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Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation to Induct Three Mining Pioneers

The three mining pioneers to be inducted during the March 2000, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame (AMHF) Ceremony in Fairbanks differed widely in their life experiences and accomplishments. What brings them together was their ability, through action, innovation, and integrity to become legends in their own time.

Fanny Quigley is the first woman to be inducted into the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame. Her road to recognition lies not in her technical skills as a miner or scientist, for almost all she knew was derived from personal life experiences. Her legendary skills deployed in pursuit of a wilderness way of life in the remote Kantishna Mining camp became symbolic of that lifestyle during Alaska's territorial period.

John Beaver Mertie Jr. was by far the best educated of the three, having received both undergraduate and graduate degrees from John Hopkins University early in his career. Somehow Mertie managed to combine his superb expertise as an earth scientist with a down-to-earth demeanor that he extended to placer miners and prospectors throughout the remote Alaskan bush.

Emil Usibelli was the practical miner of the three - incorporating innovation, creativity, and uncommonly good sense into the ground work of Alaska's only presently operating coal mine at Healy, Alaska. His lack of formal education drove him to a life-long goal of supporting educational opportunities not only for his family but for many others in the Monroe Catholic Schools and the University of Alaska system here in the Golden Heart of Alaska.
Alaska Mining Hall of Fame
Induction Ceremony, March 9th, 2000
7:30 PM Westmark Hotel, Fairbanks, Alaska

PROGRAM

Introduction and purpose of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame (AMHF) by Earl Beistline, Master of Ceremonies and President of the AMHF

They Made History, Remarks by Honorable William R. Wood, Festival Fairbanks

Introduction of new inductees by Charles C. Hawley, Chair, Honors Committee, Alaska Mining Hall Fame

Fanny Quigley, by Jane Haigh

John Beaver Mertie Jr., by Florence R. Weber

Emil Usibelli, by Joseph E. Usibelli Sr.

Importance of these people to Alaska. Recollections of the three inductees will be welcomed from the general audience at this time.

Acknowledgements

The AMHF March 2000 induction ceremony is co-sponsored by the Alaska Miners Association and the 17th Biennial Interior Mining Conference held March 6-11th at the Westmark Fairbanks Hotel. Ron Inouye and the Tanana-Yukon Historical Society have contributed significantly as in previous AMHF inductions held in Fairbanks and at the original AMA Mining History night held in Fairbanks in the spring of 1996.

Fairbanks historian Jane Haigh supplied the material on Fanny Quigley, derived from several published sources (listed on p. 5) and her own book manuscript on Quigley (in press).

AMHF Foundation board member and USGS (retired) Don Grybeck supplied the writeup on John Mertie, utilizing an obituary published in a 1980 Geological Society of America Bulletin by William Overstreet and Robert M. Chapman; Mertie’s biography “Thirty Summers and a Winter”, by Evelyn Mertie; and voluminous records kept in U.S. Geological Survey archives. Mertie presenter Florence Weber (USGS retired) used these references, drew on her acquaintance with Mertie, and more than 40 years of her own geological research in the Yukon-Tanana uplands, where Mertie also worked for many years as a USGS geologist.

Charles B. Green and Becki Phipps of Usibelli Coal Mine Inc. provided a biographical sketch of Emil Usibelli, using many company sources, and helped contact the Usibelli family and friends present at this induction ceremony. Joe Usibelli Sr. and his son Joe Jr. provide a special insight to Emil from the point-of-view of a family-owned business—Usibelli Coal Mine Inc.

Charles C. Hawley, chair of the AMHF Honors Committee, provided guidance for this and past induction ceremonies. Tom Bundtzen and Gay Ellen Heath of Pacific Rim Geological Consulting edited this Newsletter.
Previous Inductees
Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

The three Alaskan mining pioneers inducted in the March, 1999 ceremony in Fairbanks join 25 others previously inducted in four ceremonies held during 1998 and 1999 in Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, and Anchorage.

The six charter members of the AMHF Foundation - Stephen Birch, Frederick Bradley, Alfred B. Brooks, John Treadwell, Earnest Patty, and Clarence Berry - were previously elected into the National Mining Hall of Fame in Leadville, Colorado.

Yukon River traders Alfred Mayo, Jack McQuesten, and Howard Franklin, Athabascan miner and gold discoverer John Minook, and Fairbanks district founder Felix Pedro were inducted during the 16th Biennial Interior Mining Conference held in Fairbanks in 1998. That same year, at Nome’s Centennial celebration, the three “lucky Swedes” - Erik Lindblom, Jafet Lindeberg, and John Bryntesson — and gold rush mine-backer Charles Lane were added to the list.

In May, 1999, AMHF induction ceremonies at the Juneau-Douglas Museum added four more pioneers. Prospector and Mine Investor Joe Juneau, Richard Harris and George Pilz, and Auk leader Kawa lee were all associated with the early gold discovery era of what became Alaska’s capital.

Finally, three more mining leaders were inducted during the Annual Alaska Miners Association Convention in Anchorage: platinum miner Andrew Olson, coal pioneer Evan Jones, and mine innovator/geologist W.E. Dunkle.

More than 100 men and women have been nominated for the AMHF Foundation. All of these nominees remain active. The principal task of the AMHF honors committee is to select new potential inductees through internal research efforts, and to receive additional potential nominees through solicitation from the general public. We encourage all those interested and knowledgeable about Alaska’s mining history to nominate new members for the AMHF Foundation.

Fannie Quigley: 1870-1944

Fannie Quigley became a legend in the Kantishna Mining District. She arrived in 1906 and stayed until her death in 1944 at the age of 74. She staked her share of mining claims, and mined them, and though she never shot an animal till she arrived in Kantishna, her prowess as a hunter became legendary throughout the Alaskan territory. She learned to hunt caribou, sheep and moose and trap fox, wolves, wolverine and at least one lynx. She was famous for her wilderness cooking, including her famous flaky pie crusts made from rendered bear lard. She grew remarkable gardens full of vegetables and even many flowers on rocky slopes above the timberline.

She was born Frances Sedlacek in 1870 on a homestead in a Bohemian settlement near Wahoo, Nebraska. Fannies mother died when she was six, and her father married again then proved up on the homestead only to sell it and move the family to a rented farm nearby. The years in Nebraska were among the most difficult in the history of homesteading, marked by plagues of locusts, disastrous farm prices, and record-breaking blizzards. The hardships of Fannie’s youth would provide ample training for her later life.

Fannie left home at 16 to work her way west along the railroad. She was twenty-seven when she followed the stampede to the Klondike. There she developed the knack of being the first on the scene of a new gold strike. She hiked in dragging her laden with a tent, Yukon stove, and supplies, and hanging out her shingle for “Meals.” Far from Dawson, her efforts earned top dollar and her nickname, “Fannie the Hike.” She also had her own free miners certificate. Fannie staked a claim in August 1900 on a stampede to Clear Creek, a tributary of the Stewart River, 125 miles from Dawson, where she must have also met the dapper Angus McKenzie. They were married on October 1, 1900, just a few days after her return to Dawson.

Fannie and Angus operated a roadhouse at No. 18 Below on Hunker Creek, just upstream from the small settlement of Gold Bottom. According to the Klondike Nugget, she and Angus got into a few fights, most involving alcohol, with which she was to have problems for the rest of her life. In January, 1903, Fannie left Angus and the Klondike and set off on an 800 mile hike down the Yukon to Rampart. From Rampart she followed the stampede to the Tanana, and was soon in the town of Chena. No record can be found of a divorce from Angus, though he was in the Iditarod by 1910, as one of the original discoverers on Otter Creek.
Fannie Quigley

Then in August, 1906 Fannie struck out for the new Kantishna diggings, recently discovered by Joe Quigley, and others. It was the beginning of Fannie’s serious pursuit of mining, and her hopes for a profit from her years of effort.

Fannie staked 26 claims between 1907 and 1919 (all recorded under the name of Fannie, or F. McKenzie.) She continued to mine after that date as well. Her first claim, staked on Jan. 1, 1907, was the Texas Bench, on the right limit of Glacier Creek, opposite #14 Above. It was witnessed by J. B. Quigley, and filed on April 15, 1907. Fannie joined R.C. Wood and others active in the area in several large association claims on Glacier and Caribou Creeks.

In November of 1910 Joe located the Silver Pick, the first of his claims on a high steeply sloping ridge between Eureka and Friday creeks that would become known as Quigley Ridge. That same week, Fannie and Joe together located the Hard Luck Association claim and Quigley staked the Golden Eagle Claim, both on Friday Creek.

Joe and Fannie were officially married in 1918 and they moved from Glacier Creek to the western end of Quigley Ridge, overlooking the confluence of Friday and Moose Creeks, near the townsite of Kantishna. Joe was developing hard rock claims, while Fannie had her own placer claims in Friday Creek. Fannie had also filed on No. 1, Eureka, the claim which had originally belonged to Joe Dalton and had been worked continuously since 1905. Fannie continued to mine the small patches of placer material left by the earlier miners providing additional support for the subsistence lifestyle the couple maintained while they developed their hard rock claims.

In 1919, Joe and Fannie succeeded in leasing out their Little Annie claims to Tom Aitken, an experienced mining man. From 1919 to 1924, 1,435 tonnes of high grade silver lead ore were mined with underground mine methods and hauled out to market under difficult logistical situations. Quigley’s high grade ores could not be commercially produced unless they contained at least 75 ounce/tonne silver. Never-the-less, miners and their boosters in Nenana and Kantishna expected this development to be the big break they had been waiting for, and that the worth of the Kantishna district would finally be proven. Unfortunately, with declining silver prices and lease disagreements with the Quigleys, Aitken terminated the venture in 1924.

Fannie continued to provide for the mining camp, hunting, trapping and growing as much as she could in her garden. She hunted caribou, moose, sheep, and bears, butchered the meat expertly, and carried the meat on her back through the high hills to her home. She used her dog team to haul wood for the cabin and bunkhouse.

Meanwhile, efforts in Washington had created Mt. McKinley National Park and Fannie’s old friend Harry Karstens was appointed superintendent in 1921. It was Fannie whom the young rangers like Grant Pearson turned to for advice on how to survive in their new wilderness park. With their claims leased, Fannie and Joe could finally afford to take a trip to the states, in 1924, Fannie’s first and only trip outside to visit her family after 25 years in the North.

Fannie saw other changes, too, like the coming of airplanes. Once, when Joe hitched a ride back to Kantishna from town, the plane crashed in Moose
Creek, leaving Joe with a severe gash through his nose. Fannie kept her wits about her, grabbed her needle and sewed Joe’s nose using a baseball stitch.

When Joe was injured in a serious accident while tunneling into his claims in 1930. During his rehabilitation, he met a young nurse. While continuing to develop the claims, Joe never returned to the Kantishna to live full time. In 1937, the claims were leased to the Red Top Mining Company, bringing in an income for Joe and Fannie which they split as part of a divorce settlement.

While Joe married and moved to Seattle in 1937, Fannie, now 67, remained on her own in the country she loved, among the high hills. Once accessible only by dog team or on foot, there was now a new road through Mt. McKinley Park to the Kantishna area. Park personnel, Alaska Road Commission staff, and many dignitaries came to call. Fannie Quigley’s small cabin, on the high bluff overlooking Friday Creek, with Fannie’s fenced garden and the dogs staked nearby, was pictured in many photographs, and towards the end of her life, Fannie became a kind of curiosity.

She swore, used foul and gruff language, wore rough men’s clothing, and her drinking habits were legendary. Unable and unwilling to adapt to civilization, she preferred the life in the open. She was still there to greet Bradford Washburn when he descended from his successful summit climb on Denali in 1942, just as she had greeted the successful Denali climbing party of Hudson Stuck thirty years before. She died alone in her cabin in the summer of 1944.

John Beaver Mertie Jr., (1888-1980)

John Mertie was a big man physically and scientifically, a giant of Alaskan geology and mining from 1911 until his death in 1980. He was one of the stalwarts of the heroic age of Alaskan geology before World War II when the work was extremely demanding physically as well as requiring a high degree of professional competence and dedication. John Mertie produced an impressive body of work, presented in more than 70 publications that covered much of Alaska and are widely respected and frequently referenced to this day. He is probably best known for his work in the Yukon-Tanana region but there are few areas of Alaska that he did not map in or visit the mining camps. He was widely respected throughout Alaska not only for his scientific prowess, but also for a rare rapport with Alaskan miners, woodsmen, settlers, and natives. A visit from Mr. Mertie was always welcome anywhere during his active years in Alaska be it town, village, roadhouse, or mining camp. His professional career in geology, much of it in Alaska, extended to his death in 1980 at age 92. He continued to do science to the end; his first publication on Alaska geology was dated 1911, his last 1976. He served the U. S. Geological Survey, the Nation, and Alaska exceptionally well for more than 70 years and we still owe much of what we know about the geology and mineral resources of Alaska to John Mertie.

John Beaver Mertie Jr. was born on January 22, 1888 in Baltimore, Maryland to John and Margaret E. Mertie, originally Pennsylvanians of Dutch-Irish and Irish ancestry. As John was about to enter high school, his father who passed on his great strength to John, accepted a position as a shop foreman with the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad in Raton, New Mexico. John stayed in Baltimore to finish his high school education. However, he spent
his summers in Raton where, at age of sixteen, he too
to working for the A.T. & S. F, initially as a
machinist's helper at $1.95 per day. In subsequent
summers, John advanced to skilled lathe operator and
machinist. Here John also learned to drive a steam
locomotive (but it was some 40 years before he
mastered an automobile). Mertie entered John
Hopkins University in the fall of 1905 and largely
funded his undergraduate education working for the
railroad in the summers. He intended to study
chemistry and in fact took all the undergraduate
classes in chemistry. In his senior year, Dr. Charles
Swartz induced Mertie to change his major to
geology. John earned a B.A. degree in 1908 from
John Hopkins University, was elected to Phi Beta
Kappa, and received a Ph.D. degree in geology from
the same school in 1911 at the age of 23.

From 1908 to 1910, Mertie was employed during the
summer by the U. S. Geological Survey in Colorado
and New Mexico, and did his graduate thesis on the
lavas of the Raton area. Upon his graduation in 1911,
he obtained an introduction to Alfred Hulse Brooks,
and at his request began his U.S.G.S. career in Alaska
as a petrographer, then a rare skill in the organization.

John began his field work as an assistant to L. M.
Prindle in the Yukon-Tanana region, an area where
John spend much of his subsequent professional career
in Alaska. Their work that summer was by foot and
horseback and because of the shortness of the season,
John got a good introduction to Alaskan fieldwork.
They moved camp 73 times in the next 75 days. He
spent a season with Fred Moffit in the Copper River
region and then G. C. Martin in the Matanuska River
region before starting his own projects. For the next 39
years, he spent most of his summers in Alaska literally
covering the Territory on foot, horse, dogsled, and
canoe from Ketchikan to Barrow and from the
Canadian border to Cape Prince of Wales Island as
attested by the many now classic publications that
resulted from his field work. Particularly notable was
his co-leadership of the expedition to the Brooks Range
and North Slope in 1924. Begun in February in
Washington, the party traveled by steamship, train, and
mail sled to Tanana, then used dog sleds to freight four
canoes and tons of food and equipment through the
Brooks Range in the winter. After Spring breakup, they
worked down the Colville River and its tributaries
by canoe and on foot to Barrow where they arrived in
late August making topographic and geologic maps
from the Yukon River north to the Arctic coast as
they went. Field work was often arduous then; for
instance, in the summer of 1933 when the U.S.G.S.
budget was cut drastically, Mertie backpacked alone
from Ruby to Flat, some 400 miles in all, visiting the
many mining camps along the way. In addition, of
course, Mertie soon published the results in another
of his classic U.S.G.S. bulletins. His work expanded
to the Goodnews Bay area in 1937 where he
developed an enduring interest in the platinum
deposits there. Time and again, however, he returned
to the Yukon-Tanana region and it is particularly
fitting that his name now endures in the Mertie
Mountains, east of Eagle where he did so much of his
work.

Mertie was also notable for his exceptional wide
interests and skills beyond geology. He was an
excellent surveyor, photographer, and as were many
early U.S.G.S. geologists, a much better than amateur
botanist. He always carried a plant press in the field
and discovered a number of arctic plants, some of
which were named for him. He was also skilled with
the microscope and was an excellent mineralologist.
His ability as a photographer is attested by the
thousands of photographs in the U.S. G.S. archives
that he took during his fieldwork. But his
photography was more than a hobby. During World
War I, he and Fred Moffit pioneered in military aerial
photography. Moffit developed one of the earliest
American instruments to rectify multi-lens aerial
photographs for the Army and Mertie did the
experimental flying, established the darkrooms, and
instructed several classes of officers in the
techniques. John was an accomplished
mathematician; he not only published several papers
on the mathematics of geology, he often entertained
himself during weather days in the field or while
traveling doing mathematical calculations.

In 1942, Mertie retired from active field work in
Alaska but continued as a full-time Survey employee
for another 16 years in the lower states until his
manditory retirement in 1958. That work began in
the west but he soon was called to study the monazite
and rare earth elements of the Appalachian
Mountains. After his official retirement, he was
called back on a part-time basis and he continued his
mineralogical and Alaskan work almost to his death.
at age 92. His next to the last publication, his 68th, was a definitive Professional Paper on the platinum deposits of the Goodnews Bay area that he revisited several times in the late 1960s. His last paper, one on the magnetite deposits of the Appalachians, was published in 1979, at age 91, 67 years after his first publication for the U.S.G.S.

Soon after receiving his doctorate, John married Mary Brice Garrish of Baltimore, a childhood sweetheart. Mary was not able to visit Alaska until 1939 but she was a dedicated field assistant during his many long field trips in the Appalachians during his later years. After Mary’s death in 1965, John married Evelyn Cisney, a colleague in the U.S.G.S. In addition to her professional accomplishments, Evelyn worked with John to prepare his reminiscences of his Alaska work. The result is Thirty Summers and a Winter, a memorial that is not only an enchanting look at the Alaska career of John Mertie, it is a unique description of how Alaskan geology was done before World War II.

Emil Usibelli, 1893-1964

Emil Usibelli was born in 1893 in the northern Italian city of Val’ Alta. In 1907, 14-year-old Emil, his mother, three brothers and three sisters immigrated to America. His father had moved to Washington State several years earlier and sent for his family only when he had saved enough money to establish a home and pay for their passage. Because Emil worked to help support his family both before and after their move to the United States, he received only three years of formal schooling.

After moving to the Pacific Northwest, Emil worked in a variety of jobs. He worked as an underground miner in several coal mines in Washington and at a silver mine in Canada. He also worked as a logger and was employed with his brother John by Pacific Car & Foundry in Seattle.

The foundry made rail cars and paid workers by a piece rate. Emil often told the story that he and his brother John worked so well together that whenever the company had a new part to fabricate, the two brothers would frequently be the first assigned to the task. After assembly had been completed, the company would establish the amount to be paid for each piece on the basis of the production rate established by the Usibelli brothers.

Emil saved his earnings and eventually owned the Renton Fuel Company, a coal bunker in Renton, Washington. However the depression years were difficult, and Emil as well as many others looked north for new opportunities.

In 1935, Emil moved to Alaska and found work as an underground coal miner at the Evans Jones Mine near Palmer. A year later he moved to Suntran near Healy to work underground for the Healy River Coal Company. After being laid off as a result of injuries sustained in a mining accident, Emil started a contract logging operation to supply timbers to the underground coal mines at Suntranra.

During World War II, Ladd Air Field, in Fairbanks became an important base for transferring warplanes to the Soviet Union. In 1943 the U.S. Army Air Corps hired Emil Usibelli to conduct exploration work on military coal reserves east of Suntranra. Later that year, Emil and friend T.E. Thad Sanford obtained a coal lease on these lands and a one-year contract with the Army to supply 10,000 tons of coal to Ladd Air Field. Not having the capital to develop an underground mine, Emil, as mine operator for the partnership, started operations using a small TD-40 bulldozer and a 1930s vintage GMC logging truck. His surface mining methods were viewed with much skepticism by the competing underground mine operators, but the Usibelli-Sanford partnership met its contract obligations. Later Emil added International K6 and K8 trucks to haul coal and constructed a tipple to load rail cars.

In 1945, Emil introduced hydraulic stripping to increase production. Hydraulic stripping had long been used by many Alaskan placer miners to remove silt overburden from gold-bearing gravel. The sandstone beds overlying the coal seams, however, were too coarse to be removed by the hydraulic monitor. Emil used TD-18 bulldozers to push the sandstone to the nozzles, and sluice boxes with riffles were set up to catch small amounts of gold found in the Tertiary gravels. Emil and Thad let mine employees keep whatever gold was trapped in the riffles.
Emil Usibelli was an avid hunter and bowler, and is remembered by his family and friends as having a good sense of humor, a fiery temper and a natural ability to do math in his head. They also note that he had an uncommon share of common sense and the confidence to take risks.

Emil Usibelli's family has had three generations active at the mine. After his death, Emil was succeeded by son Joe as president of UCM in 1964, and by his grandson Joe Junior in 1987. Until recently, grandson Mitch Usibelli was Vice President for Engineering, while grandchildren Anna, Cathy, and Rob worked at UCM in the 1980s.

Additionally, Emil's brother John was succeeded by two generations at the UCM operation in Healy. John worked as Superintendent of Operations for UCM from 1947 until his death in 1960. John's son Roland began operating equipment as a teenager in 1953 and retired in 1981. Roland's son John, a graduate of the University of Alaska School of Mineral Engineering in the early 1990s, worked as a heavy equipment operator for UCM beginning in 1982.

Despite his business success, the lack of a formal education beyond third grade troubled Emil throughout his life, and he made a longterm commitment to enhance educational opportunities for the community by providing a major portion of the heating needs at Monroe Catholic Schools in Fairbanks.

Usibelli Coal Mine Inc. (UCM) is still honoring Emil's commitment to furthering education more than 30 thirty years later. UCM created an endowment in Emil Usibelli's name at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks that provides incentive awards to exemplary UAF faculty and researchers. UCM annually funds a scholarship to the UAF honors program and Tri-Valley High School graduating seniors, is a major supporter of the Alaska Sealife Center, the Alaska Native Heritage Center, and through it a private foundation, funds over 30 educational programs throughout Alaska.

In 1948, Emil purchased Sanford's share of the business and Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc., (UCM) was incorporated under the laws of the Territory of Alaska. In the early years of the business, supply contracts with the military were small and in some years, non-existent. Emil persevered and upgraded equipment and facilities while working to make his surface mining methods more efficient and cost effective. Still, Emil believed that a proper coal mine should include underground production. In 1956, he opened an adit near Suntrana which he named after his daughter Rosalie. UCM replaced hand labor with a continuous miner and mechanical loaders for Rosalie mine output, and improved production drift designs. Never-the-less, the underground mining at the Rosalie adit was still more expensive than the surface mine production pioneered years earlier by Emil Usibelli, and was eventually discontinued.

By the late 1950s, coal from UCM's surface operations exceeded coal output from all of the company's underground competitors. In 1961, UCM purchased the Suntrana coal mine, the successor to Healy River Coal Company. With that purchase, UCM became the predominant supplier to the Interior Alaskan military bases and, for the first time, to Fairbanks area utilities. In March of 1964, at the age of 70, Emil was killed in a mining accident at Healy, and his 25-year-old son Joe returned from graduate school at Stanford to take over the operation. At the time of Emil's death, Usibelli Coal Mine was supplying the bulk of Interior Alaska's coal for both military and commercial markets.
Selected References


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Hlh, Jane, manuscript in press, Fannie Quigley


DISTINGUISHED ALASKANS AID
FOUNDATION AS 98ers

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation was incorporated as an Alaskan non-profit corporation on April 27, 1997. The Foundation was organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes, including donations to organizations that are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code. The foundation is a non-membership corporation that depends on services provided by its officers and directors, others interested in Alaskan mining, and on donations and grants.

The Foundation is especially indebted to eleven persons who have each contributed $1,000 to become 98ers, in honor of the first stampers to Alaska in 1898 at Nome.

The 98ers
Earl Beistline
Thomas K. Bundtzen
Douglas Colp
Walter Johnson
Wallace McGregor
John Mulligan
Patrick H. O Neill
Elmer E. Rasmusson
Robert H. Trent
Joe Usibelli, Sr.
William R. Wood
Glen Chambers

Most of the 98ers are recognizable as miners of national or international reputation. William R. Wood is President, Emeritus, of the University of Alaska. Dr. Wood suggested the organization of the Foundation. Elmer E. Rasmusson is Alaska banker and benefactor, long interested in Alaska natural resource history. Dr. Walter Johnson's career was mainly in Native public health, but he knew many pioneer Alaskans. His own research has taken him to Sweden and Norway in search of the true story of the so-called three Lucky Swedes' fame at Nome.

The Foundation is seeking about ninety more 98ers, but it welcomes contributions at every level. For further information contact:

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