

Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

**Allison, Laura Sundi, Artist**

**Sundi Collection, ca. 1944-1980**

**PCA 174**

42 photoprints (of illustrations)

Revised: 1/8/2003

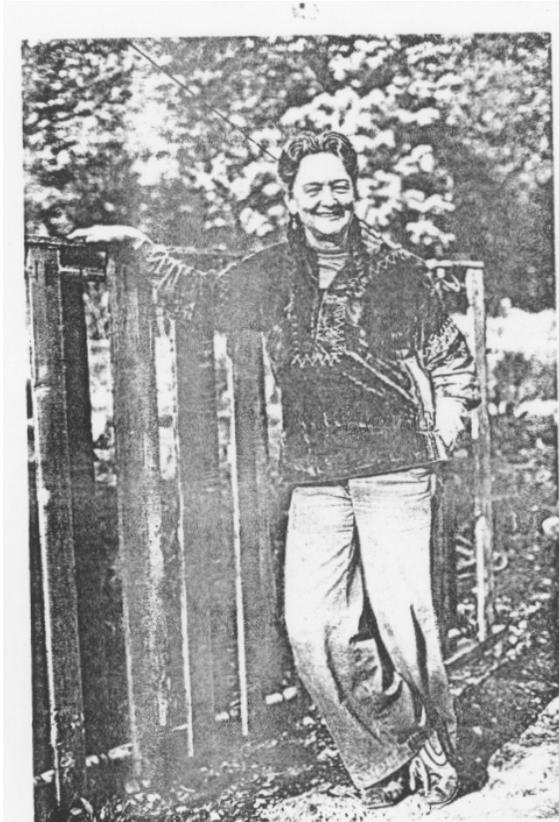
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## Biographical Note



Known by old timers as Sundi, Laura Sundi Allison came to the Territory of Alaska in 1944 and applied for and proved up on a homestead on Sundi Lake just outside of Anchorage in 1951. For thirty years she lived in Ketchikan, Anchorage (when there was only four blocks of paved street in town), Bethel, Moose Pass, Point Barrow, Umiat and Galena. While in Alaska, she made sketching trips by train, boat, bush plane and dog sled to many native villages.

She owned gold mining claims on the Kenai, worked for Statehood and was on the Alaska Centennial Kenai Committee, saw Mt. Spurr erupt and was in Anchorage during the "Big Quake."

Sundi received a B.A. in art and a M.A. in art history from California State University, Los Angeles, and completed a year of graduate work in art at Ching Chir University, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China.

Dr. Karl Reinhard wrote in a letter to her:

You are the first artist who has shown, in the faces of the Eskimos you paint, their sensitive nature, deep-seated good humor, tender emotions and light heartedness. Personally I consider you the finest portrayer of the Eskimo people."

Sundi moved to Eatonville, Washington, later in her life. (Acc. No. 1980-019.)

## Scope and Contents Note

Eskimo drawings.

The prints are copies from her sketch book; the originals are oil or water color.

## Inventory

- 1     "Ko Ko & Yum Yum" [Boy and dog portrait]
- 2     "Jimmix" [Jimmix is name of bush plane company in Bethel]
- 3     "Fish Camp" [Woman on beach with fish on racks in background]
- 4     "Bows" [Two boys & girl with new bows & arrow their grandfather made them.]
- 5     "Mask Dancer" [Three women & a man in mask]
- 6     "Snow Slide" [Two boys playing on mountain, village below]
- 7     "Story Knife" [Two boys & girl with story knife - every grandfather makes a story knife for each little girl in family]
- 8     "Woman Dance" [Four women on bench doing special dance called the "Woman Dance"]
- 9     "Russian Eskimo" [Woman and two girls standing - she was part Russian]
- 10    "Sod Hut" [Girl eating muktuk - sod hut in background]
- 10    "Sod Hut" [Girl eating muktuk - sod hut in background]
- 11    "Dance Fans" [Woman with dance fans - portrait]
- 12    "Skin Stretching" [Woman stretching skin - wash on line in background]
- 13    "Dance Wand" [Hooper Bay dancers - two women & man - dance wand is seen in foreground]
- 14    "Boy Dancer" [Jimmy dancing with fans]
- 15    "Hulligan Baskets" [Hooligan (Smelt) drying on line - two women are cutting them down and packing]
- 16    "Kids & Pups" [three kids and pups in front of sod hut]
- 17    "Eskimo Mother" [mother and baby]
- 18    "Kayak" [Two hunters with kayak]

- 19 "Seal Passing" [First seal catch in the spring is shared with all the neighbors to celebrate seal season, it is called "Seal Passing".]
- 20 "Seal Hunt" [Hunter brings home seal catch - two boys help pull seal in]
- 21 "Seal Poke" [Woman with two pokes made of blown-up dried seal hides she will use them in which to store vegetables or berries for winter]
- 22 KIDS AND SLED [Three kids by a sled]
- 23 GRASS BASKETS [Eskimo woman & daughter whose P.H.S. nurse how to weave baskets]
- 24 GRAVEYARD [Old lady has set down to rest in Russian Orthodox graveyard at St. Michael]
- 25 [Three women stringing smelt and putting on racks. One child in background]
- 26 [Group of Eskimos seated in a semi-circle around a small elevated box - probably a casket]
- 27 [Two young girls playing with mud?]
- 28 [Man in center with green mask; two children on left, two men on right]
- 29 [Young boy standing with hand in pocket; village in background]
- 30 [Woman carrying 2 pails on wind swept beach; village in background]
- 31 [Two little barefoot girls on the beach.]
- 32 [Four young girls wearing Calico or fur parkas, three seated in front of hut, one standing in the doorway.]
- 33 [Same as 16 but uncolored.]
- 34 [Same as 12 but uncolored.]
- 35 [Woman ice fishing with two rods and a fish on the line.]
- 36 [Two Eskimos hanging skins to dry.]
- 37 [Two boats in the water with passengers; group of walrus on ice floe on shore.]

- 38 [Eskimo lady with baby in a pack on her back.]
- 39 [Man chopping wood in front of hut. Woman, small boy and five dogs standing by.]
- 40 [Same as 18 but uncolored.]
- 41 [Three women skinning and preparing skins for hanging on a rack.]
- 42 [Three women and two girls berrypicking.]