NEW DIRECTIONS *in* Alaska History

ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY • 2026 CONFERENCE

with the DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, KACHEMAK BAY CAMPUS, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE

HOMER, ALASKA • OCTOBER 7-10, 2026



Joining us via Zoom?

For those who registered to participate virtually, please refer to the Zoom access instructions emailed to you. Can't find the email message? Go to www.alaskahistoricalsociety.org/virtual-conference-information.

If you are having difficulty accessing the conference, please contact Kaila Pfister at kailapfister@gmail.com or 718-753-2015.

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Homer Map ..... Inside back cover

ABOUT THE COVER IMAGES

FRONT: Homer Boat Harbor (b4-f16-16), Alaska Department of Fish and Game Historical Photograph Collection, 1950-1991, Alaska Resources Library and Information Services, on behalf of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

BACK, TOP: Homer, with a view of the spit, Kachemak Bay, and the Kenai Mountains. Photo courtesy Homer Chamber of Commerce.

BACK, LOWER LEFT: Caption written on photo reads "Kenai Natives, Seldovia, Alaska." PCA-226 Alaska State Library, William R. Norton Photographs, c. 1890-1920.

BACK, LOWER CENTER: Alaska Natives, like Henry Lockwood and his family from Unalakleet, eagerly volunteered to serve in the Alaska Territorial Guard during World War II. Mrs. Lockwood handmade the American flag they are displaying in this photo. (Caption courtesy auntphilstrunk.com.) P368-89 Alaska State Library, Mabel and Emil Fisher Photograph Collection, c. 1937-1952.

BACK, LOWER RIGHT: 300-pound halibut caught near Homer wharf. Pictured from left: Smith, R.W. Stone, Penberthy (back), and Nicholi (front). Cook Inlet, Seldovia District, Alaska, c. 1904. USGS, Stone R.W. Collection.

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Alaska HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KBC
Kenai Peninsula College
KACHEMAK BAY CAMPUS
University of Alaska Anchorage

Alaska
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

With our volunteers and community partners, the Alaska Historical Society is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to the promotion of Alaska history by the exchange of ideas and information, the preservation and interpretation of resources, and the education of Alaskans about their heritage.

Governed by a member-elected board of directors, the society provides a forum and a vehicle to achieve these goals. It publishes the semi-annual scholarly journal *Alaska History* and a quarterly newsletter, holds an annual conference, and advocates for local, state and national cultural programs.

Alaska Historical Society
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WELCOME



The theme of this year's conference, "New Directions in Alaska History," is inspired by the work of the late Alaska historian and professor emeritus at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Stephen Haycox. His scholarly career reflects his clear-eyed understanding of Alaska's place in the nation and the world, one that broke with traditional explanations of Alaska's exceptionalism and independence, as well as his own brand of measured, thorough and careful research. We celebrate both aspects of Haycox's work in the form of a Festschrift consisting of papers by 13 historians who offer examples of their own "new directions."

Similarly, the two keynote speakers, Pausauraq Jana Harcharek and Sam Mihara, offer examples of history and research from uncommon perspectives. The former engaged in years-long research with Elders that resulted in an encyclopedic framework of Iñupiaq knowledge that reveals an ancient—yet new to many non-Natives—understanding of the very nature of history and tradition. The latter augments personal experience with deep historical research into the Japanese-American internment program that was instituted by the U.S. government during World War II.

In addition, more than 30 historians from throughout the country will offer presentations of their own work Thursday through Saturday morning.

I regret that I will not be able to join you in person at this year's conference. However, like many others, I will be attending via Zoom.

— PATRICIA PARTNOW, President



Welcome to Homer for the 2026 annual conference of the Alaska HistoricalSociety. It begins Wednesday evening with registration and a reception at the Porcupine Theater. You can meet your colleagues from around the state and enjoy food and music.

Fall is a perfect time to visit my hometown as we transition between the busy tourist season and the crisp days of fall. Homer got its start around 8,000 years ago when the Alutiiq peoples camped along the spit for its rich combination of fish and wildlife. More recently, Homer has become one of Alaska's prime commercial and sports fishing destinations and a favorite get-away for Alaskans and out-of-state visitors alike.

We look forward to welcoming two fascinating keynote speakers to this year's conference and to honor the work of the pivotal Alaska historian Stephen Haycox. Don't forget the always enjoyable historic bars tour. As an added bonus, conferees are welcome to stay an extra evening to take in the Pratt Museum's fundraising gala, Ritz Under the Sea.

Those staying until Sunday might enjoy exploring the town or walking on the spit or the beach.

Thanks are due Kachemak Bay Campus staff and the conference planning committee. Enjoy the conference and my hometown.

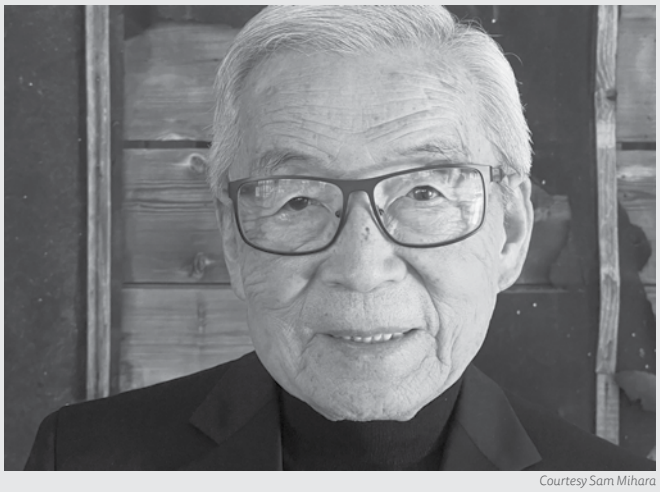
— JEFF MEYERS, Conference Chair

ABOUT OUR THEME

New Directions in Alaska History

This year's conference theme, "New Directions in Alaska History," invites attendees to explore the impacts of global forces on local communities' experiences, environmental changes and contributions of Alaska Native peoples. Presenters will address a variety of topics—from the hippie invasion of Alaska in search of land to dogsled diplomacy to the experiences of Alaska Natives at the Carlisle boarding school. The first day will feature a Festschrift devoted to exploring the expansive work of the late University of Alaska Anchorage historian Stephen Haycox. Thirteen scholars will reflect on how Haycox's work influenced their thinking and research, with the intent to publish the papers in 2027.

Keynote Speakers



Courtesy Sam Mihara

SAM MIHARA

Mass Injustice against Japanese Americans during World War II

Friday, October 9, 9 a.m.



Courtesy Jana Harcharek

JANA HARCHAREK

The Iñupiaq Learning Framework: What We Learned

Saturday, October 10, 8:30 a.m.

Registration

Conference registration is from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Porcupine Theater, 106 West Pioneer Avenue during the opening reception, and from 8:00-8:30 a.m. Thursday at the University of Alaska, Kachemak Bay Campus, 533 East Pioneer Avenue. **Attendees should bring the conference program mailed in advance, as there will be a limited number available in Homer.**

Welcome Reception

Wednesday, October 7 • 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Please join your colleagues for appetizers, drinks, and music at the Porcupine Theater, 106 West Pioneer Avenue. Past President David Ramseur will speak for President Patricia Partnow, who is unable to attend this year's conference in person, to open the conference. State Representative Sarah Vance, Borough Mayor Pete Micciche, Homer Mayor Rachel Lord, and Kachemak Bay college director Brian Partridge will welcome the conference to Homer. The food is catered by PikaPika Bento, which specializes in Japanese and Vietnamese street food. The beer is from Grace Ridge Brewery. Music is by saxophonist Dave Webster, a Homer musician with a repertoire of jazz standards.

ATWOOD FOUNDATION

The Alaska Historical Society thanks the Atwood Foundation for funding for the Festschrift and keynote speakers.

More Conference Sponsors

Credit Union 1 • Ron Inouye • JL Properties • Pioneers of Alaska, Homer • Pioneers of Alaska, Seward • Rasmuson Foundation.

Sponsors of Students

Thank you to these generous folks who contributed to pay for students to attend the conference.

Pierce Bateman • Rachel Cohen • Christie Ericson • John Fournelle • Barbara Hood • Ray Hudson • Ron Inouye • Shana Loshbaugh • Angela Schmidt • Vicki Wisenbaugh.

Annual Business Meeting

Friday, October 9 • 4–5 p.m.

Alaska Historical Society members and non-members are encouraged to attend the meeting to hear about the society's many programs—what was done this past year and plans for the coming year. It also is an opportunity for members to provide input to the officers and board of directors on projects and programs, and speak to issues of concern regarding Alaska cultural heritage interpretation, preservation and institutions. The agenda (and Zoom link for those participating online) is on page 20.

Conference Banquet

Friday, October 9 • 6:30–9:00 p.m.

The banquet will be at The Kannery, 451 Sterling Highway. It will be a buffet, with meat and vegetarian options, sides, salad and dessert and a no-host bar. AHS Past President David Ramseur will invite Program Chair Jeff Meyers to note some conference highlights, Ron Inouye to remember colleagues who died the past year, and Leanna Williams to present the annual awards.

Historic Homer Bars Tour

Friday, October 9 • 9:00 p.m.

The AHS is lucky to have Doug Vandegraft, pre-eminent researcher on Alaska's historic bars, who will lead a tour of historic Homer bars. Plans are to visit the renowned Salty Dawg Saloon on the Homer Spit and Alice's. Several vans will be available to shuttle people. The evening will end downtown close to the conference hotels.

Putting on the Ritz

Saturday, October 10 • 6–9 p.m.

Homer's Pratt Museum has its signature event Saturday evening, October 10, 6-9 p.m., at the Porcupine Theater, 106 West Pioneer Avenue. "Ritz Under the Sea" will make a splash with live entertainment, food and drink, and silent and live auctions. Proceeds support the museum's education programs, community-centered workshops, and special exhibits. Tickets are $100, with a 10% discount (code AHS10 taken at checkout) for AHS conference attendees who stay for a fun evening.

Auction & Book Sale

Check out the silent auction during the conference for an opportunity to own a rare Alaska historical artifact or book and support the Alaska Historical Society. Bid early, outrageously and often!

Auction items will be on tables in the conference meeting area and open for viewing and bidding during coffee and lunch breaks. The auction ends at 5:15 p.m. Friday. Winning bidders should collect and pay for their treasures then or Saturday morning.

Again this year, there will be "bargain book sale" tables. Any book can be purchased for $5. Available this year are issues of *The Alaska Sportsman* (renamed *Alaska Magazine*), $2.50 each or 3 for $5, from the 1950s-70s, and 23 Alaska History Day T-shirts for sale for $5 each. These treasures will be first-come, first-served, and can be purchased during coffee and lunch breaks.

There will be a table where authors participating in the conference can have books for sale. To purchase and get your copy autographed, find the author!

Please join AHS or renew your membership

If you enjoy the conference, like Alaska history, and want to know about historical programs and projects around the state, please join or renew your membership in the Alaska Historical Society. There is a lot to share, from advocating for preservation of our treasures to compiling position papers on issues of concern such as how history is presented and interpreted at public parks and museums. Lend your skills to holding programs on history and to help us reach out to local historical societies, museums and cultural centers to spread their news. Get in on the fun!

It is easy to join or renew by going to www.alaskahistoricalsociety.org or by sending a check to AHS, P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510.

Memberships are for January 1–December 31 each year. Membership levels are:

- Individual $50
- Family $65
- Organization or institution $75
- Life $700
- Full-time student $35

Benefits of membership include receiving the semiannual journal *Alaska History* and the quarterly newsletter *Alaska History News,* as well as updates on society advocacy efforts to preserve and educate about Alaska history.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 • 8:30 A.M. – 9:30 A.M.

WELCOME

Past President David Ramseur will open the conference. Will Schneider will discuss the Alaska Historical Society's tribute to Steve Haycox and introduce Dagmar Phillips, who will remember her husband Steve Haycox.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 • 9:45 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

FESTSCHRIFT Honoring Steve Haycox

Convenor: Will Schneider

"Frontiers" and Inclusion in Alaska Native History

Centering Indigenous perspectives, this presentation unpacks the concepts of "frontier" and inclusion in Alaska history. This presentation will draw from oral histories and examples in the archives.

Holly Miowak Guise *is Inupiaq from Anchorage and Unalakleet. She is an independent historian, author of* Alaska Native Resilience: Voices from World War II*, and founder of the Alaska Native oral history website ww2alaska.com. She serves on the editorial board of* Alaska History.

The Politics of Alaska's Cold War Subnational Diplomacy

This presentation examines Alaska's increasingly global orientation in the mid-to-late 20th century through the lens of politics. An analysis of political campaign materials reveals candidates' belief in, and potential voter concern over, issues of Alaska's international trade and engagement during the Cold War.

Pierce Bateman *is a historian who writes about Alaska, the Pacific and the modern world. He is a doctoral candidate studying history at the University of Oregon and an assistant professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage.*

Wickersham, Dimond, and Gruening: Roots of the Government-Native Relations in 20th-Century Alaska

The 20th century, unlike the 19th, ushered in government attention to Native interests in Alaska. This paper highlights the work of political leaders James Wickersham, Anthony Dimond and Ernest Gruening and their roles on issues important to Natives in Alaska.

William Schneider *is a retired University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty member who established the oral history program and created Project Jukebox. He serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors and initiated the Critical Issues Lecture Series and this Festschrift.*

Of Shearwaters, Whales, and Seals: Some Entanglements of the Bering and Tasman Worlds, c. 1850-1900 (remote)

This paper examines some of the ways in which Alaskan, Tasmanian, and New Zealand colonial maritime frontiers came into contact in the 19th century. Following the paths of migrating animals (shearwaters, fur seals and whales) and the people who pursued them brings these long-distance connections to our sightline, altering stories that we think we know well, and revealing new archival sources for a new generation of Alaska history scholars.

Annaliese Claydon *was raised in Anchorage and received her B.A. in history at the University of Alaska Anchorage. After completing her Ph.D. at the University of Illinois she moved to Tasmania, and now works on polar and maritime history and tourist education at the University of Tasmania, Institute of Marine and Antarctic Science.*



Reindeer corralling in Northwest Alaska, c. 1948-1950. Anthony Dimond maintained that passing of the Reindeer Act in 1937, which effectively returned ownership and administration of reindeer herds to Alaska Natives, was his most important legislative accomplishment. UAF-1997-108-318, George A. Morlander Photographs, APRCA, UAF.

SESSION 1 Land Transformation and Brown Rat Dynamics

Moderator: Mark Rice

If You Can Remember the Sixties: The Back-to-the-Land Movement and the Hippie Invasion of Alaska

By 1968, the Sixties' idealism had died for many—crashed rather—and it was time to drop out, live on the margins, find meaning away from it all. Some came to Alaska—counterculturals, longhairs, hippies. Not all were welcomed. Many eventually split. Others became residents—totally stoked—opting into the state's primo Open-to-Entry Land/Lease Program and becoming homesteaders. Some were with it—eventually purchasing their land. Most didn't. This is the setting of Doug Capra's groovy new book, *The Last Homesteaders: Resilience and Risk at the Edge of Alaska*.

Doug Capra *is author of* The Spaces Between: Stories from the Kenai Mountains to the Kenai Fjords *and the forewords for two books by artist Rockwell Kent, and many articles, essays, poetry, and a few plays. He served on the board of directors of the Alaska Historical Society and in 2023 received the Evangeline Atwood Award for his work.*

Hard Climate, Tough Soil: Developing Alaska Agriculture with Northern European Knowledge

This paper examines how Alaska was compared to Nordic countries at the turn of the 20th century. Agriculture was of special interest. Alaska witnessed experiment stations, breeding hybrid species, and establishing and imagining agricultural colonies. Northernmost Europe was an example and affected how Alaska's agricultural prospects were imagined. Suitable crop species were looked for in Northern Europe. What was needed to have successful agriculture in Alaska? Why was it important in the first place to have agriculture in Alaska? In many cases Northern European immigrants were seen as the best possible farmers.

Meeri Kataja *is a Finnish Ph.D. candidate at Montana State University. She is studying how Nordic countries were used as an example for Alaska's development in 1867-1945 and actions caused by that idea.*

From Tanalian Point to Port Alsworth

The chronicle of Tanalian Point and its successor iteration, Port Alsworth, began in the late 1890s when gold prospectors ventured into the remote Iliamna-Lake Clark region. Prospectors hired local Dena'ina men as guides and packers, and they began living together at Tanalian Point in the early 20th century. Not successful mining, the newcomers enjoyed living in a scenic, rich subsistence-based region. The isolated paradise was difficult to access until 1930 when the first airplane landed at Tanalian Point. In 1942 Babe and Mary Alsworth moved to Lake Clark to build a home and establish an air taxi business. They staked a homestead in 1944 and Hardenberg Bay proved to be a near perfect place to establish a wheeled and float plane operation.

John Branson *is a retired historian who worked at Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. He has lived at Port Alsworth since 1989.*

The Ratting of Alaska: A Cross-Pacific History

The invasive brown rat has continuously occupied Alaska for nearly 250 years. Like raccoons and coyotes, *Rattus norvegicus* is a synanthropic species: wherever humans go, it goes. This enterprising rodent's presence thus intersects the colonial and environmental history of Alaska at many points, from the Russian fur trade to American ecosystem management. Drawing on Indigenous, Russian, and Japanese sources as well as modern findings from phylogenetics, this presentation will track the brown rat's footprints across Alaska from the 18th century to the present.

Christopher Setzer *is a writer, librarian, and engineer with Harvard University's Library Innovation Lab, where he works to preserve vulnerable federal data as technical lead for the Public Data Project. Based in Seattle, he is a part-time Alaskan and often writes about the history of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.*



LUNCH & LEARN Sailing Back to the Bay Project

11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

LUNCH IS ON YOUR OWN. TALK STARTS AT 12:15 P.M.

Tim Troll will talk about the Sailing Back to the Bay project that returned a refurbished Bristol Bay double-ender cannery fishing boat from Homer to Naknek.

Tim Troll *is the executive director of the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust, a non-profit organization with a mission to preserve the wildlife habitat, culture and history of Bristol Bay.*

FESTSCHRIFT Honoring Steve Haycox

Convenor: Will Schneider

Oil and Alaska Politics: Learning from History

This presentation explores how the oil industry has influenced Alaska politics and lawmakers' policy decisions over time, and how those decisions contributed to the state's economic and social challenges. The presentation offers lessons learned from this history that can help Alaska lawmakers and Alaskans find a better path forward.

Lisa Weissler *spent most of her career navigating the complexities of oil politics in Alaska, as a natural resource and oil and gas attorney to the state and as staff to Alaska legislators over a dozen legislative sessions. Weissler is the author of* Capitol Crude: The Impact of Oil on Alaska Politics *(2024).*

Myths and Materialism: Alaska's Energetic Past and Fractious Future

This essay builds from and critiques Steve Haycox's thinking around Alaska exceptionalism, specifically through myths and materialisms pertaining to Alaska's energy and climate history. Alaska is an exceptional energy landscape, yet its similarities with the rest of the United States and world are far more revealing of its recent history.

Philip Wight *is an associate professor of History and Arctic and Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He is an energy and environmental historian, with a focus on mobility and infrastructure in Alaska and the circumpolar North. He is finalizing a manuscript on the environmental history of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.*

Alaska-Russia Relations: The Vital Role of Alaska Native Peoples

Alaska's Indigenous peoples have been central to Russia's interaction with Alaska since the founding of the first Russian settlement on Kodiak Island in 1784, as Professor Steve Haycox details in his book, *Alaska: An American Colony*. This paper examines the extraordinary story of how Alaska Native peoples led the way to melt international barriers and re-establish productive ties between Alaska and Russia.

David Ramseur *is a former journalist and aide to two Alaska governors and U.S. Senator Mark Begich. He is the author of* Melting the Ice Curtain*, a book detailing contemporary Alaska-Russia relations, and is a former president of the Alaska Historical Society.*

Alaska in Geopolitical Imagination of Current Russia

This paper explores the underlying motives for emotionally charged historical rhetoric in current Russia regarding Alaska in general and the Russian colonial presence in that area in particular. It is argued that this rhetoric illuminates such broad themes as the tense U.S.-Russia relations, the nature of current Russian nationalism, and the role of anti-Americanism in the current Russian political and cultural mainstream.

Andrei Znamenski *is professor of history at the University of Memphis, Tennessee. His interests include modern world history and religions with an emphasis on Alaska and Eurasia. He is author of* Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917 *(1999),* Through Orthodox Eyes: Russian Missionary Narratives of Travels to the Dena'ina and Ahtna, 1850s-1930s *(2003); and* Red Shambhala: Magic, Prophecy, and Geopolitics in the Heart of Asia *(2011). He serves on the editorial advisory board of* Alaska History.



Alaska and Russian Native people reunite during the June 1988 Alaska Airlines Friendship Flight in Provideniya, USSR. Photo by Steve Raymer, National Geographic Creative, 1988, courtesy David Ramseur.

SESSION 2 Borders, Trade and Currency

Moderator: Molly McCammon

Shock, Awe and Strategic Confusion: The Russian-American Company Against Tokugawa Japan

In 1806 and 1807, two small but heavily armed Russian-American Company (RAK) ships, operating out of Alaska and Kamchatka, launched a series of devastating raids on Japanese colonial outposts on Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, in the Ainu homeland. These humiliating defeats were the first that Japanese warriors had suffered at the hands of foreigners in over two centuries. Yet by 1808 the Japanese had reestablished themselves in the region despite having lost every battle. This presentation examines the little-known RAK raids as the first colonial war between imperial powers in the North Pacific, a conflict with global consequences.

Viktor Shmagin *is an assistant professor of history at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He received his Ph.D. in history from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and specializes in researching early modern Japanese foreign relations. He is currently writing a history of Russo-Japanese-Indigenous contacts in the North Pacific from the 17th to the 19th centuries.*

Use of Civil War Scrip in Alaska

An 1872 act gave Union soldiers rights to file on 160 acres of public land. Unused portions, called soldiers' additional homestead rights, could be inherited or sold. Thousands of individuals used scrip Outside; use by companies was rare. From 1901 in Alaska, 95 filings applied scrip to gain title to land. More than 35% of these were canneries, fisheries, and mining and trading companies. Just six people listed in BLM records used scrip to file on the Kenai Peninsula. This study explores the use of Civil War scrip in Alaska, particularly the Kenai Peninsula, delving into fascinating underlying history and stories.

Gretchen T. Bersch *is a retired university professor whose family homesteaded on Yukon Island in Kachemak Bay. From her youth, she has been intrigued by the history and story of her uncle Charles B. Abbott's use of Civil War scrip in Kachemak Bay.*

Alaska's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy

This presentation will discuss Alaska's evolving role in U.S. foreign policy since statehood. Alaska's peoples, history, and geographic location position the state to contribute significantly to U.S. relations with Canada and Russia as well as in U.S. Arctic and Asia policies. The U.S. and Canada share interests in high-latitude North American defense, and Alaska plays an important role particularly through the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Alaska makes the U.S. both a Russian neighbor and Arctic state as well as a site for U.S.-Chinese cooperation. In short, Alaska has emerged as an important strategic location for U.S. relations in North America, the Arctic, and with Asia.

Brandon M. Boylan *is professor of political science and director of Arctic and Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. His research interests include international relations, international security, political violence, ethnic politics, separatist movements, and Arctic security and politics.*

Maurycy Beniowski's 1772 Map of His Escape from Siberia through the North Pacific: History and Cartographic Analysis

This presentation will tell the history of Polish freedom fighter, fugitive and explorer Maurycy Beniowski and analyze his 1772 map of the North Pacific. It will include the story of his exile and his daring escape from Kamchatka through the North Pacific (Alaska – Japan – Taiwan) to Macau. The remarkable map provided Europeans new information about the lands surrounding the Bering Sea; however, soon after it was gifted to the French government it was lost for more than two centuries. The map was found in 2011 in Poland.

Kajetan Jamkowski *is a geography master's student at the University of Warsaw, Poland. His interests include A.I., GIS, geomorphology, history and archaeology, taking him to Cusco, Peru; the Greek island of Kalymnos and the North Sea. His latest research is on using GIS technology in a modern A.I setting as well as in the research of historic 17th century maps.*



BREAK TIME
2:30–3 p.m.

NEW DIRECTIONS *in* Alaska History

ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY • 2026 CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7	
5:30–7:30 p.m.	CONFERENCE REGISTRATION & WELCOME RECEPTION – Porcupine Theater, 106 W. Pioneer Ave.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8	
8–8:30 a.m.	CONFERENCE REGISTRATION – Kachemak Bay Campus, Kenai Peninsula College, 533 East Pioneer Ave.
8:30–9:30 a.m.	WELCOME & TRIBUTE TO STEVE HAYCOX » Will Schneider – The Festschrift » Dagmar Phillips – My Husband, Steve Haycox
9:45–11:30 a.m.	**FESTSCHRIFT** Honoring Steve Haycox » Holly Guise – "Frontiers" and Inclusion in Alaska Native History » Pierce Bateman – The Politics of Alaska's Cold War Subnational Diplomacy » Will Schneider – Wickersham, Dimond, and Gruening: Roots of the Government-Native Relations in 20th-Century Alaska » Annaliese Claydon – Of Shearwaters, Whales, and Seals: Some Entanglements of the Bering and Tasman Worlds, c. 1850-1900 (remote) **SESSION 1** Land Transformation and Brown Rat Dynamics » Doug Capra – If You Can Remember the Sixties: The Back-To-The-Land Movement and the Hippie Invasion of Alaska » Meeri Kataja – Hard Climate, Tough Soil: Developing Alaska Agriculture with Northern European Knowledge » John Branson – From Tanalian Point to Port Alsworth » Christopher Setzer – The Ratting of Alaska: A Cross-Pacific History
11:30–1 p.m.	LUNCH on your own » 12:15 p.m. – Tim Troll – Sailing Back to the Bay Project
1–2:30 p.m.	**FESTSCHRIFT** Honoring Steve Haycox » Lisa Weissler – Oil and Alaska Politics: Learning from History » Phil Wight – Myths and Materialism: Alaska's Energetic Past and Fractious Future » David Ramseur – Alaska-Russia Relations: The Vital Role of Alaska Native Peoples » Andrei Znamenski – Alaska in Geopolitical Imagination of Current Russia **SESSION 2** Borders, Trade and Currency » Viktor Shmagin – Shock, Awe and Strategic Confusion: The Russian-American Company Against Tokugawa Japan » Gretchen T. Bersch – Use of Civil War Scrip in Alaska » Brandon Boylan – Alaska's Role in Foreign Policy » Kajetan Jamkowski – Maurycy Beniowski's 1772 Map of His Escape from Siberia through the North Pacific: History and Cartographic Analysis
2:30–3 p.m.	BREAK
3–5 p.m. (continued on next page)	**FESTSCHRIFT** Honoring Steve Haycox » Leanna Williams – Flight, Fame, and Frontier Alaska Aviation in the Popular Imagination, 1926-1938 » Charles Wohlforth – First Drafts: The Changing Role of Journalism in Recording Alaska's History and Establishing its Cultural Narrative (remote) » Ross Coen – Still Searching for that Usable Past » Bathsheba Demuth – Thinking with Alaskan Land: or Why Alaska is the Best Place to Write Environmental History » Ian Hartman – Steve Haycox: The Making of an Alaska Historian

3–5 p.m. (continued)	**SESSION 3** Trailblazers of the North » Karen Brewster & Judy Bittner – From Seward to Nome: Protecting the Iditarod National Historic Trail » Forest Wagner – Inhabiting the Interior: Winter Ultra-Athletics and the Evolution of the Alaskan Trail Experience » Tyler Kirk – Dogsled Diplomacy: Toward a Visual History of the Intercontinental Hope '91 Sled Dog Race and the End of the Cold War
5–5:30 p.m.	FESTSCHRIFT– Comments and questions
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9	
9–10:30 a.m.	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION » Mass Injustice against Japanese Americans during World War II – Sam Mihara
10:30–11 a.m.	BREAK
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	**SESSION 4** Guardsmen and Grand Slams » Joshua Millard – Baseball's Northern Front: The Military Influence on Fairbanks Baseball & Alaska's Most Iconic Game » Kristie Swain – The Alaska Territorial Guard and the Canadian Rangers: Historical Comparison and Contemporary Relevance » John Fournelle & Hilary Hilscher – Herb Hilscher and OSS's "Black Radio" Aleutian Operation **SESSION 5** Stories of Resilience and Recognition » Mary Ludwig – Through the Eyes of a Child: Northern Colonial Intersections » Rebecca Poulson – The Mission: The First Forty Years of Sitka's Presbyterian Native Boarding School, 1881-1921 » Jane Anvik & Pam Kendrick – Honoring and Preserving the Contributions of Women in Alaska through the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame
12:30 –2 p.m.	LUNCH on your own » 1:15 p.m. – Doug Vandegraft – Historic Bars of Homer
2–3:30 p.m.	**SESSION 6** Carvings and Communities » Mark D. Foley – Joe Kakarook's Scrimshaw Mastodon Tusk: Created for the Alaska Commercial Company » Adam Dunstan – Alaska Native Histories of Cooper Landing, Alaska » Chloe McKay – Latin Cultural Spaces in Anchorage, 1970-Today **SESSION 7** Rails, Wings, and Waterways » Larry Talley – Alaska Mailboats » Bryan Taylor – Alaska's Pioneer Access Roads Program on the Kenai Peninsula » Cynthia Wentworth – Alaska Railroad: Alaska's Lucky Break » Christie Ericson – Pioneer Aviator Ingrid Pedersen: "A Rare Bird"
3:30–4 p.m.	BREAK
4–5 p.m.	ANNUAL AHS BUSINESS MEETING (in-person and remote)
6:30–9 p.m.	BANQUET – The Kannery, 451 Sterling Highway
9 p.m.	HOMER HISTORIC BARS TOUR – Doug Vandegraft
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10	
8:30–10 a.m.	KEYNOTE PRESENTATION » The Iñupiaq Learning Framework: What We Learned – Jana Harcharek
10–10:30 a.m.	BREAK
10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	**SESSION 8** Top-Down History » Tom Kizzia – Birthright Citizenship and the Fourteenth Amendment » Jo Michalski – The Smithsonian Perspective » Audience/Participant Discussion **SESSION 9** Preserving the Past, Honoring the Land » Deirdre Bryan & Tom Davis – Exploring Anchorage's Places and Spaces: Introducing the Public Historic Resources Database » Kaitlin Armstrong, Jeran Pelagiom & Lisa Griswold – Contaminated: The Legacy of Lands Conveyed Under ANCSA » Katie Ione Craney & Klara Maisch – C'ulc'ena' Łuu' / Gulkana Glacier
12:30 p.m.	CONFERENCE CLOSING – Jeff Meyers, Rich Mattson

FESTSCHRIFT Honoring Steve Haycox

Convenor: Will Schneider

Flight, Fame, and Frontier Alaska Aviation in the Popular Imagination, 1926-1938

This paper addresses the development of Alaska's aviation industry from 1925 to 1938, often called "the golden age of Alaska aviation." It evaluates how cultural memory of this period's flyers, flights, and federal oversight has changed over decades of aviation biography, memoir and popular history.

Leanna Williams *is a Ph.D. candidate in the Arctic and Northern Studies program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, researching the history and cultural memory of aviation. She serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors and coordinated the Alaska History Day program the past four years.*

First Drafts: The Changing Role of Journalism in Recording Alaska's history and Establishing its Cultural Narrative (remote)

Steve Haycox exposed the myth of the self-sufficient Alaska pioneer unaided by a colonial government. Over the 20th century, newspapers and periodicals helped create, modify and explode the myth. This presentation examines works of Alaska journalism at three key stages in the life of the myth: during the Progressive Era, the Statehood Movement, and the Anchorage newspaper war of the 1990s.

Charles Wohlforth *is an author and writing coach who has written about Alaska's history and collaborated on autobiographies with Governor Wally Hickel, U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, and Constitutional Convention Delegate Vic Fischer. After living in Alaska for 53 years, he now splits his time between New Jersey and Kachemak Bay.*

Still Searching for that Usable Past

Alaska historians have long wrestled with the matter of a "usable past," one that might help to explain our present condition. This presentation will assess the current state of the field to identify opportunities—but also risks—of drawing lines too straight between the past and present.

Ross Coen *is the editor of* Alaska History, *the Alaska Historical Society's journal. After residing in Fairbanks for 24 years, he now lives in Everett, Washington.*

Thinking with Alaskan Land: or Why Alaska is the Best Place to Write Environmental History

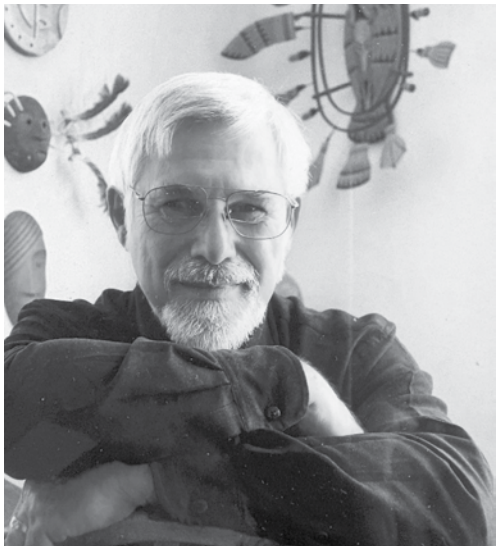
Told through brief narrative examples, this paper shows how Alaska, as a state where colonial impacts came late, capitalism has boomed and busted many times over, and where forces from the cold to wildlife shape daily life, is an ideal place to test questions core to the field of environmental history.

Bathsheba Demuth *is an associate professor of history and environment and society at Brown University. She is the author of* Floating Coast: An Environmental History of the Bering Strait, *and has recently written on Greenland and Arctic colonialism.*

Steve Haycox: The Making of an Alaska Historian

This presentation will look at Steve Haycox's intellectual evolution and the broad trajectory of his scholarship. It will highlight his most significant contributions to the study and understanding of Alaska history.

Ian Hartman *is professor of history and director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He has written on Alaska, the American West, and U.S. politics and public policy, and is just completing an exhibition on the history and culture of the Alaska Highway that will open at the Anchorage Museum in November.*



Steve Haycox. Photo used with permission from the family.

SESSION 3 Trailblazers of the North

Moderator: Zachary Dailey-Payne

From Seward to Nome: Protecting the Iditarod National Historic Trail

Most people are familiar with the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, but less well known is that it follows a historic route designated a National Historic Trail in 1978. The designation recognizes a 2,400-mile system of winter routes that connected Native villages and later provided access for gold rushers to Iditarod. Oral history interviews were conducted from 2021 through 2025 for a Project Jukebox website to capture from the people directly involved the historic trail's establishment, administration and management.

Karen Brewster *is a research associate with Project Jukebox and Oral History Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has conducted oral history interviews across Alaska for over 30 years, and is the author of three life history books about pioneering Alaskans.*

Judy Bittner *is the president of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, a non-profit organization that promotes trail stewardship, advocates for trail protections, and expands public understanding of the trail and its important place in Alaska's history. She was Alaska's state historic preservation officer for over 40 years.*



Statue installed in 2012 in Seward at Mile Zero of the Iditarod National Historic Trail by Seward Trail Blazers. Photo by Karen Brewster.

Inhabiting the Interior: Winter Ultra-Athletics and the Evolution of the Alaska Trail Experience

Beyond traditional narratives of resource extraction, Alaska's history is defined by the ways people move across the land. The winter ultra-endurance community is a modern "community of practice" that continues the state's long history of human-powered travel. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, I explore "trail time"—the unique social and ethical space athletes inhabit during wilderness transit. By analyzing their specialized discourses on gear, suffering, and resilience, I show how these participants navigate the tension between modern urbanization and the historical wild. This study reveals how athletes transform precarious landscapes into sites of meaningful, contemporary history-making.

Forest Wagner *is a researcher specializing in high-latitude communities and the intersection of human endurance and the Alaska landscape. The work uses ethnographic methods to document how contemporary Alaskans and visitors navigate and derive meaning from the state's historic winter trails.*

Dogsled Diplomacy: Toward A Visual History of the Intercontinental Hope '91 Sled Dog Race and the End of the Cold War

This paper examines the visual history of the 1991 Intercontinental Hope Sled Dog Race between Nome, Alaska, and Anadyr, Soviet Union. It explores the methodology of visual history as a new direction in histories of Alaska. Photographs and artwork offer a means of seeing the past in ways textual sources do not. What can historians do with these sources and, in this case, what can they tell us about an era of revolutionary change? How can we use these visual sources as evidence in the writing of history? They raise new questions and offer historians tools that can go where textual sources cannot. However, they require us to look and to see what otherwise has not been written.

Tyler Kirk *is an associate professor and the Arthur T. Fathauer Chair in History at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He is a historian of Russia, the Soviet Union, and the circumpolar North, and author of* After the Gulag: A History of Memory in Russia's Far North.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 • 9:00 A.M. – 10:30 P.M.

KEYNOTE

Mass Injustice against Japanese Americans During World War II

Sam Mihara

In 1942, when Sam Mihara was 9 years old, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States entered World War II. Shortly after, he and his family were forced from their San Francisco home by armed military guards and sent to the Heart Mountain prison camp in Wyoming. The government removed all people of Japanese ancestry and placed them into desolate prison camps under Executive Order 9066 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Mihara's family would live crowded into a single 20-by-20-foot room for the next three years.

Mihara will detail the racial hysteria ramped up by the media, the steps the U.S. government took to remove Japanese-Americans from their homes, legal cases brought by Japanese-American individuals against the government, interactions with people who lived adjacent to the camp, the requirement that residents sign a loyalty affidavit and serve in the military during the war, and the difficult years of reintegration into society after the war. He will challenge the audience to ensure that similar policies are never again enacted in this country.

Born in 1933, ***Sam Mihara,*** *along with his family, spent three years at a Japanese-American internment camp during WWII. Upon their release, Mihara earned bachelor's and master's degrees and worked for 42 years for the Douglas Aircraft Company, eventually becoming a key executive. Mihara is the author of* Blindsided: The Life and Times of Sam Mihara. *He has received numerous awards for his social justice advocacy. More than 95,000 people have heard his presentations about his experiences.*



BREAK TIME
10:30–11 a.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 • 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

SESSION 4 Guardsmen and Grand Slams

Moderator: Paul Dauphinais

Voices from the First Wave: The Earliest Cold War Airmen in Alaska's Interior

The onset of the Cold War sent thousands of service members into Alaska's interior to shore up Arctic defenses. Airmen and soldiers were expected to maintain first-strike capabilities while living in "shantytowns" of Quonset huts and trailer parks. Meager accommodations and inadequate infrastructure bred mischief and mayhem, and often had deadly consequences. Yet amid these austere conditions, a resilient community emerged—one that found creative ways to build morale and foster a sense of identity. Drawing on previously classified military reports and base publications, this presentation gives voice to the first wave of Cold War warriors in the Fairbanks area.

Joshua Millard *is the curator for the North Carolina National Guard Museum, currently in development. He previously was the wing historian at Eielson Air Force Base and has worked for the National Archives in the presidential library system.*

The Alaska Territorial Guard and the Canadian Rangers: Historical Comparison and Contemporary Relevance

Both the Alaska Territorial Guard and the Canadian Rangers were established with goals to provide presence, surveillance and the ability to patrol remote areas of the Arctic. The two organizations were largely comprised of Indigenous people living in remote regions. The ATG served during World War II and the Canadian Rangers were founded in 1947 as the Cold War was heating up. This presentation will compare the two organizations and the contemporary relevance of such constructs.

Kristie Swain *is a retired U.S. Air Force officer and currently a research analyst at the Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies. She is pursuing her Ph.D. through the Arctic and Northern Studies Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.*

Herb Hilscher and OSS's "Black Radio" Aleutian Operation

Herb Hilscher (1902-1987) was a civilian who volunteered to go to the Aleutians in 1944 on a mission from the Office of Strategic Services, tasked with setting up a "black radio" operation aimed at Japan. This presentation will document the 42 years of his prior life which made him uniquely fit for this mission. How did he come to join the OSS's Morale Operations branch? Who recruited him? What were the conditions in the Aleutians? How did he decide the optimal location? How did the rivalry between the OSS (with its strong Army flavor) and the Navy decide the outcome of the operation?

John Fournelle *is a retired geoscientist/electron microscopist who grew up in Anchorage 1950-1958, and did Ph.D. research on Shishaldin Volcano on Unimak Island, the only Aleutian island with brown bears. He has presented his research on the USGS's Aleutian Volcano Project (1945-1954) and the history of his Anchorage neighborhood, Rogers Park, at past AHS conferences.*

Hilary Hilscher *was born in Fairbanks when Alaska was still a territory, and grew up in Anchorage. After receiving a B.A. in communications, she worked in journalism and public relations in Anchorage, in the Senate in Washington, D.C., later earning an M.A. from Alaska Pacific University, then continuing her career with The Nature Conservancy and Audubon in Alaska and Washington state.*

SESSION 5 Stories of Resilience and Recognition

Moderator: Rachel Mason

Through the Eyes of a Child: Northern Colonial Intersections

In 1906, Faye Koborivak passed away from tuberculosis at only seven years old. Seemingly, this child did not have the opportunity to make a historical impact. However, her life provides insight into the colonial forces that shaped Alaska at the turn of the century and challenged Alaska Natives to adapt to new colonial circumstances. Faye's life illustrates a myriad of colonial intersections: environmental extraction of both animals and minerals, the entrance of religious missionaries, and the determination to assimilate children in Alaska. Alaska Natives grappled with these forces and turned to traditional and new practices to create a future.

Mary Ludwig *teaches history at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She focuses on Indigenous history and history of the North American West.*

The Mission: The First Forty Years of Sitka's Presbyterian Native Boarding School 1881-1921

This presentation explores the impact of the Presbyterian mission that became Sheldon Jackson School in its first four decades, what it was like, and the church's portrayal of the school and students that donors and missionaries supported. Documents and the words of Tlingit missionary Tillie Paul, students and parents tell of lives, experiences, and relationships to the school and the church. Why did so many children die? How did the school fit into the context of Sitka's and Alaska's broader patterns of racial bias, culture, society, and economy?

Rebecca Poulson *is an artist and writer in Sitka, coauthor with Cora Dow of* Sitka, Alaska, A Short History *(2023). She is on the boards of the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society and the Alaska Historical Society, publishes "The Outer Coast" calendar of art and poetry, and is a member of the Alaska Historical Commission.*

Honoring and Preserving the Contributions of Women in Alaska through the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame

Since 2009 the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame has honored 246 women for their significant contributions in all sectors of Alaskan life. AWHOF is a virtual repository of biographies of the recipients. Learn how the nonprofit started, criteria and make-up of the women, the selection process and inductee ceremony, and maintenance of the permanent records. The presentation also will address how to nominate a woman for the AWHOF.

Jane Angvik *is a founder and a member of the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame. She has a long history of public service in Anchorage and Alaska, and along with her husband Vic Fischer advocated for many important issues over the last 40 years.*

Pam Kendrick *is the president of the board of directors of the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame and its manager. She devotes hundreds of hours each year to this volunteer effort.*



The Presbyterian mission school in Sitka, Alaska, in a postcard titled "Sitka Home Mission. Alaska, U.S., 1887." Photo Presbyterian Historical Society, Sheldon Jackson Collection.

LUNCH & LEARN Historic Bars of Homer

12:30–2 p.m.

LUNCH IS ON YOUR OWN. TALK STARTS AT 1:15 P.M.

Homer has attracted fishermen and homesteaders since the 1940s. Two of the earliest gathering places that served cocktails were the Homer Café & Club and the Yah Sure Club. After the Sterling Highway opened in 1950, the growing population supported more places including the Bayside Lounge, the Club Bar, the Sterling Bar, and the Salty Dawg Saloon. People would soon associate Homer with establishments like the Porpoise Room, the Waterfront, Alice's Champagne Palace, the Down East Saloon, and Kharacters. This presentation will summarize the bars that have come and gone in Homer, as well as those still in business.

Doug Vandegraft *is a former Alaskan and the author of* A Guide to the Notorious Bars of Alaska*, now in its third edition. He retired in 2018 after working 35 years as a cartographer for the federal government.*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 • 2:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

SESSION 6 Carvings and Communities

Moderator: Mary Ludwig

Joe Kakarook's Scrimshaw Mastodon Tusk: Created for the Alaska Commercial Company

Guy Kakarook's scrimshawed mastodon tusk created for the Alaska Commercial Company was a tour de force of the "new direction" in Indigenous art creation. This significant example of the "Western Pictorial Style" is in the de Young Museum of San Francisco and depicts approximately 20 site-specific locations on the Yukon River. The engraving on the 66-inch tusk was completed by Kakarook in St. Michael around 1900. Painstaking research has identified each location, all historically significant and some lost to time. The presentation will use imagery on the artwork to discuss the history of settlements along the Mighty Yukon.

Mark D. Foley *is an independent researcher and writer on scrimshaw of the North. A graduate of Fordham University in New York City, Foley has lived in Seattle for 30 years.*

Alaska Native Histories of Cooper Landing, Alaska

The rich history of Cooper Landing and the upper Kenai River is often told from a settler perspective, starting with the arrival of Euroamerican miners in the late 19th century. However, in a variety of often unrecognized ways, Alaska Native persons and communities continued to dwell in and influence the area well into the mid-20th century—from Dena'ina seasonal laborers to the family of Joseph Cooper himself. Drawing on archival research, I trace these Indigenous legacies of Sqilantnu/early Cooper Landing and reflect on how this might inform our approach to Kenai Peninsula historiography.

Adam Dunstan *is an associate professor of anthropology at Kenai Peninsula College, University of Alaska Anchorage. Recently he has researched multispecies ethnohistory of the Kenai Peninsula from a Dena'ina-centric perspective.*

Latin Cultural Spaces in Anchorage, 1970-Today

This research looks at the growth of the Hispanic immigrant population in Anchorage and follows the development of Latin culture in the town. With a focus on community building and social integration, this presentation sheds light on individuals and organizations that shaped the local Latin community. Most of the research has been conducted in *Anchorage Daily Times* newspaper archives starting c. 1970. The results of this work follow grassroots organizations, religious outreach, and armed forces collaboration.

Chloe McKay *is a junior at the University of Alaska Anchorage with an interest in Latin American and Indigenous history. When she is not lost in newspaper archives, she enjoys hiking, camping, and testing new soup recipes.*

SESSION 7 Rails, Wings and Waterways

Moderator: Richard Mattson

Alaska Mailboats

The presenter is writing a history of Alaska mailboats, from 1867 through the end of mailboat contracts in the 1970s. Through research at the National Archives, Chronicling America, the State Historical Library, and interviews with mailboat operators' families, he has identified over 450 vessels and have corroborated over half of the contracts with the Post Office. The mail routes provide an interesting lens through which to view Alaska history.

Larry Talley *grew up in a floating logging camp near Ketchikan and was a customer of at least three mailboats. He was a computer programmer and bureaucrat and is now a part-time whalewatch captain and aspiring author.*

Alaska's Pioneer Access Roads Program on the Kenai Peninsula

During its very first session in 1959, Alaska's legislature enacted a bill directing the Highway and Public Works Department to "construct roads to inaccessible areas rich in mineral resources." These would be "low standard, rudimentary truck roads" without provision for maintenance. Despite the bill's wording, the state would not actually build the roads and many had little to do with mineral resources. This presentation will highlight the Pioneer Access Roads Program on the Kenai Peninsula.

Bryan Taylor *is a lifelong Alaskan who has worked in various capacities with Alaska's historic resources. He currently serves on the board of the Soldotna Historical Society and is independently researching Alaska's early transportation.*

Alaska Railroad: Alaska's Lucky Break

In "Progressive Era Big Government gave Alaska a railroad" (*ADN* 01/08/2010), Steve Haycox describes how J. P. Morgan and the Alaska Syndicate built the Copper River & Northwestern Railway. The threat of the syndicate's monopoly control in Alaska motivated Congress to authorize construction of a federally owned railroad. How did contributions from Native inhabitants, government geologists, and private enterprise lead to the development of both railroads? Today, private freight railroads and publicly funded Amtrak are often at odds. Not so with the Alaska Railroad Corporation, which runs both passenger and freight trains. How did decisions made over 100 years ago lead to the Alaska Railroad's success today for both passengers and freight?

Cynthia Wentworth*, born and raised in Anchorage, is a former economist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Railroad Corporation. She has a master's degree in cultural anthropology from École Hautes Études Sciences Sociales in Paris, France.*

Pioneer Aviator Ingrid Pedersen: "A Rare Bird"

In 1963, Swedish-American aviator Ingrid Pedersen became the first woman to fly a single-engine aircraft from Fairbanks to Norway over the North Pole. Pedersen went on to careers as a commercial pilot on Svalbard and a flight instructor in Alaska, eventually becoming the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum director. Despite her pioneering accomplishments, her contributions to polar aviation have received little attention. This presentation will delve into her life and discuss efforts to translate her 1996 autobiography, *Parfyme og motorolje (Perfume and Motor Oil),* into English.

Christie Ericson *is a professor of library science at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She is co-editor for the* Polar Libraries Bulletin *and is cultural director and librarian for the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge in Anchorage.*



BREAK TIME
3:30–4 p.m.

MORE ON FRIDAY!

Annual Business Meeting
4-5 p.m. • Agenda on page 20

Conference Banquet
6:30–9:00 p.m. • Details on page 5

Historic Homer Bars Tour
9:00 p.m. • Details on page 5

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 • 8:30 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

KEYNOTE The Iñupiaq Learning Framework: What We Learned

Pausauraq Jana Harcharek

Knowledge systems are vital in maintaining cultural integrity as they encompass the frameworks through which communities understand and interpret their experiences, values and traditions. The development of the Iñupiaq Learning Framework was an act of self-determination in education that safeguards cultural integrity, nurtures a sense of community and centers Iñupiaq ideologies.

Pausauraq Jana Harcharek *is an Indigenous educator with over 40 years of service to the perpetuation of Iñupiaq language and culture. She works with educational organizations to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems into foundational structures. Harcharek directed the creation of the Iñupiaq Learning Framework, a transformative initiative that aligns educational standards with Iñupiaq values and worldviews. She currently teaches Iñupiaq and develops curriculum to ensure the language's continued vitality. She was conferred the degree of honorary doctor of education by the World Indigenous Nations University in 2019. Beyond her professional achievements, Harcharek's work is deeply rooted in family and the continuity of heritage. She is a proud Aaka, Aana, and Amau (mother, grandmother and great-grandmother).*



BREAK TIME
10–10:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 • 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

SESSION 8 Top-Down History

Moderator: Ian Hartman

Birthright Citizenship and the Fourteenth Amendment

President Trump's challenge to birthright citizenship and recent efforts to urge triumphalist narratives on American historians are difficult to reconcile with the story of the first pioneer girl born under the American flag in Sitka. Her parents were German Jewish immigrants, and her Alaska birth in 1869, one year after ratification of the 14th Amendment, saved her life from the Holocaust with a U.S. passport. But the triumphal pioneer story once told of Sitka's settlement can be seen today as a gunboat colonial settler project to usurp Indigenous lands, raising uncomfortable associations with other such endeavors, including in Israel.

Tom Kizzia *is a Homer author and journalist. A long-time reporter for the* Anchorage Daily News*, he started his career at the* Homer Weekly News*. He was named Alaska Historian of the Year in 2022 for his third book, the ghost town history* Cold Mountain Path.

The Smithsonian Perspective

Curators of exhibits at sites such as national parks and the Smithsonian have been instructed by the administration to make alterations to reflect current political platforms and policies. Smithsonian National Board member and long-time Alaskan Jo Michalski will describe the volunteer board's role in fostering communication between the institution and its members' communities, advising the secretary on issues of institutional advancement and promoting public-private partnerships. She will read a statement from the Smithsonian Assistant Secretary for Advancement that describes how the institution is now dealing, and has dealt in the past, with political, cultural and economic pressures.

Jo Michalski *is an entrepreneur, community activist and philanthropist. She earned her B.A. degree at the University of Minnesota. In 1971 she moved to Alaska and traveled the state developing an environmental education curriculum. Jo was a founding board member and chair of the Anchorage YWCA, a trustee of the University of Alaska Foundation, and served on the Alaska Community Foundation board. She is currently a member of the Smithsonian Institution's National Board.*

Audience/Participant Discussion

Led by moderator Ian Hartman, audience members are invited to discuss and question the role of governments at all levels in defining and presenting local, state and national histories. What role might the Alaska Historical Society play in current efforts to control the narrative?

SESSION 9 Preserving the Past, Honoring the Land

Moderator: Will Schneider

Exploring Anchorage's Places and Spaces: Introducing the Public Historic Resources Database

The Municipality of Anchorage's project to build a public-facing database of cultural resources is ready in beta form. The database consolidates previous municipal and state historic resource inventories. This introductory look will profile national, state and local landmarks in the municipality, and preview some to discuss sensitivity and eligibility issues.

Deidre Bryan *is vice-chair of the Anchorage Historic Preservation Commission, a historian with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and an adjunct professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage.*

Tom Davis *is a senior planner with the Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department. He serves as the municipality's historic preservation officer.*

Contaminated: The Legacy of Lands Conveyed Under ANCSA

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act transferred 44 million acres of land to Native corporations—including over 1,100 contaminated properties. Polluters ranging from the military to mining companies left contaminants like asbestos, petroleum and PCBs on lands selected under ANCSA, yet Native corporations were considered legally liable for cleanup until 2018. This presentation will discuss several cases where Native communities held federal agencies accountable, and feature excerpts from *Contaminated*, a podcast produced by Rosebay Audio and funded by the Tribal TAB program.

Kaitlin Armstrong *is a journalist and documentary producer based in Anchorage. She is the creator of* The Alaska Myth*, a show about how settler myths shape perceptions of Alaska's history, and the executive producer of the podcast* Contaminated.

Jeran Pelagio *(Iñupiaq) was born and raised in Anchorage, and has a B.A. from Fort Lewis College in political science and Spanish and an M.A. from the University of Denver in global studies. His professional work includes environmental remediation, marketing and communications, and community outreach.*

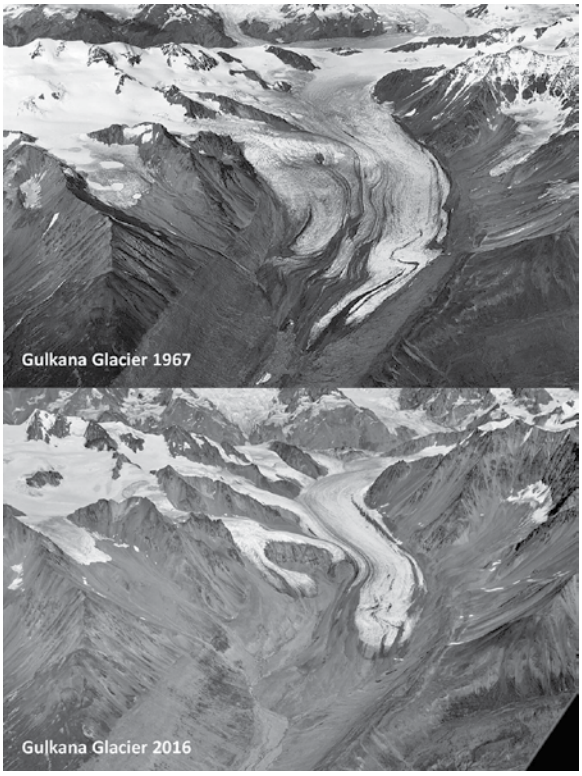
Lisa Griswold *is with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's Contaminated Sites Program, following a decade with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. She has a B.A. in natural science from the University of Alaska Anchorage, and an M.A. in legal studies from the University of Arizona.*

C'ulc'ena' Łuu' / Gulkana Glacier

C'ulc'ena' Łuu'/Gulkana Glacier is a place of connection for people who live on both sides of the eastern Alaska Range. Situated in Ahtna homelands, the dominant cultural, social, environmental and political forces that have shaped Alaska the last 125 years are laid bare at C'ulc'ena' Łuu'. Guided by Jen Rose Smith, Julie Cruikshank and others who resituate ice as an active participant and communicator, we are developing a community-centered anarchive to share visual materials and stories about ongoing entanglements of land rights, resource extraction, militarization, climate change and scientific study that overlap in this one place.

Katie Ione Craney *is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher. She recently completed a master's degree in Arctic and Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, with a focus on how dis/comfort is felt, viewed, and imagined in the Circumpolar North.*

Klara Maisch *is a visual artist who creates in response to the diversity of intelligence held within Northern places and communities. Through multimodal collaboration and the sequencing of imagery, she shares layered stories that center firsthand knowledge and sensory experiences.*



Repeat oblique photographs of Gulkana glaciers in Alaska. 1967, Unknown USGS photographer. 2016, L. Sass, USGS.

Annual Business Meeting

Friday, October 9 • 4-5 p.m.
Kachemak Bay Campus
To join via Zoom: www.tinyurl.com/AHS-2026-1
Passcode for Zoom meeting: AHS2026

AGENDA

1. Call to order, welcome, adoption of agenda . . . . . *Patricia Partnow*
   Introduction of 2025-26 officers and board of directors
   President's report

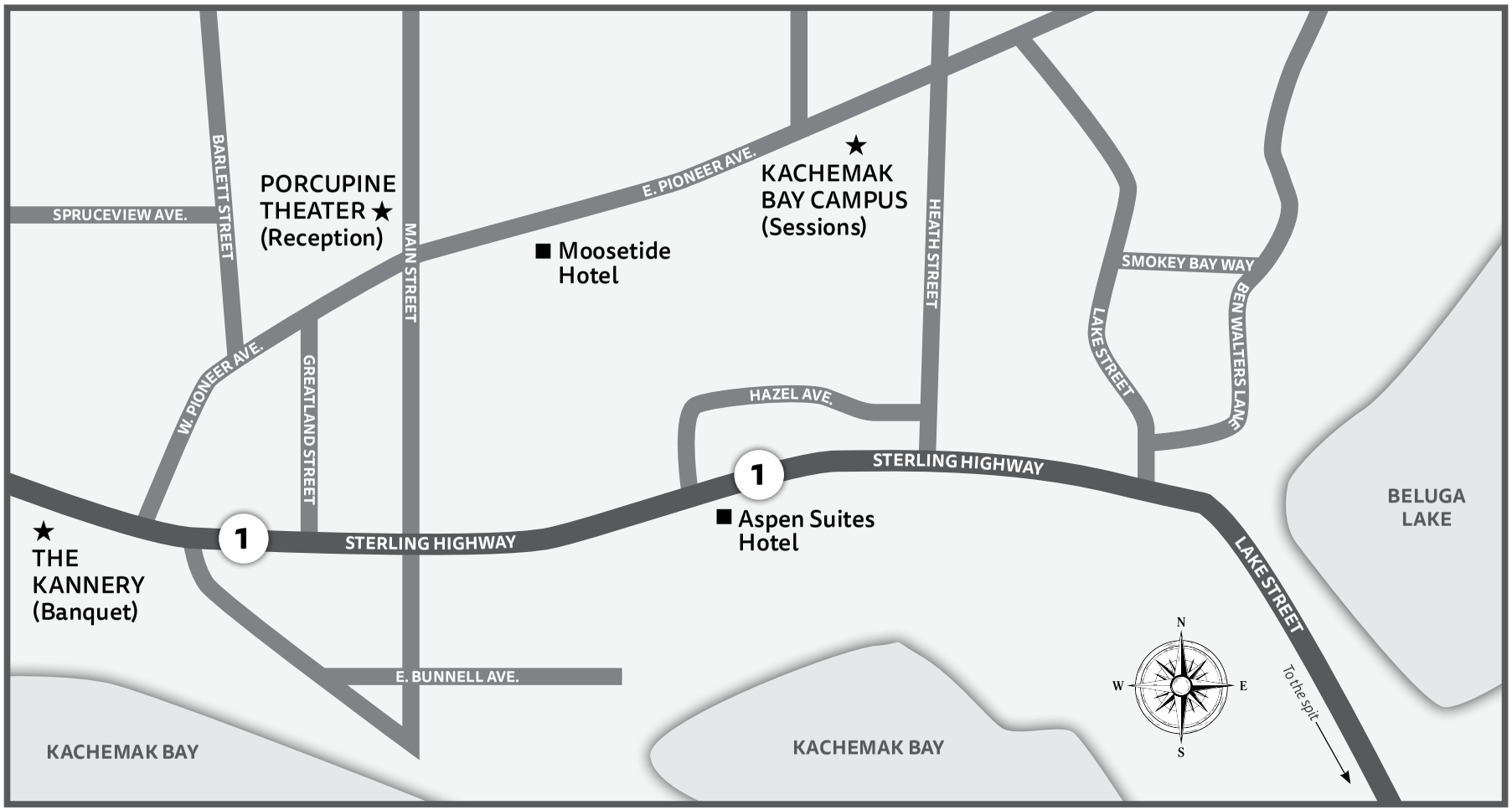
2. Secretary's report . . . . . *Rachel Mason*
   Approval of minutes of 2025 annual meeting

3. Treasurer's report . . . . . *Gwen Higgins*
   Auction

4. Program reports:
   - Board of directors election . . . . . *Patricia Partnow*
   - Membership . . . . . *Gwen Higgins*
   - Newsletter . . . . . *David Ramseur*
   - *Alaska History* . . . . . *Ross Coen*
   - Website & social media . . . . . *Kaila Pfister*
   - 2026 conference . . . . . *Jeff Meyers*
   - Advocacy . . . . . *Molly McCammon*
   - Critical Issues Lecture Series 2025-26 . . . . . *Patricia Partnow*
     - 2027 . . . . . *Will Schneider*
     - Steve Haycox Festschrift . . . . . *Will Schneider*
   - Alaska History Day . . . . . *Leanna Williams*
     Innovation in History: Impact, Influence, Change
   - Records and collections . . . . . *Jo Antonson*
   - Other:
     - Non-profit sponsor projects . . . . . *Jo Antonson*
   - Memorials (to be presented at banquet) . . . . . *Ron Inouye*
   - Awards (to be presented at banquet) . . . . . *Leanna Williams*

5. Other Business
   - 2027 conference—Juneau, September 15-18 . . . . . *Rich Mattson*
     2028 conference location?
   - Member remarks . . . . . *Patricia Partnow*

6. Adjourn . . . . . *Patricia Partnow*


PORCUPINE THEATER ★ (Reception)
KACHEMAK BAY CAMPUS (Sessions)
■ Moosetide Hotel
■ Aspen Suites Hotel
★ THE KANNERY (Banquet)
BARLETT STREET
SPRUCEVIEW AVE.
MAIN STREET
E. PIONEER AVE.
W. PIONEER AVE.
GREATLAND STREET
HEATH STREET
HAZEL AVE.
SMOKEY BAY WAY
LAKE STREET
BEN WALTERS LANE
STERLING HIGHWAY
1
E. BUNNELL AVE.
KACHEMAK BAY
KACHEMAK BAY
BELUGA LAKE
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To the spit



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