



# THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Spring 2015

Volume 33, Issue 1

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## Sitka Downtown Revitalization

Downtown Sitka shines as a prime example of how historic preservation work can contribute to a community. The Sitka Revitalization Group is a group of community members and downtown merchants focused on establishing a healthy, sustainable, and vibrant downtown community area.



Sitka, circa 1890

With many buildings having undergone restoration, downtown Sitka today presents an interesting and attractive vista for residents and visitors alike.

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AAHP) and the Sitka Revitalization Group have entered into a partnership to further the efforts of historic preservation, and both organizations look forward to a rewarding and beneficial relationship.

The photo at left shows Sitka's main street over 100 years ago. To see what downtown Sitka looks like today, see Page 5.

## REMINDER! Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Nominations Are Due Soon

Nominations for the 2015 Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties are due by **March 31**. Each year, AAHP publishes a list of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties in Alaska, based on nominations by individuals or organizations.



One of the success stories from the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties is found in Wrangell. The Chief Shakes Tribal House now has a restored façade, thanks in part to support from AAHP.

More detailed information about the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties is found on Page 3.

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## AAHP Remembers



Two long-time Alaskans with ties to the state's historic preservation community have passed. AAHP pays tribute to Ed Crittenden and Pat Roppel on Page 4. Their contributions to Alaska are far-reaching, and their presence will be missed.

### About AAHP

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AAHP) was founded in 1982 as a private, nonprofit corporation. AAHP is dedicated to the preservation of Alaska's prehistoric and historic heritage as manifested in its buildings and sites. AAHP aids in historic preservation projects across Alaska and monitors and supports legislation to promote historic preservation, serving as a liaison between local, statewide, and national historic preservation groups. Additionally, AAHP publishes a quarterly newsletter and holds educational workshops.

## Message from the President

Spring Greetings!

(Although did we ever have winter?)



Members, we are in the final days of our call for nomination to AAHP's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties list. Through this grant program, and with your help, we identify threatened or endangered properties and offer assistance in their preservation. Concurrent with professional/technical support, AAHP awards grant funding to serve as seed money to leverage further backing from other sources for preservation

projects. The recipient of this grant award is announced at our annual meeting in the fall.

AAHP very much appreciates your support for the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant Program and looks forward to sharing rehabilitation, revitalization, and recovery successes as a result.

This newsletter illustrates the continued efforts of AAHP to foster the preservation and sharing of our State's history. We also recognize the amazing contributions of two individuals who have recently passed, historian Pat Roppel of Ketchikan and architect Ed Crittenden of Anchorage. In addition, we look to the future of historic preservation in Alaska as we encourage Alaska's students—the future leaders of tomorrow—to learn and appreciate history through AAHP's partner program, the Alaska History Day Program.

Please do enjoy.

Best,

Anne

## Oscar Anderson House Tours

Public tours of the Oscar Anderson House Museum will begin on May 26 this year and will end September 4.

For information about hours and fees, please check the AAHP website at <http://www.aahp-online.net/oscar-anderson-house-museum.html>. All fees are used to help support this historical treasure.

## The Oscar Anderson House Is 100 Years Old

This year marks the 100th year of the Oscar Anderson House. In 1915, local businessman Oscar Anderson built the house for his family; it was one of the first wooden buildings in the growing Anchorage townsite. Donated to the Municipality of Anchorage in 1976 by Mrs. Anderson, the structure later underwent significant restoration that was finished in 1982.

The home was destined to become a "house museum," the only one in Anchorage. The advent of public tours of the house has allowed many visitors to imagine what home life in Anchorage's earliest days might have been like.

## Come Join the Fun! Be an AAHP Board Member!!

Are you energetic, positive-minded, and enthusiastic about historic preservation in Alaska? If so, consider surrounding yourself with like-minded people at AAHP!

AAHP is currently looking for individuals throughout Alaska to serve on our Board of Directors. Meeting once a month via teleconference, the Board of Directors supports the preservation of Alaska's prehistoric and historic resources through its education, promotion, and advocacy activities.

If you are interested in participating on the Board, please contact AAHP at 907-929-9870 or [akpreservation@gmail.com](mailto:akpreservation@gmail.com).

## Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!



## Call for Alaska's 2015 Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Nominations

The 2015 nomination period for Alaska's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties is now open. Nominations may be submitted by individuals or organizations throughout Alaska. Nomination forms may be found at <http://www.aahp-online.net/10-most-endangered.html>. The submission deadline is **March 31, 2015**.

This year's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties list will be announced in May in conjunction with National Historic Preservation Week. AAHP's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties program, which has been publicizing and supporting the preservation of endangered historic properties since 1991, is intended to bring public awareness to Alaska's threatened historic properties and cultural resources. Heightened awareness often leads to increased support for the conservation of endangered historic properties, which are assets to tourism, economic development, and the cultural heritage of Alaska.

Properties on each year's list are eligible to apply to AAHP for seed money grants when AAHP has grant money available to help with preservation efforts. Grant money is generated annually through donations to AAHP's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties program. Past successes of the program include the Oscar Anderson House Museum in Anchorage, the Chief Shakes Tribal House in Wrangell, and The Holy Ascension Church in Unalaska. And we are pleased to announce that the Kake Cannery—a 2014 Ten Most nominee—is currently undergoing permanent stabilization.

While many historic structures and cultural treasures have already been lost, it is still not too late to make a difference for many others now through a donation to the Ten Most Endangered Properties grant program. Please go to <http://www.aahp-online.net/donate.html> and select "Most Endangered Grant" to support preservation throughout Alaska.



Here is the beautifully restored façade of the Chief Shakes Tribal House in Wrangell.

This property is from a past Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties list.



## AAHP Remembers



### EDWIN B. CRITTENDEN – An Alaskan Architect

by Bob Mitchell

Edwin Butler Crittenden, often called the Dean of Alaska Architecture, died January 10, 2015, at the Anchorage Pioneer Home at 99 years of age. Born and raised in Connecticut, Ed graduated in 1942 from the Yale School of Architecture. He met and married his wife, Kit, in Ketchikan in 1944. They moved to California in 1946, then later moved back east where Ed did further graduate work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They returned to Alaska when Ed took a job in Anchorage with the Alaska Territorial Housing Authority .

Ed began his own architecture practice in Anchorage in 1950. Partnering with others over the years, he mentored many younger architects who went on to enjoy successful practices of their own. His many residence, school, church, and other prominent building designs are all over the state of Alaska. His firm was responsible for developing the first University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) campus Master Plan, which included the "spine" concept for connecting all the buildings on campus.

Ed's groundbreaking activities, honors, and awards are numerous. In 1961, Ed co-founded the Alaska Chapter of the American Institute of Architects , twice served as its president, became Alaska's first AIA Fellow in 1979, and in 1981 was the first Alaskan to be named Northwest and Pacific Regional Director. He also served on the National Committee on Architecture for Education, and in 2009 was awarded the AIA Northwest and Pacific Region's Medal of Honor. He received an honorary Doctorate of Humanities degree from UAA In 2010.

Ed's work reflects his interest in northern architecture. Ed spent a year studying the northern design works of Alvar Aalto and Ralph Erskine in Helsinki, Finland, in 1963. In 2012, he received the Kumin Award for his contributions to the theory and practice of northern architecture.

After retiring from active practice in 1986, Ed and Kit moved to Sitka; there he was the campus architect for Sheldon Jackson College and he took up painting. In 1990 they moved back to Anchorage. Kit remained active in historic preservation and writing until her death, while Ed continued to pursue his interest in the arts, architecture, and painting.

### PAT ROPPEL – An Alaskan Historian

by Anne E. Pollnow

On January 6, 2015, Alaska lost a great and dedicated contributor to our historic record. Patricia Ann Roppel, originally from Bellingham, Washington, arrived in Ketchikan with her husband, Frank, in 1956. In 1965, she published her first article. She and her family made their home for years in Ketchikan and Sitka before moving to Wrangell.

In her 50-year writing career, Pat wrote 13 books and thousands of articles focusing on the history of Southeast Alaska. Her books will always serve as brilliantly useful resources regarding the historic salmon canneries and mining activities, as well as of the people and places in Southeast. Two of her books, one in 1977 and the other in 2006, led to her being named the Alaska Historian of the Year. She also served for several terms on the Alaska Historical Commission. In addition, she was very involved in the museums of Sitka, Ketchikan, and Wrangell, and her concern for careful collection led her to advocate for museums and historical societies in the small communities of Southeast.

I personally got to know her passion for our history through our spoken and email communications about various research projects I was working on, and she was inspiring. I recall a conversation where she was explaining one small community and "their need to establish a historical society." She said, "We've just got to help them, these photographs need a place in the community." She knew the value of maintaining records as a means to preserve and share our heritage with future generations. Inspiring, too, were her merging of history and recreation, and her enjoyment of dirt-bike riding on logging roads! It seems she perceived both history and life as something to be experienced. According to her husband Frank, the first historical place the couple explored was an old mining mill site. "That sparked her interest. She just kept digging and digging in it, and started gathering information on those particular subjects, all the way up until she passed away," Frank said.

Thank you, Mrs. Roppel, for your great contributions and efforts so that we may have a better understanding of our history.

### The Edwin Crittenden Memorial Fund for the Oscar Anderson House

Ed and Kit Crittenden were instrumental in the restoration of the Oscar Anderson House in the 1980s. His family has requested that, in lieu of flowers, friends please make a contribution in his memory to the Oscar Anderson House. More details are found at <http://www.aaahp-online.net/oscar-anderson-house-museum.html>



## Then and Now



### SITKA



Lincoln Street in downtown Sitka, circa 1890.



Lincoln Street in downtown Sitka today, after undergoing restoration activities.

Lincoln Street is the main commercial drive of Sitka, Alaska. It is lined on both sides with shopping and restaurants. The street stretches from Sitka Harbor to the west past the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Saint Michael the Archangel (seen in both photographs) to the east, affording views of towering mountains, ocean harbor, and historic commercial buildings on all sides.

Lincoln Street has been the commercial center of Sitka since the Russian period. When Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867, the street contained the main governmental, commercial, and religious buildings. These included Castle Hill at the west, where the American flag was first raised in Alaska, and the Cathedral of St. Michael. In the nearly 150 years following the purchase of Alaska, Lincoln Street has survived the transfer of the Territorial capital from Sitka to Juneau, two World Wars, and a devastating fire in 1966 to remain the commercial hub of Sitka.

In 2014, the Sitka Revitalization Group, working with the City and Borough of Sitka and the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission, began to seek a historic district nomination for the Lincoln Street area. The Sitka Revitalization Group is a group of community members and downtown merchants intent on establishing a healthy, sustainable, and vibrant downtown community area. The establishment of a historic district is one goal of the group. The historic district would serve to protect and preserve Sitka's history while supporting and enhancing the visitor industry. The two photographs above show Lincoln Street from approximately the same angle, taken more than 100 years apart, and demonstrate the beautiful physical embodiment of history that the Sitka Revitalization Group is seeking to preserve.



### About Then and Now

*Then and Now* is a new feature of the AAHP Newsletter. We want you to see some of the wonderful results that historic preservation efforts in Alaska have produced—results that allow us to appreciate the journey from past to present, and to forge a path for future generations that is founded on enterprising endeavors.

## NIKE SITE SUMMIT NEWS

As winter wanes, the Friends of Nike Site Summit (FONSS) group is anticipating another successful season of public tours and restoration work at Nike Site Summit. We are also excited about a kickstart for a Nike Site Endowment Fund, as well as pursuing acquisition of one or more missiles with accessories; details about the fund and acquisitions will be available at a later date.

### On-Site Work

For 2015, our principal focus for on-site work will be the completion of window closures and completion of interior hazmat removal in the Launch Control Building. Once these are accomplished, we will have fulfilled all of our obligations under the Programmatic Agreement between Friends of Nike Site Summit (FONSS), the Army, and the State of Alaska.

Last year, with the support of a Rasmuson Foundation Tier 1 grant, we completed our Programmatic Agreement task of the Missile Assembly Building stabilization work when we finished the roof repairs on that building. Additional work in 2014 included a lot of brush removal by cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy, completion of reroofing on the Launch Control Building, and significant progress on the rebuilding of windows.



The Launch Control Building sported a new roof at the end of the 2014 work season.



The Missile Assembly Building stabilization work is completed.

### 2015 Tours

The tour schedule for 2015 Nike Site Summit is nearing completion. We have plans for seven tours within these timeframes: A Solstice tour in mid-June; a weekday evening tour with dinner at Arctic Valley in July; and morning and afternoon tours on two Saturdays in August and on one Sunday in September. Further information about tour dates will be found on the [nikesitesummit.net](http://nikesitesummit.net) website as it becomes available.

To add your name to the wait list for tours, please visit the website above or contact [fonss2007@gmail.com](mailto:fonss2007@gmail.com). In 2014, a total of 320 visitors participated in the seven tours that were offered.

### Volunteers at Work

The restoration work at Nike Site Summit over the years is the result of a volunteer work force, and plans for 2015 are underway. Given the relative lack of snow this winter, hopes are to start the 2015 on-site work in early June.

All volunteers who work on site need to attend training sessions in Range Safety, HazMat Handling, and Historic Preservation each year to be cleared for site access. Volunteer training sessions are scheduled for March 26 and April 9 in Anchorage from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Those unable to attend the scheduled training sessions will need to attend a Range Safety session by April 29 at JBER Range Control, as well as a HazMat/Historic Preservation training; the extra HazMat/HP date will be announced later. Please check [nikesitesummit.net](http://nikesitesummit.net) for more information.

Brush is cleared by Cadets from the Alaska Military Youth Academy.



## Alaska History Day Gears up for State Contest

In schools across Alaska this time of year, many students in grades 6 through 12 are preparing for the Alaska History Day State Contest. The registration deadline for the State Contest is March 20, 2015. This year's contest judging will take place March 23-27. The best entries from the different categories in both the junior and senior divisions are eligible to participate in the National Contest put on by National History Day at the University of Maryland being held this year June 15-18. While at the National Contest, students have the opportunity to visit the nation's Capitol and meet Alaska's Congressional delegation.

Alaska History Day is the Alaska Chapter of National History Day. Following a curriculum developed by National History Day each year, teachers encourage students to develop cognitive and leadership skills through researching a theme and developing a project around that theme. This year's theme is "Leadership and Legacy." The project may be in the form of an exhibit, documentary, performance, website, or paper. In Alaska, the State Contest utilizes a digital format for entry submission.

This year, Alaska History Day was honored to have the Cook Inlet Historical Society recognize the program's value with cash awards. The society awarded two \$250 prizes in February for Alaska History Day students in Anchorage. These special prizes, commemorating the Anchorage Centennial, were awarded to the top entries on Anchorage history in both the junior and senior divisions.

More information can be found at <http://www.alaskahistoryday.com/>.

### AAHP MEMBERSHIP and/or SPECIAL DONATIONS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership term is 12 consecutive months.**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$15  | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$250            |
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**I/we wish to make a tax-deductible gift to**

- AAHP Top Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties (matching-grant account)** Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Alaska History Day (supports student contest participation)** Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Donations to AAHP are tax deductible, as allowable under IRS regulations.)*

**Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**I also wish to participate in AAHP activities in the following areas:**

- Fund Raising     Membership     Education     Legislation     Public Relations     Projects & Issues

## Preservation Notes Preservation News from Around the State.

To submit Preservation News items, email us at [akpreservation@gmail.com](mailto:akpreservation@gmail.com)

### Calendar of Upcoming Events

#### 2015

##### March

20 — State History Day Contest Entry Deadline

31 — Nominations due for 2015 Ten-Most Endangered Historic Properties

##### May

26 — Start of summer tours for the public at Oscar Anderson House Museum, Anchorage

##### September

4 — Last day of summer tours for the public at Oscar Anderson House Museum, Anchorage

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DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF ALASKA'S PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC HERITAGE AS MANIFESTED IN ITS BUILDINGS AND SITES