

A map of Alaska is shown in white against a light blue background. The text "ARCHIVES for REGULAR PEOPLE" is overlaid on the map in a serif font. "ARCHIVES" and "REGULAR PEOPLE" are in a larger, orange-brown serif font, while "for" is in a smaller, bold, orange-brown sans-serif font.

ARCHIVES
for
REGULAR PEOPLE

To begin with, . . .

What's An Archives ?

People seem more familiar with archival concepts now, than when I began my career.

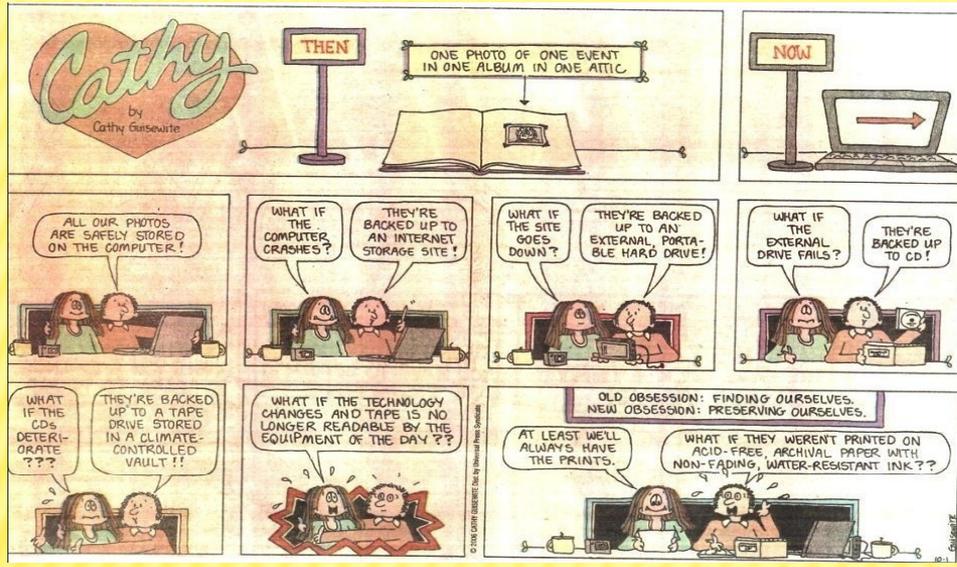
In an earlier location a I had to 1st spell my last name, then my profession when I phoned people.

(I haven't had to do that in a while.)

And a local merchant routinely sent me an invoice addressed to the, . . .

STATE ARCHIBIST

Now *Kathy*, & *Mother Goose & Grimm* mention archives now & then & I haven't been asked to talk about the buildings I design for quite a while.



Yet there seems to be a lot of vagueness in peoples' minds, & today I want to try to provide some clarification, particularly as it applies to my own job at the Alaska State Archives.

MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM/by Mike Peters



The standard *Archives Glossary* definition of archives is either,

- 1) Permanently valuable records, or
- 2) The place where permanent records are kept.

And an archivist is a person who works with or takes care of permanent records.

But I once saw *archivist* listed in a book about rare & unusual jobs.

So what do *regular* people think about when they think of archives?



Alaska State Archives 141 Willoughby, across from Centennial Hall, Juneau.

The Place?



Steve



Jeremy



Valerie & Tania

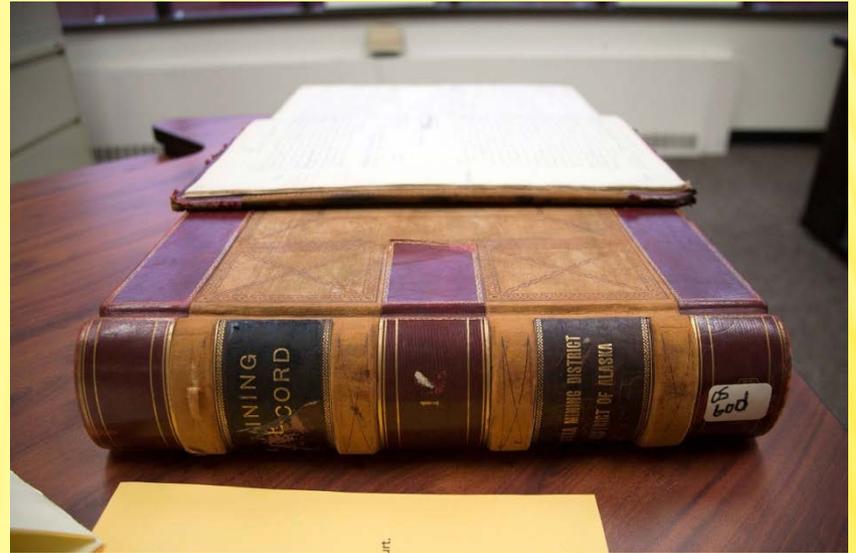
The People ?



Larry

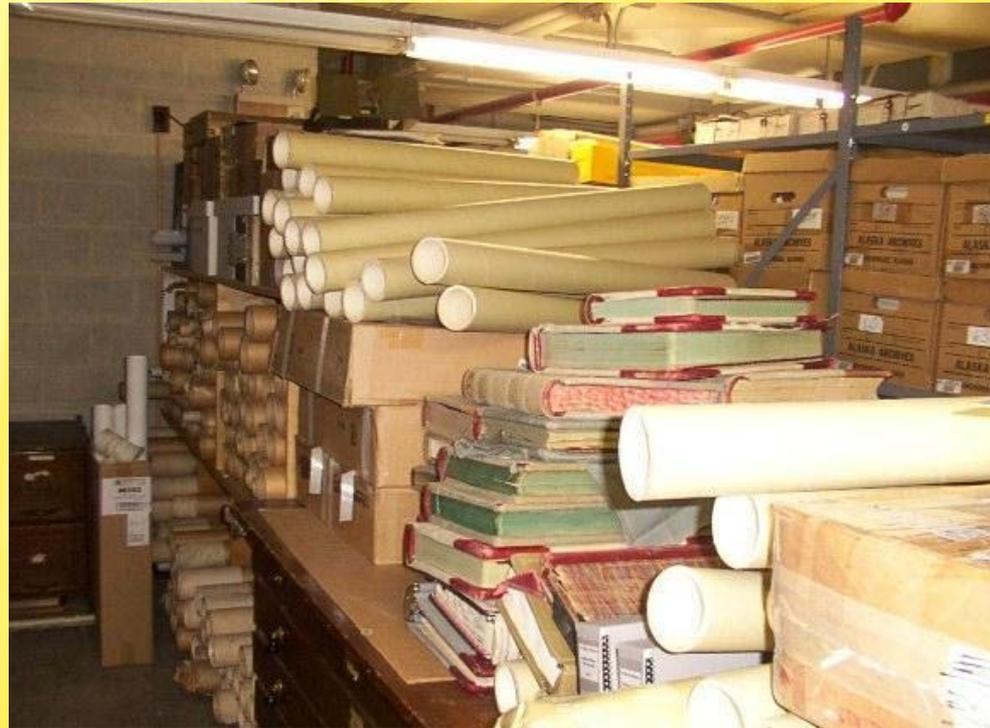


Courtesy National Archives via Woodrow Wilson Library

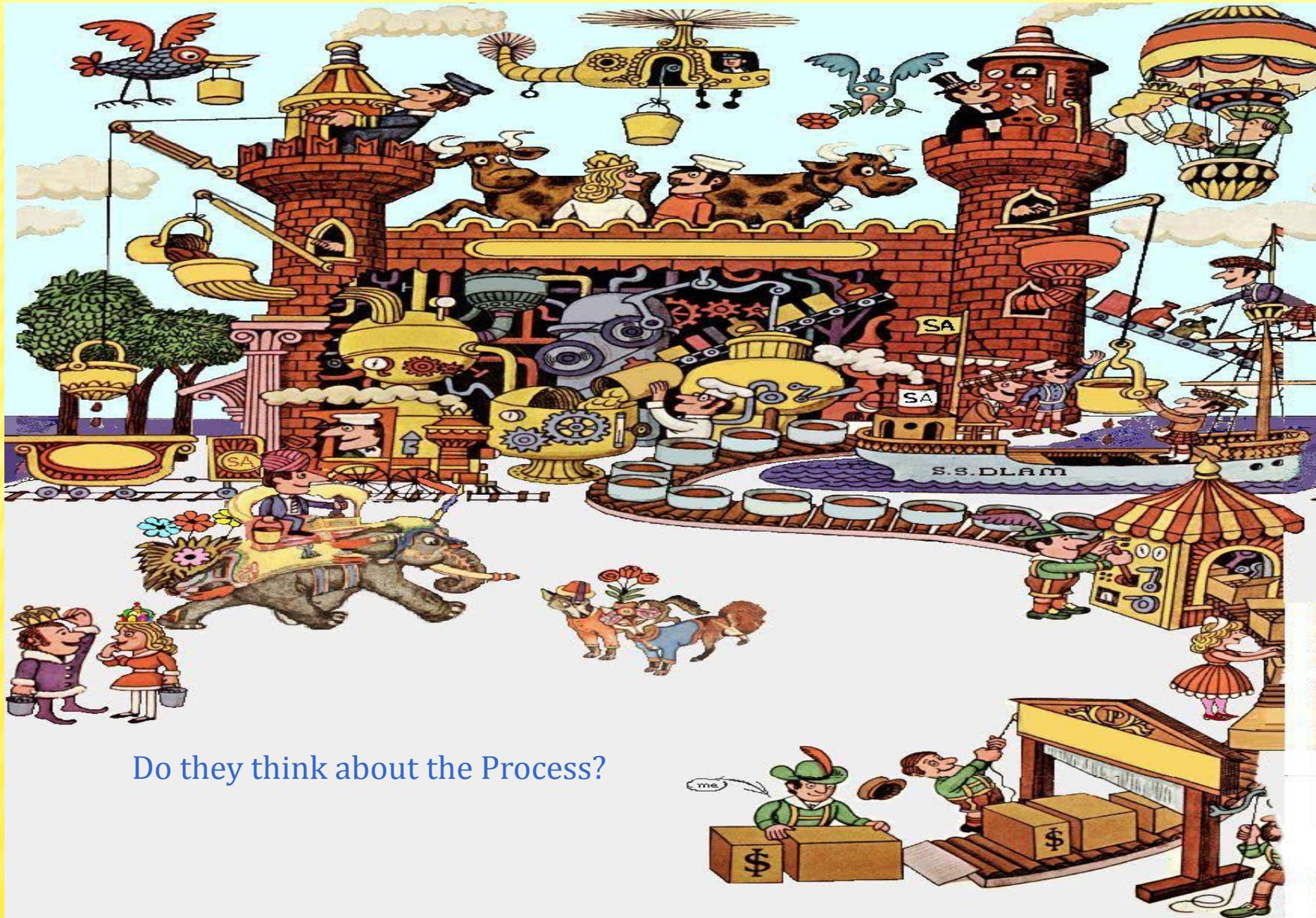


State Recorder Mining Record

The Collections ?



Treadwell Collection; Alaska State Library Historical Collections

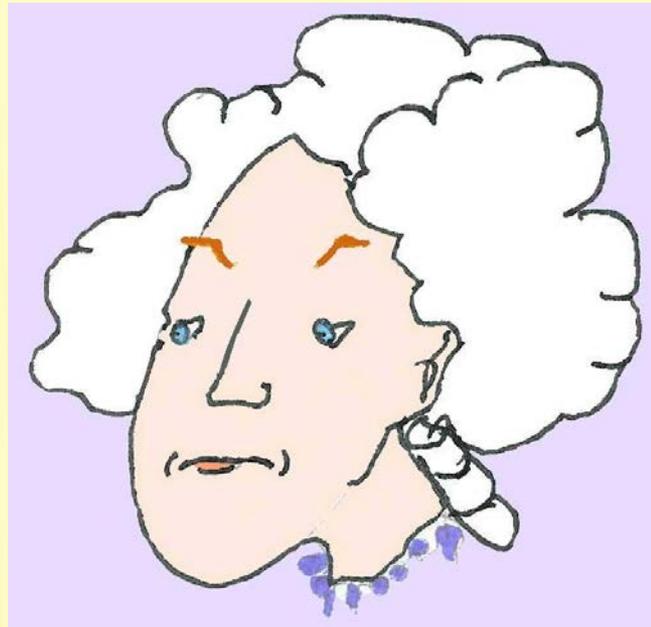


Do they think about the Process?

And Who Creates Archives



People in suits?



Important historical people?

?



Great Leaders & Statesmen ?



Organizational Officers & Officials ?

And Who Uses Archives ?



People in Suits?



Public Officials ?



Genealogists? (Courtesy <http://jimandleuvenia.blogspot.com/>)

Is There Anything About Archives That Might Involve Me

?

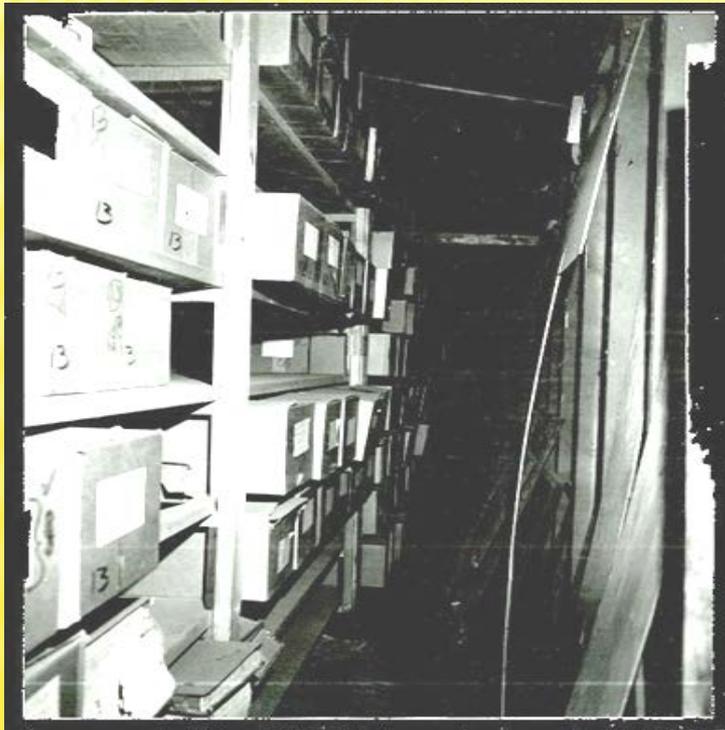
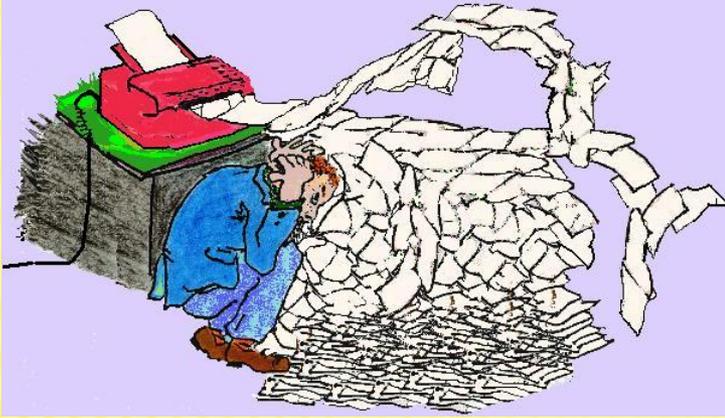
And Heavens to Betsy!

And what must
government
archives be
like?

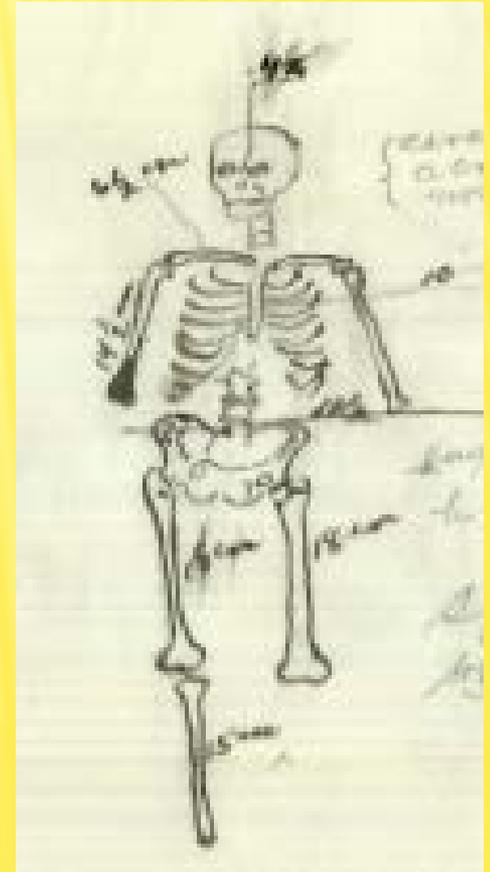


What must government archives be like?

Probably just a dull collection of facts & government statistics!



They probably don't involve me very much.



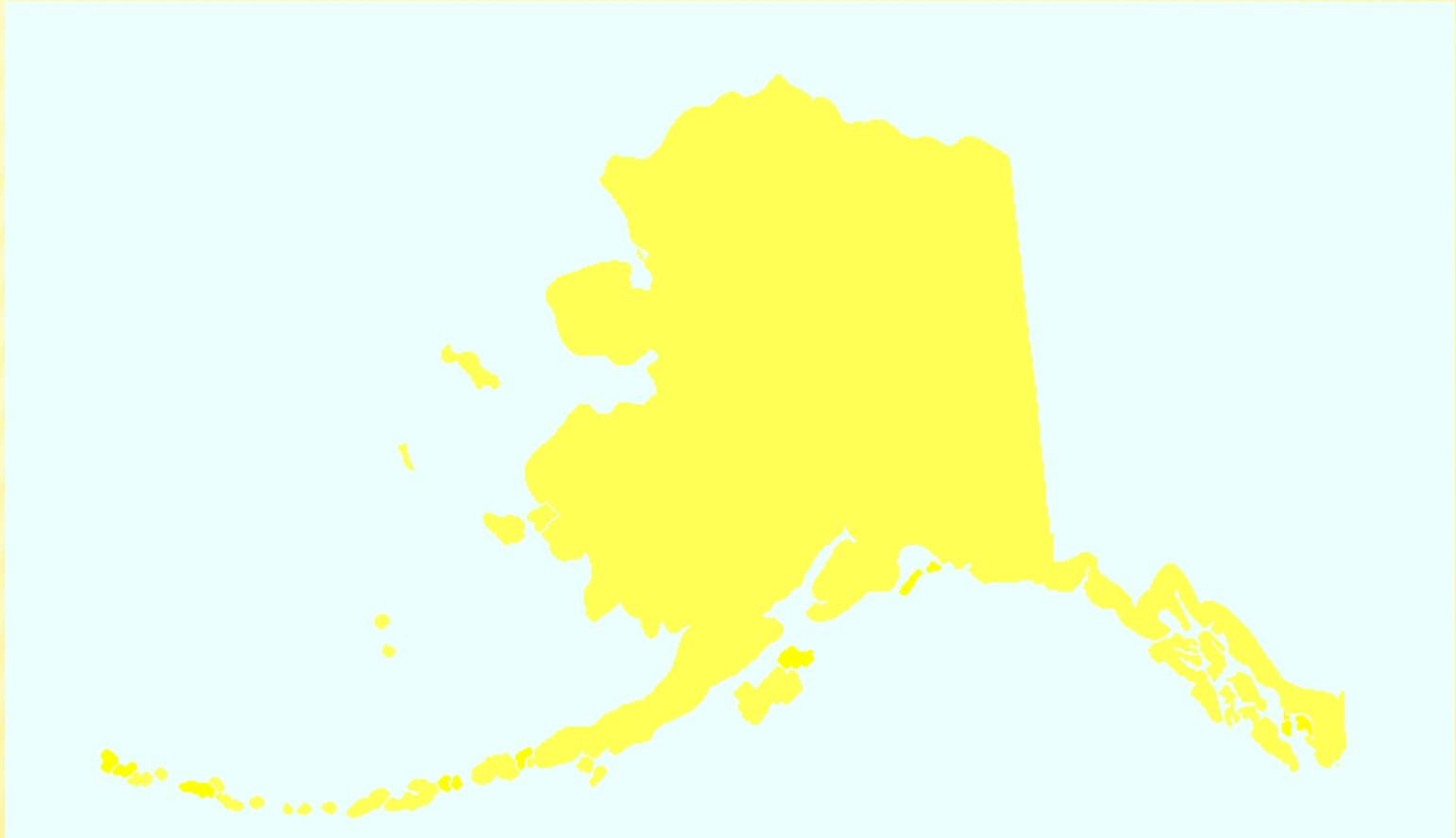
Personally after 40 years working in federal, state, municipal & county government archives I haven't found it so. We'd like to share a bit about why government archives involve regular people, & especially show off the Alaska State Archives.

If you're an Alaskan the State Archives is more relevant to you than you may think, for an important reason. Whether we like it or not, government today has a hand in nearly everything that's done.

I was thinking about this recently & decided to create a map, based on my knowledge & experience, of locations the Alaska State Archives documents in some way.

I scanned a state map outline & marked all of the areas our records touch on, in 1 way or another in yellow . I'd like to share it with you now.

Our documentation of the State of Alaska is shown in yellow below



Yes, that's right. We cover the whole State

I'd like to illustrate how we cover the State, by showing a little from 6 particular topics that regularly involve regular people, & that our collection illustrates very well:



Communities



Aviation



Alcohol

1924

American Education Week
PROGRAM
Under Joint Auspices of
Valdez P. T. A. and American Legion

FRIDAY, NOV. 21, F. O. E. HALL, 8:00 P. M.

1. MUSIC: Orchestra
2. CHORUS: Primary Group
3. VOCAL SOLO: Dr. J. L. Bulkley
"Bedouin Love Song," Hawley
- (a) ADDRESS: Hon. A. J. Dimond
"The Constitution—The Bulwark of Democracy and Happiness."
4. CHORUS: Upper Group
5. MUSIC: "Alaska" The Syncopaters
(b) ADDRESS: Capt. L. C. Parsons
"The U. S. Flag is the Living Symbol of the Ideals and Institutions of our Country."
6. PIANO SOLO: Miss Lillian Schmidt
"Hunting Song," Mendelssohn
7. READING: Conrad Gaiser
"The School House and the Flag."
- (c) ADDRESS: W. N. CUDDY
"Service to Community, State and Nation is the Duty of Every Citizen."
8. COMMUNITY SINGING
Mrs. L. C. Parsons, Leader

JOINT PROGRAM COMMITTEE
American Legion Parent-Teacher Asso.
John Rosen Mrs. M. A. Kelsey
I. J. Johnson Mrs. D. F. Millard
 Irvin F. Heise



Children



Disasters

And in relation to children I want to share an outreach activity that was especially rewarding to me.

Education



Cooper Landing Baseball Game, ca. 1980

COMMUNITIES

This is a baseball game at Cooper Landing about 1980. That log building in the background is the Cooper Landing Community Hall, so I assume that area in the foreground is more or less a city park. It appears to be autumn & the weather looks kind of crisp. Perhaps this is a Labor Day event.

A Cooper Landing local historian came into the Archives one day. I showed her the image & she began to name the people in the picture.

Alaska state agencies work & create records about their work in communities throughout Alaska. They aren't local government records ~ we let local communities care for their own records. But State agencies often create *geographic* or *community* files that document their labors in communities all over Alaska, & a few agencies have offices in particular cities.

Sometimes we get materials from the *Alaska Pioneer Homes*; former resident files for example. When a resident dies unable to reimburse the State for care, the Home can claim personal effects to offset costs. We don't get a lot of these, but when we do they're usually intriguing.

Several years ago I found a family photo album among boxes the Sitka Home sent. I emailed them & asked, *where did it come from?* Home staff replied

We don't know.

*We just found it in one of our closets
& decided it was best to send it to you.*

Pioneer Home Family Photo Album

The album is a very interesting document of the early 20th Century in Southeast Alaska. A Norwegian American Family apparently created it. They migrated through Cherbourg & New York & eventually came to Alaska. The family made its living in Juneau, Thane & elsewhere, with a herring saltrey & pile driver, & there's an image of a Thane shoe repair shop. We uploaded several images, to our webpage & asked, *can you identify these? Contact Larry.*

Among images we put up was this family group. & two Scandinavian towns.



Family Portrait



'Skydeburg' & 'Etterup'

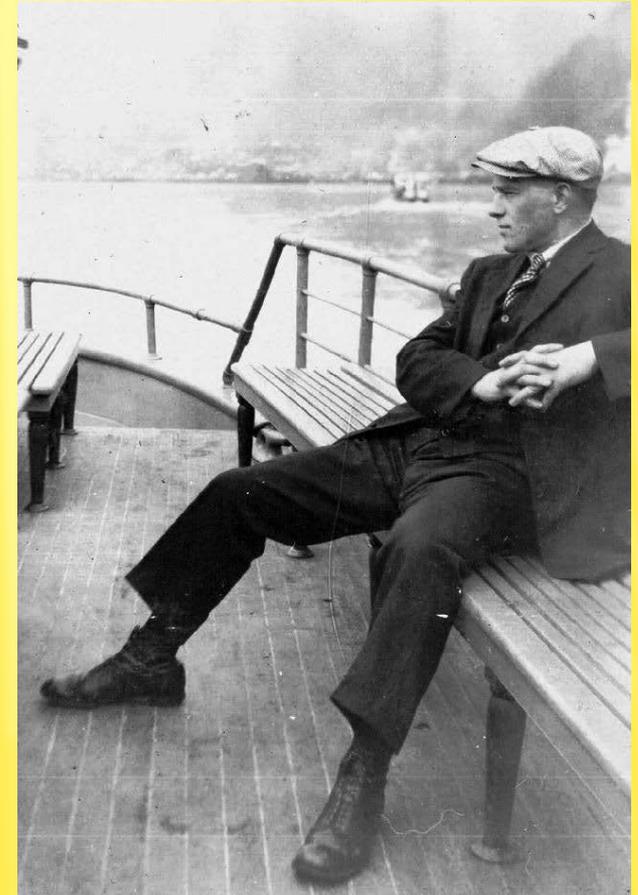


There are photos of a number of local people, including Richard Harris' descendants (left), & the man on the right, Harry Rexroth, riding the Juneau-Douglas ferry *Alma*, before the bridge was built. Harry's grandnephew contacted us & sent a copy of his military record. I discovered an interesting Alaskan 'pioneer'.

Harry was well known & well liked in Juneau during the early 20th Century. He volunteered for the ambulance corps during World War I. I believe his health was permanently affected, yet while in France he won the French Legion of Merit.



Mr. & Mrs. John Harris



Harry Rexroth on the Ferry Alma

Skydebjerg

Hjertelig til Lykke paa Fødselsdagen
kjære Katrine og Tak for i Søndags.
Nu maa du ikke glemme
at skrive den Dag.
Hilsen fra Laura i
Skydebjerg



**Skydebjerg
©1905**

And a man in Denmark responded about Skydebjerg. I assumed it was a Norwegian community, but it's actually in Denmark. And he sent me the modern image below.

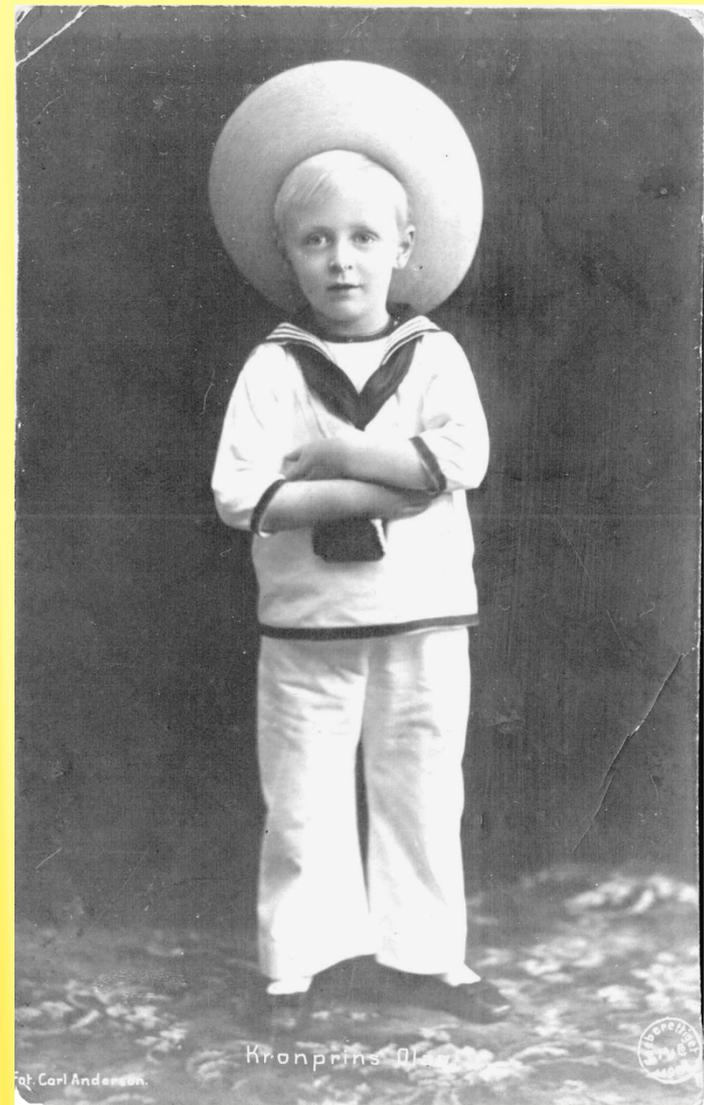


**Skydebjerg
©2005**



Family Group

And that family portrait? I'm still uncertain, but the best response we received is that it's probably an official portrait the Norwegian royal family. Another image is labeled Kron Prins Olav. The boy in the titled image is several years younger than the older boy in the unidentified family group. But the two look very much alike.



Kron Prins Olav

Sometimes our collection is
best understood not in
isolation,
but ~ *as it should be* ~
In concert with other
archives.

Here's an image from Territorial Governor's Correspondence



Record Group 101 Office of the Territorial Governor, Series 727 Correspondence, 1919-1933

Opening day of Juneau's baseball season May 7, 1933. You have the 2 teams, marching bands, & spectators. And if you look carefully you see 3 men in particular ~ the man in the fedora near the middle of the picture, the tall thin man on his right, & the elderly man in the flat cap on the extreme left. Who are they?

Well there's a companion image. Its Juneau's mayor ~ sorry, it was an election year. Juneau had 2 mayors that year & I don't know which mayor this is. The Governor is John Troy who had only recently arrived.



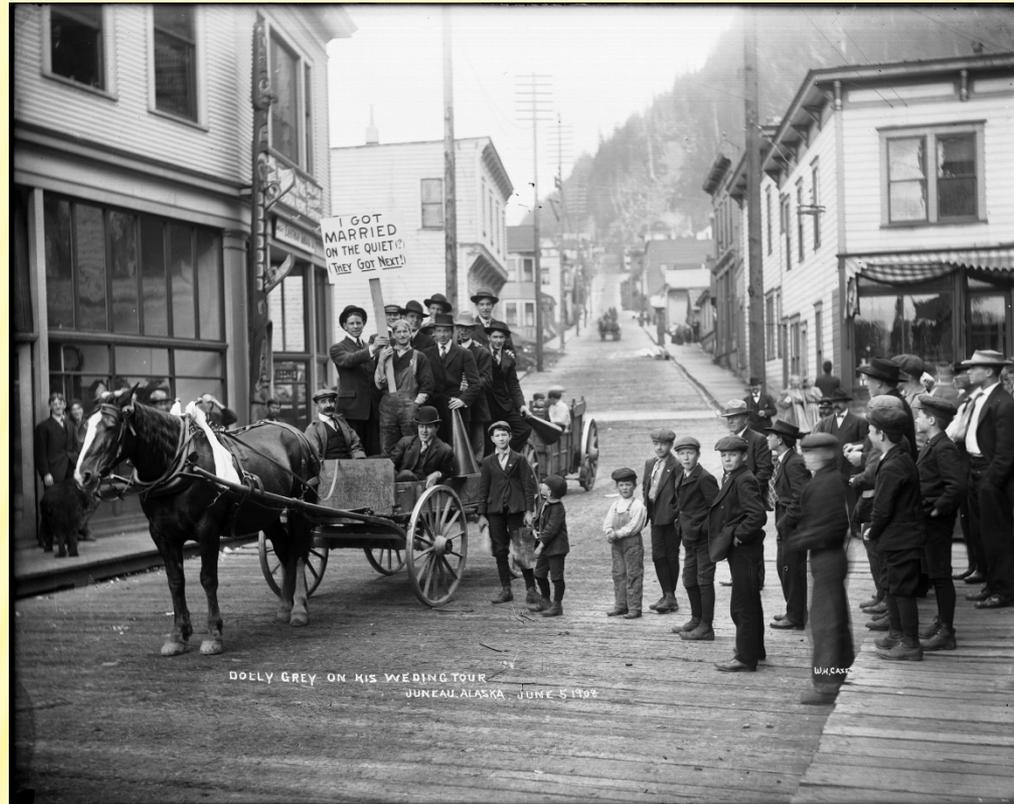
"Governor" / "Mayor" / "Dolly"
Opening baseball season.
Juneau, Alaska. May 7. 1933

RG 101 Office of the Territorial Governor
Series 130, General Correspondence
Box 349, File Folder 9 "Governor Troy"

Record Group 101 *Office of the Territorial Governor; Series 727 Correspondence, 1919-1933*

And the 3rd person? The nattily dressed elderly man on the right is identified simply as *Dolly*. Who was Dolly? I didn't have any idea for about 10 years.

Then I was at *Centennial Hall*, looking at those big Juneau history wall posters. & in the lower right corner of one poster I saw this image, credited to the *Alaska State Library Historical Collections*. It's the same man, *Dolly Gray* on his wedding day, June 5 1908.



Alaska State Library Historical Collections

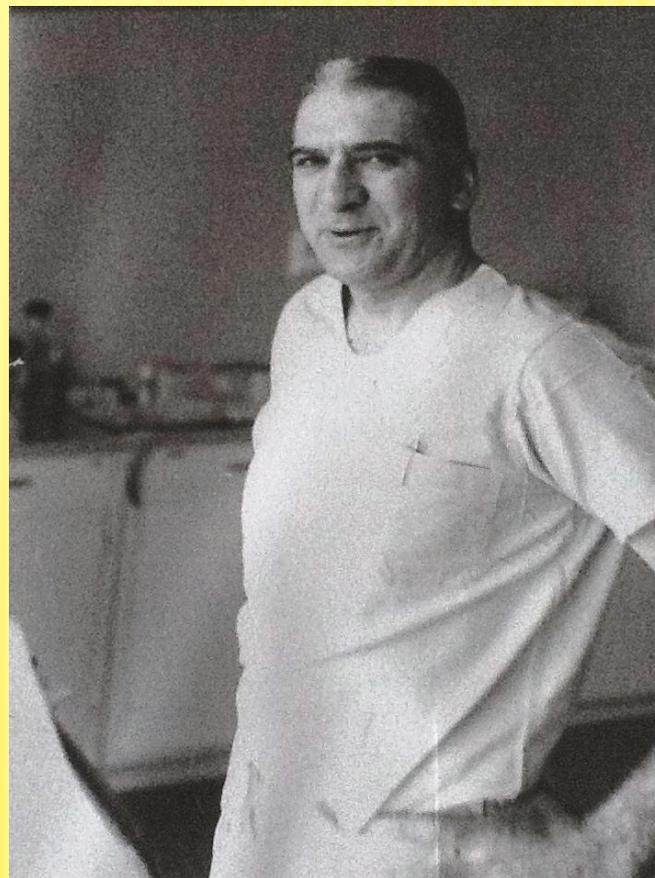
I searched for more information & found Dolly's obit. Dolly Gray is another of Juneau's forgotten 'pioneers'. He arrived in Juneau in the 1880s, long before the Klondike Gold Rush, & he stayed. He was well known & well liked & was even mayor for a while.

Alaska Geographic Names Board



Record Group 342 *State Geographic Board*; Series 960 *Geographic name nominations*

Sitka's Tribute to One of it's Citizens



George Harley Longenbaugh, MD

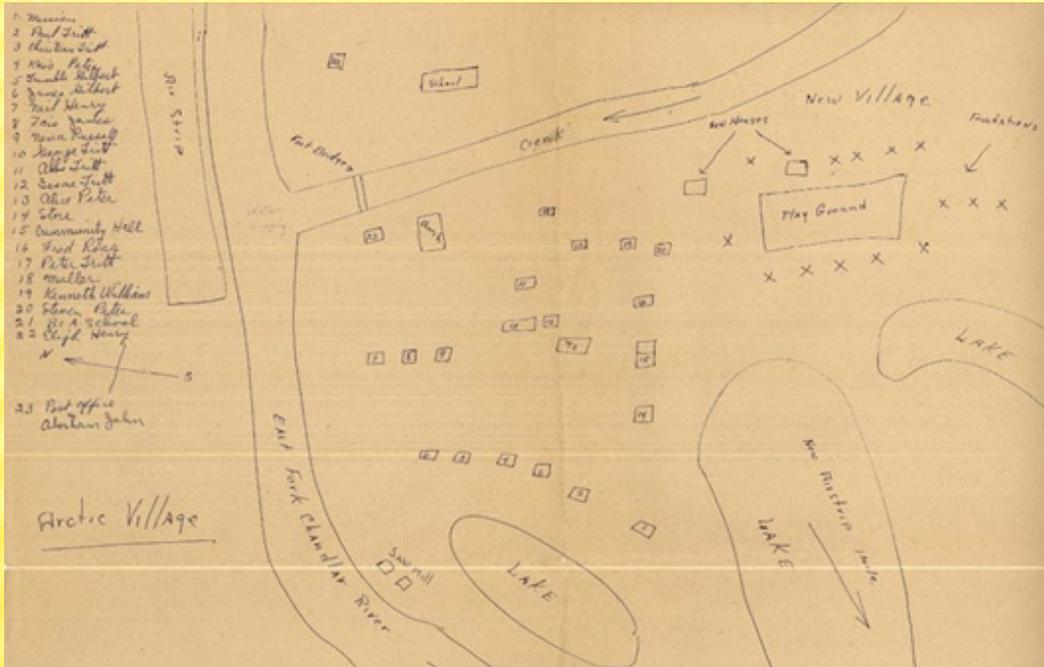
(Courtesy of Dee Longenbaugh)

Hmmm. An image of a mountain. What mountain?

The Alaska Geographic Names Board is an official state agency whose job is to review proposed names for geographic features & recommend them to the United States Geographic Names Board. Unapproved names can't appear on official published maps.

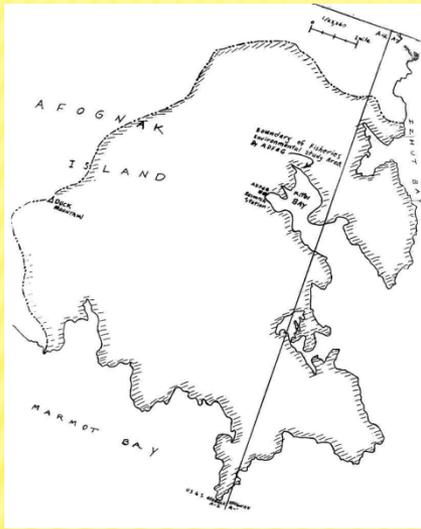
This image is taken from the Board's *Mt. Longenbaugh* file. Mt. Longenbaugh is near Sitka. People in Sitka wanted to honor George Longenbaugh, MD, who arrived in 1963 as chief of surgery at Mt. Edgecumbe Bone & Joint Clinic. He & his family moved to Sitka about 1967 ~ where family members still live ~ when Dr. Longenbaugh took over the practice of Dr. Philip Moore another well known Alaskan medical man.

So archives can bring a community into focus for you. This is a map of Arctic Village that identifies where families live & organizations are located. The brown version is in our collection. The other I prepared, based on the original.



Arctic Village

Here a few similar maps:



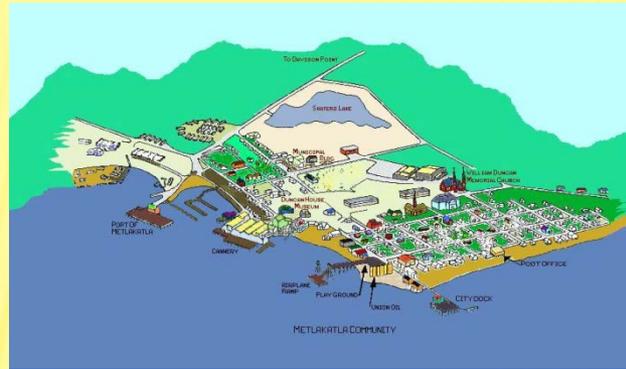
Afognak Island



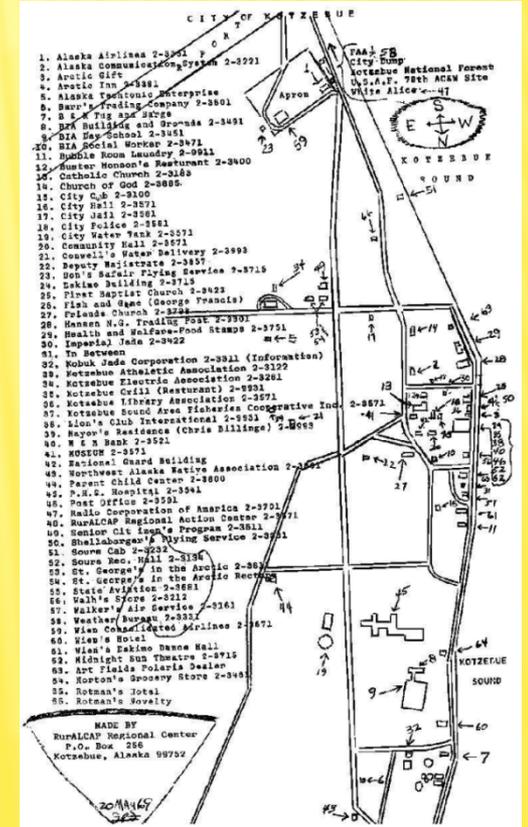
Chugachmiut



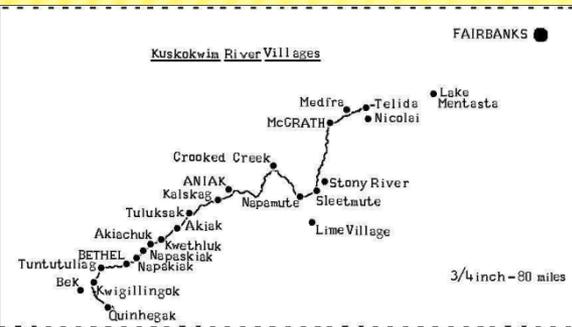
Norton Sound Reindeer Herds



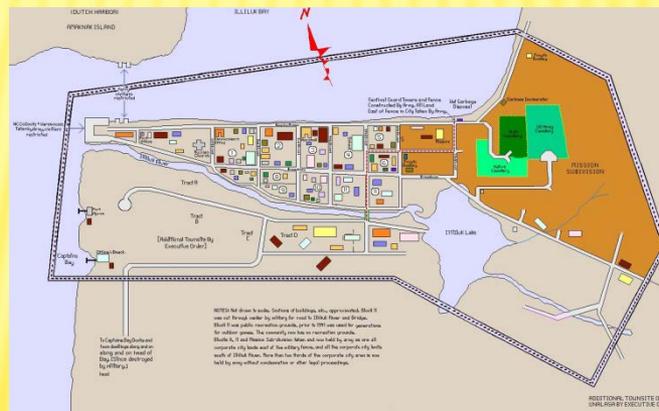
Metlakatla



Kotzebue



Kuskokwim River Villages



Illiuliuk

My favorite is Illiuliuk, which includes a rather pungent comment on community -military relationships over time.

I have to confess: Although all of these documents are in the State Archives, I colored some of them. It's a hobby I have. And it illustrates how adaptable archives are to creative projects.

Record Group 314 *Alaska Development Board; Series 53 Subject Files, 1945-1959*

The Territory of Alaska set up the Alaska Development Board late in its existence, to work toward Statehood. The board gathered information about, & encouraged developing commerce, business & tourism. Among the things the Board collected is this *birch bark card* from Manley Hot Springs. It's an ordinary greeting card ~

- except for the facts that :
- it's *handmade*;
- it's made of *birch bark*;
- it includes an *original watercolor & cover art*
- & a *poem* (for sorts) about Alaskan adventure.



cover

The lure of the land had gripped him
 The land where you die if you fail
 The land of the endless trail
 The land of the fabulous fortunes
 The land of bitter cold
 The land of the lost ambitions
 Alaska; the land of Gold

The Hon. Ernest Gruening
 Governor of Alaska
 Juneau, Alaska

Manley Hot Springs, Alaska, 11/8/47

Dear Sir:

I received your letter of March 31st and thank you very much for the information it furnished.

It surely is a great disappointment to me the way these Mutton heads from Fairbanks acted and if I had anything to say they would never disgrace the colors of the 4th Division again and if I ever meet A.F. (or) Groole, with whom I am well acquainted, I surely will tell him

what I think of him.

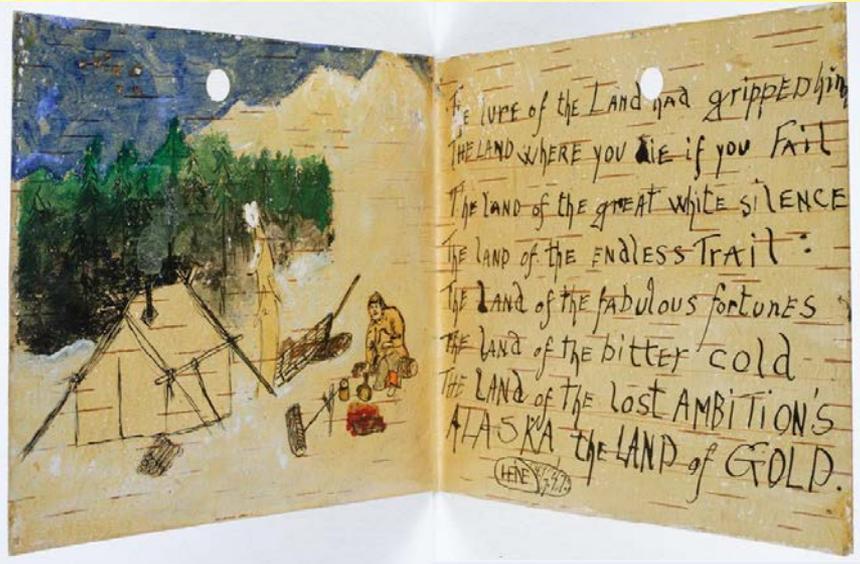
I admire Senators Herland and B... for how they stood up for their principles. I endorse... better to say a sample of the work that can be done with Alaska's resources. Everything is Birch bark.

Mr. Sundborg is to be commended for his part in doing all he can to help along.

Sincerely yours
 Fred G. Zickhoff.

P.S. This signature (FZ) is my pen name. F.G.Z.

letter to Governor Gruening



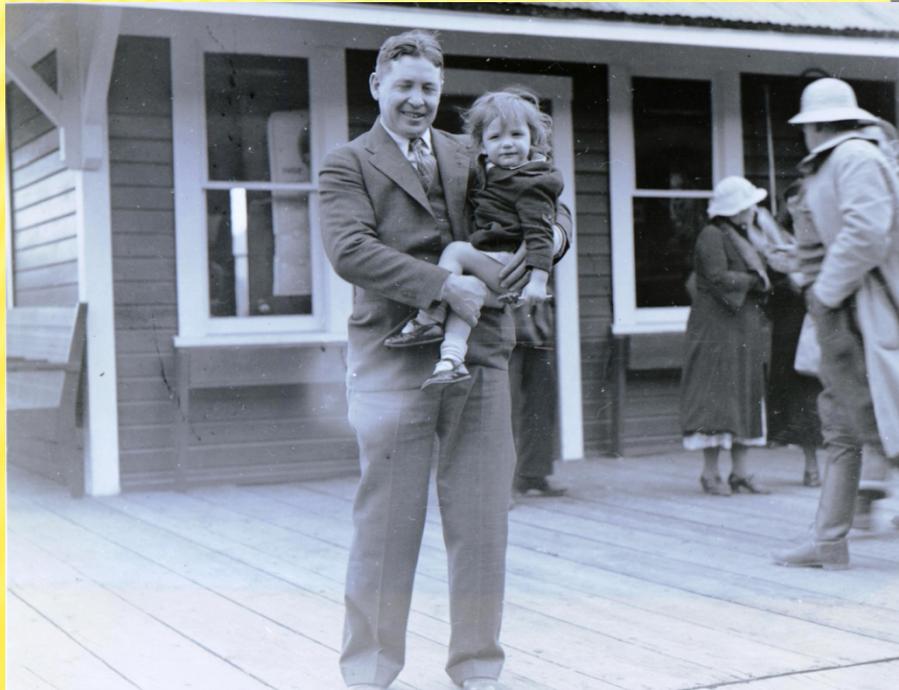
interior water color & poem

Besides the basic card there's a brief note addressed to Governor Gruening & a birch bark envelope.

Matanuska Colony Photo Album

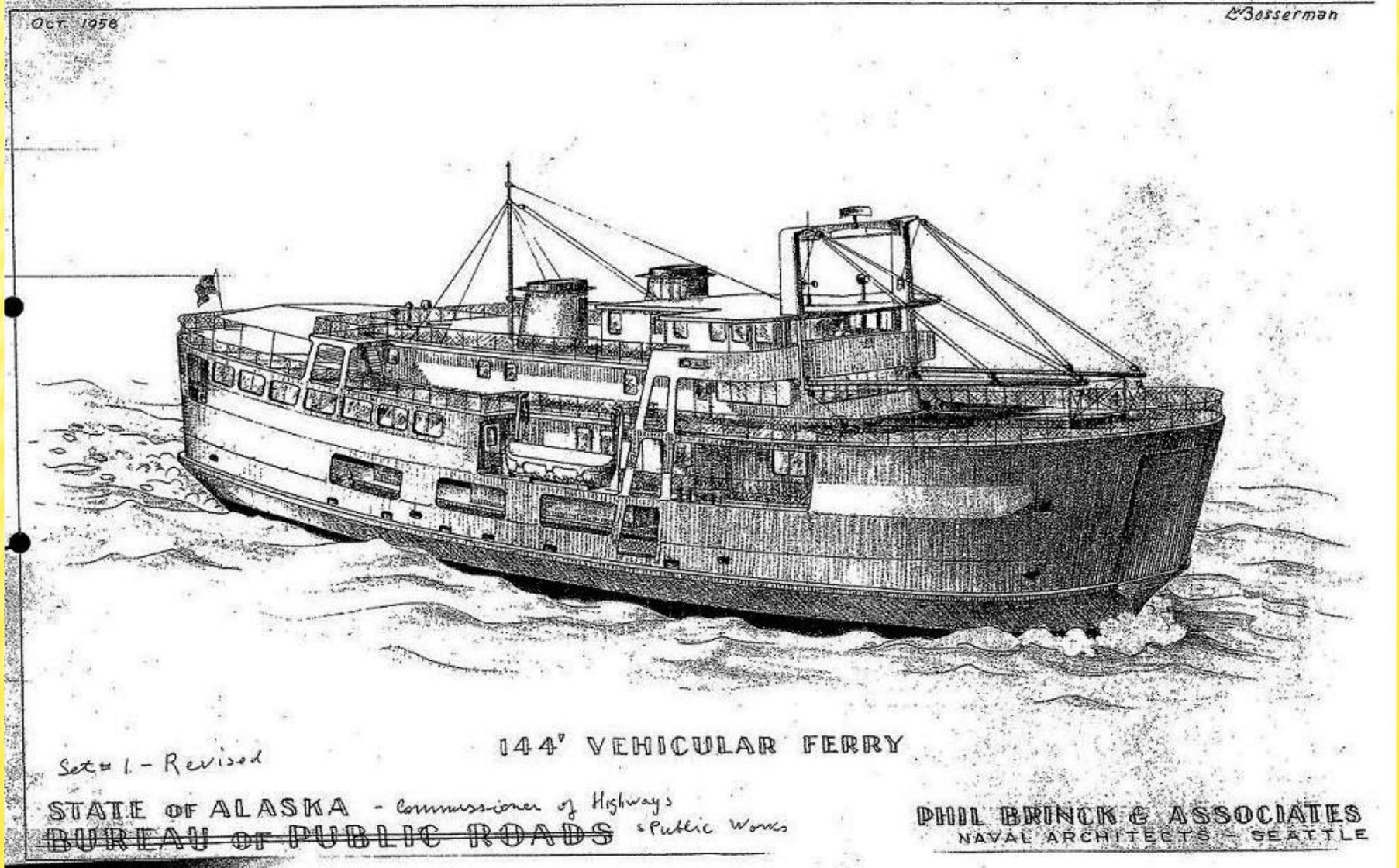
Here are images that highlight at least 2 Alaskan communities. They're from our Matanuska Colony images; people boarding the train in Anchorage; a father & child; & the camp near Palmer.

The first image illustrates another important Alaskan issue ~ transportation. Rail travel is very important in Alaska. It built our largest city.



Alaska Marine Highway System Foundation File

Yet water travel is probably more important. We have the old Division of Highways Alaska Marine Highway System development file. We'll talk about the other marine transportation element, the fishing industry later.



Oct. 1958

Bozerman

Set # 1 - Revised

144' VEHICULAR FERRY

STATE OF ALASKA - Commissioner of Highways
~~BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS~~ Public Works

PHIL BRINCK & ASSOCIATES
NAVAL ARCHITECTS - SEATTLE

Aviation

And that brings us to what is perhaps the most popular way to travel in Alaska ~ by air!

Most of our communities still can only be reached by air or water. We travel by every type & on every size aircraft available. We're the only state with more or less local air connections to the Russian Far East ~ even if most of us can't see Russia from our houses.



Peninsula Airways. ca. 1975 (In the file this image is labeled *Meeting the Fishing Fleet*)



STATEWIDE AVIATION



Loading Barrels-DC6



Little Diomed Ice Runway



Aeroflot Ilyshin 76



Federal Express & Garden



Skyvan at Napakiak



Loading a truck in a village



Twin Otter & 747 Cargo



C85 on Floats



Cold Bay (probable) Medivac Patient Loading



King Cove-Snowmobile Transfer-White Sheet



GRU-GOOSE-UNGA c 80

These images aren't from the Division of Aviation, although we have Aviation Division material ~ notably small & medium size airport construction & maintenance files. These are from a set of slides the Governor's Washington DC Office. They include images of airports & aerial views of towns & villages across the State.



Here's another image of an aircraft, which also shows how communities & travel systems of interconnect across Alaska. Just an ordinary light plane that could have been photographed virtually anywhere in Alaska at any time from 1940 until now. But what is it about?



Taken by [name of agent] August 2, 1961 Merrill Field [name of owner] plane.
Involved in bootlegging liquor to Chignik Bay.

Here is the image with its caption. This was photographed at Merrill Field in Anchorage in 1961. The pilot also owned an upscale Anchorage restaurant & during the fishing season he was taking part of his liquor stock, flying it to Bristol Bay, then ferrying it by boat to sell illegally to the fishing fleet.

Alcohol



The Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board

Until 1955 liquor licenses outside incorporated towns ~ i.e., most of the Territory ~ were granted by the local court. Then as the Territory moved closer to statehood a number of territorial government executive branch agencies developed. One was the *Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board*.

The files are very interesting. When you bought or sold a liquor business you bought or sold not the establishment, but the license. So it's possible to trace comparative growth & relationships among businesses within a community. There are also files about work & recreation camps, restaurants, trading posts, & grocery stores. And highway & rail mile posts, the Alaska Railroad Club Car, & passenger & tourist ships.

You can also learn about people in Alaska's liquor trade. Until I examined the records I hadn't considered that for some people this is a vocation & you can track their work history.

And since there are occasional investigation reports, there's information about the illegal side of community life; bootlegging, prostitution & gambling.

This series has a personal connection for me. In 1963-1964, I was a high school junior & my father was pastor of the Baptist Church in North Pole. We lived three miles away at Twelve Mile. My school bus stop was the *Twelve Mile Dancing Barn*, the only business in town, located where the community street met the Richardson Highway.

That was all I knew about the Dancing Barn at the time, but in the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board licensing records I found the Twelve Mile Dancing Barn file & learned somewhat about my neighbors.

Most ABC license records are text; applications, petitions, evaluations, license copies, inspection & investigation reports, & correspondence. But there are a few images as well.

Board of Trade Bar

THE OLDEST SALOON IN NOME



"Where the Good Times Roll"



JIM & JUNE WEST
PHONE 443-2611
P. O. BOX 967
NOME, ALASKA 90762

1.5. 1983

Here's a place mat, I believe, from the Board of Trade Bar in Nome; apart from Wyatt Earp's Dexter Saloon perhaps the best known watering hold in Nome.

Mama Martha's House of Shish Kabob in Anchorage (which may or may not have been approved). There aren't many architectural images in the series but the ones that are are clues to what people thought was attractive or impressive during the era.



My goodness! *What 's* this?



This is *Benny's Paradise*. Benny's was established in Indian, near Anchorage during the late 1950s. Over a period of about a year in the early 1960s Benny's moved successively up the Seward Highway. It's final location was along the Highway in what is now South Anchorage. Then it suddenly burned to the ground.

Here's a September 7, 1959 document; a letter from *Alaska's Ski Capital*. The *Girdwood Community Club* discusses a liquor license for the new Mt. Alyeska ski lift.

Obtaining a liquor license was an involved process, which included asking the area community for its opinion.

I remember seeing a letter from Rev. Bob Palmer of Spenard, objecting to this or another license request, & there are long lists of petitioners objecting to proposed licenses.

It was all part of the system. & it's understandable. For many people alcohol spells disaster.



GIRDWOOD COMMUNITY CLUB

Alaska's Ski Capital
Girdwood, Alaska

Sept. 7, 1959

Mr. Jack Davis, Director
Alcoholic Beverage Control Board
State of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

RECEIVED
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE
CONTROL BOARD
SEP 14 8 21 AM '59

Dear Mr. Davis:

Our organization is anticipating a major local boom due to the realization of the first phase of the ski lift facilities on Mt. Alyeska which will be operational this winter. The goal of the promotion of this mountain was two fold: to develop a major ski area on an extremely well suited mountain; and to attract other business, supplementing the ski area, to build the valley into a major center for year-around tourism.

The past month our group met to discuss the concern we have in reference to new applications for liquor licenses in this area. We know that it will be necessary for the lodge at Mt. Alyeska to have a license. The Girdwood Community Club ask your consideration for the approval of their present application for a Read House License.

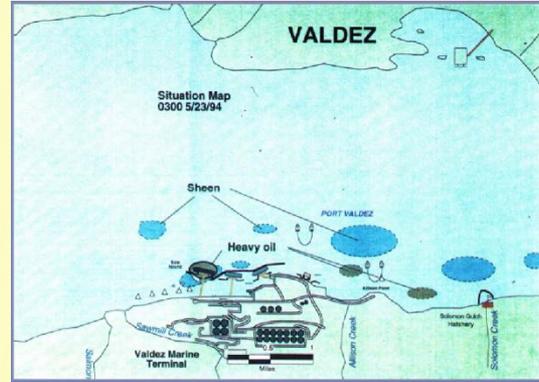
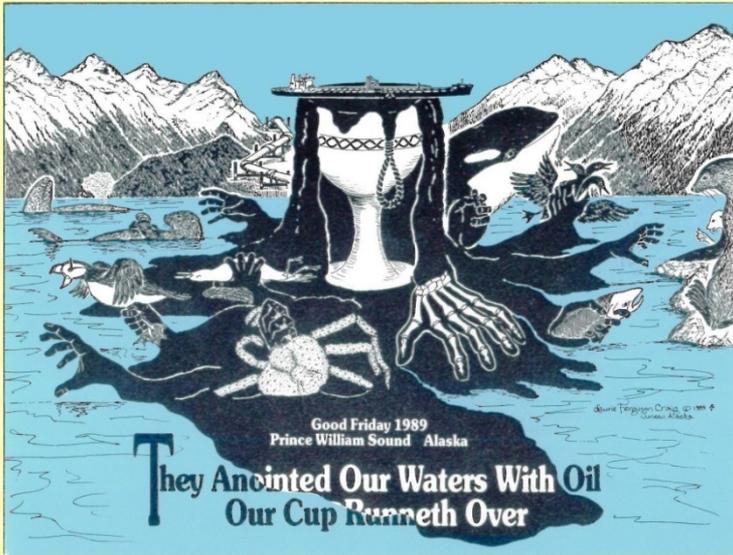
We envision many businesses associated with skiing, tourism, and general services to the public to be started in the valley



Disaster

And speaking of disasters State Government is, of course, deeply involved in disaster response.

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill



There are the big disasters, like the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill.

The State Archives currently is preparing Department of Law Oil Spill Litigation records for public access. I found these images recently as I appraised some litigation records.

Record Group 91 Alaska Department of Law Civil Division; Series 708 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Litigation Records



Cordova Protest: *We've Been Slimed*

These images are from the Governor's Oil Spill slides, created onsite while remediation was in progress.

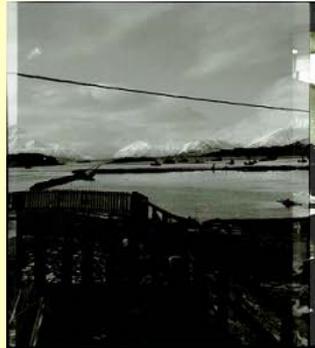
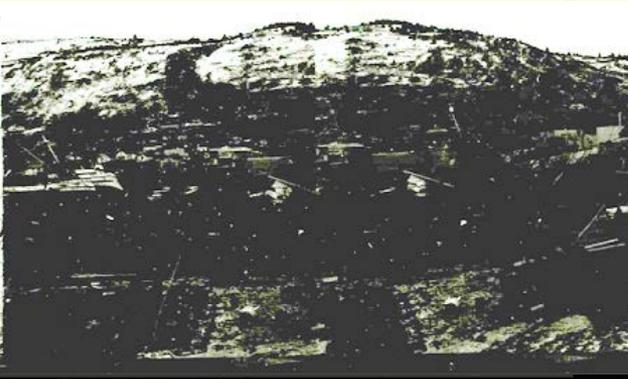


Fish Hatchery

Record Group 1 Office of the Governor ; Series 801 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Records; Governor's Slide Collection, 1989-1990

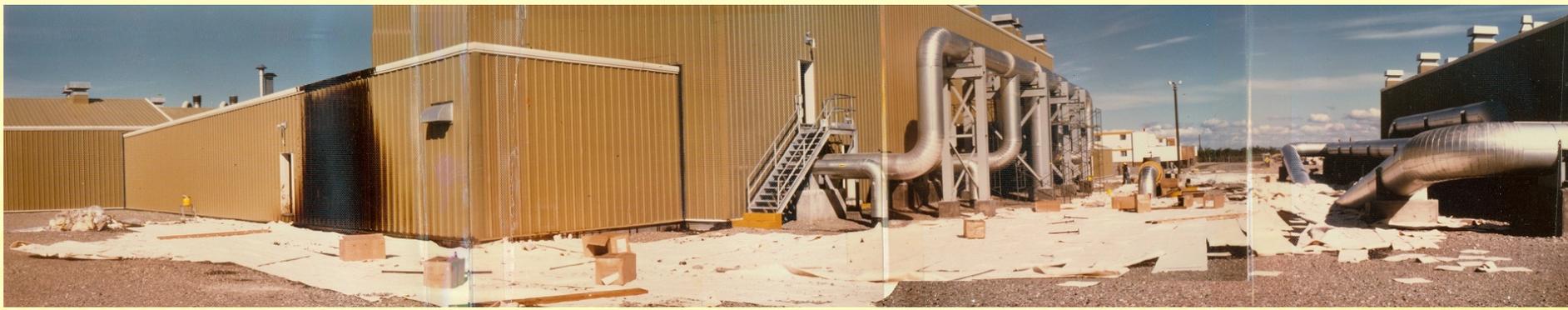
And the Good Friday Earthquake, March 27, 1964.

In the rest of the country if you ask Baby Boomers about the pivotal event in their adolescence you ask, *can you remember what you were doing when you heard about the Kennedy assassination?* That occurred November 22, 1963. But in Alaska you move forward four months & ask *do you remember the March 27 1964 Good Friday Earthquake?*



But Alaska seems accident prone. There are regular disasters all over the State. One of my favorite series is our microfiche *Division of Emergency Management* disaster files that detail many disasters, large & small, natural & man-made, in communities across Alaska ca. 1970-1990.

Since it's a microfiche series it's difficult to show images in this PowerPoint presentation. But here are some smaller disasters that come from other series:



TAPS Pump Number 2 Spill, 1970



A Kwethluk Flood, ca. 1975



Kwethluk Flood, © 1970

Fort Yukon Flood

The Fort Yukon Flood is kind of unique. Very little seems to have been written about it. Yet there are at least 35 images in our file. If you're interested in pursuing this research topic please contact us.



1948



And Fort Yukon images lead us to our next topic

Education

Record Group 117

Commissioner of Education;

Series 2 School District

Correspondence, 1916-1961;

Commissioner's School

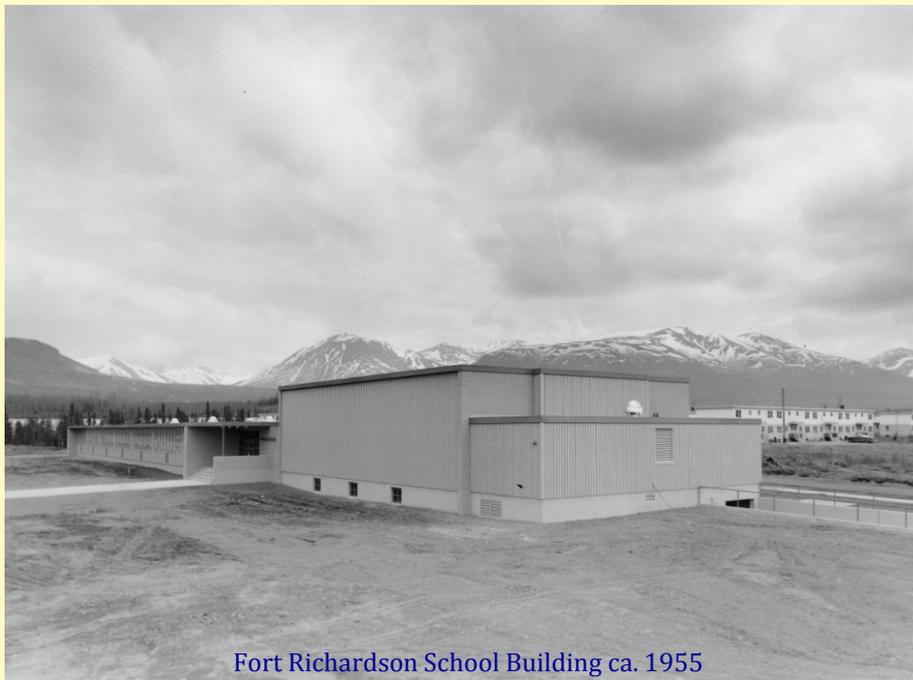
Photographs. ca. 1929-1970

How does the State Archives collection reflect Alaska's care for its most precious resource ~ our children?

The Fort Yukon images come from the *Commissioner of Education School Photographs.*

This series has about 400 images of schools & children. The earliest is Juneau's school bus of the 1920s, which I'm glad I didn't have to ride.

But the best covered period is 1950-1970, the very important Post World War II growth era, when Alaska metamorphosed from an underprivileged foreign dependency & joined the sovereign statehood. One of the series' strengths is on-base schools that developed near Anchorage & Fairbanks.



Fort Richardson School Building ca. 1955



INLET VIEW ELEMENTARY, Anchorage - 9/57



Ladd-McKinley Elementary School 1953

Kaltag Children Gather Around an Aircraft, 1954



Here's an image from the Commissioner's school photographs that I especially like. The gray version is the original photo. The blue version I created for a State Archives report we distributed at an Alaska Historical Society-Museums Alaska meeting.

I like the Kaltag image because there are phantom kids. Can you count them? How many are there? Most people count 14 or 15 but there are 17 children in the image. Three seem to fade in & out of the shadows.



This image also appeals to me because I've James G. King, who lives in Juneau & was in the audience three times when I showed the picture. Mr. King was part of the flight crew & was present when this photograph was created.

I assumed this was mail plane day, a very important event in Bush communities. But Jim King told me he was taking beaver surveys along the Kaltag River when he needed to land. *And all these kids just came running up* (probably they thought the mail plane had arrived) *so I took this picture.*

Jim was an *Alaska Game Commission* Agent, who learned to fly in this 4 seat, *Piper Pacer N702*. He supplied this additional image of himself with the aircraft & the following details:



Photo by Ray Woolford, US Fish & Wildlife Service

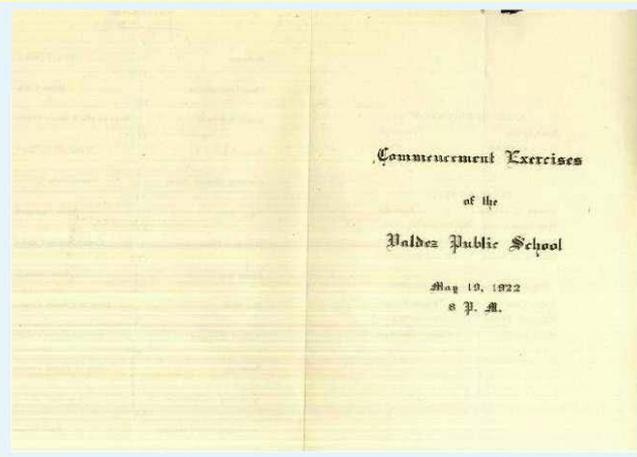
courtesy of James King

Ray Woolford, Fairbanks U S Fish & Wildlife Service Agent in Charge took this image. New pilots had to log 100 hours before they could fly under more experienced Agents. Jim worked under Woolford & was authorized April 20, 1954. Woolford retired about 1970 & died a few years later. Fish & Wildlife Service in Alaska was rebuilding after World War II & had mostly Army surplus planes. The agency started buying Pacers & Supercubs about 1953. Pilots could manage them in extremely cold weather.

In those years beaver were recovering from near extermination in the lawless early 20th Century. Trappers were limited to 10 pelts per year & before the end of April a FWS Agent inspected & must place a metal seal on their skins, so Fish & Wildlife agents were busy in April, going from village to village.

Planes landed on the river in front of villages & kids would come swarming down to stand in the wind behind, & sometimes agents had candy, so they liked to have us come. The image is in Jim's book, *Attending Alaska's Birds*.

The companion *School District Correspondence* contains the Commissioner's interaction with all local school boards & districts for 43 years, 1917 -1960. Information is detailed & reflects community activities & attitudes about issues pleasant and unpleasant. Here are a few items I gleaned from 17 folders of Valdez school district records.



BOARD OF EDUCATION		PROGRAM	
Nels Ineson	President	Welcome	I Prof. Frobeck
Mrs. S. C. Caster	Clerk	Class Lamentation	II Hides Cook
J. W. Steaco	Treasurer	Desk Bell Drill	III Boys of the Primary Grade
TEACHING STAFF		Flute Solo	IV Elizabeth De Hart
Everett F. Frobeck	Principal	Counting Market Goose	V Intermediate Grades
Miss Hazel Kincaid	6th, 7th and 8th grades	Piano Solo	VI Mary Springall
Miss Mary Martin	1st, 3rd and 5th grades	Eightfold Flag	VII Girls of Upper Grades
Mrs. M. A. Kelsey	1st and 2nd grades	Piano Solo	VIII Lillian Schmidt
GRADUATE SCHOOL GRADUATES		Fun Drill	IX Girls of Primary Grades
Helen Cook	Dorothy McLean	Sailor's Serenade	XI Boys of Upper Grades
Elizabeth DeHart	Hector McLean	Just Dig	XII Girls of Upper Grades
Alice Egna	Theodore Erickson	Retrieving the Colours	XIII The High School
		Presentation of Diploma	XIV Nels Ineson

Valdez, Alaska
March 19, 1934

[1924]

American Education Week

PROGRAM

Under Joint Auspices of
Valdez P. T. A. and American Legion

FRIDAY, NOV. 21, F. O. E. HALL, 8:00 P. M.

1. MUSIC: Orchestra
2. CHORUS: Primary Group
3. VOCAL SOLO: Dr. J. L. Bulkley
"Bedouin Love Song," Hawley
- (a) ADDRESS: Hon. A. J. Dimond
"The Constitution—The Bulwark of Democracy and Happiness."
4. CHORUS: Upper Group
5. MUSIC: "Alaska" The Syncopaters
- (b) ADDRESS: Capt. L. C. Parsons
"The U. S. Flag is the Living Symbol of the Ideals and Institutions of our Country."
6. PIANO SOLO: Miss Lillian Schmidt
"Hunting Song," Mendelssohn
7. READING: Conrad Gaiser
"The School House and the Flag."
- (c) ADDRESS: W. N. CUDDY
"Service to Community, State and Nation is the Duty of Every Citizen."
8. COMMUNITY SINGING
Mrs. L. C. Parsons, Leader

JOINT PROGRAM COMMITTEE
American Legion Parent-Teacher Asso.
John Roseen Mrs. M. A. Kelsey
I. J. Johnson Mrs. D. F. Millard
Irvin F. Heise

Valdez School District,
1922-1934
Commencement Exercises
May 19, 1922, an *American Education Week* program, 1924; but also a reflection of community prejudice ~ as late as 1934 the Board refused to accept Alaska Native Students.

Paul W. Gordon
Office of Indian Affairs
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Sir:

As President of the Valdez School Board I wish to address you on a subject that is now before the people of this town.

Mr. Anthony W. Earnest, in a communication to our Town Council set forth a tentative plan, suggesting that if we would consent to unite the white and native children in one school house, it might be possible to receive a large appropriation from a branch of the U.S.A. with which to build a large school house.

We are very much in need of a good school building. But more in need of a proper education for our future citizens. It requires contentment among scholars to acquire an education and I am quite sure that the suggested mixing would not lead to that end.

Mr. Miller when here, put forward a few remarks on the success of the schools in one or two towns in South Eastern Alaska. In that section the natives have been mixing with the whites along the Pacific coast for at least one hundred years, while those of this western country are still under tribal relations and Uncle Sam is a puzzle to them. Our natives are a shy set and huddle together. At the movies they select a section of seats and all gather in that part, though there is no restraint placed upon them. They are proud of having their own school and prove to be able scholars where they have the good fortune to be served by capable, trained teachers.

Mix them with white children and they lose that feeling of possession and become indifferent, while in their own school they become competitive and endeavor to surpass the whites in achievement.

I have mixed very much with the natives during the past thirty four years, and during eight of those years I was a frequent visitor to every native village in the Third Division. I know the people and note them a study. I found in many cases that too close proximity to the Whites was a detriment to the natives.

As an economical problem your school can be operated on a far less per capita cost than ours, your pupils are more than eager to do all the necessary work.

Give your Native children their own school house and a teacher such as they now have and they will become useful citizens, mix and they become useless. Here we have living examples of both scholars. Those who came here from Chumna were educated and are now respected.

Yours,

Jos. A. Bourke

Girdwood's 1st Day of School, ca. 1950

I arrived September 19, to find the stove in the freight shed & no supplies . . . There were no locks on the school door or place for me to live. . .

We've already seen a letter from Girdwood. Here's another, the report of Girdwood's 1st teacher, upon arriving to set up the school about 1950. It proves that a sense of humor is a valuable asset if you're going to be a rural school teacher.

I arrived September 19, to find the stove in the freight shed and no supplies here. There were no locks on the school doors or place for me to live. I slept in the hotel over the barroom and ate about at the children's homes. During the night September 19, the supplies came.

I called the children to the school house on the morning of September 20, and enrolled them, but as the men of the community had not yet put up the stove, we got so cold that I had to send them home. I dressed like an Eskimo and with the help of some of the village people unpacked books, desks, etc. By Tuesday night September 20, the stove was connected and we have had a satisfactory time teaching.

The terrible tragedy here two weeks ago today frightened me out of the hotel into the school house. It is rather unconventional to sleep in a school room, but I prize my life, and there is no other place I can sleep. The teacherage is almost finished, and I expect to be sleeping in it in a few days. When I write my autobiography, one chapter will be Girdwood Intimacy.



Children



Yet there are records about children outside the sphere of education that might also surprise you.

Moses Alexie; Eek, AK, July 1956



Record Group 298 *Engineering & Health (Facility Construction & Operation)*; Series 564village Safe Water Project Files Photographs, 1939-1961

This is Moses Alexie, of Eek, in summer 1956. It's my favorite in the State Archives collection. This is the image I usually start my presentations with.

Moses appears to be about 12 years old. He's posed with a black fish trap & basket style dog sled. He's standing in front of a log building, possibly his house. So you have an identifiable Alaskan, in his home environment, & dressed in typical Alaskan kid style, ca. 1955. I know the style well, because I was an Alaskan kid in the 1950s.

Where did this image come from? Amos, *Joe Alter*, Alaska's 1st Sanitarian was in charge of the *Village Sanitation Projects*, the 1st project to provide village water & sewer systems throughout Alaska. Alter took along a camera because he was an able, creative public servant. In most communities his images are of facilities & people at work. But for some reason in Eek, Alter took about 100 pictures of village people, just being themselves.



Lunch time at Eek School, 1956

This is one of two portraits of Grace White & Mary Ford, sisters in law, & their children. In one the family clothes are drying on the line.



Grace White & Mary Ford & their children; Eek, AK July 1956

And Moses Alexie? I contacted the Eek Village Council last summer & learned he's still living, a retired electrician somewhere on the West Coast.

But if archives are *about* education, are they *attuned* to children? Although the stereotype seems to be, *no, there probably isn't much in an archives that would interest children*, I've learned over the years that the real answer is *Yes*.

You just have to speak to them on a level that they can understand & absorb. We have records about your children & sometimes we work with children.

And do we get child patrons? Yes! Some children are genealogists. We encourage historical projects. Children from Rural Alaska often contact us about *Alaska History Day* projects. I've responded to several requests; Shageluk & Unalakleet I can remember.

And do children write history? Yes!

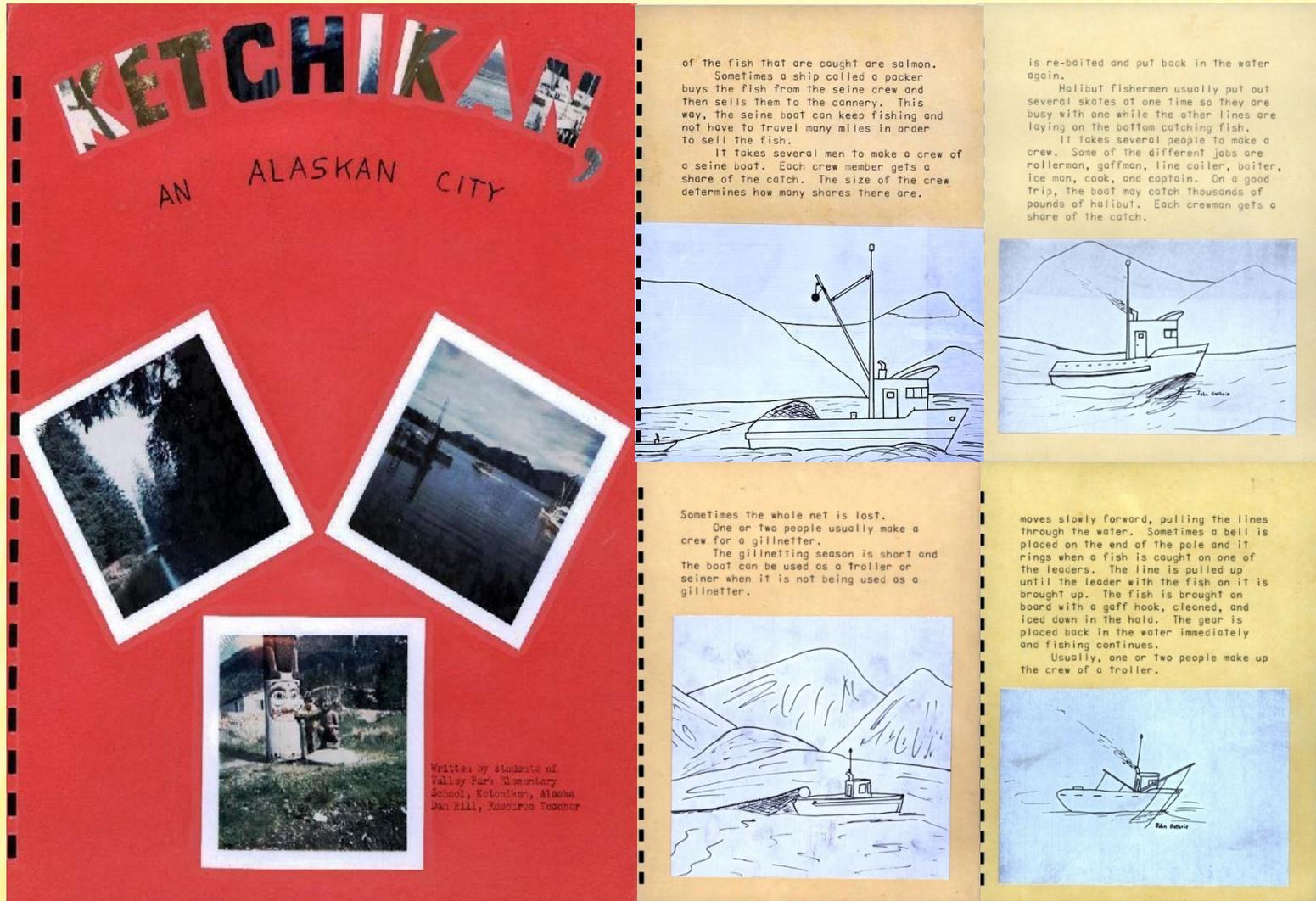
I've discovered since coming to the Alaska State Archives that schools often are leaders in recording local history. There's quite a good history of the Anchorage *Sand Lake* area done in the 1970s by 2 elementary school classes. Among others they interviewed Ella McCrea whose homestead is the namesake for McCrea Road in Midtown.

I saw something similar from *Petersburg*. And the State Archives provided research support for a *Yakutat High School* community history publication. A student traveled to Juneau to do several days of research.

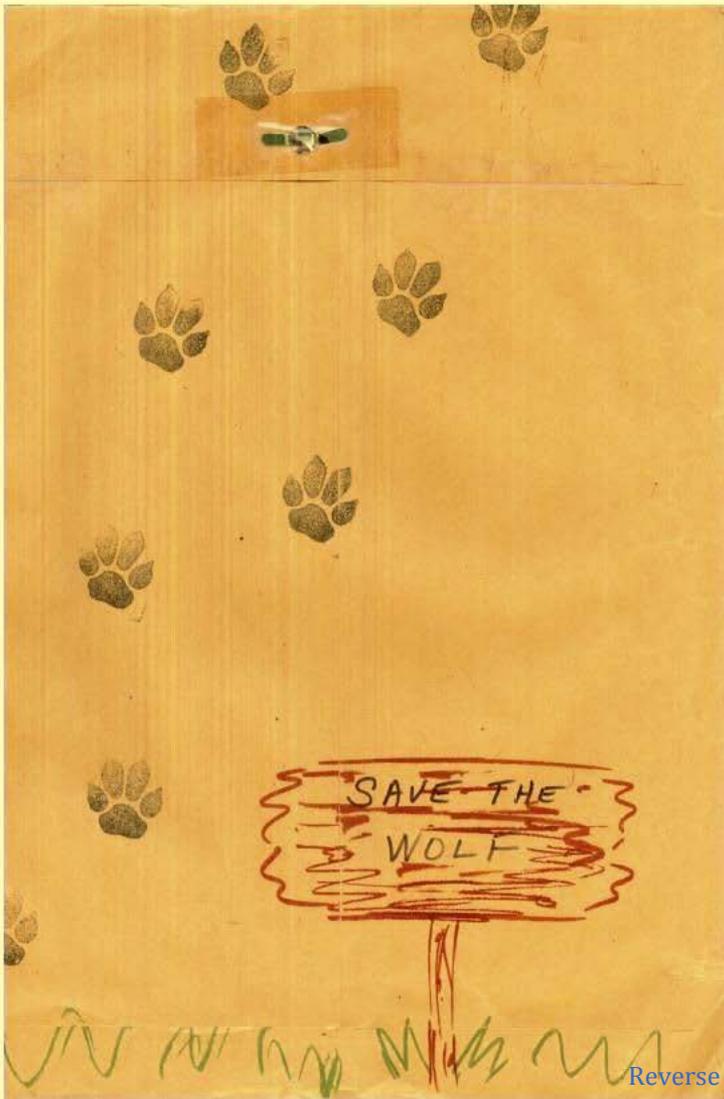
Perhaps we should encourage this trend.

A Few Pages from a Ketchikan Atlas Prepared by the City's Children.

Do children create archives? Yes. Here's something I located several years ago in our oversize collections. It came from a Ketchikan class project. I contacted the district & the school is now closed, although I suspect many of the children involved still live in Alaska with children of their own by now.



Well, what does it show? One thing it shows is that children in Alaska coastal communities know the difference between purse seiners, long liners, gill netters & trollers.



A Letter of Protest from Florida

Here's something from outside Alaska. Everyone's aware of the wolf kill controversy & know that many people from across the world wrote both Governor Hickel & the Board of Game expressing opposition. So many that the State Archives only retained a sample because the message is largely the same.

Some writers were children. A letter from an elementary class in Florida used this envelope to mail their letter of protest. Whether or not you agree with their sentiment you have to admire their artistry. And that's an important thing about public archives. We retain information for & about the public, whoever they are, & let them use it as they see fit. That's democracy in action.

And we've given tours. One was a visit by the Juneau Home School Association in which each State Archives staff member made a separate presentation.

Another was a tour by Meyers Chuck middle school students whom we showed the school's establishment file, & a chaperone saw her husband among children in a 1950s photo.

And there is the *Annual Archives Lecture & Tour for Douglas' Gastineau Elementary 2nd Graders* we presented for 3 years.



Annual Archives Lecture & Tour for 7 & 8 Year Olds

This is 1 of my most cherished activities.

A teacher contacted me. She'd always wondered what was in the archives. Her class was about to do a unit on *My Community*. Would the State Archives host them?

What could we possibly talk to 2nd graders about? I said I'd have to ask my superiors, hoping they'd say no & I'd be off the hook. But everyone said, *oh, I think that's a wonderful idea*. Of course my superiors had the luxury of not actually having to talk to 7 & 8 year olds about archives!

Yet I discovered it was possible to find things about to children. And surprisingly it didn't take a lot of time to prepare.

Of course these are the parts of the tour they seemed to enjoy most ~ climbing our rolling ladders, moving our mobile shelves & gathering in our step van. But actual learning did take place. I showed my 2nd Grade report card from Anchorage's Denali School, then showed my college diploma to prove I had improved academically somewhat over the years.

The third year the children were so impressed they prepared their own video about people & institutions in Douglas. Abby Focht & I were invited to Gastineau Elementary on the last day of the school year to view it.



7 & 8 Year Olds Learning
About Archives





And that map of the school I showed earlier?

Here are the kids examining the drawing. I emphasized the *Teacherage* & asked, *why Alaska seemed much farther away in 1895 than at present*. I found they were a little vague about that.

So I got a toy boat & toy airplanes to explain that modern technology has changed our lives significantly by greatly shortening travel time.



What message
would I like you
to carry away
this afternoon?

IT'S THIS:

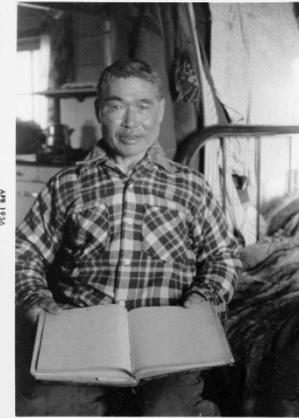
Archives are about People. And the Alaska State Archives? Are about Alaska's people!



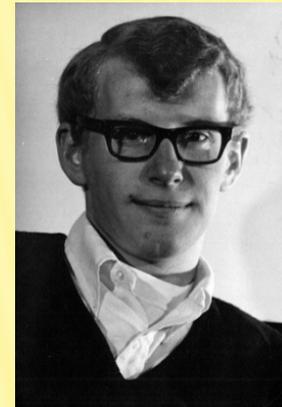
Intermodal transfer Buckland Airport ca. 1970



House near Petersburg; possibly Jess Ames, ca. 1960



George Green & his Yupik Script Bible. Eek 1956



Terry Heyworth ,
Governor's Washington,
DC Office, May 1970



Young Man with a pet deer; Ames
Fox Farm near Petersburg, ca. 1935



Ketchikan Lyric Opera
Performer ca. 1975



House construction near Petersburg; possibly Russell
Ames; date unknown



A Miner's loved one. Iditarod
Precinct ca. 1920



Miss Lillian Williamson;
probably Juneau, ca. 1918



Masquerade Party-Sitka, ca. 1914



A member of Mrs. Ferguson's class learns about
microfilm. Alaska State Archives, 2010

FINIS

