

# Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Five Issue Four

JULY & AUGUST 1996

Two Dollars

## The Copper EMPIRE



## KENNECOTT

"Carving an empire in the Alaska mountain wilderness"

Page 10



*Trees of  
Alaska*

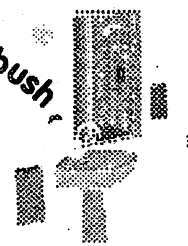
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*Swift Creek visits Europe*

Page 23

*A simple bush*



*Water system*

# A Note from the Publisher

BY RICK KENYON

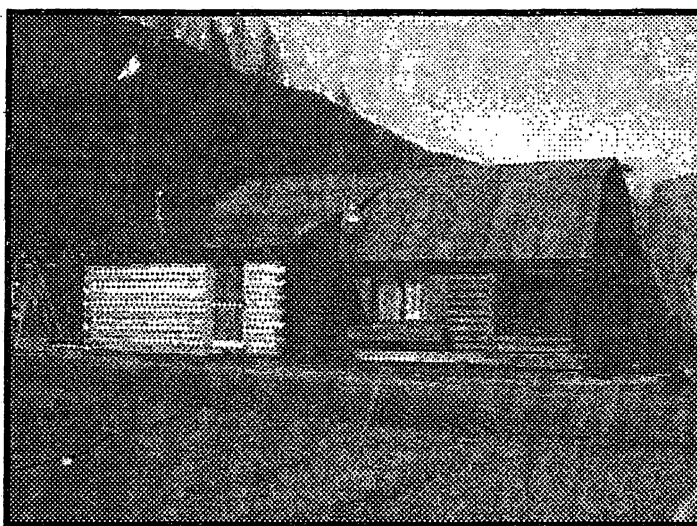
This issue marks the beginning of the fifth year of continuous publication of the Wrangell St. Elias News. New readers might enjoy a brief history and look at how WSEN is published.

Our first issue (July & August 1992) was done using a "laptop" computer with two floppy drives, and no hard disc at all. We used page layout software that cost us a whopping \$15! We ran the entire issue on a laser printer, (which we still have and use as a backup and for proofs) on letter size paper, with a single staple at the top. I remember telling my father that we had gotten our first subscriber on July 4, 1992. "Be sure to keep the money in escrow in case you don't publish a whole year of the magazine," was his sage advice.

It took only that one issue for us to realize that our laser printer would not last long if we kept printing the entire issue on it. The next few issues we had printed in Anchorage. The papers were costing us more to produce than we sold them for, in addition we were putting \$0.75 postage on them. We either had to dip into that escrow account and return our (few) subscribers' money, or plunge into the printing business.

We shopped around and found a Toshiba copy machine

that would handle the 11x17 paper that we use, and would print 14 copies per minute. We had to turn each page over to print the second side, since it did not have a duplexer. Pictures required using a "copy screen," as the copier did not have photo mode either. Each issue had to be hand collated (each page



WSEN staff photo

gathered into the proper order), hand stapled and then hand folded. Although our subscriber list had increased to around 200, it was still manageable. Bonnie and I remember less than fondly the sore wrists we had after each issue from hitting the stapler hard enough to penetrate 20 or so pages. At this point WSEN was published completely "in house" — literally! There was hardly an area of our log cabin that did not have some piece of equipment in it.

The next year we were able to replace the laptop computer with a desktop unit. It even ran "Windows," which made page layout a little easier. Probably the most difficult thing at this point was publishing a news magazine without the benefit of

a telephone, especially in a place where mail only comes twice a week!

By January of 1994 we were printing 500 or so copies each issue. Each spring we were also printing about 5,000 copies of *A Visitor's Guide to Kennicott and McCarthy*. The poor Toshiba had run considerably more than a hundred thousand copies and was showing its age. So were our wrists from hitting that stapler!

Fortunately for us, technology seems to be keeping pace with our increasing subscriber list. While in Florida visiting family, we learned about "copy printers," the modern equivalent of the old mimeograph machine. Although it stretched our budget severely, we purchased a brand-new model that would handle our size of paper and would process 100 copies per minute. Best of all, it requires less power and much less maintenance than the copier. (As of today it has run 639,371 copies with nothing more than regular cleaning.)

On that same trip to Florida, we found a folding machine that a print shop had replaced with a more modern unit. We also found an electric stapler, so now our wrists are healing up.

Last summer our big project was to build an addition onto the log cabin, a real "office" for Wrangell St. Elias News. Now most of the publishing equip-

# Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

**Mike McCarthy and Laura Bunnell:** I am smitten! One look at Mike and Laura's most recent family addition and you would feel the same. The subject of my "oohs and ahs" is a 9 week old female Black Labrador Retriever named Selkie Girl who just recently moved into #13 Silk Stocking Row. Hopefully Selkie Girl acquired a taste for flying during her flight from Wisconsin to Alaska. She'll probably get a much better seat in Mike's Cessna 180 than she had in the Northwest Airlines jet, too! Mike informed me his mother, Sally Munson, of Shamrock Acres in Waunakee, WI is well known for her quality breeding of Black Labs. After seeing (and petting) Selkie Girl, I can see why!

**Marci Thurston-Shaine:**

A bird passing through told me that Marci deserves a

round of applause for all the labor of love she is putting into her gardening this season. Her new green bean bed is going to be a success, I hear from the same bird, and her "indoor" garden is already producing an abundant crop of cucumbers! Congratulations, Marci!

bye is never easy to do—especially to friends and neighbors. However, this is what our town gathered to do on May 30.

Tailor Made Pizza made itself available to a final pizza party to the departing Sperry family who left our area the following day.

The Sperrys first arrived in the McCarthy area October 1, 1993, and made their home at Swift Creek.

They plan on taking a long, extended trip visiting numerous brothers and sisters throughout Alaska and the lower states before settling down once again.

The entire Kennicott and McCarthy community wishes this special family a safe and enjoyable traveling adventure!

## Celebration in Kennicott

On May 19 Silk Stocking Row's #13 rang with congratulations, music and just plain fun for Mike McCarthy and Laura Bunnell. The town dusted off their fancy clothes for the special occasion. Stereo music and "a bit of dancing" livened up the group and a variety of food made up what Mike says was a "wonderful potluck" and a wedding reception for the newly married couple.

The town's first King Salmon of the year was flown in by Kenny Kritchen and was barbecued. Surprise dishes appeared on the table to the delight of all the guests! Mark Vail outdid himself with a rabbit pie; Dan Myers brought his specialty—lemon meringue pie. The poppy seed cake was delicious and prepared by Marci Thurston-Shaine.

On May 1 Mike and Laura were married in their home at a small, private ceremony. Kenny Kritchen, officiated as "temporary marriage commissioner for the day," says Mike. Witnesses were Carly Kritchen and Howard Mozen. Laura's two boys, Luke and Nick Nebesky and Mike's son, McKenzie, were in attendance as well.

Congratulations, Mike and Laura! We all wish you a prosperous future—together!

**Patrick, Phyllis, Rebecca and Sarah Sperry:** Saying good-

**Doayne and Kay Houghton and girls:** The Houghton family

ment has its own place in the new area. We still utilize the kitchen table for collating the pages of an issue, but nearly everything else can be done in the office area.

Since this is an anniversary issue, we thought it would be a

good time for a minor "face lift" on our cover. We hope that you like it. Also new this issue are several small design changes that you may miss unless you look for them.

Thanks so much to all our loyal readers (and loyal

advertisers) for your encouragement over the past four years. We appreciate you. Whenever we hear one of you tell us "I read WSEN from cover to cover as soon as it arrives," it makes the effort that goes into each issue worthwhile.

of Valdez are always a welcome sight when they visit their McCarthy area "home away from home."

We were delighted to have them as neighbors the entire first week in June. What may have been meant as a "vacation" certainly didn't turn out to include much relaxation, however. They brought in a

from around their cabin and creating excellent wood chip paths for their newly planted garden. We were fortunate to acquire a couple bags of Houghton chips for our garden walkway!

The Houghtons have taken in a new family member. His name is Sullivan. Sully, for short, is a real bundle of enthusiasm and has turned this household of 5 young

from a 9 day climb on Mt. Bona. What people do for a living and call it FUN amazes me! According to Richard, he and his client spent 7 out of the 9 days in a tent surrounded by howling winds, snow and avalanche dangers.

Not all was loss, says Richard. The two mountain climbers made use of the time



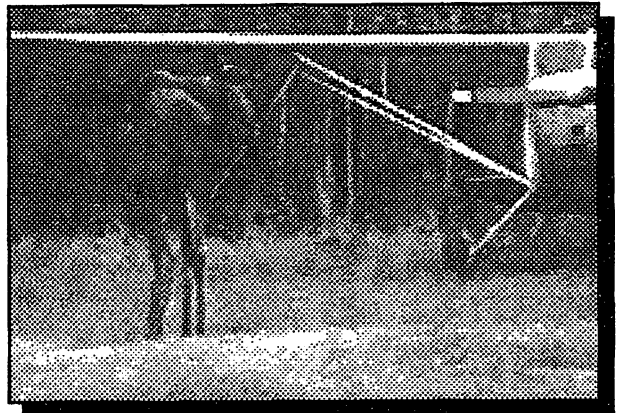
Public phone near vault toilets on the west side of the Kennicott River.

new piece of equipment to add to their growing homestead—a chipper/shredder.

The whole family got into the project of clearing brush

up!) This special Golden Retriever puppy will certainly never lack for plenty of love and attention.

Richard Villa: Richard, manager and guide for St. Elias Alpine Guides, just recently returned



"I heard the flightseeing is excellent!" This curious moose checks out our airplane after being run out of our garden.

ladies and 2 adults upside down. (Actually, I should say right side

by catching up on their sleep and reading.

Although the men's good climbing days were limited, the 12,500 ft. level was reached and they came back rested as well. Congratulations, Richard, and remind me to ask you what you do JUST FOR FUN!

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# McCarthy Road Driving Hazards

BY ED LACHAPPELLE

The McCarthy Road is a narrow dirt road, much of it one-lane. There are many blind curves and very short sight distances, offering motorists a high risk of collision or being forced off the road. This risk is compounded by an increasing number of drivers traveling at unsafe speeds.

In the following summary of the main hazard points, mileage follows DOT&PF convention and is measured from east end of the Copper River bridge.

This differs from the yellow Ahtna Corp. mileposts 0 through 7, which start from Chitina. A blind curve is one with visibility around 200 ft or less. Restricted sight distance means other road characteristics, usually the profile, limit visibility of oncoming cars.

## Mileage

2.4-2.5 Blind curve—vegetation

6.4 Blind curve plus restricted sight distance—terrain (narrow cut)

6.5 Same as Mile 6.4

6.8 Blind curve—vegetation

10.1 Blind curve—vegetation

19.3 (East end of Grass Flats)

Restricted sight distance—short, narrow cut—terrain

17.0-17.2 (1.1 mile E. of Kuskalana Bridge) Blind curve, very narrow road between rock cliff and steep drop-off—terrain. This is the single most hazardous site on the McCarthy Road.

19.7-20.0 Blind curve—vegetation

21.8-22.5 Double blind curve (S-curve)—vegetation

25.6-26.8 Series of short blind curves—vegetation

28.8-28.9 (East exit from Gilahina Creek) Blind curves plus very restricted sight distance

35.0 (Just east of red RR cabin) Blind curve—vegetation

40.1 (Crystal Creek) restricted sight distance—terrain

42.0-42.9 Blind curves—vegetation, plus narrow road and no shoulder next to steep drop-off. Already two wrecks at this spot.

42.9 Blind curve—vegetation, plus narrow road

45.5-46.5 (Long Lake) Series of short blind curves—mostly vegetation, some terrain

46.8 (Long Lake east end) Very restricted sight distance both sides of dip—terrain. Some reconstruction under way.

48.0 Blind curve (S-curves)—vegetation

49.0 Blind curve with long, straight lead-ins—vegetation and terrain

50.9-51.3 Blind curves—vegetation

52.0 Blind curve—vegetation

52.2 (Tractor Creek) Very restricted sight distance both sides—terrain

52.7-53.1 Series of blind curves—vegetation

55.0 Restricted sight distance—terrain

56.0 (Farm Creek) Restricted sight distance, narrow road between embankments—terrain

56.5 Two short sections with prominent humps in road profile. Extremely restricted sight distance and narrow road. A major terrain problem, requires reconstruction.



town chatter

# KENNECOTT

## Carving an empire in the Alaska mountain wilderness

BY RON SIMPSON

Some of the most spectacular country to be found anywhere in North America exists within the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in southcentral Alaska. Mount Blackburn, elevation of 16,140 feet, provides an impressive background for the Bonanza Ridge about four miles to the southeast. The ridge consists of highly eroded limestone and reaches a height of about 7,000 feet at Bonanza Peak and Castle Rock.

At the turn of the century Clarence Warner and Jack Smith of the Chitina Exploration Co., discovered an outcropping of pure chalcocite at the head of an ancient glacial cirque at the 6,000-foot level just below Bonanza Peak. This event marks the beginning of one of the world's great conglomerates, the Kennecott Copper Corp. In an earlier expedition, geologist Carl Rohn named the Kennicott Glacier after explorer Robert Kennicott. The corporation gained its name from this glacier, but through a misspelling, Kennecott received a second "e."

It was Smith and Warner who named that first prospect Bonanza, because the site appeared extremely rich. Since Chitina Exploration Co. lacked the capital to develop so remote a find, a mining engineer who was in Valdez seeking sites for mineral development, Stephen Birch, upon hearing of the find, was able to quickly negotiate a purchase of the claims. Birch

represented a New York-based group of investors that included J.P. Morgan, the Guggenheim family, Kuhn Loeb brothers and the Havemeyers. The investors called themselves the Alaska Syndicate, and they represented some of the largest banking and commercial interests of the time.

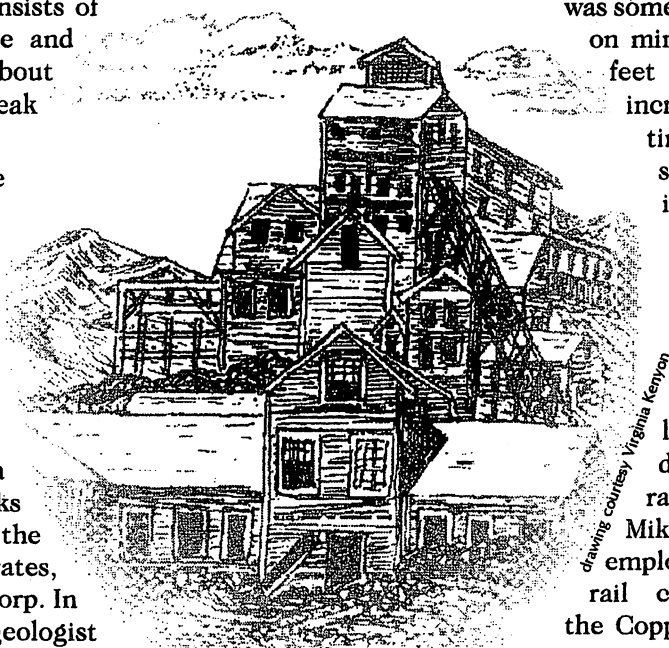
Once the Alaska Syndicate obtained title to the

lowed frozen rivers all the way up to the lower camp at Bonanza. The original Bonanza aerial tram and a complete sawmill took two winters to arrive over the winter trail due to an early breakup the first year.

Stephen Birch realized that he would have to convince his backers of the necessity of building a railway system and be was somehow able to do so based on mining assays of only 200 feet of tunnel. This was an incredible gamble, as estimated costs of construction of any route into the interior were about \$20 million. After futile starts at Valdez and Katalla (the town, just west of where the Bering River pours into Controller Bay, no longer exists), the syndicate purchased the railway rights held by Mike Heney at Cordova and employed him to continue rail construction, following the Copper River into the interior.

About a quarter of the way up the proposed route, Abercrombie Rapids blocked river traffic, so the syndicate had a disassembled 130-foot riverboat hauled over the winter trail to be rebuilt at the mouth of the Tasnuna River. Two other similar vessels followed in the next year and the Chitina, the Nizina, and the Tonsina would ply the waters above the rapids to enhance railway construction until shortly after the rail system opened in 1911.

At Bonanza, with the aerial tram in place, ore began moving



claims it was up to Stephen Birch to begin development and prove the value of the site. There were no established transportation routes linking this country with any ports, so a party of men under another mining engineer named L.A. Levansaler hauled all supplies and equipment in over a 225-mile winter trail that reached from Valdez through Thompson Pass and down the Tasnuna River (identified on older maps as running through Marshall Pass, west to Wortmanns Lodge) to its mouth at the Copper. There the trail fol-

down the 3-mile-long line, dropping 3,800 feet to the tramway terminus at the lower camp. Originally, the entire site was known as the Bonanza Mine, but the owners renamed the lower camp Kennicott. Later, the spelling changed to Kennecott to conform with the company name. Birch then traveled east to bring back a mill for the

posed Copper River and Northwestern Railway CR&NW as "Can't Run and Never Will."

J.P. Morgan, the principal backer of the railway originally offered to continue the line from Chitina on to either Eagle or Fairbanks. The corporation also offered to sell the line from Cordova to Chitina below cost to

the ammonia leaching plant and the water flotation plant across the tracks from the mill loading shed show advanced deterioration, mainly due to weather.

During the early 1960s, Kennecott Corp. sold surface rights to Roy Trotuchau, who agreed to demolish all the structures. He removed the roofs and the top two stories of the mill, and half of the roof off the large company store and warehouse. This was corrected when a group named Friends of Kennecott obtained funds that enabled them to stabilize some of the structures, and as a result new roofs now cover the mill and company store along with other buildings.

Eventually a small mining outfit purchased the quitclaim deeds to Kennecott, including the Bonanza minesite. They constructed the airstrip that is now in use near McCarthy to fly out the ore, carved a new road to the Bonanza and began surface mining. They burned down the four-story barracks and mess in search of more surface ore. They brought the ore to the old mill-site and set up a crusher on the south bank of the mill.

During this time either Roy or the surface mine operators destroyed the three-story staff house, the superintendent's residence, and the two-story manager's house that once overlooked all of Kennecott. Just below the engineer's office, the railroad warehouse and garage also came down. Today there is no sign that any of these structures ever existed, and the rock-crushing activity significantly altered the shape of the ground where these upper buildings once stood.

Now that hazardous materials, especially asbestos, are removed from the power plant,

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***When the first ore train arrived at Kennicott on April 10, 1911, two trainloads of sacked ore assaying at 70 percent copper awaited.***

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tram terminus.

When the first ore train arrived at Kennicott on April 10, 1911, two trainloads of sacked ore assaying at 70 percent copper awaited. That first train hauled 1,400 tons of ore to the Cordova wharf on top of 40 steel flatcars. A banner on the first train read: "A Million Tons to Follow." In the end, by 1938, 4.6 million tons of ore with an approximate value of \$175 million actually left Kennicott. The syndicate went public in 1915 to raise additional operating capital as the Kennecott Copper Corp. Stephen Birch became the first chairman of the board and president at New York.

The Kennecott Mines, which also included a substantial operation on Latouche Island, together with its railway system, was the second largest privately financed project in Alaska, second only to the Alyeska pipeline project. The 196-mile standard gauge railroad was the first to enter Alaska's Interior from a coastal port. Original surveys of the Copper River deemed the building of a railroad between the Miles and Childs glaciers at mile 49 impossible. Some of the newspapers dubbed the pro-

the federal government.

They completed surveys to Fairbanks and proved that the extension could be constructed from Chitina with relative ease. Politics intervened, and President Woodrow Wilson turned the offer down.

The mines were remarkable because the copper ore find was the richest concentration ever found. Just as noteworthy is the sheer remoteness, considering the size of the operation that evolved there. Little remains of the enormous mine structures along Bonanza Ridge that were once home to 250 miners, nor of the CR&NW railway system. The Kennicott townsite, however, with its 14 story mill—the tallest wooden structure in North America—is largely intact.

Fifty-seven years of neglect have, however, taken their toll. Overflows at National Creek have nearly toppled the old eight-bed hospital and have filled in most of the lower floor of the east barracks with gravel. Several of the north end cottages have fallen, as has the nearby sack storage shed, which was the original company store. Some of the larger structures, including

machine shop, and the water flotation and ammonia plant, the National Park Service is much closer to acquiring title to most of the townsite. They are also negotiating for title, including sub-surface rights, to all the claims except one called Motherlode, adding about 3,000 acres to the park system.

Ground access to this area is via the Edgerton Highway, which enters the Richardson at Mile 82.6. The road is paved for the 33 miles into Chitina. A modern concrete bridge crosses the Copper River where a railway trestle once stood. The unpaved road follows the old railroad grade for 58 miles, ending at the Kennicott River where parking and camping are available for a fee. Crossing of the Kennicott

River is only possible at this time by means of a hand operated tram. A heated controversy exists over various options the Alaska Department of Transportation is exploring for installing a bridge over the river channels. Options include bridges designed for vehicular traffic, but most McCarthy residents oppose this, as it would tend to drastically overload services and vastly change the relatively quiet and unhurried nature of the town. A foot traffic bridge appears to be the most likely option, and this will follow the historic path of the original CR&NW railway trestle.

Much of the research material and photographs used in this article came from the UAF Archives at the Elmer Rasmusen

Library. The archives is always looking for donations of historical Alaska and Yukon Territory photographs, diaries, books and manuscripts. It is a community resource well worth investigating. The phone number for archives and manuscripts is 474-6594.

For an overall and comprehensive study of the CR&NW railway and the early history of the Kennecott, I recommend "The Copper Spike," by Lone Janson, which is available at your local library and has been republished by the author.

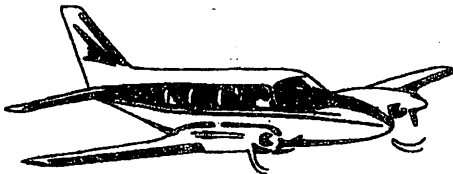
*(This article appeared in the May 28, 1995 issue of Heartland Magazine, an insert to the Fairbanks Daily Miner. It is used by permission of the author.)*

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Also, look at the expiration date in the upper right hand corner of the label. This denotes the last issue in your current subscription. If it reads JA96, you need to renew. (MJ96 means you received this issue by grace—your subscription ran out last month!) *Thank You!*

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# Mandatory borough bill dead

*We received the following letter from Representative Irene Nicholia: (edited for length.)*

Dear Friends,

As we head into these very final days of the legislative session I wanted to give you a piece of good news: Senate Bill 280 related to mandatory incorporation of certain boroughs is dead for this legislative session.

Although the bill is technically still alive until the final gavel on the final day, Representative James closed the House State Affairs Committee hearing on the bill on Tuesday and the unofficial word is that it will not be brought up again.

We had some of the best testimony, some of the strongest letters, and certainly the

strongest showing of public opinion messages against a specific bill that I've seen all session. The public record on this bill was overwhelmingly opposed, and members of the committee did take notice.

Concern over the cost of education, questions about whether rural Alaska is paying its way (much of which is based on misinformation or misperceptions)—or whether the state has too many school districts—persist. Various forms of mandatory borough bills or bills which would force consolidation of rural districts have been introduced in past legislatures, and we can expect to see these efforts again next year.

We talk about "full funding"

for education, but what we really have is "flat funding." The value of the instructional unit hasn't been increased since 1992, but costs of education has risen, just as the cost of living has risen. In urban areas flat funding has resulted in overcrowded classrooms and pressure on urban legislators to find ways to provide more money for their schools. One way some legislators have responded is by trying to find ways to move money from rural schools to urban schools. That's what is really behind statements about the cost of education in rural Alaska.

Sincerely,

Representative Irene K. Nicholia

## Chitina fires

BY MARK ROBITAILLE

As of June 12, 1996, the fire that destroyed the old BIA school building and two private cabins in Chitina, then spread to an estimated nine acres of nearby wooded area, is listed as out by the Tazlina DNR Division of Forestry. A spokesman from the Tazlina office advised that some slash piles in the Chitina logging operation areas are still smoldering, but are considered contained. The fires were fought by local residents, by Chitina, Kenny Lake, and Valdez volunteer firefighters, as well as fire crews from as far away as Fairbanks and Alakaket. These "out of area" crews were dispatched by the Anchorage DNR fire headquarters in response to the Tazlina

office request.

DC-6 air support was provided by the Alaska DNR Division of Forestry, Fairbanks, for bombing the fire with retardant. Helicopters were provided by the Park Service and State Forestry to haul water-dropping buckets.

The Chitina fires occurred after much of the local fire equipment and crews had been dispatched to fight the fire in Big Lake. This necessitated the call for additional help from "out of area" crews. The remaining local fire equipment was spread out far from their respective stations by the Chitina fire, raising concerns for timely responses should other fires occur. The local fire equipment is now being returned to the respective stations. The Tazlina Division of

Forestry advises that the Copper River Valley is still considered in a "Very High" state of fire risk despite recent localized rain showers. All of Southcentral Alaska is under an order by State DNR prohibiting all open burning for any purpose. This is being announced over local radio stations. The use of fireworks is also being strongly discouraged for the few areas in which they are legal to be used.

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### Public Service News Announcement

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The Kenny Lake Fair is scheduled for August 17, 1996. For more information or reservations for tables, call 822-3927.

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**Information will be available to the public beginning May 15, 1996  
Competitive Land Sale closes July 15, 1996**

***Lots not sold in the competitive land sale will be offered over-the-counter beginning August 1, 1996***

# McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church moves ahead

BY BONNIE KENYON

The warm, sunny days of summer are *finally* here again! I am pleased to report that the church building project is on the move again.

The windows and doors for the sanctuary are in place, thanks to John Adams and George Cebula. Additional pine boards were added to the exterior of the building, as well.

We want to thank Rick Jurick for extending his expertise on assisting Rick Kenyon on designing the proper electrical wiring for the building. The supplies to begin the actual wiring are expected within a day or two. The Sheetrock is on hand and will be the next major step in the project.

The annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church was held on June 3. New directors George Cebula, Doyne Houghton and John Adams replaced outgoing directors Phyllis Sperry, Andrew Linton and Bonnie Kenyon. With the departure of Phyllis

Sperry, George graciously accepted the position of treasurer. The following officers remained in their appointed positions: Mary Schrage, president; Rick Kenyon, vice-president and Bonnie Kenyon, secretary.

Since the church organized and began its building project the first part of 1995, approximately \$19,000.00 has been donated. Of that amount, nearly \$14,000.00 has been spent on building materials with all labor to date being donated. We cannot thank enough those of you who have given of yourselves, finances and prayers to this project.

Although there is still much to do on the inside, our contractor for the project, John Adams, says we can look forward to holding Sunday services in the island church sometime in mid July. A dedication service also is being planned for either the end of August or the first Sunday in September. In the interim, services are being held in Rick and Bonnie Kenyon's cabin on

the west side of the Kennicott.

On Sunday, June 9, we were blessed to have Doyne Houghton of Valdez share on the subject of friendship with God and each other. Doyne, his wife, Kay, and their 5 daughters are familiar faces on Sundays during the summer months. Their "home" away from their McCarthy area homestead is Valdez where Doyne has his own barbershop and Kay, a pharmacy. Kay plays the keyboard and is such a blessing to us.

Services are informal and open to all. Anyone wishing to attend are encouraged to join us at 10 o'clock every Sunday morning. For more information, you may call (907) 554-4454.

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. Galatians 1:3-5.*

## Museum News

BY LOY GREEN

The museum opened on Memorial Day, and as the saying goes "there is bad news and there is good news." The bad news first. The high winds last November took off almost half the tin on the roof and scattered it into the woods and from that point on there is only good news. First we wish to thank the person or persons who retrieved the tin and

stacked it on the museum deck. Next, as the roof still had the old shingles, the roof leaked in only one place and no interior damage or to museum items was done.

To complete the roof news. A sincere Thanks to Richard Villa and the St. Elias Alpine Guides for organizing and recruiting the three volunteers that replaced the tin. They are Dave Thorp, Charles T. Hall, (from Anchorage) and Crag (from England).

And more good news. Diane

Milliard, a caretaker from last year is back and she is filling 4 days a week. This leaves 3 days that we are seeking volunteers to fill; meanwhile, I am filling those days. Around the 10th of July I will need to be away for an undetermined period of time, so I hope to find a volunteer before then.

Looking forward to the 1996 season and extending our appreciation to the entire community.

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# Town meeting

BY GEORGE CEBULA

Officials from several state and federal agencies met with McCarthy area residents on May 22. The meeting was mediated by Ike Waits, a facilitator from the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs. The first part of the meeting was a series of reports on goals, mission, projects and schedules. First on the agenda was the McCarthy Area Council (MAC) Planning Committee.

Marci Thurston gave a short history of the community involvement and planning since the tram project in 1982. Marci reviewed some of the community issues that were identified at a MAC workshop last June. In closing, Marci stated the mission of MAC was to provide a forum, to find ways to provide community services and needs, and as a body which could accept funding.

Ed LaChapelle gave a brief history of the Aquifer Protection Project and Study, funded by a State of Alaska Grant. The local drinking water is supplied by Clear Creek and 8 adjacent springs. He identified the location of the springs and their channels into Clear Creek and the East Fork of the Kennicott River. He followed with a brief history of the local water supply.

Mark Vail talked about the planning meeting he attended for a continuous trail from Chitina to McCarthy. There were two general designs. One design was to closely parallel the road and the other was more of an exposed trail into the park. Mark said he felt that it was important to make the trail study and the road upgrade

study concurrent so the public could comment on both projects at the same time.

Jon Jarvis, superintendent of Wrangell St.-Elias National Park, was next on the agenda and introduced Tom Betts, the new Chitina Ranger. Jon updated some of the National Park Service (NPS) ongoing projects. The first was the upgrade and scenic corridor plan for the McCarthy Road. It is the intent of the NPS working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to make it a true PARK ROAD. The plan is completed and is now in a final draft form. The NPS is also working with DOT and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on trail planning along the road. End of the road design was also being coordinated with DOT. NPS believes that fifty-seven percent of the visitors to Wrangell St.-Elias National Park are coming to McCarthy and Kennicott. Appraisal of the Kennicott property is under contract now and should be done by mid June. NPS is in the process of beginning planning for the upgrade of the Nabesna Road.

Randy Elliott, operator of the Tram Station, explained the new parking procedures for the local residents. A separate lot is being constructed close to the tram for this purpose and a \$10 annual fee will be charged.

Gerald Rafson, DOT Planning Northern Region and area planner for McCarthy area, was the DOT speaker. The DOT has a revised list of construction projects due out this summer. Some of the projects for the McCarthy area are the footbridge, upgrade of the McCarthy Road and Kennicott River West and East wayside. The footbridge will be out for bid later this summer. The McCarthy Road

upgrade is scheduled to get first phase funding in 1999. This phase will also include the West Side wayside. Phase two is scheduled for 2000 and phase 3 in 2001. Phase 3 will also include the East Side wayside. At this time there are no plans for a vehicle bridge of any type. The question of right-of-way along the road from Chitina to McCarthy was brought up. The DOT is in the process of getting a ruling from the Attorney General. At this time they are sure of a 100 foot right-of-way, but it could be 200 or 300 feet. The safety issue of the road in its current condition was discussed. The DOT has no plans to improve this before they start the road upgrade project.

Mari Montgomery, University of Alaska Office of Land Management, gave the last presentation. Mari stated that the current land sale by the University of Alaska includes several parcels in the McCarthy area. Some of the property across McCarthy Creek from town are lots offered for sale on a competitive basis. Another parcel is on the west side of the airport road and is being offered for proposals to lease as commercial/recreational property. Mary strongly advised that anyone who is interested in these properties should check the physical location before bidding on the lots. The sale closes on July 15, 1996. The University has no plans for another land sale at this time. They will be waiting to see the results of this sale.

This concluded the presentations and the rest of the meeting was devoted to establishing partnerships with the various state and federal agencies.

## Swift Creek visits Europe

*As do most McCarthy area residents, we believe this is the most desirable place in the world to live. We have some of the most incredibly beautiful scenery in the world, along with the freedom to enjoy it. On occasion, however, we venture out to see the home settings of those who have visited ours. Such is the case with Jim Edwards and Audrey Betcher of Swift Creek. This past March and April, they traveled to Europe where they had the opportunity to see and learn something of the different lifestyles on the European continent as well as renew acquaintances with old friends.*

BY JIM EDWARDS

Since our friend Julie White, who visited Swift Creek in 1990, lives in London, Audrey and I decided to start there. In the summer months the airlines fly "over-the-pole" flights of approximately 9 hours, but in March we had to take a longer route which meant 20 hours of travel time not including ground time to and from airports. Believe me, we were bushed when we arrived in London and were very grateful to have a friend to stay with. Julie was very thoughtful and helped us overcome the jet-lag by allowing us to sleep and relax at our own schedule.

We did a little sightseeing in London, but since it was March the trees were bare, the wind was cold, and the traffic

downtown was mad. We had decided to travel light, and had left our heavy down parkas at home. How we missed them in London! We finally gave up trying to walk the city, and took a tour of the Tower Bridge, which crosses the Thames River. The bridge was built in the 1890's, and used hydraulic power to open for sailing ships to pass underneath.



photo courtesy Jim Edwards

London's Tower Bridge

Murray Brown, along with a group of other British young people, visited Kennicott in 1989. Under the auspices of the British Schools Exploring Society, the young "Brits" spent 2 to 3 months exploring and hiking in the Kennicott area. We visited him and his parents just north of London, and then some friends in east England before heading to Holland. We took the ferry to Hook of Holland, a cape and harbor of southwest Netherlands on the North Sea west of Rotterdam, for which it serves as a port. The ferry takes 6 ½ hours to make the crossing.

Our tickets included a train ride to Amsterdam, which took another hour and a half. Our friend Loes, who has been to McCarthy, met us at the train. She helped us buy the "Strippenkart," a strip of Zones (tickets) that let you travel on any city bus in Holland.

Amsterdam is a city on a series of canals. The canals are home to many houseboats that never move—they are permanently attached to sewer, water, phone, etc. One even had a garden on the roof. We spent four days in the area, and visited old-time villages that have been preserved (some just for tourists), wooden shoes being made, (Audrey got a pair to wear!), the famous red-light district and street markets crammed with many colorful items.

In the Netherlands the trains are on time and frequent. The country is small, so it is a short ride to Delft. Founded in the 11th century, the town was heavily damaged by fire in 1536 and by an explosion of a powder magazine in 1654. It was a famous center in the 17th and 18th centuries for the ceramics known as delftware. We toured the well known Delft pottery museum and factory. The artists spend a minimum of 6 years apprenticeship before being considered as "in-house" artists who copy and create these famous designs of blue.

We visited a family in a very small village in central Holland who live in a real thatched roof cottage—quaint! Their son has a “Fly a C-172” program on his computer, which I promptly crashed.

Bricks are a common building material in this area, and we got a personal tour of a brick factory. There are not many forests in Holland, but lots of clay.

Maastricht, on the Maas River near the border with Belgium, is a fun city to wander around in. It is an industrial center in which textiles, chemicals, ceramics, and glass are produced. Many historic structures are here, including the Cathedral of Saint Servatius, founded in the 6th century, the oldest church in the Netherlands. Narrow, crooked cobblestone streets wind between 300-500 year old buildings and 11th century Roman wall segments. Some parts of the wall are incorporated into the houses. One front door was bricked right into this old wall.

We had an interesting experience at the hotel here. (It was amusing—after the fact!) Check out was 11 a.m., but at 8 someone knocked on the door and told Audrey our room had been rented to a new customer and they needed our key. Evidently, the hotel didn't have a master key and, unfortunately, the doors are designed so that you cannot get in or out without a key. The key in question was with me and I was out taking a walk. It was a good thing there wasn't a fire!

Next we spent 5 interesting days with Hans and Margaret in Cologne (German Köln), Germany, which is located on the Rhine River. Many of you will remember Hans and Margaret as the parents of our local Jürgen Ogradnik. They showed us ancient castles, local countryside and woods with beautifully kept paths, and the famous “Doms of Cologne,” or Cologne Cathedral. The Cathedral has twin spires, each 157 m (515 ft) high. Hans and I climbed the 509 ancient, worn stone steps to view the great bell of the south tower, the Kaiserglocke. The bell

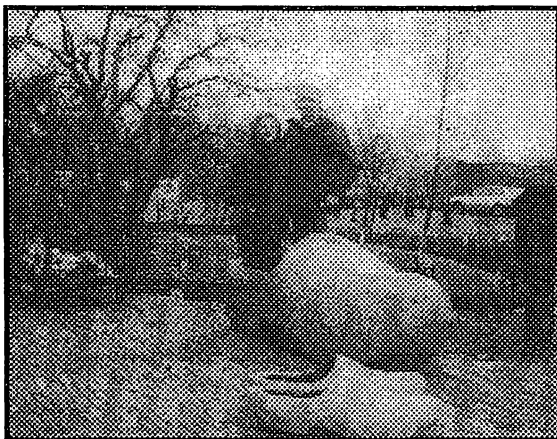


photo courtesy Jim Edwards

Audrey bought a smaller size!

was cast in 1874 from a French cannon captured in the Franco-Prussian War and, we were told, is the largest free swinging bell in the world—around 25 tons. What a magnificent structure!

We spent a month with Walter and Ursel Müller, whom many will remember from their visits to the McCarthy area in 1991 and 1994. We met them at their summer cabin not far from Cologne and rode in their car down the autobahns of Germany to their home in Wernetshausen, about 30 kilometer east of Zurich, Switzerland. Walter and Ursel drove us to the Engadine mountains. (The roads

in Switzerland are very good, considering the terrain.) We took an 80 person tram car up to a ski lodge which is at an elevation of 3,000 meters. The scenery was every bit as spectacular as our own Wrangells, if not quite as big. (I have to brag a little bit!)

Later we enjoyed walking through some villages with traditional Swiss wood houses which have all the “gingerbread.” Some of them were built in the 1500's and 1600's.

We took a trip to the village of Aeschi to visit Stevie

Hablutzel, who we had met when he visited McCarthy. Along the way, we had fun joking about the frogs. In some areas there is a kind of frog that migrates by the thousands to the lakes in the spring. Crossing the highways, they get squashed and the road actually becomes so slippery that it is unsafe for cars. The locals put up long fences on the uphill side of the road. The fences are about 8” high, with buried buckets at intervals.

During migration time, volunteers carry these buckets full of frogs across the road, where they resume the downhill trek. Large caution signs along the highways displayed a picture of a frog and a warning to travelers to “Beware the Frogs.”

The southern border of Switzerland where it meets Italy is a jagged line. Walter, Ursel, Audrey and I drove across part of Italy. Coming down the south side of the Alps, some sections of the road are incredibly steep; it seemed like 25 one hundred and eighty degree very tight switch backs in a row.

The area around Lake Como, Italy, is quite scenic. I was amazed at the dozens of little villages that are plastered back to back on the very steep hillsides of the lake shore. In some places there isn't enough room for a road of any size, so tunnels are drilled under these old villages.

We were stuck with the sudden and distinctive difference in the houses and architecture when you cross from Switzerland into Italy. People explained to us that the Italians are often more laid back and easy going, while the Swiss tend to be very efficient and business-like. You notice the change easily, even from a moving vehicle or train window.

A lot of the products that you buy in Switzerland bear labels printed in three languages. Unfortunately for Audrey and I, English was not one of them. We searched all three for similarities of words, trying to figure out what we were buying. Fruits and vegetables are comparable in price and quality to what we find in Anchorage.

Another trip with Walter and Ursel took us to St. Galen, a town about 100 kilometers from Zurich. (Only about 60 if you are a crow!) There we visited an 800 year old cathedral with the most incredible collection of statues, carvings and ceiling paintings. We also enjoyed a museum & library which has a display of 140,000 books, almost all of them older than 200 years, and many written from AD 650 onward. We put on large, felt slippers and shuffled around on the ancient, lovely floor made of inlaid wood. It would take several pages to fully describe this wonderful experience.

Walter took us through (of all things to see as a tourist!) a garbage burning plant. City waste is a costly problem in any city, and in Switzerland they are building these plants which not only reduce the bulk, but also make significant amounts of electric power and hot water for local heating of large buildings, while keeping the exhaust air clean. Walter's job as project manager is to design and build these plants, so he was able to

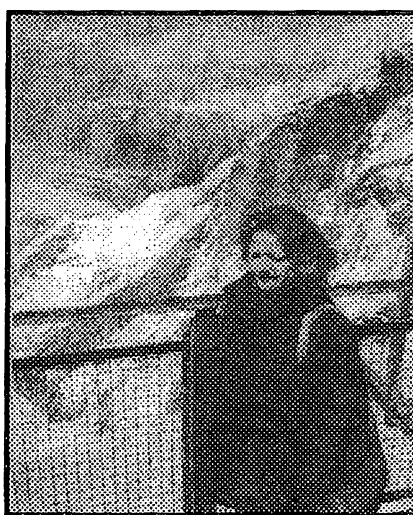


photo courtesy Jim Edwards

#### At Jungfrauoch

explain the details to us. Later, I visited the factory of a man who builds the crushers and the burning grates for these plants. I was impressed!

It was fun traveling by car, but I noted that the auto fuel was just about twice as much as we pay in Anchorage. The aviation fuel was well over twice. Personal flying in Switzerland is very restricted. An Alaskan pilot (such as myself) finds it a very tight noose. At most fields, I was told that each landing costs 20 francs!

Audrey and I took several trips on the public transport, usually the trains. The trains and buses in Switzerland are excellent. (Indeed, all over

Europe, but especially Switzerland.) They run almost everywhere, often, and on time. I'm sure we took over 50 rides, and I never saw them off more than one minute, except in the "chunnel," described later. The government run train system also offers package deals with hotels and other concessions. We took advantage of several of these.

One of these took us to Venice, Italy. Is this a "must see" Mecca for tourists, or what? You just have to take the famous gondola ride on the romantic canals, don't you? Audrey expected to be disappointed on three counts: overpriced ride, stinky canal, and a grumpy boatman. But, she felt she would be more disappointed if she didn't see it. As it turned out, we got two out of the three—the boatman was pretty jolly. He pointed out famous buildings and took us both in the little canals and out on the Grand Canal, where we went under the Rialto, a 500 year old bridge that has about 20 trinket shops on it.

Venice is an absolute maze of tiny, crooked streets only 4 to 8 feet wide. The streets are packed with tourists going in and out of the thousands of souvenir shops, where a small slice of pizza costs 4,500 lira. It's an experience dealing with the numbers! Venice was a great experience, but for us once was enough.

Probably our most spectacular trip was to Jungfrauoch. Jungfrau is a mountain in southern Switzerland, located on the border between the cantons of Bern and Valais and rising to a height of 4158 m (13,642 ft) above sea level. (The Jungfrau was ascended for the first time in 1811.) A railroad, the highest

in Europe, ascends the mountain to Jungfrauoch, a pass about 3456 m (11,340 ft) above sea level. From the town of Interlaken we took a series of three trains up ever steeper grades, pushed by cogwheels on a toothed center rail. The last 40 minutes or so of the ride is inside the mountain on a track built nearly 100 years ago. It finally levels out and stops, still inside the mountain, right beside a sort of tourist center. The center has three levels, and the windows look out on the side of what must be a 1,000 foot cliff. There was a snack bar, lunch counter, full service restaurant, and gift shop. A tunnel leads to a 112 meter rise by elevator to an observatory right on the ridge, and another tunnel leads to a system of in-the-ice tunnels and chambers with a series of carvings made from solid ice, called the Ice Palace. It's a spectacular place to spend a few hours on a nice day, and is reachable from Zurich as a day trip.

Our time in Switzerland drew to a close, and we decided to go back to London by the "fast" train. Actually the train from Zurich to Paris turned out to be only a regular "inter city" that does not slow down at small stops. We had to change trains in Paris, and were concerned about finding the proper station

in this large city. Someone suggested we use the Paris underground, but before we could find the underground station we had walked two blocks and spotted the other train station only two more blocks away along a quiet street. It wasn't a problem to walk the distance, even with our packs.

The train from Paris to London was indeed "fast," at least it was supposed to be. This is a modern train that runs under the English Channel through the "Eurotunnel," which wags call the "chunnel." Top speed is reported to be 300 kilometer per hour. After two months of using trains and buses and finding them to be on schedule "to the minute," we were amazed at the delays on this train. There were several check-in points with 30 minute waits at each one, then a 22 minute delay while they loaded the snack bar! Near the middle of the tunnel, the train slowed, stopped, and we sat there in silence for over 5 minutes before they announced that there were "some problems." It was about 10 minutes before they started up again. The delays weren't important to us, but others missed connections.

By now it was late May and London was much more enjoyable than it had been in

March. Flowers were blooming, and we enjoyed watching the redcoats shift and maneuver at Buckingham Palace. Tours of Windsor Castle, the Tower of London and Madame Tussauds Wax Museum are well worth taking. The museum is very interesting. You can actually handle the famous figures and have your picture taken with your arm around Ghandi or Napoleon. I watched a mid-eastern looking gentleman have his picture taken with his arm around Saddam Hussein. We had a good chuckle when his friend walked up to Saddam and slapped his face.

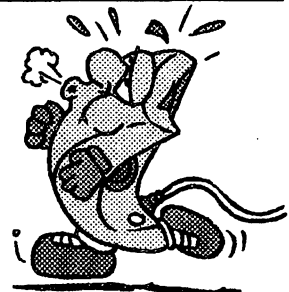
Going back to town on the classic, red, double-decker London bus, we came within inches of being rammed by a fire truck, siren howling. London! It was time to go home.

What do we miss? Old English villages. Wonderful fresh Dutch bread. Ancient cobblestone streets. Centuries old stone buildings. Wonderful friends to visit, and to point the way to the best experiences. Are we glad to be home? You bet.

*I have a more complete journal, maps and other information that I am willing to share with those interested. Jim Edwards, PO Box MXY, Glenallen, AK 99588. Phone (907) 554-4414*

## WILDFIRE HOTLINE AVAILABLE

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources has established a new toll-free hotline for people wishing information about the status of wildfires in the state of Alaska. Call 1-800-656-5858 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 10 p.m. For recorded information 24 hours a day, call 907-269-8444 and press 1 at the command.



# Independence Day

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

*This article ran in the July 2, 1921 issue of the McCarthy Weekly News.*

The Fourth of July is our great national celebration. Around it center the body of traditional ideals for which our country stands. Traditions are splendid things for countries or for individuals only if they are translated into living aspirations.

We have all seen men and women who spend their entire time boasting of their ancestors. This amounts to nothing and those who do it are entirely useless.

In the same way the country which looks back on its traditions and does not attempt to turn them into action for the present or for the future is dying of dry rot.

When we celebrate our national holiday, we should try to make it stand out to ourselves and our children in vivid terms of the present day.

We should try to make it more concrete. We should try to translate our high thought into high action. The obligation laid upon us by our forebears when they promulgated the Declaration of Independence is not merely to praise and revere them for so doing but really to see that their doctrines of democracy,



justice and equal opportunity are continued, that the great work which they set under way is carried to a successful conclusion.

Nine tenths of Righteousness is good acts, not good thoughts.

"Republicans believe every day is 4th of July, but Democrats believe every day is April 15."  
— Ronald Wilson Reagan

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### SCHEDULE

Monday — Saturday

Glennallen to McCarthy

Depart Glennallen	7:15 a.m.
Depart Chitina	8:30 a.m.
Arrive McCarthy	11:45 a.m.

McCarthy to Glennallen

Depart McCarthy	4:45 p.m.
Arrive Chitina	7:30 p.m.
Arrive Glennallen	9:15 p.m.

### RATES

Glennallen to McCarthy

RT same day	\$70
RT different day	\$88
One way	\$49

Chitina to McCarthy

RT same day	\$60
RT different day	\$70
One way	\$35

Call for group rates and reservations to Anchorage, Valdez & Denali Park



## A Visitor from the past

I had a dream the other night I didn't understand...  
A figure walking through the mist with flintlock in his hand.  
His clothes were torn and dirty as he stood there by my bed,  
He took off his three-cornered hat, and speaking low, he said:

"We fought a revolution to secure our liberty.  
We wrote the Constitution as a shield from tyranny.  
For future generations this legacy we gave.  
In this, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The freedom we secured for you we hoped you'd always keep.  
But tyrants labored endlessly while your parents were asleep.  
Your freedom gone, your courage lost, you are just a slave.  
In this, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

You buy permits to travel, and permits to own a gun,  
Permits to start a business, or to build a place for one.  
On land that you believe you own, you pay a yearly rent.  
Although you have no voice in choosing how the money's spent.

Your children must attend a school that doesn't educate.  
Your moral values can't be taught, according to the State.  
You read about the current news in a regulated press.  
You pay a tax you do not owe to appease the I.R.S.

Your money is no longer made of silver or of gold.  
You trade your wealth for paper so your life can be controlled.  
You pay for crimes that make our Nation turn from God in shame.  
You've taken Satan's number as you've traded in your name.

You've given government control to those who do you harm.  
So they can padlock your business, and steal the family farm.  
And keep our country deep in debt; put those who dissent in jail.

Harass your fellow countrymen, while corrupted courts prevail.

Your public servants don't uphold the solemn oath they've sworn.  
They interfere in your choice whether children will be born.  
Your leaders hip artillery and guns to foreign shores,  
And send your sons to slaughter fighting other peoples' wars.

Can you regain the freedom for which we fought and died?  
Or don't you have the courage, or the faith to stand with pride?  
Are there no more values for which you'll fight to save?  
Or do you wish your children to live in fear and be a slave?

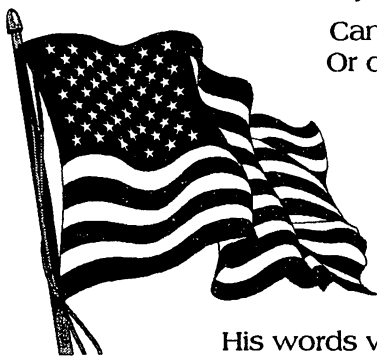
Sons of the Republic, arise and take a stand!  
Defend the Constitution, the supreme Law of the Land!  
Preserve our great Republic, and each GOD-given right.  
And pray to GOD to keep the torch of freedom burning bright."

As I awoke he vanished in the mist from whence he came.  
His words were true, we are not free, we have ourselves to blame.

For even now tyrants trample each God-given right.  
We only watch and tremble, too afraid to stand and fight.

If he stood by your bedside in a dream while you're asleep,  
And wondered what remains of the Rights he fought to keep;  
What would be your answer, if he called out from the grave:

IS THIS STILL THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE?



*Submitted by George Powell*

## Trail grant program announced

Grants for trail projects are now available to trail user organizations, individuals, public agencies and businesses. The National Recreational Trails Fund Act provides reimbursement grants of up to \$15,000 for the construction and maintenance of public trails for motorized, non-motorized, and multiple uses. Alaska State Parks and Outdoor Recreation will administer the program.

To be eligible for funding, projects must be identified in an existing local or regional park, recreation, trails or greenways plan. Eligible projects include:

a. Environmental and safety education programs or

materials relating to trails.

b. Development of urban trails that safely tie neighborhoods, parks, and commercial areas together.

c. Maintenance of existing trails including purchase of maintenance equipment.

d. Development of trailheads and associated facilities.

e. Restoration of areas damaged by trail use.

f. Development and installation of trail signs.

g. Acquisition of easements for trails.

h. Acquisition of fee simple title to property.

i. Construction of new trails on state, borough, municipal or

private lands.

j. Construction of new trails across federal lands.

k. Improvements to facilitate use of trails by persons with disabilities.

Interested parties may contact Alaska State Parks in Anchorage for more information or to request an application. Write to Carmen Denny, Alaska State Parks, 3601 C Street, Suite 1200, Anchorage, AK 99503 5921, or call (907) 269-8710. EMAIL address:

carmend@dnr.state.ak.us

Completed grant applications must be postmarked no later than July 25, 1996 to be considered.

## KENNECOTT KID RELEASES NEW BOOK

Born in Kennecott  
Memories of a Kennecott Kid



Sissy Lommel Kluh

Available at local bookstores or from Top Shelf Publishing at PO Box 11008, Olympia, WA 98508-1008 for \$14.95 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling.

## Dry weather warning

### **Used oil — illegal for dust control**

As breakup and some dry weather continue in Alaska, the Department of Environmental Conservation is reminding Alaskans that used oil is illegal for dust control, and recently-developed products are available that will control dust and are also safe for the environment and public health. Surface oiling permits from DEC are required.

DEC Investigator Jim Bowden said, "Due to the potential risk to public health and the environment, the law now strictly prohibits the use of any product which contains hazardous material as a dust suppressant, and this includes used oil."

Bowden said that the welcome spring weather and

drying out also brings the need to combat dust or control erosion. At one time, it was a common practice to apply used oil to the road surface, called "road oiling," Bowden said. "Because of the hazardous materials often contained in used oil, we now know the ill effects this practice had on the ground water and the environment in general."

Bowden said that industry has now developed several effective products that are environmentally safe when used properly, and which meet the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the Federal Water

Pollution Control Act, and the Clean Air Act.

"It is the responsibility of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to ensure that any product used for surface oiling does not pose an undue risk to public health or the environment by its composition or application. Penalties for violation of either state or federal statutes can be quite severe," he said.

Local DEC offices will provide information on how to obtain a surface oiling permit and will assist in determining whether a particular dust suppressant has been approved for use by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Bowden said, "With the development of environmentally safe suppressants, we have good alternatives to help eliminate the nuisance of dust."

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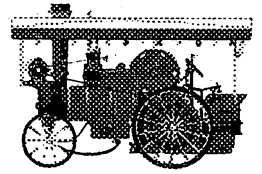
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# OUR TOWN

## July 1921 August



### FOURTH OF JULY

A truly wonderful Fourth, was the unanimous verdict of all at the close of the day.

The weather, which had been unpleasant for several days before, changed to our usual beautiful sunshine, and the rain which had fallen made everything green and also cooled the air, so that not even one mosquito was in evidence to spoil the day.

Taking advantage of the efficient speeder service which was run by the railroad department all day, crowds began to arrive in the morning, and by the time the athletic events were pulled off, large numbers were waiting to witness them. The program went through without a hitch in the capable hands of Harry Kavanaugh and Jack Conway as starters.

July 9

### LARGE PASSENGER LIST

Agent F.W. Sommer received word from Roy De Leo this A.M. that the Excursion train with 200 passengers will arrive here at 2:30 pm. tomorrow.

The train will stop here to pick up passengers to Kennecott for the ball game. Regular excursion tickets will be sold, 85 cents round trip, including war tax. Excursion will leave McCarthy Monday morning at 9. There will be possibly about 125 women and children.

July 16

### OF LOCAL INTEREST

Early next month a hunting party will arrive here which has been arranged for by the Kennecott Copper Corporation officials, Messrs. George Pratt and Son of New York will comprise the hunters, and will be accompanied by Al Fagerberg chief guide, Bill Slimpert, assistant, Jack Erickson, chef, and W. Berry, horse wrangler.

The party will spend thirty five days in a trip to the head of the Chitina River, their objective being the big horn sheep which abound there, and possibly bear. Stephen Birch, who had hoped to be one of the party could not spare the time to make the trip.

### HORSES

A car load of horses arrived on Sunday's local, having been shipped from Ellensburg, Wash. by Bud Weston, who raised them himself. From Seattle to Valdez they travelled by the freighter Juneau, then over the trail to Chitina, and the rest of the way by rail. They were taken over by Fagerberg and Slimpert, who found purchasers for them at once. Harry Boyden, Con Miller and others. Judges of horse flesh consider this the best shipment of horses received here.

July 23

### JOHN UNDERWOOD DROWNS

A terrible occurrence took place last Wednesday afternoon when our highly esteemed fellow townman John R. Underwood lost his life in the Nizina River.

At noon the party started out from town, H. F. Andrus and J.H. Murie headed for Chititu, Mr. and Mrs. J.B. O'Neill, who were to visit at Dan Creek that night and then go on to Chisana next day with Mr. Underwood. Ira McCord and Jimmy Brown who intended to camp at Spruce Pt.

The others were half an hour ahead and crossed in safety, but when the last three were crossing at the upper crossing some distance above Brown's Roadhouse, Mr. Underwood's horse struck a deep hole and went out of sight. At once the others turned to his assistance, but horse and rider were carried far down stream and after mighty efforts Jimmy Brown rescued him but life was extinct. The body was taken to Brown's Roadhouse where everything possible was done, and conveyed to town next morning.

The sad news was telephoned to town that evening casting a gloom over all, a dreadful shock to the family, Mrs. Underwood being prostrated.

The demise of this fine man is a bereavement to the entire community. For one of his sterling qualities, simple manner, and kind heart, to be cut off in the twinkling of an eye, is a blow which will take long to heal.

With the whole community we tender our sympathy to the relatives.

### S.O.S

Once more the treacherous Nizina claims a victim, and one whom we can ill spare from our midst, who bravely rode into the swirling waters with a smile on his face and was unafraid.

He knew as we know, the dangers of that stream, yet his business necessitated him making the trip to Chisana, the only trail to which lies through the Nizina River.

It is only by an act of Providence that the one who reclaimed poor John Underwood from these waters is alive today, to give us the details of the terrible accident which took place on the afternoon of the 27th of July. He took his own life in his hands when he rode into swimming depth endeavoring to save his friend's life, and was in the water for a considerable time and then only recovered the mortal remains by superhuman efforts.

Time and time again we, and other Alaskan publishers, have made reference to the dangers of the river, and the necessity of a bridge, but

the fact remains that it is still taking its toll of human life.

Twenty five lives in this section of the river alone, and it was estimated ten years ago that thirty six had met their deaths by drowning in the lower part of the river and on into the Chitina, up to that time.

July 30

Two ducks were recently hatched out of a shipment of 54 eggs sent to McCarthy—they can swim but we need a bridge.

### FROM WASHINGTON TO MCCARTHY DIRECT

Business, first, last and all the time, is the chief characteristic of the newly appointed Governor of Alaska, who paid us a high compliment last Wednesday by sparing three hours of his valuable time for a visit to this little town while touring this Division.

This is the first time that such an honor has been shown us, and it is difficult to realize that here is a man, who has come direct from the President, leaving him less than two months ago, and is making a personal tour of Alaska, his object being to come in close touch with the people, and no hamlet is too small to visit.

Aug. 6

### HUNTER HERE FOR SHEEP AND MOOSE

Mr. R. H. Rockwell, taxidermist for the Brooklyn Museum arrived here yesterday & will leave Monday morning for the White River country, there to secure specimens of Alaska sheep and moose, for the museum.

A new building is almost completed to be entirely devoted to the animals of North America and here the Alaskan specimens will have a prominent place.

Jimmy Brown will escort Mr. Rockwell to the White River, they will be gone about thirty five days.

### RICHARDSON HIGHWAY

Fairbanks is energetically working to shunt travel over the Richardson Road. The highway is in a better condition this season than for years and next year will be better yet. A traveller can step aboard an automobile in Valdez and in two days time including the stops for meals, be in Fairbanks.

This makes the trip inexpensive, as compared with other routes, and gives tourists an opportunity to pass through some of the finest scenery in North America. By the middle of next year the road will be surfaced with gravel and all bridges and culverts placed in a high state of repair. The improvements made on this end of the road this year are of a permanent character and need not be made again.

The above is an extract from the Valdez Miner, which voices the opinion of the Valdez people. They are proud and justly too, of the fine highway which now links their city with Fairbanks.

We all are proud of having a road like this in our Division, but one thing we regret and it is that the Richardson Highway cannot be used by travellers to Dan, Nizina and Chisana camps.

Aug. 13

### NEW PHOTO SYSTEM

Hubrick, is this week installing the Eastman "Deep Tank" Developing System for Amateur developing, by this system much better results are obtained than by the old method of Tray Development. He now has a complete Amateur Finishing department connected with his store.

### THE NEWS

There is absolutely no doubt that the Alaskan newspapers have done more towards the development of the country than all the bureaus at Washington.

This is thanks to the Advertising public, for were it not for advertisers the papers would go out of business.

We are proud of the fact that the News has a good 99% of the business houses of McCarthy represented in its advertising columns, fortunately that keeps the paper on the perpetual basis and we trust it will for many many years to come.

The average man who strolls into Hotel lobby or pool hall and picks up his home town paper, without cost to himself, does not realize that the publisher needs any kale, he takes it for granted the issues are produced automatically, unfortunately they are not.

In some cases subscription rates may appear high, but the price of newsprint alone has been exorbitant.

There is one thing which every Alaskan should not fail to do, it is almost as important as taking out life insurance, take out a subscription for the local paper.

Aug. 20

### FARMING

All the farmers of this section are working long hours harvesting their crops.

At Long Lake, Oscar Anderson has had his new mowing machine working on his 20 acre field of beardless barley. This grew to a height of 5 ft. 9 in.

Frank Iverson and Olaf Holtet are also cutting their crops this week.

Al Doze is expecting his mowing machine to arrive on the next train. He ordered it from the states some time ago. He will start cutting his season's crop of barley and oats.

### AIRPLANE SERVICE IN ALASKA

F.G. Noyes is clearing a large tract on the Garden Island side of Chena slough at Fairbanks to be used as a landing field for airplanes. It is understood that Mr. Noyes plans to import a flying machine for commercial use between that city and the coast.

It is highly probably that an airplane service will be in operation in this section some time next year. Roy Snyder, one of our business men contemplates purchasing a machine this winter, capable of carrying two passengers and a thousand pounds of freight. Roy figures on giving the Chisana miners a first class weekly service and some of us an occasional trip to the coast at excursion rates all the time.

Aug 27

## Volcanoes of the Wrangells — Skookum Creek

*Editors note: this is the seventh in a series of excerpts from the GUIDE to the VOLCANOES of the WESTERN WRANGELL MOUNTAINS, ALASKA, by Donald H. Richter, Danny S. Rosenkrans, and Margaret J. Steigerwald.*

Skookum Creek volcano is the only volcano in the western Wrangell Mountains that is accessible by road. It is one of the oldest volcanoes described in this guide, and because it has been intensely modified by erosion, it offers opportunities to examine subsurface volcanic processes through its spectacular exposures of domes, vents, dikes, and other geologic features.

**Name.**— Informal, after Skookum Creek, which has its source below the central high point of the volcano.

**Type and form.**— Possibly a shield volcano with a large caldera that is outlined by a ring of domes.

**Location.**— Central high point is 5 mi (8 km) northwest

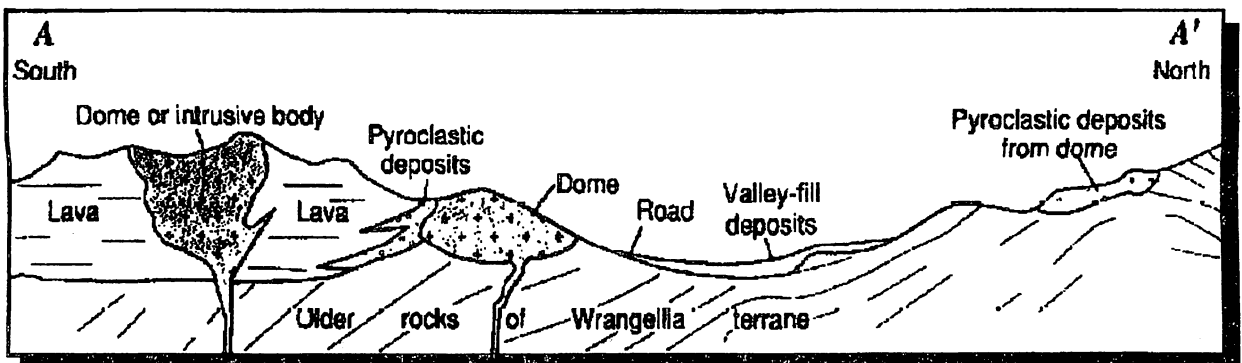
of the old gold-mining camp of Nabesna at lat 62°24' N., long 143°08' W. Shown on U.S. Geological Survey Nabesna B-5 quadrangle map.

**Height.**— Central high point, 7,125 ft (2,172 m). A 4-mi (6.5 km)-long, high ridge attains a height of 7,265 ft (2,214 m) 25 mi (4 km) southeast of this central high point.

**Volcanic history.**— The earliest known eruptive activity of Skookum Creek volcano was the production of a series of basalt flows about 32 million years ago, followed by voluminous andesite flows that continued until about 2 million years ago, when most eruptive activity ceased. During the early period (3 million years ago) of andesitic volcanism, several dacite and rhyolite domes were emplaced around the periphery of the volcano. These domes, which form an approximate circle about 9 mi (145 km) in diameter, may reflect the leakage of magma along the walls of a subsiding caldera. If a caldera did form, then the younger (2-27 million

years old) andesite flows, which form an extensive flat-lying sequence throughout most of the central part of the volcanic edifice, may represent intracaldera fill. A few small basalt cinder cones that still show original morphology lie scattered over the eroded volcanic surface. These relatively young cones, which postdate Skookum Creek eruptive activity by at least 1 million years, probably are not part of the volcanic system responsible for the formation of Skookum Creek volcano.

**Best viewing.**— The last 10 mi (16 km) of the Nabesna Road (about miles 32-42) follows a 2-mi (3 km)-wide valley that cuts through the northeastern part of the volcano. The road skirts two large domes on the volcano's flank and affords spectacular views of various volcanic rocks. Also, hikers can take short (less than 3 mi [5 km]) treks into side valleys, where the rocks and their structures can be observed in detail.



Cross section through Skookum Creek volcano, showing some hypothetical subsurface features.

# Copper River & Northwestern runs again!

## Ron Simpson does it again—this time it's the railroad

BY RICK KENYON

**T**he Bonanza Mine is not the only McCarthy-Kennicott area historical feature to live again in miniature—now the CR&NW railway is getting up a head of steam.

"It is a 1:24 scale model—twice the size of the old "O" scale Lionels of the 1950's, and all that much more exciting," says Ron Simpson, owner of this unique model railroad.

Ron has recently moved from Fairbanks to Copper Center, where he runs the Copper Center Bar. The model railroad can be seen there, as

well as photographs and historical artifacts dealing with the Kennicott and McCarthy area.

Ron's model of the Bonanza mine is on display in Glennallen at the National Bank of Alaska. It will stay there until it's moved to the State Fair in Palmer.

Ron is working on an in-depth story of the original CR&NW for our next issue. Don't miss it!

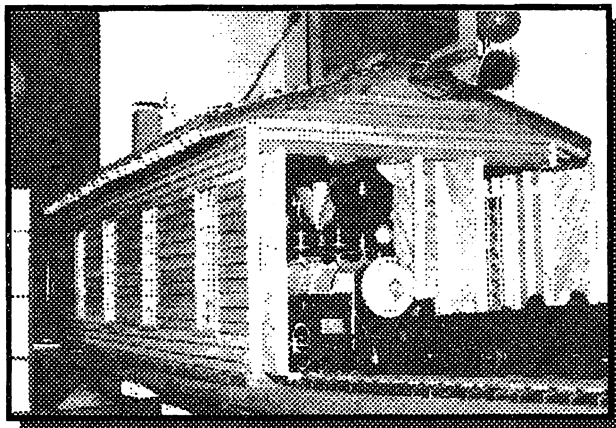


photo courtesy Ron Simpson

The two-bay locomotive repair facility at Chitina. The building had at least two transformations over the years and was finally painted the traditional red with white trim.

Engine #50 was the original locomotive, built in 1881, shipped to Alaska for the "Home Railroad" at Valdez (which never went anywhere!). It was purchased by Mike Heney for his Cordova Railway route which he sold to the Guggenheim syndicate.

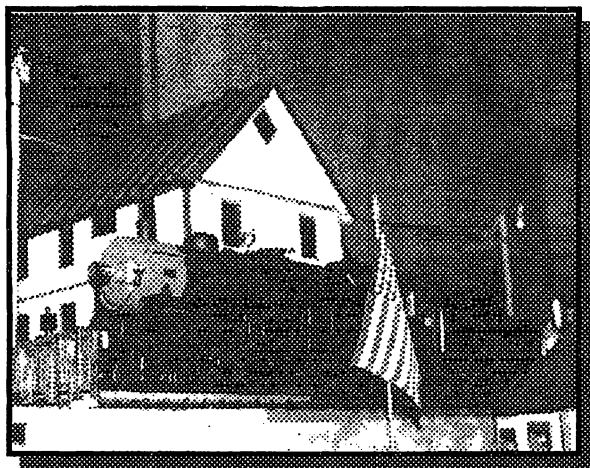


photo courtesy Ron Simpson

Engine #70 will be one of the workhorses on the model, just as the original 95-ton Mikado-type locomotives #70, 71, 72, 73 and 74 were for most of the years of operation of the CR&NW Railway. Staff house is in background, a 48-star flag flies in foreground.

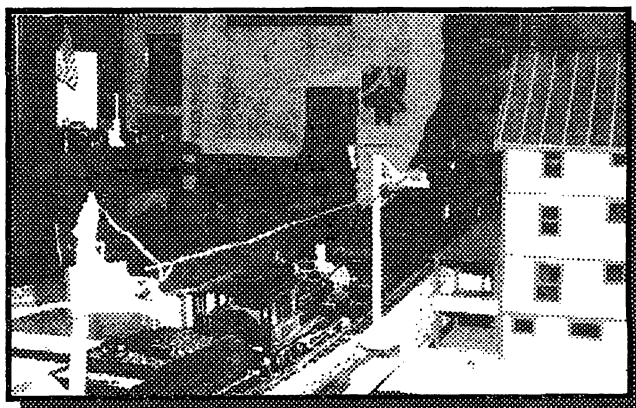


photo courtesy Ron Simpson

Rear of staff house, superintendent's residence. Engine #100 and #70. Engines 100, 101 & 102 were purchased during railroad construction, and were generally used for light duty thereafter.

## DEC Warns of PSP in uncertified shellfish

ANCHORAGE - Shellfish gatherers are being forewarned again about the dangers of paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) from clams and mussels gathered on uncertified beaches across Alaska.

"Don't eat shellfish from uncertified beaches. That's the official word," said Mike Ostasz, DEC's shellfish program manager. "The risks are real from clams or mussels from uncertified beaches, and the department advises against them."

Ostasz said that a report from state health officials two years ago showed 117 outbreaks of sickness from PSP since 1973. There were fifteen cases of paralytic shellfish poisoning in 1994, including the death of a Kodiak resident. The toxin can be present at any time in Alaska marine environments, Ostasz said.

The DEC warning does not apply to commercially-grown and harvested clams, mussels, other shellfish, crab, or shrimp available in grocery stores and restaurants. These shellfish are tested regularly before marketing.

"The safest thing is to buy your shellfish from retail outlets, because their supplies must come from tested beaches," Ostasz said.

PSP strikes a few people in Alaska nearly every year after collecting and eating shellfish from beaches in different parts of the state. PSP occurs widely in Alaska, and the only beaches the department can "certify" as safe shellfish collecting areas are those where state certified testing of clams and mussels are done on a regular basis.

Certified beaches include: Halibut Cove Lagoon, Jakolof Bay, Kasitsna Bay (McDonald Spit), Tutka Bay, Chugachik Island, Sadie Cove and Polly Creek and Crescent River. All of these beaches are located in the Cook Inlet and Kachemak Bay area.

Paralytic shellfish poison comes from algae that are a food source for filter-feeding shellfish like clams and mussels. The shellfish store the toxin from the algae in their tissues. The toxin can be present even when there is no visible discoloration, or so-called "red tides" in the ocean water. There is no home test outside the laboratory

that is accurate in determining the presence of PSP.

The toxin also has been found in crab viscera in recent years, and the department cautions consumers of crab to make sure they gut their crab and that none of the viscera is consumed. The rest of the crab is considered safe.

Symptoms of PSP may appear soon after ingestion, perhaps in less than an hour. Initial symptoms commonly are a tingling or numbness in the lips and tongue, often followed by tingling and numbness in the fingertips and toes. These symptoms may progress to loss of muscle coordination.

Other symptoms may be dizziness, weakness, drowsiness and incoherence. While there is not antidote for the toxin, it is important that vomiting be induced at the first sign of the onset of symptoms, and medical attention should be sought. Death can result from respiratory paralysis within 12 hours of eating PSP-contaminated clams.

For further information, please contact Mike Ostasz, Division of Environmental Health in Anchorage at 269-7638.

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# Trees of Alaska

A tree is defined as a woody plant having an erect trunk at least three inches in diameter. Trees are at least 12 feet tall when mature. There are branches and leaves, called a crown at the top of the tree. (A fire is said to "crown" when it spreads from the ground into the tops of trees. Once there, it can spread much more rapidly than it can moving across the ground).

Alaska has only 33 native tree species, far fewer than grow in all of the lower 48 states. Of these 33 species, 12 can exceed 70 feet in height, five grow between 30 and 70 feet tall and 16 are less than 30 feet tall when mature. Here are some interesting facts about some of Alaska's trees:

**Western hemlock:** Also called Pacific Hemlock, west coast hemlock.

Western Hemlock covers about two-thirds of southeast Alaska's forest. It is one of the state's primary commercial species, providing high quality wood fiber for both lumber and dissolving pulp.

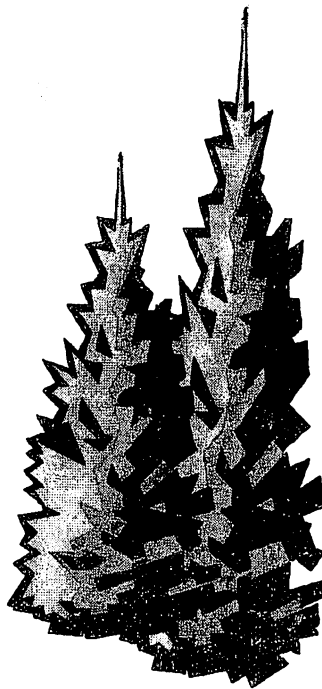
Mature western hemlock trees stand 100 to 150 feet tall and have trunks from 2 to 5 feet in diameter. A few hemlocks are more than 1,000 years old, though the species generally lives from 200 to 500 years.

Hemlock is ideally suited to coastal southeast Alaska. It tolerates shade well and in its youth is able to grow beneath the canopies of taller, older trees. Its range extends south through British Columbia into western Oregon, western Washington and northern

California. It is also found in northwest Montana.

**Sitka spruce:** Also called tideland spruce, yellow spruce, western spruce or coast spruce.

The Sitka spruce is Alaska's state tree. It is an impressive tree by any standard. Some live to be 750 years old. The biggest of them top 225 feet and are more than ten feet in diameter at their bases.



About one-fourth of southeast Alaska's forest is covered with Sitka spruce. They grow best from sea level to 1,500 feet elevation and are the only conifers on Afognak and Kodiak islands. Sitka spruce is a prolific seed producer, so replanting after harvest is almost never necessary.

Growth rings in old-growth spruce are usually spaced close together, producing strong, fine-grained wood that is highly prized by guitar and piano makers as well as boat and glider builders. Spruce's high strength-to-weight ratio made it especially valuable to aircraft

manufacturers during the first and second world wars.

**Western red cedar:** Also called canoe cedar, shinglewood, Pacific red cedar and arborvitae.

The southern half of the Alaska Panhandle marks the northern limit of Western red cedar, which ranges south along the coast to California and east into Montana. In Alaska, the tree can top 150 feet in height, though most are 70 to 100 feet tall. Their bases are usually 2 to 4 feet in diameter, but some 9-foot bases have been reported. The oldest red cedars sometime live 800 years.

Western red cedar has a distinctive, pleasant aroma and, because of its chemical makeup, it is quite resistant to disease. Natives made totem poles and canoes from the tree. Today, it is used commercially for shakes, shingles, utility poles and light construction. It can also be pulped, using the kraft process.

**Alaska-cedar:** Also known as yellow cedar, Alaska yellow cedar, Alaska cypress, Nootka false-cypress, cypress.

Alaska cedar is scattered from Prince William Sound south along the coast to northern California, with concentrations on Baranoff and Chichagof islands south of Glacier Bay. The tree grows slowly, usually to a height of 40 to 80 feet, though a few 120 feet tall and 8 feet in diameter have been reported.

Natives fashioned canoe paddles from Alaska cedar, but today the durable, aromatic wood is used in boats, windows, exterior doors and furniture.

**White spruce:** Also called western white spruce, Canadian spruce, Alberta spruce, Porsild spruce.

White spruce is the most abundant and most important

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tree species in the Alaska Interior. Commonly, it grows 40 to 70 feet tall and is 6 to 18 inches in diameter. On the best growing sites, it can reach 115 feet tall and 30 inches in diameter.

White spruce is a favorite among log home builders because it is strong, light weight and perfectly sized for log home construction.

The species ranges from the Chugach Mountains to the Brooks Range, then south and east into Canada and the Great Lakes States. In Alaska, white spruce is more slender and spire-like than varieties found in Canada or the Great Lakes region.

How to identify white spruce: The needles are sharp and stiff, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, blue-green with whitish lines on all sides. They grow on all sides of their twigs but are concentrated on top near the ends. The twigs are themselves hairless, orange-brown, with rough peg-like bases where twigs once grew. The outer bark is thin, gray and smooth and the inner bark is whitish. The wood is white, and the cones are stalkless and cylindrical. They are  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches long, shiny light brown, with thin, flexible scales.

**Black spruce:** Also known as bog spruce or swamp spruce.

Black spruce range between the Chugach Mountains and the Brooks Range. They favor cold, wet areas, especially north facing slopes and muskegs: and they can tolerate permafrost better than most other tree species. They rarely grow more than 30 feet tall, and many never top 15 feet. Their trunks are 3 to 6 inches in diameter.

How to identify black spruce: Their needles are pointed,  $\frac{1}{4}$  to

$\frac{5}{8}$  inch long, ashy blue-green with whitish lines on all sides, spreading on all sides of the twig. The twigs are slender, covered with short, reddish hairs, becoming brown and rough from peg-like bases where needles once grew. The outer bark is thin, composed of gray or dark gray scales, brown underneath. The inner bark is yellowish, and the wood is light yellow with very fine growth rings, which attest to the species' slow growth. The cones are round or egg-shaped,  $\frac{5}{8}$  to



$1\frac{1}{4}$  inch long, gray or black, curving downward on short stalks.

**Paper birch:** Also known as white birch or canoe birch.

Paper birch is one of North America's most widely distributed tree species. It ranges from Pennsylvania and Iowa north through Canada and across Alaska's interior to the Seward Peninsula. In Alaska it commonly grows 20 to 60 feet tall with a 4 to 12 inch trunk.

There are three species of paper birch in Alaska, each with a different range: Alaska paper

birch grows in the Interior; western paper birch grows in southeast Alaska; and Kenai birch grows on the Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island and the Kenai Peninsula.

Natives used the tree's smooth bark to make canoes and baskets. Today, only a small amount is harvested commercially. It is used by wood carvers and furniture and toy makers. Some is also used for handles, toothpicks, veneer, and its sap is sometimes tapped to make birch syrup.

**Balsam poplar:** Also called cottonwood, tacamahac, tacamahacpoplar and (erroneously) balm of Gilead.

Balsam poplar is the largest hardwood found in the Alaska Interior. It thrives in river valleys throughout the Interior, in northern southeast Alaska, across the Brooks Range and even along the Arctic Slope. Where its range overlaps with that of black cottonwood, the two species hybridize, which explains why the two species are often mistaken for one another.

In Alaska, balsam poplar commonly grows 30 to 50 feet tall, though some top 100 feet. Mature trunks are from four inches to two feet in diameter. The wood is used primarily as fuel for heating and cooking, and only infrequently in lumber manufacturing. Commercial use is confined to the lower 48 states, where it is used to make crates, pallets, boxes and plywood.

**Black cottonwood:** Also known as balsam cottonwood, Pacific poplar, northern black cottonwood.

Black cottonwood is the largest broadleaf tree species growing in Alaska. It grows rapidly and frequently attains a

height of 80 to 100 feet, with trunks 30 or more inches in diameter. It grows in lowlands, large river valleys and glacial outwash plains in southern and southeast Alaska; and its wood is sometimes used in log home construction or for lumber or pulp. It is sometimes mistaken for balsam poplar.

**Quaking aspen:** Also known as American aspen, trembling aspen and popple.

Quaking aspen are a common sight on south-facing slopes, benches and creek bottoms throughout the Alaska interior and south to the Lynn Canal area in southeastern Alaska.

Aspen grow rapidly, reaching a height of 20 to 40 feet, with 3 to 12-inch diameter trunks. After fire, they can propagate quickly from root suckers, often resulting in pure stands that continue to grow for up to 100 years.

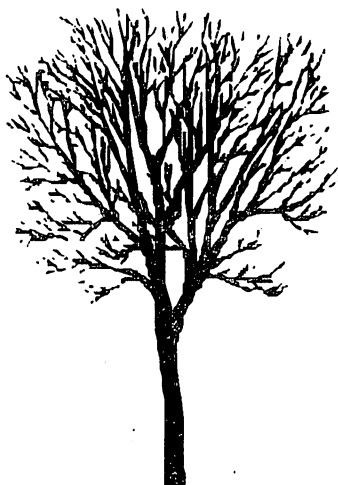
Although not used commercially in Alaska, aspen is increasingly popular in the lower 48 states where it is pulped, cut for lumber, used as packing material, compressed into wafer board and made into match sticks.

**Tamarack:** Also known as Alaska larch, eastern larch and hackmatack.

Tamarack is the only Alaskan conifer that sheds its needles. Tamarack commonly grows to a height of 30 to 60 feet and occasionally reaches 75 feet. The trunks are from 10 to 13 inches in diameter. They grow well along the Tanana, Yukon, Kuskokwim and Koyukuk rivers. The wood of the Tamarack is very durable and is frequently used for fence posts, railroad ties and poles.

**Alder:** Also known as Sitka alder, thinleaf alder, red alder.

At least one species of alder can be found in most forested areas in Alaska. They produce large numbers of tiny seeds that are easily carried many miles by wind. As a result, alder is one of the first trees to colonize sterile mineral soil exposed by floods and melting glaciers. They also



provide a critical link in the forest succession process by fixing atmospheric nitrogen, converting it into chemical compounds necessary for plant growth. Their leaves, which drop every fall, further enrich the soil.

Alder is shade intolerant and dies out when conifers, usually spruce, overtop it. When large alders are involved, this stage in forest succession can take many years because they grow much faster than spruce. In some areas foresters deliberately kill alder to give spruce room to grow.

Alder wood is used for poles, wood carvings, firewood and to smoke fish.

#### Willow:

Eight species of willow grow to tree size in Alaska. They are: littletree willow; scouler willow, also called mountain, black or fire willow; bebb willow, also

called diamond or beak willow; feltleaf willow; Sitka willow; grayleaf willow; Pacific willow, also called western black or yellow willow; and hooker willow, also called bigleaf or Yukutat willow.

Willow has little if any commercial value, but in some parts of Alaska it is the only firewood source. It is an important food source for moose and other wildlife.

Littletree willow is one of the most common kinds of willow growing in Alaska. It is found in dense thickets along waterways throughout the Interior, where it reaches a height of 30 feet.

Scouler willow is most common in southeast and south-central Alaska. It is also called fire willow because it rapidly revegetates burned areas. Its bark is an important food source for moose.

Bebb willow grows on the uplands in interior Alaska, and is also an important food source for moose and other wildlife. The same is true of feltleaf willow, which grows throughout Alaska from the coastal islands to the Arctic Slope.

Sitka willow is found mostly in southeast and southcentral Alaska and is frequently used to smoke fish.

Grayleaf willow grows mainly as a shrub and is found throughout Alaska except for the Aleutians and parts of the Panhandle. Like fire willow, it is frequently the first tree to colonize burned areas.

Pacific willow is found mainly along rivers in interior Alaska and the northern southeastern region. It rarely tops 20 feet here, but in the lower 48 states, 60-foot-tall Pacific willows are common.

Hooker willow is perhaps the least common of Alaska's willows. It is common to the Yukutat area but rare elsewhere.

Other tree species found in Alaska include: Mountain hemlock, similar to western hemlock but less common in Alaska; lodgepole pine, also

called shore pine, scrub pine and tamarack pine; subalpine fir and Pacific silver fir, both rare in Alaska; Pacific yew and Sitka mountain-ash, also rare in Alaska; Douglas maple, the only maple native to the state; Oregon crab apple, used for hand tools and to smoke fish; Pacific red elder, common along

the Alaska coast from Ketchikan to the tip of the Panhandle; Green mountain-ash, common in southcentral and southeast Alaska; and Pacific serviceberry, which produces a sweet berry that can be eaten raw and is frequently used in jams, puddings and biscuits. It is also dried like a raisin.

## Postal Service and bridge both turn 25

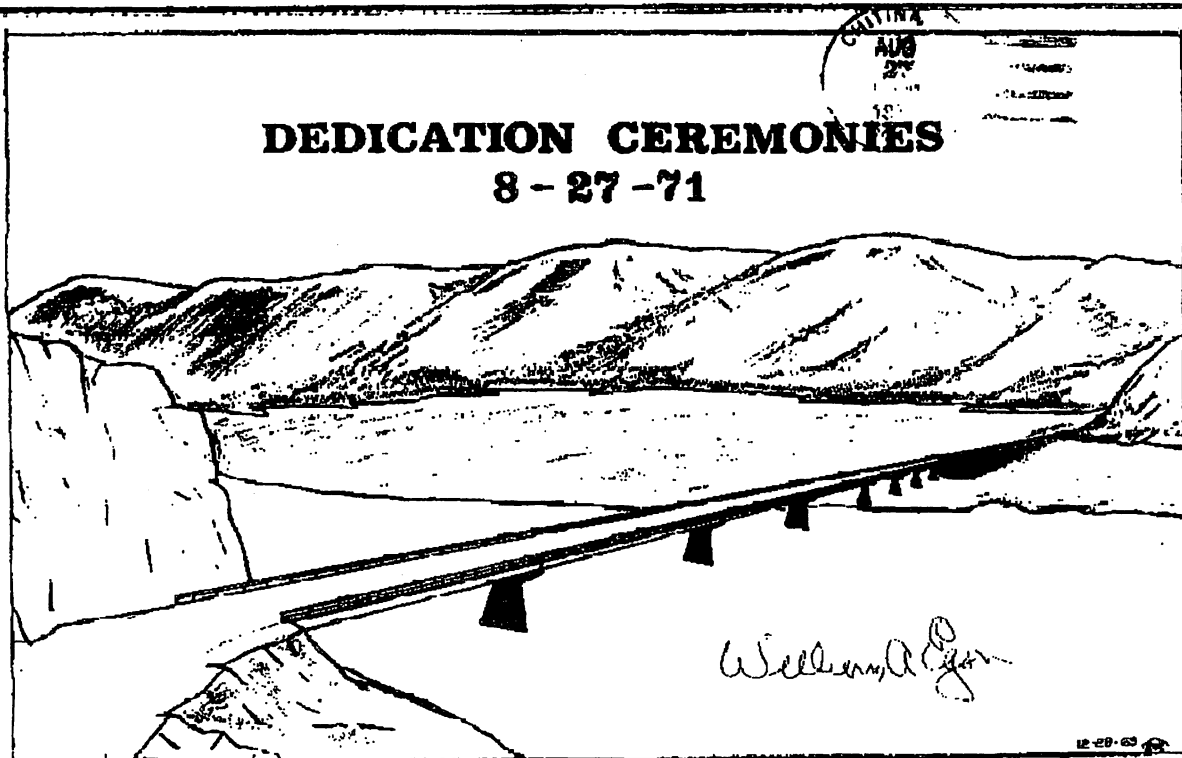
The U.S. Postal Service will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on July 1, 1996. The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 was signed into law in August 1970 by President Richard Nixon, and became effective July 1, 1971.

The creation of the U.S. Postal Service marked a

milestone in the nation's postal system, a departure from the political bureaucracy of the past. It became an independent establishment of the government, with a mandate to provide efficient and effective service to the American public.

Another anniversary of

interest to our readers is that of the Copper River Bridge at Chitina. The 1,378' two lane steel girder bridge was dedicated August 27, 1971. Below is a reproduction of a commemorative poster of the event, signed by then Governor William A. Egan. Thanks to Adina Knutsen for sharing the poster with us.



### COPPER RIVER BRIDGE CHITINA

DRAYO CORPORATION

STEEL GIRDER BRIDGE

LENGTH 1,378'

WILLIAM A. EGAN  
Governor

B.A. CAMPBELL  
Commissioner of Hwys.

# A simple bush water system

BY RICK KENYON

For 19 of our 20 years of Alaskan "bush living," our water supply came from the creeks that flow near our homestead. The "summer creek," located on our property, is very convenient, but unfortunately it only runs from late May until October. Then we had to haul water from the "winter creek" located about a quarter mile away and up a fairly steep hillside.

Summertime, the living was easy—we piped the water into the cabin, and natural gravity gave us sufficient pressure to have running water in the kitchen. Baths were in the "bath house," where we heated the water on a wood stove. Winter was another story. We had to haul the water in 6 gallon containers, and since the hill was too steep to comfortably use a snow machine we pulled a little plastic sled like the kids use. One person *could* do it, but it was much safer with a second person holding the "brake," a rope tied to the rear of the sled. Since water weighs in the neighborhood of 8 pounds per gallon, two containers (100 lb.) was about the limit per trip. Bath days required several hours and several armloads of wood to heat the bath house to a comfortable temperature. Sometimes we melted snow in order to save hauling a few loads from the hillside.

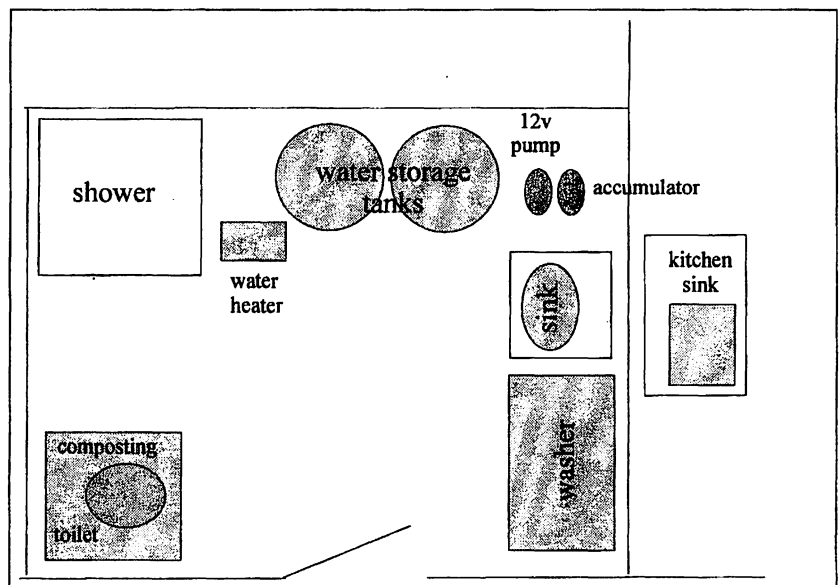
Last year several of us on the "west side" got together and had a well driller come to this area. (WSEN Sept/Oct '95 issue) We were very fortunate and hit a good supply of water at the minimum 40' level. Now, how to

take advantage of the year around supply without being able to call a plumber to install the system, or repair it once it was in?

Since most of us in the McCarthy area do not have electricity 24 hours a day, we decided the pump must be 12 volt DC. (We do have a power inverter, but choose not to leave it on as it makes a lot of "radio noise," interfering with AM and short-wave radio reception, as well as CB radio.) After talking to several people more knowl-

that have "on demand" switches, so that when you open a tap the pump starts. In order to keep the pump from cycling on and off rapidly, we also used a small accumulator (air tank) designed for motor home use.

The rest of the system is pretty standard, and I'm sure a "real" plumber could have done the installation in a few hours. We designed our bathroom so that the shower, sink and washing machine are close together in order to keep supply and drain lines as short as possible. (The kitchen sink is on the other side of the wall from the bathroom sink.) A towel closet over the water storage tanks



edgeable than ourselves, we opted for a storage type system completely inside the cabin in order to minimize freezing problems during our long and sometimes extremely cold winters.

Two 55 gallon plastic drums serve as storage. We only pump from one of them, but a siphon hose automatically keeps the water level in the two drums equalized. J.C. Whitney, as well as several trailer supply stores in Anchorage, carry 12 volt pumps

also houses the water pump and accumulator.

We installed an "on demand" type water heater that is fueled with propane. It does not require as much space as the storage type heaters, and is more efficient as you do not need to keep a large tank of water heated at all times. Our unit is a Bosch. Other popular brands are Palermo and Aqua Star. They are more expensive than tank type heaters, but

should make up the difference in lower fuel costs.

We talked with a contractor about installing a septic system and found that it would cost \$5,000 - \$6,000 for an approved system, which was out of our price range. For less than \$1,500 we installed a composting toilet that requires no septic system, and does not use any water at all. (Several models are available. Some use minimal amounts of water.) Since no sewer would be going into the system, we were able to use a simple drain field consisting of a

55 gallon drum buried about 6 feet deep and surrounded by rocks, which has proved to be very satisfactory even with last winters extended cold spell and not much insulating snow cover.

Several options are available for supply line plumbing. Plastic, rigid and soft copper are three that I am familiar with. Rigid copper requires some knowledge of soldering. With soft copper, you can use either flare or compression fittings. The newer plastic systems require little in the way of tools or knowledge, but are slightly more expensive.

I used a mix of rigid and hard copper.

It's hard to describe the pleasure of taking a shower any time, day or night, without spending several hours preparation. Or the pleasure of having the composting toilet on -40 degree nights, instead of using the frosty outhouse! After nearly 20 years of bush living, we are almost at the comfort level folks enjoyed at Kennicott in the 1920's, with their steam heat and 24 hour a day electricity!

## Quick action

### Three cheers to DOT for speedy response!

BY RICK KENYON

If you have not yet read the Guest Editorial on page 42, please stop here, go and read it, then come back.

In order to be fair to the Department of Transportation (DOT), we shared the editorial, as well as our article on page 5 concerning the McCarthy Road

hazards, with DOT District Maintenance Supervisor George LeVasseur in Valdez a few days before we went to press.

Mr. LeVasseur hopped into his truck and drove the McCarthy Road, checking out the areas described in the article.

LeVasseur told me that the legislature had approved some



funding for rural road brushing projects which will become available July 1. "Starting about the week of July 8, a side-arm brush cutter will work on the areas from Chitina to mile 26, which is the worst part of the road," said LeVasseur. "At the same time our grader will be working from the Kennicott area to the Lakina River."

## Who owns the road?

### DOT says McCarthy-Kennicott Road ends at lower gate

BY RICK KENYON

In a recent letter to Rick Jurick, who had requested a clarification of right of way status through the Kennicott Mill Site, Right of Way Engineer John F. Bennett said that "It is our opinion that the public's interest in the McCarthy-Kennicott road ends where the road crossed into Mineral Survey No 770."

The reasoning: The Kennicott Mineral Survey No. 770 (the mill site area) was patented in December of 1910, and the railroad was not completed until 1911. So, when the railroad gave the right of way to the U.S. government, it did not include the part of the road through the Kennicott property itself.

This in spite of the 1959 "Omnibus Act" Quitclaim Deed

which lists the "McCarthy-Kennicott Road" as being "From McCarthy north to Kennicott. Length 6.0 miles." The Omnibus Act QCD conveyed whatever interest the federal government had in the road system, but apparently did not guarantee that a valid right of way existed.

# Nelchina caribou hunting opportunity

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game describe plan to save the Nelchina herd and give hunters increased access to caribou**

The Nelchina caribou herd, which spends most of its time roaming the high basin surrounded by the Talkeetna, Chugach, Wrangell and Alaska mountains, long has been an important wildlife resource.

By the mid-1960's, the herd had grown to more than 70,000 animals and then went into a steep decline. By 1972, the population had fallen as low as 10,000 and hunting was restricted to a small number of drawing permits.

Researchers and managers working to restore the herd developed a plan intended to hold the population stable at 40,000 animals rather than allow it to cycle through booms and busts. It now numbers at least 50,000 with another 10,000-12,000 calves expected this spring.

The bulk of the herd has left GMU 13 entirely in each of the last two winters, and three of the last four. Long-distance movements off traditional winter ranges typically are seen in caribou herds that have become very large and are under nutritional stress.

Calf weights, thought to be another indicator of herd health, have dropped substantially lower in the Nelchina herd than in a number of other growing caribou herds across the state.

Because of a 1990 court decision, Nelchina caribou hunting went from drawing permits to Tier II subsistence permits. Since then, the annual harvest

objective for the herd has been met only once. Hunter success, which averaged nearly 70 percent when Nelchina caribou were hunted under drawing permits, has been about 50 percent under Tier II subsistence permits. As a result, each year the number of permits has been increased to try to compensate for the lower success rate and increasing caribou population. Still, harvest objectives have not been met.

If 40,000 caribou is the maximum desirable number, it is essential to reduce the herd to that level and stabilize it there as quickly as possible. Failing to do so runs the risk of a precipitous decline similar to the one which occurred in the early 1970's. Once such a crash begins, there is virtually no management strategy which will slow or reverse the trend.

The continued growth of the Nelchina herd has occurred in part because the harvest of females has been extremely low for many years. The fall harvest typically is 75-80 percent males. The antlered-only winter seasons attempt to focus the harvest on females, but with the herd departing GMU 13 in each of the last two winters, very few females were killed.

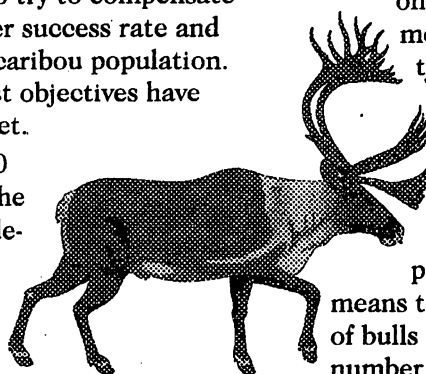
Based on the current population and anticipated production this spring, researchers

and managers believe a harvest of 15,000 caribou in the 1996-97 season would reduce and stabilize the herd at desired levels.

The Nelchina herd cannot withstand the harvest likely in a general season with a bag limit of either a bull or a cow. Based on historic harvests, most of the animals taken in such a hunt would be bulls and the ratio of bulls to cows already is declining.

**TIER II:** Tier II permits provide a means to limit the harvest of bulls by restricting the number of permits. The Alaska Board of Game has authorized issuance of 10,000 Tier II permits for bull caribou. A resulting harvest of 5,000 bulls is anticipated. Tier II permits will be awarded as they have in the past, based on scoring of an application designed to measure the hunter's historic use of Nelchina caribou and the availability of alternative food resources.

Recipients of Tier II permits also will be eligible to take cows, although the bag limit will remain at one, either a bull or a cow. Tier II applicants automatically will be sent a cow permit unless they indicate on their applications they don't want one.



Given the need to harvest a large number of cows to reduce and stabilize the population, all other Alaska residents will be able to hunt for cow caribou under what is known as a Tier I subsistence hunt. Permits can be obtained by mail by filling out an application based only on residency. It is unclear how many hunters might apply, but given historic harvest rates it would take 20,000 hunters to take the 10,000 cows needed to reduce and stabilize the herd.

While the intent of the Tier I season is to harvest a substantial number of cows, some hunters will have difficulty distinguishing between cows and young bulls. To minimize enforcement problems, hunters will be allowed to harvest a cow or young bull, based on antler configuration. Any caribou with six or less points (tines)

on one antler will be legal. A point is defined as an antler projection longer than it is wide when measured one inch from the tip.

The fall season for Tier II permittees will begin Aug. 1, along with a cow season for archery or muzzle loading rifles. The primitive weapons season will run through Aug. 9. The any-weapon cow hunt will begin Aug. 10. When applying for a Tier I cow permit, hunters will be asked whether they want to hunt Aug. 10-Aug. 31 or Sept. 1-20. Their permits will be good for only one of those fall periods in an effort to avoid crowding.

The Tier II bull season will continue uninterrupted through Sept. 20.

The season for all hunters will be closed Sept. 21-Oct. 20 to avoid the rut.

The season will reopen for all hunters Oct. 21 to provide more opportunity to harvest caribou in GMU-13, even if the herd departs eastward as it has the past several years. The Tier II will run without further interruption through the end of March. Depending on the fall harvest, the Tier I season could be closed at some point by emergency order, but would be scheduled to run through March.

For most of the Alaska public, this will provide for at least a year or two of caribou hunting opportunity unmatched in GMU 13 since the early 1970's. Once the herd has been reduced and stabilized, hunting opportunity again will be restricted to 7,000-8,000 Tier II permits issued annually.

## NBS announces free computer CD

**Free Geographic information for the Prince William Sound-Copper River Region available from the National Biological Service.**

The National Biological Service announces the availability of the "Prince William Sound-Copper River Integrated Ecosystem GIS" on compact disc. The compact disc contains 35 spatial datasets for the Prince William Sound-Copper River region and software (ArcView 1.0) which allows the

data to be viewed. Datasets on the disc include the coastline, bathymetry, elevation, land cover, vegetation and shoreline oiling from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. System requirements include a PC (386 or higher), Microsoft Windows 3.0 to 3.11, and 4 MB of RAM (minimum, 12 MB highly recommended).

The compact disc, which is available at no charge, can be obtained by contacting: Karen Oakley, National Biological Service, Alaska Science Center, 1011 E. Tudor Rd., Anchorage, AK, 99503, phone: 786-3579, fax: 786-3636 or email: karen\_oakley@nbs.gov.

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### Public Service News Announcement

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#### **McCarthy celebrates the 4<sup>th</sup> on the 6<sup>th</sup>.**

A parade, various outdoor games and special events are scheduled in downtown McCarthy on Saturday, July 6<sup>th</sup>.

Many of the games and events are being sponsored by the local businesses to help raise funds for the McCarthy Area Council, says Richard Villa, coordinator of the events.

Anyone wishing to participate or get more detailed information, may contact Richard at 554-4445.

## ***We have moved to better serve you!***

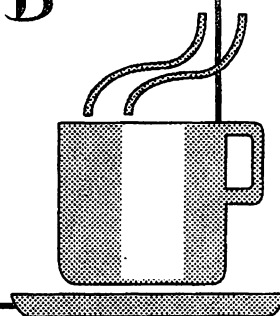
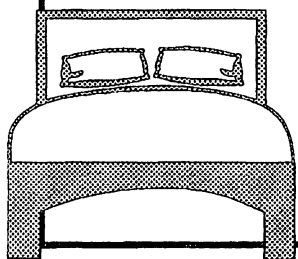
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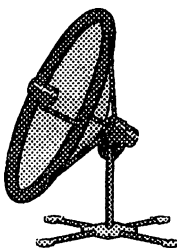


The New

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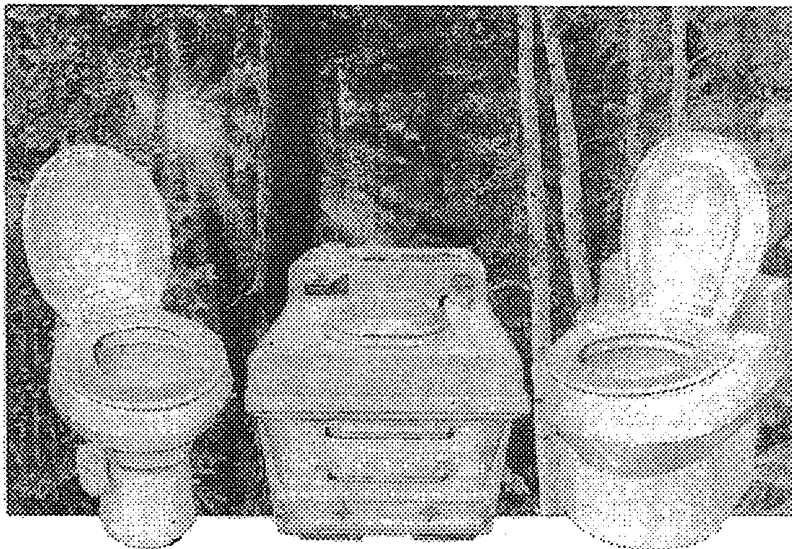
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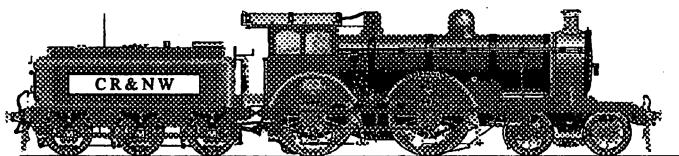
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# Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

The salmon run up the Copper River is going strong. It's been a good year for the commercial fishermen out on the Delta, and I hear that the fishing in Chitina has been really good, too. We've been eating a lot of salmon that we just throw on the barbecue, but here are a few recipes that are a little fancier, and a couple to help use up that leftover salmon.

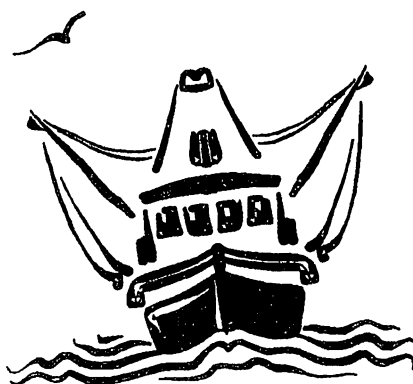
*This is a good recipe when you want to impress someone, and it's actually pretty easy.*

## Cream Cheese Stuffed Salmon Steaks

- 6 one inch red salmon steaks (or king)
- 4 oz. low-fat cream cheese
- 2 Tbsp. grated parmesan cheese
- 1 Tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 Tbsp. chopped green onion
- 3 Tbsp. melted butter
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste

Rinse salmon with cold water; pat dry with paper towels. Through the round part of each salmon steak, make a cut to the center bone, creating a pocket for stuffing. Set aside. Combine cheeses, parsley, basil, and green onion; blend well. Divide into six equal portions. Form each portion into a flat oval. Place one oval into pocket in each steak. Fasten openings closed with toothpicks. Place salmon on well-greased broiler pan. Combine butter, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Baste salmon with butter mixture. Broil 4-5 inches from heat for

4-5 minutes; turn. Baste again and cook an additional 4-5 minutes, or until salmon flakes easily when tested with a fork.



*This is a good recipe for leftover salmon.*

## Salmon Tacos

- about 1 pound cooked salmon, flaked
- 1 cup prepared salsa
- 12 taco shells
- 1 cup refried beans
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 cups shredded lettuce
- 3/4 cup chopped tomatoes

Mix flaked salmon with salsa and set aside. Fill taco shells with beans and cheese, dividing evenly. Arrange shells in baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for about 8 minutes or until cheese is melted and beans are heated through. Fill each shell with lettuce, tomatoes, and salmon mixture. Serve at once.

*I just love rosemary on fish, hope you have some growing fresh in your garden!*

## Rosemary Red Salmon

- 6 red salmon fillets, about 1 inch thick
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 5 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary
- 5 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tsp. paprika
- salt and pepper to taste

Arrange salmon in a shallow pan. Whisk remaining ingredients and pour over salmon. Cover tightly and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Remove fillets from marinade, and place on broiling pan. Broil 5-6 inches from heat for about ten minutes, or until it flakes when tested with a fork.

*This recipe is from Deb Eckly in Cordova, and was printed in the Cordova Times in an article with recipes from the Future Fishers of America. I used leftover cooked salmon; Deb used a 7 3/4 ounce can salmon.*

## Salmon Salad

- about 2 cups flaked cooked salmon
- 2 Tbsp. sour cream
- 2 Tbsp. mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped green onions
- 1 small clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. parsley, finely chopped
- 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped

Mix all ingredients; garnish with parsley sprig and sliced tomato.

Wilderness rafting in the  
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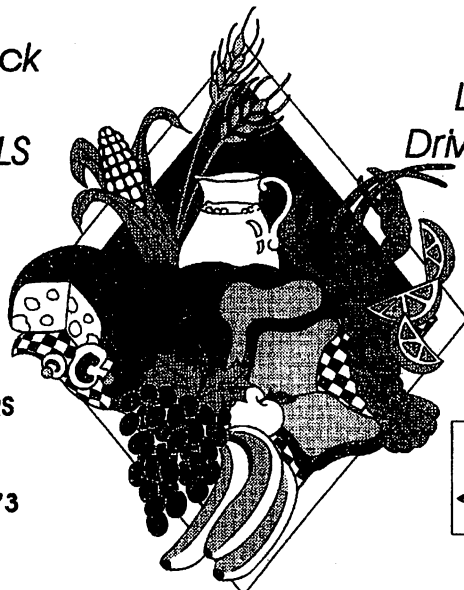
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# A look at the weather

BY GEORGE CEBULA

As in past years, April saw the end of a long winter and the departure of the snow cover. April '96 was a little on the cool side to go along with the cold winter of '95-96. The high temperature for the month was 56 on the 17th (65 on Apr. 27, '95 and 63 on Apr. 26, '94). The low was -17 on the 3rd (10 on Apr. 7, '95 and 13 on Apr. 13, '94). The average temperature for April was 32.2 compared to 36.9 in '95 and 37.4 in '94. *Silver Lake had a high of 57 on the 18th (63 on Apr. 28, '95 and 64 on Apr. 26, '94), a low of -17 on the 2nd and 3rd (11 on Apr. 7, '95 and 17 on Apr. 7, '94) and an average temperature of 29.4 (35.8 in '95 and 36.9 in '94).*

The precipitation for April was almost nil with only .01 inches (0.25 in '95 and a trace in '94). Snow was observed a few times during the month, but it only amounted to a trace. *Silver Lake had only a trace of precipitation, the same as '94 (0.16 in '95).*

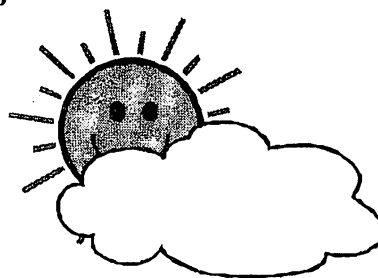
Snow cover at McCarthy was 19 inches on the 1st and melted to zero by the 29th. *Silver Lake was rid of its snow by the 30th after starting April with 16 inches.*

The temperature continued to slowly warm in May, reaching 70 on the 13th. The high temperature for the month was 75 on the 30th (77 on May 11, '95 and 67 on May 16, '94). The low temperature was 21 on the 9th (24 on May 1, '95 and 21 on May 13, '94). The May average temperature 44.5 compared to 47.0 in '95 and 43.6 in '94).

*Silver Lake had a high of 74 on the 31st (73 on May 13, '95 and 67 on May 16, '94), a low of 23 on the 9th (26 on May 17, '95 and 24 on May 8, '94) and an average temperature of 45.2 (46.0 in May '95 and 43.3 in May '94).*

The May precipitation at McCarthy was on the light side with all 0.66 inches falling on the 25th. This compares with 1.05 inches in '95 and 0.14 inches in '94. *Silver Lake recorded 0.32 inches. A little more than the 0.16 inches in '95 and 0.18 inches in '94.*

The first part of June was hot and dry with highs in the 70's and lows occasionally dipping below freezing. The record cold and late arriving snow cover this past winter has kept the ground frozen longer than normal. As of June 8th, the freezing level was just below 27 inches. Summer should be in full swing by late June. June and July are the warmest months with the highs usually in the



low 80s. The temperature begins to cool in

August with highs only getting into the low 70s. The all time high recorded at McCarthy was 87 on June 21, 1991. Freezing temperatures should be back by the end of August, although they can be observed at any time. Average monthly rainfall is about 2 inches (June-August). The first snow should be sometime in late September.

ENJOY THE SUMMER  
WHATEVER THE WEATHER!

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## METAR/TAF debuts

**New system of weather reporting goes into effect July 1st**

BY JOEL D. WILCOX, ALASKAN REGION  
SAFETY PROGRAM MGR

The new Meteorological Aviation Report and Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (METAR/TAF) goes into effect July 1st.

Canada has already implemented the new standard as of June 3rd. With some U.S. exceptions, METAR/TAF adheres to the international standard; statute miles, miles-per-hour, and feet will be used instead of the metric system. To prevent confusion for other countries, U.S. reports will state the unit of measurement. Celsius temperatures will replace Fahrenheit, however. A quick way to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit is to double the Celsius temperature and add 30. Fifteen degrees Celsius doubled is 30. Adding 30 gets 60 degrees Fahrenheit. A more precise conversion yields 59 degrees, but it's close.

Big changes include a reordering of the weather

elements and the use of new weather contractions. Sky coverage is now measured in eighths (or octas), and now includes "few," or one-eighth to two-eighths coverage. Clear skies will be SKC; automated reports will use CLR.

Indefinite ceilings are still spoken as indefinite, but VV (vertical visibility) replaces the W of indefinite and the X of obscuration. It works like this:

If there is complete fog or other total obscuration that prevents any determination of the actual ceiling — an indefinite ceiling — the range that one can see into the phenomena will be used. If one can see 100 feet straight-up into the fog, the report will say VV001. The old WOX0F, meaning indefinite ceiling zero, sky obscured, zero miles visibility in fog, will be replaced with 0 SM FG VV000, or zero statute miles in fog, indefinite ceiling zero. (Under the new system, horizontal

visibility comes first.) Technically speaking, since the smallest unit of measurement of the "triple zeros" is 100 feet and rounded up every 50 feet, VV000 could also mean that one can see up 49 feet. Not particularly useful, but information just the same.

Partial obscuration is now few, scattered, or broken, as in BKN006. Vertical Visibility is not used here, so "broken 600 feet" would mean the bottom of the coverage is 600 feet, just as BKN000 would mean that the bottom of the broken layer is less than 50 feet.

For me, the change in reporting indefinite ceilings and obscurations was probably the most difficult part of METAR/TAF to initially understand. The rest of the changes seem pretty straight forward.

*Thanks to Rickey Davidson, Stan Gerlitz, Leroy Legg and the other folks at Kenai AFSS for their explanations.*

*(Reprinted from the FAA Alaskan Flyer June 1996)*

## New Nome-area paper debuts

Alaska's newest newspaper, The Bering Strait Record, made its debut June 19. The Record is a regional newspaper covering Seward Peninsula communities and is headquartered in Nome.

The tabloid weekly is published by Alaska Newspapers Inc., a rural newspaper chain that publishes seven other weekly newspapers in communities across the state.

"We saw a need for more regional coverage from that area," said Alaska Newspapers Publisher Christopher R. Casati. "With The Record, we hope to fill a niche that has been neglected for some time. Our goal is to put out a quality product and make some new friends along the way."

Staffed by award-winning photojournalist Rob Stapleton and advertising specialist Sandy Amazeen, The Record is

published weekly on Wednesdays.

For subscription or advertising information, please call (907) 443-NEWS or fax (907) 443-5600. To reach The Record via the internet, please send email to: [aknewspr@alaska.net](mailto:aknewspr@alaska.net). Alaska Newspapers Inc. publishes The Arctic Sounder, The Bering Strait Record, The Bristol Bay Times, The Cordova Times, The Dutch Harbor Fisherman, The Seward Phoenix LOG, The Tundra Drums, The Valdez Vanguard and The Bushmaster, a monthly statewide shopper.

# Are we all a bunch of boiled frogs?

## Guest Editorial

BY ED LACHAPPELLE

It is said that if you put a frog in cold water and then very slowly raise the temperature, the frog will never notice until it is too late and he is cooked.

Something similar has been happening with hazards on the McCarthy Road. Over the last fifteen years these have been slowly rising, until we suddenly find ourselves in danger of being cooked by potential accidents every time we drive the road.

A common topic of conversation these days in McCarthy is the narrow escapes and near-misses we have experienced ourselves or hear about from others. An alarming number of hits are also occurring, including collisions, roll-overs or being forced off the road to avoid them. Most recently, a state vehicle collided with a fuel truck this spring. The primary cause is reckless and irresponsible drivers traveling at unsafe speeds on a one-lane road with many blind spots.

Like the frog's warming water, this problem has developed slowly. When I first came to McCarthy in 1980, traveling the road from Chitina took a day and a half. Mud holes, ruts, a beaver pond and other problems made it a fair-weather road. After a heavy rain, you waited a day or two before even trying it. Over the years the hardworking road maintenance crew has done a commendable job of draining

the swamps, installing culverts, adding fill and grading a wider surface wherever possible. Today it is a rough but all weather road. Unfortunately, it is also a road that is being driven in many places at 50 to 60 mph, even though the basic, single lane character still calls for a far more conservative maximum speed of 25 to 30 mph.

And all those blind spots are still there. Printed separately in this issue of the Wrangell-St. Elias News is a list of these places, described and located by milepost. Most obvious from this list is that a big majority of the blind spots are caused by easily removed vegetation.

In recent years this community has repeatedly appealed to DOT&PF to do something about the growing dangers of the McCarthy Road, but these appeals have been repeatedly dismissed while planners focus on a road reconstruction scheduled to begin four or five years from now. But the dangers are here today.

There is a big planning concentration, including a full draft and final EIS, on mitigating the effects an upgraded road will have on this area, this community and the surrounding national park. But the changes this upgrade will bring are less than those we've already experienced from the gradual, decade-long improvements—and these latter changes were brought

about without any planning, study, EIS, public hearings, community input or hardly any thought at all. Where is the mitigation for hazards to life and limb?

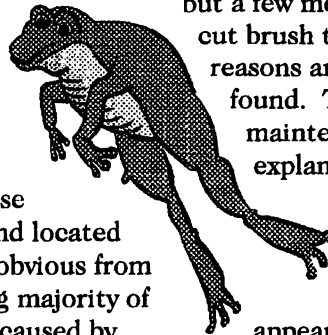
Do we have some kind of double standard at work here? Grandiose plans to improve the motorists's safety and driving pleasure sometime in the future attract big federal megabucks, but a few measly kilobucks to cut brush today for safety reasons are nowhere to be found. The scarcity of state maintenance can be one explanation, but, on the other hand, \$300,000 (93% federal money) quickly appeared to fix 700 feet of road at Long Lake this year.

Why can't serious safety problems be fixed the same way? Does the Federal Highway Administration turn a blind eye to safety? Somebody's priorities seem to be badly skewed.

The state's share of that Long Lake fix was 7%, or \$21,000. A similar amount could go a long way toward cutting brush on the McCarthy Road blind curves and posting warning signs at those places where terrain problems exist. Or does the state also turn a blind eye to safety?

When I spoke with DOT&PF Commissioner Joe Perkins earlier this winter, he told me that he "didn't want an unsafe road on his conscience."

Joe, are you sleeping uneasily these days?



# Letters to the Editor

June 13, 1996

Lynnwood, WA.

Gentlemen:

Please enter our Subscription to the Wrangell St. Elias News as noted on the enclosed form. My check for \$10.00 is enclosed.

Our son, Jeff Gustafson, often spoke about the McCarthy area, and we enjoyed reading the copy of your paper given to us by Mike Christenson of Valdez. Our son was killed in a plane crash in Alaska in August of 1994 together with Gwendolyn Frary of Anchorage. They loved Alaska and all it had to offer.

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to keeping in touch with many areas of Alaska through your publication.

Sincerely,

R. Elaine Gustafson

May 23, 1996

Ogden, UT.

Dear Bonnie,

With reference to the inquiry about info on J. P. Hubrick. I made many trips to McCarthy with my father, (he owned the only automobile in Kennecott.) I of course met many of the McCarthy people including Mr. Hubrick. Back in those days, 60 or 70 years ago kids were to be seen but not heard, so I listened a lot.

J. P. Hubrick was a hunting guide and photographer. He came to McCarthy in 1913 from the Klondike. At Dawson, Hubrick had run a ferry across the Yukon River, which accounted for his universally known title of "Cap." He started one of the first newspapers in McCarthy. It was called the

"Copper Bee." But he was no newspaperman, the Bea lasted only three issues according to my father.

Cap Hubrick was an avid photographer. He ran a store specializing in Kodak cameras and supplies. Hand tinted panoramic photos were his trademark, and are especially valuable now because few survive. Hubrick died in 1930 and most of his negatives were destroyed in one of McCarthy's infamous fires.

I recognized a hand tinted panoramic Hubrick photo of the Million Dollar Bridge at the Copper Center Lodge in 1983. When I visited the lodge in 1990 it was gone. Mrs. Ashby the resident owner and manager reported to me that it had been stolen.

The McCarthy Lodge was the old Hubrick home, formerly owned by Mudhole Smith of Cordova Airlines.

Sincerely,

Jim McGavock

May 4, 1996

Lynnwood, WA.

Dear Bonnie,

I just received the M/J issue of your news...and thought I would have one sent to some clients who are going to stay in McCarthy for two nights. This is something very special as they are not just the usual tourists but four couples who have been friend for years and the common thread is music. The four men are known professionally as "The Four Horsemen" and are a singing quartet who years ago even appeared on the Ed Sullivan

Show (if that means anything to you guys up in McCarthy).

They are all very neat guys and gals who travel together once a year and this year they are doing Alaska. Being McCarthy-Kennicott is my all time favorite I have them with Betty for two nights and on July 10 they will be in the bar/restaurant at the McCarthy Hotel and will do some singing. They are in their early sixties and although I have never heard them, I suspect they will be great fun.

When I thought of sending them the "News"...I thought you might like to know why...and maybe be at the hotel the night they will perform.

Best regards,

Clem Niven

Alaska Northwest Travel Service

June 1, 1996

Anchorage, AK.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for enclosing the "interesting" notice of expiration. I surely wouldn't want to miss a single issue.

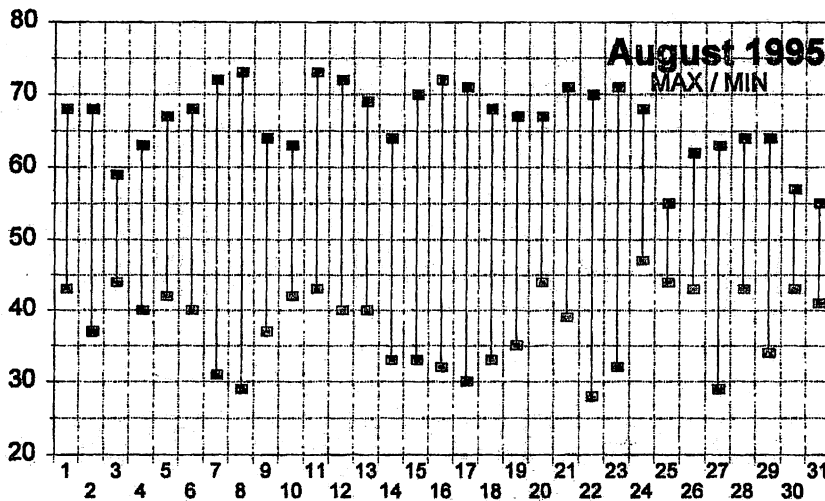
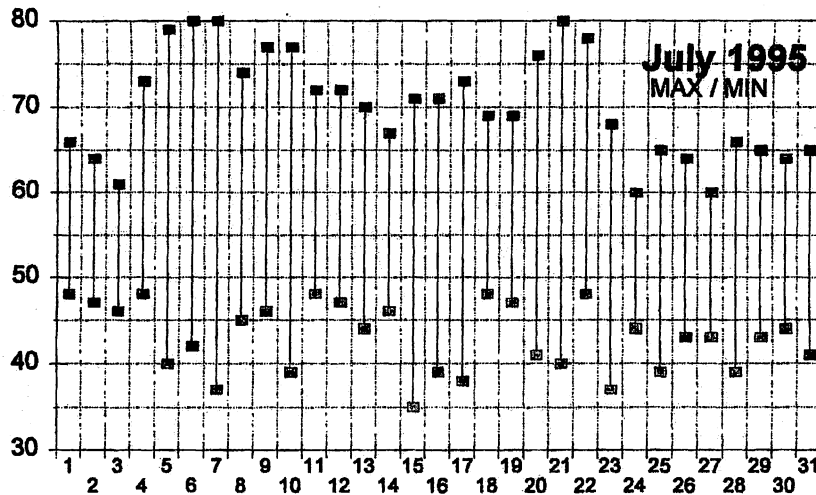
Just returned from a six weeks vacation (trip) to lands "Down Under"—New Zealand (2 weeks) was WONDERFUL and Australia (4 weeks) is fantastic. So-so-so much to see and each state unique and interesting. Fabulous once-in-a-lifetime dream come true.

Hope to return to the Kennicott-McCarthy area too some day.

Yours truly,

Marcella Williams

*Weather - What can we expect?*



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