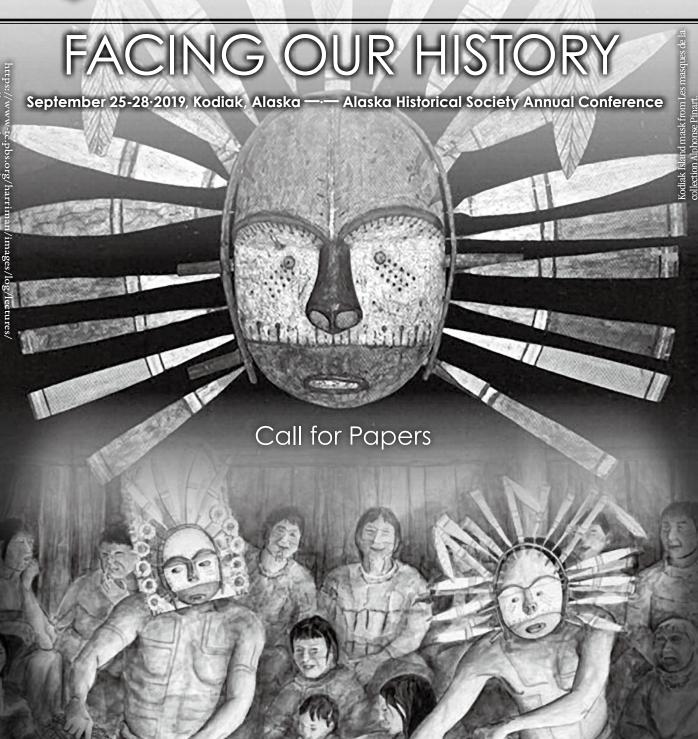


Volume 47, No. 1 Quarterly of the Alaska Historical Society

Spring 2019



Winter hunting ceremony on Kodiak Island, 18th century. Illustration by Mark Matson. Courtesy of the Arctic Studies Center. he theme for the 2019 conference of the Alaska Historical Society is "Facing our History." Many of the events subjected to historical inquiry may be interpreted in very different ways. While some historians may represent them as positive events to be celebrated, to others they involve conflict, domination, and destruction. The history of Kodiak Island, for example, involves many such events, including the subjugation of the Alutiiq people in the Russian colonial period, the American military rule prior to statehood, the effects of the Aleutian Campaign of World War II, and the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill's impact on fisheries. The theme also recognizes the historian's difficult task of documenting and interpreting past events objectively and openly, while recognizing that the resulting narrative may arouse conflict with other people. Our goal must be to find cause for inspiration and learning in even the most disturbing history.

Our keynote speaker this year is Dr. Sven Haakanson, Jr. of the Burke Museum in Seattle, formerly of Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum. Dr. Haakanson's work includes uncovering the history of Awa'uq or Refuge Rock, the site of a 1784 massacre of perhaps thousands of Alutiiq people on the south end of Kodiak Island at the hands of Russian fur trader Grigory Shelikov's armed men. Dr. Haakanson also directed the project that led to publication of *Giinaquq, Like a Face: Sugpiaq Masks of the Kodiak Archipelago*.

Please join us in Kodiak this September. As always, we welcome presentations on all Alaska history topics. Presentations are limited to 20 minutes, and all presenters must be registered for the conference. To submit a proposal, please send your presentation title, an abstract of no more than 100 words, and two sentences about yourself to Rachel Mason, Program Chair, rachel_mason@nps.gov. Proposals are due May 15, 2019.

"History never really says goodbye. History says, 'See you later.""

-Eduardo Galeano, Uruguayan journalist

Message from the President



"The tale is the product of the teller."

History, at its most basic, is an account of past events. Preparing history involves collecting and interpreting the available fragments of information to develop an argument about the past. History, however, is not science—it is subjective (although it rarely admits this). Different people will focus on different facts and apply different philosophical and cultural ideas in interpreting them.

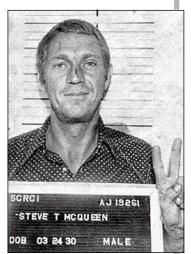
Communicating history, whether orally or in writing, is a personal act. The tale is the product of the teller. This seems obvious, but it has immense consequences when it comes to thinking about history. Every historical account is as personal as a fingerprint, and is based on what a given person, in a given time, thought was relevant, appropriate, and worthy of being considered in deciding what happened in the past, and why it happened. Because history is subjective, it is inherently controversial. The conclusions drawn about the past often rest on the frame of reference—the viewpoint—of the historian.

The theme for the September 2019 AHS Conference is "Facing our History." This theme speaks to the difficulty of trying to describe the past, and the difficulty in receiving the interpretations of others. It also recognizes that human history reflects human strengths as well as human weaknesses and failures. Attempting to honestly recognize our failures requires courage and a willingness to let go of more attractive fictions. It also requires a willingness to perceive events from other points of view.

The annual AHS conference presents us with an exceptional opportunity to present and receive the historical analyses of many different people, and to talk about them with each other. The conference is open to anyone interested in Alaska history. This year's event promises to be remarkable, as well as a lot of fun! I hope you will join us.

-Averil Lerman, President

Notes from Local Historical Societies



"Historical photographs tell many of the stories [at the Alaska Law Enforcement Museum]. They start the minute you walk in the door with the mug shot* and arrest record of actor Steve McQueen, who got busted for doing "brodies" in an Oldsmobile Toronado in downtown Anchorage in 1972. McQueen, with a ding on his nose, is looking mighty ragged after his night on the town here, a raggedness exceeded only by his seismographic signature."

—Anchorage Daily News

"My recollection is that McQueen was roaring up and down 4th Avenue at very high speed and turning brodies—drunker than hell. It was not just a time or two—he really raised hell for quite a while. When they did finally get him stopped they administered a field sobriety test, and he somersaulted down the white line. Once they got him arrested it was a pretty good time—sort of an autograph party in handcuffs."

—Lynn Burlingamet

*A mug shot is a photographic portrait of a person from the waist up, typically taken after arrest. The original purpose of the image was to provide law enforcement with a visual record of an arrested individual for identification by victims, the public and investigators. However, in the United States, entrepreneurs have recently begun to monetize these public records via the mug shot publishing industry. "Mug," English slang for "face," dating to 18th century.

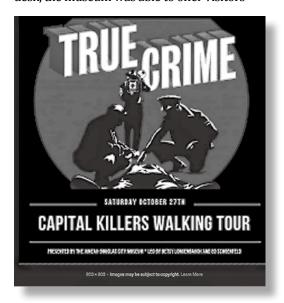
The Alaska Law Enforcement Museum in downtown Anchorage, also known as the State Trooper Museum, has a new Executive Director, Eugene Harnett. His first project is to reorganize and remodel the museum. The museum will be closed through the end of March as work progresses. The plan is to have exhibits on marshals, the highway patrol, territorial and state police, state and wildlife troopers, women, and more—including Safety Bear and a CSI room depicting a crime scene. If anyone one is interested in volunteering or being an intern, please contact Harnett at 907.279.5050 or at admin@foast.org.

Next to the **Alutiiq Museum** in Kodiak, the Ancestors' Memorial Park is taking shape. This public space, built in partnership with the City of Kodiak, will honor Alutiiq history, encourage respect of archaeological sites, and invite all people to remember their ancestors. It is another reason to attend the Alaska Historical Society and Museums Alaska annual conference that will be held this year at Kodiak, September 25-28.

To make it easier for people to connect with Alutiiq heritage, and offer a taste of its exhibits, the museum has been testing the Mobile Museum, a tent full of Alutiiq artifacts and treasures from the museum's teaching collection. While patrons learn about the different eras of Alutiiq history, they can refit the parts of a harpoon or practice holding an ulu. In 2018 the Mobile Museum visited Crab Festival, the Ouzinkie Native Corporation's annual meeting, and a number of schools and cultural celebrations around Kodiak Island.

The Sugpiag word for kelp is *nasqulut*. In the past, Alutiiq people made good use of this giant brown seaweed, using it as food, to bail boats, and to make line. Kelp pickles can still be found in many Alutiig kitchens. Kelp is the subject of a traveling exhibit, *Underwater Forests of the Aleutians*, at the museum this winter. The ten-panel display examines the life history of Alaska's kelp forests, their importance to sea mammals and fish, and humans' connections to them. A team of scientists developed the exhibit in partnership with the Museum of the **Aleutians** with funding from the National Science Foundation. It will at the Alutiig Museum through April 6.

The Juneau-Douglas City Museum has an energetic group of knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteers who love Juneau history. In 2018's visitor season, with three Historic Downtown walking tours weekly, four Treadwell walking tours, three Downtown Geology walking tours, 43 Capitol tours, an October "Capital Killers" True Crimes walking tour, and many shifts at the front desk, the museum was able to offer visitors



and locals alike a variety of interesting learning experiences. In November, George Danner III gave a talk entitled "Images of the Construction of Glacier Highway," based on 260 photographs taken between 1911 and 1943. In December, the museum opened an exhibit entitled *Plein Rein on Location with Sydney Laurence* featuring 23 plein-air paintings by local artists and three by Sydney Laurence. Plein-air is a style of outdoor painting characterized by the representation of natural light; Plein Rein is a group of Juneau painters in the plein-air style.

Ketchikan's **Tongass Historical Museum** opened a new exhibit, *Solving Problems, Telling Stories: Handcraft in a Harsh Environment*, on March 1. The exhibit has quilts, lead weights, regalia, and stained class, along with other objects made by hand throughout Ketchikan's history. The purpose of the exhibit is not only to reflect on what is made and built to survive, but also on what is created to make a home and community, and to explore how this work ties people to ancestors and descendants. The exhibit includes videos of hands at work, making and doing.

Notes from Local Historical Societies

The **Tongass Historical Society** held its annual meeting January 17. Speaker Dale Pihlman, a Ketchikan author, made a presentation about his recent book, *Alaska's Inside Passage: Nature, History, Native Culture, Industries.*

Cape Decision (Tlingit name: Aát séet) is a point of land splitting the big waters at the south end of Kuiu Island in Southeast Alaska, and the location of an historic lighthouse. For the past 21 years, volunteers in the **Cape Decision Lighthouse Society** have worked to make the site safer and more hospitable, and to create an environment that enriches the lives of all who visit. In 2018, Ken Campbell's Ikkatsu Project brought volunteers from Washington State to clean up and monitor marine debris on the beach near the lighthouse. It was a great adventure for everyone involved. Check it out at https://www.ikkatsuproject.org. The Alaska Historical Commission just funded a project for Skagway-based conservator Nicole Peters to assess and recommend preservation treatments for the iconic Lantern Room atop the lighthouse's tower.

After the November 30, 2018 earthquake that hit Chugiak-Eagle River particularly hard, the **Chugiak-Eagle River Historical Society** ran an article in their newsletter from the *Knik Arm Courier* of April 1, 1964, describing damages to the area from the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake. Compared to other Alaska cities, the *Courier* reported, the Greater Chugiak Area escaped with relatively minor damage. The worst-hit building was apparently the Eagle River School, where the walls of the multipurpose room cracked and leaned inward approximately four feet at the top. The society has put out a call for volunteers to help a few hours a month, and for members. Membership is \$15/individual, \$25/family, and checks should be to CERHS, P.O. Box 670573, Chugiak, AK 99567. To volunteer call 907.242.1627.

The **Palmer Historical Society** holds History Night, an evening of entertainment and history, on the third Wednesday of each month at the Palmer Moose Lodge at 7 p.m. PHS kicked off the new year with a combined History Night and Annual Meeting January 16. Speaker Steve Brown shared his latest mountain climbing adventures in the Stok Range of the Himalayas. The February program was given by author Helen Hegener talking about Palmer, the old town of Matanuska, the Matanuska coal region, with a side trip to Wasilla. Helen's books include *The 1935 Matanuska Colony* and *The Alaska Railroad: 1902-1923, Blazing an Iron Trail Across the Last Frontier*.

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The **Sitka Maritime Heritage Society** held a Tall Ships Night in February at the Baranof Island Brewery. Laurent DeViche shared his experiences sailing on the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport's tall ship *Lady Washington* in 2018. The February

25th Pub Talk was by sailors of the *Bagheera* on their Arctic sailing adventure, and at their March 6th annual meeting was followed by stories around the topic of "the slime line."

The SMHS also continues rehabilitation of the Japonski Island Boathouse for use as a maritime heritage center. Contractors and volunteers are working to make repairs and building an addition with an accessible entry and restroom. The museum's first exhibit is being planned by intern Andrew Gianotti to be ready by summer. The society is soliciting for exhibit ideas and asks folks to visit their website and on the exhibit page share ideas, www.sitkamaritime.org. The society has put videos of past annual meetings and oral history interviews on topics such as Cannery Life, Trolling, and Women in Fishing on its website as well.

The **Cook Inlet Historical Society's** first speaker in its North to the Future: Alaskans Encounter their Environment series was Alexander James, an economist, who titled his talk "A Resource Curse or Statistical Mirage? Oil Wealth and Alaska's Economy." In March, Ross Coen will speak on salmon research in Alaska, 1889-1924; in April Dick Mylius will have a conversation with Vic Fischer and Jane Angvik about the Alaska constitution and resource development; and in May, Larry Persily will speak on the efforts to develop a North Slope gas pipeline.

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The **Resurrection Bay Historical Society** in Seward welcomed a new curator of collections in October 2018,

Leslie Fried. Leslie worked at the Alaska Jewish Museum for seven years as its curator. In November, Marie Gage spoke to the society on Seward's Woodlawn Cemetery, where notable Seward resident and town founder Mary Lowell is buried. Audience members were aghast to learn the grave marker for Lowell is nowhere to be found. A few years ago, a City of Seward employee offered to take Lowell's gravestone to Anchorage to get an estimate for repairs. Now, it appears that no one knows its location. Marie checked



The "Angel" of Woodawn Cemetery, Seward, Alaska.

with various funeral homes in Anchorage, but could find no answers as to the whereabouts of the marker.

Other Notes

The Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association (AMIPA) is planning a Historic Aviation Footage Film Festival to be shown at the Bear Tooth Theater in Anchorage on April 30. The films will include works about Russ Merrill, Noel Wien and Ben Eielson, along with historic images of Will Rogers and Wiley Post in Alaska, WWII film *The Queen of Dago Lake*, and rare footage taken by the CAA in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. The film festival is a fund raiser for the organization.

The Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, designated in 2009, supports local community projects in Bird, Indian, Girdwood, Whittier, Portage, Hope, Cooper Landing, Moose Pass, and Seward. In 2018, it awarded eleven community grants for projects such as new interpretive signs, trail construction, and maintenance, and an Elders and Youth program. Among the projects are a new memorial in Whittier commemorating the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake, field trip mini-grants to the Roundhouse Museum in Girdwood and the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center, and summer trail programs.

Katie Ringsmuth's **Tundra Vision** spring series at the Mountain View Library in Anchorage looks at Alaska's military past. Jean Pollard and an ensemble cast presented "Frozen in History: A Reader's Theater Play Celebrating the Soldiers who Built the Alaska Highway" in February. On March 27, Mike Rice and Ivan Hodes, Friends of Nike Site Summit, are speaking about "The Secret History of the Cold War in Alaska." On April 25, Russ Vander Lugt will speak on "Lower Copper River Landscapes and Indigenous Encounters: The Army Returns after 134 Years;" and on May 30, Leslie Fried will speak on "Refuge in the Last Frontier: Evolution of the Alaska Development Plan."

Last November the **Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation** inducted three pioneers from frontier mining camps. They recognized Joe Quigley who crossed the Chilkoot Pass in 1891 and mined in the Fortymile, Klondike and Fairbanks areas before going into the Kantishna Hills in 1905 where he developed lode silver and gold mines on Quigley Ridge until he left Alaska in 1938. The Hall of Fame introduced many to Tekla Kanari, a Finnish immigrant, who helped create Trinity Mining Company in the late 1930s, one of the more successful placer mines in the Kougarok district north of Nome for more than twenty years. They also inducted one of their early members, Alvin Agoff, son of a Russian immigrant, who grew up in the Iditarod mining district in the 1930s and 40s and mined on Prince Creek along with trapping, freighting with sled dogs, and constructing cabins, mining equipment and trails. The Prince Creek Mining Company, run by relatives of Agoff, still operates in the Iditarod district. The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame newsletter, The Paystreak, has more about the three individuals, along with a list of all inductees (P.O. Box 81108, Fairbanks, AK 99708).

The **Alaska Native Media Group i**s sponsoring a series of panel discussions at UAA on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Panel 1, in January, was "Taking the Reins – A New Generation." Panel 2, in February, was "Where are the Shareholders?" On March 29, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., RH 101 Rasmuson Hall, Panel 3 will address "Women in Leadership." Panelists include Dr. Dalee Dorough, Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council; Dr. Cathy Sateen, UAA Chancellor; and Valerie Davidson, former Lt. Governor and Commissioner of Health and Social Services for the State of Alaska.

The Sea Chest, journal of the **Puget Sound Maritime Society**, devoted its winter 2019 issue completely to Alaska, from guest editor J. Pennelope Goforth to the historical articles to the book reviews. The cover is the venerable Yukon River sternwheeler SS Nenana, which is undergoing a renovation under the leadership of the Friends of the Nenana in Fairbanks. Historians Gary Stein, Bruce Merrell, Rebeca Poulson, and J. Pennelope Goforth, along with archaeologist James Rogers contributed articles on Alaska maritime history.

Maida Buckley of Fairbanks is one of nine recipients of the 2019 Governor's Arts & Humanities Awards. Maida received a lifetime achievement award for contributions made during her career of more than 25 years as an educator. Buckley, a teacher at West Valley High School in Fairbanks, tirelessly championed and developed the History Day and We the People programs statewide. Check out all of this year's awardees at akgovawards.org

The **Yukon Historical & Museums Association** has put out a call for presentations for a conference marking the 150th anniversary of the drawing of the Kohklux map, October 26-27. 2019 in Whitehorse, Yukon. Chilkat leader Kohklux and his wives drew the map in 1869 for American scientist George Davidson, who was in the north to view a solar eclipse. For more information and to submit a proposal, contact info@heritageyukon.ca. Deadline for proposals is April 30, 2019.

The **Fort Ross Conservancy** reports that May 18 is Alaska Native Day at Fort Ross State Historical Park in California, acknowledging the many contributions of Alaska Natives to the former Russian-American Company fort's history. This year the Anchorage Unangax^ dancers will share their traditional dancing from the Aleutian Islands, Ekatherina Savvinova of the Sahka Republic will perform songs and share Siberian Native history, and Haida artist Rachel Langford will lead a metal etching project. For the adventurous, there is the 6th Annual John Sperry memorial Qayaq Race in Sandy Cove.

Other Notes

A MAN, A VILLAGE, A RIVER, A PARK: THE STORY OF CHIEF CHARLEY



Chief Charley (right) and his peers—Chief Isaac of Moosehide and Chief Roderick of Circle City—posing on the banks of the Yukon River, 1900. Alaska State Library, Wickersham State Historic Site Photographs (p277-4-95).

As leader of a Han Athabascan band, Chief Charley appears frequently in the historical record. The Anglican missionary Robert McDonald documented his exchanges with Charley and his people in the 1870s, as did the trader Leroy "Jack" McQuesten, and Ivan Petrov mentions "Charley's people" in his 1880 census of Alaska. Visitors reported roughly 50 inhabitants at Charley's Village, a settlement near the Kandik River mouth on the north side of the Yukon River. In 1883, Lt. Frederick Schwatka's rafting expedition arrived and he counted six homes and noted that Joseph Ladue, a gold prospector, had also arrived by raft. Sadly, Schwatka spent more time writing about the mosquito population than about the village. After gold was discovered on the Fortymile River in 1886, Charley's band moved up the Yukon into Canadian territory to trade with the prospectors and to sell them fish and moose meat. They would return to their village on the American side of the line within a decade.

When the Klondike gold rush began, stampeders found their way to an 88-mile river downstream from Charley's Village and began to call it Charley River (or Charley's River). A small cluster of cabins sprang up at the river's mouth—steamboat captains called it Charlesville—and between 70 and 100 prospectors spent a year panning for gold. Charley River never became a gold-producer like nearby Coal Creek and Woodchopper Creek, but it did attract the attention of National Park Service planners in the 1970s who saw a rare opportunity—the chance to preserve the entire watershed of a wild and scenic river. It was the only such case in the nation and in 1978 President Carter designated the area a national monument. Two years later, with the passing of ANILCA, the park was named Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. Few people today realize that Chief Charley's legacy can be traced through the name of this national park.

Other Notes

Are You a Student or Emerging Professional?



If you would like to attend the AHS meeting in Kodiak, September 25-28, 2019 and you need help with travel expenses and conference fees, please consider applying for the Student and Emerging Professional Awards offered by the Alaska Historical Society.

The awards consist of reimbursement for documented travel expenses up to \$1,000 plus a conference registration package. Applicants must be members of AHS, be enrolled in a graduate student or upper-division undergraduate program related to Alaska history, and be able to attend the meeting in its entirety and make a presentation.

Each applicant must submit: 1) a letter with a statement of eligibility and an explanation of how attending the meeting will enhance your academic or professional development, 2) a title and abstract of your proposed presentation, and 3) a résumé. **The application deadline is May 18**. Electronic submission is preferred. Applications should be submitted to sprucetip105@gmail.com, or via regular mail to: AHS Awards, P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, Alaska 99510.



Ladies of McCarthy sitting on boardwalk, July 4, circa 1927-28. Eleanor Tjosevig Collection, courtesy of Dick Anderson and the McCarthy-Kennicott Historical Museum. From the NPS publication *For the Love of Freedom* by Karen Brewster.

March is Women's History Month. Women in the Territory of Alaska got the right to vote on March 21, 1913, seven years before the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was adopted giving all women in the U.S. the right to vote.

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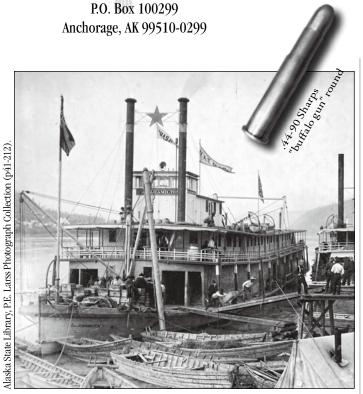
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ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Hamilton discharging cargo at Dawson City, ca. 1898.

A CLOSE CALL IN DAWSON CITY

Last Wednesday David Cone, fireman* on the steamer *Hamilton*, was examining a rifle while in his room on the boat. It accidentally discharged. A large crowd was moving back and forth along the bank and the bullet's course was directly across their path. So far as we can learn the ball passed through a man's trouser leg, nipped the brim of another man's hat, then struck Mrs. Hiltz, demolishing her hat, hair comb and clipping away a portion of her hair; thence through the iron front of the Regina Café, next grazing the side of D. McDonald, making a wound in which a lead pencil could be buried. After brushing McDonald, the bullet's fury spent, it fell harmlessly at the feet of Mr. Healy, who picked it up... Mr. Cone was arrested and given an examination. His discharge immediately followed, as no criminal fault could be ascribed.

-Yukon Midnight Sun, June 27, 1898

*A "fireman" is employed to feed wood or coal into the boilers on a steamboat.

A great gift for a friend, relative, local school or library is a year's membership in the Alaska Historical Society. Your gift includes the newsletter and journal Alaska History, and supports important activities and programs. It's easy ... go to the AHS website, www.alaskahistoricalsociety.org and then click on "membership and giving."

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