



During World War II, the U.S. government disconnected Unangał (Aleut) villagers from their homes and transported them to temporary camps in Southeast Alaska. Here, a family awaits relocation in Unalaska in July 1942. Photo courtesy of Aleutian Pribilof Island Association.

CALL FOR PAPERS

ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 5-8, 2023

CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS IN ALASKA HISTORY

The theme for the Alaska Historical Society's fall 2023 conference is "Connections and Disconnections in Alaska History," which speaks broadly to how colonialism, industrialization and global conflict have shaped Alaska history. These historical processes have created wealth and opportunity for some, while causing profound losses of land and livelihood for others.

As the Alaska Railroad marks its centennial this year, this theme allows us to explore transportation connections—dogsleds, boats, trains, vehicles and airplanes—which have linked Alaskans to one another and to the rest of the world, but have sometimes created daunting obstacles within the state. The building of the Alaska Highway connected Alaska to the rest of the U.S., but did so with the labor of a racially segregated work force, with the least favorable working conditions assigned to African-American soldiers. Alaska's connection with Russia has changed from the colonization of Alaska through the cooperation of the Lend-Lease pilots during WWII to today's re-emergence of the Cold War. The Gold Rush, the rise of commercial fisheries and the oil boom brought new settlers and opportunities for some, but displaced Alaska Natives and took food and economic opportunities from them.

There's no starker example of disconnection than the history of Alaska Native education policy. Many Alaska Native

youth went, some forcibly, from their homes to boarding schools, which had the goal of separating them from their Native identity. The callous and abusive treatment many children received continues to have consequences today. This year's theme includes the history of reconnections achieved by Alaska Native people in regaining lands, rights and resources, notably through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and around issues of sovereignty and integration of Native cultures and languages into public education.

Our keynote speaker is Diane Hirshberg, director of the University of Alaska's Institute of Social and Economic Research, an 18-year veteran of UAA and a specialist in education policy, especially Indigenous education, circumpolar education issues and the role of education in sustainable development.

Please join us in the Central Kenai Peninsula this October. The conference will be mostly in-person, with an option for remote participation. As always, presentations on all Alaska history topics are welcome. Talks 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, at rachel_mason@nps.gov. **Proposals are due May 31, 2023.**
