

# THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION

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## HOLM CABIN - 100 YEARS

by Mary Ford

One hundred years ago, a bachelor from Finland picked a site on the bluff above the Kasilof River on the Kenai Peninsula and built a sturdy cabin of local logs, using meticulous dove tail joinery.

The Victor Holm cabin still stands today at its original location and visitors are welcome. What's more, you can examine pieces of Holm's hand-crafted furniture, tools, snowshoes, boots, dogsleds and even a boat of whipsawn lumber. An adjacent, 2-story log house, exhibiting identical craftsmanship, is believed to be Holm's second home.

Charlie and Freda Lewis acquired this historical treasure when they discovered the Victor Holm homestead "at a ridiculously low price" in 1948. They lived in the cabin for a time and added a small front room. They later moved into their own hand-built log house. Recognizing the value of the old structure and its contents, they did not destroy it but preserved it as a museum.

The cabin was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. The Lewises have enjoyed showing Holm's craftsmanship to people from 49 states and many foreign countries. Last summer, visitors were few because someone persisted in removing the official brown and white historical sign at the turnoff to their property. (Note: AAHP is taking action to have a new sign prepared.)

Until it can be replaced you may want to call the Lewises at 262-4236 for directions. However, locating the cabin on your own is quite easy. If you are taking the Sterling Highway south from Soldotna, turn right at mile 111 at Cohoe Loop Road. Go about five miles and turn right on Cohoe Spur Road.

You may find the best part of the trip is talking with the Lewises, a delightful couple proud of their 84 years and 61-year marriage. Ask them how they managed without electricity or running water or how they got their mail or fed their family.

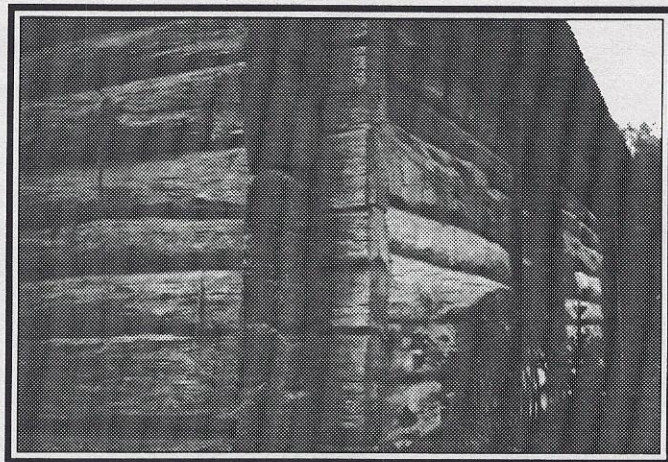
Freda Lewis is the former (and last) Cohoe postmaster and the old post office boxes remain in her home where they were actively used for 25 years. Charlie is also retired.

Note: *Executive Director Donna Lane and President Bill Coghill, based on board member Emily DeForest's recommendation, both recently visited the site. They spent a couple of hours talking to the Lewises and touring this well-preserved 100-year-old cabin. The Lewises own home is a handsome log structure with distinctive details and handmade furniture. This site, with its three houses and outbuildings, shows a continuum of rural Alaska living. Both Donna and Bill highly recommended this as a must see if you are in the Kenai area.*

## THE KENAI BICENTENNIAL

by Sue Carter, Executive Director of the Kenai Bicentennial Visitors and Convention Bureau

The Kenai Bicentennial Visitors and Convention Bureau is proceeding with plans for Kenai's 200th anniversary celebration which will begin on April 6, 1991, with a masquerade ball.



Corner detail of the Holm Cabin.

Special events and programs are planned through October of 1991 with the finale of the bicentennial celebration being a grand potlatch being coordinated through Cook Inlet Region, Inc. and the Kenaitze Indian Tribe.

The Bicentennial Office has sponsored a series of four murals for the old town area depicting Kenai's rich and diverse history. The first mural, "The Arrival of the Russians 1791", by artist Olivia Schemanski, is displayed on the side of the Peninsula Oilers Building at the corner of Cook and Main Streets in Old Town Kenai.

Kenai, Alaska's second oldest Russian settlement, will focus on its native culture, its 100 year old commercial fisheries industry and its oil industry. The oil industry began on the Kenai in 1957, making Kenai the Oil Capital of Alaska with the first discovery of oil.

Additional information and brochures on the bicentennial including a schedule of events may be obtained by contacting the Bicentennial Office at P.O. Box 1991, Kenai Alaska 99611, or by calling (907) 283-1991.

## ANNUAL PICNIC

AAHP's annual picnic will be held Sunday, August 26, 1990, at 12 noon at the Adams pavilion in Seward. The picnic, which will follow a short meeting, is a pot-luck with AAHP providing hamburgers, hotdogs and drinks. Bring a salad, vegetable tray, bread, or dessert and don't forget your family. The Adams pavilion is near the intersection of Adams Street and 7th Avenue (Balline Boulevard).

You can take the train from Anchorage if you wish. It would get you to Seward in time for the picnic, plus plenty of time for sight seeing, etc. before returning that evening. If AAHP can get 15 or more adults together to buy tickets we can get a discount. The discounted price for the round trip to Seward would be \$45.00. If you are interested in taking the train, contact Bill Coghill at 333-4746 immediately.

I understand from Jack Sinclair that the community of Seward is looking forward to our arrival. Additional activities available include a museum tour and a walking tour of historic structures in downtown Seward.

# FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Education:** Newly appointed chair, Gail Hollinger, continues to attend the planning meetings for the 1990 combined annual meetings of the Alaska Historical Society, Museums Alaska and AAHP, to be held in Anchorage, November 28 through December 2.

**Fund Raising:** AAHP's mission statement and goals were approved at the May 17, 1990 board meeting. Chair Charlie Hawkes reports that the committee will be meeting in August to work on the case statement. Their goal is to establish an endowment to support historic preservation in Alaska. They have already obtained a list of potential contributors and solicitors.

**Legislation:** Michael Jungreis is working with his committee to determine legislation priorities for next session.

**Membership:** AAHP's paid membership is now approximately 163, and growing! Jack Sinclair, membership committee chair, is planning our annual picnic, set for August 26th in Seward.

**Nominating:** Chair Janet McCabe reports, that in addition to ex-officio member Bill Coghill, her committee also consists of Jo Antonson and Steve Peterson. The committee is keeping a file on persons interested in serving on the Board of Directors. Contact Janet if you are interested.

**Projects and Issues:** Chair Russ Sackett reports that the committee has already received five projects for consideration. They are now discussing how AAHP can best provide assistance and will be coming before the board with their recommendations.

**Public Relations:** The committee continues to work on development of an AAHP logo.

## UPCOMING VACANCIES

Rolfe Buzzell, AAHP treasurer, is interested in serving in a different capacity next year. He would like a smooth transition and asks anyone interested in being our next treasurer to contact him now so they could be trained. There are some fun computer programs involved - anybody interested?

If you are not interested in handling money how about the news? If you would be interested in being newsletter coordinator next year contact Greg Curney, the current coordinator. Greg would like to work with the new person on the last newsletter of this year as a transition to next. We don't want to have to start from scratch after all we've learned this year on publishing a newsletter.

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