

# Wrangell St. Elias News

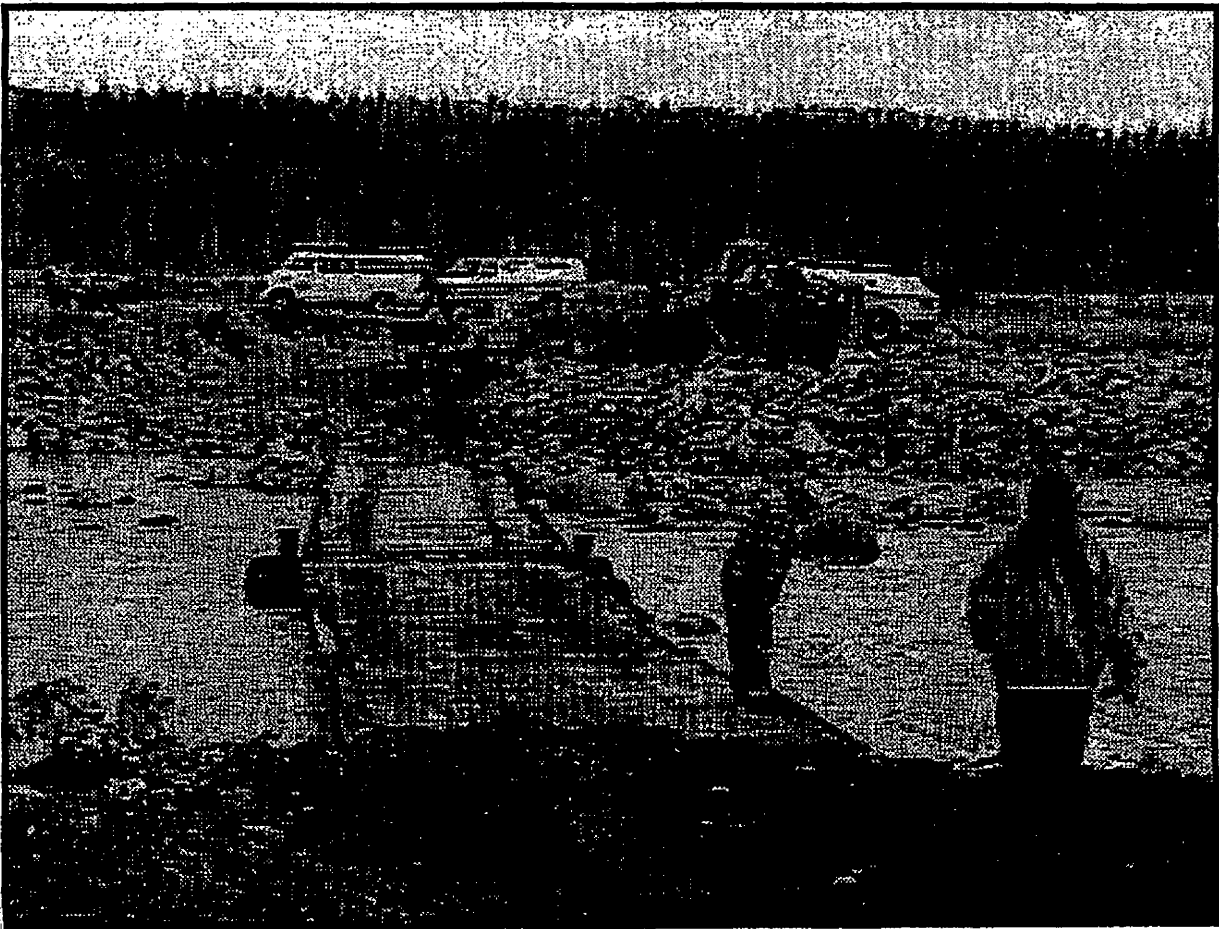
*"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"*

Vol. Eight Issue Six

November & December 1999

Two Dollars

## Private "toll bridge" raises ire



WSRN staff photo

Ted Cebula and Bonnie Kenyon inspect new bridge over Kennicott River. Several days earlier the water level was several feet higher, covering the deck with water. The access crosses private property, which, along with other concerns prompted strong opposition to the bridge. The Corps of Engineers ordered it removed from the river and the banks remediated. See story on page 6.

## *A note from the publisher*

BY BONNIE KENYON

**T**oday as Rick and I put the finishing touches on the last issue of 1999, we cannot help but tell you, our readers, how much we appreciate each one of you. Your letters, notes and emails are eagerly read—please know that your input is important to us.

We are planning on getting this issue mailed earlier than usual due to the fact Rick and I are leaving for Florida November 3 to visit our family. The WRANGELL ST. ELIAS NEWS office and phone will be shut down until our return December 3 or 4. If you want to contact us during this time, we check our email almost daily. You can find our AOL address in the masthead on this page.

Naturally, we are eager to see Rick's folks, Carl and Virginia Kenyon, and my mom, Neta Schafer, who live in Daytona Beach. We then travel to Donalsonville, Georgia, to see our son Rick Jr., our daughter-in-law Maria, and, of course, our

3 grandsons, Jonathan, Stephen and Joshua.

For those of you new to WRANGELL ST. ELIAS NEWS (and a reminder to our long-time subscribers), I call your attention to the white address labels on the back cover of each issue. Above your name is an abbreviated date of when your subscription runs out. It really helps us (mostly me!!!) if you can interpret when your renewal is due and send your check or money order before I must contact you. We know that it is very easy to overlook these kind of things. I thought this might be a good time to clarify these abbreviations.

JF is January February; MA is March April; MJ is May June; JA is July August; SO is September October; ND is November December.

The number that follows is the last two numbers of the year in which your subscription runs out. For instance, ND99 means your subscription runs out

WITH the November December 1999 issue. I include a small renewal insert in your last issue as a reminder.

Our most difficult challenge lately is having to decide what articles we have room for. (Actually, that is a blessing in disguise!) We intended to do a variety of book and tape reviews but simply ran out of room. Stay tuned, however, because they are sure to make it in upcoming issues. We also have articles by Brandon Holton on cordwood construction and Fred Denner on wolves. You won't want to miss these! (Please don't let your subscription run out before you get to read these informative stories.)

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following subscribers: Gary Martinek, AK; Mark DeWit, AK; Doug and Jeannie Crabb, Mt; Bob and Sunny Cook, WA; Dan and Pat Sentz, AK.

### ***Wrangell St. Elias News***

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## Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**Denise Jantz:** It's a sure sign that our busy summer season is over when Denise stops by for a cup of coffee. If you are a newcomer to *Wrangell St. Elias News*, Denise (also known as Potato by us McCarthyites) owns and operates the local foodwagon known as Roadside Potatohead. She is one busy lady during the summer months, and as if that isn't enough, she has started up a new business called "Swift Creek Cabins."

Located on the "J" road, west of the Kennicott River footbridge, the newly-constructed rental cabins will be in full swing for summer 2000, says Denise. She is really excited and proud of the log work that was done by Daniel Morrison and crew. Both cabins are 12' x 16' and comfortably furnished.

Although Denise stays busy in Homer during the winter months working at Two Sisters Bakery, I expect we may see her out this way at some point. She just may want to try out one of those cabins herself! Congratulations on a job well done, Denise!

**Tim Riedell:** Tim accompanied Denise to our cabin so I asked him how the summer had treated him. Tim, manager of Copper Oar, says, "We had another successful season." He and owner Howard Mozen teamed the operation of the local rafting company.

I asked Tim where he'd be this winter. He said he has applied for a job in Girdwood for "Challenge Alaska," an organization that does recreational activities for "alternatively-abled" people of all ages. He hopes to be

helping in their winter skiing program. Have a good winter, Tim!

**Chris Harris:** Although Chris has been a visitor to the McCarthy area since 1989, she is now a McCarthy area landowner and a new girl on the block, so to speak, in my neighborhood. Approximately a year ago Chris, 33, purchased her property. This summer she and two friends—Matt Morris and Paul Wilfurt—have made great strides in constructing a 16' x 24' cabin. Chris says her birthday present from Matt was the completion of her roof of which she is most grateful for! Chris reminded me that Paul, a friend of Matts, is another new landowner in our immediate area.

Chris worked at McCarthy Lodge for a short term this summer. Her normal occupation, however, is a nurse assistant and (you ladies will be thrilled to know!!) a licensed hairdresser! I hear tell Chris has her barber's chair out here already. By the way, the line starts at my cabin and BEHIND me!

Chris has left for the winter season – to hopefully visit family in Western Washington – but she assures me she will be back in Alaska to work so she can continue her building project this next summer. Chris says, "A special thanks to the people in the area for their encouragement and support!"

Have a great winter, Chris, and be sure to bring your scissors when you return. After a long, hard winter, we all will need a good trim!

**More news from "the Hood:"** I was told recently that

the neighborhood which Rick and I live in has been dubbed "the Hood." Now, don't ask me why or exactly what that means, but I thought I would use it in this case so I could give you all an update of this summer's activities in this one location.

Most of you have read about Katherine "Nelson" Corocoran and Brandon Holton who are building their first cabin out of cordwood construction. Both Nelson and Brandon have left for their jobs at McMurdo Station in the Antarctic. They plan on being there until sometime in February. They, too, made good headway on their building. Brandon has written an excellent article on cordwood construction that we will be sharing with WSEN readers in an upcoming issue.

Emily Morrison hasn't started building yet but she had Randy Elliott put in a road/driveway to her building site and hopes to have a gravel pad all in place for next year's construction. She stopped by the other day to say hello but her plans are to return to Girdwood where she will be working this winter.

Peggy Morsch, and her friend, Kathy, hail from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and they, too, purchased property nearby. Their cabin is being constructed by Daniel Morrison and crew even as I type this. It is already framed in and the roof rafters are in place with the roofing to follow soon, I understand. The two ladies were here this summer doing some clearing on their property but are now back in Milwaukee. I plan on introducing them in more detail in a later

issue. Welcome to the "hood," Peggy and Kathy!

Flatbed Larry Turnbull took quite a liking to our area and bought a piece of property this summer. He, too, had a road put in so he could access his new purchase. I am told Larry is an excellent plumber and electrician (which is as valuable in these parts as a hairdresser!). We were also informed that Larry got his nickname "Flatbed" because he has been such a great help assisting people with his flatbed truck. We expect to see more of Larry in the near future as he's spending the winter at Long Lake, and properly introduce him to you later. In the meantime, Larry, another big welcome to you!

I talked to Peggy Guntis on the phone the other day and was glad to hear she and Jim made it back to Tucson without a hitch – meaning they didn't have a problem. (Any vehicle the Guntis's purchase for use up here, requires a hitch, believe me!) In the early morning hours of their first day home, they received a phone call requesting their presence at the hospital. They were presented with a new grandson! Good timing, Peggy!

Kim Northrup is in Anchorage this winter and, according to her mom, has found a full-time job working for a veterinarian. Congratulations, Kim! Rick and I hope to touch bases with you this winter.

Julia Coats and Chad Reymiller are in for the winter and getting things set up for staying in Jim and Audrey's caretaker cabin while they work on their own cabin. Their foundation and floor is done so the next step is to peel all those logs they cut and stacked last winter. We're glad to have you two back in the neighborhood!

You both are doing a good job!

George Cebula, also an active member of "the Hood," received his annual visit from brother Ted who lives in Milwaukee. Ted and George did some remodeling in George's cabin as well as get a good start on running water lines in the kitchen area. Since Ted left, George has put the finishing touches on that project. There were a few tense moments, however, when George turned the water on. Seems he did get the walls a bit wet but, after some fine tuning, he has the system up and running – in the right places, of course!

**News from McCarthy Creek Subdivision:** "The Hood" is not the only place where there is a whole lot of building going on! Bob and Sunny Cook, who are new landowners in the McCarthy Creek Subdivision, visited our office recently and reported that there was "a lot of construction going on in their area." In fact, Bob says there was a convoy of building materials for 4 houses that came in the day the McCarthy Road opened in the spring. The Cooks are from Richland, Wa. (Bob says he is now an Alaskan resident!) and are building a 3-sided log cabin, approximately 16'x16' with two stories. Daughter Nancy has her own cabin built nearby and helped put together a birthday party for her dad—his 60<sup>th</sup>. Bob says he and Sunny were the oldest "kids" present!

Dixie and Rob Rutherford or as Bob and Sunny refer to them – the newlyweds – have the walls up on their building. The Rutherfords were married on Sept. 9, says Bob, at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge with approximately 65 people attending.

E. J. Gregory is Sam's brother and is from New York. Bob and Sunny report that E. J.'s two-story cabin is framed in already. Elizabeth Schafer and Mark Wacht are each building cabins as well. Thanks, Bob and Sunny, for the report from McCarthy and beyond!

**Fireweed Mountain Subdivision:** Mark Vail is busy readying for winter – packing in the season's bounty and getting in a supply of dog food before the winter snows! Harold and Carol Michels made a late season visit on October 10-12 just beating the first snowfall of the season. Harold is on the mend and looking forward to next summer. Carol was happy to get in a season ender and winterize the homestead. Brooks and Diane Ludwig arrived for a short visit at their Fireweed cabin in mid October. They will spend the next few months at Delta but they both expressed a desire to return here in March. Mark said I should give Art and Ann Ward a call because they had a terrific item of interest. Art answered the phone and he was more than happy to share the details with me. The Wards are the proud parents of a new baby boy who was born September 30 in Fairbanks. Ben Nicholas Ward weighed 7 lb. 4 oz. and he joins Mary Ann, 15, Nelson, 13, and Sarah, 7. I had heard that the Ward family spent a good part of the summer at their Fireweed Mountain cabin. Art said Ann and Sarah kept the bears at bay on the homestead while he and the other kids did some fishing in Bristol Bay. They hope to make a winter trip out this way for a week between Christmas and the New Year – weather permitting. Our congratulations, to the entire Ward family on their new arrival!

Ralph, Linda, Tyee, Teal and Trae Lohse: Long Lake was the scene of an "unloading" party on October 8<sup>th</sup>. The Lohse family was expecting a gigantic truck-load of building supplies for a new cabin to arrive that Friday afternoon so Ralph issued an invitation to his McCarthy neighbors to "come help." There was the promise of a pot of moose stew and Linda's homemade bread for any one who could come and give a hand. Rick and I, along with about 20 others, showed up to offer assistance. (A special thanks to George Cebula who did the weather observations for the Kenyons!) A few (maybe several is a better word) hours later all the materials were unloaded and under cover. Just as we finished up, it started to rain. Perfect timing to head for the Lohse's cabin and check out that moose stew and homemade bread!

I am always delighted to share something one of our local young people writes for a homeschool project. Here is a

sample from Tyee Lohse, age 13.

*The Sights and Sounds*  
by Tyee Lohse

*The drumming of the woodpecker like the drums of the Revolution, pounding on the rough brown bark of the spruce tree. The littering of the roly poly chickadee dee as he cracks sunflower seeds like an eating machine. The grizzled gray jay greedy as greedy gets. These are the sights and sounds of silence in the snowy, sunny south side.*

**Don, Lynn, Sarah and Rene Welty:** Don will be home soon after spending a couple of months guiding on the Alaska Peninsula. Lynn says she has started home schooling Sarah and Rene. At the moment, however, she is having some time to herself. Both girls are in Anchorage attending Anchorage House, a program sponsored by the Chugach School District. Lynn says she believes there will be 8 kids altogether representing other "bush" communities. The young people will learn how to work together as a group and

gain experience in writing up resumes and going for job interviews. Lynn will meet up with the girls and Don where they plan on doing their winter shopping before returning to the homestead. Have a great time in the big city!

**Mike McCarthy, Laura Bunnell and Luke and Nick Nebesky:** Mike just left with Luke and the Welty girls and is escorting these young people to their 3-day workshop at Anchorage House. Laura and Nick are keeping their Kennicott home fires burning. Laura shared with me that she, Nick and Luke went on a camping trip to Fairbanks where they spent some time with Pat Doak. (Pat is presently teaching biology at the University of Fairbanks.) Laura says she and the boys had a great time and even took a side trip and visited Circle Hot Spring! Sounds like a terrific end of season break, Laura!

**Jim and Audrey Edwards:** Rick and I took a walk to the Edwards's household yesterday. Jim's major project these days is fine-tuning his snowblower in readiness for our winter season. Otherwise, he stays busy just "maintaining the homestead." Audrey had her sewing machine out on the kitchen table fine-tuning a fur hat. She, too, is getting prepared for that soon-to-arrive cold spell. I discovered that Audrey was in the midst of redoing her upstairs bedroom. Jim says she is trying to wade through 20 years of accumulated stuff. Somehow I get the impression that Audrey places items in the give-away pile and when she isn't looking, Jim comes in and rescues them for one of those other projects on his list!



WSEN staff photo

"MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK." THE DRIVER WAS SURPRISED WHEN HELPERS ARRIVED VIA 4-WHEELERS, TRUCKS AND AIRPLANES!

# Private "toll bridge" raises ire

BY RICK KENYON

"There seems to be some excitement about it, and that's why we brought everybody down here—to let you see how it works. It's basically two railroad cars, with four wheels in the middle, portable, it comes in and out, and it's basically what we have been doing here for twenty or thirty years, but it's a lot safer to get stuff across, with lots less risk." With those words, Kelly Bay opened a "town meeting" on the banks of the Kennicott River. As he spoke, Randy Elliott demonstrated the bridge's capabilities by driving a bulldozer across the Kennicott River.

Bay, who, along with his wife Natalie, run Wrangell Mountain Air, had teamed up with Kennicott Glacier Lodge operator Rich Kirkwood and local contractor Randy Elliott to build the portable bridge, or as Kirkwood prefers to call it,

portable ford.

"For the last 24 years, every year we have had a ford across this river," said Kirkwood. "For the last 6 years Randy has been doing it. Every year, we end up dumping yards and yards of boulders and gravel in this thing, so we can get across the river, so we

can haul the septic, bring in materials, bring fuel in, get vehicles out, new vehicles in. There is a need for this community to have a way to get across this river—in the fall, and in the spring. And every year we have done that. The problem has been, this ford is a son of a gun. Every year we have to throw more rocks in there, we have to dig up more bank and

throw more dirt and more rocks in there...All this is, [this bridge] is an improvement on the ford."

The meeting was called in an attempt to allay growing criticism of the

project. There had been rumors about a toll bridge, which Elliott denied. Then one day the bridge was in the water, fuel trucks and equipment were using it—even a Park Service truck driven by several young contractors drove across the river. Tempers were flaring.

Ironically, both Kirkwood and the Bays had fought the idea of a vehicular bridge several years ago, preferring the footbridge that the state built in 1997. Why would they now build the same type of bridge they fought so hard to stop? Kelly Bay gives one reason, "...it gives us control. That was the big problem with a



KELLY BAY EXPLAINS PROJECT.



RICH KIRKWOOD—"THE BOTTOM LINE IS WE NEED A WAY TO GET ACROSS THE RIVER..."



RANDY ELLIOTT—BRIDGE DESIGNER & BUILDER.

bridge, that we couldn't control the access." Marcy Thurston asked, "How do we control the access? Is it a matter of who can pay for it and how much?" Rich Kirkwood answered, "The man with the heavy equipment has got the control over the access. It's just like it has been for years and years."

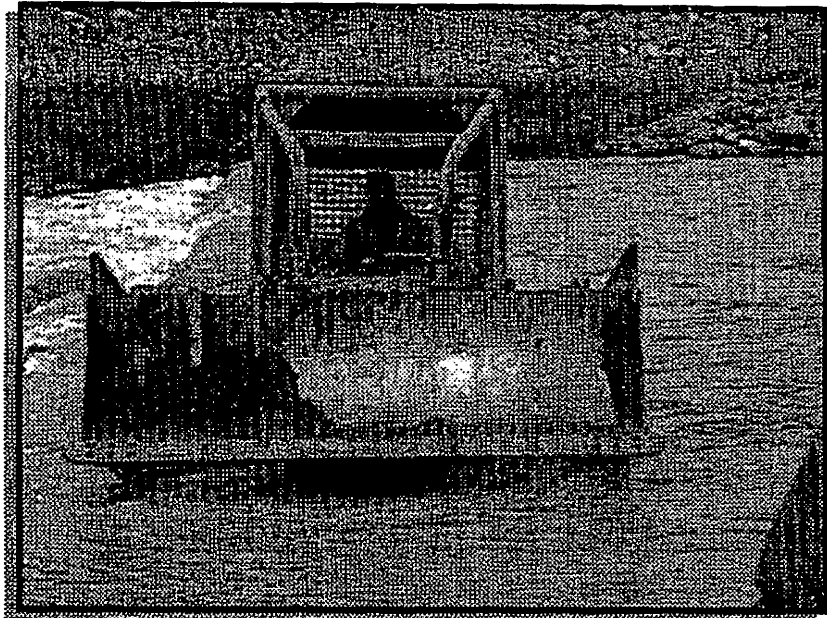
One concern that locals had was that the new ford crosses private property, and is not on a dedicated easement. Mark Vail

asked a pointed question: "I'm curious as to who owns the property that we are using without permission—for storage, gravel removal..." His question brought a shrug of the shoulders from Kirkwood, who answered, "The bottom line is that we need a way to get across the river—whether it's up there on a section line or whether it's here or whether it's down there."

Another concern was permitting. "Has there been research done to see if we need a permit from Army Corps, or DEC?" asked Vail.

"I don't know," answered Kirkwood. "Randy has a permit to cross the river and that's what he has been doing for years and years, to haul our fuel over here and haul our junk vehicles out...all we have done here is to improve that river bottom for a short period of time so we can get back and forth in safety. It's not much different from what we have been doing."

Others had concerns about summer employees and others bringing personal vehicles



RANDY ELLIOTT DEMONSTRATES PORTABLE "FORD." NOTE WATER IS HIGHER THAN DECK OF BRIDGE.

across.

"The question is going to come up—who gets to use it, and how much?" said Kirkwood. "Right now, there are three of us who have money in this improved ford down here. About fifteen thousand bucks. For the past twelve years, I have been paying somebody to build a ford here.

Kelly's been paying, I've been paying, and Randy has been doing some of the work. So we have the question, how do we pay for it. What's fair?" By the time the meeting ended, a price of \$125 per trip across the river was set for anyone who wanted to use the bridge.

The question came up as to what happened to the idea of a pipeline on the footbridge. "That solves the fuel and septic—maybe, if it ever gets done," said Kirkwood. "But it still does not solve the problem of getting trash and junk out and other vehicles in."

Betty Hickling and others were concerned with safety. "The potential for containment of a fuel spill over ice is so much easier than on open water, I don't understand why the fuel situation cannot be handled when there is ice on the river, when there is not as much risk of spilling fuel," said Betty.

"Most of the time you cannot get down the road when there is ice on the river," countered



"TOWN MEETING" ON BANKS OF KENNICOTT RIVER



Kirkwood. "That's the biggest problem."

Betty continued, "We get all of our fuel in here on the ice. I am concerned about a spill. On ice you can contain it, open water you cannot. It is going to go to Cordova."

Mike McCarthy had similar concerns. "You say this is an experiment," said McCarthy. "But you are experimenting with 10,000 gallons of fuel on the Copper River Flats."

"If this community wants to trash this idea, and wants to go to the Troopers and say "this is illegal," you can get it stopped," said Kirkwood. "There is no doubt about it."

Apparently the meeting was too little too late, however. Someone had already "gone to the Troopers." The Troopers had contacted the National Park Service. NPS criminal investigator Tim Saskowsky, along with Ranger Jim Hannah, had responded to the calls. Pictures of Elliott crossing the river with a fuel truck had been sent to the State Troopers and to the Corps of Engineers. When the meeting adjourned, a phone call from the Corps was waiting for Elliott, telling him to cease and desist.

I had a candid talk with Randy about the project. Asked about the permit to cross the river, he told me he had obtained a Fish and Wildlife permit a number of years ago to cross the rivers all the way to Dan Creek, where he had a mining operation. He had not, however, gotten a permit from the Corps of Engineers to "dig up more bank and throw more dirt and more rocks in there," as Kirkwood had aptly put it. "I couldn't afford to stay in business if I followed all the

rules," Elliott told me.

Asked about possible fines, and whether the partners were equally liable, Randy said that he takes sole responsibility. Why? "I don't know. Maybe I am trying to buy my friends," he said.

Randy told me he felt he had been singled out for harassment. He cited several incidents where local residents had "turned him in," for real or imagined violations of various regulations. He couldn't understand the animosity towards the bridge, which was his invention. "The new crossing is ten times safer than the old one," he told me.

Elliott said he did feel bad about the trespass of private property. Asked why he didn't just use the old winter crossing—an access that has apparently gone into public domain, he said that he intended to abandon that route. He said he had been approached five years ago by the owner of the property, who he said was Ian Sherack. Mr. Sherack had reportedly told Elliott that he wanted the property cleaned up, and that he had five years to do

it. Randy did say that the bridge location could be moved upstream to a section line easement, however. "By next fall, the access will be in the correct place," he told me. Then he qualified his statement. "If not, it is because I am out-voted and out-spent by [my partners]," he said.

Other locals have no intention of abandoning the old winter crossing. They see it as the only legal access (other than the footbridge) that does not depend on permission from private landowners to use. The route has been used by vehicle, snowmachine and dogsled for at least twenty years—likely much longer.

Interestingly enough, state and federal agencies seem to be more concerned about changing the bottom structure of rivers than about hauling fuel or other hazardous materials across them. A Coast Guard representative told me they were only interested in fuel crossing rivers if it was in a pipeline—then they regulate it. The Department of Environmental Conservation only



"OLD WINTER CROSSING"—STORAGE AREA FOR HEAVY EQUIPMENT?



concerns itself if the quantity of fuel is greater than 420,000 gallons. The Environmental Protection Agency regulates fixed storage sites—not transport. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Division says that as long as the crossing is above the confluence of the Kennicott River and McCarthy Creek, it's not a problem.

One agency does concern itself with hauling fuel, but not just across rivers. The U.S. Department of Transportation regulates the transport of hazardous materials, which includes fuel. I spoke with Larry Hall, of the USDOT, who told me that Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations covered the subject. "Particularly Parts 100 to 185," he said, "but also Parts 200 to 399."

I pressed Mr. Hall for some details. "How about carrying, say, 500 gallons of fuel in a tank mounted on a small truck?" I asked. "Gasoline or fuel oil?" he countered. He explained that gasoline is considered a *flammable* material, while fuel oil is labeled *combustible*.

"Gasoline," I said. He told me that anyone can carry up to 119 gallons or 1,000 pounds without special permits or licensing. And that is the size of the tank (tanks), not how much is in them. Anything more than that requires a Commercial Drivers License (CDL), shipping papers for the material being transported, and all required placards. That's if the transported material is for an individual's private use. If the gasoline will be used in his business, there are more requirements: a current medical certificate, drug testing, a Drivers Qualification File, attendance at a hazardous material training course, just to name a few. He stressed that the regulations are numerous—obtaining Title 49 is mandatory. (Hall said the regulations could be obtained from the Alaska Trucking Association, or from J.J. Keller Publishing in Washington, D.C.)

A pipeline across the footbridge is an idea that has been discussed for years. So far it has only been an idea, however.

The controversy over the private bridge has stirred new interest, and the local Chamber of Commerce is pursuing funding through the Village Safe Water Program for a masterplan/feasibility study.

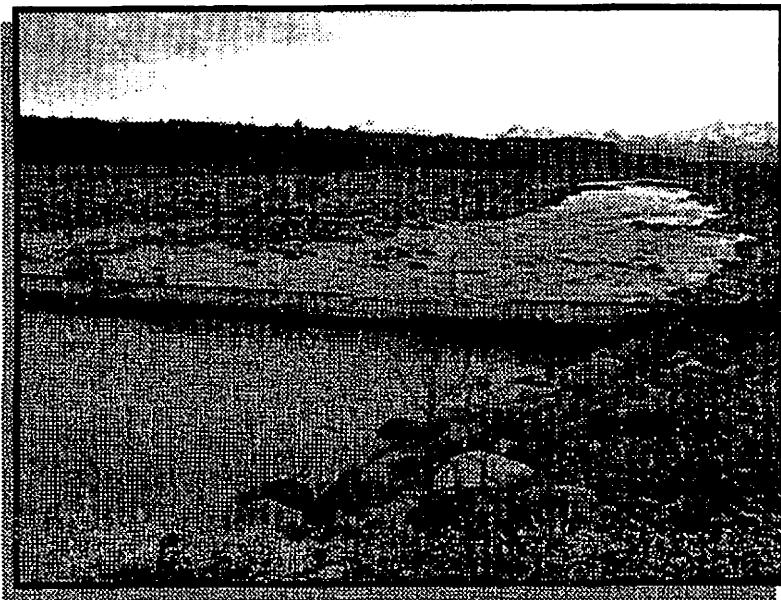
Another option for fuel transport is by air. Woods Aviation has been hauling fuel for the Park Service—so far into May Creek, but they did land at McCarthy recently, reportedly to "check it out." The downside is high cost, and the nuisance of large, noisy transport aircraft flying low over the town and surrounding residential area.

When I talked with Tim Saskowsky of the NPS, he had this to say about the river crossing problem—"Some people are saying, 'why isn't the Park Service helping?' The answer is simple—we weren't asked for help."

Both the Chamber of Commerce and M.A.C. have been asked to support the toll bridge. Both have said they will—if the required permits are obtained, and if it is moved to a legal right-of-way.

Before the bridge was removed, Copper Valley Sanitation was able to get trucks across to pump out septic systems on the "town side" of the river. I was told that the Corps had issued a waiver, allowing the bridge to remain in the water long enough for the trucks to cross, but a Corps representative said "not true."

As for now, the bridge is out of the water for the winter. The word is that the Corps will not issue a fine—this time—but do require that the river bank be restored to its natural state. Will it ever see use again? Good question. Stay tuned...



BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS.

The following is a segment from the chapter: *Closing the Bonanza*, written for the historic dramatization: *Legacy of the Chief: The Nicolai Prospect*, by Ron Simpson.

Author's Note: The following is a fictionalized account. Superintendent Richardson was actually W.C. Richelson, and several other names have also been changed. Most of the material is factual. The event, like most of them in the book, is fictional, but could have occurred. The right to the use of Chief Nicolai, one of the last great Ahtna chiefs, and a noted "sleep doctor" (medicine man) is claimed by the author, whose grandmother was of the Nicolai clan.

The Grandson, who will be the main character in the book, is a composite character.

References to the Motherlode disaster are a matter of rumor and speculation and have never been documented.

## Legacy of the Chief: Closing Day at Bonanza

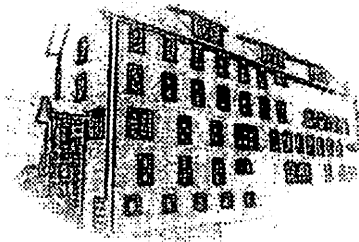
*"The White Man has come to take his precious metals from the earth. He cares nothing of this land—nor of us. He will take his precious metals, upset the earth, and then he will leave. We have no use for his treasures, nor for him. Nor should we. Soon we will have our land back and be able to live in peace as before."*—Chief Nicolai the Tyone talking to his oldest grandson at Taral across the Copper River from the new town of Chittyna in 1910—

BY RON SIMPSON

The Bonanza tram extends from the rear of the Kennecott discharge terminal, which sits at the 2,338 foot level at track grade, according to the Copper River & Northwestern Railway survey of 1910. The first tower, the twenty-second from the angle station, and the 44<sup>th</sup> from the Bonanza discharge terminal—not counting the angle station itself—stands little more than a hundred feet beyond the mill upper loading dock. The next six towers follow a relatively gentle slope, and are spaced an average of approximately 300 feet apart—giving little indication of the nature of the course which the aerial tram largely follows.

As has been the case every week since May 1935 when the mill reopened (after two and a half years of closure due to low copper prices), Walt Richardson, the site superintendent, boards the tram for the three-mile ride to Bonanza, located at the 6016 elevation, following a pattern set by his beloved predecessor who managed the site during most of

the 1920's. When Bill Douglass took the reins from Mr. Stannard back in those early days, he brought a sense of benevolence and permanence which has characterized the mill town ever since.



Douglass set the engineering standards that were specific to this remote Alaskan location and he set the psychological tone of a warm, family friendly town where there was always a sense of predictability and of stability.

Richardson, who was to be the last of a line of about a dozen or so superintendents, changed very little of the operating style of his old boss and predecessor. Though he meant well, however, he lacked the aura and personal

charm which seemed to emanate from Bill Douglass.

This routine of actually visiting the active minesites every week whenever physically possible was one of Douglass's procedures. Except this time, the visit was hardly routine. For this was October 21, 1938. The last of the ore ever to be taken from any of the Kennecott Mines would, appropriately, be removed from the Bonanza—site of the original discovery some 38 years before.

After 27 years of sending ore down the rails, the last of it was about to be trammed from the very site where it all started. But in those few years, it had become a very different world.

Because Richardson had made a career out of Kennecott, he had seen most of the major changes. Many engineers had come and gone, but Walt had been here nearly from the beginning, coming fresh from the Colorado School of Engineering in 1915—the year that the Jumbo Mine took off, turning the Kennecott mine group into the

richest copper find ever as high grade copper mines went.

He had worked his way up from a surveyor to the position of Chief Engineer—a job he held for many years, beginning in the latter years of the Douglass regime. And now Richardson was the site superintendent. At one time there had been a corporate representative here referred to as the manager. The very first had been the Great Man himself. But that was now part of a different era. Mr. Birch had long since gone into retirement.

The house built for Birch and his new wife in 1916 was never really lived in by the Great Man. His wife developed an early distaste for Alaska and she refused to even visit Kennecott. Birch moved on to greater ventures and passed the manager mantle onto E.T. Stannard. Mr. Stannard was a truly great and innovative engineer, but he little understood nor appreciated the notion of employee relations and was not well liked during his tenure at Kennecott.

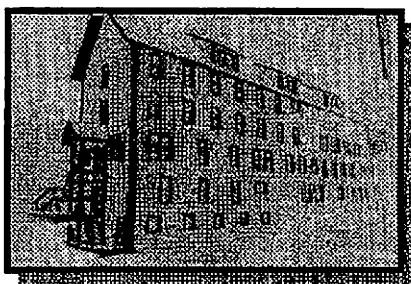
In some ways, Walt's personality must have appeared to resemble that of Stannard, for he certainly was not nearly as popular as Douglass, but he was not one to overlook good help, either.

It had been an incredibly exciting 22 years in some of the most spectacular country in the world. Richardson had participated in many mineral investigations for Kennecott in the Chitina and Nizina Valleys—and as far away as the Nabesna area. In the last few years, he had even headed many of these trips, including the Glacier Creek prospect. They had built up quite a camp there in anticipation of mineral riches that never were

realized.

Nevertheless, there was a lot to be said for being out in the field, way out there in the true wilderness, assisting the long progression of consulting geologists which the Kennecott corporate office sent this way from time to time.

Even in a world the engineers had tried to make as predictable as possible, there were many unanticipated events that kept life from being anything but routine. After all, this was still very much a virgin territory. The wilderness in most places begins here only mere



yards from the railroad right-of-way—and the land can be rugged enough to challenge even the hardiest of men. There were also a recurring number of mishaps in the mine and on the tram system. The company confidently predicted the number of mining related accidents that would occur in any given year—and it was usually very close.

As a rule, this had proved to be an unusually safe place for miners to work.

The company track record had been very good compared to other Alaskan operations. Some of the large gold mining operations near Juneau were notorious killers, whereas this particular interior operation was noted as a safe and thus desirable place to work. This year, so far, there had been no fatal accidents

at all.

It now appeared that Kennecott would be finally pulling out of the Wrangells with an almost clean record.

There had been one catastrophe which had long troubled not only Walt, but really everyone who knew of it. Even though it had now been 11 years since the disaster at the Motherlode camp, that one event had shocked everyone. Now Kennecott would soon completely abandon the area—leaving behind to be forgotten the fate of those three unfortunate souls caught up in what might have been a preventable accident. But, as Walt was now about to board the aerial tram for the hazardous aerial tram ride to the Bonanza, this was not the time to contemplate such things.

At tower number 16, lower tram, the cables begin to rise at a steeper rate, and the distance between the towers lengthens considerably. Just past tower 13 is the first tension station, where the cable then crosses National Creek.

As the cable first bridges the creek, the ground below drops precipitously, falling 200 feet below, then the cable reaches the other side, passes through two more towers and then re-crosses National Creek. Here begins another relatively gentle climb most of the way to the Angle Station at the 4015 elevation.

The angle is approximately 49 degrees, as the cable swings from an easterly direction to a northerly one. At the station, one cable system ends, and another begins. The buckets are shifted to overhead rails and remounted onto the upper tram system by the angle station crew for the

final climb. Here the rise is rather abrupt, heading toward a series of closely placed towers resembling another tension station just ahead of the heart-stopping jump across Bonanza Canyon. There is approximately a 1,500-foot gap where this cable crosses the canyon, some 300 plus feet below. It is usually windy here—and because of the length of the crossing, there is an unnerving swing to the cable.

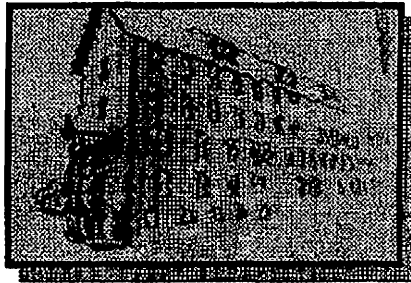
Even beyond this, as the cable continues its rapid upward path, it follows the edge of a near vertical slope, giving a lasting effect of continuing to cross a very deep canyon. As if this is not enough, as the cable continues to rise, it becomes steeper, which serves to give a sense of added speed. Just to the west of the cable system is the power line, which has closely followed the tram all the way from the lower camp. Just approaching these towers, not to mention climbing them requires nerves of sheer steel. Both the engineering staff and the men who maintain these power and tram lines consist of just this sort of apparent near super human people. This is not a place for those of faint heart, and not a few such people have washed out quickly at this mine system.

The tram is now following the ridge separating the Bonanza from the Glacier Mine. At this high elevation, many of the towers are heavily built and reinforced to counteract the effects of the enormous stress from the heavy ore loads as well as the weighty winter snow loads. As it is, quite a number of towers have been replaced over the years—sometimes to upgrade the load requirements—but usually because avalanches have taken

them out. Even this year, with the end clearly in sight, towers #25 and #43—near the very top—had to be replaced to ensure safe operations.

Even with all those many years of making this tortuous journey, Walt thinks to himself:

“Thank God, one last trip after this one—the return trip out of here—and I am done with this beast for good.” Walt Richardson is not an especially wordy person—a characteristic that is typical of the breed of engineers who have overseen this operation from the beginning.



Only to a few close associates has he ever confided his sometimes near panic at times on entering this last stretch. As the head engineer, he just somehow managed to keep these feelings to himself. Oh, yes, his wife Gladys was well aware of his apprehensions about this tram in particular, but, being the wife of a corporate representative, she had long ago resigned herself to being quiet about the expressions of her husband.

On the other hand, when one could overpower the natural inclination to want to become one with the small ore bucket below, the view here—as with all the mining sites—can only be described in superlatives. Not so today, however. Low lying clouds turning into occasional snow flurries, combined with fog at the 4000-foot level was largely

obscuring the view. Winter had been threatening the site since early September, but no heavy snows had fallen as yet.

Walt noted to himself how typical this was for a company that had become used to good luck in operating this remote site. Most of the other lesser mines in the region had eventually seen some sort of natural disaster befall them.

Oddly enough, Kennecott had always been blessed. There had never been anything the company considered a real disaster here. Probably this was largely due simply to the size and scope of the operation—and its deep corporate pockets. Even that horrible Motherlode avalanche had waited to strike until 18 of the miners were safely at work underground—and only three men were left at camp to face nature’s true force. The real horror for the engineers is that this event had taken one of their own. “Here I am still thinking about that \_\_\_ thing, and I haven’t gotten off the tram yet.”

Richardson had caught himself again. He would have to be more careful. Though he was not superstitious, there was something about that event which seemed to haunt everything about this place. No one ever spoke of it. Not ever. But it was always on the minds of those who were here at the time.

Now the upper tram terminal was minutes away. It had taken a long 45 minutes to arrive. As was always the case, it was loaded ore buckets, which passed Walt on the left, looking up, which provided the weight to make the tram work. This tram was entirely gravity operated. Because there are buckets spaced at even intervals in both

directions, the tram will not move without the weight of all that ore—or some other heavy weight coming from the mine, such as salvaged equipment. Lately, there had been plenty of that. Three of the four compressors at Bonanza had already arrived below for shipment out.

It had been a very busy year here as the miners worked furiously to complete the mining retreat plan by the scheduled date. Now that date had nearly arrived.

Just a few days before, on October 18, Walt had overseen the closing of the Jumbo tram.

The extension of the Jumbo was the Erie Mine to the northwest, which had closed much later than originally predicted, lasting until October 14. That crew had been moved here to the Bonanza site. It proved to be a race to the very end. Jumbo was cleaned out four days later as per the usual orderly plan of retreat. All the salvageable equipment not needed at Bonanza for this final push was trammed out by the 18th.

While there at Jumbo Walt had watched as the head electrician pulled the switch, leaving the camp and its mine workings in a permanent state of darkness. The electricians pulled the large transformers, following the plan for a final act of salvaging, and Walt followed them on the last tram bucket.

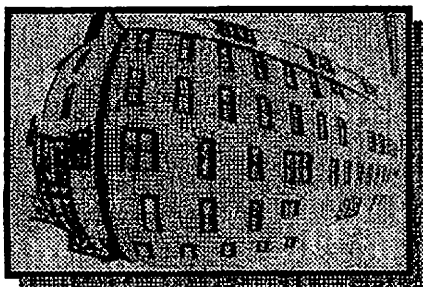
That last Jumbo ride had been very slow, for only salvaged equipment weighing considerably less than the ore which usually clogged the trams provided the weight required to operate the line.

Now it was Bonanza's turn. "This is it. Nearly everything remaining to be removed should

be out of the tunnels on the ground or on the upper loading dock," Walt was thinking.

The last of the ore had been mined yesterday, and now the ore heading down the aerial trams was being supplied totally from the reserves of one ore bin here at the terminal. The first bin was already emptied and this second one was probably only hours away from being cleaned out. Walt would be going into the main level of Bonanza for a final check, but all the activity inside Bonanza Ridge had ceased forever. Only the lights on the Bonanza adit level remained on for final inspection.

He was interrupted from this final thought as he was helped off at the upper gate, greeting



everyone as he headed toward the long, tracked inclined snowshed leading up toward barracks #2. This was the largest barracks ever built anywhere at this elevation, being four stories high, not counting the attic and the sub basement, which were themselves complete floors. It served as a kind of company showpiece, because most official visitors had arrived here first.

Walt had the building repainted with a new coat of barn red with white trim shortly after the mines reopened during the early summer of 1935. But that was about the extent of the maintenance. The company did not want unwarranted sums

spent on buildings that would soon be probably abandoned for good. As a result, much maintenance was deferred.

Like all the structures built by this company on these steep slopes, this was "secured" by cables which were in turn anchored deep into the rock as an additional precaution in case a natural occurring event, such as a heavy fall of loose rock should threaten the building, perhaps causing it to slide as much as 1,500 feet down the talus slide, virtually guaranteeing unthinkable casualties.

Only one other camp building had the finished appearance the Bonanza #2 boasted. Number 4 at the Jumbo had been given a similar finished look, but that building had met an unfortunate end as a useful barracks when the rock glacier on which it was built nearly pulled the building apart, breaking it nearly in half in the early 1930's while the camp was closed. Here at Bonanza was the largest of all the company dining rooms, with seating for 150.

Only a few days before Walt had presided over a large turkey dinner in this very dining hall to toast the remaining men—and those who had gone before them—and give a final formal farewell to the mining operations here on the high slopes.

Eighty-four men actually lived here, though only a few of these were still on the job or in camp today. Many had already received their lay off notices and had left Bonanza yesterday.

The rest of the miners stationed at Bonanza lived at the much older building #1.

There was also a respectable gymnasium and a library and billiards room. Below was the

massive drying and changing room, where the men came before and after a shift. Soon all this would be history. Most of it would be left behind intact.

There was always the faint hope that some of these structures could be reused, but Walt, on contemplating this could only think "not in this world."

He was intimately familiar with the inner workings of the entire mine system. There was virtually nothing left in there to mine. All the minerals of economic value had been completely depleted. Now they would leave. "Sorry I missed you at the terminal, Walt," foreman Hancock looked up from his perch at the top of the inclined snowshed. It was clear that the small crew was having

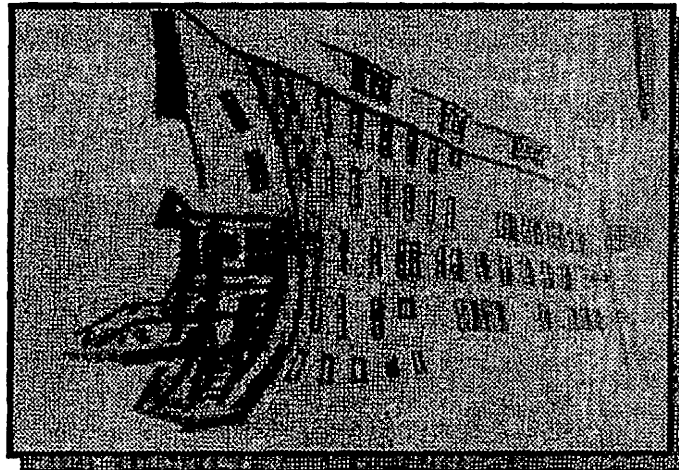
some problems in the adjacent boiler room. "We had to keep this alive as long as possible, but our heating system lost its water source when we shut down those pumps down in Motherlode, and we've barely kept it fed with the snow we've been able to gather and what limited water we've had on hand. I guess we don't need it much longer now. You are shutting it all down this afternoon, I hope?"

"No last minute changes in our plans. We are right on schedule, but we'll probably be here all day. "

"Dunkel is still here, you know."

"Nearly forgot about him," Walt mused. Here Bonanza was blessed with the presence of one of the original great engineers. He had developed the early theories that predicted quite accurately the lay of the underground copper ore. But he had long moved on to other jobs in Alaska, the last and most notable being as chief engineer for the fantastically rich Lucky Shot Mine.

Now that Dunkel was no



longer associated with the Lucky Shot gold mine over in the Willow Creek district, he was prospecting on his own mining up along the south slopes of the great Mount McKinley. Most recently, Dunkel had staked a series of claims he optimistically had named the "Golden Zone."

Dunkel had made this final trip to the Bonanza site to help oversee the salvaging of the mining equipment, much of which he had already purchased from Kennecott to use in his own small mining operation.

Even though his was a gold mine, the underground

equipment used in this copper mine was just what he needed. Furthermore, he had the advantage of many years of familiarity with Kennecott's Alaska operations. He knew exactly how much of what kind of equipment Kennecott was likely to have on hand for sale once the mines closed.

This included a number of underground battery operated locomotives, which Dunkel quickly snapped up. These were still sitting in the yard between the boiler room and the transformer house, just beyond the 1503 adit. Dunkel was nowhere in sight. Not waiting for the question, Hancock added: "I believe he's up there in the dining room looking over his check list and his bundle of manuals for those locos and scrapers."

"Thanks, Jim."

With that, Richardson headed up the stairs for his long anticipated breakfast. It had been quite a morning—and a very early start. No time for eating at home, not even coffee. Five o'clock had come too soon, even for Walt. The building was still bright with the electric power humming through this one last piece of upper Kennecott, but it was getting chilly in the barracks with the boilers clearly failed—and it being late in October.

It would be a long day.

# Shake, Rattle and Roll

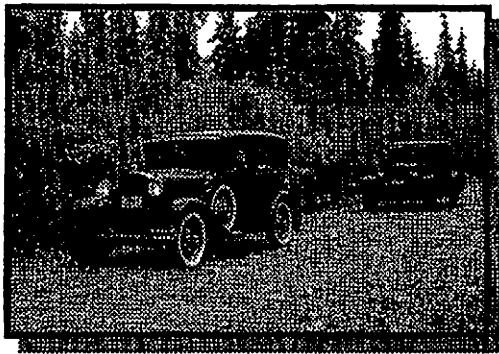
BY PEG STOUT

**S**hake, Rattle and Roll - that should have been the theme song for the Antique Auto Musers of Alaska's annual trip this year! We are a group of antique auto enthusiasts from Anchorage. Each year we take a different trip within Alaska. Perhaps our motto should be: "Own an antique auto and see Alaska."

We have been to Deadhorse, on the Dalton Highway (as if there were another way to get there by car?). We went there the first year it was open to public travel. One year we went to Juneau via Haines, returning by way of Skagway and Whitehorse. I think we probably bought all available blue tarps in Juneau since it poured on us for three days. Next, we went to Cordova via ferry from Whittier. The weather in Cordova was absolutely magnificent. Of course, we journeyed on to the Million Dollar Bridge, and over it where we came to the "end of the road." Last year, we went to Whitehorse, Dawson City, and to Eagle as we returned via the Top of the World Highway. We fell in love with Eagle and hope to return someday.

Frankly, every year when we started talking about where to go, Kennecott/McCarthy was mentioned. Each time it was met with, "Have you heard about THAT road?" Last year we decided that it was time to go. We had already missed the thrill of riding across on the tram, and were concerned that the road would be improved and we'd miss the "thrill" of driving a rural road.

We met for a potluck planning session at which time Art Isham, "the wagon master," gave us check lists as reminders of what we should take for spare parts, and in general to make sure we had everything as ready as possible. This planning certainly paid off in spades as you will see.



Friday, July 23, we met at Eagle River and headed for Palmer where we picked up the remainder of the group. When we left Palmer there were eleven vehicles making this the largest group so far to make our annual tour. What a pleasure to see so many able to tour together! Tom & Marcie Cresap's 1928 Chevrolet coupe was making its first tour; the Isham's 1930 Model A Ford was ready for its sixth Alaskan tour; the 1931 Ford Model A truck, Hank's "motor home," was ready to go; Tom & Mattie's 1939 Ford coupe was rushed into service (when their trusty truck refused to start Friday morning); Bill & Donna Waldron met us in Palmer with their eye-catching 1939 Ford convertible. Howard & Barb Hansen were looking really sporty with the top down on their 1940 Plymouth convertible; Mike, Jennifer, Chris, and Nathan Dennis and Rebecca in Art &

Tam's 1965 Mustang (substituting for Mike & Jennifer's 1952 Ford that refused to be a part of the trip about 10:00 Thursday night. Now, that is what I call GREAT parents-in-laws—when they lend you a car!); Gary and Sara Stoops with their 1958 Chevy Belair; us in "Dorothy," our 1930 Model A Ford (this isn't Kansas, Toto) which was on its sixth trip within Alaska in addition to be driven to Anchorage from Wichita; Bill and Lorraine Foster with their pick-up-truck (since the intended '64 Chevy Suburban sprung a leak in the gas tank) and Dave Syren and Jim who brought Dave's service truck and was the "sweeper." You know,

there is something very comforting about knowing there is such a vehicle bringing up the rear—even if you never need it! We were joined later by Fred and Janet Schurman who thought it better to make the trip in a camper rather than their '17 Ford Model T 1-ton—good call, you all.

After stopping in Eureka for a snack of our usual pie and coffee, we continued to our various destinations in the Glennallen area for the remainder of the evening.

Saturday, we met at the Copper Center Roadhouse at 10:00 a.m. in the rain (but nothing like last year's rain) to continue to Chitina where we were to gas up for the trip into McCarthy. Recommendation: watch the lock on the door of the ladies toilet—you can lock yourself in and nobody is likely to hear you—not a good feeling!

Countdown for starting up



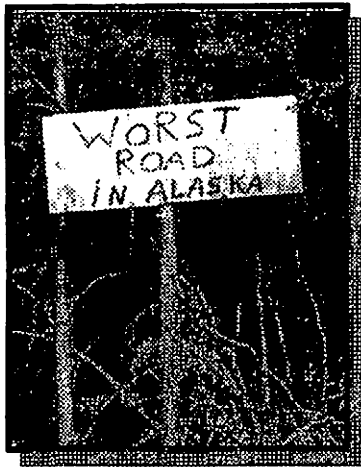
the McCarthy "highway" finally arrived about 1:00 p.m. We all headed out in a slight drizzle. It didn't take very long to start wondering if every bolt would be sheared and screw shook out before we arrived. In my opinion, it is the worst road we have ever been on. Well, perhaps, there have been sections of the Alaska Highway that are as bad, but not in recent years. The trip in and

out was a total of a 120 miles of relatively narrow, wash-board, potholed road with numerous bridges. After all, it follows the right-of-way of the old Copper River & Northwestern Railroad, and you can still see and feel many of the old

railroad ties which are embedded in the road. There are no "pit stop" areas, so watch what you drink and how much before starting on this road. The combination of very rough road and no rest stops can make for an extremely uncomfortable ride, I KNOW!

About sixteen miles onto this road (it took us an hour to get there), we came to the Kuskulana bridge. Now this bridge is something to behold. I understand that before 1988 there were no guardrails and it was quite the thrill to drive across. It is an old railroad bridge built in 1910 which is about 600 feet long and 283 feet above the water that is running through a relatively narrow stone canyon below. There were people bungee jumping when we stopped there. We waited for sometime here for everyone to arrive, but were told by fellow travelers that "the little

green car" was stopped and a red truck was helping it with "something." We later found out that Tom's '28 Chevy lost its battery (the battery box shook apart) when Dave, fortunately, saw sparks flying and got Tom stopped. I understand Dave promptly got out his plywood and saw and together they rebuilt the battery box, and it has served quite well since that time. In fact



that was the only casualty, other than a flat tire on Dave's service truck, on the entire trip—which speaks well for the work everyone did on his vehicle before the trip. Tam and Art remained behind as a back-up for Tom.

We started arriving at the parking lot along the Kennicott River about 4 p.m. and were greeted royally and shown "our" places to park. At first I was a bit nervous about the parking spot, but was told that Hidden Lake had broken out from under the glacier the previous weekend so the area was perfectly safe now. Dave Syren had made arrangements with Randy to make sure our cars were "supervised" when we left them and Randy certainly did that—it was wonderful to know that they were being watched. Many people enjoyed looking at them and, of course, we enjoyed having them "oohed" and "aahed" over.

Again we stayed at different locations so each of us has our own unique stories to tell. I have a feeling that Lorraine and Bill Foster will have a great story to tell, or, at least, Lorraine will make it a great story! They stayed at a B & B on the west side

of the river so they could keep their vehicle with them. Fred and Janet Schurman also camped on the west side of the river along with the bears. Two more GREAT TROOPER badges go to Fred and Janet for keeping up on a tour of the Kennicott Mill. Fred had been in the hospital with a back injury, and Janet was climbing those ladders with a knee brace.

From the parking lot we crossed a footbridge carrying our luggage and were met by our respective hosts. Those staying in McCarthy sent their baggage on into town while they exercised by walking into town. Those of us staying in the Kennecott (yes, that's the way the town and mine are spelled due to a misspelling of the Glacier when the town was founded) area which is about five miles from the river chose to wait for transportation for both our luggage and ourselves. We felt really fortunate to be able to stay in the Kennicott Glacier Lodge. It was built in 1987 and is a modern, 25 room lodge with a front porch across the entire front (about 180 feet) and has an unbelievable view of the glacier area and valley (when it's clear). The food is also unbelievably delicious—something nobody would expect to find in such a remote area. It is served family style and your name is on the table where you are to be seated, so we met people other than just those in our own group—which can be very interesting!

I could continue about this trip for pages, but will leave you with some final thoughts. If you haven't been to Kennecott, GO soon before it gets too crowded—it's one of the most interesting places in Alaska; once you have been there, you will want to find everything possible to read about it. We enjoyed it so much that we have already been back a second time!

# McCarthy Kennicott Community Church News

BY BONNIE KENYON

**T**hanksgiving – a word that best describes my feelings as I look back over this past summer and a timely word for the month of November. On May 23 we began our summer season with a special service for the visiting Valdez Catholic youth group who had come to McCarthy to donate their time sprucing up the McCarthy historical cemetery. My mom, Neta Schafer, spent nearly a month with us and shared her favorite inspirational readings with us on Sundays. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, which came on a Sunday this year, our church sanctuary was full with an estimated 60 in attendance. We were honored to hear from Nigerian missionary Vincent Nwankpa and Andy and Heidi Linton. The Lintons work with Christian Friends of Korea who minister to the needs of the people of North Korea. That Sunday night lots of good music took place thanks to Kay Houghton, the Rowland family and their friends on various instruments under the leadership of Lynn Welty, who kept us all singing the same song (at the same time!).

On Sunday, July 19—my birthday—I was totally surprised to find a beautiful cake awaiting me downstairs after the service. How the ladies kept that from me, I'll never know! I did discover that my mom and Kay Houghton were the instigators. Thank you all very much!

Vacation Bible School was August 2-6 and I don't know who had more fun—we three adults who organized the activities or Sarah Welty, Rene Welty and Amy Northrup, the 3 young ladies who participated in the activities! Heartfelt thanks to Lynn Welty and Kristi Houghton

who gave of their time and talents to make the week so special and, of course, to Sarah, Rene and Amy for joining in with much gusto!

Another summer highlight was the ladies luncheon held on August 22. Approximately 40 ladies from the community turned out to sample the food and a time of relaxation from their busy schedules of the previous week.

The front of the church building received a new deck this summer, thanks to Brad Gavitt of Gakona, who, along with his wife Connie and family, makes frequent visits to our area on his various outreaches in Alaska. The two new benches were built by Don and Lynn Welty and donated to the church. Thank you, Don and Lynn! Also, I want to give thanks to SAPA Greenhouse of Kenny Lake for the beautiful flowers they provided us again this year.

We are hearing such kind comments from those who visit the church during the week and find such a peaceful place to rest. During the summer months the church is open to visitors and local residents. Our guest book reflects the numerous people who make it a part of their visit to our town. It is always a pleasure to meet some of those people on Sunday mornings at the church service. We are honored to welcome them in person!

The McCarthy Kennicott Community Church Inc. held its annual Board of Directors meeting on September 16. The current directors and officers are as follows: John Adams, president; Doug Schrage, vice-president; George Cebula, treasurer; Kenny Smith, director and Rick Kenyon, director. I

continue to serve as secretary.

The church corporation remains in good standing with its 501 (3) (c) status. We cannot thank enough those of you who have contributed and continue to bless us all on a regular basis. You are loved and appreciated!

The churches's total income to date of our 1999 board meeting was \$15,528.46 with expenses totaling \$6212.14. Twenty percent of the church income has gone to a variety of ministries such as: Brad and Connie Gavitt, missionaries to the Copper River Basin and beyond, Christian radio station KCAM in Glennallen, Alaska; Christian Friends of Korea and Nigerian missionary Vincent Nwankpa.

No one receives a salary but serves out of love for this work and the community of which we are a part of. I, personally, want to thank each of you who unselfishly gives of your time, talent, and gifts which enables us to be a blessing to others. My gratitude to each one of our board members/officers. Thank you, Kay, Beth, Holly, Rebecca, Annalisa and Kristi Houghton for your continual assistance in the Sunday music! I know Rick Kenyon is honored beyond words to serve as our pastor and, although I have never voiced it near enough, my deep appreciation for allowing me the opportunity to lead our time of praise and worship.

Our winter schedule for Sunday services is: 10:00 am at the Kenyon's cabin. Everyone is welcome!

The McCarthy Kennicott Community Church offers our sincere condolences to the Houghton family on the death of Kay's father, Clarence Reinhardt

(Continued on page 22)

# OUR TOWN

November 1924 December

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Mr. D. H. Kelsey, formerly employed by J. B. O'Neill, left town Wednesday for Chitina where he has accepted a position with the Alaska Road Commission. Mr. Kelsey will be missed by his many friends in McCarthy and district but all join in wishing him success in his new location.

Mr. Pugh has completed arrangements with the Western Union to give McCarthy direct news of the Presidential election returns.

Mr. Pugh moved into the new Depot this week.

Mr. Anderson has received word that \$200 will be available to place new stoves and a supply of wood in the relief cabins at Fredreicka and Scolai Creek. These cabins are on the trail to Sushanna and are greatly in need of the above mentioned supplies.

Mr. Max Saula is to take over the barber chair in the Golden lately vacated by Mr. Wm. Longley. Mr. Saula is quite well known in the district and has had a wide experience in barbering. He respectfully solicits your patronage.

## THE PASSING OF POKER SAM

A sad fatality occurred at the Mother Lode mine last Wednesday night, October 29, when Sam Millieu, better known

locally as "Poker Sam," was overcome by gas while working in one of the drifts. He was overcome before help could get to him and all efforts at reviving him were futile.

"Poker Sam" was so well known in and around this district that he was considered a "Landmark" in this part of the country. Loved by everyone who knew him his death will be a sad shock to the community.

Nov. 1

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Mrs. Tjosevik arrived last Saturday from Seattle where she has been holidaying and says that McCarthy looks awfully good to her.

Pile driving has continued without interruption at Nizina bridge, three hundred and fifty feet of trestle remains to be driven, which, if material for such is delivered at the bridge, will be completed this month.

## SELDOVIA MARSHAL MURDERED

While on a raid for moonshine on Oct. 30 Deputy United States Marshal James Hill was shot and instantly killed at Seldovia by a homesteader, William Brooks, whom he had arrested. The raid was made by Hill and Jailer Cramer and they had

arrested Brooks along with three companions. Cramer started ahead with the other three while Hill stayed with Brooks to empty the mash and gather up the still. When Hill did not show up Cramer returned and found Hill dead on the floor and Brooks, also dead, having turned the gun on himself.

Nov. 8

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Oscar Anderson of Long Lake is in McCarthy for a few days on business.

Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Powell moved to Kennecott on Thursday where Mr. Powell has been employed.

Chick Nelson of Blackburn who has been visiting outside for some time returned to McCarthy on today's train.

## ANOTHER BUSINESS OPENING MCCARTHY

Business shows signs of boom in McCarthy these days. A confectionery and cigar store is to be opened shortly in the old News building. Mr. Graham, the proprietor, is busy now putting in furniture.

Nov. 15

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Miss Helen McDermott of New York arrived at

Kennecott this week to take a position on the nursing staff of the hospital.

Word has been received by Engineer Anderson of the Nizina Bridge construction to suspend operations pending further word. It is expected that operations will be resumed about the first of the year.

## BAD ACCIDENT TO LOCAL MEN

On Tuesday of this week when 'Shorty' Gwin was returning to his place with a heavily loaded sleigh accompanied by Mel Joliffe and Fred Togstead the load tipped over throwing the occupants. Joliffe who was driving, suffered a broken arm and Togstead had his shoulder badly wrenched. Shorty's youth and agility saved him from injury.

## ADDITIONAL ALASKA FISHERY REGULATIONS

Prince William Sound Area

The regulation of October 13, 1924, permitting commercial fishing for herring in the waters of the Prince William Sound Area with gill nets of mesh not smaller than three inches stretched measure from November 1 to November 30, 1924, inclusive, is hereby modified to permit the use of gill nets of mesh not smaller than two and one quarter inches stretched measure in the Prince William Sound Area from November 1 to November 30, 1924.

(Signed) S. B. Davis

Acting Secretary of  
Commerce

Nov. 22

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. O'Neill and family journeyed to Green Butte Wednesday night to partake of Thanksgiving turkey.

Andy Taylor breezed back to town Wednesday with dog team from the Homestead where he had been with a hunting party which was very successful.

Mrs. Erickson has been visiting her mother Mrs. Jas. Dennis at Kennecott and left on a speeder yesterday to make connections with the south bound boat.

John Luckie has begun to cut lumber for the Nizina Bridge.

## EXPEDITION TO MOUNT LOGAN

Word has been received from A. H. McCarthy that he will undertake an expedition to scale Mt. Logan, on the Canadian side about May 1 next year, starting from McCarthy.

About two tons of supplies will be distributed in eight caches along the trail. This will be commenced about the first of March.

Nov. 29

## SCHOOL NOTES

Marion Wills - Reporter  
The First Thanksgiving by  
Bud Seltenreich

The Pilgrims left England because the king was trying to made them worship as he did. They didn't want to worship as the king did. Some of them were caught and put in prison. Some were

punished and sent away.

After a while the Pilgrims got tired of the king's worship. So they went to Holland where they could worship their own way.

The English left Holland because they were learning their language. The English didn't want the young to grow up talking Holland.

When they left England on the Mayflower they had 101. When they came here they had 102, because there was 1 born on the way. And they called it Oceana.

The first summer their crops were not good. All they had was seed for the next summer. The next fall it was not good either. The next year it was so good that they invited all the Indians for Thanksgiving. That was the first Thanksgiving.

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Oscar Anderson went to Kennecott Tuesday of this week to take a position there.

Dec. 6

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

BORN - At Cordova hospital Wednesday, December 10 to Mr. and Mrs. Dr. Gillispie of Kennecott, a daughter.

## COLD SNAP HITS DISTRICT

A severe cold wave descended on McCarthy and district Friday the twelfth and held things in its grip for over forty-eight hours. Varying reports of temperatures have come in ranging from thirty-five to forty five below zero, while we vainly watched our

thermometer for the mercury to reappear out of the bulb.

The usual quota of old timers were on the job telling weird stories of cold spells they had encountered beside which this one was mere Indian Summer. But we noticed that they told their tales from the shelter of a nice large box stove. All available stove space in town is reserved.

Personally we think it was cold and at that we came from a country where a man's breath hangs in icicles from the corners of his mustache.

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

No day of the year is so awaited and expectantly looked forward to as our Christmas Day. To the young it is a time of joy, holidays, presents and many good things to eat. To the older person and business man look upon it as the culminating point of his years labor after when he will have a breathing spell and be able to rest awhile. The year to the civilized world pivots around Christmas more than the first day of January.

December 25th is the day agreed upon by students of biblical works as the birth date of Jesus. It has ever been advocated as a time of peace, of good will and love of man toward mankind. What magic Presence is it that lifts our hearts with good fellowship and makes us forget for the time the strife and struggles of humanity? The giving of presents is the expression in concrete form of this feeling of good will, or at least, such it was in the beginning. With many it has degenerated into mere habit.

May this Christmas bring to all surcease of worry and may each one know the pure joy of doing something unselfishly for another, than which there is no greater joy.

Dec. 20

## OF INTEREST TO TOWN AND DISTRICT

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Boyden returned from Sushanna on Tuesday on the return mail trip to that place. They report a very long and hard trip owing to the severe cold and storms encountered on the glacier and having to break trail nearly the whole distance. Mrs. Boyden mused the entire way which surely brands her as a real sourdough.

## TURKEY SHOOT AT KENNECOTT

A very successful turkey shoot was held at Kennecott on Christmas Day starting at 10 am. and lasting until 3:30 pm.

The successful competitors were - W. C. Douglas, C. E. Osborne, Jno. Letendre, A. K. Wintereek, Geo. Mogan, Wilbur Morris, Mrs. H. L. McNeil, Vic. Schneeberger, S. G. Olson and E. A. Metscher - each winning one turkey.

Victor Johnson picked off noless than seven, while Fred Schranz got three and Walter Egtert two.

The opening rules compelled shooting offhand from a standing position at 100 yards. This was modified later to permit kneeling to aim while the last few were disposed of with pistols at thirty yards. Twenty birds were put up.

Dec. 27

# Glaciers Made of Rock, Ice and Bear Scat

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](mailto:nrozell@gi.alaska.edu).*

The grizzly hadn't seen my dog or me, so I yelled and waved my arms. The bear stood, looked in our direction for three unforgettable seconds, then trotted up the valley. Late for a meeting with scientists, I kept hiking in the direction of the bear. A few minutes later, as I clung to a rock wall where the valley narrowed into a canyon, I had a feeling I was being watched. There, staring at me less than 20 feet away, was a glaciologist.

When I could pry my fingers off the rock, I shook hands with Roger Elconin and Adam Bucki. Elconin is an independent researcher who has studied rock glaciers near McCarthy for years. Bucki, a graduate student at the Geophysical Institute, invited me to join them on a rock glacier. That glacier, named Fireweed, sprawls on the 30-square-mile bulk of Fireweed Mountain near McCarthy. Fireweed rock glacier consists

of three lobes of rock merging to become one long tongue. The tip of that tongue broke off in 1993. Elconin, now of Anchorage but formerly of McCarthy, noticed Fireweed's clipped tongue as he flew his plane over the rock glacier in August, 1993. Soon after he landed, he hiked to the base of the rock glacier and saw a wall, 300 feet across and 80 feet tall. The wall allows a rare view of a rock glacier's innards. A rock glacier is a stream of rocks held together with ice. The glaciers flow down from mountain bowls in colored bands that look like velvet fingers. Rock glaciers are born of rocks that fall from the walls of a cirque—a bowl high in the mountains. When the bowl gets filled up, the mass of rock on top of ice starts to flow.

Rock glaciers move, but they don't gallop. Most rock glaciers in Alaska creep a few inches a year, but Fireweed flows like Karo syrup; it advanced more than 12 feet in one year. Elconin said Fireweed's

movement supports the theory that rock glaciers form independently, after snow glaciers have disappeared. Another theory, now becoming outdated, is that rock glaciers are dying snow glaciers covered with rocks. In Alaska, rock glaciers are found in the Brooks and Alaska ranges and in the Wrangell Mountains. Drivers on the Richardson Highway can see a rock glacier on Rainbow Mountain, highway milepost 207.7. Elconin and Bucki will occasionally return to Fireweed rock glacier to measure its movement and to determine the mixture of rock and ice in the glacier farther up the mountain. They hope to find out more about the mysterious nature of rock glaciers and how the frozen rivers of rock are affected by changes in Alaska's climate. They also hope to stay away from bears, which is why they each carry that indispensable research tool, pepper spray.

## M.A.C. news

BY MARK VAIL

Carly Kritchen chaired her last annual meeting as outgoing president on Friday, October 8. With 20 or more in attendance and a quorum seated, the meeting got off with a reading of the treasurer's report by Kris Rueter. Kris noted that annual dues of \$25 are payable October 1 and run for 1 year

from that date. Reports were given and discussed on the road upgrade, river crossing, fuel and sewer pipelines associated with the foot bridge, and disbursement of grant funding. Following reports and discussions a new slate of officers and Board of Directors were elected. Meg Hunt again was retained as secretary, Kris

Rueter and Dee Frady will share treasurer's duties. Michael Allwright and Ed LaChapelle will share the vice-president's chair and Mark Vail will chair council as president. Other board members are Kelly Bay, Nancy Cook, Michael P. McCarthy, Carly Kritchen and Rick Jurick. Welcome to the new board.

## McCarthy cemetery mapping project completed

BY BETTY HICKLING

Last May the McCarthy Kennicott Museum hosted the Catholic Youth Group from Valdez for a community service field trip. The focus of the project was to brush, locate, record identifiable names and map the grave sites in the cemetery. Ten teenagers and four chaperones worked hard to brush the overgrown cemetery. While doing so they discovered graves that were previous unknown by following the leaf-covered rocks that bordered the graves. A total of 66 grave sites have been located.

The Museum received an added bonus when one of the chaperones turned out to be an engineer for Alyeska and offered to create a professional detailed survey map of the cemetery which we have just received. Our thanks to this group for their hard work and for the useful tool we now have for future work. The

long-term goal of this project is to continue to do restoration work at the cemetery, to research to whom the unidentified grave sites may belong, and identify the historical significance of these early settlers to the McCarthy and Kennicott area.

The Museum wishes to also thank Kennicott-McCarthy Wilderness Guides for donating Mill tours for the kids, McCarthy Lodge for providing housing, and the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church for having Sunday Services for the group.



## Blackburn Center News

BY LAURA BUNNELL

A riot of children launched the fall and winter season at Blackburn Center. Karen Long, the teacher from the Valdez Extension School, supervises many of the local home-schooled kids. She visited families at their homes in late September and held a kid's day at the Center. Kids and parents enjoyed a campfire and cookout as well as numerous enthusiastic rounds of Capture the Flag. Karen did some cabbage juice chemistry experiments with the kids and left a good supply of art materials to use at the Center.

The McCarthy Area Council

(M.A.C.) held its annual meeting at Blackburn Center on October 8th. Fortunately, the meeting wasn't nearly as boisterous as kid's day. Mark Vail created and baked moose turnovers for lunch. Surely, that had nothing to do with his being elected president. Thanks, Mark!

About twelve people sang out at music night last Friday. We shared a potluck dinner before the music started. Orion Brewster stood up and soloed an Irish fiddle tune on his violin. Orion started playing violin last year as part of his fifth grade program.

Soon we will enjoy some improvements to Blackburn Center. The community will use

part of the proceeds from a State Matching Funds Grant that MAC received to purchase items for the Center. A new winter compatible generator will run desperately-needed lights. In the past, slide shows required a borrowed projector, garbage bags tacked over the windows and a sheet used for a screen. Now the Center will have a projector, shades for the windows and a screen. A modest stereo system will give us music. Ed LaChapelle, Rich Jurick and Mike McCarthy worked out the wiring needs for the building and Mike is picking up those materials in Anchorage. Rick brought in weatherizing supplies for the

windows.

It's about time to put up the decorations for our annual Halloween party. The generator, lights and stereo should be in

place by then. Tony Zak demonstrated his tremendous affection for this community when he created the Blackburn Heritage Foundation. His desire

to support the education of the local children and to provide the community with a meeting hall has been well met by our use of Blackburn Center.

## Border crossings into Alaska up 18 percent

KNOWLES PRESS RELEASE

July 1999 was the highest month for crossings at the Canadian Border in Alaska in 11 years, according to border crossings reported by the Alcan and Poker Creek U.S. Custom Stations to the Alaska Division of Tourism.

"Alaska's vast beauty continues to attract people from all over the world," said Gov. Tony Knowles. "And 'Tourism North' continues to be an effective promotional campaign, enticing more and more visitors to come to Alaska by road and ferry each year."

"Tourism North" is the cooperative marketing program funded by Alaska, the Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, the City of Prince Rupert, and the Canadian Tourism Commission. Participants include the Alaska Marine Highway System, BC Ferries, and BC Rail. Through its website at [www.north-to-alaska.com](http://www.north-to-alaska.com),

"Tourism North" has conducted an aggressive public relations and co-promotions campaign.

As the number of visitors in other sectors of the tourism industry remains relatively flat, the number of those coming by highway and ferry continues to increase, said Tourism Director Ginny Fay. July crossings on the Top of the World Highway, the stretch of road running from Dawson City, Yukon Territory, to Chicken before intersecting with the Alaska Highway to the South, were 20 percent higher than in July 1998, which was also a record year. From June through September, the number of tourist crossings surpassed all previous summer records since 1990.

The Division of Tourism/Alaska Public Lands Information Center in Tok also reported a large increase in visitors this summer. "Not only did more people drive to

Alaska, but more stopped to ask for additional information," Fay said. "Hopefully, this means that more communities along the road and ferry system saw the benefits of the increased numbers coming to Alaska."

*North! To Alaska*, the highway vacation planner geared toward those planning to vacation by car or RV in Alaska, Yukon, British Columbia, and Alberta, offers 14 travel itineraries, including suggestions on how to navigate the various highways. It also includes the official summer schedules for the Alaska Marine Highway System and BC Ferries. The publication is available on the Internet at [www.north-to-alaska.com](http://www.north-to-alaska.com) and can be ordered by calling 1-888-880-ROADTRIP. A total of 400,000 copies of *North! To Alaska* will be distributed to potential road travelers beginning in December 1999.

(Cont. from page 18)

Eliason, who went home to be with the Lord on September 29, 1999, in Anchorage, Alaska. Clarence often accompanied the Houghton family on their numerous weekend trips to their McCarthy area cabin. I will always treasure Clarence's tambourine playing during our services, his eagerness to share his faith in the Lord and the many warm talks we had about the faithfulness and goodness of God.

Clarence married Shirley

Agnes Ball in 1945. They moved to Gig Harbor in 1984 and spent several years traveling. They visited the Southwest in the winters and then Alaska in the summers, where Clarence had a summer job in Valdez. Clarence and Shirley shared 51 years together before Shirley preceded him in death in 1996.

Clarence accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior in 1954. His tender heart and Christian example will influence his descendants for generations to

come. He is survived by his children: Kay Houghton of Valdez, AK; David Eliason of Kirkland, WA; Janet Strutz of Anchorage, AK; Arden Eliason of Show Low, AZ; and Heidi Eliason of Ketchum, ID, as well as fourteen grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Clarence was born in Poulsbo, Wa. on June 6, 1922, as the youngest child of E. J. and Regina Louise Sulheim Eliason, and grandson of Jorgen Eliason, Poulsbo's founder.



# National Park Service News

Note: the following stories were taken from the NPS Newsletter The Wrangell Wire, Fall/Winter 1999.

## ***Kennecott River Campground***

This project, funded as part of the NPS Fee Demonstration Program, will provide a quality NPS campground for visitors arriving at the end of the McCarthy Road.

Facilities will include sites that will accommodate vehicles and RVs and sites that will be designed for walk-in visitors with tents. Utilities may include a well, central water system for drinking water, vault toilets and waste disposal facilities. Other campground amenities may include central food storage and cooking shelters to minimize conflicts with bears.

The current, primitive, NPS campground at the end of the McCarthy Road can be problematic due to bear activity. The intention is not to compete with private businesses at the end of the road; on the contrary, the campground is intended to supplement the existing facilities as visitation to the McCarthy / Kennecott area continues to increase. A planning team was in the area in mid-September to visit various locations where the campground could be located. Six different locations were explored and the team discussed if sites for hikers and bikers might be located across the Kennicott river. The team will be contacting interested community members to solicit ideas about possible locations and what sorts of facilities a campground should provide.

## ***Superintendent Notes***

As many of you may know, Jon Jarvis, Superintendent of WRST, accepted a new position as Superintendent of Mount Rainier National Park in Washington. Upon Jon's departure, Chief Ranger Hunter Sharp was promoted to Acting Superintendent and Park Planner Vicki Snitzler was promoted to Acting Assistant Superintendent. Early in September, Regional Director Barbee notified the park that a new superintendent had been selected and would be moving to Alaska some time in November. We are happy to introduce the new Superintendent, Gary Candelaria.

Gary is a 24-year NPS career employee. Born in Los Angeles, CA, he escaped at an early age to attend Oregon State University where he earned a B.S. in Forestry. He later earned a Masters Degree in museum studies at the University of Oklahoma. His NPS career includes service at Saratoga National Historical Park, NY, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, MO, and 11 years as Chief Ranger at Sitka National Historical Park. He left Alaska in 1990 to become Superintendent at Fort Laramie National Historic Site, WY. He served as Aide-de-Camp to then NPS Director Roger Kennedy, and as Acting Assistant Superintendent at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. Most recently he was superintendent at Pinnacles National Monument, CA.

Candelaria is an avid reader and book collector, as well as an aspiring bookbinder and amateur historian.

## ***Airstrip Program***

Being able to access the park/ preserve by small plane is an important and somewhat unique opportunity. One of the common misconceptions about this park is that landing areas are restricted. That is true for helicopters, but not airplanes (except to access subsistence hunting). It is legal to land a fixed wing airplane anywhere on public land inside the park/ preserve boundary.

However, landing site locations, combined with limitations of skill and ability of pilot and plane, restrict where landings are possible.

There is a difference between an "airport" and an "airstrip." To develop an airport, a formal and public process of design and approval is required by the Federal Aviation Administration. The Chisana airport is an example where the State of Alaska, FAA, and the public are working together to develop a master plan. On the other hand, airstrips were developed by people who had a need to access their mine or camp. Airstrips have no formal design requirements and are commonly located on a gravel bar that has been smoothed and cleared. Some of the mining access airstrips were developed with heavy equipment, but there was still no design standard other than

what was in the mind of the developer. Airstrips range from "super-cub short" to "DC-3 long." Width varies too, from two ruts in the pucker-brush to a 150' clearing.

Airstrips in the park are dynamic with respect to seasonal change, such as growing vegetation, ground squirrel holes, seasonal ruts, and frost-jacked rocks that pop out of the ground each year. Some airstrips, like Orange Hill on the upper Nabesna River, are being eaten away by a moving river channel. Bernard airstrip on the upper Chitina River was wiped-out by a glacial stream last year.

Many parks have a trail program; we also have a small airstrip maintenance program. The NPS is interested in these airstrips because you land on them and so do we. While it is not our intention to control the vagaries of a river channel, we do take 4 - 6 airstrips each year and brush back encroaching vegetation, fill in the holes, kick off the rocks and fill in the swales. Typically, airstrip repairs are performed using hand tools. 2-3 workers are dropped off at an airstrip for a few days with a shovel, wheelbarrow, and brushing equipment. After completing

one strip, they are picked up and relocated to another strip. Our objective is to maintain the strip to the level of the original development, not to expand it by lengthening, widening, or clearing approach or departure obstacles. It is hard work moving significant amounts of material to fill in a swale by hand. While results are not necessarily noticeable to the observer, an aircraft touching down certainly is aware of the improvements.

Other than to say it is legal, we will not tell you that you can land your airplane on any of these airstrips. It is the pilot who has responsibility for the safety of all flight operations. The pilot has to evaluate the condition of the strip, understand the performance of the aircraft, and be honest about his/her skill prior to making the decision to use an airstrip. While we do what we can to reduce risks due to seasonal changes, we do not get to each strip every year. Even the ones we do work on can be in serious need of additional work that cannot be performed with hand tools.

Maintaining these airstrips is an ongoing effort. A cyclic maintenance program, that we

compete for with all of the other Alaska parks each year, provides funding. The financial reality is that the amount of effort we put into airstrip maintenance is about all that we can afford. While we have been successful each year since 1990 in obtaining funds, it is possible that this money will dry up. Because of this uncertainty, we have kept this program low-key to avoid creating expectations we may not be able meet. The alternative to doing cyclic airstrip maintenance is to do nothing, which will result in the eventual loss of each one. Or, with a permit from the park, an interested user or group could do maintenance at their expense provided they had an acceptable plan.

There is private land inside the park/preserve boundary and there are several private airstrips. You should get the owner's permission to use any private airstrip. Unfortunately, the view from the air does not delineate public from private. Contact the park visitor center or any park ranger for clarification.

We recognize that aviation activities are an important part of public access in this park.

## ***Kennecott EA GMP Amendment and Cultural Landscape Report***

An operations planning effort was initiated, when the NPS acquired the Kennecott National Historic Landmark in June of 1998. The operations plan will outline how the site will be managed for the next five years. The various alternatives for operating the site were prepared by the NPS with substantial assistance

from community members and local non-profit groups. The preferred alternative calls for the company store to be rehabilitated for a visitor contact station and NPS offices. Other important structures such as the mill building, machine shop and power house would be stabilized so that further deterioration would not occur.

These buildings may then be available for public access and interpretive exhibits. The NPS will be working with interested parties, such as Friends of Kennecott, to develop interpretive programs and other activities for public use.

Additionally, there are many activities that have been identified as common to all

alternatives. Some of them include mitigation of lead paint on the buildings, establishing natural resource monitoring programs, developing partnerships between the park and interested community groups, securing certain areas for safety reasons, and while this plan is being developed, providing space for interpretive programs

### ***Subsistence News***

Recently, WRST developed two products that we hope will simplify some of the complex subsistence issues in the park. A new subsistence brochure features a large color map with the game management units and the park and preserve boundaries, as well as explanations of who is eligible to participate in subsistence activities in the park and what type of activities are permitted. Box holders in the resident zone communities received the brochure by mail.

For the second year, the

and community functions at the Jurick building.

Originally, this draft plan and environmental assessment was supposed to be available for review and comment by this summer. However, due to problems with editing it will not be ready until later this fall. If any interested citizens have a

villages of Northway and Tanacross received hunt maps from the park indicating where subsistence hunting opportunities exist for sheep, moose and caribou. These maps will help the residents of these communities to make better informed decisions on areas they are eligible to hunt in the park and preserve. In addition, the residents of McCarthy and the eight Ahtna villages also received these maps for their communities.

A final subsistence plan for the park is available from Park Subsistence Specialist Heather Yates. The plan is intended to

winter address where they would like a copy of the document sent, please contact Vicki Snitzler at 822-5238 or [vicki\\_snitzler@nps.gov](mailto:vicki_snitzler@nps.gov). Due to the delay we will plan to have a 90 day comment period to allow plenty of time for folks to share their thoughts with each other and us.

provide clarity in the management of subsistence uses by addressing major topics related to subsistence, such as timber cutting, shelters and cabins, trapping, resident zones, traditional use areas, access, hunting, user data, and resolution of user conflicts, and possible closures. The plan will continue to be modified as new subsistence plan recommendations are developed. All local residents are encouraged to attend the Park Subsistence Resource Commission meetings held twice per year in one of the resident zone communities.

## **Wade named to head Intermountain Region**

NPS NEWS RELEASE OCTOBER 5, 1999

National Park Service (NPS) Director Robert Stanton today announced that Karen Wade, currently superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park (TN, NC) and one of the agency's most experienced executives, has been selected to become the next Regional Director of the Intermountain Region, headquartered in Denver, Colorado.

As Intermountain Regional Director, Wade will oversee 86 diverse park units dispersed throughout an eight-state region

that includes Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming. The region is home to some of the Nation's oldest and best-known natural national parks including Yellowstone and Grand Canyon, and cultural treasures such as Mesa Verde National Park.

"Karen Wade was our choice for this important position because of her dynamic leadership abilities, especially in natural resources management," said Stanton, who recently unveiled the Natural Resources Challenge, a plan for revitalizing

natural resource programs in national parks.

"Throughout her career, Karen Wade has been a strong, energetic leader, and has demonstrated innovation and wisdom in handling many challenges," said Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. "She also has shown courage in standing by tough decisions to protect parks under her care while building strong community support for conservation goals. We are very fortunate to have such a capable manager to fill this very challenging position." Wade, a 26-year NPS careerist

and Colorado native, has served as the superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park since July 1994.

Under her direction, the park entered into a long-term partnership with hundreds of scientists to survey every living organism (more than 100,000 species) to develop a natural

resource plan for protection. The effort earned her the Service's prestigious Superintendent of the Year Award in 1998.

Wade previously served as superintendent of America's largest national park, the 13-million acre Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

(AK). She has held other superintendent and park management posts at Guadalupe Mountains National Park (TX), Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine (MD), Hampton National Historic Site (MD), Shenandoah National Park (VA), and the Appalachian Trail Project Office (DC).

## Gravel sites explored

The ADOT&PF (Northern Region, Materials Section) conducted exploratory drilling and sampling at nine existing and potential material source sites along the McCarthy Road. The goal of this work is to identify sources for quality sand, gravel, and rock materials for future road reconstruction as well as for long-term maintenance needs.

The need for establishing potential material sources along the 58-mile road is acute. The establishment of the Wrangell-St Elias National Park & Preserve and the selection of lands by native organizations effectively reduced the

availability of material sources. The current practice of mining much of the amount required for continual upkeep from within the right-of-way has had negative results, such as the use of inferior materials for road repair and surfacing or excessive visual impacts immediately adjacent to the road.

Fall 1999 (September-October) exploration sites included existing (previously permitted) and undeveloped sites near the Kotsina, Kuskulana, Chokosna, Lakina, and Kennicott Rivers; Strelina and Tractor Creeks; and Long Lake.

Preliminary results from

the exploratory drilling program indicate that suitable materials are present at the sites selected for potential extraction. ADOT will work with landowners (including State of Alaska, Ahtna Inc, other private owners, and potentially the NPS) to develop material sites in the most cost effective and environmentally sound way possible.

Additional work completed in the Fall of 1999 was an aerial photographic survey of the entire McCarthy Road route. Current topographic maps will be generated from the photographic data for use in future design work.

## Murkowski-Young say buyout proposal disappointing

Saying they were disappointed by National Park Service actions, Alaska Sen. Frank Murkowski and Congressman Don Young Oct. 1 urged the Park Service to follow the Alaska lands act and grant a permit for an access road to a proposed lodge on inholdings in Denali National Park.

Murkowski, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Congressman Young, chairman

of the House Committee on Resources, said they were concerned that Park Service officials this summer came to Washington and attempted to secure funding to buy out the 20-acre parcel, while delaying issuance of a road permit to land owners Jeff Barney and Gene Desjarlais.

"It is highly disingenuous for the Park Service to require Mr. Barney to pay upwards of \$100,000 to complete an unrequired Environmental

Impact Statement (EIS) to gain his road permit, while at the same time seeking to undermine the EIS, not to mention circumventing the authorizing committees, by requesting appropriations for a purchase," said the lawmakers in a Sept. 30 letter.

"When the state's vast conservation system units were established, over 10 million acres of Native, private and state lands were included within the boundaries. These

landowners were given the right to access their lands to pursue both traditional activities and economic developments. It was not intended that the federal agencies could wear people down by charging excessive fees for this access or by delaying these grants indefinitely," wrote Murkowski and Young in a letter to Bob Barbee, regional director for the National Park Service in Alaska.

Murkowski and Young were responding to delays by the Park Service in granting of the access road permit for the proposed lodge in the Kantishna area.

The members added the Park Service in talks with appropriators in Washington implied that the land's owners

were "willing" sellers.

"In fact, the inholders are more accurately portrayed as 'worn' sellers. The cumbersome and expensive EIS process has worn them out, mentally and financially over the past three years. . . We don't see how Mr. Barney can be viewed as a 'willing' seller unless he has the option of freely choosing between selling on the one hand, and operating his lodge with full, economic and adequate access on the other," they wrote.

The members also were reacting to the draft EIS where the Park Service has included an option that would permit only air access to the lodge, rather than road access.

Murkowski said requiring air access would be inconsistent, since it would be uneconomic and thus a violation of section 1110(b) of ANILCA that requires economic access to inholdings.

"What is most puzzling is why the Park Service has an insatiable appetite for Mr. Barney's 20-acre parcel when it already owns over 50 million acres in Alaska most of which it doesn't even try to get visitors in to see. The Park Service should be applauding this entrepreneur who wants visitors to enjoy the Park," said Young.

The two men added, "This issue has dragged on for too long and it is time to resolve it," they wrote to Barbee.

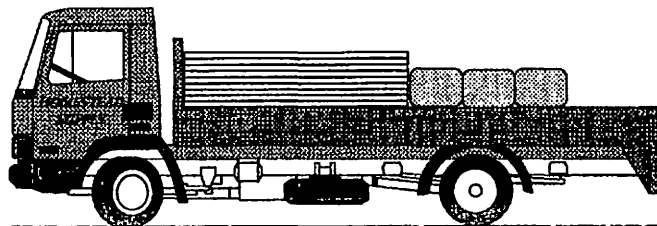
*"You only have power over people so long as you don't take everything away from them. But when you've robbed a man of everything, he's no longer in your power—he's free again."—Alexander Solzhenitsyn*

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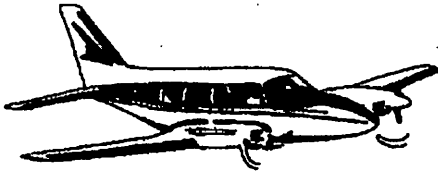
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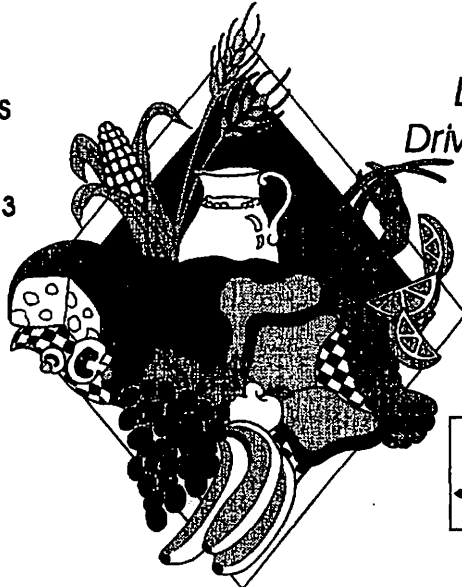
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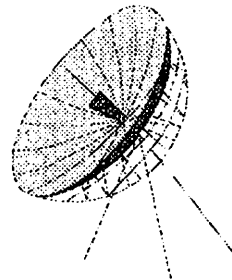
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# Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

I've got Christmas fever early this year. My husband brought up a whole box of Christmas recipe clippings that were stored in our house in Cordova. There are a lot of old favorites that I'd like to share with you, so I'm going to get right to the recipes!

*If you don't have a star-shape cookie cutter, you can make these any Christmas shape you prefer! (And they even taste good round!) I make a chunky cranberry chutney with nuts and raisins that is especially good in these cookies.*

## Jelly Stars

1 ½ cups flour  
½ teaspoon baking powder  
½ cup butter, softened  
½ cup confectioners' sugar  
1 egg  
¼ cup granulated sugar  
½ cup raspberry jelly (or preserve of your choice)

Mix flour and baking powder in a small bowl. In a large bowl, beat butter and confectioners' sugar with electric mixer until fluffy. Beat in egg; gradually stir in flour mixture until well blended. Wrap dough in wax paper and chill 30 minutes or until firm enough to roll out. On lightly-floured board or pastry board, roll half the dough ¼ inch thick. Cut out stars and place ½ inch apart on greased cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining chilled dough. Brush half the cookies with egg white and sprinkle with granulated sugar. Bake in preheated 375 degree oven about 10 minutes or until golden (do not over bake!). Remove to rack to cool. Spread bottom of each unsugared cookie with about ½ teaspoon

jelly; top with a sugared cookie. Makes about 36.

*These cookies are definitely the melt-in-your-mouth variety! Unfortunately, they don't travel very well, so make these for your family to eat at home, and not for a trip to a cookie party.*

## Viennese Crescents

Prepare about 2 hours before serving.

confectioners' sugar  
1 cup flour  
½ cup butter, softened  
½ cup blanched slivered almonds, ground  
1 teaspoon almond extract  
¼ teaspoon salt

Grease large cookie sheet. In a large bowl, mix by hand ¼ cup confectioners' sugar with the rest of the ingredients. Do not over-mix! Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Shape 1 teaspoon cookie dough at a time into a 1 ½ inch crescent. Place on cookie sheet, about 1 inch apart. Bake 20 minutes or until lightly golden. Remove cookies to a wire rack and cool completely. Just before serving, dust lightly with confectioners' sugar. Makes about 3 dozen.

*I love cookies that aren't too sweet, and this recipe is one of my favorites. It's also a good dough for a springerle roller or cookie press.*

## English Shortbread

Prepare about 2 hours before serving.

4 cups flour  
2 cups butter, softened  
1 ¼ cups confectioners' sugar  
1 teaspoon double-acting baking powder  
¼ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Measure all ingredients into a large bowl. With pastry cutter, cut ingredients until well blended. The dough will be very soft. Pat dough evenly into two 8 inch square pans. With fork, prick dough in many places. If you are using a cookie press, score the dough lightly into 12 squares and press top of each square with press. Bake shortbread about 45 minutes or until golden. Cool, remove from pans, and finish scoring the pieces completely. Makes about 2 dozen.

*I'm not very fond of candied fruit, so I was happy to find this recipe that uses regular mixed dried fruit. You can also substitute your favorite dried fruit for the whole 6 ounces. (I especially like dried cranberries!)*

## Fruit And Nut Roll

Prepare about 8 hours or one night before serving.

1 ½ cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon nutmeg  
1 cup butter, softened  
2/3 cup packed brown sugar  
6 ounces diced mixed dried fruit  
½ cup chopped walnuts

Mix flour, baking powder and nutmeg. In a large bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually beat in sugar until pale and fluffy. Add flour mixture and fruits; beat until well blended. Divide dough in half. On wax paper, shape each half into a roll 2 inches in diameter. Roll in the nuts. Wrap and chill overnight, or for at least 8 hours. Cut into ¼ inch slices. Place ½ inch apart on greased cookie sheet. Bake in a 350 degree oven 8 to 10 minutes or until golden brown. Makes about 60.

# A LOOK AT THE WEATHER

BY GEORGE CEBULA

August 1999 will be remembered for its warm and dry days. There were 5 days when the high temperature reached 80 or above and none when it only made it into the 50's.

The high temperature for the month and for the summer was 85 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (74 on Aug. 4, '98 and 75 on Aug. 4, '97).

The first freeze was on the 21<sup>st</sup> as the temperature fell to 30. This was only for a short time, and most of the garden plants were spared. The temperature fell to 28 on the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and a lot of the plants were killed. There were 5 days when the low was 32 or below and the low temperature for the month was 26 on the 24<sup>th</sup> (25 on Aug. 25, '98 and 29 on Aug. 20, '97). The average monthly temperature at McCarthy was 53.8 compared to 49.8 in Aug. '98, 53.3 in Aug. '97 and 50.5 in Aug. '96. *Silver Lake had a high temperature of 82 on 2nd and 3rd (79 on Aug. 1, '98 and 80 on Aug. 5, '97). The low temperature at Silver Lake was 30 on the 29th and 30th (28 on Aug. 19, '98 and 33 on Aug. 29, '97). The Silver Lake average*

*temperature was 54.9 (50.5 in Aug. '98, 55.7 in Aug. '97 and 51.9 in Aug. '96).*

The August precipitation at McCarthy was 1.47 inches compared with 2.84 inches in Aug. '98 and 4.02 inches in Aug. '97. There were 11 days with a trace or more of rainfall recorded, compared to 20 days in Aug. '98. *The precipitation at Silver Lake was a little lighter with 1.27 inches recorded (3.30 in Aug. '98 and 2.74 in Aug. '97). There were 12 days at Silver Lake with a trace or more recorded.*

September 1999 was another average September in temperature, but above average in precipitation. The high temperature at McCarthy was 65 on the 10<sup>th</sup> (64 on Sept. 17, '98 and 70 on Sept. 4, '97). The low temperature was 23 on the 5<sup>th</sup> (17 on Sept. 29, '98 and 12 on Sept. 30, '97). There were 10 days with the high 60 or above and only 4 days with the low in the 20's. The average monthly temperature at McCarthy was 44.5 (43.7 in Sept. '98 and 44.1 in Sept. '97). This was more than 11 degrees warmer than the record 34.3 of

September 1992. *Silver Lake had a high of 64 on the 1st (61 on Sept. 11, '98 and 69 on Sept. 12, '97) and a low of 24 on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> (20 on Sept. 28, '98 and 18 on Sept. 30, '97). The Silver Lake average temperature was 44.5 (43.8 in Sept. '98 and 45.8 in Sept. '97).*

There was an inch of snow recorded at McCarthy on September 30<sup>th</sup> and the total precipitation was 2.77 inches. This compares with the 1.79 inches in Sept. '98 and 1.83 inches in Sept. '97. There were 17 days with measurable rainfall. *Silver Lake had no snow and total precipitation of 1.80 inches (1.14 inches in Sept. '98 and 1.07 inches in Sept. '97). Silver Lake had 13 days with a trace or more of rainfall.*

The first 16 days of October have been a continuation of the cool and wet days of late September. The first snowfall was on the 13<sup>th</sup> with 3 inches. Another 4.5 inches arrived the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, with a total snow cover of 8 inches. The lowest temperature has been 13 on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Winter should arrive any day now.

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**"A strong body makes the mind strong. As to the species of exercises, I advise the gun. While this gives moderate exercise to the body, it gives boldness, enterprise and independence to the mind. Games played with the ball, and others of that nature, are too violent for the body and stamp no character on the mind. Let your gun therefore be your constant companion of your walks." —Thomas Jefferson**

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# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Alaska voters were recently asked whether they would like the legislature to use their permanent fund dividend money to help run the government. Voters answered with a resounding NO. Most citizens said they preferred the government find ways to get along with less revenue.

I heard just this morning that the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) is studying the feasibility of privatizing road maintenance. All sorts of services that have been provided by state government will be looked at to see if the private sector could do the job better, cheaper. The local Chamber of Commerce is considering purchasing its own grader to do winter maintenance on the McCarthy road.

Flying in the face of this trend is a local movement to ask the state to take over a service that is now being provided by the private sector. M.A.C. is circulating a sheet with 7 "Big Ideas," and several "small" ones. Big Idea number one is that "D.O.T. should acquire the land to make a free, unpaved parking lot for about 200+ cars." The other ideas are offshoots of this one—dealing with where the parking lot should be, what amenities it should provide, etc.

I propose Big Question number One: How would you like for the state to pay for "acquiring" the land to provide this "free parking?" Excuse me, but the theme now is *privatization*, not *socialization*.

Aside from that basic philosophical reason to oppose a DOT owned and operated park-

ing lot, there is a more practical reason also. We all have had an opportunity to compare the free parking provided by DOT/PF (in the right-of-way, several hundred feet west of the bridge) with the pay parking at the end of the road. The free parking area has a



"FREE PARKING"

camper shell that has been there for at least ten years, old vans and pickup trucks that have not run for nearly that long, a road grader, school bus, various parts and pieces of water tanks and other indecipherable equipment. DOT/PF does not have the wherewithal to provide attendants or to police the area. Signs do little good, as evidenced by the number of locally-owned cars and trucks that regularly park in the "no parking" zone at the bridge loading area.

If the current pay-parking situation is a monster, it is a monster of our own making. The thing that created the present parking lot was the refusal of a vehicular bridge across the Kennicott River. Since all of the land at the end of the road was privately owned, save for a hundred foot right-of-way, the only options to a pay parking lot were illegal trespass, or no parking at all.

We already have three free

parking lots. One is the DOT right-of-way at the end of the road that we have been discussing. Another is a privately owned campground where the owners offer free parking. The third is the NPS campground & parking lot. Granted, folks parking here need to walk several hundred yards to get to the bridge, but hey, this is the "walking town"—tourists are not allowed to bring their cars.

If we are not pleased with the present parking situation, I believe we should reconsider the concept of a vehicular type of bridge across the Kennicott. Local business's have proved both that it is needed, and that it can be done. If there is to be a free parking lot, it should be on the east side of the Kennicott River, west side of Clear Creek. There is a strip of land there that already belongs to the NPS. A simple gate at Clear Creek could limit access to "authorized vehicles." Some have said this is not possible. I challenge you to visit parks across the country. It's done all the time. As the east branch of the Kennicott River is nearly dry now, only the west branch bridge would need its bridge enlarged. (A larger culvert in the east branch would allow for those few high-water days when hidden lake goes out.)

And, since NPS already has a number of people on staff in the area, they would be in a much better position than the state to ensure the parking lot did not turn into a junkyard.

Let's use the state's limited budget to provide things the private sector cannot provide, not to compete with business's that are already struggling to survive.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

September 12, 1999

Dear Rick,

My latest issue of *Wrangell St. Elias News* just arrived and it reminded me of how incredibly negligent I've been in writing you. You can't imagine how pleased I was to open my first issue (July & August 1999) and find the reprint of Dad's poem, "The Glacierback Ride of Mt. Magee," covering two pages of the News.

Although Dad wrote volumes of poetry throughout his lifetime, most was for self fulfillment and the enjoyment of friends and family. He would have been extremely pleased to know that he had been published, especially within the periodical that serves this beautiful region of Alaska, which was so special to him. For Dad, and for me and my family, I thank you.

My own trip (my first—can you believe it? I'm almost 50 years old!) to Kennecott with my son, Bryan, was everything I had hoped for and more. We spent the afternoon exploring the town and were able to identify many of Dad's old haunts through his aging photographs, including his cozy little house (in considerable need of repair!) at the end of Silk Stocking Row. His friendly "neighbors," Mike McCarthy and family, supplied us with great historical tidbits and goings-on in present day Kennecott.

While having lunch at the lodge, we were excited to find a 1932 letter to my grandfather, Clyde W. Lloyd, posted on the wall with other memorabilia. To say we could "feel their presence" is an understatement. We walked where they walked, and have the pictures to prove it! The only disappointment of our trip was that our time in Kennecott was just too short. There is no question, however, that we will return.

Thanks again for running the poem. I wonder if you might have additional copies of the issue that I could purchase for friends and family? Please let me know (E-mail or regular). And keep those great issues of WSEN coming! They provide me a continuing "connection" to this wonderfully special place, and to Dad.

Sincerely,

Stephen R. Lloyd

September 28, 1999

Grapevine, Texas

Wrangell St. Elias News

Dear Editor,

I wanted to write and thank all the local folks who helped me and my friend B.W. unload my shipment of logs and lumber off the truck and onto the "J" road where my cabin site is located. As usual, Kenny Smith was a tremendous help with his Case FrontEnd Loader; Matt Hambrick was there 'til the end, along with Jurgen

Ogrodnik. And how could we forget the truck driver who pitched in, even though he had to labor under the handicap of not having his false teeth with him. Jurgen stayed and worked for the long two weeks it took to get the cabin constructed and dried in. Trig, my helpful Italian neighbor, always showed up when the heaviest logs had to be lifted. Also, Jeremy Cohen and Kristen Richards both helped during the final days of work. All in All, we could not have gotten as far as we did without all the help. We had so much friendly help, we thought we were back in Texas.

Thanks again,

Craig and Ann Neill

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WSEN

October 18, 1999

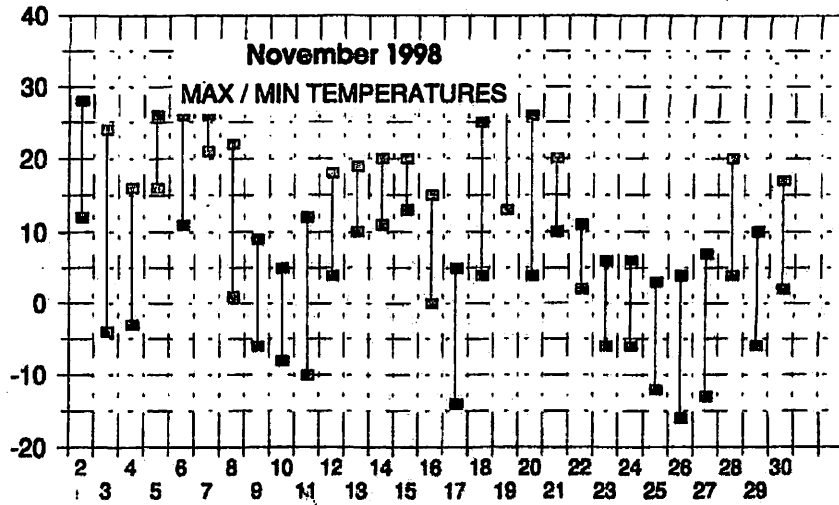
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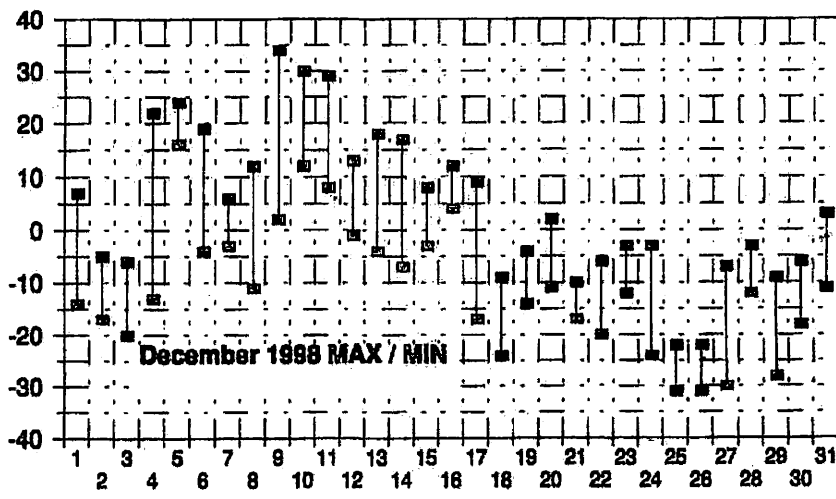
We can make a difference.  
Sincerely,

Paul A. L. Nelson

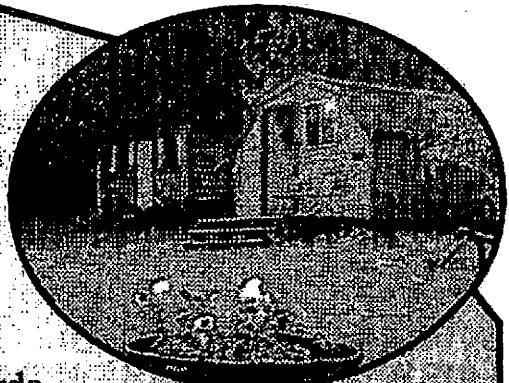
*Weather - What can we expect?*



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