

# The PAYSTREAK

Volume 26, No. 1, Spring, 2026

The Newsletter of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation

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## Honoring an Iconic Interior Alaska Placer Gold Miner and a Statewide and International Mineral Industry Explorationist, Educator, and Leader



Alaska placer mining pioneer Carl Heflinger spent 65 years mining placer gold throughout Interior Alaska. He was born on May 17, 1912 in Washington State and passed away on December 14, 2014 at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital in Fairbanks, Alaska at the age of 102. He began mining in 1934 in the Fairbanks district and ended his mining career in the Livengood district northwest of Fairbanks in 1999. Throughout his long life, Carl became known as a legendary gold mining expert that offered wisdom and advice to virtually everyone associated with the Alaska placer mining community.



British-born John Frank Michael (F. M.) Sims was a memorable lode gold expert with an international reputation, an effective educator at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks in the geological and mining fields, and a leader that advocated for the importance of the Alaska mineral industry's past, present and future. In the latter part of his career, Sims played an important role with a team of others in Alaska's first successful marketing of a significant mineral resource, (excluding petroleum), Usibelli Coal Mine Inc's. export coal to International (Pacific Rim) market destinations, which lasted for three decades.

**Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF)  
Induction Ceremony, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
AMHF Museum, 406 Cushman Street Fairbanks, Alaska**

*Ceremony Program*

The general public is invited to Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) induction ceremony from 7:00-to-8:30 PM on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026. The ceremony will take place at the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation Museum at 406 Cushman, Fairbanks, Alaska.

A Power Point Presentation will be presented for the two inductees, plus some video footage. There is no charge for admission. Refreshments (coffee and tea and cookies/donuts) will be served.

Introduction by Tom Bundtzen, President AMHF----- 7:00-to-7:15 PM

*Presentation of Inductee*

Presentation of Carl Heflinger by Joan Skilbred----- 7:15-to-7:45 PM

Presentation of John Sims, by Tom Bundtzen----- 7:45 PM-8:15 PM

*Coffee Break* 8:15 PM-8:30 PM

Recollections of Inductees from the General Audience----- 8:30 PM

Adjournment----- 9:00 PM

## Introduction and Acknowledgements

The April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 induction ceremony of the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation (AMHF) features a special gold mining pioneer, Carl Heflinger, and a successful exploration geologist, educator and visionary leader, John F. M. Sims.

Heflinger was born and raised in the coal mining town of Taylor, Washington, where making a living was tough, especially during the Great Depression. He sailed to Alaska in 1932 during the Great Depression, in hope of finding employment in the 'Last Frontier'. After briefly living in Seward and Anchorage, he arrived in Fairbanks and quickly became involved in the area's placer gold mining activities. During much of the 1930s, he worked in underground drift mines and was nearly killed in an accident underground in 1939.

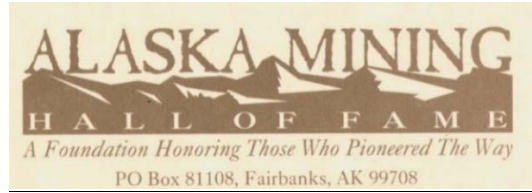
During WWII, he served in the U.S. Army Air Corps, working on Lend-Lease planes in Fairbanks being flown to the USSR on the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) Lend Lease route.

After WWII, he continued placer mining but also became a successful contractor and businessman. But gold mining was his 'oyster', and Heflinger became heavily involved in surface placer mining activities almost continuously until 1999. He served on many civic boards and made contributions to those seeking to understand the role of placer mining in the economy and helped mitigate environmental issues related to placer mining.

British-born John F.M. Sims was a memorable lode gold expert with an international reputation, an effective educator at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks in the geological and mining fields, and a leader that advocated for the importance of the Alaska mineral industry's past, present and future. His role in expanding the sales of Usibelli Coal to Pacific Rim markets helped demonstrate that Alaska could be a supplier of even low unit value mineral products to overseas markets.

Tom Bundtzen and Joan Skilbred wrote the narrative for Carl Heflinger. David Heflinger, Charles Green, Denise Herzog and Mitchell Henning edited the prose. Tom Bundtzen and Charles Green compiled the narrative for John Sims. Mitchell Henning provided editorial review and comments of the Sims narrative.

Bundtzen edited and produced the newsletter.



## **Contributions to the AMHF Foundation**

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation is funded through donations of money, time and effort, and through sales of books and other paraphernalia. The Foundation is a tax-exempt organization, so all donations are tax deductible.

### **Donations to the Foundation should be mailed to:**

Karl Hanneman, Treasurer  
Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation  
P.O. Box 81108  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

### **Contributions to the Foundation**

Contributions help the Foundation produce, publish and update the AMHF website, and operate our new museum at 406 Cushman in downtown Fairbanks. We have reproduced all *Paystreak* Newsletters from 1997-to-Present. The forty-one (41) *Paystreak* newsletters can be downloaded from the website, which is: [www.alaskamininghalloffame.org](http://www.alaskamininghalloffame.org).

We thank all contributors, regardless of the level of their donation, which are: Copper (\$1-\$99), Silver (\$100-\$499), Gold (\$500-\$999); '98er, (\$1,000) and Platinum (>\$1,000). A compilation of donations since 2013 starts on page 5 of this newsletter.

In 2025, a record forty-four (44) companies, individuals and organizations contributed to the Alaska Mining Hall of Fame (AMHF) Foundation. These important donations allows the Foundation to operate the museum in Fairbanks, work with the historical community, build an archive, man display booths in conventions, and interact with the overall Alaskan community. Some notable newer donors in 2025 include the Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation, Hyak Mining Company, Freegold Ventures, Bill Corbus, Dick Mylius, Neil Mackinnon, ICHARR, Charles Green, Bartly Klevin, Tim Musgrove, and Matt Kato.

**Contributors to the AMHF Foundation since 2013 listed below. Those that have contributed from November, 2025 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 are bolded.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contribution Level</b>	<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Year</b>
Lynden Transport	Platinum	General	2013
Teck Resources Red Dog Mine	Platinum	General	2013
Doug Colp Family	98er/Gold	General	2013
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2014
Malie Gray	Copper	General	2014
Clark Milne	Copper	General	2014
Peter Montesa	Copper	General	2014
Jules Tileston	Copper	General	2014
Six Anonymous	Silver	General	2014
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2014
Candy Waugaman	Platinum	General	2015
Karen Erickson	Copper	General	2015
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2015
Alaska Women in Mining	Gold	General	2015
Brian Rogers, Sherry Modrow	Gold	General	2015
Marty K. Rutherford	Gold	General	2015
Karen Purdue	Gold	General	2015
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Thurman	Silver	General	2015
Karen Clautice	Copper	General	2015
Christine and Corbette Upton	Silver	General	2015
Bill Brophy	Copper	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Leo and Fredi Brown	Copper	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
George Horner-Trust	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Laurence Peterson	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Sigwald and Arlene Strandberg	Silver	In Memory of Bob Bettisworth	2015
Laurence Peterson	Gold	In Memory of Jim Madonna	2015
Lisa and Milton Behr	Gold	In Memory of Walt Wigger	2015
David and Aldean Kilborn	Silver	In Memory of Walt Wigger	2015
Nathaniel May	Copper	General	2015
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2015
Aaron Pfeil	Copper	General	2015
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2015
Karen Lapp	Copper	General	2015
Jeff Lapp	Copper	General	2015

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contribution Level</b>	<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Year</b>
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2015
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2016
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2016
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2016
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2016
Karen Lapp	Copper	General	2016
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2016
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2016
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2016
Jeff Lapp	Copper	General	2016
John Cook	Copper	General	2016
Mark Hottman	Copper	General	2016
Two Anonymous	Silver	General	2016
Sarah Isto	Silver	General	2016
Tom Bundtzen	Silver	General	2016
Chris Olsen	Silver	General	2016
David and Heidi Doudna	Gold	General	2016
Karen Purdue	Gold	General	2016
Karen J. Erickson	Platinum	General	2016
Richard E. Wagner	Copper	General	2016
Harold and Leslie Noyes	Gold	General	2016
Karen Clautice	Copper	General	2016
Winston and Glenda Burbank	Silver	General	2016
Joseph and Victoria LeTarte	Silver	General	2016
Richard and Cherie Solie	Silver	General	2016
Debbie and Jeff Johnson	Silver	In Memory of Walt Wigger	2016
Helen Warner	Copper	General	2016
Laurence and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2016
John and Arlene Orbeck	Copper	General	2016
Lyman Family	Silver	General	2016
Ruth Ibbetson	Silver	General	2016
Alaska Women in Mining	Gold	General	2016
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2016
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2016
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2017
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2017
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2017
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2017
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2017

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contribution Level</b>	<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Year</b>
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2017
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2017
Joel Stratman	Copper	General	2017
Terry Taylor	Copper	General	2017
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2017
3 Anonymous	Silver	General	2017
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2017
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2017
Fairbanks Branch, Alaska Miners	Gold	General	2017
Don Gray	Copper	General	2018
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2018
William Kinne	Copper	General	2018
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2018
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2018
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2018
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2018
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2018
Mark Hottman	Copper	General	2018
Jamison Parry	Copper	General	2018
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2018
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2018
Terry Taylor	Copper	General	2018
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2019
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2019
Jason Brune	Copper	General	2019
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2019
Gay Ellen Heath Griffin	Copper	General	2019
William Kinne	Copper	General	2019
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2019
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2019
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2019
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2019
Michael Whalen	Silver	General	2019
Margaret Cox Rich	Platinum	In Memory of Ray Smith	2020
David and Patricia Carnes	Platinum	General	2020
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Platinum	General	2020
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2020
Scott Bothwell	Copper	General	2020

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contribution Level</b>	<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Year</b>
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2020
William Kinne	Copper	General	2020
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2020
Heath Nowak	Copper	General	2020
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2020
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2020
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2020
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2020
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2021
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2021
Phil Younker	Silver	In Memory of Ray Smith	2021
Anonymous 1	Silver	General	2021
Anonymous 2	Silver	General	2021
Larry and Darlene Peterson	Silver	General	2021
June and Norm McAtee	Platinum	In memory of Adams Hollis Twitchell and Jens Kvamme	2021
Rob and Donna Brady	Copper	General	2022
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2022
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2022
Matthew Hanson	Silver	General	2022
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2022
William Kinne	Copper	General	2022
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2022
Jameson Perry	Copper	General	2022
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2022
Jerry Sadler	Copper	General	2022
Anonymous 1	Silver	General	2022
Anonymous 2	Silver	General	2022
Teresa Chopoda	Silver	In Memory of John Usibelli	2022
Ann and Mike McCann	Silver	General	2022
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2022
Design Alaska Inc.	Gold	General	2022
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2022
Robert Tsigonis	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes	Platinum	General	2023

Name	Contribution Level	Dedication	Year
Don and Carolyn Gray	Silver	General	2023
Shirley Liss	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	General	2023
Laurence and Darlene Peterson	Platinum	General	2023
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2023
Anonymous	Copper	General	2023
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2023
Malie Gray	Copper	General	2023
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2023
William Kinne	Copper	General	2023
Sonny Lindner	Silver	General	2023
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2023
Jameson Perry	Copper	General	2023
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2023
Judd Rutledge	Copper	General	2023
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2023
Bill Tweet	Silver	General	2023
Nick Stepovich	Silver	General	2023
Robert Fithian/Sundance	Gold	General	2023
Margaret Cox Rich	Silver	General	2023
Shirley Liss	Gold	General	2023
Ron Inouye	Gold	General	2023
Don and Carolyn Gray	Silver	General	2023
Teresa Usibelli	Silver	In Memory of John Usibelli	2023
William Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2023
Design Alaska	Gold	General	2023
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	In Memory of Lars Ostnes	2024-1
Alaska Trappers Association	Silver	General	2024
Sarah Isto	Silver	In Memory of Oscar Tveiten	2024-1
Laurence Peterson	Platinum	General	2024
Karl and Nancy Hanneman	Platinum	General	2024
Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi	Platinum	In Memory of Lars Ostnes	2024-2
Michele and Mitch Usibelli	Platinum	General	2024
Ron Inouye	Gold	General	2024
Sarah Isto	Silver	In Memory of Oscar Tveiten	2024-2
Asle Eikeland	Platinum	In memory of Jorge Eikeland	2024
Scott Bothwell	Copper	General	2024
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2024
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2024
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2024
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2024
William Kinne	Copper	General	2024

Name	Contribution	Dedication	Year
Sonny Lindner	Silver	General	2024
Lance Miller	Copper	General	2024
Clark Milne	Silver	General	2024
Jameson Parry	Copper	General	2024
Patricia Peirsol	Copper	General	2024
Michael Whelan	Silver	General	2024
Usibelli Foundation	Platinum	General	2024
Fairbanks Coin Club	Silver	General	2024
Fairbanks Genealogical Society	Silver	General	2024
Fairbanks Branch, Alaska Miners Assoc	Gold	General	2024
Taiga Mining Company	Platinum	General	2024
Taiga Mining Company (2 <sup>nd</sup> 2024 Donation)	Platinum	General	2024
Rotary Club of College Alaska	Platinum	General	2024
Bill Stroecker Foundation	Platinum	General	2024
Margaret Cox Rich	Gold	General	2024
Bill Beistline	Platinum	In Memory of Earl Beistline	2024
Larry Petersen	Platinum	General	2025
Fairbanks Coin Club	Silver	General	2025
Paul and Joni Manuel	Platinum	General	2025
Don and Carolyn Gray	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Jeffrey J. and Susan Cook	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Harding Lake Association	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Steve and Jane Landford	Copper	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Charles B. Green	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Freegold Ventures Limited	Platinum	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
William Corbus	Gold	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Hyak Mining Company	Platinum	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Ron Inouye	Gold	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Bartly Klevin	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Richard Mylius	Silver	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Marilyn Nordale Stacy	Gold	In Memory of Mary Nordale	2025
Scott Bothwell	Copper	General	2025
Jason Brune	Silver	General	2025
Douglas Crevensten	Copper	General	2025
Joyce Dandridge	Copper	General	2025
Hamed Diawara	Copper	General	2025
Patrick Dolphin	Copper	General	2025
Matthew Hanson	Copper	General	2025
Richard Hughes	Silver	General	2025
Barbara Johnson	Silver	General	2025
William Kinne	Copper	General	2025

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contribution Level</b>	<b>Dedication</b>	<b>Year</b>
Sarah Lindner	Copper	General	2025
Sonny Lindner	Silver	General	2025
Jameson Perry	Copper	General	2025
William Tweet	Silver	General	2025
Jason Weiner	Copper	General	2025
Gary and Chena Neuman	Silver	In Memory of Gordon and Marilyn Herreid	2025
Teresa Usibelli	Gold	In Memory of John Usibelli	2025
Shannon Watts Michael	Silver	In Memory of Wendell Dawson and Kelly Adams	2025
<b>Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Margaret Cox Rich</b>	<b>Gold</b>	<b>In Memory of Ray Smith</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Bill Stroecker Foundation</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Usibelli Foundation</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Taiga Mining Company</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Design Alaska</b>	<b>Gold</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Tim Musgrove</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Jeanne Ostnes and Tim Benintendi</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>In Memory of Lars and Elsie Ostnes</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Matt Kato</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>ICHARR</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Ron Inouye</b>	<b>Copper</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Larry Petersen</b>	<b>Platinum</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Charles Green</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Chena and Gary Newman</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>In Memory of Gordon and Marilyn Herreid</b>	<b>2026</b>

## Summary of Activities Held at AMHF Foundation Museum

The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Foundation continues to operate a museum at 406 Cushman in downtown Fairbanks, Alaska. From November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, fifteen events were staged at the museum, which drew in 474 attendees. Average attendance was high for most of these events and the AMHF believes that its advertising strategy of mailing out >165 ads to individuals (who requested that they be on our emailing list), and placing ads in the local newspaper, the Fairbanks Daily News Miner, seems to be working. Tanana-Yukon Historical Society used our museum for a presentation during the time reported here and may use the facility more in the future.

A new sound system was purchased, which greatly improves the quality of our lectures. The AMHF has made a decision to record the lectures given at the Museum. We have posted three of the most recent lectures on our website.

However, as reported in the April 1, 2026 front page article by Kris Capps in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner: “Fairbanks just endured the coldest December-to-March since temperatures began being recorded in 1904”. The unusually cold winter did affect overall museum attendance. Although we continued all winter, our Xmas party was negatively affected by temperatures that reached -30<sup>o</sup> Fahrenheit on December 20<sup>th</sup>, and attendance was down about 40 percent. Attendance by visitors from outside of Fairbanks during most of the time period reported was very low—almost non-existent in January and February.

The Museum’s normal operating hours are 10:00 AM-4:00 PM Monday through Saturday during Summer months, which are reduced to 12:00 PM to 2:30 PM during fall and winter months. Call Tom Bundtzen at 907-388-6607 for museum access when our volunteer staff is not present.

Museum openings are dependent on volunteers as we have no paid employees. Our team of volunteers from Santas Seniors, North Pole, Alaska, continue to assist us so that we can keep the museum open to the general public. Our volunteers include Barbara Sevier (team leader), Goldie Southwood, Scott Southwood and Joyce Outten. The AMHF again had a booth at the Annual Conference of the Alaska Miners Association in Anchorage during November, 2025 and we are planning for a booth at the April, 2026 Spring Convention.

**The AMHF is looking for more volunteers to help us keep the doors open! Call Tom at 907 388 6607 (email: [Bundtzen@pacrimgeol.com](mailto:Bundtzen@pacrimgeol.com)) if you think you can provide some volunteer help.**

**Scheduled events at AMHF museum, including Wednesday evening lectures and events during the time period November 4<sup>st</sup>, 2025 to March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Count	Date	Lecture title and presenter	Attendance
1	11 04 2025	Fairbanks Coin Club	12
2	11 25 2025	Fairbanks Genealogical Society	8
3	12 02 2025	Fairbanks Coin Club 20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party	22
4	12 10 2025	Mining Fatalities in Early Fairbanks By Amy Stratman, Fairbanks Genealogical Society	49
5	12 17 2025	Finding Democracy Through the Lense of a Young German Woman 1944-1950	26
6	12 20 2025	AMHF Xmas Party; Music by Carl Addington and Photo Montage by Joan Skilbred	43
7	12 23 2025	Fairbanks Genealogical Society	8
8	01 14 2026	A Select Presentation of General Frederick Funston, by Nick Nugent	44
9	01 21 2026	Five (5) Cool Things You should know about Alaska's Dinosaurs, by Dr. Patrick Druckenmiller UAF Museum of the North	51
10	02 03 2026	Fairbanks Coin Club	19
11	02 11 2026	Geologic Framework and Mineral Resources of Greenland By Tom Bundtzen	69
12	02 24 2026	Fairbanks Genealogical Society	10
13	02 25 2026	Mary Joyce—A Remarkable Woman That Lived a Remarkable Life, by Jan Welch	54
14	03 04 2026	Fairbanks Coin Club	16
15	03 18 2026	For the Love of Freedom: Miners, Trappers, Hunting Guides and Homesteaders in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, by Karen Brewster, U.S. National Park Service; sponsored by Tanana- Yukon Historical Society	43
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>474</b>



**Karen Brewster presents her lecture: For the Love of Freedom: Miners, Trappers, Hunting Guides and Homesteaders in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.**

## Previous Inductees, Alaska Mining Hall of Fame

Fairbanks, Fall 1997

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

**Clarence J. Berry:** Prominent Klondike and Interior Alaska miner; noted businessman.

**Stephen Birch:** Founder and developer of Kennecott Copper Mines.

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

**Alfred H. Brooks:** Chief Geologist of U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska during Alaska-Gold Rush.

**Ernest Patty:** University of Alaska renowned teacher and later president, and manager of dredge firms in the Coal Creek-Woodchopper district.

**John Treadwell:** Founder of Treadwell Mines, Juneau.

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” grubstaked many prospectors.

**Arthur Harper:** Respected trader and prospector and promoter of the Yukon; his son Walter, first stepped foot on the summit of Mount McKinley (Denali).

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

**John Minook:** Creole-Athabascan prospector who discovered the Rampart and Melozitna districts—became an important inspiration for Indigenous rights, including US Citizenship.

**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 Nome.

**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.

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.

**Kawa.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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 district character.

Juneau, Spring 2001

**Induction Ceremony Honoring Early Government Role in Mining**

**Benjamin D. Stewart:** State and Federal mining administrator, mine safety proponent, 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:** Water engineer that designed and built Miocene and Davidson ditch.

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 20<sup>th</sup> 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—his namesake is ‘Tofty Tin Belt’.

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

**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 Inupiat wife, discovered Chandalar gold and founded the community of Beaver.

Anchorage, Fall 2003

**Induction Ceremony Honoring Early and Mid-20<sup>th</sup> 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 freighter.

**Simon Wible:** He mined gold, built water canals, and became a wealthy man in California. When the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush came along, he pioneered hydraulic mine 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 helped develop initial plans for FE Fairbanks dredging 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 lode 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 US supplier of platinum.

**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:** was born to Yupik parents in Quinhagak on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. Wuya was proficient in English when few Yupik people 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 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Nellie's final home was Nolan Creek in the Koyukuk district of northern Alaska. Cashman died of Cancer 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, named after his son, another transportation pioneer, 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. Eastaugh was appointed to the Alaska Minerals Commission in 1991 by Governor Walter Hickel. Upon Eastaugh's death, Hickel ordered state flags flown at half-mast.

Anchorage, Fall 2006

#### **Honoring an Outstanding Statesman and an Outstanding Prospector Active in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Alaska Mining Industry**

**Charles F. (Chuck) Herbert:** was one of the premier miners of his generation. Educated at the School of Mines in Fairbanks, he mined placer gold deposits 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.

**Rheinart M. (Rhiny) Berg:** Berg's strength and stamina were legendary during most of his 86 years of life. He discovered the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit. He later developed the Candle placer district.

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. Faulker was an important lobbyist during the early years of the Alaska Miners Association. 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 was 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 mi<sup>2</sup> 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 copper 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 copper mines

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. He later retooled the Independence mill to recover tungsten, a strategic metal during WWII.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2010

#### **Honoring two-civic-minded pioneers important to Interior and Western Alaska Development**

**John P. Clum:** Long after his involvement with the initial capture of the Apache leader Geronimo in Arizona, Clum established reliable postal service throughout Alaska—he became the Postal Inspector for the Alaska Territory.

**Irving McKenny Reed:** Prolific Associate Mining Engineer for the Alaska Territory known for his excellent descriptions of Alaska’s remote placer districts and true pioneer of Nome; was chair of the Alaska Game Commission prior to WWII and the Territorial Highway Engineer prior to Statehood. Surveyed much of Fairbanks townsite as the town grew.

Anchorage, Fall, 2010

**Honoring Pioneers Important to the Seward Peninsula Gold Dredging Industry**

**Nicholas B. and Evinda S. Tweet:** Partners in marriage and mining, they created a family-owned firm that has mined gold in Alaska for more than 100 years. Developed and mined graphite in the Kigluaik Mountains during WWI—now the site of a world-class graphite project.

**Carl S. and Walter A. Glavinovich:** Brothers who devoted more than 100 years of their collective lives to dredging in the Nome district, one of Alaska’s Premier placer gold districts.

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 grade but also high altitude ‘Binocular’ copper prospect. He never made a mine but his dreams live on.

**Arthur Shonbeck:** He joined numerous stampedes during the Alaska-Yukon Goldrush and was an outstanding civic leader of Anchorage. In 1945, he drowned with AMHF Inductee John Beaton in Ganes Creek west of McGrath.

Fairbanks, Spring 2012

**Honoring Pioneers Important to the Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Interior Placer Mining Industry**

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

**Glen D. Franklin:** A gifted athlete who studied business administration at the University of Alaska in the 1930s; mined with others throughout Alaska and Yukon Territory for several decades.

**Donald Cook:** An Oregon-born graduate of the University of Alaska, who pursued a stellar career in Education at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. He was an expert on USSR&M Gold dredges.

Anchorage, Fall, 2012

**Honoring Pioneers Important to the Iditarod and Innoko Districts of Southwest Alaska**

**Merton Marston:** Indiana newspaper man who became wealthy as a result of grubstaking the discoverers of the Iditarod district—becoming a gold millionaire—later managed hotels in the Pacific Northwest, including the Sorrento in Seattle, Washington State’s oldest operating hotel.

**Mattie ‘Tootsie’ Crosby:** Beloved personality in Flat, the center of the Iditarod district for more than 50 years—the only Afro-American who lived and worked in that district. A gifted musician as well as astute businesswoman.

**Toivo Rosander:** Finnish immigrant who mined in the Ophir-Innokko area for 70 years with wife Dyna and boys Ron and Ken. Managed to convince many skeptics, including leaders in the conservation movement, about the economic and social value of placer mining.

Juneau, Spring, 2013

#### **Honoring Two Pioneers Important to Mineral Development in Southeast Alaska**

**Alexandre Choquette:** French Canadian prospector who began in the 1849 California Gold Rush and ended in the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896. At the time of his death, Choquette was a true north-country legend.

**John F. Malony:** Was important to early mineral development of Southeast Alaska—served as mayor of Juneau and helped form Alaska Electric Light and Power, Alaska’s first modern electric utility.

Fairbanks, Summer 2013

#### **Honoring an outstanding citizen, educator and placer mine expert**

**Doug Colp:** Born and raised in Southeastern Alaska, Colp Became a legendary expert on placer mine technologies, a UAF Educator, and, with his wife Marcel, a civic-minded resident of Fairbanks.

Anchorage, Fall, 2013

#### **Honoring Geologists from the U.S. Geological Survey**

**Arthur C. Spencer:** Provided the first geologic descriptions of the Kennecott Mines in the Chitina Valley and authored a classic: USGS Bulletin 287—The Juneau Gold Belt—in 1906.

**Josiah E. Spurr:** Forged a career as a renowned economic geologist—and helped found the Society of Economic Geologists. Best known for his pre-Klondike adventure--*Through the Yukon Gold Diggings*.

**Stephen R. Capps:** An outstanding regional geologist that specialized in the study of Alaskan placer gold deposits in glaciated areas. His work is cemented in studies along the Alaska Railroad corridor, where he provided information on resources for use in that corridor Capps was among the first federal geologists to study and evaluate ‘strategic minerals’.

Fairbanks, Spring 2014

#### **Honoring Three Early Mining Pioneers Important in the Alaskan Mining Industry**

**‘Wise Mike’ Stepovich:** Self-educated immigrant from Montenegro came to Fairbanks shortly after the 1902 discovery and mined gold on Fairbanks Creek for 40 years; his son Mike Stepovich II would be Alaska’s last Territorial Governor. Wise Mike played an important role in the development of the critical metal tungsten in the Fairbanks district before WWII.

**Helen Van Campen:** Had a remarkable career in Alaska that included equestrian sports, journalism and gold mining mainly on the Kenai Peninsula. Helen Van Campen Memorial Scholarship Fund at

the University of Alaska-Fairbanks has provided journalism students with funding to help start their careers.

**Peter Petrovich Doroshin:** A brilliant Russian Mining engineer that discovered and mined placer gold on the Kenai Peninsula during 1849-1851; found industrial minerals for use in the colony; and was a pioneer in investigating Alaska's abundant coal resources. Would later play an important role in Russia for the Imperial Russian Naval Mining office and mine gold in the Ural Mountains.

Anchorage, Fall, 2014

#### **Honoring Three Pioneers Associated with the Kennecott Mines in Alaska**

**Alan Mara Bateman:** Important Kennecott consultant at McCarthy; Editor of *Economic Geology* for more than five decades.

**Edward M. MacKevett Jr.** Pioneer geologist of Kennecott copper-silver deposits near McCarthy and Alaska's premier mercury-antimony and REE-Th-U districts.

**William H. Seagrave** Best known for his management skills in the early Kennecott mines of Alaska, in both Prince William Sound and in the Chitina Valley.

Anchorage, Fall, 2015

#### **Honoring Pioneers Associated with the Red Dog Zinc-Polymetallic Mine and a Hatcher Pass Pioneer**

**Robert (Bob) Baker:** The Kotzebue-based bush pilot and amateur prospector who is given credit for the co-discovery of the Red Dog zinc-polymetallic deposit (with Irv Tailleir) , currently Alaska's most important metal mine.

**Irv Tailleir** A legendary U.S. Geological Survey Brooks Range geologist who followed up on Baker's recommendations and inspected mineralization in 'Red Dog Creek'; wrote the open-file report documenting the importance of the Red Dog deposit.

**Don S. Rae:** Respected prospector and assayer who worked in Southeast Alaska and Hatcher Pass.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2016

#### **Honoring Pioneers Associated with Alaska's Gold Dredging Fleet**

**Patrick H. O'Neill:** Born into a large Cordova family of Irish descent, O'Neill would graduate from the University of Alaska with several Engineering degrees, become dredge superintendent for the FE Company in Fairbanks, and complete a remarkable career operating fleets of gold-platinum dredges in South America. He was a strong supporter of the University of Alaska for his entire life.

**Walter W. Johnson:** His firm, the Union Construction Company, would construct one third of all the bucketline stacker dredges that concurrently operated in Alaska (32). UCC operated dredges elsewhere.

Anchorage, Fall, 2016

**AMHF Honors Three Pioneers Associated Placer Mining, Invention, Mineral Industry Management, Scientific Inquiry, and Public Service**

**John Arthur Miscovich:** Renowned second-generation placer gold miner from the Iditarod Mining district; John was perhaps better known for his *Intelligent*<sup>TM</sup> and other water technology inventions.

**Cole Edwin McFarland:** combined the hard work of a pioneering Alaskan placer mining family with the responsibilities of being President of Placer Dome U.S. Inc., a successful international mining firm.

**Donald John Grybeck:** had a distinguished career as a scientist, teacher, miner, and earth science manager. His lasting legacy is the USGS Alaska Resource Data Files (ARDF), which he designed.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2018

**AMHF Honors Three 'Minority' Mining Pioneers involved in all aspects of the mining lifestyle**

**William T. Ewing:** was born into slavery in 1854 in Keytesville, Missouri. After working his way across the United States, Ewing joined the Tacoma Police Department. He stampeded to Alaska in 1896, and in 1903, struck it rich in the Fairbanks District with partner James McCarty. After he passed away in 1923, his entire estate went to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

**Kate Kennedy:** lived in the copper mining boomtown of McCarthy, Alaska for nearly three decades. In the early 20th Century, Kate Kennedy, a divorced woman, became the largest property owner in the Chitina Valley and was McCarthy's best-known entrepreneur.

**Eugene Swanson:** was reported to be the only consistently successful gold miner in the Rampart District, according to a 1938 article by the Fairbanks Daily News Miner. He served as a Buffalo Soldier during the Alaska Yukon Gold Rush. An honor guard of black soldiers from the U.S. Army attended his 1942 funeral in Fairbanks.

Anchorage, Fall, 2018

**AMHF Honors Frontier Mining Camp Pioneers**

**Joseph B. Quigley:** Born in Pennsylvania, Joe Quigley would ascend Chilkoot Pass in 1891, years before the Klondike Gold Rush. Quigley is best known for his work in the Kantishna District in the shadow of Mount McKinley (now Denali).

**Tekla M. Kanari:** was a Finnish Immigrant who, along with husband John, formed and operated Trinity Mining Company in the remote Kougarak Mining district north of Nome. She made many wire transfers of funds to relatives and friends in war-torn Finland during WWII.

**Alvin H. Agoff:** Son of a Russian immigrant, Alvin Agoff mined gold, trapped, and freighted with sled dogs in the Iditarod Mining district for more than 50 years. His family legacy lives on with Prince Creek Mining Company, the last heritage mining operation in the Iditarod.

Anchorage, Fall 2019

### **AMHF Honors Pioneers of the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM)**

**Thomas L. Pittman:** was a noted metallurgist, and minerals officer for the U.S. Bureau of Mines in Juneau; at the time of his passing, was the longest serving employee of the USBM in Alaska.

**John Joseph Mulligan:** Born in New York, Mulligan arrived in Alaska in 1949 and worked in the Territory on many strategic mineral projects in Alaska. He became Chief of Field Operations for the USBM in Alaska in 1970, a position held until his retirement in 1985.

**Donald Paul Blasko:** came to Alaska as a USBM new petroleum resource officer and served as a safety officer for the Evan Jones coal mine near Palmer in the early 1960s. Later, Blasko managed many USBM studies during the D-2 Lands debates and played a role in the Red Dog deposit discovery verification. Upon retirement in 1993, he returned to his home Idaho spending much time volunteering for non-profit organizations before his passing in 2009.

Fairbanks, Summer, 2020

### **AMHF Honors Pioneers Associated with Interior and Northern Alaska Gold Mining**

**Roshier Creecy:** Born in Virginia in 1866, he sought to escape a southern Culture intent on retaining racial hierarchy. Roshier was a Buffalo Soldier for the 9<sup>th</sup> Calvary and mined in the Wiseman district of Northern Alaska for decades.

**Arnold Nordale:** The civic minded mining engineer was born in Juneau in 1896 and grew up in Fairbanks. Nordale worked for the Alaska Road Commission and ultimately, the USSR&M dredging company in Fairbanks and the Yukon Consolidated Gold Corporation in Dawson—managing both dredge fleets of similar size.

**Raymond L. (Ray) Smith:** Born and raised in Maine, Smith came north to Alaska in 1939 and obtained a mining engineering degree at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. He became President of Michigan Technological University in 1965 and is widely credited for fundamentally improving the quality of the educational institution. Upon his retirement, he remained in close contact with friends and colleagues in Alaska for the rest of his life.

Anchorage, Fall, 2022

### **AMHF Honors individuals associated with modern Alaskan mineral resource development**

**John Qipqina Schaeffer Jr.** A visionary Inupiaq leader from Northwest Alaska that was instrumental in negotiating a 1982 agreement with Cominco Limited for NANA Regional Corporation, which developed the Red Dog Mine, one of the world's largest zinc producers.

**Charles Griswald (Riz) Bigelow** is widely recognized as one of the most successful mineral exploration geologists in Alaskan history. Bigelow put together teams that discovered the Arctic, Greens Creek, Pogo, and other properties, several of which have become producing mines.

**Charles Caldwell Hawley** Born in Evansville, Illinois, Hawley became one of the most respected Alaskan geologists and mine historians of his generation. He wrote the classic book, *A Kennecott Story*, which provides a summary of Kennecott Copper Corporation history.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2023

#### **AMHF honors two women miners and a Pre-Felix Pedro Tanana Basin Explorer**

**Emma Grace Lowe** has the distinction of being one of the only woman miners in Interior Alaska during early post-gold rush years. While Grace may not have been what some would call “ladylike”, she held her own in a male-dominated profession and made her mark in Alaska’s mining history.

**Frederick James Currier** was one of those persistent early Tanana Basin miners during the Alaska-Yukon Gold Rush. He was in the 40-Mile and Circle districts during times of discovery and explored the Chena River basin years before the arrival of Felix Pedro.

**Bridget Mannion Aylward** emigrated from Ireland and mined gold in the 40 Mile district with husband Edward years before the Klondike discovery. She established an educational fund in Ireland with 40-Mile gold, which exists to this day.

Anchorage, Fall, 2023

#### **AMHF Honors Two Pioneers Associated with the development of Strategic and Critical Minerals**

**Lenhart J.H. Grothe** was born in New York, worked in Montana, and moved north to graduate with a BS degree in Mining Engineering at the University of Alaska in 1959. After working at the Red Devli mercury-antimony mine, he acquired the abandoned Lost River tin mine on the western Seward Peninsula. Eventually his company, Lost River Mining Company, was the largest source of tin in the United States from 1965 to 1990.

**William T. (Bill) Ellis** was born in California and received a BS Degree in geology at the University of Nevada Reno in 1972. Prior to that, he served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam where he received the silver star for bravery. Over a career of nearly 50 years, Bill explored a variety of metals, many of them strategic and critical. He mentored many younger geologists in the search for critical minerals in Alaska.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2024

#### **AMHF Honors two Interior Alaska hydraulic placer gold miners and an iconic coal miner and philanthropist**

**Carl Gordon Parker** was born February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1916 in Fairbanks the son of Klondike stampeders. He obtained a BS degree at the University of Alaska in 1939 and worked for decades in several Alaskan districts. By his induction and previous induction of his older sister Genevieve Parker, the AMHF honors many other members of the Parker mining family.

**Joseph Emil Usibelli** was born December 28, 1938 at -40° F, in a log cabin in Suntrana, Alaska. He obtained a degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks in 1959. Joe took over Usibelli Coal Mine at the age 25 and streamlined production, upgraded equipment, developed new markets, and reclaimed mined lands. Joe gave generously to the community of Fairbanks and to the University of Alaska. In 2022, the School of Engineering and Mines building at UAF was renamed the *Joseph E. Usibelli Engineering, Learning and Innovation Building* in his honor.

**Walter Roman** was born in 1907 and raised on a Cherokee Reservation in Oklahoma. For more than 60 years, he mined at various locals throughout Interior Alaska and in 1986, was awarded the Distinguished Mining Service Award by the Alaska Miners Association. Roman discovered the famous, largely intact, 36,000-year-old steppe bison 'Blue Babe', in 1979 during stripping operations on Fish Creek, near the present Fort Knox mine, now displayed at the University of Alaska Museum of the North in Fairbanks.

Anchorage, Fall, 2024

### **Honoring Two Southeast Alaska Miners and a Man Important to Critical Mineral Development**

**Kelly Adams** left Oregon in 1933 to search for gold in Southeast Alaska. He worked at several mines Near Hollis on Prince of Wales Island. He is credited, along with partner Don Ross, with discovering the Ross-Adams uranium (REE) mine on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska's only productive uranium deposit. He finished his mining career by mining placer gold in the Klondike during the late 1970s to early 1990s.

**Wendell Dawson** worked as a schoolteacher and civil engineer in early years but is identified with the currently operating Dawson gold mine near Hollis in Southeast Alaska. He is also widely credited with discovery of the Grand Duc mine, a major past copper, silver and gold producer in British Columbia, Canada north of Hyder, Alaska.

**Karl Bachner**, born and raised in Fairbanks, is best known as a very successful real estate and building developer but spent seven years developing and mining chromite at Red Mountain near Seldovia, Alaska's most important chrome producer during times of critical needs of the metal.

Fairbanks, Spring, 2025

### **Honoring Two Special Pioneers that Played Leadership Roles in Mining, Agricultural, and Cultural Development of the 49<sup>th</sup> State**

**Gordon Weed Herreid** was a dreamer who climbed Alaska's tallest peak, knew it's mountains and rivers, encouraged the arts, helped mine its mineral resources, and farmed it's lands. He was appointed Alaska's first State Geologist in 1961, and initiated the geologic and mineral resource framework studies of Alaska carried out by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources for decades since.

**Marilyn Hahn Herreid** insured that Gordon Herreid's objectives became reality in the fields of mineral exploration, resource studies, farming. In 1978, Marilyn and Gordon teamed up with others to form the Tanana Valley Farmers Market, a lasting legacy for both.

Anchorage, November, 2025

**Honoring a Gold Dredge Pioneer and a Civic Leader in Nome**

**Ronald Herbert Engstrom** was a master mechanic, seasoned heavy equipment operator and a civic leader in Nome, Alaska. He is perhaps best known for operating the Basin Creek bucketline dredge north of Nome for decades.



**Carl Heflinger**  
**May 17, 1912-December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Iconic Alaska placer gold miner and industry leader Carl Heflinger spent 65 years mining placer gold throughout Interior Alaska. He was born May 17, 1912 in Washington State and passed away on December 14, 2014 at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital in Fairbanks, Alaska at the age of 102. Throughout his long life, Carl became known as a legendary gold miner and a civic leader known to everyone associated with Alaska placer mining.

### Early Years

Carl was born in Taylor, Washington, about 25 miles east of Seattle, where coal was mined and bricks and tile were manufactured. Carl's father, Charlie Heflinger, was a miner and worked in coal mines throughout Washington. In 1901, Charlie traveled to Dawson during the

Klondike gold rush period. In January 1903, Charlie arrived in Fairbanks when there were just a few people in town—just a few months after Felix Pedro's discovery. Charlie's last mining job was working underground in the Treadwell mines near Juneau in 1915.

According to Carl:

*“While in my teens, we moved to a small stump town with a sawmill called Hobart, about 4 miles from Taylor where steamboats got a soft lignite coal and loaded it there.”*

Carl would use a stump puller to remove the stumps from the logging activities in the area. It was hard work and paid little. Carl attended Hobart Grade School and Tacoma High School. At the age of 20, he decided to travel to Alaska. The Great Depression had left many without work and the logging industry of the Pacific Northwest was suffering and on the verge of collapse.

In 1932, Carl and partner Pike (Frank) Anderson boarded the vessel *Admiral Evans* of the Pacific Alaska Navigation Company in Seattle, with Carl's sisters Grace and Mae and brother Harold waving them goodbye. He traveled steerage with \$40 in pocket. At Ketchikan, he gave most of what he had to a stowaway passenger, leaving him with almost no funds. They stopped at numerous harbors in southeast Alaska, including the marble-producing quarries at Tokeen on Prince of Wales Island, and the soon-to-be-closed copper mining enterprise, Kennecott's Beatson Mine, on Latouche Island, before arriving in Seward in February, 1932. They stayed in a flop- house

without any money, often going hungry. They ate stale bread thrown out of a local bakery and begged for stew meat at the Waechter Brothers Meat Company. He remembered:

*“I searched the railroad tracks for coal that dropped out of the rail cars to use in our coal cook stove”.*

But later that summer, a Standard Oil Company cargo vessel arrived, and put every able-bodied citizen to work, including Carl and Frank. Later that year, Carl began to make his way north. He recalled:

*“I hopped a freight train to Anchorage and first worked at 14<sup>th</sup> and C Streets at Bob Graham’s pig ranch. I worked for my food and did odd jobs like pitching hay and milking cows for Tom Peterking. Anchorage was a government town in those days and the Alaska Railroad, which was built by the Federal Government, employed a lot of people.”*

Carl got \$60/month working for Peterking and was able to acquire equipment. He bought an old pickup truck and a 30-inch circular saw, which he would use to cut cordwood with Bob Graham for Anchorage area wood consumers. One winter, they were one of the only wood cutting enterprises in Anchorage; they got \$2/cord for his product, which was quite profitable for them.

The value of gold increased from \$20.67/ounce to \$35/ounce in 1934, which quickly caused a sharp increase in gold mining activity throughout the Alaska Territory. Carl traveled to Fairbanks that year via the Alaska Railroad in search of mining employment. His first job was hand mining an open pit with wheelbarrow and shovel for Helmar Johnson on Cleary Creek north of Fairbanks. Subsequently, he worked with Ed Johnson in the Cripple Creek area near Ester in an underground drift placer mine on Alder Creek. The gold-bearing placer deposit was more than 110 feet deep and had ‘bad air’ along with other dangers typically encountered in drifts. The drift mine was not a paying proposition and Carl and Ed quit and both turned over their share of the dump to a Mr. Moody, the storekeeper at Ester. Carl completed much timbering at various mines and prospects with variable success. In 1935, Carl drove Thaw Points for the English Dredging Company on Fairbanks Creek.

Carl continued to conduct underground drifting at several locales throughout the Fairbanks District. As Carl became better established, his brothers Art and Harold arrived in the Fairbanks district and worked with him on several placer mining prospects. One memory Carl had was the extensive use of sled dogs, which were important during the drift mine activities in the Fairbanks area. Three of his dogs would frequently pull him around via dogsled or on skis to pick up mail, groceries or other items at Summit Roadhouse, which was on Cleary Summit.

He described a dangerous incident:



A



B

**A—Front left is Harold and right is Carl Heflinger; middle is Howard Towse; back is Art Heflinger, circa 1939. B—Winter dump at Fish Creek Mining Company operation at #9 Below Discovery where Carl was nearly killed in the 1939 drift mining accident. Photo Credits: Heflinger POA files.**

*"Life in the drift mines was dangerous work and no man knew how long his luck would hold out....On January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1939, my luck nearly ran out on Last Chance Creek (editors note—a tributary of Fish Creek). At the 40-foot mark in the shaft, I stumbled on the ladder and tumbled backwards; I could hear the wind velocity in my ears increase as I gained momentum in the fall. I thought this was the end for me. I hit the bottom of the shaft and passed out for how long I don't know....after regaining consciousness, I could feel my rib bones grinding against my backbone and my legs and hips seemed to be broken".*

Somehow, Carl managed to drag himself up the shaft ladder and onto the surface, where his brother Art would transport him via dog team to Summit Roadhouse, where a vehicle transported him to St. Josephs Hospital in Fairbanks. He spent 21 days in intensive care at the hospital. Twelve of his ribs had torn loose from his backbone, and a leg was broken but his hips were not broken. Incredibly, by February 17<sup>th</sup>, he was back at the mine (with a cast on his leg) and helped with others hoisting paydirt to the surface until April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Carl's luck improved when later in 1939, the U.S. Smelting Mining and Refining Company (know locally as the F.E. Company) bought his claims on Fish and Last Chance Creeks.

In an interview with author Margaret Reiss, he relates:

*“I sold my half of the claims and then began surface operations with tractor and dragline. The FE Company paid me well—kind of getting me out of their hair as they prepared a dredge to mine Fish Creek. I mined Monte Cristo Creek - right where the Fort Knox mine is today. I sold FE Company one of the claims at the current edge of the Fort Knox pit, which was known as No. 2 above discovery on Fish Creek”.*

### WWII Years

On December, 7<sup>th</sup> 1941, Carl’s life changed with many others. The country was at war first with Japan and shortly after, Germany and the other AXIS nations. Carl remembered:

*“All but two of the seventeen (17) men working for me were classified 1-A. In my case, as a mine owner/operator, I was \$40,000 in debt to merchants around Fairbanks and the draft board took that into consideration. I needed another year to mine and pay off the debt so the draft board granted me a one-year deferment. The draft board wanted me to pay my bills prior to me joining the army”.*

Carl was able to mine one more year (1942) and he indeed managed to pay off debt owed to local area businesses by continuing to mine on Monte Cristo Creek.

In November, 1942, Carl enlisted into the U.S. Army Air Corps (USAAC) at Ladd Field, Alaska. Carl spent WWII servicing such notable aircraft as the P-39 Air Cobra and P-63 King Cobra pursuit aircraft and the Douglas A-20 and B-25 light bombers, all of which were integral parts of the USA/USSR Lend Lease Program. Carl also refueled hundreds of aircraft often in conditions exceeding -45° Fahrenheit temperatures. Of the 14,798 aircraft delivered to the eastern front during the war, 7,983 were flown along the ‘Alaska-Siberia’ (ALSIB) route through Ladd Field. Carl believed that those working on the aircraft, including himself, were not initially very well trained for the job of maintaining complicated flying machines. Carl remembered one incident that taught him a few humble lessons:

*“One day while working on a P-39, I got up into the pilot seat to see how it worked and how it felt to be a pursuit aircraft pilot. I accidentally turned on the gunsight mechanism, which activated the gyroscope and red lights came on in the cockpit. I didn’t realize that the forward 37 mm cannon and wing-mounted machine guns were ready to shoot with the press of a button on the joystick.....A captain came over to me and said ‘don’t move’. He jumped up on the wing and gingerly took my hand off the joystick. If I had pressed that button, all hell would have broken loose. I was asked to just leave the cockpit and nothing more was made of the incident.”*



**The 5,000<sup>th</sup> Lend Lease aircraft (a P63 King Cobra) delivered to Ladd field, September, 1944.  
Photo Credit: Kathy Price.**

Before the end of WWII, Carl joined a group to clean up debris and repair buildings on a runway at Galena, which was then a Lend-Lease airfield west of Fairbanks. Then he was sent to 'East Base' in Great Falls, Montana, where the Lend-Lease route began. Carl was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army Air Corps in December, 1945 at the rank of Staff Sergeant, serving 37 months.

### *Post War Years, Marriage and Mining*

In 1944, Carl met and married Dorothy Joan Brady of San Francisco, and at the end of the war, built a house in Slaterville, a subdivision in Fairbanks. His cleanups on Monte Cristo Creek in 1946 were so poor that the Heflinger family could not make ends meet. During 1947-1948, Carl mined Olive Creek in the Livengood district northwest of Fairbanks with Carl Parker. In 1949, he mined on Portage Creek in the Circle district but returns from placer mining continued to be meager in the post WWII period.

Dorothy persuaded Carl to seek other employment, at least temporarily.



**Dorothy Joan Brady in 1944, when she met and married Carl Heflinger. Credit: Carl Heflinger.**

From 1950-1952, he worked as a heavy equipment mechanic for Mitchell Trucking and Tractor. In 1952, he started a successful contracting business and was a founding partner of GHEMM Company.

In 1953, he built a commercial building in Fairbanks that included a car repair shop, grocery store and apartments. From 1953-1959, he formed a partnership with Dodson and Norris, which specialized in 'dirt work' contracting around Fairbanks. This enterprise did quite well.

In 1954, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) sold all assets, including a gold dredge, to Chuck Herbert and Glen Franklin, who then mined the Livengood Bench system with dragline and tractor. The USSR&M Company purchased the dredge in 1955, had it rebuilt, and moved it to Hogatza in northwest Alaska where it mined pay intermittently from 1957-1996. In 1958, Carl Heflinger subleased and then purchased a part of the Livengood Bench system from Chuck Herbert and Glen Franklin and completed assessment work for the Callahan Mining Company, which controlled parts of the Livengood Bench.

From 1960-to-1969, Carl resumed placer mining with John Clark on some of the Callahan Mining Company ground at Livengood. After Clark left the partnership, Carl's firm, Redstone Mining Company, mined on Livengood Creek until 1969, until the lease expired.

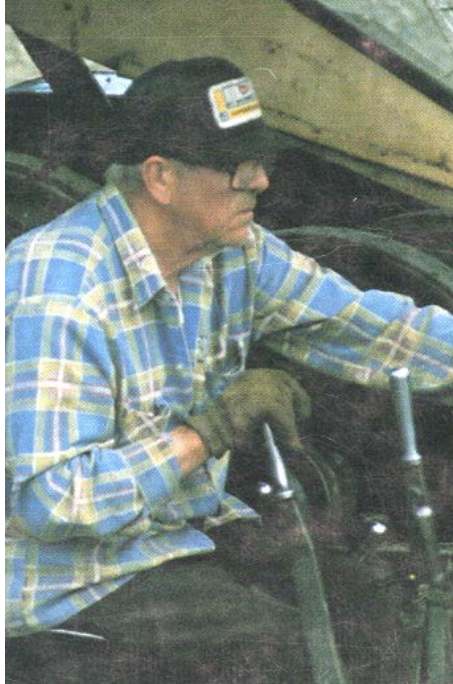
Beginning in 1967, Carl staked claims on the Walker Fork of the 40 Mile River near Boundary after that area was dropped by Yukon Placer Mining Company. Carl then moved to the 40 Mile district, where he mined during 1972-to-1974. His son Fred was involved with the mine on Walker Fork.

Beginning in 1970, all of Carl's mining activities in the Livengood and 40 Mile areas would be under the firm 'Heflinger Mining Company'. In 1973, Carl leased his Livengood mining ground to Stanford Mines. From 1974-to-1976, Carl and his then partner Glen Franklin managed the Stanford Mines Livengood operations. From 1977-to-1979, Carl and sons resumed mining on the Walker Fork of the 40 Mile River and did some stripping at Livengood.

In the late 1970s through the late 1990s, Livengood Creek was again the focus area for Heflinger Mining Company. Heflinger also maintained an ownership position on the 'Livengood Bench', several miles from his mining operations on Livengood Creek and had a royalty share with lessors and would help with cleanups.



**Carl Heflinger with 600+ ounce gold cleanup from the Livengood district, circa 1961. Photo Credit: Carl Heflinger.**



**Carl Heflinger working a dragline on Livengood Creek, circa 1988. Photo Credit—C.B. Green.**

### *Civic Activities and His Family*

Carl Heflinger ran for the State House in 1962, just three years after Statehood. The only precinct he won was Chatanika, where his old friends from mining resided. From 1970-to-1978, Carl was a member of the Alaska State Water Advisory Board. For a number of years, Carl served on the Building Board of the Fairbanks School district. He was appointed to a 'Blue Ribbon' advisory board for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, which tackled many issues related to water quality and reclamation during placer mining activities.

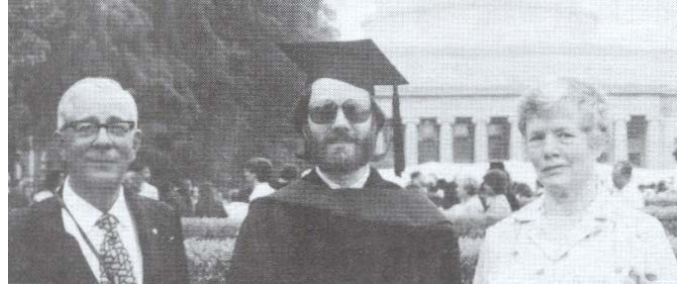
Carl served as Treasurer/Secretary of the Fairbanks Branch of the Alaska Miners Association (AMA), which he took over from USSR&M Company General Manager Jim Crafford. Carl then served as the Branch

Chief of the Fairbanks Branch of AMA and served on the board of the AMA for years.

During the summer of 1984, Carl Heflinger made local news when Alaska Governor Bill Sheffield sent him with Ernest Wolff and Walter Roman to Washington D. C. to demonstrate gold mining techniques and to discuss the nature of small-scale mining as part of the 1984 Festival of American Folklife, which was sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. The three men suffered from sweltering temperatures but managed to answer many questions about Alaska's unique placer mining culture.

Carl and Dorothy began to travel, which included visits to Europe, Egypt, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia; and in the 1980s, joined a group headed up by John Sims of the Alaska Office of Mineral Development (to be inducted with Carl) to visit the metal mining and related industries of South Africa.

Carl and Dorothy strongly encouraged their four children to seek higher education. Bruce obtained a Ph. D in Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). David obtained a B.S. Degree in Electrical Engineering, also from MIT. Fred obtained a B.S. Degree in Mining Engineering from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Their daughter, Marianne, obtained a B.S. Degree in Financing from San Jose State University in California. Their sons worked on the Trans Alaska Pipeline (TAPS) construction project during the 1970s.



**Carl and Dorothy Heflinger with their son, Bruce, who received his Ph.D in Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, June, 1980.**

### *Retirement, Passing and his Legacy*

In 1999, at the age of 87, Carl Heflinger officially retired from mining. In 2004, Carl moved to the Fairbanks Pioneer Home, where he was able to spend quality time with his beloved wife Dorothy. He lost her in 2008 after 63 years of marriage.

Carl Heflinger died on December 14<sup>th</sup> 2014 at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital at the age of 102. Nothing astonished Carl more than living into the new millennium, after several near-death experiences he had during his pre-WWII drift mining years and other medical issues experienced later in life.

At the time of his passing, Carl Heflinger had outlived his six siblings. He was survived by sons Fred, Bruce and Dave; by daughter Marianne Heflinger Mann; by grandchildren Paul and Maureen Heflinger; Chelsea, Skipper and Riley Mann; and many nieces and nephews. At the time of his passing,

the extended family thanked staff for the outstanding care given to Carl and Dorothy at the Fairbanks Pioneer Home.

One of the writers of this biography (Bundtzen) benefited greatly from conversations he had with Carl while he was residing at the Fairbanks Pioneers Home during visits in 2006 and 2008 respectively. One of the reviewers, David Heflinger, provided a timeline checklist of Carl's activities, which improved the manuscript. Beginning in 1965, Carl began to write his memoirs. Although never published, they share raw and humorous accounts of his life and dealings with many colorful characters in the Alaska Territory before Statehood. His World War II experience reminds us of the hazards that military aviation faced. Those interviews can be accessed at:

[www.nps.gov/aleu/photosmultimedia/interview-heflinger.htm](http://www.nps.gov/aleu/photosmultimedia/interview-heflinger.htm).

There is a April 17, 2000 recording of one of Carl's presentations at the 'Pioneers of Alaska' project, sponsored jointly by Igloo #4 and Auxiliary #8. The program features presentations by AMHF inductees Doug Colp, Glen Franklin, and Carl Heflinger, and is available at:

[www.jukebox.uaf.edu/Pioneers/htm/carlh.htm](http://www.jukebox.uaf.edu/Pioneers/htm/carlh.htm).

*Written/Compiled by T.K. Bundtzen and Joan Skilbred; Reviewed by Charles B. Green, Denise Herzog, David Heflinger and Mitchell W. Henning*

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**John Frank Michael Sims  
(1933-2015)**

British-born John Frank Michael (F. M.) Sims was a memorable lode gold expert with an international reputation, an effective educator in the geological and mining fields, and a leader that advocated for the importance of the Alaska mineral industry's past, present and future. In the latter part of his career, he played an important role with a team of others in the creation of Alaska's first successful marketing of a significant mineral resource, (excluding petroleum), Usibelli Coal Mine Inc's. export coal to International (Pacific Rim) market destinations, which lasted for three decades.

*Early Years, Education and  
Exploration Geological Career*

John Frank Michael (F. M.) Sims was born and raised in England, where he obtained his Bachelor of Science (with honors) degree in economic geology in 1956 from Durham University. That same year, he began a 21-year career with Anglo-American Corporation, with whom he worked on three continents. His specialty was the exploration of lode gold-quartz-sulfide deposits of the 'South African' or 'Witwatersrand' type, which are among the world's oldest 'paleo-placers'. The Paleoproterozoic Witwatersrand basin has yielded more than one third of all the gold mined in the world. When he was Chief Geologist from 1962-1969 at the *President Steyn Mine* in Welkom, South Africa, John worked on his Ph. D thesis, which advocated for a paleo-placer origin of the Witwatersrand gold deposits. John also oversaw the digging of the 7,800-foot-deep No. 4 shaft, which at the time, was the largest diameter single drop mine shaft in the world. John obtained a Ph. D from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa in 1969.

Since the mid-1960s, plate tectonic theory predicted that the Africa and South American continents were originally together and rifted away from each other as separate plates along the mid-Atlantic Oceanic Ridge since Mesozoic time. Such an interpretation suggests that the Witwatersrand basin in South Africa should appear within the right geological context and geographical position on the South

American continent. John predicted that paleo placers in South America and South Africa may be equivocal. Subsequent to completion of his thesis, John was asked by Anglo-American to initiate field investigations in South America to confirm or refute his theory that the paleo placer districts of both continents were equivocal. Beginning In 1973, John, designed a exploration program to examine potential South American analogs.

A four-year effort led to the discovery by John and his staff that the Jacobina Gold District in Bahia, Brazil, was indeed an analog to the Witwatersrand. Artisanal (placer) miners recovered gold from the region from the beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. In the 1950-1960s, the Canavieras mine excavated about 120,000 tons grading 18g/t gold. Subsequent to John's recommendations, Anglo-American acquired properties and began underground development in 1980; commercial production at the 'Jacobina mine' (actually four deposits) was achieved by Anglo-American in 1983. Eventually other firms would acquire Anglo-American assets. The main gold producer in the Jacobina district today is Pan American Silver Corporation.

John also explored for diamonds in western Africa on behalf of Anglo-American.

### *John's Alaskan Career as an Educator*

Working in South America and in other international venues took a toll on John's

family life, with many challenges, including long separations from family members and lack of firm educational opportunities for his children. John's wife, Patricia, was an accomplished dancer and dance instructor and his international exploration activities offered nothing to support her career. Another reason for John and Pat's desire to leave South Africa was that, within a few years, their two sons would be subject to obligatory service in the South African Army at a time of civil unrest and violence in the final years of apartheid.

One day, a Johannesburg Sunday newspaper contained an advertisement for a faculty position at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. A close friend and colleague, Dr. Peter Siems, who taught at the University of Idaho, encouraged John to apply for the position. Dean Earl Beistline quickly offered him an associate professorship at the College of Earth Sciences and Mineral Industries (CESMI) at UAF (a part of which would be later reorganized as the School of Mineral Industry or SMI). John encountered challenges in securing the position. He couldn't get anywhere with the U. S. Immigration Service in Johannesburg, but U.S. Senator Ted Stevens stepped in and 'saved the day' (as he so often did) by facilitating visas for John and his family. UAF. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, John and family arrived in Anchorage. On that day, it was minus 47° F in Fairbanks. As reported in *Rock Poker and Paydirt*, John would say:

*“I’ll never forget it. I’d never owned a parka in my life. I did not know what ice fog was. My wife and I spent 2 days and 3 flights attempting to get from Anchorage to Fairbanks, but the aircraft couldn’t land due to the ice fog and it had to return to Anchorage....When we finally landed in the ice fog in Fairbanks, my wife said ‘You are mad—bloody mad!’. But she changed her mind with the passing of subsequent years”.*

University life was very different for John because he had spent his entire career in the private sector. He would say:

*“I had spent my entire career in private industry, running exploration programs and working in underground mines.....And here everyone thought I spoke funny-like.....yet everyone at the university was very tolerant about my ignorance of American Academia and my lack of understanding of ‘Arctic Survival’...The lady in the front office seemed to give Earl (Beistline) his marching orders and coordinated all of his busy schedule on a daily basis. She was Joyce Carlson, Earl’s secretary.”*

Besides teaching courses focused on geological engineering curriculum, including a mineral economics course that the one us (Bundtzen) took from him in

1980, John taught summer geology field camp for CESMI. His selected area for teaching the field camp was the northern Wrangell Mountains in the vicinity of the historic Nebesna underground gold mine, now in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, which operated during the 1930s and 1940s.

### *John’s Role in State Government*

As John was teaching geology and mining curriculum at UAF, Alaska’s political climate was caught up in profound changes concerning how lands were to be used and managed. Section D-2 of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) had mandated that at least 83 million acres of Federal Lands be permanently withdrawn from mineral entry and placed into National Conservation Units. In December, 1980, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) was passed by the U.S. Congress and created up more than 105 million acres of lands which would be mostly withdrawn from mineral industry development. Development of newly discovered, world-class mineral deposits faced uncertainty. The Quartz Hill molybdenum deposit near Ketchikan was incorporated into a national conservation unit (Misty Fjords) and the Greens Creek silver-polymetallic deposit near Juneau was incorporated into Admiralty Island National Monument. Alaska’s placer miners were being challenged by strict new water quality regulations and reclamation

issues. Mineral activities in all regions of Alaska seemed to be facing an uncertain future.

Facing these challenges, Charles Webber, the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCED) created the Office of Minerals Development (OMD), a division

level function within DCED, which was to advocate for mineral development in Alaska and seek solutions to perceived issues with mining activities. In February, 1981, John Sims accepted the position of Director of OMD. Norma Wynen and Charles B. Green became his lead researchers and ‘work horses’.



**John Sims, Director of the Alaska Office of Minerals Development (OMD), circa 1981. Photo by C.B. Green.**

One of John’s first tasks was to compile an authoritative and contemporary review of the mineral resources of the State. The Alaska Territory and early State of Alaska agencies published authoritative annual mineral summaries until the report series was abruptly terminated in 1974. A large data gap about what exactly was happening in Alaska’s mineral industry formed.

In late 1981, Sims provided a crucial grant to the Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGs) within the Alaska Department of Natural Resources

(ADNR) to initiate the publication of an annual mineral industry summary. One of writers of this biographic sketch (Bundtzen) was lead author of the initial publication, entitled *Alaska’s Mineral Resources 1981-1982*, which was released in mid-1982. Since that time, the Alaska Mineral Industry Reports, which were originally designed as a co-authorship between various divisions of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, are still being produced to this day.

OMD became involved in monitoring individual on-site visits to a number of Alaskan mineral properties, including the Red Dog project in northwest Alaska, the Bornite Cu-Co deposit in the Brooks Range, and the Greens Creek mine in SE Alaska. Papers were presented at various public and professional venues, including annual meetings describing mineral activities.



**John at Greens Creek project, circa 1983, years before it went into production. Photo Credit: C.B. Green.**

### Red Dog Project Analysis

In 1983, Alaska Governor Bill Sheffield commissioned DCED to coordinate a



**John inspects a rock section overlying mineralized zone at the Bornite copper-cobalt deposit, northern Alaska circa 1982. Photo Credit: C.B. Green.**

comprehensive analysis of the proposed Red Dog zinc-polymetallic project for the purpose of formulating the State's role in the project. The lead agency within DCED was OMD under John Sims, which coordinated the input of six other Alaska State agencies. The report concluded that despite high initial development costs, the very large tonnage, with high ore grades, would give the Red Dog project a long-term competitive advantage over other world producers during cyclical downturns and metal recessions.

Eventually the Delong Mountains Transportation System (DMTS), despite being initially very controversial,

was provided with a loan from the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) to construct a 52-mile-long road from mine to port site that allowed for development of the mine—now in its 37<sup>th</sup> year of operation. That loan was completely paid back with interest.

### Placer Mining Impacts

OMD became a lead agency to develop factual information about the status and importance of Alaska placer gold mining industry, including forums to examine how to mitigate issues related to water quality and land reclamation. OMD commissioned economic ‘input-output’ studies in the 1980s by L. A. Peterson and Louis Berger and Associates, which estimated the financial impact of the then beleaguered placer industry.

### Coal Export Studies

An important project for the OMD was to assist the marketing of steam coal produced by Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc. (UCM) and other sites, especially in South-Central Alaska. Shortly after his 1981 state appointment, John began to work with UCM personnel, including Joe Usibelli, on the firm’s ambitious plans to export coal to Pacific Rim customers. A design phase for the export market was completed in 1983, with OMD working closely with Usibelli and other entities. In order to complete the challenge of exporting a relatively

low unit value fuel in a competitive marketplace, the Seward Coal terminal was completed in late 1984 by Suneel Alaska Corporation at a cost of about \$21 million. About 35,000 tons of coal were loaded onto a Panamex vessel in late 1984 and near full scale annual output of about 750,000 tons was achieved in 1985.

### South African Mine Tours

In 1982 and 1985, John organized two tours of the South African (SA) mining industry. The primary purpose of both trips was to have Alaskans see what a modern mining industry looked like and how it could economically benefit Alaska. Although new mineral discoveries had been made, including the Quartz Hill, Red Dog and Greens Creek deposits, no modern mine of significant size (except Usibelli Coal Mine) had been placed into production in Alaska for decades.

Due to John’s prominence in the SA mining industry, the mines visited would typically host luncheons and dinners for the Alaska-based group and sometimes provided accommodation. The itineraries of both tours included gold, copper, tin, platinum, antimony and diamond mines; with the 1985 tour emphasizing SA’s diamond industry. Because of Alaska’s coal endowment, the tour also visited coal mines, a coal-to-oil synfuel plant, and the Richards Bay Coal terminal, the world’s largest coal export facility at the time.



**John Sims inspecting a hydraulic nozzle operating at a placer mine near Livengood, Alaska, circa 1982.**



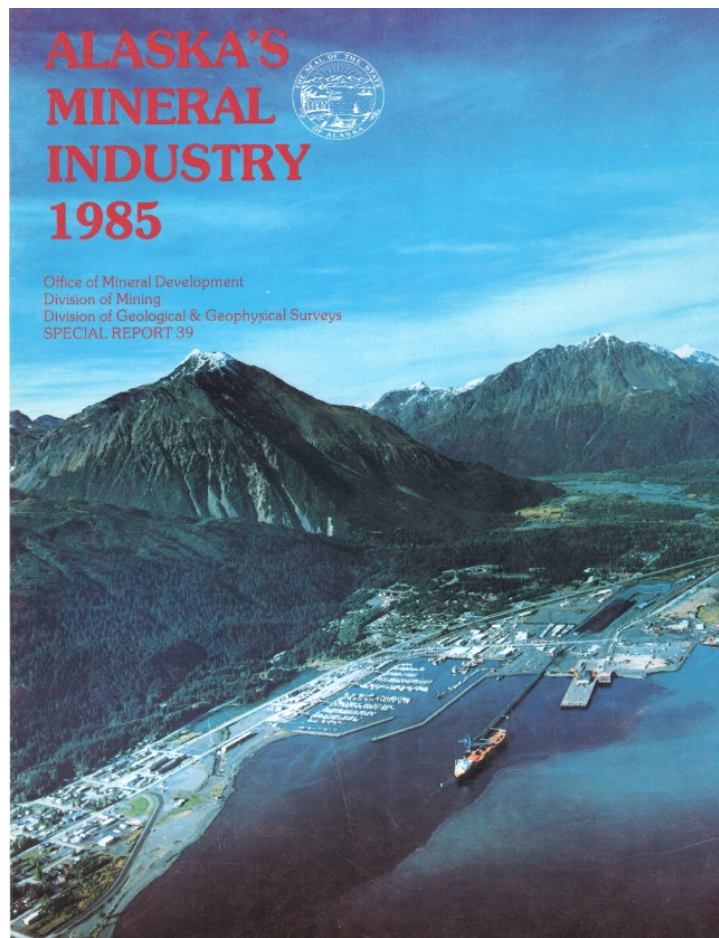
**South African Mine tour participants prepare to go underground at the DeBeers Premier Diamond mine. Left to right, Del Ackels, Peter Richardson, John Sims, John Blackwell, Doug Colp, Dan Renshaw, Rod Blakestad, Stan Gelvin, Bernie Karl; Kneeling: Charlie Green, Dave Maneval. Photo Credit: C.B. Green.**

### Joining the Usibelli Coal Mine Team

In 1986, John joined UCM in Fairbanks and became UCM's Director of Marketing. His primary mission was to help sustain the coal export market developed between UCM and the Korean Electric Power Company (KEPCO) in South Korea and find new markets for UCM coal. Later UCM coal was shipped to other Pacific Rim destinations although the KEPCO contract remained the most important market. The export market was challenging for most of its 30-year existence and required

frequent maintenance to keep it sustainable. John once told one of the writers of this article (in humor of course) that he sometimes thought he was a citizen of South Korea.

Indeed, John spent much time in negotiations with KEPCO in South Korea, as well as in other Pacific Rim destinations. Few Alaskans realize that the export of Usibelli's coal to the Pacific Rim, which lasted for > three decades, constituted the first significant export of Alaska's mineral resources (excluding petroleum) to international market destinations.



**The Seward Coal Terminal, as it appears on the cover of the Alaska Mineral Industry report for 1985, a report series which Sims help 'recreate' for the State of Alaska.**

## Other Activities

John joined and helped raise funds for the Alaska Minerals and Energy Resource Education Fund (AMEREF). This non-profit organization was originally founded by Anchorage businessman George Schmidt in 1986 and included Doug Colp, Earl Beistline, John Blackwell and John Sims among it's first Board members. AMEREF's mission was to educate students about Alaska's natural resources and foster informed stewardship, often in collaboration with the Resource Development Council for Alaska Inc. It is now known as Alaska Resource Education (ARE), a 501 C-3 nonprofit corporation which is active throughout the Alaska primary and secondary school systems.

Sims was immensely proud of becoming a U.S. Citizen and a number of his friends were there at the Federal Court House in Fairbanks to witness his Oath of Allegiance to his new country.

## Retirement, His Passing and Legacy

John Sims retired from Usibelli in 1994, after nearly 40 years in a combined earth science and mining career. He and his family stayed in Fairbanks for a number of years afterwards before leaving Alaska in 2002. His wife Pat was very active in the Fairbanks dancing community since they arrived in 1978 and taught dance classes to many Fairbanks students over many years. John and Patricia retired in Tucson, Arizona. John loved golf and after retirement, played all over the world. Unfortunately, following a lengthy illness associated with diabetes, he passed away on April 1, 2015 in Tucson, Arizona at the age of 82.

At the time of his passing, John was survived by his wife Patricia; sons Christopher and Michael, daughter Elizabeth; as well as five grandsons and two great-grandsons.



**Retirement party for John F.M. Sims, in January, 1994. From left to right, Charles Boddy, Charles Green, John Sims, and Joe Usibelli Jr., photo credit: UCM.**

*By Thomas K. Bundtzen and Charles B. Green. Edited by Mitchell Henning*

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The Alaska Mining Hall of Fame (AMHF) 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 AMHF 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 fifty (50) individuals, couples and organizations that have contributed at least \$1,000 to become 98ers, in honor of the first stampedeers to Alaska in 1898 at Nome.

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

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