

The PAYSTREAK

Volume 19, No. 2, Fall, 2018

The Newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation

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Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation New Inductees

AMHF Honors Three Pioneers from Frontier Mining Camps



Joseph Buffington Quigley Born in rural Pennsylvania, the tall Joe Quigley left home in 1884 to explore the world. Joe ascended Chilkoot Pass in 1891. From 1891-to-1903, he prospected and mined in the 40-Mile, Sixty Mile, Circle, Klondike, and Fairbanks districts. In 1905, he ventured into the Kantishna Hills, sharing the 1905 discovery with Joe Dalton. Joe Quigley, along with his wife Fannie, are interwoven into the history of mining in the classic frontier district. Quigley helped develop important lode deposits on 'Quigley Ridge' containing gold and silver, including the Banjo, which became the district's largest hardrock mine. After divorcing his long-time companion Fanny Quigley in 1938, he traveled extensively throughout the United States and became an avid gardener, amateur agronomist, and photographer, until he passed away on November 23, 1958 at the age of eighty nine.



Tekla Maria Kanari was a Finnish immigrant in search of a lost husband, who reestablished her life in a brave new world, Alaska. The mining firm which Tekla helped create, Trinity Mining Company, became one of the more successful small scale placer mines in the Kougarak district north of Nome. During the 1940s and 1950s, Tekla made numerous wire transfers of funds to friends and relatives in war-torn Finland. Both John and Tekla had to take legal action after WWII to re-acquire their claims, which had been over staked during the war. After John's death, Tekla briefly operated the mine by herself, along with a few employees. She passed away in 1981 in Seattle. By honoring Tekla, we also recognize her first husband John, Al Carey and other miners of Finnish origin for their important contributions to the Alaskan Mining industry.



Alvin Harriton Agoff The son of a Russian immigrant, Alvin Agoff grew up in the Iditarod Mining district and mined on Prince Creek for decades. Besides mining, he trapped, freighted with sled dogs, constructed cabins and innovative mining equipment, and built overland transportation access for others, including the RS2477 winter trail from Iditarod to Crook Creek on the Kuskokwim River. He was the consummate small scale placer gold miner that acquired enormous knowledge of the history of the Iditarod district, which he graciously shared with the AMHF. Alvin regularly attended AMHF inductee ceremonies beginning in 1997 until his passing in 2005. Alvin's legacy lives on today in Prince Creek Mining Company (Alvin's nephew, daughter and grand daughter), the last heritage family mining operation in the Iditarod district.

**Co-sponsored by the Alaska Miners Association
And Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)
Induction Ceremony, Tuesday, November 6th, 2018
Downtown Marriott Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska**

Program

The general public is invited to Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) induction ceremony from 7:00 to 9:00 PM on Tuesday, November 6th, 2018. The induction ceremony will take place in the Marriott Hotel in downtown Anchorage. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments will be served.

Coffee and Donuts----- 6:30-to-7:00 PM

Introduction by Tom Bundtzen, President AMHF----- 7:00-to-7:15 PM

Presentation of Inductees

Presentation of Joseph B. Quigley, by Cheryl Fair----- 7:15-to-7:40 PM

Presentation of Tekla M. Kanari, by Tom Bundtzen----- 7:40-to-8:05 PM

Presentation of Alvin H. Agoff by Tom Bundtzen----- 8:05-to-8:30 PM

Coffee Break----- 8:30-to-8:45 PM

Comments about Joe Quigley, by Denice Swanke (USNPS)----- 8:45-to-8:50 PM

Recollections of Inductees from the General Audience----- 8:50-to-9:15 PM

Adjournment----- 9:15 PM

Introduction and Acknowledgements

The November 6th, 2018 induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) features three pioneers associated with the development of classic Alaskan frontier mining camps: the Iditarod, Kougarak and Kantishna Districts. Far off the beaten trail, these camps were more remote than those accessible by sea, river, road or rail access such as the Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, Kennecott, Ketchikan, and Circe districts. Hence challenges faced in these remote areas were often reflected in the toughness and resilience of the pioneers involved in various mining camp endeavors.

Cheryl Fair, who will be presenting the biographic sketch of Joe Quigley, is a filmmaker, photographer, and writer, working with both commercial and private clients. Her photographic work includes contributions to several books, editorial photos for various publications in North America and Europe, and art photographs for exhibition in galleries. Her short films and music videos have been shown in film festivals, and on broadcast and cable television. Cheryl's "Magical Realism Tarot" project, featuring her photography and writing, was published in 2015 and is sold internationally. She holds a B.A. in Visual Art from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Baltimore School of Law. Cheryl is currently writing a biography of her great great uncle, Joseph Buffington Quigley. Denice Swanke, the Deputy Superintendent of Denali National Park and Preserve, will say a few words about Joe Quigley during the induction ceremony.

Betsy Riffey supplied the AMHF with important letters of correspondence, which document Tekla's involvement in supplying monetary and materials aid to Finlanders during a difficult time in their nation's history. The AMHF thanks Kristina Ahlnas of Fairbanks for first-pass translations of those letters into English, which were written in the Finnish Language and addressed to Tekla Kanari during several time intervals in the 1940s.

Cady Agoff supplied many valuable photographic images from the Agoff family album depicting scenes from the Iditarod district over a period nearly spanning 100 years. These images are invaluable records of the history of mining and cultural features from a remote part of the Iditarod Mining district. Cheryl Fair wrote the biographic sketch of Joseph Quigley. Tom Bundtzen and Elizabeth Riffey wrote the biographic sketch of Tekla Kanari. Cady Agoff and Tom Bundtzen wrote the biographic sketch of Alvin Agoff. Paul Glavinovich reviewed all three biographic sketches. Bundtzen prepared this AMHF Newsletter.

News From the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation

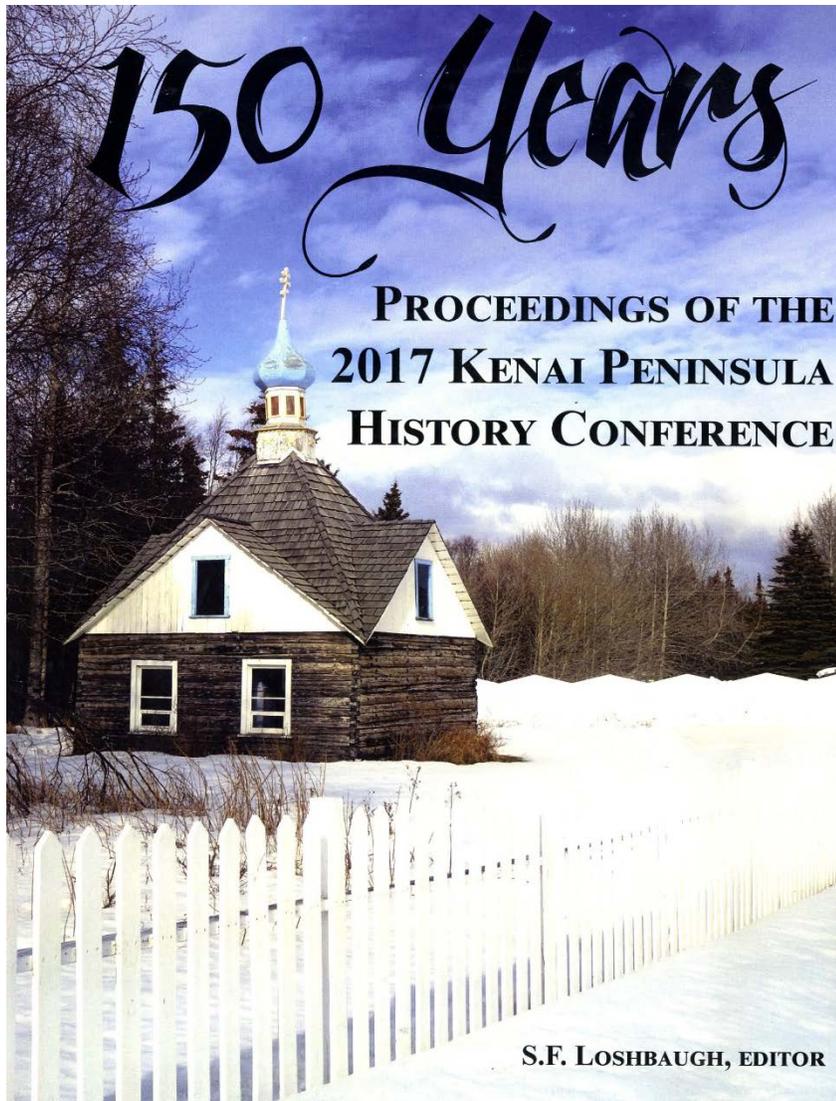
Helping to Celebrate the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of the Alaska Purchase

In November, 2017, using AMHF archived information and his own research, AMHF President Tom Bundtzen presented: *Mineral Resource Development Prior to the 1867 Alaska Purchase* during History Night at the 2017 Annual Convention of the Alaska Miners Association in Anchorage. The presentation coincides with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Purchase of Alaska from the Russian Empire by the United States. Research for the lecture included a visit to the Russian Geographic Society and the Russian Museum of Ethnology and History, both in St. Petersburg, Russia, to gather information.

A version of that lecture entitled 'Mineral Resource Development Prior to the 1867 Alaska Purchase' has been published in: *150 Years—Proceedings of the 2017 Kenai Peninsula History Conference*. The editor and convener the conference is Shanna Loshbaugh of Fairbanks. The 313 page volume is available from Loshbaugh. For information concerning acquisition of this volume, please contact Shanna Loshbaugh at: sloshbaugh@gmail.com. A version of the mineral resource paper will be imported onto the AMHF website soon.

AMHF Looking for a New Home

The Museum facility at 825 1st Avenue in Fairbanks that houses the collections of the AMHF was sold by the owner. The AMHF vacated the facility on April 30th, 2018. The AMHF has been inducting pioneers for the last 22 years at such venues as Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, and Nome. For the last 4 years, many inductions have taken place at the Fairbanks museum facility. Firstly, we want to thank all of our volunteers and helpers for their support during the operations of the Fairbanks museum facility. The Board of the AMHF has been conducting a search for a new home. Please stay in touch.



For information concerning acquisition of this volume, contact sloshbaugh@gmail.com



Contributions

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation is funded through donations of money, time and effort, and through sales at this Museum. The Foundation is a tax-exempt organization, so all donations are tax deductible.

Donations to the Foundation should be mailed to:

Karl Hanneman, Treasurer
Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation
P.O. Box 81108
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

Contributions to the Foundation

The museum opening and continued operations have thus far been made possible from various income sources acquired by the AMHF—a non-profit organization. Donations are graciously accepted. The AMHF would like to acknowledge individuals and organizations that have made financial contributions to the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation. These generous donations allow us to publish the *Paystreak* Newsletter, maintain this website, organize and carry out induction ceremonies Statewide, and especially pay for the expenses related to the planned re-establishment of a museum in Fairbanks. Contributions allow the AMHF Foundation to plan for future plans, including a site relocation of the museum, and acquisition of materials.

We thank all contributors, regardless of the level of their donation, which are: Copper (\$1-\$99), Silver (\$100-\$499), Gold (\$500-\$999); '98er, (\$1,000) and Platinum (>\$1,000). Some of the more recent contributions have been in memory of legislator, and placer gold miner Robert Bettisworth, gold miner Walt Wigger, and mine educator Jim Madonna. The AMHF especially thanks Teck Resources, operator of the Red Dog Zinc-Lead-Silver Mine, the Usibelli Foundation, and especially, the Bill Stroecker Foundation for their generous donations. Karen Erickson became our newest 98'er in 2016. Also included below are those that have contributed to the Pick-Click-Give Program.

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Lyndon Transport	Gold	General	2013
Teck Resources Red Dog Mine	Platinum	General	2013
Doug Colp Family	98er	General	2013
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2014
Malie Gray	Copper	General	2014
Clark Milne	Copper	General	2014
Peter Montesa	Copper	General	2014
Jules Tileston	Copper	General	2014
Six Anonymous	Silver	General	2014
Usibelli Foundation	Gold	General	2014
Candy Waugaman	Platinum	General	2015
Karen Erickson	Copper	General	2015
Usibelli Foundation	Gold	General	2015
Alaska Women in Mining	Gold	General	2015
Brian Rogers, Sherry Modrow	Gold	General	2015
Marty K. Rutherford	Gold	General	2015
Karen Purdue	Gold	General	2015
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Thurman	Silver	General	2015
Karen Clautice	Copper	General	2015
Christine and Corbette Upton	Silver	General	2015
Bill Brophy	Copper	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Leo and Fredi Brown	Copper	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
George Horner-Trust	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Laurence Peterson	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Sigwald and Arlene Strandberg	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Laurence Peterson	Gold	In Memory of Jim Madonna	2015
Lisa and Milton Behr	Gold	In Memory of Walter Wigger	2015
David and Aldean Kilborn	Silver	In Memory of Walter Wigger	2015
Nathaniel May	Copper	General	2015
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2015
Aaron Pfeil	Copper	General	2015
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2015
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2015
Karen Lapp	Copper	General	2015
Jeff Lapp	Copper	General	2015
William Groom	Copper	General	2015
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2015
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2015
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2015
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2015
John Cook	Copper	General	2015
Daniel Graham	Copper	General	2015
Six Anonymous	Silver	General	2015

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2015
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2016
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2016
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2016
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2016
Karen Lapp	Copper	General	2016
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2016
Matt Hanson	Copper	General	2016
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2016
Jeff Lapp	Copper	General	2016
John Cook	Copper	General	2016
Mark Hottman	Copper	General	2016
Two Anonymous	Silver	General	2016
Sarah Isto	Silver	General	2016
Tom Bundtzen	Silver	General	2016
Chris Olsen	Silver	General	2016
David and Heidi Doudna	Gold	General	2016
Karen Purdue	Gold	General	2016
Karen J. Erickson (1)	Platinum	General	2016
Richard E. Wagner	Copper	General	2016
Harold Noyes	Gold	General	2016
Karen Clautice	Copper	General	2016
Winston and Glenda Burbank	Silver	General	2016
Joseph and Victoria LeTarte	Silver	General	2016
Richard and Cherie Solie	Copper	General	2016
Debbie and Jeff Johnson	Silver	In Memory of Walter Wigger	2016
Helen Warner	Copper	General	2016
Laurence and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2016
John and Arlene Orbeck	Copper	General	2016
Lyman Family	Silver	General	2016
Ruth Ibbetson	Silver	General	2016
Alaska Women in Mining	Gold	General	2016

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2016
Usibelli Foundation	Gold	General	2016
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2017
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2017
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2017
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2017
Sonny Lindner	Copper	General	2017
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2017
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2017
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2017
Terry Taylor	Copper	General	2017
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2017
3 Anonymous	Silver	General	2017
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2017
Usibelli Foundation	Gold	General	2017
Fairbanks Branch, Alaska Miners	Gold	General	2017
Don Gray	Copper	General	2018
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2018
William Kinne	Copper	General	2018
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2018
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2018
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2018
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2018
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2018
Mark Hottman	Copper	General	2018
Parry Jameson	Copper	General	2018
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2018
Usibelli Foundation	Gold	General	2018
Terry Taylor	Copper	General	2018

(1) Also listed as a 98er in back of newsletter

A majority of donations at the copper and silver levels are from the State of Alaska Pick-Click-Give Program. Gold and Platinum levels generally constitute separate contributions. The 2018 donations list is current as of October 25th, 2018. Bolded year (2018) are new listings not included in our last Newsletter.

Previous Inductees, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

Fairbanks, Fall 1997

Six charter members of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation were previously elected into the National Mining Hall of Fame in Leadville, Colorado.

Stephen Birch: Founder and developer of Kennecott Copper Mines.

Frederick Bradley: Successful manager of Treadwell and A-J Mines, Juneau.

John Treadwell: Founder of Treadwell Mines, Juneau.

Alfred H. Brooks: Chief Geologist of U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska during Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush Era.

Earnest Patty: University of Alaska renowned teacher and later president, and manager of dredge firms in the Coal Creek-Woodchopper district.

Clarence Berry: Prominent Klondike and Interior Alaska miner.

Fairbanks, Spring 1998

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Yukon Basin Traders and Prospectors

Alfred Mayo: “Captain Al” well-known Yukon River trader, prospector.

Jack McQuesten: Known as the “Father of the Yukon” grubstaked many prospectors.

Arthur Harper: Respected trader and prospector and promoter of the Yukon; his son Walter, first stepped foot on the summit of Mount McKinley (Denali).

Howard Franklin: Fortymile prospector, discovered first “bedrock” placer gold in Alaska.

John Minook: Creole-Athabaskan prospector who discovered the Rampart and Melozitna districts—became an important inspiration for Indigenous rights, including US Citizenship.

Felix Pedro: Discoverer of Fairbanks district in 1902.

Nome, Summer 1998

Induction Ceremony Honoring Pioneers of Nome Gold Rush

John Brynteson: A ‘Lucky Swede’; an experienced hard-rock miner, discoverer of the Cape Nome district.

Erik Lindblom: The eldest of the “Lucky Swedes”, a tailor.

Jafet Lindeberg: The Norwegian of the ‘Lucky Swedes’, president and manager of the very successful Pioneer Mining Company.

Charles D. Lane: Tough, honest, and wealthy miner who helped the Lucky Swedes in their legal battles.

Juneau, Spring, 1999

Induction Ceremony Honoring Discovery of Juneau District

Joe Juneau: Native of Quebec, a California 49er, co-discoverer of gold in the Juneau district.

Richard Harris: Irish immigrant, co-discoverer of gold in Juneau district.

George Pilz: German immigrant who sent and financed the Juneau and Harris prospecting ventures in the Juneau area.

Kawa.ée: Tlingit leader who brought rich gold samples from Gastineau Channel area to George Pilz

Livingston Wernecke: Geologist-engineer for the Bradley companies of Juneau.

Bartlett Thane: Promoter-founder of the world's largest gold mine, the Gastineau at Juneau.

Anchorage, Fall 1999

Induction Ceremony Honoring Mining Pioneers of Southern/Southwest Alaska

Andrew Olson: Swedish immigrant, innovator at Flat; the original organizer of the platinum mining complex in the Goodnews Bay Mining district.

Evan Jones: Welsh immigrant; the true father of Alaska coal mining industry.

Wesley Earl Dunkle: Kennecott engineer and innovative geologist, co-founder of Star Air Service, predecessor of Alaska Airlines.

Fairbanks, Spring 2000

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early 20th Century Interior Pioneers

Emil Usibelli: Italian immigrant and founder of Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc., Alaska's only and historically largest producer of coal; civic benefactor in Fairbanks.

John B. Mertie Jr.: Leading U.S. Geological Survey geologist; outstanding earth scientist, mathematician, and world expert on platinum.

Fannie Quigley: Prospector, renowned for her bush skills, legendary Kantishna district character.

Juneau, Spring 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Government Role in Mining

Benjamin D. Stewart: State and Federal mining administrator, Alaska constitutional delegate at Alaska Statehood Convention in Fairbanks.

Fairbanks, Summer, 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring the Pioneers of the Large Scale Gold Dredging Industry of Nome and Fairbanks Districts

Norman C. Stines: Visionary engineer who planned and supervised original USSR&M activities in Fairbanks district.

Wendell P. Hammon: Installed the first three dredges in Cape Nome district; helped design financing for what became USSR&M dredge fleets in Alaska.

James K. Davidson: Designed and built Miocene and Davidson ditch systems.

Anchorage, Fall 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring Discovery of Flat District

John Beaton: Co-discovered Iditarod district with William Dikeman.

Fairbanks, Spring 2002

Induction Ceremony Honoring Successful Miners and Engineers of Early 20th Century

Frank G. Manley: Highly successful miner in Fairbanks, Hot Springs district, and Flat. Founder of the First National Bank, Fairbanks.

Herman Tofty: Norwegian immigrant who worked prospects near Manley Hot Springs.

Chester Purington: Acclaimed international mining engineer; wrote treatise on Alaska placer fields.

Thomas P. Aitken: Arguably the most successful small scale mine developer during the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush; worked both lodes and placers in Alaska and Yukon.

Anchorage, Fall 2002

Induction Ceremony Honoring Immigrant Pioneers

Peter Miscovich: Croatian immigrant who settled in Flat, Alaska 1910. Pioneered the use of hydraulic mining techniques.

David Strandberg: Swedish immigrant who joined the Klondike gold rush in 1898 and the Iditarod rush of 1910. Built placer mining dynasty Strandberg & Sons, Inc.

Lars Ostnes: Norwegian immigrant who mined in the Iditarod district and developed placer mines in remote western Alaska for over 50 years.

Fairbanks, Summer 2003

Golden Days Induction Ceremony (also recognized during Fall AMA convention)

Kyosuke "Frank" Yasuda and Nevelo Yasuda: Japanese immigrant and his Eskimo wife, discovered Chandalar gold and founded the community of Beaver.

Anchorage, Fall 2003

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early and Mid-20th Century Placer Miners

John Gustavus (Gus) Uotila: By 1915, Gus Uotila was known as a tough Iditarod teamster. He mentored placer mining operations throughout Alaska and became a respected overland freighter.

Simon Wible: He mined gold, built water canals, and became a wealthy man in California. When the time the gold rush came along, he pioneered hydraulic mine technology on the Kenai Peninsula.

Fairbanks, Spring 2004

Honoring Early Pioneers Associated with USSR&M Dredge Fleet

Roy B. Earling: Built pre-World War II FE Company into one of the most efficient and successful dredge mining firms in the world.

James D. Crawford: Well organized manager who acquired new dredge properties and guided FE Company into successful post-World War II period of gold mining.

Jack C. Boswell: Engineered the development of the rich Cripple deposit; and helped build giant FE machines used to dig deep placer deposits. Published historian of USSR&M era.

Genevieve Parker Metcalfe: Breakthrough woman mining engineer who developed initial plans for FE Fairbanks operations, wrote a landmark thesis on Alaska placer mining, and was a champion athlete and scholar.

Earl Richard Pilgrim: First Professor of Mine Engineering at University of Alaska. Independent Kantishna miner and pioneer, and noted FE consultant; “Mr. Antimony” in the US.

Anchorage, Fall 2004

Honoring Those in the Mining Legal Profession,

In Cooperation with the History Committee of the Alaska Bar Association

William Sulzer: Bill Sulzer became a prominent New York attorney and politician and briefly served as Governor of New York. The ever-optimistic Sulzer mined copper in southeast Alaska and developed gold in the Chandalar district.

Joseph Rudd: Shortly after statehood, Rudd drafted the State’s mining law on state lands and was sought for his expertise on natural resource issues throughout his career. He was killed in a plane crash in Anchorage upon his return from Juneau after discussing with other Alaskans challenges to President Carter’s Implementation of the 1978 Antiquities Act.

Anchorage, Fall 2005

Honoring the Discoverers and the Developer of Platinum Resources at Goodnews Bay

Per Edvard (Ed) Olson: Born in 1898, Edward Olson was born into a large farm family in Sweden and immigrated to the United States in 1905. In 1934, he assumed the position of general manager of the Goodnews Bay Mining Company (GBMC), the largest supplier of platinum in the U.S. during 1934-1975.

Walter Smith: In the summer of 1926, Yupik Eskimo Walter Smith and his young apprentice Henry Wuya found placer platinum in a stream draining a remote, uninhabited coast of southwest Alaska. The GBMC eventually purchase Smith's claims. Smith and Wuya are recognized as discoverers of Goodnews Bay platinum.

Henry Wuya: was born to Eskimo parents in Quinhagak on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Wuya was proficient in English when few Yupiks knew English. He mentored with the older and experienced prospector, Walter Smith.

Fairbanks, Spring 2006

Honoring Two Pioneers Important to both Canadian and American Mining Communities

Ellen (Nellie) Cashman: Ellen (Nellie) Cashman was a quintessential gold stamper who participated in many gold-silver rushes of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Nellie's final home was Nolan Creek in the Koyukuk district of northern Alaska. Cashman died of Cancer in 1925 at St. Anne's Hospital, Victoria, British Columbia, a medical facility she helped found several decades earlier.

Jack Dalton: One of the premier horse freighters of the Alaska-Yukon gold rush era, Jack Dalton opened up the 'Dalton Trail' for prospectors and trades from Haines to Central Yukon, Canada. In later years he worked as a freight engineer for the Alaska railroad. The Dalton Highway, named after his son, another transportation pioneer, is a tribute to the Dalton family in Alaska.

Juneau, Summer 2006

Honoring the Mining Legal Profession, in Cooperation with the History Committee of the Alaska Bar Association

Frederick (Fred) Eastaugh: Nome-born Fred Eastaugh was an Alaskan accountant a ship's officer for the Alaska Steamship Company, and Alaska mining attorney. Eastaugh was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission in 1991 by Governor Walter Hickel. Upon Eastaugh's death a year later, Hickel ordered state flags flown at half mast.

Anchorage, Fall 2006

Honoring an Outstanding Statesman and an Outstanding Prospector Active in the mid-20th Century Alaska Mining Industry

Charles F. (Chuck) Herbert: was one of the premier miners of his generation. Educated at the School of Mines in Fairbanks, he mined placer gold deposits, sought metalliferous lodes, and served with distinction in several public roles. During early years of Statehood, he played a crucial role in the selection of Alaska's North Slope Lands. Later as DNR Commissioner, he revitalized the State land selection process.

Rheinart M. (Rhiny) Berg: Berg's strength and stamina were legendary during most of his 86 years of life. He worked as an underground miner in the Wrangell Mountains and Fairbanks districts, as a trapper and prospector, and he found the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit. He later developed the Candle placer district on the Seward Peninsula. He gained great wealth, which he mostly gave away.

Juneau, Spring 2007

Honoring an Outstanding Statesman and a Mine Attorney Active in Southeast Alaska's Mineral Industry

Phillip R. Holdsworth: Phil Holdsworth's professional career extended nearly seventy years. He was a practical miner at the age of sixteen. Later he operated mines, assay labs, and mills. In World War II, he defended a Philippine mine as a guerilla warrior. After serving as Alaska's first commissioner of Natural Resources, Holdsworth became Alaska's elder natural resource statesman before his death in 2001.

Herbert L. Faulkner: H.L. (Bert) Faulkner's law career extended for almost seventy years. He was a sheriff, U.S. Marshall and attorney. He would represent almost every major mining company operating in Alaska during his lifetime.

Fairbanks, Summer 2007

Honoring Two of Alaska's Outstanding Mine Educators

Earl H. Beistline: Earl Beistline had a distinguished career as mining educator at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. Beistline brought to the classroom a unique blend of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of mining. During all of his adult life, he was a tireless and outspoken advocate of Alaska mining industry interests.

Ernest N. Wolff: Ernie Wolff was a notable personality on Alaska's mining landscape for more than sixty years. During this time he prospected, mined, taught and administered at the University of Alaska, wrote a classic book, *Handbook for the Alaskan Prospector*, and served on public bodies; all of this always in his unique style with a kind of gentle truculence.

Anchorage, Fall 2007

Honoring Those Involved in the Southwest Alaska's Quicksilver Mining Industry

Robert F. Lyman: Besides operating small scale mercury lodes, he managed Alaska's largest mercury mine at Red Devil, Alaska, which, during the 1950s, produced nearly 20 percent of U.S. domestic requirements of the strategic metal.

Wallace M. Cady: Produced, with other USGS colleagues, 'The Central Kuskokwim Region, Alaska', a geological framework of a large, 5,000 mi² area centered on Alaska's premier mercury mining region.

Russell Schaefer: One of Alaska's 'tough guy prospectors' that accomplished much in the Kuskokwim Mercury Belt of southwest Alaska.

Fairbanks, Spring 2008

Honoring Three Attorneys and a Civic Minded Woman Important to the Interior Alaska Mining Industry

Luther Hess: First rate mining lawyer and active mine developer in several interior Alaska gold camps. Helped organize the Alaska Miners Association (in 1939) and served as AMA's first President.

Harriett Hess: Worked with husband Luther on a variety of mining education issues and was a pioneer regent of the University of Alaska system. Worked as pro-development, pro-mining Democrats during the Roosevelt Administration.

Earnest B. Collins: Pursued a long and successful career in Interior Alaska as a placer miner, lawyer, Alaska Territorial legislator, and delegate to Alaska Constitutional Convention.

John (Johnny) McGinn: A smart mining lawyer who, with James Wickersham, cleaned up corruption in Nome and financed many small gold and silver projects in Interior Alaska and Yukon, Canada.

Anchorage, Fall 2008

Honoring Two Engineers and a Prospector Who Helped Bring Success to the Kennecott Mines in the Chitina Valley of South-Central Alaska

Earl Tappen Stannard: An innovative engineer at Kennecott's Alaska mines, and later a CEO of Kennecott Copper Corporation.

William Crawford Douglass: A gifted mining engineer and exceptional manager at Kennecott's Alaska mines.

Reuben Frederick McClellan: Organized the mining partnership that made the initial discoveries and negotiated the sales of the mineral claims that became the Kennecott mines in Alaska.

Anchorage, Fall 2009

Honoring Four Pioneers Important to the Willow Creek Mining District

Robert L. Hatcher: Began the lode mining boom in the Willow Creek district when he discovered gold-quartz veins on Skyscraper Mountain that later became part of the Independence group of mines.

Orville G. Hering: Instrumental in forming the east-coast based exploration group, Klondike and Boston Gold Mining Company and in forming the Willow Creek Mining district.

Byron S. Bartholf: Represents a large family group that was instrumental in the development of the gold lodes in the Willow Creek district.

Walter W. Stoll: An exceptional mine operator of the Independence gold mine, which became the largest gold producer (in ore tonnage) in the Willow Creek district.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2010

Honoring two-civic-minded pioneers important to Interior and Western Alaska Development

John P. Clum: Long after his involvement with the capture of Geronimo in Arizona, Clum established reliable postal service throughout Alaska—he became the Postal Inspector for the Alaska Territory.

Irving McKenny Reed: Notable Associate Mining Engineer for the Alaska Territory and pioneer of Nome; was chair of the Alaska Game Commission prior to WWII and the Territorial Highway Engineer prior to Statehood.

Anchorage, Fall, 2010

Honoring Pioneers Important to the Seward Peninsula Gold Dredging Industry

Nicholas B. and Evinda S. Tweet: Partners in marriage and mining, they created a family-owned firm that has mined gold in Alaska for more than 100 years.

Carl S. and Walter A. Glavinovich: Brothers who devoted more than 100 years of their collective lives to dredging in the Nome district, one of Alaska’s Premier placer gold districts.

Anchorage, Fall, 2011

Honoring Two Pioneers Active in South-Central Alaska Mining and Economic Development

Martin Radovan: A Croatian prospector who prospected the Chitina Valley for decades and found the high grade but also high altitude ‘Binocular’ copper prospect. He never made a mine but his dreams live on.

Arthur Shonbeck: He joined numerous stampedes during the Alaska-Yukon Goldrush and was an outstanding civic leader of Anchorage. He drowned with AMHF Inductee John Beaton in Ganes Creek west of McGrath.

Fairbanks, Spring 2012

Honoring Pioneers Important to the Mid-20th Interior Placer Mining Industry

Oscar Tweiten: Arrived in Fairbanks during the Great Depression and mined on Cleary Creek in the Fairbanks for more than 50 years.

Glen D. Franklin: A gifted athlete who studied business administration at the University of Alaska in the 1930s; mined with others throughout Alaska and Yukon Territory for several decades.

Donald Cook: An Oregon-born graduate of the University of Alaska, who pursued a stellar career in Education at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. He was an expert on USSR&M Gold dredges.

Anchorage, Fall, 2012

Honoring Pioneers Important to the Iditarod and Innoko Districts of Southwest Alaska

Merton Marston: Indiana newspaper man who became wealthy as a result of grubstaking the discoverers of the Iditarod district—later managed hotels in the Pacific Northwest.

Mattie ‘Tootsie’ Crosby: Beloved personality in Flat, the center of the Iditarod district for more than 50 years—the only Afro-American who lived and worked in that district.

Toivo Rosander: Finnish immigrant who mined in the Ophir-Innoko area for 70 years with wife Dyna and boys Ron and Ken. Managed to convince many skeptics about the value of placer mining.

Juneau, Spring, 2013

Honoring Two Pioneers Important to Mineral Development in Southeast Alaska

Alexandre Choquette: French Canadian prospector who began in the 1849 California Gold Rush and ended in the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896. At the time of his death, Choquette was a true north-country legend.

John F. Malony: Was important to early mineral development of Southeast Alaska—served as mayor of Juneau and helped form Alaska Electric Light and Power, Alaska’s first modern electric utility.

Fairbanks, Summer 2013

Honoring an outstanding citizen, educator and placer mine expert

Doug Colp: Born and raised in Southeastern Alaska, Colp became a legendary expert on placer mine technologies, a UAF Educator, and, with his wife Marcel, a civic-minded resident of Fairbanks.

Anchorage, Fall, 2013

Honoring Geologists from the U.S. Geological Survey

Arthur C. Spencer: Provided the first geologic descriptions of the Kennecott Mines in the Chitina Valley and authored a classic: USGS Bulletin 287—The Juneau Gold Belt in 1906.

Josiah E. Spurr: Forged a career as a renowned economic geologist—and helped found the Society of Economic Geologists. Best known for his pre-Klondike adventure—*Through the Yukon Gold Diggings*.

Stephen R. Capps: An outstanding regional geologist that specialized in the study of Alaskan placer gold deposits in glaciated areas. Was among the first geologists to study ‘strategic minerals’.

Fairbanks, Spring 2014

Honoring Three Early Mining Pioneers Important in the Alaskan Mining Industry

‘Wise Mike’ Stepovich: Self-educated Montenegrin immigrant came to Fairbanks shortly after the 1902 discovery and mined gold on Fairbanks Creek for 40 years; his son Mike Stepovich II would be Alaska’s last territorial governor.

Helen Van Campen: Had a remarkable career in Alaska that included equestrian sports, journalism and gold mining. Helen Van Campen Memorial Scholarship Fund at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks provides journalism students with funding to help start their careers.

Peter Petrovich Doroshin: A Russian Mining engineer that discovered placer gold on the Kenai Peninsula in 1848; was a pioneer in investigating Alaska's abundant coal resources.

Anchorage, Fall, 2014

Honoring Three Pioneers Associated with the Kennecott Mines in Alaska

Alan Mara Bateman: Important Kennecott consultant at McCarthy; Editor of *Economic Geology* for more than five decades.

Edward M. MacKevett Jr. Pioneer geologist of Kennecott deposits near McCarthy and Alaska's premier mercury-antimony and REE-Th-U districts.

William H. Seagrave Best known for his management skills in the early Kennecott mines of Alaska.

Anchorage, Fall, 2015

Honoring Pioneers Associated with the Red Dog Zinc-Polymetallic Mine and a Hatcher Pass Pioneer

Robert (Bob) Baker: The Kotzebue-based bush pilot and amateur prospector who is given credit for the discovery of the Red Dog zinc-polymetallic deposit, currently Alaska's most important metal mine.

Irv Tailleir A legendary U.S. Geological Survey Brooks Range geologist who followed up on Baker's recommendations and wrote the open-file report documenting the importance of the Red Dog deposit.

Don S. Rae: Respected prospector and assayer who worked in Southeast Alaska and Hatcher Pass.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2016

Honoring Pioneers Associated with Alaska's Gold Dredging Fleet

Patrick H. O'Neill: Born into a large Cordova family of Irish descent, O'Neill would graduate from the University of Alaska with several Engineering degrees, become dredge superintendent for the FE Company in Fairbanks, and compete a remarkable career operating fleets of gold-platinum dredges in South America. He was a strong supporter of the University of Alaska for his entire life.

Walter W. Johnson: His firm, the Union Construction Company, would construct over half of all the bucketline stacker dredges to operate in Alaska (32). UCC would operate in other international locales.

Anchorage, Fall, 2016

AMHF Honors Three Pioneers Associated Placer Mining, Invention, Mineral Industry Management, Scientific Inquiry, and Public Service

John Arthur Miscovich Renowned second generation placer gold miner from the Iditarod Mining district; perhaps better known for his *Intelligent* and other water technology inventions.

Cole Edwin McFarland combined the hard work of a pioneering Alaskan placer mining family with the responsibilities of being President of Placer Dome U.S. Inc., a successful international mining firm.

Donald John Grybeck had a distinguished career as a scientist, teacher, miner, earth science manager.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2018

AMHF Honors Three 'Minority' Mining Pioneers

William T. Ewing was born into slavery in 1854 in Keytestown, Missouri. After working his way across the United States, Ewing joined the Tacoma Police Department. He stampeded to Alaska in 1896, and in 1903, struck it rich in the Fairbanks District with partner James McCarty. After he passed away in 1923, his entire estate went to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

Kate Kennedy lived in the copper mining boomtown of McCarthy, Alaska for nearly three decades. In the early 20th Century, Kate Kennedy, a divorced woman, became the largest property owner in the Chitina Valley and was McCarthy's best known entrepreneur.

Eugene Swanson was reported to be the only consistently successful gold miner in the Rampart District, according to a 1938 article by the Fairbanks Daily News Miner. He served as a Buffalo Soldier about the time of the Alaska Yukon Gold Rush. An honor guard of black soldiers from the U.S. Army attended his 1942 funeral in Fairbanks.



**Joseph Buffington Quigley
(1869-1958)**

Photo Credit: Ken Quigley collection

Joseph Buffington Quigley, born May 9, 1869, was the second youngest of Robert O. Quigley and Mary Graham Oliver Quigley's fourteen children. The Quigleys were a pioneer family of Scotch-Irish heritage with a farm near Kittanning, in Armstrong County, Pennsylvania. Joe Quigley left home at the age of 15 in 1884 and began a seven-year journey across the continent. He was already over six feet tall and able to get jobs along the way, including a three-year stint as a blacksmith's apprentice in Nebraska. By 1890, he was working in camps in Washington State, logging by bull teams, bucking and felling timber, when he met some men who told him about prospecting for gold in the interior of Alaska. He had saved some money all along the way of his journey and felt that this was the right time to spend it on a steamship ticket to Alaska.

In spring of 1891 Quigley arrived in Juneau where he met Billy Kaufman, Lew Pierce and Charley Frampton. The four men and some others started out toward the Chilkoot Pass, taking a year's worth of supplies with them.

The group chartered a small fishing boat for Dyea, but bad weather kept them in Sunset Cove for fourteen days before they could continue on their way. It was April, with chunks of ice still in the water and the party had to take repeated trips, carrying one-hundred-pound packs, hiking through waist deep currents.

On the second day, several of the travelers turned back, leaving just four men on the trail to cut over seven hundred steps into the Chilkoot Pass to the summit. They arrived at the summit on May 8th, but found the sunny side of the hill was too soft for travel, so they waited on the top of the divide until the night got cool enough to harden the trail. On Joe Quigley's twenty-second birthday, May 9, 1891, the four men started relaying their outfits on sleds down to Summit Lake. The next day they went on to Lake Linderman, where they built a boat, went down the Linderman River to Lake Bennett, on past Miles Canyon and Whitehorse Rapids, through Squaw Rapids eventually to the Fortymile River.

Quigley found some coarse gold in Nugget Gulch and continued to prospect the gulches that ran into the Fortymile River. He "rocked on the bars for a while" and after the freeze-up in the fall of 1891, he freighted provisions on a sled. He had no dogs so he pulled the sled himself, on a solo journey up the Fortymile River about forty miles, and then over the divide seventy to eighty miles, then to the headwaters of the Sixtymile River. Joe Quigley was later described as a "mountain goat" and as "all bone and muscle." He could walk impressive distances in record time and this ability came in handy throughout his life as a prospector and miner.

From the winter of 1891 to the spring of 1893, Joe Quigley lived the solitary life, building a log cabin and working claims on Glacier Creek and the Sixtymile River.

He found a little gold, but not a fortune. He eventually met Jerry Baker, an old-timer in the area who suggested that they go to the Circle diggings on Birch Creek. They used Quigley's boat for part of the trip and then hiked sixty miles to the Birch Creek tributary of the Tanana River, but found it was all staked. When Joe Quigley needed more money than he could make prospecting, he would hunt moose, dress and quarter the animals and bring them to Circle in a Peterborough™ canoe, selling it for seventy-five cents a pound at market. He also did some trapping, catching beaver, mink, marten and ermine. He later remembered that time and said (we were)

"always looking for a million dollar mine, and never showing disappointment when we didn't find it."

By 1897 Quigley and Baker went up the Yukon River, where they went their separate ways, with Joe Quigley partnering up with Thomas Cook on #35 Eldorado in the Klondike.

They sunk some holes, thawing with good fires, and that winter they sold their claim for ten-thousand dollars each. That same year, Quigley was inducted into the Yukon Order of Pioneers. (Joe Quigley is #17 in the group photograph, taken in Dawson in 1897).

Quigley went on to prospect, breaking trail across the Klondike Flats with Bob Beam and John Krishy, until they came upon a small creek that entered the Klondike River about a mile below Bear Creek. When they went in to record their claims, Captain Constantine of the Mounted Police asked "What creek?" The men told the Mountie that the creek didn't have a name yet and so he inquired as to who found it. The men said "Quigley" and so it officially became Quigley Creek on the map. The group sunk holes on Quigley Creek but did not find gold. Joe Quigley then prospected with John Krishy around Hunker Creek, until Quigley decided to build another boat and take a solo journey up the Tanana River in then remote Interior Alaska. Quigley poled up the Tanana River for many miles



The Yukon Order of Pioneers in 1897—the year after the Klondike discovery. Joe Quigley is Number 17 on the lower right hand portion of the photo. Photo Credit: University of Alaska Rasmussen Archives Accession Number UAF-1970-0058-00254-YOOP.

until he “ran out of water at the foot of a glacier.” It was 1901, making him one of the first non-indigenous men to go all the way up the Tanana to headwaters. He found a little gold, but not the “Million Dollar Mine” he was looking for, and then headed back down the Tanana, where he stayed with mail carrier Charlie Overheiser. Quigley continued prospecting and making river trips, until 1903, when he went to the new Fairbanks diggings.

Quigley still had most of his ten-thousand dollars from the sale of #35 on Eldorado in the bank, when he saw Jack Horn in Fairbanks, in the fall of 1904. Horn and Quigley had met originally in Dawson, some years earlier. When they heard Judge Wickersham in Fairbanks, talking about his expedition to Kantishna, they decided to use Quigley’s savings and Horn’s dog team and head down to the Kantishna country. They took the outfit on a sled and small trailer and started out in February 1905, across the Toklat River following it to the headwaters of the Kantishna River. Quigley built a cabin and they began prospecting, locating on Glacier Creek at Glacier City, and on Caribou Creek, Moose Creek and Eureka Creek, naming creeks and sketching the area. They located claims for themselves and friends, and built a boat after the break-up to take themselves and the dogs back toward Fairbanks by way of the Kantishna River to the Tanana River.

Joe Quigley recorded claims for himself, Jack Horn and about a dozen others on July 10, 1905. Meanwhile, Dalton and Stiles were prospecting in the same area and registered their claims on July 12, 1905. That summer Quigley and Horn went back up the Kantishna in a small motor boat, spearheading a large group of friends and prospectors. A new mining district was formed and the recordings were transferred from Fairbanks. The activity inspired a stampede of perhaps several thousand people, mostly arriving by boat. A year later, when it became apparent that placer mining there was not as profitable as they had hoped, many of the stampeders left and the population dwindled to about fifty miners.

Among the first group of people to arrive in Kantishna was Fannie McKenzie, later to become Joe Quigley’s wife, the legendary Fannie Quigley. Joe, who was an exemplary outdoorsman, taught Fannie how to hunt and trap. In 1908 Joe and Fannie both spent time hunting with conservationist and “Father of Mt. McKinley National Park” Charles Sheldon and Sheldon’s guide, Harry Karstens, who Quigley had known from Dawson. Sheldon was impressed with Joe and Fannie and described Joe in his journal:

“Quigley was one of those rare honest chivalrous men, found here and there in Alaska, who combined successful individual mining with the traits of a true hunter and an accurate observer of Nature.”

Joe Quigley was respected as an honest man of vision, reserve, and persistence, and was considered a reliable source for the press. He had a wry sense of humor and was known as someone who would go out of his way to do a friend a favor or give advice when asked. Park ranger Grant Pearson recalled a time when Quigley was walking home after hiking from the Toklat River, on his way to see some mining engineers in the area. He noticed that Pearson’s food cache had fallen down and that Pearson wasn’t home. In spite of the fact that Quigley was in a hurry for a potentially profitable meeting, he stopped to pick up all of the food and take it into Pearson’s cabin. Community minded, Quigley became a charter member of the Pioneers of Alaska in 1909, and in 1921, a member of the Freemasons, Tanana Lodge number 162.

By the time the original Kantishna stampede died down, Joe Quigley realized that significant amounts of gold were not only in the creeks but also were in the hills. He staked several Quartz claims and began digging tunnels. Once he began hard rock mining, he realized that he would benefit from more knowledge of geology and assaying, so he took courses at the University of Alaska (then known as The Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines), taking courses from Charles Bunnell and AMHF Inductee Earl Pilgrim.

Quigley was known for his skills as a self-taught mineralogist and was regularly consulted by visiting government geologists and local prospectors. He discovered gold, silver, lead, zinc, and antimony, learned to be a scientific prospector and had his own assaying outfit. He was intellectually curious and spent his evenings studying and assaying samples found by himself and other prospectors. Quigley also continually worked to bring better transportation to the Kantishna area, because the lack of transportation was the blockage to making lode mining profitable there. He continued to do placer mining on the bars on the creeks in the summer and build tunnels for his hard rock mining in the winter. He was a diligent worker and had mastered many skills, including blacksmith, musher, mechanic, carpenter, hunter and trapper. He was a tireless hiker and even with a thirty-pound pack could walk 150 miles in four or five days.

Although Joe Quigley and Fannie McKenzie had been a couple and business partners for many years, they weren't officially married until February, 1918. He did the mining work for her claims as well as his own, and she did the cooking, gardening and other domestic work.

They both hunted for their food and did some trapping for cash. The couple lived in relative luxury compared to other miners at the camp. Joe Quigley built several cabins and storage buildings to form a compound that included a darkroom, where he could develop the photographs he shot of wildlife and some of the many guests who came to visit. The compound also had terraced gardens and cold storage tunnels that were dug into the permafrost to preserve food year-round. Over time, Joe and Fannie's relationship as business partners continued on, but their marriage deteriorated, and the couple often fought over Fannie's heavy drinking. By 1930, Joe was only going back to the cabin he shared with Fannie once a week, while he worked, building hundreds of feet of tunnels, single-handedly.

On May 21, 1930 Joe Quigley had a catastrophic mining accident, when a tunnel he was building in his Banjo claim caved in, piling three-thousand pounds of rock on him. His right shoulder was badly injured, severing the nerves, and his left femur was crushed up to the hip.



From Left, Fannie Quigley, Joe Quigley, Ruth Wilson, and Joe Dalton on a moose hunt, November, 1919. The early mining pioneers of Kantishna subsisted off the land by harvesting big game and gardening. Originally published in Bundtzen (1978). Photo Credit: Stephen Foster Collection, University of Alaska Rasmussen Archives.

When he regained consciousness, he managed to uncover his leg, using his left hand to lift the rocks, and dragged himself to the shack near the mouth of the tunnel, where he had been sleeping during the week. Fannie Quigley found him there and got the other miners to come and help. He was eventually flown to a hospital in Fairbanks, for an estimated three month stay. Although he was still recovering from his injuries, he continued to help bring transportation to Kantishna, and in August of 1930 testified before the Senate Committee that big tonnage for the Alaska Railroad would be assured if there was a transportation link across the eighty miles that separated the region from the railroad. He explained to the committee that excessive transportation costs made it unprofitable to ship any but the richest ore. During his time in the Kantishna, Quigley leased the silver-lead Little Annie Mine to Thomas Aitken from 1919 – 1921, and the Red Top Mine was leased to a Fairbanks miner in 1922.

After his accident, Joe Quigley was not physically able to continue working as a miner and was not as suited to the hard life of living off the land in the wilderness, as he once was. He was still active, reportedly walking eight miles a day only a few months after the accident, and had an alert mind always on the lookout for new possibilities, but his right arm was permanently injured. He found it difficult to stay in Kantishna and put every effort into finding investors for his claims so that he could move on to a more suitable life style. He had patented seventeen claims, owned two-thirds interest in four more claims, plus four more unpatented claims and holdings in the Banjo Mine. In 1933 he sold an option on a claim to General A. D. MacRae, splitting the proceeds with Fannie. In 1937, Joe sold his seventeen patented claims to W. E. Dunkle for one hundred fifty thousand dollars (equivalent to approximately two and a half million dollars in 2018), plus ten percent of gross profits.



Joe Quigley and dog team, undated. Photo Credit: Denali National Park and Preserve Collection #3511.

Once again, Joe and Fannie Quigley split the money fifty-fifty, and this was their last transaction as partners. Joe Quigley spent that winter in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where he filed for divorce from Fannie.

Quigley loved to travel. He bought a new car in 1938 and toured the United States putting 18,000 miles on the vehicle before moving to Seattle permanently, where he lived with his second wife Julia, a registered nurse.

He continued to collect royalties from his mines until 1942, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed executive order L-208, limiting or preventing outright gold mining throughout the United States.

Joe Quigley maintained contact with the Fairbanks press and continued his interests in prospecting and in photography, but never worked as a miner again. He enjoyed his retirement, saying that “growing things” was his hobby. Fannie Quigley died in 1944 and Joe’s second wife Julia Quigley died in 1950. He was described in 1953 as:

“A widower with no children, who has a merry twinkle in his eye and gets a kick out of life. Tall and husky yet, except for the injured arm, which he can now use for light work, he likes flowers and gardens and has planted peach and apple trees and is content.”

Joe Quigley died on November 23, 1958, at the age of eighty-nine.

By Cheryl Fair, Great-Grand Niece of Joseph Buffington Quigley, October, 2018

Biography Reviewed by Paul S. Glavinovich and Thomas K. Bundtzen

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Tekla Kanari (left) and John Kanari (right), circa 1940s.

Tekla Maria Kanari 1898-1981

Finlander Tekla Maria Kanari never planned to live in faraway Alaska for much of her adult life. She was born in the farming village of Kustavi near Turku, Finland, where her homeland had been an autonomously administered region of Imperial Russia since 1809. As a young woman, she witnessed the establishment of Finland as a new nation state after the Bolshevik Revolution transformed much of the Russian Empire into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). During WWI, Finland's national hero, Carl Gustaf Mannerheim, fought with distinction German and Austrian adversaries for Russian Tsar Nicholas II along the Austrian and Romanian Fronts—even winning the coveted Order of St. George. Nevertheless, he was determined that Finland would not become a Republic of the USSR after its creation in 1918. A brief civil war between the Red Army and the Mannerheim-led White Army ensued and the latter won—insuring that Finland would become an independent nation state for the first time in its history.

With the advent of the world-wide depression that began in late 1929, Tekla's husband, John, immigrated to the United States. At his departure, he told Tekla that he would send for her after he established a stable means of livelihood. Immigrations records show that John Kanari applied for a 'Petition for Naturalization' in Nome, Alaska in 1930. By 1932, John Kanari had become a gold miner in the Kougarak region north of Nome, Alaska, where he partnered with two other Finlanders, Al Carey (aka Alfred Karjapenttila), and Hector Laurin. Carey, Laurin, and Kanari shared profits and claims of their initial mining operations. Additional claims were staked and developed in 1936 on the Kougarak River by the incorporated partnership known as Kanari, Laurin and Carey, Inc. In official territorial records, the mine development is referred to as 'hydraulic'. The number of employees was six.

It is not entirely clear whether the lack of correspondence between John and Tekla was due to the unreliability of surface mail or electronic methods of communication (telegraph or telephone) or just due to neglect by the former; but after not receiving any instructions from her husband, Tekla left Finland in 1934, determined to find John. Tekla arrived at Ellis Island in New York, and after completing her immigration paperwork, began work in Brooklyn. Subsequently, she made her way across the United States, where she was employed as a maid in hotels, as a waitress in coffee houses, and any other labor she could find. She eventually discovered through research with the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service that John had resided, at least during the winter, in Nome, Alaska.

In 1936, Tekla bought an Alaska Steamship ticket bound for Alaska and by mid-summer had reached Nome. Upon reaching her final destination, she promptly applied for a 'Petition for Naturalization' to receive eventual U.S. citizenship. No matter what she would face in her future, she was here to stay. Tekla was determined to be an American citizen.

Tekla was finally rejoined with her husband John and the couple, along with Al Carey, collectively formed Trinity Mining Company (TMC) in 1937—not to be confused with the Trinity Mining Company created by AMHF inductee William Ewing in 1915. The previous partner to Kanari, Hector Laurin, rejoined with his brother’s mine outfit on Macklin Creek. TMC operated out of Trinity Creek, Alaska in the Kougarok district, where regular postal services was established. Their operations were in the remote part the northern Seward Peninsula in a classic frontier mining camp setting 75 miles north of Nome. Mining took place from April to October. When the ground froze up and the water froze, the camp crew demobbed the operation and the Kanari couple moved to Nome for the winter.

For twenty (20) years, TMC was one of the most successful small scale gold mining operations in the history of the Kougarok Mining district, which was then administered as a part of the Cape Nome Mining District. The operations of TMC continued in earnest by Al Carey and John and Tekla Kanari, along with a half dozen employees. What made TMC succeed was that the main driver of the partnership was shared equally by John and Tekla. John and Tekla were hard workers—even ambitious.

Whereas John did much of the ‘caterpillar mining’, Tekla worked on equipment; operated water giants, bought groceries, hauled in supplies, made most of the clean-ups, and managed the books. TMC’s consistent success story relied much on both Tekla’s brawn but especially her brains. Operating in the remote camp did have it’s challenges. One 1948 correspondence deals with the need to repair a fuel pump, a starting engine clutch and other damaged parts at the Caterpillar division of Northern Commercial Company (NCC) in Nome. John and Tekla Kanari thanked the NCC in advance for assisting in the ‘mechanical emergency’.

Most provisions need by the TMC that came out of Nome were sometimes shipped to Shismaref on the coast or Candle to the east. From either site, TMC personnel would freight the foodstuffs, mining equipment, and spare parts back to the Kougarok usually by ‘Cat Train’. Examination of mine records during 1936 and 1948 suggest other Finnish nationals were working for the TMC, including Otto Lahikainen and Enok Myutthi. Like so many mining camps occupied by Scandinavians, the Trinity Mining Company featured a well-furnished Finnish sauna.



Left—Abandoned building that served as a bunk house of Trinity Mining Company; Right—Betsy’s sons Kris and Kevin stand next to the Kanari sauna at Trinity Camp. Both images undated. Credit: Elizabeth Riffey.

During her years of mining in in the Kougarok, Tekla sent numerous money orders and care packages from her new home to friends and family in war-torn Finland, which experienced extreme poverty during WWII and at least for a time during the post war years of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The Soviet Union, Germany, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Finland experienced the largest human losses as a percentage of the total population of any nations engaged in the European theatre of WWII. Tekla's activism began in late 1940, after the termination of the Russo-Finnish war of 1939-1940. She began to wire-transfer funds to friends and relatives in the war-torn country in 1940. During Finland's 'first war', at great cost, the USSR annexed Karelia and adjacent areas. Casualties on the Finnish side were equally high. On June 21, 1941, Nazi Germany and its allies attacked the Soviet Union. Finland allied with Germany in order to take back Karelia and other territories lost to the USSR in 1940. Several letters from Finland (translated by Kristina Ahlnas in Fairbanks) to Tekla illustrate Tekla's involvement in helping those in need. Excerpts from a letter written by Tyyne Enberg Anabainen, Tekla's brother, on August 16th, 1941, poignantly describes the situation in war-torn Finland at the beginning of Finland's 'second war'. Tyyne, who was not eligible for military service, continued to run the family farm. Excerpts of the letter, written in Finnish, follows:

My Dear Sister!

From far away with many greetings. Have you seen the letter that I sent on the same day that the war started for Finland again on June 22, 1941? This life is awful when so many already have not returned from the front, where both old men and youngsters are dying together in those killing fields. Death is waiting there every moment. It is good that Arne (another brother of Teklas) has not yet been wounded. Here in Kustavi, an old farmer has just lost his 3rd son. He lost the 1st and 2nd sons in the first war. Now he has no more sons.....

Thank you so much for the money (1,440 marks). Olya also thanks you for the money sent to her. And Ina is screaming at the top of her lungs thanking you for the package she received—so loud that everyone in the village hears it!.....Before Arne left for the front, we repaired the barn. Inside the barn, everything has been rebuilt. And maybe I have found me a helper for this winter; a big man named Veeijo.....Father is feeling well but mother feels very old. Maybe both of them will stay with us this winter.....But now I must cut hay to feed the cows this winter. I will soon harvest the potatoes. And we also have 29 sheep to feed. So I must return to work. Let's wish for better times. Good Bye Sister!

For several years before, during, and after WWII, Tekla provided for food and other materials to friends and relatives in Finland through agents in Brooklyn, New York. Whereas Tekla could wire funds directly to Finland from Nome, to ship materials, she had to employ assistance from agents in Brooklyn, who would acquire the desired foodstuffs and equipment and provide estimates of costs to Tekla. Upon mutual agreement of terms, Tekla would then wire transfer funds from Nome to the Brooklyn-based agents. The materials were then loaded onto freighters bound for neutral Ireland, neutral Sweden, or Finland. A letter postmarked November 24th, 1942, and written in Finnish was sent to Tekla from Elizabeth Bloomquist:

Good day, Mrs. Kanari:

Thank you for the letter written some time ago. Our little boy liked the pictures of school boys in Nome that you sent me. I am mailing you the NY newspaper that describes the Finnish care efforts, which of course you are involved. For your interest, a 15 pound package you inquired about would cost \$5.00 to transport. Your last shipment was sent aboard the SS Kroner. It included 700 pounds of sugar, an electric refrigerator, and several bulk dried food types. One cannot send packages anymore without inspection by authorities who search for war materials.

*But some materials can be sent by air.....My 18 year old daughter Ethel is making \$45/week in an airship factory. That is very good pay for such a young girl! My husband believes he will be soon be drafted. He is 44 but still eligible for the draft. Can you send me an Alaskan newspaper? My 14 year old boy wants to travel to Alaska, because of all the girls there. Ha! Ha!.....Is there much defense work in Nome? I just visited the Brooklyn naval yards and the people there are making a lot of money—more than \$100/week! I must go now.
Good bye, Elizabeth Bloomquist*

Although remote, the Kougarak district where Trinity Mining Company (TMC) operated experienced the same competition with respect to holding mining claims as other mining jurisdictions in the Alaska Territory. Mine entrepreneur Sam Godfrey, who in 1937 partnered with AMHF inductee Johnny McGinn to construct a 3 cubic foot bucketline gold dredge in the Kougarak district, over staked claims held by Trinity Mining Company in the Kougarak district. The over staking occurred during World War II, when the requirement to do annual assessment work on mining claims was suspended by the Federal Government. After WWII, John Kanari, who served in the Territorial Guard during the war, returned to Nome to mine in the Kougarak district. Much to his surprise and disappointment, he discovered that over staking of all of Trinity's claims by Godfrey had occurred during the war years.

In order to regain the TMC claims, John and Tekla Kanari filed their intention to hold mining claims, citing Public Law 735-80th Congress, Chapter 595-2nd Session (H.R. 6239). This congressional enactment allowed for the suspension of annual assessment work by miners affected by war time conditions until July 1, 1948—extended until July 1, 1949. Included in Kanari's filings were restoration of the rights of 14 mining claims in the vicinity of the Trinity Creek, a tributary of the Kougarak River.

Sam Godfrey's bucketline gold dredge was eventually sold to Nicholas and Evinde Tweet; aka N.B. Tweet and Sons, which operated the dredge to this day—the only bucketline stacker gold dredge still operating in Alaska.

John Kanari died of a massive heart attack at the TMC mine site in 1954, following Al Carey's death three years previously. Tekla continued to mine and prospect in the Kougarak district for years on her own; albeit at a much smaller scale. Her close friend Hazel Le Compte related in a May 12th, 1955 letter:

I suppose that you will be at Taylor Creek getting your assessment work done and your mine plans completed. Have you sold any of that oil at Dahl Creek? I hope that you did. I'm glad that your luck has changed. You are a very clever business woman.

In 1959, Tekla married Herman Gustafson, a longtime gold miner who operated a placer gold operation on Oregon Creek near Nome. In the early 1960s, Tekla sold all of the assets of Trinity Mining Company and both Herman and Tekla moved to Seattle. Tekla's departure from the mining business not only coincided with important new changes in her personnel life and her age (she was 62 when she married Herman) but also a time when placer gold mining had declined significantly from previous levels. The chief culprit for this decline was the fixed price of gold at \$35/ounce, where it had remained since 1934. In a speech before the U.S. Senate in January, 1965, Alaska Senator Ernest Gruening stated:

Because of the fixed price of gold, no industry in the history of this country has ever been the target of greater discriminatory practices and abusive executive power than gold mining. Costs for gold miners have risen more than 150 percent since the 1934 price freeze was imposed.

Gruening went on to relate how the loss of gold-mining jobs in rural communities like Nome, Fairbanks, McGrath and in other regions had caused a loss of economic diversity in rural Alaska. Gruening managed to obtain a number of senators as co-signatures on a bill designed to either remove the gold price control or provide for a gold price incentive program. His bill failed. Placer gold mining in Alaska would not be revived until the Presidential administration of Richard Nixon removed the Roosevelt era price control on the gold price in the early 1970s.

Tekla and Herman stayed in touch with their friends in Alaska and hosted many 'Nomeites' in their Seattle home.

Tekla Maria (Kanari) Gustafson passed away in Seattle in 1981 of unknown causes.

Tekla's life story is one of a European immigrant's search for a lost husband, reestablishment of life in a brave new world, success in the mining business in a remote part of the Alaskan frontier, and care for family members and friends she left behind in war-torn Finland. Her courage, strength, perseverance and basic character has earned her a place in the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame. And by honoring Tekla, we also recognize her first husband John, Al Carey and other miners of Finnish origin like AMHF inductees Gus Uotila and Toivo Rosander for their important historic contributions to the Alaska Mining industry.



Left: letter from Tynne Enberg Anabainen (Tekla's brother) on August 16th, 1941 from Turku, Finland; Right: Letter from Brooklyn resident Elizabeth Bloomquist, one of Tekla's agents for sending food and care package materials to Finland, dated November 24th, 1942.

Written by Thomas Bundtzen and Elizabeth Riffey, October, 2018. Reviewed by Paul Glavinovich

The AMHF thanks Kristina Ahlnas for translating several of Tekla's letters and Douglas Tweet for clarification of mine-related activities of the Trinity Mining Company.

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Alvin Agoff at Prince Creek, circ 1985. Photo Credit: Marti Miller

**Alvin Harriton Agoff
(1931-2005)**

Alvin Agoff probably wouldn't know what to make of hearing that he had been inducted into the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF). He regularly attended AMHF inductee ceremonies from 1997 through 2004, until his passing in March, 2005. Family members said that the induction ceremonies always gave him great pleasure in life. We naturally assume that he would be delighted to be in the company of so many old friends that were inducted before him.

Agoff Family Beginnings

Alvin was born December 3, 1931 in Akiak, a small village in remote Southwest Alaska. His father, Amaran Gregor Agozorov, immigrated from Imperial Russia through Canada to Alaska, surviving a shipwreck along the way. Somewhere along this journey his name was changed to the more prosaic (and infinitely easier to pronounce) Harry Agoff. He traveled throughout Alaska from Juneau to Kennicott, finding work as a miner, prospector and dog musher. In 1917 he joined the hordes of gold seekers in Alaska still trickling in to the site of the last large gold stampede in

North America, the Iditarod Gold Rush. Harry decided to walk the Iditarod trail from Anchorage to Flat. When questioned, Harry said:

"It was winter. The ground was nice and firm and in those days, there was a roadhouse every twenty miles, so a man never had to sleep out in the weather."

Nineteen year old Harry arrived in Flat on Christmas Day, 1917 - just in time to join the 'Tough Man' boxing match taking place in the rugged frontier town of about 2,000 and to beat all of his competitors. Harry was handsome, physically strong and somewhat of a polyglot. His family remembers him speaking at least four languages with relative ease. Harry easily found work in Flat on any of the three dredges working there at the time. He also prospected for others, and carried mail with dog teams on the Iditarod Trail.

Alvin's mother, Evelyn Ragnhilde Hoverson, rode up the Iditarod River in the sternwheeler North Star to become the schoolmistress of the Otter Territorial School in Flat in 1926. Evelyn was a second generation Norwegian-American and one of twelve siblings. She trained to be a teacher in North Dakota. She was an intelligent young woman with a gift for teaching and mentoring young people that threaded throughout her life.

Evelyn's kindness to others and her talent for lasting friendships proved to be a civilizing influence on her dark and handsome Harry Agoff, and they were soon married. Throughout their marriage, Evelyn would continue to take teaching jobs in Flat and surrounding areas when there was a need. Besides reading, writing and arithmetic, she taught generations of children to play the piano. Her grandchildren remember fondly her delicious Norwegian potato pancakes (lefse) and helping her starch and iron Harry's work jeans into armored stiffness.

Harry and Evelyn had three children. First came Sergay in 1928, then Alvin in 1931, and finally sister Ruth, who was born in 1935.



From left to Right, Harry Agoff (aka Amarahen Gregor Agozorov), and sons Sergay and Alvin, circa 1932. Photo Credit: Agoff family album.



Harry Agoff, Debo Sagoff, and other colleagues at sluice box on Upper Flat Creek probably on the Omega Fraction, circa 1923. Photo Credit: Agoff family album.

Alvin and his brother Sergay spent their first winter in the Yupik village of Crooked Creek, being nurse-maided by the Parent girls while Evelyn taught school there.

Agoff Family Gold Mining Established

In the early 1920s, Harry and his Russian partner Alexei Tarsagaravev (Debo Sagoff) and others leased mining claims in the Iditarod district. The Annual Report for the Territorial Department of Mines for 1923 reported the partnership of Finnegan, (Harry) Agoff, and Scott ground-sluicing the Omega Fraction on Flat Creek, downstream from the residual placer gold deposits being worked on the flanks of Chicken Mountain by AMHF Inductee David Strandberg.

Harry and Debo Sagoff leased promising claims on Prince Creek - a remote site connected to Flat Town by the road system, but just barely. Prince Creek was the last placer deposit developed in the district. The Agoff Family had to pioneer their own trail from Prince Creek to Chicken Creek and the community of Flat, which were 3 and 16 miles away respectively.

Harry Agoff and Debo Sagoff mined throughout the 1930s and until 1942, when War needs shut down the gold sector. Mining resumed after the war. According to the Biennial Reports of the Territorial Department of Mines, covering 1948, 1950, 1952, and 1954, Harry Agoff was operating a non-float placer gold mine on Prince Creek in his name only—but with crews ranging in number from 4-8.

A Wilderness Lifestyle for the Agoff Family

Transportation was a big string of freight dogs in the winter and by foot in the summer or as soon as the snow was too fragile and honeycombed to support the dogsled. The dogs were a wonderful advantage in the winter and were great favorites of the Agoff. However, the disadvantage to dogs was that they needed to be fueled all year long. One of the big chores was providing dog food.

The Agoffs did this by harvesting bears or mushing to Crooked Creek to trade for Kuskokwim dried dogfish strips. In later years their friend Bob Vanderpool would air-drop their fish strips to them as flying became more popular.



Evelyn Agoff with (l-r) children Alvin, Ruth and Sergay, circa 1936. Credit: Agoff family album.

The family home was a one room log cabin at the head of Prince Creek, chinked with mud and moss and roofed with sod. The family used kerosene lamps for light and chopped wood for heat. As with most mining families, any money made mining went right back in to the operation to beef it up for next season so at times the family lived pretty lean.

Evelyn had a big garden at the fertile head of Prince Creek (her strawberries were deservedly famous), and grew as much food as she was able. The children learned to live off the land from an early age. All three children were taught to hunt from the time they could pick up a .22 rifle. Grouse and rabbit were usually the first game they brought to the table. Salmon fishing was not a great bet in the Flat area, but whitefish, grayling, pike, char and other smaller fish lined the creeks in abundance.

Unlike other mining families the Agoff family had the privilege to live in Flat all year round. They lived with the land and by the seasons. As a consequence young Alvin and his siblings became highly competent outdoorsmen and outdoorswomen. When other miner's children were sent outside for schooling, the Agoff children remained in the Alaska Bush, and forged strong bonds of friendship with the Native families in surrounding villages.

Agoff Prince Creek Mine Matures

Prince Creek Mining Company had originally begun as a partnership between Harry Agoff and Debo Sagoff. The two men started out hand mining. It was hard and brutal work, which built the Agoff reputation for brute strength. Guys would walk over from the mechanized operations at Chicken Creek when they thought they had a found a rock "so big Harry Agoff couldn't lift it". Once Harry lifted a rock so heavy it sheared the handles off the wheelbarrow.

Prospecting was done by digging deep prospect holes in the spring so the mushy permafrost wouldn't thaw and collapse inwards. When the holes got too deep to fling dirt out of easily with a shovel, a bucket windlass would speed up the work.

In early years, Agoff and Sagoff mined by using wooden boxes and willow pole riffles to catch the gold. They hand dug ditches to funnel water to a splash dam and when the water cut loose; they had to be ready to shovel in the pay dirt as fast as possible. They hauled away the tailings by wheel barrow, again working as fast as possible. Plugged up sluice boxes don't catch any gold. One of the earliest chores all Agoff children did in the cut was to unplug the boxes by shoveling and roll out rocks so they could be smashed with sledge hammers and moved.

The young Agoff boys Alvin and Sergay remembered walking over to Chicken Creek and gazing admiringly at the shiny yellow Caterpillar tractors.

Alvin especially remembered the great day that John Fullerton, home from college for the summer, graciously set the little boys up on the big bulldozer and taught them the fundamentals of running it. Soon enough, their own family operation took up the boys' time. Their winters were devoted to schooling (up to 9th grade), trapping to supplement the family income, and cutting wood. As the boys got older, they cut wood for the dredges during winter months.

In 1950, the Agoff family's hard work paid off and they were able to purchase a 1935 RD-50 bulldozer (one of the first bulldozers in Alaska) from the Miscovich family to mechanize their operation. The family decided to move their camp. They picked a dry, breezy site close to Bonanza Creek with plenty of room for expansion. The three Agoff men, Harry, Alvin, and Sergay, and Debo Sagoff built the roomy two story log cabin that remains the family home to this day. They constructed a shop and blacksmith shed so they would be able to fully service their new equipment. With their new bulldozer, they pulled up trapping cabins they had built along the creek for guest cabins.

The Prince Creek mine increased in size as better ground was uncovered with the aid of mechanization. This enabled the purchase of more bulldozers and Alvin's favorite piece of equipment, the dragline. The beautiful new-to-them Lima™ was the last piece of heavy equipment to come up the Iditarod River before barge service ended. Their workhorse Bucyrus Erie dragline was purchased from Pat Savage at Chicken Creek. The last Biennial Report of the Territorial Commissioner of Mines for the biennium ending 1958 lists Prince Creek Mining Company operating a non-float mechanized mine on Prince Creek with brothers Sergey and Alvin Agoff as owner/operators. The first State of Alaska canvas of Alaska's miners in 1960 shows the Agoff brothers Alvin and Sergay mining on Prince Creek with six employees. By that time, Harry Agoff, the patriarch, had passed the reins of the operation on to his sons.

Alvin and Sergay researched and taught themselves all the new skills necessary to maintain and operate their mine-related equipment. The bookshelves at Prince Creek are filled with manuals and textbooks of a variety of heavy equipment and tools. They became master mechanics and skilled welders. They continued to improve their home, they learned to work with electricity, plumbing and radio communications. In 1960, Sergay met and married his German bride Elisabeth Von Loessel, and started his family of what would eventually be five children - Edith, Max, Edward, Lena and Nick.

Alvin and his brother Sergay have been described as the miner's miners by Andrew Miscovich. As Flat's population dwindled, the aging population of old timers were not able to care for themselves. Alvin and Sergay cut and hauled wood for those who could no longer get their own. They cleaned chimneys, built coffins and dug graves. It was Sergay's job to thoughtfully write the words to be delivered on the sunlit slopes of Cottonwood cemetery in Flat, while Alvin made the crosses for the old miners' final resting place.

For a while, Prince Creek functioned as a de facto Russian retirement home, much like Ninilchik on the Kenai Peninsula did for Russian Americans a Century before. Three squares a day, a guest cabin and a little nozzling job helped keep body and soul together and helped these old timers age with dignity. When they decided to leave Flat and move in to one of the state's Pioneer Homes, it was Alvin who was deputized to fly out and inspect the homes and determine their suitability for Flat's childless, pioneer population. They trusted him to look out for their best interests.

One of the Agoff brother's significant contributions to mining in Alaska was pioneering a cat trail to Crooked Creek. After barge services ceased to Iditarod, they decided to haul fuel from the Kuskokwim via their old dog trail to this village. The Kuskokwim barges would offload fuel in the summer, and the guys would take their

cats and wanigans over ice roads in the spring. The April 29th, 1964 edition of the Crooked Creek News describes the fuel hauls:

"The Agoff brothers, Alvin and Sergay, are hauling oil from Crooked Creek to Flat by cat train this week. They have made two trips and expect to make at least one more. They have over six hundred barrels to haul, for besides their own they are hauling for others in their neighborhood. It is always a fine day when these two young fellows come for their oil and pay us a visit."

Another edition of the Crooked Creek News mentions the brothers helping out the village by moving a few houses around with their Caterpillar tractors when they came through. This trail was a key transportation corridor for supplies for the more recent, large Donlin Creek project prior to airport construction.

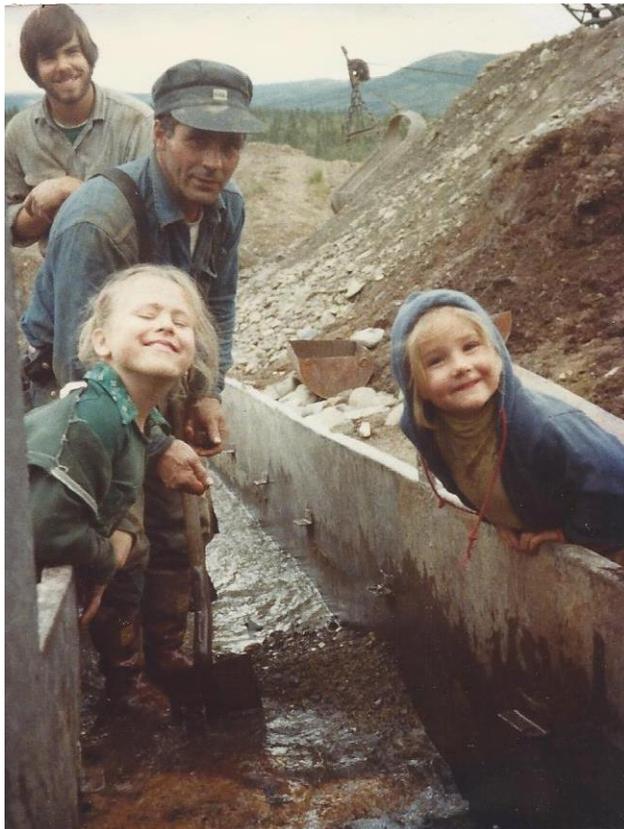
Family Life for Alvin Agoff

In 1967 Alvin met the love of his life. His childhood best friend, Alfred Miller, brought along a vivacious, Irish Catholic girl on a boating trip up the Iditarod which ended up in the Prince Creek living room. Kathleen Coyle was one of the most lively women Alvin had ever met. She had a taste for adventure and had left Florida and moved to the Athabaskan village of Tanana to nurse in the hospital there. Kathy embraced life whole heartedly. It is said that she was one of the first persons to water ski on the Yukon River.

Kathy was intrigued with the shy, handsome miner, and accepted his invitation to go on a bear hunt later that fall. Mail planes of letters flew back and forth as they planned their hunt and easily segued into planning their marriage. Twenty eight years of marriage later, when Kathleen finally shot her first bear, she said "Well honey, shall I go home to Florida now?" After their marriage, Kathy's nursing training came in handy in a region without hospitals or clinics. She birthed babies, gave shots, treated horrific injuries and closed eyes after signing death certificates.



Alvin and Kathy Agoff, circa early 1970s on front of bear hide. Photo Credit: Agoff family album.



Alvin Agoff with Max, Cady, and Christy, examining a cleanup on Prince Creek, circa 1980 Credit: Agoff family album.

Alvin and Kathy were married in the winter of 1969 (so as not to interrupt mining season), and on the way home from their honeymoon, received the horrific news that brother Sergay had tragically died in a car accident near his winter home in Oregon. Alvin was devastated. Sergay, besides being his brother and mining partner, was his best friend. With the help of the old-timers and his family, Alvin adjusted to the loss of his brother. Alvin continued the Agoff family tradition of mining on Prince Creek throughout the 1970s-to-1990s. His crew sizes were reduced, but more direct family members became involved. Sister Ruth and her husband Willard Green mined with Alvin and Sergey during much of the 1960s.

Prince Creek was one of five streams that radially drain Chicken Mountain, a granitic-cored mountain massif roughly in the geographic center of the Iditarod Mining district. Gold-bearing mineralization hosted in the Chicken Mountain igneous intrusion is the lode source for nearly all of the placer gold that has been developed and mined in the Iditarod district. Throughout his life, Alvin Agoff was keenly interested in identifying the lode sources of gold in Prince Creek basin and readily discussed information that he collected with a combined Federal (U.S. Geological Survey) and State of Alaska (Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys) geological investigation of the Iditarod district headed up by Marti Miller and Tom Bundtzen. During the 1980s, Alvin showed the geological team geological exposures worth sampling, including important fossil localities and hardrock mineralization that he uncovered during mining.

Alvin loved his nieces and nephews as his own and welcomed them at Prince Creek always. Kathy and Alvin enjoyed children and were a profound influence in the lives of many young people. They welcomed a house full of children even before their two (Cady and Christy) came along. Kathy and Alvin were well known for their generosity. Alvin saw “no sense in holding

on to something that someone else could get some use out of.” Gifts of houses, homesteads and mining claims enabled quite a few young families to get a foothold in the Alaskan Bush.

Alvin got a reputation for helping young men turn their lives around. Alvin’s integrity and strong sense of ethics blazed a clear trail for young people to follow in some uncertain decades.

Alvin never met a shovel, ax or sledgehammer he didn’t like. His favorite building material (after logs) was hammered out steel drums. Alvin created sheds, sluice box wings and even a boat to float down the Iditarod with these handy recycled diesel barrels. He preferred to work with his hands and inexhaustible strength to get the job done. Alvin did not cut corners. Growing up “typically Alaskan, wresting a living from the creeks and hills” made him very conscious of waste. There were no bent nails thrown away at Prince Creek. You hammered them out and used them again.

Alvin was a woodsman from his head to his toes and believed in conservation. He conducted emphatic correspondence with the Fish and Game decrying decisions which he felt led to poor game management and wanton waste. If he hunted an animal he used every bit of meat and then boiled the bones for soup. Alvin had no patience for trophy hunters, thrill killers and desk jockeys, who never set foot in the environment they claimed to be protecting. Towards the end of his life it was frustrating to see so many unfair, one-size-fits-all decisions being made in Washington D.C. which profoundly affected the lives of many rural Alaskan residents.

In Remembrance

The unexpected premature effects of aging ended Alvin Agoff’s wilderness lifestyle in the Iditarod district. He passed away on March 26th, 2005 at the age of 74. He was buried in Cottonwood Cemetery in Flat.

Alvin was a vivid storyteller with a photographic memory and a gift for mimicry. Alvin spent some winters in the communities of Palmer and Tanana and was fortunate to spend every mining season but one at his beloved Prince Creek near Flat. Alvin's life-long friendships bridged the gap between the Native and Mining communities. He established roads and trails that are still in use by the mining community of today. He gave young people a fresh start and helped them establish a work ethic. His generosity gave many promising families a foothold in the Alaskan wilderness and enabled them to start their own successful enterprises which enriched the state in many ways. Alvin's generosity of spirit stayed with him to the end of his life when he opened his heart

and home and helped his daughter Cady take in and raise his best friend's granddaughter, Misty May. Misty May and Christy's daughter Alyssa had the great privilege of a childhood running free at Prince Creek. Alvin's legacy lives on. Today Prince Creek Mining Company (Alvin's, nephew, daughter and granddaughter) is the last heritage family mining operation in the Iditarod district.

This biography celebrates Alvin H. Agoff for his very significant contributions to placer mining in the Iditarod area. But in a larger sense, the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation is also honoring the entire Agoff family for more than 100 years of contributions to the many unique cultural aspects of a classic frontier mining camp, the Iditarod Mining District.

By Cady Agoff and Tom Bundtzen

Reviewed by Paul S. Glavinovich



The Prince Creek Mining Crew in 2018. From left to right, Max Agoff, Misty May, Cady Agoff, Auna Reed-Lewis (Misty May's Sister), and Dan Cremer. Prince Creek Mining Company is the last heritage mining operation in the Iditarod district.

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**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. On September 17, 2003, the IRS confirmed the 501(c)(3) status of AMHF, and further categorized the organization under codes 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(6).

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 twenty four (24) who have each contributed \$1,000 to become 98ers, in honor of the first stampeders to Alaska in 1898 at Nome.

The 98ers

Dr. Earl H. Beistline (d)	John Mulligan (d)
Thomas K. Bundtzen	Patrick H. O'Neill (d)
Glen Chambers (d)	Elmer E. Rasmuson (d)
Douglas Colp (d)	Irving Stoy Reed (d)
Karen Erickson	William Stroecker (d)
Wendell Hammon Jr.	Teck Resources
Dr. Charles C. Hawley (d)	Dr. Robert H. Trent (d)
Dr. Walter Johnson	Mitch Usibelli
Wallace McGregor	Joe Usibelli, Sr.
Neil McKinnon	Candy Waugaman
Tom Mein	Dr. William Wood (d)
James Moody	Dr. Kenneth L. Zong

(d=deceased)

Most of the 98ers are recognizable as miners of national or international reputation. The late William R. Wood was President, Emeritus, of the University of Alaska. Dr. Wood suggested the organization of the Foundation. The late Elmer E. Rasmuson was an Alaska banker and benefactor, long interested in Alaska natural resource history.

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

Karl Hanneman
Treasurer
626 Second St., Suite 201
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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