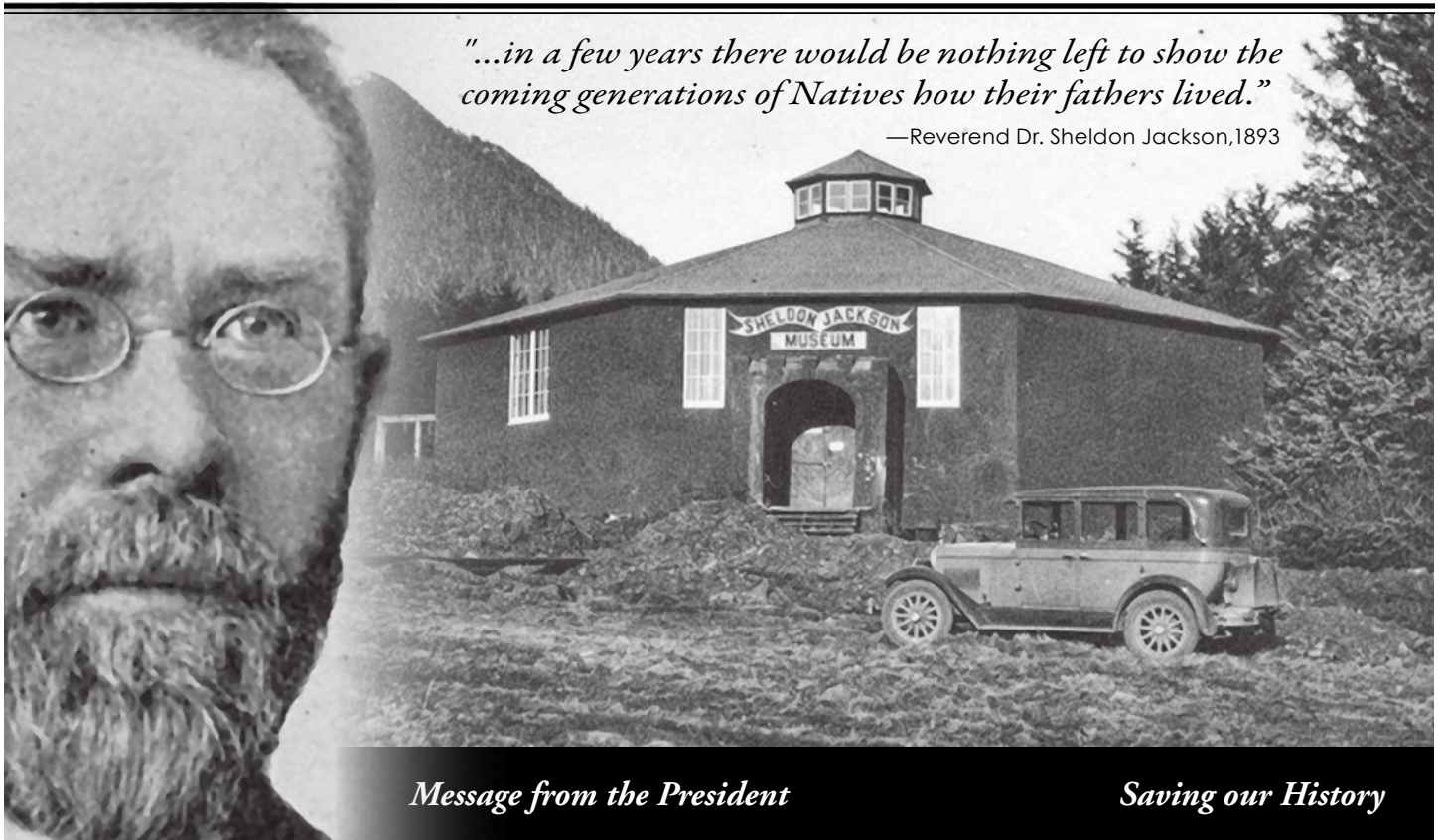


Alaska History News

Volume 47, No. 2 Quarterly of the Alaska Historical Society

Summer 2019



"...in a few years there would be nothing left to show the coming generations of Natives how their fathers lived."

—Reverend Dr. Sheldon Jackson, 1893

Message from the President

Saving our History

Anyone interested in Alaska history should be concerned about recent developments regarding historical resources in this state and should speak up.

One of the jewels of Alaska history is the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka. The small museum houses more than 6,000 artifacts from Alaska Native peoples, many of which are irreplaceable ceremonial objects, donated to the museum for safekeeping and for permitting access to the world at large. The museum employs staff with expertise in the care and handling of these objects, and hosts numerous exhibitions, demonstrations, and lectures about Alaska Native history, art, and culture. The museum is wildly popular; last year alone, it attracted more than 14,000 visitors, and collected \$42,000 dollars in revenue. The travel website "TripAdvisor" lists the museum as the most popular thing to do in Sitka, based on ratings of travelers.

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy, however, has directed state agencies to sell "underutilized" property to reduce state spending. His proposed budget eliminates state funding for the Sheldon Jackson Museum after July 1, 2019. As a consequence of this directive, the Division of Alaska State Libraries, Archives, and Museums is considering selling the Sheldon Jackson Museum.

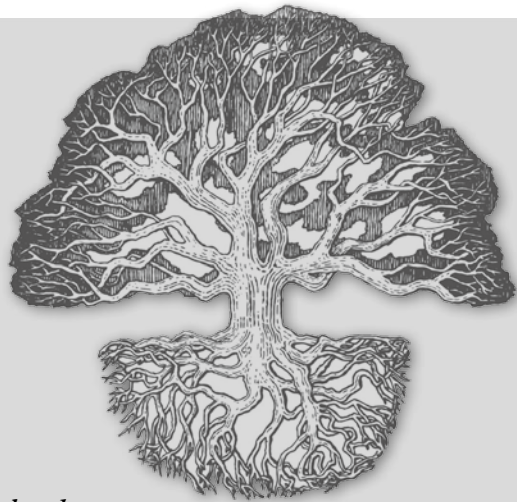
Whether such a sale will come to pass is not knowable right now—there are legal issues that must be evaluated first. If, however, the Museum is sold, there is a real danger that the collection would be broken up and dispersed to buyers from all over the world and lost to Alaskans forever.

This issue is much bigger than just the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and clearly demonstrates a threat to all of Alaska's cultural resources. But if this can happen to this museum, it will happen to many others. Archives and libraries throughout the state are also in jeopardy.

We need to speak on behalf of our historic resources, or, like the Anchorage branch of the National Archives which was closed in 2014, they will disappear. Our collective voices are significant. We need to speak, both individually and collectively.

—Averil Lerman, President

Donations are sought for the Society's **annual silent auction** that will take place in Kodiak as part of our annual conference, September 25-28. Items from attics, basements, and files have been popular, including Alaskana postcards, photos, maps, artwork, collectibles, and rare books. There is a growing interest in adding gift certificates and gift cards. The auction is the Alaska Historical Society's principal fundraiser, so we encourage you to make a donation. Rogan Faith, auction committee chair, needs your information on donated items by July 15. Please send a brief description of your donation to members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org. Our goal is to have the auction catalog available on the Society's website by the end of August so those who will not be at the conference can bid on items.



A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.

— Marcus Garvey

Serve on the Alaska Historical Society's **Board of Directors!** The AHS needs leaders who are committed to its mission and willing to help in a variety of capacities. This year, terms on the Board of Directors end for Rebecca Poulson, Sara Piasecki, Ian Hartman, Anastasia Tarmann, and Chris Allan. Are you interested or do you know someone who would be an asset on the Board of Directors? Terms on the board are for three years, and each board member typically chairs one of the society's committees or serves as an officer and is on at least one other committee. Members are expected to participate in quarterly teleconference board meetings and attend the annual meeting and conference in the fall. If interested—or to suggest someone--please email members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org by July 15.

Do you know individuals and groups which have done a worthy project, made long-term contributions to local history, made historical materials better known, or written a book that has contributed to the understanding and preservation of Alaska's history this past year? It is time to nominate these folks for recognition by the Alaska Historical Society with the **annual awards** it makes. The award categories are:

- The *Esther Billman Award of Excellence* to a state or local society, museum, government agency, or other organization which has completed a project contributing to the preservation and understanding of Alaskan history.
- The *Evangeline Atwood Award* to an individual for significant long-term contributions to Alaska state or local history.
- The *James H. Ducker Alaska Historian of the Year Award* to an *Alaska resident* for publication of significant new material about Alaska's past.
- The *Barbara Smith Pathfinder Award* for indexing or preparing guides to Alaska historical material.
- The *Elva Scott Local Historical Society Award* for a special achievement of a local society or museum.
- *Contributions to Alaska History Award* to recognize singular and significant recent contributions to Alaska history.

Nominations are due by Wednesday, July 31, 2019. A nomination letter should describe the individual's or the group's contributions or detail the project to be recognized. Please include supporting material such as a copy of the publication, guide, or photographs. Nominations should be sent to Chris Allan, AHS Awards Committee Chair, P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510, or submit by e-mail to members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org.

News from around the State



Oscar Anderson House interior restoration, Anchorage, Alaska, 1979-1980.

Besides a complete interior renovation, plans include placing outdoor gear typical of the era in an upstairs hunting closet, dishes in the cupboards and the house's original bathtub on legs, quite likely the oldest bathtub in Anchorage, in the bathroom. To date, a large brick fireplace in the living room has been rebuilt and the bathtub and kitchen and laundry sinks refinished. The house's interior has worn many faces through the years. Wallpaper, paint, and furnishings changed with passing trends. In places, wallpaper was 14 layers thick.

—Brenda Stephens
The Anchorage Times



General Henry Tureman Allen, American Expeditionary Forces in Germany.

From Anchorage: The **Alaska Association for Historic Preservation** announced that the organization received a grant from the Collections Assessment for Preservation program of the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation. The grant will provide funds to hire a collections assessor and a building assessor to complete a general conservation assessment of the Oscar Anderson House. This is an important step in caring for the furnishings and family belongings displayed in the house. AAHP also announced that Angela Demma has been hired to manage the Oscar Anderson House following the retirement of long-time museum manager Mary Flaherty.

From Anchorage: **Tundra Vision** held the ninth season of its Thursday Nights in Mountain View public history series this year. This season's theme was "Surprising Stories of Alaska's Military Past." On April 25, Russ Vanderlugt spoke on "Copper Riverscapes and Cultural Encounters: The Army Returns after 134 Years." In 1885, Army Lt. Henry T. Allen explored over 1,000 miles of Alaska wilderness. In 2018, 134 years later, Vanderlugt, an active duty Army officer and Ph.D. student in the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Arctic and Northern Studies Program, followed parts of Allen's route, from Cordova to McCarthy and from Chitina to Glennallen. Vanderlugt spoke about his journey, taking note of the riverscape's surprising stories of climate change and cultural perseverance.

From Cooper Landing: On Memorial Day the **Cooper Landing Historical Society and Museum** proudly displayed a new spruce panel mural and map showing Cooper Landing and the Kenai River to Skilak. The unique art piece was designed and crafted by Katie Feichtinger in memory of Helen and Pat Gwin. The nine-foot spruce plank came from Jack Harris.

The Cooper Landing Youth Group, under the direction of Kristine Route, interviewed Cooper Landing residents from September 2018 through March 2019 for a multimedia video that will be added to the museum's displays.

From Eagle River: The **Chugiak-Eagle River Historical Society** sadly reported the passing of Lee Jordan on December 31, 2018. Lee made a huge impact on Chugiak-Eagle River and his stories and insights will live on in memories and in his books. CERHS has a new kiosk at the Chugiak-Eagle River Chamber of Commerce offices next to the library in Eagle River. The display features calendars, Lee Jordan's books, membership applications, and some history memorabilia. Check it out!

From Fairbanks: **Festival Fairbanks** is raising funds to add subtitles to a recently completed documentary on Felix Pedro done by Italian filmmaker Paolo Muran, and to have the film shown in Fairbanks next winter. Most of our newsletter readers undoubtedly know Pedro was the man who discovered gold in Fairbanks. There is more information at <https://festivalfairbanks.info/p/felix-pedro-film>

From Hope and Sunrise: The **Hope and Sunrise Historical and Mining Museum** has four fishnets in its collection. In the past fishnets were used to catch salmon in Resurrection Creek, but today it is no longer legal to use nets there. Hal Thornton, who lived in Hope from 1945 to 1949, took the Mathison ferry to Anchorage's Ship Creek and purchased a used king gill net or "web." Wearing hip waders, he strung it along Resurrection Creek and took a bounty of kings on his first try, the largest one being 50 pounds. His wife Jeanne canned those fish until she ran out of canning jars, then Hal took the surplus jars to Seward and sold them. As he recalled, there was no legal commercial fishing in Hope but there was always a market in Seward for salmon priced under the going commercial fish rate. His best customer was Seward's tuberculosis sanatorium. Hal bragged that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service never caught him.

News from around the State

From Juneau: The **Juneau-Douglas City Museum** opened two exhibits this spring that will be on display through October. *The Rhythm of Winter: What We Do in the Cold and Dark* seeks to answer the frequent question from summer visitors about what it’s like to live in Alaska in the winter. *Legacy* is a collection of recent paintings by Christianne Carrillo, which illustrate the impact of plastics on our environment and open a discussion about the legacy human beings will leave on Earth.

Over the winter, the museum featured an exhibit of ekphrastic writing entitled *Poems, Stories and Artifacts* by University of Alaska Southeast students in Professor Emily Wall’s advanced creative writing class. Ekphrastic writing is a form of creative writing that describes a work of art, an object, or visual image. For this project, each student observed an artifact from the museum’s collection then wrote a poem or story inspired by the object.

The City Museum’s First Friday event in April was a Stump the Historian Game Show, a live game show with questions about local history. The event was held in memory of Marie Darlin who died in June 2018. Marie became involved with the City Museum in 1991 and over the next 27 years provided about 2,000 volunteer hours of service, including leading the weekly summer Historical Downtown Walking Tour.

The City Museum started its summer walking tours on May 11. “True Crimes: Capital Killers” was a walking tour of downtown Juneau which highlighted murders that occurred in Juneau and Douglas between 1900 and 1960. Former Juneau crime reporters Ed Schoenfeld and Betsy Longenbaugh led the tour. On May 18, local historian Jim Geraghty led a walking tour of the Treadwell Historical Mine. Along the trail, participants learned about the history and operations of the early lode gold mine.

From Juneau: One of the **Fr. Andrew P. Kashevaroff Building**’s First Friday events in April was a screening of the documentary film *Dugout*. In 2009, Wayne Price, master carver, took nineteen young people and a round cedar log to an island in the middle of the Yukon River. The only way off the island, Price made clear to the students, was to carve the cedar log into a canoe themselves. Their struggle was about more than canoe building—it was also about recovery and wellness. The film follows Price and his young apprentices as they work together to overcome challenges of modern life through application of ancient skills.

From Kodiak: The **Alutiiq Museum** is preparing the Ancestors’ Memorial Park for its grand opening this summer. A team of volunteers participated in a community work party on April 26 to clean up the park, plant bulbs and bushes, and share stories of ancestors. The park looks great.

The Alutiiq Museum’s new exhibit, *Naut’staapet – Our Plants*, featuring plants of Kodiak and the many ways Alutiiq people use them, opened on May 3. The exhibit combines displays of ethnobotanical knowledge of contemporary Alutiiq harvesters with historical photographs and artifacts from the museum’s collections. Much of the information comes from the research of Priscilla Russell who visited Kodiak communities in 1990 and recorded traditional plant uses for the Kodiak Area Native Association. The exhibit’s four major sections display the uses of plants for food, fuel, materials, and medicine. There is also a banya corner, where visitors can see the inside of a modern steam bath and learn how steam activates plant medicines.

The museum is in the process of purchasing three works of art for its permanent collection: *Spirit of the Merganser* (below) and *Sunset at Pyramid Mountain* by Alutiiq artist Linda Infante Lyons of Anchorage and *Back Side of Ugak Island* by Bruce Nelson of Kodiak.



From Kodiak: The **Baranov Museum** has changed its name to the **Kodiak Historical Museum**. Over the years, the museum heard from the community that it should expand its narratives beyond the story of Russian colonization to tell more about all of Kodiak’s diverse and rich history. They also heard that the Baranov Museum’s name may have led some visitors to expect the museum to focus exclusively on Russian-American history or on Alexander Baranov himself. On May 4, the newly renamed Kodiak Historical Museum held a celebration of its redesigned exhibit space.

News from around the State

From Willow: The Old Willow Community Center log building is being renovated by M. Stitt Barns and Restorations. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The rehabilitation work is to be done by the end of summer. If all goes as planned, the **Willow Historical and Wildlife Museum** members will have a grand opening and rededication ceremony this fall.

From Palmer: The **Palmer Historical Society** has acquired a chicken coop from a Matanuska Colony farm to preserve and use for storage space at the Colony House Museum. The chicken coop was offered, along with the Beylund house, in the mid-1990s. The Colony House Museum preservation project was the top priority then, so the chicken coop was not acquired at that time. Finally, this year, the chickens came home to roost!

The Palmer Historical Society’s April 17 History Night at the Palmer Moose Lodge was “Herstories of the Alaska Railroad” by Pat Durand. Pat shared the herstory of notable women such as Clara Gooding VanCleve, Jane Wainright, and the Ladies of Unga, along with their connections to the Alaska Railroad.

From Petersburg: At the Little Norway Festival, the **Clausen Memorial Museum** presented its new publication, *Tin Can Country: Southeast Alaska’s Historic Salmon Canneries*. Anjuli Grantham, Karen Hofstad and others collaborated to produce the book, much of which is based on the writings of the late Pat Roppel. The book touches on some of the many Southeast canneries and a variety of topics, including the early development of the canning industry in Tlingit and Haida country, the expansion and consolidation of canneries, canneries during World Wars I and II, canneries and the civil rights movement. The full-color publication features Hofstad’s unparalleled collection of salmon can labels and tins and has custom-made maps. The book is an outgrowth of AHS’s Alaska Historic Canneries Initiative.

Did you know that on permanent display at the Clausen Museum is the Fresnel lens from the Cape Decision Lighthouse? The lighthouse is on the southern tip of Kuiu Island and guides mariners to the entrances of Chatham and Sumner Straits. The lighthouse was built in 1932, the last established along Alaska’s rugged coast, and staffed until automated in 1974. The Coast Guard donated the lens to the museum in 1976.

From Port Alexander: *Ebb and Flood*, the newsletter of the **Port Alexander Historical Society**, reported that a project is underway to reconstruct and improve the historic CCC foot trail from Ship Cove to Port Alexander. The City of Port Alexander is reconstructing the trail around the Back Lagoon, improving the foot path to Ship Cove, and reconstructing the “Married Man’s Trail” to accommodate foot traffic, bikes,

and ATVs. Rachel Myron, USDA Forest Service archeologist, unearthed many interesting facts about the history of the area in her report on the foot trail, adding to other writing on the area by local historian Mark Kirchhoff. In the early days of Port Alexander, the Back Lagoon was the site of several moonshine operations. Roy Fields, one of the best-known moonshiners, lived there. The PAHS Museum has some artifacts of Fields’ still, along with photographs of the small dam thought to have provided a water source for the still. During Prohibition, locals stashed their bottles in the woods and in holes in the muskeg. By the 1920s, several prostitutes made their summer homes in the Back Lagoon, staying on scows in the water. The trail to the Back Lagoon then became known as the “Married Man’s Trail.”

Ebb and Flood editor Karen Lucas reported on beached vessels near Port Alexander. The wooden barge *Fort Union* was beached for salvage at Ship Cove on September 1, 1930 (alaskashipwreck.com). It had a boiler system that was probably used to process salmon. In the 1970s, homesteaders made many treks to Ship Cove to retrieve materials from the wreck to improve their cabins. Another derelict vessel that has all but melted into the beach in the Back Lagoon was an old U.S. Navy minesweeper nicknamed “Turkey.” All kinds of useful materials were also salvaged from this vessel in the 1970s. Two years ago, PAHS was able to photo document the boat graveyard and to record Marty Remund as he identified and told stories about each vessel that had come to rest there.

From Seward: The **Resurrection Bay Historical Society** newsletter occasionally publishes past articles from the *Seward Gateway*. The February newsletter reported that on August 5, 1925, a *Gateway* headline announced “Ku Klux Klan Organizer to Form Klan Here: Major Powell States that Every Town in Alaska Will Have a Klan.” Powell, Imperial Wizard of the national KKK, had traveled to Seward to initiate candidates into the order in a secret ceremony held in the woods. The Major stated that Klans had already been instituted in Ketchikan, Petersburg, Wrangell, Juneau, Haines, Skagway, Cordova, Kennecott, and Valdez.

The March issue of the RBHS newsletter contained an excerpt from an interview with Blanche Clark as she recalled her and husband Bob’s experience of the 1964 earthquake in the Crawford Subdivision at the head of Resurrection Bay. Blanche and Bob were in their car when they saw a huge wave roll in across Resurrection Bay. They climbed to the top of a backhoe, but that was not enough. They climbed a big tree and clung to the branches as they watched the wave pick up the backhoe, roll it over and turn it bottom-side up. They remained in the tree for almost three hours. When they came down, they had lost their home, their buildings, their vehicles, and all their pets. All they had left were the trees and the clothes on their backs.

The program at the April RBHS meeting was about the mountains of Seward, presented by Harold Faust and Dano Michaud, local climbers and outdoor adventurers. Earlier this year, Faust and Michaud appeared before the Alaska Historic Commission to make the case for naming Peak 4883, which lies across Resurrection Bay from Seward, Mt. Mary. The men want to honor Mary Lowell, Resurrection Bay homesteader and mother of Alice and Eva, who already have mountains named after them. Faust and Michaud also proposed to name another peak southeast of Mt. Alice after the steamship *Santa Ana*, which brought the first boatload of settlers to the new townsite of Seward on August 28, 1903.

From Sitka: The **Sitka Historical Society** is offering a series of illustrated talks on World War II in Sitka. On April 18, Matt Hunter spoke on “Standing Guard: The Story of the U.S. Army Coast Artillery in Sitka During World War II.” The event featured memorabilia from Chris Mattingly’s World War II collection.

From Sitka: *The Slime Line: Stories of Working Fish* was the program at the annual meeting of the **Sitka Maritime Heritage Society** on March 6. A panel of Sitkans, moderated by Eric Jordan, told their stories of the work of fish processing in Sitka over the years. One of the panelists, Dave Thomas, demonstrated how to fillet a fish, with the process projected onto an overhead screen and Eric Jordan providing a slice-by-slice description of the technique. Audience members were invited to participate with their own stories and questions.

From Soldotna: On May 13 Girl Scouts and Grace Lutheran School students worked with the board members of the **Soldotna Historical Society and Museum** to clean the Homestead Museum. The museum is now open Tuesday through Saturday 10-4 and Sunday 12-4 for the summer. Recent membership drives increased the number of active members from 42 last year to 115. They opted to create a lifetime membership and have had a very good response to it.



Mount Alice.

From Whitehorse: The **Yukon Historical & Museums Association** marked Asian Heritage Month with activities in the Old Fire Hall in Whitehorse on May 5-6, including calligraphy and sumi-e demonstrations and a reading of haiku poetry. A new publication, *Inventory to the History of Asian Yukoners* by Hidden Histories Society Yukon, was launched. Michael Abe and Yasmin Railton made a *Landscapes of Injustice* presentation, followed by a discussion. *Landscapes of Injustice* is a research project at the University of Victoria focused on the dispossession of property of Japanese Canadians during the 1940s.

The Yukon Historical and Museums Association and the Jilkaat Kawaan Heritage Center in Alaska will co-sponsor a conference October 25-27, 2019 in Whitehorse at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, to recognize the 150th anniversary of the drawing of the Kohklux map. 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. The map depicts an indigenous trade route between southeast Alaska and southwest Yukon. The conference will explore the cultural and historical value of this map, its legacy, and related topics. In anticipation of the conference, in September 2018 the YMHA hosted an event in Whitehorse entitled “Exploring Early Mapping in the North.” The event brought together indigenous speakers, heritage professionals, linguists, and others for a discussion on indigenous and non-indigenous mapping in the north: how maps were created, how they were used, and how they are important today. A detailed genealogical chart created by Bessie Cooley and her husband showed many connections between the First Nation communities that used the trading route recorded on the Kohklux map. René Rivard gave an impromptu presentation about his own efforts to map the Dead Horse Gulch area of the White Pass Trail.

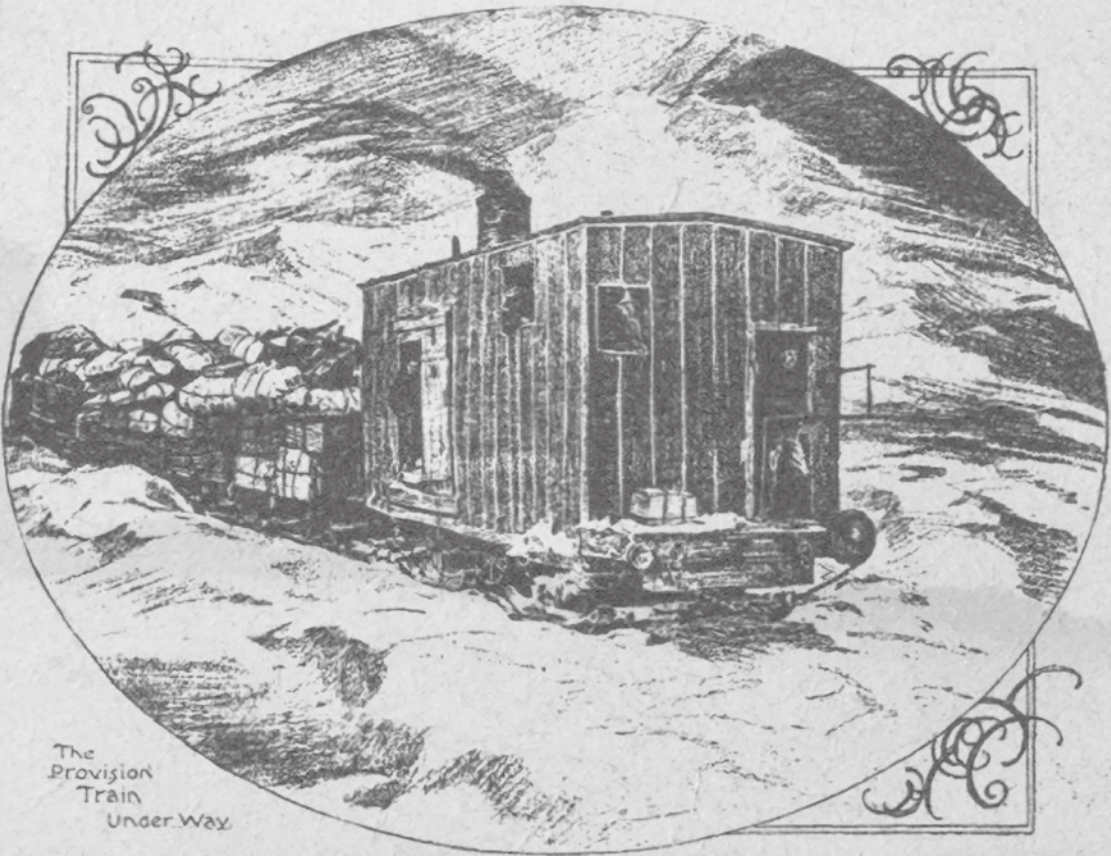
Oddment

Calgary Weekly Herald, January 27, 1898

Ice Train to the Klondyke

A Klondyke party of nine from Chicago and Minneapolis passed through the city en route for Edmonton on Thursday last. They propose to reach the Yukon by steam power over the frozen rivers and lakes of the north. A heavy spiked cylinder occupying a forward position under the locomotive will revolve in the snow and ice and propel the concern at the rate of 15 miles an hour under favorable circumstances. The engine is light but powerful, being built on

the latest and most economical plan. The party expect that their outfit loaded will weigh about 12 tons. Their plan is to follow the Mackenzie system to the mouth of the Peel, then up that river as far as possible. They anticipate difficulty in passing rapids where ice is badly piled up but hope to be able to surmount any such obstacle. Should their locomotive fail they propose to abandon it, build boats and wait for the opening in the rivers to take them through the gold regions.



THE ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S special initiative the last two years has been to learn about archives in Alaska and their needs. Out of the conversations came the idea to have a page in *Alaska History News* highlighting archives around the state and some of their collections. The page is being compiled by Anastasia Tarmann. Readers with materials to suggest should email AHS and the information will be forwarded to her.

Canneries and fisheries at Alaska State Library Historical Collections

It’s summer, which means fishing and cannery work in Alaska. Alaska’s Historical Collections in Juneau has material in over 30 collections on these subjects with blueprints, location charts, and drawings of canneries and information on cannery workers. To highlight a few:

- 1. **Captain Victor Seidelhuber Papers, ca. 1940s** (MS 245). Hand-drawn maps show cross sections of headlands and navigational courses along with navigational calculations, and hand-drawn charts show how to dock a vessel at various Southeast Alaska canneries. There are instructions on how to use the captain’s portable Pelorus, miscellaneous notes and correspondence regarding Seidelhuber’s work, and a book of tables for navigation. Seidelhuber was Master of a U.S. Navy tanker in the Aleutian Islands during 1951-1952. He patented a portable Pelorus, a navigation device, in 1937.
- 2. **Fish Trap and Cannery Location Maps, 1919-1961** (MS 247). 24 maps detail fish trap and cannery locations, 1919-1994, prepared by Hubbell & Waller Engineering Corporation and Deep Sea Salmon Company. The locations include Corea Bend Beach, Cape Kasilof Gold Gulch, Cook Inlet, Salamatof Beach, Kenai River Mouth, Granite Point, Bristol Bay, Cape Edward, Margaret Creek, Port Althorp, Chichagof Island, and Ninilchik Beach.

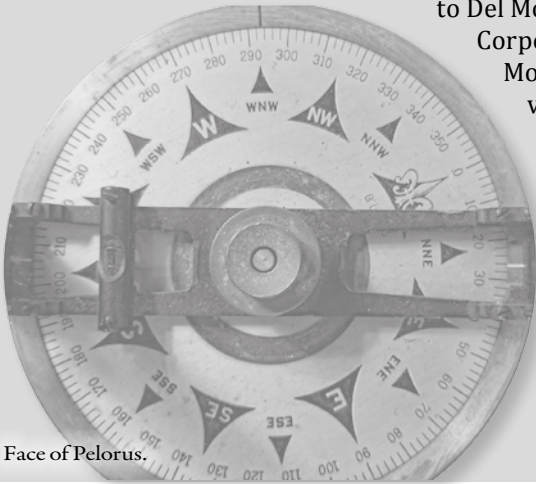
The State of Alaska banned fish traps in 1959, at the time of statehood. For further information, the library has books on the Pacific American Fisheries Company and about salmon fisheries from the mid-1800s to mid-1960s. See also the Pacific American Fisheries Records 1875-1994, Western Washington University, Center for Northwest Studies, and the Hubbell & Waller Records 1908-1976, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections for further background information and related collections.

Oral history interviews:

- 1. **Oral Interviews and Other Materials Related to the Alaska Packers Association, 1974-1987** (MS 9B). Along with transcriptions of oral interviews, there is a diagram of the bark *Star of India* and publications.

Note: related to **Alaska Packers Association Records, 1891-1970** (MS 9) that includes 82 linear feet of microfilm, microfiche, maps, and records. Six series: I. Administrative records; II. Cannery operation; III. Data concerning activities which the Alaska Packers Association considered detrimental to their fishery operation; IV. Files on fishery regulations, procedures and related material; V. Files on canning and processing of fishing products; VI. Fishery publications/miscellaneous, including maps. The APA was an association of Alaska salmon canneries chartered in 1892 from 11 independent canneries, with headquarters in San Francisco. In the 1960s its central offices moved to Blaine, Washington and the association was sold to Del Monte Corporation along with their parent company, California Packing Corporation. The APA was still operational, as of 1982, as a subsidiary of Del Monte. The APA operated an extensive fleet of ships, maintained files on various operations, and collected publications and shipwreck data.

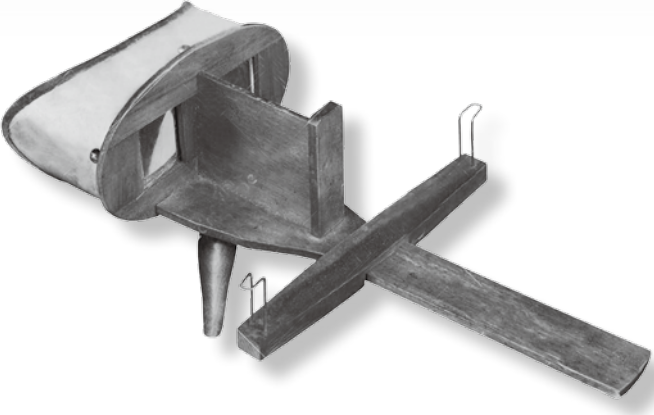
- 2. **Helen Abbott Watkins Photograph and Oral History Collection** (PCA 563, AV 28). Along with an interview are 275 photographs. The bulk of the collection is about a Tlingit family fish camp, Haines, 1950s-1970s. Subjects include the Thunderbird House, Carr’s Cove, Tlingit heritage, and smoking fish. Watkins was born in 1939 to Lilly (Klannott, born to James and Mary White, daughter of Anna White/ Woo Tu [sp?]) and John Allen Abbott in Haines. Mary White’s sibling was Joe White, head of the Thunderbird Clan and a highliner fisherman. Helen spent



Face of Pelorus.

six years in a sanatorium with TB and scarlet fever, which disrupted her education. In 1971, she obtained her GED. Her first job at age 16 was for Haines Packing Co., a cannery, where workers received \$300 for the season without overtime, with an average workday of 14 hours since all the fish that came in needed to be processed each day. Her mother also worked at the cannery, and oversaw the iron chink, two blades that cut the heads off the fish. Workers salvaged and ate the heads. A van picked up the workers who were mostly women. In summer the family tanned seal skin and preserved fish, and in winter women sewed booties, moccasins, and souvenirs from seal and deer for the Alaska Native Arts Cooperative. They often worked all night to make the quota by Friday each week, under what Watkins remarks were sweat-shop conditions. The going rate was \$2.35 per pair of booties. The interview with Watkins was recorded by Anastasia Tarmann, July 9, 2013.

- 3. **Interviews with Southeast Alaskans engaged in commercial salmon fishing, 1913-1978.** Related to *The southeast Alaska salmon fishery: a guide to interviews with men and women engaged in commercial fishing, 1913-1978*, text by Stephen B. Levey; photos by George Figdor, and to Southeast Alaska salmon fishery photos and papers, 1978, George Figdor, F901.A295 NO.6, PHONOTAPE C-44 (Digitized), PCA 473. There are interviews, and photographs of 54 individuals about commercial fishing in Southeast Alaska, pressures within the industry, and the impact of public policy decisions.



Photograph collections:

- 1. **Vincent Soboleff Photograph Collection**, ca. 1896–1920 (PCA 1). The family photographs cover a variety of subjects from Killisnoo to Angoon, Alaska. The most notable views cover Southeast Tlingit lifeways, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the fishing industry.
- 2. **Jacques and Marion Jacobsen Collection**, ca. 1882-1967 (PCA 423). Images in a variety of formats (stereographs, lantern slides, antique photographs) portraying fishermen, subsistence fishing, drying fish, canneries, and other subjects.
- 3. **Theodore R. Merrell Photograph Collection** (PCA 450). Images and documents, a number related to fisheries and canneries, collected by Merrell as he traveled throughout Alaska from 1959 through the 1990s as a fisheries biologist, field project leader, and fishery research administrator.
- 4. **Lars Degn Nelson Photograph and Oral History Collection, 1920s-1950s** (PCA596). Two albums with 79 black and white and color photographs of the Dillingham area, the Scandinavian Cannery, Pacific American Fisheries Cannery, and family and friends of Nelson. Included is an oral history provided by Harlan Adkison. Nelson was born December 28, 1927 at the Scandinavian Cannery at Snag Point, now known as Dillingham. His parents were August Nelson and Ella (Nielsen) (Nelson) Adkison. August was the winter watchman at the cannery. He drowned in a storm when Lars was four years old. Lars was in the first graduating class of the territorial school at Dillingham in 1949. He was drafted into the army in 1950 and served his time at Fort Richardson in Alaska. In 1958, Lars met Mary Teresa “Terry” (Coady) Nelson while working at the Kanakanak Hospital. Despite an order by the Hospital Nursing Director that Terry was not to “fraternize with the local native boys,” she fell in love with Lars and married him in 1959. They lived on the hospital compound until 1964, then built a basement home on Lars’ native allotment where they raised their children. Lars worked as a fisherman, a maintenance worker at Kanakanak Hospital, as ground crew for Wein Air Alaska, and a Dillingham jail guard until he retired in the early 1980s. He died November 16, 2014 in Palmer.

Beware the Bunko Men

Humans have always shown a tendency to swindle one another, but the “bunko man” and his cronies raised this work to high art. On the White Pass trail to the Klondike, for example, packs of “sure-thing gamblers” set traps for their quarry, luring in “suckers” to rigged poker games or the pea and shell game illustrated below. In this scenario, the bunko man sets up his table with three walnut shells and the elusive pea. His partners in crime, called “bunko-steerers,” lurk in the vicinity and then crowd around the table, gasping when one of

their number guesses correctly. “Well, well, this is my unlucky day,” says the man with the table, “But I’ll give some other gentleman a chance to win on the little pea.” And back and forth and round about go the shells again, a glimpse of the pea being given the watchers at seductively frequent intervals. This activity attracts an outsider, who bets—and loses. In frustration, he usually bets again and perhaps a third time. A witness to one of these episodes described a prospector who lost \$90 sit upon his pack and burst into tears.

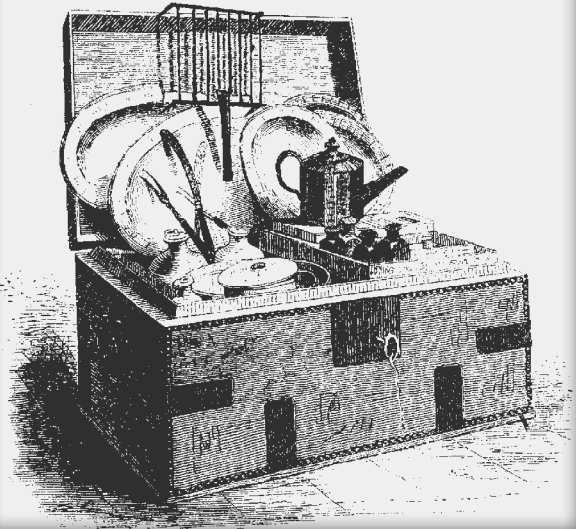
Adapted from: “Bunko Men and Their Tricks,”
San Francisco Chronicle, April 10, 1898.



THE PEA AND SHELL GAME ON THE SKAGWAY TRAIL.
[sketched From Life by M. W. Newberry, the “Chronicle’s” Artist, Now on the Way to Dawson.]

SEEKING TREASURES

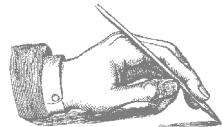
The Alaska Historical Society’s big fundraiser is its silent auction held as part of its annual fall meeting. The auction committee is soliciting items for this year’s auction. Please send a description of what you would like to donate to members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org.



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P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510-0299
Tel: 907/276-1596
Email: members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org
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