



THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Summer 2016

Volume 34, Issue 2

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10 Most Endangered Historic Properties for 2016

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AAHP) presents this year's 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties. These properties are eligible to apply for the 2016 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties grant from AAHP. This grant supports preservation efforts for the selected property, which is announced in the fall. Here are the ten properties nominated for 2016:



Buckner Building, Whittier

The Buckner Building was built in 1952 as a "city under one roof" for use by the military. It is the only American Army building of its kind in the world, and it is now in danger from vandalism and neglect.



Pilgrim Hot Springs, North of Nome

Pilgrim Hot Springs Mission was surveyed and platted as a homestead in 1905. The 320-acre property changed ownership many times over the years, serving as a roadhouse, bathhouse, and saloon, and later an orphanage. Since the 1950s it has been a recreational area.

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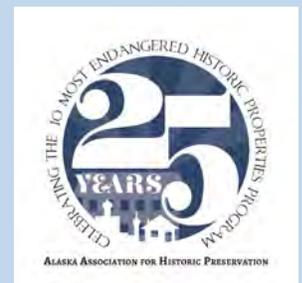
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Special Invitation

As the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties program, we invite you to help us assure these efforts continue in the future. Please join us for the second annual Dinner and Silent Auction benefit that supports this grant program on October 8 in Anchorage. (More details are on Page 3.)



About AAHP

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AAHP) was founded in 1982 as a private, nonprofit corporation. AAHP is dedicated to the preservation of Alaska's prehistoric and historic heritage as manifested in its buildings and sites. AAHP aids in historic preservation projects across Alaska and monitors and supports legislation to promote historic preservation, serving as a liaison between local, statewide, and national historic preservation groups. Additionally, AAHP publishes a quarterly newsletter and holds educational workshops.

President's Message



Anne Pollnow
AAHP President

Greetings, Members!

This past May, AAHP's 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties Committee came together to select a list of historic treasures whose welfare is of concern and in need of immediate attention. This newsletter provides an overview of the selected properties. AAHP identifies threatened and endangered properties, and with your financial contribution and through the 10 Most grant program, we offer assistance in their preservation. Concurrent with professional and technical support, AAHP awards grant funding to serve as seed money to leverage further backing from other sources for preservation projects. We announce the recipient of this grant award at our annual membership meeting in the fall.

AAHP very much appreciates your support for the 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties Grant Program and looks forward to sharing rehabilitation, revitalization, and recovery successes as a result. Look for event details for our annual fall fundraiser benefiting this worthy program.

This newsletter also contains happenings, stories, and interesting tidbits compiled by our brilliant staff and board members. With the bustle of summer, I thank them for taking the time to contribute. Please enjoy!

Have a wonderful rest of your summer,

Anne

New Superintendent for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation is pleased to join our colleagues at the National Park Service (NPS) in welcoming Ben Bobowski – the newly selected Superintendent for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) – to Alaska.

Ben's wide range of experiences puts him in a unique position to help WRST navigate the unique challenges it faces. His educational background includes a Bachelor of Science Degree in forestry and wildlife management from Rutgers University and Masters and Ph.D. degrees from Utah State University, focusing on Range Science. His long and very diverse history with NPS includes several collateral duties for the Washington, D.C., Support Office. He served as a Range Ecologist at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, as the Director of Science at the Grand Canyon, and as the Chief of Resource Management at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Most recently, he served Rocky Mountain National Park, first as Chief of Resource Stewardship and then as the Acting Superintendent. Several universities have also benefited from his activities as affiliate faculty over the years.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve forms the largest area under management by the National Park Service in the United States. Located in the southcentral corner of Alaska bordering Canada, the Wrangell-St. Elias NPP is home to the historic Kennecott copper mine and townsite, currently undergoing major preservation activities by the National Park Service.

We at AAHP look forward to having Ben in Alaska. Welcome!

Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!



SAVE THE DATE! October 8

10 Most Endangered Historic Properties Fundraiser



The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation is pleased to announce that we will be hosting our second annual fundraiser to benefit Alaska's 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties on October 8th, 2016, at the historic Pioneer School House in Anchorage.

Along with entertainment and fun, the event will help raise awareness and funds for AAHP's grant program that supports preservation activities for endangered historic properties in Alaska. Each spring, these endangered properties are selected from open nominations submitted by individuals and organizations, and they include both historic and prehistoric sites.

Please put this fun and important event on your calendar—and we look forward to seeing you!

Highlights from the 2016 State Historic Preservation Workshop

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) Annual Workshop was held April 18, 2016, in Anchorage. The all-day program opened with SHPO's welcome, discussion of the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, 50 Films from 50 States, and Alaska's Statewide Historic Preservation Plan.

The session on Human Remains, state law, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) dealt with the various land categories to which NAGPRA applies, and noted the frequent need to consult with regional archaeologists and the need for a model language for dealing with human remains. A panel discussion on Section 106 Mitigation dealt with various topics, including cultural youth programs.

Several visiting members of the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) spoke to their particular areas of expertise. ACHP is now an independent Executive Branch agency, no longer within the Department of Interior. ACHP has 23 members and a staff of 43, with 16 doing Section 106 reviews. Most Section 106 consultations are resolved at the SHPO level.

The workshop concluded with the announcement of the new OHA web page, which can be found at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/index>.

FONSS Tours Fully Subscribed for 2016

For the fourth year, Friends of Nike Site Summit (FONSS) public tours of the restoration at Site Summit have been fully subscribed. Since 2012, more than 1,400 people have toured with FONSS volunteers and Nike veterans. To be added to the notification list for 2017 tour dates when they are determined early next spring, please send an e-mail to fons2007@gmail.com with the subject line "2017 notification list."

If you are on the list, you will be notified approximately 2 weeks prior to any general public announcement of the tour dates, giving you the first opportunity to choose your tour date.



Radar towers of Nike Site Summit can be seen from downtown Anchorage.

10 Most Endangered Historic Properties for 2016 *(Continued from Page 1)*



Kake Cannery National Historic Landmark, Kake

One of the 134 salmon canneries constructed in Southeast Alaska between 1878 and 1949, the Salmon Cannery was begun in 1906 by the Kake Trading & Packing Company. This cannery became Kake's first industrial development.



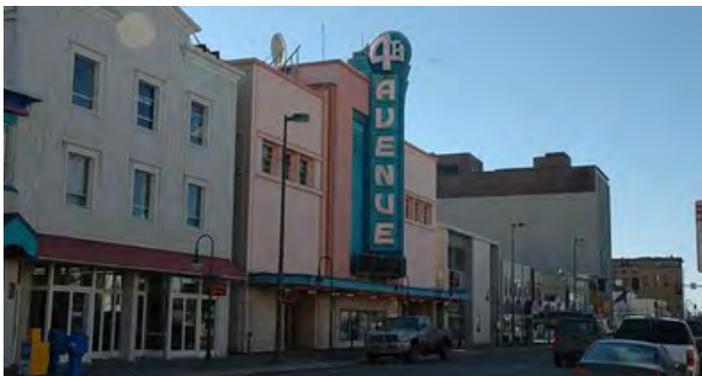
Kate Kennedy House, McCarthy

This three-room frame house is approximately 100 years old. In 1898, the house's original owner, Kate Kennedy, followed her husband to the Klondike, eventually settling in McCarthy. By 1929, she was on her way to becoming the town's largest property owner as well as its most successful businessperson.



3 German Bachelors' Cabin, Talkeetna

This log cabin was built in 1936 and is located at one of the most photographed locations in Talkeetna. The cabin is part of the National Register of Historic Places-listed Talkeetna Historic District.



4th Avenue Theatre, Anchorage

A prominent Deco style landmark located in the heart of downtown, this theater was completed in 1947. It is significant for its association with Austin "Cap" Lathrop and as the best example of Art Deco style in Alaska.

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10 Most Endangered Historic Properties for 2016 *(Continued from Page 4)***Ascension of Our Lord Chapel, Karluk**

Finished on June 11, 1888, and located on the far side of Kodiak Island, it is the oldest extant Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska. The building's elaborate design may be attributed to the salmon cannery that is located on the Karluk River below.

**Saint Michael's Cathedral, Sitka**

The Cathedral sits on an octagonal island of land in the middle of Sitka's main street, Lincoln Street, while pedestrian and vehicular traffic is forced to go around it. This structure rates as one of the most frequently photographed in Alaska and preserves the historic heritage of Russian America.

**Chacon, Chugiak**

The Chacon is a 72-foot, dry-docked, wooden former fishing vessel. It was designed by world-famous naval architect Leslie Geary and built by Johnson Brothers and Blanchard in 1912. During the 1964 Earthquake, it assisted in the evacuation of Old Harbor Village.

**Iditarod National Historic Trail, Seward to Nome**

First surveyed in 1908, this trail was designated a National Historic Trail in 1978, and it is part of the National Trail System. Much of the trail is a winter trail and is still used for recreation and for subsistence, as well as for travel via dogsled, snowmachine, skiing, and other winter modes.

Preservation Notes Preservation News from Around the State
To submit Preservation News items, email us at akpreservation@gmail.com

The *Chacon* Mystery Solved: The Old Boat on the Roadside in Chugiak

Along the Old Glenn Highway in Chugiak, north of Eagle River, a strangely out-of-place local landmark has sparked the curiosity of visitors and locals alike for decades.

The *Chacon*, an old, deteriorating 72-foot wooden fishing boat, has been resting at a roadside location in Chugiak since 1984. Until recently, little was known of its rich history before it came to Chugiak.

More than 100 years ago, *Chacon* was designed by the famous naval architect Leslie "Ted" Geary. In the early 1900s, Geary was well known for designing competitive racing sailboats and luxury fantail yachts for some of America's wealthiest tycoons and Hollywood elites, such as John Barrymore.

Chacon was built in Seattle in 1912 by Johnson Brothers and Blanchard for the Fidalgo Island Packing Company.

The boat serviced fish traps in Southeast Alaska and Cook Inlet for many years. After fish traps were outlawed in the state of Alaska in 1959, *Chacon* was sold to a series of private operators engaged in commercial fishing in Southeast Alaska.

In March 1964, *Chacon* played a very different role during the Great Alaskan Earthquake. The village of Old Harbor on Kodiak Island was leveled by a tsunami generated during the quake. *Chacon* survived the large wave and assisted in the evacuation of the village by transporting 43 people to safety.

In the 1970s, *Chacon* worked as a chartered fishing boat in Halibut Cove for Alaska state legislator Clem Tillion until disaster struck: A collision in the early 1980s damaged the bow and left the boat scuttled in a rocky cove of Kachemak Bay.

Enter Thillman Wallace, the owner of Klondike Concrete in Chugiak. While on a fishing charter in the area in 1984, Wallace spotted the partially submerged *Chacon* and decided he would salvage the vessel, restore her, and sail around the world.

Wallace had *Chacon* relocated to Chugiak with much difficulty and at great expense. *Chacon* finally arrived in Chugiak, where she was put up on wooden blocks at the edge of Wallace's property along the Old Glenn Highway.

Wallace never realized his dream of restoring *Chacon* and sailing around the world. Time eventually got away from him, and the boat remained on the blocks, decaying over time, showcasing moss and plant growth, and eventually becoming half hidden by trees growing up around it. Vandals smashed all of the windows and stole most of the metal parts, including the brass propeller. In 2015, Thillman Wallace passed away at the age of 83.

Today, Wallace's family hopes to continue their father's legacy through preservation. The wooden blocks that held *Chacon* upright for 30 years have been replaced by a newly constructed steel structure, and the trees, moss, and plant growth have been cleared. *Chacon* has been moved down a few feet to a permanent resting place on a small parcel of land.

The land and boat were donated by the Wallace family to the Chugiak Volunteer Fire Department in August 2015, serving as a roadside memorial to Thillman Wallace, and still continuing to arouse curiosity in passersby.



Chacon rests in drydock along the roadside in Chugiak before being moved in 2015

Chacon: The Story Behind the Story

By Mikhail Siskoff

The story of *Chacon* includes the boat's origins, uses over time, journey to Chugiak, and final resting place. But uncovering that story is a story in itself. It highlights the step-by-step gathering of information, following the various threads from different sources, that goes into historical research—all sparked by human curiosity and the desire to know more.

The short version of the "story behind the story" starts when I became intrigued by *Chacon*. In 2015 I saw it being moved—for the first time in more than 30 years—to its permanent resting place 50 feet from where it had languished all those years. Why was this old, run-down boat that was serving as a huge planter box for Alaskan vegetation being moved just a few feet? Inquiries led to learning of the preservation efforts for the boat by the Wallace family and others. Wanting to assist those efforts, I decided to do some research on the boat.

To unravel the mystery of the boat's pre-Chugiak history, I started by telephoning *Chacon's* prior owner, Clem Tillion. Tillion told me that *Chacon* was originally a cannery fish trap tender. He also told me about the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society in Seattle and suggested that I reach out to them for assistance. Following that lead, I connected with a researcher there, Carl House, who told me about a list of merchant vessels published annually by the U.S. Department of Commerce. These documents provided a wealth of hard facts, including *Chacon's* hull number and radio call letters, as well as official dimensions, registered owners, and past home ports. In the wake of that information, I went online to discover more. One of the gems of *Chacon's* history came from a deep internet search of U.S. Coast Guard radio transcripts from 1964. This revealed *Chacon's* role in evacuating residents of Old Harbor after the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake and tsunamis.

In the meantime, additional research by Carl House uncovered an original photo of *Chacon* from 1916 and the builder's certificate. These were especially significant because there was another boat named *Chacon* that was also a fish trap tender in Southeast Alaska, and both *Chacon's* had operated at the same time in the earlier 1900s. Further research was necessary to differentiate the various references to "*Chacon*." The "other *Chacon*" was built in 1918 and was lost at sea in 1937 (fortunately, the crew survived).

As *Chacon's* story took shape, I wanted to share that information, so I wrote a Wikipedia article. The once abandoned *Chacon*—now more than 100 years old—is riding a new wave of family and community involvement. This will help ensure that *Chacon* has continued visibility as a unique roadside memorial, not only to the man who dreamed of restoring her and sailing around the world, but also to the power of dreams and perseverance.

AAHP MEMBERSHIP and/or SPECIAL DONATIONS

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Membership term is 12 consecutive months.

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$500 & above |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit* | \$45 (*includes federal, state, & municipal agencies) | | | Membership | \$ _____ |

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

- AAHP 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties (grant account)
- For more giving opportunities, please visit the AAHP website at <http://www.aaHP-online.net/>

Donation \$ _____

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

Total Enclosed \$ _____

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

- Fund Raising Membership Education Legislation Public Relations Projects & Issues

Calendar of Upcoming Events

2016

August

31 Last day of summer tours at Oscar Anderson House Museum

October

8 10 Most Endangered Historic Properties Annual Fundraiser Dinner and Silent Auction
Anchorage Pioneer Schoolhouse. For reservations, phone 907-929-9870 or
visit our registration page at <http://www.planetreg.com/10Most>



This year's deadline is August 31. The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation has joined Pick.Click.Give., and we need your financial support! Donations can be made through MyAlaska, the State of Alaska's web service for state transactions. Donations to Pick.Click.Give. for 2016 are accepted through the end of August.

Your support means historic preservation in Alaska matters!

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