

Alaska Historical Society Memorials

October 6-8 and 13-15, 2022 | Anchorage, Alaska and Hybrid

LaRue Annette Olsen Barnes

1955-2022, Cordova



Ordained minister LaRue Barnes and husband Gary pastored the Little Chapel in Cordova for over 30 years.

Raised in Cordova, LaRue worked at the Cordova Museum and advocated development of the Ilanka Cultural Center and Museum. She was a member and president of Museums Alaska and served as consultant for the Alaska

display in the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian.

Marjorie Cochrane

1924-2022, Eagle River



Violinist, reporter, writer, and librarian Marjorie was active in the Eagle River community. Coming from Idaho, she reported for the Chugiak-Eagle River Star and immersed herself in Alaska history. She authored "Between Two Rivers: The Growth of Chugiak-Eagle River" (1983) for the Alaska Historical Commission, "Three Dogs, Two

Mules & a Reindeer" (2009), and "Bold Women in Alaska History" (2014).

Marjorie was a member of the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra. She and husband Byron retired to Nahcotta, WA.

Nancy Jane Ramey Lethcoe

1940-2022, Valdez



Water and Prince William Sound drew the full attention of Nancy, husband James, and family. A competitive swimmer, Nancy won a 1956 Olympic silver medal in Melbourne, and in 1958 set world records in both the 100- and 200-meter butterfly races.

Anticipating interest in sailing and ecotourism in Prince William Sound, the Lethcoes created Alaska

Wilderness Sailing Safaris (Whittier and Valdez). They authored numerous books: "History of Prince William Sound" (1994), "Valdez Gold Rush Trails of 1898-99" (1997), "Cruising Guide to Prince William Sound" (first published 1984 and now in its fifth edition). Nancy published "An Observer's Guide to the Glaciers of Prince William Sound, Alaska" (1987).

Wilda Koch Marston

1930-2022, Anchorage



Teacher Wilda Marston loved Alaska and Northwest exploration history. She met future husband Brooke in a University of Alaska Fairbanks Alaska-history class and they continued her history interest.

Wilda served numerous Anchorage civic organizations and provided leadership on the Loussac Library board, the

Anchorage Museum Foundation, and on numerous municipal, state, university and historical preservation committees. She was in the inaugural class of the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame.

Lael Warren Morgan

1936-2022, Anchorage & Fairbanks



Raconteur, sailor, reporter, writer, Epicenter Press publisher, UAF journalism instructor, and certified detective were Lael Morgan's roles. She wrote for newspapers in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Los Angeles and freelanced for the Washington Post, NY Times, and National Geographic.

Whether reporting for the Tundra Times or teaching, she was always researching and writing on varied topics as "Art and Eskimo Power: The Life and Times of Alaskan Howard Rock" (1988) and "Good Time Girls of the Alaska Yukon Gold Rush" (1998) which garnered her the Alaska Historical Society "Alaska Historian of the Year"

Phyllis Demuth Movius

1946-2021, Fairbanks



Consummate quilter Phyllis Demuth Movius discovered writing and research after careers with the Red Cross and United Way. She authored "When the Geese Come" documenting Ella Romig's personal and nursing career (1898-1905) in Southwest Alaska, and "A Place of Belonging," biographies of five founding women of Fairbanks

(1903-1923).

Phyllis and husband Jim Movius retired to Montana in 2012. She experienced five years of Alzheimer's dementia.

Gary Holthaus 1933-2022, Anchorage



Raised in Iowa, Gary Holthaus was an ordained minister in Montana where people and landscape captured him. He moved to Alaska in 1964 and became the founding and 20-year director of the Alaska Humanities Forum. A writer, teacher and social justice activist, he received the 2017 Governor's Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities.

Departing Alaska in 1991 Gary taught and consulted for organizations like the Center of the American West. He returned to minister for the Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (2012-2017) then retired to Red Wing, Minnesota.

Lance Mackey 1970-2022, Fairbanks



Four-time winner of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and twice back-to-back winner of the Yukon Quest, Lance Mackey came from a mushing family. Beset by health scares and troubled with drug abuse, his mushing dedication and doggedness carried him through until throat cancer finally intervened at age 52.

The 2015 documentary "The Great Alone" chronicled his difficult life. In 2014 "Outside Magazine" called him "the world's toughest athlete."

Gordon L. Pullar 1944-2022, Anchorage



Although born and educated in Bellingham, Washington, Gordon returned to Kodiak to connect with his Sugpiaq Native identity. With a University of Washington MPA in tribal administration, he became involved with tribal self-determination, artifact repatriation, and cultural revitalization.

Gordon served multiple terms as President and CEO of the Kodiak

Area Native Association and taught 20 years in the University of Alaska Fairbanks' rural development program.

Edward "Ed" Rasmuson 1940-2022, Anchorage



Banker and philanthropist, Ed Rasmuson provided leadership in his family's First National Bank transition to the Rasmuson Foundation.

Raised in the tradition of his father's banks in numerous Alaska communities, Ed watched that industry significantly change with automation, regional/national consolidation, and

global economic shifts. Through the Rasmuson Foundation, Ed and his family and staff continue to provide significantly toward Alaska's arts, education, charitable projects, non-profit organizations and community projects.

Theodore "Ted" Ryberg 1927-2020, Fairbanks



A position as Director of Libraries for the Alaska Statewide System of Higher Education brought Ted Ryberg to Fairbanks from positions in New York state. He successfully worked with the U.S. Department of Education and the Alaska State Legislature to create what is now the UAF Rasmuson Library. Following a stint at the University of South

Florida during which time he met his lifelong partner Bob Williams, he returned to Alaska. Ted was active nationally in the Alaska Library Association and co-founded the Alaska Library Association. His previous personal and military international travel defined his retirement interests in teaching ESL to immigrants, working with Global Volunteers, and teaching English in Indonesia.

Gary C. Stein 1947-2022, Fairbanks & Anchorage



Historian Gary C. Stein's Alaska research and teaching career (1975-1992) included the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Park Studies for ANCSA cultural resource management and preservation sites, Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources historic inland waterways uses, and Bureau of Indian Affairs acknowledgement

of Indian tribes.

His research interests included the Tetlin Indian Reservation and US Revenue Cutter Service in Alaska. His post-Alaska career focused on the regulatory functions of the pharmaceutical industries and teaching.

Arliss Sturgulewski 1927-2022, Anchorage



Arliss Sturgulewski survived the Great Depression and changed perceptions about women in society. Discouraged from higher education by her father, she nonetheless put herself through the University of Washington.

Coming up the Alcan on vacation in 1952, she never left. After her engineer husband was killed in a plane crash, she chose to raise her

son in Anchorage.

Interested and active in school and government policy, Arliss served on numerous local and state boards and commissions. She served in the Alaska Senate (1978-1993) working on legislation to inflation-proof the Alaska Permanent Fund, and to establish conservation easements. She also worked on issues related to mental health trust lands. She was the first Alaska woman to head a major party ticket as the Republican candidate for governor in 1986. She was inducted into the first class of the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame.

Clem Tillon 1925-2021, Halibut Cove



Born in Brooklyn, Clem served in the South Pacific during WWII, then arrived in Kachemak Bay, settling in Halibut Cove as a fisherman where he raised his family.

Interested in fisheries, he was elected to the State House in 1962 and was appointed to the State Senate in 1975. During his two decades in Alaska politics, he

worked on fishery policy when subsistence and commercial interests and biological/international issues roiled the industry. He worked with Governor Hammond in establishing the Alaska Permanent Fund and dividend system.

Joseph "Joe" Emil Usibelli 1938-2022, Fairbanks



Born and raised in Suntrana, Joe Usibelli attended a one room school, continuing his education in Fairbanks through to Stanford graduate studies. At 24, he unexpectedly and successfully assumed leadership of the Usibelli Coal Mine founded by his father. During his tenure the mine became one of Alaska's most prominent and prosperous businesses.

Joe was acknowledged for his problem-solving ingenuity and

generosity to his family, employees, and community. His many interests included aviation and scuba diving. He was an advocate and major donor to the University of Alaska through scholarships and faculty awards, and through contributions to the Museum.

William "Bill" B. Workman 1940-2021, Anchorage



Anthropologist Bill Workman came to Alaska in 1962 as a University of Wisconsin graduate student researcher on Kodiak Island. His long Alaska career also included research and publications on Kachemak Bay, and the Alaskan and Canadian interiors.

Bill taught at Alaska Methodist University and University of Alaska Anchorage and published extensively on northern anthropology. Known for his dry humor and demeanor, Bill guided many students and co-founded the Alaska Anthropological Association.

Jules Winslow Wright 1933-2022, Fairbanks



Born and raised at St. Mark's Mission in Nenana, Jules was the sixth of seven Wright brothers who became leaders. Living a subsistence lifestyle he was drafted into the Army, then embarked on an entrepreneurial career in mining and construction. He built and operated Manley Hot Springs Resort.

An advocate for Native employment and local businesses, Jules became president of the Fairbanks Native Association, and served on the boards of Seth-De-Ya-Ah (Minto) Corporation and Doyon Ltd. He was elected to the Alaska House of Representatives in 1967 and served one term.