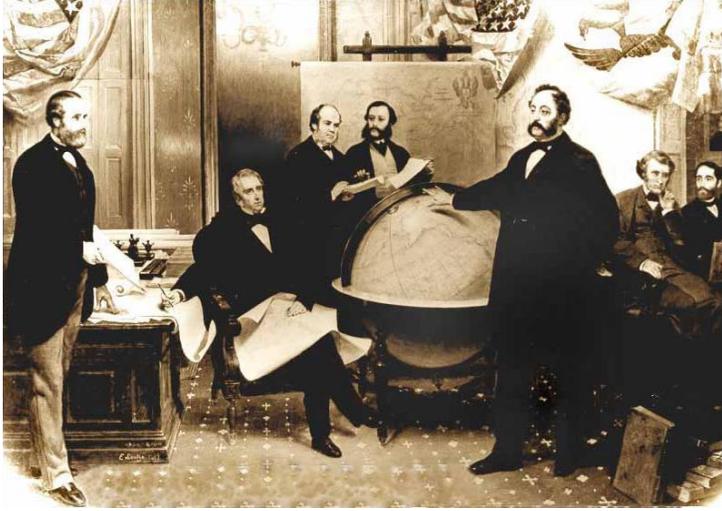




Centennial Celebration: August 19 - 21, 2010



"The Signing of Treaty of Cession, March 30, 1867," by Emanuel Leutze / Alaska State Library, P243-1-086

2010 International Conference on Russian America

To mark our role as a caretaker of key aspects of our history, Sitka National Historical Park on August 19-21, 2010 will co-sponsor the 2010 International Conference on Russian America with the International Association of Specialists on the Study of Russian America. Scholars from Russia, the United States and other countries will be invited to present original research on three aspects of Russian America – the lifeways of the various communities here, the interrelations between those communities, and the extent to which New Archangel (the Russian name for Sitka) was truly a center of culture and learning, or what was popularly described as “the Paris of the Pacific.”

Rich Historic Topics to Explore and Debate

Was Sitka the Paris of the Pacific? The Conference will use all the tools at the historian's disposal to dive deeply into that question, and the focus on lifeways and culture in Russian America. Scholars from around the world will be invited to submit and present papers on those subjects, while workshops will explore the techniques of oral history and comparative culture, and historical archeologists will both talk about and perhaps demonstrate their work.



St. Michael's Cathedral / courtesy of Berek

Sitka: Native Alaskan and European Cultures Mix

Conferees will have access to a number of optional tours of local and remote historic sites. Sitka's Russian tradition is rich and deep. It is the site of one of just four buildings that still remain from the Russian era in all of North America, the Russian Bishop's House. Sitka National Historical Park is of course the site of the Battle of 1804 between the Russian forces and the Kiks.adi clan of the Tlingit people. Sitka is home to several museums with

artifacts and exhibits from the Russian era, including the Sitka Historical Society Museum, the Sheldon Jackson Museum and the exhibits at the Visitor's Center of the Park. A replica of the original St. Michael's Cathedral, the Orthodox Church, is located in the center of Sitka, as is Castle Hill, the site of the transfer of Alaska from Russia to the United States in 1867.

Sitka: A Postcard of Russian-American History

The conference planners are exploring some additional program events that will offer an enhanced experience for those who plan to attend. The Russian presence in the Sitka environs included the original settlement at Redoubt St. Michael, reachable by road about 7 miles north of the city center. The pits used to produce charcoal for the colony are located on the lower elevations of Mt. Verstovia on the eastern edge of the city. Two sites used by Tlingit, Russian and American residents over several centuries for fish processing and health cures are reachable by boat. More remote sites associated with the events surrounding the Battle of 1804 are also within reach. We plan one optional waterborne trip to one or more of these sites. The 2010 International Conference on Russian Ameri-

ca will offer a varied program of learning opportunities. We are excited to be able to offer this event to help advance our understanding of the people and events that shaped all of our lives.



1827 Illustration of Castle Hill (Old Sitka), by Postels / courtesy of Alaska Dept of Natural Resources