

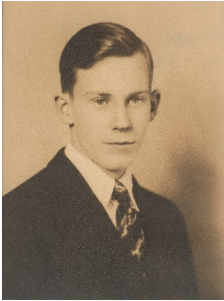
The PAYSTREAK

Volume 24, No. 2, Fall, 2024

The Newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation

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Honoring Two Southeast Alaska Miners and a Man Important to Critical Mineral Development



Kelly G. Adams left college in Oregon in 1933 to prospect and mine in Southeast Alaska. He was put to work by Wendell Dawson to clean tailings at the old Kasaan gold mine near Hollis and later worked at the Puyallup Mine. In 1955, Adams detected a large radioactive anomaly using a Geiger Counter strapped to the strut of his plane while flying over Bokan Mountain on Prince of Wales Island. His partner, Don Ross, staked federal claims over the anomaly. This became known as the Ross-Adams uranium-thorium-REE deposit, which was mined underground intermittently until 1971 and was Alaska’s only productive uranium mine. Kelly later served as an FAA inspector and commercial pilot. He continued his mining career in the Klondike district from 1978-1993 and passed in 2005.



Wendell Dawson was born in Illinois and educated as a schoolteacher and civil engineer but spent much of his life associated with the mining industry. He served in the U.S. Military in three wars: WWI, WWII, and the Korean War. He briefly worked for the U.S. Geological Survey as a hydropower engineer in Oregon and Alaska. In 1930, the Kasaan mining company leased claims to Dawson on Prince of Wales Island near Hollis, which would become known as the Dawson Mine. Wendell mined there intermittently from 1931-1952, where gold was primarily recovered, but also byproducts of silver, lead and copper. In 1953, Wendell and partners staked claims which ultimately became the Grand Duc copper-gold-silver mine. In his last years, he focused on the exploration of rare earth elements in Nevada, where he suffered a heart attack and passed in 1965.



Karl A. Bachner was born in Fairbanks, Alaska in 1927 into a pioneering mining family from the Livengood Mining District. He grew up in Fairbanks, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, and attended the Pacific Lutheran University before working in the Alaskan construction industry. In 1953, he joined his father, J. George Bachner, and partner Mike Seiler to form the Kenai Chrome Company (KCC) to exploit the rich chromite deposits at Red Mountain, near Seldovia, Alaska. In 1955, their mining company produced nearly 20 percent of the nation’s total metallurgical chrome output. KCC had difficulties getting their product to US smelters that could compete with overseas producers and discontinued production in 1958. Karl then focused on construction of landmark buildings in the new State of Alaska. He was an avid equestrian and owned winning racehorses. He passed on September 21, 1990.

**Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)
Induction Ceremony, November 6th, 2024
Marriott Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska**

Program

The general public is invited to Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) induction ceremony from 7:00-to-9:30 PM on Wednesday, November 6th, 2024. The ceremony will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska.

Power Point Presentations will be presented of all three inductees. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments (coffee and tea and cookies/donuts) will be served.

Introduction by Tom Bundtzen, President AMHF----- 7:00-to-7:10 PM

Presentation of Inductees

Presentation of Kelly Adams by Tom Bundtzen and Shannon Michael----- 7:10-to-7:40 PM

Presentation of Wendell Dawson by Tom Bundtzen and Shannon Michael---- 7:40-to-8:10 PM

Presentation of Karl Bachner by Denise Herzog-Cook----- 8:10-to-8:40 PM

Recollections of Inductees from the General Audience----- 8:40-to-9:00 PM

Adjournment----- 9:00+ PM

Introduction and Acknowledgements

The November 6th, 2024 induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) features three remarkable mining pioneers: 1) Wendell Dawson—a seasoned underground gold miner from Southeast Alaska—with a currently operating mine named after him; 2) Kelly Adams—an underground and later placer gold miner that co-discovered the Ross-Adams uranium-thorium-REE mine near Ketchikan—Alaska’s only past productive uranium mine; and 3) Karl Bachner—an individual often associated with design and construction of landmark buildings in the early years of Alaska Statehood but who operated an important critical mineral mine in southern Alaska. All of these individuals lived full and interesting lives.

Wendell Dawson taught school and was briefly employed as a civil engineer, working as a hydropower expert in Oregon and Alaska. He also served in multiple fields of conflict for the U.S. military establishment, mainly the U.S. Naval Reserves, but his main line of work was tough, underground gold mining near Hollis on Prince of Wales Island. The gold deposit he worked on became known as the Dawson Mine, due to his nearly 20 years of hard work there. In 1946, he was credited with operating one of the only lode gold mines in the Alaska Territory! He later benefited from his early years of prospecting with others in nearby Canada by securing claims over what became the Grand Duc copper-silver-gold mine.

Kelly Adams grew up in Washington State but spent much of his working life in southeast Alaska and the Klondike district in north-central Yukon, Canada. Originally working for Wendell Dawson at the Kassin mine, he later worked at the nearby Puyallup mine. But his claim-to-fame was, along with partner Don Ross, was the discovery and eventual development of the Ross-Adams uranium-thorium—REE deposit on Bokan Mountain at the southern end of Prince of Wales Island—Alaska’ only productive uranium mine. This deposit system has recently seen much renewed interest for the potential to produce Rare Earth Elements and Niobium—considered important critical minerals today.

Karl Bachner lived a most successful life mostly in the building trades during those exciting early Alaska Statehood Years. He formed, with William Jones and Edgar Billimek, the firm Bachner Northwest, which was credited with construction of landmark buildings such as the original Portage Glacier Visitors Center, the Eagle River Correctional institution, the Sitka (Harrington) Centennial Hall, and other buildings in South Central and Southeastern Alaska. But we honor Karl for developing an important chromium deposit near Seldovia, Alaska. His name appears in numerous federal Congressional reports concerning the development of chromium in Alaska; his mine produced nearly 20 percent of the nation’s metallurgical chrome requirements during 1955—considered a critical mineral then and now.

Shannon Michael completed most of the research for both Kelly Adams and Wendell Dawson, with minor contributions for Dawson from Tom Bundtzen. Jared Fithian first nominated Wendell Dawson for induction into the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame and supplied early documentation to establish Dawson’s qualifications. Denise Herzog-Cook provided the writeup for Karl Bachner. Tom Bundtzen edited and produced the newsletter.



Contributions to the AMHF Foundation

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation is funded through donations of money, time and effort, and through sales of books and other paraphernalia. 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

Contributions help the Foundation produce, publish and update the AMHF website, and operate our new museum at 406 Cushman in downtown Fairbanks. We have reproduced all *Paystreak* Newsletters from 1997-to-Present. The thirty-nine (39) *Paystreak* newsletters can be downloaded from the website, which is: www.alaskamininghalloffame.org.

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, mine educators Ray Smith and Jim Madonna, Lars Ostnes, and John Usibelli. The AMHF especially thanks Teck Resources, operator of the Red Dog Zinc-Lead-Silver Mine, the Usibelli Foundation, Mitch and Michele Usibelli, , Teresa Usibelli, Margaret Cox Rich, Taiga Mining Company (Taiga), the Bill Stroecker Foundation, Design Alaska Inc., Robert Tsigonis, Larry and Darlene Peterson, June and Norman McAtee, Jeanne Ostnes, Tim Benintendi, Jason Brune, Ron Inouye, Sarah Isto, Shirley Liss, Sonny Lindner, Asle Eikeland, and Dave and Pat Carnes for their generous donations during the last several years. Also included below are those that have contributed through the Pick-Click-Give Program by year. **We highlight contributors in bold below that have contributed during January-to-Late October, 2024.**

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Lynden Transport	Platinum	General	2013
Teck Resources Red Dog Mine	Platinum	General	2013
Doug Colp Family	98er/Gold	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	Platinum	General	2014
Candy Waugaman	Platinum	General	2015
Karen Erickson	Copper	General	2015
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	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 Walt Wigger	2015
David and Aldean Kilborn	Silver	In Memory of Walt Wigger	2015
Nathaniel May	Copper	General	2015
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2015
Aaron Pfeil	Copper	General	2015
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2015
Karen Lapp	Copper	General	2015
Jeff Lapp	Copper	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
Matthew 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	Platinum	General	2016
Richard E. Wagner	Copper	General	2016
Harold and Leslie 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	Silver	General	2016
Debbie and Jeff Johnson	Silver	In Memory of Walt 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
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2016
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2016
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2017
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2017

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
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	Platinum	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
Jamison Parry	Copper	General	2018
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2018
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2018
Terry Taylor	Copper	General	2018
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2019
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2019
Jason Brune	Copper	General	2019
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2019
Gay Ellen Heath Griffin	Copper	General	2019
William Kinne	Copper	General	2019
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2019
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2019
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2019
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2019
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2019
Margaret Cox Rich	Platinum	In Memory of Ray Smith	2020
David and Patricia Carnes	Platinum	General	2020
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Platinum	General	2020
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2020
Scott Bothwell	Copper	General	2020
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2020
Don Gray	Copper	General	2020

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2020
William Kinne	Copper	General	2020
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2020
Heath Nowak	Copper	General	2020
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2020
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2020
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2020
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2020
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2021
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2021
Phil Younker	Silver	In Memory of Ray Smith	2021
Anonymous 1	Silver	General	2021
Anonymous 2	Silver	General	2021
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2021
June and Norm McAtee	Platinum	In memory of Adams Hollis Twitchell and Jens Kvamme	2021
Rob and Donna Brady	Copper	General	2022
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2022
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2022
Matthew Hanson	Silver	General	2022
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2022
William Kinne	Copper	General	2022
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2022
Jameson Perry	Copper	General	2022
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2022
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2022
Anonymous 1	Silver	General	2022
Anonymous 2	Silver	General	2022
Teresa Chepoda	Silver	In Memory of John Usibelli	2022
Ann and Mike McCann	Silver	General	2022
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2022
Design Alaska Inc.	Gold	General	2022
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2022
Robert Tsigonis	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes	Platinum	General	2023

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Don and Carolyn Gray	Silver	General	2023
Shirley Liss	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	General	2023
Laurence and Darlene Peterson	Platinum	General	2023
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2023
Anonymous	Copper	General	2023
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2023
Malie Gray	Copper	General	2023
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2023
William Kinne	Copper	General	2023
Sonny Lindner	Silver	General	2023
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2023
Jameson Perry	Copper	General	2023
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2023
Judd Rutledge	Copper	General	2023
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2023
Bill Tweet	Silver	General	2023
Nick Stepovich	Silver	General	2023
Robert Fithian/Sundance	Gold	General	2023
Margaret Cox Rich	Silver	General	2023
Shirley Liss	Gold	General	2023
Ron Inouye	Gold	General	2023
Don and Carolyn Gray	Silver	General	2023
Teresa Usibelli	Silver	In Memory of John Usibelli	2023
William Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2023
Design Alaska	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	In Memory of Lars Ostnes	2024-1
Alaska Trappers Association	Silver	General	2024
Sarah Isto	Silver	In Memory of Oscar Tweiten	2024-1
Laurence Peterson	Platinum	General	2024
Karl and Nancy Hanneman	Platinum	General	2024
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	In Memory of Lars Ostnes	2024-2
Michele and Mitch Usibelli	Platinum	General	2024
Ron Inouye	Gold	General	2024
Sarah Isto	Silver	In Memory of Oscar Tweiten	2024-2
Asle Eikeland	Platinum	In memory of Jorgen (George) Eikeland	2024

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Scott Bothwell	Copper	General	2024
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2024
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2024
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2024
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2024
William Kinne	Copper	General	2024
Sonny Lindner	Silver	General	2024
Lance Miller	Copper	General	2024
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2024
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2024
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2024
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2024
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2024
Fairbanks Coin Club	Silver	General	2024
Fairbanks Genealogical Society	Silver	General	2024
Fairbanks Branch, Alaska Miners Association	Gold	General	2024
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2024

Summary of Activities Held of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation Museum

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation continues to operate a museum at 406 Cushman in Downtown Fairbanks, Alaska. A few tourists come through our door in late fall and winter, but activities were quiet during the 14-day, Late January-Early February cold spell which saw temperatures dropping down to -54°F. Attendance improved beginning in May and stayed up until the end of September. From late November 2023 to Late October 2024, thirty (30) events were held, including fourteen (14) Wednesday Evening lectures, a AMHF induction ceremony, two book signings, and a film review. On March 27th, 2024, the biggest crowd of the year (108) showed up during a standing-room-only induction ceremony honoring iconic coal miner and philanthropist Joseph Usibelli Sr. and veteran placer gold miners Carl Parker and Walter Roman.

The Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, the Fairbanks Branch of the Alaska Miners Association, the Alaska Trappers Association, the Fairbanks Genealogical Society and the Fairbanks Coin Club all used the facility for meetings during the reporting period. The AMHF Foundation encourages these and other organizations to use the facility. Visitors continue to purchase mining history books, coffee cups, and other paraphernalia that are for sale at the museum. Those who visited the museum came from 32 U.S. States and 17 foreign countries.

Our team of volunteers from Santas Seniors, North Pole, Alaska, continue to insure that the museum is open to the general public. They include Barbara Sevier (team leader), Goldie Southwood, Jo Small, John Halbert, Frank and Ida Rhines, and Joyce Outten.

The Museum’s normal operating hours are 10:00AM-4:00PM Monday through Saturday during summer months, which are reduced to 12:30PM to 3:00 PM during fall and winter months. We are open year-round; due to reduced hours, visitors are encouraged to call Tom Bundtzen at 907-388-6607 for access when our volunteer staff is not present.

Estimated Count and Guest Book Totals During Normal Operating Hours, Evening Lectures, and other activities, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Museum, November, 2023-October, 2024

Month	Daily Guest Book Sign-Ins	Additional Estimated Attendance	Evening Lectures and Scheduled Events	Total
November, 2023	5	17	44	66
December, 2023	7	23	108	138
January, 2024	14	31	71	116
February, 2024	6	20	73	99
March, 2024	15	28	125	168
April, 2024	17	31	126	174
May, 2024	44	49	104	197
June, 2024	58	47	51	156
July, 2024	113	54	115	282
August, 2024	117	72	15	204
September, 2024	109	41	123	257
October, 2024	7	11	117	135
TOTAL	515	424	1,072	2,011

Scheduled events at AMHF museum, including Wednesday evening lectures and other get-togethers during the reporting time period November 1, 2023 to October 31, 2024

Count	Date	Lecture title and presenter	Attendance
1	11/22/2023	<i>Mining the News for Local Nuggets</i> , by Virginia Farmier	16
2	11/29/2023	Pillars of Smoke: Energizing Alaska 1904-2024, by Phil Wight UAF	18
3	11/30/2023	Fairbanks Genealogical Society	10
4	12/01 2023	<i>The Price of Paradise</i> , By Mark Schlenker--book signing sponsored by Alaska Trappers Association	25
5	12/06/2023	<i>Pistons to Pipelines--Relationship Between Aviation and Oil Development in Alaska</i> by Dan Berriochoa UAF	18
6	12/15/2023	<i>AMHF Christmas Party</i>	65
7	01 16 2024	<i>Fairbanks--Then and Now—A Photographic Time Travel Journey</i> by Joan Skilbred and Mark Cosson	71
8	02 14 2024	<i>Goldrush Blacks in Fairbanks, Alaska</i> By Joan Skilbred	41
9	02 23 2024	<i>Alaska Miners Association/Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Review</i> By Jeremy Johnson	32
10	03 26 2024	Fairbanks Genealogical Society Amy Stratman	17
11	03 27 2024	<i>AMHF Induction Ceremony</i> (Carl Parker, Walter Roman, Joe Usibelli)	108
12	04 03 2024	<i>Historic 'Old Time Hunting Films'</i> by Randy Zarnke and A J Schmidt	47
13	04 17 2024	<i>Felix Pedro's 166th Birthday Party</i> ; by Joan Skilbred	37
14	04 23 2024	<i>Life and Times of Irene Sherman</i> By Fairbanks Genealogical Society	42
15	05 07 2024	<i>Organization and Goals of Alaska Mining Hall of Fame</i> By Tom Bundtzen for Fairbanks Coin Club	27
16	05 08 2024	<i>A Tale of Two Cats—Early History of the Caterpillar Brand</i> By Joan Skilbred and Jim Gibertoni	21
17	05 22 2024	<i>'The Girl Alaska' (1919 silent film)</i> Presented by Angela Schmidt (UAF Archives)	56
18	06 19 2024	<i>The Caravaya Region of Peru—a gold region worked by north country pioneers</i> By Paolo Greer	51
19	07 10 2024	<i>The Moose Creek Pictograph Site</i> By Martin Gutoski	59
20	07 24 2024	<i>Richardson, Steese and Dalton Highways--Who are They Named For?</i> By Rose Rybachek	43
21	07 27 2024	<i>Tour of Hi-Yu Mine</i> for Swedish-Norwegian Tour Group, organized By Tom Bundtzen	13
22	08 06 2024	Fairbanks Coin Club (unknown topic)	6
23	08 09 2024	Osher Life-Long Learning Group: <i>What is the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame?</i> By Tom Bundtzen	9
24	09 03 2024	Fairbanks Coin Club	16
25	09 11 2024	<i>Alaska in the Progressive Age 1896-1916</i> Thomas Alton	33
26	09 19 2024	<i>Subarctic Sounds and Echos—A History of Performing Arts in Early Fairbanks</i> By Paul Krejci	67
27	09 24 2024	Fairbanks Genealogical Society Amy Stratman	7
28	10 01 2024	<i>Grading of Uncirculated US half cents</i> , By Enlow Walker	14
29	10 04 2024	<i>Alaska Miners Association Economic and Candidate Forum</i>	44
30	10 30 2024	<i>Missing Plane N1812H An Obvious and Logical New Theory</i> by Jim Gilbertoni and Joan Skilbred	59
Totals	NA	NA	1,072



A



B



C



D



E



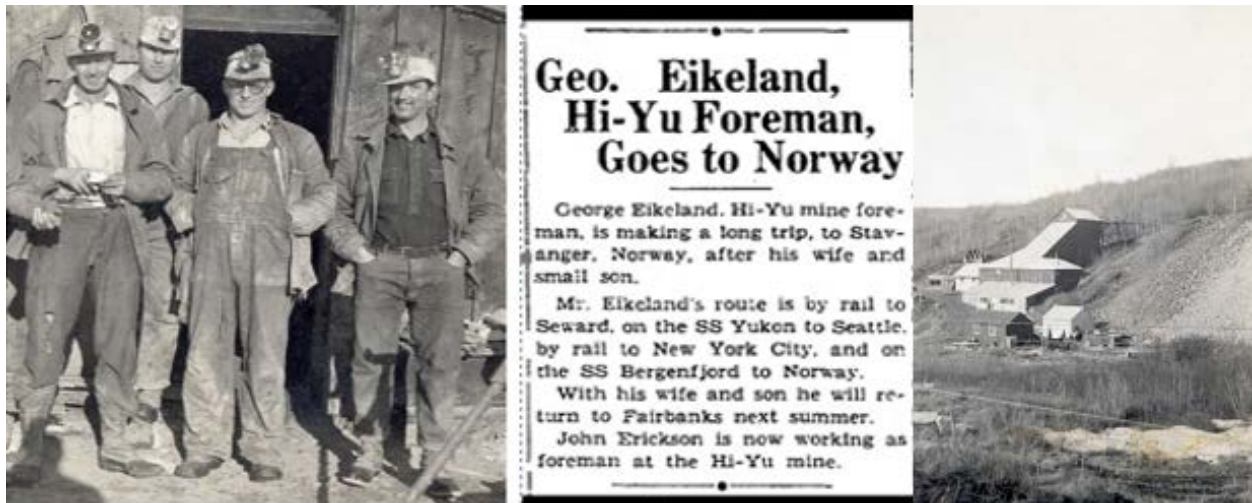
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Captions for 2024 Images: A—Celebrating Felix Pedro’s 166th Birthday during April 17th, 2024 lecture; B—Display of 66 pound copper ‘nugget’ from White Pine Mine, Michigan donated to the AMHF by Ken Pohle and Tom Bundtzen; now on display at the Museum. C—Sally Anne Carlson sings with musician/presenter Paul Krejci at his September 19th 2024 lecture *Subarctic Sounds and Echos—A History of Performing Arts in Early Fairbanks*; D-- Chamber of Commerce CEO Jeremy Johnson addresses an early morning crowd at the museum on February 23, 2024; E Visitor viewing the mineralogical collection of AMHF inductee Stephen R. Capps at the museum; F—newly erected poster celebrating AMHF inductee and Irish Immigrant Bridget Aylward.

Scandinavians Investigating their Mining Heritage—A Field Trip to the Hy-Yu Gold Mine in the Fairbanks district

In Late July, 2024, a group of eight (8) from Scandinavia visited Fairbanks on a mission—to view the Hy-Yu gold mine, a past producer of lode gold during Territorial times. The following narrative was provided by Asle Eikeland, son of Jorgen (George) Eikeland (1906-1990), who grew up on the family farm in Bjerkreim Municipality in Norway as one of eleven (11) children. In 1929, at the age of 23, Jorgen (George) emigrated to the United States to seek opportunities during the worldwide ‘Great Depression’. He first worked as a forester in Montana and later in a sawmill. He later became a sheep herder, protecting sheep from predators such as coyotes, pumas, bears and human poachers.

In 1932, Jorgen (George) heard the ‘Call of the North’ and left Montana for the Fairbanks Mining District in Interior Alaska, where he obtained a job as an underground miner at the Hy-Yu Gold mine in the upper Fairbanks Creek drainage. His talents were quickly recognized and by 1936, he became the Foreman of the mine. The Hi-Yu mine was one of the larger underground gold mines in the Fairbanks Mining district that were active during Territorial times before Alaska Statehood. In 1938, George went back to Norway to pick up his wife and small son with plans to return to Fairbanks the following summer. But he did not return. His wife was reluctant to leave Norway and Jorgen began to experience significant respiratory issues. However, after a period, he completely recovered from this illness.



Photos from left to right showing Jorge (George) Eikeland at far left; center—1938 Article about George Eikeland in Fairbanks Daily News Miner; and right—the Hy-Yu Mine as it appeared in 1938.

Fast forward to July, 2024, when eight people from Norway and Sweden traveled to Fairbanks to get a glimpse of the Hy-Yu gold mine. Asle Eikeland and Geir Asheim had contacted Tom Bundtzen, President of the AMHF in the spring of 2024, and asked if he could assist in organizing a trip to the Hy-Yu Mine. The field trip occurred on July 27th, and after two attempts through dense deciduous forest, bogs, and beaver ponds, the group finally encountered the mine. It was partially fenced off to restrict access from the general public, but otherwise, the mill building was easily recognizable. It was a wonderful experience for Asle Eikeland to walk directly in the footsteps of his father, George Eikeland. The next day, the group got a complete tour of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Museum in downtown Fairbanks. Later, Asle Eikeland became the newest AMHF 98er.



Left—Joren Eikeland showing photo of his grandfather George Eikeland, a truly remarkable resemblance between the two. Center —the field trip with the Hy-Yu mill in the background. Featured in the photo besides those listed below are Geir Asheim, Geir Stangeland, Gry Vorset, Irene Willumsen, and Lola Petterson. Right--part of the group at the AMHF museum featuring Asle Eikeland, son of George Eikeland, Cecile Stangeland, granddaughter of George Eikeland, Tom Bundtzen, President of the AMHF, and Joren Eikeland, grandson of George Eikeland. All photos provided by Asle Eikeland.

Past AMHF President Mary Nordale Honored at 2024 Alaska History Conference



Mary Anita Nordale undated (1934-?)
(Photo from *The Alaska Miner*, vol. 52, No. 4, 2024)

In October 10th, 2024, AMHF President Tom Bundtzen and University of Alaska Professor of Political Science-Emeritus Jerry McBeath presented a paper at the Alaska Historical Society Annual Convention, which was held in Cordova, during October 9-12. The paper was entitled: ***Mary Anita Nordale: Law and Mining in Alaska***. Among her numerous civic achievements, which has recently earned her a place in Alaska's Women's Hall of Fame, Mary contributed greatly to Alaska's mining industry. She served as the Commissioner of Revenue under Governor Bill Sheffield (1984-1986) and was Statewide President of the Alaska's Miners Association from 1994-1996, the first woman to hold that position. Mary served for many years on the University of Alaska-Fairbank School of Engineering and Mines Advisory Board.

Mary is best known to many small mining firms for helping them through regulatory hurdles and educating them about the requirements of new national and statewide environmental regulations. Mary helped dozens of small-scale placer miners file and defend claims and apply for fish habitat permits—rarely charging the levels of fees that lawyers usually collect for such assistance.

Mary was a founding member of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) and drew up the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for the AMHF in 1997. She served as President of the AMHF from 2004 to 2011.

Previous Inductees, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

Fairbanks, Fall 1997

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

Clarence J. Berry: Prominent Klondike and Interior Alaska miner; noted businessman of the north.

Stephen Birch: Founder and developer of Kennecott Copper Mines.

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

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

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

John Treadwell: Founder of Treadwell Mines, Juneau.

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 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, mine safety proponent, 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: Water engineer that 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—his namesake is 'Tofty Tin Belt'.

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 Inupiat 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 Alaska-Yukon 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 helped develop initial plans for FE Fairbanks dredging 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 lode 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 Yupik parents in Quinhagak on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Wuya was proficient in English when few Yupik people 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. Eastaugh was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission in 1991 by Governor Walter Hickel. Upon Eastaugh's death, 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 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.

Rheinart M. (Rhiny) Berg: Berg's strength and stamina were legendary during most of his 86 years of life. He discovered the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit. He later developed the Candle placer district.

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. Faulker was an important lobbyist during the early years of the Alaska Miners Association. 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 copper 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 copper 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. Herning: 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. He later retooled the Independence mill to recover tungsten, a strategic metal during WWII.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2010

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

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

Irving McKenny Reed: Prolific Associate Mining Engineer for the Alaska Territory known for his excellent descriptions of Alaska's remote placer districts and true pioneer of Nome; was chair of the Alaska Game Commission prior to WWII and the Territorial Highway Engineer prior to Statehood. Surveyed much of Fairbanks townsite as the town grew.

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. Developed and mined graphite in the Kigluaik Mountains during WWI—now the site of a world-class graphite project.

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. In 1945, 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 Tveiten: 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—becoming a gold millionaire—later managed hotels in the Pacific Northwest, including the Sorrento in Seattle, Washington State’s oldest operating hotel.

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. A gifted musician as well as astute businesswoman.

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, including leaders in the conservation movement, about the economic and social 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. His work is cemented in studies along the Alaska Railroad corridor, where he provided information on resources for use in that corridor. Capps was among the first federal geologists to study and evaluate ‘strategic minerals’.

Fairbanks, Spring 2014

Honoring Three Early Mining Pioneers Important in the Alaskan Mining Industry

‘Wise Mike’ Stepovich: Self-educated immigrant from Montenegro 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. Wise Mike played an important role in the development of the critical metal tungsten in the Fairbanks district before WWII.

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

Peter Petrovich Doroshin: A brilliant Russian Mining engineer that discovered and mined placer gold on the Kenai Peninsula during 1849-1851; found industrial minerals for use in the colony; and was a pioneer in investigating Alaska’s abundant coal resources. Would later play an important role in Russia for the Imperial Russian Naval Mining office and mine gold in the Ural Mountains.

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 copper-silver 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, in both Prince William Sound and in the Chitina Valley.

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 co-discovery of the Red Dog zinc-polymetallic deposit (with Irv Tailleir) , 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 inspected mineralization in 'Red Dog Creek'; 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 complete 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 one third of all the bucketline stacker dredges that concurrently operated in Alaska (32). UCC operated dredges elsewhere.

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; John was perhaps better known for his *Intelligent*TM 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, and earth science manager. His lasting legacy is the USGS Alaska Resource Data Files (ARDF), which he designed.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2018

AMHF Honors Three 'Minority' Mining Pioneers involved in all aspects of the mining lifestyle

William T. Ewing: was born into slavery in 1854 in Keytesville, 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 during the Alaska Yukon Gold Rush. An honor guard of black soldiers from the U.S. Army attended his 1942 funeral in Fairbanks.

Anchorage, Fall, 2018

AMHF Honors Frontier Mining Camp Pioneers

Joseph B. Quigley: Born in Pennsylvania, Joe Quigley would ascend Chilkoot Pass in 1891, years before the Klondike Gold Rush. Quigley is best known for his work in the Kantishna District in the shadow of Mount McKinley (now Denali).

Tekla M. Kanari: was a Finnish Immigrant who, along with husband John, formed and operated Trinity Mining Company in the remote Kougarak Mining district north of Nome. She made many wire transfers of funds to relatives and friends in war-torn Finland during WWII.

Alvin H. Agoff: Son of a Russian immigrant, Alvin Agoff mined gold, trapped, and freighted with sled dogs in the Iditarod Mining district for more than 50 years. His family legacy lives on with Prince Creek Mining Company, the last heritage mining operation in the Iditarod.

Anchorage, Fall 2019

AMHF Honors Pioneers of the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM)

Thomas L. Pittman: was a noted metallurgist, and minerals officer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines in Juneau; at the time of his passing, was the longest serving employee of the USBM in Alaska.

John Joseph Mulligan: Born in New York, Mulligan arrived in Alaska in 1949 and worked in the Territory on many strategic mineral projects in Alaska. He became Chief of Field Operations for the USBM in Alaska in 1970, a position held until his retirement in 1985.

Donald Paul Blasko: came to Alaska as a USBM new petroleum resource officer, and served as a safety officer for the Evan Jones coal mine near Palmer in the early 1960s. Later, Blasko managed many USBM studies during the D-2 Lands debates and played a role in the Red Dog deposit discovery verification. Upon retirement in 1993, he returned to Idaho spending much time volunteering for non-profit organizations before his passing in 2009.

Fairbanks, Summer, 2020

AMHF Honors Pioneers Associated with Interior and Northern Alaska Gold Mining

Roshier Creecy: Born in Virginia in 1866, he sought to escape a southern Culture intent on retaining racial hierarchy. Roshier was a Buffalo Soldier for the 9th Calvary and mined in the Wiseman district of Northern Alaska for decades.

Arnold Nordale: The civic minded mining engineer was born in Juneau in 1896 and grew up in Fairbanks. Nordale worked for the Alaska Road Commission and ultimately, the USSR&M dredging company in Fairbanks and the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation in Dawson—managing dredge fleets of similar size.

Raymond L. (Ray) Smith: Born and raised in Maine, Smith came north to Alaska in 1939 and obtained a mining engineering degree at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. He became President of Michigan Technological University in 1965, and is widely credited for fundamentally improving the quality of the educational institution. Upon his retirement, he remained in close contact with friends and colleagues in Alaska for the rest of his life.

Anchorage, Fall, 2022

AMHF Honors individuals associated with modern Alaskan mineral resource development

John Qipqina Schaeffer Jr. A visionary Inupiaq leader from Northwest Alaska that was instrumental in negotiating a 1982 agreement with Cominco Limited for NANA Regional Corporation, which developed the Red Dog Mine, one of the world’s largest zinc producers.

Charles Griswald (Riz) Bigelow is widely recognized as one of the most successful mineral exploration geologists in Alaskan history. Bigelow put together teams that discovered the Arctic, Greens Creek, Pogo, and other properties, several of which have become producing mines.

Charles Caldwell Hawley Born in Evansville, Illinois, Hawley became one of the most respected Alaskan geologists and mine historians of his generation. He wrote the classic book, *A Kennecott Story*, which provides a summary of Kennecott Copper Corporation history.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2023

AMHF honors two women miners and a Pre-Felix Pedro Tanana Basin Explorer

Emma Grace Lowe has the distinction of being one of the only woman miners in Interior Alaska during early post-gold rush years. While Grace may not have been what some would call “ladylike”, she held her own in a male-dominated profession and made her mark in Alaska’s mining history.

Frederick James Currier was one of those persistent early Tanana Basin miners during the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush. He was in the 40-Mile and Circle districts during times of discovery and explored the Chena River basin years before the arrival of Felix Pedro.

Bridget Mannion Aylward emigrated from Ireland and mined gold in the 40 Mile district with husband Edward years before the Klondike discovery. She established an educational fund in Ireland with 40 Mile gold, which exists to this day.

Anchorage, Fall, 2023

AMHF Honors Two Pioneers Associated with the development of Strategic and Critical Minerals

Lenhart J.H. Grothe was born in New York, worked in Montana, and moved north to graduate with a BS degree in Mining Engineering at the University of Alaska in 1959. After working at the Red Devli mercury-antimony mine in SW Alaska, he acquired the abandoned Lost River tin mine on the western Seward Peninsula. Eventually his company, Lost River Mining Company, was the largest source of the strategic mineral tin in the United States from 1965 to 1990.

William T. (Bill) Ellis was born in California and received a BS Degree in geology at the University of Nevada Reno in 1972. Prior to that, he served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam where he received the silver star for bravery. Over a career of nearly 50 years, Bill explored a variety of metals, many of them strategic and critical. He finished his career with Alaska Earth Sciences in Anchorage, where he mentored many younger geologists in the search for critical minerals in Alaska.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2024

AMHF Honors two Interior Alaska hydraulic placer gold miners and an iconic coal miner and philanthropist

Carl Gordon Parker was born February 6th, 1916 in Fairbanks the son of Klondike stampers. He obtained a BS degree in mining engineering at the University of Alaska in 1939 and worked for decades in several Alaskan districts with a focus on the Livengood district. His induction also honors many other members of the Parker mining family.

Joseph Emil Usibelli was born December 28, 1938 at -40° F, in a log cabin in Suntrana, Alaska. He obtained a degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks in 1959. After losing his father Emil in a mine accident, Joe took over Usibelli Coal Mine at the age of 25 and streamlined production, upgraded equipment, developed new markets, and reclaimed mined lands years before that was required. Joe gave generously to the community of Fairbanks and to the University of Alaska. In 2022, the School of Engineering and Mines building at UAF was renamed the *Joseph E. Usibelli Engineering, Learning and Innovation Building* in his honor.

Walter Roman was born in 1907 and raised on a Cherokee Reservation in Oklahoma. For more than 60 years, he mined at various locals throughout Interior Alaska and in 1986, was awarded the Distinguished Mining Service Award by the Alaska Miners Association. Roman discovered the famous, largely intact, 36,000-year-old steppe bison 'Blue Babe', in 1979 during stripping operations on Fish Creek, near the present Fort Knox mine. This iconic Pleistocene fossil is on display at the University of Alaska Museum of the North in Fairbanks.



**Keldon 'Kelly' Gaylord Adams
(1912-2005)**

**Photo Credit: Hoquiam High School,
Washington**

Kelly Adams was born in Hoquiam, Washington, on July 8, 1912 to Leal (Stevenson) and Arthur Gaylord Adams. (1, 2, 3). He graduated from Hoquiam High School in 1930. It was a trip to southeastern Alaska in the summer of 1932 to check out a gold deposit with his father Gaylord Adams that began his lifelong interest in gold and mineral prospecting and mining (4, 5).

In early 1933, he quit Oregon State College where he'd been studying aviation engineering and bought a small boat and motored north with a friend to southeastern Alaska. His goal was to do what all young, enthusiastic prospectors aim to do: strike it rich. New to the area, an acquaintance suggested he try prospecting around the old Puyallup mine at Hollis on the eastern side of Prince of Wales Island.

Kelly and a partner found gold, but not enough to live on. After struggling to mine enough gold to make ends meet, the two young men were hired by Wendell Dawson, owner of the nearby Harris River Gold Mine (now known as the Dawson Mine), who put them to work cleaning the tailings of the Old Kasaan gold mine. In ten days, he and his partner, fellow Hoquiam friend Larry Erickson, removed 1,100 wheelbarrows of sand and gravel from the stream and retrieved \$1,100 in gold (at about \$32/oz) (5).

Wendell Dawson let Adams and his mining partner winter over at the cabin on his claims. While wintering over, Adams discovered a creek filled with quartz that had gold in it. He and his partner ordered a prospector's mill and averaged about \$210 in gold a month from the area for five months, which was just breaking even. Then, they started clearing about \$600 a month until it was time to pull out (5).

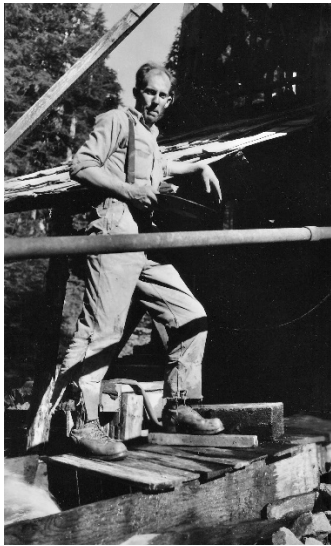


**Kelly Adams shows contents of gold pan in
southeast Alaska, circa 1930s. Photo Credit:
Shannon Michael**

Adams continued to mine in Southeast Alaska, staking a gold mining claim at Kasaan in 1934 and prospecting around Juneau working through the summer of 1934 and into the winter. He and his partner got snowed in at a mountain cabin and almost starved to death. He lost 40 pounds, from 174 down to 134 pounds by the time they were able to get out in March of 1935 (5).

He returned to Washington State by 1938 when he married Wendell Dawson's oldest daughter, Dayle Dawson. He and Dayle settled in Yakima, Washington, where their daughters, Sandra and Judith, were born in 1940 and 1942. Throughout World War II, he was a bus driver for the workers at what is now called the Hanford Nuclear Plant (6, 7).

In November 1945, Adams returned to the Puyallup Mine on Prince of Wales Island, this time bringing his wife and two young daughters with him to mine gold. The family moved to Ketchikan when it was time for his oldest daughter to start school. In 1947, he began working for Ellis Airlines as a mechanic, and he became a licensed inspector for the Federal Aviation Administration with A&P and I.A. ratings. He also became an accomplished Alaskan bush pilot after earning his pilot's license in 1949 (5, 6).



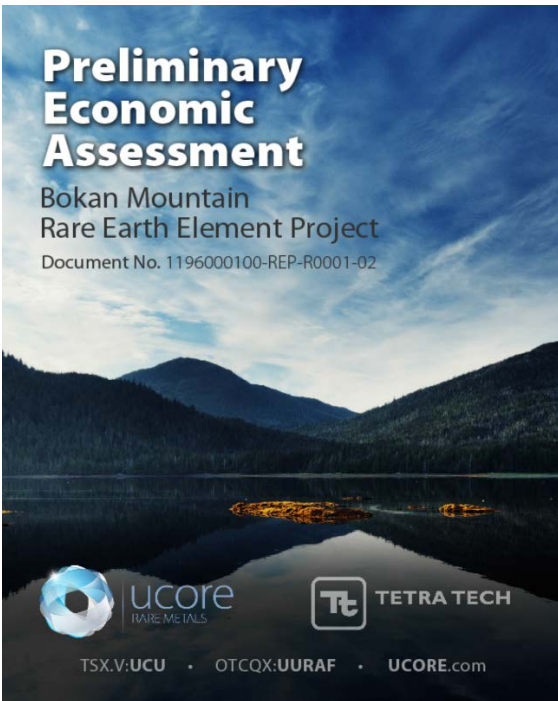
Kelly Adams at the Puyallup mine, circa 1946. Photo Credit: Adams family files

Adams spent his free time prospecting in Alaska, British Columbia and several western states from 1945 until late 1956, including helping Wendell Dawson stake copper claims near the area that would become the Granduc Mine in northwestern British Columbia (B.C), Canada. near Hyder, Alaska, and Stewart, B.C. in 1954 (8).

After his first marriage ended in divorce, he met and married the love of his life, Ketchikan elementary school teacher Judith Chilton, a native of Minnesota, in 1951. They added two more daughters to the family, Martha "Tate" in 1953 and Grace in 1958. His wife Judy quickly became the biggest supporter and partner of Kelly's prospecting and mining adventures throughout their almost 54 years of marriage (6).

In April 1955, Don Ross, Bill Easton and Kelly Adams formed the Uranium-55 Syndicate, dedicated to discovering uranium in southeastern Alaska. Ross and Adams were assigned to do the actual prospecting while Easton served as financial advisor and bookkeeper (9).

On May 18, 1955, Adams and Ross made the first significant discovery of uranium in Alaska. Kelly detected a large radioactive anomaly using a Gieger Counter strapped to a strut of his airplane while flying over Bokan Mountain on southern Prince of Wales Island. He didn't have time to land the plane and stake claims, so he drew a detailed map for his partner, Don Ross, who climbed up Bokan Mountain and staked the claims. High-grade uranium mineralization was subsequently confirmed through ground prospecting by Adams. Their claims became the Ross-Adams Mine and was honored as *Mining World's* "United States Discovery of 1955". Their discovery also caused an increased interest in mining in Alaska. U.S. Geological Survey geologist and AMHF Inductee Edward McKeveitt subsequently recognized Rare Earth Element concentrations in nearby veins. It is the only commercial uranium deposit found in Alaska, with mining occurring from 1956-1971. Today, Bokan Mountain contains the best-documented rare-earth element deposit in Alaska (9, 10).



Cover of Preliminary Economic Assessment of Bokan Mountain for the Development of Rare Earth Element Endowment, circa 2018.

In the fall of 1956, Adams moved his family to southern Oregon where they lived until returning to Ketchikan in 1967 when Webber Air offered him a job he couldn't refuse as a mechanic and FAA inspector in Ketchikan (6).

In 1973, Adams began taking summers off from his job as Chief Mechanic at Webber Air to focus on prospecting. He spent the summer of 1974 with his wife Judith and daughter Tate on Prince of Wales Island at the old Puyallup Mine tracking down two quartz veins that were predicted to intersect under a creek bed. When he cleared the creek bed, he found there'd been a geological fault and they did not intersect. In 1976, he re-staked the Dawson Mine, formerly owned by Wendell Dawson, near Hollis and began additional exploration and development (6).

From 1976-1977, Kelly Adams served as Chair of the Ketchikan Branch of the Alaska Miners Association (5).



The 'Southeastern Log' (vol. 7, no. 11, 1977), features Kelly Adams panning for gold near Hollis, Prince of Wales Island.

Prospecting never left his blood after retirement, though. Kelly and Judith were among placer miners in 1978 who were rediscovering the gold of the historic Klondike District in Yukon, Canada using modern equipment. In 1978, they staked claims on Dominion Creek outside of Dawson City, Yukon Territory. He and Judy spent every summer in the Yukon through 1993, often with family members assisting in the mining, moving from claims on Dominion Creek to Independence Creek in 1988. His mining efforts earned him an induction into the Yukon Order of Pioneers (6, 10, 11).

In 1984, he retired from Webber Air after his wife also retired from teaching at White Cliff Elementary School in Ketchikan, and they moved to Gold Hill, Oregon, where they lived the rest of their lives. Fittingly, they lived up Sardine Creek Road on the Lucky Bart, an abandoned claim that produced several thousand dollars' worth of gold from 1890 to 1914 (6).

By 1993, at age 81, he still was an active claim holder to the Dawson Mine on Prince of Wales Island with his partner Gene Romilly but was no longer actively prospecting or mining in Alaska due to the onset of dementia (12).

As mentioned in Chapter 4 of Ken Eichner's 2002 book, *Nine Lives of an Alaska Bush Pilot*:

“Prospectors are dreamers. Kelly’s dream was to make enough money so he could drive a pink Caddie, smoke Cuban cigars, and fart through silk shorts. He spent a lot more time bent over banging on rocks than driving Caddies, but he did make a few profitable claims over the years.”

After his uranium discovery garnered a six-figure payout, he bought the silk shorts and a Cadillac, just like he promised (6, 8, 13).

Kelly Adams passed away in Medford, Oregon, on March 28, 2005, at the age of 92, survived by his beloved wife, four daughters, 10 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren (1, 6).

By Shannon Watts Michael, 2024;
Reviewed by Tom Bundtzen



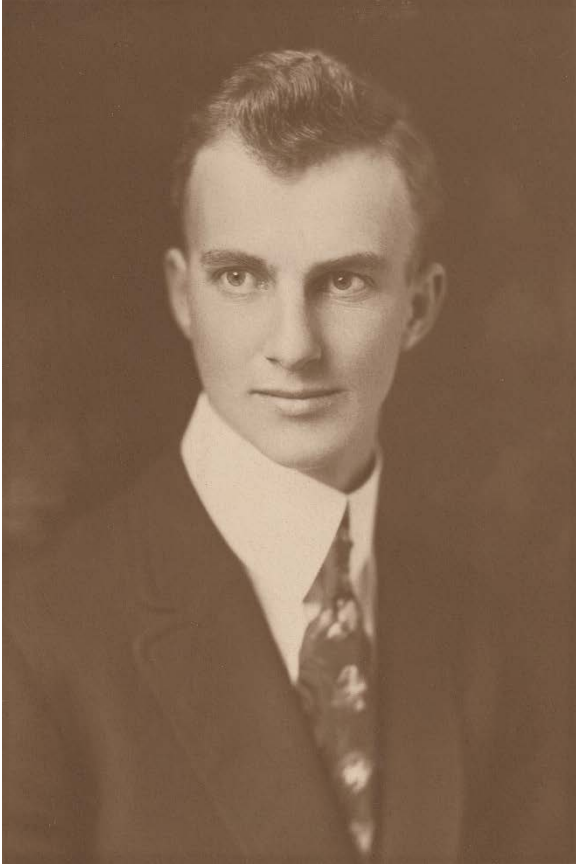
Kelly Adams with Klondike gold, circa 1990
Photo Credit: Adams Family Files.



Kelly and Judith Adams, circa 1990. Photo
Credit: Adams family files.

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**Wendell Dawson
(1896-1965)**

Wendell Dawson's favorite quote (1) was from a prominent geological engineer, Franc R. Joubin:

"Mining is an industry, but mine exploration is a romantic adventure."

This is the story of Wendell Dawson's romantic adventures with mineral exploration. Wendell Dawson was born on January 22, 1896 in La Harpe, Illinois, the son of Mary Ann Finch and Lemoine Painter Dawson. His family started migrating west in 1907, spending a few years in Estelline, South Dakota, before settling in 1910 near Idaho Falls, Idaho, where he graduated from high school in 1914. He became a local schoolteacher, but by 1916 he was beginning his lifelong passion of prospecting and mining (2,3).

The first known mention of Dawson being a miner was in a sensational July 1916 news story

picked up by several papers detailing his heroic efforts to walk 60 miles over the wild interior of Idaho in order to enlist in the U.S. Army as World War I escalated.

"Wendell Dawson is a young miner 21 years of age, former resident of Idaho Falls, Idaho, and La Harpe, Illinois. For the past few years, he has been placer mining along Loon Creek remote from civilization and transportation facilities" (4).

He served along the Mexican border before returning to Idaho where he had met fellow teacher, Naomi Christensen, a native of Utah, at a local business college. They married in 1917, then moved to Washington, D.C., as war workers before he was sent to Europe in 1918 as part of the U.S. Army Balloon Corps and served overseas until 1919. He returned home to Salt Lake City, where he resumed his studies to become a civil engineer. Wendell and Naomi moved to Portland, Oregon, where he began working as an engineer for the U.S. Geological Survey. In August 1920, they had a daughter, Dayle, but Naomi sadly passed away seven months later (2).

In June 1924, he was selected by the U.S. Geological Survey to examine the U.S. Forest Service's project of surveying Alaska's hydro power potential. He was stationed in Juneau for the summer, his first foray into Alaska (5).

In 1925, he married his second wife, Edna Munz. The family lived in Portland, Oregon, where they welcomed a son Edward in 1926. By 1929, the family was living in Ketchikan where their daughter Theresia was born in 1929 (2).

In 1930, The Kasaan Mining Company leased the Handy claims to Wendell Dawson on Prince of Wales Island, near Hollis. Dawson shifted the mining about a half-mile north of the Harris River Mine to what is now called the Dawson Mine. Dawson mined here intermittently starting in 1931 until 1952. Gold was the primary metal mined, along with silver, lead, and copper (10).

His first major prospecting trip was in July 1931 when he and partner William Fromholz of Juneau hiked into the Leduc River valley. After motoring a boat from Ketchikan to the Chickamin River before merging onto the Leduc River, they were within 15 miles of the International Boundary. They then hiked within two miles of the boundary, where they set up a base camp for the summer. They discovered a large copper deposit near the Leduc Glacier and staked several claims in September 1931. When they returned, Wendell wrote an extensive report to the Alaska Territory's supervising mining engineer, AMHF inductee B.D. Stewart (6, 7, 8).

In 1933, Dawson, owner of the Dawson Mine, hired Kelly Adams and Larry Erickson, two young native Washingtonians trying their luck in mining gold in Alaska for the first time, to clean the tailings of the Old Kasaan gold mine. In ten days, Adams and his partner removed 1,100 wheelbarrows of sand and gravel from the stream and retrieved \$1,100 in gold (~\$32/oz.). Kelly Adams became his son-in-law in 1938 when his daughter Dayle got married. Despite her marriage's failure to Kelly Adams in 1951, Wendell and Kelly remained lifelong prospecting partners and friends (2, 9).

By 1938, \$22,000 in gold, at about \$35 per ounce, had been produced at the Dawson Mine since 1933, according to an Alaska Territorial Department of Mines Examination Report. Between 1931 to 1952, the Dawson Mine is estimated to have produced nearly 10,000 ounces of gold, 7,000 ounces of silver, along with minor amounts of lead and copper (10).

By 1940, Wendell's marriage to Edna Munz had ended and he married his third wife, Coral Zundel, of Utah, in Ketchikan. Coral's sister, Ruby Boedeker, visited the Dawson Mine in 1941 at the invitation of Coral and husband Wendell Dawson, who had hired Ruby's husband Bill to help with the mine. Besides having a few close run-ins with aggressive black bears, one of which literally killed a deer within a few feet of her, Ruby described the layout of the Dawson Mine

in an article in the November 1941 edition of the Alaska Sportsman titled 'We Have Everything':

"the Dawson camp was a pleasant surprise. It turned out to be a big, six-room log building, painted dark red, with a green shingled roof. Then there was a general storeroom, a dry house, a meat house and a coal house. A thirty foot yard of sand had been piped down from the mine surrounded by buildings--to hold back the green jungle....From the camp, it was a three-thousand foot hike up the side of the mountain, to an elevation of five hundred feet. Wendell had built a stairway made of split logs for half the entire distance from the camp to the mine" (11).



Wendell Dawson at his Dawson mine, circa 1941; from Boedeker (1941).

Both Ruby and her husband Bill got a serious case of gold fever and began to scheme about how they could have their own gold mine. At the encouragement of Wendell Dawson, they prospected an area 3 miles northwest of Hollis, where gold-bearing quartz veins were found. They staked two federal mining claims and began to plan. Ruby relates:

“We’ll clear a place for a cabin. We’ll have a tumbling stream at our front door and the beautiful mountains around us. We’ll have our home and our children, our health and our freedom. And when we add up the things acquired here, then ‘We’ll Have Everything’! (11).”

Dawson worked summers on his mine but closed it down in 1942 when he was called to active duty by the U.S. Naval Reserve as part of the Civil Engineer Corps Construction Battalion. He served as an officer in charge of a Seabees company building airplane runways in the South Pacific near New Caledonia, the Hebrides, Guadalcanal, and Okinawa. He was promoted to Lieutenant Commander by the end of the war (2, 12).

After WWII ended, Dawson reopened the Dawson Mine producing a small amount in gold in 1946. He began operations again in March 1947, and by early August 1947 had milled 49 ¾-ton cars, averaging about three to four cars of ore a day, at about \$30 per ton (13). In 1947, Associate Mining Engineer for the Hyder and Ketchikan Mining Precincts J. C. Roehm noted in a report:

“Dawson operates this mine alone and considerable credit is due for his development of the existing ore-body. Indications are that this ore-body contains a reserve many times greater than the present capacity of the mill. Dawson also probably holds the distinction of operating the only

producing gold lode mine in Alaska at the present time without the aid of labor. He has been working alone for the last two seasons” (13).

In 1949, an investigative report dated May 25 by Howard M. Fowler noted:

“Visited Dawson Mine on Harris River. Dawson has milled approximately 125 cars of ore. Expects to mill about 300 cars for the season (14)”

Dawson ceased underground mining at the Dawson Mine in 1950 after shipping 28,540 pounds of concentrates to the Tacoma Smelter during the winter of 1949-1950 (14, 20).

In 2023, current mine superintendent of the Dawson Mine, Jared Fithian, took Paystreak editor Tom Bundtzen through some of Wendell Dawson’s old workings at the Dawson Mine.



Jared Fithian looks over gold-bearing quartz-sulfide vein system in the underground face Wendell Dawson worked during late 1940s.



Haulage way (on rails), old Dawson workings as seen in 2023; with rusted-out equipment.

By 1951, he was called up to active duty again—for the third time--this time for the Korean War. He served in the Marshall Islands. While serving, his wife Coral left him and filed for divorce (2, 12).

Upon his return to the U.S. in 1952, he was stationed in Seattle, Washington, at U.S. Naval Air Station Sandpoint, where he was assigned to 'Ready Reserve'. From 1952 until 1962, he maintained assessment work on the Dawson Mine/Harris Creek claims until he leased them to Bill Boedeker in the fall of 1962 (12, 20).

In February 1953, he learned that his 1931 discovery of a massive copper deposit near the Leduc Glacier in B.C. was garnering major interest from a large mining company, Granby Mining and Smelting. He quickly organized a small group of men, including Howard Fowler, the former Alaska Government mining engineer, to go with him to restake his claims he'd let lapse in the 1930s. A major storm developed, allowing the men to access the area and stake 72 claims that would be named "Dawson Copper, Skeena Mining Division" before the competition could get into the area. That area would become the Granduc Mine in the 1960s. It was Wendell Dawson's most profitable mining venture (15, 16, 17).

In May 1953, Wendell developed Tuberculosis and was shipped to a Naval hospital in San Diego, California, where he was treated until finally cleared for medical retirement in October 1953 (12).

In February 1954, Wendell married his 4th wife Grace Gilkey, a high school home economics teacher from Sumner, Washington. They moved to Kirkland, Washington, in 1955, naming their home, "Dawson's Diggin's". She was an avid supporter of his mining adventures for the remainder of his life (15).

In *The Northern Miner's* March 5, 1964 story, "**Value of Prospector Well-Documented in Postwar Years**", Dawson's Granduc discovery was mentioned:

"It must be emphasized that in situations of this kind, no one party can take claim to all the glory for bringing in a mine, nor in being entirely responsible [for] the exploration thinking that lead to the making [of a] mine. An excellent case in point is that of Granduc Mines, a major situation in Northern B.C. Quite popularly, the Karl Springer-sponsored Helicopter Exploration outfit is credited with making the Granduc discoveries, but in actual fact, one individual is actually known to be responsible. He is Mr. Wendell Dawson, of Kirkland, Washington, who flew into the Granduc region in the early 1930's (and in doing so, demonstrated the value of the airplane in exploring remote and difficult country in B.C.). Mr. Dawson's subsequent knowledge and interest in the area eventually led to the Springer organization and many other people moving into the country, with Granduc Mines the subsequent result" (18).

In Dawson's last years, his primary area of prospecting focus was on rare earth element claims he held between Luning and Mina, Nevada. While prospecting, he suffered a heart attack on May 13, 1965, but was able to drive himself to the hospital in Hawthorne. A day after his wife Grace arrived, he suffered a massive heart attack and died on May 19, 1965, at the age of 69. He was buried at Sunset Hills Memorial Park in Bellevue, Washington. He was survived by his wife Grace, three children, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren (15, 18).

Even after his death, his contributions to mining in Alaska were noted. A 1995 report by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, "Mineral investigations in the Ketchikan mining district, southeastern Alaska" noted, "The largest past mineral producers in the Hollis area were the Harris River and Dawson Mines." (20).

Today, Wendell Dawson’s legacy lives on in the operations of the Dawson Mine, now (2024) in its fifth year of commercial operations. The Dawson Mine is owned and operated by the Sundance Mining Group (SMG). SMG operates year-round with a crew of about 50. A 125 ton per day mill is fed from several underground faces. The gravity-only facility recovers both fine gold from tables as well as from shipments of sulfide concentrates shipped to a facility in Germany.

The Dawson mine has provided a significant economic impact to the community of Hollis as well as to the overall residents of Prince of Wales Island—something that Wendell Dawson would have appreciated.

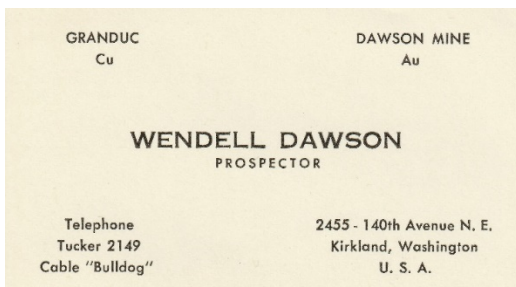


Miners working underground at the Dawson Mine, circa 2022. Photo Credit: Sundance Mining Group.

By Shannon Watts Michael, 2024; Reviewed and With Minor Additions by Tom Bundtzen



Sno-Cat™ all-terrain vehicle used in the prospecting of the Granduc area, Canada during 1953, with Wendell Dawson on the far right. Photo Credit: Dawson family files.



Wendell Dawson’s business card-circa 1950s.



Wendell Dawson in 1960. Photo Credit: Dawson Family Files.

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**Karl Alvin Bachner
(1927-1990)**

Karl Alvin Bachner was born in Fairbanks on February 10, 1927, to Cleora Cassiday Bachner and J. George Bachner, both Alaskan Pioneers. George emigrated from Wurttemberg, Germany in 1911, coming to Alaska in 1914. Cleora was born in Leduc, Alberta, Canada and travelled to Fairbanks in 1906 as a five-year old with her mother and her brother. After a few years in Fairbanks, Cleora's mother remarried, and they made the then arduous journey to Livengood where her stepfather mined on Mike Hess Creek. At 17, she married George in front of her parent's home on Amy Creek.

George and Cleora mined in the Livengood area for another eight years while their family grew to include Jesse and Elizabeth (Betty). By the time Karl was born, the family was living on Eighth Avenue in Fairbanks, where George found work as a house carpenter.

Karl enjoyed the many pursuits typical for those growing up in small town Fairbanks before the boom of World War Two. He was an avid gardener, entering and winning prizes for his vegetables, joining the 4-H Club and Boy Scouts, playing baseball, and appearing in local band (trumpet) and theater productions. On August 15, 1935, Karl was on hand to watch Wiley Post and Will Rogers take off from Fairbanks on their final flight. He also saw Howard Hughes landing in Fairbanks in 1938 as part of his round-the-world flight. Karl's older brother Jesse eventually became an aviation pioneer himself, running Bachner Aircraft Service on Phillips Field in Fairbanks. In the early 1940s, the family moved to the Seattle area, where Karl's father was employed by the Morris Knudsen Company.

Karl attended Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) before enlisting in the U.S. Navy in 1944. After his discharge in 1946, he finished his degree at PLU in 1951 and joined his father's general contracting company. Karl later formed Bachner Northwest with William G. Jones and Edgar Billimek, building many landmark buildings throughout Alaska. These buildings included the original Portage Glacier Visitor Center, the Eagle River Correctional Institution, and the Sitka (Harrington) Centennial Hall.

In 1953, Karl turned his attention to strategic and critical minerals. With his partners, George Bachner and Mike Seiler, they formed the Kenai Chrome Company to extract high-grade chromite from the Chrome Queen and Star Four deposits on Red Mountain near Seldovia, Alaska. After securing a contract with the US General Services Administration (GSA), they produced their first 6,000 tons of gravity separated concentrate in 1954. In 1955, Karl and his partners produced and shipped 7,067 tons of concentrate. The 1955 production represented nearly 20 percent of the total US metallurgical chrome production. At that time, the US total production met only 1 percent of total domestic demand.



Surface exposures of chromite seams from 1990 investigation at Red Mountain, Seldovia quadrangle, Alaska; most chromite was mined using underground methods. TKB Files.



Chromite concentrates stockpile at beachhead from Red Mountain, undated TKB Files.

Chromium became increasingly important after the development of “chromium steel” in the mid-1800s. Once “rustless” or stainless steel alloys were perfected in the early 1900s, chromium became a critical mineral with applications in all sectors of industry. Since stainless steel contains at least 10.5 percent chromium, a secure domestic chromite (FeCr_2O_4) source is needed. Unfortunately, chromite production in the U.S. has been historically low with cheaper international sources of chromite available from Turkey, New Caledonia, the Philippines, South Rhodesia, and South Africa. This is especially true when shipping costs from Alaska are already high.

In 1957, Karl travelled to Washington D.C. at the invitation of Alaska Delegate Bob Bartlett (then the Territory’s representative in the US House of Representatives from Alaska’s at-large district) to address the U.S. Senate Natural Resources Committee on the need for tariffs and price setting to bolster the economics of Alaskan chromite mining. At that time, a ton of metallurgical grade chromite (at least 42%) went for \$21 (U.S.)/ ton. Shipping Red Mountain chromite by barge to Seattle and then by rail to the smelter in Mississippi cost \$25/ton. Karl argued for tariffs on non-domestic chromite and a regulated price point of \$125/ton to cover mining and transportation costs. Karl also cited the high cost of labor in Alaska at that time in part due to the Cold War military ramp up. Skilled workers were making a high wage of \$4.25/hour with extras like overtime and lodging which made industrial metal mining even more uneconomic. Refractory chromite (less than 42% grade) is primarily used for furnace lining bricks. While refractory chromite is important to the industrial process, it was even less economically viable to mine than metallurgical chromite.

Civil engineer and US Senator George Malone from Nevada, who served on the US Senate Natural Resources Committee and spent time in Alaska prior to World War Two as an engineering consultant on war materials, strongly supported the mine development at Red Mountain. Unfortunately, Karl Bachner was not able to move the needle on chromite prices. Ultimately, mining at Red Mountain was discontinued in 1958 after the GSA refused any more shipments of chrome concentrates from Alaska. Subsequently, the U.S. became even more dependent on chromite imports.

Karl returned to the construction industry. After George died in 1960, the rights to the Red Mountain deposits were transferred to Anaconda Copper, which continued to intermittently explore the area through the 1980s.

U.S. chromium needs continued to rise with the increasing military, automotive, and medical uses until the 1960s. At that time stainless steel recycling methods were developed and eased dependence somewhat on foreign imports. Limited chromite mining in Oregon and California also reduced dependence. In the early 1970s, Englehard purchased approximately 20,000 tons of Red Mountain chromite that had been stockpiled on the beach near Seldovia. This material represented the combined mining efforts of Union Carbide and Chemical Corp. during WW2, and the Kenai Chrome Co. during the 1950s.

In 1976, with international chromite prices on the rise, Englehard shipped the material to Japan. Mining, however, was not resumed.

Karl and his wife Carolyn settled in Anchorage in the early 1950s and raised three children, Dana, Denise, and Vicki. In the 1970s he became involved in real estate development. He was also a member of the Anchorage Elks Lodge, the American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. An avid horse racer, he proudly owned several winning racehorses, including 'Kobuk King' and 'Ahead Tiger'. Karl passed on September 21, 1990, at the age of 63.

By Denise Herzog-Cook; Reviewed by Tom Bundtzen



Sitka (Harrington) Centennial Hall, Sitka Alaska, designed and built by Bachner Northwest in 1967, is still considered one of the finest public buildings in Alaska.

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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).

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Karl and Nancy Hanneman	Foundation
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