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The Newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)

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Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation
New Inductees
AMHF Inducts Charles F. ‘Chuck’ Herbert and Rheinhart M. ‘Rhiny’ Berg

Charles F. ‘Chuck’ Herbert was the premier Alaska miner of his generation. He mined placer deposits, sought to discover the lodes that spawned them, and at intervals served all Alaskans in public roles. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Chuck found his chosen mine engineer career in Alaska, which lasted from 1934 until the 1990s. During WWII, he achieved the rank of Lt. Commander as a “Seabee” building naval projects throughout the Pacific. He served Alaska again in both William A. Egan administrations. Chuck was in a small group of engineers and geologists who assured that the Prudhoe Bay area was selected for the state shortly after Alaska became the nation’s 49th State. During the second Egan administration Herbert revitalized the land selection process that had been dormant since the 1966 Department of Interior land freeze. From 1972-1974, Herbert was an effective spokesman regarding Alaska lands in the Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission. Chuck Herbert was articulate, feisty, and courageous. He spun fascinating tales from his wealth of adventures in a wild country filled with interesting and outrageous characters. Chuck, himself, was one of those characters.

Rheinhart M. ‘Rhiny’ Berg had strength and stamina which would become legendary during his 86 years of life. He worked as an underground miner in the Wrangell Mountains and Fairbanks district, and as a trapper and prospector in other north-country localities before joining the Alaska Scouts during WWII. After the war, Rhiny prospected the Kobuk country of northwest Alaska. Through his diligence and hard work, he discovered the important Bornite copper-cobalt deposit. Bornite symbolized the mineral endowment of the Brooks Range, and served as a base of operations for others to discover many important mineral deposits. Throughout his life, a gently spoken Rhiny retained an almost child-like innocence, and a belief in the inherent goodness of man. Through his prospecting ventures, Rhiny attained great wealth which he mostly gave away. At Candle, Alaska, where he spent his last years, his idea was to divide the mining property into workable units so that others could share in the wealth that the earth could yield.
Supported by the Alaska Miners Association

Induction Ceremony, November 9, 2006
Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska

Program

The general public is invited to the jointly sponsored induction ceremony from 7:00 to 9:00 PM on November 9th, in the 3rd Floor Ballroom of the Anchorage-Sheraton Hotel. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments will be served.

Introduction by Mary A. Nordale 7:00-7:10 PM
Master of Ceremonies: Curtis J. Freeman 7:10-7:20 PM
Presentation of Inductees: 7:20-8:00 PM

Charles Francis ‘Chuck’ Herbert by Chuck Hawley
Rhinehart M. ‘Rhiny’ Berg by Tom Bundtzen

Refreshments and Coffee Break 8:00-8:20 PM

Recollection of the Inductees from the Audience 8:20-8:45 PM

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The November 9, 2006 induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) will feature two important mining pioneers that factor importantly into Alaska’s mining history. Charles F. Chuck Herbert was a smart, adventurous, and civic minded mining engineer and placer miner that served during both terms of Governor William A. Egan as a Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. Herbert played important roles in the selection of lands at Prudhoe Bay and was a senior spokesman of Alaska’s resource industries during the contentious D-2 lands debate. Rhiny Berg symbolized the toughness of a prospector and miner and under any measure, was one of the most successful small-scale mining men of his era. Yet Berg retained an almost child-like innocence, and a belief in the inherent goodness of man. Both Herbert and Berg teamed up on the discovery of the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit, one of the best known mineral discoveries ever made in Alaska.

Data sources are numerous and include published documents, many written and personal interviews, and personal recollections by the authors of the biographies, Honors Chair C.C. Hawley and T.K. Bundtzen, who knew both inductees. Gay Ellen Heath Griffin and T. K. Bundtzen prepared the 2006 AMHF newsletter for publication.
Previous Inductees, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

National Mining Hall of Fame Inductees
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.
Earnest Patty: University of Alaska, and manager of Placer Dredging Venture.
Clarence Berry: Prominent Klondike and Interior Alaska miner.

Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation Inductees

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” grubstaker for prospectors.
Arthur Harper: Well known and respected trader and prospector and promoter of the Yukon.
Howard Franklin: Fortymile prospector, discovered first “bedrock” placer gold in Alaska.
John Minook: Creole-Athabascan prospector who discovered Rampart district.
Felix Pedro: Discoverer of Fairbanks district in 1902.

Nome Summer 1998
Induction Ceremony Honoring Pioneers of Nome Gold Rush

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 Luck 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 Juneau district.
Richard Harris: Irish immigrant, co-discoverer of gold in Juneau district.
George Pilz: German immigrant who sent Juneau and Harris into the Juneau area.
Kawame: 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.
Induction Ceremony Honoring Mining Pioneers of Southern/Southwest Alaska

Andrew Olson: Swedish immigrant, innovator at Flat; long-time miner of platinum.
Evan Jones: Welsh immigrant; father of Alaska coal mining.
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

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

Juneau Spring 2001
Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Government Role in Mining

Benjamin D. Stewart: State and Federal mining administrator, Alaska constitutional delegate.

Fairbanks Summer, 2001
Induction Ceremony Honoring the Pioneers of the Large Scale Gold Dredging Industry of Nome and Fairbanks Districts

Norman C. Stines: Planned and supervised USSR&M activities in Fairbanks district.
Wendell P. Hammon: Installed the first three dredges in Cape Nome district.
James K. Davidson: Designed and built Miocene and Davidson ditch system.

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

Herman Tofty: Norwegian immigrant who worked prospects near Manley Hot Springs.
Chester Furlington: Acclaimed international mining engineer; wrote treatise on Alaska placer fields.
Thomas P. Ailken: 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 alone, 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 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 Metcalf: 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 FE consultant; thought of as “Mr. Antimony” in the US for many years.

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 highly sought for his expertise on Natural Resource issues throughout his career. He was killed in a plane crash 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 a Developer of the Platinum Resource at Goodnews Bay

Per Edvard (Ed) Olson: Born in 1898, Edward Olson was the eighth of ten children born to a farming family in west-central Sweden. They emigrated to the United States in 1905. In 1934 Edward assumed the position of General Manager of the Goodnews Bay Mining Company. The firm was the largest source of platinum in the United States from 1934-1975, and considered to be one of the best managed mining operations in Alaska history.

Walter Smith: In the summer of 1926, Yupik Eskimo Walter Smith and a younger apprentice prospector, Henry Wuya, found suspected platinum-bearing grains. One year later, the platinum discovery confirmed, the Goodnews Bay Mining Company purchased Smith's claims. He is honored today as the co-discoverer of platinum at Goodnews Bay and a contributor to Yupik history.

Henry Wuya: Henry Wuya was born to Eskimo parents in Quinhagak, on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Wuya was proficient in the English language at a time when few Yupiks knew English. Wuya's diverse skills landed him a mentorship with the prospector Walter Smith. Together the two men would make the discovery that led to the development of America's largest source of platinum during most of the 20th Century.

Fairbanks March 2006

Honoring Two Pioneers Important to both Canadian and American Mining Communities

Ellen (Nellie) Cashman: The barely five foot tall Irish immigrant Ellen (Nellie) Cashman was a quintessential gold mining stampeder that participated in many of the North American gold-silver rushes of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Nellie's final home was the Koyukuk district of northern Alaska, where she lived until she became terminally ill in 1925. Cashman died in St. Ammes Hospital in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, a medical facility that she helped found 51 years before.

Jack Dalton: As one of the premier horse freighters of the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush era, Jack Dalton opened up the 'Dalton Trail' for prospectors and traders from Haines to the Canadian and Interior Alaska gold fields. In later years, Dalton worked as a freight engineer for the Alaska Railroad. The Dalton Highway is a tribute to the Dalton family here in Alaska.

Juneau June 2006

Honoring the Mining Legal Profession
In cooperation with the History Committee of the Alaska Bar Association

Frederick (Fred) Eastough Nome-born Frederick Eastough was an Alaskan accountant, a ship's officer for the Alaska Steamship Company, and mining attorney that spent most of his professional career in southeast Alaska. Eastough was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission in 1991 by Governor Walter Hickel. Upon his death a year later, Hickel ordered state flags flown at half-staff.
edicated and interested in the arts. Joseph studied at the Chicago Art Institute, but moved to Cincinnati to engage in business and raise a family. Chuck was the oldest of siblings, four brothers, William, twins Robert and Richard, Edward, a sister Caroline who was the youngest. His mother Maude was a serious musician, if one whose main role after her marriage was family. A native of Wisconsin, Maude attended the Chicago Conservatory of Music. She was sufficiently talented that she performed the Grieg A Minor Piano Concerto with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Chuck’s interest in mining seems to have come from his paternal grandfather, a man of Danish descent, who mined in the Rocky Mountain states. After graduation from high school in Cincinnati, Chuck left home and worked his way across the continent and sailed steerage to Alaska. He had an objective—to be a professional mining engineer. He worked to attain the objective, alternately studying mining at the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines in Fairbanks and working at whatever mining jobs that he could find. In the late 1920s Chuck was a miner at the Kennecott mines near McCarthy doubtless surviving the rough hazing especially meted out to young college lads. As Chuck gained some formal mining knowledge, he found employment as an assayer at the Lucky Shot mine in the Willow Creek country. At Lucky Shot, Herbert worked for Wesley Earl Dunkle, a leading economic geologist and mining engineer of his time. Both men had a quizzical sense of humor: Chuck remembered one afternoon when the two of them spent several hours liberating a large boulder above the mine, then watched, laughing hysterically as it cascaded down the mountain. Mining activities in the Hatcher Pass district provided Herbert with valuable experience related to the development of hardrock mineral resources. At the time Dunkle’s Lucky Shot mine was one of the richest and best managed gold mines in the United States.

Charles Francis Herbert was born on February 17, 1910 in Cincinnati, Ohio to Joseph and Maude, nee Johnson, Herbert. His parents were well
Chuck returned to the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines in Fairbanks in 1934, where he earned a B.S. degree in Mining Engineering. He was senior class president, graduating Magna Cum Laude. It was a rather auspicious time to be a mining engineer graduate. America was in the midst of the Great Depression, but gold mining was thriving under the impetus of raised gold price and deflation of most costs. Chuck found employment and joint ventures, first working in the Forty Mile country. Before Herbert gained a reputation as a leading independent dredge miner, he was thought of as one of Ernest Patty’s ‘boys’. These boys, more accurately described as men and including a young woman, Genevieve Parker, had studied mine engineering under Dean Ernest Patty at the college. Chuck and a few others, including later well-known placer engineers Bruce Thomas and Bill O’Neill, worked for Patty as he established dredge operations at Coal and Woodchopper Creeks and extended his outreach into the Yukon. Herbert’s undergraduate School of Mines thesis “Gold Dredging in Alaska” is one of the best contemporary summaries of dredging. It benefited from the close association that students like Herbert had with the FE Company, then operating a dredge fleet at Fairbanks, and with successful independent gold dredgers, including Thomas P. Aitken, who served as an advisor to the college.

During the mining years of the mid-30s, Chuck married Sarah Ann (Sally) Stephens and fathered two sons, Paul and Steven. Both boys grew up in Alaska and prospected with their father in the Fortymile, at Livengood, and in the Brooks Range.

In the late 1930s, Chuck put his hard-gained practical and academic experience to work for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), the depression-spawned Federal agency that subsidized
new industry, including gold and platinum mining in Alaska. One significant project that involved Herbert was the RFC loan to the Goodnews Bay Mining Company. The loan, which was repaid within a year, enabled the firm to install a large Yuba floating dredge on the Salmon River of southwest Alaska. The Goodnews company became the largest producer of platinum metals in the United States for nearly 40 years.

With the coming of World War II, shortly after his election to the Territorial Legislature, Chuck joined the Navy. As a SeaBee, the US Navy engineers, Herbert managed construction projects throughout the Pacific theater. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant Commander, but returned to mining at war's end.

In 1946 after the war Chuck joined Glen D. Franklin, Harold Schmidt, and Leonard Stampe to form Yukon Placer Mining Company organized initially to pursue mining opportunities in Walker’s Fork, Canyon Creek, and Jack Wade Creek in the Forty Mile country of east-central Alaska near the Canadian border. The men successfully operated a gold dredge on the Sixtymile River and an open cut placer gold mine in Glacier Creek in an adjacent part of the Yukon Territory.

Another Herbert success story took place north of Fairbanks. The large but deep and complex placer gold deposit at Livengood had never been successfully mined on a large scale and the mine closed down before World War II. The mine had had RFC backing, and the RFC tried to get Fairbanks Exploration Company (FE Company) interested in mining the deposit. In 1953, the FE company decided to move the Livengood dredge to the remote Hogatza district of northwestern Alaska rather than mine the promising but challenging Livengood Bench system. In 1954, after legal foreclosure, RFC auctioned the Livengood property off. Chuck, with Glen Franklin and partners, acquired the placer deposit and mined it successfully with a dragline and elevated sluice for a number of years – despite the fixed price of gold at the time.

Although noted as a placer miner, Herbert retained an interest in prospecting for hard rock resources, especially in Alaska’s Brooks Range. It was an interest that he shared with prospector Rhinehart (Rhiny) Berg. Rhiny had prospected in the Wrangell Mountains before World War II, but believed that he would make a major strike in the Brooks Range, which he had first seen as a wartime Alaska Scout. After the war, Rhiny engaged famous bush pilot Archie Ferguson of Kotzebue to land a prospecting outfit west of Kobuk on the southern flank of the Brooks. Chuck Herbert, aviators at Kotzebue and Kobuk, and Jack and Edith Bullock of Kotzebue Tug and Barge grubstaked and advised Rhiny. Berg discovered a large copper deposit at present Bornite, Alaska and sold it to Kennecott Copper Company. Rhinehart Berg shared a multimillion-dollar pay off with Chuck, the Bullocks, and the natives who had assisted him in prospecting.

Prospeacting in the Brooks Range almost cost Herbert his life. In 1957 while on a prospecting venture, Chuck, son Steve, and Eskimo prospector Tommy Douglas survived an airplane crash which killed the pilot. Their aircraft could not conquer the downwind flow in a narrow pass and plowed into the mountain. In the accident Chuck, already handicapped by loss of an eye to cancer in 1950, was badly bruised with a severe arm fracture. Tommy Douglas lost a leg as a result of the accident. Steve Herbert earned a Carnegie medal for his role in saving the lives of his father and Douglas.

Politically Chuck was a Democrat, and was close to William A “Bill” Egan, who in 1959 put together a team for Alaska’s first gubernatorial race. Egan wanted old friend Chuck Herbert on the team. To avoid any conflict of interest Herbert sold his interest in Yukon Placer Mining Company to remaining mining partners Franklin and Schmidt and joined the ultimately successful Egan team. Chuck’s first assignment from Governor Egan was to set out procedures for and manage the public utilities of the new state. In effect he set up a utility management system, the forerunner of today’s Regulatory Commission of Alaska. With the successful conclusion of that task, Governor Egan wanted Chuck in a more sensitive political position, that of Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The governor thought that his Commissioner of DNR, Phil Holdsworth, and the powerful Director of the
Division of Lands, Roscoe Bell, might be too easily influenced by oil lobbyists, then jockeying for land. Egan wanted someone whose judgment he could trust as a counterbalance, and he chose Herbert. Chuck himself never doubted the integrity of Holdsworth and Bell, but he accepted the deputy position where he had direct access to the governor. Herbert quickly became involved in some of the earliest state land selections as promised in the Alaska Statehood Act. DNR geologist Tom Marshall and Commissioner Phil Holdsworth had identified a selection near the remote and then practically unknown Prudhoe Bay on the northern coast of Alaska which they thought was rich in oil—a belief downplayed by many professional oil men. The selection would be large and Governor Egan was not fully convinced by Marshall’s and Holdsworth’s arguments. Holdsworth sent Herbert to lobby the governor, a move which helped finalize the critically important Prudhoe Bay land selection. Gil Mull, Atlantic Richfield’s pioneer geologist at the Prudhoe Bay discovery well, remembers that the savvy Deputy DNR Commissioner Herbert helped consummate the land selection by avoiding a conflict with the federal government over the issue of navigable rivers. By selecting lands adjacent to the coast, the State of Alaska avoided the specter of a long term dispute with the federal government, which could have derailed the Prudhoe Bay selection.

In late 1966 and early 1967, Chuck also served Governor-elect Walter J. Hickel who retained Holdsworth, Bell, and Herbert for a few months until he could field his own Natural Resources team. The potentially valuable oil lands had been selected in the Egan administration, but the onshore and offshore lands at Prudhoe Bay had yet to be leased. Former Governor Egan, who lost to Hickel in 1966, had held off in offering the critical Prudhoe Bay leases, partly because he did not believe in rushing into deals with the oil companies and partly because Alaska’s native groups threatened a law suit if the sale proceeded before a Native lands settlement was concluded.

Hickel moved aggressively with the leases and DNR holdover Chuck Herbert helped organize the lease-sale. Hickel succeeded in resolving native fears and the lease-sale proceeded. An Atlantic Richfield drill hole started only weeks after the lease-sale in January 1967, shut in during the muddy summer months, was finally completed in the spring of 1968, when oil flowed at thousands of barrels per day. It was the Prudhoe discovery well.

Later in 1967, Governor Hickel brought in his own team headed by independent oilman Thomas E. Kelly and Chuck returned to his first love, the mining and mineral exploration business. In 1968 Herbert was retained by Newmont Mining Company to coordinate an exploration program for platinum metals. The crew prospected and evaluated most of the important known platinum metal occurrences in Alaska: Goodnews Bay, Kowikow, Mount Hurst, and Boob Creek in western Alaska and Salt Chuck on the Kasaan Peninsula in the Panhandle. Alaskan geologist Paul Glavinovich was on the crew and remembered one incident illustrative of Chuck’s style, strong on leading by example. The crew had been pinned down by weather for three days and there was no let up in sight. In the afternoon of the third day, Chuck began pulling on his min gear. Paul noted: “he [Chuck] stated that although he could not reach the high ground he felt that he could still be productive if he could get into the lower creeks to check the float … available outcrops, and do some panning.” Paul decided to join Chuck even though he had not asked for volunteers. With those examples, the rest of the crew suited up and went to work.

In 1970, Chuck joined the second Egan administration as the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. It was a critical job at a critical time, especially in regard to the State’s land selection process. Prudhoe Bay, some valuable near-urban lands, and some coal lands were early targets of selection. But most of Alaska’s 104 million acre entitlement was still in Federal hands. Land selection under the statehood act had been precluded since late 1966 by Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall’s ‘land freeze’, pending resolution of native claims to public lands.

It appeared that Alaska’s land selections might be back on track when Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in December, 1971. But the act also established new restrictions on selection and gave native corporations preferential rights to select 44 million acres of Alaska land. Moreover Section 17 (d) (2)
of the ANCSA Act recommended that 83 million acres be studied for inclusion into Federal conservation units such as National Parks, Wildlife Refuges, and Monuments, which would preclude natural resource development. Extensive withdrawals of Federal land were made under Section 17 (d) (1), and froze Alaska’s rights to select lands as mandated in the 1959 Alaska Statehood Act.

Pending identification of these lands, Alaska had a limited opportunity for selection in early 1972. The Commissioner moved rapidly. Herbert’s staff, which included the respected oil geologist William C. Fackler, focused on the selection process, and Herbert appealed to the private sector, mainly to miners who knew rural Alaska better than anyone except native first residents. In January the State filed for tens of millions of acres of land, infuriating Secretary of Interior Rogers C. B. Morton who reacted with threats of litigation. Against Herbert’s belief and advice, Governor Egan settled out-of-court with Interior cutting the selections. Commissioner Herbert believed, probably rightly, that the extensive selections would serve as a buffer in the coming battle on conservation lands.

Alaska’s long-time Governor’s representative in Washington D.C., John Katz, remembers the important contribution that Herbert made during this crucial time in the new state’s history. “I think Chuck felt the need to accelerate the State selection and conveyance process. Quite rightly, he believed that subsequent events would open large areas to State Selection. So in this context, Herbert’s land selections had two purposes: 1) to vest legal rights where possible; and 2) to put down a marker for Congress and the Interior Department. Chuck’s land selections did help the Alaska national interest lands debate throughout the 1970s by identifying particular State interest in land parcels. I also think that the transportation and access provisions to land selection titles in the 1980 ANILCA act were a direct product of Chuck’s concerns.”

Chuck Herbert served on the joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission (FSLUPC), a unique body set up by Congress during the 1971 passage of ANCSA. The FSLUPC served as an important counter balance during Alaska’s land battles with the federal government, until the passage of ANILCA in 1980.

One of Herbert’s objectives during his tenure as DNR Commissioner was establishing a more credible State presence in the fields of geological mapping and geophysical investigations. In 1971, acting on the advice of veteran state geologists Gordon Herreid and Crawford E. “Jim” Fritts, many geologists in the private sector, and his own desires, Herbert reorganized DNR’s Division of Mines and Geology into the Alaska Geological Survey, with William C. Fackler and Donald C. Hartman serving as the first two State Geologists. Interestingly, a final name change in 1973 to the Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys reflected, in part, Governor Egan’s personal interest in airborne geophysical investigations as a tool to evaluate minerals on Alaska’s lands. DGGS Professional staff member Mitchell Henning remembers Commissioner Herbert as “down-to-earth . . . showing a keen interest in the professional work of ordinary DNR geologists, stopping by the Geological Survey offices on a monthly basis”.

Chuck and Egan had a major falling out over future ownership of what would become the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Egan and the majority of his Commissioners favored State ownership of the Pipeline. Herbert, with more experience in the private sector, argued against public ownership because he distrusted the states efficiency and its ability to timely respond to the problems that would surely exist during construction. Chuck could never convince the Governor of the correctness of his views, but was perhaps vindicated when the TAPS pipe line, which was supposed to cost about $1 billion, cost nearly $10 billion by the time it was completed – a burden that could have broken the new state or buried it deeply in debt.

Both Herbert and Egan shared blame when Governor Egan lost to Republican Jay Hammond in 1974. One very contentious campaign issue was the buyback of the Kachemak Bay oil leases. Prior to the leases, a petition signed by hundreds of residents of the lower Kenai requested a hearing on their concerns with possible oil-drilling damage to the sensitive marine environment off Anchor Point.
Herbert, with at least tacit support from Egan, denied the requested hearing, as reported by oilman Jack Roderick, Herbert wrote, “No specific issue or problems were raised.” The lease sale proceeded in December 1973. The decision to proceed without a hearing angered many otherwise strong supporters of Egan. Hammond’s margin of victory was so small, that a decision to grant the hearing could well have changed the result of election.

Herbert and Egan disagreed on several issues, but remained close friends and regardless of differences, Herbert always believed that no one could approach Bill Egan’s love of Alaska and its people.

Herbert served out Egan’s second administration, and then at age sixty-six, returned to the Brooks Range. BP Minerals, the hard rock subsidiary of the major oil company, proposed to prospect Alaska and they wanted an experienced Alaska man to lead the effort. BP-Mineral’s Canadian manager, Donald Mustard, hired Chuck to set up the program. The exploration team headquartered out of Bettles and worked east and west along the Range, although leaving the Kobuk-Bornite area mainly to Kennecott. Legislation that passed Congress in 1979 blocked access to much of the southern Brooks Range. BP-Minerals pulled out of Alaska a few years later, but not before Chuck had built up a good exploration team that made discoveries that were never drill tested. Steve Erns, Alistair Findlay, Andy Chater, Nate Brewer, and other members of the BP-Minerals team carried Chuck’s name and reputation around the mining world— South America, Mexico, Mongolia and Western and Eastern Canada.

During the BP Minerals years Chuck received a signal honor from his Alma Mater in Fairbanks. At the first ever School of Mines Alumni Banquet in 1978, Chuck Herbert was named the first Outstanding Alumnus of the School. It was a special honor as he was competing against internationally known placer engineers such as Patrick O’Neill and educators including Ray Smith, President of Michigan Tech University. . Chuck’s citation noted: “As deputy commissioner of Natural Resources, Chuck Herbert played a principal part in the state’s selection of oil-rich Prudhoe Bay . . . as commissioner of Alaska’s Dept. of Natural Resources from 1974 [he] approved the state right-of-way lease for the Trans-Alaska pipeline.”

The BP-Minerals venture that began in 1975 took Herbert well into his 70s. Paul Glavinovich kept Chuck working for a few more years. Glavinovich, who had moved from Newmont to Noranda, engaged Chuck to advise on the feasibility of dredge mining the placer deposit at Mud Creek near Candle (Seward Peninsula). He also sought Chuck’s advice on methods of recovery of the fine-gold on the beach sands near Yakataga along the Gulf of Alaska coast.

In 1982, Herbert presented the paper ‘Alaskan Placer Mining’ at an A.I.M.E. meeting held in San Francisco. In that paper, Chuck stressed the importance of searching for deeply buried gold and platinum placers as well as the promise of recovering ultra-fine gold from previously mined areas and marine strandline deposits. Indeed, the excellent presentation reflected a true expertise and depth in the placer mining field—where Herbert’s long Alaskan career had begun.

Throughout the late 1970’s and into the 1980’s, Herbert continued to work on behalf of Alaska’s mining industry. As friend and lawyer James Reeves relates: “Chuck had a fairly serious heart attack (or stroke) right before my eyes in the reception area of my law firm when we were working on the Statehood Act6(i) lawsuit, which was challenging the way in which State lands were being managed for minerals. He was rushed to the hospital, but predictably, he was out of the hospital and back into the fray before practically anyone had noticed.” Chuck would remain a quiet but always knowledgeable advisor and friend to the mining industry into the early 1990s.

For decades his career had been stabilized by an exceptional second marriage. In 1953, Chuck married Roberta Roberts McInerney. Roberta was also an Alaska expert; she knew the Alaska Highway as well as anyone from the twenty or so trips up and down it canvassing lodges and recording mileages for The Alaska Milepost. Although the Herbergs were quiet socially, they were gracious hosts. Their home reflected their interest in Alaska art and artifacts. Works by their
favorite Alaska artists, Eustace Ziegler, Marvin Mangus, Rie Munoz, and Jenny Lind adorned the walls. Roberta died in 1989 after a year’s battle with cancer. Chuck never recovered completely from the loss.

In the early 1990s, Chuck Herbert broke his hip at his home in Anchorage. At his son Steve’s insistence, Chuck moved to Hawaii, but remained on his own. In his last year, Chuck’s remaining vision began to fade and at last he felt immobile, but his intellect never faltered. Charles F. Herbert, Alaska’s premier miner of his generation, died at Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, on September 3, 2003.

Charles C. Hawley and Thomas K. Bundtzen, October 29, 2006

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Chuck and Roberta Herbert at Livengood, Alaska, circa 1954. Photo courtesy of Jamsie Herbert
In his prime, Rhiny Berg was a powerful man. His strength and stamina, at the time not unusual in Alaska, would now be legendary. Throughout his eighty-six years, he retained an almost child-like innocence, a belief in the inherent goodness of man. Through his prospecting ventures, Rhiny attained great wealth which he mostly gave away. He was a well- and gently-spoken man. At Candle, Alaska, where he spent his last years, his idea was to divide the mining property into workable units that he could disburse so that many could share the wealth that he believed the earth could yield.

Rhiny was born in Brooklyn, New York, on April 17, 1911. He was raised on a farm in upstate New York. Rhiny never married, but “adopted” as his own the family of his niece Wally, her husband Bill Brooks, and their children Brad, Ben, Erica, Joanna, and Christina. As a boy, he was inspired by stories about the north, and later wrote: “I had read a bit... (about Alaska and Klondike) in the writings of Jack London, Rex Beach, and Robert Service. That
trio of writers could fire any youngster up, which it sure did me.” At the age of twenty-one, in the spring of 1932, Rhiny put his dreams to the test. He sailed out of Seattle and landed in Cordova, then a copper and fishing town. Within days, Berg had employment with old-timers Link Wahl and Olaf Lovseth. Rhiny’s hotel manager said “I think that they would be glad to have you with them when they go up to the Bremner this summer.” Rhiny could hardly have had a better apprenticeship than with Link and Olaf: boating, hunting, prospecting for placer and hard rock gold, cabin building, and mining with a portable outfit. When Link and Olaf returned to Cordova in the fall, Rhiny wintered over at Spruce Lake. His reputation as a willing worker was already established and Rhiny found a job for the 1933 season at the Chittitu placer mine operated by Charlie Kramer. Kramer mined hydraulically, as described by Rhiny: “A six inch giant pushed the gravel into the sluice boxes with iron rails (riffles) to the end where the tailings were stacked with another six inch giant.” The gold mine was in the Wrangell copper country where Rhiny, fascinated by the products of the sluice box, received a lesson in mineralogy. “The mixture of azurite, malachite, native copper nuggets, silver, and various gold nuggets... made quite a sight to see.”

When Chittitu closed for the season in 1933, Rhiny went to work at the Nakesna hard-rock gold mine in the most basic job of an underground mucker. He shoveled the blasted, hardrock gold ore into waiting ore carts for seven months before returning to Chittitu for the 1934 season. In the fall of 1934, Rhiny signed on at the nearby Kennecott copper mine, which was always short of underground miners. Rhiny remembered Kennecott as a lively camp and he enjoyed his stay there. After one more summer season at Chittitu, Rhiny decided to add trapping to his by now considerable bush skills. There were abandoned miners’ cabins to stay in, so Rhiny wrote his friends in Cordova to send him a trapping outfit that he would pay for the following spring.
In 1937, after wiping out the small game and most of the coyotes at his Wrangell Mountains location, Rhiny left for the Fairbanks district where he heard that the Hi-Yu hard rock gold mine was hiring. He stayed at Hi-Yu for two years, and he almost stayed there permanently and fatally. One day Rhiny was 87 feet up above tunnel level, driving a vertical raise with an Ingersoll-Rand storer (an air-driven drill used for driving up holes). He hopped over onto a slippery plunk deck and fell to the tunnel below. Rhiny hit a timber about 10 feet above the tunnel level. The collision may have saved his life, as it broke his fall and turned him over so he landed on his hands and side. Rhiny was black and blue all over, and unable to speak for eight days. On the eighth day, his doctor at St. Josephs Hospital said he “was back to pretty good shape” and pronounced him able to work. Rhiny wrote, “Nothing had broken on me so I went back to work and finished the job. Then I quit, looked up Sig Wien and he gave me a fine flight to Nome.”

At Nome Rhiny initially worked for the USSR&M Company driving points in the thaw field in front of Dredge No. 3. Being in Nome reminded him of some of his boyhood adventure reading—his told that a little cabin on the beach was where Rex Beach lived when he wrote The Spoilers, Beach’s colorful account of gold rush greed and graft in Nome. At about this time, Berg decided it was time to record his interesting life so he bought a professional quality 16mm camera, a camera which he thereafter used to record his life and adventures.

After Rhiny finished working the 1941 dredging season at Nome, he tried coal mining at the Jonesville Mine east of Palmer, Alaska. Berg moved to Jonesville a few days before the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7. In March 1942, the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor, only 700 miles from Rhiny’s home in Palmer. Rhiny decided that
the life and the freedom he enjoyed so much should be paid for. "Physically I didn't have a single thing wrong with me, so I should use the good shape I was in fighting the enemy. I left [Jonesville] on the next train." The next day, Rhiny went to Ft. Richardson and talked to Captain Orville Hager, who was looking for men exactly like Berg: strong, resourceful, able to live off the land. Hager wanted miners, prospectors, trappers, and others familiar with Alaska's diverse geography. The next day Rhiny officially became an Alaska Scout. With his fellow Scouts, Rhiny moved into a remote cabin on the shores of Cook Inlet where he learned military skills to supplement his already attained out-of-doors skills.

Rhiny's first military assignment took him to Kodiak via the Motor Yacht Cavanaugh, where he transferred to the submarine USN Triton, then the nation's largest sub. After that, the Scouts, sometimes fighting their way, went ashore on several Aleutian islands including Attu, Amchitka, and Kiska. Their diverse means of transportation included rafts, a minisubmarine, 'Mosquito' torpedo boats, and two-engine flying boats, PBYs. The Scouts prepared the way for the later invasions. It was dangerous work which Rhiny as usual took as a matter of course. He later recalled that he had made most of Alaska Scout's Aleutian landings.

After the Aleutian campaign, the Scouts explored northern and interior Alaska preparing for a war that never came. The men traveled by dog team as far north as the Brooks Range. When Rhiny left the Scouts at the end of the war, the Army let him take the pick of his dog team. He chose eight dogs and promptly took them trapping on familiar ground in the Wrangell Mountains, where he stayed for two seasons. By the time he finally left the area, he had built four cabins, dog pens, caches, and trails. "But I was thinking of the hills up the Kobuk River." On his last run of the trap line, he segregated wolverine pelts, which he knew would be prized by the northern Eskimo, for his trip to the Brooks Range.

In March 1947, Rhiny left the Wrangell Mountains for the Brooks Range. A few days later he was in Rodmans Hotel in Kotzebue. He met Jack Bullock and his wife Edith, co-owners of Kotzebue Tug and Barge, who advised him to talk to pilot Archie Ferguson. Jack thought that Archie would take him out. Jack said, "He will ask you if you will take him in as a partner." Rhiny replied, "that's all right if he puts some money into it." Archie jumped at the opportunity. He found a landing spot about fifteen miles out of Shungnak where he unloaded Rhiny and his outfit, including snowshoes, a Trapper Nelson™ pack board, and a favorite Winchester 30-06 rifle.

Rhiny planned to gradually move to a pick up point near Kobuk, and began to prospect on his way, using Geiger counter and pick and shovel. In early April, he crossed the Shungnak River and set up camp on a barren hill that he called Pardners. Rhiny knew copper minerals from his years at Chititu and Kenneccott. He noticed azurite and spots of chalcopyrite on the hill and at another location about two miles to the east. He started shoveling and the deeper he got, the better the ore looked. Soon Rhiny was staking claims. When it came time to go out in the fall, Ferguson asked what he was doing and Rhiny told him, "Picking, picking, and more picking, shoveling down the same with shoveling—and now [home] for trapping."

Rhiny returned to the Brooks Range the next spring (1948) for more prospecting. He rented a Caterpillar D4 tractor from Jim Robbins, a famous inventor of tunneling machines, who had placer mined at Kobuk. He also hired Joe Sun from Shungnak as a helper. Soon he saw the need for more supplies and equipment, and rented a bigger dozer from the Bullocks to build an airfield. Archie Ferguson was skeptical about Rhiny's new plans, "you are just killing yourself on that pile of rock. I don't want to be in on it. I will write you a check
for $1.00." A check that Rhiny kept. By the end of the 1949 season, Rhiny and Joe had constructed an airfield long enough to land equipment. Rhiny arranged for a diamond drill to be brought the next season. He found a new pilot for support in Tony Bernhardt who had a Cessna based at Kobuk.

Each winter, Rhiny returned to his Wrangell Mountains trap lines and his friends at Chitina, but he was now sure that he was onto something big in the Brooks Range. Although neither Rhiny or Joe Sun had operated a diamond drill, they soon mastered its operation. They also kept prospecting with the D-4 tractor, finding more mineralization; sometimes hardrock and sometimes placer. One day at a depth of four feet, the men struck massive black, brown, and green rocks similar to those that they had observed on Pardners Hill. Rhiny took pieces back to camp to check with the Geiger Counter - which went off scale, indicating a high uranium content. For confirmation, Rhiny mailed samples to Max White of the U.S. Geological Survey, who was traveling throughout Alaska looking for uranium, then vital to the government. While followed up with a visit. He found the yellowish-green uranium mineral autunite mixed with rich zinc ore, sphalerite.

Occasionally trapping in the Wrangell Mountains also proved exciting. Rhiny was traveling with Albert Commack, a Brooks Range Eskimo who had wanted to visit the Copper River Country. The men surprised a grizzly that, without any warning, charged. Rhiny fired from the hip killing the bear with one shot, while Albert was trying to remove a jammed bullet from his rifle. Rhiny had plenty of bear adventures in both the Brooks and the Copper River country. Afterwards every time Rhiny and Albert met, Albert would say "that bear wanted to get us."

Rhiny sold his claims to Kennecott Copper Corporation for more than $3 million. The claim group became known as the Bornite copper prospect. Berg repaid his backers, including substantial amounts to Jack and Edith Bullock and Chuck Herbert, but never rested on his laurels.

Rhiny's Bornite discovery played a significant role in the search for mineral deposits, and in the future of the 49th State, then a Territory. Ironically, although uranium initially generated the most interest in Rhiny's new find, the "Bornite prospect" proved more valuable in copper, zinc, and cobalt.

Modern ore deposit research has focused on the geological origins of the Bornite prospect, now often called the Ruby Creek deposit (Runnels, 1963, 1969; Hitzman, 1983, 1986), but Berg's discovery also had political importance. During the arguments for and against Alaska Statehood, which dominated the Alaska political scene of the 1950s, critics of Statehood argued that Alaska lacked the resources for self-sufficiency and would become a Federal welfare state. The rich copper discovery at Bornite in the Brooks Range and the nearly synchronous discovery of oil and gas at the Swanson River field on the Kenai Peninsula helped persuade key decision makers in Washington D.C. that Alaska's natural resource endowment could supply jobs and revenues for a future state.

Although the Bornite property has yet to produce a pound of copper, the camp which Rhiny started served as an exploration base for the discovery of a number of important copper-zinc-precious metal deposits in the "Brooks Range Schist Belt". The Bornite 'staging area' also provided logistical access for mineral exploration much further to the west in the Delong Mountains, which led to the 1975 discovery of the giant Red Dog zinc-lead-silver deposit, currently the world's largest zinc mine.

After leaving Bornite, Rhiny formed Arctic Circle Exploration Company that prospected near Nome and bought the Candle mining camp from Jack Bullock. At Candle, on the Seward Peninsula nearly due south of Kotzebue, Rhiny hired four
Eskimos to rebuild the old placer camp, a four-year job. When Rhiny left the Kobuk, he gave his house, warehouse, boats and everything else to his friends Joe Sun and Albert Connack. It was only one showing of Rhiny’s generosity. Earlier he had built a house for an older Eskimo woman who had been attacked and badly injured by a rabid sled dog. Rhiny greatly respected Eskimo culture, and knew of the great Eskimo prophet Maanellik and many other Eskimo legends of the north.

Clara Creek in the Kiwalik River basin—sometimes employing as many as 25 men each. Virtually owning the mineral rights of an entire placer mining district enabled Rhiny and his partner Wетlesen to provide long term leases of large, low-to-moderate grade placer gold deposits to substantial placer gold mining firms. During the early 1990s, Rhiny and Thor operated independently as Tundra Exploration for most of the short summer seasons on Mud, Mina, and Candle Creeks in a sometimes successful (sometimes not) attempt to develop high grade placer gold reserves from those stream basins.

Rhiny and his partner Thor Wetlesen kept the Candle camp open for nearly a thirty year period that began during the early years of Statehood. In general, Rhiny and Wetlesen backed exploration at the Independence hard rock prospect and leased ground to serious placer miners. During the 1980s and 1990s, companies that leased ground from the Rhiny Berg-Thor Wetlesen partnership included Au Mining Company, Fardners Mining, and GHD Resources, companies which operated on Candle, Mud, and Independence Creeks and

(Bundtzen and others, 1994).

The Candle camp at the end of the main airfield was always open to a tired Cessna 206 driver (Hawley) on his way across the Arctic. The camp was an oasis of good food and intelligent conversation. Rhiny and Wetlesen kept the Candle Camp in excellent shape well into the 1990s.

Alaska’s long Western-Interior winters were beginning to take effect even on a tough guy like Rhiny Berg. For most of the last 15 years of his life, Rhiny spent the summers at Candle camp and
the winters with his niece, Wally Brooks, and her family in Gulph Mills, Pennsylvania, or Steve Wetlesen in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania or alternatively traveling in the Lower 48 States.

Rhiny Berg was unique; he lived a life-style even then almost obsolete. Those who knew him loved and admired him. At the age of 86, Rhinhart M. ‘Rhiny’ Berg died of pneumonia on February 9, 1998, at Providence Medical Center in Anchorage, Alaska.

Charles C. Hawley and Thomas K. Bundtzen, October 30, 2006

Rhiny Berg, December, 1997, Photo courtesy of Earl H. Beistline

Candle Creek Mining Company Dredge, Candle, Alaska 1991
Photo courtesy of Tom Bundtzen


Wally Brooks, 1998, Remarks at the Memorial Service


Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation Announcement

On September, 9th, 2006, AMHF President Emeritus Earl Hoover Beistline was inducted into the National Mining Hall of Fame in Leadville, Colorado. Beistline was inducted along with three other individuals with national reputations, including the eminent economic geologist R.A.F. Penrose, Central American miner Robert M. Reininger, and U.S. copper king John Stanton. Earl also joins an elite group of six well known Alaska mining pioneers: Stephen Birch, Frederick Bradley, John Treadwell, Alfred H. Brooks, Ernest Patty, and Clarence Berry.

Earl Beistline’s lifelong association with mining as an engineer, miner, and educator of aspiring mining engineers qualified him to share honors with other distinguished individuals of the National Mining Hall of Fame. Dean Beistline is an invaluable resource to the organization which he helped found—the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF). The Board of Directors of the AMHF is proud of its founder and pleased that he continues to be an inspiration to this organization, which is dedicated to be a source of knowledge and information concerning the people who have made mining an important part of the economy and culture of Alaska.
THE 19TH NATIONAL MINING MUSEUM AND INDUCTION BANQUET

September 9, 2006
Museum Convention Center
Leadville, Colorado
5:30 p.m.

Presented by the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum, a non-profit Section 501 (c)(3) corporation that depends on your contributions to preserve mining's heritage.

P.O. Box 801, Leadville, Colorado 80461
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 sixteen persons who have each contributed $1,000 to become '98ers, in honor of the first stampeders to Alaska in 1898 at Nome.

The '98ers

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<td>Earl H. Beistline</td>
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<td>Thomas K. Bundtzen</td>
<td>Elmer E. Rasmussen*</td>
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<td>Glen Chambers</td>
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<td>Douglas Colp</td>
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<td>Walter Johnson*</td>
<td>Joe Usibelli, Sr.</td>
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<td>Wallace McGregor</td>
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<td>John Mulligan</td>
<td>Dr. Kenneth L. Zonge</td>
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*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. Rasmussen was an Alaska banker and benefactor, long interested in Alaska natural resource history. Dr. Walter Johnson knew many pioneer Alaskans. His research has taken him to Sweden and Norway in search of the true story of the so-called "three Lucky Swedes" of fame at Nome.

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

Wallace McGregor        Karl Hanneman
Chair, Finance Committee Treasurer
1212 N. Washington, Ste 12 626 Second St., Ste 201
Spokane, WA 99201        Fairbanks, AK 99701

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AMHF President
Mary A. Nordale
100 Cushman Street, Suite 308
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

AMHF Honors Committee
Charles C. Hawley
11401 Olive Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99515
phone 907-522-9201

AMHF Treasurer and Donations
Karl Hanneman
626 Second Avenue, Suite 201
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Associate Editors of the Paystreak
Charles C. Hawley
11401 Olive Lane
Anchorage, Alaska 99515
Box 81906
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

David G. Stone
Box 22893
Juneau, Alaska 99802
Box 80268
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708