

Wrangell St. Elias News

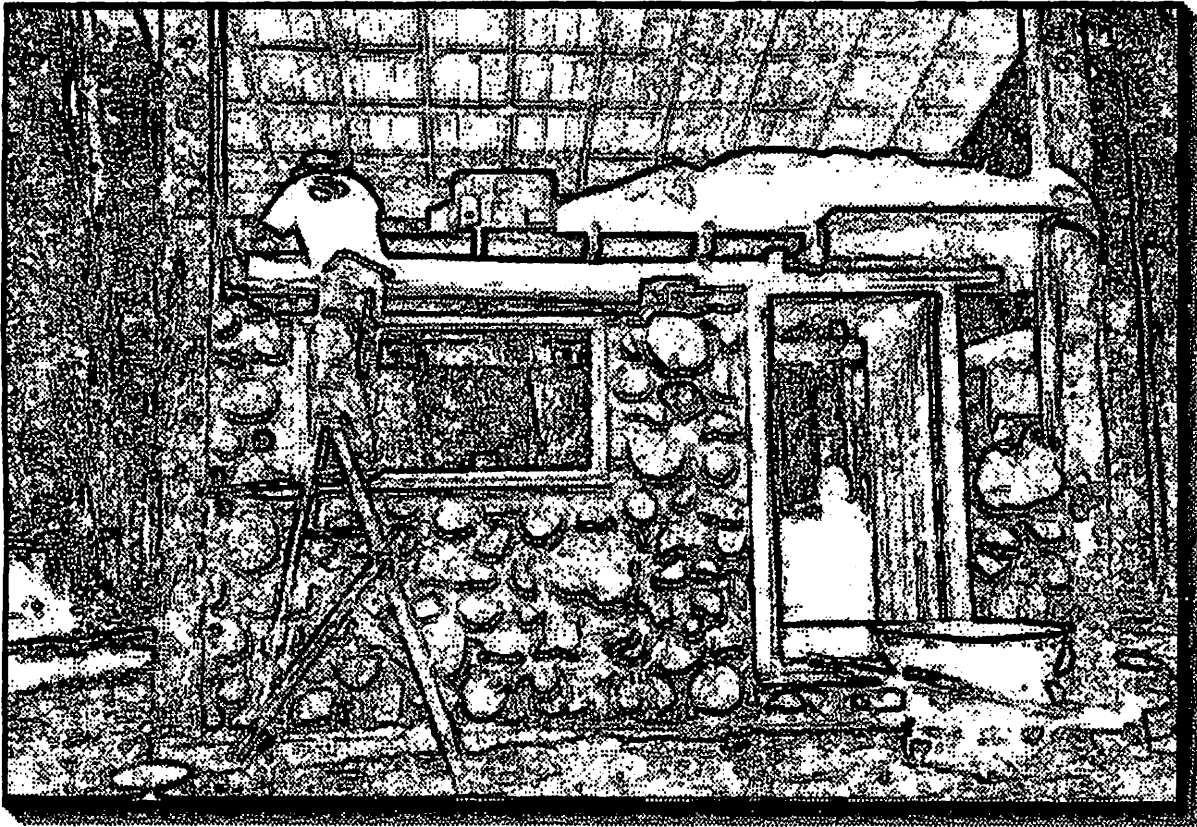
"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Nine Issue One

January & February 2000

Two Dollars

Wood and mortar



Cordwood masonry—a construction style that dates back to the 1800's, is alive and well in the year 2000. Brandon Holton says it's Easy, Economical, Efficient, Esthetically pleasing and Eco-friendly! Story on page 6.

Web Sites—

- ✘ **WSEN** page 11
- ✘ **CR&NW** page 8
- ✘ **Alaska Online** page 17

AIRPLANES IN THE WRANGELLS



page 10

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

I am sure the calendar says December 21 is the first day of winter, but the weather here in the McCarthy area didn't seem to agree!

We almost thought we were still on vacation in Florida. Our official weather thermometer indicated 56 as our maximum temperature and a low of 32. Then, it started to rain. The 10 inches of snow on the ground disappeared until our snow depth stick read 3 inches! Rick and I went for a walk and were amazed at the warm gusts of wind that greeted us as we strolled (more like sloshed) through the neighborhood.

By the time Christmas Day arrived we were dreaming about a white Christmas, believe me! Our dream came true. It started to snow and didn't stop until we had 8 inches of beautiful, fluffy snow.

As I sit at my computer today (January 3), I can testify to the fact that winter eventually

arrived in McCarthy. It is -29 and I am wondering if we just imagined those warm breezes.

On October 31 Rick and I left the cabin and began our journey to Daytona Beach. It was snowing when we left. By the time we got near Glennallen, the visibility and driving conditions were so poor that we decided to stay overnight instead of venturing through the mountain passes to Anchorage. By morning the roads were in much better condition and we gratefully finished the first leg of our trip south.

After spending a couple of days in the big city shopping for supplies, we were soon winging our way to Florida. We enjoyed visiting our parents in Daytona then spent a week in southern Georgia with son Rick Jr., Maria and our 3 absolutely wonderful grandsons. Jonathan, 6, really takes to the computer like his father and grandfather. He and "Grandpa Rick" hunted and fished together and didn't even

leave the house. Stephen, 4, my little buddy, gave me a blow-by-blow description of the latest Veggie Tales video he had seen. Joshua, 1, welcomed us with open arms and was quick to let us hold him. What rich memories we came home with this year!

We are back in the swing of things now and are almost ready to pull out the Gestetner Copyprinter and get the first issue of the new year out to you. By the way, we have not experienced any glitches from Y2K. Our computers are doing just fine and all is well with *Wrangell St. Elias News*.

All of us at *Wrangell St. Elias News* wish you a very prosperous and blessed new year.

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Harry Heintz, WA; Matt and Gerlyn Brasic, WI; Gene LaBerge, WI; Nancy Green, WA; Mark Boulter, AK; Robert Spude, NM; Channel 2 Broadcasting Co., AK.

Wrangell St. Elias News

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Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Chris Richards: One of the most astounding items of interest in the McCarthy-Kennicott area since our last WRANGELL ST. ELIAS NEWS issue is the weather! At the time I called Chris (Dec. 23) we were experiencing rain, temperatures in the 50's, gusts of warm air, loss of snow and icy conditions. (Let's see, did I leave anything out?)

Chris, who lives in downtown Kennicott, assured me he was just fine but the Kennicott Glacier was bare of snow. Also, he said he was seriously considering loaning out "crampons" as Christmas gifts to all the local residents! For you new-timers to Wrangell St. Elias News, Chris owns a local guiding service which makes great use of those ice-climbing or glacier-hiking tools that fits on one's boots.

I thanked him and said I'd pass the word around the neighborhood—just in case this strange weather didn't straighten up!

Dave Hollis: For those who like to keep up on some of our summer locals, Chris reports that while he was in Anchorage recently, he stayed with Dave. Dave is working for Muffler City doing bookkeeping and computer work. I'm sure Dave sends his best regards to all who know him (or know of him!).

James Sill: While I was chatting with Chris, I asked him who else was up in his neck of the woods that I could get an item of interest from. He then handed the phone to James who was at that moment visiting Chris. James says he was in Girdwood doing carpentry work but decided to come back here for a couple of weeks. His plans are to return to Girdwood, complete his job, and come back to Kennicott for the remainder of the winter.

Tim Mischel: The phone rang several times before Tim answered. I was beginning to wonder if those super gusty winds had gotten to him! Actually, he told me he had been outside checking on his snowmachine. This was his first day in about a week that he managed to venture very far from his cabin. Located at 3,800 feet at what is known as the Angle Station, Tim is often subject to high winds and adverse weather conditions. I think this year beats them all: 2 days of 48 degrees, a major meltdown (as Tim describes it!), then an estimated 10 feet of snowfall, followed by freezing rain, lots of nearby avalanches, gusting winds, and low

clouds that prevented Tim from seeing much beyond his front door! It's a good thing that Tim has a cell phone so he can stay in touch with us down here in the valley. Hang in there (literally), Tim. As my mom used to tell me whenever she took me to the dentist, "This, too, shall pass!"

Diane Malik: Diane, along with her son Orion, and husband Mike are also Kennicottites. I seldom see Diane except a few times during the summer. However, this month I've been able to visit with her at mail and at Carly Kritchén's Christmas Tea. This was Diane's first time to attend the annual "ladies-only" social event and she even came sporting a new hairdo. Looks great, Diane, and let's get in another good visit before spring arrives. (I'll make a batch of fudge!)

John Adams and Carmen Russo: Speaking of not seeing someone in awhile, I must tell you how glad I am to see John and Carmen back in the neighborhood. If you are an avid reader of *Items of Interest*, you are aware that this McCarthy couple is spending the winter in Cube Cove located on Admiralty Island. Cube Cove is a logging camp and they needed an all-around maintenance man. That's where John came in. The camp also needed a teacher and Carmen quickly filled that position.

Carmen says she is gaining lots of experience with teaching multiple grades. She teaches Math and Algebra for grades 6-12 and is really enjoying it.

They tell me it isn't all work in Cube Cove. In fact, Carmen found time to do some blueberry picking. John, on the other hand, kept their freezer well stocked with deer meat, so you can easily guess what he did on his days off!

Welcome home, John and Carmen, and have a great vacation!

Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty: Summers in McCarthy are usually filled with various building projects. Our warmest season is so short that we do our best to start and (hopefully) finish those outdoor chores that we eagerly plan during the winter months. Once our first real snowfall of the winter arrives, those chores usually come to an abrupt halt. Well, not for the Welty family this year!

Before winter arrived, Don managed to get the foundational work done for an addition to their house—bedrooms for daughter Sarah and Rene.

Although winter was settling in upon us, Don was able to get in his building materials. In between the snowfall, rain, wind and ice Don and his crew (Sarah, Rene and Lynn) continued to make progress.

This morning I received an email from Sarah who happily informed Rick and I that she is busily moving in! In fact, she and Rene slept in their new rooms last night.

Lynn and I talked on the phone just awhile ago. She said she told Don it's quite a feat to make all 3 of the women in his house happy, but all at the same time? Well, now that's quite an accomplishment! Congratulations, Don!

Jim and Audrey Edwards: It seems there is always something cooking at the Edwards's house—especially lately. On Thanksgiving Audrey invited several neighbors to join her and Jim for a dinner with all the holiday trimmings. Then between the Christmas tea/cookie exchange and the church party, she barely had time to give her oven a break. (Rick says to keep those empty propane bottles coming our way!) Cookies in various shapes and flavors filled her counter. I imagine Jim had fun sampling all the goodies.

On Christmas Day she pulled out another turkey and, yep, you guessed it, on goes the oven. Rick and I were invited to share the goodies. Audrey kept pulling out of her over-worked oven!

Jim almost didn't make it home for Christmas, he told me. Needing to take care of a few things in the big city, he flew his plane to Anchorage mid-December. Discovering that adverse weather was heading our way, he attempted to fly home on Saturday, the 18th. However, the lack of daylight found him putting down for the night at Gulkana. Thanks to McCarthy's mail pilot, Lynn Ellis, Jim found refuge for his plane (which was full of perishable items) in Lynn's hangar and a warm bed at Lynn's home. Thankfully, he was able to finish the last leg of his trip the next day; otherwise, he says, "I'd still be in Anchorage!"

The Lohse Family: Ralph, Linda and their 3 boys Tyce, Trae and Teal weren't traveling by air but they were on the road during the week of our strange weather. They drove from Long Lake to Anchorage in order to pick up the rest of their immediate family who flew in for the holidays. Ralph and Linda's three daughters Becky, Robin and Lynnette and Becky's husband Ivan all made it back to Long Lake safe and sound, says Ralph, in spite of the fact they ran into a blizzard on the way into town and another one on the way home. Other than that, the trip was uneventful!

By the way, the Lohses's new cabin is really coming along. Linda says it is completely enclosed now, the roof is on and a wood stove is in place. Just in time, too, for the entire Lohse family to share Christmas dinner together under one roof.

The Miller family: Speaking of families, Jim, Jeannie, Aaron, Matt and Stacie are also together this Christmas. When I called Jeannie the other afternoon, Jim was on his way down from Kennicott to meet daughter Stacie and Dan, a friend, at the bridge. The young people had just arrived from Fairbanks where they had started out 3 days before. The weather slowed them down some, but Jeannie was counting her blessings—they made it safe and sound.

Jeannie is a proud mom these days. Stacie graduated from the University of Fairbanks with a Bachelor's Degree in Cultural Anthropology and is going to take a trip to Australia, Thailand and other assorted countries with her Uncle Doug next month. Congratulations, Stacie!

Matt, who turned 21 in May, now has his own cabin in Kennicott which he built himself. According to his mom, it has linoleum and carpeting throughout and even oil heat! Pretty uptown for a cabin in the bush! So, guess what he got for Christmas from mom and dad? "Household stuff, of course," says Jeannie.

Aaron is back to school with Katy Steger as his teacher and doing a great job!

Chad Reymiller and Julia Coats: Chad and Julia are having "major problems" this winter in their log cabin building project! The rain left layers of ice on the logs they need to peel, says Julia. This is the second time this has happened. Once in November and again this month.

Will they give up winter construction? Are you kidding? These two "kids" don't know what giving up is, and that's good. Julia just stopped by for a minute and said they now have 2 rounds of logs up. Now, that may not sound like much but consider this; their logs measure anywhere from 14" to 20" at the butt ends. Each round makes a lot of difference!

Your perseverance is paying off, Julia and Chad! Next winter you should be able to kick up your feet and relax in front of that fancy new oil stove!

Matt Hambrick: Matt's back home and enjoying his new cabin. I've only seen him briefly at mail and a quick stop here at our place. He, Chad and Julia have been doing some snowmachining around the countryside. They are hoping to put in

a trail up to Tim Mischel's place any day now. Welcome home, Matt!

Carly's 5th Annual Christmas Cookie Exchange & Tea: Carly has done it again! On Friday, December 17, fifteen ladies from McCarthy, Kennicott and Long Lake accepted Carly's invitation to bring 4 dozen of their favorite cookies or candy and gather at her cabin. As usual Carly provided the ladies with a fine luncheon and a fun-filled time exchanging goodies to take home to family and friends.

KMCC update

According to its president, Betty Adams, the Kennicott McCarthy Chamber of Commerce (KMCC) has receiving a Capital Projects Matching Grant through the State of Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development. The purpose of these grants are for community facilities and equipment.

"The Chamber tried to address issues that have been expressed by as many community members as was possible," writes Adams in a letter to the community. "We developed a want list and then prioritized it. We have identified the following projects: 1) Two fire trucks, safety equipment for fire fighters, and training for the east and west sides of the Kennicott River. 2) Bank erosion stabilization to McCarthy Creek to save land and historical buildings. 3) Access across McCarthy Creek."

The KMCC has purchased a road grader for community projects and in response to D. O. T. budget cuts. The acquisition of this grader was achieved by donations to the Chamber. The Board of Directors has developed a management plan for this grader which includes "the plowing of the McCarthy Road as needed to provide year round access but the plowing shall be done to ensure multi use for snow machine and dog teams and consideration given to property owners' driveways... Cost for any road plowing other than the McCarthy Road can be made by donations from the property owners for the operating expense of the grader (fuel and maintenance). The operator on the grader will be Lane Moffitt who will be donating his time so it will not be on call. Proposals, requests and questions regarding road maintenance should be directed to the KMCC."

You may contact the chamber at P.O. BOX MXV, Glennallen, Alaska 99588 or phone 907-554-4402 or FAX 907-554-4404.

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Wood and mortar

BY BRANDON HOLTON

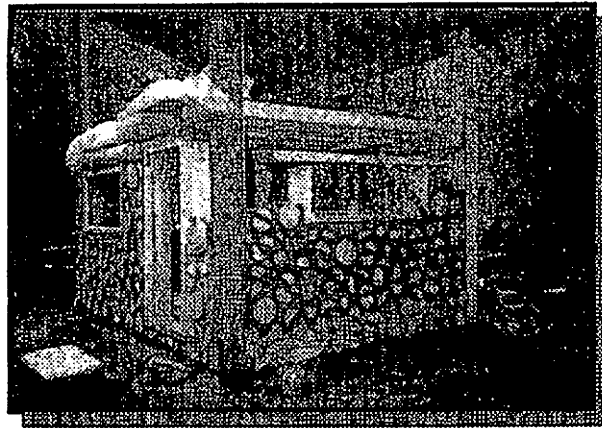
“Mmmm, interesting,” “Cool!” “Is this fantasy land?” “Creative.” Complete and utter silence. These are but a few reactions we have received from McCarthy locals, varying from skepticism to enthusiastic optimism. What are we talking about? *Cordwood masonry*. Sorry, that still may not answer the question for a lot of folks. If you’ve been to Jurgen Ogrodnik’s cabin you should have a relative idea what I’m talking about.

Cordwood masonry is a construction style which dates back to the 1800s. The theory is simple: build by combining firewood and mortar. I’m sure some of you are doubled over with laughter. “Wood and mortar? That’s ridiculous—there’s no natural bond!” Does it work? Well, it’s comforting to know that 100-year old structures are still standing today in Wisconsin, southern Canada and Scotland (where this unconventional ideology was born).

For those who have never seen cordwood masonry, or stackwall construction as it is also known, I will do my best to describe. The wood, in our case spruce, can be cut at any desirable length. Note—the length of the cut will be equivalent to the thickness of the wall. Our cordwood is a foot long, therefore our walls are a foot thick. Easy enough. The

wood can be any size or shape, without rot, of course. Rounds are typical, but we used mostly split. There is no structural difference, only esthetics, so it’s the builder’s choice.

The next ingredient is mortar. Mortar recipes vary in quantity, but the four essential ingredients remain consistent for most cordwood structures: sand, cement, lime and wet sawdust. We used a basic recipe which has been reliable in the past: 9:3:3:2. That is, for every batch of mortar, we used 9 parts sand, 3 parts wet sawdust, 3 parts Portland cement and 2 parts lime. Sand, mortar and lime provide the structural



stability for the mortar, and the sawdust provides extra insulation. When the sawdust is added to the mortar mix it is wet and expanded. As the sawdust dries, along with the mortar, it shrinks and therefore creates dead air space. This air space helps prevent heat transfer through the mortar to the exterior.

The final ingredient is a mixture of dry sawdust and lime. This serves as the

insulation backbone. The lime is thrown in to discourage insects from hanging out in our walls and to prevent rot.

Okay, the wood is cut, split and peeled. The mortar is mixed, as is the insulation. Time to build a wall. The wall consists of equal thirds of mortar, sawdust (insulation) and mortar. Since our logs are 12 inches long, we had 4 inches of mortar on the inside, 4 inches of mortar on the outside, and 4 inches of insulation in between, creating a barrier between the inner and outer mortar. This eliminates the chance of heat being lost through a continuous mortar joint.

Next, throw on a log to your liking and repeat the process, making sure the insulation is packed down so it fills in all the hidden pockets under the logs and in between the mortar joints. Mortar, mortar, insulation, log. Repeat. That’s all there is to it. It sounds simple and it is. The process flows quite smoothly, yet it

does take longer than you’d think. Hand mixing all the mortar, finding the perfect log, and smoothing out (pointing) the mortar all set you back a bit. Work with someone on the inside and the outside of the wall until you’re tired of looking at them. Then clean up and call it a day. Your wall is completed both inside and out. Wake up the next morning and continue where you left off. It’s gratifying to see daily progress.

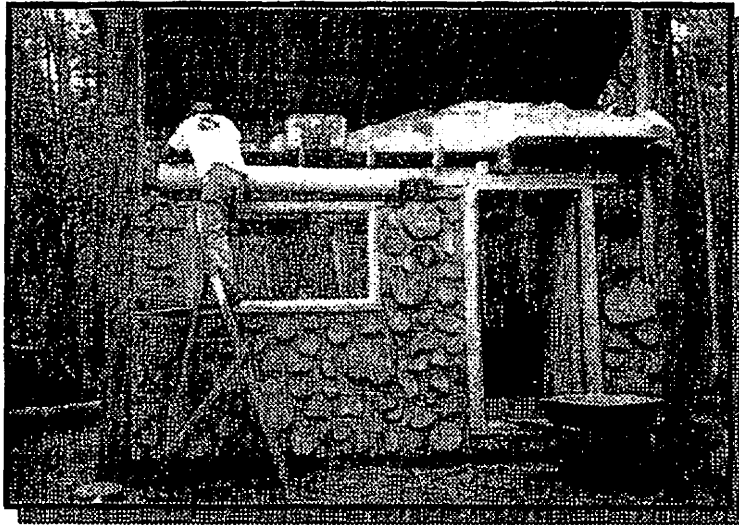
So why do people build

using this type of construction? Rob Roy, one of the modern pioneers of cordwood masonry, developed the five E's to answer that question. The first, which we have already referenced, is the *ease of construction*. You don't have to be a wiz at carpentry. Some basic carpentry skills, which I learned along the way, and some common sense, which I'd like to believe I acquired long ago, are all you need. "What did we do right?" was my reaction to our perfectly level foundation. I guess it's better than "what did we do wrong." Along with the minimal skill requirements comes the minimal tool requirements.

Our tools consisted of a handsaw, hatchet, hammer, shovel, wheelbarrow, scraper, hoe, level and rubber gloves. Add an occasional drill and chainsaw and that sums it up and brings us to the next E: *economical*. A basic theory of cordwood construction is "use what you've got." Everything can be found or purchased locally. It's budget building at its finest. The cordwood, the small amount of dimensional lumber, the second-hand windows and the home built-door all come at an inexpensive price.

Efficiency is the third E. The thick walls with their insulation provides a lot of thermal mass as the heat which is stored in the walls is radiated back into the interior. There is a very low conductivity of

heat/cold between the inside and outside mortar joints because they never actually meet. Condensation should be low as well, because the log ends breathe and transfer moisture to the outside. Hopefully these theories will hold true for us, as it has for other cordwood builders. If not, our neighbors, the Kenyon's B&B will be open all year long!



E number four is *esthetics*. If you like unconventional building, you should like cordwood. If you don't, it will probably grow on you (just ask Rick).

Cordwood homes can be packed with personality. You are free to use your creative side and build something a little different. For example, in addition to our windows, we used bottle ends and glass cubes to improve lighting and add character. The ladder to the second floor and our bookshelves are built directly into the walls by using logs longer than our standard 12 inches and extending them on the interior side. Old climbing pitons stuck in the wall are used for hanging curtains. A little zoo consisting of moose,

frogs, hippos, rhinos, fossils, a glow-in-the-dark piranha and a grizzly bear can be found sticking out of our walls. (The grizzly bear being Nelson's idea so I will never forget my first summer in McCarthy. See the September & October WSEN!)

In addition to being personally pleasing, cordwood homes blend well with their surroundings.

The use of local and natural products reveals the final E of cordwood masonry: *ecologically friendly*. I think that most cabins in Alaska are eco-friendly, so take this for what it's worth. It's just nice to know that when our cabin eventually

returns to the earth everything should break down relatively easy, with the exception of the metal roof and plastic zoo.

Well, that's about it for cordwood masonry. We would just like to reiterate for those people in McCarthy thinking about cordwood projects and other folks with an interest that it really is a creative and fun way to build. If you want more information, I suggest reading Rob Roy's *The Complete Book Of Cordwood Masonry*. Mike Loso has our copy, so feel free to haggle that long-haired hippie. Finally, we'd like to thank all those who contributed advice, opinions and labor on our building project, with special thanks to the Edwards and to the Kenyons who helped us out in every possible way.

The Kennecott Copper / Copper River & Northwestern Railway Historic Website

BY RON SIMPSON

There are a number of websites to be found relating to the McCarthy-Kennicott area. The bulk of these are commercial sites which are mainly useful in planning trips into the south-central area, identifying services including lodging, flightseeing and adventure tours. Many of these same sites can also be located through the official National Park Service website, which provides a comprehensive look at the park and region. This useful link can be found at:

<http://www.nps.gov/wrst/home.html>.

There are also a number of personal websites following along the lines of "my trip into the Wrangell-St.Elias National Park," of which one of the most interesting can be found at:

<http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/2003/mine.html>. This site contains a number of photos taken within the old Kennecott mine system.

If, however, the visitor wishes to view a comprehensive historic site, complete with extensive photos and text, the place to look would be the "Copper Rail Depot," which can be found at: <http://www.angelfire.com/ak2/crnwrail/>. The Depot serves as a gateway page, and provides useful links to the Kennecott / CRNW Railway historic site, which will be discussed in more detail; a section on the private 1:24 scale CRNW Railway project; and comprehensive links to a variety of related sites, most of which are contained in the adjacent page, "Alaska and Yukon Territory visitor links," which can be found at <http://www.angelfire.com/ak2/crnwrail/akvisitors.html>. This single page includes direct links to the NPS website and a large number of the related commercial websites for the entire region, with useful road travel information through the Yukon Territory and Alaska, including the link to the Alaska ferry system, links to the Copper River valley area, Cordova, Valdez, Dawson City, and other sites which would be of particular interest

for those planning a trip into the region.

The Copper Rail Depot site is the home page for the historic models project, and includes photos of the Kennecott mill model (and adjacent historic structures), a number of historic Chitina buildings, a model of the Gilahina trestle and much more. Included with photos of these models are links to photos of the actual original structures for purposes of comparison.

The main historic site is by far the most comprehensive historic site of its type found anywhere on the internet, and includes, probably, a total of nearly 400 mostly black and white historic photos. Here are some of the categories to be found on this site:

Route of the CRNW Railway:
http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/route_list.html follows the actual historic railway route from Cordova to Kennecott, including Cordova wharf scenes, the eleven-bay roundhouse, Alaganik, Flag Point, Katalla Junction, the Million Dollar Bridge, Baird, Tiekkel, Woods Canyon, Chitina, Strelna, Chokosna, McCarthy and Blackburn.

Locomotives of the CRNW:
<http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/locomotives.html> which includes many large photos of every type of locomotive the CRNW ever used, plus photos of the rotary snow plows, and a roster of all the CRNW main line equipment.

The largest section on the site is the photo collection for Kennecott itself, which can be found through:
<http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/kennecott.html>. The emphasis here is on the National Creek complex, which was the heart of Kennecott, and includes some of the earliest photos ever taken of the town, plus maps of the site in 1908, 1915 and



Photo courtesy Candy Waugaman

MINER RIDING DOWN THE BONANZA AERIAL TRAM

1935 as well as a map (in two sections) which shows the proposed town layout as envisioned before Kennecott was ever built. Incidentally, for spelling purposes, the original townsite actually was spelled the same as the adjacent Kennicott Glacier, but was changed shortly thereafter to "Kennecott," to reflect the spelling of the company. The postal spelling became "Kennecott," which it remained as long as the mine operated. Prior to that, the site was simply known as the Bonanza Mine terminal, which is the original discovery outcropping. To be historically accurate, "Kennecott," however, is the correct spelling for the town.

The next largest section contains the various minesites themselves, and can be accessed at: <http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/minelist.html>. This links all five minesites and the aerial tram system, and includes its own maps, including two profiles of the main part of the Motherlode mine workings.

There is a section of aerial photographs, some of which are close-ups of the Bonanza and Jumbo minesites (taken in 1955) as well as aerial shots of Kennecott and McCarthy (1939) and the Million Dollar bridge (1939). These can be accessed at: http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/aerial_list.html. There is also a modern infrared photo included of the Kennicott Glacier area with Kennecott and the minesites marked on the map.

The main text which creates the proper perspective for these photos can be found under the section, "following the path of the introduction," which begins at: <http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/introduction.html>. This is the comprehensive text which provides which tells the story of Kennecott Copper Company of Alaska and its CR&NW Railway. This is recommended reading for those who wish to

understand the nature of the historic Kennecott operations.

Most of the photos used in the historic site were derived from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, photo archives, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art photo archives, and from the McCarthy-Kennecott Museum. Links for ordering the copyrighted photos can be found on the historic site. Orders placed to the UAF-Fairbanks and the Anchorage Museum can probably be done through the e-mail links provided. Links for other sources, such as the

University of Washington Special Collections or the Alaska State Library are also provided. The link for all photo order information can be found on the historic site index page, <http://members.tripod.com/~Blackburn49/index.html>.

Orders for photos owned by the McCarthy-Kennecott Museum will need to be made in person at the McCarthy Museum during the summer tourist season, however, the selection of photos available at this museum is very good and should not be overlooked. The museum also owns a number of historic panoramics, which can be reproduced, including several of

McCarthy itself, one of Kennecott, and one each of Bonanza, Jumbo and Motherlode minesites.

While it is immensely satisfying to visit the historic McCarthy-Kennecott area, and the many sites along the original CR&NW Railway right-of-way, visiting this historic website places the region into its true perspective, showing the old railway line and towns as it was seen from the eyes of the people who lived and worked there from 1900 to 1938. The historic website provides more photos and general updated background then can be found in any book currently available.

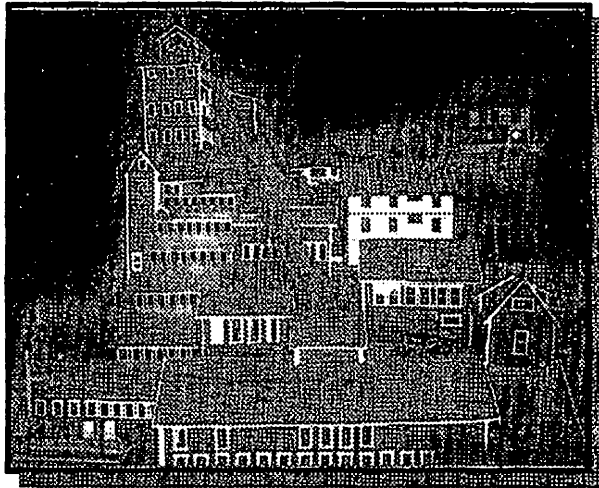


Photo courtesy Ron Simpson

THIS PHOTO APPEARS ON THE HISTORIC KENNECOTT SITE AND ON THE COPPER RAIL DEPOT SITE.

HOLLY, RON'S CAT, SITS BEHIND A BUILDING ON THE LOWER PART OF THE MILL LOOKING TOWARD THE RAIL GRADE WHERE A CABOOSE RESTS ON THE TRACKS TO THE LEFT OF THE LOADING DOCK. TO THE RIGHT OF THE MILL, GOING UP HILL IS THE GENERAL OFFICE, 3 STORY STAFF HOUSE, THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RESIDENCE, AND THE TWO STORY STEPHEN BIRCH HOUSE. THE MILL IS THE 1920 VERSION BEFORE THE EXTENSIVE ADDITIONS OF 1923. THE 1:24 SCALE RAILROAD MODEL IS APPROXIMATELY 6 FEET TALL AND 12 FEET DEEP.

Airplanes in the Wrangells

BY KEN SMITH

On December 17, 1903 Orville and Wilbur Wright flew the world's first successful airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Three years earlier, on July 22, 1900, two prospectors, Clarence Warner and "Tarantula" Jack Smith, discovered the "Glory Hole," a super-rich outcropping of copper ore at the headwaters of the Kennicott River. This discovery would eventually result in the creation of Kennecott Copper Corporation.

It must have been just coincidence that led to the near simultaneous discovery of the world's richest deposits of copper ore and the creation of powered flight but nevertheless, so the twentieth century began.

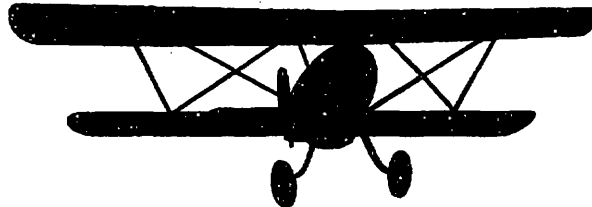
Beginning with the very first efforts to extract this valuable copper from Alaska's heartland, the latest state-of-the-art techniques and mechanical devices were utilized. Evidence of this is everywhere. For instance, due to the haste to get to Kennicott 15% of the rails for the Copper River Northwestern Railway were laid on trestles or bridges. Later, in order to eliminate some tressel, the latest in railroad construction equipment for the period was used when new side dumping cars were purchased and used to pour gravel fill on and around the tressels.

A person pondering the early influence of the new technological marvel, the airplane, on the rapidly developing economy in the Wrangell Mountains can't help

but be intrigued by a hoped for event that never happened. The August 5, 1913 issue of the *Chitina Leader* reported on this potentiality.

Before I repeat that story a little background concerning two related happenings is necessary:

For the annual 4th of July commemoration in Fairbanks in 1913 three local business men arranged to bring the first airplane to Alaska and have it fly



over the local ballpark during the festivities. They contracted with Mr. James V. Martin from New England who was in Seattle for a visit. Mr. Martin was very knowledgeable in aviation and had successfully designed and built a tractor biplane (propellers forward of the engine) in 1911. His aircraft was powered by a 100 horsepower Gnome rotary engine and had skids instead of wheels.

Mr. Martin's aircraft was crated and shipped to Skagway where it was transported on the White Pass Yukon Railroad to Whitehorse. From Whitehorse it was taken to Fairbanks by riverboat. Martin's wife and his mechanic assisted in assembling the aircraft. On the 4th of July Martin powered up the aircraft, which was tied to a stake by a rope and an ice scale. When the scale indicated a specific force the mechanic cut the rope and

Martin lumbered into the air. Martin circled over the area for about 11 minutes and then landed. He then recreated the airplane and shipped it back to the states.

Except for 4 army biplanes which flew through Alaska in 1920 another aircraft wouldn't fly in the Alaska sky until Clarence O. Prest did in his JN-4D Jenny in the summer of 1922.

At the same time Martin completed his Independence Day flight a gold rush was underway in the Wrangell Mountains. This was the Chisana gold rush. Chisana was a name derived by the boundary commission from the Indian name "Shushanna". This gold rush, later acclaimed as the last great gold rush, was just beginning. It involved significant claims on tributary creeks to the Chisana River, which are the headwaters of the Tanana River. Little Eldorado Creek and Bonanza Creek were the focus of activity.

Like all major gold rushes this one also experienced a boom and boost cycle. Those who got rich in other stampedes often did not get involved in any actual mining effort. Chisana was no different, therefore, during the early part of the "boom", entrepreneurial conflicts over various transportation corridors and other means to "get there" abounded.

The community leaders in Cordova, Chitina, and McCarthy along with the Copper River Northwestern Railway and the Alaska Steamship Company

combined efforts to support Chisana gold country access from Seattle. After arriving via train in McCarthy the stamperder would travel up over the Wrangell Mountains to Chisana using either the Chitistone River Goat and Skolai Pass trail or the winter trail on the Nizina and Chisana Glaciers.

Those plugging competing routes were numerous and assertive. Some of the most vocal competition included city fathers in Skagway and Whitehorse who supported using the White Pass and Yukon Railroad to Whitehorse then on to Chisana using a selection of various river and overland routes.

Fairbanks merchants got involved early on by advocating shallow water steam vessel transportation from Fairbanks down the Chena and up the Tanana Rivers to where one could use pole boats to go on to the gold fields. Claims were made that one could pole within 12 miles of the Chisana diggings using this route.

Not to be outdone, Dawson City interests encouraged steam vessel travel up the Yukon and White Rivers to shallow water. Stampederders could pole from

there up Snag Creek to a point near the strike.

More than one hard sell sales pitch promoted each route, each replete with exaggeration. In almost every case, stampederders ended up doing a lot more hiking and back packing than they anticipated. With the benefit of hindsight we now know that the trail over the Chitistone was by far the easiest of all the alternatives. Back in 1913 though, a stamperder would have had difficulty in deciding which route to take after listening to all the rhetoric comparing options.

Many misleading denunciations originated at Skagway describing deadly pitfalls awaiting travelers on the Cordova to Chisana route.

These indictments were often published in outside newspapers, much to the chagrin of Cordovans. Doctor Leonard S. Sugden, from Whitehorse, was sponsored by local merchants to evaluate the trails. He traveled to Chisana by taking both the Klune Trail/White River route from Whitehorse and then Chitistone Trail from McCarthy. During the trips he took moving pictures and later gave lectures in which

he described the "death traps" associated with the Chitistone and Skolai trail.

Cordovans, anxious to refute any negative publicity that might encourage travelers to by-pass their community looked for schemes to better the McCarthy/Chisana leg.

The *Chitina Leader's* August 5, 1913 article outlined what Cordovans had in mind: "A movement is on foot to secure Captain Martin, the aviator who made the aeroplane flights at Fairbanks, July Fourth—and prevail upon him to go to McCarthy and run an aerial express for passengers—the distance is little over 100 miles, and it is believed that many of the stampederders would avail themselves of this means of travel."

Exactly why Captain Martin never began this first-ever air carrier commuter service in the Wrangells, or probably in the entire world, is a good question. But wouldn't it have been fascinating if this long ago fantasy of the Cordovans had materialized? Perhaps Martin would have called his service "Wrangell Mountain Air Inc." or maybe even "McCarthy Air".

WSEN gets web page

<http://wsenews.tripod.com/>

BY RICK KENYON

Wrangell St. Elias News has joined the digital world with its own web site. Admittedly in the infant stage, hopefully, in time it will grow and develop.

Putting WSEN on the web has been challenging, given the slow data transfer rates and lack of a local access number here in

the McCarthy area. We took advantage of the more modern phone lines in Florida while we were there on vacation to get the web site going.

The next step is to put at least one feature story or regular column from each issue online. We would appreciate readers

comments and suggestions. So far we have been advised to "take it slow," which advice we are heeding. Our web address is: [HTTP://WSENEWS.TRIPOD.COM/](http://wsenews.tripod.com/)

Plans are also underway to publish the *Visitor's Guide to Kennicott and McCarthy* online next spring. Stay tuned!

Kennecott Kids Korner

BY MARY ELLEN CLARK

My parents, my sister Peggy and I came to Kennecott in 1924 from Latouche, Alaska, another Kennecott Copper Corporation mine on Latouche Island in Prince William Sound. My father was E. J. (Jim) Duggan. He started as a mill worker and worked up to become mill superintendent.

My mother had her hair bobbed when we were at Kennecott. When she wanted to have it curled she would ask Mrs. Morris (Frank's mother) to come and give her a marcel. Mrs. Morris brought an appliance that would heat curling irons. When she was finished my mother had crisp, even waves—very chic!

I remember walking across the narrow footbridge over National Creek. We would stop

in the middle and stare down at the falls. I could see tiny pink moss campion and other flowers clinging in the cracks in the rock. A short way upstream on a slope was the community garden. The lush vegetables were greatly appreciated, as they were not available in the winter.

In spring we clung to the last days of skiing. On the hill above the tennis court in the evening just before dark the snow would get an icy crust on top. We would ski diagonally across, often breaking through. We also would go cross-country skiing on the edge of the glacier, being very careful to stay on the trail. There were some people from Scandinavian countries in camp who were experienced skiers, and they

made many of the trails.

The snow that was cleared from the skating rink would become piled 6 or 8 feet high around the edges. It made a great place to dig tunnels and secret rooms.

Ordinarily women were not allowed in the mines. However, before they left camp they were given a tour. When I was fourteen or fifteen years old, our family hiked up to Bonanza Mine and were given a tour. We walked and rode in various cars going on the level, up and down and diagonally on an incline. There was one stope where the walls were covered with beautiful, lacy ice crystals looking like butterfly wings made of frost.

All in all, we had a wonderful childhood.

Re: George Flowers



Dear Rick and Bonnie,

Thank you so much for sharing the letters from George Flowers. They were wonderful and I have read and re-read both of them many times. I am a Kennecott Kid and although I was 5 years old when we left, I do remember George Flowers at Long Lake! We have pictures of him in our family albums, and I remember he was always happy and always kind. I wish, for all those who were not fortunate enough to be Kennecott Kids, that you had published a picture of him along with the article—he was a beautiful human being, loved by all who knew him.

Wouldn't he be happy to know that the little kids he used to know and play with, were still getting together and still talking about our times in Kennecott, McCarthy and Long Lake! And still remembering our old friend, George Flowers. God rest his soul!

If anyone else has letters or stories from that era, please share them with us.

Thank you Rick and Bonnie for being the pipeline that keeps us in contact with each other. From Kennecott, we have all gone in many directions, but we all come together again when your publication comes into our home.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Nan Moore Henderson

Bud Seltenreich 1915 - 1999

Anchorage resident Bud Stanley Seltenreich, 84, died Nov. 8, 1999, at Providence Alaska Medical Center.

Friends and relatives gathered at noon, November 27, at the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum, 4721 Aircraft Drive.

Bud was born February 15, 1915, in McCarthy. He bought his first airplane along with brothers Fred and Ted at age 16 in McCarthy and spent his whole life involved in aviation. He and Fred started the first official flying school in Alaska in Fairbanks.

Bud served with the Federal Aviation Administration from 1948 to 1980 in various positions, ending with pipeline coordinator, resulting in a National Meritorious Achievement Award from Washington, D. C. for his excellence in safety and accident prevention. Bud worked for Katmailand as operations manager from 1985 to 1995.

He belonged to several organizations, including OX5, Fraternal Order of Masons-Mt. Susitna Lodge No. 8, Antique Auto Musers, Benevolent and

Protective Order of Elks, and QB's.

His family said, "As a life-

99502.

Bud not only was born at McCarthy, he grew up and was schooled here as well. *Wrangell St. Elias News* did a feature story on Bud in our July & August 1994 issue titled *Local boy makes good—the Bud Seltenreich story.*

In 1925, when Bud was 10 years old, several of his school writings were published in *The McCarthy Weekly News*. He was routinely on the Honor Roll. The children received different colored stars which determined their standing on the Roll.

New Year Resolution — 1925

BY BUD SELTENREICH

I am going to work hard now, mainly on my arithmetic. I am going to help momma do her work. I will go to the store for her.

I am going to try to make as many stars as I can. I am going to study my lessons at home every night and get hundreds every day if I can.

This is the way I am going to start my new year. Throw away my wish bone, stick out my jaw bone, straighten up my back bone, and go to it.



WSEN staff photo

Bud Stanley Seltenreich—1915-1999

long Alaskan, his life touched many others and stories about him have appeared in many publications. His dedication, humor and generosity have helped benefit countless people, and hopefully his legacy will carry on this tradition. He will be missed by all who knew him."

Bud is survived by his daughter, Lenore Kay Seltenreich, granddaughter, Wendy Rose Seltenreich, and grandson, James Jeffrey Goode, all of Anchorage.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Bud Seltenreich Scholarship Fund, 7320 Silver Birch Drive, Anchorage, AK.

McCarthy-Kennicott celebrates Christmas

BY BONNIE KENYON

On Saturday, December 18, the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church was the setting for a community Christmas celebration. Twenty-three residents of the McCarthy/Kennicott area gathered to observe the Christmas season with the reading of the Christmas story, caroling, and a party following.

It is hoped this event will mark the first in many future Christmas celebrations. My heartfelt thanks to all who attended the event and who provided the holiday goodies afterwards.

OUR TOWN

January 1925 February

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

H. D. Foster returned on Saturday from Seattle where he has been since last August. Mr. Foster will soon go out to prepare for the summer's work at the Westover Mine.

Harry Bosch and Herman Hill came in from their trap line on Tuesday with a nice catch of furs and returned Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Tim Eckstrom of Cordova have been visiting Mr. and Mrs. Frank Iverson and Mr. and Mrs. Nels Tjosevig during the holidays.

Mrs. Lommel and Mrs. Erickson hiked down from Kennecott on Saturday to look the town over.

Fred Schranz mushed down from Kennecott with dog team today.

For Sale

THREE DOGS and HARNESS and complete outfit for one year ALL FOR \$375
Apply P. W. Holmes, McCarthy

The children of Kennecott were given a great treat on Wednesday in the form of a sleigh ride to McCarthy. The two school teachers were hostesses to the kiddies and they were more than repaid by the appreciation and delight shown by the children. The weather was perfect for such an outing and after they had visited the Owl Café and been filled to repletion with Leo Mitchell's finest turkey they drove back home the happiest youngsters in Alaska.

We wonder if Deanie and Marion figured out a way to get in on the "eats."

Jan. 3

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Sig Wold, popular garage owner of McCarthy, was given a farewell party by friends in Kennecott Monday night before leaving for the outside. Sig will spend the winter with his parents in Duluth, Minnesota.

Word has been received by Engineer Anderson that funds will be available to recommence operations on the Nizina Bridge about the first of February.

KENNECOTT MAN BADLY HURT

A bad accident occurred at Kennecott on Thursday when Bill Weitzel, head lineman for the Kennecott Copper Corporation, fell from one of the tram towers leading to the Jumbo Mine breaking one leg in two places. The full extent of his injuries is not yet known.

SKATING PARTY

On Sunday last a party of young people took advantage of the ideal weather to make up a skating party and journey from Kennecott to McCarthy where the overflow in the creek had formed a large sheet of smooth ice.

There were eight or nine couples in the party and everyone enjoyed to the limit this 'king' of outdoor sports.

PREPARATIONS TO SCALE MOUNT LOGAN UNDERWAY

Albert H. McCarthy, pioneer explorer, is putting the finishing touches to arrangements for his expedition to Mount Logan next Spring and Summer, starting at McCarthy.

The services of an experienced moving picture photographer has been engaged by Mr. McCarthy who hopes to

procure some wonderful pictures of the trip. There will be no lack of opportunity surely for the trail will be through a country unrivaled for grand and beautiful scenery.

While this is a work of love for a man of Mr. McCarthy temperament, yet it will be undertaken in the interests of geological societies who hope to obtain valuable information and data concerning the country traveled as well as of Mount Logan itself.

The freighting of supplies is in the hands of Andy Taylor and Scotty Atkinson, than whom no one is more capable. They will begin hauling the supplies in the near future.

Jan. 10

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

We have reported that Sig Wold has gone away every week for the last six weeks and everytime he fooled us and didn't go at all. And now he has gone and missed another boat. What is all the attraction around here anyway, Sig?

Jan. 17

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Everything was set to resume operations on Nizina Bridge early this week but the severe cold snap delayed doings a few days.

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. O'Neill and family departed for Cordova on Saturday where they expect to spend several weeks. Jack will look after his brother's interest there for a time.

Jan. 24

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Herman Hill walked in from Long Lake on Thursday. At first he was very wroth at having missed the train, there but he says he beat it into McCarthy at that.

It is rumored that the Owl Café is to be under New Management very soon, the new owners being Jack Costello and Bob Harris, who are at present at Kennecott.

Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Snyder, mushed out to Nicolai Camp on the Mother Lode trail to bring in their summer tent not expecting to need it for awhile.

Up to the time of going to press the train derailed at mile 187, is still out of commission and the road still blocked at mile 50.

WE HAVE OUR TROUBLES

It never rains but it pours and the C. R. and N. W. Ry. never runs into trouble but they roll in it. The drifts have snowed in one of the rotories at mile 50; and the local coming in from Chitina on Thursday struck a broken rail at mile 187, and had the engine and two coaches derailed. Jack says next time he goes to Cordova he will stay at home.

WORK ON NIZINA BRIDGE RESUMED

Operations on the now notorious work of bridging the Nizina River were resumed on Wednesday morning after a period of inactivity of nearly six weeks.

Engineer Antone Anderson received word some two weeks ago that \$1,000.00 was available to start the rock excavation work

and he immediately sent out the fiery cross for the members of his old crew who were on this work at the close down. At this juncture old Mother Nature took a hand in the job and sent us some fifty below weather which has held up the work for two weeks. The milder weather of the early part of the week permitted of a start and Jno. Guilbertson, cook, and eight men reported for work Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. This will be all the crew needed until the "cats" arrived about February 1st when some additional men will be called for.

The carpenter work is expected to start around March 1st when Fred Anderson, who was in charge of this end of the operation and Mr. Antone Anderson has made the statement that the last spike will be driven within one hundred days from that time. This will give ample time to have the structure in shape before the summer flood water comes down to test its strength. Previous attempts to bridge the river have all been failures owing to the fact that the piling was driven in the winter months when it was impossible to get the proper penetration and the frost leaving the ground naturally loosened the piles. This time the piling has been put in to an average depth of 18.3 feet with the maximum depth 22 feet which should give sufficient strength to withstand any flood pressure.

The news of the early completion of this structure will be hailed with joy by those who are depending on it to get over the water in the dangerous summer period when so many fatalities have occurred there in attempts to ford it. Not only the placer creeks, Dan and Chititu, will benefit but also other ventures who are planning on this route to get into the Nabesna and White River Districts, notably among them being Wm. Sulzer in his venture into the head of the White.

Owing to severe winds on the flats near Cordova the train schedule has been badly disarranged. The train leaving Cordova Monday morning was

forced to put back after going about thirty miles and it is not expected to get through service to Cordova until Saturday. Meanwhile J. B. O'Neill and family languish in Chitina, than which we can imagine no greater horror.

Jan. 31

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Little Dickie Schneeberger of Kennecott is seriously ill with pneumonia and the entire community is expressing sympathy and hoping for the little fellow's speedy recovery.

J. J. Price of Dan Creek arrived in Cordova on the S.S. Alaska Ferry this morning from Seattle and will be in McCarthy Sunday.

Andy Taylor and A. E. Trim got back from their freighting trip Friday afternoon having deposited their freight at Bryson's and leaving Bill Lang in charge. They will take another load as soon as Mr. McCarthy comes in person with the last of the supplies. He is expected Sunday.

AND IT WAS RAISED IN MCCARTHY

Alaska is not commonly regarded by the public at large as a stock raising country and especially interior parts are regarded as particularly unsuited to the breeding of live stock. But Mr. Frank Iverson, a rancher on the outskirts of McCarthy, demonstrated recently that we can raise hog, and hogs of the finest grade at that.

While at the local depot last week we saw some enormous animal sacked and ready for delivery to the Green Butte Copper Mines and after due deliberation we decided that the said carcass was not an elephant but a huge swine of the common barnyard variety. Mr. Trim (Junior) was there at the time and after regarding the huge bulk for a minute or two he turned and demanded of Mr. Pugh, "Who killed that cow?"

Reports from the Green Butte are that it was necessary to

haul it into the saw mill and cut it into several sections before it could be taken by train to the upper camp.

FROM NOW ON

Meals at the Golden

Will Be \$.75, Sandwiches \$.25 with coffee \$.35.

BOARD AND ROOM \$2.50 PER DAY.

Feb. 7

Andy Taylor and A. E. Trim made a start Wednesday on freighting supplies for the Mount Logan Expedition. They took about 5,000 pounds of supplies, equipment and feed which they will freight with horses as far as the Chitstone Glacier and return for the remainder. From thence it will be distributed with three dog teams along the route to the foot of Mount Logan in preparation for the dash to the peak next summer.

Dan Person, blacksmith at Eric Mine, was badly burned about the hands and forearms when a gas torch set fire to a can of gasoline and exploded it.

Feb. 14

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

While skiing last Sunday at Cordova Mrs. J. B. O'Neill had the misfortune to twist her ankle very severely and can walk only with the aid of crutches.

Geo. Flowers of Long Lake was a McCarthy visitor this week, coming up on Thursday and returning next day.

MT. LOGAN EXPEDITION UNDER WAY

A. H. McCarthy, leader of the expedition, to scale Canada's last big peak, arrived in McCarthy Sunday. After renewing old acquaintance with numerous friends here plunged into the work of getting the last of the supplies loaded, and on the way to be distributed along the route of travel in preparation for the expedition proper in May.

A. E. Trim with four horses started early Tuesday morning with about 6,600 pounds and was followed closely by Bill Wyres

with one team and 3,500 pounds.

At eleven a.m. the three dog mushers: Andy Taylor, Henry Olsen and Scotty Atkenson, pulled out each with seven of the dogs and five hundred pounds of supplies. Even the dogs seemed to sense the glory of their participation and at the first "Mush On!" they were away with a will.

A large crowd assembled to see the start off and wish the mushers all good luck on their 150 mile journey to the base of the mountain.

The New York Times of February 1st contains a long account of the expedition and of the members. Their will be ten principals in all which will be made of the following persons:

A. H. McCarthy, Wilmer B. C.; Fred Danbart, Ottawa; Alan Carpe of the American Alpine Club; Col. W. W. Foster, Victoria B.C.; Norman H. Reade, New York; H. S. Hall and R. M. Morgen, Milwaukee.

Feb. 21

OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Bill Weitzel who was injured in a fall at Kennecott some weeks ago was taken outside for medical treatment this week.

Pete Eiklund accompanied Harry Boyden into town on his return mail trip from Shushanna this week. He will return about the first of March.

Fred Carlson and Antone Jensen returned Wednesday from their jaunt to Cordova, Fred having taken a job with the A.R.C.

EARTHQUAKE FELT MCCARTHY

About 2:55 Monday afternoon this town was shaken by an earth tremor lasting some twenty seconds. While not as severe as reported from coast towns it rocked the buildings and stopped clocks. No damage was done.

The government cable between Cordova and the westward was broken.

Denali Weather, Courtesy of Naomi Uemura

BY NED ROZELL

This column is provided as a public service by the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, in cooperation with the UAF research community. Ned Rozell is a science writer at the institute. He can be reached on e-mail at nrozell@gi.alaska.edu.

During winter, Mount McKinley is one of the coldest places on the planet. The sun, weak as a light bulb, cuts a shallow arc over the southern horizon. Wind chill on the mountain drops below minus 100 degrees. Not many people try to climb North America's highest peak in winter, but not many people are like Naomi Uemura.

Uemura, a Japanese mountaineer, liked to do things alone. In 1966, he climbed the Matterhorn by himself, sparking a love for solo treks that made him a hero in Japan. His solitary trip by dog sled to the North Pole in 1978 earned him a place beside Christopher Columbus and Sir Edmund Hillary on a list of explorers compiled in Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia.

In 1984, Uemura walked into the alpenglow of Mt. McKinley in a quest to become the first person to climb the mountain alone in winter. Clipped to a long bamboo pole designed to span the mouths of crevasses, he set out in early February.

On February 13, pilot Don Lowell flew over the mountain and called the climber on the

radio. Uemura answered, saying he was close to the summit of the south peak, at a height of about 20,000 feet. The radio transmission was the last anyone heard from Naomi Uemura. Searchers eventually found his camp at 17,000 feet, but they never found his body.

To honor Uemura, members of the Japan Alpine Club carried up the mountain an unusual memorial—a rugged little weather station. They used pitons and cables to secure a metal tripod with a wind gauge and a thermometer at a spot above Denali Pass, about 19,000 feet above sea level. The station records wind speed, temperature, and wind direction in a little box called a data logger.

On trips up the mountain, Japanese climbers occasionally retrieve the data logger and replace it with a new one. Some of those climbers were in Fairbanks a month ago to attend the opening ceremony for the International Arctic Research Center. To mark the occasion, the Japan Alpine Club donated the lonely weather station to the International Arctic Research Center and the Geophysical Institute.

Syun-Ichi Akasofu, director of the International Arctic Research Center, decided the weather station would be more valuable if it could transmit information instantly. Kevin Abnett, supervisor of the electronics shop at the Geophysical Institute, thinks real-time transmission will be possible so long as the weather station has a line-of-sight to Fairbanks. The station will need a small whip antenna and a pack of lithium batteries the size of a dictionary. Park Service officials at Denali Park recently approved the upgrade to the weather station. The tentative plan is for a team of Japanese climbers and a few people from the Geophysical Institute to climb the mountain in June and install the antenna and new battery pack.

If the transmitter works, Abnett said he'll put the Denali weather information on the Internet and supply it to the National Weather Service and Park Service rangers. Maybe next February, while sitting in a warm home, we'll be able to find out the conditions Naomi Uemura faced on the mountain in 1984, all by himself.

Murkowski praises decision on Denali Park snowmachining

Alaska Sen. Frank Murkowski Nov. 24 welcomed a decision by a U.S. Federal Judge in Anchorage that struck down the National Park Service's order that closed Denali National Park to snowmachining.

Murkowski in February had objected to the order saying the closure was a violation of the Alaska lands act that permitted "traditional" activities to continue in Alaska parks. He also argued the closure was too broad and was not based on site

specific damage that snowmachining might cause as required by the law.

"ANILCA (the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) guarantees Alaskans the right of reasonable access. I continue to be

distressed by the continuing efforts of this Administration to erode that right. We've seen it in Glacier Bay, and we saw it again in Denali. It is good news that a judge overturned this attempt to chip away at the rights guaranteed Alaskans when the lands act passed 19 years ago.

"The Park Service's action could have established a dangerous precedent, if it had

been allowed. This was not an issue involving protection of the environment. The Park Service still has the right to seek limited closures of areas in our parks, if any activity harms the environment. The issue rather was the Park Service ignoring the law and placing its judgment ahead of what the law required. I'm pleased that the court overturned the Park Service and stopped that

practice.

"It was noteworthy the Park Service did not file an Environmental Impact Statement on either the Glacier Bay closure or February's Denali Park closure—which I regard as both major federal actions. I was pleased that Judge Sedwick noted that fact in his ruling," said Murkowski.

Alaska online access among top in nation

Center for Digital Government Ranks Alaska Second in Electronic Commerce

JUNEAU—

The State of Alaska has been ranked second in the nation for facilitating electronic commerce according to the Center for Digital Government. The ranking will appear in the January edition of *Government Technology* magazine.

"Facilitating a thriving business environment is very important to my Administration, as is access to state government for all Alaskans," Gov. Tony Knowles said. "By offering online access to business information and state officials, we are demonstrating that Alaska is truly 'open and ready for business' via the Internet."

Alaska has one of the highest per capita rates of Internet usage and number of personal computers in homes in the nation. Now, the State of Alaska web page www.STATE.AK.US receives over 200,000 hits per month.

The one-stop shopping center for state online transactions is the "Alaska Webmart." There Alaskans can obtain a business license,

register a car, or order personalized license plates. Alaskans can also get a hunting or fishing license through the Department of Fish and Game's online license site.

State hiring is conducted through the nationally recognized program Workplace Alaska. State recreational cabin availability can be checked online, and university students and state employees can take online technical training courses. "Online Public Notices" allows Alaskans access to all public notices, agency meeting schedules, competitive bids, and a host of other legal notices.

All State of Alaska forms can be downloaded on the Web including applications for Alaska's annual Permanent Fund Dividend. Many state application processes are now available as an online service. Processing these forms used to be a time consuming effort of data entry and approval. Now, online data entry is automatic, meaning faster service at less cost. For the Division of Motor Vehicles, it has helped reduce the cost-per-transaction of

vehicle registrations from \$7.75 to 91 cents.

Online services are particularly important and popular in a state like Alaska where long distances and remote communities are a challenge to providing services. One area where online forms have been particularly effective is rural economic development and assistance.

"Online information about community development grants and assistance is a quantum leap forward for rural residents who are not connected by road and often hundreds of miles from the nearest population center," Knowles said. "Now they can get answers to questions without having to make a costly long-distance call or wait for the next mail plane. A process that used to take weeks now takes just hours from start to finish."

Creation of Alaska's Webmart was led by Lt. Gov. Fran Ulmer, chair of the state Telecommunications Information Council (TIC) and a team of state commissioners who have made significant

improvements to the state's use of information technology. The TIC authorized the state's web site four years ago and have continually sought new applications and additions to make it more custom friendly and useful.

Alaska previously has ranked well among online

government services. Last year Alaska's web site won in the categories of "social services" and "business regulation" and placed 9th overall. Alaska also won a coveted "Best of the Web" award from *Government Technology* magazine. The National Association of State Chief Administrators has tapped

Workplace Alaska and the Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Partnership Program for its 1999 Overall Award for Innovation. Likewise, the DMV program earned an innovator in technology award from the *Smithsonian* and *Computerworld Magazine*.

Rural tourism development assistance available online

ANCHORAGE, AK —

Many communities in Alaska continue to consider tourism as a means of creating economic diversity, but they may not be sure how to proceed with any development efforts or how to decide if tourism is "right" for them. For communities or interested residents who are connected to the Internet, help is as close as their personal computer! Previously in hardcover only, *The Alaska Tourism Handbook: A Guide to Community Tourism Development* is now available online. The web address is www.dced.state.ak.us/tourism/guideline.htm

The Alaska Division of Tourism created this website to help groups and individuals develop tourism in their communities. The website is designed to help communities decide whether tourism would

work for them, and if so, how to make tourism and the community succeed.

The website also lists contact names and addresses for financial or technical help. In addition there is a sample tourism development plan to use as a reference. Guidelines are suggested to help communities be successful in introducing tourism to their area.

Communities of all sizes may use this guide, however, it is written specifically for Alaska's smaller, more remote rural communities.

Hardcover copies of *The Guide* are still available upon request from the Alaska Division of Tourism. Contact them at 907-465-2012.

For questions about the guide, tourism development for rural Alaska or any other topic or service relating to tourism in Alaska please contact John Beiler

at the Alaska Division of Tourism, tel: 907-465-2012, email: John_Beiler@dced.state.ak.us, address: P.O. Box 110801, Juneau, AK 99811-0801. Carolyn Bettes Saunders, Coordinator of the Rural Tourism Center since December 1995, has resigned her position. John Beiler will be the rural tourism development contact until her replacement is named.

The Rural Tourism Center is a joint venture of the Alaska Division of Tourism and Alaska Village Initiatives. Alaska Village Initiatives is a non-profit member-based company dedicated to improving the well being of rural Alaska communities, families and individuals. The Center also receives support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development.

We ran across these rules for staying safe in bear country on Jeff Cooper's web page.

1. Be alert.
 2. Do not regard bears as cuddly. They are large, strong, dangerous animals, and upon occasion they can be very fierce.
 3. Never enter bear country without a powerful weapon and the skill to use it well.
 4. Do not pitch your camp on a bear run.
 5. Be alert.
-
-

Book review – Alaska from the Air



Editor's note: This last July my mom, Neta Schafer, visited Rick and I. While she was here, she eagerly agreed to read Alaska from the Air and do a book review for WRANGELL ST. ELIAS NEWS. It seemed every time I turned around mom was once again immersed in the pages of this beautiful book. Here is her review.

BY NETA SCHAFER

If you are a pilot, you are sure to find this book fascinating. Even if you are not a pilot (like myself), the full-sized, color aerial shots enable you to see what they see from the air of the real Alaska.

The author and photographer is Fred Hirschmann who logged over 500 hours and more than 50,000 flight miles to present us with 160 color photos of this magnificent state. The book is hardbound, 144 pages, and sells in the U. S. for \$39.95. The publisher is Alaska Northwest Books, 203 W 15th Ave, #108, Anchorage, AK 99501.

More than 100 Alaskan pilots helped make this book a

success—of which I recognized the names of two local pilots from McCarthy—Kelly and Natalie Bay.

The first 47 pages are a long documentation of Mr. Hirschmann's experiences while taking the photos for his book and some places read like a novel. He also draws on pilots's experiences as well.

Perhaps a quote from the author in the last paragraph will help you decide whether this book should be a part of your personal library or even a gift to a friend. It reads: "The real Alaska lies beyond the end of the state's scant road system. Here stretched the vast wilderness

lands of the Last Frontier, where humanity has barely left an impression. Aircraft provide people with a convenient and quick way to access the bush. And while nearly every flight's destination holds the promise of adventure, often the flight itself can be just memorable. Whether you are a person who has flown hundred of times in rural Alaska or an armchair explorer dreaming of your first journey, sit back and enjoy the flight."

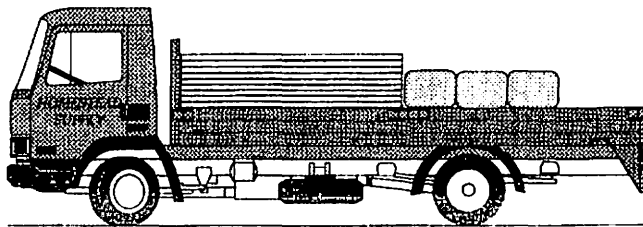
Every turn of the page was another breathtakingly, beautiful picture of this wonderful northland country. I recommend it highly.

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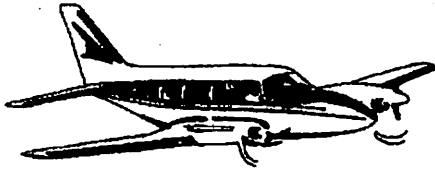
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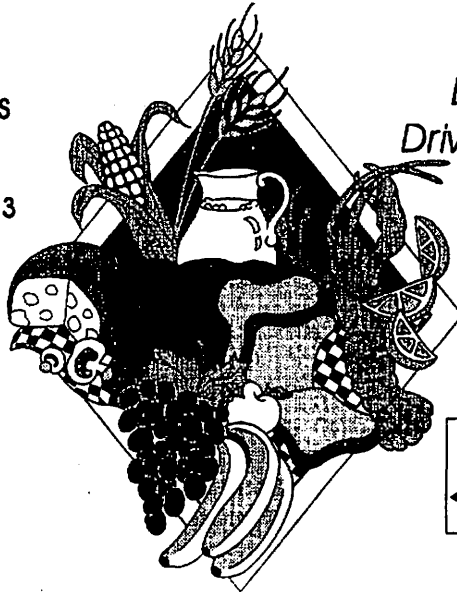
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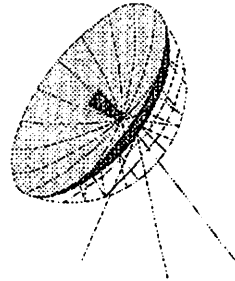
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Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

Since this is my last column of the 1900's, I'd like to thank everyone who, over the years, have been nice enough to write, or just let me know that they've tried some of my recipes! Since I'm also an avid recipe collector, I also appreciate the recipes that I've received. I've tried every one of them, and they'll probably be appearing in a later column!

This month I'm going to jot down some recipes for delicious party appetizers. No matter whether you're going to a big party, or staying at home and having a marathon Monopoly game with the family, I think one of these recipes will help make the occasion more festive. Happy 2000 to you all!

We used to dig and can our own razor clams when we lived in Cordova, but now I'm forced to use store-bought clams for this recipe! This can also be served warm with crackers.

Clams Gourmet

- 1 pound Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
- 3-6 ½ ounce cans chopped clams, drained
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- 2 Tablespoons chopped chives
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- dash pepper
- 16 slices of thin french loaf

bread

Combine cheese, clams, parsley, chives, garlic and pepper, and mix until well blended. Place bread slices on a baking sheet, and top equally with clam mixture. Broil until golden brown and bubbly. Serve immediately. Makes 16

Appetizer Crab Cakes

- 4 small radishes
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs (or 1 cup fresh crumbs)
- 1- 6½ ounce Alaskan crab meat
- 2 eggs
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon grated onion
- 3 Tablespoons butter
- 4 teaspoons mayonnaise

Slice 2 radishes into thin slices and reserve for garnish. Place remaining radishes, crabmeat, eggs, salt and pepper into a blender and blend on medium until mixture is well mixed. Stir crabmeat mixture, grated onion and bread crumbs together in a bowl until well blended. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Drop crabmeat mixture into skillet by tablespoons and cook until browned on both sides, about 6 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Top each crab cake with a dollop of mayonnaise, and garnish with a radish slice. Makes about 16

This is a simple recipe that's really easy to make!

Cheese Ball

- 11 ounces cream cheese
- 2 ounces crumbled blue cheese
- 2 Tablespoons chopped onions
- ½ cup chopped peanuts

Cream cheese together at room temperature. Add onions and mix well. Form into a ball. Roll ball in chopped nuts. Serve with assorted crackers.

You can make this appetizer ahead of time, freeze and store in an airtight bag, then bake when you have company!

Cheddar Appetizers

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 medium onion, chopped fine
- ¾ cup almonds, chopped fine
- 6 bacon strips, baked and crumbled
- 1 loaf French bread

Combine mayonnaise and Worcestershire sauce in a bowl: stir in cheese, onion, almonds and bacon. Cut bread into approximately ½ inch slices: spread with cheese mixture. Cut slices in half and place on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 8-10 minutes, or until bubbly. Makes about 4 dozen. (If freezing, don't bake before you store them. Place unthawed appetizers on greased baking sheet and bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes.)

"As to the abuses I meet with, I number them among my honors. One cannot behave so as to obtain the esteem of the wise and the good without drawing on oneself at the same time the envy and malice of the foolish and wicked, and the latter is testimony of the former. The best men have always had their share of this treatment, and the more of it in proportion to their different and greater degree of merit. A man, therefore, has some reason to be ashamed of himself when he meets with none of it." — Benjamin Franklin, 1767

A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

October 1999 was rather warm and wet with about average snowfall.

The average temperature for October was 29.5 (27.2 in Oct '98 and 20.8 in Oct. '97). The high was 53 on October 2nd (53 on Oct. 18, '98, and 50 on Oct. 4, '97) and the low was -5 on October 30th (-5 on Oct. 29, '98, and -22 on Oct. 18, '97). There were only 3 days with the low zero or lower and 2 days with the high of 50 or above. This compares with Silver Lake average temperature of 30.1 (27.4 in Oct. '98 and 21.5 in Oct. '97). *The high at Silver Lake was 52 on October 3rd (47 on Oct. 25, '98 and 50 on Oct. 2, '97) and their low was 3 on October 30th (1 on Oct. 30, '98 and -15 on Oct. 28, '97). Silver Lake had 4 days with the low 10 or lower and 2 days with a high of 50 or above.*

The total liquid precipitation was 3.02 inches (2.50 in Oct. '98, and 2.72 in Oct. '97). About half of the precipitation fell as rain, with a total snowfall in October of 14.9 inches (1.7 in Oct. '98 and 36.7 in Oct. '97). *Silver Lake had 2.17 inches of liquid (1.36 in Oct. '98 and 1.70 in Oct. '97) with 12.5 inches of snow (1.0 in Oct. '98 and 12.1 in Oct. '97).*

The snow depth at McCarthy began with 1 inch on October 13th and ended the

month with 6 inches. *Silver Lake began with 7 inches on October 16th and it melted by the 18th. They got 4 inches on the 22nd and ended the month with 5 inches on the ground. Silver Lake was completely ice covered on October 31st (Oct. 29, '98).*

November was rather mild with average temperatures and above average precipitation.

The November average temperature at McCarthy was 9.0 (8.9 in Nov. '98 and 14.2 in Nov. '97). The high temperature was 37 on November 1st (32 on Nov. 19, '98, and 39 on Nov. 6, '97). The low temperature was -26 on November 29th (-16 on Nov. 26, '98, and -12 on Nov. 25, '97). The record temperatures for November are a high of 48 on November 1, '70 and a low of -46 on November 11, '89. *Silver Lake had an average temperature of 3.9 (9.4 in Nov. '98 and 15.9 in Nov. '97). The high was 29 on November 1st (33 on Nov. 29, '98, and 49 on Nov. 9, '97) and the low was -18 on November 29th (-19 on Nov. 26, '98, and -15 on Nov. 25, '97).*

The total liquid precipitation for November was 2.26 inches (0.13 inches in Nov. '98, and 1.50 inches in Nov. '97). Most of it fell as freezing rain, with 1.86 recorded in 6 hours on November 1st. Total snowfall was 7.4 inches (1.8 inches in

Nov. '98, and 3.3 inches in Nov. '97). *This compares with 1.53 inches of liquid precipitation at Silver Lake (0.33 inches in Nov. '98, and 0.65 inches in Nov. '97). Snowfall at Silver Lake was 19.5 inches (4.6 inches in Nov. '98, and 5.5 inches in Nov. '97). Silver Lake received 17 inches on November 1st, as McCarthy was getting freezing rain. The snow depth at McCarthy was 7 inches on the 1st, increased to 11 inches on the 16th and ended the month with 9 inches. Silver Lake started the month with 5 inches of snow. This increased to 22 inches on the 1st and 24 inches by the end of the month.*

The first snow machine to safely cross the Kennicott River ice this winter was Gary Green on November 10th and the first vehicle was Frank Adams in his pickup on November 18th. Al Gagnon safely navigated the ice covered Nizina River with his snow machine for the first time this year on November 18th. This was almost two weeks earlier than last year when he first made it across on November 30th.

December and January are usually the coldest months with the lows falling to -50 and colder. Daylight is down to just under 5 hours by December 21, before it begins to increase again.

"In the Supreme Court and elsewhere, blithe talk about "a living Constitution" conceals the fact that the constitution is in fact dying as it is being reinterpreted out of existence, whenever it stands in the way of the prevailing Zeitgeist." —Thomas Sowell

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Money—That's what I want

BY CHUCK CUSHMAN — EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN LAND RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

The best things in life are free, But you can keep 'em for the birds and bees, Now give me money, that's what I want.

This Motown hit made famous by the Beatles may as well be the theme song for HR 701/S 25, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA). Fiscal responsibility, private property rights and environmental protection are all being overridden by old fashioned pork barrel politics.

CARA creates a three billion dollar annual trust fund taken from royalties generated by offshore oil production, called outer continental shelf (OCS) revenue. OCS royalties were established many years ago to pay for damage caused to marine life, oceans and estuaries by oil exploration and extraction activities.

However, in order to gain broader support for CARA, the fund is being bastardized to accommodate a laundry list of constituencies. Under CARA, all fifty states are showered with cash, and for purposes completely unrelated to environmental mitigation. These include building roads and ports, grants to Indian tribes and preserving Civil War battlefields. It seems that every special interest group in Washington has been cut in on the deal, from the National Association of Realtors to Major League Baseball, both of whom support the bill!

Veteran Congressmen Don Young (R-Alaska), Billy Tauzin (R-Louisiana) and George Miller

(D-California) each abandoned long held beliefs in exchange for cold, hard cash by joining together to cosponsor this monstrosity.

Young the hunter, Tauzin the property rights advocate and Miller the environmentalist created a trust fund that will take land from sportsmen, trample private property rights and ignore the environmental goals for which OCS was established.

Under the bill, Young directs \$166 million annually to Alaska, a state with only 614,000 residents. That's a subsidy of \$272 per person, per year. Tauzin racks up \$313 million annually for Louisiana, a huge benefit for one of the poorest states in the country. And Miller tweaked the funding formula to disproportionately benefit localities within his congressional district.

Here is what happened at the recent House Resources Committee meeting, where the bill was approved.

CARA guarantees nearly one billion dollars annually for land acquisition. Animal rights activists intend to target for purchase privately owned hunt clubs, woodlots and other areas used by sportsmen, and then eliminate all consumptive use of wildlife. This just occurred in upstate New York, where 139,000 acres of timberland had been leased out to hunters for over one hundred years. It was purchased by the state government, and hunting and snowmobiling were immediately prohibited.

Don Young argued against an amendment that would have assured no net loss of land per-

mitted to be used for hunting. For Young, who is a member of the National Trappers Association, it was a tough spot, and he angrily refused to even allow a roll call vote on the amendment. But selling out sportsmen was worth it for a guaranteed annual fiscal pipeline from Washington, DC to Alaska.

CARA allocates to state governments up to \$450 million per year which can be used to condemn land and force people off their property. Billy Tauzin led the charge against any amendments to protect private property, including an amendment to prohibit condemnation. Not one acre of land anywhere is safe from a bureaucrat's whim under this bill.

He also opposed an amendment which would have protected property owners adjacent to federal lands from losing use of their property due to regulatory "buffer zones" that are frequently declared around parks and refuges. Tauzin had sponsored an identical amendment during debate over the Desert Protection Act in 1994. This time around, he decided that pork barrel spending overrode principles.

Most of us have visited national parks and seen the poor condition many facilities are in, such as bathrooms, pathways, benches and employee housing. CARA dedicates over \$400 million per year for additional federal land acquisition, and yet does nothing to address the severe maintenance backlog in our parks. The federal government should not be buying up more land when it cannot

handle what it already owns.

Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Oregon) pointed out that CARA will create a broad constituency with a very strong incentive to increase offshore oil drilling and the revenue that flows from it. Environmentalists strongly oppose this kind of incentive. But George Miller shut him down before he could even propose an amendment. During last minute negotiations, Miller inserted a narrowly drawn subsection in the bill to treat certain counties that have oil refineries more favorably under

the bill's revenue distribution formula. Those counties include Contra Costa and Solano in California, within which is located Miller's congressional district.

After the committee markup, Congressmen Tom Udall (D-New Mexico) and Grace Napolitano (D-California) held a press conference opposing oil drilling in ANWR, the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. Miller has long been an opponent of ANWR drilling, but was strangely absent this time. Perhaps he has lost interest in the issue, now that he

has carved out his piece of the money pie.

HR701 is a threat to both private property rights and the environment, and is fiscally irresponsible.

This gravy train is so long you can't see the caboose from the engine!

The American Land Rights Association, located in Battle Ground, Washington, has over 21,000 members in 50 states. It is a leading grassroots advocate for private property rights and multiple-use of Federal lands. Its website is www.landrights.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Chitina, AK

Dear WSEN:

Re: The Razing of Kennicott. All of your articles are true, however there is a part that was left out.

Mr. O. A. Nelson of Chitina had the salvage contract with Kennicott. Upon sales, a certain percentage of the proceeds went to Kennicott. Besides salvaging, Mr. Nelson ran tours.

Kennicott had a caretaker until the early 50s by the name of Wilhelm.

Re: From Rails to Road. Very accurate account. The rails from Chitina towards O'Brien Creek did go towards the building of the Alcan Highway, along with old buildings, which were used for the lumber.

Adina Knutson

Palo Alto CA

Dear Bonnie and Rick,

The *Wrangell St. Elias News* arrived in my mail today, and Marci Von Presseutin called me from Palo Desert, California to tell me *her* issue had also arrived in her mail. Please find check for

our two subscriptions for the year 2000. (I don't want to miss an issue ever!)

What a story by Rick: *McCarthy under siege*. Chillingly exciting to read this far away—what an adventure from the last frontier!

We so enjoy your most interesting and wonderful publication. Thanks again.

Molly O'Neill Huckins

Fairbanks, AK

Dear Rick and Bonnie

Enclosed is a check for a subscription to WSEN. I am doing research on a biography on Harold Gillum Sr. Since he did much of his flying in the Copper River Region I have been in contact with Adena Knutson at Chitina who has provided me with photos and other information. Recently she sent me a copy of your publication with an article by Jim McGavock in which he mentions flying with Gillum. I am interested in getting bits of personal and somewhat unrelated to his flying. I would like to contact Mr. McGavock

concerning this subject.

I would also like to contact Cliff Cornick whom you mention as a new subscriber. He worked on Herman Landohl's biography which mentions Gillum.

I look forward to reading the News with the double purpose of learning more about the area, and, who knows, perhaps pick up a clue on Gillum's activities in that area.

Arnold Griese

Editor's Note: One of our historians, Kerin Smith, has promised a story about Gillum. Look for it in the next issue of WSEN!

Superior, CO

Dear Bonnie and Rick,

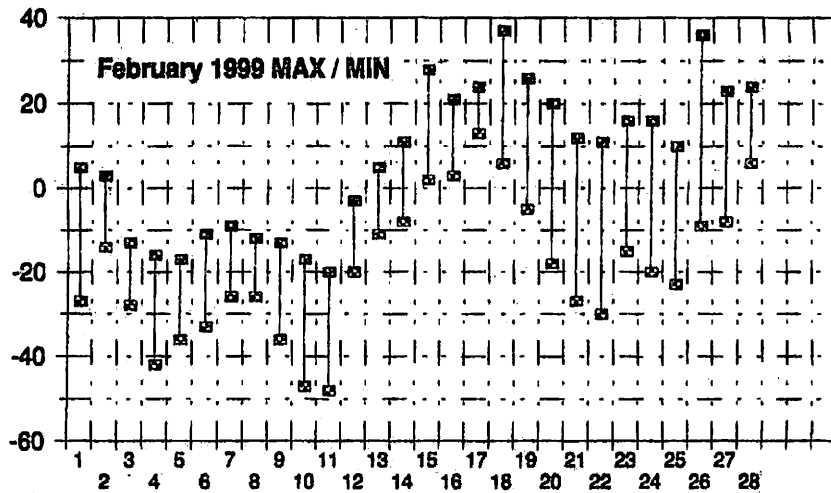
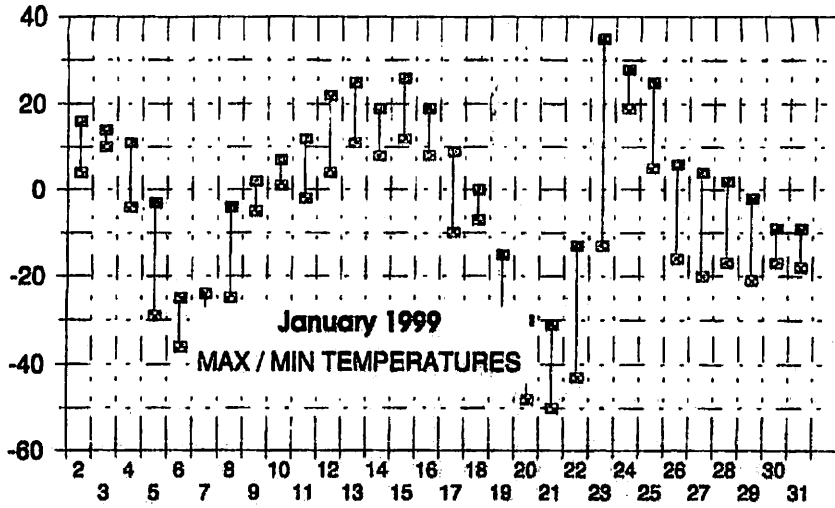
WSEN gets better and better! I greatly enjoy Dee Frady's column on wild plants and flowers. When I see one of her sketches it is like meeting an old friend!

Best regards, and keep up the good work!

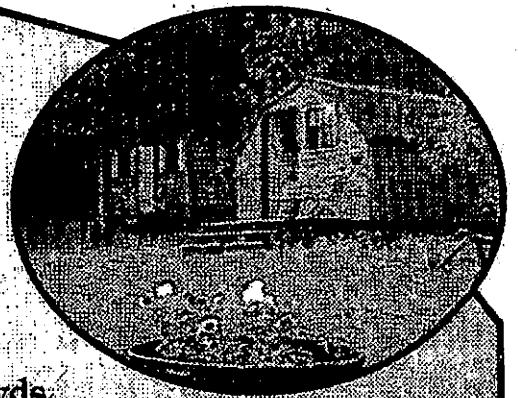
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