[**CECIL** continued on page 22]*




MOST OF THE SAMI RIVERS ARE DAMAGED BY HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER PROJECTS.

*Elle Hán'sa [Hans Ragnar Mathisen] wrote "Luleju" in 1977 after the Norwegian government revealed plans to build a dam on the Alta-Guovdageaidnu [Kautokeino] River. The poem is his epitaph for a string of five lakes in Sweden that had already been destroyed when the Swedish government built a dam on the Luleju River.*

*"I wrote this during my Christmas vacation," he says, "and it flooded like a strong river from my mind and heart onto the paper." He says he wrote the poem in English so that the outside world would get a deeper understanding of why Sámi people are against hydro-electric projects. "They disrupt forever the balance of Nature and thereby destroy life and society. I am very happy that Báiki is now publishing 'Luleju,' thus accomplishing the initial purpose of the work."*

*The photos were taken by Hans Ragnar in the area where the events in the poem took place. A glossary follows on page 28. This is the first of two installments. The second installment will be published in our Spring Issue #24.*

*"to Ruočajávri, Luoktanjárgajávri, Ráivojávri, Vuoksajávri,* and *Suorvajávri"*

# LULEJU

## THE STORY OF A SAMI SIIDA AND A RIVER.

BY ELLE-HAN'SA (KEVISELIE)


## *I*

What is more joyous
more healthy and happy
than a boisterous mountain brook
in the heartland of old *Sápmi.*
Fresh and free
since the first day of the Earth,
healthy, yes,
what is more healing to the human soul
when it is troubled and
coping with suffering and sorrow
than the cleansing sound of a stream?

And when it swells to a mighty river
and with shouts of joy and laughter
jumps fearlessly down hills
over stones and rocks
spraying the happy herbs on its rim
with a shower of sun-blessed dew drops,
the waterfalls invite the strong salmon
to challenge the stream's fall downwards
with a mighty jump upwards,
till it finds rest in a lake —
this most sacred spot of calm solitude,
mating ground and cradle for many a creature
their playground and home,
parents love to see happy children
make the lake their life's delight.
The brook, once so small,
now proudly carries its living wealth
to the next lake, then another,
five in all, and between
the murmur and rushing rustle of the river,
a song of love for Creation!

The Luleju River and its lakes
gave birth to and have supported many a being.
A beautiful birch forest adorns the banks.
The animals of our ancient land
found refuge and food for life
in the safe shelter of this forest,
their thirsty tongues
quenched and comforted by its waters,
the sacred springs of *Sápmi,*
the blood and life of our land.

O my people, who season after season
have shown their gratitude
by faithfully keeping
the balance and maintaining
the creative cycles
of a strong but sensitive land!
A land full of fruits and riches
for those wise enough to share.
The wealth of our *Sami* homeland
is more edible and useful
to creatures seeking nourishment
than is the power of silver and gold,
because it is cared for
in such a way that it reproduces itself
by means of a secret Master Code
hidden in the first germ cell of the universe:
Never take more than you need
and your children's children will
bless you,
because you have such enduring wisdom.
M-o-r-e is the curse of modern times.
In those days, even in struggling, we would sing.

Yes, a love song indeed was this bound to be,
but damn! the devil is also here!
Hush, my brook, not so loud and free,
don't let them hear how carefree you really are!


## *II*

A foreigner, a king in another's kingdom,
walks on the old path by the lakes,
stops, and takes down notes and numbers.

He is a field officer from Stockholm
where his masters have made him
proud of his job and
his use of advanced apparatus to measure
the levels of lakes on maps and paper —
it's so easy to handle these expensive tools —
almost like playing with children's toys.
He smiles, taking down another note
for Progress.
The "wilderness of *Lappland*,"
has been found to be profitable
for those whose feet are on the frontline
of the world's greatest wonders since the Sun:
the Industrial Revolution and Progress,
Electricity, Hydroelectric Power!
The Power of Nature at last
is under the command of Man.
Man needs more light for his leisure, too —
what politician dares deny that?
The lakes in the "wilderness of *Lappland*,"
the potent falls of its rivers,
shall and must be dammed, and out
of these five little lakes
there shall come a big one,
another number in his notebook —
(in school he was the best in his accounting class).

But what is this, we make him out to be evil,
but he is not the devil. He is just one .
of the many who has got a job to do
of which he is even very proud.

Behind him are ignorant millions
and money. He plays
just a tiny part in it all,
the responsibility is not his, therefore, and
who is to blame? The dam will and must be built,
Who can stop Progress?
Yes, who can stop it? But he does stop
for a short while to gaze in amazement
at the beauty of the landscape.
Even when swift clouds
carried by the wind
on this day of destiny for this valley
cast heavy shadows, and hastily sweep
the lakes into protesting waves,
and whip the leaves
into a sudden gale
which seems to warn the stream against being so joyous
in its song of a happy paradise
when such a day as this has

come.
The Sun suddenly strikes the Earth,
its powerful rays illuminate its autumn clothing,
the land wakes up with glistening colors
as powerful as flames of fire which
quickly move across the moor like a warning. Then it is over,
the shadows sleep where the fire burned,
and the red and yellow heather
turns to ashes.
But in the shadow of a rain cloud
the lofty mountain *Áhkavárri*
looms — a mysterious background
for the ashes and flames,
and millions of airy drops of water
that soon are made into radiant diamonds by the Sun:
a rainbow — God's own poem
and promise to Creation —

NEVER WILL I PUNISH
HUMANITY AGAIN
WITH A DEADLY FLOOD!

Unable to see the warning,
the official takes no numbers down.
Even with his precision tools he can neither
come near to the rainbow
nor grasp its treasured secrets.
All he does is open up an umbrella
to shelter himself and his instruments
from the rain from the sky and the rays of the Sun.
As he hurries back
to his portable synthetic nylon tent
to get ready to leave for Stockholm
(never to come back, he hopes)
he passes the *siida* of a *Sámi* family.
They are not in. There is not even a dog
to stop him if he were to steal
the old-fashioned fishing boat
that seems ready for a spin on the lakes,
a trip into the Midnight Sun.
Oh what a wonderful life they live! he says,
while we go here and there toiling and worrying.
Oh yes, I must remember to mail that letter
that tells them to prepare for the future!

As he goes to bed with a trophy,
a reindeer antler he has found,
he dreams of his wife and their children.
I wonder if they will like
this Lapp souvenir I'm bringing them,
this antler of a real reindeer.
I'm sure they will, he says, as he starts to fall asleep.


## III

The old *goahti*, shelter of many times
of happiness and sharing among *Sámi* families,
simple and real as the mountains themselves,
welcomes its wandering people.
Young and old alike love the warmth
that comes from its hearth where they
listen to the thrilling tales and the wonderful stories
of a tribe that has survived in

the barren arctic
for more than ten thousand
polar winters.

Sometimes the flame has
almost been extinguished
but even the feeblest flame
and the faintest smoke
tells the story of the stubborn
glow
deep inside the hearth of my
People.
With this little spark carried
inside our small bodies
through the centuries
we have stayed close together,
families united in a *Sámi siida*,
where parents were equal
partners
in carrying out responsibility for
all,
where the oldest and the
youngest were not isolated
but willingly shared the work
of tending and cultivating a
heritage of traditions
and laws developed in ancient
times
to protect and care for a living
land:
Life to help others live.
All over *Sápmi* the faithful
*siidas*
guaranteed the sanctity
of our heritage and the health
of this part of our irreplaceable
hemisphere.

The little glow of simple love
for the Creator and his work of
art,
the Creation, and all its
creatures —
this spark of eternal joy —
carried us over
the dangerous cracks of
glaciers,
the icy roaring streams, across
the desolate *tundra*,
and the death-defying
swamplands in between
into the safety of a well-built
*goahti*,
the turf-hut, the cleverly
constructed tent that was
cool in the heat of a summer
day,
and warm, close and cozy in
the frost of the winter.
The glowing sparks from the
crackling fire
would run up through its open
ceiling
followed by laughter at ancient
folktales —
humor and wisdom so
masterfully combined —
up to the stars high above the
*siida*,
as if they wanted to tell the
outside world:
We are here, we survive,
the *Sámi* People of the North.
Come in and share
our happy hours —
stay, they are so short,
before the burdens of daily

duty
call us all to take part
in caring for our Earth
and each other!


## IV

Morning comes. Awakening
with the spirit of the dawn
the people prepare to continue
their work —
not just their job, this is their
life.
Most of the *siida* are healthy
and know how to herd reindeer,
to train pack animals
and to mark the clever calves
who escaped the swift
*suohpan*, the lasso
of the quickest herders,
their previous time in the *gárdi*
where the herds are now
corralled.
There are shouts and
the herd expresses its need for
freedom
with the sharp sounds of
clicking hooves
as they run in circles to escape
the sharp eyes
of the *siidaisit*, the owner,
looking for a specific reindeer.

Suddenly his glance leads to
action.
Quick as a flash he throws his
*suohpan*,
And ropes in a silver-swift bull-
to-be!
It is stubborn, but at last
the other herders manage to
hold it down
while his sharp knife
makes the necessary marks on
its ears
to separate it from the other
animals
and make it a part of their
*eallu*, their life.
Better this, thinks the young
reindeer
(as it runs away, relieved),
than being caught between the
teeth of a wolf
or caught in the claws of a
mighty eagle
or swallowed alone by a cleft
between rocks.
Here I am not alone!


## V

Now is the time when day
begins
to grow and compete with the
night.
In the mystic mood of dawn
the *siidaisit* for some reason
leaves the *goahti*
earlier than the others ,
maybe to repair the fishnet.
He holds the well-worn net,
so neatly tied by trained hands,
examines carefully the net that
has
brought in many a meal.
Now its threads are broken
and in the middle is a big hole.
But ho! What is this he sees
through the gap in the net?
A dead fish is floating on top of
the lake,
white side up, to show its
innocence
and that this is no suicide,
and around it are some leaves
and dirt.

The *siidaisit* throws down the
broken net
and rushes to the lake
but steps in water before he
reaches its shore.
So wet here, but it didn't rain
last night —
did it rain last night,
my son? No, says the son,
just coming home,
proudly holding up two
ptarmigans.
At least I got something in my
*giella*,
he smiles as he goes inside.
He has been out all night with
the herd
watching for watching for
wolves
and wants a good meal.
But the smile will not last long,
thinks his father,
since he intends to send him
as soon as possible
to the village to the government
office
to ask the*dáccat* there
what they have done
to their clean and pure source
of food,
to ask what is happening to
the lake!
Before, when he came down
from the mountains,
he didn't see or feel anything
strange
except the usual sound of
small waves
speaking the language of
sleeping well.
Maybe he was just tired after
the hard work
of three days and nights out in
the open, and
it was dark because the

autumn was already in power.
He is afraid of these new signs.
Will there be fewer pleasant meals?
Old people haven't told about such signs,
has he ever heard of dirty water and dead fish
at the same time? Is there some catastrophe
among the Beings at the bottom of the lake?
He looks at the lake and the floating fish,
so unnatural; then a hawk dives swiftly to catch it
but before its claws touch the water's surface
it turns and flies back to the mountain.

Certainly something is wrong;
he must look into it later, but now
they shout from the *goahti* to come and get some food.
He walks inside with heavy steps.
As he smells the tempting scent
of a well-prepared and tasty meal from nature
he reminds himself with a smile:
well, maybe this time the hawk won't have his meal,
but I most certainly will!


## VI

Autumn-winter means hard work;
the reindeer mothers with their calves
must be kept apart from the rutting bulls;
now is the time to milk them and make cheese.
After the meal the whole *siida* goes to work.
On his way to the herd, the *siidaisit* thinks about
what is happening to the lakes of his land —
and what will, later, to the creatures in and around them.

Then he sees far away two
strong reindeer males
with big impressive horns
fighting with each other head to head,
antler clattering against antler.
The two bulls are fiercely fighting for control
and the respect of the females.
Who will win her territory
and proudly issue the mating call?

Or will they both die this day because they are fighting each other?
New worries enter the thoughts of
the *siidaisit* while he does work that he can almost do in his sleep.
He wonders what all these new signs mean.


## VII

When all the adults have gone to the mountains
and most of the children have gone with them,
the oldest *áhkku* , too weak for that work
yet with a wealth of wisdom in her eyes
to support and strengthen the hearts
of hopeful broods yet unhatched,
sits outside her tent
watching the youngest have fun
while her fingers keep busy doing fine hand work.
Through the laughter and the shouts of the children
she remembers the days and nights in the past
when she kept watch over the herd
on the white mountain plateau (the *duottar),*
high above the forest line (the *orda)*,
with nothing else to keep her company
but the stars and sometimes the moon
that softly lit the resting herd
and the dogs sound asleep on the snow.
What a thrill to witness such solitude
and the ghostlike northern lights (the *guovsahasat*) ,
pursuing themselves in a flight that would send waves of mystical wonder
shivering through her soul like an echo.
She would pray to them not to touch her.
Then, at the sound of a wolf,
she would shout back
to keep fear away
and if that made their howls increase
she would *joik* a *luohti* with gentler sounds
in case they might have the heart to heed
her appeal to them:
Do not take from our little herd, it is the only way we have to live!

She thinks about a person in another *siida.*
She would *joik* his *luohti* and this happy person
later became her husband.
Now he is dead, and when she sings his song—
his *luohti* — silently to herself
she can almost see and feel his presence,
his wise old eyes blessing her age.

Her children love her too;
they are busy with games they love to play.
but unlike certain games in this world
theirs have a purpose, a natural plan.
Their games train them for grown up activities.
They test their skills
at catching each other while running
with the lasso.
They play as children who want to be grown ups
not like those who play for the sake of playing,
whether they are children or not.
The materialism of modern society
produces people who never learned in childhood
that even play serves a purpose.
Therefore all they do nowadays becomes less than child's play in their version of adult society.
Nature and Nature's creatures, its people,

become toys in their hands.
The way they run the world
is a threat to its security and survival,
like a gang of bullies
who disobey their father,
playing with paper, pistols and puppets —
an infantile struggle, a game of power
to see who's the strongest
in a world where people need peace!

## VIII

*Áhkku, áhkku*! Shouts from afar.
The grandson is returning from the village.
A letter has come, a letter from the capital!
As he breathlessly gives it to her she says jokingly to him:
This is certainly not for you or me —
no love letter is this!
No, says the boy, it is from Stockholm,
from the Royal Hydro-electric Department,
he is proud of his pronunciation. What does it say?
We must wait till father comes home,
answers *áhkku* — it's for him.

As they all come home from the mountain
the shocking letter gathers the whole *siida*
together as if it was a religious meeting.
With difficulty they get through the foreign language
but its intent is as clear as a clap of thunder that follows an awesome lightning flash:
We have to move, disappear,
the river is being dammed,
the lake will grow bigger
and overflow its banks.
Move your homes further up!
Prepare for the future!

The letter states that
this is the second warning,
but the first letter
was never received — did it disappear?
Only the official knows.

*Mii fertet jávkat*? asks *áhkku*.
Must we disappear?
What about them, the children?
The father can give no answer,
he has to ask the river, and the lake.

(Now he understands the dead fish and the dirt on its surface.)
Will they kill all the fish,
our future,
and our children?

## IX

What happens to a child
if in rage you punish and beat it
even if it is innocent?
You cause it physical pain, and worse,
it becomes the victim of psychological terror,
(words that you have invented),
mental disturbances,
loss of balance.
Cut off a finger, cut off a foot,
will there come a new one?
Like this you turn off
Nature's creative processes.

They have amputated me,
and my land.
Our life-giving rivers
meant to fill the needs
of coming generations
now have to feed the robots,
the generators!
This is done to my body, my land,
to our own dearest Mother!
They even ask and expect us to forget
the crimes and injustices that have taken place.
But how can you forget an
amputated arm
if that was the one that carried food to your hungry children?
A distant disturbed childhood
can not be pushed aside with words,
the need for that arm will always be there
and it is not where it should be.

It won't be long before the last Sámi
will see himself
in the mirror of the doomed lake
that swallowed his people and now wants him, too.
More, m-o-r-e, isn't that the word?

## X

A shadow has been cast over the *siida*
and like a curse disturbs its hearths.
Asked to move, they can't understand why,
but the dam doesn't wait for them
and water begins to flow into the *goahti*
from the lake, once a friend—
now an enemy.
In painful resignation they take what they can —
another site has to be found,
but there is no other lake.
So a new *goahti* is built quickly and with skill.
It is good that our homes
in this shadowy world
are moveable and easy to build,
not like the palaces of foreign kings
where, once built, only a war can remove them.
Much care goes into the work.
This will be the home for the whole family
where young and old and in between
can respect each other's individuality.
In a *goahti* even the dog is welcome
to share the warmth and the food
after sharing a hard day's work.
That night when their work is done all sleep well.
Now, even the wolf and the eagle
have become their friends.
What is their taking of reindeer calves
out of the need to feed their young ones
compared to the needs of the "big greedy fish"
that will swallow five small innocent ones!
But hush now, — sleep well!

## XI

Not many meals have they been able to enjoy
in their newly-built turf hut
when the official from Stockholm suddenly

reappears.
Leaving behind the manners of Swedish society,
he walks right in without knocking.
Smiling, he pays no attention to their surprise.
Oh, what a nice knife you're working on there,
how much does it cost?
I don't know yet, says the father.
Well you see, when I left this Land of the Midnight Sun
the only thing I got as a souvenir
was an old reindeer antler,
a surplus item in this land of plenty.
I took it home, but they wanted something else,
so I thought I should buy some handicrafts.
My neighbor in Stockholm, he is second in command
in the iron industry in *Giron* [Kiruna] by the way,
has a *guksi* he is very proud of.
I can't have anything less, can I?
So how much does this knife cost? My goodness —
what a well-shaped sheath!

What is this? thinks *áhcci.*
He wants to pay before the knife is finished.
You can have it, he says,
no need to pay — and gives it to him.
You take our land — you can take this too.
Oh thank you, says the official, admiring the nearly-finished work.
I am in a hurry, I have to leave today.
*Áhkku* whispers to the giver:
One should never
give away a knife, according to what the old ones say.
Oh, it doesn't matter, he replies,
what can we do with traditions when they have taken away our land?

Satisfied, the official puts the gift in his pocket.
Just one more thing before I leave —
this letter is for you; that's what I can pay you with.
What? A letter for me? From who?
I am sorry to say, says the official,
it's from the Royal Hydroelectric Department.
But we have already moved.
Well you see, the dam was too small;
we miscalculated and the dam is obsolete.
We are responsible for building up an industry
in this country that will be

strong enough
to compete with powers like Germany and Great Britain and others.
But what has that to do with us? asks *áhççi.*
Well, you see, continues the official in a voice
that is getting louder: You will have to move again.
Again? shouts the *siidaisit.*
*Maid da dácca dadjá,?* asks *áhkku,*
what is that foreigner saying?
(She does not understand Swedish.)
Yes...further...into the future.

The people of the *siida* are too shocked to protest.
The official tries to convince them:
After all, how can you,
go on living like this?
I am sure because of the lack of hygienic conditions
the death rate of your children must be quite high
because they aren't kept clean,
I mean, you don't wrap up your food —
just eat it the way it is,
straight from Nature. Maybe you do not even wash your hands!
Can't you see we are living in a time
when new demands
have entered the realm of natural life,
and with the help of modern technology
the future is ours.
We who have made this land have worked steadily on it for ages.
We are an advanced society.
We hold the future in the very palms of our hands.

His audience neither curses nor praises his sermon.
They gaze at him with troubled eyes and trembling hearts
as he goes on explaining:
I know this can't be easy for you,
but would it be better if millions of homes
in this our Swedish homeland,
not to mention all the factories that produce all the things we need
for our daily well-being,
went without electricity and power?

When he pauses to take a breath
his glance falls on a little girl outside
where there are no houses nor factories that need electricity.
She is playing with some sticks,
making a reindeer herd out of them.
He goes on: Of course here in the wilderness
you might think such power is not needed,
but one day civilization
will take pity on these poor sparse areas too.
I am sure it will come here,
one fine day. Without this dam there would be no toys for the children,
kettles for the housewives,
or guns for the men —
no sewing machines or airplanes
in which we can reach unlimited lands!
And our daily work is so hard,
so boring and demanding
that we need more leisure and better tools,
and games to while away our free time
and have all the things we want to own.

And I want you to know this: I myself
tried to ask for more time
so that you wouldn't need to move so soon.
I even suggested a small sum of money —
a kind of compensation to help — but no.
You know, they are tight with money,
those businessmen down there.
They brushed aside my objections
like the ashes from their cigars:
Those tiny Lapp dwellings
are a small price to pay
for such a promising power project;
this is Sweden, not *their* land!
they said.

Even when I wanted to open a shop up here, I was told I would have to wait
till next year — they're stingy, aren't they?
I hope to be a shopkeeper,

maybe I'll even be your
neighbor. Therefore,
to be fair I would like to pay
for this beautiful product, he
says,
pointing to the bulge in his
pocket
where the knife is.
As he places some coins and a
bill
on the floor, he silently says
good-bye
and walks away like before.
But while he can still be seen,
one of the daughters of the
*siida*
whispers sadly as if to herself,
the lake and the land
don't like you as you walk
there,
they don't love your approach
like they love us and trust our
footsteps.
Even the trees are trembling
with fear
when you come with your
machines.
You think you are clean, but
the dirt multiplies
wherever you touch the earth.
And what is death but a friend
if we honestly serve without
shame
our God-given purpose and
each other!

The oldest son is more angry
than sad.
Had we not given him the knife
I don't know what I would have
done with it!
Some of the children are crying
but *áhkku* is the one who tries
to cheer the others up;
she has gone through this
before,
and kept many a wolf away.
Maybe we should ask him if he
has time
to mend our broken fishing
nets! she jokes.


## XII

Another silent night is disturbed
by the busyness of the
bulldozers,
mocking the purity of Mother
Earth,
naked noise in the kingdom of
sweet and pleasant peace.
Disgusting roars dirty the air
that was once the home of
happy songs.
Hell has come to Sámi land!

Look at the rivers: even the
eagles
refuse to eat its dying fish,
its waters polluted with

dangerous poisons.
Those who dare to remove the
juices of growth
from their natural connection
with life:
be prepared for their revenge,
as they turn into fatal tissue
when the smallest are killed
even by its smell.
The artificial lake grows
unnaturally large,
like an ill-natured and untimely
tumor
spreading its poisons
throughout the body;
our earth is infected
and who can ever cleanse it
from this sin?

The silvery beauty of the trees
is attacked,
the birch forest, unprepared,
does not know its own
drowning
until it is too late for rescue.
The waters change as if by
magic
from a friend to a foe,
and creep up to lick the white
trunks of the birches,
to steal their simple pride and
beauty
stripping them of their last
protection,
depriving them of their chance
to serve Creation,
raping them till the result is
death,
and they fall under the power
of the dammed river
designed for the self-indulgent.
These trees will never be used
to build another ark for Noah!
Some are pulled down by
powerful machines
and great is their fall as the
motors utter ugly howls.
But to the operators this is like
music,
stopping the birds in the middle
of their singing.
But beware! you proud ones
run by greed and lust
stop the machine you bring
with you, stop and listen.
Look up, look down, and all
around:
If you listen you will hear
from the depths of the
drowning lakes
the stones speaking the truth
to you.

*To be continued.*

*For Sámi words, see page 28*

## LULEJU GLOSSARY

*Elle Han'sa (Hans Ragnar Mathisen) is a Sami poet, artist and writer. He is also a cartographer who has produced a series of maps of Sápmi without political boundaries and with the original Sami place names.*

*With Samuli Aikio and Anders Henriksen he is the author of* Sámi Atlas, *a collection of his geographic and historic maps in the Sámi language published in 1996. A book of his art, called* Hans Ragnar Mathisen, Elle Hán'sa, Keviselie, *was published by DAT in 1998.*

*Hans Ragnar lives and works in Tromsø, Norway where he has been the facilitator of NANA, a yearly International Festival of Indigenous Culture.*

*His drawings have frequently appeared in* Báiki, *and we published a feature about his life and his work in Issue #2, winter 1992, called "Keviselie: Maps Without Borders."*

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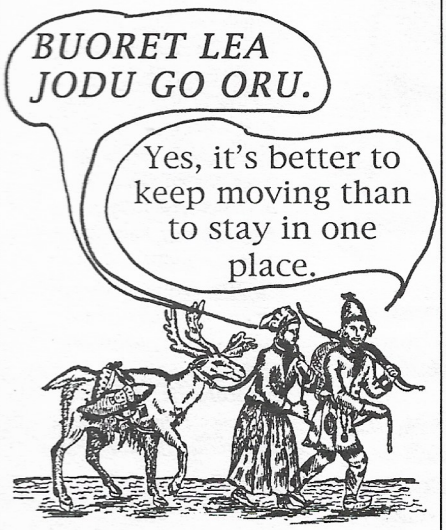
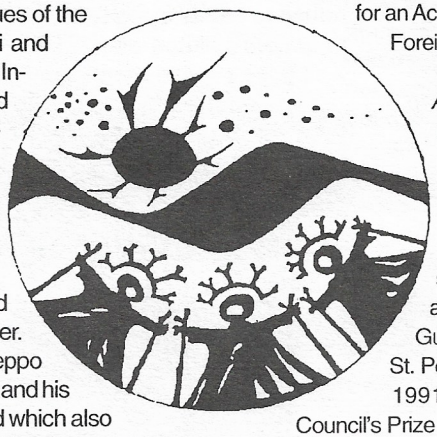



with thanks to Mette Ballovara
for the old Saami proverb

*(ÁILLOHAS continued from page 3)*

lead the Saami delegation to the first meeting of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples at Port Alberni, BC. He is said to have electrified the other Indigenous delegates when he stood up and joiked.

Later I read *Greetings from Lapland,* which was written in English, and I was struck by the similarity between the cultural, ecological and political issues of the Saami People in Sápmi and those of the American Indian Nations here. I had never before read anything written from this perspective.



In 1982 I attended a concert at the Science Museum in St. Paul, MN that featured Áillohas as the main joiker. He was backed by Seppo (Paroni) Paakkunainen and his jazz group from Finland which also included Ingor-Antti Ailu Gaup. This was Áillohas' first North American tour and it featured the innovative combination of joik with modern music. Although we did not know each other then, many of us at that concert and the one in Minneapolis on the same tour later became active in the North American Saami movement.

In 1998 Áillohas visited Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN, through the efforts of Roland Thorstenssen, to present a seminar called "Sun, Thunder and Heaven's Fires." The Gustavus library amassed one of the best collections of his art work and writing in North America.

In 1995 the Nordic Center at Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN, sponsored what was to be his last visit to North America, with *Báiki* serving as the cultural consultant. There he presented a multi-media performance of poetry and joik called "Trekways of the Wind" which drew a standing-room-only crowd and also featured the photography of Niillas A. Somby. During that visit Áillohas granted me an interview and I found him to be a gracious and softspoken person.

In the winter of 1996 he was seriously injured in an auto accident and for a time lost the ability to walk and talk. He withdrew from public life in order to recover.

This past October he flew to Japan to take part in a cultural presentation of Saami poetry and joik and an exhibit of Saami art. He died in his sleep in his way back to Sápmi. Here are some of the highlights of his life:

1966: begins to earn his living as an artist

1968: his first joik LP, *Joikuja,* is released

1971: publishes *Greetings From Lapland*

1975: attends the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) first meeting at Port Alberni, BC

1982: tours North America with Seppo (Paroni) Paakkunainen and performs in New York, Seattle, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and St. Paul

1988: acts in and writes the score for Nils Gaup's *The Pathfinder,* which is nominated for an Academy Award for the Best Foreign Film of 1989

1988: publishes *Beáivi Áhcázan, (The Sun, My Father*), a book of his drawings and poetry in the Sami language with archival ancestral photos

1989: presents a seminar, "Sun, Thunder and Heaven's Fires," at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN

1991: receives the Nordic Council's Prize for Literature

1991: grants *Báiki* permission to publish an English translation of his poem "My Home is In My Heart" in its first issue

1991-92: appears on the Norwegian television series *'Solens sønn og månens datter"*

1992: releases a four CD set to accompany the book *Beaivi, Áhcázan*

1994: opens the Lillehammer, Norway Winter Olympics with a joik, which draws worldwide attention to Norway's Indigenous People

1994: publishes an English translation of his poetry trilogy *Trekways of the Wind*

1994: presents a multi-media performance "Trekways of the Wind: the Sami Experience" at Augsburg College, Minneapolis,MN, and Suomi College, Hancock, MI

1994: receives an honorary Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Oulo, Finland

1997: publishes *The Sun My Father* in English without the photos

1999: receives an honorary Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Lapland, Finland

2001: records a compilation CD of his joiks with Seppo (Paroni) Paakkunainen, which is released in Japan

2001: publishes his last poetry book, *Eanni Eannázan*

The poem at the beginning of this tribute is from *Trekways of the Wind*, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, translated into English by Harald Gáski, Lars Nordström and Ralph Salisbury and published by DAT in 1994. DAT has kindly given us permission reprint it here. The drawing of the three Sami Grandmother Spirits is also by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, who gave us permission to use it in an earlier issue.

# TWO WATER STORIES FROM ALASKA

*These two stories first appeared in* PETROGLYPHS: LIFE STORIES FROM THE ROCK, *published by the University of Alaska, Anchorage. They are reprinted here with the permission of the writers Mary Eyman and Lois Stover. These stories took place along the Kuskokwim River in central Alaska where they grew up. Both women now live on Kodiak Island.*

## FISHING FOR THE BIG ONES

*by Mary Eyman*

In Aniak we had a cutting table which was nailed to our dock and I remember how fast my mother and Aunt Bernie could cut fish. They used the traditional Yup'ik *ulu* knife and with about five swipes they would have the fish head cut off, the belly sliced open, and the fish slimed and gutted. They wore hip boots so the waste from the fish went into the river and not onto them. The heads were saved, as they were considered a delicacy by many.

The Kuskokwim salmon are a much oilier fish than the salmon in Kodiak. Nature has provided them with extra fat so they can make it up hundreds of miles to spawn in the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers. You can see the oil dripping from them when you smoke them, which makes them very rich and much sought after. We still get our cousin in Aniak to smoke us some strips.

The king salmon get huge in this area and sometimes the fish have to be stripped first so they can cure in the small smokehouse. Mom's Uncle Peter would first spread the salmon on racks to air cure before placing them in the smokehouse. He always did this on a windy day so that flies would not land on them. One time he spread his salmon out to dry and when his back was turned seagulls came and pushed all his fish to the ground. Uncle Peter, angrily cussing, heard Grandpa Jens, who was a Norwegian immigrant, say, "Vell, don't yell at me, I didn't tell those seagulls to come take your fish!"

One day, when I was only three or four years old I went fishing from the dock in Aniak with a pole made from a willow branch and a hook made from a safety pin that hung from a string. Suddenly I snagged a big king salmon.

I wouldn't let go of my pole, and the fish, who weighed between 40 and 50 pounds, pulled me into the river. Luckily Uncle Jimmy and Grandpa were close by and rescued me. I was crying my heart out because I had lost my fancy pole. They consoled me and quickly fixed me up with another one.

Across the river Grandpa and my uncles had a fish wheel which they tended. They would bring me along to club the fish. When I felt sorry for the fish they would say, "You do like to eat them don't you?" I had to admit that salmon strips were my favorite food.

I also helped Grandpa move the fish around in the smokehouses because I was small enough to place the fish where he wanted them. To this day our old smokehouses are still there and I imagine people still use them. We smoked fish not only for our own use but for trading for other things we needed and for feeding our sled dogs. When you have four or five dogs they consume a lot of fish and many times we just air cured their salmon.

## A TENSE MOMENT

*by Lois Stover*

The winters were cold in Takotna. We would haul our old five gallon square gasoline cans down to the creek where we got our water, fill them up and then let them freeze over on top so they wouldn't spill when we carried them up the hill. We'd hitch up the dogs, go back down to the creek for the water buckets and haul them home. But when it had been cold for a long time, the ice would be so thick on the creek that my older sisters Mary and Esther couldn't reach the water level. They would put little me down the hole we had cut in the ice and hold on to my ankles so I could fill up our buckets with a dipper. All this time I would be yelling "don't let go, don't let go!" We used this creek water for drinking and cooking.

Since getting water was such a chore in the winter, we would fill other oil drums with snow and put them next to our big stove, which was also made from an oil drum. The snow would melt down for our dishwashing, bathing and laundry needs and we were very careful with it. After bathing, the water was often saved for laundry, and then used again for floor scrubbing.

I also remember one December afternoon when Dad took the dog team to get our Christmas tree. He was training a dog named Blackie to be a lead dog. Flossie, our regular lead dog, was so dependable and obedient you never had to worry about leaving the sled, but while Dad was out cutting the tree, Blackie decided he was tired of staying in one place and away he went with the dog team and the sled, leaving Dad and his tree far behind. Dad's hollering "whoa, whoa" had little effect. Dad started following them, figuring he had a couple of hours

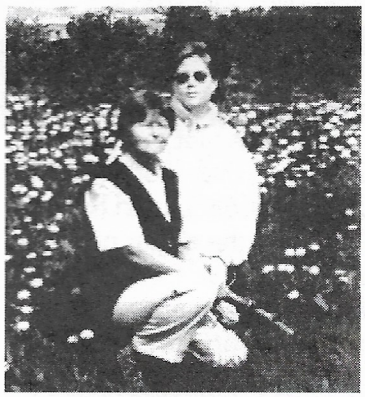
*[**STOVER** continued on page 26]*

the petroglyph is from Kodiak Island

# BETWEEN TWO RIVERS

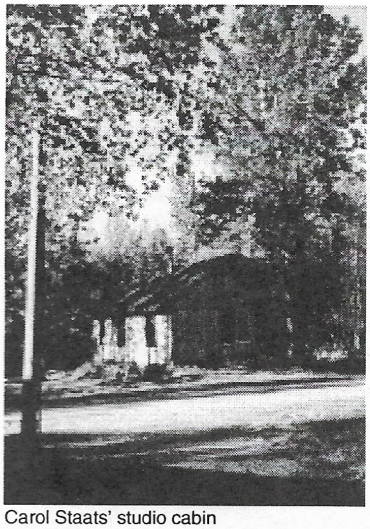
## the poetry and art of CAROL STAATS

*Carol Ruotsala Staats was born in Seattle of Finnish and Sami ancestry. She grew up on Douglas Island in southeastern Alaska. Her work refects her heritage and the Alaska scene and people. She and her husband Willard have lived for many years on a subsistence farmstead in the Matanuska Valley near Wasilla, Alaska, where they grow potatoes, rye, flax and berries. As an artist Carol works with native materials: birch, diamond willow and burls. As a poet her work has been published in numerous journals and anthologies throughout the Western Hemisphere, and excerpts from volumes I and II of her poetry books titled* From a Greenwood Flute *appeared in* Báiki*Issue #4, 1992. Carol is currently working on a novel about a psychiatrist who lives in a small Alaska town. The following poems are from* Between Two Rivers, *a recently-published anthology of poetry and prose by writers and poets who live between the Matanuska and Susitna Rivers. They are reprinted here with Carol's permission.*



Carol Staats and her daughter Lillian

**CAROL STAATS ON BEING A NORTH AMERICAN SAMI:** "We are, after all, Samis in this time and the exact trappings of our ancients are not as important as the spirit in which we carry on. The Samis are very adaptable and use what comes to hand. The feeling of kinships and ancient bonds are the things we must keep going: our connections with each other, the land and the natural forces, wind, water, even ice and snow, the sun and moon and stars, and our only limit is the sky."



Carol Staats' studio cabin

**C.S. ON WRITING POETRY:** I love the sound of the English language because it has the courage to borrow from every other language and it is as close as there is to a prayer about life. Although I identify with the drumming and hoof beat of poetry I often think of it as the heartbeat or pulse — or breathing — of the earth, perhaps a female impression.

### SEINER'S CHANTEY

The whales are sounding deep today,
a sea storm is abrewing.
The spewing foam flies over bow,
and keening winds are bitter.
So pull the nets
and tuck the lines.
We'll anchor in the cove.

"A school of Reds!" the lookout cries.
Northeast by east direction!
Run out the purse and haul them in!
We'll brail her to the scuppers!"
We'll haul the nets
and tuck the lines,
and anchor in the cove.

The season's done. All hands, "Halloo!"
The catch is in the hold.
When winter's howling on the Cape,
we'll all be safe at home.
We'll hang the nets,
and stow the lines,
and anchor safe at home.

### THREE VERSES FOR RAVEN

My own clock strikes twilight
as your true-timed arc
against the wintry sunscape
signals dusk.

You peer at me, and I at you,
through hand-warmed peephole
in winter-window rime.
You watch as I tear off a share,
ham-sandwich tribute
to your Arctic fortitude.

I laugh and nod
at your contentious wrangling
over sharing summer perch
in birch and spruce
with birds that winter
in St. Augustine.

### NORTH WINTER DAY

Time hovered with the sun
behind the hills
night cloud opaque and black
against the silvering sky.
A drooping birch
brushed oriental signature
earth waiting for the dawn.

A newborn sun breaks over rim,
rebounds on valley sides
a winter rainbow on the rock
the prism waterfall.
Sparkling, lustrous, crystalline,
land wakening to light.

Too soon sun's brilliant glare
becomes long darkening shadow,
a brief pavanne, the blood-red glow
Silence...
and the night.

### AUTUMN RUN

As if pearling of moon,
ancient sign,
gives the reason,
or the waning of tides,
or some mystical symbol.
Each turning homeward
in its own season
from the salt water deeps
to the willow-banked, alder-flanked
streams of beginning.

Churning where the sea
meets mountain water,
from the shadow shallows
of the stream,
fins flash, tails lash
foaming canyon current,
milling silver turning
rust and green.

*(STAATS continued page 27)*

# BETWEEN TWO RIVERS
## the poetry of LILLIAN STAATS

*Lillian Staats was born in Anchorage, Alaska. Her writing reflects the influences of growing up when Alaska was still a frontier state and her mother's Finnish Sami heritage. She has been published in the* Fireweed Journal, Alaska Women Speak *and in* Báiki *Issue #4, 1992. Lillian participates in poetry slams and she and Carol are the first mother-daughter team to take part in the local semi-annual Fly By Night Club poetry slams. An avid gardener, she also loves to travel. She is currently working at a camp on the North Slope.*

*The following poems were written specifically for publication in this issue of* Báiki. *They cannot be reproduced without the permission of the poet.*

### SWAN

A swan glides slowly
across the blue lake's night.
Soon it will be gone.
(summer 01)

### SKY SEA

The sea and sky meet alchemically,
and storm blue clouds hang low,
compressing the sun's rays
into ripples of mermaid scale.
Calm, but constant motion
gives the illusion of travel.
Time, here, cannot be measured
by sextant or sailor's watch,
but hangs in Luna's palm.
How wise and wide this
element is; vast and untamed,
and if ever they do tame it,
I hope I am gone by then,
a coin placed in my mouth
to bring me over the River Styx.
(9/13/01)

### PATHS

The water tracks down my face,
traces down my window sill,
forces her way from shore
to shore by Luna's dance,
swirls rip tide and
hurricane eye,
becomes a limpid pool
which I cast a stone upon,
or grass and spider web dew,
her tracks run down my window sill,
her traces run down my face.
(9/15/01)

### RAIN

Take this dry land and
awake it once more,
take this seed husk
and cause it to live,
take the parchment ground
and write Sanskrit,
take the homely plant
and make it bloom,
its raiment fine
as any courtesan's gown,
take me under blue gray
clouds coming over
Natcher's Pass....
I know them like
beloved friends,
I await the dropping
of heaven,
down to where I can
feel the
face of God.
(9/13/01)

Lillian Staats

**LILLIAN STAATS ON BEING SHY:** "Poetry alleviated my feeling of isolation. With it I could share without standing in front of everyone and I could make them understand what I had been feeling at the time. This photo was taken by a friend of a friend who had some film left in his camera after I took pictures of him for his girlfriend. The one eye is what counts. I give that to you! Mostly I'm in humble dress in humble circumstances."

Willard Staats prepares a hearty breakfast of buckwheat and flax seed pancakes with sausage

**L.S. ON WHAT SHE LEARNED FROM HER FATHER:** "He taught me about patience and self-sufficiency. He taught me about organic farming, wind power, solar power, how to live in the woods, how to mine for gold and how to fish. "He also taught me that the ones who care are the ones who do the work."

*(STAATS continued on page 27)*

*(CECIL continued from page 9)*

A watershed is a small region, defined by its natural boundaries. It is a three-dimensional, V-shaped region, with a valley in its center, often with a river or stream flowing through it, and its outer boundaries are the two ridgelines on the valley's opposite sides. For hikers, this is common sense. For many urban folks, this is a new way of seeing how the world works, akin to the discovery that the earth is not flat. It changes one's perspective forever.

Cities and towns are, of course, in watersheds too. The San Francisco region was built on lowlands and marshes at the mouth of the Sacramento, where that great river flows into the bay and the Pacific. The great Sacramento, which gathers many downflowing rivers into a deep valley that cuts California in half, the Sierra mountains on one side, the Coastal ranges on the other.

The water flowing through all watersheds is like a bloodstream to the body, providing health, nutrients, moisture, and oxygen to the plants and animals it touches. For humans, it is often only convenient "irrigation," but for bees, birds, forests and flowers, it is the difference between life and death. It is for us, too, if we would realize it.

Our cities create another sort of gravity flow called "runoff." From concrete parking lots and asphalt streets and highways, dirty, oil-containing rainwater runs down into gutters and sewers, adding pollutants to our rivers and bays.

Watersheds are social and political units too. They are convenient to map and good for planning. They are logical units, with a geological basis. They can be overlaid on other political and social boundaries: towns, neighborhoods, postal codes, voting precincts. The logic is impeccable: because of gravity, what is done upstream, affects those who are downstream. Whether it is toxic pollutants, or overuse, or logging slopes and eroding soil into streams — what is done by me upstream affects you, downstream. Actions have consequences.

There is a new name — "bioregion" — to define watershed areas. Bioregions are larger than the smallest watershed units, with "nested" watersheds within them. This has allowed scientists and others to look at species and systems within a place-based context, to see causation and to suggest action. Bioregions have political and social meaning, too, for understanding threats to a watershed, for making decisions, and for taking action in defense or in restoration.

Watersheds are often in danger from a variety of human-caused activities. Toxins and pollutants affect the health of instream species such as fish and amphibians. Even arctic ice has measurable pollutants in it now, carried in through the precipitation cycle. Salmon are threatened by silt from logging, which chokes the gravel beds where they lay their eggs. Oil drilling threatens arctic watersheds and coastlines. Global warming is melting glaciers and permafrost. Coastlines and islands are submerging, also due to global warming. Upstream affects downstream, and returns to upstream, through the cycle of oceans, clouds, rain, and ice.

Other threats are economic, such as the widespread commercialization and privatization of water, further drying up the resource and making it less available to local populations. These, too, must be countered with defensive action.

But the good news is that by "thinking like water," we can also begin to design strategies for watershed survival, through defense and healing. The earth's wounds are not neutral: they worsen, or they heal, through time and action.

Watershed defense means recognizing, with neighbors within a watershed unit, the dangers that are specific to that place, and then taking appropriate action. On the local side, such action is usually social, political, and legal, but on occasion, nonviolent civil action may become necessary for some. Appropriate action may also involve asking for help — bioregionally, nationally, and internationally. The recent Gwich'in call to action for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one example of this, and the call of the U'wa people for assistance, is another.

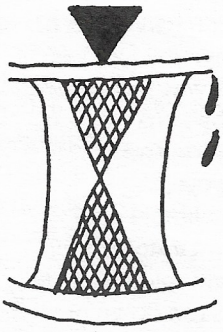
Watershed healing is a key part of the survival effort. Although harms are not reversible, healing is possible, as is spiritual renewal of the earth. The Yurok nation in northern California near where I live has an Earth Renewal ceremony each year.

Residents and workers are also taking action by planting trees and native species, removing dams, preventing erosion on slopes, and installing fish hatcheries. Others do mapping and planning within a watershed unit, or work with local authorities to secure funds to pay for needed work.

The steps are simple: think like a river, touch the land lightly, move slowly or swiftly as appropriate, move around barriers or slowly grind them away. Analyze the dangers. Cooperate, and take small steps. Carry seeds in your pocket, and sow them to restore slopes and shorelines. Plant trees and native shrubs. Recreate shade and capture moisture. Break up concrete, and let the earth sponge up moisture again. Encourage the restoration of free-flowing rivers and streams.

This local healing energy, watershed by watershed, will assist in the re-greening and re-moisturizing of the earth, and help to restore clean and clear water to our streams of life.

*Ruthanne Cecil, J.D., has a degree in doctoral law and works in international law and is a policy analyst at the Center for Environmental Economic Development. She lectures widely on how tax shifting and other fiscal options can provide resources for urgent global needs and is currently drafing a proposal called "The Green Marshall Plan."*



water spirit - traditional Sami drawing

*(**BURGESS** continued from page 8)*
for whom salmon lie at the very center of their culture, these losses have been particularly acute and to look at the history of many Pacific and Atlantic salmon rivers is in reality a lens through which to view the history of native and non-native relations. The Ainu in Hokkaido were forbidden to catch salmon through much of the 20th century. The construction of enormous dams on the Columbia blocked thousands of miles of spawning grounds and The Dalles Dam eliminated forever the historic native fishery at Celilo Falls in Oregon.

The Sami have long had their salmon fisheries intensively regulated by the nation states of Sweden, Norway and Finland. The Sami along the Ponoi River in Russia's Kola Peninsula have been forcibly removed from their traditional fishing villages and have had to contend with powerful sports fishing lobbies whose interests may not always coincide with native fisheries. This is a common story from the Atlantic to the Pacific — from Canada to Alaska to Sápmi. Arguably those who have suffered the most from the industrialization of the "silver swimmer" are those who have the most to teach us when it comes to stewarding, celebrating and living alongside the resource.

In the midst of what has been lost, ancient stories are still being told, and ceremonies are still being performed. This indicates that the vital link between salmon and the Peoples who depend on them has not been entirely broken. There remains reverence for the fish upon which some People are entirely co-dependant, for not only do salmon return home and provide nutrients to whole villages, they provide sustenance to many other species in the forest that eagerly await the salmon's return.

However, in the current atmosphere of argument and counter argument, quotas and regulations, endless statistics and projected returns, the deep significance of ceremony has been overlooked. Perhaps it is with ceremony and stories that we can begin to reevaluate the place of salmon in our lives. With all this in mind that the Sustainable Ireland Cooperative and the Coomhola Salmon Trust have proposed an innovative festival called "Celebrating the Vital Link" that has at its epicenter a celebration of salmon and the stories and ceremonies of the Salmon People that weave their way between.

Conceived of as a weekend event, the festival will be held on the banks of the salmon-bearing Coomhola River in West Cork, Ireland in September 2002. Guest presenters, storytellers and spiritual elders from various nations and cultures where salmon still occupy an important position are being invited.

Participation is being sought from from Indigenous and First Nations as well as individuals and groups involved in watershed restoration, local fisheries, sports fishing and marketing.

If salmon are good ecological indicators of the kind of world that we live in — and currently their diminished runs clearly demonstrate the negative results of our cut-and-run models of economic growth — then the people whose livelihoods and lives have been intertwined with the fate of the salmon have both the most to lose and the most to gain by reorientating contemporary lifestyles towards choices that favor the salmon. Restoring ecosystems so that there is space for both salmon and Salmon People will mean decisions by all of us who live within watersheds about the kind of world we wish to live in.

For more information, contact: Salmon Festival, c/o, The Sustainable Ireland Cooperative, 159 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6, Republic of Ireland. <sustainable.ireland@anu.ie>

*Philip Burgess is a native of Dublin, Ireland. He completed his Masters in Arctic Studies at the University of Lapland, Finland in 1996. His thesis, published by the Arctic Centre, Rovaniemi, looked at the impact of sports fishing on the traditional Sami fishery on the Deatnu. He is currently working on a variety of Arctic-related projects on salmon fisheries, sustainable development and traditional knowledge. He lives on Musqueam territory (Vancouver, B.C.) with his wife, Rauna Kuokkanen, who is a native of the Deatnu.*

## THREATENED SAMI SACRED SPRINGS NEEDS YOUR HELP

*Suttesaja* ("The Stream That Doesn't Freeze") is above the Arctic Circle near Utsjoki, Finland. Sami purify themselves in the waters there before they visit the sacred mountain *Ailegas* nearby. Suttesaja is the largest natural springs in Finland and as such it is now in danger of having its waters bottled and sold. In April the local government announced a feasibility study regarding the exporting of water from *Suttesaja*.

The first threat to *Suttesaja* came several hundred years ago when the area was forcibly christianized. Much of the knowledge about the spiritual significance of such sacred sites was lost, hidden or destroyed. Many elders are now unable to pass sacred knowledge on to future generations. Steps have been taken to see that further desecration of Sami sacred sites does not occur.

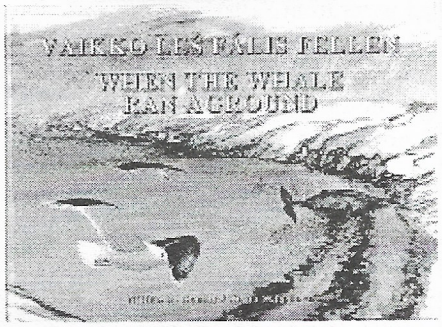
Article 13 of *The United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which is supported by the three Sami Parliaments and the Sami Council, states in part: "Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites. States shall take effective measures, in conjunction with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to ensure that Indigenous sacred places be preserved, respected and protected." In other words, sacred sites like *Suttesaja* are not for sale.

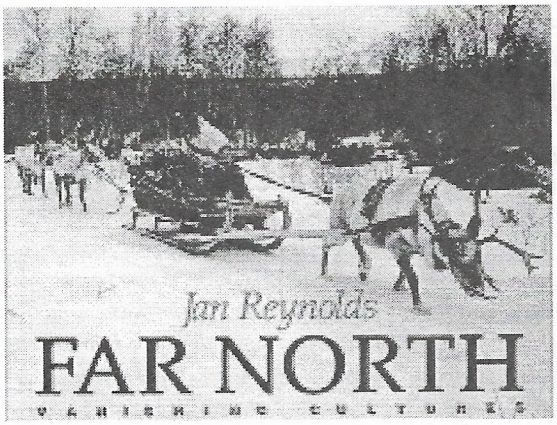
Thanks to pressure from a number of concerned local Sami a public hearing was held in Utsjoki in October. *Báiki*'s e-mails to Heikki Niittyvuopio, the Utsjoki project leader, regarding the outcome of that meeting have not been answered. The Sami are asking people worldwide to contact him and that copies of e-mails to him are also sent to <Suttesaja@ZipLip.com> so they know of your support. Please help the Sami in their effort to save *Suttesaja*. Contact:

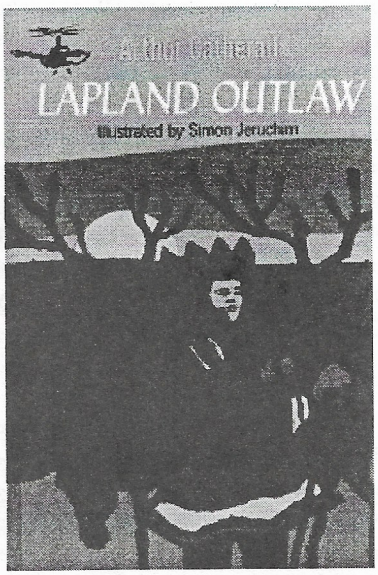
Heikki Niittyvuopio
Utsjoen Kunta, PL 41
99980 Utsjoki, FINLAND
Fax: +358-16-677339
e-mail: heikki.niittyvuopio@utsjoki.fi

BÁIKI REVIEWS

# SAAMI BOOKS IN ENGLISH


*by Nathan Muus and Faith Fjeld*

People have asked us about good books on the Saami culture that are suitable for young people and written in English. First we asked ourselves, "What constitutes a good book about the Saami?" We came up with four questions that we would use as criteria about any book before we would recommend it:

1. Does the information come from Saami people in their own words? Anthropologists and "Saami experts" are often the only ones who receive funding to write the books that are published in English. Does the author speak a Saami language? Is the author part of the Saami culture that is being written about?

2. Does the book re-enforce stereotypes? Only 10% of the Saami herd reindeer today, yet most young peoples' books in English present nomadism as the way all Saami live. Are the Saami portrayed as being colorful and exotic? Worse yet, do they appear as little comic figures?

3. Does the book present the Saami as a "vanishing culture"? Authors often assume that the Saami are about to disappear — which they are not. Is the past tense used? Is the assumption made that assimilation is inevitable? Does the author treat the Saami worldview as if it no longer has relevance?

4. Does the text use misleading, or racist terminology? Authors often use terms like "pre-Christian" to suggest that all Saami converted during the missionary period — which they did not — and does the book use objectionable terms like "magic drum," "superstition," and "heathen idols?"

Using these questions as criteria we selected twenty-three books, and picked five of them as "Best Bets." The book titles that are underlined are still in print.

**BEST BETS:**

These five books answer the need for accurate, balanced portrayals of Saami life. We recommend them without reservation. Three of the authors are Saami, one is Swedish and one is American.

***A Year in Lapland: Guest of the Reindeer Herders*, Hugh Beach, Washington & London, Smithsonian Institution Press: 1993.** Hugh Beach is an American anthropologist who lives and teaches in Sweden, speaks the Saami language, has lived in a goahtti and worked with reindeer. This book is a real-life adventure story of the best kind. In describing the rhythms of Nature and what reindeer life is like today, Beach makes you feel as if you are part of it all too.

***Sami- an Indigenous People of the Arctic*, Odd Mathis Haetta, Karasjok, Norway, Davvi Girji o.s: 1993.** Haetta is a well known educator and author of many articles on the Saami society. This concise 79-page basic introduction to Saami history and culture can be used as a handy reference.

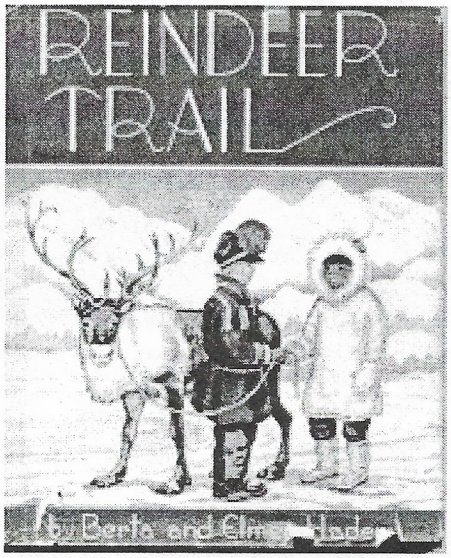
***People of Eight Seasons*, Ernst Manker, N.Y., Crescent Books: 1972.** Manker, Swedish, is a respected scholar. This beautifully-designed book for older children (and adults) is easily the best coffee table-size introduction to traditional Saami culture that exists. The book contains outstanding detailed drawings of the people, animals, plants, tools, clothing and other elements of year-round life in Sápmi.

***When the Whale Ran Aground*, Niillas A. Somby, Govadas, Sirma, Norway: 1996.** Somby is a well-known activist, photographer and journalist. Based on an incident from an elder's childhood, the book portrays the realities of the subsistence lifestyle. There are beautiful illustrations by Sirpa Seppanen. Written in Sámigiella and English this is far and away the best children's book.

***Turi's Book of Lapland*, Johan Turi, Harper and Brothers, New York and London: 1910.** This is the first book about the Saami culture written and illustrated by a "real Saami" instead of the anthros and explorers who were "discovering" them at the time. Originally written in the Sami language and later published in Danish and in English, the folksy unpretentious text and simple line drawings capture the essence of turn of the century Saami life when nomad-

## BÁIKI REVIEWS

# FOR YOUNG READERS





ism was still flourishing. The book contains a wealth of information about healing practices, understanding the weather, resisting colonization, etc. It is a wonderful source of timeless information.

The rest of the books we've separated into three categories:

### SHORT STORIES & NOVELS

***The Way of the Four Winds*, Yrja Kokko, New York, G.P. Putman: 1954**, is an excellent novel based on the story of a Finnish Sami siida, said to be Wimme (the joiker's) family.

Another one of the better ones is ***Lapland Outlaw*, Arthur Catherall, N.Y., Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., Inc: 1966**. This book is about the theft of some reindeer from the family herd. It is culturally realistic, and has good, if sparse, illustrations.

Another short novel for middle school and older readers is ***North of Skarv Island*, Karl Wikstrom, Grants Pass, Oregon, Midgard Press: 1985.** This book contains events that involve both fishing and reindeer Saamis as well as Norwegians. It even comes with questions for classroom use.

### FOLK TALES & LEGENDS

Two books for 6th grade and older readers are ***Legends and Folktales of Lappland*, Valerie Stalder, London & Oxford, Mowbrays: 1972**, and ***The Enchanted Forest*, Robert Crottet, London, Richard Press: 1949**. The first book contains stories from many parts of Saamiland and the second book contains stories from the Eastern or Skolt Saami from the Russian Kola Peninsula. A third book in this category is ***Lapland Legends*, Leonne de Cambrey, New Haven, and Yale University Press: 1926,** which contains Swedish Saami tales.

An additional book of folk tales that is difficult to find, but well worth the hunt, is ***Daughter of the Moon:and Son of the Sun*, as told by A. Yelagina with drawings by E. Bulatov and O. Vasiliev, Moscow, Malysh Publishers: 1979**. This is a 24-page beautifully- illustrated gem aimed at young readers, that can be enjoyed by all ages. A great book for grandmas and grandpas to read out loud!

### PHOTO ESSAYS

Two fairly recent books offer nicely written and illustrated stories of North Norwegian Saami reindeer life and can still be found in book stores and book sellers' booths at cultural festivals. They are ***The Reindeer People*, Ted Lewin, Macmillan, N.Y: 1994**, and ***Far North—Vanishing Cultures*, Jan Reynolds,N.Y., Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich: 1992.**

*(BOOKS continued on page 28)*

## www.baiki.org

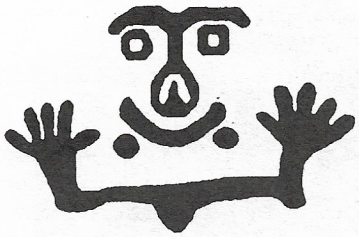
Randy Rhody, Báiki's new web master, specializes in family tree web sites.

Báiki's new web site <www.baiki.org> has drawn favorable comment from long-time "*Baikers*" as well as from those who are visiting it to establish Saami connections for the very first time. People tell us they appreciate the basic cultural information and links to other educational Saami web sites including that of the Sami Siidda of North America and web sites from Sápmi. We can say from first-hand experience that the *Báiki* web site is quick to download, simple to navigate and that the name is easy to remember. We also think it looks good.

Randy Rhody (pictured above) is behind all this. An accomplished artist and teacher, Randy came to *Báiki* with six years' experience as a freelance Silicon Valley web site designer for individuals and small businesses. Randy's sister Barbara Eckels, a long-time *Báiki* subscriber now living in Kalispell, MT, suggested that he design a web site for us. When we met Randy and he told us he believes that the greatest asset of the internet is the distribution of information, we knew this would be a good fit. Like us, he views the web as a library, not a shopping mall. To top it off we found out that Randy specializes in unique pictorial family tree web sites!

Curious to see what Randy could do with *your* family genealogy and family photos on a family tree web site of your own? Just visit Randy's family tree web site at <http://vagamag.tripod.com/index.htm>, or his wife's family tree web site at <http://silversmokey.tripod.com/luco_louis.htm>. To contact him you can e-mail randy@randyrhody.com, or call him at (650) 949-4399.

(*STOVER continued from page 19*)



of daylight left and would surely catch up with them by then.

By 11:00 pm he still hadn't caught up with them, but didn't want to turn back because a dog team was so valuable back then. We depended on them for hauling wood and water, for trapping, for meeting the mail plane which came in twice a week, and also for recreation.

Meanwhile back at home Mom knew something was wrong. When she drug out her old gas-powered washing machine and started doing laundry we all knew she was really worried because that was what she did when something bothered her and there was nothing she could do. Finally, at 11:00 pm she went to our neighbor Willie and asked if he would go and look for Dad.

The temperature was 30 degrees below zero. I made the mistake of asking Mom that if Dad died how would we bury him since the ground was so frozen. That was not the right thing to say, I found out!

Willie found Dad cold, but okay, and the next day the two men went out and found Blackie and the dog team, still pulling the sled. Dad tried a couple of times more with Blackie and finally gave up. Some dogs are just not good lead material.

*Mary Eyman and Lois Stover are part of a Sami-Yup'ik extended family brought together by the Alaska Reindeer Project. A Memorial to their father, Tim Twitchell, follows.*

## TIM TWITCHELL 1906 - 2001

(left) Anna Spein (Sami) and her husband Tim Twitchell (Yup'ik) in the Kodiak home of their daughter Lois Stover whose story "A Tense Moment," and "Fishing for the Big Ones" by their daughter Mary Eyman, page 19 ff, are from their life together on the Kuskokwim River; (right) Tim as a young man.

Tim Twitchell died March 29, 2001 at the Pioneer Home in Palmer, Alaska at the age of 95. He was born on January 31, 1906 in Bethel. His father was Adam Hollis Twitchell, a white trader from Jamaica, Vermont, and his mother was Irena Kochek, a Yup'ik woman from Nelson Island, Alaska. Twitchell's life parallels that of many Alaskans of his generation: In order to survive, he learned to do many things well.

He lived during a time of change. His daughter, Lois Stover, writes that as a boy he saw the first airplanes come into the Bethel area. He went to high school in Fairbanks but returned home when his mother contacted tuberculosis during the epidemic and after she died he stayed on to help his Dad with reindeer herding. When he finally went back to finish school he was one of the first Alaska Natives to graduate from the University of Alaska.

Tim married Anna Spein, the daughter of Sami reindeer herders who came to Alaska with the Reindeer Project. Some of his family's history is chronicled in *Báiki* Issue #22, "Subsistence in Alaska: Then and Now."

Tim ran the Northern Commercial Store in Aniak on the Kuskokwim River and it was here that Mary (Eyman), Esther and Becky, her older sisters, were born. Lois (Stover) and Anna were born after the family moved to Akiak to run Carlisle's General Store.

Then the family moved upriver to Takotna where Tim's father ran the General Store and grew potatoes that were sold along the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers. Here, Sonny, Matthew, Ruth and Hannah were added to their family. Tim helped with the farming, was the town's postmaster, taught school, worked as a hunting guide and commercial fisherman and he and Anna served together as the town's midwives. They also trapped beaver, wolves and marten for fur.

In 1956, Tim moved the family to Anchorage when he took a job with Union Oil. Here their last child, Rachel, was born. Anna died in 1986 and Ruth died in 1999.

Lois says one of her father's sayings was: "If a task is once begun, never leave until it's done. Be thy labor great or small, do it well or not at all." Another was: "If you can't sing good, at least sing loud."

Willard Staats, a long time resident of Wasilla, knew Tim. "I would stop to pick up fuel at the Union 76, and while I was filling up my truck, Tim and I would talk. He was part of the old reindeer group that herded in Alaska. Later, my wife Carol and I would visit him in the Pioneer Home in Palmer."

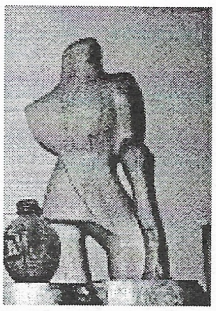
The organizations Tim Twitchell belonged to bear witness to the diverse nature of his interests. They include the Cook Inlet Native Organization, the Masons, Eastern Star, the Sons of Norway, Pioneers of Alaska and the Retired Teachers Association.

Of her father, Lois says, "He was a great man and we celebrate his life and thank him for his patience, love and teachings."

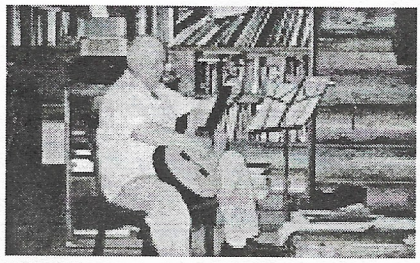
Tim Twitchell is survived by 9 children, 23 grandchildren and 15 great-grand children.

# BETWEEN TWO RIVERS

## (CAROL & LILLIAN STAATS continued from page 20-21)



**CAROL STAATS ON VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY:** "It's the most gratifying lifestyle I can think of. You don't have to be doing very much — you just have to be aware. It's like being in my Yellow Room with the sun streaming through the windows, relaxed and empowered." The photo is of two of her sculptures, that grace her Yellow Room.

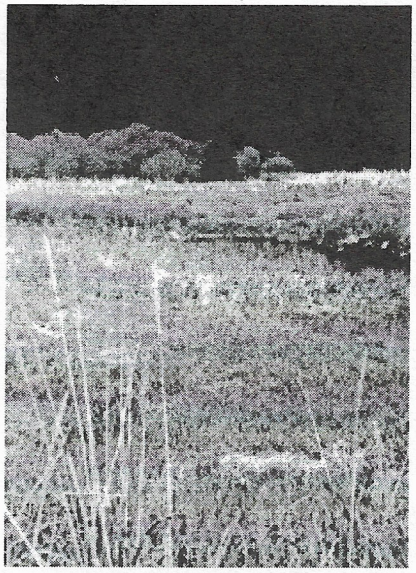


Willard Staats playing classical guitar

**C.S. ON HER HUSBAND WILLARD:** "We met on a bus in Montana – he was reading the poetry of Robert Service out loud. He worked as a heavy equipment operator for Arco and now that he's retired he's become a gourmet chef. He also plays classical guitar and writes haiku. He once did a book for his Mother with haiku for each of the pictures that were reminiscent of her life."

Carol Staats in the Yellow Room of her studio cabin holding up flax fibers from their farm

**C.S. ON HER CHILDHOOD ON DOUGLAS ISLAND:** "I grew up on the fjords. We had a boat and went fishing for salmon and halibut, and we went gold panning, camped out and visited with the neighbors. We'd go to the beach and get clams, and we'd pick salmonberries, blueberries, cranberries, and thimbleberries."



A sedge grass meadow in the Matanooska Valley

**LILLIAN STAATS ON BEING A POET:** "It is not a talent, an intelligence, or a special sensitivity. It is a *compulsion.* You see something so beautiful you just have to share it. *Poetry is a prayer to our higher self.* There are moments when I *must* write. Once when I read Mom's and my poetry I started to cry. They were joyous tears. But the next day my boss asked me if I had emotional problems."

Carol Staats

**L.S. ON WHAT SHE LEARNED FROM HER MOTHER:** "She taught me four letters that I have on a piece of paper: "S-I-S-U." I taped those letters where I can see them because they keep me going every day. They are my real connection to my Sami family. SISU means more than courage. It means steadfastness of spirit. SISU keeps me from being a cry baby."

# LULEJU GLOSSARY

***ÁHCCI***: father
***ÁHKKU***: grandmother or female elder
***ARRAN***: fireplace in the middle of a goahhti, with its center directly on the earth and stones in a circle around it
***DAZA***: a non-Sami, or ordinary person, usually a Scandinavian
***DUOTTAR***: a bare mountain plateau
***EALLU***: reindeer herd ( from ***EALLIN*** or "life")
***GAMA - GÁPMAGAT***: Sami shoes worn in the summer
***GIELLA***: a snare used to catch ptarmigans
***GÁRDI***: a reindeer fence or corral
***GIETKA***: a Sami cradleboard
***GOAHTI***: a Sami turf hut or earth cottage
***GUKSI***: wooden drinking cup made from a birch burl
***GUOVSSAHASAT***: *aurora borealis*
***LÁVLOT***: to sing in an ordinary non-Sami way
***LAVVU***: a tent used by herders, not families
***LUOHTI***: a Sami joik
***ORDA***: timberline or forest line
***RIVGU***: a non-Sami woman
***SÁMI (SAAMI, SAMI)***: the People of Sápmi
***SAMIENA***: Samiland
***SÁPMI (SÁBMI)***: the ancient and correct name of Lappland in the language of its inhabitants
***SIIDA***: a family or a few families together and the area they use and share together; a "village"
***SIIDA-ISIT***: village elder or leader
***SUOHPAN***: a lasso
***TUNDRA***: frozen barren arctic land
***YOIK (JOIK)***: Sami vocable chanting

*(SAAMI BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS IN ENGLISH from page 28)*


***Vanishing Lapland*, Arthur Catherall, N.Y., Franklin Watts Inc: 1972**, suitable for middle school readers, has wonderful photos, although the text is tied to the past.

There are some older photo essay books for children that are worth searching out as well. First there is ***Children of Lapland*, Thoro Thorsmark, New York, Rand McNally: 1936** which features the Karasuando Swedish Saami children of the time. Wonderful photos and the text is not too bad either. Glaring fault - no one in the photos has a name, the people are all called " Lapps!" Two others are ***Nomads of the North*, N.Y., Anna Riwkin Brick with text by Elly Jannes, Macmillan Co: 1962** and ***Elle Kari*, Nordisk Rotogravyr, Stockholm: 1952.** Both are set in northern Sweden.

***Follow The Reindeer*, Sonia and Tim Gidal, N.Y., Pantheon Books: 1959** is set in northern Norway, pre-snowmobile period, and ***Men, Moss and Reindeer, The Challenge of Lapland*, Erick Berry, Challenge Books, N.Y: 1959** portrays traditional life. These two books are nicely illustrated with color photos, maps and drawings that are aimed at grade school students. But there is that irritating use of the past tense and culturally-biased statements.

Another more recent book is ***Saami of Lapland — Threatened Cultures*, Piers Vitebsky, N.Y., Thomson Learning: 1993.** It is one of the better introductions to the Saami culture for young readers.

There are still other children's books that meet most of our criteria and that we recommend.

One of them is ***Children of Lapland*, Bodil Hagbrink, Plattsburgh, N.Y., Tundra Books:1978.** It is well-written and informative with painstakingly-detailed illustrations of north Norwegian Saami life and it is in Norwegian and English. ***Reindeer Trail*, Berta and Elmer Hader, N.Y., Macmillian and Co: 1959**, is another. It tells the story of Saami herders who brought reindeer to the Eskimos of Alaska at the turn of the century — a moment in American history that rarely makes it into children's books. And yet another good book of photographs is ***Lapland and the Lapps*, Ernst Manker, Stockholm, Nordisk Rotogravyr: 1953.**

Since most of the abovementioned books are out of print, our next question is: "Where can out of print books on the Saami be found?"

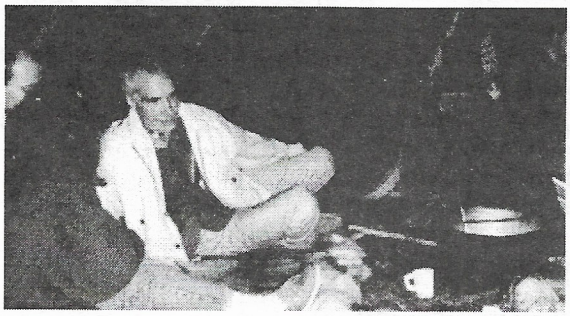
Most can be found on the Internet. Try <http://www.abebooks.com> and <http://www.bookfinder.com>; <DavviGirji.com> is the best internet site specifically for recently published Saami books available in English. For those who are not online, try used bookstores and your public library.

Saami books still in print can often be found at Scandinavian and Finnish bookstores and gift shops and we have sometimes found them at cultural festival book stands.

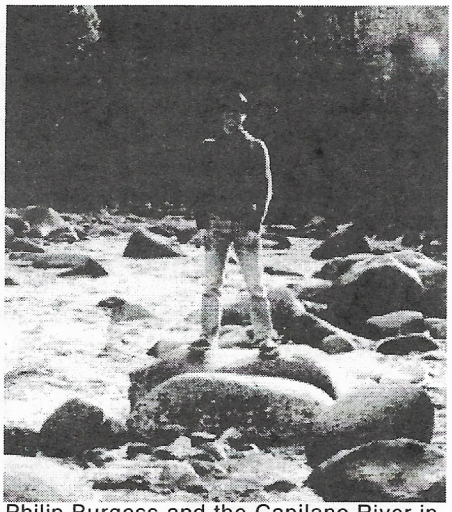
We know that a large number of excellent books for children and youth have been published in Sápmi . Written and illustrated by Saami writers and artists, they cover traditional, contemporary, and cross-cultural subject matter, including old legends, teachings about Nature, environmental issues,and the subsistence lifestyle. A number of them have been translated into Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish, and so we ask one final question: "Why haven't these books been translated into English?"

# SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Ruthanne Cecil standing in front of a Finnish sauna near the cabin she built for her family in the Mattole-Eel River bioregion in the redwood country of northern California



Grey Eagle (Ken Jackson) in a *lavvu* with friends at Sami College in Sápmi



Philip Burgess and the Capilano River in Vancouver

Carol Staats (l) and her daughter Lillian (r) in the home of Jean Anderson Graves, director of the Alaska Yukon Library in Anchorage (c).

Elle Han'sa (Hans Ragnar Mathisen) at an exhibit of his woodcuts at the Tromsø Museum,Tromsø, Norway

(l-r) Faith Fjeld, Lois Stover and Mary Eyman having breakfast at King's Diner, Kodiak,Alaska

The late Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (r) on his last North American visit, standing with Nathan Muus, the host of a community gathering in his honor in Minneapolis .

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**Rosemount, MN**

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