



A Window to Our Past



Bill Garry, Earlene Reed, Louis Denny, Chris Degernes, Tom Crockett, and Jeff Johnson in 1983 at the Ninilchik Campground Dedication.

I was recently introduced to the Alaska State Parks Geensheet, the precursor of the Eagle Watch. Curiosity got the best of me, and I couldn't resist flipping through a few issues. I began to wonder, what was happening in State Parks this month 30 years ago?

April 1984: "Two Senate add-ons of interest: \$300,000 to take over operation of the Chena Lakes Recreation Area, a borough park near Fairbanks. We have this as an add-on in both houses now. Also, \$31,500 was tacked onto [the] budget to study the possibility of establishing public use cabins in the State Park System, similar to the Forest Service's program.

"Southeast District: ...The new boat launch at Old Sitka State Historical Park is receiving heavy use. Vandalism in Southeast units has been unusually heavy this spring. Benny Benson, a seasonal volunteer who worked for the Kenai District last summer, has reported to work in Haines.



Judy Chapman and Mike Goodwin



Neil Johannsen checks out the Old Sitka Boat Launch

"Chugach/Southwest Districts: ... On Monday, April 2, 1984, Rangers Dan Hourihan, Mike Goodwin, Tom Crockett, Jane Anderson, and Ed Barret responded to an avalanche accident that claimed one life and injured one other. The avalanche occurred on Eagle Peak, 4.5 miles up the valley from the Eagle River Visitor Center. ...

"Kodiak Area: Ranger Ed Apperson has contacted General B. B. Talley, one of the Army commanders during the Aleutian War and he agreed to be the guest of State Parks during Historical Preservation Week. General Talley will participate in programs, radio talk shows and give interviews. He will also be a guest speaker at the park visitor center ...

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Bill Evans and a group of ACCs

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“Kenai District: ... Deputy Director Skip Harding and some members of his staff were given a tour of Kachemak Bay State Park including facilities at Halibut Cove Lagoon. ... Search and rescue mission was conducted for a boat stranded off Deep Creek State Recreation Site.

“Northcentral District: ... Ranger John Zimmerli completed his first week of duty in Fairbanks as Chief Ranger after a two week training/orientation session in Anchorage and Soldotna.

“Mat-Su/Copper Basin Districts: ... The next Independence Mine Advisory Board will meet... on April 14, at the Independence Mine State Historical Park. This will be the first on-site orientation and inspection of the park facilities by the Board.

“Design and Construction: ... Mike Seidl is in Juneau monitoring the trail improvements on Perseverance Trail... Bill Evans accompanied Dale Bingham to Peter’s Creek Campground to develop Site Plan Concepts. ...

“History and Archaeology: Tim Smith, Deputy SHPO, and Paul Chattey, Architectural Historian, visited Dutch Harbor and Umnak Island to view remains of WW II installations. ... The hiring team for the OHA Chief position has been selected.

“Director’s Office: ... Neil Johannsen and Skip Harding met with Roger Contor, Regional Director of the National Park Service, to discuss a more coordinated effort on South Denali Development planning. ...”

I hope you enjoyed this snapshot of the past as much as I did!

- Niki Acevedo



Mike Seidl, in peak monitoring form.



Photo taken by Paul Chattey. It is entirely within the range of possibility and coincidence that Tim Smith is the person looking out of the observation slit. Location was Ulatka Head on Mount Ballyhoo above Dutch Harbor, this was one of the battery command observation posts in the harbor defenses.



Al Meiners, Neil Johannsen, and Tom Young



Photo taken by Judy Bittner. Paul Chattey was looking at the maker’s name plate on a WWII bomb cart they found by the side of the road leading to the airport. (Paul doesn’t recall who told them that it was used to move bombs from storage to waiting aircraft so he’s not positive that it really was a bomb cart.)



Chugach Corner

New Face in Chugach State Park

Teri Coeville has been hired to fill Chugach State Park's Office Assistant II position located at the Potter Section House. She is very knowledgeable about the park and she has been working in our office for the last nine months as an ACC employee. So, don't be surprised if you're already familiar with the sound of her voice.

Teri has an Associate's degree from UAA and has previously worked at Alaska Mill and Feed, Carrs, and Princess Cruise Line. She is also a former volunteer for Chugach SP. Please join us in officially welcoming Teri to the team.



Researchers from Belgium's Ghent University are taking sediment cores on Eklutna Lake to look for traces of unusually high magnitude and destructive power prehistoric earthquakes.



Park Specialist Blaine Smith and Resource Technician Ben Corwin take a well-deserved break from sanding the interior of one of the two new public-use cabins at Bird Creek Campground. Both have ready access to the Indian to Girdwood multi-use trail and are scheduled to open to the public in mid-May. If you get the chance, come check them out!

Northern News

- The second annual Tanana River Challenge Endurance Race was held at the Chena Pump Wayside. Fifty-seven teams raced a 50-mile course from Nenana to Fairbanks.
- Ice huts were pulled off the lakes in preparation for spring break up. Maintenance worker Doug Avara noted it was none too soon as there were puddles two-feet deep surrounding the huts.
- Bridge timbers are being hauled over the snow and placed across overflow at Mastodon Creek in Chena River SRA. The bridge is being constructed along the new Mastodon Trail.



Park Specialist Brian Charlton and ACC Mike Hitte cleared trails in Chena River SRA during March. Here, their snowmachines rest from clearing the South Fork Trail to Nugget Creek Public-Use Cabin, giving Brian and Mike a chance to take a few pictures.



Boy Scout Troop 78 followed in the footsteps of Troop 92 splitting and stacking firewood for use at the roadside public-use cabins in Chena River SRA. They also restocked the woodsheds at the three cabins. The cabin renters will surely appreciate the full woodsheds.



Rangers Ian Thomas and Dane Happ attended a Family Health and Safety Night event at Nordale Elementary School in Fairbanks. They taught the kids how to build a fire in an emergency and how to use matches and lighters safely and responsibly.



The boat channel at Quartz Lake SRA was dredged the first week of April. Close to 2,000 yards of sediment were removed, allowing boaters smooth access to the lake and saving them money on props and shear pins come summer.

OHA and SHPO Annual Workshop

The Alaska Office of History and Archaeology and the State Historic Preservation Office presented their annual workshop over the course of two days in March at the BP Energy Center. Approximately 65 people representing private industry, state and federal agencies, the military, Tribes, and municipal agencies attended. Topics included the elements of a quality National Register significance statement, case studies in Section 106 compliance, and an interdisciplinary panel discussion on the challenge of protecting Alaska's archaeological sites. Historical architects with the National Park Service gave a presentation on the latest technological advances in documenting buildings.



The event attracted a plethora of participants



Left to right: Bill Rafton, Bill Hedman, Steve Street, Rita Miraglia, Amy Steffian, Judy Bittner, and Richard VanderHoek.



Group sessions allowed for hands-on learning

Spring Cleaning



Mild spring conditions on the Kenai Peninsula have allowed park staff to start performing annual maintenance tasks. Dave Engholm uses a Bobcat to sweep the parking lot at the Cooper Landing boat launch and remove sand applied during the winter from access roads.

★ Extending Open Call for Poems in Place

Poems in Place, a unique collaboration between Alaska Center for the Book, Alaska State Parks, a steering committee of poets and writers, and residents of Alaska, will place a poem written by an Alaskan writer in each of the seven regions of the Alaska State Park's system in the coming years.

Poems in Place is now accepting poems for Independence Mine State Historical Park, near Palmer, and Lake Aleknagik State Recreation Site/Wood Tikchik State Park, near Dillingham until April 30.

Both original work and nominated poems written by Alaskan writers and submitted by appreciative readers will be accepted. There are no submission fees and an honorarium will be paid to the winning poets.

For more information, contest rules, and entry forms please visit Poems in Place at <http://www.alaskacenterforthebook.org>.

To see examples of current Poems in Place signs visit the Alaska State Parks website

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/poemplace.htm>.

