

Larsen Bay Cannery Is Big Operation

(Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles by Mrs. Eudora Preston, in which she describes her visits among the inhabitants of the villages on Kodiak Island.)

By Eudora Preston

I flew into Larsen Bay from Karluk on the mail run. Here I was house guest of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Howe and their son Jim. Pilot "Al" took me to the cannery office and introduced me to Bruno Tominali, the Office Manager. He in turn took me to Mrs. Howe, who is operating the cannery laundry this summer. Jim is marking time until his fishing permit arrives. He will be seining alone in his own dory as he is under age. Lloyd Howe is operating the labeling machine. What a huge cannery this is. The largest in the State, I understand. Three lanes and so extensive the staff goes around on bicycles! Jim took me through and did a very commendable job of explaining the machinery operations. This year Larsen Bay is bringing in Eskimo workers to replace the Filipino. The cannery workers say the Eskimo are the best workers they have had and they are always happy. This will be a much needed boost to their

economy. I am happy to see this.

Bill Mosier is the very capable cook and turns out excellent meals in the cafeteria style mess hall, new this year. John Seible is the baker. His sweet rolls disappear at "mug-up" like magic. John is European born, and there learned his trade. Need I say more? Met Russell Lotti the cannery cook; now I know why I like Alaska canned salmon. Stewart Rouch, the office bookkeeper, always had a ready grin whenever we met. Al St. Germain is back again this year as Radio Operator. Pete Marinkovich the cannery superintendent, cheerful and well liked by all is, of course, one of the bicycle riders. His wife, Dolly, runs the store and P. O. It is seldom you find such a delightful person both capable and attractive.

Jim was my day time guide. Between visiting we found time to halibut fish and hunt octopus. Delightful eating. We stopped in for morning coffee with Marie Jones, now living at Larsen Bay. Interrupted Margaret Rastopsoff in her washing. I was very sorry to have missed seeing Dora Aga but she and John were out fishing. One evening Mrs. Howe and I

walked over to Ella Carlsen's and had a very nice visit. Two of her children, Herman and Evelyn, are home from Mt. Edgecumbe. This fall Bobby will join them as a freshman. I left Larsen Bay with the desire to return and get to know the people better and see more of the area.

Fly with Kodiak Airways and see the island! This is NOT a commercial. From Larsen Bay I flew to Afognak via Lazy Bay and Old Harbor. If you have never toured this beautiful island, by no means pass up such an opportunity. The mail must be delivered and passengers must get off and get on. I was the one that gained in this trip.

I was the house guest of Paddy and Nadia Muller and arrived just at dinner time! Afognak is my idea of THE place to retire. This village was founded in the early part of the last century under the name of Ratkovsky, for the aged and pensioned employees of the Russian American Co. The village extends in a single row of houses, widely scattered, about a mile along the beach of Afognak Bay.

Some other time I will write about Afognak. After dinner John Sharatin and his bride Thao dropped in. John and Paddy were getting the "Norman J" ready for the season. While Mary and Linda polished off the dishes and "baby set" Patricia and young Norman, the men drove Nadia and me over to the Mill to meet the people in that area. It is about 15 miles of lovely country road. Not all were home but we had coffee and visited with the Wills, newcomers to Afognak, who are here to stay and ranch. They are experienced ranchers from Wyoming and I expect to hear a lot about them. Ira and Mary Sheppard were also there, so of course we did a lot of politicking and talking of mutual friends in other parts of the state. Larry and Kathrine Shaw had just returned home after checking their "net" so we stopped in to say "hello."

The next day Nadia and I started off on foot. We had seen "Junie," John and Paddy off to the fishing grounds. We found her mother, Mrs. Serge Sharatin, Sr. busy washing, but she took time out to make mid-morning tea and visit. She was glad to hear the news I brought from Karluk of her friends there. Those of us who have a common ground, such as native plants and flowers, never run out of things to talk about. Here is a very charming lady and a wonderful mother. We were about to leave when two more daughters arrived. Paula Malutin (Mrs. Joe) and Pasha. From there we went over to visit with Betty Nelson, another gardener. They are building a beautiful home overlooking the Bay. We had a brief visit with Julia Knagin and she was glad to get her mother's message I carried from Karluk.

The next day I was to leave so we went to see Helen Nelson for a brief visit. In the morning we had Britpa Ellison send word I was ready to leave and go to Ouzinkie. While there I met Irene Nelson and her baby son. As we walked along the beach we watched two small children playing in the water in bathing suits, while their mother watched. It was Tena Larson and her two little girls, who had been my next door neighbors here in Kodiak. So good to see them again. We stopped and had lunch with Ralph Demidoff, Nadia's uncle, a very fine man. We visited until Bob Hall picked me up.

Herman Haakinson arranged for me to stay at the Mission. While wandering around town I talked with several and met mutual friends again. Fay Haakinson took me up to meet Jennie Chernikoff.

We had a delightful visit and I learned much of the problems there. The pattern is much the same in all the rural areas. I talked briefly with her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Mike Chernikoff. Eric Bullmer invited me to Sunday breakfast at the cannery but I was unable to go. I regret that.

That afternoon the MV Expansion came in and I returned that way. It was like coming home. I knew most of the passengers and crew, for a few years ago I made the trip to Nikolski. Agnes Schlos-

ser, a teacher whom I have known for over 20 years, was aboard. Of course I had dinner aboard with her and caught up on all the statewide news of old friends from Point Hope to Ketchikan.

Boucher In Charge

Sergeant John Boucher will be in charge of the local police force during the absence of the Chief of Police, according to an announcement by R. E. Vickery.

Vickery will be away on vacation for two months.

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