

# Alaska Anthropological Association Newsletter



**Volume 32, Number 1**

**June 2006**

## **President's Message**

*Polly Wheeler*

It hardly seems possible that a year has gone by since I assumed the helm for the Association. We have accomplished some good things in the past year, though we have some work yet to do. I thought it would be a good time to review a few highlights of Association business in the past year, and give you an idea of what we're looking at for the next 12 months. Before getting into that, however, I'd like to first thank the Alutiiq Museum in general, and specifically Sven Haakanson, Executive Director; Amy Steffian, Deputy Director; Katie St. John, Museum Manager; and Patrick Saltonstall, Curator, for their stellar work in pulling together a fabulous conference. I've heard from all kinds of people since the meetings, and to a person, participants and attendees were thrilled with the talks, the key note speakers, the banquet and the amenities. You can find the conference report on page 6 of this newsletter; I urge you to review it and see how the 2006 annual meeting proceeded financially. Again, a warm and hearty thank you to all the people at the Museum for making the meetings a success.

Okay, so a review of highlights of the past year. We finally made changes to the by-laws, based on some thoughtful and careful work on the part of the by-laws committee. We had a record number of ballots (52) testifying to the importance of the business of the Association. We also purchased liability insurance for the Association, thus removing the need to purchase separate insurance for each of the annual meetings.

And we published Volume 3(1) of the journal! Published with the critical financial assistance of the Bureau of Land Management Northern Field Office, this volume contains many articles from the 30th anniversary meetings of the Association (March 2003), also sponsored by BLM. Thanks to editor Owen Mason and also to Ken Pratt for their hard work and dedication to ensuring all of the finer details in the journal are addressed. Thanks, too, to all of the authors and all of the reviewers as well.

The Association has had some personnel changes in the past year: Susan Bender stepped down as secretary/treasurer, after five long years of keeping the Association on the straight and narrow. We appreciate her excellent work, thank her, and wish her

**Reintroducing  
a feature article section  
of your newsletter...  
see page 13**

**Feature articles are not something  
new to the aaa newsletter, but they have  
recently fallen by the wayside.  
There is a renewed interest  
in reviving regular feature articles.  
Please contact the editor for guidelines.**

fun in all of her newly found spare time. At the same time, we welcome Barbara Bundy, who has agreed to serve as treasurer for the Association. Also, after many years, Rachel Mason has stepped down as newsletter editor. Becky Saleeby has volunteered for this labor of love however, and you may note that this volume of the newsletter is developed with the aid of InDesign, one of the many improvements Becky intends to make with the newsletter in the near future. Finally, while Matt Ganley is no longer on the Association Board, he will continue to work on developing our web page. We have a new Board member, Lisa Frink. In summary, we have lost some faithful and hardworking officers, and we all greatly appreciate their hard work and dedication to Association business. That said, we welcome the new cadre of volunteers, and we look forward to working with them.

As far as items to address in the coming months... the Board is continuing the process of evaluating and refining the operational business of the journal. In the next newsletter, you should see a proposal for the membership to consider regarding changing the dues structure of the Association to accommodate the journal. We are also working on attaining more institutional memberships.

Other items out there include getting the website up and running, developing job descriptions for the many volunteer positions within the Association, and addressing some outstanding financial and administrative issues. We will keep you posted in upcoming issues of the newsletter. As always, if you have questions, or comments, please feel free to contact me, or any members of the Board. Our next regularly scheduled meeting is on July 24, 2006, to address journal issues. In the meantime, set aside the dates of March 14-17, 2007 for the 35th annual meeting in Fairbanks.

I hope you have a safe and productive summer, and we'll see you in the fall!

## ALASKA ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

President

Polly Wheeler

Board Members

Alan Boraas

Lisa Frink

Owen Mason

Rachel Mason

Dan Odess

Secretary

Margan Grover

Treasurer

Barbara Bundy

*The purpose of the Alaska Anthropological Association is to serve as a vehicle for maintaining communication among people interested in all branches of anthropology; to promote public awareness and education of anthropological activities and goals; to foster sympathetic appreciation of the past and present cultures of Alaskan peoples; to encourage Alaskan Natives to participate in the elucidation of their respective cultures; and to facilitate the dissemination of anthropological works in both technical and non-technical formats. Membership is open to any individual or organization indicating interest and concern for the discipline of anthropology. The Association holds its annual meeting during March or April of each year and generally publishes four newsletters each year.*

*The membership cycle runs from the date of payment for one year; dues may be prepaid for more than one year at a time. Dues are \$20.00 for student members and \$40.00 for regular or institutional members. Checks or money orders, in US dollars, should be made out to the Alaska Anthropological Association. To become a member, send your name, affiliation, mailing address, city, state/province, postal code and payment to the Association at P.O. Box 241686, Anchorage, Alaska 99524-1686, USA. Items for the newsletter may be sent to the editor, Becky Saleeby, at the above address, attention "Newsletter Editor," or to becky\_saleeby@nps.gov.*

# Alaska Anthropological Association Board Minutes

## Business meeting 3/4/06

Call to Order at 5:00 pm by Polly Wheeler

### Reports

**Aurora Monograph Series:** No report as D. Reger and R. Reanier not in attendance.

**Alaska Journal of Anthropology:** Report given by Polly Wheeler. The AJA editorial board met on 3/5/06 at 2nd story restaurant in Kodiak during the lunch hour. Most board members agreed to renew efforts to increase subscribership. Ken Pratt has compiled an index of what is in the existing four issues. One issue raised at that meeting is the idea of tying journal subscriptions to aaa membership. The aaa board of directors will be discussing this issue at their next meeting. More information will be going out in the June newsletter and there is the possibility of a separate mailing for members to vote on this issue. O. Mason reports that there are lots of articles in process for the next issue. BLM contributed \$8,000.00 towards the cost of printing the 30th anniversary volume which is the most recent issue (Vol. 3(1)).

**Association Finances:** Report given by S. Bender. Financial report is now published in the February newsletter. Encourages members to contact her or Polly Wheeler if they have questions or concerns. Reports that there has been an increase in the Vanguard Investment portfolio of approximately \$3,700.00 since that statement was published.

**Association Newsletter:** Report given by Rachel Mason for Becky Saleeby who was not able to attend. Becky is the new newsletter editor and is putting it into Adobe InDesign to ease publication.

**Public Education Group Speaker Series:** Report by Karlene Leeper. The group received a small grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum of \$,2500.00. The group is still brainstorming on possible speakers for 2006. All members are encouraged to contact Karlene or Polly with suggestions for good speaker candidates.

**Alaska Consortium of Zooarchaeologists:** Report given by Diane Hanson. 2006 marks ACZ's 10th anniversary. Becky Saleeby called the first meeting in the spring of 1996. The 7th annual zooarchaeology workshop featured Dr. Pat Shipman who lectured on

butchery. The intent was to have a seal available for butchering in the afternoon, but inclement weather prevented a successful hunt. Instead, the group showed some videos on butchery at the Alutiiq Museum. Thirty-nine people attended this years workshop, stretching the room capacity to its limits (The group will have to enforce pre-registration next year). The workshop brought in \$845.00, with a portion of that expended on Dr. Shipman's honorarium and some gas for the seal hunters. Next year, Lee Post of Homer will present on re-articulation of skeletons. The first Christina Jensen Scholarship of \$300 is awarded to Ross Smith, at Portland State University. There is currently \$1,295.00 in the ACZ scholarship fund. There is approximately \$1200.00 in the NPS Marine Studies grant. Further details on ACZ activities are in the newsletter.

**Public Education Group:** Report given by Richard VanderHoek and Joan Dale. The group has been meeting monthly to discuss the Archaeology Month poster and other activities. The 2006 poster is being developed by BLM under the direction of Bob King, and highlights the 100th anniversary of the Antiquities Act. VanderHoek and Dale are developing 8th grade curriculum available for teachers and lots of links to more information on the Antiquities Act and Alaska's National Historic Landmarks.

**Website Committee:** Report given by Matt Ganley. We now have our own domain at [alaskaanthropology.org](http://alaskaanthropology.org). One issue pending is whether to pay for a professional webmaster or not. The committee will be working on investigating this issue. Another issue is that of links and whether there should be a fee for linking off our website for for-profit entities, but not for non-profits or educational groups. Ganley estimates it will take approximately \$250 annually for maintaining the site. There will be a greater expense for the initial set up. Members are encouraged to contact Ganley with ideas and information.

**Book Room:** Report given by Chuck Diters: The association took in \$400 from the silent auction for the scholarship fund. There were \$300 worth of AJA issues and subscriptions sold. Diters noted that several book vendors said they haven't received sufficient orders from aaa meetings in the recent past, so they see no

reason to offer special discounts. Ditters asks for ideas from members. Question: Any reason the Aurora volumes are not available at bookroom? Answer: They usually are, but this year neither Reger or Reanier were in attendance.

### Announcements

Awards: The winner of the student paper competition is Melissa Workmon of UAA and USFS, who will receive a check for \$250.00. The Undergraduate Scholarship winner is Natalia Slobodina of UAA (\$750). There were no beginning graduate applicants. The winner of the Advanced Graduate Scholarship is Katharine Foster from the University of Washington (\$750). Dave McMahan was recognized for his Service to the Association and will receive a bronze raven medal. The 2006 Career Achievement award is given to Bill Workman. He will also receive a bronze raven medal.

### New Business

1) The election committee reports that 36 ballots were returned in the recent board election. The only new member is Lisa Frink, replacing Matt Ganley. Dan Odess and Owen Mason retained their seats. Many thanks to Matt Ganley for serving.

2) Thanks also to Susan Bender for serving as treasurer for five years, including secretary/treasurer for 3 ½ of those years. Barbara Bundy is stepping in as Treasurer.

3) Thanks to the Alutiiq Museum, and especially Sven Haakinson and Katie St. John for hosting the 2006 meetings and for a wonderful job done. St. John reports the preliminary conference results: There was a total of 203 registrants, with 108 papers presented. All presenters paid registration. There were 13 sessions and 9 posters presented. Attendance at the banquet totaled 144, and 115 at the luncheon. The estimated bottom line is \$3500.00 surplus.

4) The UAF Museum is hosting the 2007 meetings, which will be held at the Westmark Hotel March 14-17 in Fairbanks. Dan Odess is organizing. USFWS will host in Anchorage in 2008, as noted by Polly Wheeler and Debbie Corbett. Beyond that, the asso-

ciation needs to have people step forward to host. There is the possibility of Juneau in 2009.

5) Call for additional business: Don Dumond announces that the Museum of Natural and Cultural History of Oregon is hosting an arctic conference on Oct 20-21, 2006. Dan Odess suggests possible formal student slated position on the board. General discussion about whether or not this is a good idea. Move to adjourn by Thibault; second by Slobodina. Adjourn at 5:45 pm.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Quarterly board meeting 5/05/2006

Present: Polly Wheeler, Rachel Mason, Owen Mason, Alan Boraas (teleconference), Lisa Frink (teleconference)

Call to order at 1:05 PM

### Old Business

1) Minutes from March 4, 2006 business meeting were reviewed and accepted by Board.

2) Journal issues:

Editorial Board: Owen gave a quick overview of the current editorial board and his assessment of the support it provides to the journal. He briefly reviewed the March meeting of editorial board members present at the meetings. Owen has added Jeff Hunston, and the board discussed the possibility of adding several other Canadian representatives, as well as the need for sub-disciplinary representatives and who they might be.

EBSCO: EBSCO is a subscription service, and Owen has received some limited information from them. Their minimum number may not work for us, but Owen will discuss their services further with Jeff Hunston.

Institutional subscriptions: The Board discussed the issue of, and need for, tapping institutional base. Two issues discussed include contacting institutions, and designing a new flyer for the journal. Owen will get the list of institutions contacted by Debbie Corbett and Diane Hanson, who sent out a mailing regarding subscriptions to which the journal has received limited response. Rachel Mason agreed to work with Owen to develop new flyer for

the journal, and Lisa Frink will work on a letter to accompany the flyer. Items to include in the flyer are a list of editorial board members, a list of past and present articles and authors. This may help to provide additional information of interest to institutions. The Board also discussed the value of bringing flyers to other professional meetings (i.e., AAA, SfAA, etc), to spread the word.

**Tying subscription to dues:** Lisa Frink will continue to research this issue, and will develop a model of proposed dues structure to include journal subscription for consideration by the membership. The Board discussed several issues including the merits of going to one issue/year (as opposed to the existing two), and the need to accommodate students, and couples who are both members but who do not want two copies of the journal. The Board will continue to research this issue, formulate a plan, and provide a complete proposal for consideration by the membership in the Fall newsletter.

**3) 2006 conference report:** The Board accepted the 2006 conference report submitted by Amy Steffian and Katie St. John. All agreed that the conference was excellent, and the Alutiiq Museum did a fabulous job of organizing and putting on the conference. The conference report will be included in the fall newsletter.

**4) Update on Web page:** The Board will ask Matt Ganley to make a list of options to include on the web site, and to secure 3 bids and make a selection for a web designer, as per his suggestion at the March 2006 business meeting.

**5) Update on 2007 meetings:** Dan Odess was unable to be at the board meeting due to a scheduling conflict, but he provided Polly with several questions for the Board regarding possible key note speakers.

### **New Business**

**1) Personnel:** Polly reported that Barbara Bundy was assuming the treasurer responsibilities from Susan Bender. The board discussed the issue of where the treasurer duties left off and secretarial

duties began.

**2) Email distribution:** The Board has received several requests in recent weeks to distribute items to the membership via email, and Polly asked the board for an official recommendation regarding email distribution. After discussion, the Board voted to not distribute items via email unless it was specific to membership business. The Board anticipates having the web site up and running and maintained regularly before too long, and this would provide a good venue for timely distribution of information.

Meeting adjourned 2:45 pm.



<http://www.alaskaanthropology.org/>

**keep informed!**

## aaa Meeting News and Updates

### Anthropologists in Kodiak

*Amy Steffian, Alutiiq Museum*

Hosting the 2006 annual meeting of Alaska's anthropologists in a smaller community proved to be a fun and profitable change for the association. The Alutiiq Museum took the reins this year, developing the conference in downtown Kodiak. As Kodiak lacks a conference-sized hotel, the museum arranged the meetings around community spaces. Participants filled three hotels and nearly every bed and breakfast. They gave papers at Elks Club and the Shoonaq' Tribal Hall, viewed poster presentations in the Alutiiq Museum gallery, and met for coffee, conversation, and book browsing at the Cama'i Café.

Two hundred people registered for the conference, which included 13 sessions with 108 papers, 9 posters, a variety of panel discussions, and two keynote addresses. Catered receptions were a popular part of the four-day event. Feeding visitors is an honored Alutiiq tradition and conference organizers took this responsibility seriously. The Baranov Museum and the Alutiiq Museum held refreshment-laden open houses. There was a catered memorial honoring members of the Social Transitions in the North project, a dessert reception to roast Kodiak archaeologists Don Clark, and snacks of local seafood in the bookroom, in addition to the traditional banquet and luncheon.

The Alutiiq dancers welcomed participants to the conference banquet at the U.S. Coast Guard's Golden Anchor, where Dr. Ofer Bar-Yosef spoke on the evolution of modern humans. Jim Pepper Henry of the Kaw and Muskogee Nations of Oklahoma spoke at a luncheon at the Old Powerhouse Restaurant on uniting Native traditions with collections care and each member of the audience received a copy of the book *Stewards of the Sacred*. The conference ended with a spectacular performance by dancers from King Island, and a well-attended roadside archaeology tour led by museum curator Patrick Saltonstall.

Strong participation, outstanding community support, and a substantial in-kind contribution from the National Museum of the American Indian helped the conference generate \$4590 for the association, an increase over 2005 revenues. A summary of the budget follows. A more detailed accounting is available in the Alutiiq Museum's final conference report. Please contact me ([amy@alutiiqmuseum.com](mailto:amy@alutiiqmuseum.com)), or a member of the association's board, if you would like a copy. Quyanáasinaq - Many thanks to all of you that traveled to Kodiak.

EXPENSE	AMOUNT
<b>Travel</b>	
Bus Transportation in Kodiak	\$673.75
Key Note Speakers - air fare, meals, lodging	\$3,014.67
<b>Supplies</b>	
Meeting Packets	\$1,390.48
Receipt Mailing	\$378.00
Other Supplies	\$389.58
<b>Contractual</b>	
AV Equipment Costs	\$519.00
Wednesday Reception	\$850.00
Thursday Receptions	\$744.60
Friday Banquet	\$3,785.00
Saturday Luncheon	\$1,078.82
Saturday Meeting	\$168.00
Alutiiq Dancers	\$250.00
Snack Services	\$3,877.20
Rooms Rentals	\$1,600.00
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>\$18,719.10</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	
Registrations	\$16,280.00
Meals	\$6,190.00
Tour	\$840.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$23,310.00</b>
<b>REVENUE GENERATED</b>	<b>\$4,590.90</b>

## Special Interest Group News



**Alaska Consortium  
of Zooarchaeologists**  
*Diane Hanson*

This is our slow time of the year because most people are in the field or enjoying the summer. We do much of our processing in the summer though so we are always looking for volunteers to help number animal bones for the comparative collection at UAA. If this is something you'd like to do, please e-mail Diane Hanson at [dkhanson@alaska.net](mailto:dkhanson@alaska.net) and let me know you'd be interested in some volunteer work.

The first recipient for the Christine Jensen Scholarship was Ross Smith (Portland State University). He will be using the \$300 scholarship to help with his research on skeletal element density of fish bones and archaeological bone survival. The next scholarship application deadline will be early spring 2007.

The workshop next spring during the aaa meetings in Fairbanks will be about preparing study skeletons for teaching or for the laboratory. Lee Post will be the guest speaker. We are asking that people pre-register because we were taken by surprise by the number who registered for the Kodiak workshop and would like to be better prepared next time. There will be a new registration fee for late registrants. People can register by going to the workshop page at [www.akzooarch.org](http://www.akzooarch.org).



Pat Shipman instructs at the 7th annual ACZ workshop held at the aaa meetings in Kodiak.



**Public Education Group**  
*Mark McCallum*

Alaskans celebrated Archaeology Month in April with events from Ketchikan to Fairbanks. The Association's Public Education Group (PEG) coordinates Archaeology Month, including design of a poster and compiling a schedule of free events in communities across the state. Alaska Archaeology Month began as a weeklong celebration in 1990 and, with increasing interest, has grown to a month-long event. This year's Archaeology Month poster, produced by the Bureau of Land Management with assistance from other agencies, highlights the centennial of the 1906 Antiquities Act and importance of Alaska's National Historic Landmarks.

Anchorage kicked off Alaska Archaeology Month April 1st with the Ninth Annual Alaska Atlatl Competition. The Alaska Native Heritage Center hosted the event along with a series titled, *Gifts Left Behind*, teaching the importance of archaeology. Approximately 40 people attended the event, led by Office of History and Archaeology (OHA) archaeologist and PEG co-chair Richard VanderHoek. The Anchorage Daily News covered the competition and included an article and photo the next day showing the event's 10-foot tall, 3-D mammoth target and an individual caught in mid-throw. The OHA, Alaska Native Heritage Center and World Wide Movers jointly sponsored the event.

National Park Service (NPS) archaeologist Becky Saleeby found audiences eager to learn about National Historic Landmarks at Anchorage's Chester Park Senior Center, Pioneers of Alaska Igloo 15, and at the Begich- Boggs Visitor Center near Portage.

Chris Campbell of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium held a seminar in Anchorage on relevant cultural resource laws and policies.

In Ketchikan and Craig, Tongass National Forest (TNF) archaeologist Terry Fifield premiered a documentary film: “Kuwóot yas.éin: His Spirit is Looking Out From the Cave,” which chronicles the discovery of a 10,000 year-old campsite at On Your Knees Cave on northern Prince of Wales Island. The film highlights the partnerships that developed among Alaska Native people, scientists and the Tongass National Forest in the study of this place. Fifield also showed the film at schools in Craig and Hydaburg. As part of an Earth Day celebration sponsored by the local tribe, Fifield also manned a table highlighting conservation and Leave No Trace ethics.

TNF archaeologist Gina Esposito participated in the annual Wrangell Garnet Festival by hosting a booth activity. She provided festival-goers with the opportunity to make paint using traditional Tlingit methods by smashing salmon eggs to create tempera. Well over 20 kids (and some adults!) from the community painted traditional images on cedar shakes using Alaska Native design templates.

Jane Smith, TNF archaeologist, gave several presentations about the North Point Site, a unique prehistoric site that was tested in 2005 with Pete Bowers of Northern Land Use Research. Jane presented information about site function, age and artifacts in Kake and Wrangell and to Forest Service employees in Petersburg. Jane also presented a slide show to middle school kids about the archaeology of Peru.

TNF archaeologist and PEG co-chair Mark McCallum hosted several public tours of the 2,000 year-old Sandy Beach fish traps in Petersburg, including an Elderhostel group. Continuing a 15-year tradition, McCallum, Esposito and Smith took all of Petersburg’s third-graders to Sandy Beach after spending an afternoon in the classroom prep-

ping them for their fieldtrip. Smith and McCallum also led a tour of the site for a group of Petersburg home schoolers.

TNF archaeologists Nicole Lantz and Shauna McMahon traveled to Angoon with some special luggage – an artifact kit with objects from the St. Lawrence Island area. The artifact kit was one of several available through the Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Over 80 Angoon elementary and middle school students got to examine the artifacts and learn analytical techniques used by archaeologists. Artifacts included harpoon heads, ulu blades, scrapers, sinew twisters and bolo weights. For some students it was a first-time introduction to ivory and its use in tool manufacture. Students drew, studied, and made inferences about the objects’ uses. Each student bravely presented an object to the entire class and then Lantz and McMahon revealed the actual tool function.

NPS and TNF archaeologists teamed up to create an exhibit at Sitka’s Kettleon Memorial Library and they estimate over 6,000 people viewed the exhibit during Archaeology Month. Pretty impressive for a town of 8,000 people! TNF archaeologist Jeremy Karchut presented school programs in Hoonah and Tenakee Springs.

TNF archaeologist Myra Gilliam joined forces with Alaska State Museum curator Steve Henrickson and Judy Ramos of the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe to offer a series of public events in Yakutat. One night Henrickson gave a lecture, “Baskets, Robes and Fish Traps: The Origins and Survival of Tlingit Weaving Technology.” The next evening Steve and Judy’s father George Ramos co-presented a fascinating lecture on Tlingit armor and helmets. Later in April noted Tlingit weaver Terry Rofkar shared her knowledge of spruce root collecting, processing and weaving. Participants got to work with Rofkar and learn traditional ways of collecting and processing spruce roots.

*article continued on page 11*

Use this form to register or update your membership, make donations, subscribe to the Alaska Journal of Anthropology, or purchase Aurora volumes.

**Contact Information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

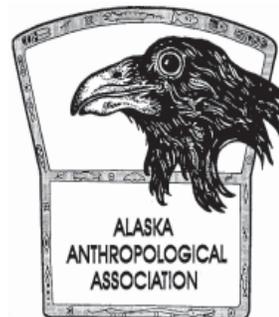
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Lake Minchumina Prehistory by Charles E. Holmes	\$15.00	\$12.00
Bibliography and Index of Alaskan Archeology by C. Eugene West and Richard O. Stern	\$10.00	\$ 8.00
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**Note: Please fold this page for mailing in thirds, not in half!**

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**Alaska Anthropological Association  
P.O. Box 241686  
Anchorage, AK 99524-1686**

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*continued from page 8*

The Chugach National Forest (CNF) hosted a series of brown bag lunch presentations in Seward that extended into mid-May. CNF archaeologist Melissa Workmon presented a lecture on historic cabin preservation, focusing on work completed on the McKinley and Lauritsen cabins. Seth Depasqual, CNF archaeologist, shared the history of mining on Bear Creek. Seward Historical Preservation Commissioner Valerie Park showed a PowerPoint presentation on the history and future of Seward's famous Jessie Lee home.

In Kodiak Alutiiq Museum curator and archaeologist Patrick Saltonstall gave a public lecture entitled "Living in Women's Bay: 7,300 Years of Alutiiq Settlement and Subsistence," sharing results from a community archaeology excavation conducted in 2005.

Mat-Su Borough archaeologists Fran Seager-Boss and Dan Stone presented results of archaeological investigations in their Wasilla public lecture, "Early Migrations of People Through the Middle Susitna Valley."

Several agencies posted Internet web pages focusing on various themes related to Archaeology Month.

Bureau of Land Management  
<http://www.ak.blm.gov/ak930/antiquities/index.html>

National Park Service  
<http://www.nps.gov/akso/CR/AKRCultural/ArchaeologyMonth.htm>

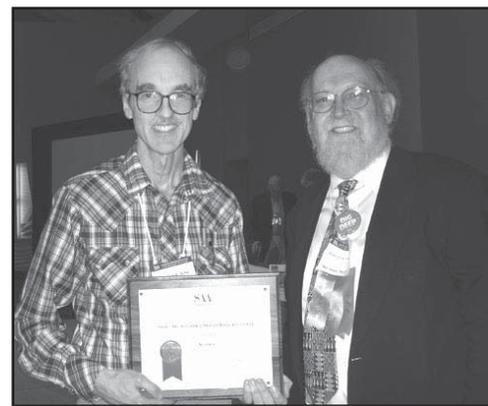
Tongass National Forest  
[http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/forest\\_facts/resources/heritage/archmonth.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/forest_facts/resources/heritage/archmonth.shtml)  
Alaska Archaeology Month 2006

## **More Public Education News**

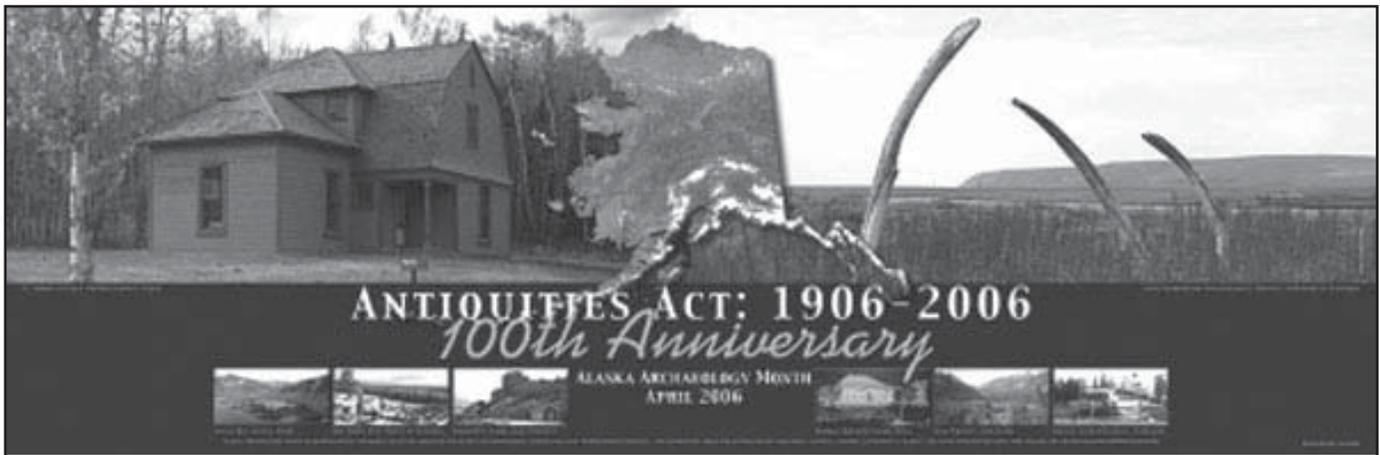
*Robert King, Bureau of Land Management*

Alaska's 2006 Archaeology Month poster recently won second prize in the annual "best" State Archaeology Month National Poster Contest held by the Society for American Archaeology (SAA). BLM State Archaeologist, Robert King, accepted the award for Alaska from SAA President Kenneth Ames at the April 28th evening business meeting of the Society at which several hundred SAA members were present. The award was based on voting by over 1,000 SAA members who attended the 71st annual meeting of the SAA held April 26-30, 2006 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Posters from about half of the 50 states were in competition.

As for the poster, BLM led its creation this year with Carol Belenski, Visual Information Specialist in BLM's Division of Resources, Lands & Planning, being its key designer. King and Belenski developed the poster in coordinated with the Public Education Group of the Alaska Anthropological Association and its sponsoring agencies, some of whom helped support the cost of the poster's production and distribution. This year's Alaska Archaeology Month poster celebrated the 100th anniversary of the passage of the Antiquities Act, and featured eight National Historic landmarks in Alaska that are among the state's most significant historic and prehistoric sites.



Robert King accepts the 2nd place poster contest award for Alaska from SAA President Kenneth Ames at the SAA meetings in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



The 2006 Alaska Archaeology Month poster took second place at the national Archaeology Month poster contest held annually at the SAA meetings.

### **Mark Your Calendars for the Beringian Days Conference**

*Katerina Wessels, National Park Service*

The Beringia Days International Conference, celebrating the cultural and natural heritage shared by Russia and the United States across the Bering Strait will be held from Thursday, September 7th through Friday, September 8th, 2006 at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art. Scientists, government officials, Native leaders, artists and educators from both countries will gather to hear presentations and exchange information about the ecological, physical and cultural heritage of the Beringia region. The agenda for the conference, which is hosted by the National Park Service and co-sponsored by the Museum, will be available from the National Park Service website, <http://www.nps.gov/akso/beringia>

Over 10,000 years ago, the Bering Land Bridge, spanning from the Chukchi Sea in the north, to the southern edge of the Aleutian Islands chain, joined the continents of Asia and North America into one continuous land mass. As the planet warmed, waters inundated the low-lying land of the Bering Land Bridge creating a boundary between the continents. The Shared Beringian Heritage Program is helping to rebuild the bridge of understanding and cooperation be-

tween our two countries. The concept of an international park spanning the Bering Strait was endorsed by Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990. Since then, the National Park Service has managed the Shared Beringian Heritage Program which supports a wide range of cultural exchanges, research and international meetings focused on the Beringia region.

Beringia Days is free and open to the public. Many opportunities for volunteering during this conference are available. Drivers, assistants, and bi-lingual Russian speakers are needed. Please call 907-644-3527 to learn more.

For more information about this unique conference please check our website <http://www.nps.gov/akso/beringia>



## Feature Article

### **Update on the Deering Archaeological Program**

*Peter M. Bowers, Northern Land Use Research*

#### Introduction

One of the long term projects of Northern Land Use Research, Inc. (NLUR) is the Deering Archaeological Program. Between 1997 and 1999, major archaeological excavations were undertaken in the native village of Deering, located on the northern Seward Peninsula, Kotzebue Sound.

The archaeological excavations undertaken by NLUR and others resulted primarily from trenching for a new vacuum sewer system installed by Village Safe Water and installation of a new post office building (Bowers et al. 1999). This work was undertaken by Bering Straits Foundation in 1997 and Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation (UIC) in 1998 (Reanier et al. 1998a), and NLUR in 1999 (Bowers et al. 1999; Bowers n.d.). All of the construction projects in Deering that have potential for ground disturbance and adverse effect on cultural resources are subject to a comprehensive Programmatic Agreement signed by Deering City, IRA Council, and seven State and Federal agencies (see Deering Programmatic Agreement and Research Design; Reanier et al. 1998b).

Only a small percentage of the Deering Archaeological District has been subsurface sampled. A preliminary description of field techniques and field conservation methods are provided elsewhere (Bowers et al. 1999), and a final monograph is in preparation (Bowers n.d.). Inventory, cataloging and preliminary analysis of the cultural materials recovered by NLUR and others took place between 1999 until the beginning of 2003. Analysis and report writing was officially on hold between February 2003 and November 2005 while all funding was suspended. However, analysis of this extensive collection has now resumed, including study of all materials collected by UIC and others in 1997 and 1998 (Bowers n.d.). Since 1999, NLUR has continued to conduct other (non-VSW funded) archaeological surveys and construction monitoring activities in Deering (e.g., in 2002 the Native Village of Deering asked NLUR to assist the community in the emergency excavation of an eroding burial near the modern day sewage treatment plant; Bowers 2002).

We are currently in the process of re-mobilizing the project and continuing where we left off in 2003. Work is proceeding on a number of fronts, including: public education, mapping and spatial analysis, cross-year data correlation, artifact analysis, report photography and drawings, radiocarbon dating, geoarchaeology (particularly as it pertains to sea level and storm history), ethnographic and historic summaries, faunal analysis, artifact conservation and curation.

In 2005, NLUR assisted the Deering Village IRA Council in procuring a planning grant from the National Park Service Beringian Heritage Program (<http://www.nps.gov/akso/beringia/>). This is completely separate from the Village Safe Water sponsored project, although very much integral to the overall success of the program. The planning funds are being used for community meetings to formulate a long term curation plan for the artifacts and site data once the VSW project is completed (estimated in December 2006). Pete Bowers will be traveling to the village in 2006 to help facilitate these meetings and work closely with the village to help draft a cultural resource management plan.

## Background

The Native Village of Deering is a predominantly Inupiat Eskimo community with a population of about 130, located within historic Pittagmiut territory (Burch 1998). Deering's economy is a mix of cash and subsistence activities, with active reindeer herding in the recent past. Regionally, it is part of the Northwest Arctic Borough, NANA Regional Corporation, and Maniilaq Regional Health Corporation (Alaska Department of Community Advocacy 2004). The present day village was established in 1901 as a support town for gold mining in the interior of the Seward Peninsula, particularly the gold mining community of Utica, located some 20 miles (32 km) upstream from the historic village of Inmachukmiut (KTZ-003) on the Inmachuk River (Bowers n.d.).

The village is located at the mouth of the Inmachuk River, a northeasterly flowing river which empties into Kotzebue Sound. It is built upon a gravel and sand spit that has been aggrading for over two thousand years. The 2 km long spit has a maximum height of 4.3 m above sea level and has formed via a combination of eastward longshore sediment flow derived from bluff erosion, replenished periodically by storm surges. The spit forms a barrier that tends to impound sediments from the northward flowing Inmachuk River and its tributary, Smith Creek. Surficial sediments comprise a series of gravel and sand beds, capped in places by sand dunes (Bowers n.d.; Reanier et al. 1998a; see also Mason et al. 1997; Mason and Gerlach 1995).

Bedrock in the study area consists of Paleozoic metalimestone and schistose pelitic rocks (Matthews 1974). Thick deposits of Quaternary age alluvium fill the Inmachuk River valley; well logs from the Deering spit reveal unconsolidated sediments extending to 90 feet (27.4 m) below surface. At Cape Deceit, located about 2 km to the west, primary or reworked loess is present, in places capped by thick sedge or moss turf (Matthews 1974). The area was not glaciated during Wisconsinan glaciation, although outwash and loess may have provided a source for some sediments later reworked to form the Deering spit.

Archaeological research carried out since 1949 has identified at least three prehistoric cultures present along the spit and on the adjacent headland at Cape Deceit: Ipiutak, Western Thule, and late prehistoric Inupiat Eskimo (e.g., Bowers et al. 1999; Bowers n.d.; Dixon 1994; Larsen 2001; Powers et al. 1982; Ray 1964; Reanier et al. 1998a). Much attention has been focused on the impressive discoveries associated with the ca. AD 600-900 Ipiutak Culture (e.g., Larsen's 1950 excavations of a large Qargi (men's ceremonial house; KTZ-023) have recently been published; Larsen 2001). Several Ipiutak burials were excavated in 1997 (Reanier et al. 1998a; Dale and Simon 1998; Steinacher 1998), including Ipiutak Burial 4, containing a spectacular composite ivory mask similar to the two found at Point Hope (cf. Larsen and Rainey 1948; both of the Point Hope artifacts are currently housed at the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen and the American Museum of Natural History in New York).

Deering has a historic gold-rush component at the eastern end of the spit (KTZ-170; Bowers n.d.) as well as protohistoric and historic settlements at Cape Deceit (Kipalut; KTZ-020, KTZ-025) and along the Inmachuk River (KTZ-003, KTZ-024, KTZ-026; Ray 1964; Powers et al. 1982; Burch 1998; Bowers n.d.). Cultural resources known within the Deering Archaeological District (KTZ-169, encompassing the entire modern village) include human burials, buried houses, cache pits, dozens of other features, faunal remains, and artifacts. Between 1997 and 1999 alone, over 94,000 animal bones and artifacts were recovered (Bowers et al. 1999; Bowers n.d.).

The NLUR archaeological investigations in 1999 focused on two main sites within the Archaeological District. KTZ-299 was a buried Ipiutak house and associated cache pit under what is now the new Post Office building. The Ipiutak features excavated by NLUR at KTZ-299 in 1999 yielded about 1,750 artifacts and more than 6,000 animal bones (Bowers et al. 1999). The remains of a Western Thule settlement are located about 200 m west of KTZ-299; the two Western Thule houses in this area are located < 5 m apart. The 1999 NLUR excavations of Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300) recovered approximately 1,375 artifacts and more than 45,500 faunal remains. Western Thule House 2, partially excavated in 1998 and yielding about 1,130 artifacts, has been assigned KTZ-301. Seven Ipiutak burials, comprising at least 20 individuals, were excavated in 1997 by James Simon, who was then employed by Bering Straits Foundation (Reanier et al. 1998a; Dale and Simon 1998). These burials, located in the vicinity of the Western Thule houses, have been assigned AHRS site number KTZ-302. The overall size and extent of both the Ipiutak and Western Thule settlements at Deering is still unknown (Bowers n.d.). A provisional list of C-14 dates is provided in Table 1 on page 20.

### Ipiutak House

The Ipiutak house excavated in 1999 was roughly rectangular in shape, with straight 3.7 to 4.75 m long sides and rounded corners. In the southern corner we located a short entrance tunnel. Possible indications of the original wood floor includes wood chips. No post holes or sod block remnants were located. A hearth was found near the center of the house, and a cache pit was located nearby (Bowers et al. 1999; Bowers n.d.).

A partial list of artifacts recovered from the Ipiutak house and features includes: incised bone and antler arrow points, chert side and end blades, chert discoidal scrapers, worked ivory and wood, flake knives, bone awls, worked bird bone, bone needles, chert projectile points, bone toggling open socket harpoon heads, wound plugs, incised decorated bones, leister prongs, carved tooth/seal effigies, antler hooked objects, toggling harpoons with intact sideblades, and an engraving tool with a carved seal head and iron tip (Bowers et al. 1999:7).

Charcoal from the central hearth was radiocarbon dated to 1230+40 BP (calibrated AD 685-890; Beta-138562). A nearby cache pit dates to 1620+80 BP (calibrated AD 245-615 ; Beta-138564). The date of the house feature is remarkably close to that of Ipiutak Burial 4 (1280+40 B.P. [Beta-113142] Reanier et al. 1998) and a similarly aged Ipiutak Qargi or men's ceremonial house excavated in 1950 (Larsen 2001).

### Western Thule Houses

Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300) was partially excavated in 1998 by UIC with additional excavations by NLUR the following year. The semi-subterranean house is roughly square (2.7 m x 2.3 m) with a main room, approx. 6 m long entrance tunnel, and a side room presumably functioning as a kitchen. It was constructed of driftwood, whalebone, and sod. Most of the cultural material was recovered from midden fill deposits. Well preserved faunal remains were found lying directly on basal floorboards and in midden fill directly above the floor.

From House 1, a partial list of artifacts includes: pottery, antler harpoon heads, arrow points, ivory float nozzles, antler awls, ivory pins, ground slate ulus, knotted baleen, ivory puffin pendants, wooden and ivory pottery paddles, antler brow bands with incised lines, incised ivory objects, ivory seal plugs, chert scrapers, antler fishing jigs, scapula knives, fish net gauges, notched stone sinkers, stitched bark fragments, antler tanged arrow points, baleen bowls with wooden bases, part of a wooden bowl or shovel, ivory harpoon

heads, wooden bow fragments, wooden Umiak part, bodkins, ivory needles, wooden baskets, and ivory picks with lashing grooves (Bowers et al. 1999:7-8).

Four C-14 dates were obtained from House 1 organic samples collected in 1999. The most reliable date is from charcoal found beneath the main room floorboards dated to 870+40 BP (calibrated AD 1040-1255; Beta-138568). Charcoal from the base of the House 1 entrance tunnel dates to 920+40 BP (calibrated AD 1020-1210; Beta-138565). Two additional C-14 samples from the House 1 kitchen antechamber may have been contaminated by ancient sea mammal oil; these are less reliable age indicators (Table 1; Bowers et al. 1999; Bowers n.d.).

A single tree ring date of A.D. 1203 was obtained from analysis of structural wood from House 1 timbers. This wood had a growth span of 163 years between A.D. 1040 and 1203 and was probably obtained as driftwood (Val Barber, personal communication, 2003).

Western Thule House 2 (KTZ-301), consisting of a main room measuring 3.7 m x 3.2 m, was partially excavated in 1998 by UIC. The length of the entrance tunnel and presence/absence of a side room are unknown at this time due to limits of test excavations. House 2 was also constructed of driftwood, whalebone, and sod, with well-preserved organic remains located on floorboards and in midden fill directly above the floor. A radiocarbon sample of wood from a subfloor cache wall was dated by NLUR to 790+40 BP (calibrated AD 1220-1270; Beta-189091); this is the only date so far associated with Western Thule House 2.

The combined 1 sigma C-14 ranges for the two Western Thule houses are AD 1035-1270, with a mean age of about AD 1150. House 1 appears to have predated House 2 by about a century. The Western Thule occupation most likely postdated Ipiutak by at least two centuries.

### Summary

It is clear that the modern village of Deering is situated atop one of the most significant archaeological sites in the Western Arctic. The large amount of cultural material and data recovered between 1997-1999 hold great promise for addressing a variety of research questions and helping us to better understand the prehistory and rich cultural heritage of the native people of northwest Alaska. Of particular interest is the transition/hiatus between Ipiutak and Western Thule, and the effects that climate (e.g., transition from Mediaeval Warm Period to Little Ice Age), storm history, and environmental factors had on such topics as subsistence and settlement patterns, artifact styles, culture history and interactions/trade with other groups (e.g., Old Bering Sea, Okvik, Punuk, Birnirk) in the Bering Strait area.

We anticipate completion of the Deering analysis and report by the end of 2006. The main goal of this work is to complete a comprehensive technical monograph (e.g., Bowers n.d.; Mason n.d.; Sheppard n.d.). We will be actively working with the community in education programs, to help resolve outstanding curation issues, and to assist in facilitating a long term cultural resource management plan. In addition, a number of ancillary studies related to (but not directly funded by) this project are in progress, which we trust will help add to Deering's cultural heritage, and to aid our understanding of Arctic prehistory and paleoecology (e.g., Moss and Bowers n.d.; Glascock et al. n.d.; Gerlach et al. n.d.; Gelvin-Reymiller et al. 2006).

### Acknowledgements

Excavations at Deering were funded by a contract between the City of Deering and Northern Land Use Research, Inc., with funding provided under the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act by the ADEC Village Safe Water Program and the U.S. Postal Service. We wish to thank the City of Deering and Native Village of Deering for their assistance with all phases of the Deering Archaeological Program. In particular, we thank and acknowledge the important contributions by the late James Moto, Jr., Emerson Moto, Gilbert Barr, Calvin Moto, Brenda Karmen, Roberta Moto, Bonita Barr, Suzie Barr, Stephanie Barr, Kevin Moto, Jim Moto, Brian Weinart, (all of Deering); Catherine Williams (NLUR Lab Supervisor), Robin Mills (NLUR Field Supervisor, now with BLM), Owen Mason (Geoarch Alaska) and the NLUR field and lab crew. Preliminary artifact and faunal analyses have been carried out by Josh Reuther, Jennifer Newton, Stacie McIntosh and Dawn Laybolt (present or former NLUR employees). Avian faunal analysis was undertaken by Madonna Moss (University of Oregon). Radiocarbon samples were dated by Beta Analytic, Inc. Dendochronological analysis was performed by Val Barber, UAF Institute of Arctic Biology, and x-ray fluorescence of Deering pottery was completed by Diana Zozwik, UAF. Larry Duffy of the UAF Dept. of Chemistry generously donated heavy metal analysis of fur fragments and Michael Glascock of the Research Reactor Center, Univ. of Missouri-Columbia donated instrumental neutron activation analysis of obsidian.

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**Table 1.** Radiocarbon dates associated with cultural features and burials<sup>1</sup> Deering Archaeological District (KTZ-169). This provisional list is not comprehensive, and does not include geologic samples already dated, those requiring additional interpretation, and/or dates published by Larsen (2001).

Lab Number	<sup>14</sup> C Yrs BP Conventional	<sup>14</sup> C Yrs BP Measured	Calibrated Age AD (2 sigma)	<sup>13/12</sup> C Ratio (o/oo)	Context and Sample
Beta-138562	1230 ±40	1250 ±40	685-890	-26.3	Ipiutak House 1 (KTZ-299), charcoal from central hearth
Beta-138564	1620 ±80	1640 ±80	245-615	-26.1	Ipiutak cache pit adjacent to Ipiutak House 1 (KTZ-299), charcoal
Beta-113142	1280 ±40	N/A	660-863	N/A	Ipiutak Burial 4, seeds associated with mask (Reanier et al. 1998a)
Beta-113148	1560 ±50	1580 ±50	N/A	-25.8	Artifacts of uncertain cultural affinity from organic midden 5-6 ft. below surface (Reanier et al. 1998a)
Beta-138566	1080 ±80	1080 ±80	775-1055, 1085-1150	-25.1	Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300), charcoal from kitchen antechamber, sea mammal oil soaked layer
Beta-138567	1190 ±40	1220 ±40	720-745, 760-965	-26.8	Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300), charcoal from kitchen antechamber, sea mammal oil soaked layer
Beta-138565	920 ±40	940 ±40	1020-1210	-26.2	Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300), charcoal from bottom of entrance tunnel
Beta-138568	870 ±40	910 ±40	1040-1255	-27.2	Western Thule House 1 (KTZ-300), charcoal from beneath floor boards in main habitation room
Beta-189091	790 ±40	820 ±40	1220-1270	-26.6	Western Thule House 2 (KTZ-301), wood from subfloor cache wall
Beta-169404	790 ±50	800 ±50	1170-1290	-25.7	Burial 19, located near sewage treatment plant. Wood associated with cranium
Beta-196498	850 ±40	870 ±40	1050-1100 1140-1270	-26.1	Burial 20, located near new health clinic. Charcoal associated with mandible
Beta-169405	240 ±50	260 ±5	1520-1590 1620-1680 1730-1810 1930-1950	-26.5	Kipalut (KTZ-170), Cape Deceit. Grass netting

1 - Note: only three or four of the areas of human remains found in Deering are fully identifiable burials; most are isolated bones and/or scattered bone fragments.

## Upcoming Meeting News

### **14th Annual Arctic Conference**

The fourteenth Arctic Conference will be held at the University of Oregon on October 20 and 21, 2006, under the auspices of the UO Museum of Natural and Cultural History, in Eugene.

For the event, the Museum will install an exhibit of Alaskan archaeological and ethnographic materials from its collections. The meeting will also coincide with the beginning of a fall lecture series (October 20); the 2006 focus is on issues of northern interest. The plenary speaker will be Dr. Thomas H McGovern, Professor of Anthropology at Hunter College (CUNY) and Coordinator of the North Atlantic Biocultural Organization, who will talk about his research on the archaeology, history, and historical ecology of the Viking Age in the North Atlantic region. There will be a social buffet supper in the Museum on Saturday evening, October 21.

Abstracts of papers and posters (100 words, electronic format, either MS Word or WordPerfect) will be due by September 15. Please contact Judi Pruitt, Administrative Program Coordinator at (541) 346-1671 or at [judip@uoregon.edu](mailto:judip@uoregon.edu) for further information. There will be information on the Museum webpage at <http://natural-history.uoregon.edu/>.

Eugene is presently served by three airlines: Alaska (Horizon), United (United Express), and Delta (America West Express), with connections through Seattle, San Francisco, Denver, and Salt Lake City.

### **Paths Across the Pacific V**

Paths Across the Pacific V is being held in Sitka, July 26 - 30. For more information contact [nydavis@alaska.net](mailto:nydavis@alaska.net).

### **Beringian Days**

Annual meeting sponsored by National Park Service Shared Beringian Heritage Program  
September 7 - 8, 2006  
Anchorage Museum of History and Art  
Contact Bruce Greenwood  
([bruce\\_greenwood@nps.gov](mailto:bruce_greenwood@nps.gov))

### **Oral History Association**

October 25-29, 2006  
(Generational Links: Confronting the Past, Understanding the Present, Planning the Future) Little Rock, Arkansas  
( Madelyn Campbell, 717-245-1036 or [www.dickinson.edu/oha](http://www.dickinson.edu/oha))

### **American Anthropological Association**

105th AAA Annual Meeting  
November 15-19, 2006  
San Jose Convention Center  
San Jose, California  
<http://www.aaanet.org/>

### **Society for Historical and Underwater Archaeology**

40th Annual Meeting  
January 9 – 14, 2007  
Williamsburg, Virginia (in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestowne)  
<http://www.sha.org/>

### **Alaska Anthropological Association**

March 14 - 17, 2007  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Fairbanks  
Dan Odess ([ffdpo@uaf.edu](mailto:ffdpo@uaf.edu))

### **Society for American Archaeology**

72nd Annual Meeting  
April 25 – 29, 2007  
Austin, Texas  
<http://www.saa.org/meetings/index.html>

## Advertisements of Recent Publications

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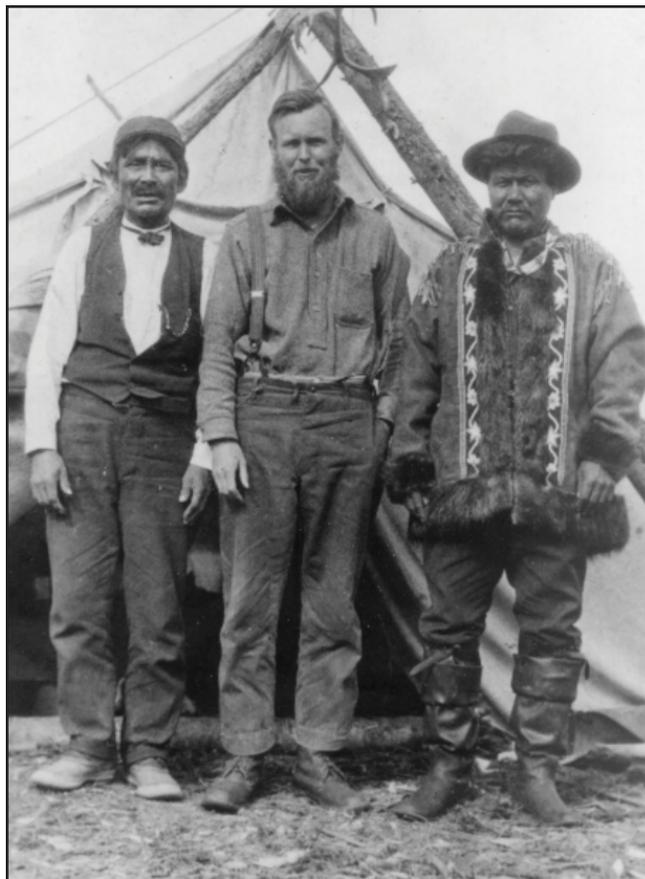
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**The University of Alaska Press** announces the publication of *Tanana and Chandalar: the Alaskan Field Journals of Robert A. McKennan*. Born and raised in Helena, Montana, Dr. McKennan (1903-1981) attended Mercersburg Academy and was a graduate of Dartmouth College (B.A., 1925) and Harvard University (Ph.D., 1933). McKennan had a distinguished teaching career at Dartmouth for nearly four decades and was the co-founder, with Elmer Harp, of the Department of Anthropology. He was one of the very first professional anthropologists to do ethnographic fieldwork in Alaska, and his daily journals, originally composed as letters to his wife and parents, offer deep insights into his methods of working in isolated Athabaskan Indian communities during the period from 1929-1933.

Students of cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, and ethnohistory will discover that editors Craig Mishler and William Simeone have themselves followed in McKennan's footsteps to the Upper Tanana and Gwich'in villages where he worked, providing an extended introduction, a biographical sketch, and extensive annotations to contextualize his journals. Well-illustrated with photo portraits of McKennan's many key respondents and the wealth of colorful beadwork he collected, *Tanana and Chandalar* will have general appeal to readers interested in Native American Studies and the history of anthropology, as well as those with specific interests in Alaskan ethnohistory and the northern Dene. Phone orders may be placed toll-free at (888) 252-6657. The book may also be ordered through book stores or via the web at [www.uaf.edu/uapress](http://www.uaf.edu/uapress). The volume is 255 pages hardcover, with b & w photos and color illustrations, maps, bibliography, and index, and retails for \$45.



Left to right: Big Mark, Robert McKennan, and Bill Northway, taken on the upper Tanana, May, 1930.

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