

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Fourth Avenue Theatre (AHRS SITE NO. ANC-284)

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 4 of 4

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EXP. 12/31/11

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date entered

brochure adds a bit more of his saga:

"This theatre was built expecially for Alaskans. . .It is the culmination of a sincere wish to bring to the people of Anchorage, and visitors from all parts of Alaska, a theatre unexcelled on the American continent. . ."

Of the thousands of people who have since been entertained at the 4th Avenue Theatre, most will agree that Lathrop succeeded well in fulfilling his devout wish. 4th Avenue Theatre is a monument to a very prominent Alaskan, and an exceptional example of the now-rare Architectural fad style known as "Art Deco." Cap Lathrop first dreamed of such a structure about 1916. He prepared to build in the 1930's, and most definatly, by 1941. Then, when World War II halted the plans, Lathrop still perservered until his dream became reality as "The Showplace of Alaska."

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

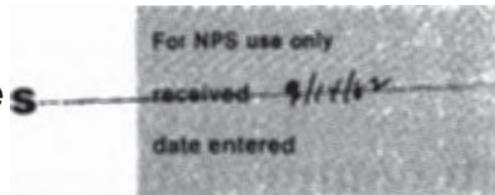
**National Register of Historic Places**  
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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

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Atwood, Evangeline, and Robert DeArmond Who's Who in Alaska Politics, Binford & Mort, Portland, 1977.

Evans, Walter "Seattle's Mr. Architect," Seattle Post - Intelligencer, Portland, 1977, October 5, 1971, p. C-14.

Ferber, Edna Ice Palace, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1958.

Greuning, Ernest Many Battles, Liveright, New York, 1973.

Heinsbergen, A.B. Personal Correspondence (January 6, 1978).

Ray, Joan "Cap Lathrop: Hard Work Made an Alaskan Millionaire," The Great Lander, Volume 7, Number 37 (August 20, 1975).

**TAB 8**



# PATTERNS OF THE PAST

AN INVENTORY OF ANCHORAGE'S HERITAGE RESOURCE

## MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

George M. Sullivan, *Mayor*

### Municipal Assembly

|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Paul Baer       | Ben Marsh           |
| Bill Besser     | Dave Rose           |
| Ernie Brannon   | Lidia Selkregg      |
| <i>Chairman</i> | Don Smith           |
| Fred Chiei      | Arliss Sturgulewski |
| Tony Knowles    | David Walsh         |

### Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jim Bridges                 | Dee Lane                  |
| Jim Bruce                   | William Liston            |
| Phyllis Carlson             | <i>Chairman (present)</i> |
| Cliff Cernick               | John Longacre             |
| Kit Crittenden              | Wilda Marston             |
| <i>Chairman (1976-1978)</i> | Beverly Pierce            |
| Wes Greg                    | Beverly Power             |
| Michael Kennedy             |                           |

*Covers: On the front cover is Club 25 as it appeared in 1916; and on the back cover is the Crow Creek Mine's messhall as it appears today.*

*The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the author and commission and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government in general or HUD in particular. Neither the United States nor HUD makes any warranty, expressed or implied, nor assumes responsibility for this report's accuracy or completeness.*

# **PATTERNS OF THE PAST:**

## **AN INVENTORY OF ANCHORAGE'S HERITAGE RESOURCES**

**Prepared for the Municipality of Anchorage,  
Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission**

**Prepared by Michael E. Carberry, Planning Department**

**January 1979**

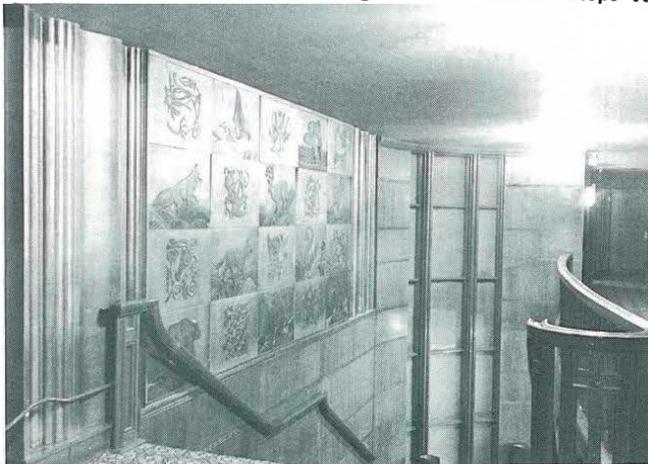
seasonal basis during periods of congressional recess. Senators Ted Stevens and Mike Gravel now staff full-time offices there. Representatives who have had offices in the Federal Building include Congressman Nick Begich and Congressman Don Young who currently maintains an office in the building.

### The 4th Avenue Theatre

The 4th Avenue Theatre achieved instant acclaim upon the spring day in 1947 when it opened its doors and "The Jolson Story" flashed across its marquee. "The theatre is a landmark in the transition of Anchorage from a frontier community to a city of permanence. It is a landmark in the development of a city in which families live, work, play and die."<sup>16</sup> Such was the accord of the *Daily Times* editorial upon its gala opening. As the gem of Alaskan theatres, the mammoth edifice has maintained its stature as a major Anchorage building. In consideration of its interior and exterior, the building represents the foremost of Art Deco buildings in Anchorage.

B. Marcus Priteca and A.A. Porreca, Seattle-based architects, designed the structure in the early 1940's. C. William Hufeisen was responsible for the construction project, one of the longest in the Municipality's history. Ground-breaking and foundation work began in 1941, but the war demanded that raw materials go toward defense purposes. A four-year delay set in before concrete and steel could once again be melded to form the exterior shell. The delay was probably a worthwhile one as it is told that Cap Lathrop who was the mastermind in the development of many of Alaska's theatres, including this one, had renewed thoughts about this project. In the interim of war years, he extended his plans for the interior. The result was astonishing.

The interior of the 4th Avenue Theatre brings the building alive. The murals – a very rich collection of Alaskan – are an exquisite lining to the heart of the building. There are three sets of them. A huge, floor-to-ceiling pair that depicts the commercial and industrial growth of Alaska helps to



The 4th Avenue Theatre. The wildlife mural highlights the balcony stairway.

*Fourth Avenue Theatre as it appeared in 1947. The Reed Building next door is still in existence, although it has been altered. Photo courtesy of the Historical and Fine Arts Museum.*



frame the stage. Another one, a resplendent view of Mt. McKinley, brightens the lobby. A third set forms a panel of individual wildlife blocks above the stairway to the balcony.

The geniuses behind the murals were A.B. Heinsbergen and Frank Bouman, interior decorators from Los Angeles. Heinsbergen, a Dutch-born artist, was apprenticed in his early teens as an artist. By the time he was eighteen he was in business for himself, embarking on a lengthy career in creating murals and interior decoration. By his own count he has decorated 751 theatres on this continent as well as state capitols, city halls, hotels, restaurants and churches. Frank Bouman who has worked with the Heinsbergen firm for some 45 years, was responsible for the 4th Avenue Theatre decor. In Heinsbergen's words, Bouman "worked on the murals extensively . . . installed them and supervised the entire decorative scheme."<sup>17</sup>

## Cap Lathrop: The Man Behind the Theatre

Fourth Avenue Theatre stands in testimony to Cap Lathrop – not as a monument to him, but as a monument made by him. Lathrop was visionary. His achievements in transportation, broadcasting, construction and coal mining were instrumental steps in severing the territory from a frontier past, toward a progressive future.

Austin “Cap” Lathrop, the son of a Michigan farmer, was born in 1865.<sup>21</sup> He left school in the ninth grade and moved to Wisconsin with his family. In 1889 he went to Seattle and began a contracting business in the wake of the city’s devastating fire. Lathrop continued in the building industry and profited in the construction in the Anacortes-Fidalgo City Railroad. His prosperity was ruined in the depression of 1893, consequently Lathrop began looking for new opportunities.

The year 1895 was an especially important one for Cap as it marked the beginning of his Alaskan ventures. The spark that ignited Lathrop’s interest in Alaska was a conversation with Captain Kelly, a salted, maritime man and long-time acquaintance of Lathrop. Kelly talked of the placer gold which had been found in the Turnagain Arm section of Alaska. Lathrop became very interested, not in the lure of golden dreams, but in the opportunities that shipping and freighting could bring during a gold rush. Through a loan from A.E. Barton of the Fry Meat Packing House, Lathrop, Kelley and John O’Neill bought the L.J. Perry, a small two-masted schooner. Their initial voyage to Cook Inlet led to years of steady success.

Around 1910 Lathrop started the Alaska Transfer Company in Cordova. Like other Cordova citizens, it is reported that Lathrop became increasingly embittered about the closing of the coal fields. Alaskans had to import coal when more than enough of the fuel was nearby. Their displeasure came to a head in 1911 when tons of imported coal were dumped into Cordova Bay. Lathrop is said to have been instrumental in this “coal party.” The effort helped to have the desired effect; within three years the coal lands were open.

Lathrop’s political philosophy was tempered during his bitter experiences in resource development and the consequent resource withdrawals. Later when statehood movement arose, he was leery about the idea – he seemed more comfortable with Alaska independence. He did not stand on the sidelines of politics. His offices and representation included: the Territorial House, 1921-1923; the Republican National Committee, 1928-1932, 1949-1950; and the University’s Board of Regents, 1932-1950.<sup>23</sup>

In 1915 Lathrop brought his Alaska Transfer Company to Anchorage and located his offices in the Lathrop Building (at Fourth Avenue and H Street, where Legal Pizza is now). After the second story of the building was completed about a year later, Cap lived in one of the apartments upstairs.<sup>24</sup>

A chain of theatres was formed by Lathrop in the mid-teens. The motion picture was an eagerly devoured form of entertainment in the northland, and provided a social outlet which could routinely be enjoyed. He delighted in bringing happiness to the children of the rustic Alaskan towns; on holidays he would often open his theatres to the kids for free movies. Starting with the Empress at Cordova in 1915, Lathrop developed a chain of theatres in Alaska. Other theatres included Anchorage’s Empress (1916), and the Lacey and Empress Theatres at Fairbanks (1929). Besides building movie houses, he became involved in the film industry as well. As president of the Alaska Motion Picture Corporation he oversaw the 1923 production of “The Last of the Cheechakos.”

His later years saw the further expansion of his economic domain; he became owner of the *Fairbanks Daily Newsminer*, the Healy River Coal Mine and he pioneered the development of the broadcasting industry in Alaska. KFAR in Fairbanks and KENI were forerunners of what was to become the Midnight Sun Broadcasting Company.

His employees were devoted ones and, although ill-tempered on occasion, he was devoted to them. Harry Hill began working for Lathrop in 1924 and his son, Don Hill, continues to work in the lineage of the Lathrop Company. His secretaries, first Ruby DeGraff, and later, Miriam Dickey worked with him over 31 years. Al Bramstedt, who came to work for Lathrop at KFAR, and rose to the top management spot of Midnight Sun, brings some light to the Lathrop personality: “He was very colorful, and had a lot of charm. He was very popular with the wives of his employees, as with every employee. He could be the most cantankerous man on earth, and then turn around half an hour later and be the most charming, gallant, and the most courtly individual you ever knew. He was a man of different moods, and I think he used his temper at the right time in business for emphasis. A lot of people never learned to be comfortable with him because they were afraid – they didn’t know him that well.”

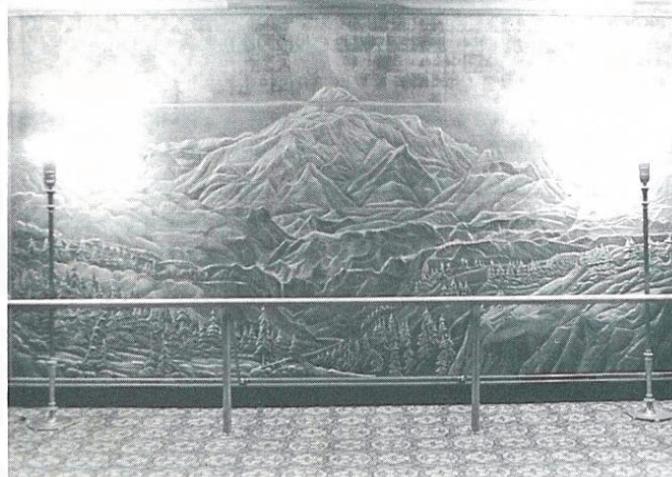
Cap Lathrop was an active man well into his eighties. As late as 1950, the year he died, he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention and could still make the rounds to his various concerns. While at the Suntrana Mine on July 26, a railroad accident took Lathrop’s life. Alaska had lost a foremost citizen – one of the first of her self-made men who stayed to invest in her future.

KENI Radio Station, built in 1947, was another of Lathrop's projects.

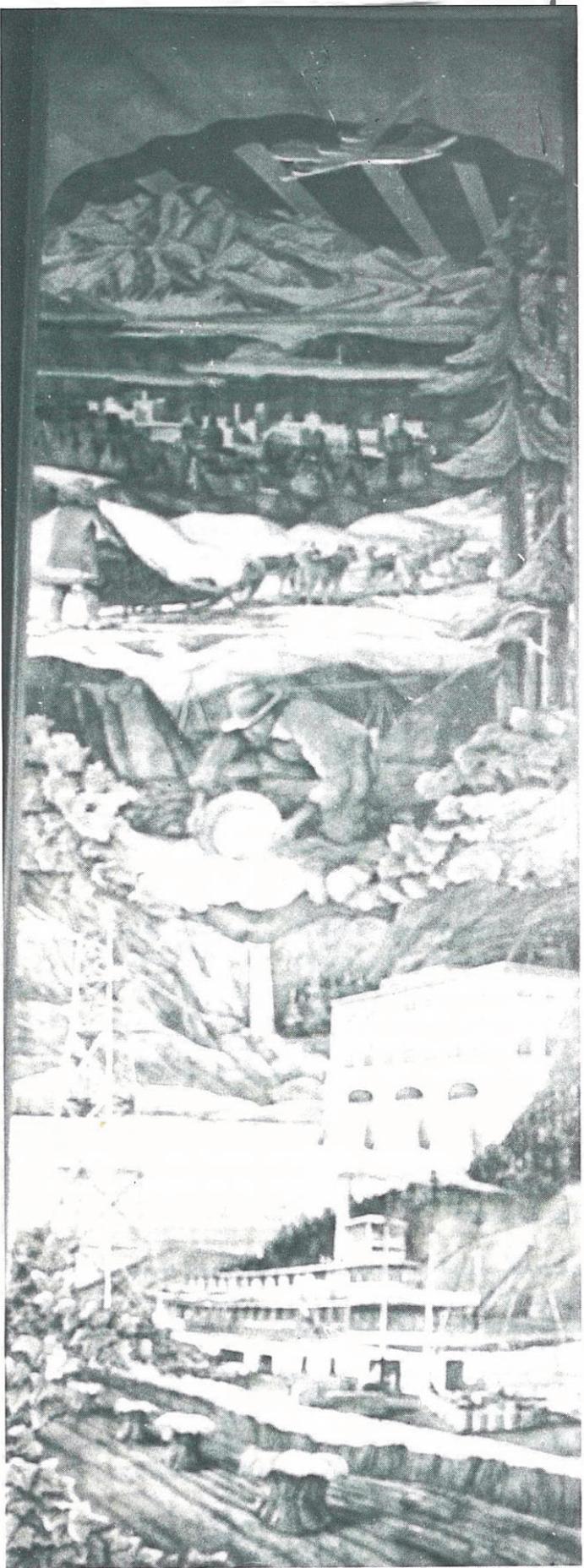


Each of the murals is different in the means in which it was executed, although a silver and gold bas-relief texture is common to all. The magnificent pair of panels in the theatre itself is a collage of the mining, hydroelectric farming, steamboating and aviation history of the state. Upon the theatre's opening one initial observer commented: "Touring the theatre's ultra-gorgeous interior is like walking through a kaleidoscope."<sup>18</sup> Variations in color included a predominantly warm rose accented by light blues and chartreuse – the initial color scheme.<sup>19</sup>

The film patron paid eighty cents in that first year of the theatre's operation. It certainly entitled him to more than a movie. In those restless moments before the projectors began to roll, a casual look to the ceiling would bring the familiar Big Dipper and North Star to view in a configuration of twinkling star-like lights. Additional lighting was provided by large colorful glass baubles. Those large red, orange and yellow globes hang about midway down each aisle. The seating is structured to provide straight aisles and unobstructed sight lines. This was accomplished by providing an overly-large chair at the ends of alternating rows.



The 4th Avenue Theatre. A Mount McKinley mural is featured in the lobby.



The 4th Avenue Theatre. Frank Bouman designed this mural and the interior features of the theatre.

The lobby and the entrance to the balcony are highlighted by the golden bronze mural of Mt. McKinley and the bronze-over-silver animations. Both areas and the stairway are finished in a dark walnut which was beautifully fashioned by Johnson Mill Works, Tacoma, Washington.

The exterior is notable for its bulk, graphics and details. The building itself is of cast concrete and covers 100 feet by 130 feet. The ground-level portion of the facade is enriched by a light Italian marble. The building was one of the first to rise to the fourth-story level on Anchorage's "main street." It was also one of the first buildings to feature an elevator.

Besides the theatre, other offices and businesses have been conducted within the various sections of the building. Foremost of these is KENI-TV and radio. Also notable are the offices of the Lathrop Company which are handsomely finished in light walnut. These offices also contain the portrait of Cap Lathrop which was painted by Eustice Zeigler and was presented to Lathrop at the dedication of the theatre in 1947.

Lathrop called the opening of the theatre "the happiest day of my life." However, his message to Alaskans on the dedication brochure tells a bit more of the story and what he intended the theatre to be:

This theatre was built especially for Alaskans . . . it is the culmination of a sincere wish to bring to the people of Anchorage, and visitors from all parts of Alaska, a theatre unexcelled on the American continent.<sup>20</sup>

To many who have been entertained at the Fourth Avenue Theatre, they know that Lathrop succeeded in fulfilling that wish.

#### Other Second Generation Buildings

The list of concrete and steel buildings of the late 1930's and 1940's can be extended to include a number of firms and specialized facilities. One of the first built was the **Glover Building** (442 West Fifth Avenue), now recognized as Alaska State Bank. Built around 1939, this building contained an automobile showroom with offices and apartments on the second floor.

Also built around 1939 was the extension of the Anchorage Hotel at **501 West Fourth Avenue**. Today the major tenant in the building is Welch's Style Shop. E.I. Sedille designed this cast concrete structure. A series of stylized battlements ornament the roofline of the two story building.

Another of these buildings, the **Loussac-Sogn Building**, was completed around 1946. It was built under the supervision of Slim DeLong, who had formerly been with Morrison-

Knudsen Company. Initially designed as a two-story building, a third level was added during the course of the project. The building's name is derived from the two prominent citizens who were responsible for the project: Z.J. Loussac, a long-time pharmacist, and Dr. Harold Sogn, a physician.

A.A. Porreca, the architect who helped design the Fourth Avenue Theatre, prepared the plans for two other noteworthy Anchorage buildings: Holy Family Cathedral and KENI Radio Station.

**Holy Family Cathedral** was a dream of the local parishioners in the early 1940's. However, the war postponed the realization of the dream. Porreca was retained as the architect in the mid-1940's.<sup>25</sup> The monolithic cast concrete structure was built between 1947 and 1951 by the firm of C. William Hufeisen.<sup>26</sup> The bell tower is the most prominent original feature. The portico, added in the late 1960's was designed by Jim Bruce of McIntire - Pendergrast.



*Holy Family Cathedral.*

**KENI Radio Station**, located at 1777 Forest Park Drive, was also designed by Porreca. The station was built in 1947-48 under Al Swalling. KENI went on the air in May that year to become the second Anchorage radio station. It was built for Cap Lathrop and became part of the Midnight Sun Broadcasting Company System. The cast concrete structure is most impressive when viewed from its north facade. That face of the building is a good example of the Art Deco Style. The station's walnut interior is very impressive. Lathrop wanted to retain professional, reliable personnel. Thus he included three apartment units within the station for KENI engineers and broadcasters.<sup>27</sup> The building is still the KENI headquarters.

4b. The Fourth Avenue average was based on sale figures of the lots between A and L Streets. Also see: "Anchorage Lots Bring Big Prices at Auction Sale," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

4c. Belcher.

5. "Fine Success of Sale," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 17, 1915.

6. Interview with Mrs. Myrtle Stalnaker, January 30, 1978.

7. "Fine Buildings Adorn New Town," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, August 14, 1915.

8. *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 27, 1916.

9. Interviews with T.W. Carrol and William Stolt, April and May, 1978.

10. The term, "The First Citizen of Anchorage," is used in the editorial and in an article, "Sydney Laurence Dies," *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 12, 1940.

11. The *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, July 3, 1915 as quoted in Robert L. Shalkop, *Sydney Laurence: An Alaskan Impressionist* (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum, 1975), p. 8.

12. It is the writer's observation that many photographs, labeled the "Sidney Laurence Company," suggested the labeling of a left-handed assistant. It is very different from the Laurence signatures of his paintings.

13. Robert L. Shalkop, *Sydney Laurence: An Alaskan Impressionist* (Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum, 1975), pp. 7-9.

14. Interview with Jeanne Lawrence, May 23, 1978.

15. "Brevities," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, September 4, 1915.

16. Interview with Mrs. Decema Kimball Andresen Slawson, April, 1978.

17. "Fine Buildings Adorn New Town," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, August 14, 1915.

18. "Around the Town," *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 22, 1916.

19. Interview with Selma Smith, April 3, 1978.

20. Early A.E.C. photograph, Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum.

21. "Large Transfer of Real Estate," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 14, 1923, p. 7.

22. "Carstens Will Erect Building," *Anchorage Daily Times*, June 21, 1916, p. 1.

23. Sanborn Maps, 1922, 1927.

24. "Corley's" ("Conleys" or a similar name) is depicted at this location in a pre-1920 photograph. The Ship Hotel was reportedly located in the building around 1920.

25. "Hewitt and Co. To Open Store in Anchorage," *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 8, 1916.

26. *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 2, 1916, p. 12; also photographs of the era, Historical and Fine Arts Museum.

27. A restaurant is depicted on the Sanborn map at the location in 1927.

28. Early 4th Avenue photographs, Historical and Fine Arts Museum; the New Method Cleaners later occupied a lot farther east.

29. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. William Stolt, May 19, 1978.

## EDUCATION FACILITIES

1. "Public School is Needed," *Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 19, 1915.

2. William H. Wilson, "The Founding of Anchorage: Federal Townbuilding on the Last Frontier," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, July 1967, pp. 136-137.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Evangeline Atwood, *Anchorage: All America City* (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mott, 1957), p. 12.

5. *Ibid.*

6. "Clerk Wendler Makes a Report," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 21, 1916.

7. Wilson, pp. 137-138.

8. Edes to Christensen, January 29, 1916, LIDF 25.044 (1915-18) as quoted in Wilson, p. 138.

9. Edes to Christensen, January 23, 1917, LIDG 25.129-501 as quoted in Wilson, p. 138.

10. Wilson, p. 138.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. "Clerk Wendler Makes a Report."

14. Wilson, p. 137.

## THE SECOND GENERATION OF ANCHORAGE

1. The *Anchorage Daily Times*, November 14, 1936, p. 1.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 1, p. 5 and p. 8.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, March 12, 1938.

5. *Ibid.*, May 25, 1938, p. 1 and May 16, 1938, p. 1.

6. Railroad workers went on strike in spring 1916. That, however, was a "railroad" strike. Anchorage was not even incorporated at that time.

7. *Ibid.*, June 20, 1938, p. 1, June 29, 1939, p. 1 and July 12, 1939, p. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, June 29, 1939, special section.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

10. *Ibid.*, special section.

11. *Ibid.*, June 25, 1938, p. 1, July 22, 1938, p. 1, July 23, 1938, p. 1.

12. U.S. Treasury Department, Procurement Division, Architectural drawings.

13. The *Anchorage Daily Times*, October 24, 1940, p. 1.

14. Personal interview with Robert Atwood, March 28, 1977.

15. The *Anchorage Daily Times*, September 16, 1940, p. 8.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

17. Letter of Anthony B. Heinsbergen to Michael E. Carberry, January 6, 1978.

18. The *Anchorage Daily Times*, May 28, 1947, p. 1.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Opening day brochure, the 4th Avenue Theatre.

21. The material in this section was primarily based on the following:

Jean Alito Ray, "Cap Lathrop: Hard Work Made an Alaskan Millionaire," *The Great Landers*, Anchorage, Alaska, Volume 7, Number 34 (August 20, 1973), pp. 1-8.

22. Banks as quoted in Ray, p. 4.

23. Evangeline Atwood and Robert N. DeArmond, *Who's Who in Alaskan Politics* (Portland, Oregon: Binford and Mart, 1977), p. 57.

24. Personal interview with Selma Smith, Anchorage, Alaska, April 3, 1978.

25. Originally William Manley had been retained as the architect; however, Porroca was brought on after the war.

26. Personal communication with Sister Margaret Cantwell, December 1978.

27. Personal communication with Al Bramstedt and Angie Hebert, December 1978.

## CHAPTER 3 RAILROADING, MARITIME AND POWER FACILITIES

1. U.S. *Statutes at Large* (1912), Volume 37, p. 512 as quoted in Wilson, p. 18.

2. As quoted in Wilson, p. 25.

3. Wilson, p. 26.

4. Wilson, p. 28.

5. Alaska Engineering Commissions, *Reports of the Alaska Engineering Commission for the Period From March 12, 1914 to December 31, 1915*. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1916, p. 83.

6. As quoted in Wilson, p. 29.

7. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Cold Storage Plant Building Plans, 1916.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Prince, p. 577.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 602.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 473.

12. Conversation with John Longacre, son of the A.E.C.'s electrical engineer, March 1978.

13. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Power Plant Building Plans.

14. Wilson, p. 200.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200.

16. As quoted in Prince, p. 581.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 639, p. 647.

18. "The Alaska Railroad... Colorado Building Makes Long Trek to Alaska," *The EM-KYAN*, September 1948.

19. Files of the Alaska Railroad (Reprints from an article about Number 1).

20. Prince, p. 889.

21. *Alaska Railroad Record*, Volume 11, No. 26, p. 204a.

22. Wilson, p. 39.

23. Joan M. Antonson and Douglas R. Reger, "Potter-Girdwood Archaeological and Historic Site Survey," in *Archaeological Survey Projects, 1976* (Anchorage: Alaska Division of Parks, 1977), p. IV-16.

24. Prince, p. 118.

25. Anderson, p. 11.

26. Prince, p. 70, p. 135.

27. *The Alaska Railroad Record* (selected issues), 1917-1918.

28. *The Alaska Railroad*, A.E.C. Survey maps of 1914 show the location of the cabins built a few years earlier by the Alaska Northern crews.

29. Prince, p. 70, p. 246.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Wilson, pp. 6-7, p. 253.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 254.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

34. Prince, p. 578. Present-day railroaders relate that these no longer exist.

35. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Section House Plans, 1929.

36. Personal communication with Steve McCutcheon, August 1978.

37. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Section House Plans, 1923 and 1934.

38. Hand cars were replaced by mechanized cars in the mid-1920's.

39. Prince, p. 587.

40. The Alaska Railroad, Engineering Files, Standard Depot Plans, 1916.

41. The Alaskan Engineering Commission, Service Monographs of the United States Government, No. 4. Institute for Government Research: as quoted in Anton A. Anderson, *Construction and Maintenance Problems Encountered on the Alaska Railroad*. (a paper distributed through the Alaska Railroad, Anchorage), p. 8.

42. Wilson, p. 171.

43. Letter of O.F. Ohlson to Emard Packing Co., Anchorage, Alaska, September 27, 1944 (ARR Property Management Files).

44. Wilson, p. 46.

45. Prince, p. 314.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

47. Wilson, pp. 170-172.

48. Letter of O.F. Ohlson.

49. "Anchorage's Fishing Industry Adds \$150,000 Annually to Local Payroll," *Anchorage Daily Times*, 1917 Progress Edition, p. 8.

50. Personal communication with Lee Hancock, March 14, 1978.

51. "Missing Fleet," *Anchorage Times*, May 20, 1978, editorial page.

52. Helen Gillette, "Freighter Limestone Takes No Cargo to Sea," *Anchorage Times*, 1977 (a clipping provided by Virginia Augustad, exact date and page were not part of the copy).

53. The facility descriptions are based upon the report John J. Longacre and W.L. Kinsell, "Report on the Anchorage Light and Power Company to the Bank of America, San Francisco, California," June, 1941.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Personal communication with Frank Reed II, March 7, 1978.

## CHAPTER 4 EARLY SUBDIVISIONS

1. "Work on the Railroad Moves Along," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915, p. 1.

2. Lyman Woodman, "Railroad History on Government Hill," *Anchorage Daily News*, April 7, 1974, pp. 4-5.

3. "Government Hill Beautiful Place," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, September 1915, p. 1.

4. Personal interview with Mrs. Forrest Warwick (formerly Hazel Seaberg), March 1978.

5. "Work on the Railroad Moves Along," *The Cook Inlet Pioneer*, June 12, 1915, p. 1.

6. Charles S. Harvard as quoted in Woodman, p. 4.

7. The street names are derived as follows: *Delaney Street* - James J. Delaney, railroad employee, 1916-1957, former mayor of Anchorage; *Cohovell Street* - George W. Colwell, member of the 1914 railroad survey party, former chief engineer; *Brown Street* - Jack Brown, Ship Creek resident as a forester in 1912 and long-time power plant foreman; *Anderson Street* - Anton Anderson, civil engineer for the railroad for 41 years; former mayor of Anchorage; *Boyd Street* - William E. Boyd, former ARR superintendent of transportation; *Cunningham Street* - J.T. Cunningham, worked for the railroad for 33 years, rising to assist general manager; *Deegan Street* - Michael Deegan, locomotive engineer and early SRR foreman; and *Erickson Street* - Believed to be named for John H. Erickson, early ARR electrician.

8. Bernadine L. Prince, *The Alaska Railroad in Pictures*. (Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, 1964), pp. 183-184.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 499.

10. "CCC Six Years Old," *Anchorage Daily Times*, April 4, 1939, p. 1.

11. "Hill Houses are Mud Mt. Copies," *Esprit de Corps* (Anchorage, Alaska), Volume 1, Number 2 (December 1977), p. 3.

12. Personal communication with Virgil Knight, April 1978.

13. Personal communication with Vannie Davenport, January 1978.

14. "Sale of Lots Shows Demand for Home Sites in Anchorage," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 24, 1916, p. 1.

15. "Order Affecting Acre Tracts," *Alaska Railroad Record*, Vol. 1, No. 23 (1917), p. 182.

16. "Acreage Tracts in Anchorage Townsite Sold at Public Sale," *Alaska Railroad Record*, Vol. III, No. 33 (1919), p. 262.

17. "Experienced Fur Man Urges More Farms Here," *Anchorage Daily Times* (Progress Edition), July 3, 1937.

18. "South End Outskirts See Activity," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 11, 1939, p. 7.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Interview with Mrs. Louis Strutz, December 1977.

21. Interview with the Imlach family, December 1977.

22. Personal communication with Norma Marek, May 18, 1978.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Interview with Bert Wennerstrom, July 1978.

25. "Fine Home Going Up For ARC Man At 11th And E," *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 19, 1938, p. 7.

26. Personal communication with Dean Conover, May 20, 1978.

27. Interview with Mrs. Barrie White, December 1977.

28. Interview with Marjery McCormick, June 1978.

29. Personal communication with Walter Radke and George Karabelnikoff, May 1978.

30. Personal communication with Virgil Knight and George Karabelnikoff, May 1978.

## CHAPTER 5 TRAILS

1. U.S. Forest Service personnel report that the glacier route was used as late as 1975 when two groups made their way to Whittier. A Forest Service Party, knowledgeable about glacial hazards, used the ice field; another group climbed along the rocky edge of the glacier on a separate occasion that week.

2. Mary J. Barry, *A History of Mining on the Kenai Peninsula* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1973), p. 55.

3. George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World*, Volume 3

**TAB 9**

# Mostly Music

The Story of  
**Lorene C. Harrison**  
Alaska's Cultural Pioneer

F910.7  
.H37  
B37  
1999

As Told to and Written by  
**Dianne Barske**



or working girls. Anchorage is deluged with numerous and varied organizations; thus one night a week, except when concentrating on Christmas or Easter music, is our rehearsal time.

To raise money for our Music Department, our choir gives an annual secular concert in November. Because of the influx of people here due to National Defense projects, we gave the concert two evenings and cleared \$225 at 55 cents admission price. The audiences are most appreciative indeed, and there is always the urge for 'more.' More than one tourist has commented that we could put many a larger choir in the States to shame. We have some fine outstanding talent at present, and how noticeable it is that the artists with real music in their souls are both ready and willing to assist whenever asked! We, who have been here for some years, so deeply appreciate their generous attitude.

In our thirst for a musical outlet, we not only find joy in singing, but also find ourselves growing into a close companionship which is so essential for every individual who finds himself so far away from former home and friends. Maybe we love to sing because we enjoy each other so much, or perhaps vice versa. Any-

way, I am so proud of the work my groups have done that I am enclosing a picture taken last year when we sang our Christmas Cantata. Last Easter we took great pride in singing Dubois "The Seven Last Words of Christ."



Pegge and Carol Anne in the winter of 1940, with dog Susie - Both share many happy memories of growing up in Anchorage in the 1930s and 40s.

In addition to conducting, Lorene was also involved in arranging music. In 1941, Lorene composed the first four-part arrangement of what would become Alaska's beloved state song, the *Alaska Flag Song*. The flag was designed in 1927,





the year before Lorene first came to Anchorage to teach in the public school. Its young designer, Benny Benson, became one of Lorene's friends. Inspired by the flag's design,

state she had left in 1936, put Drake's words to music in 1938. Lorene's four-part arrangement of the music made its debut as part of the 1941 Fur Rendezvous celebration, at the outdoor coronation of the Fur Rendezvous queen by Brig. General Simon B. Buckner, Jr., commanding general of the Alaska Defense Command.



*Lorene's nephew, Bob, Jr. (Bob Wyatt), was married in Anchorage on September 23, 1942. The wedding took place in the first little Presbyterian Church. Lorene was matron of honor and Jack gave the bride, Elda, away.*

The newspaper the following day, February 19, 1941, described the events leading up to the performance of the *Flag Song*. First there were young ice skaters, followed by children performing "a lovely penguin dance," then a "delightful sled dance," then vocals by a men's quartet. The article reads, "The men, with four girls, joined in singing *Alaska's Flag*, a new song published recently. A beautiful Alaska flag of the Pioneer lodge was unfurled as they sang. Most of the accompaniments were by Mrs. Jack Harrison."

Marie Drake, Assistant Commissioner of Education for the Territory of Alaska, had written a poem titled *Alaska's Flag* in 1935. A public school choral director in Nebraska, Elinor Dusenbury, homesick for the

(Lorene's four-part vocal arrangement of the *Alaska Flag Song* was also sung by the Community Chorus at the grand opening of the 4th Avenue Theater in 1946.)

Lorene's daughters, Pegge and Carol





# The Chechahcos

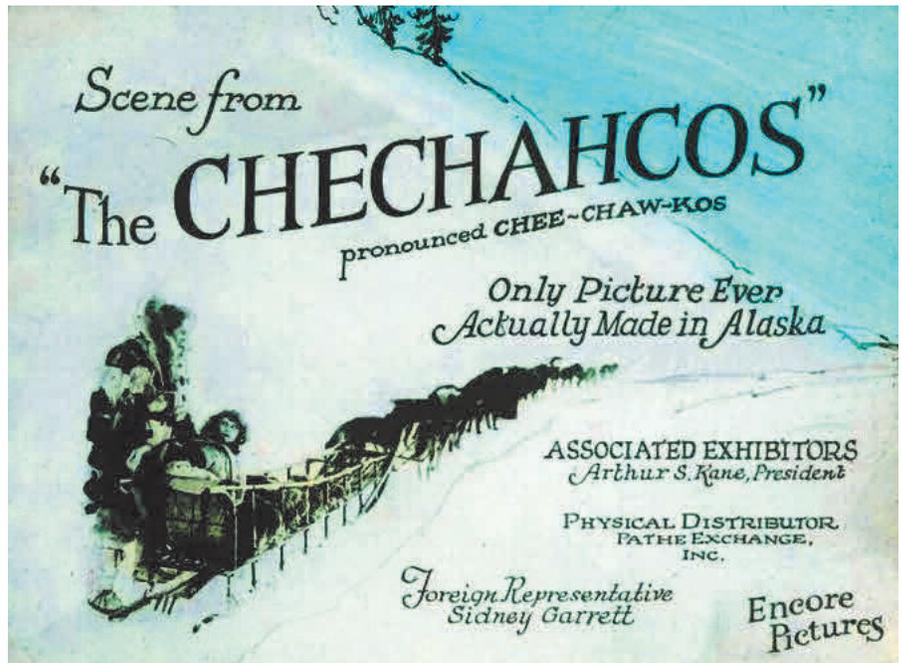
By Chris Beheim

Film distribution giant Associated Exhibitors was confident that they had a sure-fire hit when they purchased "The Cheechakos" from the Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation in March 1924. So impressed were they with independent writer/director Louis Moomaw's tale of the Klondike gold rush that they asked him to make four more feature films. The advertising campaign for "The Cheechakos" would equal those for "The Covered Wagon" and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" — two of 1923's top grossing films. A Broadway premiere in the prestigious Capitol Theatre was planned for May.

After changing the spelling to "The Chechahcos," Associated Exhibitors launched full-page teaser ads in trade publications and planned for the movie to be "road-showed" in large theaters with live orchestras, a marketing technique reserved for only a few premium feature films.

In April 1924, Associated Exhibitors took the "The Chechahcos" to Washington, D.C. for a private screening at the Interior Department. (The late President Warren Harding, who visited the cast and crew on location during his ill-fated Alaska tour the previous summer, had requested that the first showing be at the White House). Portland's newspaper, "The Oregonian," reported that government officials who viewed the film formally requested that it be placed in the Washington archives—an honor previously extended to only one other movie.

Associated Exhibitors spared no expense in promoting the film. A 16-page section featuring marketing strategies for "The Chechahcos" was placed in "Exhibitors Trade Weekly," with tie-ins to products ranging from Borden's Condensed Milk to Sterno Canned Heat. The film was touted as "the greatest money-getting production ever made" and "both a Broadway and Main Street box-office bet." An elaborate preview for over 800 critics and other invited guests took place at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in New York. Invitations contained an Alaskan gold nugget. The evening featured dinner, dancing, and the Paul Whiteman Orchestra. One of Broadway's top electrical engineers added special lighting effects to en-



A lantern slide used to promote the film to theater patrons.

hance the action on the screen. Pathé was selected as distributor, and the first full-length motion picture filmed entirely in Alaska was destined for worldwide showing.

Movies about the far north were popular in the silent era, but were typically filmed in California—much to the chagrin of Alaskans. When George Edward Lewis announced in 1922 his plans for a "stupendous motion picture production to be photographed in Alaska", the project quickly gained the support of citizens across the Territory of Alaska. Lewis organized the Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation in the tiny town of Seward, Alaska and began to sell shares of stock. The local newspaper predicted that the movie would be "one the greatest advertising schemes for the Territory that has ever been offered".

Austin "Cap" Lathrop, one of Alaska's wealthiest entrepreneurs and theaters owners, joined Lewis in raising capital to produce a motion picture that would introduce audiences to the real Alaska and "reproduce accurately the early days of the Alaskan territory." The enterprise quickly gained support throughout the Territory. Lathrop became president of the corporation, with Lewis as production manager. In November 1922, construction began in Anchorage on one of the largest buildings in the Territory, the Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation movie studio.

Lewis' business partner, Lewis Moomaw of the Portland-based film company American Lifeograph, was writer/director. The cast and crew arrived in

Anchorage on March 15, 1923. Principal males William Dills, Albert Van Antwerp, and Alexis Luce were accomplished stage actors, but the cast lacked movie experience. Only leading lady Eva Gordon was the exception. The ingenue role went to George Edward Lewis' step-daughter, Gladys Johnson. All were greeted by 1,000 Anchorage residents—half of the town's population. The company rode the train to the new Mount McKinley National Park (now Denali) where most of the sled dog mushing scenes were filmed. Harry Karstens, the park's first superintendent, drove the park's working sled dog team as a stunt double. An Army Signal Corps dog team also appeared in the film. The rustic Mount McKinley Hotel served as the exterior of the wealthy miners' home.

The cast and crew spent three months filming in the Anchorage area. A group of 250 Anchorage residents traveled 66 miles by rail to Bartlett Glacier, where they scaled a mountain for the spectacular scene of the 1898 gold rush at Chilkoot Pass. An "Anchorage Daily Times" headline proclaimed it "a correct reproduction of historic stampede" and the "Most Remarkable Historic Film Ever Recorded."

The mining hamlet of Girdwood, 40 miles south of Anchorage by rail, substituted for far away Skagway, Alaska. Giant radium flares and rockets provided illumination for the scenes filmed at night. The shipboard scenes were filmed on the SS Alameda. All other interior scenes were filmed in the Anchorage studio, including the dance hall scene and the burning of the prosperous mining town.

The cast and crew sailed to Cordova, Alaska where they took the Copper River & Northwest Railroad to filming locations on Childs Glacier, Abercrombie Rapids, and Eyak Lake. Famous Alaskan artist Sydney Laurence painted artwork for the intertitles, which were written by well-known screenwriter Harvey Gates.

After private screenings in Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle, the official premier of "The Cheechakos" took place in Anchorage's Empress Theatre on December 11, 1923. After screenings before packed houses in theaters across Alaska, the film had a successful holiday run in Portland, Oregon. Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation then took the film to New York City and sold it to Associated Exhibitors.

"The Chechahcos" never achieved the box office success that Associated Exhibitors had envisioned. The road show was cancelled and the New York premiere was moved to the smallest theater on Broadway. Despite "glowing criticisms" reprinted in

full-page "Film Daily" advertisements and projected on a giant screen placed above the theatre marquee, the expected crowds never materialized. After a short Broadway run, "The Chechahcos" was shown around the country and abroad for two years before fading into obscurity. Cap Lathrop and the Alaskan stockholders never saw a return on their investment.

The Alaska Moving Pictures Corporation successfully introduced audiences to the real Alaska. The spectacular Alaskan scenery and the hundreds of Alaskans who appeared as extras provided authenticity. The producers also exercised artistic license. The climactic dogsled chase shifts between three different locations hundreds of miles apart—all within a few seconds. The stereotyped Native American character was portrayed by a Caucasian. Artificial snow was used for the fire scene filmed in June.

"The Cheechakos" was essentially forgotten until 2000, when University of Alaska, Fairbanks archivists restored the film through a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation. The film was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry in 2003. "The Cheechakos" came back to life as an official event of Anchorage's Centennial Celebration. Because no score was found during the restoration, the Anchorage Fine Arts Society commissioned musicologist Eric Beheim to create a historically accurate orchestral score for the film. On July 17, 2015, the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra debuted the new score at a screening of the film before an enthusiastic audience of 2,000 at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. This sold-out performance was undoubtedly the type of deluxe presentation that Associated Exhibitors envisioned for "The Cheechakos" when they purchased it 91 years earlier.

*The views expressed in this essay are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Library of Congress.*

*Chris Beheim serves on the boards of the Anchorage Symphony and the Anchorage Fine Arts Society. He discovered "The Cheechakos" after accompanying numerous films as a clarinetist in the orchestra's silent film series. Utilizing his investigative skills honed as the supervisor (now retired) of the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory, he conducted extensive research on the history of the film, and commissioned a new orchestral score to replace the lost original. This work led to the reintroduction of the film during Anchorage's 2015 Centennial Celebration.*

**TAB 11**



## MODERN MOVEMENT

### ART DECO (1930 - 1950)

[< STYLE GUIDE](#)

Art Deco loudly announced its presence at Paris' Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes in 1925. In 1922, Eiel Saarinen brought the style to the United States when he entered the Chicago Tribune Tower design contest and came in second. The machine age inspired the geometric patterns and curves found in this style. Art Deco did not simply stay in the realm of architecture. Jewelry, appliances and furniture also incorporated Art Deco concepts in their design. Art Deco is more of a decorative application in the architecture than stylistic ideology. The style is widespread in commercial buildings, but rarely found in residential architecture. Other commonly applied names to the style include Zigzag Modern, Chama Style, Depression Modern or Jazz Modern.

#### Primary Stylistic Features

- Vertical emphasis.
- Rooflines are stepped or flat.
- Concrete is a common material used in construction to achieve smooth white surfaces. However, polychromatic examples exist with painted concrete.
- A minimum of one of the following decorative elements: zigzags, chevrons, sunburst, fluting, banding or other references to the machine age.

#### Secondary Stylistic Features

- Projections are often incorporated into the roof design.
- Glass brick and tile are used to decorate the building.
- Windows are often large with metal sashes.
- Additional decorative features that are distinctly non-Western.



### Evaluation Considerations

Art Deco buildings are not found in clusters in Alaska. Art Deco buildings can contribute to the significance of a district, but most often will be considered for individual eligibility. To be eligible, an Art Deco building must have all the primary characteristics and at least one of the secondary features. Inappropriate treatment to the concrete surfacing can result in ineligibility. Due to their relative scarcity, evaluators should exercise flexibility when assessing integrity.

#### For Further Information

Bayer, Patricia. *Art Deco Architecture, Design, Decoration and Detail from the Twenties and Thirties*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1986.

Craig, Robert. *Atlanta Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic 1920-1950*. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Co., 1995

Dunlop, Beth. *Miami: Mediterranean Splendor and Deco Dreams*. New York: Rizzoli, 2007



## MODERN MOVEMENT

### STREAMLINE MODERNE (1930 - 1955)

[< STYLE GUIDE](#)

Streamline Moderne is closely related to Art Deco, but the emphasis is on horizontal plane. The machine age is still present in decorative reference. Streamline Moderne places an emphasis on the movements found in automobiles, planes, trains and ships. The horizontal lines of Streamline Moderne were also incorporated into the design of the machines in which they found reference. Zoom and speed are embodied in the design of the buildings. Art Moderne is another term used for this style.

#### Primary Stylistic Features

- Horizontal massing.
- Flat roofs with small parapets.
- Asymmetrical façade.
- Concrete or stucco exterior finish.
- Speed bands or other horizontal emphasis.

#### Secondary Stylistic Features

- Curved building corners.
- Metal cash windows, sometimes found in ribbons to accentuate the horizontal.
- Corner windows.
- Glass brick.
- Rounded porthole windows
- Cantilevered awnings (sometimes curved).



### Evaluation Considerations

Streamline Moderne is a rare building type in Alaska so latitude should be given when assessing their architectural significance. Clusters of this building type do not exist. In most cases, Streamline Moderne buildings will be eligible individually. In order to be eligible, Streamline Moderne buildings must exhibit all the primary characteristics, but not all the secondary characteristics. Streamline Modernes can contribute to the eligibility of a district that has a variety of architectural styles.

#### For Further Information

Wenick, Frank E., *The Streamline Era Greyhound Terminal: The Architecture of W. S. Ammann*, Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007.

Jalke, John, and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America: Creating the North American Landscape*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

**TAB 12**

# CIVIC LANDMARKS:

A whirlwind tour



PARIS: The Eiffel Tower



NEW YORK: The Empire State Building

SEATTLE: The Space Needle



DUNLAP-  
STOWELL  
1914

ANCHORAGE: The 4th Avenue Theater



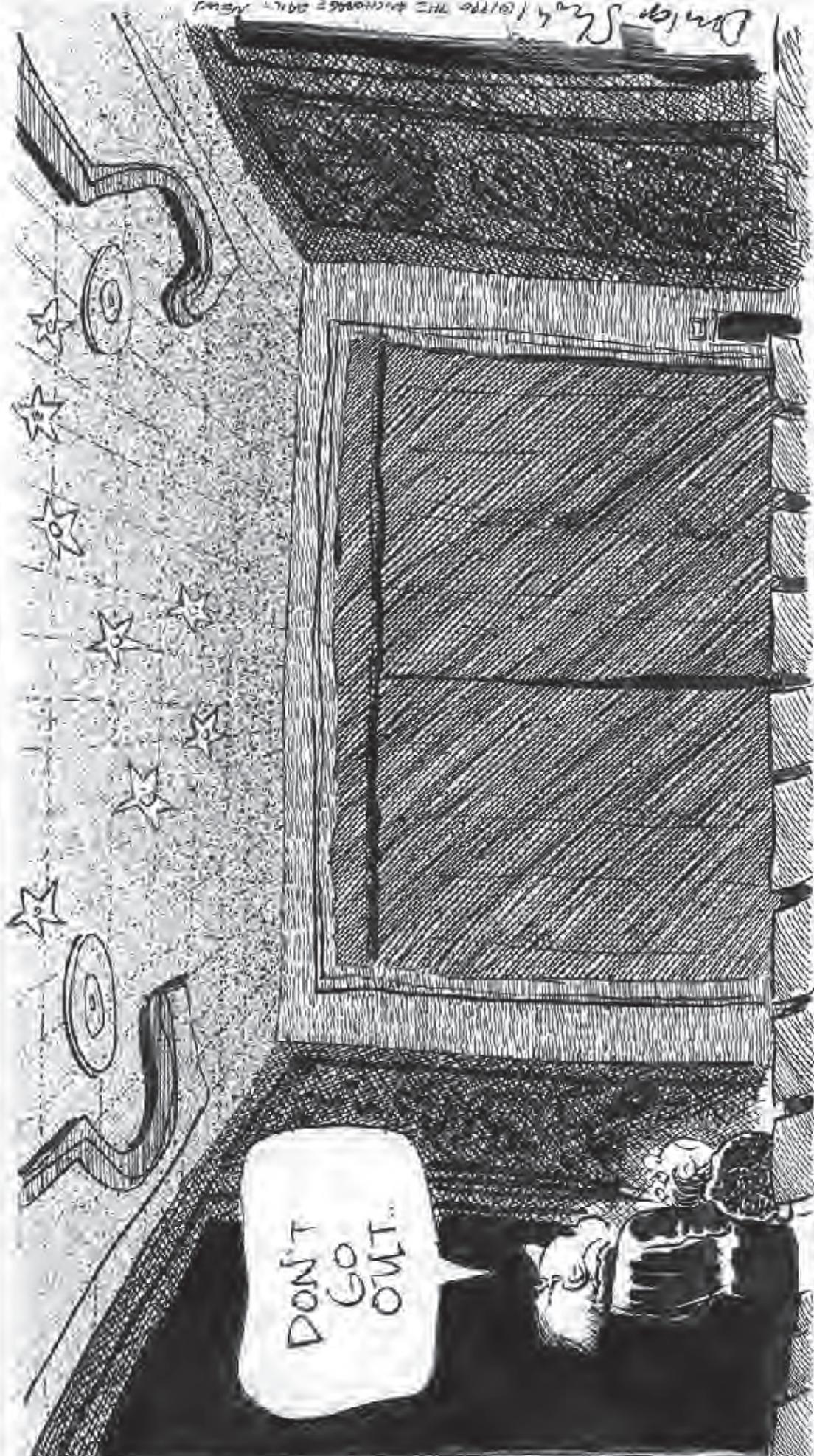
IMPRESSIVE! A  
COMMEMORATIVE  
PLAQUE FROM THE  
REGISTRY OF HISTORIC  
BLUNDERS.

FORMER  
SITE of  
4TH AVE  
THEATER

DUNLAP-SMOHL  
DRAWING BY 3/21



Don't Stop (1970) THE ARCHIVE 2017

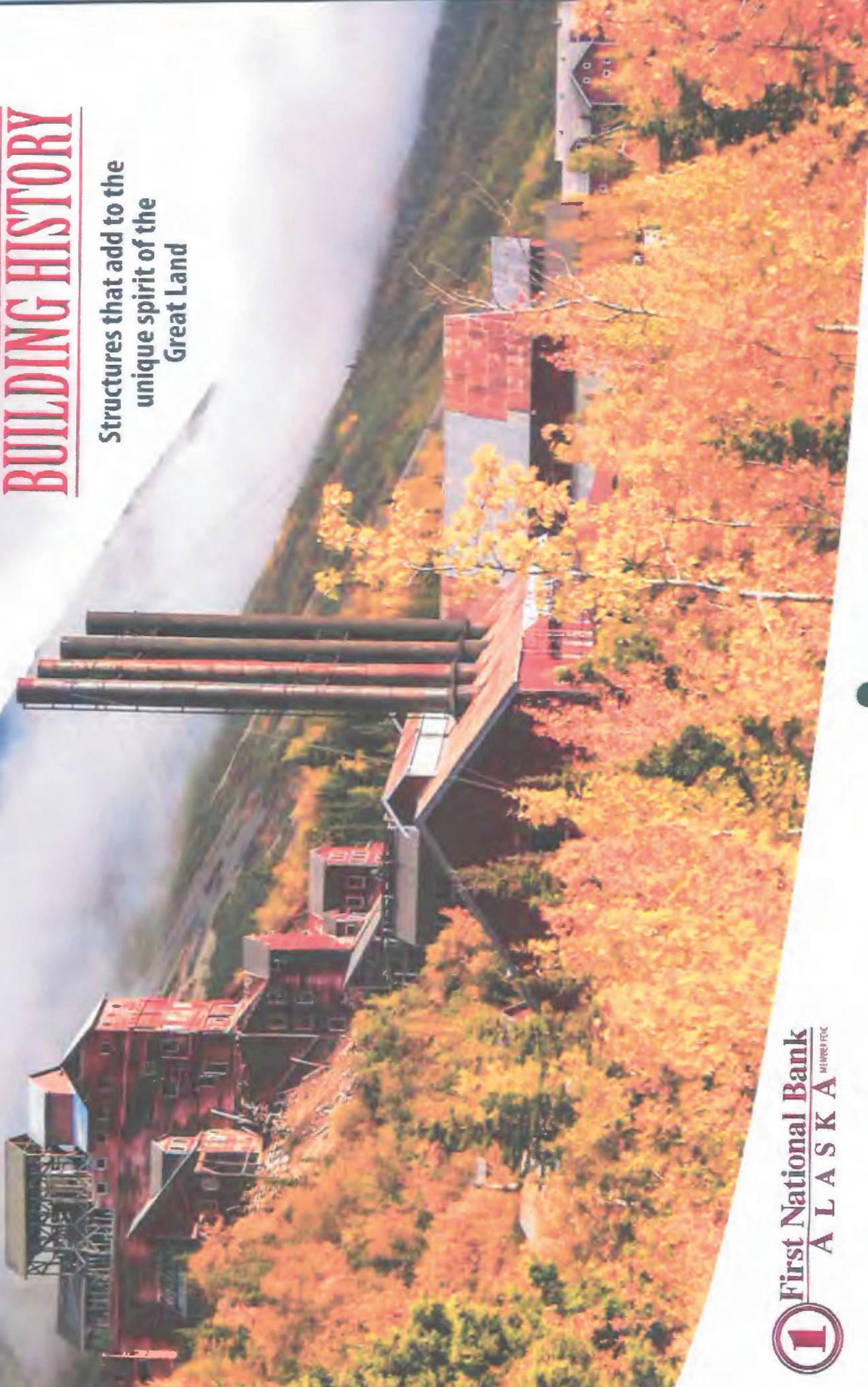


WISHING ON A STAR AT THE 4<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE THEATER

FIRST NATIONAL BANK ALASKA  
2017 Calendar

# BUILDING HISTORY

Structures that add to the  
unique spirit of the  
Great Land



 First National Bank  
ALASKA  
MEMBER FDIC



2017

MCMC

ALASKA SPORTS SUPER SALE

50% OFF  
SELECTED MERCHANDISE  
T-SHIRTS, SWEATERS,  
SCARVES & MORE

Are you thinking about buying a home? Applying and prequalifying for a mortgage loan is fast and easy at **FNBAAlaskaHomes.com**. Work with a local Alaska home loan specialist to buy your new dream home or refinance your current one.

# March

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
|        |        |         | 1         | 2        | 3      | 4        |
|        |        |         | 8         | 9        | 10     | 11       |
|        |        |         | 15        | 16       | 17     | 18       |
|        |        |         | 22        | 23       | 24     | 25       |
|        |        |         | 29        | 30       | 31     |          |

| FEBRUARY 2017 |    |    |    |    |    |    | APRIL 2017 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S          | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  |
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| 5             | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 12            | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 19            | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 26            | 27 | 28 |    |    |    |    | 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
|               |    |    |    |    |    | 30 |            |    |    |    |    |    |    |

## 4th Avenue Theatre ANCHORAGE

When the 4th Avenue Theatre opened in 1947 next to First National Bank downtown, the city suddenly had a sophistication and style it had never known.

The neon of the three-story marquee drew residents to much more than just a night at the movies. Greeted by the Italian marble façade, ticket holders stepped into a world unseen in the Last Frontier - a sweeping staircase cascading from the balcony, lustrous walnut paneling, and rich carpets. Inside the theatre, they gazed at gold-leaf friezes depicting Alaska's history. Above it all, eight stars of gold twinkled from the ceiling. It was almost too much to be borne!

First National Chair and President Betsy Lawer remembers the 4th Avenue quite fondly. "We were so lucky to have this magnificent theatre. When I was a teenager, many Friday nights were spent there. It was the place to be seen and connect with friends. Later, of course, I grew to better appreciate the unique styling and architecture."



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