

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by Preservation Alaska

ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION A nonprofit with a mission to protect and preserve Alaska's built heritage

Summer 2023 Vol 41 No 2

## **2023** Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Announced

Anchorage, Alaska (May 3, 2023) – Preservation Alaska announced its 2023Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties on Sunday, April 30, to kick off Historic Preservation Month held during May. This is the 32nd year that Preservation Alaska has announced the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties annual list.

There was one new property nominated to the list which was the Chitina Emporium building in Chitina.

The SS Nenana, located at Pioneer Park in Fairbanks, was ranked as the most endangered historic property of the ten properties listed. It needs a lot of repairs and restoration work. While

the Fairbanks North Star Borough has allocated some funding for the



SS Nenana—Fred Hirschmann photo for Historic American Engineering Record HAER AK-89-15

Continued on page 2

## Historic Alaska Highway Bridges May Be Demolished

Major Alaskan highways are considered part of the Interstate system, despite the fact that they don't go between states and aren't freeways. These include the Alaska, Richard-



Gerstle Bridge— University of Alaska Archives/ Fairbanks. Photo.

son, Parks, Seward, Sterling, Glenn, and Tok Cutoff Highways.

Since 2005 interstate highway projects have been exempt from review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, with the exception of specific structures determined to have special national significance.

Just five such exceptional structures were designated in Alaska. These were World War Two era truss bridges on the Alaska Highway spanning the Tanana, Tok, Robertson, Gerstle, and Johnson Rivers. These remained subject to Section 106 review.

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Regret goes only one way. The preservation of historic buildings is a one-way street. There is no chance to renovate or to save a historic site once it's gone. And we can never be certain what will be valued in the future. This reality brings to light the importance of locating and saving buildings of historic significance—because once a piece of history is destroyed, it is lost forever.

From "Six Practical Reasons to Save Old Buildings" by Julia Rocchi



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#### Oscar Anderson House Closed for 2023.

Museum: 907-206-2284 OscarAndersonHouse@gmail.com

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Banner by Bill Devine, 1992.

## Ten Most Endangered List Continued from page 1

project, bids have twice come in over budget.

The Friends of the *SS Nenana* are working on gathering donations to assist with the restoration of this unique landmark.

The remaining nine historic properties include:

Ascension of Our Lord Chapel - Karluk Chitina Emporium—Chitina Eldred Rock Lighthouse—Haines Pilgrim Hot Springs—Nome Pioneer Hall—Ketchikan Fort Wm. H. Seward Hospital—Haines Bishop Rowe Chapel—Arctic Village Bristol Bay Boats—Naknek Hi Yu Stamp Mill—Fairbanks

The video of the announcement was posted on the group's Facebook page and can be viewed on YouTube at https://youtu.be/2NMJ4s-7vYA

This annual list is intended to bring public awareness to Alaska's threatened historic properties. Heightened awareness often leads to increased support for the conservation of endangered historic properties, which are assets important to tourism, economic development, and the cultural heritage of Alaska. Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (now rebranded as Preservation Alaska) has been identifying the Most Endangered Historic Properties since 1991.

The Ten Most Endangered Grant Program funds hands-on preservation work on endangered properties to serve as seed money to leverage funding from other sources. One matching grant is awarded each year. The program calls attention to threatened properties that define our great state, the people that live here, and the heritage we share. The nominations for this program are submitted by individuals and organizations living throughout Alaska and vetted through the organization's committee. Preservation Alaska is working on an endowment fund to be able to award larger grants or more than one grant each year. Donations for the grant program are welcome. The 2023 Sponsors include: Nvision Architecture, Kuchar Construction, LLC, HZA Engineering Solutions, Northern Air Cargo, Enterprise Engineering, BBFM Engineers, Inc., RSA Engineering, Inc., and LCG Lantech, Inc.

#### Bridges Continued from page 1

Nonetheless, two of those historic bridges have already been replaced: the Tanana River Bridge near Tetlin Junction, destroyed in March 2011, and the Tok River Bridge near Tok, destroyed in 2018. The Alaska DOT&PF is now proposing to fast-track demolition and replacement of the remaining three historic spans: the Robertson, Gerstle, and Johnson River Bridges between Tok and Delta Junction. The new bridges are projected to cost over \$200 million.

These bridge replacements are needed to accommodate the extremely large



Johnson Bridge — University of Alaska Archives/Fairbanks. Photo.

and heavy trucks that Kinross Gold Company wants to use to haul ore from the new Manh Choh mine near Tetlin to their existing mill at the Fort Knox mine

near Fairbanks.

The proposed ore haul is very controversial, not least because it isn't needed for the mine to be profitable. In 2018 its previous owner, Royal Gold, projected

hundreds of millions in profit using onsite ore processing, assuming a price of \$1,250 per ounce. Gold has recently



Robertson Bridge — University of Alaska Archives/Fairbanks. Photo.

been selling for over \$1,900 per ounce.

For more on the Interstate Highway Section 106 exemption and its background, see the Federal Register notice at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/57hrdfts">https://tinyurl.com/57hrdfts</a>

Note that the exemption covers only the highways, not other historic or prehistoric resources that may be in the Area of Potential Effect.

There's a group called Advocates for Safe Alaskan Highways active on this issue, <u>safealaskahighways.org</u>. Clicking

## The Taliesin Historic Preservation Colloquium

By Sam Combs, AIA, NCARB, Architect

As an Historic Preservation Architect, I've always wanted to visit Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesins—one in Wisconsin and the other near Phoenix, Arizona. The opportunity to visit one of these historically preserved sites occurred in early February with the AIA (American Institute of Amer-

ica) Historic Resource Committee's "Taliesin Colloquium 2023: The Evolution of Preservation Standards and Guidelines" in Phoenix on February 3rd and 4th. As an Alaskan since 1955, one jumps at the chance to escape our long win-



ters and AAHP's Board voted to pay for my registration fees and I'm thankful for that as a longtime board mem-

The main gist of the Colloquium was to examine the current policies and standards governing historic preservation since the world has changed much since the standards were written many decades ago. Not only have we just lived (and many have unfortunately died) through a worldwide pandemic, but our climate is also changing as well. The need for the historic preservation community, and the community as a whole, need to take a more holistic view of sustainability. This includes social, cultural, and economic equity and to consider whether the current standards are inclusive or exclusive. The treatment of minority communities over the years has been, to say the least, terrible in literally dividing established minority



areas by transportation corridors. And minority communities have been underserved in historic preservation as well.

The first session of the Colloquium was a video interview by Melissa Morancy of Woolridge Brown Morton III who is a coauthor of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Morton is an architectural

historian, international preservation consultant, conservator, Professor Emeritus at the University of Mary Washington and a priest at the Episcopal Church. Brown began his work at the National Park Service as the principal architect for HABS (Historic American Buildings Survey) and then served as the US Representative at IC-CROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property). When he returned from Rome he created the Technical Preservation Services Division and stared the Preservation Briefs

program (which I've referred to a lot over my 46 years in the historic preservation field!). During this time period he was working with the IRS to create a tax benefit to rehabilitate historic buildings. If there is one person to start off the Colloquium, Morton is the one.

Brown Morton has concluded that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation needs to be revised back to be more flexible. He and Gary Hume, his co-author, wanted it to be "whenever possible" instead of what the Standards have been evolved to state "shall" or "will" do such and such. His conclusion would be to go back to "whenever possible" which would allow more flexible new uses of an historic structure. They never intended the Standards to state "do this" and "not do that." Morton stated that "...one needs to find a new compatible use for historic buildings if needed." If the

building integrity can be saved with a new use, then the best of both worlds is achieved. We need to take each community and look at its context rather than looing at all historic buildings in all communities the same. At least every 10 years we need to look at the Standards and make changes to reflect the current time.



Melissa Morancy from Seton Hall Law School presented a program concern-

ing Adaptive Management. Legal Regimes Challenges concern our changing climate, statutory and regulatory frameworks not changing as need be, and that making laws and regulations adapt is difficult because of political challenges and under-resourced agencies. Some examples of Non-Adaption are the National Flood Insurance Program that has not changed approach even with repetitive loss properties and the Army Corps of Engineers who in reality manage resources in a static manner not evolving to new climate concerns. Adaptive



Management allows for uncertainty in natural system and allows for the continuous update of inputs for regulatory action. Eight key steps of Adaptive Management:

(1) definition of the problem; (2) determination of goals

and objectives for management of ecosystems; (3) determination of the ecosystem baseline; (4) development of conceptual models; (5) selection of future restoration actions; implementation and management actions. (6) implementation and management actions; (7) monitoring and ecosystem response, and )8) evaluation of restoration efforts and proposals for remedial actions.

## In This Corner...

May was spent celebrating Historic Preservation. From announcing the 2023 Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties to the recent announcement of the prestigious award to the "Naknek Cannery History Project, May was definitely one to understand the importance of preserving our history. (See page 13 for the news

release.)



We were pleased to have partnered with the "Naknek Cannery History Project." It was a great project from the very beginning that

seemed to grow a life of its own. Katie Ringsmuth and her team did a terrific job at telling the story of the cannery and the history of the Bristol Bay Fishing Industry. Congratulations!

The SS Nenana needs funding if we are going to save the vessel. Information about the need for financial support can be found on page 7. I usually ask for donations for Preservation Alaska on Facebook around the time that my birthday rolls around in May. This year, I asked for donations specifically for the SS Nenana. I am very concerned that we do not lose this valuable piece of Alaska Gold Rush History. It is an Alaskan Landmark. The fundraiser ended at \$660.00. The board added \$40.00 to make it an even \$700.00. We'll be forwarding that to the Friends of SS Nenana. Thank you to everyone who donated!

While the focus appears to be on the SS Nenana, be assured that the other endangered historic properties on the 2023 list are just as important. We have been working on raising funds to be able to award either more small grants each year or increase the amount of the small matching grant. Currently it is \$2,500. Our 2023 sponsors allow us to offer the annual grant. See page 5 for our sponsors.

As you may know, we have been managing

the Oscar Anderson House for ten years now. This year, we enter into our 11th year with great concern for the house. Since mold was found in the closet of the boys bedroom, the Preservation Alaska board decided that the house must be closed to the public this summer until we



are able to make repairs. The house needs a new roof but before that can be replaced it must be assessed to determine what other issues may be hiding that need to be corrected before the new roof is put on. Only then can the mold be remediated. See page 6 for details. It falls on *Preservation Alaska* to raise the necessary funds to get the work done as the Municipality of Anchorage does not have the funding to cover the costs of repairs and restoration.

A bright spot is the news that more funds have been received by ROSSIA, for some of the projects that they have been working

on. One of the projects that we have been involved with is saving the Ascension of Our Lord Chapel at Karluk for the past few years. While the church at Karluk was once declared the most endangered historic building, it is still of concern to us. Check out the article on page 12.



Buildings are not the only endangered historic properties. We have had the fishing vessel *Chacon* on our list of endangered properties. Sadly, the boat was demolished about a year ago. This month it is about historic bridges that are



endangered. Some have already been demolished. The article on page one brings to light three bridges that could be next to be demolished in the

interest of progress. Archaeological sites and coastal areas have been on our endangered list. We welcome queries about potential endangered buildings, vessels, or sites. It is never too late to be thinking about nominating an historic property whether it is a building, plies the waters of Alaska, or is an endangered site. We welcome information about any of those historic sites for future newsletters.

As you travel around this summer, I hope that you will take time to check out the historic buildings, boats, and sites. We have an amazing history in Alaska!

Trail dell

Trish Neal, President Preservation Alaska



#### Here Are Ways to Support Our Mission & Programs

Here's a quick list of things to do from home to support preservation with AAHP:

• Become an AAHP Member! Join today!

https://tinyurl.com/bdhydxc4

• **Donate** to our Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant Program <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yhdjirj6">https://tinyurl.com/yhdjirj6</a>

## •Alaska Community Foundation:

Established in 1995, The Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) cultivates, celebrates, and sustains all forms of philanthropy to strengthen Alaska's communities forever. Please contact us on how to contribute to our endowment funds.

•Advocate for AAHP and Historic Preservation! Contact your local leaders and your mayor to promote the importance of Historic Preservation in your community.





Preservation isn't just about saving historic places. It's also a catalyst for community revitalization. Preservation is something we can only accomplish together.

People Saving Places!



#### 2023 Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties

- 1. SS Nenana—Fairbanks
- 2. Ascension of Our Lord Chapel— Karluk
- 3. Chitina Emporium—Chitina
- 4. Eldred Rock Lighthouse—Haines
- 5. Pilgrim Hot Springs—Nome
- 6. Pioneer Hall—Ketchikan
- 7. Fort Wm H. Seward Hospital—Haines
- 8. Bishop Rowe Chapel—Arctic Village
- 9. Bristol Bay Boats—Naknek
- 10. Hi Yu Stamp Mill—Fairbanks

### Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant Program Sponsors

Celebrating 32 Years of the Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant Program!

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## Oscar Anderson House Closed for 2023 Summer



The Oscar Anderson House is closed for 2023 pending needed repairs and restoration work. The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) owns the house. Preservation Alaska has managed the property through an agreement with the MOA for ten years. The group is waiting for a contract to sign that will give them the ability to seek funding and oversee the project. Until the agreement is received from the MOA's legal department, reviewed by Preservation Alaska's attorney and the

final contract approved and signed, the organization is in limbo.

The roof on the house needs to be replaced. This has been an ongoing concern since at least 2012, yet the MOA has not been able to come up with the funding for the roof. The Planning Department determined that the least expensive way to replace the roof is to replace it with a metal roof. The Preservation Alaska

board of directors has gone on record that they are opposed to this decision. It is not historic. The board is concerned of the property losing its National Reg-



ister status and its *Distinctive Destination* status. The State Historic Preservation Office would prefer that the roof is replaced with what is there: cedar shingles.

The roof has been leaking and created damage to the ceiling of the boys' bedroom closet. The sons of the Anderson Family shared that bedroom. Last winter a local building inspector was hired by Preservation Alaska to inspect the area out of concern that there may be mold. It was confirmed that there is mold in that area of the house as well as in the air. The Preservation Alaska board voted to close the house until further notice. Until the mold can be remediated, the board does not want to take a chance of ex-

posing the public to a potential health hazard.

The longer it takes to get the repairs accomplished, the cost of the repairs or replacement of the roof increases. The Historic Structure Report may run around \$40K.



Replacing the roof was estimated at \$40k about a year ago. UV filter window inserts for all 21 windows of varying sizes are estimated at around \$6,500. Some of those windows need repairs, first. The foundation may need work. Landscaping work needs to be done to protect the exterior of the



house. There is a concern about the tall trees. One tree had to be removed last summer due to rot. There may be more that is hidden that we won't know about until the house has been inspected. And then, there is the mold that needs to be remediated once the roof is replaced.

Donna Burgess and Ernest Burgess, grandchildren of Oscar Anderson, are very concerned about their childhood home. They have stepped up to offer a

\$5,000 challenge to Preservation Alaska to match \$5,000 that they raise. However, until the group has a signed agreement to oversee the entire project, they are hesitant about starting a fundraising campaign. Until there is a signed agreement no grants can be applied for.

The MOA does not have the funds budgeted to handle the

repairs. It was suggested that perhaps Preservation Alaska needed to find the funds. The group has taken up that challenge. The continued stewardship of the house is important to them.



2023 is the eleventh year that

the group has managed the house. Their stewardship of the house is taken seriously. It takes about \$14,000 to cover the costs of managing the house that they cover with about \$3,500 in admissions. The MOA covers utilities and groundskeeping. Visitors to the Oscar Anderson House are enthralled with the history of the house and the family who



lived there. We all want to make sure that the Oscar Anderson House continues to be the Anchorage treasure that it is. It will take a village to make sure that this happens. Meanwhile, the group is waiting for the MOA to submit an agreement that will allow the group to begin working on repairs/restoration of the Oscar Anderson House.

## Help Save the SS Nenana!

The Steamer Nenana is located in Pioneer Park which opened in 1967 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the purchase of Alaska from Russia. The boat was moved in 1987 and set up on a docking structure, and then restored and refurbished. She was reopened in 1992.

The Steamer Nenana was built in 1932 by the Alaska Railroad in Nenana. She went into service in 1933, and ran until 1955. The five-deck, wooden-hulled, western Riversstyle steam sternwheel packet was fitted with 24 berths, a dining salon, a smoking room, an observation room, men's and women's toilets. Passenger and officers' rooms were fitted with washbowls and electric lights. The boat was a blending of steam, wood, and paddlewheel technology. The Steamer Nenana was made from clear, vertical grain; kiln-dried fir. With a total weight of 1,128 tons and 237 feet in overall length.

The last structural repair work done on the Steamer Nenana by the Fairbanks North Star Borough was done in 2012. Time and weather have continued to attack the ship. Funds were deferred for the Steamer Nenana to other buildings or projects in Fairbanks by the North Star Borough. If work isn't done soon to stop the decay this national treasure will be lost.

The one constant that continues is the damage happening to the exposed wood on the boat and the wheel.

The Friends of SS Nenana, Inc. are working on their original plan to restore and reopen the boat through their non-profit organization.

They continue to accept donations to save the S.S. Nenana.



Bud Kuenzli recently flew his drone around the SS Nenana located at Pioneer Park. Be sure to watch the video: https://youtu.be/oMOWa8Jv44A

Donations can be made online through their fiscal sponsor, North Star Community Foundation, or the Friends of SS Nenana. The Friends will manage those donations.

Donations online to North Star Community Foundation: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yrfj3a58">https://tinyurl.com/yrfj3a58</a>

Checks can be mailed to the organization. Be sure to write in the memo field that it is for the SS Nenana.

Friends of SS Nenana P.O. Box 72876 Fairbanks, AK 99707

## The Taliesin Historic Preservation Colloquium Continued from page 3

The conclusions that Payne arrived at were that agencies need to use discretion they have in statutory Schemes to provide flexibility necessary to adapt to climate change, the Standards could provide broad discretion like they did at the beginning of their use and could therefore allow the flexibility to do so again.

Luis Hoyos of Cal Poly Pomona subbing for Dr. Stephanie Toothman spoke on efforts to diversify the National Historic Landmark Program and National Register which are still ongoing. Dr. Toothman felt there was a persistent and tangible bias towards the East Coast. She also listed several obstacles to inclusion in preservation programs:

)1\_ lack of awareness—some don't know they exist; (2) distrust in government; (3) lack of funding experience; (4) lack of skills to complete nominations; (5) lack of research abilities; (6) the overly strict integrity criteria contained in preservation bulletins and guidelines; (7) monitoring and ecosystem response, and, (8) evaluation of restoration efforts and proposals for remedial actions.

Around 2010 Secretary of the Interior Kenneth Salazar gave instructions to NPS to determine the causes of the imbalance and ways to fix it. One of the results was

"Theme" studies that led to the Latino Heritage, the Asian and Pacific Islander and LGBTQ Theme Studies. Prior to these studies there were several studies that included "Five Views: an Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California (1988)" which included American Indians, Black Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans and Mexican Americans. Of 400 sites identified, very few were deemed eligible by the staff. The result was a bulletin rewrite that is more inclusive and is 90% completed but was halted in 2016 by the new President.

Nicholas Vann, AIA, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for the State of Washington spoke on "Social Justice In Historic Preservation: The Need For Conservation Standards." Vann spoke on the unconscious and implicit bias significance vs. integrity when the way it is, is that integrity vs. significance with significance outweighing integrity, a balance between the two and when significance outweighs integrity which in many instances is more important. "Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance." Cultural Significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places, and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups." The conclusion of "Do we need another Standard?" was basically that we need to make the Standards more flexible.



#### **Ongoing Summer**

• Brown Bag Lunch Haines Second & Fourth Wednesday. 11:50am to 12:50pm. Sign up to be a speaker by calling the Sheldon Museum at 907-766-2366.

#### June

•Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant available for applicants from the 2023 list.

• Alaska Aviation Museum Upcoming Events: June 17th-Father's Day Birdhouse Workshop. Create lasting memories with your child(ren) at this hands on Father's Day. 4721 Aircraft Dr, Anchorage, AK 99502 (907) 248 -5325

https://alaskaairmuseum.org/

#### July

#### **Alaska Aviation Museum**

July 15th-ly By Festival. Come out for this community event and enoy the Fly By Festival on the busiest sea plane base in the World! Enjoy beer, wine & food trucks. Contact: (907) 248-5325 https://alaskaairmuseum.org/

#### August

•Call for Nominations for Preservation Alaska's Historic Preservation Awards. Check website for details

https://alaskapreservation.org/

#### October

•October 5-8-- Alaska Historical Society Annual Conference "Connections and Disconnections in Alaska History" Central Kenai Peninsula, Kenai Community College and virtual. https://alaskahistoricalsociety.org/

#### November

• November 2-Annual Meeting, Preservation Alaska. Location TBA. Hybrid meeting planned.

Do you have events to share? Please send your event information to AKPreservation@gmail.com by August 1, 2023

## **Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance**

#### TRAILS CONFERENCE

Alaska Trails was excited to bring participants back together for the 2023 Alaska Statewide Trails Conference, April 12-14, at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage, with most sessions shared via Zoom. The session presentations and videos are available at: www.alaskatrails.org/conference-archive-links.

#### RACE ACROSS ALASKA WINTER CHALLENGE

Alaska Trails is, once again, very grateful for the overwhelming support from the Race Across Alaska Winter Challengers, including Race Director Heather Helzer and all the participants in the 2022-23 race. 2,688 racers logged their miles from the Winter Solstice in December through the Spring Equinox in March.



In addition to the RAAWC donating a portion of the entry fees for each participant, racers were invited to make an additional donation. Those extra

donations from the racers totaled over \$25,000. The entire donation to Alaska Trails for the Alaska Long Trail project = \$56,001.

#### ALASKA LONG TRAIL IN THE STATE BUDGET

Alaska Trails and partners have recently submitted 14 Alaska Long Trail projects into FY24 state capital budget, totaling \$9.5 million. These projects will fill key shovel-ready and planning ready gaps in the section between Anchorage and Fairbanks.

The 14 projects include: • Building new non-motorized trails • Existing multi-use trail improvements • Planning studies to identify links between segments • Improving trail access and parking · Wayfinding and cultural heritage • Separated highway paths for safe nonmotorized travel. You can find more information, including the specific projects at: https:// tinyurl.com/97e6zmfc

#### PHOTOS NEEDED FOR ALASKA LONG TRAIL WORKBOOK

A draft of the Alaska Long Trail Workbook has been put together and is now available for you to peruse: https://tinvurl.com/5cwwrp96

This document is a compilation of proposed routes that identifies existing trails, potential issues and areas of trail that need work, gaps in the route, and analyzes routes to determine their time of completion.

The workbook is still a working draft. If you have high resolution photographs, you'd be willing to share from portions of the Alaska Long Trail route, please contact xlopez1818@gmail.com.

#### ALFRED LOWELL STATUE

Pat Garley of Arctic Fires Bronze in Palmer is working on the clay models



for the Alfred Lowell statue to be erected in Seward by the Seward Iditarod Trail Blazers. The clay models are used to make the molds for casting the statute in bronze. Pat believes the statues of Alfred and the dogs will be ready to mount in May.





**Pictured** here is Alfred and two of the dogs at the present time.

Pat will be starting on third dog soon.

#### FROM THE PAST... Iditarod Pioneer May 16, 1914

BREAK UP OF IDITAROD RIVER BRINGS DISASTROUS INUNDATION

Shortly after noon on Saturday last the ice in the river commenced to disintegrate and this continued intermittently until evening when the steady run set in. The water had been rising steadily for some days and with the breakup and added volume

increased the flow until it was rising at the rate of several inches an hour. On one occasion a rise of over a foot was recorded in 60 minutes. Last Saturday night it seemed as though the flood had reached its limit.

and tired water watchers retired to their homes. The water kept steadily rising, however, and by daylight warehouses, places of business and cabins on the river front were inundated. By noon the



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water was several inches deep on the floor of Mrs. Peterson's bakery and the place had been deserted. The Cascade Laundry was flooded, and the water had reached the restaurant kept by Mrs. Simms, near the corner of Willow and First streets. The creek which runs into the river at the foot of Willow Street had backed up until there was two feet of water at the intersection of First and Willow streets, and the west side thoroughfare was impassable.

Further down the river several cabins were under water, and the warehouse of Karl Thiele contained several feet of water, but the merchandise had been removed without damage.

At the foot of Richmond Street, the Northern Commercial warehouse, containing quantities of goods, was submerged, and much damage was done. Further up the river at the Cleveland mill, the building used by Crowley and Porter as a warehouse was completely flooded. The building was well filled with merchandise. The men had been put to work moving goods here early Saturday morning, but too fast did the water rise that comparatively little can be moved, and the loss will be very heavy.

Residents on the riverbank bank directly opposite the city were driven from their homes on Saturday night and were able to take but few of their belongings with them. The houses across the river were all several feet under water, and their contents were ruined by the water. The heaviest loser here was Jay J. Smith, who had but recently moved his family and large flock of chickens there. A large number of the chickens were drowned.

On Saturday much cord wood was seen to be floating down the river mingled with the ice. Dozens of residents along the riverbank in the lower part of town, armed with long poles engaged in the work of recovering the wood, and several fine fuel piles were the result. But the industrious ones met with misfortune, as with the continued rise of the river, most of it was carried away again.

The several docks along the riverfront stood the strain of the rush of ice and water in good shape. In some instances piling was carried away, but it will take comparatively little work to repair the damage.

#### **BALTO**

On February 2nd, 1925, musher Gunner Kaasen drove a dog team led by Balto into Nome carrying packages of diphtheria serum in his sled bag. Kaasen was the last

of 20 mushers who relayed the anecdote 674 miles from Nenana to Nome.

When Balto died in 1933 a taxidermist in the Cleveland Natural History Museum preserved and displayed him. Using a tiny patch of skin cut



from that taxidermy mount, Heather Hanson who has lived and mushed dogs in interior Alaska saw in Balto an opportunity to find out more about dogs operating at their peak capacity. She is an author of a recent paper "Comparative genomics of Balto, a famous historic dog, captures lost diversity of 1920s sled dogs" in the journal Science.

Balto's genetic makeup shows a greater ability to process starches, examples of which are rice beans and other plants when compared to wolves and Greenland sled dogs. Balto was also more genetically diverse and therefore a bit healthier than many dogs today. It's a trait Hanson called hybrid vigor which she has seen at work many times on cold dark trails like the one over which Balto ran. "Sled dogs don't have many breed associated diseases" she said "they aren't bred for physical traits they're bred for performance."

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes awareness of the Iditarod Trail and its gold rush and Alaska Native Heritage by encouraging education programs and historical research, assisting in the protection, improvement, maintenance and marking of the Trail and developing partnerships that foster stewardship, commitments and support.

Become a Member or Donate!

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes awareness of the Iditarod Trail and its gold rush and Alaska Native Heritage by encouraging education programs and historical research, assisting in the protection. improvement, maintenance and marking of the Trail and developing partnerships that foster stewardship, commitments and support.

While the Iditarod Trail is well-known nationally and internationally due to the contemporary sled dog race, many Alaskans and most Americans are unaware of the basic history of the Trail. While parts of the Trail go back thousands of years to trade routes used by Alaska's native people, today's Iditarod Trail began with an Alaska Road Commission (ARC) scouting expedition in mid-winter 1908. With the strike of gold near Iditarod. the ARC blazed the trail the winter of 1910, giving the Nome gold fields and the Iditarod and Innoko mining districts overland access to the ice free deep water port of Seward.

The Alliance was founded in 1998.

Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance PO Box 2323 Seward AK 99664 www.Iditarod100.org

Newsletters online!

Become a Member or Donate!

#### IditarodHTA@gmail.com

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

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## Friends of Nike Site Summit

**Doris Thomas** Director

#### It's tour and work party season for Friends of Nike Site Summit

The annual FONSS open house was held in the REI conference room on



May 24, with about 30 in attendance. Board member Ivan Hodes gave a slide presentation that highlighted last year's restoration/ maintenance progress and included our increased activities at the former

FONSS board member

Ivan Hodes began a

Cold War history tour

for Ravenwood Ele-

mentary 6th grade

students with a brief

history of Cook Inlet

and the evolution of

the land Kincaid Park

now occupies. About

55 students and their

chaperones participat-

ed in the May 19 tour.

are many such student

tours. (Doris Thomas

This was the first of

Site Point (Kincaid Park). One public tour (May 20) and our first-ever 6th grade school tour have already taken place there this spring. That school tour, on May 19, was for about 55 inquisitive students and chaperones from Ravenwood Elementary in Eagle River.

Our 2023 tour season features an increase in hiking tours, with a commensurate decrease in bus tours due to greatly increase tdransportation costs. If the roads what FONSS hopes at Site Summit are snow-free, the first tour (hiking) will oc-

cur on June 17. Reservations are open for all seven tours at Site Summit. Space is limited and early registration is encouraged.

photos)

Morning and afternoon bus tours of Site Summit are on Saturday, July 8,



and Sunday, Aug. 13. Besides June 17, the other hiking tours are July 22 and Aug. 26.

About 30 guests heard an Tour particiupdate on FONSS projects pants will talk and tours at the annual open to veterans house on May 24 at the An- who were chorage REI conference room. Margan Grover, JBER Cultural Resource Manager and liaison to FONSS, and Ivan Hodes are shown talking about upcoming JBER work projects at Site Summit.

stationed at Nike sites in Alaska, find out how the missiles were launched and learn about Alaska's role in the Cold

War. Site Summit is culturally significant as the only one of eight Cold Warera Nike-Hercules missile sites in Alaska still standing.

The on-line registration link for all tours is http://reg.planetreg.com/ FONSS-2023. Those without Internet access can reserve by calling (907) 929-9870 and making payment and reservation arrangements.

The bus tour price includes round trip



transportation to Site Summit from the Arctic Vallev Lodge parking lot. Bus tours are \$75 for students 12-17, veterans and senior citizens 65+, and \$80 for adults.

Jim Renkert, past FONSS director, and recently active in helping establish the new Muktuk Marston - Hunter Pass Trails at Arctic Valley, tells FONSS open house visitors about the trails' dedication ceremony on June 1, open to fit, 2023.

The Site Summit hiking tours are experienced hikers 13 and

older. The fee is \$45 for adults and \$40 for youth, veterans and seniors.

Reservations are required no less than three days in advance for the Site Summit tours.

FONSS is also hosting a hiking tour on June 10 at Kincaid Park. Fewer structures remain at Kincaid, but it is a more affordable tour and our tour guides do a great job discussing Anchorage's Cold War history. The tour is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and lim-



During the season's first public tour, May 20, Phil Parks tells tour participants at Kincaid Park how the various radar systems worked at the former Nike Hercules missile site. Parks was assigned to Site Point from 1967-70.

ited to fit hikers aged 10 or older. Register (\$25) at http://reg.planetreg.com/FONSS-Hikes-2023.

Plans are underway for work parties and reassembling the training missile donated to FONSS by the Museum of Alaska



Using a model missile, Nike veteran Lance Morgan demonstrates to the May 20 hiking tour participants at Kincaid Park how missile launches took place.

Transportation and Industry. Efforts are being made to learn the whereabouts of the launch rail that originally accompanied the training missile. MATI was previously located at the Alaska State Fairgrounds a few decades ago as the

Alaska Museum of Transportation. We're hoping that the launcher still may be in some forgotten spot on the premises. Having the rail will be the icing on the cake when our volunteers reassemble the training missile this summer. Anyone interested in assisting with the reconstruction, may contact FONSS at fonss2007@gmail.com or call Evan Rowland at (907) 227-0741.

All volunteers (including returning ones) need to fill out the volunteer form available on our Web site, and take the Range Control safety class offered at the start of each Site Summit tour and at Range Control the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 10a.m. Contact FONSS or Evan Rowland for more information.

Follow **FONSS** on Facebook <a href="https://tinyurl.com/48pj97vf">https://tinyurl.com/48pj97vf</a>

# Will the Third Try be the Charm for the SS Nenana?

The Fairbanks North Star Borough is planning another try to get some repairs done on the sternwheel riverboat, which is drydocked in Fairbanks' Pioneer Park. The National Historic Landmark vessel, the largest ever to ply the rivers of Alaska's Interior, is #1 on Preservation Alaska's 10 Most Endangered List for 2023.

In the past 15 months FNSB Public Works has solicited bids twice for extensive repairs to *SS Nenana*, using plans prepared by Design Alaska, Inc. Twice only a single bid was received, and was rejected as exceeding the funds available for the work.



SS Nenana—Fred Hirschmann photo for Historic American Engineering Record .

This time, encouraged by the local advocacy group Friends of *SS Nenana*, the borough has asked Design Alaska to prepare plans for a greatly reduced scope of work, the minimum needed to reopen the cargo deck interior to the public. This includes cleanup of loose and peeling paint, which (despite extensive paint removal during restorations in the 1990s) may contain residues of lead, and temporary shoring in unspecified locations if determined necessary.

SS Nenana's cargo deck interior, including the engine room with its twin locomotive steam engines, was open to the public for many years. FNSB Public Works declared it unsafe and closed it in 2018. They have never stated what, specifically, is thought unsafe, to the frustration of preservationists and the general public who are anxious to visit the historic sternwheeler again, and to see it returned to good repair.

#### Past Excellence in Historic Preservation Award Winners

2022 Judith Bittner
Whisky & Ramen and
Determine Design
DCI Engineers
557 Locomotive Rest. Co.

2021 Grant Crosby
Treadwell Historic
Preservation &
Restoration Society
Howard & Juliana Farley
Trish Neal

2020 Iditarod Historic Trail
Alliance (IHTA)
Fraternal Order of
Alaska State Troopers

2019 Janet Matheson
Katie Ringsmuth/<NN>
Doris Thomas/FONSS
Lee Poleske
Hugh & Iris Darling

2018 No Award Given

2017 Bob De Armond Bill De Armond

2016 No Award Given

2015 Bob Mitchell

2014 Thad Poulson Jim Renkert

2013 Sheri & Darrin Hamming

2012 No Award Given

2011 Mary Flaherty

**2010** FONSS

Erin & Falene Reeve

2009 Don Corwin Steve Peterson

2008 No info available

2007 Edwin Crittenden, FAIA Katharine Crittenden Sam Combs, AIA Elayne Janiak

## **ROSSIA Readies for a Busy Summer Season**

For the past 20 years, Russian Orthodox Sacred Sites in Alaska (ROSSIA) has been striving to restore and preserve



the historic Russian Orthodox churches in Alaska. Thanks to various funding sources and private donations,

here are highlights of this summer's projects:

**St. George the Martyr Russian Orthodox Church:** ROSSIA was awarded a \$12,000 Rasmuson Tier 1 grant for roof and water damage repairs at the St. George Orthodox Church on St. George Island in the Pribilofs.

One of only seven National Historic Landmark Russian Orthodox churches in Alaska, St. George the Martyr was built in 1936 by Aleut parishioners with earnings from the fur seal trade.

The roof of the church began leaking from the bell tower and windows of the cupola some time ago. The parishioners have been unable to combat the leak and keep the water from seeping into the internal walls, damaging the dry wall, floors, and warping the front door.

This grant will allow experienced historic preservation contractors to patch the roof, repair the front door, begin drying the inside entry, and create a plan to replace the roof and damaged dry wall, as well as secure the infrastructure of the narthex and bell tower.

**Old St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church- Eklutna:** The National Park Service (NPS) recently announced the distribution of \$1,395,234 in historic preservation grants for the State of Alaska.

ROSSIA was awarded a \$350,000 Historic Preservation Fund Grant-in-Aid to restore the Old St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Eklutna, built ca. 1870.

Many years ago, a new foundation was built, and the church was moved several feet over on top of the new foundation. To maintain its structural integrity, Bishop ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka & Alaska, has approved moving the church back to its original location on a more secure foundation with new heating and electrical systems.

This project is funded in part by the Historic Preservation Fund, as administered by the National Park Service, Department of Interior.Bottom of Form

The Ascension of Our Lord Orthodox Church in Karluk was chosen as one of this year's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties in Alaska by Preservation Alaska. For the past four years, ROSSIA has been working with Orthodox clergy, plus national, state, local and university representatives to find a new permanent location

for the oldest extant Russian Orthodox church in Alaska built in 1888.

In 2021, when the church was a mere 8 feet from the edge of the cliff high above the mouth of the Karluk River and Shelikoff Strait on Kodiak Island, it was lifted from its foundation and moved about 80 feet inland for a temporary placement. The new location under consideration will be approximately five acres in size to accommodate not only the church, but also a new cemetery for graves that will need to be relocated as the cliff continues to erode due to climate change.

We have already experienced the benefits of this church being listed seven times on Alaska's Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties. The listings drew attention from national, state, private donors, and local entities who combined forces to move the church in the nick of time before it was lost forever.

We believe that listing it again for 2023 will produce the same energy and force to move the church to its final resting place upriver and closer to the contemporary village of Karluk where it can continue to be a place of worship and beacon of light to the community.

**Unalaska Bishop's House:** Over the past three years, work concentrated on restoring the exterior of the historic Bishop's House adjacent to the Holy Ascension Cathedral of Our Lord and National Historic Landmark in Unalaska with the addition of a fire suppression system, new roof, and new paint.

This summer, interior work is scheduled to be finalized with sheetrock, painting, heating, plumbing, electrical and woodworking to restore this house to a point where it can be used by the parish for meetings and overnight guests. The family of Patty Lekanoff has graciously volunteered to do all of the interior decorating, complete with period furniture.

St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church Rectory-Juneau: ROSSIA has been providing preservation planning and funding assistance to the St. Nicholas parish since 2002. The church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the long-term plan is to restore the church to its 1894 appearance while rehabilitating the rectory (1898) to continue supporting day-to-day parish activities such as parish hall, museum displaying photographs, liturgical artifacts and vestments, restroom, kitchen, office, and gift shop, with electrical and mechanical updates.

ROSSIA recently received a \$5,000 National Trust for Historic Preservation grant to support the final design element needed which is electrical engineering. Upon completion, the church and rectory will be ready for a complete restoration starting next year.

https://rossialaska.org/

## Alaska's NN Salmon Cannery "Mug-Up" Project Wins Prestigious 2023 AASLH Award of Excellence

Nashville, TN – The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) congratulates Katie Ringsmuth and fellow team members for receiving an Award of Excellence for the NN Salmon Cannery Project in South



Naknek, Alaska. The Award of Excellence is part of the AASLH Leadership in History Awards, the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation of state and local history.

Alaska's salmon fishing and processing history, now 145 years old, played a vital role in the state's economy in remote communities including South Naknek in southwest Alaska's Bristol Bay. The Diamond NN cannery, as it was known, began operating

there in 1890 and continued until 2001. Katie Ringsmuth grew up at the cannery and played a leadership role in organizing the history project over seven

years, collecting materials from the canning process, the housing of the Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Mexican workers; the cooking hall, hospital, and putting them all together in an exhibit at the Alaska State Museum named "Mug Up, the Language of



Work." Mug Up was cannery speak for coffee break and was a major part of cannery life.

Ringsmuth was named as Alaska's State Historian midway through the seven-year project, and enlisted support from other local historians: Bob King, Tim Troll, LaRece Egli, Andrew Abyo; John Wachtel with the National Park Service, local Bristol Bay and Naknek Native corporations and local governments, and most importantly, the cannery's owner Trident Seafoods, its South Naknek superintendent Carvel Zimin, his wife Shirley, and other staff including a guy named Crusher who stuffed all of this into a container van to send to the Alaska Museum staff in Juneau. The project's future is still under consideration but remains a prime exhibit of the history of Alaska's Bristol Bay and its continuing salmon fishery.



This year, AASLH is proud to confer fifty-one national awards honoring people, projects, and exhibits. The winners represent the best in the field and provide leadership for the future of state and local history.

The AASLH awards program was initiated in 1945 to estab-

lish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards not only honor significant achievements in the field of state and local history, but also bring public recognition of the opportunities for small and large organizations, institutions, and programs to make contributions in this arena. For more information about the Leadership in History

Awards, contact AASLH at 615-320 -3203, or go to www.aaslh.org.

#### **NN Cannery History Project**

The NN Cannery History Project was a multifaceted public history endeavor to collect, share, and preserve the stories of the diverse, and often invisible, cannery workers whose activities are reflected by and embedded in the industrial

landscape contained within the century-old Diamond

NN Cannery at South Naknek, Alaska. Over seven years, the project developed youth educational programming, museum exhibits, and oral histories, and listed the Diamond NN Cannery on the National Register of Historic Places. Thanks to



many collaborative efforts, the completed project ensures that this significant underrepresented history will be made accessible to the public so that the lives of cannery people everywhere will be better understood and valued.

#### Links:

- •NN Cannery History Project NN Cannery History Project (nncanneryproject.com)
- Mug Up: The Language of Work, Online Exhibit, Alaska State Museum Home - Mug Up: The Language of Work - Libraries, Archives, Museums at Alaska State Library
- •NN Cannery Project Jukebox Oral History: <u>Project Jukebox | Digital Branch of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Oral History Program (uaf.edu)</u>

#### **About AASLH**

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), a national nonprofit association, provides leadership and resources to help the history community thrive and make the past more meaningful for all people. AASLH serves the tens of thousands of history organizations, professionals, and volunteers around the country who help people of all ages develop critical thinking skills and understand how learning history helps society make progress toward justice. Through research, advocacy, and our field-leading professional development program, AASLH advances public history practice and connects history practitioners to critical issues in the field and to one another. For more information about AASLH visit <a href="https://www.aaslh.org">www.aaslh.org</a>.

## The Taliesin Historic Preservation Colloquium Continued from page 7

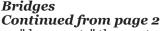
If you get the chance to visit Taliesin West, Taliesin and/or any of Frank Llyod Wright's buildings you should take it. For an Architect it is like a pilgrimage even though Wright had a terrible time designing roofs that didn't leak, his personal

life was a disaster, and he had many tragedies in his life. A few photographs are included here to give an idea of the environment the Colloquium was held in that was very conducive to stimulating ideas about the evolution of the National Preservation Standards and Guidelines.

Maybe in the future we may be able to save historically significant buildings such as the Jesse Lee Home in Seward and the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre in Anchorage if the Standards are more flexible, but it is doubtful in either of these cases since the City of Seward and the owners of the Theatre were bound and determined to destroy those two wonderful historic buildings.

There were other speakers, but they were unable to share their talks due to copyright and legal limitations so even though I took 18

1/2 pages of notes I'm limited on text—this is it!



on "documents" there gets you to: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/4dshxc5y">https://tinyurl.com/4dshxc5y</a> which has links to many documents, including the economic analysis: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/5n6s6wdx">https://tinyurl.com/5n6s6wdx</a>

Contact Preservation Alaska at <u>AKPreservation@gmail.com</u> if you would be interested in supporting saving these bridges.





Alaska Association for Historic Preservation P.O. Box 102205 Anchorage, AK 99510-2205

Phone: 907-929-9870 Email: AKPreservation@gmail.com 501(c)(3) Tax ID: 92-0085097



















#### ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, INC.

PO Box 102205 – Anchorage, Alaska 99510 Office: 907-929-9870 www.AlaskaPreservation.org AKPreservation@gmail.com

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