

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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Guide prepared by: Sara Piasecki, Photo Archivist

TITLE: Richard Huff Photographs

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2005.006

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1950

Extent: 2 items

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Audrey and Frank Morgan

Administrative/Biographical History:

Little Diomed Island, Alaska, is the smaller of the two Diomed Islands located in the middle of the Bering Strait between the Alaskan mainland and Siberia. Big Diomed Island, across the International Date Line to the west, belongs to Russia. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union established a military presence on Big Diomed, and villagers were prohibited from travelling between the islands.

According to Arthur Eide in his 1952 memoir, *Drums of Diomed*, the Eskimos objected violently to the presence of white teachers on Little Diomed, and had forcibly removed the teachers who served immediately prior to Eide's arrival.

"In 1953 Gerald F. and Donna Carlson were assigned to Little Diomed Island where they were the only teachers for all grades K-12. At that time there were 130 Inupiat on Little Diomed - 35 were students from K-8 in a one-room schoolhouse. The schoolhouse also served as the Carlson's home - it being the only square building on the island except for a small Catholic church, St. Jude's, built by Father Tom Cunningham." ["Diomed," <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ak/state/diomed.html>. Retrieved June 16, 2011]

The school year 1953-1954 in Little Diomed Island was adapted to better serve the local needs. The teaching took place through the holidays and also some weekends to complete the 180 days of class time before the walrus migration started in the Spring. The annual walrus hunt meant major supply and income possibilities for the villagers, and everybody's help was needed. The primary language at the time was Inupiat, and students were also taught English. The only way of communication with the outside world was by amateur radio. The non-existing health care was somewhat upgraded with a basic medication knowledge by seasonal teachers. ["Diomed, Alaska." In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved June 16, 2011]

Audrey and Frank Morgan co-wrote the photo essay "Alaska's Russian Frontier: Little Diomed Island," which was published in *National Geographic magazine* in April 1951. The two images included in this collection were not included in that article.

Scope and Content Description:

Collection consists of two black-and-white mounted photographs of student activities on Little Diomed Island.

Arrangement:

Not applicable

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

Materials copyrighted by photographers. No reproductions.

Preferred Citation:

Richard Huff Photographs; Anchorage Museum, B2005.006

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Donated by Richard Huff in 2005.

SUBJECTS

Eskimos—Alaska—Diomed

Eskimos—Education—Alaska—Diomed

Diomed (Alaska)

Little Diomed Island (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection

.1 – Typed caption on back: Alaska, Little Diomedes Island. Under a canopy of crepe paper and colored lights, you would never guess this to be a group of Diomedes Eskimo enjoying a “white dance” to the music of a phonograph. Date stamp: Rec’d Oct 30 1950. [at AFN 2014, location tentatively identified as Nome High School gym, individuals identified as, left to right: Theresa Omiak?, John Iyapana, [unknown], Cecilia Omiak, James Iyapana, [unknown], Sophie Omiak, [unknown couple], Albert Iyahuk, Annie Iyapana Iyahuk, [unknown couple]]

.2 – Typed caption on back: Alaska, Little Diomedes Island. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught in the Government school; but bringing in the game from the Polar Pack and skin sewing is still more important than schooling to the future existence of these young citizens on Diomedes Island. Date stamp: Rec’d Oct 30 1950.

Guide updated: October 29, 2014