

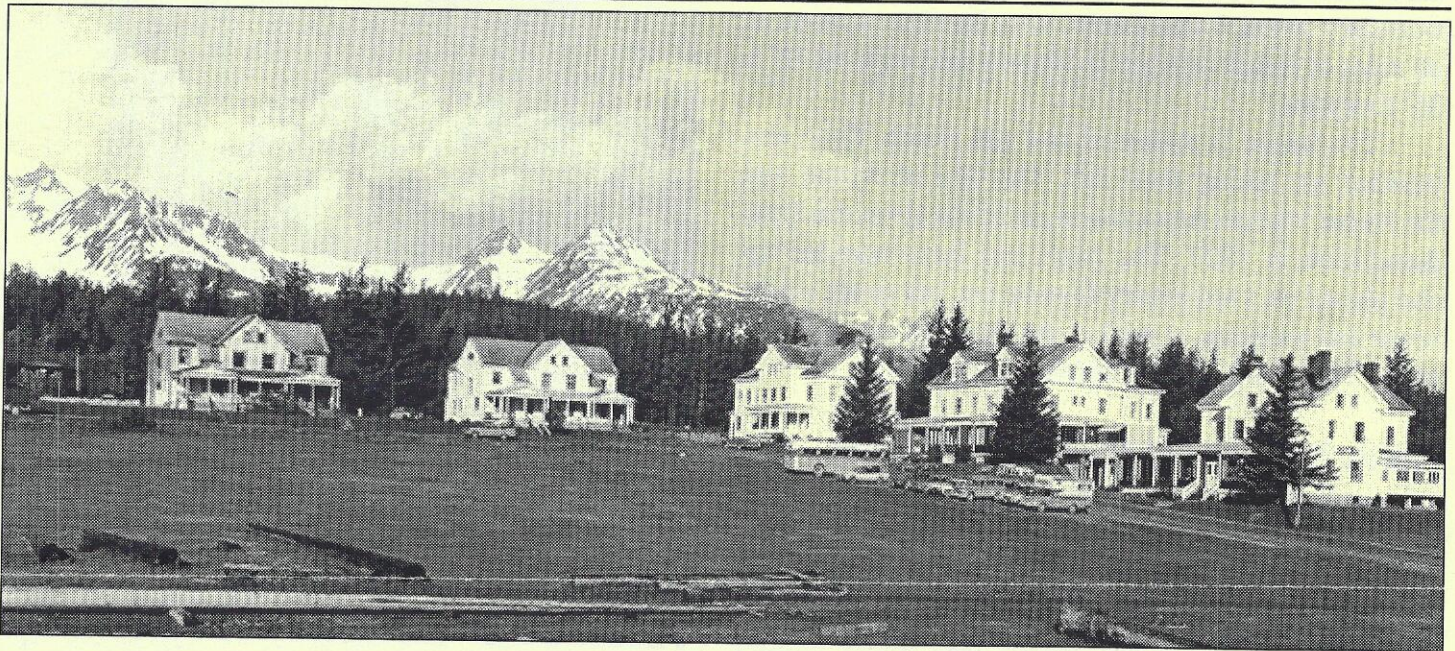


THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

200 West 34th Avenue #1184, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

JULY 2001

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Top Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties of 2001

Sean Boily

Fort William H. Seward, Haines

Ten Most Endangered 1999, 2000, 2001

Fort William H. Seward (see photo above) was established in 1898 to secure a military presence in Alaska's gold rush frontier. It was garrisoned from 1902 to 1945. Once known as the Chilcoot Barracks, Fort Seward was Alaska's only military installation for almost twenty years. The fort originally consisted of approximately eighty-five buildings, mostly constructed between 1904 and 1906.

Development pressures in areas around the fort as well as within its boundaries threaten this remarkable structural complex. The properties remain privately owned. Property owners and the city of Haines are interested in developing design guidelines and other planning documents to assist in the fort's preservation. This property was designated a national historic landmark in 1978.

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2001 Matching Funds Preservation Grants

Sean Boily

Each year, the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AAHP) sponsors a fund-matching preservation grant, made available to projects identified by AAHP as Alaska's ten most endangered historic properties. Following the grant program's first five successful consecutive years, AAHP proudly announces the grant recipients for the program's sixth year, 2001.

The Rebekah Lodge, located on the First Avenue Historic Streetscape in Fairbanks, is to receive a \$3000 fund-matching grant for the final phase of work that will take this building from an endangered status to being an operational historic place. The grant will assist the owners in replacing the deteriorated electrical system, painting and protecting the building's wood exterior, and restoring eight of the building's original windows. This historic property was originally constructed in 1907 to serve two businesses: a doctor's office (in front), and a bathhouse (in back). After the bathhouse pipes froze and

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Jimmy H. Doolittle Home, Nome

Ten Most Endangered 2000, 2001

This is the childhood home of the legendary Jimmy Doolittle, built by his father Frank in 1900 (see photo, right). Frank came to Nome to search for gold in 1899, bringing his wife, Rebecca, and his son with him. Jimmy is famed as an aviation and army officer who led a decisive bombing raid on Tokyo during World War II (1942). He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery. The building is a two-story wood frame house, with bracketed eaves at all sides of house (unique in Nome), and with an 18' x 36' footprint.

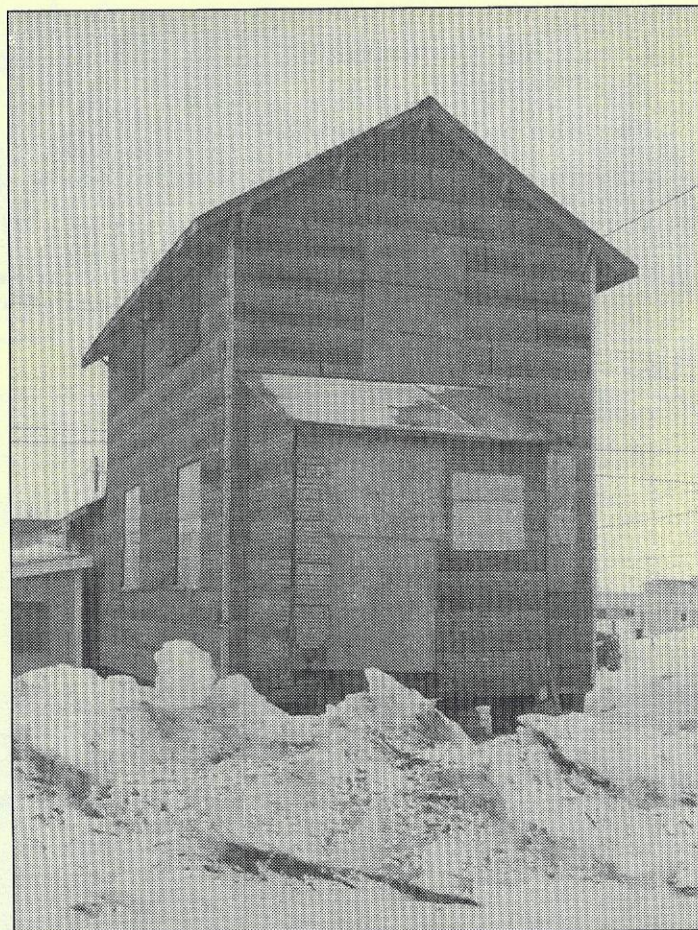
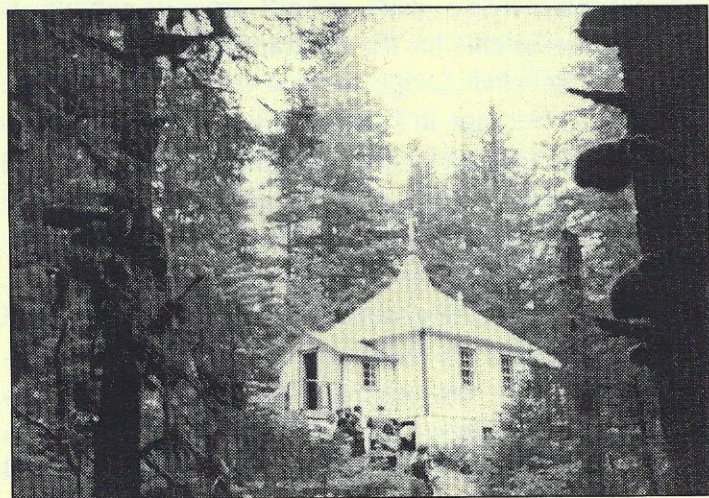
The house is unheated and run down. Time and weather are taking their toll. The city of Nome and the Nome Visitors Association saved the structure from demolition in 1997. The place has been boarded up and placed on a temporary foundation, but needs a new home and purpose, as well as the necessary restoration work. They are looking for funding sources.

Saints Sergius and Herman of Valaam Church, Spruce Island

Ten Most Endangered 2000, 2001

Location: New Valaam site (Monks' Lagoon), Spruce Island (near Kodiak), Alaska

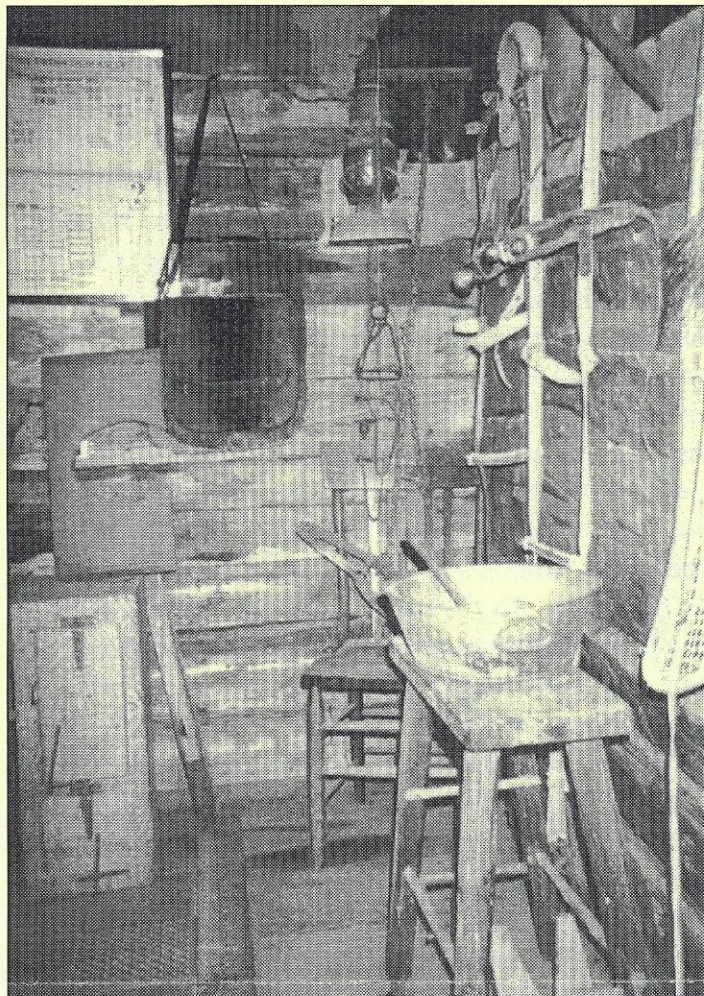
The wood-sided log chapel (see photo below) was built between 1894 and 1896. It is constructed on pilings over the sacred gravesite of Saint Herman of Alaska (died Dec. 1836). The chapel was built of spruce logs by the Ouzinkie people. This building represents a significant and rich history of the Russian Orthodox faith and the continuance of the remote Spruce Island Monastery. The monastery was founded in the early 1800s with the arrival of the monk Herman, who established Spruce Island as a refuge, founding



Jimmy H. Doolittle Home, Nome, Alaska

a monastic school and orphanage. Governor Wrangell granted Father Herman exclusive governing authority of Spruce Island and its residents in 1831, by issuing regulations which applied to Aleuts, Creoles, and Russians alike. Herman was canonized Saint Herman of Alaska after his death, and the monastery has continued to the present day. This monastery is recognized by modern state and local governments as a significant historic place and a vibrant contributor to the cultural fabric of not only Alaska, but the greater cultural heritage of this nation. This chapel is at the core of the monastic life, and its deterioration is widely felt. Spruce Island Monastery is regularly visited by pilgrims from all over the world, as well as by Alaskans who seek out this place out of personal interest and respect.

Piling supports are rotting out and collapse is imminent. Work on repairing pilings will inevitably lead to the discovery of wider-spread deterioration in need of repair. Temporary supports were provided in August of 1999. The purchase of materials is an obstacle the monastery faces, having only minimal funding. This property is on the National Register of Historic Places.



Interior view of the Victor Holm cabin in Kasilof

Victor Holm Cabin, Kasilof

Ten Most Endangered 1995, 1997, 2000, 2001

The 13' x 15' log structure represents the pre-gold rush homestead building style in Alaska. Several associated outbuildings also constructed by Victor Holm are part of this developing cultural heritage site.

The Victor Holm cabin is considered the oldest surviving homesteader cabin on the Kenai Peninsula south of the Kasilof River. It was constructed around 1890 by Victor Holm, a Finnish American who came to the Peninsula to work as a salmon processor on the Kasilof River. He obtained a homestead patent and lived at this location until the mid-1940s, when he left Alaska. The property was purchased from Mr. Holm in 1948 by Charles and Elfrieda Lewis, who lived in the cabin and used it as the district post office until the mid-1950s. Mr. Holm left a great deal of his belongings, which the Lewises recognized as having cultural value, and made the effort to preserve by making a time capsule of the homesteader era within the cabin.

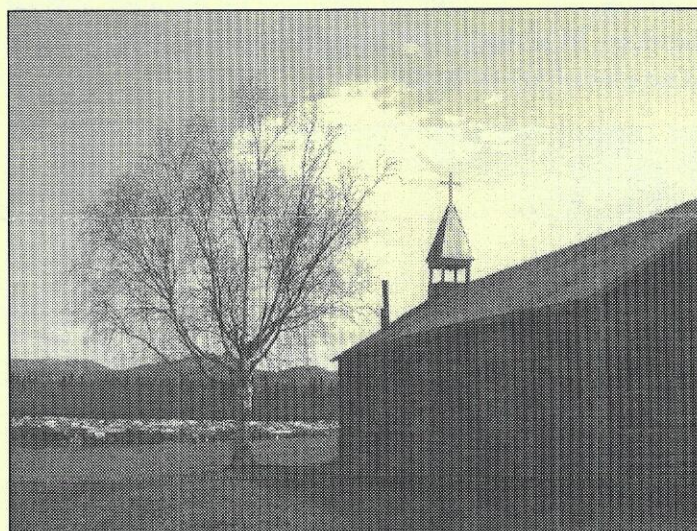
In December of 1999, the Victor Holm property was donated to the Kachamak Heritage Land Trust by

Elfrieda Lewis and her daughter Anne, with the understanding that it be preserved complete with contents and made available to the public.

The cabin and accompanying outbuildings are slowly deteriorating and in desperate need of conservation. The nearby embankment of the Kasilof River is also rapidly eroding, causing an additional threat to the buildings and artifacts on the property.

The Kachamak Heritage Land Trust has efforts underway to establish a conservation plan, with specific efforts to have a professional evaluation of the structures to determine the scope of conservation/restoration effort. KHLT has received a \$2500 grant from the Land Trust Alliance Northwest to spearhead this effort. Following evaluation, funds will immediately need to be raised to begin conservation in areas identified in that analysis as most critical.

This property is on the National Register of Historic Places.



Historic St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Eagle City

Ten Most Endangered 2001

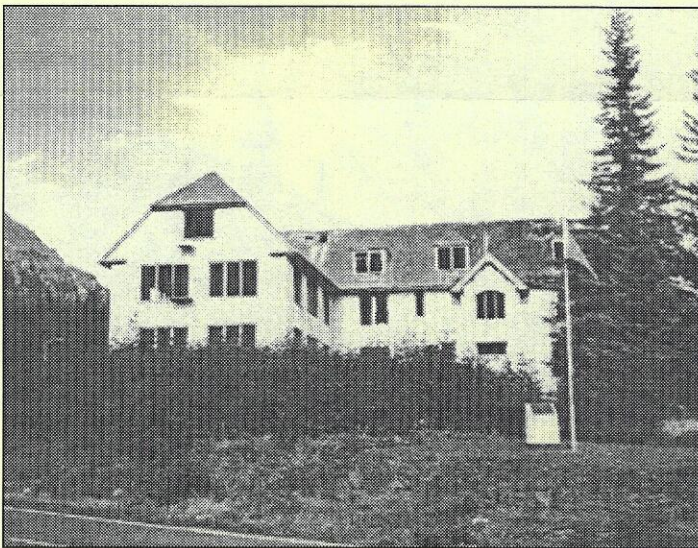
This is a log church building, located on Block 1, lots 10 & 11, Townsite of Eagle (see photo, above).

Reverend and Mrs. James Kirk, Presbyterian missionaries, arrived in Eagle in 1898. After one year's residence, they built the present church with the rectory next door. The last Presbyterian missionary left Eagle in 1905 and the church buildings were sold to the Episcopal church. Priests or lay readers were assigned to Eagle until 1951, after which time the church was served only intermittently by church workers. In 1936 a large two-story rectory replaced the original single-story building. In 1943 the original church was rebuilt,

using the same design except for changing the entrance to the river side of the building. On Dec. 23, 1996, the large rectory burned to the ground. The church suffered enough structural damage that it was not used again. On Oct. 19, 1999, the Episcopal Diocese deeded the church buildings to the Eagle Historical Society and Museums after determining the organization was the only one interested in restoring the historic building.

Since receiving the deed, volunteers have worked to weatherize the building by patching up the roof and sections of the walls. The interior has been cleaned out and painted. Some funds have been raised by a quilt raffle. These will be used to replace broken and missing windows. Additional funds are needed to replace the foundation and roof.

Original furnishings remain in the church. Exhibits are back on the walls, telling the history of the church and personnel serving the area. The church is now open for tourists to visit on the daily summer walking tour. The church may also be used for special services, held during the summer months only as there is no electricity or heat.



Jesse Lee Home, Seward

Ten Most Endangered 1993, 1994, 2000, 2001

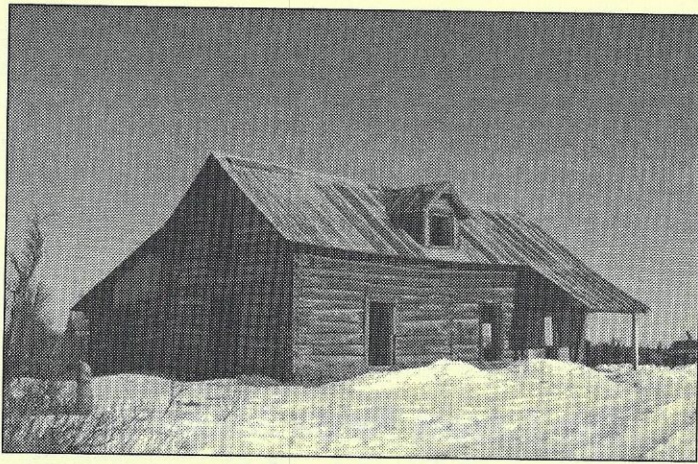
The Jesse Lee Home for Children in Seward (see photo, above) is the second of three institutions of that name. The first opened at Unalaska in 1890. The home moved to Seward in 1926, in part to reduce operating costs. Following damage to the home in the March 1964 earthquake, the home relocated to Anchorage in 1966.

Founded in Unalaska in 1890 and funded by the Women's Home Missionary Society of the United Methodist Church, the original Jesse Lee Home was a children's orphanage. It provided refuge, education,

and care for children from any ethnic background whose parents had died, were ill, or otherwise were unable to care for them. The name, Jesse Lee Home, honors a pioneer circuit-riding Methodist preacher. Rampant tuberculosis and the 1919 influenza epidemic left many Alaska Native children homeless. Responding to the increased need, the Methodist Women's Home Missionary Society decided to construct a new, larger children's home at Seward and close its homes at Unalaska and Nome. In 1923, the federal government deeded one hundred acres north of the City of Seward to the Methodist Women's Home Missionary Society for the Jesse Lee Home. This included land for dormitories, agriculture, animal husbandry, and a territorial school. An average of 120 children lived at the home. The "family concept" was practiced at the home. Children were divided into groups of about ten and were assigned two house parents who had rooms near the children and ate family-style meals with them. Fearful the home was an easy war target, the U.S. Army asked that it be temporarily closed in 1942. The children were moved to Native boarding schools at Eklutna, north of Anchorage, and the Wrangell Institute in southeast Alaska. The home's buildings were painted in camouflage because of their proximity to Fort Raymond, established in 1942.

It should be noted that this was the home of Benny Benson, Jr., the artist who designed the flag of the state of Alaska, and is the location of the first raising of our flag on July 9, 1927. The Jesse Lee Home is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The building has been vacant for a number of years. Interior finishes and all windows and doors have been removed and the building is deteriorating. In 1994, the Seward Historic Preservation Commission received a grant from the Office of History and Archaeology to have a National Register nomination prepared. The property was successfully placed on the National Register of Historic Places. No actions have been taken to physically preserve the property. It is still endangered. The Jesse Lee Home has been consistently cited by Seward residents as a high priority for preservation, but many feel the scope of work is beyond the capabilities of the community. The state legislature has introduced bill 96, which would enable the state to acquire the property and manage it in a way that recognizes its contribution to the state's history.



The state parks lack the resources to adequately protect the house at this time, but the parks superintendent has expressed an interest in working with the historical society and other entities to restore the property. In 1999, the parks service began stationing the campground hosts at the house during the summer months to deter vandalism. Seven years ago, local volunteers started making the effort to clear the property of trash, and have spoken to young people in the area to educate them to the building's value. Now a historic tour is made a couple times a year to raise awareness. Volunteers also have made some effort to complete minor tasks and help stabilize the building.

Kasilof Winter Watchman's House

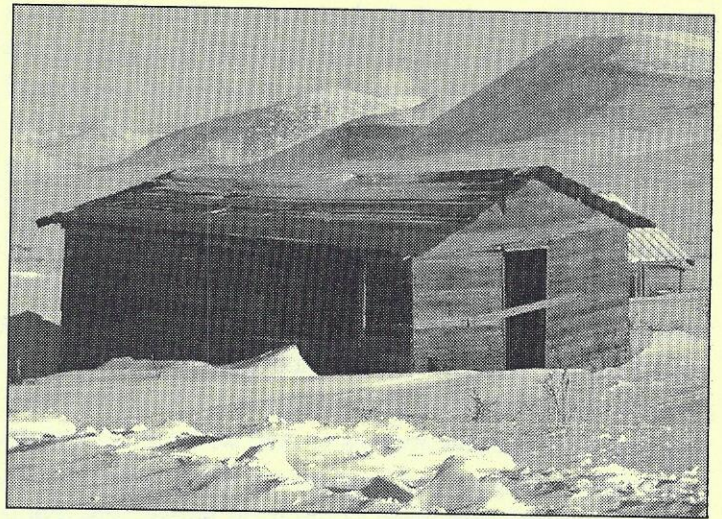
Ten Most Endangered 2001

Location: North side of the mouth of the Kasilof River, central Kenai Peninsula

The Watchman's House is a two-story log house, roughly 26' x 36', with attached shed, porch, and dormers (see photo, above). Log construction implements both dove-tail and lap-lock techniques. The interior has remnants of tongue and groove flooring and wall-paper. Parts of the exterior are sheathed with cannery tin sheets.

An unverified source suggests 1891 construction, while later documentation refers to late 1890s work. This is one of only seven known structures built prior to 1900 surviving on the Kenai Peninsula. The house was the home of the Alaska Packers Association cannery superintendent, Harry Weatherby, a skilled photographer, whose photos documenting the fishing industry of the era are in the State of Alaska archives. After the cannery closed, the building was used in turns by local homesteaders of the area, through the 1930s. After that time it was abandoned, and used for local parties, and by squatters, both of which caused considerable damage. In 1962 the state of Alaska gained title to a forty-four-acre parcel, which included the house. In the 1990s, the Kenai Area Plan designated the site to become a state park.

The house has been heavily vandalized over the years. All windows and doors are gone, exposing the interior to the elements. The building has the unfortunate combination of being in a secluded area (difficult to monitor) and accessible by road. Being on the beach it is a party spot, and vandals have torn off and burned many parts of the finer parts of the building. The log components and the roof remain intact, and in fair condition (probably because the building is now so well ventilated).



Wyatt Earp's Cabin, Nome

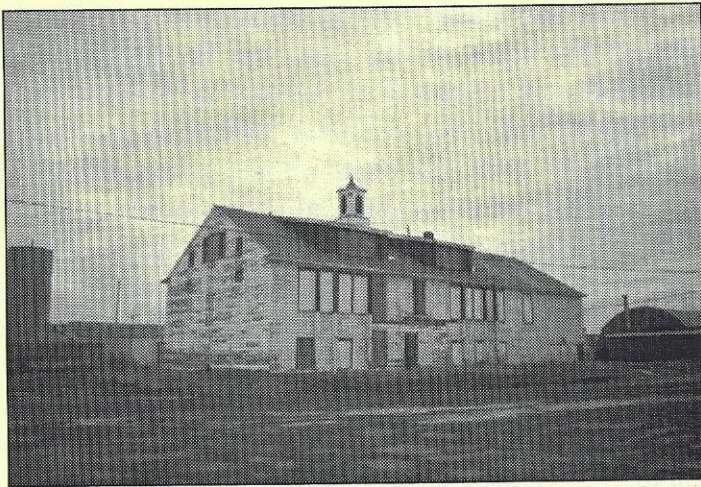
Ten Most Endangered 2001

Wyatt Earp lived in Nome from 1899–1901. He started and ran the Dexter Saloon, the most prosperous drinking and gambling establishment in Nome at the time of the Goldrush. The ninety-plus-year-old structure is currently being used as a temporary residence (see photo, above). It is in dire need of rehabilitation to stabilize, and guide reconstruction of historic finishes. The Alaska Department of Transportation is currently considering construction a road turnout and wayside at the site. This will effectively make the site an attraction, and further justify rehabilitation work

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Unalakleet

Ten Most Endangered 2001

The Bureau of Indian Affairs school building was constructed in Unalakleet in the 1930s (see photo, next page). This two-story building with Georgian Revival elements, including a cupola with functioning bell, remains a distinct landmark within the community.



BIA school building in Unalakleet

Many residents attended elementary school here until its closure in the 1980s. The building remains in its original setting, and the concrete foundation and wood framing appear to be sound. The building, with windows boarded up, is deteriorating due to the harsh climate and lack of maintenance. The owner, the Bering Strait School District, uses the building as storage and has no plans to restore it. The native village of Unalakleet is working toward acquiring and restoring the building for use as office space and as a center for community activities. The village is looking for funding and remediation options to deal with the hazardous materials (asbestos and lead paint). The National Park Service recently prepared a condition assessment report and determination of eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

U.S. Signal Corps Naval Radio Apartment House, Unalaska

Ten Most Endangered 2001

The U.S. Signal Corps Naval Radio Apartment House is the only surviving pre-World War II government building on Amaknak Island that still sits on its original foundation. The imposing, sharply-gabled brick building is one of the more striking buildings in the Unalaska landscape, with many architectural embellishments characteristic of the Tudor Revival style. The basement walls preserve a unique series of frescos painted by military personnel during the war. The radio house has been damaged since the initial Japanese attack on Dutch Harbor in 1942, when the grounds and building sustained direct bomb hits, shattering all of the original windows, and leaving the brick facing pockmarked by shrapnel. After the war, the building was mothballed and never re-used. The framework is still solid, but the brick veneer is left

damaged by fifty years of Aleutian winds and rain. The interior shows evidence of vandalism and residential squatter use. The roof joists and trusses are in fairly good condition, but floor systems and stairs need to be rebuilt. The Ounalashka Corporation is interested in rehabilitating the building, but cannot afford the funding for construction.

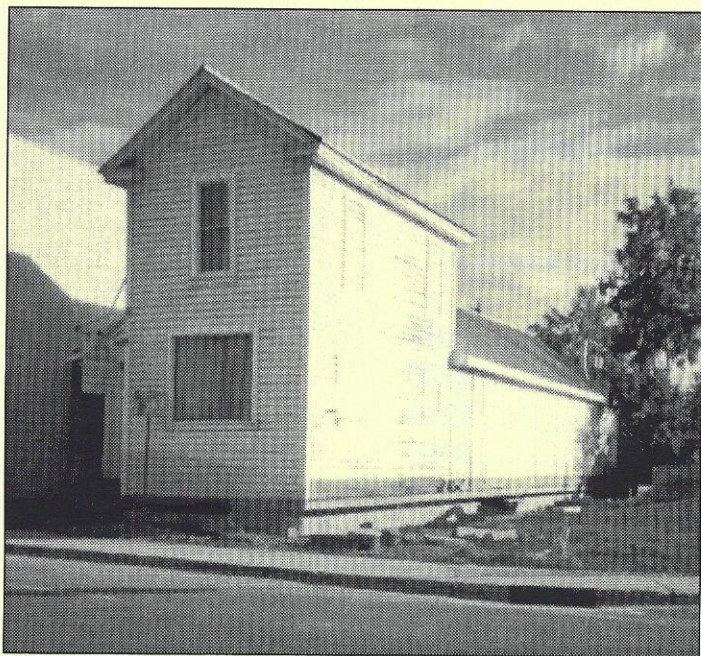
(Photo not available at time of printing; Please contact AAHP if interested in this project, and one will be made available.)

The Latest News About Our Membership

Russ Sackett

AAHP wishes to express its sincere appreciation to our 183 members for your support in 2001. We are 63 members short of last year's membership total of 245. Reminders for membership renewal was mailed to absent friends in June. Geographically, 118 members (64%) are from Southcentral Alaska (of which 79 are from Anchorage), 23 (13%) are from Southeast Alaska (of which 12 are from Juneau), 29 (16%) are from the Interior (of which 17 are from Fairbanks), 11 (6%) are from out of state, and the remaining are from Alaska's western and southwestern regions. Categorically, the majority of memberships (96 or 52%) have joined at the Individual level, followed by Family (21%), Non-Profit (13%), Contributor (8%), and Friend (3%) with Corporate and Student making up the remainder. AAHP wishes to recognize the following non-profits for their memberships:

- Alaska State Library (Juneau)
- Alaska State Museum (Juneau)
- Anchorage Historic Properties, Inc. (Anchorage)
- Anchorage Libraries (Anchorage)
- Carrie McLain Museum (Nome)
- Chugiak-Eagle River Historical Society
- Copper Valley Historical Society
- Cordova Historical Society (Cordova)
- Delta Historical Society (Delta Junction)
- Eagle Historical Society (Eagle)
- Hope Sunrise Historical Society (Hope)
- Ketchikan Museum (Ketchikan)
- Kodiak Historical Society (Kodiak)
- Main Street Fairbanks (Fairbanks)
- Museum of Alaska Transportation & Industry (Wasilla)
- Palmer Historical Society (Palmer)
- Russian Orthodox Diocese
- Talkeetna Historical Society (Talkeetna)
- Tanana-Yukon Historical Society (Fairbanks)



The Rebekah Lodge, in Fairbanks

Grants, continued from page 1:

were destroyed during the winter of 1912, the building was purchased by the Oddfellows society, who used it as a meeting hall up through 1963, when it was purchased by the Golden North Rebekah Lodge #4, the owner of the property today. The Rebekah Lodge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in June of 1980, and has since been added to the State of Alaska Heritage Resources Survey. This property received an AAHP preservation grant in 2000 to assist in the replacement of the building foundation and the stabilization of the structural frame.

The chapel of Saints. Sergius and Herman of Valaam, located on Spruce Island (near Kodiak), is to receive a \$3000 fund-matching grant for the materials associated with the replacement of the log piling foundation that supports the chapel and forms the grotto around the gravesite of Saint Herman of Alaska, Defender of Alaska Native Peoples (who arrived in Alaska as part of the First Russian Mission in 1794). The building was constructed in 1894 on what is now called Monks' Lagoon to celebrate the centennial of the First Russian Mission, and has been renovated a number of times in the past century. However, in spite of the care it has received, the harsh and wet marine climate at the mouth of Cook Inlet has taken its toll on the structure, especially where logwork is near or at grade. Today the site is an object of an annual pilgrimage during the month of August, and serves as the center of a small ascetic religious community. The property is being nominated through the National Park Service as a national historic landmark.

Ten Most Endangered Grant Program

Russ Sackett

This year marks the seventh year that AAHP has awarded matching grants to properties listed on its Ten Most Endangered Historic Properties in Alaska (see article this issue). This year also marks the first time members have contributed over \$2,000 to this grant program. Fifty of the 183 members have contributed to this program with contributions ranging from \$5 (three members) to \$200 (one member). AAHP appreciates the growing interest in this program and thanks the following members for contributing to this fund.

Joan Antonson	Sally Ramaglia
Earl Beistline	Kathy Ruddy
Nancy Bird	Matthew Reckard
Judith Bittner	Katherine Richardson
Sean Boily	Bernhard Richert
Wayne Bouwens	Russ Sackett
Verda Carey	Hellen Schmidt
John Chenoweth	Fran Seager-Boss
Janet Clemens	Beatrice Shepard
Richard Corbet	Skagway Convention and
Ed Crittenden	Visitors Center
Marie Darlin	Barbara Smith
Emily DeForst	Mary Smith
Leigh Dennison	Jay Snodderly
Eagle Historical Society	Holly Stinson
William Flynn	Amanda Welsh
Mary Grisco	
Frank Gruber	
Alma Harris	
Larue Hellenthan	
Terry Hyer	
Robert Jackson	
Janet Kincaid	
Christy Konigsberg	
Donna Krier	
Wilda Marston	
David Mathews	
Janet McCabe	
John McKinnon	
Bob Mitchell	
Damaris Mortvedt	
Stephen Ondeck	
Grace Pleasants	
James Poulson	

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

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

___ Student	\$15	___ Corporate	\$100
___ Individual	\$20	___ Friend	\$100
___ Non-Profit	\$25	___ Sponsor	\$250
___ Family	\$30	___ Benefactor	\$500
___ Contributor	\$50		

Donations to AAHP are tax deductible as allowed under IRS regulations
I/we would also like to make a tax-deductible gift of \$_____ to AAHP Top Ten Most Endangered
Historic Properties preservation matching grant account.

Check enclosed for \$_____. WE THANK YOU
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