COMMUNITIES REMEMBERED & IMAGINED

ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2021 DIGITAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 7-9 • OCTOBER 14-16 • 2021

With sessions to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
Alaska Historical Society
2021 Digital Conference

COMMUNITIES REMEMBERED & IMAGINED

With sessions to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

October 7-9 • October 14-16
2021
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The conference is supported in part by a generous grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the Humanities, a federal agency. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

ABOUT THE 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 15-member Board of Directors, the Society provides a forum and a vehicle to achieve these goals. It publishes a 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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members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org
907-276-1596

Welcome to the 2021 Alaska Historical Society annual meeting. Last year we proved that Covid could not slow us down and this year we’ll do it again, virtually. This year the Society is grateful to have received a generous grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum and the National Endowment for the Humanities to support our conference. There will be a video record of all of the presentations, panels, and the workshop. The Society’s annual awards and tributes to our colleagues who died this past year will be part of the annual business meeting. We have added a session for representatives of local historical societies to network. There are wonderful presentations planned and we are happy to have you join us.

— WILLIAM SCHNEIDER, President

I also welcome you to our second all-digital conference. This year’s theme, Communities Remembered and Imagined, gives us a chance to hear presentations on ghost towns, forcibly-abandoned villages, and reinvented communities. Our keynote speaker is journalist and author Tom Kizzia, former resident of McCarthy, a mining boom town which was abandoned from 1938 to 1983 and subsequently recreated with a new life. In his presentation Kizzia will show how McCarthy’s history follows and counterbalances the boom narrative of the Alaska frontier. There are other presentations from across the state about mining and cannery ghost towns, former Alaska Native villages, and other places fondly (or not so fondly) remembered.

A second theme of the conference is the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Three sessions will explore the history and significance of ANCSA. Alaska Native leaders involved in the movement and historians will reflect on the events leading up to ANCSA, the act itself, and the legacy of this important legislation. Presenters include Emil Notti, Sam Kito, Willie Hensley, and Oliver Leavitt, all key figures in the passage of ANCSA.

Some other highlights of the conference include a session for representatives of local historical societies to network, a workshop on the techniques of history focusing on genealogy and archives, and a discussion on the teaching of American history. Enjoy!

— RACHEL MASON, Conference Chair

ABOUT OUR THEME
Communities Remembered and Imagined

Alaska is full of once-thriving communities that now stand empty or have vanished without a trace. Some were boom towns that grew up around a gold mine or processor, but shrank when the source of wealth dried up. Others were forcibly abandoned because of natural disaster or war, or lost population to lack of government services and the draw of economic survival. At the same time, other towns have risen from the ashes of former ones, or have been rebuilt in a new location. We have also seen some fictional Alaskan towns as settings for books, movies and television. Some of them are thinly disguised real places; others are a combination of reality and imagination.

Alaskans have always had to be flexible and creative in building our communities, relying not only on sharing a physical location, but also on more intangible connections to the people in our lives. As the pandemic has reined us in more tightly in our homes and communities, but increased our digital communications, we can appreciate a more accommodating definition of community. This year’s conference theme, Communities Remembered and Imagined, focuses on the life cycles of communities, particularly on those phases that exist only in memory or imagination.
Thank you for joining our virtual conference! We look forward to gathering in person in future years, but meanwhile, here are some notes for making this year’s Zoom-based conference as smooth as possible.

**How do I find the conference sessions on Zoom?**
Registrants will receive an email from Zoom with the webinar link information.

**Will the same Zoom link work for all the conference sessions?**
Yes. The Zoom link you receive in the email should work for all sessions on all days. However, the AHS business meeting is a Zoom meeting, not a webinar, and has a separate Zoom meeting ID and passcode. See page 22 for this information. If you have trouble accessing multiple sessions with the same Zoom link, please email Karen Brewster (karen.brewster@alaska.edu) during the session and she can assist you.

**I didn’t register for the conference, but would like to participate in the AHS business meeting. Is that possible?**
Yes. If you wish to participate only in the AHS business meeting without registering for the full conference, please contact members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org.

**Using Zoom**
We want to make sure that everyone who is giving a presentation is comfortable with how to give a Powerpoint presentation via Zoom and everyone who registers can access the panels, so we have created

- Zoom Instructions For Presenters: [www.tinyurl.com/AHS-presenters-21](http://www.tinyurl.com/AHS-presenters-21)
- Zoom Instructions For Attendees: [www.tinyurl.com/AHS-attendees-21](http://www.tinyurl.com/AHS-attendees-21)
- Zoom Instructions For Moderators: [www.tinyurl.com/AHS-moderators-21](http://www.tinyurl.com/AHS-moderators-21)

**I have questions not answered by these instructions. Help!**
If you need additional help with questions, please contact
Karen Brewster, Conference Technical Coordinator
karen.brewster@alaska.edu
907-479-7479.

**I have accessibility issues. Can I still participate in the conference or meetings?**
If you have impaired vision or hearing, or have other accessibility issues, please let us know in advance at members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org so that we can provide captioning or other support.

**Having problems getting into the conference sessions on Zoom?**
Email Karen Brewster: karen.brewster@alaska.edu.

**How do I ask question during a conference session?**
There should be time at the end of each session for a short Q&A period. Each session moderator will handle it. As an audience member in a webinar, you can watch and listen to the presentations and type questions or comments in the Chat, like you would in a regular Zoom meeting, but you can only speak when the host gives you permission to unmute yourself.

**We value your feedback**
After the conference, a survey will be sent by Zoom to all registrants. Another way to provide comments on the conference is to send an email to members@alaskahistoricalsociety.org
The Impermanent Past:
Living in the Space Between

The ghost town story provides an essential counterbalance to the boom narrative of the frontier. We visit these places in the American West, haunted by a beguiling absence, and a mortal question hovers: Is this where we’ve been, or where we’re going? The story of the “lost decades” in Alaska’s iconic ghost town, McCarthy-Kennecott, carries special power, given the state’s engrained historical fear of becoming a ghost state.

Tom Kizzia is an award-winning Alaskan author and journalist who traveled widely in rural Alaska during a 25-year career as a reporter for the Anchorage Daily News. He is the author of Pilgrim’s Wilderness and the Alaska village travel narrative The Wake of the Unseen Object. His work has appeared in The New Yorker, the Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, the Columbia Journalism Review, and in Best American Science and Nature Writing 2017. He received an Artist Fellowship from the Rasmuson Foundation and was a Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford University. A graduate of Hampshire College, he lives in Homer, Alaska, and has a place in the Wrangell Mountains outside McCarthy. His latest book, Cold Mountain Path: The Ghost Town Decades of McCarthy-Kennecott, Alaska, 1938-1983 (Fall 2021) covers a period in McCarthy’s history when the town was nearly abandoned.
## WEEK 1: OCTOBER 7-9

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-11:30am</td>
<td>CONFERENCE OPENING</td>
<td>Welcome - William Schneider &amp; Rachel Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-3pm</td>
<td>THE GHOSTS OF FORMER MINES</td>
<td>Chris Allan, moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-5pm</td>
<td>MYTH AND DELUSION IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA</td>
<td>Anastasia Tarmann, moderator</td>
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### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-11:30am</td>
<td>SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA</td>
<td>Ian Hartman, moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-3pm</td>
<td>BRISTOL BAY</td>
<td>Katie Ringmuth, moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-5pm</td>
<td>FOOD AND DRINK IN ALASKA</td>
<td>Pennelope Goforth, moderator</td>
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### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10am</td>
<td>LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES MEETING</td>
<td>Ron Inouye, moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11:30am</td>
<td>WORKSHOP</td>
<td>Melissa Barker - Techniques of History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-3pm</td>
<td>CROSSING INTERNATIONAL BORDERS</td>
<td>David Ramseur, moderator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-5pm</td>
<td>FORUM ON TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY</td>
<td>Ian Hartman, moderator</td>
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</tbody>
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**Summary:**

- **Conference Opening** by William Schneider & Rachel Mason on Thursday, October 7, 10-11:30am.
- **Keynote Address** by Tom Kizzia on The Impermanent Past: Living in the Space Between.
- **The Ghosts of Former Mines** with Chris Allan moderating.
- **Myth and Delusion in Southeast Alaska** with Anastasia Tarmann moderating.
- **Southcentral Alaska** with Ian Hartman moderating.
- **Bristol Bay** with Katie Ringmuth moderating.
- **Food and Drink in Alaska** with Pennelope Goforth moderating.

**Workshop: Techniques of History** by Melissa Barker on Saturday, October 9, 10-11:30am.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Moderator</th>
<th>Presentations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-11:30am</td>
<td><strong>THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11:30am</td>
<td>ANCSA: A CONVERSATION ON NATIVE HISTORY</td>
<td>Meghan Sullivan,</td>
<td>Emil Notti and Sam Kito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-3pm</td>
<td>ANCSA AT 50: LOOKING BACK</td>
<td>Patuk Glenn,</td>
<td>Willie Hensley and Oliver Leavitt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3:30-5pm    | HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ANCSA           | Will Schneider,   | Philip Wight - Right of Way: The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act  
|             |                                             | moderator         | Daniel Monteith - William and Frederick Paul and their Contributions to Alaska Native Land Claims  
|             |                                             |                   | Stephen Haycox - Shock and Awe: Understanding Early Perceptions of the Passage of ANCSA |
| 10-11:30am  | **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15**                     |                   |                                                                               |
| 10-11:30am  | ALEUTIANS                                   | Ray Hudson,       | Michael Livingston - Aleutian Ghost Towns? Call OpenStreetMap!               |
|             |                                             | moderator         | Leslie McCartney - Preserving the Unangač (Alaska Aleut) Cuttlefish Project Recordings  
|             |                                             |                   | Lauren Peters - Sophia’s Return                                                |
| 1:30-3pm    | COMING TO WORK IN ALASKA                   | Tim Troll,        | Carol Hoefler - Northern VISTAs: A Retrospective of the Volunteers in Service to America Program in Rural Alaska 1965-1971  
|             |                                             | moderator         | Heather Feil - Civilian Conservation Corps in the Arctic - 1937-1940           |
| 3:30-5pm    | AHS BUSINESS MEETING, STATE OF THE STATE, MEMORIALS, AWARDS |                   |                                                                               |
| 10-11:30am  | **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16**                   |                   |                                                                               |
| 10-11:30am  | INTERIOR ALASKA                             | Angela Schmidt,   | Rachel Cohen - The Alaskan Capital that Never Was: The Willow Capital Project  
|             |                                             | moderator         | Erik Johnson - McKinley Park Station in 1921: The Centennial of Mount McKinley National Park’s First Headquarters  
|             |                                             |                   | Keely O’Connell - Looking for Caro                                              |
| 1:30-3pm    | THE CHENA TOWNSITE                         | Erik Johnson,     | Scott Shirrar, Josh Reuther, and Justin Cramb - Historic Archaeology at the Chena Townsite  
|             |                                             | moderator         | Martin Gutoski - Digging for the Lost Town of Chena                             |
THE GHOSTS OF FORMER MINES

Thursday, October 7 • 1:30pm-3:00pm
Moderator: Chris Allan

The History of the Lost River Tin Mining Company

When in 1903 Leslie Crim, Charles Randt, and W. J. O’Brien discovered tin on the Lost River in the Seward Peninsula, they staked a claim and incorporated the Lost River Tin Mining Company. They made a fortune from the mine. The mine was in operation off and on until 1955. Learn the history of the mine and hear the stories about the owners. Crim died in 1911 and left over 100,000 mine shares to the Holy Rollers church. His sanity was doubted, and a long legal battle ensued. Randt and O’Brien both died before the court case was settled around 1945.

Trish Hackett Nicola, Certified Genealogist, writes and lectures about Pacific Northwest history and the Chinese Exclusion Act files. She lives with her family in Seattle, Washington.

Treadwell, The Impermanent Town with a Permanent Impact: How a Big Mine on a Little Island Launched Alaska’s Development and Had Worldwide Significance

Fifteen years before the Klondike Gold Rush of 1897-1898, a sophisticated underground mining complex on Douglas Island attracted investors and workers from across the globe and inaugurated Alaska’s first industrial development, transportation sector, and tourism trade. World-class technology produced profit from low-grade ore. Skilled managers, exceptional wages, and community amenities attracted a diverse workforce, many of whom stayed beyond the mines’ catastrophic ending to populate the permanent towns of Douglas and Juneau. While Treadwell today is a bucolic walk in the woods with scattered remnants of what for forty years was a modern thriving community, its impact on Alaska endures.

Laury Scandling was born and bred in Alaska and has a Masters of American History from Stanford. She is a former public radio and television reporter, and a retired teacher of history at the high school and university level. She has volunteered many years at the Last Chance Mining Museum in Juneau and edits the biannual newsletter of the Gastineau Channel Historical Society.

Rich Mattson is a retired fisheries biologist with a passion for local Juneau and Alaskan history. He is a board member of the Gastineau Channel Historical Society, coordinates content development on their website, and researches material for their newsletter. He also volunteers at the Juneau-Douglas City Museum and at the Last Chance Mining Museum. Having grown up in Douglas next to the old Treadwell workings, which served as an awesome playground, he acquired a life-long interest in Treadwell history and does guided tours there for the Treadwell Historic Preservation and Restoration Society (aka “the Treadwell Society”).

Walking with Ghosts: Two Historians Hike the Chilkoot Trail

Two historians will show photos and share stories from their August 2019 Chilkoot Trail hike. Their reflections along the trail about artifacts they observed and experiences of men and women who pioneered this route were different from your average backpacker. They felt the presence of ghosts at the old camps, in their steps up the steep Golden Staircase, and in the shouts of joy at the end of the trail. Karen could relate some places to the stories of those who had built the recreational trail and the rangers who manage it that she recorded as part of an oral history project for Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park.

Karen Brewster is a Research Associate with the Oral History Program/Project Jukebox at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has conducted oral history interviews around Alaska for twenty-five years on a variety of historical and cultural topics. She serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors and is the author of two life history books about pioneering Alaskans.

Angela Schmidt is the Film Archivist and head of the Alaska Film Archives at the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks, and serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors.
Alexander Baranov, the Man, the Myth: Reality, Distortion, and Why it Matters

The figure of Alexandr Andreevich Baranov (1747-1819) has captured the imagination of writers from his day to our own. Books like Lord of Alaska, Alexander Baranov – A Pacific Empire, and Master of Alaska offer one view, with recent portrayals as a brutal, debased colonizer quite another. What do we know about his actual life and times, and how does that compare to the imagined versions - in books, websites, and in media surrounding the 2020 debate over removal of Sitka’s bronze Baranov statue? What do the discrepancies tell us about how we imagine Alaska, today?

Rebecca Poulson is a writer and artist in Sitka, Alaska. She serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors and is a member of the Alaska Historical Commission.

Centennial Delusion: The Carving of the Juneau Centennial Totem Poles

Juneau celebrated its centennial in 1980 partially by commissioning a large number of art pieces, including two totem poles. The road to developing these two poles was littered with misunderstandings and misconceptions that revolved around an imagined perception of local Tlingit culture and history. However, by working with various community members, the Centennial Committee was able to commission two iconic works of art that represented an actual community, instead of what they are often imagined to be. Through the examples of the Auke and Wooshkeetaan totem poles, we will look at how art can successfully reflect communities instead of feeding into imagined stereotypes.

Niko Sanguinetti is the Curator of Collections and Exhibits at the Juneau-Douglas City Museum. She is mainly responsible for the creation, development, installation, and deinstallation of museum exhibits as well as the care and maintenance of the museum collections (including the Auke and Wooshkeetaan totem poles).
The Last Homesteaders: John and Carolyn Davidson at Driftwood Bay

In early August 1977, John Davidson, 27, his wife Carolyn, 25 and their three-year-old son Jesse, headed south in their small open boat along Resurrection Bay to their home in Driftwood Bay at Day Harbor, about 25 miles from Seward. They never made it. Beginning in 1970, John and Carolyn started building on their open-entry homestead. Through hardship and perseverance, they created a comfortable life there. Their story is about the idealistic and turbulent 1960s, the disillusionment of the 1970s, the back-to-the-land movement, the long-hairs or hippies. It’s about a period of spiritual search, and the need for authenticity, individualism, solitude, and also community.

Doug Capra is from Seward, the author of The Spaces Between: Stories from the Kenai Mountains to the Kenai Fjords. He has written the forewords for reprints of Alaska books by American artist Rockwell Kent. Capra has published Alaska history articles, essays, poetry and plays.

Valdez Rises: One Town’s Struggle for Survival After the Great Alaska Earthquake

On March 27, 1964, the largest earthquake ever to strike North America devastated Alaska’s coast, including Valdez. Within days of the quake, officials determined that Valdez would move. The City Council rallied residents, oversaw the buy-out of Old Town homes, assigned new town lots, and coordinated with agencies to build infrastructure, businesses and homes. Within four years, the new town was built and every person moved. The relocation was a success and positioned Valdez to win the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline Terminal.

Tabitha Gregory holds a BS from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and an MBA from Colorado State University. She was born and raised in southeastern Alaska, and lived in Valdez for 22 years, where she served as Executive Director of the Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Association.

“New York or London will have nothing on Anchorage”: Music in Anchorage, 1915-1930

Anchorage history has a rich soundtrack. For many new residents, the arts were as crucial to building a community as raised sidewalks. Musicians in early Anchorage came from varied segments of society, with day jobs often far removed from the performing arts. Some residents had extensive musical training and professional experience. A few had already spearheaded artistic organizations in other Alaskan communities. The arts were not immune from daily struggles and politics. Studying the tribulations and successes of Anchorage’s music scene from 1915 to 1930 adds a deeper dimension to the history of early Anchorage and its residents.

As Artistic Director for the Anchorage Festival of Music, Laura Koenig specializes in melding archival research with the performing arts. She also performs extensively on modern and baroque flute, coaches for Alaska Youth Orchestras, and teaches at the University of Alaska Anchorage and her private studio.
Images of Nushagak - Gone, But Not Forgotten

When Russian explorers ventured into Bristol Bay in 1819, they built a fort and trading post at a location now known as Nushagak. Nushagak eventually grew to become a center of commerce and the genesis for the spread of Russian Orthodoxy throughout southwest Alaska. The location is now nothing more than a summer fish camp. This presentation is a short history of Nushagak as told through images captured by artists and early photographers, and a look at Nushagak today.

Tim Troll is the Executive Director of the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust and the author most recently of Bristol Bay Remembers: The Great Flu of 1919. He is a member of the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors.

Ivan Petroff’s “Malchatna Villages” c. 1880-1888

In the 10th Census of the United States Ivan Petroff documented the “Malchatna Villages” on his map of southwestern Alaska but offered few details. In the mid-20th century the people of Nondalton, particularly elders, gave researchers names and approximate locations of some of their ancestral Mulchatna River villages. In 2000 a group of multi-agency researchers began to search for the Mulchatna villages. During the following several years the team located approximately 22 separate Dena’ina Mulchatna villages covering more than a hundred miles of the Mulchatna River. The proposed presentation will detail what the researchers discovered about Petroff’s rather “mysterious” Mulchatna River villages.

John Branson is a historian at Lake Clark National Park and Preserve and a 51-year resident of the Bristol Bay region.

Where the Hell was Hallerville? And Why No Canneries Survived on the Kvichak, Bristol Bay’s Most Productive Salmon River

Before you reach for your favorite cannery reference, MacDonald (1950) makes the usual mistakes about this site and while Orth (1967) has the right coordinates, it doesn’t tell the story that followed. Once the most northern cannery on the Kvichak River, Hallerville was built by Joseph Haller in 1900. Problems ensued. The cannery was moved, renamed, and ultimately abandoned. Six other Kvichak packers shared a similar fate that left Bristol Bay’s most productive salmon river barren of canneries. What happened was a combination of meandering river channels, evolving regulations, and World War II that left questions about where Hallerville really was.

Bob King served as news director of KDLG radio in Dillingham and later as an assistant to Gov. Tony Knowles and U.S. Sen. Mark Begich during their terms in office. Now retired, he lives in Juneau and continues to write about Alaska fishery history.
Food Life History in the Arctic Communities: Usages of Underground Cache and Food Preservation Practices

This paper presents the theme of “food life history”—the history of harvest, preservation, and preparation of local fish, meat and plants—in northern Alaskan communities. Alaska Native peoples have used ice cellars, underground caches, and pits to preserve and share locally harvested food and maintain their lifeways. Their food storage practices have changed due to rapid environmental fluctuations, especially in freeze/thaw and moisture conditions, and the arrival of modern education and technologies. Our preliminary study shows that sharing traditional food and knowledge with relatives and communities strengthens their physical and spiritual health, and commemorates their ancestors and homeland.

Yoko Kugo is an Affiliate Professor in the Arctic and Northern Studies Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her interests include Indigenous place names, Alaska Native cultures and lifeways, and histories of Japanese pioneers in the Arctic during the Yukon gold rush.

Kazuyuki Saito, Affiliate Professor at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature, Kyoto, Japan, is a physical climatologist with research interests on the variability and functionality of permafrost in the cold-region eco-climate-life system on various timescales.

Yu Hirasawa is a Lecturer at Department of Human Sciences, University of East Asia, Japan. His interests are prehistoric archaeology and indigenous archaeology of Alaska and Hokkaido, Japan.

Michael Koskey is an Associate Professor with the Center for Cross-Cultural Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Mike’s research focuses on oral history, traditional knowledge, ethnohistory, culture change, decolonization, resource use and allocation, and Indigenous cosmology/mythology.

Go Iwahana is a Research Assistant Professor and a geocryologist at the International Arctic Research Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks. He is interested in quantification of permafrost degradation and reconstruction of the paleo-environment from permafrost.

Shirow Tatsuzawa is an Assistant Professor with the Graduate School of Humanities and Human Sciences and Arctic Research Center at Hokkaido University.

Bars of Alaska’s Past: Gone, But Forever Notorious

Alcohol has long been a part of Alaskan culture, and Alaskans have a legendary thirst for alcoholic beverages. The remoteness of Alaska, seasonal darkness, isolation, and loneliness has historically created a tremendous need to socialize, which provided a unique niche for bars to prosper. The gold rushes, military build-up during World War II, and the construction of the Alaska Pipeline were events that prompted the opening of many bars in Alaska. Time and the changing economy have since closed many of these once popular places. This presentation will focus on some of the most famous of these former establishments.

The *Alaska History News* and other statewide newsletters provide us with information on our local historical organizations. How do you additionally learn about the other societies?

How closely tied are you to your local museum? Does that connect you to the rest of the state? What is your opinion about the separate conferences of AHS and Museums Alaska?

Museums often have budgets through local municipalities which result in consistent funding and operations whereas the historical societies are largely volunteer. What’s your local experience?

Does your board have a plan for diversifying its members and bringing on younger representatives?

Are there common historical society needs which should be programmed into future conferences?

Let’s talk!!

### WORKSHOP

**Saturday, October 9 • 10:00am-11:30am**

**Presenter: Melissa Barker**

**(Techniques of History)**

Genealogists use all kinds of tools to help them with their research. Using archives to locate documents, photographs and artifacts to uncover family history is what we as genealogists live to do. Whether you are researching in Alaska or anywhere else, knowing what records are available, where the records are located and how to access those records is a tool of knowledge every genealogist and community historian should have in their toolbox. Learn from a seasoned genealogist and archivist how to find stories about your ancestors and community members, local history residents may have experienced, and social history that can help tell family stories.

*Melissa Barker* is a Certified Archives Manager, professional genealogist, speaker, and writer. She is affectionately known as *The Archive Lady* and teaches about researching in archives and records preservation.
Early Flemish/Dutch Accounts of the Bering Strait ("Anian Fretum")

While knowledge of a strait between Siberia and Alaska probably existed in China from the time of Marco Polo, it was later Dutch cartographers who first mapped it. The Dutch expeditions by Willem Barentsz in 1594-95 and 1596-97 encountered Russians at Novaya Zemlya who had traded with Chinese merchants at the Yenisei River. In 1668, a Dutch expedition 700 km north of Japan recovered a lance tip from a Bowhead whale with initials of a whaling captain who had lost it near Jan Mayen in the Atlantic. This contributed to Czar Peter I’s 1719 order for his Great Northern Expedition.

*Waling Gorter* was educated at the Universities of Amsterdam, Cambridge, Bergen and Tromsø. As a professor at the Federal University in Archangel and an authorized museum curator of Norway, he has written several monographs and hundreds of other publications.

Flag Wars: George M. Miller and the Battle over the U.S-Canada Border in Southeast Alaska

In 1902, a gold miner named George Miller responded to a fit of patriotic fervor by tearing down a Canadian customs office flag in Skagway. This caused a minor international incident. At the time, British, Canadian, and American diplomats were trying to resolve the dispute involving the boundary line between Mount St. Elias and the Portland Canal. Would the United States retain control of access routes to the goldfields? Could Canada be able to claim an ocean port? According to Miller and his fellow jingoists, the Canadians needed to be pushed back at the point of a bayonet and (perhaps) deserved to lose the Klondike also.

*Chris Allan* works in Fairbanks for the National Park Service and specializes in the history of the Klondike-Alaska gold rush.

Forging an International Community: A Path to Friendship Across the Taiga

In 1991, the Fairbanks North Star Borough and Yakutsk, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Russia, formally became sister cities. I discussed our “courtship process” at the 2009 AHS conference. Friendships formed in the early 1990s grew into long-term relationships. Official relations have been maintained. In 2020 the Yakutsk City Administration published a photo album of pictures that I collected, edited, and annotated. The book shows the wide range of activities and interactions that have taken place involving the members of this international community. I will show pictures from this book and discuss the contents and process of producing it.

*Melissa Chapin* was one of the original delegates to Yakutsk, and is a Russian interpreter. She has travelled to Russia more than 30 times, and is currently the president of the Alaskan Russian Center, which coordinates the Fairbanks-Yakutsk Sister City interactions.
In an era of heightened political division, history has emerged as a battleground for the contested meaning of our nation. What are the roles and responsibilities of educators in presenting a history of the American nation that is at times celebratory but one that has also often failed to live up to its loftiest promises? How should professional historians and educators present the history of topics that have once again become flashpoints and topics of public debate? How does teaching in Alaska impact our approach to these questions? This forum is to discuss the above questions, among others, to gain greater insight into how American and Alaska history are presented in our high school and college classrooms.

Songho Ha is a professor of history at the University of Alaska Anchorage where he teaches a spectrum of courses on colonial and early American history. He has published widely on the topic of early America and has a research emphasis on early American economics and finance.

Katie Ringsmuth is the Alaska State Historian and has also taught U.S. and Alaska history at the University of Alaska Anchorage and worked closely with the University’s Middle College, a partnership between UAA and the Anchorage School District.

Michael Hoyt is Tlingit from Wrangell, of the Teeyhittaan clan, and Inupiaq from Diomede. He currently teaches social studies and language arts at Nome Beltz Middle High School in addition to courses for UAF NWC relating to Alaska Native history and education. Hoyt received his Bachelor of Arts in philosophy from Northwest Nazarene University and a master’s degree in education from University of Alaska Southeast.

Perry Lewis teaches history at Eagle River High School for the Anchorage School District.

Ian Hartman is a professor and chair of the History Department at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He teaches modern American history with an emphasis on issues related to economic and racial inequality.
Join us for a conversation on unresolved Alaska Native issues with two early leaders of the land claims movement and journalist Meghan Fate Sullivan.

Emil Notti is Athabascan from Koyukuk. He holds a BA degree in aeronautical engineering. He was a leading figure in the organization of Native leadership in the years leading up to passage of ANCSA and was instrumental in providing testimony in the Congressional hearings leading to passage of the act. He served as the first president of the Alaska Federation of Natives and the third Chief Executive Officer of Doyon, Ltd. Emil holds honorary doctoral degrees from Alaska Pacific University and the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Sam Kito Jr. is Tlingit and Japanese-American from Petersburg. He went to high school in Juneau, went on to study at the RCA Institute, and then returned to Alaska to work in Fairbanks. Sam served with Native associations including Tanana Chiefs Conference and Fairbanks Native Association. He was president of the Alaska Federation of Natives and of Doyon, Ltd. For six years Sam served on the University of Alaska Board of Regents. He now works as a lobbyist.

Meghan Fate Sullivan is Koyukon Athabascan from Anchorage. She graduated from Stanford University with honors in International Relations. She is currently reporting for Indian Country Today, where she covers Alaska Native affairs including special reports on the 50th anniversary of ANCSA.

The long battle for Native land claims in Alaska culminated in the signing of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act on Dec. 18, 1971. Panelists Willie Hensley and Oliver Leavitt will share memories of their leading roles in the development of this historic legislation.

William (Willie) Hensley is Iñupiaq from Kotzebue. He was a founder of the Alaska Federation of Natives and served a term as president. He holds a degree in political science from George Washington University. He was director of NANA Regional Corporation, was elected to terms as state representative and state senator, and served on the University of Alaska Board of Regents. He is currently Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Department of Business and Public Policy at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Oliver Leavitt is Iñupiaq from Utqiagvik (formerly known as Barrow). He served for over two decades on the boards of the Alaska Federation of Natives and the Arctic Slope Native Association, and on the North Slope Borough Assembly—being elected its first president. He was elected to the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation Board of Directors in 1972, serving as treasurer and chairman, and was Vice-President of Lands and of Government Affairs. He is a whaling captain.

Patuk Glenn is Iñupiaq from Utqiagvik. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Rural Development from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She is Executive Director of the Arctic Slope Community Foundation and is on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors.
Right of Way: The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

This paper argues there was nothing inevitable about the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) precipitating the passage and influencing the character of the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Scholars have given these events an aura of inevitability that is not supported by the historical record. TAPS owner companies, Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel, and most Native elites and their lawyers worked to advance the settlement of native claims separate from the approval of TAPS. Ultimately, the combination of Alaska Native activism, the incompetence of the TAPS consortium, environmental challenges, and serendipity ensured the pipeline could not proceed without ANCSA.

Philip Wight is an Assistant Professor of History, Arctic, and Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. An environmental historian by training, he studies energy, infrastructure, and social movements in Alaskan history.

Shock and Awe: Understanding Early Perceptions of the Passage of ANCSA

ANCSA is today so much a part of the basic framework of Alaska society, politics and economy that it is taken for granted. But there was substantial opposition to the passage of the act before December 1971, and much criticism of it afterward, both in Native and non-Native circles, and a good deal of shock and confusion. The grant of 44 million acres of land and nearly $1 billion to Native entities was unprecedented, and for many non-Natives, inconceivable. This paper examines and analyzes reactions to the act in the months and years immediately following its passage.

Stephen Haycox is an emeritus professor of history at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

William and Frederick Paul and their Contributions to Alaska Native Land Claims

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act it is appropriate to recognize and celebrate two Alaska Native attorneys who played key roles in the legislation. William Paul Sr. and his son Frederick Paul were influential Alaska Native attorneys who played substantial roles in the Tlingit and Haida Land Claims and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Their negotiation and litigation skills were instrumental in land claims. Their prolific written communications and documents provide historians with detailed archival records of Alaska Native land claims history.

Daniel Monteith is a professor of anthropology at the University of Alaska Southeast. His specialties include ethnohistory, economic anthropology, and Tlingit oral histories.
Aleutian Ghost Towns?
Call OpenStreetMap!

Who you gonna call when Aleutian ghost towns are under threat from disappearing forever? OpenStreetMap! “Army Brat” Michael Livingston will talk about how he used OpenStreetMap to preserve the once-bustling military community of Fort Randall in Cold Bay on the Alaska Peninsula. When Aleutian communities move from the landscape, leaving only light impressions in the soil, OpenStreetMap can be used to preserve Alaska history in the digital landscape before they are forever forgotten.

Michael Livingston was raised in Cold Bay, where his father Bob served with the US Army shortly after World War II and his mother served as US Postmaster. He worked in Alaska as a police officer for about 28 years, and now works as cultural heritage specialist with Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

Preserving the Unanga*x (Alaska Aleut) Cuttlefish Project Recordings

UAF is digitizing and making accessible 59 “Cuttlefish Project” recordings. From 1970-1982, Ray Hudson recorded community Elders sharing stories about themselves and cultural and historical details with his Unalaska high school “Cuttlefish” class. These recordings are important culturally, historically and linguistically. Many of the Elders featured were the last generation whose mother tongue was Unangam Tunuu. There is almost no documentation of interactions between Elders and children which is exactly what these recordings are. These recordings predate, by decades, the recordings Hudson later made with Unanga*x Elders, starting in early 2004, which resulted in the Beginning of Memory publication.

Leslie McCartney is a cultural anthropologist specializing in oral history. She is an Associate Professor and the Curator of the Oral History Collection at UAF. Her latest publication is Our Whole Gwich’in Way of Life Has Changed / Gwich’in K’yuu Gwiidand’ai Tthak Ejuk Goonlih Stories from the People of the Land with the Gwich’in Tribal Council, published by the University of Alberta Press.

Sophia’s Return

In 1895, on St. Paul Island in the Bering Sea, a tragedy occurred leaving sisters Irene and Sophia orphans. The girls were taken to Unalaska and would never see their home again. After Irene died, Sophia was sent to the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. She, too, died and was buried in the Army’s Indian Cemetery. In the summer of 2021, Sophia will come home to St. Paul Island. This is the story of a 121-year journey that will uphold the UN’s Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People which allows for reuniting land and bodies. Returning Sophia is giving us hope that we can take back our culture, our language, and our stolen children.

Lauren Peters is a first generation Unanga*x graduate student in her first year in the Native American Studies PhD program at the University of California Davis. Her work centers around Unanga*x histories during precontact and in the Russian and American eras from an Indigenous perspective.
Northern VISTAs: A Retrospective of the Volunteers in Service to America Program in Rural Alaska 1965-1971

This paper examines the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program as it operated in rural Alaska from 1965 to 1971. The state’s remote and impoverished villages presented daunting operational challenges to the program’s operation as communities underwent dramatic socio-economic changes. From a national perspective, VISTA’s effectiveness was compromised by conflicting ideologies and shifting political tides. In Alaska, the rural volunteers’ activist nature and creative approaches contributed to many local successes but not without conflict. Analysis of interviews and other accounts from volunteers and stakeholders indicates this cohort of “poverty warriors” both influenced communities and benefited from their volunteer experience.

Carol Hoefler is a Master’s student in Arctic and Northern Studies at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Civilian Conservation Corps in the Arctic - 1937-1940

Step outside of the typical Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp experience of the Lower 48 and hear how the CCC supported infrastructure development in villages along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. Run through Air Mail correspondence with the Forest Service in Juneau, and a secondary hub in Kotzebue, a variety of projects were completed - from flood clean up, drainage improvements, and community houses to telephone lines, dog sled trails, and reindeer herding.

Heather Feil is an architectural historian with the Alaska Region of the National Park Service where she writes about old buildings, advocating for their preservation, while getting people excited about their history – telling all Americans’ stories through the built environment. Heather earned a B.A. in History and Anthropology from Montclair State University and an M.A. in Historic Preservation from Savannah College of Art and Design.
The Alaskan Capital that Never Was: The Willow Capital Project

In 1978, four years after Alaskan citizens voted to move the capital from Juneau, major newspapers throughout the state ran a pamphlet introducing Alaskans to “Our New Capital City” - an ambitious plan for an idyllic new state capital city to be built near Willow. While this was neither the first nor last attempted capital move in Alaskan history, the planning process was the most extensive. In addition to questions of finances and engineering, the New Capital Site Planning Commission sought to discover “What is Alaskan?” This paper will examine the proposed city, what it revealed about Alaskans’ conceptions of themselves, and why the project eventually failed to break ground.

Rachel Cohen is the archivist at the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Born and raised in Alaska, she holds degrees in Library and Information Science and Theater History and Literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

McKinley Park Station in 1921: The Centennial of Mount McKinley National Park’s First Headquarters

In 1921, Mount McKinley National Park’s first superintendent was tasked with establishing a park headquarters. He decided to build it in McKinley Park Station—a community that recently sprung up around a bustling railroad camp and Morino’s Roadhouse—just east of the park’s boundary. The headquarters remained for about four years before relocating. The former headquarters site and adjacent community are now within the boundaries of Denali National Park, but they remain only in ruins and photos. One hundred years ago, fleeting communities existed throughout what is now Denali National Park. This presentation looks at those former communities, with a special focus on McKinley Park Station and the park’s first headquarters.

Erik Johnson is the park historian at Denali National Park & Preserve and serves on the Alaska Historical Society Board of Directors.

Looking for Caro

I first came across the name Caro on a boat trip up a remote river. The GPS indicated the presence of a town on the riverbank, but when my companion and I approached we found only empty forest. Later, as I sifted through trails reports and archival materials, the miners and explorers who once lived in Caro took on life and color in my imagination. By weaving primary documents together with my journal entries and photos from that river trip, I hope to bring my vivid impression of Caro and the Chandalar region to life for a broader audience.

Keely O’Connell is a graduate student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. While her primary area of study is nonfiction writing, she confesses to a keen interest in skijoring, small engine repair, and migratory bird identification.
Historic Archaeology at the Chena Townsite

The Chena Townsite, settled in 1902 downstream of the Tanana and Chena Rivers confluence, was initially a bustling gold rush town rivaling Fairbanks. At its height, the town was home to hundreds of people, but it saw a rapid decline and was nearly abandoned by 1920 as Fairbanks became the economic and political hub of the Interior. Little was thought to remain of the once thriving town, but work over the last 20 years has revealed intact archaeological features with the potential for researchers to better document the history of Interior Alaska and the Alaska gold rush.

Scott Shirar has lived in Interior Alaska for almost 20 years and received a graduate degree in anthropology from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He has worked at the Museum of the North since 2008 and is currently the archaeology collection manager.

Digging for the Lost Town of Chena

How do you find a ghost town in Alaska that only existed for 17 years and was abandoned by the time the Government Land Office (GLO) approved the survey plat? The competing towns of Chena and Fairbanks were both surveyed within the same year. Today nothing is left of the railroad town at Chena. The Chena townsite survey in 1907 bears a brutal stamp across the bottom in bold letters, CANCELLED. At the top is a scratchy handwritten note: Sur. 436 Cancelled by letter… July 14, 1921. What happened to the parallel riverfront boom towns that simultaneously cancelled one while the other flourished?

Martin Gutoski has been a licensed land surveyor in Alaska since 1988, with more than 30 years as platting officer at the Fairbanks North Star Borough Planning Department. He holds a master’s degree in anthropology and has been involved in historical archaeology projects since 1994 and forensic survey analysis since retiring in 2014.
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Friday, October 15 • 3:30pm-5:00pm
Join the Zoom Meeting: www.tinyurl.com/AHS-bizmtg

AGENDA

1. Call to order and welcome remarks
   Introduction of 2020-21 officers and board of directors
   Will Schneider

2. Approval of minutes of 2020 annual meeting
   Secretary’s report
   Angela Schmidt

3. Treasurer’s report
   Tim Troll

4. Committee reports:
   Board of Directors election
   Erik Johnson
   Membership
   Jo Antonson
   Newsletter
   David Ramseur
   Alaska History
   Ross Coen
   Records and collections
   Jo Antonson
   Website
   Karen Brewster
   Social media
   Erik Johnson
   Alaska Historical Commission nominations
   Ron Inouye
   2021 annual meeting
   Rachel Mason
   Advocacy
   Ian Hartman
   State Library, Archives and Museums
   Patience Frederiksen
   Office of History & Archaeology
   Judy Bittner
   Special projects
   Non-profit sponsor projects
   Jo Antonson
   ANCSA 50th anniversary
   Will Schneider
   United States 250th anniversary
   Erik Johnson
   Memorials
   Ron Inouye
   Awards
   Will Schneider

5. Other business
   Will Schneider

6. Adjourn
   Will Schneider
SUPPORT AHS AS A MEMBER

If you found this program interesting, you like working on projects that promote history, and you think it would be fun to meet with like-minded folks, 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 pressing issues such as the role of controversial monuments and statues. Lend your skills to building programs on history and help us reach out to local historical societies to spread their news. Get in on the fun!

It is easy to join or renew by going to www.alaskahistoricalsociety.org and then to Membership & Giving. Or send a check to AHS, P.O. Box 100299, Anchorage, AK 99510. Memberships are for January 1-December 31 each year. Membership levels include:

- Individual $35
- Family $45
- Organization $50
- Patron $100
- Sponsor $250
- Life $600
- Student $25

Benefits of membership include receiving the semiannual journal Alaska History, now in its 36th year of publication, the quarterly newsletter Alaska History News, and a discount on our annual conference when held in-person.
In fall 1970, then-Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel met with prominent figures in the Alaska Land Claims dispute in his Washington office. Clockwise from far left: Wally Hickel; Tim Wallis, president, Fairbanks Native Association; Charles (Etok) Edwardson, executive director, Arctic Slope Native Association; Eben Hopson, Barrow; Emil Notti; Attorney Barry Jackson (standing); State Senator William Hensley; Alfred Ketzler, Nenana; Barbara Trigg, Nome; unknown; Delois Ketzler; Harvey Samuelson, Dillingham; George Miller, Kenai; unknown; State Senator Ray C. Christiansen (far right); Frank Degnan, Unalakleet; Moses Paukan; Morris Thompson; John Borbridge (back to camera).