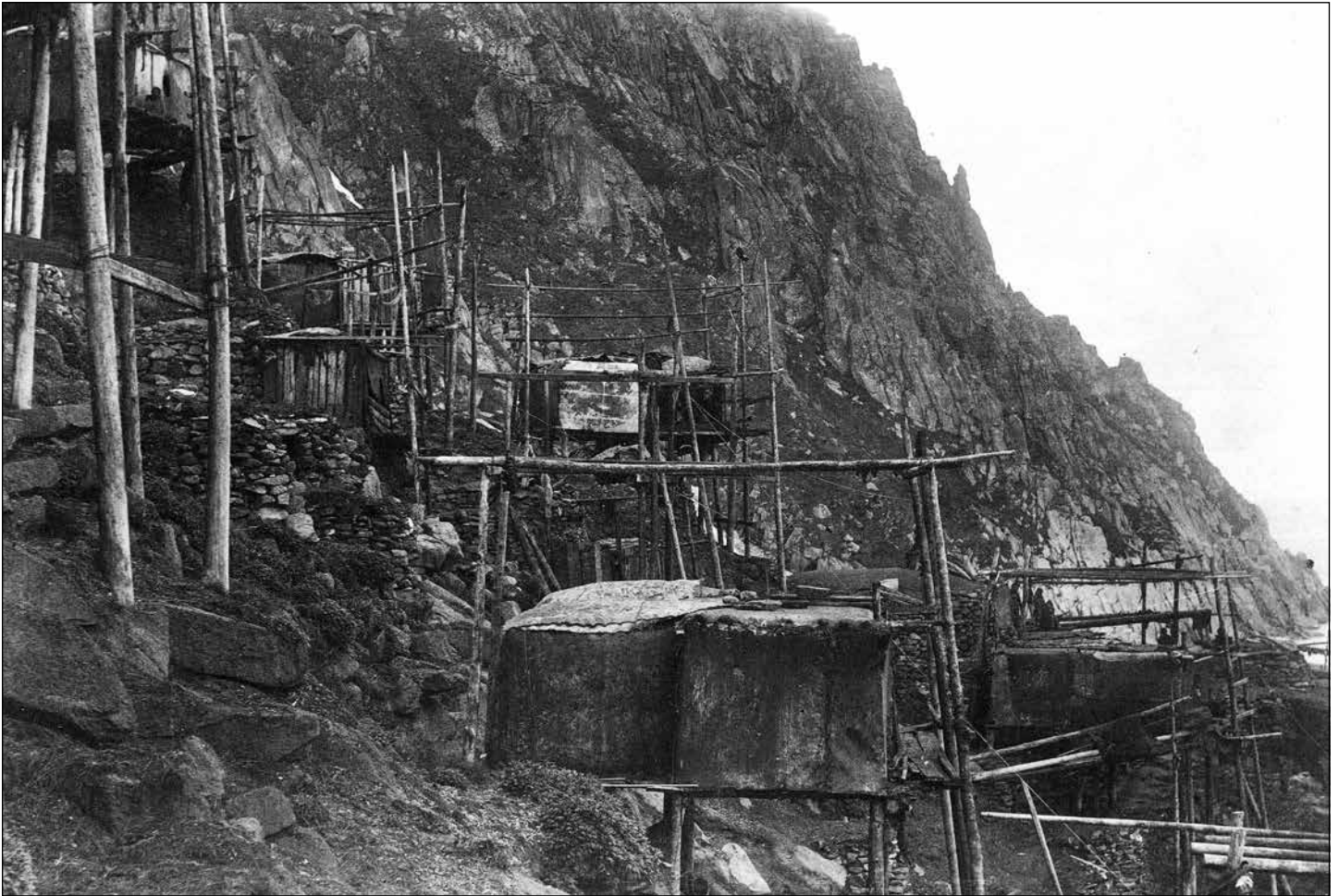


ALASKA HISTORY NEWS

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Quarterly of the Alaska Historical Society



King Island was home to an Inupiat group, the Ukivokmiut. After the BIA school closed in 1964, residents of King Island were forced to move to the mainland, most of them settling in Nome. By 1970 no one was left on the island. Alaska Digital Archives, ASL-P27-110. Agnes Swineford Shattuck, a summer on the *Thetis*, 1888. ASL-PCA-27)

Interest Builds for This Fall's Virtual Historical Society Conference

The papers are rolling in for the Alaska Historical Society's 2021 conference, to be held virtually October 6-9 and 13-16. As of May 15, we've received more than 20 proposals, with promises of more. Many, but by no means all, fit into some aspect of this year's theme, "Remembered and Imagined Communities."

We're excited this year's keynote speaker is journalist and author Tom Kizzia, whose new book, *Cold Mountain Path*, is subtitled *The Ghost Town Decades of McCarthy-Kennecott, Alaska, 1938-1983*. A 25-year reporter for the *Anchorage Daily News*, Tom's bestselling book, *Pilgrim's Wilderness*, was chosen by *The New York Times* as the best true crime book set in Alaska. A graduate of Hampshire College, Tom lives in Homer.

Panels for the conference are being planned, with interest in one on "wrongly imagined" communities in Alaska, such as those featured in misguided TV shows, movies and news articles. At least one session will focus on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the law's passage.

If you haven't yet submitted a paper proposal, there's still time. The deadline has been extended to June 15. If you'd like to present on any topic related to Alaska history please send a 100-word abstract, along with a couple of sentences about yourself, to Rachel Mason at rachel_mason@nps.gov. Even if you only want to listen and learn, mark your calendars for October 6-9 and 13-16. Registration will open later this summer.

Sherwood Family Generously Re-Endows Award to Encourage Historical Writing

Bob Spude Wins 2020 Alaska History Prize for Focus on Interior Gold Mining

The Alaska Historical Society is enormously grateful to the family of renowned Alaska historian Morgan Sherwood for re-endowing an effort to encourage well-written and insightful articles about Alaska history.

Sherwood's widow Jeanie recently contributed \$10,000 for the *Alaska History* award which recognizes the best article in each volume of the Society's journal. The endowment provides a \$500 cash prize for the best article and has been awarded since 1988 from the original endowment of \$13,000.

"Good writing is important, good history is important and it's important to keep good people writing about it," said Jeanie from her home in Davis, California.

Morgan, raised in Anchorage, wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on exploration of Alaska, 1867-1900, and subsequently published what is considered "a milestone of Alaska historical literature" still in publication today. Morgan served as program chair for the Conference on Alaska History held in 1967 as part of the commemoration of the centennial of the U.S. purchase of Alaska from Russia. A result of the conference was the creation of our Alaska Historical Society.

A longtime professor of history at the University of California Davis, Sherwood attended and presented at numerous annual conferences of the Alaska Historical Society and met and encouraged all attending in the research and writing of Alaska history. He promoted the creation of the

journal and published an article in the inaugural issue in 1984. Morgan and Jeanie lived in California and they spent summers at their Halibut Cove cabin.

The journal's editorial advisors annually vote for the best article award. The selection for Volume 35 published in 2020 has just been announced and is Robert L. (Bob) Spude for his article "Fairbanks Assayer Gustave Eugene Beraud and 88 Tons of Gold, with Comments on the Assayers in the Alaska-Yukon Goldfields, 1898-1920."

Upon receiving notice of the award Bob wrote journal editor Ross Coen: "I knew Morgan Sherwood and respected his work. He was one of those old-time gentlemen scholars so approachable, especially during the Alaska History conferences. Nice to be associated with his name in the award."



Morgan and Jeanie Sherwood at their Halibut Cove cabin circa 1990. Photo by Sam Kimura

President's Message

Engage in History by Participating with Historical Society

One of the benefits of membership in the Alaska Historical Society is the chance to work with a group of wonderful people on fascinating and engaging issues, from advocacy to planning for an annual conference. You can join this collective effort by nominating individuals and local societies for our annual awards.

Recognize the work of a colleague or a group of people who have completed an exhibit, written about a little-known part of Alaska history or worked hard to preserve a valuable gem from the past. It is easy to do, just write the nomination and go to our website to email it. This year's deadline is August 15 and recipients will be recognized at the annual conference.

Please enjoy this edition of our quarterly newsletter with details on the upcoming Annual Conference October 6-9 and 13-16. Join us by Zoom to present or participate in the discussions.

You'll also find an article in this issue on our advocacy efforts to keep the National Archives and Records Administration in the Northwest and accessible to Alaskans. Halting the sale is a tremendous success story, but there is more work required to ensure the resources are appropriated to maintain the facility and plan adequately for a reasonable schedule to digitize the vast number of (continued)



collections pertaining to Alaska. Please join with us to encourage our elected officials to continue this effort.

I hope you will read the article on the Alaska Historical Society's project to produce a Guide to the Sources for the Study of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, tied to our commemoration of the 50th anniversary of ANCSA's passage. You can help by identifying documents, recordings, films or other records that may exist in local communities.

Finally, it's not too early to think about your community hosting a future in-person Alaska Historical Society annual conference. I know we are all anxious to catch up with each other and share our insights about Alaska's rich history, and we want to partner with communities across the state to do exactly that.

—Will Schneider

Alaska History Day Entries Focus on Indigenous Language Preservation

The results are in! Some 54 students from five schools across Alaska participated in the late March Alaska History Day competition. In groups or as individuals they submitted 35 entries in one of five categories: research paper, performance, documentary film, exhibit, and website.

Students hailed from West Valley High School, Floyd Dryden Middle School, Rogers Park Elementary, North Pole High School and Family Partnership Charter School.

On the theme of Communication in History, two noteworthy submissions explored Alaska indigenous languages, including *Alaska's Old Oppression: Reviving the Dead Languages* which took 3rd place in the research paper category.

The thesis for *Molly of Denali*, a website project, "represents the extension of the communication goals of both Golovin Native Corporation and Bering Straits

Native Corporation when they were founded. Specifically, the communication goal was to preserve the traditions and languages of Alaska Natives by teaching children and others in an engaging format." While *Molly of Denali* didn't place due to some technical issues, the judges agreed it was a stand-out presentation.

A full list of the winners is available at <https://www.akhf.org/ahd>.

The Alaska Historical Society congratulates all the students for their excellent entries in this year's competition and looks forward to more Alaska-themed projects in 2022. To inspire students to that end, Society members are encouraged to contact program coordinator Kari Lovett to volunteer to mentor students and judge entries at klovett@akhf.org.

—Penelope Goforth

Closure of Federal Archives Feds Commit to Quicker Digitizing of Alaska Records

What just a year and half ago looked like a terrible outcome for historians in Alaska and other Pacific Northwest states has been reversed by the Biden administration.

On April 8, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which administers the federal budget and had approved the sale of Seattle's National Archives facility, reversed an earlier decision and ended the federal government's effort to sell the building in downtown Seattle.

In a letter from Acting OMB Director Shalanda Young to the Public Buildings Reform Board (PBRB), she formally withdrew OMB's January 2020 approval of the sale of the NARA Seattle facility.

"Any effort to sell the Federal Archives and Records Center in the future, through any available and appropriate authority, must comply with at least two substantial

requirements," Young wrote. "First, it must be preceded by meaningful and robust tribal consultation, consistent with the President's January 26, 2021 Memorandum on Tribal Consultation. Second, it must proceed through the appropriate administrative process, based on a new factual record, and must comply with the attendant substantive and procedural safeguards of that process."

Meanwhile, Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski on May 17 responded to the Alaska Historical Society with a three-page letter about her efforts to stop the archives sale and ensure that Alaska's historical records are digitized. Reflecting concerns from the Society and other Alaska groups including the Alaska Federation of Natives, Murkowski asked NARA for a report on the status of digitizing Alaska records. (continued)

“We recognize that with limited staff and equipment available in Seattle, we are not able to make progress at a rate that is acceptable to our stakeholders, and we are taking concrete steps to expedite the digitization of these important records,” NARA told the senator in a three-page report.

To increase the pace of digitization of Alaska records, some are being transferred to National Archives at College Park, MD. With this more aggressive effort, NARA says “we will complete the digitization of Alaska records over the next few years.”

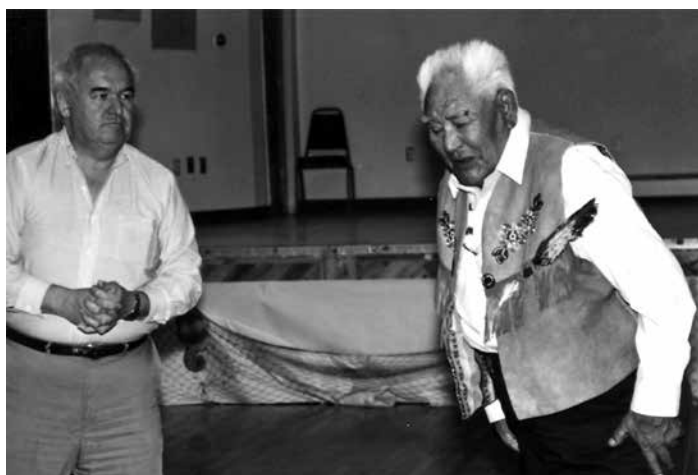
Murkowski told the Society in her letter that NARA’s efforts are not satisfactory to her. “It does not explicitly reflect NARA’s commitment to me to not only digitize the Alaska records, but to index them and make them easily accessible online,” she said.

In Seattle, a continuing challenge remains the longstanding deferred maintenance issues with that region’s archives building. The building is 77 years old (a former World II Navy warehouse). The costs to bring it up to modern standards are \$52-72 million, and to build a new facility in the area are \$90 million.

Historical groups across the Pacific Northwest including the Alaska Historical Society continue to urge their federal representatives to provide funding to either get the building in the shape it needs if it remains in Sand Point or build a new facility to house these records.

—David Ramseur

Society’s Guide to Sources on Landmark ANCSA Well Underway



Traditional Chief Peter John with Morris Thompson. Chief Peter John was an early advocate for Native land claims and Morris Thompson was a prominent Native leader and supporter during the years preceding and during passage of ANCSA. Archives, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Chief Peter John Collection, UAF 2009-92-404.

The Alaska Historical Society’s project to prepare a comprehensive Guide to Sources for the Study of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), which was signed into law on December 18, 1971, is in progress. This landmark legislation settled Alaska Native claims to land in Alaska. The settlement of 44 million acres and nearly \$1 billion is the basis of Native regional and village corporations, creating economic opportunities that enrich both Native and non-Natives throughout the state. The Act also abolished aboriginal title and aboriginal hunting and fishing rights, a source of continued legal struggles for those dependent on the subsistence resources of the land.

The Society’s project is to research primary and secondary sources available in archives, libraries, museums, Native organizations, and national repositories. The final guide starts with an introductory essay on the scope of the work with a brief overview of the historical issues.

The second section describes collections researched at archives in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. A significant part of this section includes online sources, including the Alaska Native Review Commission Collection and Mike Gravel Papers at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Fred Paul Papers and the Alice Brown Papers at the University of Alaska Anchorage, the Federal State Land Use Planning Commission Collection at the Alaska State Historical Library, records from the Office of the Governor at the Alaska State Archives in Juneau, the *Tundra Times* website, Bureau of Indian Affairs records, material from the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and the National Archives, and media material produced by the Alaska Federation of Natives.

The third section elaborates on each collection, with detailed references down to the box and folder level and highlights key documents. The fourth section is an annotated bibliography of published sources on ANCSA. The final section is an appendix with a timeline of events and a listing of key participants in land claims with brief annotations of their roles.

This project is being done in collaboration with the Alaska Library Network and is made possible by generous support from the Rasmuson Foundation, the Atwood Foundation, and five Alaska Native regional corporations.

To date, a significant amount of the archives research has been completed. We are beginning to pull together the varied information into a standard format, and work is moving forward on the bibliography and personal names list. (continued)

The target completion date is December 18, 2021, but we will share information before then as requested and at the Society's annual conference. We will continue to add material after December 18 as funding provides. The final guide will be available electronically on the AHS website and linked from other online ANCSA and archival resource-related and educational websites.

We hope to include an educational component to this project, where material fitting Alaska's social study

standards can be easily available for secondary and university-level courses being taught about Alaska state and Native history and politics.

If you would like to help with the ANCSA project or have archival material related to ANCSA, please contact William Schneider, wsschneider@alaska.edu.

—William Schneider

Denali Park Historian Brings Appreciation of International Cultures to Board

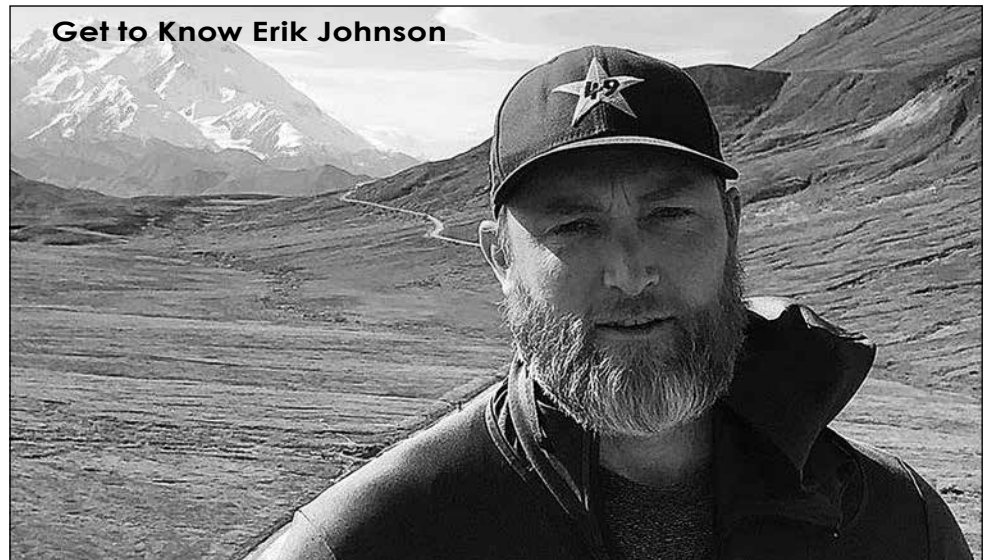
Erik Johnson, just elected to his second term on the Alaska Historical Society board, credits his family for inspiring his lifelong passion for history. His mother a teacher and volunteer, Erik saw her positively affect their community outside Denver. His father a United Airlines flight attendant, Erik gained a first-hand appreciation of other cultures and their rich history traveling around the world with his dad.

After earning a bachelor's degree in international affairs from the University of Colorado Boulder, Erik wanted to share his knowledge with young students, so he worked as an English teacher in Seoul, Korea. But after nearly four years in Asia during the 2000s, he grew discontented with U.S. foreign policy and frustrated with an overall ignorance of history by many Americans.

So in late 2010, Erik returned to the states, earned a master's in history from George Mason University and committed to doing what he could to improve Americans' understanding of history. Where better to start than the repository of American history, he thought, settling in Washington, D.C.

In various internships and volunteer assignments with the National Park Service, such as serving as a guide at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the National Mall, he observed first-hand how tourists to the nation's capital interacted with their history. He was especially struck by how few African Americans visited the Mall's historic sites, until the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial opened in 2011. "History needs to be relatable and representative," he says he learned from that experience.

In 2014, Erik was searching for history-related jobs with the NPS and spotted a park historian opening at Denali National Park and Preserve. Having enjoyed a visit to Alaska nearly a decade earlier and missing the West, he landed the position and made the uneasy transition from the bustle of the nation's capital to park headquarters outside rustic Healy.



Erik Johnson, Denali National Park & Preserve, Stony Overlook.

As park historian, Erik explores and documents Denali's rich history, conducts oral interviews with former employees and long-time area residents, and is rewarded working with an expert park staff. One of his proudest recent achievements was helping complete a nearly decade-long effort to include the Denali Park Road on the National Register of Historic Places. He also enjoys writing Denali-related "History Scoop" articles, uploaded to the park's website every few weeks.

From his home in the park, Erik pursues his passion for his favorite professional sports teams, including the Denver Nuggets and Milwaukee Brewers, and takes advantage of Alaska's incredible outdoor offerings such as pack-rafting, hiking and camping.

He especially cherishes his interactions with young Alaskans through Alaska History Day and hopes to eventually return to the classroom. "Studying history sometimes makes it hard to stay optimistic," Erik said, "but the incredible things that young people are doing through the National History Day program is what gives me hope."

—David Ramseur

Brooks Range Museum Documents Inland People of North Slope

Hop on a plane in Fairbanks someday and journey up to Naqraq, or Anaktuvuk Pass, to visit the Simon Paneak Memorial Museum.

SPMM opened in 1986 with a mission to collect, preserve, and interpret objects and materials relating to the history, culture, and lifestyle of the Nunamiut (Inland People) of the North Slope.

Inside the museum, you'll be amazed by a huge map project that Sollie Hugo, oral historian for the North Slope Borough's Inupiat History, Language and Culture Commission, has been working on since 2016.

"I am doing a mapping process for all our people across the Brooks Range and also the coastal peoples' travels and their ways of life," Hugo said. "Everything pertaining to our history and the whaling culture history is all on maps. All our campsites, all their campsites, all the historical sites, all the seasonal sites, every known site that was there for a purpose is on that map."

Hand-drawn and color-coded with Sharpie pens are caribou migration routes, places where there's open water in winter ("in case the caribou did come through, you had to happen to know where those were"), historical trails, places of interest, messenger feast sites, game-playing sites and medicine man burial sites ("because you have to know where those are"). Also documented are the routes—and some starvation sites—of explorers from the 1800s.

Hugo's Central Brooks Range map alone is about 10-foot square. Similar maps document historic activities in the eastern and western Brooks Range. He intends to transfer all the information onto one giant map that stretches from Point Hope to Herschel Island, "to show that there's unity and conformity here and this has been a very active place for a very long time." A digitized version is also a goal.

Information for the project came from recorded interviews with elders in years past, the North Slope Borough archives, and writings of explorers.

Another project Hugo is working on with SPMM staff is repatriation of human remains from the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. A team from Naqraq plans to visit the museum this fall to finalize arrangements.

The process began about 10 years ago after Hugo, visiting the east coast, found himself drawn into the museum.

"I saw some old artifacts from Point

Barrow and that's 300 miles from where we are, but that sparked my interest into the museum," he said. "And lo and behold, the further I went into the museum I recognized the Nunamiut inland people's remains and artifacts on display in a display case.

"I talked to the curator. I told her exactly where I was from, who I represented, and I told her that those are from my people, there's only one Nunamiut tribe in the whole state of Alaska or from the north for that matter and that's our people."

Before the fragile remains are shipped home, they will be DNA tested.

"Once that's done we can identify whose kinfolk those people are because they're directly related to our people here," Hugo said.

SPMM also is pursuing the return of artifacts housed in museums around the world. Many have already found their way home and are safely housed in SPMM's climate-controlled storage area.

"It is with gratitude that we have received items of interest from different people across the country and the world—things perhaps their parents or grandparents bought, or items received as gifts," Hugo said.

While large groups are still not allowed to visit SPMM due to COVID restrictions, individuals who are vaccinated and can show a negative COVID test can arrange a tour. SPMM is beginning to restart traditional skills classes taught by elders. The classes, sponsored by the borough, are free to community members. Elders are paid \$50 an hour to teach six-week classes, four hours a day for five days a week. The museum is also involved in the local school to teach survival and other skills.

You can learn more about the museum at www.tinyurl.com/nsb-spm. To learn more about the Inupiat History, Language and Culture Commission visit www.tinyurl.com/ihlc-commission

—Carol Gales



Anaktuvuk Pass drummers, May 1970. From left to right: Arctic John, Elijah Kakinya, Frank Rulland, and Simon Paneak. Ward W. Wells Collection, Anchorage Museum (WWS-4827-128).

Contributions of African Americans to Alaska Documented in Museum Exhibit

The many historic contributions of African Americans to Alaska's politics, economic development, and culture is the focus of a new exhibit at the Anchorage Museum entitled "Journey, Justice, and Joy: Black Lives in Alaska." A diverse collective of community members, museum curators, archivists and historians (including AHS Board member Ian Hartman) pulled together material to present a snapshot of Black history and culture in Alaska over the previous 150 years.

Before Statehood and earlier even than the Klondike gold rush of the 1890s, Black men and women arrived in Alaska and have since participated broadly in Alaska's development. They patrolled the seas, built the roads, served in the military and public life, opened businesses, fought injustice, created art, and forged communities.

This exhibition, told through archival photos and collected materials, showcases the richness and resilience of Black lives in Alaska. It will run through November in the Museum's atrium.

—Ian Hartman



Bessie Couture, circa 1900. Couture owned and operated two restaurants in Skagway, Alaska. The first she ran during the Klondike Gold Rush, between 1897 and 1900. Her second, the "Broadway Restaurant and Bakery," she co-owned with her husband, Frenchman William Couture. Anchorage Museum, Bessie Couture Collection, B1987.2.44c

News Summaries from around the State

Anchorage

Museums Alaska Welcomes New ED

Museums Alaska's new executive director, Dixie Clough, started work in April. She is moving to Alaska from Florida where she was Director of Communications and Development for the Bay Arts Alliance in Panama City. In other news, the organization will hold a virtual annual conference, #MA2021, September 13-14 and 20-21. The theme is *Sustainability: Adaptation and Resilience of Alaska Museums*. Welcome to Alaska, Dixie!

Hope

New Sign Recognizes Local Forest Service Role

The Hope and Sunrise Historical Society has a new sign, *Guarding the Forest*, that tells about the Forest Service guard stations built after the Chugach National Forest was created in 1907 and expanded to include the Hope and Sunrise area in 1909. At the time, Sunrise and Hope were established settlements, but area roads were rough. In 1911, the Forest Service constructed a dog sled trail from Moose Pass to Cooper Landing. In 1936, a steep, rough and hazardous road was completed, linking Seward to Hope. The Forest Service guard stations were built in the 1930s to provide safety for travelers on the difficult trails and for protection against fires. Located near Hope, Granite Creek, Girdwood, and Cooper Landing, they served as administration sites away from the district's headquarters in Seward.

Smokey's Guard Station began its life as the Granite Creek Station. In the early 1950s, it was moved from Granite Creek to the Johnson Pass Trail trailhead to serve as a guard station there. The Hope Guard Station was on the Hope Highway (then a trail), five miles east of Hope. It was staffed by a ranger for decades. At least one ranger invited Hope residents to picnics at the station. The Forest Service later donated the buildings to the Hope and Sunrise Historical Society.

Bertha Ford Whitaker, Namesake of Bertha Creek

John Whitaker wrote to the Hope and Sunrise Historical Society seeking information about his great-grandmother, Bertha Ford Whitaker. Using Mary Barry's *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula* and other sources, museum personnel were able to create a timeline of events for Bertha Whitaker. Bertha and Clifford Whittaker spent their 1898 honeymoon on Turnagain Arm mining at what is now called Bertha Creek, now the site of a campground near Sunrise. After her husband died in Dawson in 1902 in an incident described as "accidentally shot by gun in store window," Bertha took her son back to the Lower 48. She remarried and became Bertha Munson, but her son continued to spend summers in Alaska with his maternal grandfather, William Ford.



The only known historic images of the Yates Memorial Hospital interior. The "men's ward" (left) and "sitting room and private room for women" (center and right). *Spirit of Missions*, September 1912

Juneau

Local Breweries Featured in Newsletter

The Gastineau Channel Historical Society just distributed its spring/summer edition of *Gastineau Heritage News*. The theme for this issue is alcohol, with a timeline and list of the breweries in Juneau and Douglas, and articles on buildings in town where alcohol was brewed and distilled and newspaper coverage of the businesses.

Opera Focuses on Tlingit-Russian Wars of 1802 and 1804

Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Juneau Perseverance Theater are teaming up to produce the first-ever Tlingit opera, written by Tlingit composer Ed Littlefield and Tlingit librettist Vera Starbard. The opera focuses on the wars waged between Tlingits in Russians in Southeast Alaska in 1802 and 1804, telling stories from the Tlingit perspective. The libretto tells the history of the Tlingit-Russian battle in 1802 in which the Tlingit and Haida united and were victorious. The victory was followed by a defeat in 1804 and the Tlingit retreat from Sitka. In April, SHI held a two-day workshop for Indigenous actors and singers to prepare them to perform in Tlingit. The full opera production will be developed over the next several years.

Updated Treadwell Website Online

Juneau-Douglas's Treadwell Historic Preservation and Restoration Society updated its website in May. Check it out at www.treadwellsociety.com

Ketchikan

Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital Repurposed

In 2020, the Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital in Ketchikan was declared one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The building, on Mission Street, received this recognition because it suffers from a failing roof, foundation, and interior

deterioration. Built in 1905 as a clergy house for the Episcopal Mission, the building was re-purposed in 1909 to serve as a 12-bed hospital during the boom years of Ketchikan's growth. The construction of a larger hospital nearby left the Yates building vacant for many years. Emery Tobin, founder of the *Alaska Sportsman* magazine (now *Alaska Magazine*) based the magazine and a curio shop out of the building from 1941 to 1966. The Chamber of Commerce occupied the building from 1968 to 1978. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Episcopal Church operated a Seaman's Center to assist seafarers visiting Ketchikan. Now Historic Ketchikan hopes to create displays to share the remarkable history of the building with locals and visitors alike. The organization is raising money to stabilize and repair the building.

Petersburg

Museum Celebrates Three Local Women

To celebrate Women's History Month, the Clausen Memorial Museum created Facebook video shorts that highlighted the lives and accomplishments of three Petersburg women. Jerry (Geraldine) Frink, who arrived in Alaska as a child in 1917, was the first female shrimp boat captain in Petersburg. Amy Hallingstad, an Alaska Native rights leader, was born in 1901 in Haines and came to Petersburg with her family in 1920. Magnhild Lee, who was born in Norway and came to work in Petersburg at age 18, was the first woman on Petersburg's city council. The three videos can be found on the Clausen Memorial Museum's Facebook page.

Seward

Memories From Just Before the 1964 Earthquake

In early 1964, a few weeks before the Great Alaska Earthquake devastated much of Seward, brothers Mac and Bob Eads used Caterpillar tractors to move a 79-foot railcar from the train yard on the Seward waterfront

to a new home at the corner of Third and Jefferson. The Alaska Railroad had donated the club car named “Seward” to the community, and the Seward Chamber of Commerce intended to use the car at its new location as an information center and tourist attraction.

On a snowy February day, the brothers laboriously moved the railcar over frozen ground using two Caterpillars, one at the front end with a winch, and the other at the back with a dozer blade. A few weeks later, the 1964 earthquake destroyed the railroad infrastructure on the waterfront, but the railcar at Third and Jefferson escaped unscathed. It is still there, although recently there has been some vandalism. (from the Resurrection Bay Historical Society’s Pages from the Past, *Seward Phoenix Log*, March 4, 2004).

Only one day before the earthquake, Seward residents learned their town had been selected by *Look Magazine* as an All-America City. The national award was given in 1964 to 11 cities of varying sizes that showed outstanding citizen action in improving their communities.

Seward, one of the smallest towns ever to become an All-America City, won the award for fighting off the threat of extinction in 1961. That year, although the military, the tuberculosis sanitarium, two fish processors, and a freight company had pulled out of Seward, its residents were determined to keep the town going. They voted to pave the streets and improve the harbor, hoping to bring industry back. Their efforts were repaid when two new businesses opened in Seward.

Unfortunately, the earthquake destroyed many of the improvements, but Seward kept its All-America City title and showed much of the same citizen determination to recover from the earthquake. (from the Resurrection Bay Historical Society’s Pages from the Past, *Petticoat Gazette*, March 26, 1964, and *Look Magazine* press release).

Musher and Pioneer Alfred Lowell Subject of Statue

The Seward Trail Musers have received a Kenai Mountains Turnagain Arm Heritage Area grant and are raising more money to put up a statue of Alfred Lowell. A musher who worked with Japanese musher Jujiro Wada to scout out a trail to the Nome goldfields and mark the Iditarod Trail, Alfred was the son of Mary and Frank Lowell, who settled at the head of Resurrection Bay in 1884.

Sitka

Japonski Island Boat House Restoration Underway

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society continues its quest to bring the World War II Japonski Island Boathouse into

full restoration and operation as a place for celebrating, documenting, preserving and sharing what makes Sitka unique. The COVID pandemic has made the last year challenging, but over the winter the Society’s small socially-distanced work parties accomplished a lot to prepare for the restoration of the northeast wall of the Boathouse and siding the addition this spring. The April 24 work party to remove old siding and rebuild the historic wall was a big success. The Society also took advantage of the time away from physical programming to add material to its website and survey the Sitka community to plan future programs.

Whitehorse

Old Log Church Museum Redesign Underway

The Old Log Church Museum in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, is planning a redesign of its permanent exhibit installed in 1999. The current exhibit is static and doesn’t really tell the complex and evolving stories of Yukon First Nations and the Anglican Church. In addition, it is aimed only at adults. The museum decided it was time for a change and hired Sylvie Binette of Binette Cultural Solutions to develop a plan for a new exhibit. The planning team sponsored a Design Thinking Workshop, with participants from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. At the workshop, the group addressed issues and came up with ideas about how to interpret the history of the Anglican Church in Yukon in a way that engages a broader audience, including Indigenous citizens and young families. Specific suggestions included a diversity of voices for exhibits, more interactive exhibits and a revamp of the reception desk area, gift shop and children’s corner.

The Full Legacy of the S.S. Klondike is Told

The S.S. *Klondike* was a sternwheeler that carried passengers, tourists, freight and silver-lead ore up and down the Yukon River from 1929 to 1955. When it was retired, the steamboat found a life in Whitehorse as the S.S. *Klondike* National Historic Site. For years, the boat’s story was interpreted to visitors as a positive one, while leaving out some of the negative parts of its legacy. Although the S.S. *Klondike* connected some communities, it also divided them by taking Indigenous children away from their homes along the Yukon River to a residential boarding school at Carcross. New interpretive panels will acknowledge the impacts of mining and settlement on Indigenous culture and tell how the S.S. *Klondike* perpetuated these impacts. The expanded story will offer more information about the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and

the Ta'an Kwäch'an Council, on whose traditional territory the S.S. *Klondike* now rests. The National Historic Site has commissioned Indigenous artists Dustin Sheldon and Duran

Henry to design and carve three cedar poles to welcome visitors to the new interpretive exhibit.

Alaska Historical Business

Help Us Recognize Those Who Promote Alaska History

Each year the Alaska Historical Society recognizes, through its awards program, individuals, historical societies, and public institutions for outstanding research, writing, and promotion of Alaska history. AHS invites nominations for its 2021 awards.

The **James H. Ducker Alaska Historian of the Year Award** is given to an Alaska resident for publication of significant new material about Alaska's past published the last sixteen months. Historian James Ducker edited the Society's scholarly journal *Alaska History* for 30 years.

The **Esther Billman Award** is given to local or state historical society, museum, government agency, or other organization for a project or series of projects contributing to the preservation and understanding of Alaska history. Esther Billman's service as curator at the Sheldon Jackson Museum is commemorated by the award.

The **Evangeline Atwood Award** is given to an individual for significant long-term contributions to Alaska state or local history. Evangeline Atwood was one of the founders of the Alaska Historical Society.

The **Barbara Smith Pathfinder Award** is given to an individual or individuals for indexing or preparing guides to Alaska historical material. Barbara Smith, a historian, archivist, and exhibit curator prepared invaluable guides to Alaska Native, Russian Orthodox, and Russian American records.

The **Elva R. Scott Local Historical Society Award** is for a special achievement of a community historical society or museum to make the local people and historical events known. Elva Scott was a founder of Homer's Pratt Museum, and after moving to Eagle was the newsletter editor, tour guide, and official of its historical society.

The **Student and Beginning Professional Travel Scholarship Awards** are cash awards given to help individuals attend and participate in the Alaska Historical Society's annual meeting and conference.

The **Contributions to Alaska History Award** recognize an individual or groups that have made singular and significant recent contributions to the promotion and understanding of Alaska history.

A letter of nomination with sufficient detail and supporting materials should be sent to the AHS Awards Committee, members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org or mailed to P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510. Nominations for the Ducker Award must include a copy of the publication for the committee's use. Nominations are due August 15, 2021.

SOCIETY BOARD SEEKS ENGAGED CANDIDATES FOR SERVICE

The Alaska Historical Society is governed by a 15-member Board of Directors. Directors are elected to three-year staggered terms and are limited to two consecutive terms. Five terms expire each year.

Directors generally meet six times a year. They meet in-person at the Society's annual meeting and electronically the remainder of the year. The directors set policies and oversee operations of the organization. The directors annually elect the Society's officers. Each director usually heads one of the Society's committees such as membership, publications, newsletter, advocacy, annual meeting program, and awards, and serves on several others.

It's your organization! Please consider serving on the Board. If you are interested or have a recommendation of an individual, please contact Erik Johnson, Chair, Nominating Committee, at members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org by August 20, 2021.

VIRTUAL AUCTION RAISES VITAL FUNDS

Thank you to all who bid enthusiastically on items offered in the first Alaska Historical Society electronic auction, as well as to the donors of the items. The last half-hour of the auction was crazy with the website updated every two to four minutes. All but one item sold and more than \$3,000 was raised to help with the Society's many programs.

The plan is to get back on schedule, holding the auction as part of our annual conference. Look forward to this fall's auction; we already have some good stuff but need more. Please contact members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org if you have some great Alaska ephemera or books you are interested in donating. As a non-profit organization, your donation is tax deductible for its fair market value.

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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."



PLEASE DONATE



We welcome your letters, news and pictures. Please send them to an address on the right.

P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510-0299
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From Klondike Nugget, August 24,
1898.



**LOOK OUT FOR GOLD-DUST SWINDLERS:
AN ODDMENT
by Chris Allan**

In 1898, as the population of Dawson City swelled so did the number of crooks and conmen. This observer describes a trick pulled in local casinos involving lead pellets like those used in shotgun shells:

The would-be swindler fills a sack partly full of shot and enters one of our many play-houses. Throwing the sack carelessly on the table he calls for a 'stack of whites' or 'blues' [casino chips] according to his ambition. The dealer drops the sack into his drawer. If he wins, his sack is returned to him and gold to the amount of his winnings is weighed out to him at the scales and, of course, is not put into the sack of shot. The shot sack, however, is liable to detection by a vigilant dealer. As it rolls on the table it flattens out, somewhat different from the sack of gold. The fraud is materially aided by enclosing the shot in a smaller inner sack which holds the small pellets in place.

Monday night one of the largest roulette games in town was victimized . . . The dealer had a good game going, and picking up the sack by the neck he dropped it carelessly into the drawer with a check showing how much was against it. The swindler played and lost his stack and called for another. Another stack and another check in the drawer against the sack. Mr. Swindler was out of luck for he continued to lose until \$400 was against the 'poke.' The player then withdrew from the room for a couple of minutes, and as he did not come back the sack was turned over to the weigher and the fraud discovered.

Caption: "The Last Roll in Dawson"—Gamblers at the roulette table, May 24, 1901. UAF Archives, Selid-Bassoc Collection (1964-92-267)