

# Alaska History News

Volume 40, No. 3 Quarterly of the Alaska Historical Society

September 2012



Sitka, October 10-13, 2012

itka is *the* place to be this October. With the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood centennial celebration and the annual Alaska Day festivities flanking the AHS conference, history and merriment will resonate through the Southeast gem.

"Alaska on the World Stage" is the Alaska Historical Society's conference theme. Few Alaskans have the first hand historic perspective of Alaska's place in the world as Vic Fischer, our keynote speaker. Fischer has been a legislator, Constitutional Convention member, and expert on the connections between Russia and Alaska. He will be joined by his biographer, Alaskan author Charles Wohlforth. Their public presentation and discussion will start the program. They are followed by a session highlighting an event that garnered Alaska worldwide attention. On the heels of a successful centennial commemoration, the session "Remembering Katmai" will feature presentations from several perspectives of the 1912 volcanc eruption.

While sessions on Russian America, Alaska's role in the history of aviation, and the Filipino legacy in Alaska promise to illuminate Alaska's place in an international context, several sessions on the history of Sitka will help attendees understand and appreciate our host community. On Saturday the conference will be held at the historic Sheldon Jackson College campus, and local folks as well as visitors will want to attend a panel on the legacy of the school and the current resurrection of its campus. Also on Saturday, back by popular demand, New York University professor Michelle Dent is offering a writing workshop.

With our Museums Alaska colleagues, this year's joint conference promises to be great. See you in Sitka!

Anjuli Grantham, Program Chair

### Message from the President

This summer the Alaska Historical Society, along with the Tanana Yukon Historical Society, sponsored the "REEL History" film series at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Every Thursday night in June, July, and August, a volunteer loaded a DVD into the player and screened one of the many classic documentaries that have chronicled Alaska's past. To name just three: People of the Caribou, The Odyssey of Captain Healy, and Reindeer Queen: The Story of Sinrock Mary.

The series has been a regular feature of UAF's summer programs for some time, but this year the university was prepared to pack it in. Even the most popular films typically drew just a dozen people. Some nights only two or three showed up—that's including the volunteer. But some dedicated Fairbanks historians stepped up and made it happen. My thanks to Terrence Cole, John and Elizabeth Cook, Ron Inouye, and Erin Shew.

We had a lot of fun, especially because the evening's enjoyment was in direct proportion to the interest of the attendees, not their number. Most nights when the film ended and the credits rolled, no one left right away but instead stayed to talk about the film and ask questions of Alaska history. One couple who moved to Fairbanks from Outside this spring attended almost every night because they wanted to learn more about their new home state. I was especially gratified later to see that couple browsing the Alaska collection at the UAF Rasmuson Library.

Yes, there are a lot of people who couldn't care less about Alaska history. But there are some, more than you think probably, who are hungry to learn everything they can. It's our job to help them.

Ross Coen, President



Captain Michael A. Healy, with his pet parrot, on the quarterdeck of the Revenue Cutter *Bear*, circa 1895. Courtesy United States Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

# Alaska on the World Stage & Museums Matter: Connecting with Our Communities

Alaska Historical Society / Museums Alaska 2012 Conference Hosted by the Sitka Historical Society October 10-13, 2012 Sitka, Alaska

#### Wednesday, October 10

8:30 AM-4:00 PM Museums Alaska Workshops

Fundamentals of XRF

Bruce Kaiser, Bruker Elemental

#### **Exhibit Makeovers**

• Alice Parman, Ph.D., Keynote Speaker, Museum Consultant

1:00 PM-4:00 PM Alaska State Historical Records Advisory Board Meeting

3:00 PM-4:15 PM Alaska Historical Society and Museums Alaska board meetings

4:30 PM-7:30 PM Opening Reception Cruise

#### Thursday, October 11

7:30 AM-8:30 AM Continental breakfast

8:30 AM-9:45 AM Conference Welcome and Keynote Address:

• Vic Fischer and Charles Wohlforth

#### 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Alaska Historical Society

Remembering Katmai

- Katie Ringsmuth, "The Katmai Centennial Collaboration"
- Katie Myers, "100 Years of Photography in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes"
- Gary Freeburg, "The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes: Revisiting the Alaskan Sublime"

#### Alaskan Historiography

- Olga Zaplatina, "Studying the History of Orthodox Church in Alaska (1867 present): Modern Schools"
- Terrence Cole, Mike Hawfield, Ross Coen, "Misrepresentations of Alaska: Blunders, Howlers, and Gaffes in the Historical Record"

#### Museums Alaska

- NAGPRA in Alaska's Museums, Steve Henrikson, Moderator; Dave McMahan, Marnie Leist, Sue Thorson
- Filling the Gaps: Educational Programming in Museums, Monica Garcia, Moderator; Ryjil Christianson, Marie Acemah, Lisa Golisek

#### 12:00 PM-1:15 PM State of the State Lunch

Clark Gruening, Linda Thibodeau, Judy Bittner

#### Alaska Historical Society / Museums Alaska 2012 Conference

#### 1:30 PM-3:30 PM

#### Alaska Historical Society

From Sitka to the California Coast

- Russell Vanderlugt, "Allen in Sitka: Formation of Alaska's Greatest Expedition"
- Mary Purvis, "Calvin National Geographic Canoe Trip"
- John Straley, "Revisiting Ricketts and Calvin: Sitka's role in Marine Ecology"

#### Sitka History and Archaeology

- Dave McMahan, "An Archaeological Reflection on New Arkangel's International Material Culture in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century"
- Bob Medinger, "Historical Overview of Sitka"
- Steve Henrikson, "Sitka in Images"

#### Museums Alaska

- Think BIG! Care of Large Objects, Norm Lagasse, Moderator; Bob Banghart, Joselyn Young, Richard Beckerman
- Strengthening Interpretation Through Compelling Stories, Scott Carrlee, Moderator

#### 3:30 PM-5:00 PM

#### Alaska Historical Society

Southeast Alaskan Native Art and Education

- Emily L. Moore, "French and English Totems: Landscape Architecture in the New Deal Totem Parks"
- Daniel Monteith, "Naa Kaa Hidi Theater on the World Stage: the History and Impact a Tlingit Theater Group"
- Zachary R. Jones, "'To know of their own heritage,' Tlingit Indian Response to the Indian Self-Determination & Education Assistance Act of 1975"

#### Documenting the Filipino Legacy in Alaska

- Anjuli Grantham, "Kodiak Pinoys: An Historical Overview"
- Marie Acemah, "Collaboratively Making Alaskan Filipino History"
- Diane Rodill, "One of the 'Filipino Boys,' The Biography of a Rascal Youth Whose World Stage Included Alaska"

#### Museums Alaska

- Legal Issues in Collections Management, Presenters from the Office of the Attorney General, State of Alaska
- Walking the Leadership Tightrope, Patricia Relay, Moderator; Patricia Alexander, Jerrie Clarke, Kate Herring

#### 5:00 PM-6:00 PM Joint AHS/MA Board of Directors meeting

6:00 PM-9:00 PM Evening Reception and Entertainment

#### Friday, October 12

7:30 AM-8:30 AM Continental breakfast

#### 8:30 AM-9:45 AM Updates and keynote address

• Alice Parman

#### Alaska Historical Society / Museums Alaska 2012 Conference

#### 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

#### Alaska Historical Society

#### Russian America

- Jackie Pels, "More Than Meets the Page: Alaskans at Fort Ross, 1812-1842"
- Dawn Lea Black, "Late Eighteenth Century Shelikhov-Associated Russian-Alaskan Fur Companies, Before the Formation of the Russian American Company and Excluding the Lebedev-Lastochkin Companies"
- Katherine L. Arndt, "Sitka, Alaska, July 1867"
- Alexander Petrov, "The Importance of Studying History and the Heritage of Russian America in Russian American Relations"

#### Aviation and Communication Technologies in Alaska's Past

- Benjamin Widman, "The Flight of the Black Wolf Squadron: A Discussion of the First Major Introduction of Aviation in Alaska"
- Susan Larrabee, "The ALSIB Route: Gateway of Mistrust"
- Terrence Cole, "Air-Age Cartography: How Aviation and Second World War put Alaska at the Center of the World"
- Morgan R. Blanchard, "The WAMCATS on the World Stage: The role of the Washington Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System in Shaping Alaskan News (1900-1936)

#### Museums Alaska

- Up Close with Alice Parman
- XRF in Alaska's Museums, Angela Linn, Moderator, Savanna Bradley, Scott Carrlee, Josh Reuther, Monica Shah, Dave McMahan

#### 12:00 PM-1:15 PM Local Historical Societies lunch

#### 1:30 PM-3:30 PM

#### Alaska Historical Society

#### Prospecting and Exploration

- Mary F. Ehrlander, "The Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant and the Controversy Surrounding No. 9 Above"
- Chris Allan, "Ed Shieffelin's Alaska Prospecting Party"
- Megan K. Friedel, "Reconstructing the Cook Inlet Exploring Expedition of 1898"
- Margot Higgins, "Mining Living Historys from an Industrial Past"

#### Women, ANCSA, and Cordova

- Virginia Lacy, "Cordova: Oil, Fish, GI's, and Lots of Snow"
- Jane G. Haigh, "Oil Discoveries and Alaska Native Land Claims take Alaska to the World Stage"
- Michelle Dent, "Tumultuous Domesticity"
- Beverly Beeton, "Alaska's First Legislature Grants Women Voting Rights"

#### Museums Alaska

- Exhibits Soup to Nuts, Jackie Fernandez, Moderator; Sarah Asper-Smith, Amy Russell, Jackie Manning, Toby Sullivan, Jill Lipka
- Using Social Media to Further Your Mission, Angela Linn, Moderator; Theresa Bakker, Cassandra Stalzer

4:00 PM-5:00 PM Alaska Historical Society and Museums Alaska annual business meetings

#### 6:00 PM-9:00 PM Awards banquet

#### Alaska Historical Society / Museums Alaska 2012 Conference

#### Saturday, October 13

8:00 AM-9:00 AM Breakfast at Alaska Arts Southeast / Sheldon Jackson Campus

• Updates and remarks

#### 9:00 AM-10:30 AM

Alaska Historical Society

Alaskan Artistic Expression

- Lael Morgan, "An Eskimo Claims an Unlikely Place on the World Stage"
- Ronald K. Inouye, "Promoting the World Stage into Alaska: Impresario Maxim Schapiro and the Alaska Music Trails"
- Kathy Price, "Norman Rosten's *The Big Road*: Literary Inspiration from the Alcan Highway"

Fur, Fruits and Fostered Hopes: Agriculture in Alaska's History

- Sarah Isto, "Alaska Fur Farms, World Fur Markets, Exhibitions, and the Popular Press 1749-1993"
- Daniel Blumlo, "Colonization through Agriculture"
- Rogan C. Faith, "A Kibbutz on the Kenai"

#### Museums Alaska

• Q&A on Museum Matters, Scott Carrlee

#### 9:00 AM-12:15 PM

Legacy of Sheldon Jackson College, Panel and Tour

• Rebecca Poulson & Bob Medinger Coveners

#### 10:45 AM-12:15 PM

Alaska Historical Society

Preserving an Era: Mitigating Alaskan LORAN Base Closures

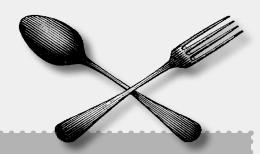
• Terri Asendorf, Jon McVay, Leonard Voellinger, presenters

Alaska on the World's Stage Writers Workshop

• Michelle Lee Dent, presenting

Afternoon: Tours and hikes

REGISTRATION FORM, INFORMATION ON FLIGHTS AND HOTELS, AND ABSTRACTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.ALASKAHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG.



#### LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES LUNCH

Join colleagues from local history groups around the state for a no-host lunch on Friday at the Sitka conference. It is a great opportunity to exchange ideas, news, challenges, and success stories. Please bring copies of recent newsletters, membership brochures, and other materials from your organization to share. All are welcome to join the conversation!

In past years this has been a popular conference event. If you are planning to attend, it would be appreciated if you would email akhist@gci.net to let the conference planners get a preliminary estimate of how many people to expect.

# Notes from around the state



Text/photograph from Friends of Nike Site Summit website:

The Nike Hercules missile, pictured [above], was the U.S. military's first nuclear capable anti-aircraft missile. Nike Site Summit operated to defend against a potential attack by nuclear armed Soviet bombers. From 1960 to 1963 Nike Site Summit held annual live fire exercises, launching unarmed practice missiles to test the readiness of Nike missile crews. Many Anchorage residents remember stopping work and taking breaks from school to watch the annual firings. They were exciting events! The Nike Hercules missile is an incredibly fast missile, attaining a top speed of nearly 3,000 mph during a launch.

http://www.nikesitesummit.net/about-sitesummit.html, accessed 9-17-12 The Friends of Nike Site Summit were busy this summer. FONSS is working closely with Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to ensure the future of Site Summit. Under the stipulations of a Programmatic Agreement signed in 2009, FONSS is responsible for preserving six buildings, while JBER is preserving the remaining 18 structures. With a small grant and over 800 hours of volunteer time, they stabilized and restored three sentry stations in 2010. Work began last summer on stabilizing the Guided Missile Maintenance Building and the Launch Control Building, an effort that is continuing this summer thanks to dedicated volunteers and contractors. To get more information, contact Doris Thomas at 694-3570, or email fonss2007@gmail.com.

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An exciting discovery and follow-up notice. The Alaska Commercial Company purchased the Russian American Company's many trading posts in Alaska. Some of their handwritten ledgers were discovered recently and the enormous task of digitizing them was accomplished. Here's an excerpt from the discoverer: Project Director J Pennelope Goforth, former resident and journalist in the Aleutian communities of Unalaska and Akutan, said of transcripts, "Ever since I discovered these ledgers it's been my dream to preserve the information they contain and make it available to the descendants of these mighty hunters as well as researchers of Aleutian history. It is my sincere hope that they will taste a bit of this Aleutian yesteryear reading the transcripts, too. At least their eyes won't cross belaboring a particularly fanciful ink blot!" Goforth spent all the snowy winter in Anchorage poring over the tattered ledger books. Of the scanned images, which were done on a special document scanner, she said, "The quality [of the images] invites you right back to 1875; the aged brown of the ink on yellowed pages comes through so well along with odd creases and the crumbled edge of a well-used ledger. You won't, however, have the slightly musty mildew-y 135 year old smell that had me sneezing."

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Forwarded from the State Museum is a request for artifacts pertaining to Harold McCracken and Edward Moffat Weyer, Jr. and their 1928 Alaska expedition for the American Museum of Natural History. McCracken's books on Alaska wildlife are well known, and it's nice to know there is the McCracken Research Library in Cody, Wyoming.

The museum is also interested in the art of Francis Lee Jaques, who designed dioramas for the American Museum based on the 1928 adventure. Contact Mary Robinson at maryr@BBHC.org if you can contribute.

\*

Sixteen new members of the **Alaska Women's Hall of Fame** were inducted this spring.

- \* Audrey Aanes, advocate for women with disabilities
- \* Gretchen Bersch, education
- \* Connie Boochever, arts in Alaska
- \* Wilda Hudson, women's voting rights
- \* Carolyn Jones, hope and change through Rotary
- \* Louise Kellogg, farming, philanthropy, education
- \* Ellen Paneok, first Alaska Native woman pilot
- \* Sharon Richards, community leader
- \* Irene Rowan, leader in Alaska Native affairs
- \* Lisa Rudd, civil and women's rights
- \* Hannah Solomon, Alaska Native concerns
- \* Pauline Utter, political and women's rights
- \* Rosita Worl, Tlingit culture to youth
- \* Leonie von Zesch, dental services to Alaska Natives

If you want to know more about the program or read biographies of the remarkable women, visit www.alaskawomenshalloffame.org or phone Bonnie Jack at 907/279-4836.

•••

Bob Banghart has moved from Chief Curator at the Alaska State Museums to the Division Operations Manager. Among his new duties are developing the new consolidated State Library, Archives, and Museum (SLAM) building and overseeing the consolidation of the former Sheldon Jackson College Stratton Library building with the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka.

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The Russian American Company's southernmost colony, Fort Ross in California, is celebrating its bicentennial with vigor and joy. The Fort Ross Interpretive Association folks have spent a lot of time identifying the location of the first buildings, building a replica of an original warehouse, and tracing the history of the first fruit trees brought by the Russians, including a peach tree. If you can't go up the coast from San Francisco, see www.fortross.org and see what you're missing.

# Notes from around the state



"Sydney Laurence: Reflections of the Great Northwest." Juneau-Douglas City Museum, May 4—November 17, 2012. Image: Supper on the Mendenhall Bar. JDCM 2003.13.003. Donated by Mike Blackwell

Always fun announcing one of our members has a new book out. Katie Ringsmuth has written *Tunnel Vision - the Life of a Copper Prospector in the Nizina River Country*. You can e-mail her at katmaikate@aol.com or call 907/644-3467 for a copy.

**Chief Shakes House** in Wrangell has been

a landmark for a very long time. In 1940 it was completely restored and later designated a National Historic Landmark Now it is being renovated again,

Historic Landmark Now it is being renovated again, and because of its status, very carefully. Posts must be hand adzed; this time four women are included, a first for a Tlingit traditionally male job. The *Anchorage Daily News* 

wrote the story. Contact reporter Mike Dunham at mdunham@adn.com for details.

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The Alaska Maritime Society may be only two years old, but it has already completed a long list of projects. The founders and members are divers, archaeologists, and historians (several a combination), fascinated with shipwrecks and other human effects on Alaska coasts. Kodiak and Sitka, both historic ports, concentrate on local maritime history, but there's plenty to go around over all Alaska's coasts. AMS works closely with all the appropriate state and federal agencies.

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June seems a fine month to hold *Frozen Pasts*, the third **International Glacial Archaeology Symposium**. This was June 3-8 in Whitehorse, Yukon. Need to know what went on? www. youkonheritage.com or e-mail ruth.gotthardt@gov.yk.ca

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The price may have gone up, but it's still well worth \$20.00 a year to join the **Alaska Yukon Pioneers** and receive the monthly newsletter. You'll also know about meetings in the Seattle area, but the chief joy is reading what your old neighbors and friends are up to. Checks should be made out to AYP and

mailed to Joyce Penman, Recorder, 27833 85th Drive N.W., Stanwood, Washington, 98292. Her e-mail is olwomn@wavecable.com

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The centennial of the vast Novarupta volcanic explosion—better known as Katmai—and the matching centennial of the 1912 Second Organic Act which made Alaska a Territory will surely bring forth some remarks about volcanoes and politicians. Fairbanks celebrated the second: The Tanana Yukon Historical Society commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second Organic Act which officially made Alaska a Territory on Saturday, August 25, at the Wickersham House Museum in Pioneer Park in Fairbanks. James Wickersham, Alaska's non-voting delegate to Congress, worked hard to convince Congress to pass the bill. President Taft, initially opposed to the legislation, signed the bill on August 24, 1912, which was also Wickersham's birthday. The bill amended the First Organic Act passed in 1884, and authorized establishment of a Territorial Legislature. Wickersham was unsuccessful in 1916 when he tried to get Congress to make Alaska a state. Territorial status did not give Alaskans as much control over its affairs, particularly natural resources, as Wickersham would have liked, but it was a big step in the development of Home Rule and remained the form of government for Alaska through two world wars until statehood in 1959. For more information about the Tanana Yukon Historical Society reception contact tyhs@alaska.net.

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And, of course, we must mention the monthly news about Alaska, national, and various other conferences, notes, and general information found in *Heritage*, the newsletter of the **Alaska Office of History and Archaeology**. If you want to get on the mailing list email jo.antonson@alaska.gov.

## News & Information

Kodiak is amazing at including young people in projects. In June nine 7th-12th grade students turned the **Baranov Museum** into a film studio and workshop. They did research, interviewed 25 people, wrote their scripts and filmed nine documentaries on Kodiak's largest ethnic minority, the Filipinos. Not only that, the films are now on-line! Hop over to their results at www.youtube.com/BarMuse and see the Hollywood-bound entrepreneurs. From the skill of the films, perhaps Hollywood will move to Kodiak.

The museum also had a raffle on July 4th and raised \$5,000 for museum programs. Then they hosted a community picnic in early August and sponsored a speaker on the history of Russian whaling in Russian America. I think we can see where the school kids get inspired.

And don't forget the **Kodiak Maritime Museum** volunteers restoring the fishing boat *Thelma C*. If you want to see the work, get a ten-year-old or be brave and go to http:www.ktuu.com/videogallery/70128048/ News/Kodiak-Boat-Restoration-Receives-Tidal-Wave-of-Support#pl-62853090

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The Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center at the Anchorage Museum is featuring in September Da-ka-xeen, sculptor and photographer, recounting his Tlingit/N'ishga heritage and personal journey. The center's recent newsletter contains a first-hand account of the shrinking of the Arctic Ocean summer sea-ice, at another historic low since 2007 when large amounts of soot were seen around Wrangell Island. High officials from the Obama administration attended a conference on this last year. The 18th Inuit Studies Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. October 24-28, 2012. Thinking of going? www.mnh. si.edu/arctic/ ISC18/index.html.

To an outsider, Hope and Sunrise sound like a romantic novel from 1900 or a pop song from the 1960s, but if you're from Alaska you know these were gold rush towns of the turn of the last century on Turnagain Arm. Sunrise survives only as a cemetery, but Hope lives on and the Hope and Sunrise Historical and Mining Museum has some wonderful volunteers who continue to add such things as a pit saw display, nature walks, a thriving library, and the mid-summer Wagon Trail Race for runners. Children were enlisted to rake gravel and spread dirt. Their rewards were a backstage tour of the museum, pizza, and kite flying on the tidal flats. The dandelion pickers drank some dandelion lemonade, made dandelion chains, and learned the truth about the plants. Like Kodiak, Hope is a fine example for other small places.

They finish the summer with a talk on the event that sounded like gunfire, the earth shook, the sky turned an odd gray-yellow—the great Katmai eruption of 1912. For an e-newsletter, send your e-mail address to timbersak@ hotmail.com

James Wickersham, first judge in the Interior, then the lone Delegate to Congress from Alaska among other honors, would confuse people by owning two fine residences, one in Fairbanks and one in Juneau. Celebrating his 155th birthday in August, the Gastineau Channel Historical Society published a tribute to his house and the central core of Juneau where it stands. (Not mentioned is an old story, perhaps factual, that when people decided to build substantial dwellings on a ridge above Juneau, they wanted to call it "Nob Hill" as a salute to San Francisco. Laughing at this pretentiousness, the old miners decided the ptarmigan of the area, called "chicken" by them because they were tasty and easy to harvest, would be more fitting, so "Chicken Ridge" it became and remains.)

The newsletter also has an account of the shameful decree of the United States when World War II began and all Japanese Americans born in Japan, no matter how long they had lived here or how honorable their lives, were sent to concentration camps. John Tanaka, valedictorian of the Juneau High School Class of 1942, was among those. Outraged, his classmates represented him by an empty chair at graduation. Now an Empty Chair sculpture is being planned for the school site.

Much more in the issue: a daring bank robbery in 1932, local fire, and telephone service changes. Need more?: www.gastineauchannel.blogspot.com/

**>>>** 

Kentucky has its derby and a K-town in Alaska has its derby, but one involves horses and the other salmon. Haven't heard of riding fish or trolling for horses, but since 1944 Ketchikan has celebrated its event, the **Tongass Historical Museum** reports.

The newsletter also has a story with photos of the evolving Ketchikan fire stations. The **Totem Heritage Center** held its two-day spring cedar bark harvesting with hands-on classes. Cedar bark and cedar trees; the fragrance and utility, mean home to Tlingits. The center also has their winter and spring classes in carving, weaving, and even artist marketing lined up. Want to know more?: http://www.ketchikanmuseums.org

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# *News & Information*

Whale watching is very popular in Alaska, but dead whale towing? That was the **Pratt Museum** of Homer, working on its goal of bringing Kachemak Bay in all its diversity to the public's attention. In this case, busy volunteers have been working to clean and repair the bones, then connect them with the desired result of hanging the 37-foot skeleton from the ceiling. The museum is also working with the Seldovia Village Tribe's **Seldovia Museum** on an exhibit about Gull Island, where eight seabird species breed and eat during the summer. Since 1998 the Pratt has had the live GullCam in its museum so viewers can watch without disturbing the birds.

**>>>•** 

Okay. You are a special person who is fascinated with the Alaska Railroad history except when you like to take a break and climb a mountain or two. The **Talkeetna Historical Society** has the ticket for you. First, go by the museum, housed in the 1936 original one-room schoolhouse (the teachers lived upstairs) and on the grounds you'll find the railroad depot, built in 1933, as well as a 1923 railroad section house, and Belle's horse barn, once part of her freighting business. The section house contains the mountaineering museum, so you're on your way. Various events throughout the year will celebrate the theme this year *One Hundred Years of Mountaineering*.

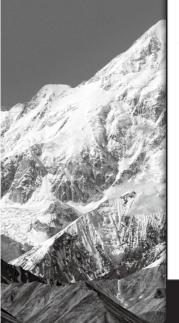
Then you can go climbing, after checking with the National Park Service's Talkeetna Ranger Station. Not there? Go to www.talkeetnahistoricalsociety.org Enjoy!

**>>>●** 

Too bad this is a family newsletter or much fun could be had with the lead story in the **Sitka Historical Society** and **Museum** newsletter concerning the dam built for hydropower. "Not by a dam site" is only one that comes to mind. Money has been appropriated for a dam addition, so the newsletter gives the history of the project. This summer the society opened a new permanent exhibit on Sitka aviation at the appropriate place—the airport. And the museum called for stories, essays, poems, songs; any material written by Sitkans about Sitka. Winners were featured in a community exhibit. Fascinated? Consult www.sitkahistory.org. They are also very excited about planning for new space for the museum.

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A busy summer for all, but particularly for **Saxman Totem Park.** They raised two Raven Entrance Poles, replacements for others but hand-raised in the traditional way. Also new frog carvings were installed. When you're in the Ketchikan area, be sure to visit. Or you can peek at saxmangrants@kpunet.net.



"Denali Lifts her Skirts

# WANTED Memorabilia

1913 Stuck-Karstens McKinley Expedition



# Help us create an exhibition

commemorating the centennial of the 1913 first ascent of Denali's South Peak.

We are looking for original 1913-era objects or photographs relating to Hudson Stuck, Harry Karstens, Walter Harper, Robert Tatum, John Fredson, or Esaias George.



#### Contact: Angela Linn

Senior Collections Manager Ethnology & History 907.474.1828 ajlinn@alaska.edu



# News & Information

Ever made \$1,000 from a pancake breakfast? You might check with the McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum for tips. Their newsletter also speaks of the rather odd sculpture outside the museum. It's said to be parts of three different rock crushers fetchingly stacked. And what are rock crushers, you ask? Used at mines and other places where rock needs crushing. Want a Rock Crusher 101 course? Read all about it and more when you write the museum at P.O. Box MXY, Glennallen, Alaska, 99588-8998 and enclose your \$15.00 for a year's membership.

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All the snow this winter exacerbated the moose plus railroad tracks problem. The **Alaska Railroad** newsletter writes of clearing the right-of-way and offering feeding stations for the moose. The newsletter also has a piece on the return to Alaska of *Steam Engine No. 557*, the last one used in Alaska. A great deal of work is needed, but the engine will not be scrapped. Surprised as I was to find the railroad has a newsletter? Go to www.alaskarailroad.com, or use that quaint old method and phone 907/265-2300 to subscribe.

Interested in Sitka and shipyards? Right in the middle of the downtown is a sign pointing out the first ships built on the west coast of North America were built in Alaska. The **Sitka Maritime Heritage Society** also is collecting oral histories of Sitka and Alaska's early maritime history. Got something to contribute or want to know more? www. sitkamartime.org is the place to look.

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More talented kids working on Alaska history? Of course. Students at the 119-pupil, K-12 Kenny Lake School in Copper Center just won a \$6,000 award for their 90-minute documentary *Iron Rails: The Story of the Copper River and Northwestern Railway.* So, we can either learn how they did it or try to adopt some of these tech-savvy kids.

### **Alaska Historical Society**

#### **Board of Directors**

Ross Coen, *President*, rcoen@uw.edu
Fairhanks

Andrew Goldstein, Vice-President, curator@valdezmuseum.org Valdez

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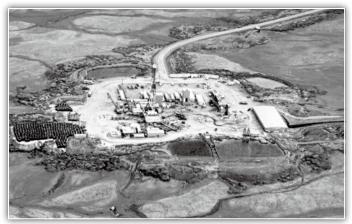
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Cannikin test site, Amchitka, 1971.

#### Editor's Comments

lections are coming up this fall in Alaska. On the national level, much is written and said about the bitter rivalries and heated contests. This is always given in a breathless way; never before has so much bitter division happened. Well, in Alaska's politics, rivalry is nothing new. Jack Coghill, in his memoirs, tells of the elderly delegate from Nome who voted against every item in the Constitutional Convention; he didn't believe in centralized government. Jack also writes that he and the other male Republican in the first State Legislature had to caucus in the men's room.

Master politician Jay Hammond has many amusing stories in his memoirs, including the time State Senator George McNabb took advantage of a long list of "clean-up" statutes to slip in an amendment. The list passed handily until the other legislators discovered they had abolished their pay. Correction was made. Jay also mentions a reporter who asked his views on the proposed and controversial atomic bomb explosion on the small Aleutian island that contained the remnant Alaska sea otter population. Hammond replied it should be exploded on an island where indigenous species aren't endangered. What island? Manhattan, of course.

To be completely serious for a moment, do you know your legislators' views on Alaska history and your group's wishes? If not, isn't it time to find out? Nothing engages legislative sympathies more than a well-organized community group's reasonable petitions. Make sure they're realistic, then go get 'em Tiger!

Happy Elections! D. L. Non-profit Org. U.S. Postage Permit 411 Anchorage, AK



Cannikin warhead being lowered into test shaft, Amchitka, Alaska, 1971. Courtesy United States Department of Energy