

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Nenana
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Alaskaland Park not for publication
city, town Fairbanks vicinity
state Alaska code AK county Fairbanks code 090 zip code _____

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		_____	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation-Water Related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SS Nenana is a five-deck (main or cargo, saloon, boat or hurricane, Texas, and pilothouse), western river, sternwheel steamboat. Two-hundred and thirty-seven feet in overall length, with a 42-foot beam, she was rated at 1,000 gross tons register. Nenana was built at Nenana, Alaska, and launched in May 1933. Fully laden, she drew three feet, six inches of water.

During Nenana's first year in operation, her 210-foot wooden hull was found to be too flexible. In the winter of 1934 the hull was strengthened. To lighten the stern, a smaller wheel shaft was installed and the 28-foot sternwheel rebuilt. Hydraulic steering gear was added at this time. [1]

Marine architect W.C. Nickum of Seattle designed the sternwheeler, which was prefabricated in Seattle and put together at Nenana, Alaska, by Berg Shipbuilding Company. Nenana was built to serve as a packet. She could carry both passengers and freight. Nenana had accommodations for 48 passengers on her saloon deck. Up to 300 tons of freight, including two tons in cold storage, could be carried on her main deck. A Texas, topped by a pilothouse mounted forward in poolboat style, provided staterooms for a portion of the crew of 32. Nenana could push five or six barges on the Yukon River; but, because of sharp bends, only one on the Tanana River.

The Washington Iron Works in Seattle built two horizontal compound, noncondensing steam engines and shipped them to Alaska for Nenana. Tandem, compound engines, each with a 28-inch diameter low pressure cylinder and a 17-inch high pressure cylinder and six-foot stroke, the engines could develop 600 horse-power each. McGintie & McDonald handled installation of the machinery and equipment. At first, powered by a wood-fired boiler, Nenana was converted to an oil-burner in 1948 when 8,700-capacity oil storage tanks were installed below her foredeck.

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SETTING

As she exists today, Nenana is in a protected setting which maintains a relationship to one of the Yukon tributaries on which she steamed, i.e., the Chena River. Nenana is permanently supported on a concrete and timber grid system placed on the bottom of a canal leading from, but not presently connected to, the Chena River. The canal was constructed ca. 1966, when it was decided to place Nenana as the center piece of an historical park celebrating the Alaska Purchase Centennial of 1967. The park is now known as Alaskaland. The canal is presently drained, but is to be refilled when restoration work on Nenana is completed. An automatic pump can fill the canal with river water to a level just below the boat's hull.

Nenana's bow points north and is approximately 350 feet from the Chena River. The end of the now-blocked canal in which the boat sits is approximately 150 feet from the river.

VIEWS

From Nenana's bow, an asphalted road, frame building, narrow gauge amusement park railroad, cyclone fence, and bike path screened with riverbank alder interrupt the main deck view of the river. Saloon deck, boat deck, Texas deck, and pilothouse deck views of the river are possible. From Nenana's starboard side, the view is of a number of small log and frame buildings relocated to Alaskaland from the Fairbanks riverfront. From Nenana's port side, the view is over a large asphalted open area to a convention center and over a wide asphalted trail to a grassy, treed area occupied by a childrens' play area and to a few more buildings relocated from the Fairbanks downtown waterfront. From Nenana's stern, the view is of a large asphalted area leading toward the Alaskaland entrance. Looking out from the bow or either side, Nenana gives the sense of being alongside a typical well-kept riverbank at a small Alaskan village.

The view of Nenana's bow is over the length of the canal. Nenana's port side is unobstructed except for a wooden rail fence that keeps visitors away from the canal bank. The view of Nenana's port side is obscured by a wood staircase required by

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local fire regulations which is placed on the canal bank just aft of the port cargo doors. Rising from the canal bank, the staircase joins Nenana on the saloon deck where it is temporarily attached to the vessel by a metal plate. The view of Nenana's stern is unobstructed except for the wooden fence mentioned above.

Exterior

Restoration work is currently underway on Nenana. A temporary roofing structure, erected in 1980, shelters her exposed decks. Vertical beams support the roofing and rest on hull grid supports below the hull. This grid system for supporting hulls out of the water has been in use for more than one hundred years in Alaska.

At present, exposed decks consist of original redwood planking that has been covered with plywood and painted with Hypalon, a paint-like roofing compound. This was applied ca. 1975, when the original painted deck canvas was removed. Restoration plans call for the redwood decking to be exposed, laid over with marine plywood, and re-covered with the original finish of painted canvas.

Other than decking, Nenana's exterior remains intact. A layer of white latex paint was applied to outside bulkheads ca. 1977, when the exterior was scraped and dry rot repaired. It is to be removed and replaced with non-latex paint.

Exterior fixtures also remain intact for the most part. With a few exceptions, original brass hardware remains on doors and windows. Although some exterior light fixtures have been added, some original light fixtures remain in place. A sprinkler system, required by local fire codes for public use of the vessel, is visible along exterior bulkheads but appears compatible with other piping. Original brass fire mains, auxillary hand fire pumps, cleats, and bitts remain in place.

The foredeck, lying between the main deckhouse and the stem, is currently being rehabilitated. The decking, extensively rotted, has been removed and is to be replaced with wood that is an exact match in size and nature to the original. Major features on the foredeck include towing bitts on either side of

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the stem; a stage or gangplank, which remains intact; a steam winch, which has been removed during rehabilitation and is to be reinstalled; vent pipes, originally placed just aft of the steam winch on either side of the deck but removed and to be reinstalled; a mast supporting three cargo booms. Two additional booms called spuds, used to lift the steamer's bow when grounded, are carried vertically port and starboard. The booms have been removed during rehabilitation and are to be reinstalled. Also on the foredeck just outside the forward bulkhead are water mains inboard of the starboard forward cargo door and a hand-operated auxillary pump inboard of the port forward cargo door. A pipe and wire guard rail protects the deck edge from the stem to the forward bulkhead.

Narrow guards, without guard rails, run aft outside the main deckhouse to the stern, ending at the monkey rudders. The sternwheel is seated between the two monkey rudders and the four main rudders mounted at the end of the hull. On port and starboard guards, two cleats are located forward of the midship cargo doors and three cleats are located aft of the midship cargo doors. Six wooden bumpers, shown in 1944 and 1949 photographs, were placed port and starboard outside the guards. These were apparently removed at some point and not replaced.

Enclosed exterior stairs, port and starboard, lead to the saloon deck. Aft, interior stairs lead from the starboard side of the engineroom to the saloon deck, coming out in an enclosed stairwell just behind the after bulkhead of the saloon deckhouse. The exterior saloon deck runs port and starboard from the bow to the stern, where it is terminates at the sternwheel splashboard. Although the space between the stairwell and the splashboard is shown covered with a roof in a 1944 photo, it is shown uncovered in 1949 photo and is presently uncovered. Wooden guard rails supported by pipes connected with wire fencing enclose the exterior saloon deck.

Access to the boat deck forward is by way of port and starboard, exterior unenclosed stairs. Four hog posts, two port and two starboard, pierce the boat deck aft. Port and starboard davits on the boatdeck outboard of the after bulkhead of the Texas held lifeboats, which have been removed during rehabilitation work. Photographs made in 1944 and 1957 show a stove pipe rising from

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the saloon deck on the port side at approximately frame 61. It had been removed by the time Nenana was being prepared for relocation to Alaskaland in 1965.

Access to the Texas deck is by short, fore and aft, port and starboard stairs from the boatdeck. It sits atop the skylights of the saloon deckhouse and is elevated from the boat deck only by the height of those skylights. Although a 1939 photograph shows the forward bulkhead of the Texas to be squared off, by 1949 it had been changed to the rounded configuration which exists today. The Texas deck is pierced by a kitchen stove pipe just forward of the after end of the deck. This was not shown in photographs up to 1965, when the boat was placed at her present location. A few feet forward of the present stove pipe is a cast iron atmosphere exhaust, which is shown in a 1944 photograph. Between the exhaust and the base of the pilothouse are three ventilation hatches that have been adapted to hold blower fans.

Between the forward-most hatch and the base of the pilothouse, the Texas deck is pierced by the center or king post that is the central feature of the boat's "hogging" or bracing system of posts, trusses, and turnbuckles. This hogging system is necessary on western river steamboats to strengthen the lightly built hull. It provides a strengthening girder to the entire hull structure. [2]

Access to the pilothouse deck, provided by the Texas roof, is by portside exterior unenclosed stairs. A 1944 photograph shows that there was once also a set of starboard stairs. The pilothouse deck is currently enclosed by a pipe and wire fence, although this is not shown in the 1944 photograph. The deck is pierced by the main stack, which rises behind the pilothouse. Unenclosed stairs rise from the port side of the pilothouse deck to a door at the back of the pilothouse.

A searchlight shown in a 1944 photograph is no longer atop the pilothouse. The ship's bell, once mounted on the outside of the forward bulkhead of the pilothouse has been removed. It is reported to be in a bar in Anchorage. The ship's whistle, once mounted on the forward part of the main stack above pilothouse level, has also been removed. It is reported to be somewhere in Fairbanks. Staffs rising from the forward mast, kingpost, and

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from the saloon deck just forward of the splashboard are shown in photographs taken prior to 1957. They are not present at this time.

Interior

Interior spaces include the hold, main deckhouse, saloon deckhouse, Texas deckhouse or Texas, and pilothouse.

Access to the hold is by hatches on the foredeck and in the engineroom. The hold, 42' by 210', is interrupted only by partial bulkheads from stem to stern. Frames numbered 0 (at the stern) to 155 (at the bow) brace the hull as do a number of horizontal and vertical beams. Supports for the steam winch are found in the hold at frame 150. Between frames 146 and 150 were the oil tanks, now removed, installed in 1948. In this area the hull timbers are blackened from oil spillage. A partial bulkhead is in place at frame 146. The forward mast rises over frames 132 and 133. Between frames 117 and 124 are the remains of the bed for the boiler and firebox which were removed, ca. 1965. Another partial bulkhead is in place at frame 100. The king post rises over frames 77 and 78. Between frames 0 and 36 are the hot well, lower portions of shifting and reversing levers, and rudder stock connections.

The main deckhouse, 37' by 130' 6", runs from frame 0 to frame 133. Vertical clearance ranges from 8' to 10' 3". Access to the main deckhouse from the foredeck is by port and starboard cargo doors or amidships by port and starboard cargo doors. As originally configured, the main deckhouse housed a multi-flue boiler (built at the Washington Iron Works in Seattle in 1932) forward between frames 100 to 120; a crew mess, galley, and bakery just aft of the midships cargo door on the port side; and a filtering plant and walk-in refrigerator just aft of the midships door on the starboard side. A full bulkhead at frame 32 closed off engineroom spaces (from frames 18 to 32), crew quarters in an inner cabin (from frames 4 to 16), and crew toilet (from frames 0 to 4).

The boiler and the main steam line which ran overhead to the engineroom were cut and removed in 1965. The hole in the decking through which the boiler rose from the bilges was decked over. The steel beams and trusses surrounding the boiler were sheathed with 1 x 6" boards.

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At the time the boiler was taken out, the crew mess, galley, and bakery, filtering plant, and walk-in refrigerator were removed to create more usable space in the main deckhouse. No permanent modifications have replaced these features, although the space formerly occupied by the boiler is being used as a workshop during rehabilitation and the space aft to the engineroom is being used for temporary exhibits. Some additional lighting fixtures and overhead ducting for heating spaces on the saloon deck have been added. These are to be removed during the current restoration.

Access to the engineroom is by port and starboard interior doors leading from the forward main deckhouse, port and starboard, exterior doors leading from the guards, and by interior stairs leading from the after saloon deck. The engineroom is substantially intact. The stub end of the main steam line is still overhead. Pumps, feedwater tanks, condensers, throttle, engineroom telegraph, and port and starboard engines remain in place. The engines were disconnected from the sternwheel, ca. 1975, to permit an electric motor to turn the wheel, but can easily be reconnected. Some engineroom gauges have been removed, but a few remain.

Unlike the engineroom, the after crew quarters and toilet are not substantially intact. They were apparently gutted at some point after 1965 to provide storage room.

The saloon deck, 28' 6" x 130' 6", runs from frame 6 to frame 127. Vertical clearances range from 7' 5" to 9'. As originally configured, the saloon deckhouse was divided into an observation room (frames 101 to 127), a dining saloon (frames 29 to 100), and a smoking room (frames 6 to 8). Photographs taken in 1957 show the observation room and dining saloon with simple furniture. The dining saloon's unadorned walls were relieved by a series of overhead arches located at the junctions of skylights. Steam radiators were located on the bulkheads at the ends and in the middle of the dining saloon. A series of seven or eight globe lights ran along the center of the overhead. At the forward end of the dining saloon was a partial bulkhead in front of which stood a small bar or sideboard. Aft, another partial bulkhead screened the passageway leading to the smoking room. A pantry, located portside aft, opened into the dining saloon. The pantry reportedly was served by a dumbwaiter which ascended from the galley on the main deck. On the portside, outboard of the dining saloon, a ladies room occupied the first compartment and a men's room occupied the last compartment; between was a series of small staterooms. On the starboard side, the purser's office headed the line of staterooms.

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men's room occupied the last compartment; between was a series of small staterooms. On the starboard side, the purser's office headed the line of staterooms.

The saloon deckhouse was substantially altered, ca. 1965, as Nenana was prepared to be a feature attraction at the Alaska Purchase Centennial of 1967. A bar and dance floor were installed in the observation room. Bulkheads between staterooms and those between the end staterooms and the dining saloon were removed, as were stateroom fixtures. The smoking room was converted into a kitchen. In 1978, this alteration was amended, with restrooms being installed in space taken from the port side of the kitchen area.

The Texas, 14' 6" x 50", runs from frame 79 to frame 122. Vertical clearance is seven feet. As originally configured, the Texas was divided into eight staterooms for deck and engineer officers. Reversing the traditional placing on other western rivers, the captain's cabin was to port and pilot's cabin to starboard forward. A watercloset and bath were located at the center of the Texas. The 1965 alterations included gutting the Texas. A large meeting room was created forward, with a service kitchen aft served by a dumbwaiter served by the newly installed bar below.

The pilothouse, 11' x 12', runs from frame 104 to frame 115. Vertical clearance is seven feet. As originally configured, the pilothouse included a large pilot's chair placed on a two-drawer base in the after starboard corner, engineroom telegraph, steering lever for the hydraulic system installed in 1934, and pilot wheel. A large brass radiator was mounted on the forward bulkheads. The pilot's chair, steering lever, and engineroom telegraph are no longer in place. The chair base, steering lever column, pilot wheel, and radiator remain.

Summary

SS Nenana is located in an appropriate setting. Approximately 70 to 90 percent of the original fabric remains. From the exterior, the boat appears much as she did during her operating life. Although the interior, particularly the forward main deckhouse, saloon deckhouse, and Texas deckhouse, has been substantially altered, important features such as the engineroom remain intact.

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NOTES

1
William S. Hanable, "Inspection Report, SS Nenana, Alaskaland, Fairbanks, Alaska, June 28, 1988." Copy in National Historic Landmark files, History division, National Park Service. The majority of this section is based on this report.

2
Alan Bates, The Western Rivers Steamboat Cyclopedium, (Leonia, New Jersey: Hustle Press, 1968) pp. 1-40.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

NHL CRITERIA 1,4

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture (Naval)
Maritime History

Period of Significance

1933-1955
1933-1955

Significant Dates

1933

NHL XII-L: Business: Shipping and
Transportation

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Seattle Shipbuilding Co.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The exploration, settlement, and growth of America has been intimately concerned with the waterways which opened this vast continent to Europeans. Transportation by water was the first means employed as new lands were settled. In the territory of Alaska, just as in other territories settled earlier, rivers offered a route to the interior long before roads could be built.

The preceding statement of significance is based on the more detailed discussion which follows.

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STEAMBOATS ON WESTERN RIVERS

The first successful steamboats were built to navigate on the rivers of America. Starting with Robert Fulton's historic trip up the Hudson River in 1807, steamboats provided convenient, inexpensive transportation and ultimately opened up the continent to settlement.

The early steamboats on eastern rivers were powered versions of canal boat hulls. New Orleans, the first steamboat on the Mississippi, also employed the long, narrow, deep hull of early eastern steamboats but the shallow Mississippi required a different sort of boat. [1]

Several design problems had to be solved before steamboats could operate successfully on shallow western rivers. Primarily, the hull and machinery had to be made as light as possible. A lightweight powerplant first appeared in 1813 on a small boat named Comet which employed a high-pressure engine. The powerplant was further refined in 1816 when Henry Shreve built a horizontal, high-pressure, direct-acting steam engine and placed the boilers on deck to distribute machinery weights evenly on the hull. The final requirement, a broad, shallow-draft hull, developed over time. All of the essential elements that made up the western river steamboat as a type were present by 1825. Broad, shallow-draft vessels with boiler and engines on deck, side or sternwheels for propulsion, and cabins built on lightweight decks above the freight and machinery-laden main deck soon appeared on nearly every tributary of the Mississippi. The ease and economy of this service caused the value of goods reaching New Orleans to double every ten years from 1820 to 1860. [2]

The first steamboat on the west coast was the sidewheeler Beaver, which navigated the Columbia River in 1835. Western river type steamboats spread to California with the gold rush in 1849 to carry fortuneseekers and supplies up the Sacramento River to the goldfields. Steamboats spread over the west coast and by the 1850s and 1860s could be found in every major river.

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STEAMBOATS IN ALASKA

Steamboat operation in Alaska began in 1862 when Flying Dutchman began service to fur traders on the Stikine river. [3] More boats followed on other rivers in later years to supply trading posts and carry passengers. Alaskan steamboats and navigation practices differed little from western river boats and many men from the Mississippi, Missouri, and Columbia Rivers came to work in the new frontier. The first steamboat on the largest river in Alaska, Yukon, began operation there in 1869. Several companies operated steamers on the Yukon after Yukon showed the way.

The river steamers are of stern-wheel type, many years' experience having demonstrated the superiority of vessels of this class for overcoming the difficulties of swift currents, shallow water and shifting sand bars. Necessarily they are of varied size and structure to meet the variety of conditions encountered... [4]

The Klondike goldrush in 1897 created an enormous need for river steamboat service in Alaska and a number of new private steamboat lines were soon in operation on the Yukon River to supply the goldfields. By 1898, 30 steamboat companies had been formed and 60 new boats and barges operated on the Yukon river. Steamboats were the sole source of supply to isolated mining and trading communities in the interior and though the boom slowly died off, steamboats continued to run in numbers on the Yukon. As in the rest of the nation, new highways and railroads slowly strangled river transportation. When steamboat lines abandoned unprofitable routes the government-owned Alaska Railroad, run by the Interior Department, was forced to maintain minimal services. [5]

In May 1923, the Interior Department, authorized by an act of Congress, established a steamboat freight, passenger and mail service for the Yukon. Run by the Alaska Railroad, a 642-mile route was established to run between Nenana and Holy Cross and extended in 1925 an additional 132 miles to Marshall. The Army Corps of Engineers, which also built and employed steamboats to maintain the rivers and supply Army installations, transferred two steamboats, Gen. J. W. Jacobs and Gen. Jeff C. Davis to the Alaska Railroad to perform this service. [6] In 1927 the railroad bought and refurbished the Canadian steamboat Alice to augment

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the two aging boats aquired from the Army. Though these boats lost money every year, economic conditions prevented a rate hike. Service had to be maintained to allow continued growth in the strategically important interior. To cut operating costs the railroad contracted for a single large boat to replace Gen. J. W. Jacobs and Gen. Jeff C. Davis. [7]

NENANA AS BUILT AND MODIFIED

The boat the Alaska railroad contracted for was traditional and conservative, though larger than any previous Yukon River steamer. The design called for the new boat to be a steamer rather than a diesel or diesel-electric boat which might have unknown problems in the harsh conditions of the Yukon. The new boat was built by the Seattle shipbuilding company at Nenana and named Nenana at her launch in 1933. [8]

The steam engines fitted to Nenana were the most efficient type that could be applied to a sternwheeler. They were compound engines which expanded steam twice to extract more work from a given amount of steam. Unlike most western rivers steamboats Nenana was built to use a condenser. This, like the compounded engines, made the powerplant more efficient and had the added advantage of quiet operation.

Nenana could carry up to 100 tons of cargo on her maindeck. The boat was licensed to carry 16 passengers, but as government travellers did not count against this total, a total of 52 passengers could be carried in spacious staterooms equipped with hot and cold running water and electricity. Airplanes began to take most of the passengers after the First World War and tourists were sought from beyond the local region to augment low passenger revenues. The American Express Travel Department organized tours that included a riverboat excursion. Tours were offered every year until 1941. Passenger views of this passage varied considerably. One described steaming on the shallow Tanana River with a crewman sounding out the water depths:

When they were sounding, as they often did on the Tanana, with a soft guitar melody for a background, the whole scene took on a sort of timelessness, and I felt content to sit for hours just watching. [9]

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Another passenger saw the trip as:

...hundreds of miles of insipid Yukon River flats where scraggly spruce trees provide the scenery and mosquitos supplied the principal diversion. No wonder that tourists who came down river from Dawson were ... ready to fight at the least provocation. [10]

Like other western rivers packets, Nenana often pushed or "towed" up to six barges. Turbulent conditions and sharp bends in the Tenana River on part of her route limited Nenana to a single barge on that section of her route. River steamboats were designed to flex rather than remain rigid when meeting rough water but Nenana was found to be too flexible and was strengthened after her first season. The hull strengthening members were augmented and weight at the stern decreased by fitting a lighter paddlewheel shaft. [11]

The new wood-burning sternwheel-propelled steamboat was expected to retire the older steamboats but Nenana's cargo capacity promoted a growth in cargo revenues that kept the older boats running.

Nenana made a 1600 mile round trip to Marshall every two weeks from the middle of May to October 1 except for occasional trips beyond the Arctic circle to Fort Yukon. The rest of the year was spent on specially constructed grids high on riverbanks free of damaging ice floes. [12]

World War II brought a military buildup in Alaska and kept Nenana busy. Nenana supplied Galena Air Base from which fighter aircraft were supplied to the Soviet Union as well as transported supplies to a number of military establishments in the advance defense system in Alaska. After the war ended, the decline in passenger revenues that had been arrested by the war continued. Alaska Railroad suspended all river passenger services after the 1949 season. At the close of the 1952 navigation season, Nenana was reconditioned at Whitehorse at a cost of \$164,409.20. She only made one more trip north for the Alaska Railroad before being laid up until a newly formed company, Yutana Barge Lines, leased the entire Alaska Railroad fleet in 1954. Yutana Barge Lines operated Nenana to haul freight on rivers for one season but discontinued her lease at that time as unprofitable. [13]

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The General Services Administration called for bids on Nenana December 10, 1955. All bids were rejected as too low until a group associated with the Chamber of Commerce formed to bring Nenana to Fairbanks. This group, Greater Fairbanks Opportunities, Inc., purchased the steamboat, steamed her up the Tanana and Chena rivers to Fairbanks and opened her as a museum ship in 1957. For a time during a severe shortage of rooms, Nenana also operated as a hotel.

Weather, neglect, and souvenir hunters damaged Nenana at her berth on the river, and to protect, preserve, and interpret her, the vessel was moved to a permanent protected dry berth in 1965. Nenana became the centerpiece of "Alaskaland," a historical park in Fairbanks. An extensive restoration program was begun to return her to her former glory. The latest phase of this work has rebuilt the bow and renewed Nenana's decks. [14]

Nenana, the only United States steamboat preserved in Alaska and one of only five surviving western river steamboats, is now a potent symbol and remnant of America's maritime past.

NOTES

- 1
Jean Baptiste Marestier, Memoir on Steamboats of the United States of America, (Mystic, Connecticut: The Marine Historical Association, Inc. 1957), pp. 1-19, 54-57.
- 2
John H. Morrison, History of American Steam Navigation (New York: Stephen Daye Press, 1958), pp. 207-209.
- 3
K. Jack Bauer, A Maritime History of the United States, The Role of America's seas and waterways Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), pp.158-170.
- 4
Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, Alaska's Heritage (Fairbanks, Alaska: The Alaska Historical Commission, 1985), pp. 336.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

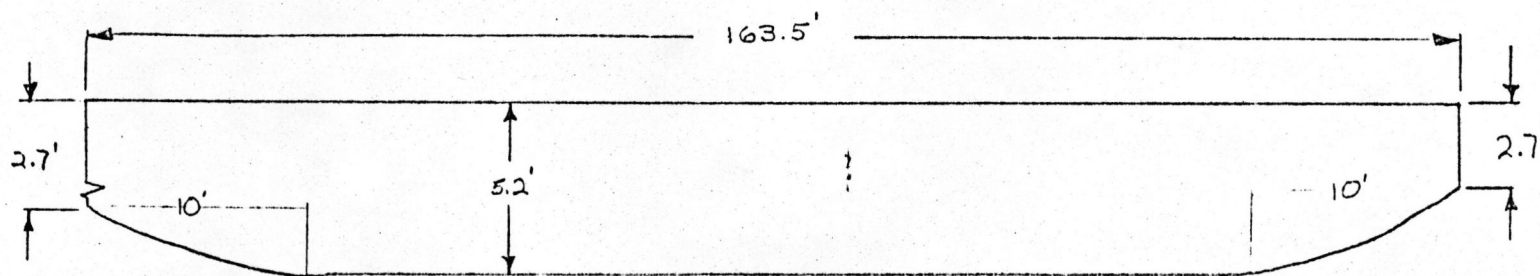
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

- 5
Melody Webb, "Steamboats on the Yukon River," The Alaska Journal
(Vol. 15, No.3, Summer 1985), pp. 21-22.
- 6
Ibid, pp. 25-26.
- 7
"Justification of River Transportation Operated by The Alaska
Railroad on Yukon River and Tributaries" (Anchorage, Alaska,
January 8, 1948), p. 1.
- 8
William H. William, Railroad in the Clouds: The Alaska Railroad
in the Age of Steam, 1914-1945 (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett
Publishing Company, N.D.), p. 237.
- 9
Ruth E. Anderson, "Sternwheelers on the Big River," Alaska
Sportsman (January, 1948), p. 31.
- 10
Columbia-Sentinel Engineers, "Final Report Sternwheeler Nenana
Restoration Project (Phase IV), Historical Research," (Seattle,
Washington), p. 11.
- 11
William S. Hanable, "Yukon Steamboat," S & D Reflector
(Marrietta, Ohio, Vol. 8, No. 4, December, 1971), p. 35.
- 12
Melody Webb, "Steamboats on the Yukon," p. 28.
- 13
"Justification of River Transport," p. 1.
- 14
Barry C. Anderson, Lifeline to the Yukon: A History of Yukon
River Navigation, (Superior, Wisconsin: Superior Publishing
Company, 1982), p. 98. Columbia-Sentinel Engineers, "Final
Report," pp. 19-21.

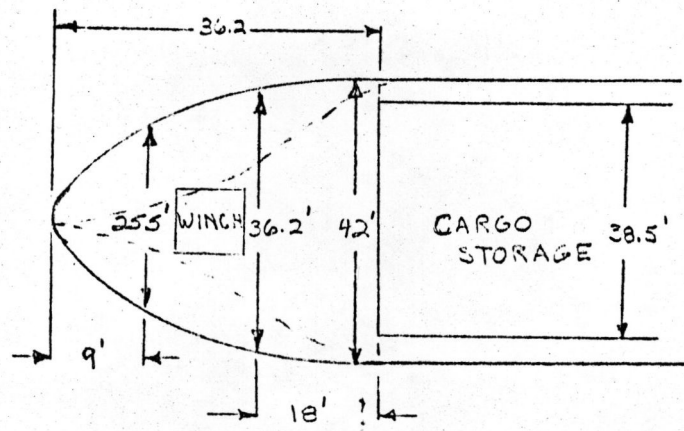
NENANA, STERNWHEELER



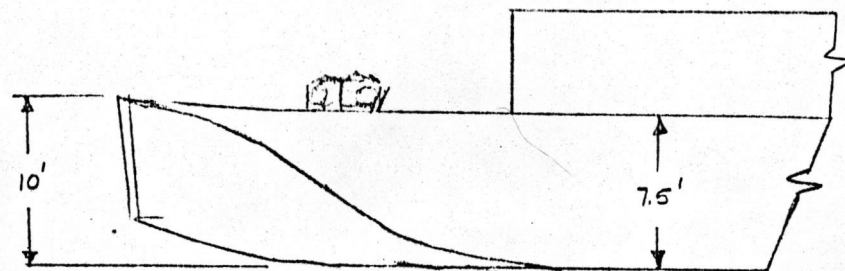
PORT SIDE VIEW

PLATE I - HULL

NENANA, STERNWHEELER



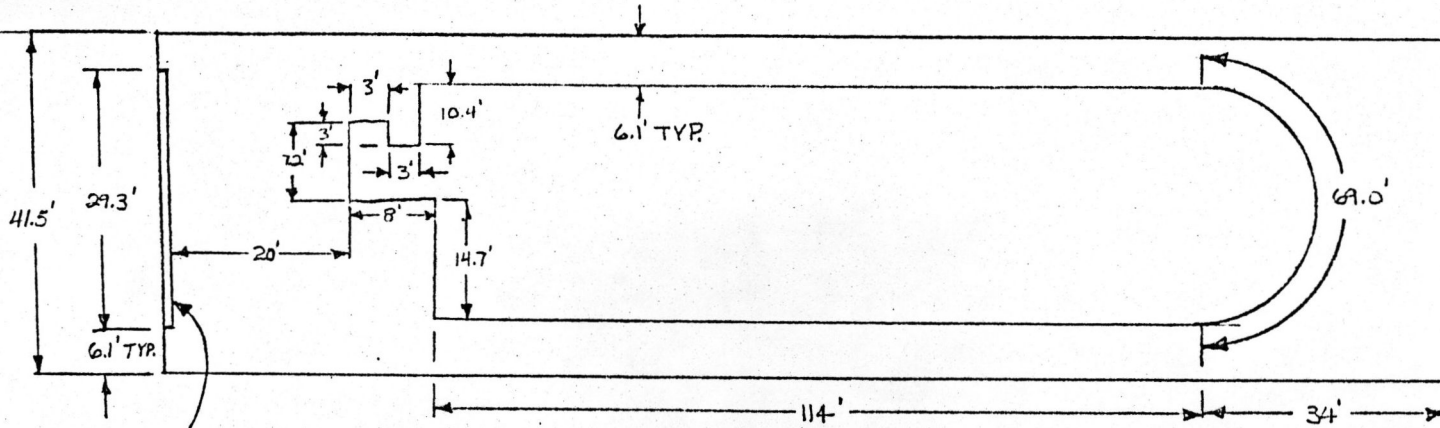
TOP VIEW



PORT SIDE VIEW

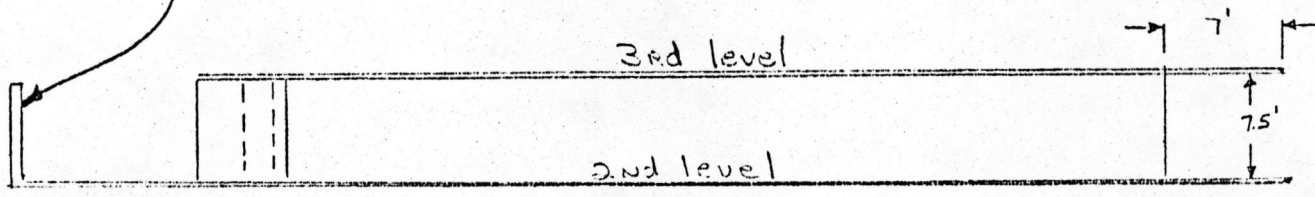
PLATE II - BOW

NENANA, STERNWHEELER

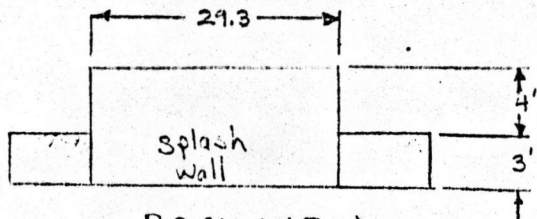


TOP VIEW

Splash wall



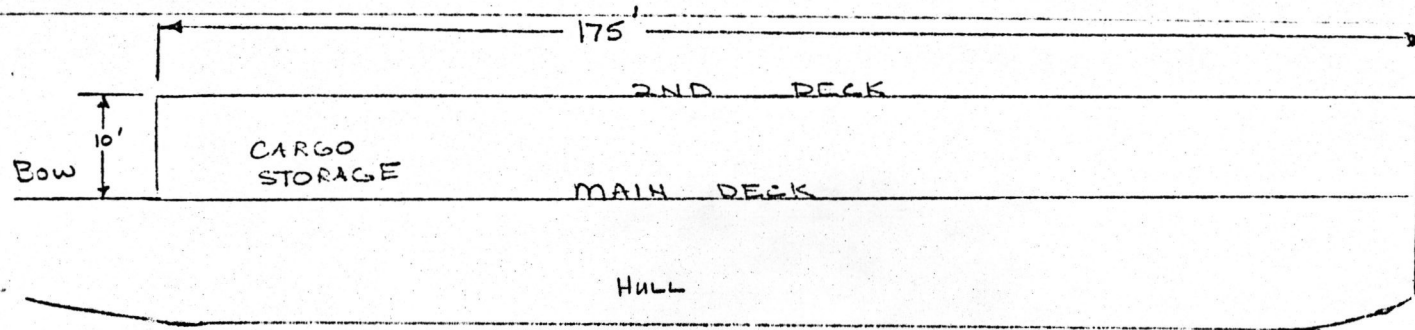
Starboard Side View



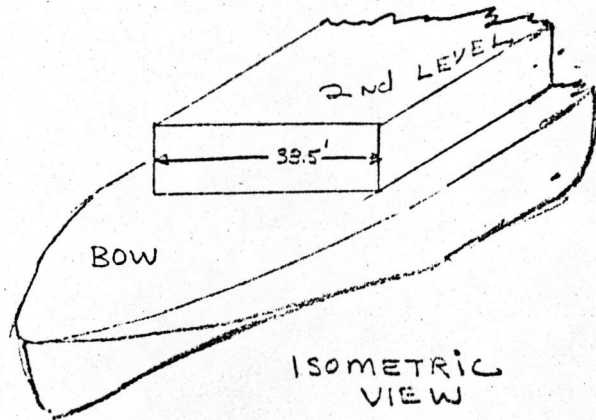
BACK VIEW OF SPLASH WALL

PLATE IV - 2nd level

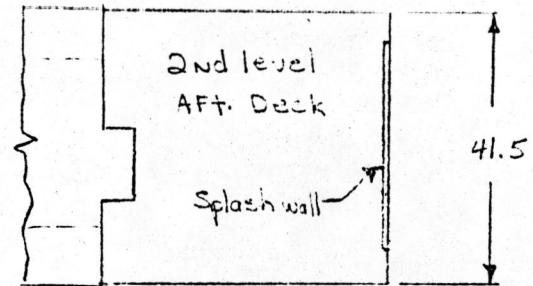
NENANA, STERNWHEELER



PORT SIDE VIEW



ISOMETRIC VIEW



TOP VIEW

PLATE III - 2nd level with AFT. DECK

NENANA, STERNWHEELER

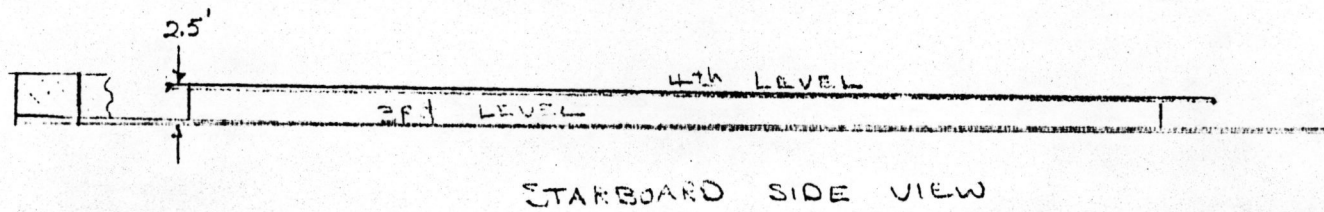
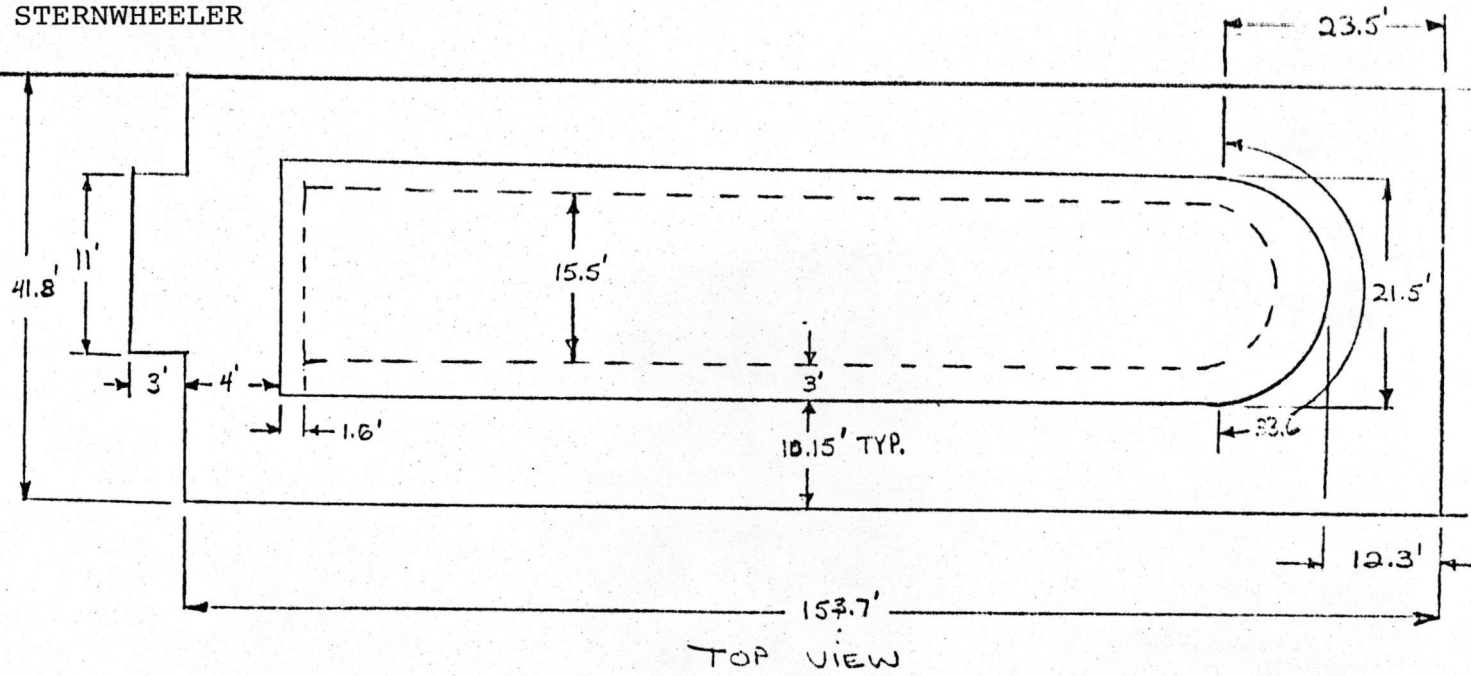


PLATE II - 3rd LEVEL

NENANA, STERNWHEELER

4th LEVEL

5th LEVEL

7'

3'

STARBOARD SIDE VIEW

4th LEVEL

5th LEVEL

3'

15.5'

24'

50.8'

TOP VIEW

5th LEVEL

13'

Pilot House

12'

Top VIEW

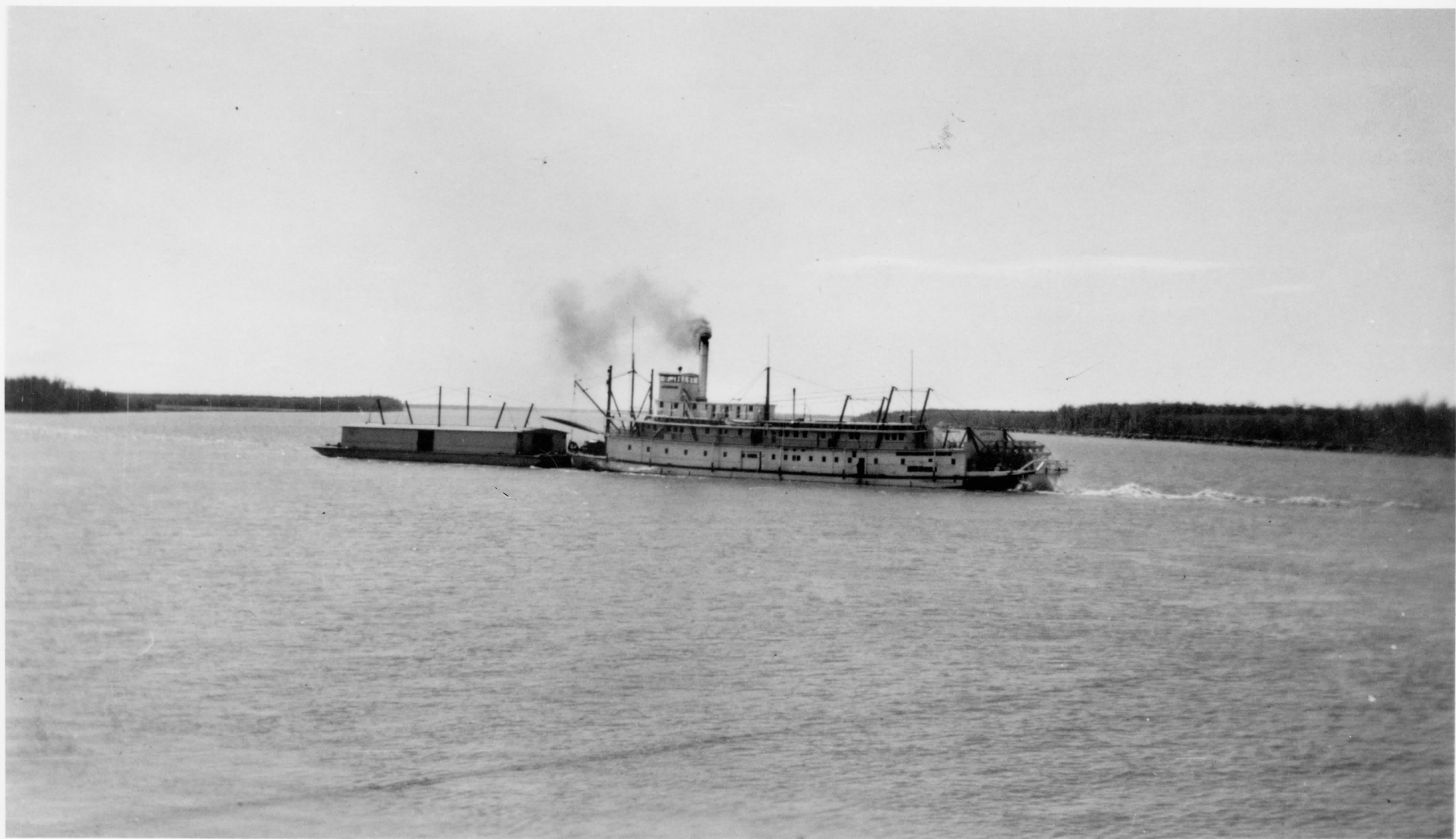
5th LEVEL

Pilot House

12.5'

STARBOARD SIDE VIEW

PLATE VI - 4th & 5th LEVEL with Pilot House



NENANA ON THE KUSKO RIVER

NOT TO BE DUPLICATED WITHOUT PERMISSION

Please Credit: B65.18.386

THE ANCHORAGE MUSEUM of History and Art

121 West Seventh Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

(907) 264-4326

All rights reserved.

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska
Historical Photograph, the Anchorage
Museum of History and Art, Anchorage, AK
City of Fairbanks
Nenana on the Kosko River, circa 1945
Photo #1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRS FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN	___ VICINITY OF	STATE	COUNTY
Fairbanks		Alaska	Fairbanks Division

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT	DATE OF PHOTO
William Hanable	
NEGATIVE FILED AT Alaska Division of Parks	March, 1975
323 E. 4th Ave., Anchorage, Alaska 99501	

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO.

Starboard view of Sternwheeler at Alaskaland

1



NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska
Photograph provided by Alaska Department
of Natural Resources, Anchorage
City of Fairbanks
Nenana's sternwheel, Alaskaland, 1976.
Photo #2

FAI-005

S.S. NENANA

Fairbanks, AK

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska
Photograph provided by Alaska Department
of Natural Resources, Anchorage
City of Fairbanks
Nenana's sternwheel, Alaskaland, 1976.
Photo #2

Alaskaland, a centennial Park
in Fairbanks is where this
230 foot Sternwheel packet is
now located. Now a restaurant/
theater lounge. This was the last
sternboat to offer passenger ^{se-}_{vict.}

Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Outdoor
Recreation
Pouch 7001
Anchorage, AK 99510

1976



Str. Nenana, Alaskaland, Fairbanks

1971

02 nenana. eps

bow - looking south

Alaska Division of Parks

Anchorage, Alaska

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

Photograph provided by Alaska Division of
Parks, Anchorage, AK.

City of Fairbanks

Bow view of Nenana at Alaskaland, 1971.

Photo #3

* 02 nenana. eps

(A2)



STR. NENANA

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

BOW, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

JUNE 28, 1988

NPS (ARD)

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska
National Park Service Photograph by
William S. Hanable, 1988
City of Fairbanks
Port bow quarter view showing restoration
work in progress, June 28, 1988.
Photo #4



RIVERBOAT NENANA

THE QUEEN OF THE RIVER

BUILT 1913

RETIRED 1964

LENGTH 221'

DRIVES BY 1000

HP

STR. NENANA

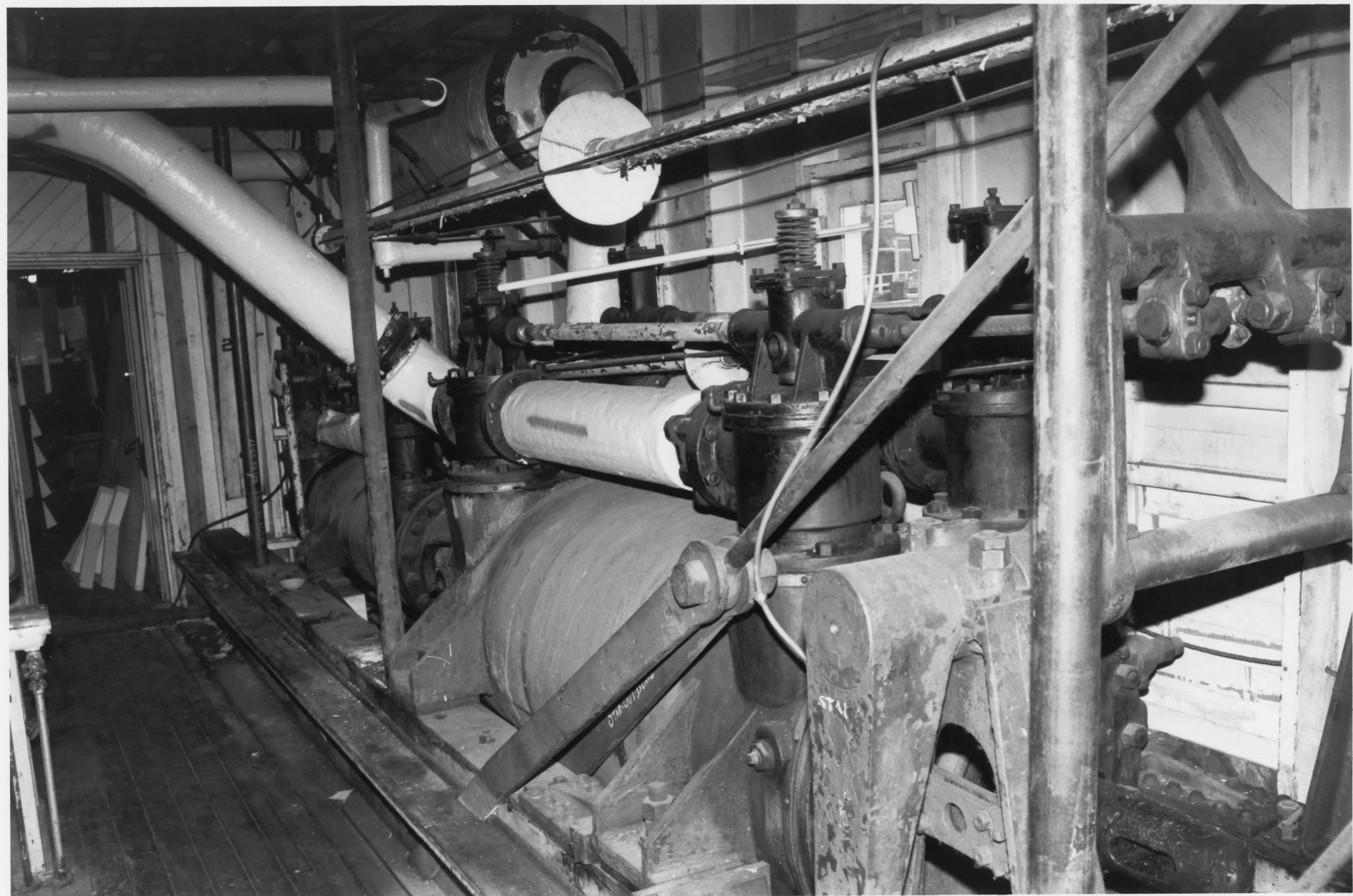
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

STERN, STARBOARD SIDE LOOKING FORWARD (NORTH)

JUNE 28, 1988

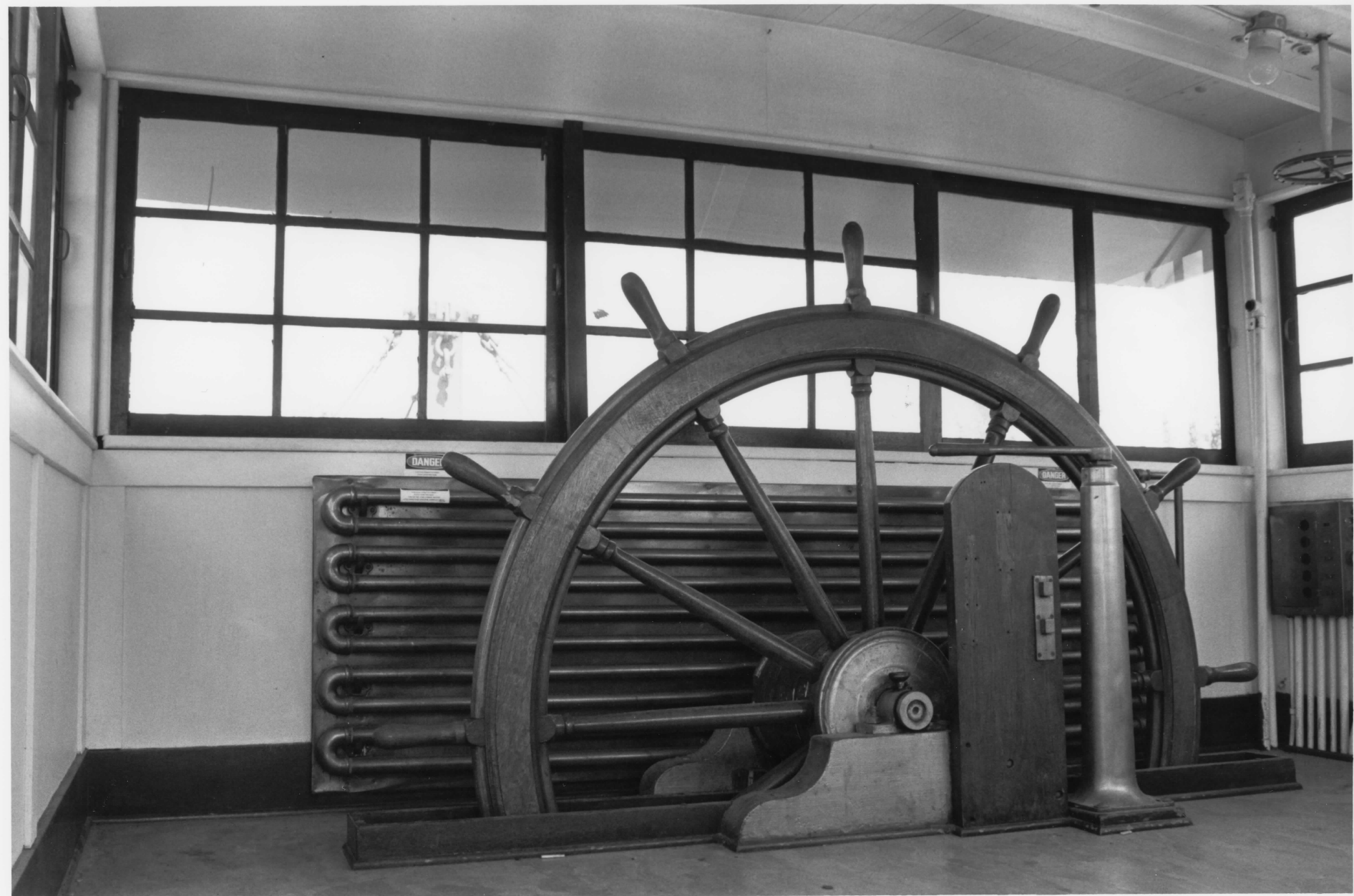
NPS (ARO)

Nenana, Fairbanks, Alaska
National Park Service Photograph by
William S. Hanable, 1988
City Of Fairbanks
Starboard stern quarter view showing
restoration work in progress, June 28, 1988.
Photo # 5



STR. NENANA
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA
STARBOARD ENGINE LOOKING FORWARD
JUNE 28, 1988
NPS (ARD)

Nenana, Fairbanks, Alaska
National Park Service photograph by
William S. Hanable, 1988
City Of Fairbanks
Starboard compound steam engine looking
forward from stern, June 28, 1988.
Photo # 6



STR. NENANA
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

PILOTHOUSE INTERIOR LOOKING FORWARD

JUNE 28, 1988

NPS (ARO)

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska
National Park Service Photograph by
William S. Hanable, 1988.
City of Fairbanks
Pilothouse interior, looking forward,
June 28, 1988,
Photo # 7

AMT 3400

58

FA AREA

9-24-68

2-5



UAg 2
533
151.8

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRS FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska

COUNTY

Fairbanks Division

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Bureau of Land Management

DATE OF PHOTO

24 September 1968

NEGATIVE FILED AT 555 Cordova, Anchorage, Alaska 99501

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Aerial view in stereo pair of the City of Fairbanks, AMT 3400

PHOTO NO.

2-4

2-5

Missing Core Documentation

Property Name	County, State	Reference Number
NENANA (River Steamboat)	Fairbanks, AK	72001581

The following Core Documentation is missing from this entry:

Nomination Form

Photographs (# "2-4")

USGS Map

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRS FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

___ VICINITY OF

Fairbanks Division

COUNTY

STATE

Alaska

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE U.S. Geological Survey, Fairbanks Quadrangle, D-2 SW

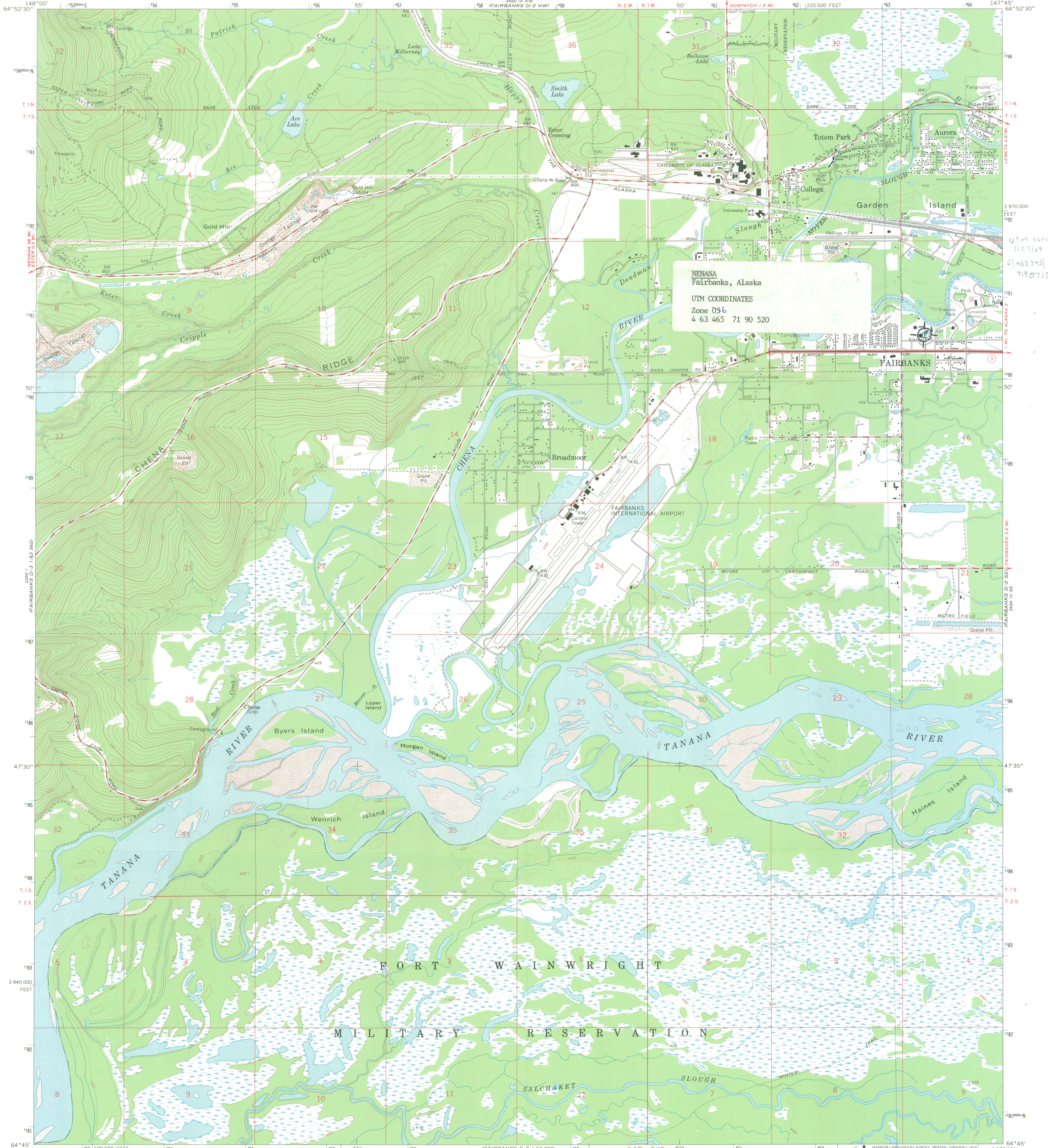
SCALE 1:24,000

DATE 1966

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

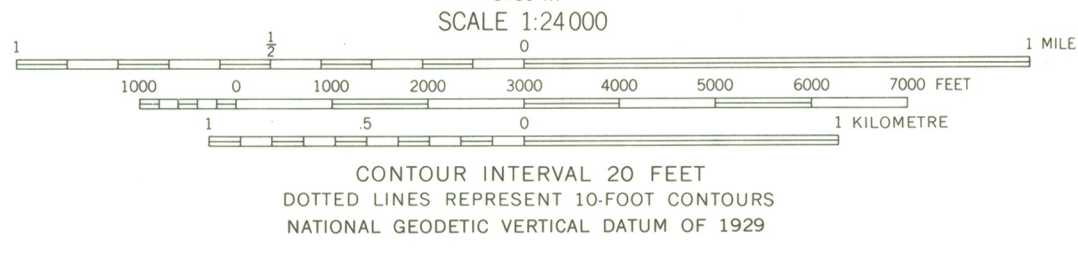
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



NENANA
Fairbanks, Alaska
UTM COORDINATES
Zone 036
4 63 465 71 90 520

UTM correction
312709
61463343
7190715

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966
Universal Transverse Mercator Projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Alaska coordinate system, zone 3
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 6, shown in blue
Gray land lines represent unsurveyed and unmarked locations predetermined by the Bureau of Land Management
Folios F-6 and F-10, Fairbanks Meridian
Swamps, as portrayed, indicate only the wetter areas, usually of low relief, as interpreted from aerial photographs



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
State Route	

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

FAIRBANKS D-2 SW, ALASKA
N6445—W14745/7.5 X 15

1966
AMS 3450 IV SW—SERIES Q801

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

NENANA Sternwheeler (AHR Site No. FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Fairbanks
Division

STATE

Alaska

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE Alaska Division of Lands, 323 East 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

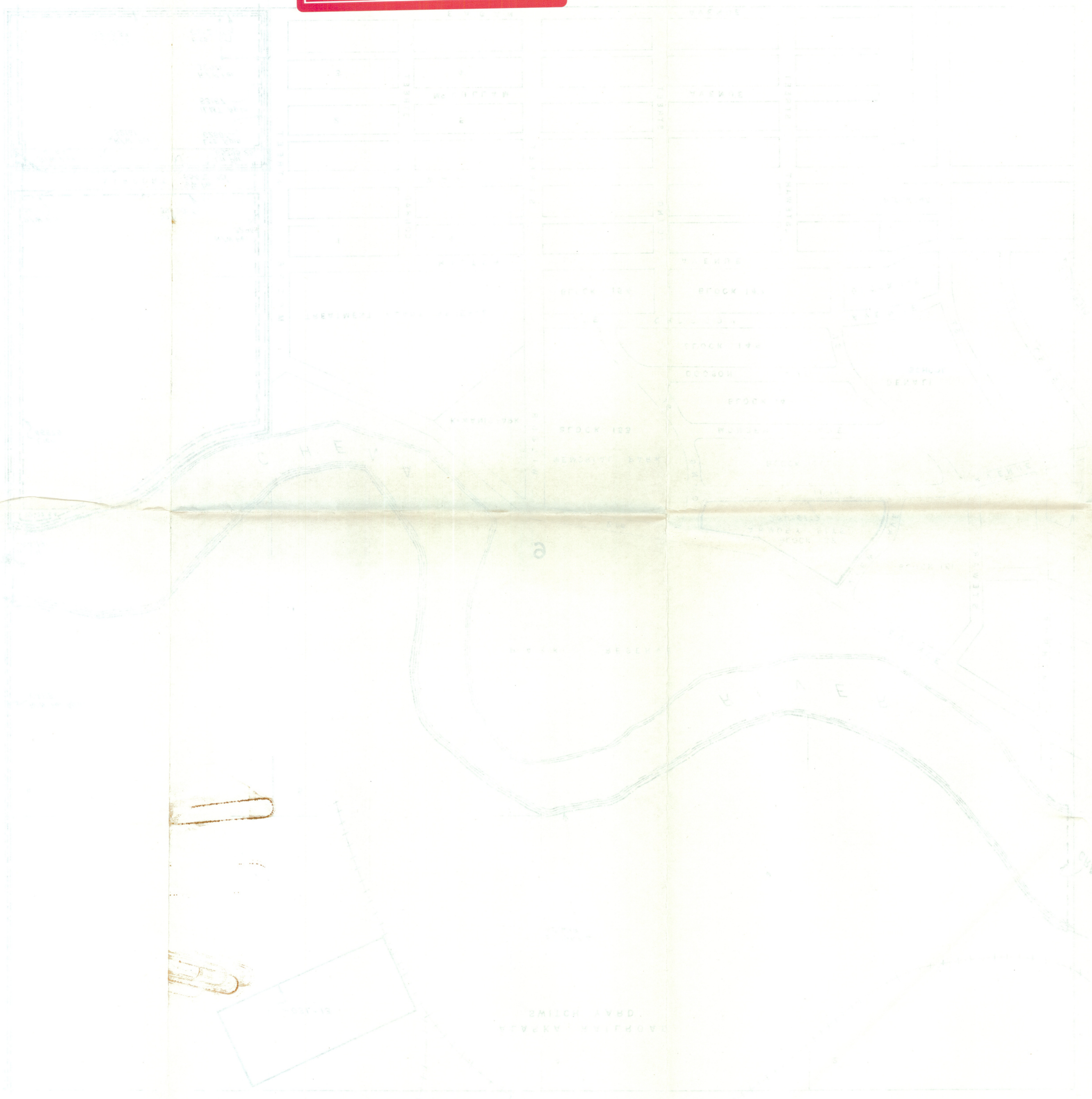
SCALE 5 chains = 1 inch DATE Current as of 30 July 1975

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

NENANA Sternwheeler
(AHSR Site No. FAI-005)
Alaska



SECTION 10
SECTION 11
SECTION 12
SECTION 13
SECTION 14
SECTION 15
SECTION 16
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SECTION 96
SECTION 97
SECTION 98
SECTION 99
SECTION 100

(mirrored)
STAINING PLAT

80560 SEC 8 T 12 R 1 W OF THE FAIRBANKS MERIDIAN ALASKA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- **ENCLOSE WITH MAP**

1 NAME

HISTORIC Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRS FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Fairbanks VICINITY OF Fairbanks COUNTY Division STATE Alaska

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE Alaska Division of Lands, 323 E. 4th Ave., Anchorage, Alaska 99501

SCALE 5 chains to the inch DATE 7 June 1913

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

STATUS PLAT
(SUPPL.)

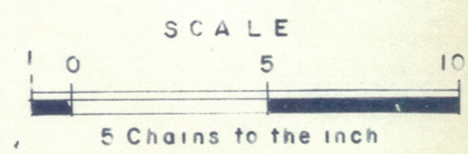
REFERENCE



OTHER ACTIONS AFFECTING DISPOSAL OR
USE OF STATE LANDS.
ENTIRE TOWNSHIP SURVEYED PLAT. APPVD. 6/7/13

Blank lines for recording other actions affecting disposal or use of state lands.

REVISED 5/68



DATE	CHECKED BY

Sec 9
T. 1 S.
R. 1 W.
F. M.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRS FAI-005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

___ VICINITY OF

Fairbanks Division

COUNTY

STATE

Alaska

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE City of Fairbanks (Site Plan)

SCALE

See Attached

DATE

Unknown

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Theme: 7d

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Nenana, Sternwheeler (AHRs SITE NO. FAI005)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Alaskaland

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Alaska

STATE

Alaska

__ VICINITY OF

CODE

02

COUNTY

Fairbanks Division

CODE

090

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Fairbanks

STREET & NUMBER

410 Cushman Street (907) 452-1881

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

None

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1961

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Nenana is a three-deck, western river sternwheel steamboat. Two hundred and thirty-six feet in length, she was broad in beam (forty-two feet) when launched in 1933 from the construction yards of Berg Construction at Nenana, Alaska. Laden with her maximum cargo of seventy tons, however, she drew only three feet and six inches.

During her first year in operation her wooden hull was found to be too flexible and in the winter of 1934 her hull was strengthened. To lighten the stern a small shaft was installed and the twenty-eight foot sternwheel rebuilt. Hydraulic steering gear was also added at this time.

Built to serve as a packet, carrying both passengers and freight, Nenana had accommodations for thirty-five passengers on her cabin (second) deck and could carry a variety of freight, including up to two tons in cold storage, on her cargo (first) deck. The texas (third) deck, topped by a forward mounted pilot house in pool boat style, provided staterooms for the crew of thirty-two.

On the cabin and texas decks, these tiny staterooms were entered from doors facing outward. Unusually, there was no interior access. Inside the rooms, short built-in bunks, washbasins, and chests of drawers were all the furniture that could be accommodated.

Two horizontal steam engines, with direct connected tandem compound poppet valve gear, were full condensing and generated twelve hundred horsepower, six hundred to each engine with its seventy-two inch stroke. A wood burner at first, consuming up to a cord of dry spruce each hour, Nenana was converted in 1948 so that oil heated her single multiflue boiler, which had been built in 1932 by the Washington Iron Works of Seattle. After conversion, her fuel bunker storage capacity was 8,700 gallons.

Inboard of the staterooms on the cabin deck, a saloon or dining room ran aft to about midships, while beyond that came the kitchen.

On the Yukon, Nenana could push five to six barges, while when operating on the Tanana River, she was limited by the narrow turns to a single barge of up to four-hundred tons burden.

In 1954, just before she was taken out of service, the boat was reconditioned completely at a cost of \$164,409.20 in a White Horse, Yukon Territory, boatyard.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Nenana, Sternwheeler, Alaska (AHRs SITE NO. FA11005)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 2

Alaska Heritage Resource Survey
1970-- State
Alaska Division of Parks
323 E. 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

During ten years of neglect, from 1958-1965, souvenir hunters stripped Nenana of much hardware, ornaments, and machinery. Then, when she was "restored" in connection with the Alaska Purchase Centennial celebration of 1967, her boilers were removed and the cargo space converted to a theater. The engine room, on that deck, with the engines, brass gauges and levers, etc., remained intact but in disarray. On the cabin deck above, staterooms were torn out and the area combined together with the original dining area to make a restaurant and bar. Similarly, the texas deck was changed to a party room.

In preparation for the Centennial, Nenana was taken from the Chena River, a tributary of the Tanana, which in turn runs into the Yukon, through a specially dug canal and sealed into a small pond in the center of Alaskaland, the official centennial park. There she remains, considerable altered inside but with exterior integrity, the only representative in United States territory of the scores of sternwheelers that once plied the Yukon and its tributaries.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1933 (constructed)/1955 (retired) BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance

Nenana, a three-deck, western sternwheel steamboat, two-hundred and thirty-six feet in length and forty-two feet in beam, is the only survivor in the United States from scores of similiar boats that once plied Alaska's inland waterways. Built in 1933 to serve as a water borne extension of the Alaska Railroad, she served on the Yukon and Tanana Rivers until retirement in 1955, continuing traditions begun in 1869 when Yukon initiated steamboat traffic on her namesake river.

As the sole survivor in the United States of these boats, Nenana is unique historic fabric. She has, however, been extensively altered on the interior, with cargo spaces converted to theater, stateroom area to resturant and bar, and crew quarters to private dining room.

Located at Alaskaland park in Fairbanks, Nenana is owned and operated by the City of Fairbanks as a visitor attraction during summer months, with resturant hours generally from noon until midnight. Local schedules must be checked for theater times.

She was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 27, 1972.

Historical Background

The Yukon, nearly 2,300 miles in length, is the fifth longest in North America. Known as the Kvichpak ("kvich" for river, "pak" for great) to Russians and Eskimos, and to interior Indians and English as the "Yokukonah" or great river, it was for centuries the single most important communication and transportation artery in Alaska.

To this lifeline on July 4, 1869, came the fifty-foot sternwheel steam vessel, Yukon. Owned by the Alaska Commercial Company, she ascended the river to Nulato and Fort Yukon, leaving trading goods at strategic points. By 1873, she made regular runs, pushing barges, to Anvik, Nulato, Tanana, and Fort Reliance.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"General Information Covering River Transportation System-The Alaska Railroad", undated typescript in Alaska Railroad archives, Anchorage, Ak. Kitchener, L.D., Flag Over the North, The Story of the Northern Commercial Company, Superior Publishing Company. Seattle: 1954.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1

UTM REFERENCES

A 0,6 | 4,63 | 4,80 | 7,11 | 90 | 58,2
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | []
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | []
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D [] | [] | [] | [] | [] | []
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

William S. Hanable

ORGANIZATION

Alaska Division of Parks

DATE

December 9, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

TELEPHONE

(907) 274-4676

CITY OR TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Russell W. Cahill

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

Jan 22, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Others followed, for the Yukon and its tributaries provided about 5,000 miles of navigable waterways lined with natives eager to trade for goods and hardware; later, these Indians and Eskimos were supplemented by swarms of prospectors and miners. Strikes in the Klondike, Fortymile, and Tanana Valley all brought would be miners in on the rivers and subsequent mining needed to be supplied by boat.

By 1916, the Northern Navigation Company was operating twenty boats, the White Pass and Yukon Route sixteen, Merchants Yukon Line four, and the Georgie Steamship Company one. Thereafter, however, the American Yukon Navigation Company became, by purchase of the Northern Commercial Company River Lines and various independent operators, the sole operator of a river navigation line available to the public. In 1921, American Yukon arbitrarily withdrew service below Fort Yukon.

Almost simultaneously, as efforts of the Interior Department to persuade American Yukon to restore service failed, the Army, which had operated boats to supply Forts Egbert, Hamlin, and Gibbon, abandoned these posts. Its equipment, the sternwheelers General J.W. Jacobs and General Jeff C. Davis, became surplus and were made available to the Alaska Railroad by Executive Order.

The Railroad received authority to operate freight and passenger traffic on the Yukon River and its tributaries, and during the years following 1922 an average of three thousand tons of freight was carried during each four and one-half month navigation season.

The steamer Alice, built in 1909 at Seattle, was placed in service in 1929, while new construction, Nenana, was built in the Nenana boatyard at the confluence of the Tanana and Nenana Rivers and launched in 1933. Even as she slid down the ways, freight and passenger traffic, affected by the world wide depression and the institution of air passenger service, declined.

The river traffic, however, provided the only haulage between the end of the government railroad running from the major seaport of Seward to Alaska's interior during summer months, and was replaced only to a limited extent by sledged freight in winter.

To meet this need, Nenana usually operated on the Nenana and lower Yukon Rivers, although sometimes she went north of the Arctic Circle to Fort Yukon. On her normal eight-hundred mile run to

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Marshall (one-hundred and twenty miles from the Bering Sea), she made a round trip every two weeks between middle May and October first.

Although she stopped carrying passengers after the 1949 season, Nenana continued to deliver freight to river villages until 1955. By then fuel costs and the expense of her thirty-two man crew made the boat too costly to operate, and she was leased to Yutana Barge Lines on a twenty-two year contract. Even so, at the end of the navigation season of 1955, she was laid up and offered for sale.

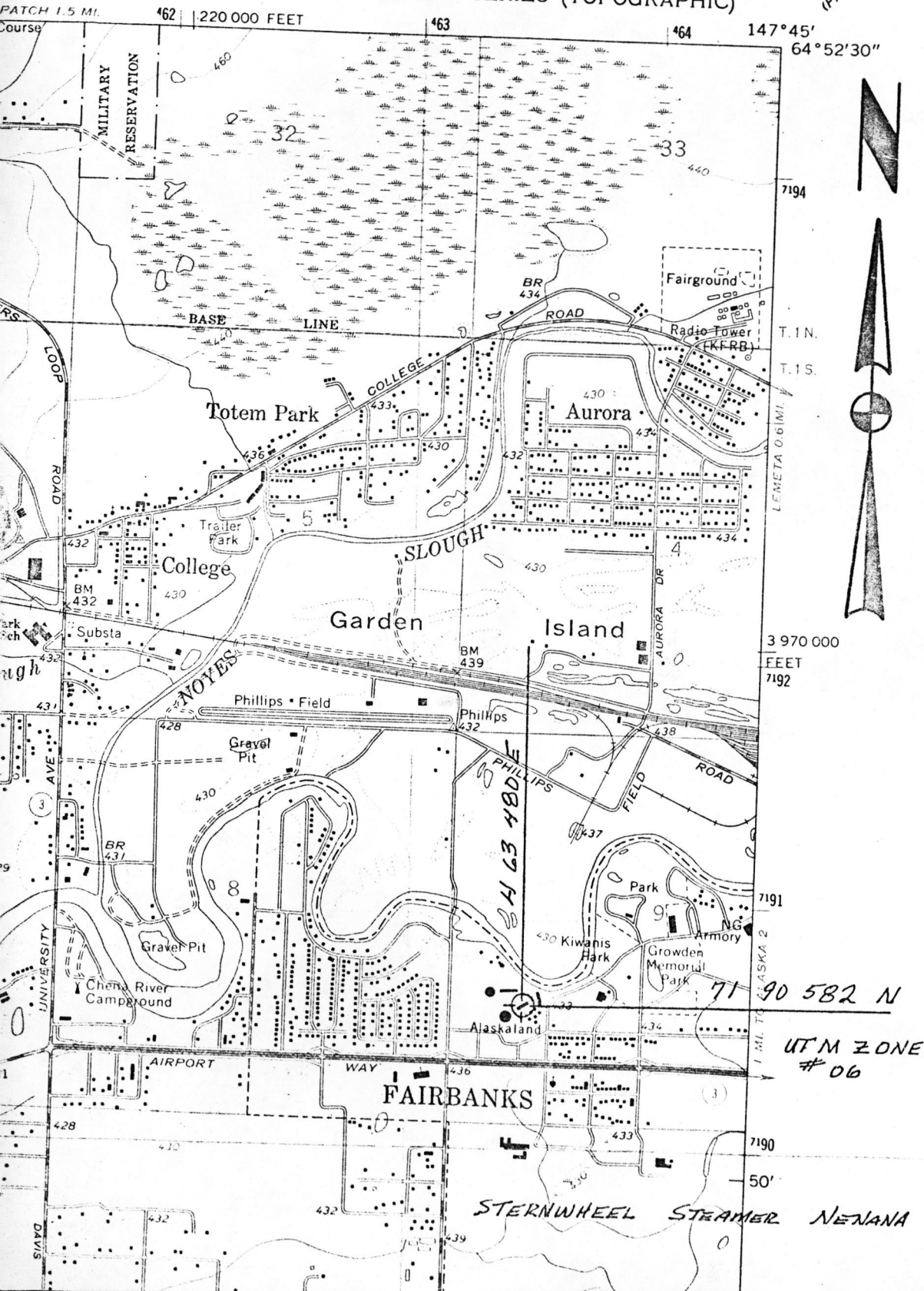
No acceptable bids were received and in June of 1956, the Alaska Railroad permitted Greater Fairbanks, Inc., to acquire and operate Nenana as a floating museum through 1957-58. After a three-day voyage with a volunteer crew in 1958, the sternwheeler was abandoned until 1965. Then officials of the Alaska Purchase Centennial celebrations moved her to the outskirts of Fairbanks and from there into the centennial park, Alaskaland.

At the park location, Nenana survives as the only riverboat in the United States of the scores of sternwheelers that once plied Alaska's waterways. Her significance in Alaskan history was recognized by entry in the National Register of Historic Places on June 27, 1972.

N 6445 - W 14745 / 7.5 x 15
1966

AMS 3450 II SW - SERIES Q801
FAIRBANKS D-2 SW QUADRANGLE
ALASKA - NORTH STAR BOROUGH
1:24 000 SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

3450 IV NE
(FAIRBANKS D-2 NE)



71 90 582 N
UTM ZONE # 06

STERNWHEEL STEAMER NENANA

1975 NHL nomination -
copy from Alaska SHPO
Jules, Anchorage, Alaska

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

ALTERED

MOVED

DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Nenana is a three-deck, western river sternwheel steamboat. Two hundred and thirty-six feet in length, she was broad in beam (forty-two feet) when launched in 1933 from the construction yards of Berg Construction at Nenana, Alaska. Laden with her maximum cargo of seventy tons, however, she drew only three feet and six inches.

During her first year in operation her wooden hull was found to be too flexible, and in the winter of 1934 her hull was strengthened. To lighten the stern a small shaft was installed and the twenty-eight foot sternwheel rebuilt. Hydraulic steering gear was also added at this time.

Built to serve as a packet, carrying both passengers and freight, Nenana had accommodations for thirty-five passengers on her cabin (second) deck and could carry a variety of freight, including up to two tons in cold storage, on her cargo (first) deck. The texas (third) deck, topped by a forward mounted pilot house in pool boat style, provided staterooms for the crew of thirty-two.

On the cabin and texas decks, these tiny staterooms were entered from doors facing outward. Unusually, there was no interior access. Inside the rooms, short built-in bunks, washbasins, and chests of drawers, were all the furniture that could be accommodated.

~~Two horizontal engines, with the stern engine and poppet valve gear, were full condensing, and generated twelve hundred horsepower, six hundred to each engine with its seventy-two inch stroke. A wood burner at first, consuming up to a cord of dry spruce each hour, Nenana was converted in 1948 so that oil heated her single multiflue boiler, which had been built in 1932 by the Washington Iron Works of Seattle. After conversion, her fuel bunker storage capacity was 8,700 gallons.~~

~~On the Yukon, Nenana could push five to six large rafts when operating on the Tanana River, she was limited by the narrow turns to a single raft of up to one hundred tons burden.~~

~~In 1957, just before she was taken out of service, the boat was conditioned completely at a cost of \$164,409.20 in a White~~

set next page

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fuel bunker storage capacity was 8,700 gallons.

Inboard of the staterooms on the cabin deck, a saloon or dining
room ran aft to about midships, while beyond that came the kitchen.

On the Yukon, Nenana could push five to six barges, while when
operating on the Tanana River, she was limited by the narrow turns
to a single barge of up to four-hundred tons burden.

In 1954, just before she was taken out of service, the boat was
reconditioned completely at a cost of \$164,409.20 in a White
Horse, Yukon Territory, boatyard.

During ten years of neglect, from 1958-1965, souvenir hunters stripped Nenana of much hardware, ornaments, and machinery. When she was "restored" in connection with the Alaska Purchase Centennial celebration of 1967, her boilers were removed and the cargo room converted to a theater. The engine room, on the main deck, with the engines, brass gauges and levers, etc., remained intact but in disarray. On the cabin deck above, staterooms were torn out and the area combined together with the original dining area to make a restaurant and bar. Similarly, the texas deck was changed to a party room.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ALREADY OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1

COORDINATES

A 4 80 7.1 90 58.2
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B EASTING NORTHING
D ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

...platted and located in the Alaskaland overlay, City of Fairbanks.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

William S. Hanable

ORGANIZATION

Alaska Division of Parks

STREET & NUMBER

323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY OR TOWN

Anchorage

DATE

December 9, 1975

TELEPHONE

(907) 274-4676

STATE

Alaska

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

January 21, 1976

RE: 3320-10
Sternwheeler Menana

City of Fairbanks
410 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Dear Sir:

This office is currently carrying out, under contract, a study for the National Historic Landmarks program of the National Park Service. The contract calls for an evaluation of potential National Historic Landmarks in Alaska. This category is limited to sites of national historical importance meeting the highest standards of integrity.

An enclosed leaflet further explains the program, which does not affect a property's ownership, or owner's rights.

As our knowledge of historic and archaeological sites in Alaska has increased, it has become apparent that your property, which was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on June 27, 1972, may qualify for the higher designation of National Historic Landmark.

A summary of the physical characteristics and historical importance of your property is being forwarded to National Historic Landmarks program officials.

Those officials will review our recommendations and, if they concur, present a nomination of your property for National Historic Landmark status to the Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments.

If the Secretary receives a favorable recommendation from his Board, he may then designate the property as a National Historic Landmark.

City of Fairbanks
January 21, 1976
Page 2

If you wish further information or to comment on the proposed nomination, please write to: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Sincerely,

Russell W. Cahill
Director

By: William S. Hanable, Chief
History and Archaeology

Enclosure

cc: Office of Archaeology
and Historic Preservation
National Park Service

WSH/kp

J. Scheie
2/1/78

Green

FEB 2 1978

Bureau of Land Management
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Sir:

The Historic Sites Act of 1935 established as national policy the identification and preservation of the Nation's historic sites. To assist in the implementation of this policy, the Secretary of the Interior directed the National Park Service to conduct a survey of historic sites and buildings that are believed to be of national significance. On the basis of these findings the Secretary designates those meeting the criteria for national significance as national historic landmarks. The enclosed leaflet explains the purposes, criteria, and operation of the program in some detail.

We appreciate your assistance in having made it possible for the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office to consider Onion Portage Archaeological District for recognition as a potential national historic landmark. Onion Portage Archaeological District is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Designation as a national historic landmark would not change the benefits and protections which it already enjoys by virtue of listing in the National Register. The national historic landmark designation gives the additional recognition of national significance to the property. Onion Portage Archaeological District would join the other national historic landmarks that make up the "honor roll" of the National Register.

A variety of programs and benefits have been established to promote the preservation of properties listed in the National Register. Some of these we would like to describe more fully than was possible at the time of the initial visit. We enclose a packet of information materials on the National Register Program, the Grants-in-Aid Program, the Technical Preservation Services Program, and sections of the 1976 Tax Reform Act.

Should you have any questions pertaining to the preservation of properties listed in the National Register, or wish to make comments on the possible designation of Onion Portage Archaeological District as a national historic landmark, we welcome the opportunity to

receive them. Questions and comments should be sent to this office, preferably before March 3, the date on which the Consulting Committee to the National Survey meets to review and evaluate potential national historic landmarks. Subsequent reviews are given to studies. Specific dates for all meetings are published in the "Federal Register" five days prior to the meetings, which are open to the public. We will be pleased to explain the National Historic Landmarks Program in greater detail and to answer any specific questions you may have after reviewing the enclosed materials.

We appreciate your interest in the historic preservation programs of the National Park Service.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ George F. Emery

George F. Emery
Chief, Historic Sites
Survey Division

Enclosures

cc: Mr. William S. Hanable
Chief of History and Archeology
Division of Parks
Department of Natural Resources
619 Warehouse Avenue, Suite 210
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

FNP:HJ Sheely:mdw:523-5464 2/1/78

bcc: 772-reading file

772-Sheely

HP - Alaska - Onion Portage Archaeological District

BASIC FILE RETAINED IN 772

H34(418)

MAY 27 1988

Honorable William Walley
Mayor of the City of Fairbanks
410 Cushman Street
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Mayor Walley:

We wish to inform you that the National Park Service is studying the property identified on the enclosed sheet to determine its potential for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The National Historic Landmarks Program recognizes sites of national significance in the Nation's history, architecture, archeology, and culture. Each Landmark receives a certificate of designation; owners may also apply for a bronze plaque.

National Historic Landmark designation follows three steps: study, which requires a visit to the property and preparation of a nomination; review of the nomination by the National Park System Advisory Board; and a decision by the Secretary of the Interior on the Board's recommendations.

When we complete our study of the property, you will receive a copy of it. At that time you will have 60 days to submit your views in writing if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2) and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). We also call your attention to the supplemental information that appears on the enclosed sheet.

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosures

PROPERTY TO BE STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

While you may comment at this time, you may wish to wait until the study is completed and transmitted to you. You are, of course, welcome to consult us at any time. If you wish to respond at this time, please address your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

If you have general questions regarding the National Historic Landmarks Program you may contact Ben Levy at the History Division address given above, (202) 343-8164 or FTS: 343-8164. Historian Kevin Foster will prepare the study of the property. If you have questions concerning the study, you may contact Mr. Foster at the above address or at (202) 343-8159; FTS 343-8159.

NHL

H34(418)

JUN 1 1988

Honorable Ted Stevens
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stevens:

We wish to inform you that the National Park Service is studying the property identified on the enclosed sheet to determine its potential for designation as a National Historic Landmark. The National Historic Landmarks Program recognizes sites of national significance in the Nation's history, architecture, archeology, and culture. Each Landmark receives a certificate of designation; owners may also apply for a bronze plaque.

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Sincerely,

/Sgd/Rowland T. Bowers
(for)

William Penn Mott, Jr.
Director

Enclosures

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As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

While you may comment at this time, you may wish to wait until the study is completed and transmitted to you. You are, of course, welcome to consult us at any time. If you wish to respond at this time, please address your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

If you have general questions regarding the National Historic Landmarks Program you may contact Ben Levy at the History Division address given above, (202) 343-8164 or FTS: 343-8164. Historian Kevin Foster will prepare the study of the property. If you have questions concerning the study, you may contact Mr. Foster at the above address or at (202) 343-8159; FTS 343-8159.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ALASKA REGIONAL OFFICE
2525 Gambell Street, Room 107
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 2892

12 JUL 1988

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H34 (ARO-RCR)

Memorandum

To: Maritime Historian, History Division, WASO

From: National Register Historian, Alaska Region *WWS*

Subject: Inspection of SS Nenana

As requested, an on-site inspection of SS Nenana was conducted on June 28, 1988, at Fairbanks.

The following are enclosed with this report.

A report of the inspection is attached, as is a 5 1/4" floppy diskette in Word Perfect format on which the report is stored.

Selected current photos and photos from 1971 and 1976 showing the boat before the temporary shelter now obscuring views of the boat was erected.

Site plan and map showing current location of the boat.

Selected photocopies of articles, documents, and chapters from books providing information on river transportation in Alaska in general and Nenana in particular.

If any additional information is required, please don't hesitate to call me at 907-257-2661.

Enclosures

H34(418)

AUG 25 1988

Honorable Don Young
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Young:

We are pleased to inform you that the National Park Service has completed the study of the property identified on the enclosed sheet for the purpose of nominating it for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark. We enclose a copy of the study report. The National Park System Advisory Board will consider the nomination during its next meeting, at the time and place indicated on the enclosure. The Board will make its recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior based upon the criteria of the National Historic Landmarks Program.

You have 60 days to submit your views in writing, if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and then inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations for his final action.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the criteria for designation (Sec. 65.4), the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2), and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). Should you wish to comment, please send your comments to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127.

Sincerely,

/Sgd/ Jerry L. Rogers

William Penn Mott, Jr.
Director

Enclosures

PROPERTY STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

As a private owner of the property identified above you may concur in or object to the designation. Your comments may govern whether or not the property will be designated. You can find guidance for your comments in Section 65.5(d)(4-5) of the enclosed regulations.

In commenting on the possible designation of the property identified above you can find guidance in Section 65.5(d)(4) of the enclosed regulations.

The above property will be considered for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park System Advisory Board at a meeting on Monday, October 24, 1988 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 222 of the U.S. Customs House, 423 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. Should you wish to obtain information about the meeting, or about the National Historic Landmarks Program, please contact Ben Levy at the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, 202-343-8164 or FTS-343-8164.

If you have questions about the study report, you may contact Mr. Kevin Foster Historian, at the History Division address above, (202) 343-9550 or FTS 343-9550.

H34(418)

AUG 25 1988

Ms. Judith E. Bittner
Chief, History and Archeology
Department of Natural Resources
Division of Parks and Outdoors
Recreation
P.O. Box 7001
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Dear Ms. Bittner:

We are pleased to inform you that the National Park Service has completed the study of the property identified on the enclosed sheet for the purpose of nominating it for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark. We enclose a copy of the study report. The National Park System Advisory Board will consider the nomination during its next meeting, at the time and place indicated on the enclosure. The Board will make its recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior based upon the criteria of the National Historic Landmarks Program.

You have 60 days to submit your views in writing, if you so desire. After the 60-day period, we will submit the nomination and your comments to the Advisory Board and then inform the Secretary of the Board's recommendations for his final action.

To assist you in considering this matter, we have enclosed a copy of the regulations that govern the National Historic Landmarks Program. They describe the criteria for designation (Sec. 65.4), the effects of designation (Sec. 65.2), and specify how you may comment on a proposed designation (Sec. 65.5(d)(4-5)). Should you wish to comment, please send your comments to me, at the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127.

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosures

PROPERTY STUDIED FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

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If you have questions about the study report, you may contact Mr. Kevin Foster Historian, at the History Division address above, (202) 343-9550 or FTS 343-9550.

SEP 12 1988

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



The Golden Heart City

September 6, 1988

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian
United States Department of Interior
National Park Service
PO Box 37127
Washington, D. C. 2001-7127

SUBJECT: Study Re: The Riverboat Nenana
at Alaskaland

Dear Mr. Bearss:

Your letter informing that the National Park Service has completed the study of the Nenana has been forwarded to Mayor Juanita Helms, Fairbanks North Star Borough. The City of Fairbanks transferred Alaskaland Park to the Borough on July 1, 1987.

Please direct any questions to Mayor Helms's Office, 452-4761.

Sincerely,

CITY OF FAIRBANKS

Bill Walley
BILL WALLEY
Mayor

cr

MIS: pgl

SEP 12 1988

★ Fairbanks North Star Borough

809 Pioneer Road

P.O. Box 1267

Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

907/452-4761

September 6, 1988

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian
US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P O Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

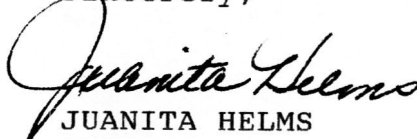
Dear Mr. Bearss:

I am pleased that the study for the Riverboat Nenana's nomination as a National Historic Landmark has been completed. It is another step in the long journey toward recognition of this last great riverboat that served interior Alaska so well during her short, but active commercial career.

The Nenana has been on display at Alaskaland, our local historic theme park, for twenty-two years. Her functional beauty has gradually faded through lack of a driving force to focus local pride in her long-term care and appearance.

Because she is now on lease to the Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation, the restoration and care of the SS Nenana is now assured. The quality of the Foundation's work is impeccable and their dedication to historic detail is established. It is with great satisfaction that I encourage the favorable action of the National Park System Advisory Board on this nomination.

Sincerely,



JUANITA HELMS
Borough Mayor

JH/RN/mn

cc: Historic Preservation Foundation

STATE OF ALASKA

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

3601 C STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503
PHONE: (907) 561-2020

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. BOX 107001
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510-7001

October 3, 1988

Re: 3330-3 Nenana

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian, History Division (418)
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

OCT 11 1988

Dear Mr. Bearss:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed National Historic Landmark nomination for the Nenana sternwheeler. Members of my staff reviewed the nomination you provided, and following our discussion I wish to convey to you that we strongly endorse designation of the boat as a National Historical Landmark. It is one of only five surviving western river steamboats, and the only wood-hulled steamboat extant. Although its setting is not ideal, the boat retains a great deal of its historic integrity and is worthy of landmark designation.

Staff members noted that several technical corrections need to be made to the nomination. Section 7, pages 7 and 8 are duplicates. In Section 8, page 5, paragraph 2, line 3, the first word should be either Tanana or Nenana; there is no Tenana River. The author in footnote 8 is Wilson not William. Otherwise the nomination is excellent.

Because much of Alaska's history has revolved around use of the sea, its maritime heritage, we are interested in additional information about the maritime heritage National Historic Landmark study. In particular, we are involved with a project to survey submerged lands for shipwrecks and would like to know if there is a component for such properties in the thematic study.

Sincerely,

Neil Johannsen
Director


by Judith E. Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer

JEB/jma

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DON NICKLES, OKLAHOMA

FRANCIS J. SULLIVAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
J. KEITH KENNEDY, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

CL-88-5224

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

October 5, 1988

William Penn Mott, Jr.
Director, National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Mott:

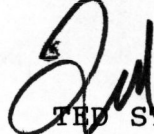
Thanks for requesting that I submit my views on the nomination of the S.S. Nenana for possible designation as a National Historic Landmark.

After visiting the Nenana numerous times myself, and reviewing the substantive material which you provided, I'm convinced that she is worthy of becoming a National Historic Landmark. I've therefore submitted a positive recommendation to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, the individual to whom you indicated my comments should be sent.

Thanks again for contacting me about this matter.

With best wishes,

Cordially,


TED STEVENS

JOHN C. STENNIS, MISSISSIPPI, CHAIRMAN

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CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, IOWA
DON NICKLES, OKLAHOMA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025

FRANCIS J. SULLIVAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
J. KEITH KENNEDY, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

October 14, 1988

OCT 27 1988

Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian
National Park Service, History Division (418)
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Bearss:

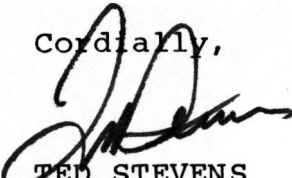
The Director of the National Park Service recently informed me of the nomination of the S.S. Nenana for possible designation as a National Historical Landmark. I firmly support this nomination.

Steamboats provided inexpensive transportation which helped in the opening of our continent for settlement. As I understand it, the Nenana is one of only five surviving western river steamboats. She is appropriately located at Alaskaland, which is a highly visited historical park in Fairbanks. Although she is currently being restored, much of the original structure will remain.

I believe the S.S. Nenana is worthy of designation as a National Historical Landmark. I urge you to give this nomination every possible consideration. Thank you.

With best wishes,

Cordially,



TED STEVENS



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H3015(418

March 28, 1989

Memorandum

To: Chief Historian

From: Maritime Historian

Subject: Trip Report. Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska

During the period between March 21 and March 24, 1989, I was on official travel to Alaska at the request of the Regional Director, Alaska Region. This report summarizes my activities and observations.

Anchorage

I was invited to Anchorage by the Alaska Regional Office to be the principal speaker at the Arctic Shipwrecks Conference, co-sponsored by the NPS and the Alaska Historical Society. Regional Office staff also wanted to take advantage of my trip to hold a meeting with the SHPO on NHL studies of shipwrecks. I traveled to Anchorage on Tuesday, March 21; departing at 9:00 am EST and arriving in Anchorage at 10:15 pm AST.

On Wednesday, March 22 I had a breakfast meeting with Regional Historian Lidfors, Historian Bill Hanable, and Archeologists Susan Morton and Paul Gleeson. At the Regional Office I met with Regional Director Boyd Evison, Associate Regional Director Paul Haertle, Lidfors, and Deputy SHPO Robert D. Shaw. We discussed the Region's involvement in a potentially alarming situation involving the proposed salvage of the steam whaler Orca, which while supported by State Senator Tim Kelly, President of the Alaska Senate, has been criticized by the Alaska State Historical Society, the SHPO, and the Region for failure to address several key concerns, including long-term conservation costs and the possibility of sale for profit of artifacts.

Lidfors and I met with Deputy SHPO Shaw over lunch to continue our discussion of the Orca Project. At 2:00 pm we met with Mr. Dan Shirey, Project Director for the Orca Project and Chuck Landers, an aide to Senator Kelly. I voiced several concerns and asked a number of technical questions of Mr. Shirey and Mr.

Trip Report
March 28, 1989
Page Two

Landers; the discussions were amicable and Mr. Shirey professed strong adherence to a careful, scientific, archeological approach. Both Lidfors, myself, and Shaw continue to have reservations: Mr. Shirey has not filed a research design with the SHPO as required and seemed reticent to do so until strongly pressed by Shaw. He continued to insist on either minimal or no conservation and his enthusiasm for the project, while laudable, could result in considerable damage to the shipwreck unless carefully monitored. There was some hint of a "hands off" attitude toward Shaw and the SHPO, too, which left me feeling uneasy.

Following this meeting I met with Archeologist Steve Klinger of the SHPO staff, who provided me with print-outs of the Alaska Heritage Resource Survey for vessels, shipwrecks, and lighthouses in the state for inclusion in the National Maritime Initiative inventory. I also researched the documentation of the Japanese schooner wreck of 1909 at Sitka, Kaisai Maru, which was unearthed and excavated a few years ago. I then had a dinner meeting with Lidfors and Paul Gleeson. We discussed the need for follow up the NHL studies of the Alcan Highway and Atka, which I also pursued with Bill Hanable the next day. The Alcan situation can apparently be rectified and Kate and Bill said they could tackle it: Atka requires much more work and on-site documentation, which will be expensive. They wish to defer work on Atka and possibly regroup on the issue of an Aleut relocation NHL.

On Thursday, March 22, I attended the Arctic Shipwreck Workshop for the entire day. Approximately 43 persons attended the workshop, including representatives from NPS, BIA, BLM, MMS, the State, sport divers, and local and private museums. A reporter from the Anchorage Daily Times was present and interviewed me. I have enclosed a copy of his story. I was asked to make presentations on shipwreck values and interest groups, appropriate techniques for survey and documentation, federal legislation and policy, and pressing issues in maritime preservation, particularly shipwreck management. I made four separate one-hour presentations over the course of the day. A copy of the agenda is also attached. The meetings were successful, conveying the need for careful approaches to shipwrecks and for a comprehensive program to inventory, survey, document, and evaluate Alaska's shipwrecks and other maritime resources. Mr. Landers approached me after the meeting and asked for followup correspondence on appropriate shipwreck protection legislation in Alaska, particularly in regard to establishing state parks and preserves for shipwrecks.

Trip Report
March 28, 1989
Page Three

That evening I attended a party hosted by Regional Curator Jean Swearingen. The hostess was as usual charming, the food outstanding, the atmosphere informal and friendly, and I enjoyed meeting and talking with museum curators from around the State as well as Deputy SHPO Shaw and NPS staff.

Fairbanks/Anchorage

On Friday, March 23, I flew to Fairbanks with Bill Hanable on the 6:50 am flight. We were met at the airport by Jack Williams, the project director for the restoration of the pending NHL riverboat Nenana. I toured Nenana, inspecting the restoration work completed on the bow, forecastle deck, and on the Texas deck. The work, which is being done in accord with the draft standards for ship restoration projects, is outstanding. The adherence to in-kind materials and workmanship retains outstanding integrity. I was particularly impressed with the craftsmanship displayed by shipwright Howard Binder in hewing the cant frames in the bow by hand to fit the original frames and outer hull planking. Nenana well deserves NHL recognition, and Mr. Williams was somewhat discouraged by the lack of action on the part of the Secretary's office to designate the vessel, a situation that he is angry has continued now for five months after the Board's approval. He has complained to his Senators and Congressman and is seeking a dedication ceremony on Memorial Day when the ship reopens to the public. He has already secured Senator Stevens' attendance and support for the NHL dedication ceremony. Following my inspection of the boat, I was interviewed by a reporter from the Fairbanks Press-Miner about the significance of Nenana and my impressions of her restoration.

Hanable and I returned to Anchorage on the 11:40 flight, arriving at 12:40 pm. After a quick lunch we returned to the Regional Office for a close-out meeting with Deputy Regional Director Richard Stenmark, ARD Haertle, and Leslie Starr Hart. I then met with a staff archeologist from MMS who expressed strong staff concerns over MMS' refusal to stipulate remote sensing cultural resource surveys for 150 Arctic blocks near the submerged whaling fleet wrecks despite strong staff requests and protests, and MMS' refusal to require a permit, consult with the Advisory Council, or seek 106 review of Mr. Shirey's survey work, artifact recovery, and potential salvage of Orca or other vessels from MMS-controlled blocks. The staff member strongly asked for NPS support in rectifying this matter, which I discussed with Stenmark, Haertle, and Hart. They are very inclined to make inquiries and work with MMS regionally, but the seriousness and

Trip Report
March 28, 1989
Page Four

nationwide implications of MMS' refusal to comply with the NHPA indicates a need for Washington Office attention and action in accord with the Region's position. I met with MMS officials and conveyed the NPS' concern and position on these two matters, but met with polite disinterest. A stronger stand is required, though I feel we should continue to stress amity and interagency assistance to MMS. I offered our assistance in preparing an NHL study for the Arctic whaling fleet wrecks and Orca particularly.

Late in the afternoon Bill Hanable and I toured and documented the 1942-built concrete barge Limestone, ex-Corondum, which may be the most intact WWII emergency fleet concrete vessel surviving in the United States. Limestone is used as a warehouse on Cook Inlet across from Anchorage.

I left Anchorage at 6:45 am on Saturday March 24, arriving at my residence outside of Washington at 11:15 pm that evening.

Conclusions

I was gratified to see a strong burgeoning interest in shipwreck preservation in Alaska, which with its long, unsurveyed coastline, cold waters, difficult accessibility, and Arctic ice offers well-preserved shipwrecks and hulks. I was able to make strong showing with the support of the Regional Office staff, who worked hard to make the workshop a success. Regional Historian Lidfors, Bill Hanable, Susan Morton, and Paul Gleeson all deserve recognition for what they accomplished and for demonstrating NPS leadership in Alaska shipwreck preservation. The meeting with the SHPO staff were exceedingly amicable and productive, and they are eager to work with us on shipwreck NHL studies, being particularly pleased with the study and pending designation of Nenana.

The Orca situation and MMS actions in the Arctic near hundreds of presumably well-preserved shipwrecks, including the greatest concentration of whaler wrecks (43) dating from 1851 to 1897, bears careful scrutiny and action, and we should meet with DCA Keel and Associate Director Rogers on this situation soon to formulate a plan of action with the Region.

As always, I appreciate the opportunity to travel, particularly in response to a request from a region or park.

F · A · I · R · B · A · N · K · S

HISTORICAL · PRESERVATION · FOUNDATION

755 8th AVENUE
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701
(907) 452-7295

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Purser "SS Nenana"

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DR. WILLIAM R. WOOD

MARTON WUBBOLD

DON YOUNG

United States Congress

April 7, 1989

Mr. James P. Delgado, Maritime Historian
Head, National Maritime Initiative
Division of History 418
National Park Service
Box 37127
Washington D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Jim:

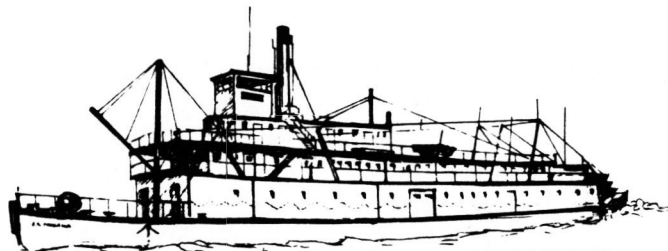
Sorry to be so tardy with this letter, but things have really been hectic since you left.

Your visit and the interview which appeared in the Daily News-Miner on Sunday, March 2, 1989 has caused a Spring resurgence of interest in the "Nenana" project. I have been pleasantly surprised by calls from several businessmen and three State Legislators who have expressed regret at the lack of federal funding, but enthusiasm at the "one of a kind" National Landmark designation.

I have enclosed a copy of the news article and, as you can see, it barely scratches the surface of all that was said. I would appreciate it very much if you could reiterate in a letter your opinion of the quality of our work and our general approach to the project in terms of the integrity of historic restoration.

I have heard nothing more from our Congressional Representative regarding the proposed Memorial Day plaque presentation. This, coupled with the limited time which will be available to manufacture the plaque after Mr. Lujan signs the designation, has influenced us to be more favorable to a postponement of that event.

I will look forward to hearing from you in the near future -- hopefully the very near future, as soon as "Nenana" is officially a Landmark.



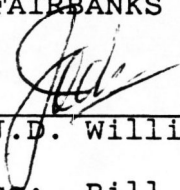
S.S. NENANA

Mr. James P. Delgadd
Letter of 4/7/89
Page 2

Personally and on behalf of the FHPF Board, I would again like to express my appreciation to you and Bill Hanable for a most informative and productive visit. Naturally, I will keep you informed of our progress.

Regards,

FAIRBANKS HISTORICAL PRESERVATION FOUNDATION



J.D. Williams, Chairman

cc: Bill Hanable

JDW/klr

Enc 1



United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30(418)

April 13, 1989

Mr. Jack D. Williams, Chairman
Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation
755 8th Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Mr. ~~Williams~~ *Jack*:

Thank you for your hospitality when I visited Fairbanks in late March and had the opportunity to tour Nenana. While the National Historic Landmark study of the riverboat is convincing proof of the boat's significance, the experience of touring Nenana enhanced my understanding and appreciation of her. The majestic size of the wooden hull and superstructure and the vessel's representation of a now largely vanished technology are compelling and fascinating.

I was heartened to see the restoration work taking place both on the decks, in the hull, and in the superstructure. The use of original materials and shipwright Howard Binder's meticulous attention to reproducing the workmanship and feeling of the boat as she was built are a credit to Nenana and to your efforts. The character of the vessel as a National Historic Landmark is being strongly enhanced by the restoration.

The high quality of work on Nenana is exemplary. Next year we will be producing a case book of successful maritime preservation projects, particularly emphasizing appropriate techniques. I very much would like you to consider preparing an article for this publication on Nenana's restoration that discusses the work done on the bow and forecastle deck.

Thank you again for taking the time from a busy schedule to take Bill Hanable and me on a tour of Nenana. I enjoyed every minute of it!

Sincerely,

James P. Delgado
Maritime Historian



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
P.O. BOX 37127
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127



IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30(418)

Memorandum

To: The Secretary

Through: Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

From: **Acting** Director, National Park Service

Subject Summary: Designations of 9 Properties as National Historic Landmarks--
and Confirmation of Boundary Revision for 1 Property;
Request for Secretarial Action

DISCUSSION: At a meeting on October 24, 1988, the National Park System Advisory Board recommended designation of the following publicly owned properties as National Historic Landmarks:

MARITIME THEME STUDY

1. USS Arizona, Honolulu, Hawaii
2. USS Utah, Honolulu, Hawaii
3. Portsmouth #101, Portsmouth, Virginia
4. Sergeant Floyd, Sioux City, Iowa
5. W.T. Preston, Anacortes, Washington
6. Nenana, Fairbanks, Alaska

OTHER PROPERTIES

7. Shiloh Indian Mounds Site, Hardin County, Tennessee
8. Wallowa Lake Site (Old Chief Joseph Monument), Joseph, Oregon
9. Mill Grove (John James Audubon Home), Audubon, Pennsylvania

In accordance with National Historic Landmarks Program regulations, the Board reviewed the studies nominating these properties for Landmark status, and found that the properties meet National Historic Landmarks Program criteria. The Board therefore voted to recommend that they be designated as National Historic Landmarks. None of the parties required to be notified of Landmark nomination proposals objects to these nominations. (See attached briefing paper for a description of the National Historic Landmarks Program and an explanation of steps taken to inform the owners and other concerned parties of the Landmark nominations.)

At the same October 24, 1988, meeting, the National Park System Advisory Board also recommended a boundary revision for the following publicly owned National Historic Landmark:

1. Cape Nome Mining District National Historic Landmark, Nome, Alaska

I recommend that you approve the Board's recommendations and designate as National Historic Landmarks the 9 properties listed above, and approve the boundary revision for the National Historic Landmark listed above.

Approve Manuel Ruyin Disapprove _____

Date MAY 06 1989 Date _____

Attachments

Prepared by: Patty Milner ext.: 343-8172

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

The wooden-hulled, western rivers-style steam sternwheel passenger riverboat Nenana is one of only three steam-powered passenger sternwheelers of any kind left in the United States, and the only large wooden sternwheeler. Built in 1933 for the Alaska Railroad for service on the Yukon, Nenana, and Tanana Rivers in Alaska, Nenana carried military cargoes during World War II including lend-lease aircraft on the way to Russia. Retired in 1955, Nenana is now preserved at Alaskaland Park near Fairbanks.

BRIEFING PAPER
NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS PROGRAM: NOTIFICATION AND COMMENT OF OWNERS
AND OTHER PARTIES

Purposes of the Program:

The National Historic Landmarks Program is the public-private partnership by which the Secretary of the Interior encourages and assists owners who wish to preserve nationally important historic buildings and places. Through it, the Secretary meets the legal responsibility to identify, designate, recognize, and protect such properties.

This recognition is, in most cases, highly prized and eagerly sought after by owners, for it is the highest national distinction awarded to historic properties and offers an opportunity to highlight, to the entire nation, the significance of a property and efforts for its preservation. At present, only 1839 properties bear this designation.

The Secretary personally approves all National Historic Landmark designations. The Secretary, Director of the National Park Service, and your predecessors in office have often presented the National Historic Landmark plaques to the owners in festive ceremonies that call favorable attention to the Department.

The Secretary can also remove the designation from properties that no longer qualify. This is important because Landmark designation serves as a screening tool for the National Park System by determining if a property possesses the national significance required to become a unit of the System.

The primary purpose of Landmark designation is not, however, to expand the National Park System, but as an alternative way of facilitating historic preservation by other owners. It does not prevent an owner who wishes to alter or demolish a privately owned property with private money from doing so, for it

does not involve any mandatory design or other review by any Federal agency. Only if Federal actions, funds, or licenses are required for a project will the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation review the effect of the activity. Landmark designation also aids planning by Federal agencies and others because it identifies the nationally important properties that their activities may affect.

Authorities for the Program:

The Landmarks program is conducted under legislative direction from the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The program regulations date to 1981; they include the formal legal description of the program and the criteria used to determine whether properties qualify.

Selection of Landmarks:

Landmarks are identified by theme and special studies prepared or overseen by National Park Service historians and archeologists. These reports are evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board, a committee of scholars and citizens appointed by the Secretary. The Board makes advisory recommendations to the Secretary, who has, however, the final authority on Landmark designation.

All Landmark designation studies include detailed information on the historical significance of the property; a physical description of it, including a proposed boundary; and photographs and maps.

Public and Owner Participation:

Both initially and again before Advisory Board review of Landmark studies, all owners and specified government officials, including the State, Members of Congress who represent the locality, and local officials are informed and invited, but not required, to comment.

Private owners may concur in or object to designation. If they object, the Secretary is not permitted to designate the property, but is required to determine whether it meets the Landmark criteria. In some cases, places which the Secretary finds do not meet the Landmarks criteria may be listed in or determined eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, based on their local or State importance.

The Pending Decision Memorandum and the Opinions of Owners:

A list is attached showing the owners' positions on the designation of the proposed Landmarks, which were all considered and approved by the National Park System Advisory Board at its meeting this past October. (The written endorsements and supporting Landmark studies are available for your review; all the properties are briefly described in the press release drafts that accompany the decision memorandum.)

Several owners are extremely eager to receive designation because it will assist fundraising and other efforts they are making to preserve their properties. For this reason, we urge swift consideration of this memorandum by the Secretary so that we may inform the owners, Congress, and the States of his decisions.

OWNER'S POSITION ON PROPOSED NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION
Publicly Owned Properties

<u>Property</u>	<u>Owner's Position</u>
<u>Maritime</u>	
1. <u>USS Arizona</u>	No comment
2. <u>USS Utah</u>	No comment
3. <u>Portsmouth #101</u>	Written endorsement
4. <u>Sergeant Floyd</u>	Written endorsement
5. <u>W.T. Preston</u>	No comment
6. <u>Nenana</u>	Written endorsement
<u>Other</u>	
7. Shiloh Indian Mounds Site	Written endorsement
8. Wallowa Lake Site (Old Chief Joseph Mnument)	No comment
9. Mill Grove (John James Audubon Home)	Written endorsement
<u>Boundary Revision</u>	
1. Cape Nome Mining District	No comment

H34(418)

JUN 22 1989

Honorable Ted Stevens
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stevens:

I am pleased to inform you that the property identified on the enclosed sheet has been found to possess national significance in the history of the United States. As a result, the Secretary of the Interior has designated it a National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of landmark designation is to identify and recognize nationally significant sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them. Landmarks are chosen after careful study by the National Park Service. They are evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board and designated by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Designation as a National Historic Landmark automatically places a property in the National Register of Historic Places, if it is not already so listed, and extends to it the safeguards and benefits provided by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and other Federal laws protecting historic properties.

We are pleased to include this property on the roll of National Historic Landmarks as a significant representative of our nation's heritage.

Sincerely,

s/ Herbert S. Cables

James M. Ridenour
Acting Director

Enclosure

The Secretary of the Interior recently designated the following property a National Historic Landmark:

NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

A certificate attesting to the national significance of the property and the Secretary's designation of it as a National Historic Landmark will be sent to you, as the owner. You are also eligible to receive a bronze plaque to commemorate its designation. Copies of the plaque application form are enclosed. Please complete the form in triplicate and return two copies to the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. You may retain the third copy for your records.

Unless you specify otherwise, both the certificate and the plaque will bear the name of the property as it appears above. Both plaque and certificate have standard texts, except for the name of the property (a maximum of two lines) and the year of designation, which appears on the plaque. If you have questions about the certificate or plaque, such as the precise text to appear, please contact Jim Charleton at the above address, or by telephone (202) 343-8165 or FTS: 343-8165.

The National Park Service will be pleased to assist an owner who wishes to arrange a ceremony for the presentation of the plaque. Such a ceremony should be scheduled a minimum of several months after notice of designation to provide time to cast the plaque and to arrange the participation of appropriate officials in the ceremony.

The owner of each Landmark receives a certificate of designation, and, upon application, will also be awarded a bronze plaque. We are notifying the owner of the property's designation and providing the appropriate application forms.

H34(418)

JUN 29 1989

Mayor Juanita Helms
Fairbanks Northstar Borough
809 Pioneer Road
P.O. Box 1267
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Mayor Helms:

I am pleased to inform you that the property identified on the enclosed sheet has been found to possess national significance in the history of the United States. As a result, the Secretary of the Interior has designated it a National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of landmark designation is to identify and recognize nationally significant sites and to encourage their owners to preserve them. Landmarks are chosen after careful study by the National Park Service. They are evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board and designated by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

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We are pleased to include this property on the roll of National Historic Landmarks as a significant representative of our nation's heritage.

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

Enclosure

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NENANA, Fairbanks, Alaska

Mayor
Helms

A certificate attesting to the national significance of the property and the Secretary's designation of it as a National Historic Landmark will be sent to you, as the owner. You are also eligible to receive a bronze plaque to commemorate its designation. Copies of the plaque application form are enclosed. Please complete the form in triplicate and return two copies to the National Park Service, History Division (418), P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127. You may retain the third copy for your records.

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Everyone

Else The owner of each Landmark receives a certificate of designation, and, upon application, will also be awarded a bronze plaque. We are notifying the owner of the property's designation and providing the appropriate application forms.

July 26, 1989
(Date)

Chief
Division of History
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

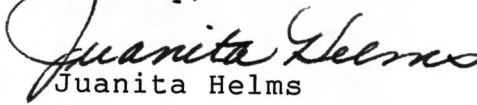
Dear Sir:

As the owner(s) of the Nenana, a riverboat
located in Fairbanks, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Alaska
(City) (County) (State)

(I, We) hereby make application for a bronze plaque identifying the property as a National Historic Landmark.

1. Fully conscious of the high responsibility to the Nation that goes with the ownership and care of a property classified as having national significance and worthy of National Historic Landmark status, (I, we) agree to preserve, so far as practicable and to the best of (my, our) ability, the historical values of the site that satisfy the criteria for national significance.
2. (I, We) agree to permit periodic inspection of the property by a representative of the National Park Service for the purpose of monitoring its integrity and the nature and degree of any threats thereto.
3. (I, We) agree that, should the Landmark designation ever be revoked in accordance with the procedures outlined in the National Historic Landmarks regulations, the bronze plaque and the certificate of designation will be surrendered upon request to the National Park Service.
4. (I, We) further agree to affix the plaque for public view and in an appropriate manner.

Sincerely,


Juanita Helms
Borough Mayor

AUG 1 1989

T.W.

H34(418)

AUG 23 1989

Honorable Juanita Helms
Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough
P.O. Box 1267
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1267

Dear Mayor Helms:

We are pleased to have received your application for the bronze plaque identifying Nenana as a National Historic Landmark.

The Regional Offices of the National Park Service coordinate the presentation of National Historic Landmark plaques and certificates. Therefore, we are notifying the Alaska Regional Office of your application, with the request that they proceed to order and provide the bronze plaque and National Historic Landmark certificate. If you have any questions regarding this issue, you may contact:

Ms. Sandy Faulkner
Alaska Regional Office
National Park Service
2525 Gambell Street, Room 107
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 261-2690

Sincerely,

Edwin C. Bearss

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian

cc: 001 RF
400 RF
418 Delgado/Foster (w/c inc.)
418 PLAQUES AND CERTIFICATES (w/c inc.)
418 NENANA (NHL) (w/c inc.)

JHCharleton:gmg:8/22/89
Thomas Disk 23 #44

H34(418)

AUG 24 1989

Memorandum

To: National Historic Landmark Coordinator, Alaska Regional Office

From: ~~acting~~ Chief Historian

/s/ Benjamin Lowy

Subject: National Historic Landmark Plaque Application

A copy is attached of the application by the owner of Nenana, Fairbanks, Alaska, for the plaque identifying this National Historic Landmark.

We ask you to contact the owner and arrange to order and provide the plaque from the Regional budget. We will provide the requisite National Historic Landmark certificate.

The Department would appreciate being advised of arrangements made to present the National Historic Landmark plaque and certificate. Every effort should be made to coordinate any ceremony with the availability of high-level Departmental staff and to secure the participation of Members of Congress who represent the locality.

Attachment

cc: 001 RF
400 RF
418 Delgado
418 PLAQUES AND CERTIFICATES (w/c inc.)
418 NENANA (NHL)

JHCharleton:gmg:8/2189
thomas 23:43

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE Alaska	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. XVIII - Travel & Communication; XXI - Alaska History
3. NAME(S) OF SITE Riverboat S. S. Nenana	4. APPROX. ACREAGE (Boat)
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) Foot of First Avenue, on Chena River, in Fairbanks	
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) City of Fairbanks (Greater Fairbanks Opportunities, Inc., 545 Third Ave., Fairbanks)	

7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)

The S.S.Nenana, an 1898 stern-wheeler riverboat, is apparently the last surviving example of the great riverboats that once served as a major method of transportation on the rivers of the Far West and Alaska.

The first American riverboats appeared on the California rivers (the Sacramento, Feather, American, and San Joaquin) in 1849, and on the Columbia in the Pacific Northwest in 1850. Multiplying rapidly in numbers, these steamships were quickly organized into two great corporations known as the California Steamboat Navigation Company and the Oregon Steam Navigation Company, which established monopolies of traffic within their respective spheres of influence. Under their direction the riverboat served as a major mode of transportation until the coming of the railroad brought their dominance to an end, first in California in 1871, and then in the Pacific Northwest in 1879.

The last stand of the river steamer as a major means of transportation was made in Alaska. The only transportation to the interior, from 1890 to 1906, was made via the Yukon and Tanana Rivers by means of the river steamers plying between St. Michael and the trading posts and gold mining camps situated along the two rivers. During the great Klondike gold rush of 1897, and subsequent rushes, hundreds of river steamers carried thousands of miners and tons of freight up the Yukon. The great days of heavy river traffic, however, were ended forever by the completion of the Alaska Railroad to Fairbanks in 1922.

Condition of the Boat:

The S.S.Nenana is permanently anchored on the bank of the Chena River and appears to be in excellent condition. The city plans to preserve the ship and exhibit it as a museum.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)

Guide to Fairbanks, June, 1961 (Leaflet published by Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce); Clarence L. Andrews, The Story of Alaska (Caldwell, Idaho, 1947), 222-223; Stuart R. Tompkins, Alaska - Promyshlennik and Sourdough (Norman, Okl., 1945), 234-235; Jerry MacMullen, Paddle-Wheel Days in California (Stanford, 1946); Oscar Osburn Winther, The Old Oregon Country (Stanford, 1950), 231-245.

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, IABS, etc.)

None

****2460 - See Fairbanks Inventory Sheet**

10. PHOTOGRAPHS* ATTACHED: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> KX** NO <input type="checkbox"/>	11. CONDITION Excellent	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) To be Museum	13. DATE OF VISIT July 23, 1961
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) Charles W. Snell		15. TITLE Reg. Chief, Branch Hist. Site.	16. DATE Nov. 29, 1962

* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

Alaska Historical Society



SUITE 204C, OLD CITY HALL
524 W. 4TH AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

March 23, 1989

Mail to
P. O. Box 100299, Anchorage, Alaska 99510-0299

MARITIME PRESERVATION WORKSHOP

Auditorium, Alaska Public Lands Information Center
Suite 105, 605 West Fourth Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska

- | | |
|--|---|
| 8:30AM Coffee, tea, pastries | 1:00PM
Legislation Protecting Shipwrecks Delgado |
| 9:00AM
Welcome and Introduction
Leslie Starr Hart, Chief
Cultural Resources, Alaska Region, NPS | 2:00PM Break |
| 9:15AM
Executive Summary (overview of topics to be covered, federal agency responsibilities, problems facing managers of submerged lands in Alaska; state preservation programs affecting maritime projects)
James Delgado, Maritime Historian, NPS
Robert D. Shaw, Deputy Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer | 2:15PM
Conservation needs, problems, responsibilities.
Paul Gleeson, Archeologist, NPS |
| 10:15AM Break | 2:45PM
Investigation/preservation techniques for shipwrecks
Delgado |
| 10:30AM
Why and to Whom Shipwrecks Are of Interest
Delgado | 3:15PM
Shipwreck documentation, interpretation, protection in the Great Lakes
Kate Lidfors, Regional Historian, NPS |
| 11:30AM
Break for Lunch | 3:45PM Break |
| | 4:00PM
Pressing Issues in Maritime Preservation - national, state, and local.
Delgado/Shaw/Lidfors |
| | 5:00PM Adjourn |

Cosponsored by the National Park Service, Alaska Region

POSSESSION PLAQUE

Nineteen iron tablets inlaid with copper crosses and the words "Russian Territory" were buried at various locations. This one found at Old Sitka is adapted as our seal.

THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION

OLD CITY HALL, 524 WEST FOURTH AVENUE, SUITE 203, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501, TELEPHONE (907) 274-2311

MARCH 1989

VOL. 8, ISSUE 1

SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION: AN ISSUE FOR ALASKA

ALASKA'S ARCTIC SHIPWRECKS

By William S. Hanable, President, Alaska Historical Society

National and international news recently reported attempts to rescue two whales from the ice in which they were trapped off Alaska's Arctic Coast. There is some irony in this. Nearly a century ago efforts were underway to rescue the crews of whale-hunting ships which were trapped in the ice off that same Arctic Coast.

The whales recently were freed, and the crews a century ago were aided, but the ships remained behind to be crushed by the ice and sunk. Nearly one-hundred years later, those shipwrecks are either submerged cultural resources or a treasure-hunter's bonanza.

Commercial whaling began in the Arctic in 1848 when the bark *Superior* sailed through Bering Strait and discovered bowhead whales there. During the summer of 1850, 200 whaleships sailed in Arctic waters, taking over 1700 whales. The pursuit would continue for another 50 years, killing 20,000 of an estimated 30,000 total bowhead whale population.

In the 1860s, natural hazards such as ice claimed nine Arctic whaleships. In the 1870s, 57 Arctic whaleships were lost. Over 30 were abandoned to the ice in 1871 alone. Additional ships were lost in the 1880s. In 1897, eight more, including *Orca*, were trapped in the ice and four sank.

The large number of shipwrecks left by the commercial whaling industry in the Arctic, the preservative quality of Arctic waters, and the efficiency of modern detection devices combine to make an exciting potential for marine archeologists interested in the technology of the 19th Century and for treasure hunters, as well.

Until 1988, remoteness and severe conditions had discouraged investigation of the Arctic shipwrecks. However, a recent project to salvage the steamwhaler *Orca* has raised questions regarding the public interest in these resources.

As the situation in the Arctic now stands, those wrecks lying within the three-mile limit fall under jurisdiction of the State of Alaska and are, by reason of the new Abandoned Shipwreck Act, the property of the state. Shipwrecks lying outside the three-mile limit are subject to admiralty law principles, under which except for U.S. warships and public vessels, the vessels are treated according to a "finders keepers" rule.

Orca, and many of its companion vessels, are believed to lie outside the three-mile limit. Thus, whoever finds one of them can probably keep the wreck and its cargo. In the case of *Orca*, this prospective right has been traded to public agencies for financial assistance to locate the wreck.

(continued, page 3)

HISTORIC SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION -- A STATE PERSPECTIVE

By Judith Bittner, State Historic Preservation Officer

The Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987 established that historic shipwrecks within state waters are public property, resolving the conflicting claims of Admiralty laws of salvage and find and state land management laws.

The shipwreck law gives states title to historically significant shipwrecks which located on their submerged lands and directs states to provide public access, protect and preserve significant underwater sites, and encourage research and conservation. Specific guidelines will be developed by the National Park Service to assist states in the management and protection of historic shipwrecks.

Shipwrecks on tidelands and submerged lands within the State of Alaska are already protected under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act (AHPA) (A.S. 41.35), which provides for preservation and protection of the state's historic, prehistoric and archeological resources. While the Division of Land and Water Management is the managing agency, the AHPA provides policy for historic resources on submerged lands.

The Office of History and Archaeology (OHA), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, assists land managers in implementing the AHPA. One of its tools is a statewide inventory of historic sites which is used to determine whether federal or state projects will affect cultural resources. Through OHA's survey and inventory grant program, an archival study to survey historic shipwrecks was funded in 1983. Creating an inventory of historic shipwrecks was an important first step in preservation planning. However, accurate location information is available for only a few shipwrecks. A severe cutback in funding has hindered further efforts to survey historic shipwrecks.

A nonrenewable resource, historic shipwrecks must be treated with care. Shipwrecks are time capsules which yield important information on ways of life, activities, and technologies of the past. Recovery of any portion of a historic shipwreck requires a permit from OHA to ensure that basic scientific standards are met, that information is properly recorded during recovery, and that artifacts receive adequate conservation care. To receive a permit, applicants need to meet certain professional qualifications, have a research design, and serve the public good. Material recovered from the site belongs to the state.

Shipwreck sites in state waters will provide future opportunities for underwater marine parks. Cooperative efforts between state agencies and recreational dive groups for interpretation and protection of sites are likely to be explored as the state addresses the management and recreational use of its shipwrecks.

FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

OCEAN RESEARCH CENTER OF THE ARCTIC AND "PROJECT ORCA"

By Donna Lane, Office of History and Archeology

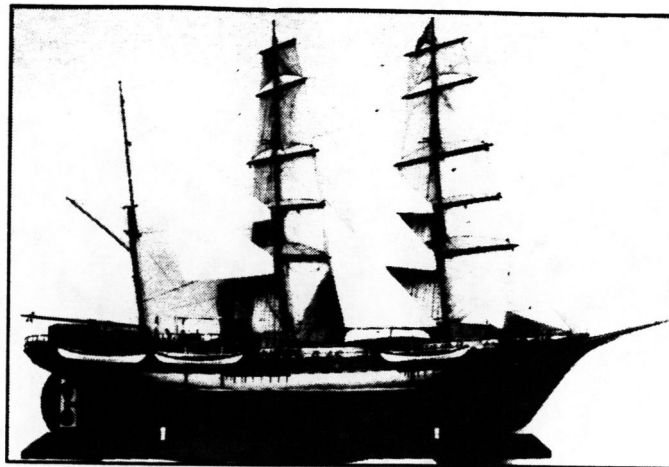
In 1985, former U. S. Coast Guard search and rescue diver Dan Shirey organized the Ocean Research Center of the Arctic (ORCA) to identify and recover historic shipwrecks in Arctic waters. Over the past three years ORCA has researched over forty major shipwrecks, targeting for its first recovery project the steam whaler *Orca* which sank off Point Franklin in the Chukchi Sea in 1897.

With the support of the Explorers Club and a number of maritime interest groups, ORCA planned a full scale search for the ship in the summer of 1987. When shore-hugging pack ice made this impossible, a shoreline search was conducted which located a large section of hull believed to be from the 1871 whaling fleet. Wood and metal artifacts were tested and found to be in sound condition compared to samples from ships of about the same period but recovered in warmer waters. Because the cold temperature of arctic waters is believed to aid artifact preservation, the group expects to find *Orca* in an equally well-preserved state.

In 1988, ORCA solicited the support of state and local entities to continue the project and implement a plan for the ultimate disposition of the vessel and its artifacts. The State of Alaska, Municipality of Anchorage, North Slope Borough and Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau signed an agreement with ORCA to provide financial and other assistance in exchange for salvage rights to the vessel and its contents, should the *Orca* be found outside state waters. The State Legislature provided \$50,000 to help locate the ship.

The group got a late start last season, and deep water exploration was again limited by harsh weather. Near-shore investigations, however, resulted in location of two new wreck sites.

ORCA will continue the project this summer. Once the shipwreck is located, the site will be surveyed and photographed. Plans for the recovery of *Orca* include



Courtesy of the Anchorage Museum of History and Art

Orca was the largest steam whaler constructed and the flagship of the Arctic fleet. The 628 ton vessel was built in 1882 at San Francisco especially for the whaling trade. A three-masted bark, *Orca* was 177'x32.5'x18.9' with 3/4" iron plates sheathing her forward hull to provide ice breaking capabilities and a unique internal tryworks system. Most whaling ships of the era had large sand pits located above deck where fires could be built and steel pots placed over them for boiling whale blubber down to oil, which was then poured into wooden barrels and stored below deck. *Orca's* tryworks were built into her hull. Blubber was placed in a large steel tank which was heated by steam; the rendered oil was transferred through pipes to a steel holding tank for cooling and storage. This saved considerable time and space aboard ship as well as removing the danger of open fires. *Orca* made 15 voyages to the Arctic before being crushed between ice floes in September of 1897, 60 miles southwest of Barrow.

dredging beneath the vessel, attaching large slings to its frame and lifting it with barges. The ship itself is to be displayed in Anchorage and representative artifacts displayed in Barrow.

SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION COSTS "ASTRONOMICAL"

By William S. Hanable

National maritime preservation experts, polled in a February 1989 telephone survey, almost unanimously reported shipwreck preservation costs to be "astronomical." Few could give more precise planning figures, although some offered a rule-of-thumb and others cited costs for specific projects. Overall, the picture was dismal, whether on an international or national basis.

The experts' rule-of-thumb is that initial preservation costs for a shipwreck are 15 to 20 times the cost of raising the wreck from underwater. Thus if the costs of raising a vessel are estimated at \$2.5 million, initial preservation costs are estimated at \$37.5 to \$50 million. Prerequisites for preservation include consistent control of humidity and temperature, while conservation treatments for the various fabrics such as copper, iron, and wood found in a ship are often mutually destructive.

Internationally, two of the most well-known shipwreck preservation projects are in Sweden and in England. The *Wasa*, a 17th century warship sank in Stockholm harbor in 1928 and was raised in 1961. The *Mary Rose*, a 16th century English warship sank in 1545 and was raised in 1970.

Preservation efforts for each of these vessels have been well-funded by national governments, cost millions, and are not yet complete. Nearly 30 years after the raising of the *Wasa*, preservationists are still looking forward to construction of the controlled-environment building that may arrest further deterioration of the ship although over \$20 million has been on preservation efforts to date.

Nationally, there have been a number of attempts to raise, preserve, and display shipwrecked vessels. These include an 1840s schooner, the *Alvin Clark*, recovered from the Great Lakes and several Civil War gunboats found in the South.

The *Alvin Clark* was raised by private efforts in the 1960s and offered as a tourist attraction until the 1980s. Income from the tourist business never matched the cost of upkeep. After unsuccessful attempts to transfer ownership to government agencies, the owner finally burned the vessel in the late 1980s.

The *USS Cairo*, a Civil War ironclad sunk in 1863 on the Yazoo River in Mississippi, was raised in the 1960s. The raising itself severely damaged the vessel. Ten years followed during which the *Cairo* languished at the Ingalls shipyards in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The costs of these private and state preservation efforts are unknown. In 1977, the National Park Service acquired the *Cairo*. Congress provided \$7 million for preservation and construction of a museum to house artifacts. Another decade later, only 30 percent of the original fabric of the vessel is left. Displayed at Vicksburg National Military

(continued, page 4)

MARITIME SERVES -- PRESERVATION AND PUBLIC RECREATION

By Vickie Cole, Historian, Matanuska-Susitna Borough

"Even a well-known wreck that has been stripped provides a special diving thrill. It harbours quantities of marine life, has a history all its own, and always offers the chance of discovering yet-one-more brass plate or bell or other lost treasure." Thus a book on popular diving spots of the Pacific Northwest describes the intrigue of sport diving around shipwrecks.

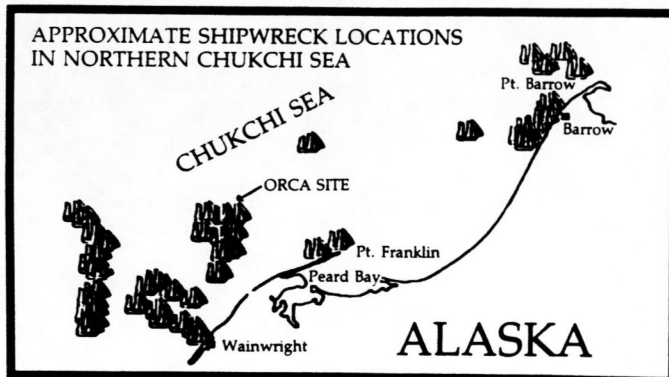
But what preservationists and sport divers alike have come to realize is that a stripped wreck, though it may have some intrigue for a novice diver, is a lost opportunity for both knowledge and recreation. Marine reserves and underwater parks provide an alternative by protecting maritime resources and, at the same time, encouraging the public to experience "the intrigue" of these environments. In a well-planned marine park, underwater trails lead the visiting explorer through exotic marine habitats and glimpses of the seafaring past. Appropriate signs or underwater trail guides identify and interpret features of the vessel, artifacts, and marine life fostered by the very presence of the wreck. And when a diver catches the glint of brass, the discovery is captured in a photograph--not a mesh bag.

Because shipwrecks are undisturbed time capsules, they are among the most important archeological resources in the world. The U. S., Canada, Mexico, and other governments have taken steps to protect their maritime heritage through protective laws and the establishment of parks and reserves. Yet problems of law enforcement and effective resource management remain.

Several states and the U. S. National Park Service have had success with programs which enlist volunteer sport divers as partners in the preservation effort. South Carolina has had good results training and licensing sport divers to assist in maritime resources management. Under the guidance of archeologists, licensed volunteers participate in documentation of shipwrecks, and even excavation and recovery. The National Park Service has found that sport divers participating on similar projects have become vocal advocates for shipwreck preservation, while contributing to public knowledge of the resources.

Maritime parks and underwater preserves are proving to be a good management tool to protect the interest of divers, preservationists, and the general public in the fascinating remains of our maritime history.

NOTE: In 1986 the Alaska Maritime Heritage Society proposed the *Armenia* shipwreck site as an addition to the Alaska State Park and Recreation System. Supporters feel that this site could become an important first step in underwater resources management in the state while developing the tourism potential in this as yet untapped resource.



(Arctic Shipwrecks, Continued)

The problem remains of finding ways in which to protect the public's interest in other wrecks that may be contemporary with *Orca*. That interest includes not only preservation of the wrecks and the artifacts that may be found in them, but also collection of information about the context in which the hulls and artifacts are found. Once the wrecks are disturbed, the integrity of that information will have been destroyed.

The commercial whaling shipwrecks of the late 19th Century in the Arctic offer a fascinating subject for archeological and historical study, and possibly a rich storehouse of materials for interpretive display.

The shipwrecks also offer serious challenges to those who would protect the public's interest in them. The possibilities for exerting jurisdiction are limited: perhaps only to a Congressionally-mandated marine sanctuary such as that which protects *USS Monitor*. Whether that solution, or its equivalent is found will depend upon the interest of groups such as the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation.

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preservation of the Whaling Ship *ORCA*

WHEREAS, the Alaska Historical Society is interested in furthering the interests of historical research and presentation of that research to the public in a responsible fashion, and

WHEREAS, the North Slope Borough, in cooperation with the Alaska State Legislature, the Alaska Division of Tourism, the Municipality of Anchorage, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the private non-profit group, ORCA, is considering raising the sunken wreck of the whaling ship *Orca*... and

WHEREAS, all wrecks within the three-mile limit as measured from mean high tide belong solely to the State of Alaska, and

WHEREAS, all wrecks from three to twelve miles from the mean high tide mark are under the jurisdiction of the United States Government, and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Historical Society believes these sunken ships are an historically valuable source of information important in national history as well as in the history of Alaska,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska Historical Society:

(1) Urges the Alaska Legislature to study the cost of floating, transporting, housing, and conserving the associated maritime artifacts and maintaining them in perpetuity before assigning funds to raise the *Orca*, and

(2) Urges the state and federal governments to take immediate steps to hold the *Orca* and other sunken ships and their contents in public rather than private ownership, and

(3) Calls for a conference for public education on issues of law affecting historic maritime resources, preservation and management of historic shipwrecks, and the specific issues involved in the proposed salvage of the *Orca*, this to be sponsored by the Office of History and Archeology, Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and the National Park Service, and held before the 1989 underwater research season, and

(4) Requests that no public funds be expended on private underwater research or salvage efforts until such time as state and national significance of the resources has been determined and that any such research proposal affecting resources under state or federal jurisdiction be a part of an agency-approved resource protection and management plan, and

(5) Directs that this resolution be forwarded to the Governor and Legislature of the State of Alaska, the Mayor of Anchorage, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, the North Slope Borough, the Office of History and Archeology, and the Alaska Region, National Park Service.

(1 January, 1989)

(costs astronomical, continued fr. page 2)

Park, the *Cairo* is inadequately protected from the elements by a canopy. While the ship's iron armor plating is stabilized, wood continues to spall off the vessel itself. A recent estimate projects a cost of \$100 million to prevent the *Cairo* from turning to dust.

There have been no efforts in Alaska to preserve ships that have been wrecked and raised, but lessons can be drawn from one project to preserve a steamboat of relatively recent construction. The Steamer *Nenana* served the Alaska Railroad from 1933 to 1954. Placed out of service in 1955, only three years after being completely reconditioned at a cost of \$164,000, the *Nenana* fell into the hands of Fairbanks entrepreneurs in 1957. They spent \$45,000 to move the still-functioning steamboat to Fairbanks. Attempts to operate the boat as a "boatel" and restaurant failed. In 1965, state and

federal funds were obtained to remodel the *Nenana* in preparation for the Alaska Purchase Centennial of 1967. The sternwheeler became the centerpiece of a centennial park known as Alaskaland. Time has obscured exactly how much of the \$1 million-plus total grant for Alaskaland was spent on the *Nenana*. It was probably no less than the \$164,000 rehabilitation ca. 1952. Since 1967, nearly \$350,000 has been spent to repair and preserve the *Nenana*. A ten-year plan for preservation of this 20th century vessel estimates future preservation costs at \$1.5 million. These figures are for a boat that was newly-reconditioned when taken out of service and since the subject of nearly continuous preservation work.

Tutored by such experiences, the national maritime preservation experts invariably concluded their answers to the February 1989 telephone survey by advising that, "unless the preservation money is in hand, sunken vessels are best left in the water."

MARITIME PRESERVATION WORKSHOP UPCOMING IN ANCHORAGE

A workshop on maritime preservation will be offered on March 23 in Anchorage under the joint sponsorship of the Alaska Historical Society and the National Park Service. The workshop will be held at the Alaska Public Lands Information Center, Suite 105, 605 West 4th Avenue, Anchorage, from 9:00AM to 4:30PM.

James P. Delgado, head of the National Maritime Initiative for the National Park Service will be the featured speaker. Topics include maritime preservation responsibilities under federal and state laws and the opportunities and problems of preserving historic ships and shipwrecks in Alaska. The speakers will explain the new federal Shipwreck Act and discuss maritime preservation projects undertaken in other states.

For more information or to register for the workshop, please call William Hanable (257-2661) or Susan Morton (257-2559) at the Alaska Region, National Park Service, 2525 Gambell Street, Anchorage 99503. Registrations will be accepted until space is filled; there are no workshop fees.

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Continued from page B-1

representatives from agencies like the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Natural Resources, and Alaska State Parks.

They heard presentations on the legal, practical, and scientific issues concerning maritime artifacts in Alaska and around the nation.

Interest in underwater archeology is increasing, as evidenced in the dramatic publicity over the discovery and exploration of the H.M.S. Titanic in the North Atlantic, said Robert Shaw, deputy state historical preservation officer for Alaska.

"The diving community sees (shipwrecks) as inherently interesting visually, and not simply as repositories for items to place on the mantelpiece," Shaw said. As more divers sought to explore wrecks, issues arose over who should own and manage them.

The Underwater Shipwreck Act of 1987 helped resolve some of these legal questions, Shaw said. Under the law, if the ship lies within three miles of a state's coast, it belongs to the state. If from three to 12 miles offshore, it is owned by the federal government, he said.

As the Park Service learns to implement the regulations, it will have to deal with increasing pressures to uncover, explore, catalogue and preserve the shipwrecks and other nautical data, Shaw said.

"Alaska is blessed with a large number of shipwrecks," he said. While federal records list more than 1,000 wrecks, there is no way to determine exactly how many broken boats litter the state's ocean floors and coastlines. But Alaska's rich maritime history means there is a huge variety of potential sites, he said.

Maritime artifacts are not limited to wrecks on the seabed, Delgado said. Floating ships, lighthouses, archives of ships' records, and shipyards are also valuable historical evidence.

Of special interest is the late 19th-century whaling fleet, said Delgado, when the U.S. whalers left New England to ply the Arctic and Beaufort seas hunting bowheads.

The dangerous ice sank scores of ships, some of them on a 300-foot deep plateau off Wainwright, where archeologists believe the cold water, combined with minimal tides and waves, could preserve ships in good condition.

But shipwrecks could also contain data on the aboriginal native cultures, the Russian exploration era, early salmon and cod-fishing industries, and the various gold rushes, Delgado said.

"For thousands of years people have used the shorelines of Alaska, and borne themselves over the water in boats of various kinds," he said. "Alaska's deep Arctic Ocean is a last frontier for ocean preservation."

CITY/STATE B-1

Ghost fleet

History held hostage under seas

Ghost fleet holds history hostage under icy oceans

By DANIEL R. SADDLER

Times Writer

Beneath the surface of Alaska's icy oceans lies a scattered ghost fleet of wrecked ships, holding vast treasure for those lucky enough to reach them.

But fortune seekers dreaming of gold ingots needn't bother getting into a wetsuit, said a federal historian: The value of Alaska's shipwrecks is really the wealth of historical data they hold.

"Shipwrecks on the bottom are veritable maritime ghost towns," said James Delgado, maritime historian for the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. "(They) are enclosed time capsules that have remarkable evidence of the past."

As head of a national effort to research, catalogue and preserve the nation's maritime heritage, Delgado was in Anchorage Thursday to speak to a one-day symposium on maritime preservation at the Old Federal Building on Fourth Avenue.

Sponsored by the National Park Service and the Alaska Historical Society, the symposium drew some 38 people, including

See Maritime, page B-8

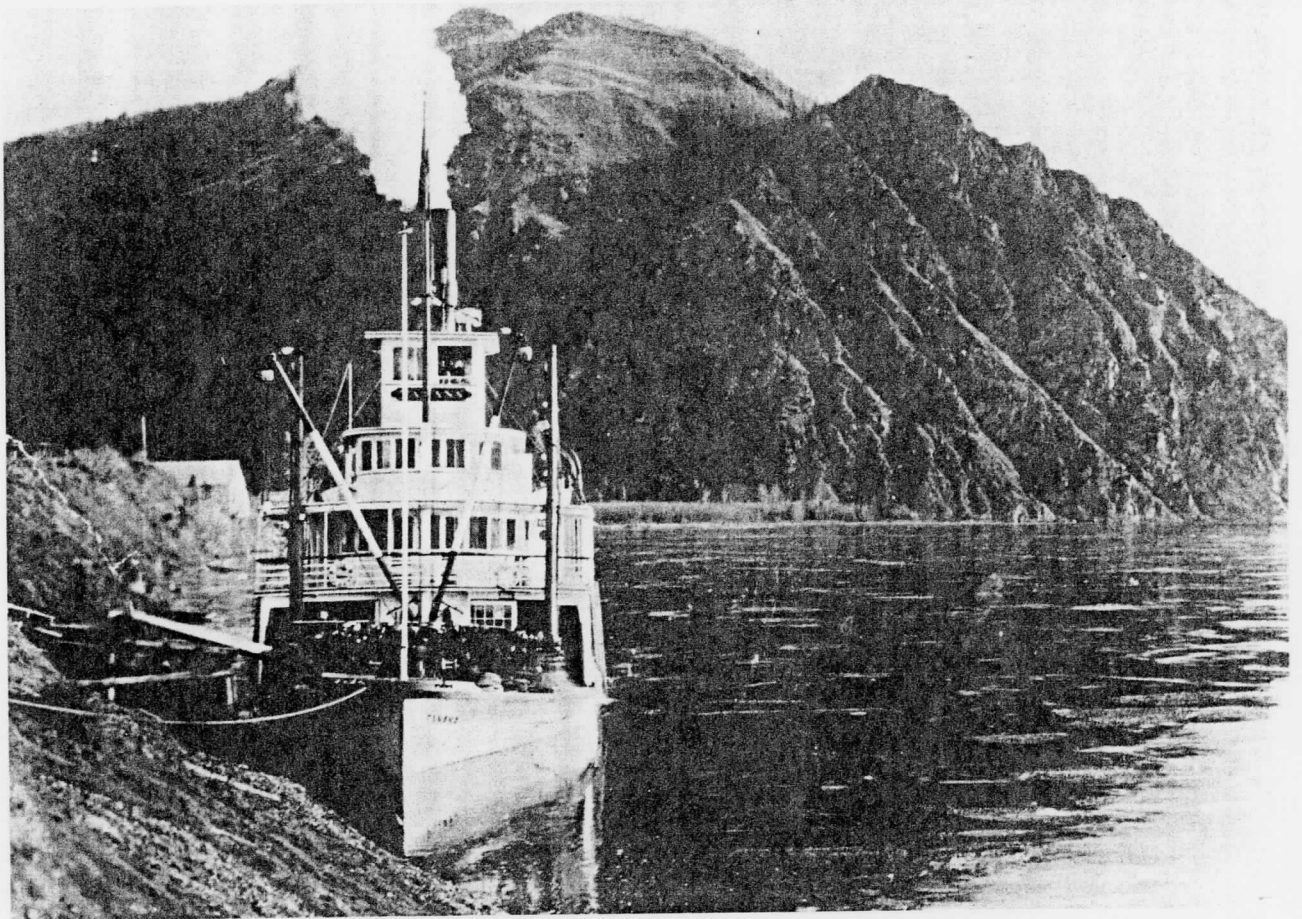
LIFELINE TO THE YUKON
A HISTORY OF YUKON RIVER NAVIGATION

BY

BARRY C. ANDERSON

 **Superior** PUBLISHING COMPANY

Queen of the Yutana Barge Lines fleet, Tanana shoves two barges loaded with petroleum products and general cargo along the Yukon River. (Joel W. Rogers)



The Tanana, built at St. Michael in 1904 by Northern Navigation Co. and operated by American Yukon Navigation, calls at Eagle, first stop in the U.S. after leaving Canada. (University of Alaska)

The Coming of the Railroad 1916–1940

Ever since Fairbanks had become a town, Alaskans living in the interior had been pressing the territorial government for a better system of transportation. The navigation companies did the job from either end of the Yukon during the summer months, but inhabitants were virtually cut off the rest of the year.

In 1905 the Nelson Act established the Alaska Road Commission to begin construction of roads to the interior. By 1930 the commission had constructed nearly 5,000 miles of roads and trails, the most important of which was the Richardson Road connecting Valdez and Fairbanks.

In the meantime, railroad entrepreneurs made several abortive attempts to connect the interior

and the coast with steel. The Alaska Northern Railroad actually completed 71 miles of track toward Fairbanks before it went bankrupt.

Taking over from these beginnings in 1915 the Alaska Railroad, a federally run company operated by the Department of the Interior, began pushing the rails northward to connect Seward, on salt water, with Fairbanks. Anchorage, now Alaska's largest city, began as a railroad construction camp supplying the nearly 5,000 men (many of them Indians) who pushed the rails slowly but inexorably past Mt. McKinley, the coalfields at Healy and the Tanana River.

The Railroad Takes to the River

Anyone with a map of Alaska could see the

railroad would deal a mortal blow to the White Pass & Yukon's rail-river monopoly on the Yukon. In 1922 the WP & Y subsidiary, American Yukon Navigation, retaliated, withdrawing all riverboat service from the Tanana (and Fairbanks). They continued to operate sporadic service that summer on the Yukon itself with the *Alaska* and *Yukon*. Several small local boats (including George Black's *Pioneer*) were hastily pressed into service to handle the Tanana and Chena traffic, but they weren't enough. The Army had to use the *General J. W. Jacobs* to pick up stranded miners and trappers all along the river during the summer.

With the completion of the rails to Nenana, the Alaska Railroad established its River Boat Service in 1922. The Army had been phasing out the posts along the Yukon and having no further need for the decrepit *Davis* and *Jacobs* turned them over to the railroad that fall. On July 15, 1923, President Warren G. Harding drove the golden spike at the north end of the new bridge across the Tanana at Nenana, completing the Alaska Railroad.

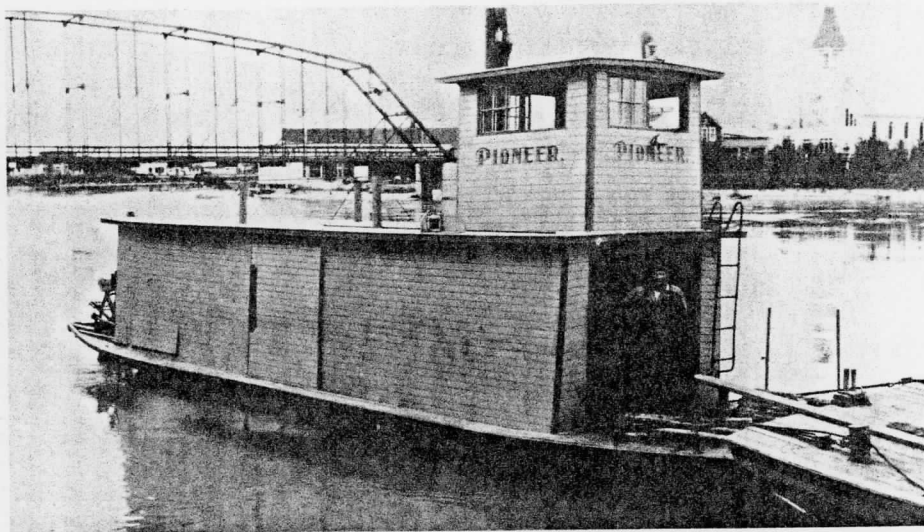
The link was forged and it had a pronounced effect on the transportation system of interior Alaska. From now on, freight and passengers destined for Fairbanks could get there by rail. Traffic destined for the villages along the Yukon could be brought in by rail, transferred to boats and barges at Nenana and transhipped by water. St. Michael would die on the vine, with dozens of steamboats littering her beaches to rot.

The new route to Fairbanks from Seattle by steamer and rail saved 2,395 miles over the old all-water route. And, it could be used twelve months of the year.

Mindful of the ruinous rate war that had put the Northern Navigation Company out of business less than a decade before (and that they only had two boats with which to cover the river), the Alaska Railroad reached a "gentlemen's agreement" with American Yukon Navigation. The Canadian boats would handle the upper river from Dawson down to Tanana and steam up the Tanana River to the rail transfer point at Nenana. The railroad would take the lower river, operating from Nenana down the Tanana and Yukon as far as Holy Cross (later extended to Marshall). Northern Commercial Company operated several small gasoline launches and diesel tugs out of St. Michael, serving company stores in the delta area and ran a regular gas boat service of one boat per week as far upriver as Holy Cross to connect with the railroad's weekly steamer from Nenana.

The Lean Years

There has always been controversy over the role of the federal government in operating the Alaska Railroad versus private enterprise, but in the case of the River Boat Service, AAR performed a public service that probably would not have been undertaken by independent companies. At least private operators would not have served the needs of the Yukon villages as reliably.



George Black, founder of Black Navigation Co., a forerunner of Yutana Barge Lines, and his first boat, the sternwheeler Pioneer at Nenana. (Arthur Peterson)

The boats were constant money losers in the 1920s. In 1926 the service lost more than \$22,000, increasing to a deficit of more than \$27,000 in 1928. Freight tonnages were modest; 3,125 in 1925 to 3,826 in 1928. Passengers were scarce: 721 in 1927 and 892 in 1928, for example.

The Canadians had the same problems. After 1924, AYN operated only the *Yukon* on the run to Nenana. The *Alaska* was returned to BYN to operate in Canada and renamed *Aksala*.

In 1927 AYN sold four boats to the Alaska Railroad: *Alice*, *White Seal*, *Minneapolis* and *Reliance*. *Minneapolis* and *Reliance* were beached at Chena, *White Seal* was resold and the *Alice*, best of the lot, was immediately pressed into service to augment the two aging ex-Army steamers.

Day Navigation Is Born

With only two boats in regular service, AAR had all it could do to serve the Tanana and Yukon

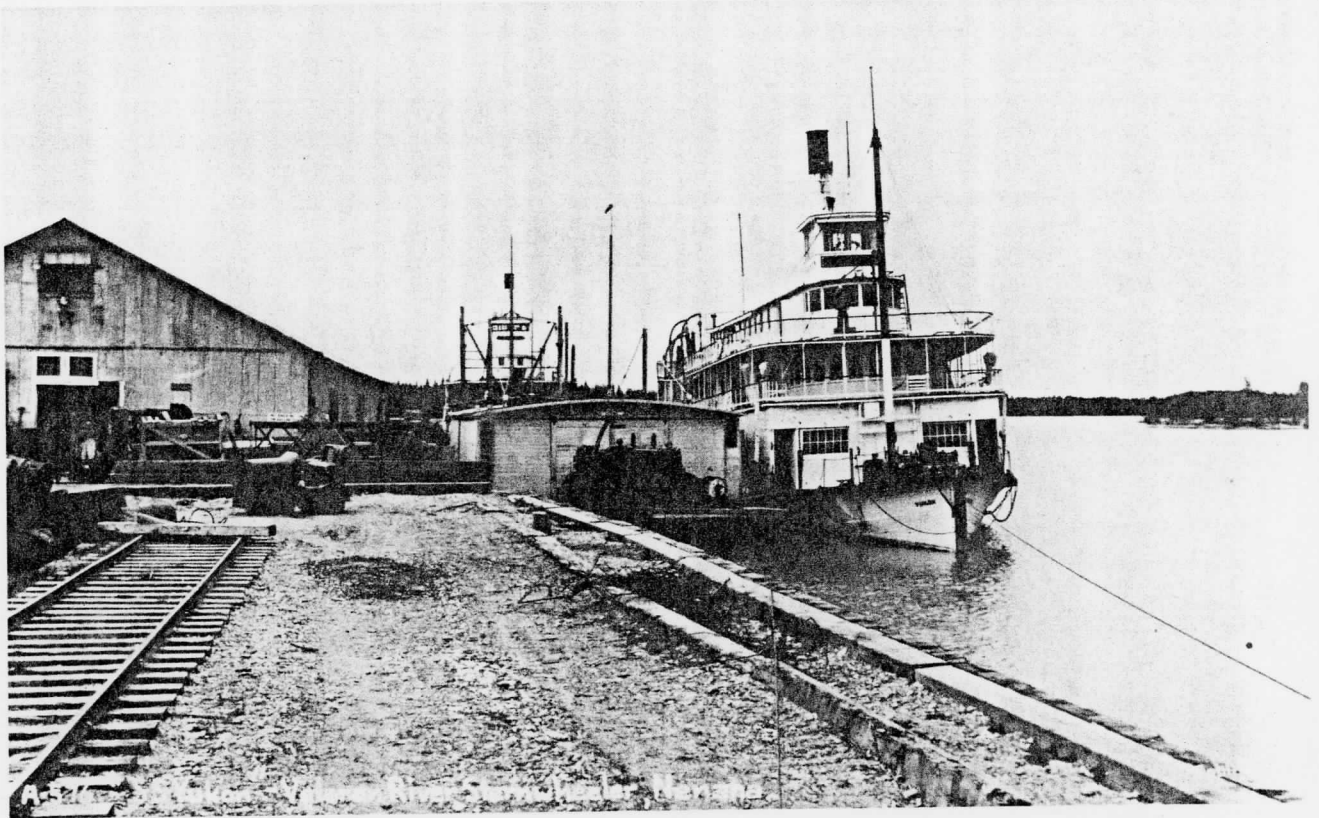
Rivers. Customers on the side streams were served by Black Navigation and other small operators on a sporadic basis. By 1927 mining had increased around Flat on the Iditarod River and the Riley Investment Company, desperate for supplies, underwrote a new riverboat service that was destined to become another of the ancestors of Yutana Barge Lines.

Glenn Day had come to Flat as engineer on a gold dredge. With the company's backing, he and three partners founded Day Navigation Company. Rather than picking up any of the dozens of surplus river steamers now available, as other newcomers had done, they had two brand-new towboats designed especially for the extremely shallow waters they would encounter on the 410-mile run from Holy Cross up the Innoko and Iditarod Rivers to the village of Iditarod.

Built by the Lake Washington Shipyard at Houghton, Washington, *Danaco No. 1* and *Danaco No. 2*, plus two barges, were freighted north, assembled in Fairbanks and run down-



U.S. Army steamer General J. W. Jacobs loading cargo at Nenana, September 4, 1922. Note the old covered wooden barge, typical on the Yukon before 1940. (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum)



With the slump in traffic after World War II, Alaska Railroad sternwheelers Yukon and Nenana (shown here at Nenana) were sufficient for river service. (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum)

The Strong Survive 1945–1982

The war was over. Elsewhere in the country pent-up demand for consumer goods was creating post-war prosperity, but along the Yukon things weren't so rosy. Military traffic, that had stimulated expansion of river freighting services, fell off abruptly. For the next five years Yukon boatmen would experience lean times, just another of the down cycles in the river's roller coaster economic history.

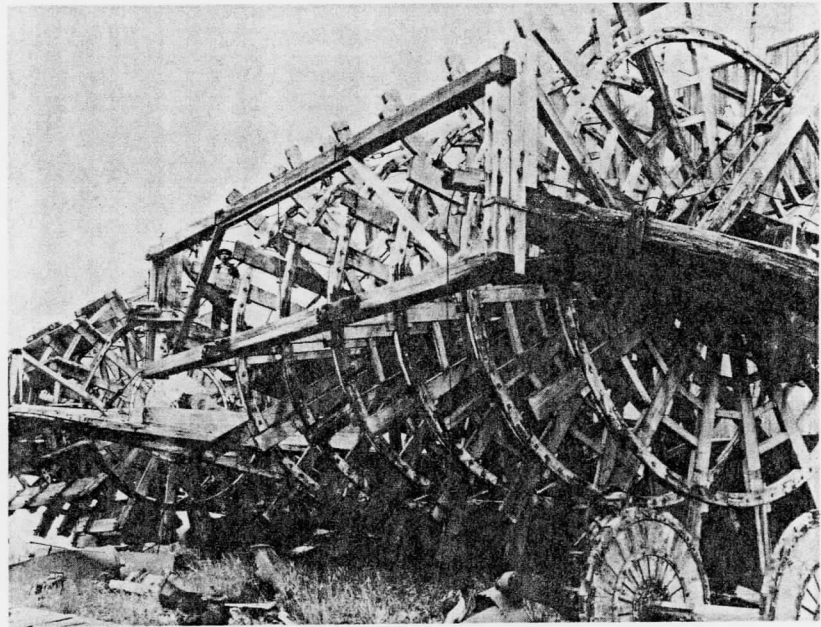
The Alaska Railroad, operating the *Alice*, *Nenana*, *Barry K* and *Yukon*, lost \$171,054 in 1946, \$191,624 in 1947 and \$164,169 in 1948. In 1928 passenger business had grossed \$20,365. By 1947 it had dwindled to a mere \$4,000.

Ice proved troublesome to the AAR fleet as well. The *Yukon* was holed at Tanana in the

spring of 1957, filled with empty oil barrels and towed back to Nenana to be repaired. That same winter, the *Nenana*, unable to make it back upriver to Nenana due to low water, froze in on the Innoko River but remained intact at breakup in the spring. The *Barry K* was damaged by ice the following winter. The *Hazel B I*, a former Stikine River tug acquired by the Army turned over to the Alaska Railroad, lost her power plant to ice two winters later (1949-1950). Hull openings had not been closed properly, allowing water to freeze in the engine and clutches, putting them out of commission for the following season.

But the loss of half the fleet during those years wasn't all that crippling. There wasn't much freight to carry anyway.

Skeletons of the great paddlewheels that thrashed the Yukon for decades stand forlornly decaying on the beach at St. Michael in the 1950s. (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum)



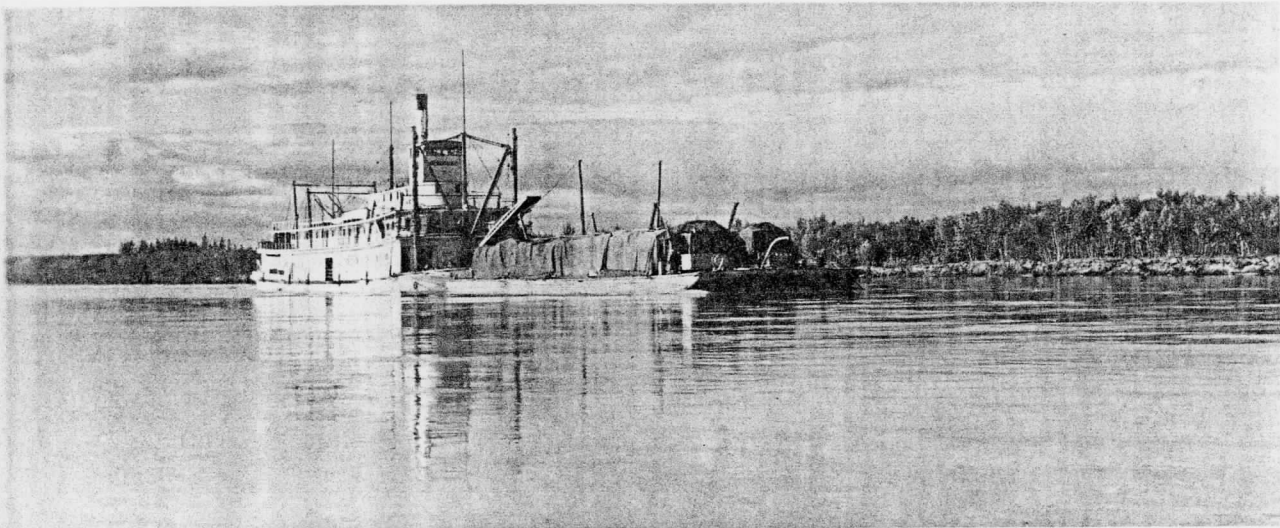
Bill Yanert and his brother Herman were tourist attractions at Purgatory. Bill carved a huge devil figure out of wood and would raise it into a vertical position whenever one of the steamers carrying passengers was about to make a landing. A former surveyor, Yanert became known for his poetry and sketches published in a volume titled, *Yukon Breezes*.

A Decade of Change

The early 1950s brought big change to Yukon

navigation. In 1950, the Alaska Railroad, tired of supporting a declining and money-losing passenger business, ceased to carry them aboard the two boats it was then operating, *Alice* and *Nenana*.

“But passengers and freight just didn’t mix,” says Al Brown. “We had to cater to passengers. Back in those days everyone [the officers] had to wear a uniform. Then maybe we’d get into Tanana, for example, and we had to post a notice what time the boat was sailing so passengers



In the fall twilight of an October evening in 1949, the Alaska Railroad's Nenana shoves a barge load of cargo down the Yukon toward Marshall. (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum)

could be back aboard. Well, we might get the freight off a couple of hours before the scheduled sailing time. Then, we had to sit around and wait, wasting time and money, until all the passengers were back aboard. Then, if it worked the other way, where we weren't through unloading by sailing time, the passengers would get upset."

By 1951 AAR freight had declined to just over 5,000 tons. CAA's River Transportation Unit, serving CAA installations on the Kantishna and Koyukuk Rivers, hauled more than 50% as much (2,598 tons) with the *Taku Chief* and purchased the small tug *Matanuska* from the railroad. Even though business was poor, AAR began exploring the possibility of purchasing two surplus stern-

wheelers from the WP&Y or constructing two new tugs for the following seasons.

Black Navigation, then operating three boats—*Idler*, *Kusko* and *Pelican*—began the first of several expansions by purchasing Day Navigation. Among the floating inventory that went along with the sale, Black sold *Danaco No. 2* and barges to Nick Dementieff, retained the *Danaco Nos. 6 and 7* (boat and barge) and scrapped the remainder as being either unservicable or too small for use on the Yukon.

The year 1953 was to prove both tragic and momentous. George Black began the year by expanding his fleet with a new vessel, built at Fairbanks. The steel hull for the new *Yutana* (a



Yutana Barge Line's diesel-powered sternwheeler Yutana spent several ignominious years as a ferry at Nenana before the present highway bridge was built. She's now the Fairbanks excursion boat Discovery II. (Yutana Barge Lines)



Last active steamboat of the Canadian fleet, the Klondike is towed along First Avenue in Whitehorse in 1966 to become a Parks Canada museum. (Yukon Archives)

combination of the names Yukon and Tanana) was fabricated in Portland, then shipped north in sections by steamship and freight train. The 150 horsepower diesel and most of the machinery was salvaged from the old *Idler* to power the 80-foot vessel's sternwheel.

But George Black was not to live to see his dreams fulfilled. On the *Tanana* near Minto he fell overboard and drowned. Art Peterson says, "He was 59 years old and just worn out. We think he may have had a heart attack or stroke because he never struggled at all. We couldn't get the kicker boat started to go after him and when we did, he was gone."

Portland yards completed construction of the two big new diesel towboats for the Alaska Railroad in 1953. The *Yukon* under command of Captain William Maki and the *Tanana* under the command of Captain Howard L. Adams with Al

Brown as Pilot were towed north to St. Michael by the sturdy sea-going tugs *Quenett* and *Nez Perce*. Both of the new boats were all steel construction, 120 feet long and powered by twin diesels generating 1,200 horsepower. The *Alice*, now surplus, was sold to the mission at Holy Cross.

Romantic as the old sternwheelers were, Alaska Railroad crews were more than happy to see the new vessels arrive. Al Brown remembers, "These new boats made life a lot easier for us. They were only 120 feet long whereas the *Nenana* was 257 feet. Stick a couple of barges out front and you're talking about 400 feet. That much length is a lot more difficult to maneuver and get off of sandbars. A captain really has to be on the ball when turning that thing around. Then, too, the *Yukon* and *Tanana* had both main and flanking rudders and twin screws, giving you



Allen Brown, here at the controls of the Tanana, came to the Yukon in 1938, piloted the Alice, skippered the Nenana to her permanent berth at Fairbanks and became senior captain with Yutana where he now serves as Port Captain. (Yutana Barge Lines)

a lot more turning power at slow speeds. The only thing you could do with a sternwheeler that you can't do with these screw boats is back up for a long time. You could back the *Nenana* all day and still steer, because her main rudders were ahead of her wheel. But you could back the *Tanana* and *Yukon* just so long and, if they took a notion to turn around on you, you must just as well help because there was no stopping them."

While the big, powerful screw tugs were taking over the river, barges were evolving as well. Up through World War II, most barges had been wooden, many of them covered with large warehouse-type deckhouses. The new barges (two of them came north with the *Tanana* and *Yukon*) were all steel, low profile and compartmented to carry bulk liquid cargo.

By 1953 a new highway between Dawson and Whitehorse and a mine-haul road between Mayo and Whitehorse had doomed the BYN boats on

the upper river. The *Keno* had been laid up at Whitehorse in 1951, the *White Horse*, *Aksala* and *Casca* in 1952. Service below Dawson was discontinued in 1953 and most of the fleet was up for sale with no takers. That same year, the one remaining boat in service, the *Klondike*, was refurbished for the tourist trade. At a cost of \$100,000 the company converted the boiler to burn oil, added additional cabins, a lounge and bar and enlarged the dining room. She would operate just two more years before being retired permanently. The steamboat era was drawing to a close.

Yutana Barge Lines is Born

Alaska Railroad's decision to get out of the river shipping business in 1955 took many observers by surprise. The railroad had been steadily losing money on its river operations for years, but just two years previously they had built two brand-new tugs and sent the *Nenana* to Whitehorse for extensive rebuilding, including replacing all of the deck and hull planking, plus a new paddlewheel and rudders. Correspondence of that period between railroad officials and Washington, D.C. administrators reveals the railroad went to great lengths to justify the very expensive rebuilding being done in Canada.

Art Peterson sheds some light on the subject. "The Alaska Railroad really didn't care much for the river trade. The through tariff from Anchorage or Seward all the way downriver to Marshall was only slightly more than the all-rail tariff to *Nenana* or Fairbanks. No wonder they were losing money; they were offering the river transportation almost free. I broke the tariff down and showed them what they should be charging."

Al Brown has another perspective. "The decisions were made in Washington. All the bureaucrats could see is that the operation was losing money. There was very little communication with the people on the river who could have told them how to fix it."

When the railroad put the river service up for bid, Art Peterson, Fred Goodwin (a Wein Airlines pilot) and Jack Bullock (who owned B&R Tug and Barge at Kotzebue) formed a partnership and submitted the winning bid. Under the terms of the agreement, AAR would continue to own the *Yukon*, *Tanana*, *Nenana* and *Taku Chief*, along with several barges, and lease them to the partners for a period of 20 years.

Few restoration projects have received as much community support as Fairbanks, Alaska's rescue of the riverboat *Nenana*, the last of the paddle wheelers that once plied interior Alaska's major rivers. More than 300 shallow-draft stern-wheelers operated throughout the vast region of Alaska and northern Canada at various times from the 1860s until 1955, traveling the Yukon River from its delta on the Bering Sea as far as Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory, some 2,000 miles upstream. Designed to overcome the hazards of shallow water, swift currents, and shifting sandbars, these vessels were the sole bearers of passengers, supplies, and mail to communities separated by hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles. (In winter, dogsleds provided the only transportation.)

The *Nenana* was launched May 15, 1933, after the heyday of the riverboats. During the 1920s the United States Department of the Interior announced plans

to build a railroad from Seward, on the Gulf of Alaska, to Fairbanks in the interior. But when officials of the fledgling Alaska Railroad realized that they had no way to haul freight from the railhead to isolated settlements, they began to acquire and operate a fleet of railroad steamers, of which the *Nenana* is the only survivor.

Named for the town where she was built, she is a stately 237 feet long, including the great paddle wheel and its supporting structure. *Nenana* had twenty-three passengers' staterooms, a dining room with a handsome ribbed ceiling, and a texas with cabins for thirty-two crew. "She was not your typical Mississippi River paddle wheeler with a lot of fancy-work," says Jack Kutz, the marine designer who drew up the restoration plans. "She's a pretty straight Alaska boat—the second-largest wooden boat in the world."

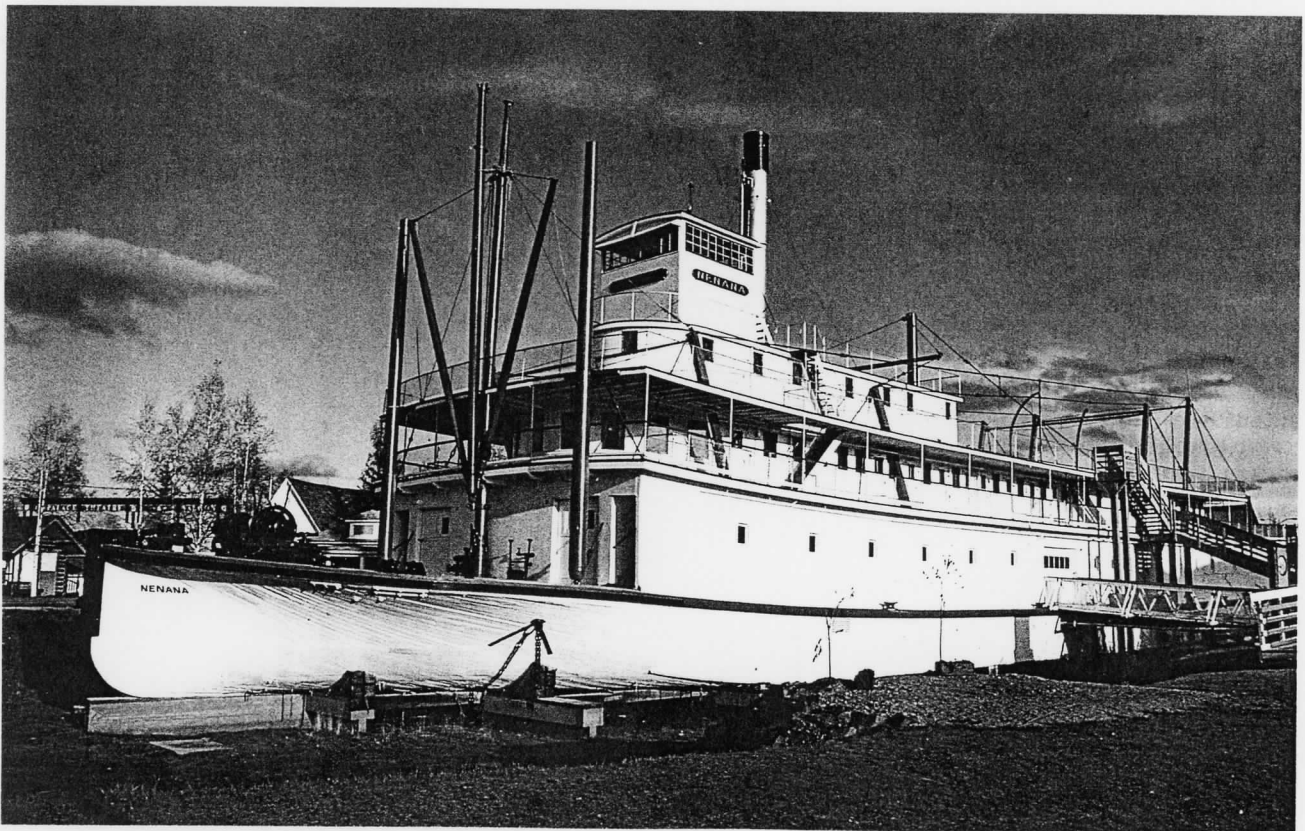
When fully laden with up to 300 tons of freight, the *Nenana* was capable of pushing five or six barges at one time. The wood-fired boiler consumed a cord of wood every hour, so regular stops had to be made along the river to take on the necessary amount, cut and stacked by pre-arrangement. During her five-month season, she would leave home port every two weeks for the 774-mile voyage to Marshall, near the mouth of the Yukon. Each fall, when the rivers started to freeze, she was laid up on wooden grids known as ways, high on the riverbank near Alaska Railroad's yard.

During World War II Alaska's remaining riverboats played an essential role in transporting the equipment and personnel needed to construct airfields and other military installations. Peacetime, however, spelled the final chapter for the vessels, unable to compete with roads and

The Last of Her Breed

A broadly based community effort in Fairbanks restores a historic Alaskan paddle wheeler.

By Alberta Eiseman



The *Nenana*, which transported cargo and passengers over Alaska's river network from 1933 until 1955, resides in a historical park called Alaskaland.

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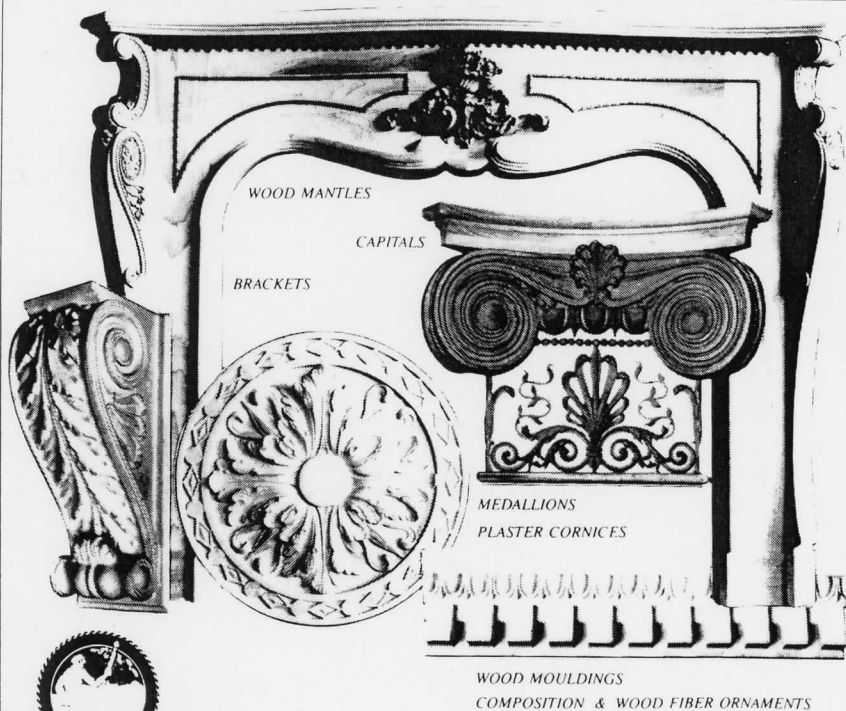
airplanes. In 1955 the *Nenana* was laid up to await potential bidders.

Two years later a group of businessmen associated with the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce purchased the vessel for \$40,000 and transferred her to their city. For several seasons her staterooms were opened to paying guests. Souvenir hunters had a field day. A reprieve seemed in sight when it was decided to make the *Nenana* the focal point of a historical park planned by the state to celebrate the centennial of the Alaska Purchase of 1867. The vessel was floated to a man-made pond in the center of the park, now known as Alaskaland. Surrounded by a group of small cabins that had been part of the original town of Fairbanks, the *Nenana* was a picturesque sight indeed. Yet many misadventures still awaited her.

She was converted into a year-round restaurant and bar, her interior gutted and rebuilt with no thought to its original character. A heating system created widespread rot and decay. At the same time, the hull was sorely damaged. When the City of Fairbanks commissioned a study from Columbia-Sentinel Engineers of Seattle in the fall of 1980, Kutz suggested building a temporary roof and a permanent concrete grid on which the *Nenana* is now securely nestled. These cost the city almost \$1 million, but saved the *Nenana*. Still, there was no agreement about what to do with her.

Enter John D. (Jack) Williams, the *Nenana's* knight in shining armor. One of the first concessionaires at Alaskaland, where he owns a small seasonal restaurant in partnership with his wife, Nancy, Williams had been appointed by the mayor to the commission that oversees the park. In spring 1987 Williams founded the Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation, of which he is now the executive director, and over the next five years the organization accomplished the herculean task of restoring the steamboat to its original condition. Kutz became the foundation's marine consultant—unpaid, for the time being, because all monies raised go back into the boat. Of the \$1.8 million spent on the restoration, forty percent has come from the community, seventeen percent from city and borough governments, and forty-three percent from the state.

The bow was stabilized and the temporary roof was removed. Workers resurfaced all of the decks. The most intimidating of jobs was the painting. Court-ordered community-service workers, inmates at a nearby halfway house, made



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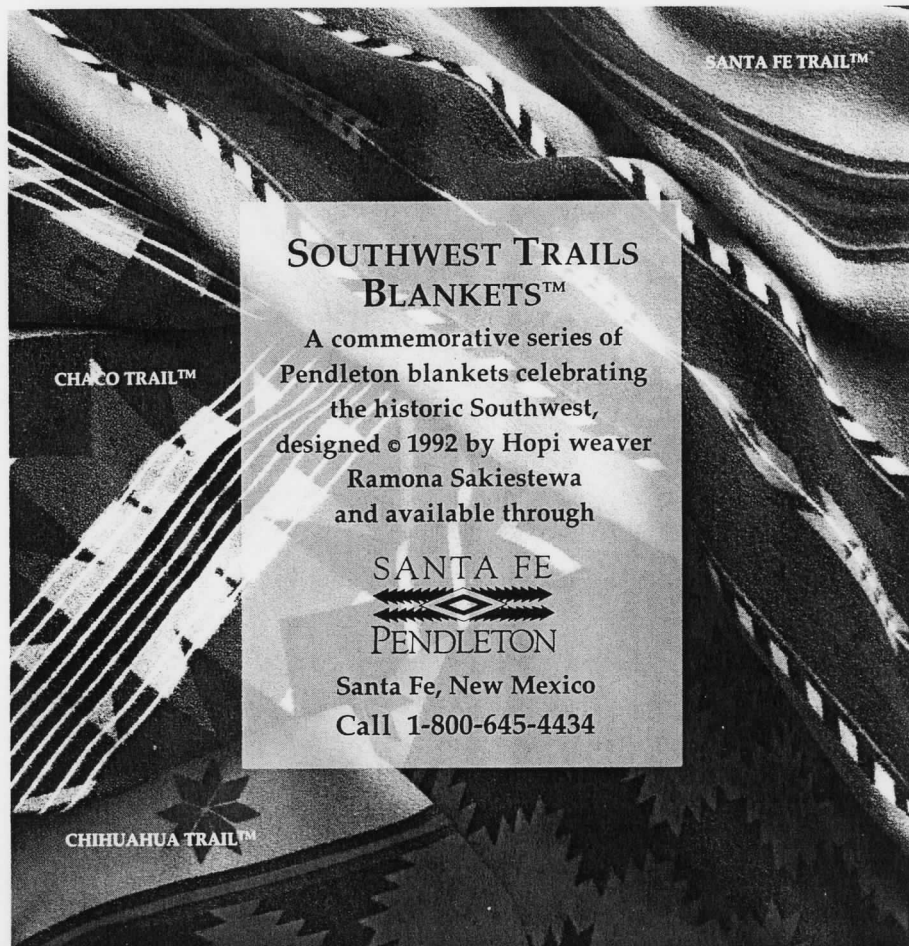
up a large portion of the work force, as did young people hired through a government-funded summer program. Two unions sent their apprentices to help. Even a third-grade class, familiar with the old riverboat from field trips, lent a collective hand to the paint scraping and contributed \$1,000 they had earned shoveling snow and selling brownies. All of the skilled painting and finishing work—outside and in—was done by one talented young painter, David Gruben.

In the interior of the vessel, all of the remodeling was ripped out. The state-rooms were rebuilt, each one funded by a \$1,000 donation from a Fairbanks resident. The mahogany paneling removed from walls and ceilings two decades earlier was replaced and finished with eleven coats of spar varnish. Old photographs and interviews with the *Nenana's* former captain and purser helped carpenters re-create such interior details as cabin doors, chairs, and tables. Most of the original dining room chairs were found in use at a local saloon.

A new steam engine—the gift of two local businessmen—turns the giant red paddle wheel, which dips three feet into the water surrounding the boat. The hull will remain dry, but the effect will be that of a working riverboat. Plans call for a 200-foot-long diorama along the bulkheads of the cargo deck, re-creating the scene along the rivers the *Nenana* once plied. The exhibit will highlight the interaction of riverboats with the native communities. "Many of the passengers came from native villages," Williams explained, "as did most crew members, woodcutters, and some of the trade goods."

For further authenticity, a former captain, Howard L. Adams, now a Seattle resident, has agreed to provide a collection of photographs taken by his wife, who was a passenger when he first met her. Adams served on the *Nenana* throughout the working life of the boat, starting as a fifteen-year-old mess boy. Reminiscing about the five-year effort, Williams recalls what Captain Adams said following the dedication ceremony last July: "I was standing in the lounge talking to people," the former captain told him, "when the thought hit me that I'd better get topside because we should be getting under way." That meant to me," Williams says with satisfaction, "that we don't need to worry about authenticity anymore." ▼

Alberta Eiseman is a Connecticut-based free-lance writer who has family ties in Alaska.



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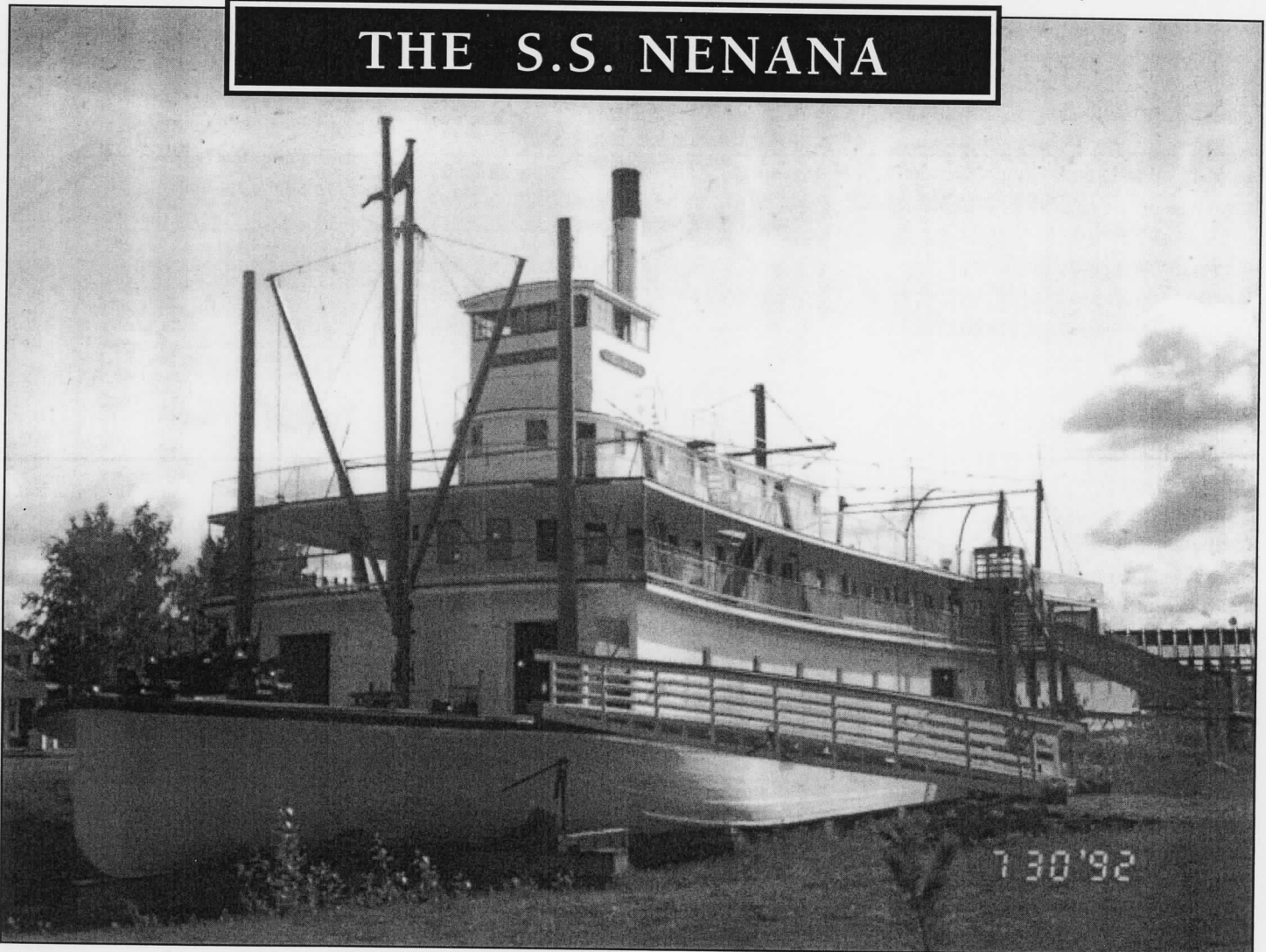
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The Last

PADDLE

THE S.S. NENANA



Nenana in her final resting place in Fairbanks.



WHEELER

In Alaska

By Marilyn Jesmain

Use materials as the basis for education, but treat them imaginatively.

Dr. John Merriam

From the time of skin-covered boats until the introduction of the airplane, transportation into Alaska's interior has moved along its rivers. During Alaska's formative years, hundreds of sternwheel steamboats played a vital role in developing frontier settlements along the Tanana and Yukon Rivers. Today, only one of the old paddle wheelers remains. The S.S. *Nenana*, the last lady of the river, was built in 1932 by the U.S. government. She was a culmination of over 200 years of riverboat design. Magnificent and state-of-the-art, she was the largest of all the wooden packet boats ever built in North America. For 20 years she brought supplies to miners and settlers and traded European goods to the native inhabitants. As a major participant in the transition of Alaska from a subsistence economy to capital development, she served the many residents of the lower Tanana and Yukon Rivers.

After her retirement in 1954, the Grand ol' Lady was moved upriver to Fairbanks, where she served as a temporary "boatel" during the oil boom. Later, to celebrate the purchase of Alaska from Russia, the *Nenana* was again moved, this time to her final mooring at Alaskaland Heritage Park.

In 1972, she was nominated to the National Registry, but serious misuse and neglect had begun to take its toll. The Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation was founded in 1987 around a concept of creating a public, nonprofit foundation dedicated to saving the old stern-wheeler.

From the very beginning, the wisdom of long-term preservation planning has characterized the *Nenana* project. With a concern for meticulous accuracy and historic authenticity, the restoration of the *Nenana* is the most important historic project currently under way in Alaska. In May of 1988, she was given the highest national recognition when designated as a Historic Landmark. To commemorate the completion of her restoration, a dedication celebration was held on July 12, 1992.

As beautiful as the restoration has become, the *Nenana* is more than a unique artifact frozen in time. The vessel's new role as a tourist attraction now evokes different concerns that need to be addressed. The responsibilities of the foundation have now changed from restoration to the operation of a museum facility.

In a recent Society for American Anthropology publication, "Actions for the '90s," it was stated that Americans need—indeed, deserve—to know about their heritage and the history and prehistory of the nation. Heritage interpretation is a way of

reaching out to the general public with facts concerning the past.

The tourism industry in Alaska is currently estimated at over \$500 million annually. It is the fastest growing and leading private-sector business in the state. Tourists come north to experience Alaska's esthetic landscape and to observe life in the wild. A forerunner in the field of interpretation, the natural sciences were the first to interpret facts in a form more interesting and intelligible to ordinary people.

To effectively portray the *Nenana's* service mission on the river and best represent the tremendous contribution she made to the people of Alaska, an interpretive center located in the cargo area was proposed. However, information alone, without personal involvement, can be dull. The essence of the center needed to go beyond a body of collected information to project her as a living embodiment of the past.

Turning historical research data into an enjoyable learning experience is the purpose of heritage interpretation. For that reason the foundation, which had orchestrated the restoration, began contemplating what type of exhibits would best tell her story. History is, after all, a continuing story of living people. To best represent the contribution the *Nenana* made to the heritage of our great state, the foundation focused on a cross-cultural three-dimensional miniature replication that would depict the many river com-

munities that the S.S. *Nenana* serviced during her life span.

A diorama is an art medium capable of conveying a story. A multimedia diorama is not simply a static showcase model. It has the broader capability of involving the viewer in a sensual experience. Using three-dimensional realistic miniatures involves a person in the visual message, but when sound and variations in light are added there is a feeling that one has become a part of the story.

When a visitor enters the cargo area of the *Nenana*, they see not just a lifelike model, but a landscape in time. There is a feeling of being a bird looking down on the world. The river is full of riverboats and canoes, the villages are humming with life, there is a rain-storm over Fort Gibbon, and the aurora borealis in all its grandeur ripples across the sky over Marshall. Elder Alaskans who see the diorama, recall walking down the streets in their youth. Former village residents recognize their homesteads, while out-of-town visitors feel as if they are taking a historic cruise down the river. One cannot help having an emotional response, for briefly each of us becomes a part of life in the past.

The foundation began the ambitious project in May of 1993. When completed, the diorama will be over 330 feet in length, making it the longest display of its type in the United States, possibly in the world. Over 86% complete, its projected completion is the summer of 1997.

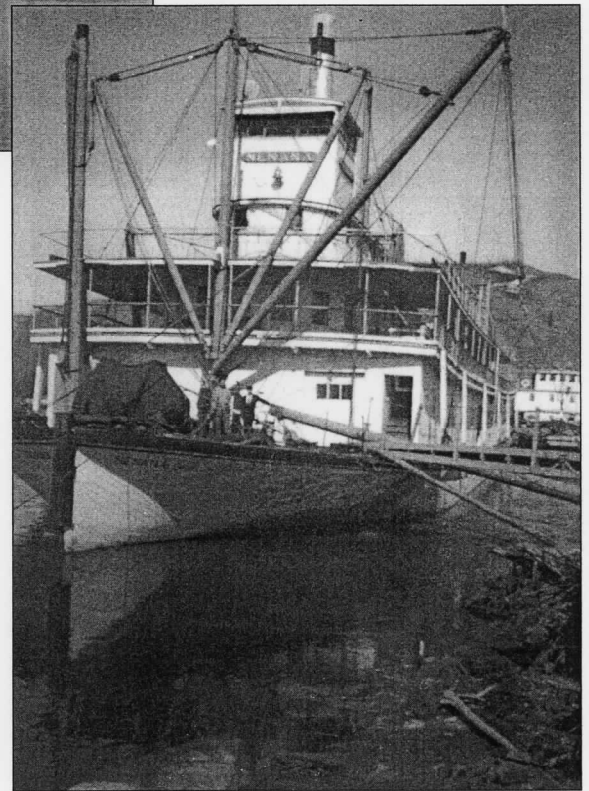
A time-line approach was chosen to best represent the wide variety of activities along the rivers. Each village is represented



LEFT: *Nenana* working on the Yukon.

BELOW: The S.S. *Nenana* in her prime at the village of Nenana, her home port.

RIGHT: Nestled in the center of Alaskaland Heritage Park, a historic theme park.



at its peak development. Fort Yukon is shown in 1867, the year Alaska was purchased from Russia. The town of Nenana is shown in 1932, the year the S.S. *Nenana* was constructed.

The major challenge in building the diorama was the scale. Even at 1/8-inch scale (1/8=1 ft), there was a problem in how to fit 2,000 miles of river and 22 villages into the limited space available. Dave Lyons, diorama development specialist, had to decide on how to best represent each village. Using selective compression, Lyons designed the model to give the illusion of more space and distance than actually exist.

The villages are also not isolated in just

the space along the rivers. A scenic mural was needed to match the colors and realism so exactly as to give the illusion of depth and space. As we look into the diorama, it

THE DIORAMA

Native village of Nulato on the Yukon as seen from Cemetery Hill.

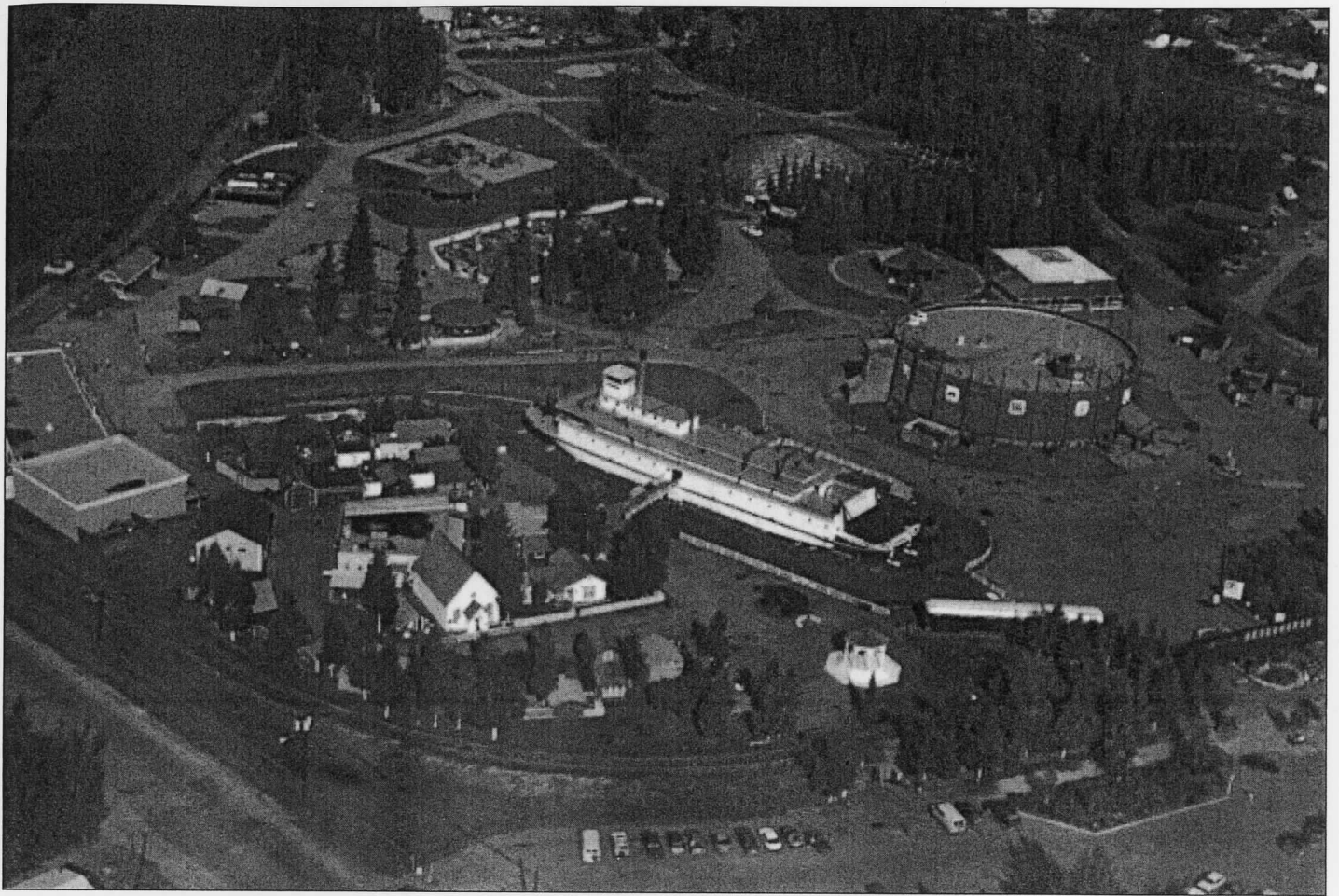


The village of Tanana in 1928, at the confluence of the Tanana and Yukon Rivers.



Settled on the Tanana River is the Athabaskan village of Old Minto (circa 1925).





is almost impossible to tell where three dimension fades into two dimension.

Stepping onto the *Nenana's* gigantic cargo area, we approach the diorama. Our first contact is with the town of Nenana. The *S.S. Nenana's* home port on the Tanana River was a vital junction between the rail-road and the riverboats. Because the rivers were the only highways into the interior, the town of Nenana was a disembarking point that brought outside commerce,

news, and supplies to isolated communities of the interior.

Passing Nenana, we continue down the Tanana River to the native village of Old Minto. It is an early spring morning on Minto Flats. We see the natives piling wood along the riverbank, where the steam-powered boats will stop to fill their decks with firewood. Farther down the river, we pass the Tolovana Roadhouse where the owner, as old-timers recall, still sits atop his sod

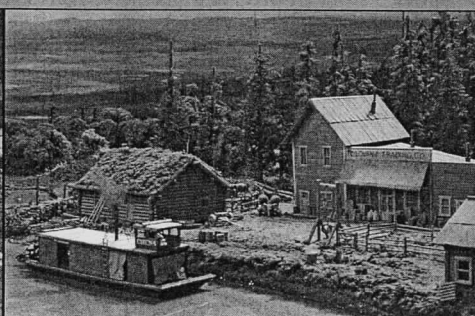
roof watching the boats go by. Passing Tolovana, we soon come to Chief Alexander's Fish Camp, where native fish wheels are scooping up the salmon that the natives are drying on the racks along the beach.

Historical accuracy is the cornerstone of the display. The incredible details of individual structures were laboriously replicated from archival photos. Homesteads, gold mines, fish camps, firewood stops,

Riverboat bringing supplies to a native village.



Tolovana Roadhouse and trading post on the Tanana River.



Tanana, circa 1917-1919, a main trading center and early army post on the Yukon River.



boats, wildlife, natives and white settlers, plus over 40,000 handmade spruce and deciduous trees are all realistically depicted.

For such an enormous undertaking, financing posed the biggest problem. From the very beginning, volunteers made the project feasible. Grade-school students, Boy Scouts, model enthusiasts, and interested locals willingly gave of their time. Volunteers, however, could not be expected to do all the work. There was the matter of thousands of trees and bushes. It was arranged for the residents of the local halfway house to perform their community service at the boat. This proved mutually advantageous.

During construction, the foundation sought to actively involve the Athabaskan community. In 1994, the Tanana Chiefs Conference officially recognized the importance of the exhibit to the history of the natives living along the Tanana and Yukon Rivers.

When the diorama is complete, visitors will experience life in interior Alaska. All the colors of spring, summer, fall, and winter, and the activities associated with each settlement, are vividly portrayed. Eventually, an audio recording by a resident of each village will be installed to tell the unique story of Alaska's early settlers. The accompanying sounds of the splashing of a paddle wheel and the squeal of the riverboat's whistle as she pulls into the dock will all make the experience appear very real.

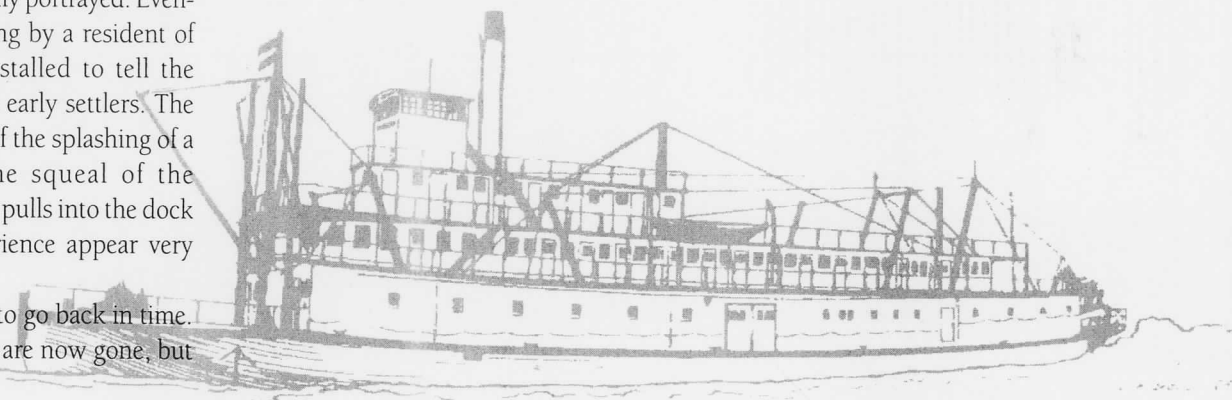
It is never possible to go back in time. Many of the old villages are now gone, but

in our minds and imagination, the Tanana and Yukon are again resonating to the thumping rumble of steam engines. Highways and air travel now connect the outlying villages with metropolitan centers. The *S.S. Nenana*, now restored to her original elegance, will never run the rivers of the interior again, but her stately structure continues to provide cultural, educational, and economic benefits for many years to come. Open for tourism from her enormous engine room to the pilot house, the *Nenana* now provides a sense of national identity by establishing a tangible link for future generations with Alaska's unique heritage. In conjunction with the interpretive center, the *Nenana* has the opportunity to affect the future of the state both as an educational experience and as a potential economic resource through increased tourism.

The *S.S. Nenana*, located in Alaskaland Historic Park in Fairbanks, is operated by the Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation and is open for tours seven days a week during the summer months.



Ms. Jesmain is the diorama artist and part of the heritage interpreters aboard the *S.S. Nenana*, and can be contacted at the Fairbanks Historical Preservation Foundation, P.O. Box 70552, Fairbanks, AK 99709.



Chief Alexander's Fish Camp on the Tanana.



The Railroad town of Nenana, where the famous *S.S. Nenana* was built, became her hometown.



Edgar Kallands Roadhouse played an important part in the Iditarod.



The Str. Nenana, only sternwheeler surviving from the days when steamboats provided passenger and freight service on Alaska's rivers, has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The Delta Queen is the only vessel now listed in the Register, which recognizes significance in local, state, and National history.

Although scores of steamboats plied Alaska's rivers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Nenana is the last of the breed not only in terms of survival, but also date of construction and termination of service. River traffic in the Forty-ninth State, once the equivalent of that on the Mississippi River system, had withered by the time the Alaska Railroad authorized the Nenana's construction in the early 1930's.

Two-hundred and thirty-six feet in length, the Nenana is broad in beam (42 feet) and was rated at over 1,000 gross tons when launched at Nenana in 1933. Unlike many boats which ran on northern rivers but were built on the west coast or in yards on the Mississippi and its tributaries, the Nenana was built at a small railroad town fifty miles southwest of Fairbanks.

During the first year's operation her hull was found to be too flexible and in the winter of 1934 the Nenana yard strengthened it, rebuilt the 28-foot sternwheel, and installed a smaller shaft to lighten the stern. Hydraulic steering gear replaced the previous armstrong rig at this time.

The Washington Iron Works in Seattle built 2 horizontal compound engines (600 h.p. each) and shipped them to Alaska for installation by the boat yard firm, Berg Construction. At first powered by wood-fired boilers that burned a dry cord of spruce each hour, they were converted to oil in 1948. Just before she was taken out of service the Nenana was, during the winter of 1952-1953, reconditioned by a Whitehorse, Canada, boatyard at a cost of \$164,409.20.

Intended as a packet, the Nenana offered accommodations for 52 passengers when she came out under Captain Charlie Adams. Andy Livingston was the first pilot to guide the sternwheeler through the uncharted waters of the Yukon. More like the free-running Mississippi than the pooled waters of some other rivers, the Yukon was a constant challenge. One picture in Alaska Railroad files shows a standard procedure---the mate taking soundings from a skiff while the Nenana cautiously followed.

Fifty to 100 tons of freight could be carried on the railroad boat's cargo deck, and when operating on the Yukon she could tow 5 or 6 barges. Sharp and short bends limited her to one barge when working on the Tanana River.

This service from the end of the government railroad running from Anchorage to Fairbanks provided the only cargo and passenger haulage in interior Alaska during summer months, and was replaced only to a limited extent in winter by sledged freight.

Today air freight supplants river traffic, but diesel towboats still travel the Yukon and its tributaries in warm months.

The Nenana usually operated on the Nenana and lower Yukon Rivers, although sometimes she went north of the Arctic Circle to Fort Yukon. On her normal 200-mile run to Marshall (120 miles from the Bering Sea), she made a round trip every two weeks between middle May and October first.

Although she stopped carrying passengers after the 1949 season, the Nenana continued to deliver freight to river villages until 1955. By then fuel costs and the expense of her 32-man crew made the boat too costly to operate, and she was leased to Yukon Barge Lines on a 22-year contract. Put at the end of the navigation season in 1955 she was laid up and offered for sale.

In June of 1956, Greater Fairbanks, Inc. acquired and operated her as a floating museum through 1957-1958. After a 3-day voyage with a volunteer crew in 1958, the sternwheeler was abandoned until 1965. Then officials of the Alaska Centennial celebration moved her to the outskirts of Fairbanks. During the nearly 10 years of neglect souvenir hunters had stripped brass fittings and small machinery from the boat, but the Centennial project restored her exterior and remodelled the cabin deck into a restaurant and lounge. The texas deck was fitted for use as a private club. A little theater stage replaced the Nenana's boilers.