

The PAYSTREAK

Volume 14, No. 2, Fall 2012

The Newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)

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Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation New Inductees

AMHF Honors Mining Pioneers from the Innoko and Iditarod-Flat Mining Districts

Merton H. Marston was the city editor of the *LaPorte Daily Herald* in Indiana when he and a large group of Argonauts left LaPorte for that great adventure - the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush. Specifically, Marston and his group represent the supporting cast of characters necessary to carry out a prospecting venture in an unmapped wilderness. Marston first sought his fortune in Dawson, but by 1908, he had arrived in Fairbanks, and at least temporarily worked as a newspaper man for the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*. Despite a serious altercation with well-known Fairbanks miner Mike Stepovich, he reached the goal of achieving wealth in the Iditarod mining district.



Mattie Crosby, a.k.a. Tootsie, arrived in the gold rush town of Iditarod, Alaska in 1911, and stayed there nearly continuously for the next 50 years. For all of that time, she was the only African American in town. She found alternative ways of making a living, including running a bathhouse with a sauna, cooking, a business loan venture and prospecting. She was always an entrepreneur, but a compassionate one. Mattie sank nearly all of her loan business profits into a mining venture on Marvel Creek in the Nyac mining district. When Tootsie died in Fairbanks at age 88 on October 11, 1972, old timers noted that Tootsie's funeral turnout was similar to those for Felix Pedro, Fannie Quigley and other beloved Alaskan personalities.



Toivo Rosander emigrated from Finland when he was a small child, and grew up on a farm in New Hampshire. In 1936, at the age of 21, Toivo Rosander was summoned to Alaska by his uncle, Gus Uotila, to help him mine gold in the Innoko mining district of western Alaska. Except during World War II, Toivo was engaged in placer mining for much of the next 70 years. He was known for mentoring others who later went on to establish their own careers in mining and in other vocations. His wife, Dyna, became an expert designer and fabricator of gold jewelry from placer gold in the Ophir area. During the contentious D-2 lands debate, his honesty, courage, and passionate views about his life's work helped convince many important decision makers of the merits of preserving the placer mining culture.

**Co-sponsored by the Alaska Miners Association
Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)
Induction Ceremony, November 8, 2012
Anchorage Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska**

Program

The general public is invited to the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) induction ceremony from 7:00 to 9:30 PM, on November 8, 2012. The induction ceremony will take place in the third floor ballroom of the Sheraton Hotel. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments will be served.

Coffee and Donuts	6:30-7:00 PM
Introduction and Purpose of the AMHF, by Thomas Bundtzen	7:00-7:10 PM
Honoring Don Grybeck, by Paul Glavinovich	7:10-7:35 PM
Presentation of Inductees	
Merton Marston, by Chuck Hawley.....	7:35-8:00 PM
Mattie Crosby, by Chuck Hawley.....	8:00-8:25 PM
Toivo Rosander, by Tom Bundtzen.....	8:25-8:50 PM
Coffee Break	8:50-9:05 PM
Recollection of Inductees from the Audience	9:05-9:30 PM
Adjournment	9:30 PM

Introduction, Acknowledgments and Announcements

The November 8, 2012 induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) features pioneers associated with two related mining camps in western-southwestern Alaska - the Innoko and Iditarod mining districts. The inductees, Merton Marston, Mattie 'Tootsie' Crosby and Toivo Rosander, all knew each other, and all came into the country for similar reasons. But that is where the similarities between the three personalities end.

Merton Marston was a newspaper man turned entrepreneur, who became wealthy by grubstaking John Beaton and William Dikeman, the two partners who discovered the Iditarod district. He would become a leading citizen of the Iditarod mining community before leaving the North Country after World War I.

Mattie Crosby, a.k.a. Tootsie, is one of the most interesting personalities that the AMHF has ever inducted. She arrived in Iditarod just two years after gold was discovered, the only African American of that mining district. She exhibited an entrepreneurial spirit, and succeeded as a business woman in a money loaning enterprise, as a cook, as the owner of a bathhouse and as a prospector. She also grubstaked many prospectors. Many in the Iditarod-Flat community loved Tootsie for her generosity and compassion. The turnout at her 1972 funeral in Fairbanks rivaled that of Felix Pedro, Fanny Quigley and other famous personalities of the day.

Finnish immigrant Toivo Rosander exemplifies the spirit and courage of the Alaska placer mining industry. During his 70 year long, successful mining career, he mentored many, and served as a leader to inspire others in the field. He was very tolerant those who did not agree with him, but he also managed to convince some of the most extreme skeptics of the value of the Alaska placer mining culture. Toivo was a leader within the mining industry. He also provided many with an inspiration on how to live.

Prior to the induction ceremony, the AMHF is honoring Dr. Donald J. Grybeck, a longtime employee of the U.S. Geological Survey, a University of Alaska geology professor, and an economic geologist who lived and worked in Alaska for more than 40 years. He passed away in September 2012 in Washington State. Don made important accomplishments after his retirement, by advocating and implementing the federally funded USGS 'Data at Risk' program. This program established the Alaska Resource Data File (ARDF), one of the best mineral deposit data compilations of its type in North America. We encourage those who knew Don to speak up and share their experiences.

Chuck Hawley and Ms. Fern E. Schultz compiled the biographic sketch of Merton Marston. Chuck Hawley and Tom Bundtzen wrote the sketch for Tootsie. Tom Bundtzen wrote the biography of Toivo Rosander. Tom Bundtzen, with Pacific Rim Geological Consulting, Inc., edited and produced the newsletter. AMHF Board member Paul Glavinovich organized the tribute for Don Grybeck.

This year, the AMHF completed a Feasibility Study to determine the merits of building an Alaska Mining Hall of Fame museum. Our consultant, Howard-Tellefson Consulting, Inc., provided us with the study and final report. We thank all those who participated for their input into this important study. More will follow as we progress forward toward goal of establishing an important facility that honors and preserves the accomplishments of Alaska's mining pioneers.

Previous Inductees, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

National Mining Hall of Fame Inductees

Six charter members of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation were previously elected into the National Mining Hall of Fame in Leadville, Colorado.

Stephen Birch: Founder and developer of Kennecott Copper Mines.

Frederick Bradley: Successful manager of Treadwell and A-J Mines, Juneau.

John Treadwell: Founder of Treadwell Mines, Juneau.

Alfred H. Brooks: Chief Geologist of U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska.

Earnest Patty: University of Alaska, and manager of Placer Dredging Venture.

Clarence Berry: Prominent Klondike and Interior Alaska miner.

Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation Inductees

Fairbanks, Spring 1998

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Yukon Basin Traders and Prospectors

Alfred Mayo: “Captain Al” well-known Yukon River trader, prospector.

Jack McQuesten: Known as the “Father of the Yukon” grubstaker for prospectors.

Arthur Harper: Well known and respected trader and prospector and promoter of the Yukon.

Howard Franklin: Fortymile prospector, discovered first “bedrock” placer gold in Alaska.

John Minook: Creole-Athabaskan prospector who discovered Rampart district.

Felix Pedro: Discoverer of Fairbanks district in 1902.

Nome, Summer 1998

Induction Ceremony Honoring Pioneers of Nome Gold Rush

John Brynteson: A 'Lucky Swede'; an experienced hard-rock miner, discoverer of the Cape Nome district.

Erik Lindblom: The eldest of the 'Lucky Swedes', a tailor.

Jafet Lindeberg: The Norwegian of the 'Lucky Swedes', president and manager of the very successful Pioneer Mining Company.

Charles D. Lane: Tough, honest, and wealthy miner who helped the 'Lucky Swedes' in their legal battles.

Juneau, Spring 1999

Induction Ceremony Honoring Discovery of Juneau District

Joe Juneau: Native of Quebec, a California 49er, co-discoverer of gold in the Juneau district.

Richard Harris: Irish immigrant, co-discoverer of gold in Juneau district.

George Pilz: German immigrant who sent and financed the Juneau and Harris prospecting ventures in the Juneau area.

K̄awa.ée: Tlingit leader who brought rich gold samples from Gastineau Channel area to George Pilz

Livingston Wernecke: Geologist-engineer for the Bradley companies of Juneau.

Bartlett Thane: Promoter-founder of the world's largest gold mine, the Gastineau at Juneau.

Anchorage, Fall 1999

Induction Ceremony Honoring Mining Pioneers of Southern/Southwest Alaska

Andrew Olson: Swedish immigrant, innovator at Flat; the original organizer of the platinum mining complex in the Goodnews Bay Mining district.

Evan Jones: Welsh immigrant; the true father of Alaska coal mining industry.

Wesley Earl Dunkle: Kennecott engineer and innovative geologist, co-founder of Star Air Service, predecessor of Alaska Airlines.

Fairbanks, Spring 2000

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early 20th Century Interior Pioneers

Emil Usibelli: Italian immigrant and founder of Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc., Alaska's only and historically largest producer of coal; civic benefactor in Fairbanks.

John B. Mertie Jr.: Leading U.S. Geological Survey geologist; outstanding earth scientist, mathematician, and world expert on platinum.

Fannie Quigley: Prospector, renowned for her bush skills, legendary Kantishna character.

Juneau, Spring 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Government Role in Mining

Benjamin D. Stewart: State and Federal mining administrator, Alaska constitutional delegate at Alaska Statehood Convention in Fairbanks.

Fairbanks, Summer, 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring the Pioneers of the Large Scale Gold Dredging Industry of Nome and Fairbanks Districts

Norman C. Stines: Visionary engineer who planned and supervised original USSR&M activities in Fairbanks district.

Wendell P. Hammon: Installed the first three dredges in Cape Nome district; helped design financing for what became USSR&M dredge fleets in Alaska

James K. Davidson: Designed and built Miocene and Davidson ditch systems.

Anchorage, Fall 2001

Induction Ceremony Honoring Discovery of Flat District

John Beaton: Co-discovered Iditarod district with William Dikeman.

Fairbanks, Spring 2002

Induction Ceremony Honoring Successful Miners and Engineers of Early 20th Century

Frank G. Manley: Highly successful miner in Fairbanks, Hot Springs district, and Flat. Founder of the First National Bank, Fairbanks

Herman Tofty: Norwegian immigrant who worked prospects near Manley Hot Springs.

Chester Purington: Acclaimed international mining engineer; wrote treatise on Alaska placer fields.

Thomas P. Aitken: Arguably the most successful small scale mine developer during the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush; worked both lodes and placers in Alaska and Yukon.

Anchorage, Fall 2002

Induction Ceremony Honoring Immigrant Pioneers

Peter Miscovich: Croatian immigrant who settled in Flat, Alaska 1910. Pioneered the use of hydraulic mining techniques.

David Strandberg: Swedish immigrant who joined the Klondike gold rush in 1898 and the Iditarod rush of 1910. Built placer mining dynasty Strandberg & Sons, Inc.

Lars Ostnes: Norwegian immigrant who mined in the Iditarod district and developed placer mines in remote western Alaska for over 50 years.

Fairbanks, Summer 2003

Golden Days Induction Ceremony (also recognized during Fall AMA convention)

Kyosuke 'Frank' Yasuda and Nevelo Yasuda: Japanese immigrant and his Eskimo wife, discovered Chandalar gold and founded the community of Beaver.

Anchorage, Fall 2003

Induction Ceremony Honoring Early and Mid-20th Century Placer Miners

John Gustavus (Gus) Uotila: By 1915, Gus Uotila was known as a tough Iditarod teamster. He mentored placer mining operations throughout Alaska and became a respected overland freighter.

Simon Wible: He mined gold, built water canals, and became a wealthy man in California. When the time the gold rush came along, he pioneered hydraulic mine technology on the Kenai Peninsula.

Fairbanks, Spring 2004

Honoring Early Pioneers Associated with USSR&M Dredge Fleet

Roy B. Earling: Built pre-World War II FE Company into one of the most efficient and successful dredge mining firms in the world.

James D. Crawford: Well organized manager who acquired new dredge properties and guided FE Company into successful post-World War II period of gold mining.

Jack C. Boswell: Engineered the development of the rich Cripple deposit; and helped build giant FE machines used to dig deep placer deposits. Published historian of USSR&M era.

Genevieve Parker Metcalfe: Breakthrough woman mining engineer who developed initial plans for FE Fairbanks operations, wrote a landmark thesis on Alaska placer mining, and was a champion athlete and scholar.

Earl Richard Pilgrim: First Professor of Mine Engineering at University of Alaska. Independent Kantishna miner and pioneer, and noted FE consultant; “Mr. Antimony” in the US.

Anchorage, Fall 2004

Honoring Those in the Mining Legal Profession,

In Cooperation with the History Committee of the Alaska Bar Association

William Sulzer: Bill Sulzer became a prominent New York attorney and politician and briefly served as Governor of New York. The ever-optimistic Sulzer mined copper in southeast Alaska and developed gold in the Chandalar district.

Joseph Rudd: Shortly after statehood, Rudd drafted the State’s mining law on state lands and was sought for his expertise on natural resource issues throughout his career. He was killed in a plane crash in Anchorage upon his return from Juneau after discussing with other Alaskans challenges to President Carter’s Implementation of the 1978 Antiquities Act.

Anchorage, Fall 2005

Honoring the Discoverers and the Developer of Platinum Resources at Goodnews Bay

Per Edvard (Ed) Olson: Born in 1898, Edward Olson was born into a large farm family in Sweden and immigrated to the United States in 1905. In 1934, he assumed the position of general manager of the Goodnews Bay Mining Company (GBMC), the largest supplier of platinum in the U.S. during 1934-1975.

Walter Smith: In the summer of 1926, Yupik Eskimo Walter Smith and his young apprentice Henry Wuya found placer platinum in a stream draining a remote, uninhabited coast of southwest Alaska. The GBMC eventually purchase Smith’s claims. Smith and Wuya are recognized as discoverers of Goodnews Bay platinum.

Henry Wuya: Henry Wuya was born to Eskimo parents in Quinhagak on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Wuya was proficient in English when few Yupiks knew English. He mentored with the older and experienced prospector, Walter Smith.

Fairbanks, Spring 2006

Honoring Two Pioneers Important to both Canadian and American Mining Communities

Ellen (Nellie) Cashman: Ellen (Nellie) Cashman was a quintessential gold stamper who participated in many gold-silver rushes of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Nellie's final home was Nolan Creek in the Koyukuk district of northern Alaska. Cashman died in 1925 at St. Anne's Hospital, Victoria, British Columbia, a medical facility she helped found several decades earlier.

Jack Dalton: One of the premier horse freighters of the Alaska-Yukon gold rush era, Jack Dalton opened up the 'Dalton Trail' for prospectors and trades from Haines to Central Yukon, Canada. In later years he worked as a freight engineer for the Alaska railroad. The Dalton Highway is a tribute to the Dalton family in Alaska.

Juneau, Summer 2006

Honoring the Mining Legal Profession, in Cooperation with the History Committee of the Alaska Bar Association

Frederick (Fred) Eastaugh: Nome-born Fred Eastaugh was an Alaskan accountant a ship's officer for the Alaska Steamship Company, and Alaska mining attorney. Eastaugh was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission in 1991 by Governor Walter Hickel. Upon Eastaugh's death a year later, Hickel ordered state flags flown at half mast.

Anchorage, Fall 2006

Honoring an Outstanding Statesman and an Outstanding Prospector Active in the mid-20th Century Alaska Mining Industry

Charles F. (Chuck) Herbert: Chuck Herbert was one of the premier miners of his generation. Educated at the School of Mines in Fairbanks, he mined placer gold deposits, sought metalliferous lodes, and served with distinction in several public roles. During early years of Statehood, he played a crucial role in the selection of Alaska's North Slope Lands. Later as DNR Commissioner, he revitalized the State land selection process.

Rheinart M. (Rhiny) Berg: Berg's strength and stamina were legendary during most of his 86 years of life. He worked as an underground miner in the Wrangell Mountains and Fairbanks districts, as a trapper and prospector, and he found the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit. He later developed the Candle placer district on the Seward Peninsula. He gained great wealth, which he mostly gave away.

Juneau, Spring 2007

Honoring an Outstanding Statesman and a Mine Attorney Active in Southeast Alaska's Mineral Industry

Phillip R. Holdsworth: Phil Holdsworth's professional career extended nearly seventy years. He was a practical miner at the age of sixteen. Later he operated mines, assay labs, and mills. In World War II, he defended a Philippine mine as a guerilla warrior. After serving as Alaska's first commissioner of Natural Resources, Holdsworth became Alaska's elder natural resource statesman before his death in 2001.

Herbert L. Faulkner: H.L. (Bert) Faulkner's law career extended for almost seventy years. He was a sheriff, U.S. Marshall and attorney. He would represent almost every major mining company operating in Alaska during his lifetime.

Fairbanks, Summer 2007

Honoring Two of Alaska's Outstanding Mine Educators

Earl H. Beistline: Earl Beistline had a distinguished career as mining educator at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. Beistline brought to the classroom a unique blend of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of mining. During all of his adult life, he has been a tireless and outspoken advocate of Alaska mining industry interests.

Ernest N. Wolff: Ernie Wolff was a notable personality on Alaska's mining landscape for more than sixty years. During this time he prospected, mined, taught and administered at the University of Alaska, wrote a classic book, *Handbook for the Alaskan Prospector*, and served on public bodies; all of this always in his unique style with a kind of gentle truculence.

Anchorage, Fall 2007

Honoring Those Involved in the Southwest Alaska's Quicksilver Mining Industry

Robert F. Lyman: Besides operating small scale mercury lodes, he managed Alaska's largest mercury mine at Red Devil, Alaska, which, during the 1950s, produced nearly 20 percent of U.S. domestic requirements of the strategic metal.

Wallace M. Cady: Produced, with other USGS colleagues, 'The Central Kuskokwim Region, Alaska', a geological framework of a large, 5,000 mi² area centered on Alaska's premier mercury mining region.

Russell Schaefer: One of Alaska's 'tough guy prospectors' that accomplished much in the Kuskokwim Mercury Belt of southwest Alaska.

Fairbanks, Spring 2008

Honoring Three Attorneys and a Civic Minded Woman Important to the Interior Alaska Mining Industry

Luther Hess: First rate mining lawyer and active mine developer in several Interior Alaska gold camps. Helped organize the Alaska Miners Association (in 1939) and served as AMA's first President.

Harriett Hess: Worked with husband Luther on a variety of mining education issues and was a pioneer regent of the University of Alaska system. Worked as pro-development, pro-mining Democrats during the Roosevelt Administration.

Earnest B. Collins: Pursued a long and successful career in Interior Alaska as a placer miner, lawyer, Alaska Territorial legislator, and delegate to Alaska Constitutional Convention.

John (Johnny) McGinn: A smart mining lawyer who, with James Wickersham, cleaned up corruption in Nome and financed many small gold and silver projects in Interior Alaska and Yukon, Canada.

Anchorage, Fall 2008

Honoring Two Engineers and a Prospector Who Helped Bring Success to the Kennecott Mines in the Chitina Valley of South-Central Alaska

Earl Tappen Stannard: An innovative engineer at Kennecott's Alaska mines, and later a CEO of Kennecott Copper Corporation.

William Crawford Douglass: A gifted mining engineer and exceptional manager at Kennecott's Alaska mines.

Reuben Frederick McClellan: Organized the mining partnership that made the initial discoveries and negotiated the sales of the mineral claims that became the Kennecott mines in Alaska.

Anchorage, Fall 2009

Honoring Four Pioneers Important to the Willow Creek Mining District

Robert L. Hatcher: Began the lode mining boom in the Willow Creek district when he discovered gold-quartz veins on Skyscraper Mountain that later became part of the Independence group of mines.

Orville G. Herning: Instrumental in forming the east-coast based exploration group, Klondike and Boston Gold Mining Company and in forming the Willow Creek Mining district.

Byron S. Bartholf: Represents a large family group that was instrumental in the development of the gold lodes in the Willow Creek district.

Walter W. Stoll: An exceptional mine operator of the Independence gold mine, which became the largest gold producer (in ore tonnage) in the Willow Creek district.

Fairbanks, Spring 2010

Honoring Two Civic-Minded Mining Pioneers Important to Interior and Western Alaska Development

John P. Clum: Long after his involvement with the capture of Geronimo in Arizona, Clum established reliable postal service in Alaska, and became the Postal Inspector of the Alaska Territory.

Irving McKenny Reed: Notable Associate Mining Engineer for the Alaska Territory and a pioneer of Nome; was Chair of the Alaska Game Commission prior to World War II and the Territorial Highway Engineer just before Alaska Statehood.

Anchorage, Fall 2010

Honoring Pioneers Important to the Seward Peninsula Gold Dredging Industry

Nicholas B. and Evinda S. Tweet: Partners in marriage and partners in mining, they created a family-owned firm that has mined gold in Alaska for over one hundred years.

Carl S. and Walter A. Glavinovoch: A pair of brothers who, collectively, devoted more than one hundred years of their lives to the prospecting, deciphering, drilling, thawing, and dredging of the Nome, Alaska placer gold fields.

Anchorage, Fall 2011

Honoring Two Pioneers Active in South-Central Alaska Mining and Economic Development

Martin Radovan: A Croatian prospector who prospected the Chitina Valley for decades and found the high altitude Binocular copper prospect. He never made a mine, but his dreams live on.

Arthur Shonbeck: He joined numerous mining stampedes during the Alaska-Yukon gold rush, and became an outstanding business leader in Anchorage, Alaska, where he helped found Providence Hospital. He drowned in Ganes Creek, west of McGrath, Alaska, while on a trip with AMHF inductee John Beaton, the man who discovered Iditarod.

Fairbanks, Spring 2012

Honoring Pioneers Important to Mid-20th Century Interior Alaska's Placer Mining Industry

Oscar Tweiten: Arrived in Fairbanks during the Great Depression, and mined on Cleary Creek in the Fairbanks district for more than 50 years.

Glen Franklin: A gifted athlete who studied business administration at the University of Alaska in the 1930s, and placer mined with others in both Alaska and Yukon Territory, Canada.

Donald Cook: an Oregon born graduate of the University of Alaska, who pursued a long career in both mining and in education.

Notice on Pick.Click.Give Program

In 2012, the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) became eligible to participate in the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) program *Pick.Click.Give*. The AMHF is included in a list of educational organizations, community foundations, and charitable organizations that are eligible to receive charitable contributions as designated by PFD applicants on the electronic permanent fund dividend application. The AMHF is again eligible for 2013.

We encourage Alaskan residents interested in Alaska's mining pioneers to contribute to this effort. It helps the AMHF cover the organization's day-to-day expenses.

Regardless, thanks much for your support!

If you any questions concerning the *Pick.Click.Give* program and what it means to the AMHF, please contact:

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Merton H. Marston (1871-1935)

Merton H. Marston was born in Indiana on July 22, 1871 to James and Alice *nee Sweet* Marston. He remained a mid-westerner until he was 27 years old, at which time he began the adventure that places him in the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame - mainly because of his involvement with John Beaton, a Canadian of Scot ancestry, and William Dikeman, reportedly of German descent, in the Flat district of southwest Alaska. Specifically, Marston represents the supporting cast of characters necessary to successfully carry out a prospecting venture in an unmapped wilderness.

The Marston syndicate of LaPorte, Indiana, a small city about 50 miles southeast of Chicago, was one of dozens of mining syndicates that were assembled to seek gold during the great Klondike gold rush of 1897-1900. Marston attended La Porte schools, but there is no record of his graduation. He served as a clerk in the store of Barnes & Company (dry goods, carpets, millinery, etc.) during his teenage years, and then went to work for the *LaPorte Daily Herald*, eventually becoming city editor. The syndicate seems better qualified by the skills of its organizers than many, but none of the Argonauts had any mining experience. One of the group, James Walter Davis, was a civil engineer. Another, John Merton Davis, a blacksmith. Eugene G. Neff was a carpenter. Although James Davis was, and remained, a well-regarded engineer throughout his life, the only member of the syndicate known to have struck it rich in the north was perhaps the least likely by background - Merton H. Marston - a newspaper man.

On February 26, 1898, the *Daily Herald* announced that Davis, Marston, and Neff were ready to depart for the northland. Two days later, they left. A few days before their departure, a man from the Michigan City area named George McDonald started west,

“...with a view of seeking his fortune in that far off country.”

His plan was to stay in Tacoma, Washington, for at least a month, and, if he was able to obtain a good job, he would remain there. However, his main ambition was to continue north in search of gold, and he would probably do so after April 1st. It was reported that he would be outfitting himself with supplies, and would be prepared to engage in digging with a pick and shovel for the yellow metal, but that he would engage in any enterprise that would bring him profit. He joined the La Porte party in their search for mineral wealth.

Word from newspaper man Marston was sparse, but of the group, at least James Davis and Marston remained in the north, drifting westward as gold was discovered in inland Alaska. James Davis seems to have done well in the Klondike, but as an engineer rather than a miner. By 1906, Marston was on Fairbanks Creek in the Fairbanks district of Alaska, both actively mining and operating a saloon at ‘13 below discovery’. By 1908, Marston had returned to his earlier career, and was writing for the *Weekly Fairbanks News*. The paper was renamed the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* in 1909, and it remains Alaska’s oldest daily newspaper to this day.

While in Fairbanks, Marston met two placer prospectors, John Beaton and William A. Dikeman. Beaton and Dikeman had been prospecting in the Innoko region, near the present

day City of McGrath. With limited success in the Innoko district, the men decided to move southwest, into the wilderness drained by the Iditarod (not yet named). Before they left the relative civilization of the McGrath area for an all winter prospecting venture, they found a small river boat, and arranged for supplies and food through Marston, who was promised a $\frac{1}{6}$ interest in any gold found by Beaton and Dikeman.

The Iditarod country is of general low relief, and is mostly underlain by frozen soils, or permafrost. Though Beaton and Dikeman did do some panning for 'color' in the Iditarod, they mainly prospected by shafting, burning and shoveling their way toward bedrock. Shafting is very hard work, and at times Beaton complained of the bacon and beans diet furnished them by Marston. Beaton, however, was an experienced prospector, and must have known that there would be little culinary variety, except for fish and game that they could take opportunistically along the way.

The key to the Iditarod discovery was the suggestion, from a local trapper, that Beaton and Dikeman prospect a stream known for an abundance of land otter - aptly called Otter Creek. They took the trapper's advice. On Christmas Day of 1908, at a depth of about 10 feet, Beaton and Dikeman encountered rich pay. The discovery area on Otter Creek would later become part of the Flat town site. The successful prospectors proceeded to mine their discovery, although it wasn't until thaw and breakup that they could wash their gravel and recover the gold. Word of the discovery slowly leaked, and by late 1909, a stampede was under way.

As reported in the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, Marston brought the first gold dust from the

Iditarod mining district to Fairbanks on September 27, 1909. The results of thirty-two holes dug on Otter Creek indicated that the pay was shallow and the ground was rich. Marston owned two claims on Otter Creek, portions of which he leased out. According to the *News-Miner*,

Marston took a pan from each dump of the nine holes running straight across the creek bed on [a leased portion of one of his claims] shortly before returning [to Fairbanks]. The nine pans netted \$2.32 or over 25 cents a pan.

On the same day [another of Marston's lessees] took out a bucket which yielded \$2.45.

Marston had great faith in the new discovery. A new settlement, known as Beaton City, was under construction at Otter Creek, and Marston began building a large general store. He resolved to leave the *News-Miner*.

Before his trip into the Iditarod country, an event occurred that could have sidelined Marston for a long time. On April 4, 1909, along with William James and John Butovich, Marston was involved in a violent altercation with Mike Stepovich on Fairbanks Creek – one that involved a shootout in Stepovich's cabin. According to the defendants, Stepovich and two others caught Butovich on a Fish Creek quartz claim that had been located by Stepovich, and beat him so badly that

“...he had to be assisted to his home by his son.”

In retribution for this and other transgressions, Marston held a lantern while James allegedly blazed away at Stepovich with a rifle, and

Stepovich answered with his own six-shooter. Incredibly, no one was hit. Marston, James and Butovich were charged with ‘shooting with intent to kill’. The three were taken into custody, but released on bail until the trial began in November, 1909, allowing Marston to spend much of the summer in the Iditarod. During the November trial, about twenty residents of Fairbanks Creek were subpoenaed by the defense. The details of disputes over claim ownership between Stepovich and Marston (on Fairbanks Creek) and Stepovich and Butovich (on Fish Creek) were heard. In the end, the jury refused to convict the trio of the felony ‘shooting with intent to kill’ that they had been indicted under, and, instead, found Marston and James guilty under the minimum charge, attempted assault, a misdemeanor. The judge on the case noted that:

“...Marston and James should consider themselves exceptionally fortunate.”

and told them,

“You have been ably defended by counsel, who brought out all the mitigating circumstances of this case.”

He sentenced them to three months in the Federal jail and a fine of \$250 each.

By 1912, Marston began to partner with another Iditarod millionaire, Henry Riley. They would, for a time, jointly own the Riley-Marston dredge that worked pay on Otter Creek. In May of 1913, *The Iditarod Pioneer* reported:

“Riley and Marston have about 40 men doing preparatory work on Otter Creek such as digging ditches.”

Also in May of 1913, *The Iditarod Pioneer* reported that,

“The Mert Marston-Henry Riley partnership is the largest donor and contributor for road maintenance funds in the district.”

The partners also donated a team of draft horses for the road maintenance work.

Marston must have been a physically fit individual. As reported by the *Fairbanks Daily Times* (the last rival to the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*), Marston, accompanied by well-known Alaskan gold miners Dan Kennedy, William Casey, and Tom Bullene, left Iditarod on November 15, 1912, and walked more than 150 miles to Kaltag, staying at roadhouses along the way. From Kaltag, the miners mushed via dog team onto Ruby, and then onto Fairbanks. They made the trip from Ruby to Fairbanks in 8 days, which was considered near-record time in 1912.

Marston was financially involved with John Beaton in the construction of the Alaska Theatre which opened in Seattle, May 14, 1914. This theatre later became known as the Strand Theatre.

Merton Marston left Alaska in 1918. Later that year, he acquired a chicken ranch near Pontiac Bay, Sand Point, Washington, and operated it for four or five years. He started building chicken coops on his Pontiac Bay farm until he completed about 500 feet of them. Marston and his wife, Stella, operated this business until the early 1920s, when they left the chicken ranch and moved to the Columbia neighborhood of South Seattle. They maintained ownership of the Sand Point land until it was purchased by the federal government for the establishment of Sand Point Naval Air Station,

an amphibious aircraft base operated by the U.S. Navy.

From 1926 through 1931, Marston headed the Terry-Madison Company, the corporate owner of the Sorrento Hotel, located in Seattle, Washington. The hotel was built in 1908-09 by Samuel Rosenberg of Kline & Rosenberg, Clothiers, who participated in the successful Chamber of Commerce campaign to make Seattle the outfitting and jumping-off place for gold seekers headed to the Klondike during the gold rush of 1897. Marston and Stella managed the Sorrento Hotel. A major remodeling effort that they completed in 1925 received national recognition from the magazine *Hotel News of the West*. Today, the Sorrento Hotel is one of the oldest operating hotels in Washington State.

In 1931, Merton and Stella moved to DeLake, Oregon where they built the DeLake Hotel. It burned in 1934, and they moved to Yachats, where they opened the Rendezvous Restaurant. They were still operating the Rendezvous at the time of Merton Marston's death in April, 1935.

Written by Charles C. Hawley and Ms. Fern E. Schultz, October 26, 2012.

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“Hotel Sorrento wins favor with new furnishings” *Hotel News of the West*, November 21, 1925.



Hensley, Humo and Peterson at Otter Creek, Alaska; Hensley and Humo were two of a party of three who leased the middle 450 feet of 1 above, creek, one of Marston's original two claims on Otter Creek in 1909; photo courtesy of Alaska's Digital Archives.



Mattie 'Tootsie' Crosby, date unknown; photo from the Miscovich family collection.

**Martha Euphemia Tula Macelhaine
a.k.a. Mattie Crosby
a.k.a. Miss Tootsie
(1884-1972)**

On August 14, 1911, an African American woman nicknamed Tootsie arrived in Iditarod, Alaska. She didn't see another African American for seventeen years, but during that long interval, she more than held her own in Iditarod and its adjacent mining town of Flat. And, as she told writer Helen Gillette,

"If I wanted to see another dark face, I just looked in the mirror."

Tootsie, also known as Mattie Crosby, was born in Maine on May 2, 1884 into a family of about 27 children. The exact number is immaterial, as Tootsie never knew most of them anyway. Mattie was little more than an infant when her mother died, and Mattie was adopted into the Wade family, which, as Mattie later remarked,

"...treated me just like a queen."

They also made sure that she got an education. Mattie traveled with the Wades when they pulled up their roots to follow the Klondike gold rush to Dawson, then eventually to Fairbanks and the Koyukuk. She entered Alaska in 1900. She gained her last name by falling in love and marrying a miner by the name of Crosby, who was mining gold on Goldstream Creek in the Fairbanks district, but the marriage didn't last.

Due to exposure to well below freezing temperatures, Mattie lost an eye and at least some of her hair. She wore a variety of wigs that often made her appear, according to John Miscovich, like

"...another African American woman in town."

Tootsie was always an entrepreneur, but a compassionate one. She left Alaska in 1909, but returned in 1911, and went to Iditarod with the aim of establishing the finest bathhouse in Alaska, which very possibly she did.

She also found alternate ways to make a living, in addition to prospecting and running a bathhouse. Tootsie was an exceptional cook, and supported herself through the years by preparing frontier banquets, as well as ordinary meals, either in her little home in Flat, or in larger, commercial facilities. She opened a lunch room and tavern in Flat after leaving Iditarod. The original Donnelly and Sheppard Store in Flat still has Tootsie's luncheon menu tacked to the wall.



Mattie Crosby with Johnny Stevens and Frank Molitar (right) at Otter Creek in Flat, Alaska; photo from the Lulu Collection, Accession Number 68-69-2344, Archives, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Tootsie never drank or smoked. Yet, with the passage of the Volstead Act (Prohibition) in 1919, she became an enthusiastic bootlegger, selling her own moonshine, as well as product she purchased from Andrew (Sr) Miscovich, Donnelley and Sheppard.

Tootsie was a business woman. Long before credit cards, she operated a sort of 'carry on and pay later' business. While she did lose money to some unscrupulous individuals who managed to skip Flat on a plane before paying, overall her business was profitable. Tootsie sunk nearly all of her loan business profits into mining ventures on Bear Creek and Marvel Creek in the Nyac mining district. Bear Creek proved to be a good placer prospect, but for real success, it demanded

more capital than Mattie could put together. It would later be mined by companies with sufficient capital.

May of 1925 saw the first commercial flight between Fairbanks and Flat. Tootsie was the only passenger on board for that inaugural event. She reportedly paid \$500 for the flight, which was piloted by a man named Bennett. The cost included freight charges for some resupplies for her businesses in Flat.

June McAtee, a descendant of Saami reindeer herders that were active in southwest Alaska, remembers comments made by her mother. Tootsie used to visit the Kvamme reindeer family in Aniak. At the time, Tootsie had claims on Ophir Creek south of Aniak in the northern foothills of the Kilbuck Mountains. During the initial 1930s meeting, Tootsie was the first African American woman that June's mother had ever seen. MacAtee further relates:

“It would be interesting to be a fly on the wall during visits between the two women. A Saami and an African American in Aniak - so different but both making a living with gold miners all around them.”

Mattie's non-mining successes led to her one jail term. Mattie was convicted of bootlegging, and she served six months in jail in Fairbanks. At the end of her term, her jailors were sorry to see her go, as they had never eaten so well. After serving her jail time, Tootsie would never again sell illegal alcohol. Attorney and sometime gold miner Earnest B. Collins (E.B.) was the prosecuting attorney on the case. A few years later, E.B. ran for Territorial legislature, and John Miscovich took E. B. on a campaign visit to Tootsie's lunchroom in Flat. Mattie told E. B.,

“Mr. Collins, I don’t know if I want to kiss you or kill you.”

She decided upon the former, gave E. B. a big hug and voted for him (he won). E.B. Collins was a former Speaker of the Territorial House, where he successfully sponsored a bill in 1913 that granted women the right to vote in Alaska. He was a mayor of Fairbanks during the 1930s, and a delegate to the 1955-56 Alaska Constitution Convention. E.B. Collins was inducted into the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame in 2008.

Tootsie was an African American woman, and in the days before integration, did have to face colloquial insensitivities from time to time. John Miscovich remembers a time when he had just returned from a Cold War missile development program in Alabama that he was consulting for. He had stopped in Flat to give her his regards. He was telling her that he had just been

‘...in her part of the country...’

when she abruptly stopped him in mid-sentence saying:

“Mr. John. I am not from Alabama but from the Great State of Maine. I should hope that my New England accent is proof of that.”

Mattie and John were very close friends, so nothing negative ever came of the encounter.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Tootsie wrote articles about Flat that were published in the newspaper *The Star News* of Chula Vista, near San Diego, California.

In her later years, Mattie supported a several old timers, especially Mike Burns, who in turn kept Tootsie in firewood. All the old timers were stove up in one way or another, and when Mike lost his sight, and Mattie’s legs began to give out, she and Mike moved, first to the Pioneer’s Home in Sitka, then to the Home in Fairbanks. On the way to Sitka, they stopped in Anchorage for a few days, where Mattie greeted Anchorage pioneers. By then she was wheelchair-bound, and staying at Providence Hospital. When some Iditarod pioneers came to visit her she exclaimed:

“Great day in the morning! I have never been so happy in my life. This is one of the greatest meetings I have ever had!”

Later during her Anchorage stay, Tootsie reminisced with Lois Pedersen, the widow of dredge master Fred Pedersen, who recalled,

“In Flat those years we were like one happy family - that’s the kind of friends we are.”

Tootsie answered,

“Ain’t that the truth, and the Lord surely blessed us.”

Tootsie died at the Fairbanks Pioneer’s Home at age 88 on October 11, 1972. Old timers noted that Tootsie’s funeral turnout was similar to that of Felix Pedro, Fannie Quigley and other beloved Alaskan personalities.

Written by Charles C. Hawley and Thomas Bundtzen, October 25, 2012.

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Letters and oral correspondence with John Miscovich to Hawley and Bundtzen, 1994 to 2012

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The authors are indebted to John Miscovich for his information and many insights into Mattie (Tootsie) Crosby.

Sometime after World War II, Mattie Crosby possessed a hand-written autobiography that described her life in Alaska, which she had worked on for years. Someone offered to get it typed up for her. Tragically, when she lent the only copy out for typing and review, it was lost. People are still attempting to locate even fragments of that manuscript. Much of the information provided to the AMHF by John Miscovich are based at least in part on recollections of what was in the autobiography, which he had read while it was still in Mattie's possession.



Toivo Rosander at age 88; photo taken by Jennifer Cheek Pantaleon.

Toivo Johan Gustavus Rosander (1915-2010)

Toivo Johan Gustavus Rosander, known to friends and family simply as Toivo, was born on December 30, 1915 in Erajarvi, Finland. He passed away in a suburb of Miami, Florida on December 24, 2010, missing his 95th birthday by just a few days.

Toivo's beginnings trace back to both New England and Finland. His mother, Alexandra, a.k.a Sanni, and his father, Victor, had immigrated to the United States from Finland before World War I. But the Rosander marriage split up, with a pregnant Sanni taking her four US born children, Helen, Aino, Vieno, and George back to Finland to spend time with relatives, and to 'sort things out'. Toivo, the youngest of the five children, was the only Rosander child born in Finland. Sanni had planned on returning to the United States within a relatively short time, but travel during World War I was restricted or banned. She and her children were stuck in Finland until

the end of the war. As the conflict subsided, Sanni and her children, including Toivo, returned to the United States by way of Canada.

Toivo grew up on a farm near New Ipswich, New Hampshire, where he learned the value of hard work. He also learned how to operate the new mechanized equipment that was being introduced into the American agricultural economy.

In 1936, at the age of 21, Toivo Rosander was summoned to Alaska by his uncle, veteran freighter and miner Gus Uotila, who was mining placer gold in the Innoko mining district of western-interior Alaska. In 1934, President Roosevelt had raised the price of gold from \$20.67/ounce to \$35/ounce, which caused a resurgence in Alaska's placer gold mining industry. Prior to that, a new generation of miners had already benefited from the use of mechanized equipment such as draglines and bulldozers, equipment that was not available to the sourdough stampedeers of the Alaska-Yukon gold rush era. Largely because of this later day gold mining 'boom', Interior Alaska escaped most of the negative effects of the Great Depression.

Toivo was a fast learner, and soon mastered the dragline, bulldozer, hydraulic monitor and other equipment necessary to successfully mine placer gold. He quickly became a good manager of people. He lived in the mining town of Ophir, and worked alongside Eric Hard, his uncle Gus, Cole McFarland Sr., Hugh Matheson Sr. and Joe Degnan. Ophir, named for the fabled place where the Queen of Sheba's mines were located, was the center of mining in the Innoko district, and miners from Ganes, Yankee, Little, Spruce, Ester, and Ophir Creeks did their business there.



The Uotila and Hard placer operation on Ophir Creek where Toivo worked, circa 1937; photo from the Rosander family collection.

Toivo's older brother, George, also came to Alaska during the mid-1930s. George became managing editor of the *Kusko Times*, then published in Takotna, Alaska. His business partner was Alaska Egan, the older brother of William Egan, who would eventually become the first governor of the State of Alaska. Later, George Rosander mined gold on Golden Creek in the Tozi-Moran area west of Tanana, and on Granite and Slate Creeks in the Iditarod district, the latter with his uncle Gus Uotila. According to John Miscovich, George Rosander was one of the best dragline operators in the Iditarod area. He married Eva Miscovich, a member of the Miscovich placer mining family centered in Flat.

While on a trip to visit his mother Sanni in Florida, where she had relocated, Toivo met Miriam Polkkynen, a native of Warren, Ohio. Miriam was a gifted athlete. She was a competitive swimmer and diver, and an accomplished figure skater. She was also an excellent basketball player in high school, and earned the nickname 'Dynamite' because of the quick, explosive plays she made on the court. She

became known as 'Dyna' to many friends and loved ones, a name that stuck for the rest of her life. Her parents, Hjalmer and Katri, had moved to Florida so that Miriam could train for Olympic try-outs in diving for the 1936 Olympic Games, which were held in Berlin, Germany. She did not make the team, but proved that she could compete with the best divers in the country at the

time. In the late 1930s, Miriam skated in a supporting role for the 'Hollywood Ice Review' with the Norwegian Olympic Champion turned professional figure skater and movie actress, Sonja Henie. Prior to World War II, Dyna entered the Civilian Pilots Training Program (CPTP) and obtained a pilot's license, one of the emerging woman pioneer aviators of the day. Love and family changed the direction of her life. Toivo and Dyna were married, and had two children: Ken, born September 29, 1938 and Ron, born February 23, 1943.



Miriam (Dyna) Rosander with Ron Rosander, circa late 1943; photo from the Rosander family collection.

In 1940, Toivo Rosander was ready to operate independently of his Uncle Gus Uotila, and formed a placer mine venture on Little Creek in the Innoko District with Joe Degnan. He worked there with Joe for two full mining seasons. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, and the nation was suddenly at war. Toivo was drafted into the U.S. Army, and he later joined the U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF). During the conflict, Lieutenant Toivo Rosander piloted B-24 bombers over Europe in the 15th Air Force, first based in North Africa, and later in Italy. He was being scheduled for training to be a B-29 pilot when the war ended. Upon his discharge from active military service, Toivo, Dyna and their sons returned to Ophir, Alaska and resumed their mining activities on Little Creek, with their partner, Joe Degnan, through the 1946 season.



Toivo Rosander shortly before being discharged from the U.S. Army Air Forces, circa 1945; photo from the Rosander family collection.

Beginning in 1947, Toivo Rosander formed a partnership with Larry Reed on Yankee Creek west of Takotna, after being purchased from Nels Vibe. Some of the ground had previously been worked by mining pioneers Jack Neubauer and Neil Beaton. Mining Yankee Creek was one of the most successful parts of Toivo's 70 year career in the Alaska placer mining business. After Reed passed away in 1950, Toivo purchased his partner's estate in 1952, and mined on Yankee Creek continuously until 1968. For more than fifteen years, Rosander deployed two work shifts per day (double-shifted) during the mining season, employing as many as twenty-five men and women, many from local communities such as McGrath, Takotna, Nikolai, Holy Cross, and other villages. During that time, Toivo and his crews consistently mined more than one million bedrock feet of paystreak each year.



The sternwheeler *Northwestern* off-loading lumber at Sterling Landing for the Yankee Creek camp, circa 1950; photo from the Rosander family collection.

From early on, Toivo was a valuable mentor to younger miners, who would go on to create successful careers of their own. The late Cole McFarland Jr., who spent his teen years in the Ophir area, often remarked that working for the Rosander and Reed partnership on Yankee Creek was the first real job that he had. McFarland

would later become President of Placer Dome U.S., an international mining firm. Hugh Matheson Jr. worked for Toivo Rosander on Yankee Creek during the early 1950s. He later mined on Big Creek in the Chandalar district, taught in the School of Earth Sciences and Mineral Industries (CESMI) program in Fairbanks, managed the Endako molybdenum mine in Canada, and managed the Evan Jones Coal Mine near Palmer. Matheson became a Vice President of Placer Dome, and was later President of CoCa Mines, and St. Marys Minerals, Inc., both mid-sized mining companies. George Cheek, whose father ran the Ophir NC Store, was also mentored by Toivo. He would become the President of the American Forest Institute, an organization representing about 180 corporate members, including Georgia-Pacific and Weyerhaeuser, and more than 75,000 tree farmers throughout the United States. He also worked as a newspaper reporter in Washington State. George Cheek related to the author in a recent correspondence:

“In the late 1940s, wages in the Ophir area were pretty standard: \$1.00/hour for labor, including nozzling; \$1.25/hour for a cat skinner; and maybe \$1.50/hour for a good dragline operator. Meals and bed in a bunkhouse were \$2.00/day. Toivo always paid \$0.25 more per hour, had one of the best crews in the valley, and certainly one of the happiest camps.”

Cheek continues:

“Toivo was one of only a few mine owners that hired mostly locals, including members of the native community. One result was that he was always welcome in places where outsiders were not always accepted, at least at that time, such as Unalakleet and Holy

Cross. We took for granted the warmth and welcome of the people in those towns but it was a result of the regard in which Toivo was held, and that was extended to the rest of us because of him.”

Cheek published a book in 2007, titled *Epitaph for Ophir*, about his experiences as a young man growing up in Ophir, Alaska. This valuable historical contribution describes the day-to-day events of life in a remote Alaska mining community during the pre-Statehood era. Although many of the book’s characters (but not all) contain fictional names, the events are real. In *Epitaph for Ophir*, Toivo and Miriam Rosander are Toivo and Dyna Taipale, who lived in Ophir, along with their sons Ron and Ken.

One colorful event in the book involves an attractive, blonde woman soundly beating a miner in a wrestling match at Slim’s Bar in Ophir, thus winning a \$50 dollar bet made by her husband. That woman was the athletic Miriam Rosander, a.k.a. Dyna. After making sure that the vanquished was not physically injured and his damaged ego was repairable, Dyna turned to Toivo and said:

“Don’t get any more bright ideas about me wrestling.”



Toivo, Dyna and George Rosander, circa early 1950s; photo from the Rosander family collection.

While operating the Innoko district's largest non-float mining operation on Yankee Creek, Toivo partnered with others on other placer paystreaks in the Innoko district. During 1953-1958, Toivo, Neil Beaton, and Frank Molitor mined Ganes Creek with the 'Holky' bucketline stacker dredge. The boat had been rebuilt during the late 1940s by Molitor, Charlie Holky and Johnny Repo. From the late 1950s to the early years of Statehood, Toivo established a successful partnership with Tex Gates on Bear Creek near Cripple Mountains 50 miles north of McGrath.

Toivo shut down his main Yankee Creek gold mine in 1968, partly due to the exhaustion of easy-to-mine reserves, and partly due to the fixed price of gold. Many of Alaska's gold miners had shut down by that time. Prior to that, Toivo diversified his livelihood, and organized Kusko Trucking Company (Kusko Trucking). Kusko Trucking hauled fuel and supplies along the 55 mile long Ophir-Sterling Landing road system to fellow gold miners and to Tatalina Air Force Base, a Cold War DEW line early warning system built along the flanks of Takotna Mountain. Toivo's Kusko Trucking, which was active from the late 1950s through the early 1980s, kept cash flow positive for the Rosander family.

Toivo and Dyna made gold nugget jewelry with placer gold from the Ophir area. Dyna became an expert designer and fabricator of gold jewelry, making pendants, earrings, and necklaces. Toivo focused on polishing and stone setting for the jewelry products. Their market not only included Tatalina AFB and McGrath, but outlets in Fairbanks and Anchorage as well.

When gold prices were decontrolled, and began to rise in the early 1970s, Toivo eagerly joined his

sons Ron and Ken to plan and develop a new gold mining venture on Colorado Creek north of McGrath. Through the purchase of mining claims from the John and Richard Fullerton in Flat, the Rosander Mining Company has mined at Colorado Creek every year since 1974, making it one of the longest running, continuously mining Alaska placer gold producers of the modern era. Toivo and the author were at Colorado Creek when the 'Rosander Mammoth' was excavated by University of Alaska researchers in 1982. The company donated skull with tusks is prominently displayed at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks' Museum of the North to this day. In 1994, Toivo and others of the Rosander Mining Company were honored by the University Museum for their paleontological contribution.



Toivo Rosander cleaning up at Colorado Creek, circa 1982; photo by Tom Bundtzen.



The Rosander mammoth skull and skeleton being uncovered in 1982; photo from the T. K. Bundtzen collection.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Toivo was an integral part of tours funded by the American Forest Institute in Washington, D.C., an organization that sponsored the American Tree Farm program, and advocated for the forest products industry. George Cheek was the President of that organization. All of the tours had a similar pattern. A group of as many as twenty would tour logging and processing plants in southeastern Alaska. Then a smaller group would travel north to the general Ophir-Yankee Creek area. Toivo was the main host during those interior Alaska visits. Frequently, the group split up to see different operations in order to obtain

unique perspectives from mine operators themselves. Toivo wanted people to see for themselves what was going on, and make up their own minds about environmental damage or other issues. One group would visit Mike O'Carroll on Spruce Creek. Another group would visit Warren Magnuson on Ganes Creek. A third group would visit Toivo's son, Ron Rosander, on Colorado Creek, and so on. Afterwards, the groups would be flown to Flat by Warren Magnuson, Doc Sayers and Bob Magnuson, to visit with the Miscovich, Fullerton and Agoff mining families.

In 1973, Toivo hosted a lawyer who later became

chairman of the American Bar Association's anti-trust committee, and a New York Times reporter who was off duty. The group caught grayling, picked two beer cases full of morels (mushrooms) and anchored a case of very good chardonnay in the by-water flowing through Yankee Creek camp from the old drainage ditch. Toivo fried the fish and morels in butter, cracked the wine and sat there eating under a hissing Coleman lantern. Said the lawyer,

“I wonder how much we'd have to pay for a dinner like this in Washington.”



The Rosander mammoth skull on display at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks' Museum of the North; photo from the T. K. Bundtzen collection.

That lawyer still has a picture of himself and Toivo cleaning grayling hanging in his dining room.



Toivo Rosander and George Cheek cleaning grayling on Ganes Creek, circa 1991; photo by Jennifer Cheek Pantaleon.

When the contentious D-2 Lands were being debated, people from the media, Congressional staffs, government agencies including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and from universities toured the Innoko and Iditarod districts, with Toivo again serving as host. The media groups represented in those tours included ABC News, Time Magazine, Business Week, Harpers, Saturday Review, Field and Stream Magazine, Newsweek, the Kansas City Star and the New York Times. According to George Cheek, in the 1990s Dan Cordtz, who was then the Economics Editor for ABC News, still had a photo hanging on his office wall of himself, Judy Rosander (Toivo's daughter-in-law) and a prepubescent Neil Rosander (Toivo's grandson) panning gold.

George Reiger, then the conservation editor of *Field and Stream Magazine*, hit it off with Toivo Rosander. They fished together on Ganes and Yankee Creeks. Reiger would later publish an

article titled "Grayling in the Tailings" in his magazine.

Another personality who would make one of the Toivo's tours was Brock Evans, who at the time was the chief lobbyist for the Sierra Club. In a recent correspondence with the writer, Brock Evans relayed the following:

"I am a long-time admirer of Toivo Rosander;

congratulations to his family for his induction into the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame. I had the great privilege of spending many hours with him at his place, out near Ophir, Alaska, in 1978. Although we were poles apart on the issues of the times (the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act – ANILCA), Toivo always treated me with the greatest courtesy and friendliness. I still remember the slogan taped to his front door "Sierra Go Home!" Despite, or maybe because of all that, I have rarely had such friendly conversations over anyone's campfire or kitchen table, spiced with his great libations, and of course, Arctic Char and other delights. I have always remembered those times with Toivo, his honesty, courage, and passionate views about his life's work, and his way of life. Just being near him, and sharing it all with him, was a highly enriching experience in my own life."

Throughout his long life, Toivo was tolerant of many viewpoints that conflicted with his own.

Like his uncle Gus Uotila, he was a great mentor of youth. It is difficult to overstate the number of young people that Toivo influenced during his life. Allison Davis, who visited Toivo at Yankee Creek on several occasions during the 1970s, observed the legal and environmental challenges faced by the placer gold miners of the Ophir-Flat area. She later pursued a law degree at the University of California-Davis and would represent small mining interests such as Rosander Mining Company and others during her career. After Toivo retired, he continued to help and encourage a younger generation of gold miners in the Yankee Creek drainage basin and in other areas, including Ben Magnuson, Mansie Magnuson and Eep Anderson, who have opened up their own placer mining properties during the last 25 years.

Toivo liked classical music, and was especially fond of violinist Itzhak Perlman, whom he heard live at the San Francisco Symphony.

As might have already been ascertained, Toivo was a dedicated fisherman, and would often spend time at his favorite fishing holes in the Tatlawiksuk, Swift and Gagaryah River basins, all tributaries of the Kuskokwim River downstream from McGrath.

Besides his generosity, honesty and humor, Toivo will also be remembered for his Finnish saunas, a prominent fixture in all of his placer mining camps.

Toivo's older son, Ken Rosander, died in 1983. His first wife, Miriam, mother of his two sons

Ron and Ken, died in 1986. Toivo married Dana Litchmen in 1990, and both lived in Florida until his death. Toivo Johan Gustavus Rosander is survived by his wife Dana Rosander, his son Ron Rosander and daughter-in-law Judy Rosander, and five grandchildren (including placer mine operators Neil and Kyle Rosander) and eight great grandchildren.

Written by Thomas K. Bundtzen, October 20, 2012.



A meeting of minds at Yankee Creek, circa 1978; Toivo Rosander is in the center (standing); to Toivo's left is Judy Rosander; second from the left in the front row is Helen Fenske, Assistant Secretary for water quality, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and to her right is Judy Dobrcyzinski from *The New York Times*; sitting in the center with the child is Brock Evans, chief lobbyist for the Sierra Club; third from the right (in suspenders) is George Cheek from the American Forest Institute; the others are unidentified; photo by Jennifer Cheek Panteleon.

Sources:

The writer benefited from conversations he had with Toivo Rosander during 1978, 1982, and 1996, all while Toivo was engaged with mining activities in the Innoko mining district. The writer thanks Ron Rosander, Judy Rosander, Peter Snow and George Cheek for written and oral conversations concerning Toivo's life and accomplishments. In particular, Cheek provided abundant information on Toivo's activities during the 1970s. Using these and other sources, the writer compiled a brief biographic sketch that was published by the Journal of the Alaska Miners Association during 2011.

The writer is especially indebted to professional photographer Jennifer Pantaleon, who took many of the images used in this article and also used in the Powerpoint presentation during the November 8th induction ceremony.

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Distinguished Alaskans Aid Foundation as '98ers

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation was incorporated as an Alaskan non-profit corporation on April 27, 1997. The Foundation was organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes, including donations to organizations that are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code. On September 17, 2003, the IRS confirmed the 501(c)(3) status of AMHF, and further categorized the organization under codes 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(6).

The foundation is a non-membership corporation that depends on services provided by its officers and directors, others interested in Alaskan mining, and on donations and grants.

The Foundation is especially indebted to twenty-two (22) people who have each contributed \$1000 to become 98ers, in honor of the first stampedeers to Alaska in 1898 at Nome.

The 98ers

Dr. Earl Beistline	James Moody
Cheryl R. Bradley	John Mulligan
Thomas K. Bundtzen	Patrick H. O'Neill
Glen Chambers (d)	Elmer E. Rasmuson (d)
Douglas Colp (d)	Irving Stoy Reed
Wendell Hammon Jr.	William Stroecker (d)
Dr. Charles C. Hawley	Dr. Robert H. Trent
Dr. Walter Johnson	Mitch Usibelli
Wallace McGregor	Joe Usibelli, Sr.
Neil McKinnon	Dr. William Wood (d)
Tom Mein	Dr. Kenneth L. Zong

(d=deceased)

Most of the 98ers are recognizable as miners of national or international reputation. The late William R. Wood was President, Emeritus, of the University of Alaska. Dr. Wood suggested the organization of the Foundation. The late Elmer E. Rasmuson was an Alaska banker and benefactor, long interested in Alaska natural resource history. Dr. Walter Johnson's career was mainly in Native public health, but he knew many pioneer Alaskans. His own research has taken him to Sweden and Norway in search of the true story of the so-called "three Lucky Swedes" of fame at Nome.

The Foundation is seeking about ninety more 98ers, but it welcomes contributions at every level. For further information contact:

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