May is National Historic Preservation Month

National Preservation Month is sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust created Preservation Week in 1971. This celebration of the grassroots movement in historic preservation is now an annual celebration. Events all over the country range from architectural and historic tours and award ceremonies, to fundraising events, educational programs and heritage travel opportunities. In 2005, the National Trust extended the celebration to the entire month and declared May "Preservation Month". This was a direct response to the growing preservation movement in villages, towns, cities, and rural communities. Learn more about National Preservation Month at www.PreservationNation.org/PreservationMonth. The theme for National Preservation Month 2009 is This Place Matters. This Place Matters is a nationwide event that raises awareness of historic sites, buildings, open spaces, parks; any of the places that really matter to us. People all over the country are taking their photographs holding a sign that reads "This Place Matters" at various locations of importance. They then post their photo online to share with others. We’ve included a This Place Matters sign in this newsletter for you. Take it to a place that matters to you and take your picture holding the sign. You can go to www.preservationnation.org/take-action/this-place-matters/ for more information and to post your photo, or you can email your photo with a brief description to us at acohp@alaska.net and we’ll post it for you.
Message from the President

for family and friends to visit from outside, let's introduce them to Alaska's rich history and culture by visiting sites, parks, historic hotels, and museums that celebrate our heritage.

AAHP is holding events to celebrate National Preservation Month. You can find information on events throughout this newsletter. Most importantly, May is when we announce AAHP's Most Endangered Sites and Properties. You can learn more about the program by visiting our website, www.aahp-online.net. We are also planning additional activities for the entire summer, including walking tours in downtown Anchorage, cook outs, and setting up booths at community functions to raise awareness and recruit new members. Visit our website frequently to see what’s happening and be sure to attend events whenever you can! If you are holding events in your community to celebrate Alaska’s historic and cultural heritage, please drop us an email and we’ll list your event on our website.

Thank you for being a member of AAHP and we look forward to a successful, busy summer!

Best wishes,
Jessica M. Vargas

Geodesic Domes

Although domes have existed for some time, Buckminster Fuller popularized them through lectures demonstrating the effectiveness and resourcefulness of the building style. In 1954, Fuller patented the dome. Many domes were sold in kits and assembled by the property owners. Most domes could be assembled in a couple of days by constructing the wall units, attaching them together and finishing the interior spaces. The triangular shaped panels meant load bearing walls were not necessary in the construction of this style. Most domes average 30 feet in diameter. In Alaska most geodesic domes are residential. Due to the do-it-yourself nature of residential Geodesic Domes, they are often found in isolation. Domes were used in a variety of building types including uses for recreation, military, residential, or civic. Although the dome is the primary feature of this building style, they often exhibit other characteristics. Some of those include irregular shaped windows, flat roofed wings, cupolas, segmented dormers, and a variety of cladding such as asphalt shingles, stone veneer, T1-11, and wood shingles.

If there is a specific area, building, town, or even neighborhood that you are concerned about, or if you are interested in serving on our board, please contact us.
Preserving, Recycling, and Revitalizing Wasilla's History

Wasilla continues to grow and with its population becoming more and more diverse, most would agree that the old is giving way to the new. Over the past ten years our town has evolved into suburbia, complete with all of its "conveniences." Most residents think the new chain restaurants and box stores are nice additions to our community, allowing residents to shop and dine close to home. However, these new additions seem to exact a high price—Wasilla’s historic character is disappearing and before long there will be little history left in the town’s built environment to separate it from any other town in America.

A small group of residents have recently spearheaded an effort to help make the City aware of the need to preserve its history for future generations by establishing a historical preservation commission. City Council passed the ordinance last July and the City is now accepting application for appointments to the commission. The commission will consist of five members with two seats reserved for the Knick-Wasilla Historical Society and Knik Tribal Council and the remaining three seats for Wasilla residents. Some of the goals of the commission will be to inventory Wasilla’s historic sites and create a local register of history places; merge history preservation with economic development; assist in updating Wasilla’s Comprehensive Plan; explore heritage tourism potential in Wasilla; and work with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Historical Preservation Commission on preservation issues in the Borough.

It is important that residents of Wasilla become aware of the benefits that historic preservation can have on a community. Most people probably don't know that historic preservation play a large role in revitalizing downtowns, creating job opportunities, and conserving resources. Communities across America, both large and small, have experience the economic and environmental benefits associated with historic preservation. It creates opportunities for small business owners and, when the housing market is struggling, historic preservation provides work for residential and commercial construction contractors. Also, by decreasing the number of buildings demolitions through preservation efforts, communities have substantially saved on landfill space.

Although historic preservation in Wasilla is in its infancy, some residents have already acknowledged the benefits that can result from preserving Wasilla’s historic buildings. The Knik-Wasilla Historical Society has long since utilized the historic "charm" of Teeland’s Country Store to complement the businesses it has housed over the years. Also, adjacent to Teeland’s Country Store, a former residence built in the 1930s is being converted into a tapas restaurant and wine cellar. With the Dorothy Page Museum and Teeland’s Country Store as their neighbors, the soon-to-be restaurant operators have already begun to see how history can be utilized as a means to promote their business.

Thinking of the downtown block as a historical district, one can imagine how the newly formed commission could collaborate with the city on ways of attracting more visitors into the downtown area and tackling problems such as inadequate parking and traffic flow.

For Wasilla residents interested in applying for a seat on the Wasilla Historical Preservation Commission, the application can be accessed on the city’s website at www.cityofwasilla.com/index.aspx?page=385.

Robert L. Meinhardt III Historic Preservationist

Iditarod Party

On Saturday, March 7th, the Alaska Association of Historic Preservation in conjunction with the Historic Iditarod Trail Alliance opened its doors for the 2009 Iditarod ceremonial start in downtown Anchorage. From 9:00 until 2:00 we invited tourists and locals to come in, warm up and learn a little about the history of the Historic Iditarod Trail. Snacks and warm drinks were provided and sparked conversation, a few new members and even an interview with the Bering Strait School District Journalism students! Plus we were fortunate enough to have the official trail marker for Anchorage placed outside our cottage.

2008 to 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the opening of the winter overland route that became know as the Iditarod Trail. Across America, only 17 trails have been honored as National Historic Trails. The Iditarod is the only Alaska trail and the only winter trail. First scouted in 1908, the Iditarod Trail was completed by crews working through mid-winter temperatures of -50F in 1910 and 1911. Within a year, thousands of gold-seekers hiked or mushed the government trail to the Iditarod goldfields, and gold-carrying sled dog teams became a regular sight on the trail. As a result of population increases from the rush to the Last Frontier, Congress elevated Alaska to territorial status in 1912. To commemorate the epic achievements involved in the opening and use of the old Iditarod Trail, January 2008 to October 2012 has been designated as the Centennial of the Iditarod National Historic Trail.
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AAHP can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online!

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**Advertise in the**

**AAHP Newsletter**

**Members**

Business Card $35

1/4th Page $65

Prices are for one issue of the AAHP Newsletter. AAHP has the right to refuse advertisements that they deem inappropriate for this venue.

**Look for us along with other organizations at the Alaska State Fair!**

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**Alaska Association for Historic Preservation**

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**Board of Directors**

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**Other Members:**

Judith E. Bitmer, Ex Officio

Bob Mitchell

Mike Yarborough

Ann Pollnow

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**Let Us Hear From You!**

We would love to receive submissions from members for our newsletter. Please send us articles, along with a short biography about yourself and your phone number. We will contact you prior to publishing your article. Thank you in advance for your submissions!

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**Summer Tours**

The AAHP will be conducting summer downtown tours. If you are interested in volunteering, please leave a message at our office at 929-9870 or send an email to AAHP@alaska.net.
THIS PLACE MATTERS
place online – and submit their own.

3. Tell your family and friends to view your special

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2. Upload your photo and short story at

(Make sure you or someone in the photo holds the

1. Have a photo taken at your favorite place.

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sponsored by the Fireman’s Fund Insurance Company.

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story about a place that matters to you. Help spread the word and get even more people

Foundation in Northern California to George’s Ossabaw Island. Start now by sharing your own

It's up to all of us to make sure our favorite landmarks get their due – from the Knight

places that matter to them.

place that matters, enhance and enjoy the

The National Trust for Historic Preservation
A special thank you to our most recent 2009 members

**Student**
- Robyn Miller

**Individual**
- Luke Gosek
- Bonnie Hahn
- Lacy Hamner
- Karen Lavery
- Claus Naske
- William Coghill
- Dan Corwin

**Family**
- Janine & Michael Dorsey
- Allan & Ann Renfroe
- Robert & Mildred Rentkert
- Art & Damaris Mortvedt

**Non-Profit**
- Valda McMahin
- Mary Smith
- Palmer Historical Society
- Gastineau Channel Historical Society
- Chugiaq Eagle River Historical Society
- Skagway Museum & Archives
- Klondike Gold Rush NHP Library

**Contributor**
- Be our next contributing level member!

**Friend**
- John Chenoweth

**Grant Donations**
- Valda McMahin
- Allan & Ann Renfroe
- Mary Smith

- Jim Rentkert

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**Invite your friends to join!**

**AAHP MEMBERSHIP 2009**

Name ____________________________

Address __________________________

City __________________ State _____ Zip _____

Membership term is 12 consecutive months.

- [ ] Student $15
- [ ] Individual $25
- [ ] Family $40
- [ ] Non-Profit* $45 *(includes federal, state, & municipal agencies)*
- [ ] Contributor $ 50
- [ ] Friend $100
- [ ] Corporate $100
- [ ] Sponsor $250
- [ ] Benefactor $500 & above

I/we wish to make a tax-deductible gift to the

AAHP Top Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties matching-grant account

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

Membership $___________

Donation $___________

Total Enclosed $___________

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

- [ ] Fund Raising
- [ ] Membership
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Legislation
- [ ] Public Relations
- [ ] Projects & Issues
Historic Preservation Month
Evening lectures
2nd and 4th Tuesdays

Bishop Rowe Episcopalian Chapel in Arctic Village
Bob Mitchell
AIA Historical Architect
May 26th at 6:30

Dutch Harbor
"It was a weird and majestic spot"
Michael R. Yarborough
Cultural Resource Consultants LLC
May 12th at 6:30

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We're on the web www.aahp-online.net

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