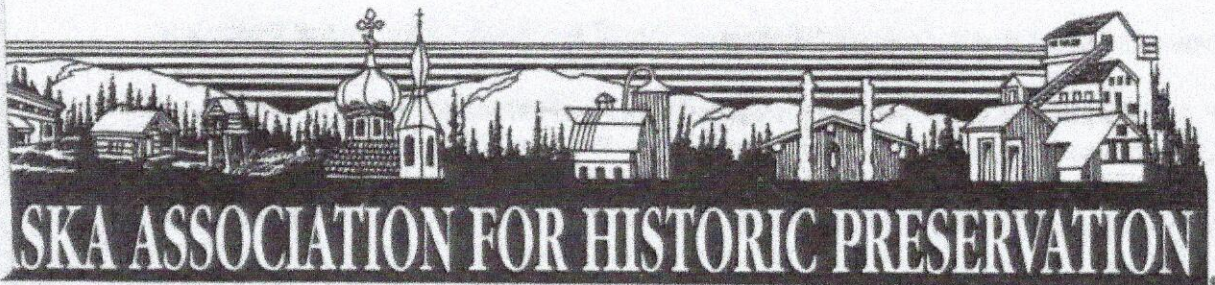


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ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

645 West Third Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2124

DECEMBER 1997

VOL. 16, ISSUE 4

Annual Meeting to be Held Saturday, January 24th

The Association will hold its annual meeting at 1 p.m. on January 24, 1998. The meeting will be held at Loussac Library, on the ground floor near the City Assembly chambers.

The program will feature three speakers. Leading off the program will be Janine Dorsey, a Fairbanks resident who is an expert on the town's coal bunkers. (The Fairbanks coal bunkers, as noted elsewhere in this issue, have been the focus of a preservation fight for more than a year.) Also on the program will AAHP scholarship winner Karen Bretz, who will speak about the economics of preservation, particularly as the topic relates to Bristol Bay cannery sites. In addition, NPS architect Steve Peterson will speak about preservation activities at the Kennicott Mine in conjunction with the recently-passed Congressional appropriations.

We urge you to attend, and hope that you'll mark it on your calendar.

What's Happening With the Properties on AAHP's "Ten Most Endangered" List?

by Sean Boily and Russ Sackett

Changes (mostly good!) have taken place with half of the properties AAHP nominated to the Ten Most Endangered list last spring. Here's a rundown on the latest goings-on:

* **Alaska Nellie's Cabin, Lawing:** This property received one of AAHP's two \$2,500 matching grants. As of late July, more than \$2,700 had been spent on materials and reimbursable labor, primarily on stabilizing the building foundation. AAHP has awarded half of its grant amount already and will award the remainder if it receives documentation of further work.

* **Improved Order of Red Men Lodge, Eagle:** As noted in an Eagle Historical Society newsletter article (*see back page*), rehabilitation work—including jacking and leveling the building and installing a permanent concrete foundation—has effectively preserved the lodge (*see photo*). AAHP has received documentation for much of the contractor's work and has paid EHS the full \$2,500 it requested.



* **Matanuska Colony's Cannery/Creamery and Warehouse, Palmer:** The State of Alaska requested proposals from interested parties to receive ownership of the property. In a victory for preservationists, proposers must show that they can adaptively reuse the buildings by meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; they must have their work certified as such using the rehabilitation tax credit program. Two strong proposals have been received, and it

was anticipated that the successful proposer would be chosen by the end of December.

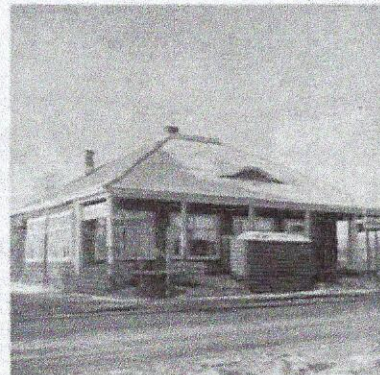
* **Alaska-Juneau Gold Mining Company's Locomotive Shop, Juneau:** Juneau, under the Certified Local Government program, has received grant money to address foundation and exterior sheathing (roof, siding, and windows) problems. Work will be completed by September, 1998. These rehabilitation measures will successfully address the preservation of the Locomotive Shop and should remove it from the "endangered" category.

* **Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka:** The college trustees have agreed to begin a maintenance program for all buildings on campus. The Allen Auditorium is scheduled for minor repairs and repainting this coming summer. The trustees have also agreed to have the campus nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

* **Erskine House, Kodiak:** The building received new insulation last summer addressing one of the major problem areas threatening the building.

* **First Avenue Historic Streetscape, Fairbanks:** Bad news here. The Wear House, a Queen Anne cottage dating from 1907, was burned by the fire department this summer. The owner was advised by a contractor that it would be cheaper to destroy the house and rebuild a copy than to address correcting problems in the original, so the owner followed that advice. No significant activities have occurred to other First Avenue properties.

Russ reports that in regards to the **Victor Holm Cabin in Kasilof**, the Soldotna Historical Society is making a formal inventory of the many items in the cabin. No significant activities are known to have taken place at either the Flat City Historic District (Flat) or Saints Sergius & Herman of Valaam Church (English Bay).



The George C. Thomas Library, part of the First Avenue Streetscape, is a National Historic Landmark.

Members are encouraged to send recent information about the condition of any of the "ten endangered buildings," or other historic structures in Alaska, to either Sean or Russ in care of the AAHP office. Russ can be reached by telephone at 269-8726.

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Special 1998 Membership Offer!

For 1998 only, AAHP is offering its Anchorage individual and family members a special rate to join both AAHP and Anchorage Historic Properties, Inc. (AHPI). I hope our Anchorage members and readers will take this opportunity to support preservation efforts at the local, as well as statewide, level by joining both organizations. Under this plan, joint membership is \$30 for individuals and \$45 for families, a savings of \$5 (15 percent) and \$10 (18 percent) respectively over the regular cost. AHPI is making the same offer to its members.

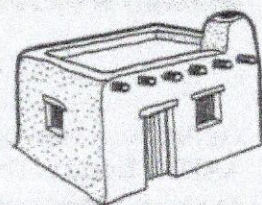
1998 promises to be an interesting year for AAHP. In particular, our Ten Most Endangered Building Preservation Matching Grant Program was very successful in 1997, because AAHP matching funds were used to help restore historic structures at both Lawing (near Seward) and Eagle. We hope to achieve at least the same level of success in 1998. Any donations received specifically for this program are placed in a special dedicated account and are not used for any other purpose. Too many of Alaska's historic structures face an uncertain future! Please consider making an additional contribution to this program in 1998.

THANK YOU for supporting AAHP. Please don't forget to renew your membership for 1998.

Happenings at the National Trust Conference

by Sylvia Elliott

Thanks to generous scholarships from both the National Trust and the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation, I had the opportunity to travel to Santa Fe, New Mexico for this year's National Trust Conference. Also representing Alaska were State Historic Preservation Officer Judy Bittner, National Trust Advisors Russ Sackett and Renee Blahuta, and John F. C. Johnson of the Chugach Heritage Foundation.



Approximately 2,000 National Trust members attended the week-long conference. Activities were held in several different locations within the downtown historic district, which provided everyone the welcome chance to stretch their legs and get in a bit of sight-seeing between sessions. Although Santa Fe received a dusting of snow on October 12, the weather quickly cleared, and daytime temperatures during the conference ranged from 68 to 74 degrees.

The theme of this year's conference, "People and Places: Living in Cultural Landscapes," focused on the ways in which the natural and constructed elements of the landscape have influenced the lives of the American Indian, Hispanic and Anglo cultures in the Southwest. Some of the issues explored included benefits and costs of heritage tourism; protection of archeological sites and artifacts; stewardship of historic sites; innovative approaches to growth management; and authenticity, contemporary design, and functional needs in historic districts.

The Opening Plenary Session, held at the historic St. Francis Cathedral, featured welcoming addresses by several notable officials. My favorite speaker, and the one who held the attention of the audience most noticeably, was Richard West, the Director of the National Museum of the American Indian. West spoke with quiet intensity and personal emotion about one of the conflicts facing the American Indian; the clash of traditional ways and sacred places with economic development.

Choosing which of the 175 concurrent workshops, educational sessions, field sessions and receptions to attend was difficult. I finally decided on what seemed an equitable sampling of each. The first workshop, "Building Support Through Public Relations," proved to be one of the best, especially applicable to AAHP. In addition to practical suggestions for increasing membership and public support, this session also provided the opportunity to talk and problem-solve with other representatives of non-profits.

Another session that I particularly enjoyed was "Rethinking Authenticity and Tradition: What Preservationists Might Learn from Pueblo Indians, Hispanic and Appalachians." Four speakers presented thought-provoking discussions which challenged a long-accepted definition of historic preservation as being limited to the built environment. Rina Swentzell, a New Mexico architect, was the most compelling. She related the historic world view of the southwest American Indian, noting that Pueblo people consider that the land and its traditional uses are more important than architecture. She stated that "our adobe buildings mean nothing to us if we are not able to continue raising our Chiro sheep." People feel that a building has a life cycle: it is born (constructed), exists for a natural lifetime, and then dies as it slowly decays and returns to the earth. Building restoration is not part of this paradigm, and "structures embodying a notion of superiority are anathema to us." Swentzell further asserted that "the American culture's fear of death is reflected in the 'need' to preserve buildings."

Another educational session was "Riding the Tourism Wave Without Losing Your Balance." This session produced fireworks. During speaker Gregory J. Ashworth's presentation, for example, many audience members voiced concern that their cities were evolving into artificially created tourist environments at the expense of authentic residential communities. Ashworth's response to those concerns? "Move." The remainder of Ashworth's presentation time was spent refuting and deflecting subsequent chastisement by audience members.

All in all, I felt very fortunate to attend the 51st National Preservation Conference. It afforded me an excellent opportunity to meet some very interesting people from around the country, while gaining a broader perspective on some of the crucial issues facing the historic preservation movement in the coming century. I appreciate the generosity of the AAHP and the NTHP in helping to fund my trip.

AAHP Holds Strategic Planning Session

On Saturday, November 1, AAHP's Board of Directors convened in a Frontier Building meeting room and spent the day discussing the present status and the future direction of our organization. The Western Regional Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Elizabeth Goldstein, was there to facilitate the discussion as was Anthony Veerkamp, a staff member from NTHP's San Francisco office. Thanks to their skilled direction, the meeting moved swiftly, and by day's end, the Board had a more definite sense of its goal orientation. As would be expected, however, the day brought forth as many questions as answers. Stay tuned!



Board members attending AAHP's Strategic Planning Retreat included (from left to right) President Gillian Smythe, Chuck Hawley, Executive Director Bill Coghill, Russ Sackett, Sylvia Elliott, and NTHP staffer Anthony Veerkamp. Elizabeth Goldstein, NTHP's Western Region Director, stands at the right

JOIN US AND PRESERVE ALASKA'S HISTORY!

Membership runs from January 1 through December 31. Benefits include...

- * the quarterly AAHP newsletter
- * workshops and seminars
- * annual meeting
- * historic preservation advocacy

— Student	\$10	— Contributor	\$50
— Individual	\$15	— Friend	\$100
— Family.....	\$25	— Sponsor	\$250
— Non-Profit.....	\$25	— Benefactor	\$500

PLEASE NOTE ANY CHANGE TO YOUR MAILING LABEL.

Donations to AAHP are tax deductible as allowed under IRS regulations.

I/we would also like to make a tax deductible gift of \$ _____ to the AAHP Top Ten Most Endangered Buildings preservation matching grant account.

Check enclosed for \$ _____. WE THANK YOU!

Please return to: The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation
645 West Third Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2124

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THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1998

Endangered Historic Properties

To increase public awareness of endangered historic properties, the Alaska Association for historic Preservation identifies the State's ten most endangered historic properties during National Historic Preservation Week each May. The properties on this list are nominated by individuals and historic preservation organizations throughout the state. AAHP requests your assistance in identifying historic properties that are endangered. To nominate a property to the endangered list, please complete the following by March 31, 1998, and mail to :

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation
645 West Third Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501-2124

Property name nominated: _____

Location: _____

Property Owner and address: _____

Name if individual preparing form and Address: _____

Phone - Day: _____

Evening: _____

Property Description:

(complete other side)

Property history:

Why is property endangered?

Activities under way to save property:

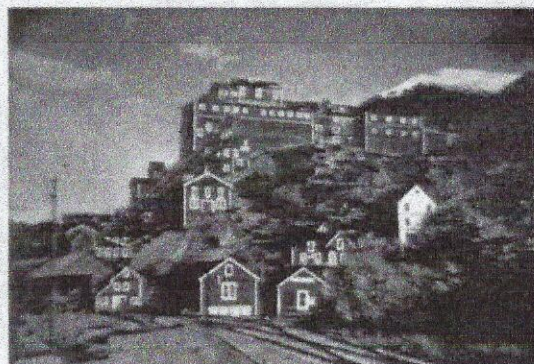
Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places: yes no

Provide a photograph of the building with this nomination.

NEWS about Significant Alaska Historical Properties

Senator Ted Stevens has provided for approximately \$4 million in the Fiscal Year 1999 budget for the National Park Service to acquire buildings at the **Kennicott Mine and Mill Complex**, near McCarthy. That funding package passed Congress, and all indications are that it will survive President Clinton's veto pen.

Restoration and renovation work is nearing completion on the **Old St. Joseph's Catholic Church** in Nome. When completed, the building promises to be the community's centerpiece. The old church has been moved from its temporary site on private property, where it was used as a storage warehouse for over 50 years, to a new steel pile foundation on the city "square." The building's exterior has been restored to its original appearance, an effort which included the reconstruction of the 100 foot belfry and spire. A 10 foot tall illuminated cross once again is a beacon in the arctic landscape. The building interior was removed in its entirety, refinished, and reinstalled in conjunction with a modern insulation and mechanical heating and ventilation system. All original lighting fixtures have been removed and replaced with new ones, in historic character. Additional up-lighting has also been installed to provide exhibition space lighting levels. A new reception area desk and two single bathrooms have been provided in the area under the choir loft, and a "chapel" addition has been provided, emulating the form of the original chapel. The park landscaping and lighting is incomplete, but has been designed to complement the historic St. Joseph's Church building. The City of Nome is planning to use the building for special events, and possibly as a Nome/Gold Rush interpretive center. **NOTE:** The building's Grand Opening took place on December 14. We hope to describe that event in the next issue of our newsletter.



The Kennecott Mill Complex, 1946.

The Fairbanks Historic Preservation Association received a direct appropriation of approximately \$50,000 from the state legislature this year to prevent the destruction of the **Fairbanks Coal Bunkers**. Part of the money was spent to dismantle the structure. It now sits in a pile on an adjacent property. No immediate efforts are planned to re-erect the structure.

At the **Independence Mine Camp**, north of Palmer, the Old Bunkhouse (Dormitory #2) received a new foundation and floor system this past summer. This action took place because an inspection of the building revealed that the condition of both foundation and floor was worse than originally thought; specifically, all beams and floor joists at the northern end of the building were totally rotted away, and the northern wall had sunk 8 inches below grade. Alaska State Parks is once again considering a concession operation in the area.

A Fairbanks architectural/engineering firm conducted a building condition assessment of the town's **Masonic Temple**. The results indicate that the building has major structural problems and will require a large budget to correct. The Masons are now attempting to address what to do with the building.

The **Seward Railroad Depot** is being rehabilitated. The Chugach Alaska Corporation has negotiated a 20-year lease, with option to purchase, to use the building as an interpretation center. The corporation's intent is to purchase the property before it is put into service in order to obtain the 20% tax credit available for respectful rehabilitation of designated historic buildings. This project is scheduled to be completed by May 1, 1998.

Members are in the initial planning stages for a **log cabin preservation workshop** to be held in 1998. We'll publish details about the workshop as they become available.

How others see our work...

Redmen Restoration
from the Fall 1997 "Eagle Historical Society and Museums Newsletter"

"Since 1993, EHSM has been working towards rehabilitating the historic Redmen Hall. Phase II, which was completed October 15th, included a new cement foundation, all weather wood pony walls, support beams, floor joists and insulation.

The contract was awarded in June to Steve Nelson for less than \$28,000. Steve, a long time Eagle resident, has worked on other historic buildings in Eagle and in the Yukon-Charley National Preserve. This became a family project to complete, as Steve was assisted by his wife, Patty and teenagers Zac and Emily. Even their youngest children, Luke and Jena, helped shovel dirt and run errands. The family managed to complete the project while running their gift shop and working for the National Park Service....

Another big project has been completed. Taking on Phase II (new foundation), to stabilize the 1904 historic Redmen Hall, was a very large project for the EHSM to undertake. Funds for the project were received from the following sources:

- * Rasmuson Foundation, \$6,000
- * Nellie Briggs, \$1,318
- * Bill Bowie, \$1,000 Cdn.
- * Member Donation, \$1,405
- * 1995 Quilt Raffle, \$3,816
- * 1996 Quilt Raffle, \$4,000
- * **Alaska Association for Historic Preservation matching grant, \$2,500**

Lots more needs to be done, but the new foundation makes the Redmen Hall much more comfortable."

- Elva Scott, EHS Newsletter Editor

* * * * *

Bill Coghill, AAHP's longtime executive director, has headed south for the winter. He has resigned as both executive director and membership chair. He will, however, remain on the board. He'll return in the spring. In the meantime, we all wish him well in sun and warmth that now surround him!

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