

ALUTIAN WORLD WAR II
NATIONAL HISTORIC AREA

• 2010 CALENDAR



Courtesy Alaska State Library, Butler/Dale Photo Collection, p306-2841.

Photograph: Children of Attu Island, July 1941



Wone of his last acts as President, George W. Bush signed a proclamation on December 5, 2008 establishing Valor in the Pacific National Monument to honor Americans who sacrificed their lives, homes and livelihood for the cause of democracy and freedom during World War II. Nine sites located in Hawaii, Alaska and California comprise the new National Monument. In part, President Bush said:

Beginning at Pearl Harbor with the day of infamy that saw the sinking of the USS Arizona and ending on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, many of the key battles of World War II were waged on and near American shores and throughout the Pacific. We must always remember the debt we owe to the members of the Greatest Generation for our liberty. Their gift is an enduring peace that transformed enemies into steadfast allies in the cause of democracy and freedom around the globe.

Americans will never forget the harrowing sacrifices made in the Pacific by soldiers and civilians that began at dawn on December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu. The surprise attack killed more than 2,000 American military personnel and dozens of civilians and thrust the United States fully into World War II.

America responded and mobilized our forces to fight side-by-side with our allies in the European, Atlantic, and Pacific theaters. The United States Navy engaged in epic sea battles, such as Midway, and our Armed Forces fought

extraordinary land battles for the possession of occupied islands. These battles led to significant loss of life for both sides, as well as for the island's native peoples. Battlegrounds such as Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan, Guam, Peleliu, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa are remembered for the heroic sacrifices and valor displayed there. The conflict raged as far north as the Alaskan territory. The United States ultimately won the encounter in the Aleutian Island chain but not without protracted and costly battles.

There were also sacrifices on the home front. Tens of millions of Americans rallied to support the war effort, often at great personal cost. Men and women of all backgrounds were called upon as industrial workers, volunteers, and civil servants. Many Americans valiantly supported the war effort even as they struggled for their own civil rights.

In commemoration of this pivotal period in our nation's history, the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument adds nine historic sites to our national heritage of monuments and memorials representing various aspects

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument



Courtesy National Park Service.

of the war in the Pacific. Three sites are located in Alaska's Aleutian Islands (in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge). The first is the crash site of a Consolidated B-24D Liberator bomber—an aircraft of a type that played a highly significant role in World War II—located on Atka Island. The second is the site of Imperial Japan's occupation of Kiska Island, beginning in June 1942, which marks the northern limit of Imperial Japan's expansion in the Pacific. The third Aleutian designation is on Attu Island, the site of the only land battle fought in North America during World War II.

To read the full text of the proclamation, go to: http://home.nps.gov/pwr/customcf/apps/ww2ip/dsp_proclamation.cfm

This year's calendar gives tribute to those in the Aleutians who paid such a high price for their love of country. Forcibly removed from their home islands by the U.S. government, the Unangan (Aleuts) suffered through years of internment in makeshift

camps in southeast Alaska. To the end, they remained proud citizens of the country which abandoned them. Far from home, military men and women risked their lives to safeguard the freedoms we now still enjoy. Far from home, both Native Alaskan and military personnel from the "lower 48" suffered terrible loss during the Aleutian Campaign. For their sacrifice we owe them all a debt of gratitude.

Once again, we are grateful to all who so graciously donated photos and stories for use in this calendar. These calendars are put together largely from photos you have shared with us. This year, images and stories from the families of Charlton Heston, Mannert Abele, and Robert Johnson, and from veterans Robert Boon, David Hendrickson, Wiley Hunter, and Glen R. Ellis provide touching vignettes of those who served in the Aleutians.

Images for this year's calendar were also obtained from National Park Service sponsored research on the lost villages of Unalaska and Attu Islands, on the internment camps of southeast Alaska, and on the Japanese guns of Kiska. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contributed images as well from World War II sites located on the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

Through sharing these stories we continue to remember those who have quietly passed on and honor their contribution to our nation's history.



Second Lieutenant Glen R. Ellis, 18th Pursuit Squadron, Amchitka, 1943.

Photograph courtesy retired Lt. Col. Glen R. Ellis.

All Hands Lost: The Submarine USS *Grunion*



Stern of USS *Grunion* on launching ways, 1941. Electric Boat Company, Groton, CT. Courtesy St. Mary's Sub Museum.



Stern of USS *Grunion* as photographed by remote operated vehicle 3000 feet below sea level, 2007. Courtesy Abele family.

Abele, Mannert L.
Alexander, Frank E.
Allen, Daniel E.
Arvan, Herbert J.
Banes, Paul E.
Bedard, Leo J.I.
Blinston, Wesley H.
Bonadies, Nicholas R.
Boo, Robert F.
Bouvia, Chester L.
Caldwell, George E.
Carroll, Richard H.

Clift, John S.
Collins, Michael F.
Cooksey, Lee D.
Cullinane, Daniel
Cuthbertson, Wm. H., Jr.
Deaton, Lawrence D.
DeStoop, Albert E.
Devaney, William P., Jr.
Dighton, Samuel R., Jr.
Doell, Louis H., Jr.
Franck, Leon H.
Graham, Merritt D.

Hall, Kenneth E.
Hellensmith, Ernest G.
Henderson, Hollice B.
Hutchinson, Charles R.
Kennedy, Sylvester J.
Knowles, Edward E., Jr.
Kockler, Lawrence R.
Kornahrens, William G.
Ledford, Moore J.
Lehman, Woodrow W.
Loe, Sidney A.
Lunsford, Samuel, Jr.

Lyon, James W.
Martin, Carson R.
Martin, Thomas E.
Mathison, Ryder
McCutcheon, Richard G.
McMahon, John M.
Miller, Ernest C.
Myers, David O.
Nave, Frank T.
Newcomb, Arthur G.
Nobles, John W.
Pancoast, Jack E.

Parziale, Carmine A.
Paul, Cornelius, Jr.
Pickel, Bernard J.
Post, Arnold C.
Randall, William H.
Ryan, Loyal, Jr.
Sanders, Howard A.
Schumann, Elmer T.
Sullivan, Paul P.
Surofchek, Steven
Swartwood, David N.
Templeton, Samuel A.

Thomas, Millener W.
Traviss, Byron A.
Ullmann, Albert
Van Woggelum, Marshall F.
Walter, Melvin H.
Webster, Raymond E.
Welch, Donald F.
Wells, John H.
Wilson, John E., Jr.
Youngman, Ralph J.

January 2010

On Eternal Patrol

The Navy and the nation will always be grateful for their service and their sacrifice.



Lt. Cmdr. Mannert L. Abele

Courtesy Abele family.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|------------------------------|---------|-----------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | 1 New Year's Day | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 Last Quarter Moon | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 New Moon | 16 |
| 17 | 18 Martin Luther King Day | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 First Quarter Moon |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Full Moon |
| 31 | | | | | | |

On 30 July 1942, the USS *Grunion* on patrol north of Kiska radioed to Dutch Harbor, "... at 1435 and 1516 heard moderately heavy gunfire to north of Kiska. Have 10 torpedoes forward remaining ." The sub was never heard from again. For 66 years the *Grunion* has been on the books as missing, cause unknown.

In August 2007, as a result of a collaborative effort with individuals from all over the world, the sub commander's sons used a remote operated vehicle to videotape a shipwreck 3000 feet below sea level. Roughly a year later, the Navy confirmed that the wreck was the USS *Grunion*, the sub commanded by their father.

To learn more go to ussgrunion.com. To contact the brothers go to: mbabele@999info.net.

Internment: Funter Bay



Funter Bay Cannery, Funter Bay, Alaska.
Courtesy Alaska State Library.

February 2010

We were dreadfully homesick. We didn't like the trees. The children called them "leaves on sticks" and "old stalks of celery." At Funter Bay we couldn't go walking because the trees were in the way.

– Alice Tutiakoff, St. George, Pribilof Islands

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|------------------------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Last Quarter Moon | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 New Moon Valentine's Day | 15 President's Day | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 First Quarter Moon | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 Full Moon | | | | | | |

Funter Bay, 2008. Courtesy NPS.



Mary [Kozloff] Bourdukofsky and Mary Kushin washing clothes at Funter Bay.

Courtesy Fredericka Martin Album, Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Department, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

An abandoned cannery on the shore of Funter Bay was one of five relocation camps in southeast Alaska where Unangan were sent during the war. Like the other places, the Funter Bay cannery was barely habitable. The Unangan were forced to live in deplorable conditions, without sanitary water or sewage systems in the ramshackle bunkhouse and cottages which had previously housed cannery workers. During the two years they stayed at the camp, several people died and were buried in a cemetery close by.

Today, the land where the cannery stood has been sub-divided and sold. Most of the old buildings are collapsed, in ruins, or exist as only a trace, but a few have been renovated. The cemetery, refurbished by the Unangan, was the site of a 50th anniversary of internment commemorative service.



At Dutch Harbor. Warrant Officer Plunkett (far left), Robert Johnson, trombone (row 1), unknown trombone (row 2), Ralph Beauchamp, drum major (row 3), James Craig, trombone (row 4), Henderson, trombone (row 5).

The 206th Coast Artillery Band



Troops enjoy a show at Dutch Harbor. Courtesy Alaska State Library.



Fighting boredom at Dutch Harbor with a song. Bobby Boon (far right), Bob Johnson (4th from left) Phil Cassiopo (2nd from left), James Craig (upper right). Courtesy Stephanie Johnson Dixon.

March 2010

*What makes a lady of eighty go out on the loose?
 Why does a gander meander in search of a goose?
 What puts the kick in a chicken, the magic in June?
 It's just Elmer's tune.*

– Glenn Miller



Staff Sgt. Robert T. Johnson.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|----------|--------|---------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| Last Quarter Moon | | | | | | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| Daylight Savings Time Begins | New Moon | | | | | First Day of Spring |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| | | First Quarter Moon | | | | |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |
| | | Full Moon | | | | |

The Arkansas National Guard 206th (Anti-aircraft) Coast Artillery served many roles during their lengthy stay at Dutch Harbor but may be best loved for their role in entertaining the troops. Over the course of the war, the 206th band marched in parades, greeted troop ships, played hymns at the chapel and funeral ceremonies. They entertained at weekly dances at the NCO and Officer's Club, attended by the ever popular female nurses. The entertainment they provided broke up the boredom and monotony of the service men's daily lives.

–From Stephanie Johnson Dixon,
*What Daddy (and Mother)
 Did in the War, 2007*

The band at Dutch Harbor. Members left to right: Boles (piano), 1st row: Sarf, Reshke, Robert Boon, Lawrence McKinistry (standing), Newt Williams (at table). 2nd Row: Bob Johnson, Henderson, unknown, Stuart Rogers, Virgil Baugh; bass horn player obscured. Photos courtesy Stephanie Johnson Dixon (unless otherwise noted), from the collection of Robert T. Johnson, 206th Coast Artillery Band, El Paso, Texas (Ft. Bliss), Dutch Harbor & Amchitka, Aleutian Islands, 1941-1945.

The Japanese Guns of Kiska

Unequivocally, the Japanese guns on Kiska are the best preserved in the entire Pacific.

– Dirk DH Spennemann

This 1894 gun is arguably the single-most significant gun in the entire Pacific. Originally part of the British-built Japanese battleship *Fuji*, it is tangible evidence of the beginning of British-Japanese military cooperation in the early 1900s, which led Japan to align herself with the Allies in World War I. At war's end, Japan was given the former German colonies of Micronesia, and thus established herself as a major colonial power in the region. It was from these islands that Japan attacked the U.S. possessions of Wake Island and Guam on the same day as the attack on Pearl Harbor. World War II had come to the Pacific.

April 2010

[There was] very intense flak [at Kiska]. I was surprised. I was well into Europe after I left there before I saw any flak that I thought was much . . . heavier.

– George I Ruddell pilot, 54th Fighter Squadron, Amchitka



NPS photo courtesy Bruce Greenwood.

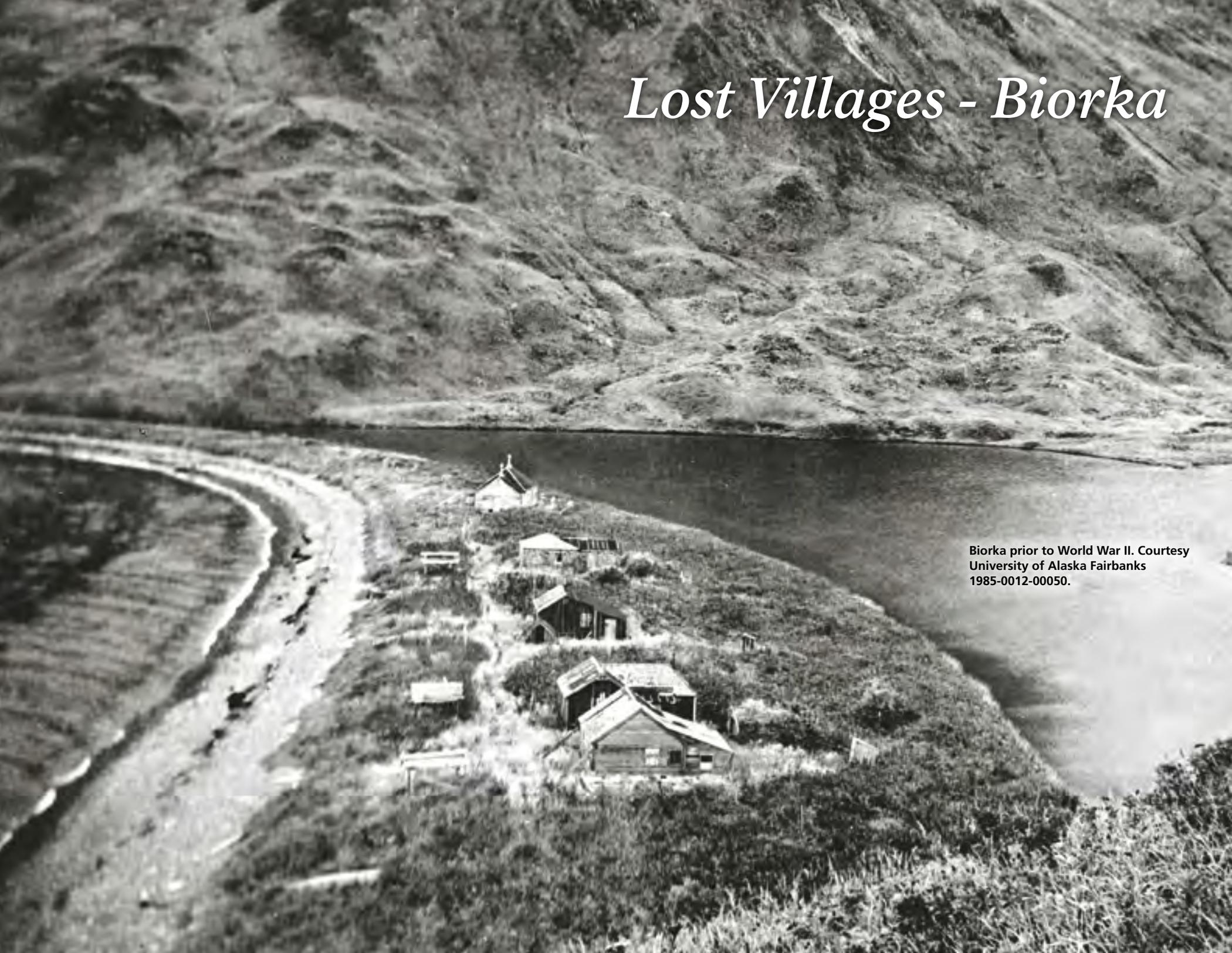
Dirk HR Spennemann photographs the Eastern gun, South Head Battery, Kiska Island as part of the 2007 gun condition assessment project.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|-------------------|--------------------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Easter | | Last Quarter Moon | | | | |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | | | New Moon | | | |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| | | | First Quarter Moon | | | |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |
| | | | Full Moon | | | |

75mm single gun, South Head, Kiska Island. Photo courtesy Dirk HR Spennemann.

On June 7, 1942, the Japanese No. 3 Special Landing Party and 660 Marines went ashore at Kiska and immediately set to work to develop the island into a major base from which to launch sea planes and submarine operations. To protect the installations, they established a deep defense system comprised of coastal defense guns, controlling the approaches to Kiska Harbor, as well as a cordon of anti-aircraft gun batteries. U.S. Army and Navy squadrons maintained bombing, strafing and photographic missions over Kiska on 349 of the 435 days that elapsed between the Japanese occupation of Kiska and the US and Allied landing in August 1943. In 2007 a gun condition assessment was conducted through a National Park Service partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Lost Villages - Biorka



Biorka prior to World War II. Courtesy
University of Alaska Fairbanks
1985-0012-00050.

May 2010

Government officials refused to fund the restoration of four communities, virtually ringing the death knell for Attu, Biorka, Kashega and Makushin.

Dean Kohlhoff, author, *When the Wind Was a River*



Remnants of the old village of Biorka, circa 1980s.

Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks 1989-0210-00001.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 Last Quarter Moon | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Mother's Day | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 New Moon | 15 Armed Forces Day |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 First Quarter Moon | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 Full Moon | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 Memorial Day | | | | | |

The village of Biorka was built on a narrow strip of land separating the salty ocean from a fresh water lake (top and above). In 1942, eighteen people in Biorka, living in four households, were forced to abandon their homes when the U.S. Government transported them to Southeast Alaska. They lived at an old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp at Ward Lake until the end of the war (1945). Most of the village residents were resettled in Akutan after the war, but several returned to Biorka where they stayed only a few years. During their absence storms had damaged the houses making it difficult to remain. Today the village of Biorka no longer exists and only one small structure is left standing.

The only structure left on Biorka, July 1998. Courtesy Marie Lowe.

Miracles by Appointment only



"Seabees Hive, Dutch Harbor, Alaska," William F. Draper,
Oil on board; 1942, 88-189-Q. Courtesy U.S. Navy Art Collection.

W F Draper 1942
88-189-Q

June 2010

“We Build, We Fight” – Seabees can do with willing hearts and skillful hands, the difficult we do at once, the impossible takes a bit longer ...

Official Seabee Motto



Sailors walk down Adak’s “Main Street.” Left to right: Carpenter’s mate 2/c Fred Werberg, Coxswain Leonard Hopkins, Gunner’s Mate 2/c Ted Cross and Fireman 1/c Charles Scott.

Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks UAF-1970-11-104.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------|----------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 Last Quarter Moon | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 New Moon |
| 13 | 14 Flag Day | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 First Quarter Moon |
| 20 Father's Day | 21 Summer Begins | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Full Moon |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

The highly respected Construction Battalions – or Seabees as they were known – were comprised of men who had left lucrative civilian jobs to volunteer their special skills to the Navy. Battalions of Seabees are credited with the big gun emplacements; acres of tank farms; catacombs filled with torpedos and bombs; runways; hangars; warehouses; and miles of barracks at Dutch Harbor. From there the Seabees and Army Engineers moved westward to provide similar constructions on other islands in the push towards Attu and Kiska.

The Seabees had several unofficial mottos, including: “Can do!” and “Miracles by appointment only.”

Seabees install interlocking Marston matting in a mile-a-minute gale at an Aleutian base from which American planes take off to bomb Paramushiro, Japan. The Aleutian winter is one of constant freezing and thawing which at times turns the roads and runways into quagmires of almost impassable mud. Marston mat provides a more stable surface for aircraft take-off and landings. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection.

*Time on
their Hands*



Pilots play cribbage between missions against the Japanese.
Photo courtesy National Archives

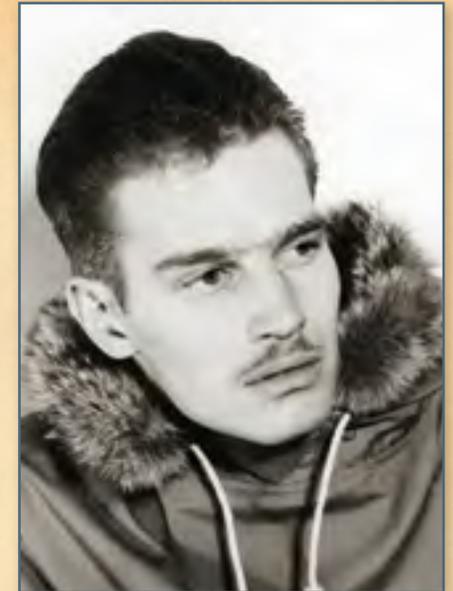
July 2010

A woman behind every tree.

Common Sarcastic Lament in the Aleutians During WWII

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|-----------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 Independence Day Last Quarter Moon | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 New Moon | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 First Quarter Moon | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 Full Moon | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Sunbathing in the Aleutians. From left to right, medium bomber pilots Lt's John K. Zwicky, Ernest R. Grey, and Phillip M. Lynett. Courtesy National Archives.



Courtesy of the Heston Family, from the collection of Charlton Heston

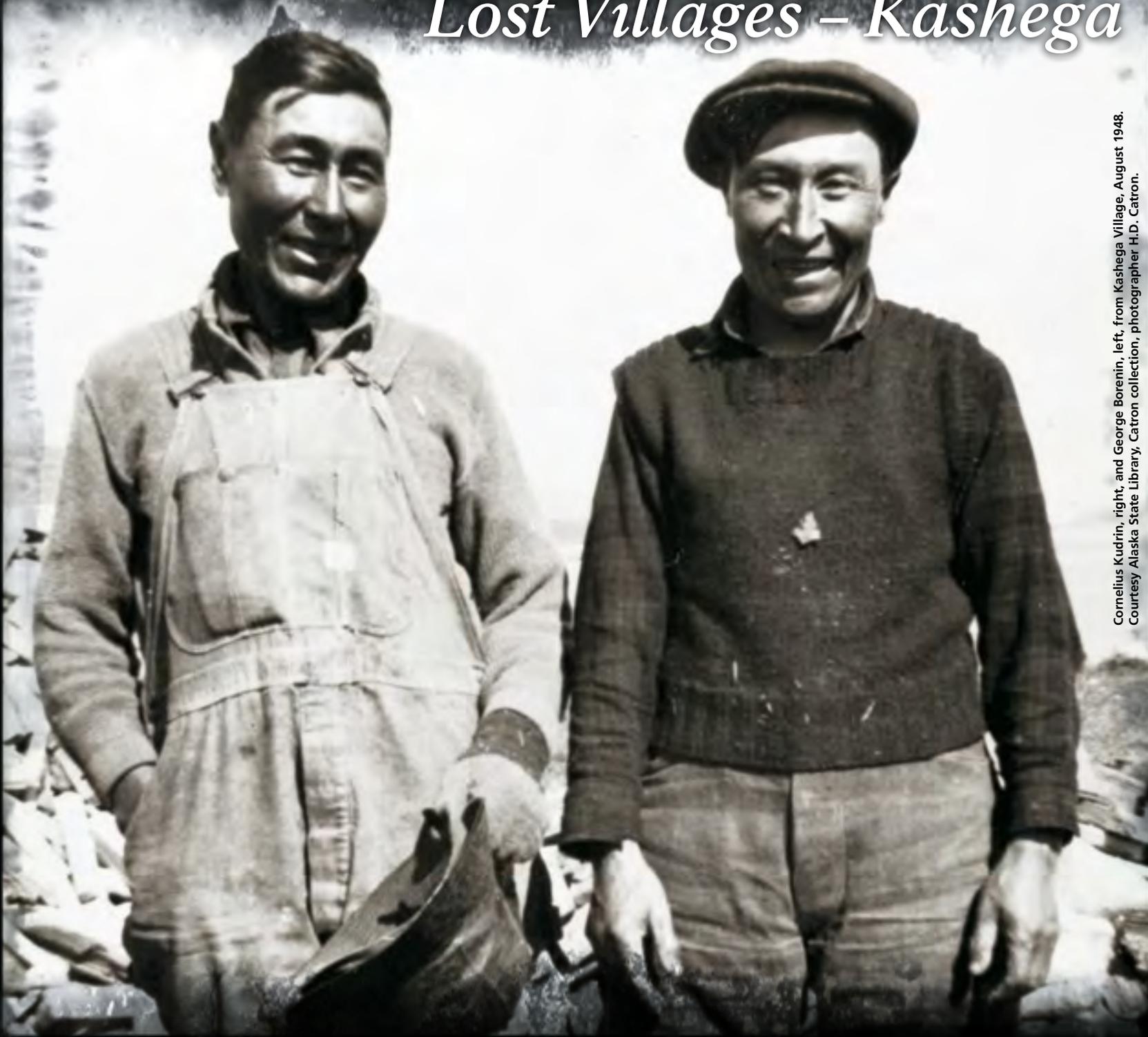
Charlton Heston, 11th Air Force, Aleutian Islands & Alaska, 1944.

Charlton Heston served in the 77th Bomb Squadron on Attu for two years late in the war. Air strikes were on-going against the Kurile Islands but as the war wound down there was less and less to occupy a young man's time. He remembered tension among the men:

We rarely flew and were seldom in harm's way, unless you take the weather into account. So, for the rest of the war, there we were. Our offensive role abandoned, we awaited the return of the Japanese, an increasingly unlikely event. The absence of women raised the level of tension, though God knows their presence would've brought it to explosive levels. I got into the last fistfight of my life over a chess game.

—from *In the Arena: An Autobiography* by Charlton Heston

Lost Villages – Kashega



Cornelius Kudrin, right, and George Borenin, left, from Kashega Village, August 1948.
Courtesy Alaska State Library. Catron collection, photographer H.D. Catron.

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August 2010

After the war ended, the Unangan began to assess their destroyed homeland. Seven historic churches were damaged or destroyed. Villages were unrecognizable or burned to the ground and personal belongings lost or stolen.



Courtesy University of Alaska Anchorage, Ted Bank Collection, circa 1954.

George Borenin at Kashega holding a *kamleika* –a raincoat made of sea mammal intestines.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 Last Quarter Moon | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 New Moon | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 First Quarter Moon | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 Full Moon | | | | |

George Borenin, caretaker of the Chapel of the Transfiguration at the abandoned village of Kashega, Unalaska Island. Janet Bank (Ted Bank's wife) to right. Courtesy University of Alaska Anchorage, Ted Bank II Collection, circa 1954.

When they returned from internment in South-east Alaska, the villagers from Biorka, Makushin, and Kashega were told that they would have to move to Akutan or Unalaska. Two former Kashega residents, George Borenin and Cornelius Kudrin, decided after World War II to re-establish their homes in Kashega. For at least part of their attempted resettlement, the two men lived on separate ends of the village and barely interacted with one another. By 1954 Cornelius had left and George was the only inhabitant of Kashega. That year, anthropologist Ted Bank II took a series of pictures of George—at the church, on the beach, operating a radio, and holding a *kamleika* (raincoat made of sea mammal intestines). Within a few more years even George Borenin had left Kashega and moved to Unalaska.

Bloody Attu

We had started a big attack up the floor of Massacre Valley ... and they began to dump everything they had on us, mortars, machine guns, rifles, some mountain guns – the works.

– Robert Mitchell



Japanese snipers, half hidden by fog in the hills in the background, pin down Allied troops near Massacre Beach. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection.

September 2010



American machine gun nest in the front lines of Attu. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection.



Japanese helmet* removed from Attu. Object courtesy of the Museum of the Aleutians. Photo by Archgraphics.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|----------------|---------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------|----------|
| | | | 1 Last Quarter Moon | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 Labor Day | 7 | 8 New Moon | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 First Quarter Moon | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 Full Moon | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

U.S. 105s fire into the Attu hills from Massacre Beach. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection.

“The Jap(anese) held positions in places where it was almost impossible to get to them with anything but the artillery because the ground was naked as Adam; and so the 105s were pounding away almost constantly ... while the doughboys got up from behind little knobs in the ground that wouldn’t adequately hide a small jackrabbit and moved in closer.”

– LT. DARWIN M. KRYSTALL,
Battery B, 49th Field
Artillery Battalion

*Due to a lack of raw materials, the Japanese were forced to use unalloyed steel in the construction of helmet Model 92. Relatively brittle, these helmets were often found on Attu with holes cracked out of the metal, or entire sections blown away. Others were found split completely in two, broken as neatly as a boiled egg by U.S. fire.

Atka's B-24 Boxcar

Time was running out ... we only had fifteen to twenty minutes of daylight left, and maybe half an hour or so of fuel. So it was time to make a decision ... land on the water, land on the beach, or land going up the mountainside?

Captain John Andrews

B-24 crash site, Bechevin Bay, Atka Island. Courtesy Steve Hillebrand, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

October 2010



Courtesy National Archives.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | | | | Last Quarter Moon | |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| | | | | New Moon | | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| | Columbus Day | | | First Quarter Moon | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| | | | | | | Full Moon |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| | | | | | | Last Quarter Moon |
| 31 | | | | | | |
| Halloween | | | | | | |

On December 9, 1942 a B-24 Liberator on a weather reporting mission found its home base socked in. With stations up and down the chain reporting zero visibility, Captain John Andrews caught a glimpse of land on Atka Island through the soup. Running low on fuel, daylight and options, Andrews opted to ditch on land. All crew members were ordered onto the flight deck, the strongest part of the plane, and braced for the crash. Andrews brought the plane down low over the water, then made a belly landing on the frozen tundra in an explosive racket. The plane skidded 150 feet before all was silent. Fortunately, the crew survived the crash with few injuries. After spending an uncomfortable night under the wing of the airplane, the crew was found and later picked up, cold and tired but otherwise unharmed.

The wreckage was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 and recently became part of Valor in the Pacific National Monument.

(Nicknamed the “Flying Boxcar” because of its spacious, slab-sided fuselage, the B-24 was also disparaged as the “Flying Coffin” for its tendency to catch fire when attacked and the near impossibility of the forward crew members to escape through the lone rear exit.)

B-24 Liberator. Photo courtesy U.S. Air Force.

U.S. Coast Guard

*Full many a sailor points with pride
To cruises o'er the ocean wide;
But they cannot compare with me,
For I have sailed the Bering Sea.
While though you've weathered fiercest gale
And every ocean you have sailed;
You cannot a salty sailor be
Until you've sailed the Bering Sea*

– THE BOOK OF NAVY SONGS



USS *Albuquerque* crew on shore leave. Left to right: Joe Rose, Wilbur Lee, David Hendrickson, Ralph Kelly, John Griffin, Sal Gonzales, Bob Sherfick, and Don Holman. Photo courtesy David Hendrickson, USCG, Aleutian Islands.



USS *Albuquerque*. Photo courtesy David Hendrickson, USCG, Aleutian Islands.

November 2010

Scotch Cap Light on the Pacific side of Unimak Pass was Alaska's first coastal light erected in June, 1903. Cape Sarichef Light, marking the western passage to Unimak Pass, was the second coastal light in the State and the only manned light in the United States at the time.



David Hendrickson S 1/c, October 1944.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|---|--------|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 Election Day | 3 | 4  | 5 | 6 New Moon |
| 7 Daylight Savings Time Ends | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 Veteran's Day | 12 | 13 First Quarter Moon |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 Full Moon | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Thanksgiving Day | 26 | 27 |
| 28 Last Quarter Moon | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

Scotch Cap Light, courtesy U.S. Coast Guard.

In April 1944, Coxswain David Hemming Hendrickson aboard U.S. Coast Guard Patrol Frigate USS *Albuquerque* caught site of Scotch Cap light guarding Unimak Pass, announcing the ship's arrival in the Aleutian Islands. For the duration of the war *Albuquerque* provided escort, patrol and life saving services in the Bering Sea. Hendrickson remembers:

From April to August Albuquerque escorted 22 convoys for a total of 84 days at sea in what seemed endless stop and go from Monotony to Boredom to Apathy, a.k.a. in any order, Dutch Harbor, Adak, Attu.

—From: Cold Sea – Lonely Sea: A Bering Sea Odyssey Aboard A Patrol Frigate in World War II by David Hendrickson

A Soldier's Christmas



*Christmas in the Adak hospital
sponsored by the USO.
Courtesy Anchorage Museum
of History and Art.*

December 2010

The men went out behind the camp and gathered arm loads of brown-green tundra moss and fastened it together with bailing wire in the shape of a tree. Shavings from a bar of soap served as artificial snow and Christmas tree decorations were empty 50-caliber shells.

"Forgotten Front," *Colliers*, 27 March 1943



Courtesy Hunter family

Wiley and Marge Hunter, 1942. Marjorie was a "war bride" and spent two years alone while her beloved husband served in Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

A Poem for Christmas 1945

*'Twas the nights before Xmas
In the years since forty-one
We were in the service,
And you were waiting home.*

*Your lights were low—and
Ours in dark subjection.
Yours for the Xmas spirit,
And ours to save detection.*

*Your sweets came quite on time,
in boxes torn,
Though dextrose in the solid form
Conveyed your thoughts for us
On Xmas morn.*

*And now, returned to home
And Xmas fellowship of old—
Our hearts are glad with you
That peace is here again.*

—Wiley Hunter,
65th Anti-aircraft unit, Aleutian Islands

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---------------|--------------------------|--|----------------|----------|--------|---------------|
| | | | 1 Full Moon | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 New Moon | 6 | 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 First Quarter Moon | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 Full Moon First Day of Winter | 29 | 30 | 31 | Christmas Day |
| | | Last Quarter Moon | | | | |

Soldiers shovel snow off the roof of a Quonset hut after a storm. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection.

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area



During World War II the remote Aleutian Islands, home to the Unangan (Aleut people) for over 8,000 years, became one of the fiercely contested battlegrounds of the Pacific. This thousand-mile-long archipelago saw the first invasion of American soil since the War of 1812, a mass internment of American civilians, a 15-month air war, and one of the deadliest battles in the Pacific Theatre.

In 1996 Congress designated the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area to interpret, educate, and inspire present and future generations about the history of the Unangan people and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the United States in World War II. In a unique arrangement, the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area and visitor center are owned and managed by the

Ounalashka Corporation (the village corporation for Unalaska) and the National Park Service provides them with technical assistance. Through this cooperative partnership, the Unangan are the keepers of their history and invite the public to learn more about their past and present.

For information about the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area, visit our web site at: www.nps.gov/aleu/ or contact:

Alaska Affiliated Areas
240 West 5th Ave
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 644-3503

Ounalashka Corporation
P.O. Box 149
Unalaska, Alaska 99685



Antiaircraft gunner, Aleutian Campaign.
Courtesy Museum of the Aleutians.



Visitor Information (907) 581-1276
Visitor Center (907) 581-9944