

DISCOVER

KETCHIKAN

# OUR TOWN

ALASKA'S MOST VIBRANT COMMUNITY

COMPLIMENTARY  
**EIGHTH**  
EDITION

ECONOMY  
LIFESTYLES  
PERSONALITIES  
FACTS & FIGURES  
HISTORICAL FEATURES

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# OUR TOWN

## DISCOVER KETCHIKAN ALASKA



Historic Ketchikan Inc. is pleased to present this book to visitors, prospective visitors and fellow residents of Ketchikan as a vital record of a vibrant and progressive community.



*THE CALM AFTER THE SWARM* Stedman Street and Creek Street rest quietly late on a summer day after thousands of visitors have departed this distinctive neighborhood, where two national historic districts intersect.

PUBLISHED BY  
**Historic Ketchikan Inc.**

WITH SUPPORT FROM  
**Ketchikan  
Gateway Borough  
AND  
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Historic Ketchikan Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes economic development through historic preservation and heritage tourism. Our programs are designed to instill community pride and interest in Ketchikan's history.

This publication is a community profile with general factual information and residents' opinions. It is designed to be informative and entertaining—a tribute to the spirit and heritage of a vital community. It is not intended to be a primary historical reference.

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Design | text | text editing — Gregg Poppen  
for Full Circle Media Arts

ON THE COVER Kayakers paddle up Ketchikan Creek at high tide PHOTO BY SEANNA O'SULLIVAN



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*Late-afternoon sun silhouettes a couple visiting the shore near Mountain Point. Amazing vistas can be discovered throughout this book: of history, cultures, industries, enterprise, nature and lifestyles.*

GREGG POPPEN

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# FIRST CHOICE IN THE FIRST CITY


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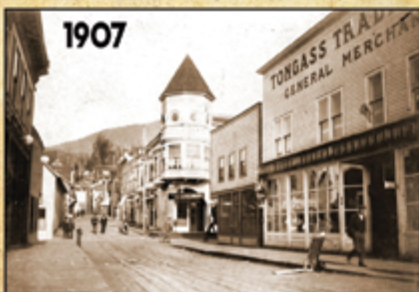
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## KETCHIKAN, AK

VISIT [TONGASSTRADING.COM](http://TONGASSTRADING.COM) TO DOWNLOAD COUPONS & SPECIALS   



CINDY BALZER

Springtime fog burns away to reveal Nob Hill homes above our downtown tunnel and Casey Moran Harbor. Two classically styled commercial vessels are tied up at open moorage.

# Ketchikan

## A PLACE THAT IS LIKE NO PLACE ELSE

**FIRST LINK IN THE CHAIN**—Ketchikan is the first port of call for northbound ships and aircraft entering Alaska—hence our nickname “The First City.” The community spans three islands of the Alexander Archipelago, a 300-mile-long chain of islands in the Panhandle (about 1,100 islands in all).

**55.35° N**  
**131.67° W**

**BY AIR OR BY SEA**—Ketchikan International Airport is 670 miles northwest of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The city is 90 miles from Prince Rupert, British Columbia, the nearest city on the North American road system.

**PLACE NAMES TELL OUR HISTORY**—Listen to place names to hear traces of many heritages. Most of Ketchikan is on Revillagigedo Island, named in 1793 by English explorer Capt. George Vancouver in honor of the Spanish Viceroy of Mexico, who commissioned prior explorations of the Pacific Northwest. “Ketchikan” is anglicized from a word of the Tlingit people, the first Alaska Natives to settle here. The Alexander Archipelago was named for Tsar Alexander II in 1867, when Alaska was purchased from Russia; Panhandle islands with names such as Baranof and Chichagof recall the Russian era.

**REVILLA ISLAND RANKS IN THE U.S. TOP DOZEN**—Revilla Island is the 11th largest island in the United States, with 1,150 square miles of land mass—and even more at low tide!

**IS DENSITY DESTINY?**—We enjoy wide-open spaces. Revillagigedo Island’s population density is just 13 people per square mile. Sure, density’s greater in town—but the wide-open backcountry is only about three blocks away!

JOSHUA ROPER



GREGG POPPEN



**IT’S AN ISLAND! HOWEVER YOU REACH KETCHIKAN, SOMEONE ELSE WILL DO THE DRIVING FOR YOU. YOUR EYES ARE ABLE TO TAKE IN AMAZING SIGHTS ON THE WAY.**

*Alaska Airlines offers several flights daily, year-round, from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport to Ketchikan International Airport; flight time is about 95 minutes.*

*Delta provides seasonal, daily service from Sea-Tac. Flight time is about two hours.*

*Alaska Marine Highway System ferries depart Bellingham, Wash., for a relaxing 38-hour trip to Ketchikan; the vessels carry passenger cars, RVs and boats. Another option is to drive to Prince Rupert, B.C., and board an Alaska ferry for a six-hour transit. Summer sailings are popular and ferry schedules can change, so check in early at [alaskaferry.com](http://alaskaferry.com) to be sure of space for your vehicle.*

*On approach to Ketchikan, seat yourself in the ferry’s forward observation lounge to observe as Alaska’s First City comes into view.*



*Ketchikan climbed the hill above tide flats in the first half-decade of the 1900s. At right here, the Chief Johnson pole stood tall; at left, a long wharf went dry at low tides.*

## THE CAN-DO SPIRIT ANIMATED KETCHIKAN EVEN BEFORE OUR HISTORICAL FAME AS THE CANNED SALMON CAPITAL

**S**almon made Ketchikan. Native Alaskans had a summer fish camp at the mouth of a creek that Tlingit people called *Kich-xaan*. Salmon lured entrepreneurs from the Pacific Northwest; eagle-eyed for new sources of fish, the first scouts landed here about 1885. By the mid-1890s, pioneering business people had built a wharf and Tongass Packing Co. operated a cannery.

An affable adventurer named Mike Martin and his partner George Clark bought Tongass Packing Co.'s land after the cannery burned down in 1897. The pair established a saltery on a new wharf where Dock and Front streets meet today. They opened the town's first trading store. Martin and Clark sold their land to Ketchikan Improvement Co.; the developers platted lots measuring 50 by 100 feet. In 1900, 103 property-owning male voters incorporated "Ketchikan" and elected Martin as the first mayor. The first head count found 800 residents in this "First City"—nicknamed as the port of entry into Alaska.

Early settlers developed the salmon-packing industry and tapped steady Ketchikan Creek to drive generators and mills. They created a deepwater port and mined valuable ores in the area. Great steamships chuffed up the coast, bearing gold-rush prospectors, settlers and even intrepid sightseers. Ketchikan businesses flourished supplying services and goods. Residents levied a property tax of 7.5 mills for a school, fire protection and streets.

**Sawmills cut lumber** for buildings, street planks, salmon cases and export. Police were hired. "New Town" residents north of Nob Hill campaigned to remove brothels and the city segregated working girls south of the creek—hence the Creek Street red-light district. With the Bone Dry Law in 1917, Creek Street became a hub for freewheeling bawdy houses and bootlegging. Crews on large fleets of fishing vessels provided clientele.

Ketchikan was Alaska's most populous city into the 1930s. We paved Front Street in 1923 (the first street in Alaska to be paved). As many as seven salmon canneries at a time operated in the city. Brothels were shut down in 1953. The pulp mill at Ward Cove became Alaska's biggest employer in the mid-'50s. Ketchikan integrated schools and social life with Alaska Natives and the town came to take pride in a culture that fascinates visitors. We welcomed hundreds of immigrants from the Philippines, their enterprise and enthusiasm comprising a second pioneer wave.

It's a town with a unique past and a spirit made of optimism and enterprise.

**KETCHIKAN SETS A VIBRANT,  
CONGENIAL COMMUNITY IN  
THE MIDST OF MAGNIFICENT  
NATURAL SURROUNDINGS.**

*We're in a lush temperate rain forest beside the calm, clean Inside Passage of the North Pacific ocean—but we're also intricately tied to remarkable human heritages.*

*Our historical properties harken back to Alaska's Frontier era. World-class totem poles and a living Alaska Native culture express a presence beyond history. A vital business climate and a thriving arts community round it out.*

*Nature makes this place extraordinary. History makes it unique. People make it Ketchikan.*



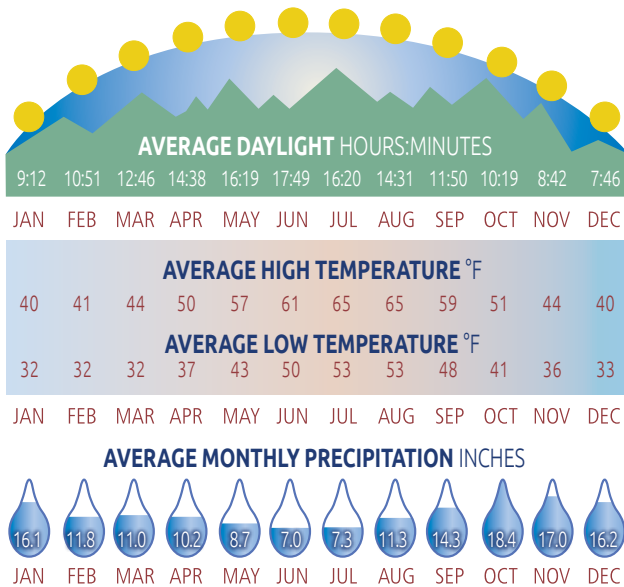


# CLIMATE

**SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST ALASKA** is in a region that scientists call a temperate rain forest. Temperatures are moderated by the North Pacific Ocean and weather systems over the ocean generate ample precipitation. This moist, mild climate and abundant rain promote prodigious growth. We handle it with waterproof, breathable fabrics; waterproof footwear; and a certainty that, surely, into each life *some sun* must fall. We cherish clear days when the sea sparkles and we rejoice that most of our trees are *evergreens*: there's vital color year-round. In July, we see our best odds for sun: 16 days of 31 are dry, on average.

The climate has vacillated of late. In summer 2017 (June through August), Ketchikan endured record-setting rainfall at 46.99 inches. Then a prolonged drought began in summer 2018 and *only* 107 inches of precipitation fell that year—the seventh-driest year in more than a century of record-keeping, according to the Southeast Regional Climate Center. The pendulum swung back in 2020 and Ketchikan set another alltime record for soggiest summer at 47.29 inches of rain.

**THE GRAPHIC BELOW** summarizes weather statistics. The text below the graphic outlines some of our climatic mosts and leasts and usuals.



## WEATHER RECORD

January average temp	35.6° F
July average temp	58.8° F
Average annual rainfall 1910-2022	149.2 inches
Avg. number of days with rain during a year	234 days
Longest stretch with daily rainfall	88 days — Sept. 19-Dec. 15, 1920
Longest stretch with no rain	29 days — July 10-Aug. 7, 1996
Wettest year	1949 — 202 inches
Driest year	1982 — 87 inches
Wettest month	Nov. 1917 — 53.85 inches
Driest month	Feb. 1989 — 0.82 inches
Greatest 24-hour precipitation	Oct. 11, 1977 — 8.71 inches
Average winter snowfall	37.3 inches



*It wouldn't be a rain forest without some rain. This group braves a summer shower to soak up Ketchikan history with a local walking-tour guide in the Downtown Historic District. An eagle perching above the Daily News looks on, undaunted.*

GREGG POPPEN

# MUNICIPALITIES | services



## CITY OF KETCHIKAN

The city incorporated in the U.S. District of Alaska in 1900. The city is a home rule municipality with wide-ranging powers and services: police; firefighting; streets; distribution of electricity, telephone and domestic water; collection and treatment of wastewater; collection and disposal of solid waste; a library and a museum; and others.

City residents elect seven council members at large and elect a mayor who presides over meetings and breaks tie votes; all terms are three years. The city doesn't impose term limits.

The council hires a manager to oversee city general government and municipally owned Ketchikan Public Utilities.



## KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

The borough was established in 1963 with limited powers. The borough conducts property assessing and collects property and sales taxes areawide. It also provides for animal control. KGB runs the state-owned airport and operates a public transit system. Borough functions include parks and recreation; planning and zoning; and community development. Under its education authority, the borough owns school facilities and sets a budget for the school district. Seven assembly members elected at large serve three-year terms; the mayor is elected separately to a three-year term and votes only in deadlocks. Assembly members and the mayor are limited to two successive terms. The assembly hires a manager, a clerk and an attorney.



## CITY OF SAXMAN

The City of Saxman is two miles south of Ketchikan and incorporated in 1929, when Alaska was a U.S. territory. Saxman is a second-class municipality; residents elect city council members, who select a mayor from their body.

Saxman provides water service and wastewater collection and operates Saxman Seaport, a multimodal sea and rail facility. The City of Saxman is managed by a city administrator.

## PROPERTY TAXES 2011-2022

### City of Ketchikan | Ketchikan Gateway Borough

Figures below reflect Ketchikan property owners' ad valorem payments to the areawide Ketchikan Gateway Borough and the City of Ketchikan within the borough.

PROPERTY TAX	Mill rate 2022	Mill rate 2017	Mill rate 2011
City of Ketchikan	6.6	6.7	6.2
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	5.2	5.0	5.8
Total mill levy for in-city property	11.8	11.7	12.0

An additional property tax of 0.7 mills is levied nonareawide—outside the cities of Ketchikan and Saxman—for a borough contribution to operation of Ketchikan Public Library, which is an agency of the City of Ketchikan.

## SALES TAX

City of Ketchikan	5.5% APRIL 1 to SEPT. 30
	3.0% OCT. 1 to MARCH 31
Borough	2.5% YEAR-ROUND

The City of Ketchikan instituted a seasonal sales tax adjustment effective April 1, 2023. Combined sales tax (city and borough) on in-city purchases April through September is 8.0%; combined sales tax October through March is 5.5%.

Sales tax is paid on only the first \$2,000 of any single item purchased in the City of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough—the single-unit tax exemption. Registered residents 65 and older are exempt from local sales tax.

## BED TAX

City of Ketchikan	7.0%
Rural borough and Saxman	4.0%

# UTILITIES



CHARLES HABERBUSH

- GREEN, AFFORDABLE HYDRO POWER
- FIBER-OPTICS FOR ENTERPRISE & ENTERTAINMENT
- FRESH MOUNTAIN WATER CONSTANTLY ON TAP

**E**lectricity in Ketchikan is heaven-sent. Affordable kilowatt-hours (kWh) are generated across our region by hydropower turbines spinning below high-mountain lakes that catch snowmelt and rainfall. On average, 99.2 percent of Ketchikan’s power is renewable hydroelectric. Capital upgrades by the municipal utility and a regional power wholesaler have kept the system ahead of demand and have allowed customers to count on stable power costs.

Municipally owned Ketchikan Public Utilities (KPU) provides electricity through its distribution system to homes and businesses on Revilla, Gravina and Pennock islands. About 46 percent of that electricity comes from KPU’s own hydro plants and diesel generators. The municipal utility also buys electricity from Southeast

Alaska Power Agency (SEAPA); the quasi-public entity owns two hydroelectric projects in southern Southeast Alaska.

*Electric rates have resisted inflationary tides due to the partnership of local and regional hydro power suppliers*

KPU’s residential customers paid 11.09 cents per kilowatt hour in 2022. Industrial users paid 9.63 cents per kWh and commercial users paid 10.39 cents. KPU electric rates increased only 18 percent in the past 15 years.

**The utility brought** a new hydroelectric generator online in 2014; Whitman Lake hydro added 4.5 megawatts (MW) to KPU’s generating capacity and engineers estimated that it could supplant 1 million gallons of diesel-generated power every year. Local bonding and state appropriations funded the new facility. Like some other hydro infrastructure in Ketchikan, Whitman Lake has a remarkable heritage: The lake was dammed and tapped by New England Fish Co. in

1912 as a power source for its processing plant in town.

KPU operates three other hydro plants that collectively provide about 13 MW of capacity. Bailey Power Plant’s diesel-fueled generators and diesels at Point Higgins can develop more than 24 MW, but KPU spins up these plants only in emergencies or when hydro-generating capacity is unavailable.

Demand on the system hit a record 35.7 MW in winter 2020; home heating, combined with power drawn by the shipyard, the aquatic center and other large users, challenged KPU’s in-house generating capacity.

**Swan Lake hydro** has fulfilled increasing power demand since the 25 MW facility northeast of Ketchikan was wired into KPU’s system in the 1980s. SEAPA owns Swan Lake hydro, along with the Tye Lake plant that provides power to Petersburg and Wrangell. SEAPA sells electricity at a fixed wholesale rate of 7.05 cents per kWh to municipal utilities in the three communities. That rate has increased only once, by less than 4 percent, in more than two decades.

SEAPA’s two hydro-generating plants were linked in 2009 by the Swan-Tye Intertie—57 miles of high-voltage line spanning mountains and inter-island ocean depths. SEAPA uses this link to send excess Tye Lake power as needed to Ketchikan.

**Several years ago**, SEAPA increased generating capabilities at Swan Lake by installing an innovative system in the dam’s 100 foot-wide spillway. The maximum lake level rose 15 feet and storage capacity increased by 25 percent. That gives operators more water to run through the turbines in winter, when much of our high-elevation precipitation >

*GREEN LIGHT* Clean, renewable hydro power is the star in the city-owned electrical grid. Electricity distributed to Thomas Basin harbor and across three islands powers our town.

## KPU ELECTRICITY PER KILOWATT HOUR

Residential	11.09
Commercial	10.39
Industrial	9.63

RATES IN CENTS AS OF 2022



ED SCHOFIELD

Our regional power wholesaler raised the water level at Swan Lake with an innovative addition to the dam—increasing hydro generating capacity by 25 percent.

is locked up in snow and ice, but demand for electricity is greatest. The upgrade offsets as much as 800,000 gallons of diesel generation each year and keeps 18 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere in the long run.

SEAPA was created under a state statute as a “joint action agency.” Professional personnel work under a board of directors made up of

representatives from municipal governments in Ketchikan, Petersburg and Wrangell.

The regional entity also eyes the horizon for hydroelectric opportunity. Coordinating with the State of Alaska, SEAPA vets potential power sources and conducts site analysis, planning and pre-construction for future hydro projects.

## FIBER-OPTICS OPTIONS FEED KETCHIKAN'S NEED FOR SPEED

Internet and home-entertainment services are vigorously competitive in Ketchikan. Municipal and private providers supply urban-class broadband via undersea fiber-optic cables.

KPU established a fast fiber-optic link to the continental system in 2020 with installation of an undersea cable originating near Prince Rupert, B.C. KPU had prepared for that broadband upgrade in a years-long program of installing “fiber-to-the-home” lines within its service area. KPU also maintains a mountain-top microwave system as a backup link.

*A new undersea fiber-optic link to the continent brings the locally owned provider and the private provider into parity, both offering fast broadband service*

GCI, a private business founded in Alaska, was first to provide fiber-optic service to Southeast Alaska in 2009 with an undersea link to the Lower 48 in Puget Sound.

KPU’s community-wide fiber-to-the-home network offers entertainment programming and Internet connectivity at speeds as great as 1 gigabit per second. GCI’s local system carries TV and Internet via coaxial cables; service speeds range up to 1 Gbps.

Both providers run high-definition TV and on-demand content. The municipally owned entertainment provider has the distinction of a local-TV effort. KPU TV boasts 14 local channels, with content ranging from community events and sports to locally produced TV shows.

Excellent and competitive 4G/LTE service is provided by Verizon, AT&T and GCI.

Both GCI and KPU offer services suited to businesses. KPU’s hosted IP phone systems are considered state of the art technology. KPU operates a secure, hosted data center for storage in a growing economy. GCI provides up-to-date cloud data storage services for businesses.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

## UTILITIES' HISTORY FLOWS FROM CREEKSIDE ORIGINS

KETCHIKAN CREEK WAS the font of life, water and light from the community’s founding: first salmon, then domestic water, then hydroelectric power. The flume and powerhouse pictured above succeeded gravity-fed systems built on the creek as early as 1904.

The town also drew electricity after 1903 from Ketchikan Power Co., which burned wood waste at Ketchikan Spruce Mill (at the site of today’s Berth 1) to turn steam turbines. The privately owned Citizens Light, Power and Water Co. provided utilities for decades.

KETCHIKAN PUBLIC UTILITIES was established by the City of Ketchikan when it purchased the assets of Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. Inc. in 1935 for the grand sum of \$954,000. The city claims that it was the first municipality in the United States to own and operate all three of its own utilities: electricity, water and telephone.

## LAKE WATER SLAKES LOCAL THIRST

The KPU water division pipes fresh, safe water to about 3,200 customers, 15 percent of them businesses. The source is Ketchikan Lakes in a steep watershed above the city. KPU treats potable water with a multi-stage system applying chlorination, intense UV light and chloramination.

Residential water usage is unmetered and billed at \$63.26 per month. KPU is installing meters for businesses and industrial users toward an eventual metered-rate program.

The utility distributes more than 7 million gallons of water per day in summertime, when fish processors and cruise ships increase demand. Wintertime water use falls back to a range of 3 million to 3.5 million gallons a day.

Many homes and businesses south of town use the borough-owned South Tongass water system, which filters and treats water drawn from Whitman Lake. The City of Saxman has its own water system. Some rural residents hook up to neighborhood water systems or catch rainfall.



## MUSEUM

FELIX WONG

### FACTS AND ARTIFACTS OF OUR UNIQUE STORY ARE ON VIVID DISPLAY

**TONGASS HISTORICAL MUSEUM** makes sure the First City lasts by collecting, preserving and interpreting our heritage.

The museum in the Centennial Building was recently re-cast in a major renovation. The project increased exhibition space and provided for up-

to-date design and display technology.

The city-owned facility has presented a broad range of exhibitions and interpretive materials since 1967. Items in its own collection are mainstays, but the professional staff also organizes and curates exhibits that call on the community to participate—such as an exhibit “Grown on the Rock” spotlighting this area’s dauntless dairymen, truck farmers and gardeners.



ERIKA BROWN

*BEAR AND HERITAGE* Skeletal remnants of a famous brown bear dubbed ‘Groaner’ are fleshed out in metal artwork in the permanent exhibition at Ketchikan’s museum. Icons of Ketchikan’s history cut from sheet metal welcome visitors.

The museum also hosts exhibits from other institutions. Public programs, special events, workshops and educational programs related to local history are offered throughout the year.

Early-days Ketchikan and Alaska Native villages in this area were documented by photographers from the 1890s on and priceless images from that period and every era since are registered, digitized and carefully stored. The museum’s historical archive and extensive photography collection are available for research.

**RARE ARTIFACTS** in the museum’s collection display Ketchikan’s many guises: as a Native fish camp; a way station for the Interior gold rush and a hub for this region’s mining boom; a canned-salmon colossus and halibut hot spot; a timber town; and the onetime home of a notorious red-light district. The independent Tongass Historical Society has aided the museum in establishing its collection.

## TED FERRY CIVIC CENTER

**KETCHIKAN HAS A PLACE** meeting the needs of those needing a place to meet.

Ted Ferry Civic Center has the versatility to host statewide conventions; conferences of regional groups; the arts council’s annual runway wearable-art show; concerts; weddings; dances; and political events.

The facility’s award-winning design has a 4,300-square foot grand ballroom that seats several hundred people. Smaller private meeting areas can be set off. The ballroom becomes three distinct bays with individual sound and lighting controls. (Naturally, they’re named for nearby bays in the ocean.)

The civic center offers a spacious, 1,500-square foot stage for performances and presentations. An 800-square foot kitchen



KVB

is available for on-site food preparation. Outside caterers also serve the center.

**AN EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM** and spacious lobby contribute to the comfort and convenience of this essential community facility.

The civic center has all the essentials for conferences: AV equipment; copiers; high-speed Internet service; teleconferencing equipment; computers; and LCD

projectors for big ideas.

The facility is owned and staffed by the City of Ketchikan. Ketchikan Visitors Bureau markets the facility as part of its promotional program for the community.

Ted Ferry Civic Center is on Venetia Way above Ketchikan Creek and commands a dramatic view of Deer Mountain. The public facility is adjacent to Cape Fox Lodge, a full-service hotel accessible from Creek Street via a funicular tram installed by the lodge’s owner, Cape Fox Corp.

# PORT & HARBORS

## FIRST CITY HAS ESSENTIAL FACILITIES FOR COMMERCIAL AND PLEASURE FLEETS

**RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ON** vessels from skiffs to seafood processors use six harbors operated by the City of Ketchikan's Port and Harbors Department.

Along the historical heart of Ketchikan, nearly a mile's worth of cruise ships routinely tie up on summer days. Four long docks, dubbed Berths 1 to 4, accommodate Panamax-scale ships on a span reaching from Thomas Basin northwest to the city's historic Newtown area.

But that wharfage would look small against the total length of all the slips maintained by city personnel in Ketchikan's harbors.

Nearly 50 cruise and excursion ships visit Ketchikan from April to early October; in 2022, they were scheduled for more than 630 port calls over the long season. Most of the ships use in-town docks, although some tie up at the new, privately operated Mill at Ward Cove north of town.

Berth 1 on the south end was built in the mid-1990s with state and local funding. Recent rebuilding of Berth 2, at \$28 million, was funded by grants from the state's commercial passenger vessel levy. The \$36 million remake of Berth 3 in 2007 used port revenue bonds. This upgrade replaced City Float and provided a street-level pedestrian promenade between Berths 3 and 4. Berth 4 was built in 2008 with innovative funding. Private interests funded and developed the dock and leased it to the city for 30 years.

**THE DRIVE-DOWN FLOAT** completed in 2014 in Bar Harbor was long-sought by commercial fishers and merchant mariners—but also by cabin-builders and other private users. The city's raw fish tax, a borough appropriation and a state harbor facility grant funded it.

Hole in the Wall Harbor near Herring Cove was completely overhauled in 2016 with new pilings, floats and a breakwater. A winding concrete pedestrian ramp makes this smallest of our harbors at last fully accessible at ADA standards. A city port bond and a state grant funded the \$2.6 million re-do at the scenic south-end site.

Port and Harbors' annual revenues for reserved moorage, transient moorage and passenger wharfage fees levied on large ships range around the \$8 million mark.



GREGG POPPEN

*STAYING AFLOAT* Our port serves myriad maritime users. The drive-down float seen in use above is a critical interface between the street and the sea. Six harbors accommodate travelers and liveaboards alike; many slips offer electrical service and potable water.



GREGG POPPEN

## PORT OF KETCHIKAN

- Six small-boat harbors
- 1,100 reserved boat stalls
- Thousands of feet of transient moorage
- Four deepwater berths for ships to more than 1,100 ft. LOA
- 3 double-lane launch ramps for small boats
- 1 drive-down float
- 4 tidal boat grids

Visitors support the port via a per-person levy on cruisers

**THE COMMERCIAL PASSENGER** vessel excise tax, or CPV, provides resources to make Ketchikan and other port communities better places to visit.

The CPV levy was initiated in Alaska law in 2007. The state collects CPV tax and allocates most of it to seven municipalities affected by the cruise industry. That revenue supports shoreside

## CPV

COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VESSEL LEVY

projects and programs related to cruise-based tourism. Cruise lines pay \$34.50 per passenger into the CPV account; the state passes on funding to municipalities affected by the huge numbers of seasonal visitors. The City of Ketchikan and Ketchikan Gateway Borough split \$5 per person—several million dollars every year.

**CPV FUNDS** HAVE been used throughout the community to support the cruise industry. The city upgraded cruise ship docks and collaborated with the borough on waterfront promenade improvements. CPV funds built rain shelters, sea walls, public restrooms and wayfinding signs. Local revenues from the levy also expanded the transit system.

## LIBRARY

'COMMUNITY LIVING ROOM' OFFERS MEDIA WITH A MOUNTAIN VIEW

**KETCHIKAN PUBLIC LIBRARY** IS an award-winning facility above Bear Valley that features a commanding view of a high ridge leading to iconic Deer Mountain. The building's cladding of slate and wood reflects Ketchikan's natural surroundings and was among features cited by architects who awarded the building "most Alaskan" plaudits after its dedication in 2013. The 16,700 square-foot interior is enhanced with locally created sculpture, Alaska Native carvings, fiber art and sheet steel art. The children's library has a life-size fiber art tree built with local youngsters.

The library is owned and managed by the City of Ketchikan and serves all Ketchikan Gateway Borough residents.

A member of the staff likened the library to "a community living room" where people read, write, create, explore, discuss and reflect. The library dedicates spaces for children, teens and adults. The Alaskan room focuses on Southeast Alaska. Lighted bookshelves and media cabinets frame roomy aisles. A fireplace flanked by artwork and window walls is a centerpiece.

**COMPUTERS AND WI-FI** ARE available for public use. Study rooms provide quiet places for individuals and groups. Meeting rooms are used by non-profits and library staff.



CREGG POPPEN

*The library commands the heights of service and terrain.*

Programs serve all ages and include storytime, book clubs for teens and adults, chair yoga and chess club. Adults enjoy a winter reading program. Children and teens take part in summer reading programs. Teen Advisory Group and Friends of the Library develop and help to fund a robust library programming schedule. Ketchikan residents and groups lead their own programs.

**LIBRARIANS CURATE** collections for residents and visitors. In addition to print and online books, DVDs and music CDs, the library lends games, art posters, electronic equipment, crafts and hiking explorer kits. KPL and Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad provide hikers with SPOT locator beacons for safety.

Outreach librarians deliver books, DVDs and programs to the homebound, to the Pioneer Home and senior centers, and to people at the correctional center. Book Shares throughout the borough provide those outside the city with a selection of books and DVDs.

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# PUBLIC SAFETY



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## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS KEY FOR KETCHIKAN POLICE

**K**etchikan Police Department is responsible for law enforcement inside the City of Ketchikan and provides the community's links to emergency services.

KPD has 26 full-time officers and 12 civilian employees. Uniformed staff are state academy-trained before completing local field training with KPD officers. Dispatchers at the department downtown are responsible for routing local 911 calls to appropriate law-enforcement and fire agencies—the bulk of about 5,000 calls that ring at KPD each year. Police credit their nine dispatchers as the “unsung heroes” of local public safety.

The department focuses on its relationship with the community. A school resource officer posted mainly at Ketchikan High School boosts positive relationships with students, school personnel and the public. KPD is on scene for safety and support in numbers of community events, from the Fourth of July celebration and Blueberry Arts Festival to Halloween. But officers also conduct close-up involvement in projects such as Shop With a Cop, which fosters rapport with youth and families.

## STATE TROOPERS' ROLES EXTEND FROM CRIMES TO COURTS AND CRITTERS

Alaska State Troopers' A Detachment South in Ketchikan is HQ for an area spanning the Panhandle from Metlakatla to Yakutat. A Detachment oversees troopers posts in Ketchikan, Juneau and Craig. The detachment also handles judicial services offices in state courthouses in Ketchikan and Juneau. These offices provide courthouse security and prisoner transport. They also conduct extraditions of fugitive prisoners to Southeast Alaska.

**Ketchikan AST** has a lieutenant, a sergeant, four toopers and two court service officers. The post is the primary local law-enforcement agency outside the City of Ketchikan and assists other agencies. Alaska Wildlife Troopers base three officers in Ketchikan. Three A Detachment posts manage law enforcement and search and rescue functions of a number of village public safety officers across Southeast Alaska. Equipment assigned to the Ketchikan Post includes trucks, SUVs and a medium-class patrol vessel.

## K.F.D.'S FIRE-READINESS RATING IS A BOON FOR BUSINESSES AND HOMEOWNERS

**The shield worn** by personnel and apparatus in the Ketchikan Fire Department confers more than just a sense of security for residents. KFD has an overall fire-readiness rating that saves money on insurance policies.

KFD is based in a modern station house that was dedicated in the heart of the city in 2012. A fire station in the West End complements the downtown facility. The department's Class 2/2Y designation by the Insurance Services Office benefits business and industry in holding down insurance costs and also spins off savings for homeowners. KFD reported that fewer than two fire departments in a hundred nationwide have earned the Class 2 rating.

KFD has 20 career staff, including nine paramedics. KFD recruits and trains about 15 volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical technicians to supplement the career staff. KFD personnel respond to more than 2,100 calls for service per year.

The department is committed to readiness. Training in fire, EMS and hazardous materials is scheduled daily for shift personnel. Volunteers and career staff gather for drills every Wednesday night and one Saturday each month. The department supports personnel not only as trainees, but also as trainers. More than 16 members of KFD are certified to teach a broad range of skills: CPR; firefighter 1 & 2; basic and advanced EMT classes; and hazardous-materials response.

**KFD's reach extends** to outlying areas of the community. Mutual aid agreements are in place with North Tongass Volunteer Fire Department, South Tongass Volunteer Fire Department and the Ketchikan International Airport Fire Department.

KFD rolled out a new tower truck in 2021. The fleet also boasts three fire engines, two water tenders and three ambulances. KFD has provided advanced life support services to the community since the 1980s.

KFD conducts community outreach through the civic Christmas tree lighting and “Home for the Holidays” program. Career firefighters participate in public education, school tours and smoke detector installation programs.





Volunteers drilled for readiness, as in this 1950s firehose exercise on the wood dock.

## VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS WERE INDISPENSABLE IN A WOOD TOWN

**EARLY-DAYS KETCHIKAN** WAS made of fuel. The volunteer fire department was one of the first civic organizations in a town constructed of combustible wood buildings, wood pilings, plank streets and boardwalks. Into this tinderland, introduce wood and coal stoves, oil lamps and a sawmill tepee burner downtown. You'd want crackerjack firefighters—and Ketchikan had them.

Ketchikan Fire Department volunteers in 1900 boasted the most basic of equipment: all a member needed was a bucket for the bucket brigade. Capabilities increased soon after with the purchase of hose carts. About 1904, a fire hall was put up on Main Street—with a 50-foot tower where hoses of that length could be dried after use. As the city expanded, KFD strung wire for a primitive fire-alarm system that rang at the station. Devoted

volunteers ran from every point of the compass to fight their nemesis.

By the 1920s, KFD was buying modern rolling stock. One of the engines from that time is displayed in a windowed annex at the new station downtown; "Grandma" was a longtime staple in the Fourth of July parade.



**A CONCRETE FIRE STATION** was built on Main Street in the 1940s and was in use until 2012. (It's now used by a new distillery—from fire station to fire water, you might say.) Conflagrations of many kinds challenged local volunteers from the 1950s on. Among these: a series of arsons downtown (see sidebar to the right); the blaze that took out New England Fish Co. (where the Berth 2 parking lot is now); a fire at an oil distributor; and innumerable house fires and commercial blazes. But volunteers' commitment and systematic training proved adequate: even as late as the 1960s, fewer than a handful of paid professionals were on KFD's personnel roster.

The balance tipped over to paid staff through the 1970s. The city built Station No. 2 in the West End in the middle of that decade and, until the new downtown station opened, parked Grandma behind a phalanx of contemporary fire engines.

In the present day, KFD remains a home for volunteers: more than a dozen of them augment the full-time staff.

## FIRE LIEUTENANT'S ARSONS RE-MADE DOWNTOWN DURING 1950s SPREE

**BETWEEN 1956 AND 1961**, fires destroyed much of downtown Ketchikan: a hotel, a movie theater, restaurants, stores and apartments. In a single fire in 1958, an entire block on the water side of Front Street fell to the flames and was never rebuilt.

Arson was to blame in many of the blazes and early suspicion settled on Bill Mitchell. Aside from some circumstantial details, he seemed an unlikely suspect. Mitchell was a solid citizen: a lieutenant in the volunteer fire department, a married man, manager of his parents' Ben Franklin store and president of the Jaycees. But all the same ... fellow firefighters wondered why Mitchell was so often the first man to arrive at fire scenes. Local and state authorities set up polygraphs for fire department personnel. But using one pretext or another, Mitchell avoided his appointments with the lie detector. The D.A. got an indictment of Mitchell anyway, based on physical evidence found at fire scenes and circumstantial features of Mitchell's whereabouts during and after fires.

**MITCHELL LIT OUT**, so to speak. He went to California in the spring of 1961 to stay with family. Firefighter colleagues noted that Ketchikan was fire-free during his absence.

Then all heck broke loose during Fourth of July

celebrations in 1961. Fires struck three downtown buildings within 90 minutes. Afterward, a local pilot reported having flown a man dressed in drag to the airport on Annette Island, where flights departed for Seattle; the pilot had seen a wanted poster for a *forger* who disguised himself in women's clothing. FBI agents met the cross-dresser in Seattle, but he wasn't their man: he was Bill Mitchell of Ketchikan—and he was released.

**BACK HOME**, FIRE INVESTIGATORS discovered that candles in Ben Franklin-style glass holders, ringed by rag and paper, had been used to ignite the Fourth of July fires. Then they learned from the FBI that Bill Mitchell had been in Ketchikan on that disastrous day. Mitchell was hauled back. He confessed to arson fires and served a prison term.

Fortunately, no one was hurt in the firebug's six-year spree, which recast the face of downtown.



HKI ILLUSTRATION

Volunteer fire Lt. Bill Mitchell was photographed by authorities in his getaway get-up after his arrest in connection with a string of arsons.

# CEMETERY SITES REFLECT THE TRIUMPH OF LAST RESPECTS OVER TERRAIN AND FOREST

**Resting place?** The departed of Ketchikan have been rattled by occasional blasting during the century—plus that Bayview Cemetery has been the community’s burial ground.

“Ground” might be an exaggeration. On a hillside south of town, the site, pre-development, was typical of rain forest: tall conifers rooted in organic debris, a thin layer of topsoil, rock underlying all. The City of Ketchikan expanded Bayview by blasting rock, hauling it out and replacing

it with soil from other sites. At latest count, more than 5,000 people are interred at Bayview.

Most white settlers who met their ends in early-days Ketchikan

were sent south on steamships to next of kin. Many Alaska Natives ceremoniously consigned their dead to forested plots on Pennock Island. South

*A formal cemetery was established on north Pennock Island. Histories describe lavish funerals—the coffin and mourners in one boat and a brass band in another, in procession across Tongass Narrows.*

GREGG POPPEN



Scenic Bayview Cemetery above the sea holds thousands in respectful repose.

W.H. CASE / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



The son of a Tlingit chief was laid to rest in grand fashion in an Alaska Native cemetery on Pennock Island.

Pennock was much-used: carved totem poles, stone markers and even wooden mausoleums commemorated the dead.

**When the First City’s** population burgeoned in the first decade of the 20th century, a formal cemetery was established on north Pennock Island. Histories describe lavish funerals—the coffin and mourners in one boat and a brass band in another, leading a funerary flotilla across Tongass Narrows.

The first recorded interment on north Pennock was in 1908. City records cite drowning as a leading cause of death in the olden days. Also noted are victims of timbering and sawmill accidents; knifings; and disease—mortal ends described somewhat vaguely, but often with alcohol penciled into records as a factor.

After New England Fish Co. built a cold storage south of town in 1908, a boardwalk and then a rough road reached far enough to permit development of a cemetery more conveniently situated on Revilla Island. The first burial in Bayview was conducted in December 1911.

**Grave markers bear** interesting epitaphs; some feature Alaska Native designs. Notable citizens are at rest, from the first mayor, Mike Martin, to residents whose names are on local streets and buildings. Shrubs and flowers are vivid from spring to late fall. The site overlooks a historic cannery building and boat traffic on the narrows. Visitors are urged to keep to the paths through the green expanse: the soil can be unstable.



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# TRANSIT

## BUS SYSTEM'S TECH ROLLOUTS WILL SOON INCLUDE E-BUSES

**KETCHIKAN'S PUBLIC BUS SYSTEM** spans 35 miles, but it fits in the palm of the hand with mobile technology. And soon in-city buses will also plug into the latest motor tech.

Ketchikan Gateway Borough Transit Department runs convenient in-town routes and reaches nearly the length of Tongass Highway, north and south. A web site and app provide riders with services from ticketing to bus-tracking.

Electric buses will join the fleet in late 2024, powered by a \$4.3 million federal grant. The grant funds three buses; the link to KPU power; charging infrastructure; and training. Transit's in-town "Green Line" will match the moniker when buses charge up with renewable hydro electricity.

The nearly \$3 million borough bus system provides convenient rides in the city and to outlying areas. Buses ease congestion during the cruise ship season. Ridership nearly quadrupled 2006 to 2016 and stabilized at about 450,000. Fares, federal support, the commercial passenger vessel levy and municipal funds support the agency.

**THE FARE** for a single ride is \$2. Day passes are \$5 at the mobile-ticketing app. Monthly and annual passes reduce costs per ride. The system provides a free downtown loop shuttle in summer.

While offering free rides, discount passes and Silver Line service to rural areas, the transit operation has a moderate impact on local taxpayers. A state study found that the service spun out \$10.7 million in benefits while costing \$2.7 million.

All fixed-route buses are ADA accessible. Information about the complimentary paratransit service is at [www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/494/Paratransit-and-Senior-Services](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/494/Paratransit-and-Senior-Services).



*A square? No, a steering wheel for the bus system.*



CREGG POPPEN

*City Park on Ketchikan Creek is a place for play, contemplation and picnics. It's in the portfolio of Borough Public Works.*

# PUBLIC WORKS

**TAKING CARE OF PLACES** where we play is the most visible responsibility of the borough's Public Works Department, but the agency's services extend into areas from beautifying the cityscape to purifying drinking water.

The Public Works Department maintains and operates all of the community's parks and fields. The fields range from seven sand-surfaced youth baseball fields in town to a pair of grass-surfaced softball fields for adults 15 miles north. An artificial-turfed soccer and football field ringed by a competition running track at Esther Shea Fawn Mountain Field—replete with a new covered grandstand, changing rooms and restrooms—is also in the department's purview.

Residents and visitors enjoy seaside parks at Rotary Beach south of town and South Point Higgins Beach on the north end; public works will develop a new outhouse at the latter. The large urban City Park boasts water and light features upgraded by public works: the department recently restored jets and lights at the park's decades-old fountain. In the upper West End, public works oversees Alder Park, a small urban park with play areas and a covered gathering space. Five tot lots are also under the agency's aegis.

**SPRING AND SUMMER BLOOM** with gardens and hanging baskets developed by public works staff beside the tunnel and at Eagle Park and Whale Park in the heart of the city. The paved, in-town Schoenbar Trail and the challenging Rainbird Trail in forest above the city are community assets maintained by public works; repairs to the north stretch of Rainbird will be finished in 2023. KGB Public Works owns and maintains the skate park between Schoenbar Road and Ketchikan Creek; bidding is under way for a long-sought roof.

The Public Works Department operates the South Tongass water treatment system that supplies safe water to hundreds of homes. Wastewater in the Mountain Point, Saxman and Forest Park areas is collected and cleansed at the Mountain Point Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Public Works oversees maintenance in several road service areas and provides general maintenance throughout the borough's facilities, such as the borough's HQ, the White Cliff Building. The staff oversees engineering for the borough.

Recent activities include construction of the Music Moves Park and uplands improvements at Rotary Beach in cooperation with First City Rotary and Rotary 2000. Public Works conducted extensive tree removal and trimming in City Park.

# CITY OF SAXMAN



CITY OF SAXMAN

Cape Fox Dancers perform in the clan house. A photo shows Saxman in its early years.



CITY OF SAXMAN

## THE COMMUNITY EMBODIES MUNICIPAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES

**R**ich history and deep cultural heritage are easy to see on a walk through Saxman.

Totem Row, leading up from the shore, is flanked by totem poles representing those brought from village sites nearly a century ago. Up the hill is a clan house providing an essential civic and cultural asset for Saxman.

In the 1930s, totem poles and ceremonial artifacts were brought from village sites at Cape Fox and on Tongass, Cat and Pennock islands in programs managed by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Many totem poles were restored and raised. The totem park welcomes more than 100,000 visitors each year. Beaver Clan House—built in traditional style all in cedar—hosts cultural presentations and is also much-used by the greater community for concerts and other gatherings. Edwin DeWitt Carving Center nearby is a work space for Tlingit artists; visitors interact here with carvers and learn about Alaska Native culture.

**The City of Saxman** has 431 residents. The Organized Village of Saxman is a federally recognized tribe. Almost 70 percent of Saxman residents claim Alaska Native ancestry. Many of them still lead a

subsistence lifestyle. Deer, salmon, halibut and other wild foods provide a significant part of their diets and figure in cultural events.

**The city recently** completed a 20-year master plan that envisions a new harbor for small cruise ships and large yachts. This development will enhance cultural tourism in the greater Ketchikan community.



CITY OF SAXMAN

*The New Deal was a new lease on life for Northwest Coast carving. Henry Denny Sr. was filmed as he recounted the CCC restoration of the Giant Oyster totem pole, standing today at the foot of Totem Row.*

Saxman Community Center incorporates a gym, meeting space, a theater, a kitchen and some city offices.

The city operates water distribution and sewer collection systems. Public works staff take care of Saxman's roads. Firefighting is handled through a contract with a rural fire department.

## VILLAGERS SETTLED ON A HOPEFUL SHORE

Saxman was founded in 1894 when residents of the Tlingit villages of Tongass and Cape Fox left ancestral homes to create a new village around a government school and a church. The village on a gentle seaside slope was named for Samuel Saxman, a Presbyterian teacher who had been lost at sea while searching for a new village site with a Fort Tongass villager and Louis Paul, the teacher in Fort Tongass. (Louis Paul was the father of William Paul, the first Alaska Native admitted to the bar and first to be elected to the Territory of Alaska House of Representatives. He was also an Alaska Native rights activist.)

The school building was erected at once in the new village and still stands today, used as the Saxman City Hall; it is the oldest building in active use in all of Saxman and Ketchikan.

Fishing and timber were the economic mainstays of the new village and by 1900 there were 142 residents of the community. Saxman was incorporated as a second-class city in 1929; it was the first Alaska Native village community in Alaska to incorporate under territorial law.

# CHRONOLOGY OF THE GREAT LAND

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
MAP OF THE TERRITORY OF ALASKA

▲ ARMY BARRACK STATION  
▼ NAVY BARRACK STATION  
■ COMMERCIAL BARRACK STATION  
+ TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
— TELEGRAPH LINE  
— RAILROAD  
● POST OFFICE IN THIS STYLE TYPE MARKED

This map shows all positions north of latitude 49° and west of longitude 127° that were established on December 1, 1867.  
Portions of these are approximately 1000.



A hand-drawn map from the 1700s.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD OF HUMAN HABITATION IN ALASKA GOES BACK MORE THAN 10,000 YEARS. THE WRITTEN RECORD—TOLD IN RUSSIAN, SPANISH AND ENGLISH—IS CONSIDERABLY BRIEFER, AT LESS THAN THREE CENTURIES. HERE ARE SOME PROMINENT POINTS ON THE TIMELINE, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON KETCHIKAN AND NEARBY LOCALES.

**±11,000 years ago** People of the Beringian culture in far Eastern Asia migrate to North America across the Bering Land Bridge and settle across the North American and South American continents over a span of thousands of years.

**1725** Tsar Peter the Great of Russia sends Vitus Bering to explore the North Pacific.

**1728** Bering sails the strait between North America and Asia that bears his name.

**1733** Bering's second expedition; with him is George Wilhelm Steller, first naturalist to visit Alaska.

**1774** Spaniard Juan Perez discovers Prince of Wales Island and Dixon Entrance—the strait linking our area to the open Pacific Ocean.

**1776** English Capt. James Cook leads a search for the Northwest Passage.

**1778** Cook reaches King Island, Norton Sound, Unalaska.

**1784** Grigorii Shelikhov establishes the first permanent non-Native settlement: Three Saints Bay on Kodiak Island.

**1791** George Vancouver leaves England to explore Alaska's coast. Alejandro Malaspinga explores the Pacific Northwest for Spain.

**1793** Vancouver's crew makes land near Ketchikan.

**1795** Alaska's first Russian Orthodox Church is established at Kodiak.

**1799** Alexander Baranov establishes a Russian post known today as Old Sitka.

**1802** Tlingit Indians drive Russians from Old Sitka.

**1804** Baranov re-establishes a Russian settlement at site of present-day Sitka.

**1848** Cathedral of St. Michael dedicated at New Archangel (Sitka).

**1853** Russian explorer-trappers find oil seeps in Cook Inlet.

**1861** Gold discovered on the Stikine River near Telegraph Creek in British Columbia.

**1867** U.S. purchases Alaska from Russia for \$7 million in a bargain engineered by U.S. Secretary of State William H. Seward. Some derided the purchase as "Seward's Folly."

**1868** Alaska designated as the Department of Alaska under authority of U.S. Army.

**1869** Alaska's first newspaper, the Sitka Times, debuts.

**1872** Gold is discovered near Sitka.

**1876** Gold is discovered south of Juneau.

**1877** U.S. troops withdraw from Alaska.

**1878** First canneries are established in Klawock and Sitka.

**1880** Richard Harris and Joseph Juneau discover gold on Gastineau Channel and establish the community of Juneau.

**1882** U.S. Navy bombs and burns the Tlingit village of Angoon.

**1884** Congress passes the Organic Act allowing for local governments and allocating funds to educate Alaska Native children.

**1887** Presbyterian Father William Duncan and his Tsimshian followers from B.C. establish Metlakatla on Annette Island.

**1890** Large corporate salmon canneries appear.

**1891** Oil claims staked in Cook Inlet.

**1897-1900** Klondike gold rush.

**1898** Nome gold rush. Congress funds telegraph cable from Seattle to Sitka.

**1900** City of Ketchikan is incorporated. Alaska capital moves to Juneau. White Pass railroad completed.

**1902** President Teddy Roosevelt establishes Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve in southern Southeast Alaska.

**1904** Undersea telegraph cables laid from Seattle to Sitka and from Sitka to Valdez.

**1906** Alaska sends a non-voting delegate to Congress. Governor's office moved from Sitka to Juneau.

**1907** Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve and other U.S. lands are consolidated as Tongass National Forest by President Teddy Roosevelt.

**1908** Alaska's first cold storage plant is built in Ketchikan.

**1911** International agreement by U.S., Great Britain, Canada, Russia and Japan controls fur, seal, and fish harvests; sea otters completely protected. >



Rough-hewn Ketchikan in 1895, five years before the city's incorporation.



A bronze statue of William H. Seward at the state capitol. It was created by Ketchikan sculptor David Rubin with Judy Rubin.

1912 Alaska gains territorial status. Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) organizes in Southeast to advocate for Alaska Native civil rights, legal rights and land allotments.

1913 First Territorial Legislature.

1915 Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANS) has first convention.

1916 First bill for Alaska statehood introduced in Congress. Alaskans vote to ban liquor by 2 to 1 margin, three years before Prohibition.

1922 Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines opens in Fairbanks. Native voting rights decreed in U.S. court.

1923 President Warren G. Harding comes to Alaska to drive the last spike in the Alaska Railroad. Ketchikan names Warren, G and Harding streets in Newtown.

1924 Congress extends citizenship to all Indians in the U.S. Tlingit leader William Paul Sr. is first Native elected to Alaska Legislature. Airmail delivery to Alaska begins. Undersea telegraph cable laid from Seattle to Ketchikan (868 nautical miles); undersea telegraph cable laid from Ketchikan to Seward (738 nautical miles).

1928 Court case resolves right of Alaska Native children to attend public school.

1932 Radio-telephone communications open in Ketchikan, Juneau and Nome.

1935 Jurisdictional Act allows Tlingit and Haida Alaska Natives to pursue land claims in U.S. Court of Claims.

1942 Japan bombs Dutch Harbor and invades the Aleutians. U.S. and Canada build the 1,680-mile ALCAN Highway in about six months.

1945 Territorial Gov. Ernest Gruening signs the Anti-Discrimination Act, the first such legislation passed in the U.S. or any of its possessions.

1946 Boarding school for Alaska Native students opens at Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka.

1947 Alaska Native land claims suit filed by Tlingit and Haida people in U.S. Court.

1948 Alaskans vote by 10 to 1 margin to abolish fish traps. Alaska (ALCAN) Highway opens to the public.

1953 The first big Alaskan pulp mill opens at Ward Cove north of Ketchikan. Oil well near Eureka on Glenn Highway opens Alaska's modern oil history. First Alaska television broadcast, KENI-Anchorage.

1955 Alaska Constitutional Convention opens.

1956 Territorial voters adopt the Constitution. Territorial legislators are sent to D.C. to push for statehood.

1958 Statehood measure passes. President Eisenhower signs statehood bill.

1959 Statehood proclaimed for Alaska. Sitka pulp mill opens. U.S. Court of Claims issues judgment favoring Tlingit and Haida claims to Southeast Alaska lands.

1963 Ketchikan Gateway Borough incorporated.

1964 Good Friday earthquake devastates Anchorage and Prince William Sound—at magnitude 9.2, the most severe earthquake ever in the U.S.



ANS and ANB meet together in Haines.



President Harding visits Ketchikan in 1923.



Territorial Alaskans vote in 1948 to abolish fish traps, but the traps persist in depleting salmon runs until statehood.

1968 Oil discovered at Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope. Ted Stevens appointed to a vacant U.S. Senate seat; he was elected to the seat seven times and became the GOP's longest-serving U.S. senator.

1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is signed into law by President Richard Nixon: Alaska Natives bargained for 44 million acres of land and \$963 million; village and regional corporations are created.

1973 Ketchikan International Airport opens on Gravina Island. Congress passes Trans-Alaska Pipeline Act. Limited-entry for commercial salmon fishing becomes law.

1976 Alaskans OK a constitutional amendment creating Alaska Permanent Fund.

1977 Trans-Alaska Pipeline completed: 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez.

1980 Congress passes Alaska National Interests Lands Conservation Act. Legislature increases Permanent Fund share of oil revenues from 25 to 50 percent, establishes dividend fund to disburse earnings. Legislature repeals state income tax.

1982 First Permanent Fund dividends distributed after lawsuits are settled.

1983 All of Alaska except the westernmost Aleutian Islands is consolidated in Alaska time zone; previously, Alaska spanned four time zones.

1986 Price of oil drops below \$10 per barrel, state revenues plummet.

1989 Exxon Valdez oil tanker runs aground and spills 11 million gallons of oil in Prince William Sound. Permanent Fund reaches \$10 billion value. Alaska Supreme Court throws out Alaska's rural preference subsistence law.

1990 Tongass Timber Reform Act in Congress sets aside more Southeast Alaska forest in wilderness.

1991 Congress closes Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil development.

1993 Sitka pulp mill announces indefinite suspension, idling hundreds.

1994 Voters defeat a proposal to move the state capital to Southcentral.

1996 Congress lifts the ban on export of Alaskan crude oil.



ANCSA tops newspaper front pages from Fairbanks to New York City.



The WW II-era airport on Annette Island is left behind as Ketchikan International Airport opens in 1973. This photo depicts the Annette airport in its heyday, when Grumman Goose amphibians operated by Ellis Air Lines shuttled Ketchikan passengers to meet PanAm flights.



Ketchikan Pulp Co.—full steam ahead in 1960.

## THE RAINBIRD

### A HOLLYWOOD TECHNICIAN HATCHED THE UR-BIRD

**MYTHICAL BUT NEARLY** ubiquitous, the rainbird stoically endures Ketchikan's prodigious rains. This somber avatar for our own resignation is seen in myriad forms: logos, shoulder patches, pins, ads, business names.

As with many popular icons, Hollywood had a role in its birth. Paramount Pictures was in town in 1937 to film location scenes for *Spawn of the North*, a drama set here. Persistent rain kept the crew from filming, so one stranded man whittled. His block of wood yielded the first Rain Bird: back bent against the storm, head drooping, eyes beseeching an end to the downpour. When the Ketchikan shoot wrapped, the movie man gave his 15-inch carving and a matching hatchling to a curio store with a placard: "Ketchikan Rain Bird, Trapped for Hall's Trading Post during the last downpour by Mitch Crowley of Paramount Pictures."

**A YEAR LATER**, an employee of the U.S. Lighthouse Service built a 5-foot likeness from driftwood, plywood, doorknobs and pipe. It stood in yards for decades, until it disintegrated—in the rain.

**MORE RAINBIRDS** hatched. Artist Bill Gabler inked versions with umbrellas, raincoats, even rainboots. Someone ordered lapel pins. The bird showed up in newspaper ads, patches for USCG, firefighters and others. Local public radio took the bird's name for its corporation. A tour business used the name and image. The yacht club adopted the motif. Like our precipitation, the rainbird is inescapable.



*The originals, carved by a movie technician; design by Tsimshian artist Ken Decker on a drum; Bill Gabler's inked update; a U.S. Coast Guard patch; the Ketchikan Yacht Club pennant. FROM TOP*

1997 Ketchikan Pulp Co. shuts down, throwing hundreds out of work and ending 45 years of large-scale timber harvest and processing in Southeast. Canadian fishermen in Prince Rupert, B.C., blockade an Alaska ferry for 19 weeks to protest Alaska salmon-fishing practices.

1999 Proposed spending of Permanent Fund earnings on state government is rejected by 83 percent of voters.

2002 Alaskan voters reject, by 67 percent to 33 percent, a proposal to fund moving the legislature to Southcentral.

2005 U.S. transportation bill has a \$223 million earmark to help fund a bridge from Revilla Island to Gravina Island—a hard link sought since 1973, but derided nationally by some as the "Bridge to Nowhere."

2006 GOP gubernatorial candidate Sarah Palin visits Ketchikan and supports the bridge: "We're going to make a good team as we progress that bridge." Palin is elected governor in November.

2007 Gov. Sarah Palin cancels funding for the proposed bridge, diverts much of the earmark money to other Alaskan projects, orders study of improved ferry service to Ketchikan's airport.

2008 Republican presidential nominee Sen. John McCain picks Gov. Sarah Palin as his vice presidential running mate in August. In her first speech thereafter, Palin tells the crowd, "I told Congress, thanks but no thanks on that bridge to nowhere." The GOP candidates lose the November election to Barack Obama and Joe Biden.

2009 Alaska's population is 698,473—47th among the states and greater than populations in North Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming.

2009 Gov. Palin resigns office on July 29 and Lt. Gov. Sean Parnell takes the office.

2010 Former U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens dies in an airplane crash near Dillingham.

2014 Gov. Parnell signs a contract with Vigor Alaska for \$102 million to construct two Alaska Class state ferries—the first state ferries to be built in Alaska.

2014 Independent candidate Bill Walker defeats incumbent Republican Sean Parnell in the gubernatorial election after forming a "unity ticket" with Democratic nominee Byron Mallott, who is elected as lieutenant governor. Voters approve a citizen initiative legalizing the controlled use and sale of marijuana.

2015 U.S. Coast Guard designates Ketchikan as a Coast Guard City. The honor recognizes American communities that show "unusual and extraordinary support to their local Coast Guard units." Four Alaskan communities are among the 29 in the nation thus honored.

2017 Ketchikan's first licensed marijuana stores and cultivation facilities open for business under permits from the state Alcohol & Marijuana Control Office and local government. U.S. Coast Guard stations Alaska's first two fast response cutters here.

2019 Total passenger capacity of cruise vessels calling at the Port of Ketchikan hits a record at nearly 1.2 million.

2020 The COVID-19 pandemic obliterates the scheduled arrival of dozens of cruise ships in Ketchikan as the global industry shuts down. Alaskan voters approve an initiative to establish nonpartisan pick-one primary elections and ranked-choice general elections.

2021 A corporation involving private owners of former Ketchikan Pulp Co. property, an Interior Alaska tour business and Norwegian Cruise Lines finishes development of a deepwater dock and works on associated shoreside facilities at Ward Cove. Alaska's Congressional delegation presses successfully for the Alaska Tourism Restoration Act suspending for one year the necessity for foreign-flagged cruise vessels to call at a Canadian port between Alaskan port calls; Canada's pandemic cutoff of cruise-ship calls threatened resumption of Alaska cruising. Port of Ketchikan and Mill at Ward Cove welcome several ships in late stages of summer.

2022 Rep. Don Young dies after 49 years as Alaska's sole member of the U.S. House of Representatives. To fill the remainder of his term, Alaskans conduct the first pick-one primary and ranked-choice general election; Mary Peltola, a Democrat, becomes the first Alaska Native elected to Congress. For a full two-year term, Peltola and GOP candidates Sarah Palin and Nick Begich go on from the nonpartisan primary to the general election. The Coast Guard Reauthorization Act permits the agency wider latitude in choosing shipyards (such as Vigor Alaska in Ketchikan) for repair of vessels; the legislation incidentally helps the navy clear a backlog of vessel repairs.

# ACTIVITIES AND ATTRACTIONS



CARL THOMPSON

■ Take a *walking tour* of downtown or the West End to breathe in our town's past. Maps are at Ketchikan Visitors Bureau information centers, at the Ketchikan Daily News and at other businesses. The walking tour is sponsored by Historic Ketchikan Inc.

■ Visit the *Southeast Alaska Discovery Center* on Main Street for interpretive displays on natural history, industries and cultures of this region. This federal facility is one of Alaska's premier attractions. Videos featuring local subjects are shown in the center's theater.

■ *Totem Bight State Historical Park* 10 miles north of town has great totem poles, a long house and an extraordinary oceanside setting.

■ Visit *Misty Fjords National Monument* by excursion boat or floatplane. Local outfitters conduct extended boat-based visits featuring kayak outings. Glacially carved granite landscapes and deep fjords are magnificent from all angles.

■ *Historic Creek Street* has been home to a shingle mill, totem poles, homes and brothels. It's now lined with shops, galleries and museums above the watercourse. *Dolly's House Museum* displays historical artifacts of the red-light days at the house where Dolly Arthur ran a brothel.

■ Our tall conifers have inspired *zipline adventures* at Southeast Exposure north of town and Alaska Canopy Adventures south of town. Descend through the tree canopy from thrilling heights.

■ *Totem Heritage Center* between Deermount Street and Ketchikan Creek presents Native culture and historically significant totems in an interpretive setting.

■ *Saxman village* south of Ketchikan offers a world-class collection of totem poles and a cedar clan house.

■ If you're here on the *Fourth of July*, you're in for a unique visual and sonic experience. Catch the parade at mid-day. Ketchikan's celebration of Independence Day closes with a

CHARLES HABERBUSH



BETWEEN TALL FORESTED MOUNTAINSIDES AND A TEEMING, COLD, CLEAN SEA— THIS IS A UNIQUELY RICH ENVIRONMENT FOR INDULGING YOURSELF IN AMUSEMENT AND ENRICHMENT, FROM SENSORY EXPERIENCE TO ENCOUNTERS WITH THE LONG HUMAN PRESENCE.



KVB

dazzling fireworks display. Volunteers on a barge floating between Pennock and Revilla islands launch colorful and loud fusillades—pyrotechnics reflecting off of Tongass Narrows, explosions echoing off of mountains and the city. Spectators line the waterfront while numbers of boaters take positions beneath the prolonged display.

■ Hike the *Perseverance Lake* or *Talbot Lake* trails to see rain forest from USFS paths of open ground and boardwalk; they're fairly easy for fit hikers. *Ward Creek Trail* is a comfortable walk along a scenic stream. *Deer Mountain Trail* is a 2,500-foot challenge with superb vistas. *Rainbird Trail* above Third Avenue Bypass has in-town access and views of the narrows. Trail maps are at the Discovery Center and online.



■ *Go fishing* with a local guide; saltwater trips can be on powerboats or open kayaks. Half-day charters are available. One features a cook-your-catch shore excursion. One-day trips take off from our docks; multi-day stays in remote lodges provide all-inclusive adventure. Check online.

■ *Thomas Basin* harbor is home to working and pleasure boats. Walk down from the historic Union Machine Shop and Potlatch Bar to stroll the floats, or amble out the breakwater for a view of town and mountains.

■ The first weekend of August, *Blueberry Arts Festival* offers arts and food; music; fun contests in beard-tending, slug-racing and pie-eating; dance concerts; and a poetry slam. It's run by the Arts & Humanities Council.

■ *Bar Harbor* in the West End is our largest harbor; find an astounding array of vessels: commercial fishing boats; motor and sailing pleasure craft; tugboats and tenders; luxurious motor yachts; liveaboards; and even fast law-enforcement boats. Two ramps offer pedestrian access to the floats.

■ Take a *kayak tour* for a close, quiet and exciting encounter with Alaska. Tours range from near-town excursions to several-night wilderness visits in Misty Fjords National Monument. Southeast Sea Kayaks, Southeast Exposure, Ketchikan Kayak Co. and Alaska Kayak Co. offer a range of small-group tours.

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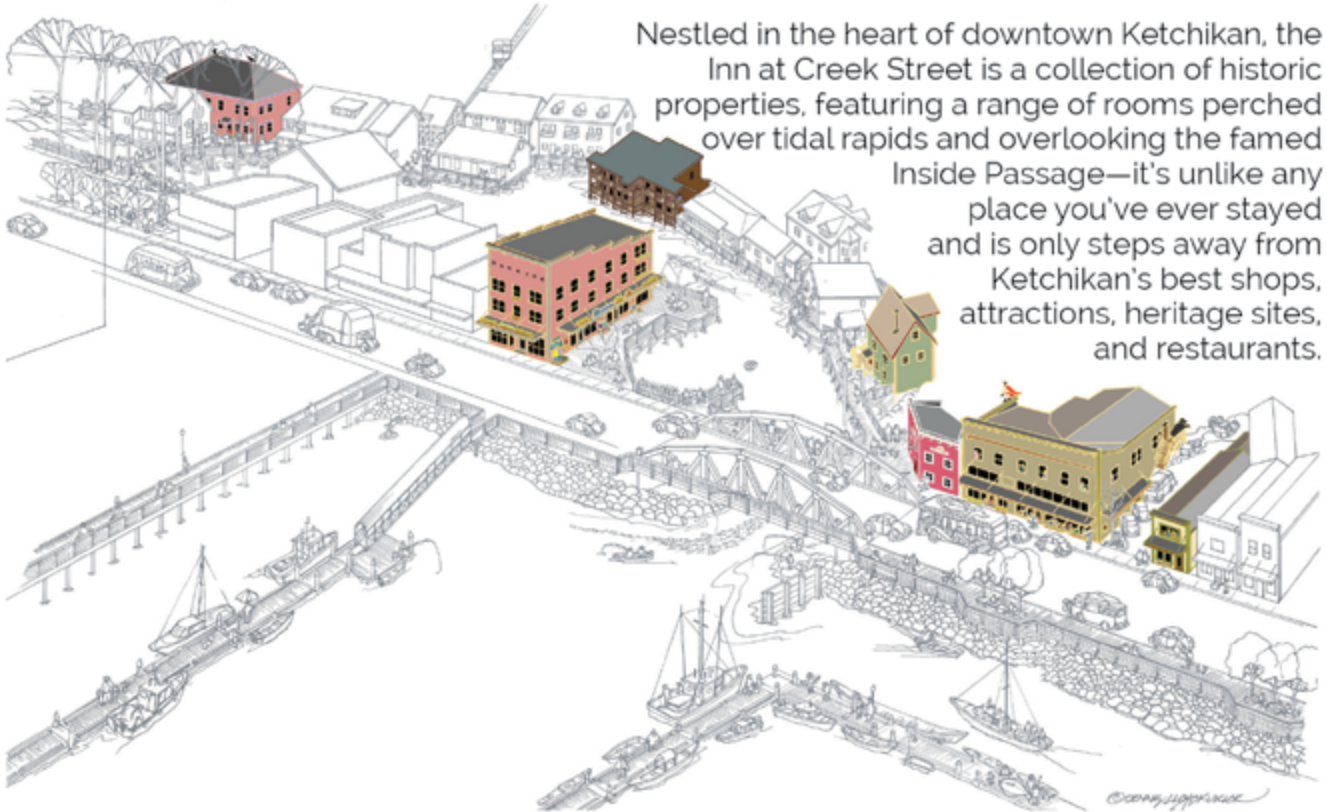
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# KETCHIKAN ICONS

## THE WELCOME ARCH



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



The Welcome Arch of the 1930s featured Ketchikan's prowess in packing salmon—a simulated salmon can in the capstone position. By the '40s, sportfishing was the brand idea and a neon design featured a salmon and a fisherman. The 1951 layout is adopted in today's sign, a signature city monument. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

### THE PORTAL ON MISSION STREET MARKS KETCHIKAN'S EVOLVING SELF-CONCEPT

IT MAY BE KETCHIKAN'S most focal landmark—very literally, considering the thousands of visitors who photograph it. The Welcome Arch goes back to the 1930s, when Americans (Lower 48, that is) were car-happy and towns were welcome-arch-happy. Our highway is the sea, so our arch faced the steamship dock. Arches have been friendly foreground for our mountains for more than 90 years. They've also indicated our

choices in "branding." The first arch over Mission Street was of wood and boasted that we were "the Canned Salmon Capital of the World."

AFTER WORLD WAR II, a new arch dubbed Ketchikan "Salmon Capital of the World," with a salmon and fisher counterpoised in neon-lighted battle. The 1951 design claimed All-America City status and had neon animation. That arch stood for almost 20 years and was replaced by a wood design

with a totemic motif; a wayward truck took out that arch in the '90s. Historic Ketchikan Inc. led a drive to replicate the 1951 arch; the version installed in 1996 had funding from the city and the Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailers Association. The city repaired and restored this First City icon in 2016 after an encounter with a drunk driver whose car collided with a support pole and dangerously canted the entire structure.

## THE tunnel DYNAMITE AND DETERMINATION DEFEATED A ROCK

Until 1954, downtown and Newtown were linked by a narrow, wooden, two-way viaduct on pilings that skirted Nob Hill.

The tunnel dedicated that year provided easy northbound access to Newtown and the fast-growing West End. The southbound viaduct beside the rock was upgraded and paved in a massive civic project.

Planning and funding launched when the startup of pulp mill operations at Ward Cove was imminent. Everyone knew that population and traffic would increase markedly and Model Ts weren't the biggest rigs on the street anymore. Ketchikan needed to



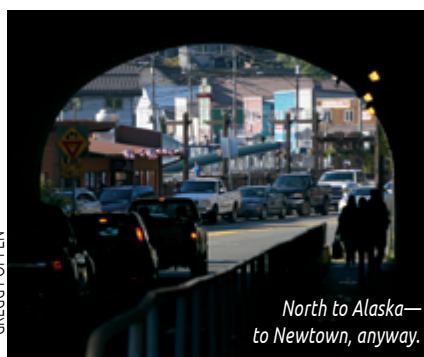
The narrow wooden walkway linking downtown to so-called New Town in 1907 is at right in this photo.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

circumvent or pierce the stone divide—or do both—before the coming surge.

Before 1900, settlers rowed between the city core and the few homes to the north. A narrow wooden walkway on timbers was put up as "New Town" developed. A plank street on pilings was built in 1916 and was improved over the years. It sufficed for decades, but barely.

In 1952, the options were to upgrade the two-lane viaduct over the water, to blast down the rock or to tunnel through. Tunneling was chosen. Nob Hill residents were relocated for months during blasting. Shot rock provided fill for other local projects. Ketchikan's 273-foot tunnel was finished in 1954 and capped with concrete ends.



GREGG POPPEN

North to Alaska—to Newtown, anyway.

### TUNNEL UNIQUE

Ketchikan boasts that our tunnel is the only one in the world that can be driven through ... driven around (on the southbound viaduct) ... and driven over (Upper Front Street, on Nob Hill). An item, in 1967, in that respected guarantor of truth, *Ripley's Believe It or Not*, is cited as verification.

# NATIVE CULTURE



RAY TROLL

**A TALL CEDAR TREE FALLS.  
A STORY IS WRITTEN BY THE  
SHARP EDGE OF AN ADZE.**

NORTHWEST COAST NATIVES DEVELOPED A UNIQUE ART FORM IN CARVED WOOD. TOTEMIC WORKS THAT RELATED LEGENDS, HONORED ANCESTORS AND PRAISED LEADERS WERE INSCRIBED IN THIS 3-D LANGUAGE. AND BEHIND ALL OF THAT RESTS A CULTURAL SYSTEM AND SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY SUITED TO THE PLACE.

**A**rt and practicality are linked in Northwest Coast Native cultures. Creative work is integral to the way of life of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian peoples of Southeast Alaska. Intricately woven cedar bark baskets were traditionally used to hold foods and household goods. Ornamented robes expressed family backgrounds—a sort of walking genealogy. The canoes carrying Alaska Natives to trading sites and fish camps were carved and painted with mythical and family emblems. Even halibut hooks bore artistry: carved figures to beguile fish for the catch. Sometimes unremarked behind the artistry is the utilitarianism in

*THIS IS HOW WE ROLL*  
Alaska Native cultural forms turn up all over in Ketchikan. Ken Decker, an artist and gallery owner who belongs to the Tsimshian tribal group, paints formline designs on a municipal bus that advertised the community's appreciation of traditional culture. Below, Cape Fox Dancers wear traditionally styled Tlingit tribal regalia to celebrate the raising of a new totem pole in Saxman.



Chief Johnson is depicted among seven figures comprising "The Rock" on Berth 2 in the center of downtown. Master carver Nathan Jackson—among the world's most honored Northwest Coast artists—was sculptor Dave Rubin's model for the Tlingit chief. (SEE MORE ON 29.)



HALL ANDERSON

Northwest Coast Natives' decorated objects: cedar baskets woven tightly enough for parboiling food; woven hats that kept out rain or kept in air for a personal flotation device; and halibut hooks sized to select medium-aged fish, not young spawners nor stringy old fish.

For millennia, Northwest Coast peoples carefully traced family lineages within and among their villages. They maintained intricate



Early photographs of Alaska Native villages record peoples whose ways of life had been only slightly altered by contact with Westerners. In this scene, villagers of Kasaan on Prince of Wales Island meet visitors arriving in lighters off of a steamship. (This photo was in a Keystone stereograph card in 1915.) The Haidas' own dugout canoes were their primary means of transportation. Kasaan resembled many traditional villages in this region, where tall totem poles and large houses looked down on beaches and villagers cooperated in subsistence harvests from a bountiful environment. Archival photographs of Alaska Native life are prominent features in the interpretive program at Totem Heritage Center.

webs of honor, privilege and duty. In a rain forest realm equal parts bounty and challenge, they founded subsistence on salmon and cedar—and built up from there in an economy with widespread trading.

**Totem Heritage Center** on Ketchikan Creek is indispensable for learning about ancient ways and artistry. Southeast Alaska Discovery Center presents Native culture in replicas. Parnassus Bookstore has material on the culture. Potlatch Totem Park, a private business at Totem Bight, displays totem poles and replicas of village houses.

Native artists and dancers in Ketchikan take their traditions to coming generations, as well as to visitors. Almost 20 percent of Ketchikan's population has some Alaska Native lineage; cultural preservation is important to identity.

Carvers and weavers take on apprentices and students to extend the culture. Young Natives get involved through dance groups. Prime examples in this area are the Haida Descendant Dancers, Tongass

Tribe Dancers, Cape Fox Dancers and New Path Dance Group. Youths and elders work together on regalia, language and dances, fashioning cultural links while presenting the art form to non-Natives.

Subsistence harvests and traditional foods also help to keep culture alive. Many Alaska Natives are expert at old ways of taking and preserving foods from the sea and shore.

**Village corporations** and regional corporations set up in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in the 1970s boost heritage and shareholder economics. Cape Fox Corp., the village corporation for Saxman, is particularly enterprising. CFC operates a lodge, restaurants, lounges and gift stores in Saxman and Ketchikan. During summer, CFC offers tours centering on Alaska Native culture and also takes visitors to its remote lands for AWD adventures.

*Totem Bight State Historical Park is one of two major public collections of totem poles in the community. This site and Saxman present world-leading groupings of poles along with replica clan houses and valuable interpretive materials.*

SEANNA O'SULLIVAN



## TOTEM HERITAGE CENTER

**PRESERVATION OF OBJECTS** from the past was a key mission when the City of Ketchikan founded Totem Heritage Center in 1976, but the facility has become integral in moving traditional Alaska Native culture forward. The center was tasked with holding 19th-century totem poles retrieved from unoccupied Tlingit and Haida village sites. Functioning in part as a museum, the center displays these priceless cultural artifacts and recent carved poles, along with Alaska Native artifacts. The center in 2022 welcomed an addition to its collection as a local family conferred their 24-foot totem

pole to its care and display: the James and Lillian Leask Memorial totem pole was placed beside the center.

Totem Heritage Center also furthers traditional arts and crafts of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures in a nationally recognized program of Native arts classes and activities. Master carver Nathan Jackson and master weaver Delores Churchill—both recipients of National Heritage Fellowships—have taught at the center, as have many distinguished artists.

**THE CENTER'S MISSION** of preserving heritage has an educational component; artists teach Natives and



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*Native arts studies program students, such as this pair working on a bentwood box, maintain the currency of traditional arts at the center.*

non-Natives in tool-making, carving, weaving and regalia-making.

The center is open to visitors year-round off of Deermount Street beside Ketchikan Creek.

# CHRONICLES, MYTHS AND STATUS IN CEDAR

*Northwest Coast peoples possess a sophisticated suite of fine arts and crafts, but their totem poles are best-known. The art form predates Western contact, but flourished in the prosperity of the fur trade in the 1700s and 1800s. Poles were commissioned by wealthy village leaders to display their status and affluence. Some poles tell of legends, clan lineages or notable events. Some celebrate cultural beliefs and others merely demonstrate carvers' artistic talents. Poles also illustrate stories, commemorate historic persons, represent shamanic powers or incorporate ridicule—the so-called shame poles. One of the most-told and most-carved Native stories is Theft of Daylight, or Raven Steals the Sun.*

*A fine example carved by Dempsey Bob stands beside Tongass Historical Museum on Dock Street.*

## Raven Steals the Sun

**THE OLD MAN AT THE** Head of the Nass River was very rich and owned three boxes containing the stars, the moon and the sun. Raven wanted these for himself. Raven transformed himself into a hemlock needle and dropped into the water cup of the Old Man's daughter while she was picking berries. She became pregnant with him and gave birth to him as a baby boy. The Old Man doted over his grandson, but Raven cried incessantly. The Old Man gave him the Box of Stars to pacify him. Raven played with it for a while, then opened the lid and let the stars escape through the chimney into the sky.

Later, Raven cried for the Box of the Moon, and after much fuss the Old Man gave it to him, but after stopping up the chimney. Raven played with it for a while and rolled it out the door, where it escaped into the sky. Finally Raven cried for the Box of the Sun, and after much fuss the Old Man relented and gave it to him. Raven knew well that he could not roll it out the door or toss it up the chimney because he was carefully watched. So he waited until everyone was asleep and changed into his bird form, grasped the sun and flew out the chimney. He took it to show others, who did not believe that he had the sun—so he opened the box to show them and it flew up into the sky, where it has been ever since.

*The Old Man gave him the Box of Stars to pacify him. Raven played with it for a while, then opened the lid and let the stars escape through the chimney into the sky.*



CARL THOMPSON

*A walkable museum of totem poles flanks Totem Row Street in Saxman as Beaver Clan House glows in evening light. Totem Bight State Historical Park presents another rich array of traditional Northwest Coast artwork.*

## World-class totems distinguish Ketchikan and Saxman collections

**P**ublicly accessible collections of Northwest Coast totem poles in Saxman and at Totem Bight offer comprehensive displays of an art form known around the world. Carved cedar in museums and at private sites contributes to making Ketchikan the single best place in the world to explore this cultural legacy.

Saxman Totem Park has been prominent for nearly a century as a monument to totemic art—and as a training ground for generations of Alaska Native carvers. Modern poles and those from the New Deal era stand along Totem Row, which leads to Beaver Clan House. Poles in Saxman are for the most part replications of village poles dating to the 1800s and early 1900s—although some express more modern themes. Native dance performances and interpretive programs are conducted in the clan house. The newly enlarged carving shed in Saxman provides a work site for master carvers and apprentices. The totem park is open to the public; Cape Fox Corp.'s paid tours and programs take in the clan house and carving shed in addition to guiding visitors through the totem park.

**Totem Bight State Historical Park** 10 miles north of Ketchikan has an outstanding collection of poles replicating those from Native villages. A brochure and interpretive signage along the easy forest path provide information on Native culture and natural history. The trail leads to a seaside clan house like those used traditionally as village gathering places. Haida Descendant Dancers perform monthly; check community calendars. Park admission is \$5, May through September.

Both parks are on bus routes.

Chief Johnson Pole on Stedman Street and Chief Kyan Pole on Mission Street are replications. Another salient totem is in front of UAS Ketchikan campus on south Stedman Street. Ketchikan Indian Community's health center boasts poles by Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian artists.

Six modern poles in the Council of Clans stand between Cape Fox Lodge and Ted Ferry Civic Center. Privately commissioned totem pole collections can be seen on paid tours at Rainforest Sanctuary at Herring Cove and in Potlatch Park at Totem Bight.

# HERITAGE MASTERS' HEIRS BROADEN SCOPE OF THE ARTS



**SMOOTH CONVOLUTIONS** in red cedar glow on a bank wall. In a carved chimera, traditional Northwest Coast formline style swirls within two individual visions unhitched from history.

Jackson Polys and Donald Varnell designed and carved separately together for "Haa Heists'aa." The commission for Northrim links young artists with celebrated lineages and artistic careers that honor and extend those of their forebears. Their cedar collaboration (CENTER PHOTO ABOVE) is titled in what Jackson Polys called "a mashup of broken Tlingit and Haida"—Northwest Coast languages of the carvers' respective peoples. Varnell carved the left side of the piece, Jackson Polys the right.

Varnell is the grandson of Delores Churchill, a renowned artist and teacher of Haida weaving. His mother, April Varnell, is a lauded weaver and teacher in the tradition of Haida Gwaii, the Haida nation's island homeland in British Columbia. Jackson Polys is the son of Nathan Jackson, a master carver in the tradition of his Tlingit nation. Both Delores Churchill and Nathan Jackson have won accolades including National Heritage Fellowships and United States Artists Fellowships. Each of them has produced artwork now in museums and collections from Ketchikan to Europe. Each has taught many younger artists.

**VARNELL AND** Jackson Polys benefit from creative family lines. Varnell's great-grandmother, Selina Peratovich, was essential in the revival of Haida basketry in the mid-20th century. His mother's sisters, Holly Churchill and Evelyn Vanderhoop, are accomplished Haida weavers and teachers. Varnell's cousins are active in forms from weaving to dancing, from carving to Haida language. Jackson Polys had two influences at home: His mother, Dorica Jackson, is an expert in the history of traditional Chilkat robes, woven in wool, and is a noted weaver in her own right.



Jackson Polys learned the carver's art with his father from the age of 8. He carved in the Northwest Coast style but clicked with unorthodox materials and motifs. Sculptures for Ketchikan harbor pilings used unearthly colors in cast resin and alluded to Alaska Native forms. A commission with his father for the Burke Museum was part of a cycle to repatriate Tlingit village carvings taken by the Harriman Expedition. The father's interpretation is meticulous and symmetrical in red cedar, the son's a ravel in dark resin expressing the violence in a legend—and what the son calls "theft of cultural heritage." Jackson Polys earned an MFA at Columbia as he split time between Alaska and NYC. In 2022, he and his father carved totem poles for Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau. With partners of Ojibway heritage, he pursues multimedia projects as New Red Order "examining desires for indigeneity."



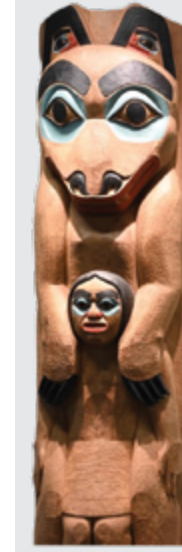
**VARNELL'S ARTISTIC** vision cohered early within a talented family. In the words of his grandmother, Delores Churchill, "Donnie has been an artist since he could hold a crayon." Aunt Holly taught him weaving. He apprenticed as a carver with Reggie Davidson. Varnell carved a totem pole at the KIC health center, representing the Haida people. He produced panels in wood, paints and fibers; in many, carved figures riff on traditional design. Masks of carved cedar bear an emotional charge. Varnell paints distinctive works on paper. New efforts are stretched, painted leather masks fringed with cedar fibers. "I'm a habitual line crosser. I don't stick to just one medium," he said.



Both artists have had solo shows at the Alaska State Museum. Both have been awarded prestigious artist residencies.



*Nathan Jackson and Delores Churchill have well-earned distinction in traditional arts. Among many commissions, Jackson was honored to carve a house post for the Burke Museum, closing a repatriation circle for artwork stolen in 1899. Churchill's weaving, research and teaching have generated vivid life for Haida tradition.*



*Jackson Polys in Edwin Dewitt Carving Center in Saxman. 'Nearing Completion' for Burke Museum: epoxy resin, aluminum, cedar. 'Tlanakeet'akw' at Goldbelt Corp. tram terminal in Juneau: red cedar, wax and blood. FROM TOP PHOTO*

*Donald Varnell chalking a dock bollard. 'XUUX' ('Slick' in Haida): carved wood, paint, cedar bark. Bentwood box in yellow cedar, paint. FROM TOP PHOTO*

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# LAND OF MISTS MISCELLANY

Selected features of Ketchikan's natural history, our unique human history and our way of life between the rain forest and the ocean

**17:28** Hours and minutes of daylight in Ketchikan on the summer solstice.

**7:06** Hours and minutes of daylight on the winter solstice.

**4 hours** Number to add to local time for Eastern time; add 9 for GMT.



**\$25** Annual fee levied by the Forest Service for lease of an entire Tongass Forest island for fox farming in 1907. Nine fox farms started up near Ketchikan and others were founded around Prince of Wales Island before World War II. In 1925, a blue fox pelt was worth \$100-\$150 to brokers for European interests. But the cost of starting a fox farm was estimated at \$7,300. No fox farms survived.

**4,592 feet** Elevation of Reid Mountain, tallest peak on Revillagigedo Island.

**3,001 feet** Elevation at the peak of Deer Mountain, Ketchikan's distinctive backdrop. The summit is only 6,500 lateral feet from the nearest shoreline. (That sign is imaginary and is placed here only to reference Ketchikan's long-ago links to Hollywood: see pages 21 and 33 for more on that.)



**1,063.65** Square miles comprising Revillagigedo Island, the 11th-largest island in the 50 United States. By comparison, the entire land mass of the State of Rhode Island is only 1,055 square miles. (Little Rhody claims another 169 square miles of water to fill out its nominal area.) To the west, our archipelago neighbor, Prince of Wales Island, is the third-largest island in the U.S. at 2,577 square miles of land mass, and boasts about 990 miles of shoreline.

**1959** Year when Ketchikan's last milk cow was shipped out, from Homestead Dairy 4 miles south of town. (Old Homestead and Old Dairy roads are there.) Half a dozen commercial dairies operated on Revilla, Pennock and Gravina islands between 1902 and 1959. The first was the Pittenger dairy at the top of Bawden Street, established about 1902. A street bears the name of the dairy's founder (but it's spelled Pittinger).



**1923** Year when Ketchikan became the first Alaskan city to pave a street, replacing planks on Front Street between Grant and Mill streets. This photo shows the project in about 1921. Workmen trundle rock to the narrow confines of the developing street; completed concrete sections are in the distance. Forest L. Hunt's shop is at left; he and his wife, Harriet Hunt, a fellow photographer, sold souvenir photo prints (called "Kodaks" in that time) along with cigars. (SEE RELATED ITEM ON 69.) At right along Front Street is the Dream Theater, one of two cinemas downtown at the time.



**1913** Year when Tongass Trading Co. finished its concrete building at Front and Dock streets—Alaska's second concrete building (after First National Bank in 1911; today's First Bank at Main and Dock). The building remains in use for the company, founded in 1898. Fast-forward one century from *that* mark ...



**Nike** Maker of the Air Terra Ketchikan in 1998. The trail runner (which was sold at Tongass Trading Co.) featured a waterproof Gore-Tex lining and was part of Nike's ACG (All Conditions Gear) apparel. That same year, Nike sold the nearly identical Air Terra Crested Butte—named for a Colorado town that averages 20 percent as much rain as we enjoy. But then, they get nearly 200 inches of snow, compared to our typical 37 inches.

**24 percent** The slope of a portion of Washington Street in the West End. It's the most vertiginous stretch of pavement in a town built on a mountainside. >



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**5,800** Number of people who visited Ketchikan as tourists on excursion steamships in 1898, according to U.S. Forest Service records.

**1,426,458** Total capacity in passenger berths of cruise and excursion vessels scheduled to call at Ketchikan in 2022—greatest-ever number of total potential passengers on ships affiliated with Cruise Lines International Association. The number was about 20 percent greater than the count in 2019, the last full cruise season before the Covid-19 pandemic.

**637** Total number of scheduled port calls by 48 cruise and exploration ships at the Port of Ketchikan and the Mill at Ward Cove in 2022. The prior record for port calls by cruise vessels was 570 in 2019—the last season before the Covid-19 pandemic halted cruise travel in Alaska and around the globe. Ketchikan port calls by cruise vessels in 2020 were zero; in 2021, ships made 104 port calls in the industry's partial season.



**1.0:7.9** Ratio of the lengths of the largest and the smallest cruise ships calling in Ketchikan in 2022. Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines' Ovation of the Seas and Quantum of the Seas are 1,142 feet in length overall. Southeast Alaska-based Alaskan Dream Cruises' Baranof Dream is 143 feet in length. Each of the twin, oceangoing Royal Caribbean ships carries 4,180 passenger berths plus berths for 1,500 crew members; Baranof Dream checks in with 49 passenger berths and accommodations for 18 crew members.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

**1901 & 1989** Years of the raising of so-called Chief Johnson poles near Ketchikan Creek in the heart of Ketchikan. The first (seen at right) was commissioned by Chief Johnson of the Tlingit people and was dedicated to the honor of the Kadjuk House of the Raven Clan of the Tlingits; that pole is now in the Totem Heritage Center off of Deermount Street. The pole standing today was raised as a replica by carver Israel Shotridge.

### J.R. Heckman

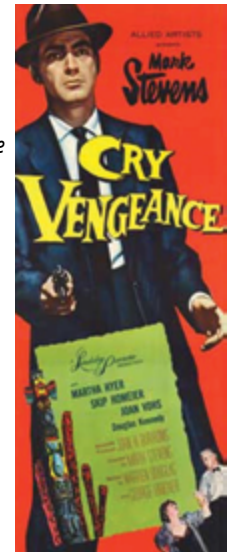
Founder of Ketchikan's first mercantile store, at Main and Dock streets—where his namesake concrete building is still in use for retail stores and offices. Heckman is also historically credited as a primary inventor of floating fish traps, which decimated natural salmon runs as they harvested salmon for local canneries. They were outlawed in 1959 as a condition of Alaska's achieving statehood.



**Page 25** Page in the U.S. passport depicting the Chief Kyan totem pole in Ketchikan. Other pages depict American icons such as the Liberty Bell, a longhorn cattle drive, Mount Rushmore, the Statue of Liberty, a railway steam engine, a Mississippi paddlewheeler, etc. The original Chief Kyan pole stood near the site of today's museum. A replica was at Main and Pine streets in the 1960s. A third version carved by Israel Shotridge was raised in Whale Park in 1993.



**1954** Year of two important pulp debuts: startup of production for Ketchikan Pulp Co. at Ward Cove and national release of Allied Artists' movie *Cry Vengeance*, set largely in Ketchikan. KPC spun out Tongacell pulp until 1997, while the noir-lite production *Cry Vengeance* opened in November 1954 and quietly disappeared. Its 83-minute run time includes many scenes filmed in Ketchikan, including a climactic shootout on the new Ketchikan Pulp Co. dam at Connell Lake. Mark Stevens starred with Martha Hyer in Stevens' first effort as a director. The film screened in Ketchikan in early 1955. It's on Youtube, a time capsule of mid-century Ketchikan in black and white: Ellis Airlines amphibians and local taxis, streets and totems, storefronts long since gone, even a few residents as extras.



**Magician** The 32-foot sailboat that L. Ron Hubbard sailed to Ketchikan from Bellingham, Wash., in autumn 1940. Hubbard and his wife were in town for as long as 10 months, according to some accounts. The photo shows Hubbard on his boat with Stedman Street behind him. Long before Hubbard wrote works creating Dianetics and Scientology, he used his talent for storytelling in a weekly radio program on KGBU-AM; "Mail Buoy" featured prose, sung ballads and answers to questions about boats and seamanship mailed in by listeners. (Transcripts of several programs are online at a web site devoted to Hubbard's life.) >



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**\$28 million, 0.9 mile** Cost and length of Third Avenue Extension, completed in 2004. Third Avenue Bypass, as we call it, provides an alternate route from the West End to Bear Valley and the city center—a convenience and an important link for public safety. Its engineering centerpiece is a wall 1,000 feet long and 90 feet high made of 120,000 tons of compacted concrete. This topic leads to a globally significant event on this road ...

**1,976** The number of residents and visitors who strode Third Avenue Bypass *en masse* in May 2013 to claim the Guinness World Record for most people to “race” in rainboots—or wellingtons, in the vernacular of the *former* titleholders in Lincolnshire, England—who mustered 1,366 people for their race. This was Ketchikan’s second attempt to take the record; an effort a year prior brought out fewer than 1,200 rainboot racers in footwear we call “Ketchikan sneakers.” (Example at right.) But we persevered in our quest and earned the record in 2013. Alas, Alaskans: Our preeminence was short-lived. The record was snatched from our very feet in May 2014, when 3,194 people did a rainboot scoot boogie in Killarney, County Kerry, Ireland.



CREGG POPPEN

**1.96 miles** Length of all the boardwalk “streets” maintained by public works crews working for the City of Ketchikan. City personnel take care of 56 staircases (such as Parnell Street shown here) in their inventory of 10,346 linear feet of boardwalks. This colossal stretch includes marked wooden stairways as well as wooden walkways in residential areas. The longest stairway street is Edmond Street, with a base between the Ketchikan Daily News and Chico’s Restaurant on Dock Street; the upper end is at the onetime site of Main School.



CREGG POPPEN

**23.0 feet**

Greatest predicted range between successive tides in Ketchikan for the entire year of 2022: on January 3, when a high tide of 19.2 feet cresting at 12:40 p.m. precedes a low tide of minus 3.8 feet at 7:19 p.m. In general, two low tides and two high tides occur daily.

The tides depicted here are somewhat middling by our extreme local standards. The photos show how tides on a mid-April day alter the land- and seascape at Mountain Point.



PHOTOS: CREGG POPPEN

Low tide of minus 2.4 at 7:53 a.m. nearly empties the boat launch basin ahead of an incoming boater and exposes rock formations near the point. The following high tide of 16.0 feet at 2:12 p.m.


crests close to the top of the breakwater, conveniently lifting the dock for an imminent boat launch but submerging rocks to the north that can be hazards for careless skippers.

Ketchikan District				
HIGH TIDES		LOW TIDES		
DATE	TIME	HEIGHT	TIME	
1 F	1:37	18.9	1:51	16.3
2 S	2:06	17.1	2:29	15.9
3 SS	2:38	18.9	3:06	14.2
4 M	3:07	18.9	3:42	12.9
5 T	3:36	15.6	4:21	13.1
6 W	4:06	14.7	5:03	11.8
7 T	4:41	13.6	5:56	10.8
8 F	5:20	12.5	7:12	10.0
9 S	6:03	11.6	8:49	10.1

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# BUSINESS LIKE AN ACTIVE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZES AND ADVOCATES TO KEEP KETCHIKAN BUSINESS-FRIENDLY

Ketchikan's business-advocacy organization was born with the 20th century and grew up on the frontier fighting for Ketchikan's commercial causes and development.

And the more things change, the more they stay the same. Business boosters in the bustling new town in 1900 lobbied for a telegraph link—the world wide web of that time. The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce of today touts the community's solid and speedy Internet capabilities to entice mobile workers and tech entrepreneurs.

The chamber works to solidify local business in an ever-changing economy, helping those from the smallest enterprises to the largest industries. The chamber's roster of more than 300 active members grew by 20 percent in two years leading up to 2022. The Alaska State Chamber of Commerce awarded the Ketchikan group "local chamber of the year" honors in 2021.

Referring to themselves locally as "Your Chamber," members pump more than \$750,000 into the local economy through the Merry Merchants and Munch Holiday programs. Chamber members created many other events to engage the community and promote local businesses. The annual awards banquet dubs a Citizen of the Year and confers other honors to business people. The 4th of July Parade Committee selects



a grand marshal who has contributed to the community's unique vitality. The chamber's advocacy for business at the local, state and federal levels mirrors the vibrancy of the commercial scene.

The chamber was founded in 1900 as Ketchikan Commercial Club. Its first project was petitioning the U.S. to bring in a telegraph cable—at a time when commercial information and goods traveled at steamship speed. By the 1960s, the chamber was a vigorous advocate for the timber industry. Since incorporating in 1967, the chamber has promoted balanced growth and has organized advocates for economic development.

In the 1990s, the chamber lobbied for consolidation of local governments and worked to keep local taxes in check. The chamber supported the U.S. Navy in siting a submarine testing facility on nearby Back Island. Chamber members were active in founding the Ketchikan Marine Industry Council. The organization advocates for a vibrant shipbuilding industry and a growing mariculture industry.

In 2022, the chamber launched Choose Ketchikan, a timely effort to attract remote workers. The web site chooseketchikan.com soon drew hundreds of applicants expressing interest in relocating to Ketchikan to take advantage of fast fiber-optic Internet, a business-friendly scene and the vital Southeast Alaskan lifestyle.

## TWO ROTARY CLUBS ENGAGE IN SERVICE

**Ketchikan folks formed** Alaska's first Rotary club in 1925: Rotary 2000 was the 2,000th club in Rotary International. The club's first big project, in 1930, was Rotary Beach; Rotarians collected private funding and poured a concrete wall for a seawater swimming hole south of town that's been incorporated into a borough park. Rotary 2000 provided scoreboards and other facilities at ballfields and places kid-size loaner life jackets at boat launches—the Kids Don't Float program. Club members ring bells for the Salvation Army and assemble food boxes for those in need. Their Trunk or Treat on Halloween night provides a safe, indoor family event.

First City Rotary chartered here in 1987 and was among the first in the world to admit women members. The club's Fourth of July Rubber Duck Race on Ketchikan Creek is its major fund-raiser.

**That club recently installed** "Music Moves," an experiential outdoor musical park at Rotary Beach; Rotarians also improved access to the beach and cleaned the saltwater

swimming hole. The club provided picnic shelters at several state parks and spanned Lunch Creek and Ward Creek with pedestrian bridges. First City Rotary installed playground equipment in pocket parks and seaside picnic benches along the south-end pedestrian path. The Pioneers Home got new carpet and Rendezvous Senior Center, a new kitchen. The club put in play equipment at Women in Safe Homes. Third-graders in this area receive dictionaries courtesy of the club.

**Members support** Rotary Youth Exchange and mentor the Kayhi Rotary Interact club. International projects go to South Africa and South America.

Both Ketchikan clubs provide scholarships and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. Members help Ketchikan-area nonprofits with funding for food and supplies.

The clubs were jointly awarded the Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce's community service award in 2014.

*RESONANT PROJECT  
Musicians Heidi Nelson  
and Roger Nelson try  
Rotarians' sonic  
sculpture, Music Moves.*



CREGG POPPEN

# NATURE

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AND VICE VERSA.



CHARLES HABERBUSH



BARBARA MORGAN



CINDY BALZER



GREGG POPPEN

*A bald eagle and a black bear have a summertime staredown at Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary, a privately owned visitor destination. The salmon hatchery upstream along Herring Creek makes both creek banks popular places for viewing these predators as they take advantage of returning salmon. Alpine slopes are good places to see mountain goats—but the animals are wary, so take a long lens. River otters haul out to sun themselves on rocks along many streams. Trumpeter swans are often seen at Ward Lake; the lake is a USFS recreation area and features an easy trail.*



We share this environment with amazing varieties and numbers of wild creatures. Backcountry, remote shorelines and even our built environment offer superb opportunities for photographers and wildlife viewers.

Trails into the forest are good places for viewing birds and forest mammals. Boats and even near-shore roads make great platforms for observing humpback whales and orcas as they feed. At sea, keep your boat at least 100 yards from all marine mammals: federal law and a good practice for all concerned.

Bear-viewing sites offer seasonal looks at resident bruins. Herring Cove is on the road system. Ward Creek Trail viewing platform is up an easy path. Other sites can be reached by boat or floatplane.



JAMES LEWIS



ROSIE ROPPEL



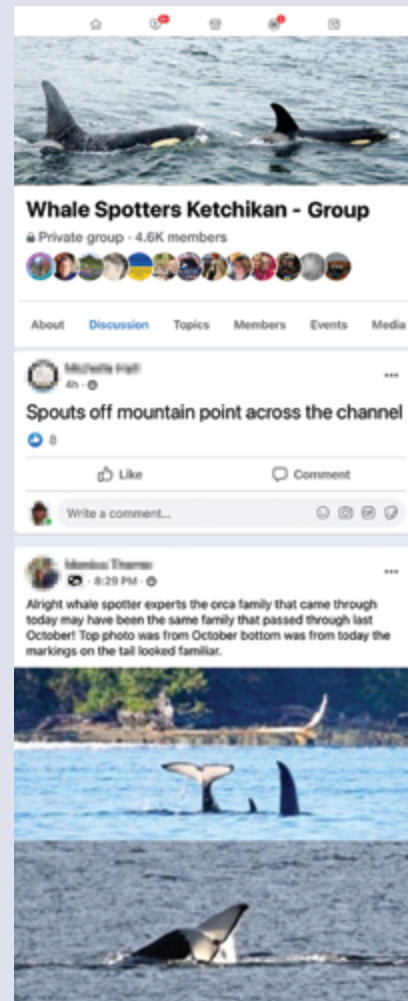
CINDY BALZER

## WILDLIFE WITH FINS, FEATHERS, FLUKES OR FUR IS VERY PHOTO-READY

*Ketchikan adopted a humpback whale in late 2020—or was it the other way around? An adult humpback frequented our shorelines for weeks, often rising in the harbor while feeding. Folks named the cetacean Phoenix and packed the port to witness the offbeat behavior as a distraction from a disastrous pandemic year. In a quieter realm of nature, the Forest Service's Ward Lake Recreation Area is a good place to see wildlife; this great blue heron caught a lake trout. Sea lions haul out on remote rocks and go into near-shore waters to hunt for salmon—sometimes rising in thrashing, splashing scenes.*

## It's a web site for whale sightings

Humpback whales and orcas transiting waters near Ketchikan have a fan club. Members of Whale Spotters Ketchikan track the creatures and promptly post photos to a Facebook group. Many posts include tips such as direction of travel to enable fellow spotters to see these impressive marine mammals.



# FISHERIES

## sea resources



### A MAJOR PORT TRADES ON A MIX OF SUSTAINABLE SPECIES

**T**he First City is a tonnage titan in the state that tops the nation in production of sustainable seafood.

Ketchikan ranked 18th in the U.S. in landed seafood poundage in the most recent available numbers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In 2021, the community was ninth in seafood brought to shore among Alaska's prodigious seafood-handling ports. In stats that matter within the local economy, Ketchikan was home for hundreds of resident skippers, crew members and processing personnel.

NOAA reported that Ketchikan handled 59.5 million pounds of seafood in 2021 to rank at number 18 nationwide. The total ex-vessel value was reported to be \$44.3 million. Ketchikan's per-pound seafood values are typically less than those of East Coast lobster and tuna ports, but in competition with its own history Ketchikan improved in 2021: per-pound values of \$.74 compared to values of \$.47 in 2015. The total dollar value of seafood landed in Ketchikan in 2021, according to NOAA, was 29th among all U.S. ports.

Oceans have tides, and so does Alaska's ocean-dependent industry—subject not only to variations in the abundance of target species but to oscillating commodities prices as well. Catches and ex-vessel values can vary widely from year to year. Ketchikan's seafood landings in 2013 ranked 11th in the nation by dollar value, buoyed by a big harvest of pink salmon in Southeast.

The region's commercial harvesters are accustomed to variations in pink abundance: lesser runs in even years, greater runs in odd years. Even so, the catch of 8 million pinks in Southeast in 2020 was a crash. The 48.5 million pinks landed in 2021, on the other hand, were close to the record harvest and, fortunately for the seine fleet that relies on those humpies, prices were good.

**Ketchikan can no longer** be characterized as merely a canned-pink capital, although the city's three large processors convert great numbers of that ordinary salmon species into various consumer products. Trollers deliver king, coho and chum salmon to processors' docks. Gillnetters harvest several species of salmon.

Salmon and other finfish processed in Alaska are wild-caught and catches are regulated for sustainability. The limited entry permit system for fisheries has such regard that it was embedded in Alaska's constitution.

OLE GUNDERSEN

*Bright, wild-caught Alaskan salmon set high marks for quality and sustainability. LaDonna Gundersen and husband Ole Gundersen run a gillnetter and deliver fish to processors before pursuing secondary markets related to Alaska's unique appeal: She publishes seafood cookbooks and he sells photographs taken on their summertime fishing trips. 'Value-added' in many forms is constantly in the minds of Alaska's seafood industry.*

In 2020, Ketchikan residents held 573 fishing permits for species from salmon to geoduck clams. About one resident of every 25 was an active commercial skipper or was licensed as crew, according to United Fishermen of Alaska. Ex-vessel income was \$10.4 million. Seafood processing employed another 675 people in 2020, according to labor officials, and a third of processing pay went to residents—\$3.8 million in all.



GREGG POPPEN

*TOTES FRESH* A troller delivers salmon to E.C. Phillips

**Commercial fishers** have boosted the supply side of their industry since the 1970s by augmenting natural salmon runs with hatchery fish. In this area, Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) operates seven hatcheries and puts young salmon into the ocean each year—212 million in 2022. Economists estimated several years ago that harvest of SSRAA kings, cohos and chums added nearly \$17 million to commercial catch values in the region. Fishermen pay 3 percent of ex-vessel salmon value into a fund that supports the aquaculture program.

The consumer side of the Alaskan industry is critical and Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) is charged with building brand and demand. In a world where about half of all seafood consumed was farm-raised, *Alaska Seafood* is trademarked as a unique combination of wild, sustainable, healthful and tasty. ASMI's web site posts glamour photos, recipes and human-interest features; its promotions are seen in stores and in public events. ASMI conducts food-aid programs in the U.S. and across the globe—a blend of benignity and brand promotion.

**In the difficult middle position** between fishers and eaters are processors, whose products enter a U.S. market where seafood consumption rates are relatively flat (19 pounds per person per year) and farm-raised seafood sourced from the likes of Chile and Norway has an edge in price. In Ketchikan, Pacific Northwest processing giant Trident handles fish for a broad product mix, from frozen and canned salmon to fish oil and packaged entrees. Alaska General Seafoods, a statewide business, specializes here in sockeye and pink salmon and is the city's last large-scale canner. Locally owned E.C. Phillips processes a wide swath of species—salmon, halibut, cod, rockfish, shrimp and herring—but also buys geoduck clams and sea cucumbers from dive harvesters year-round. All of the processors provide housing for workers who fly in for the season.

## FED FUNDS WILL FOSTER SEA FARMING

**Private enterprise** and public entities working toward creating a world-class mariculture industry in Alaska have a huge infusion of U.S. funding to help them.



PREMIUM AQUATICS

*Ribbon kelp harvest at Seagrove Kelp near Craig.*

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in September 2022 approved a \$49 million grant to the Alaska Maritime Cluster. The cluster is a conceptual frame developed by state and local governments along with mariculture boosters and entrepreneurs. Now it's a concept with a cash catalyst. The money will aid in "producing shellfish and seaweed for the long-term benefit of Alaska's economy, environment, and communities," according to Southeast Conference, a leader in the statewide campaign for sea-based farming.

Private mariculture is well-established offshore of Ketchikan and northern Prince of Wales Island, raising market-ready oysters and kelp. Scaling the industry in this and other Alaskan regions for a place on the global scene needed buoying up—and coordination. The state and the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation led a five-year task force diagramming a \$100 million Alaskan mariculture industry by 2040—starting from today's \$2 million annual gross. A consortium of businesses, nonprofits and governments became the Alaska Mariculture Alliance and won the EDA's funding support within the \$1 billion, nationwide Build Back Better program.

**The money will float** revolving loans; foster mariculture seed supplies; help processors; and aid growers in testing product. The grant favors tribal and rural mariculture.

In prior initiatives in 2022, the U.S.D.A. handed \$500,000 to Southeast Conference for design and planning of a mariculture processing plant on POW. NOAA's Alaska Fisheries Science Center committed to five years of research support for mariculture, noting that sea farming can benefit local economies while improving ocean ecology and reducing ocean acidification.



*Buy bi-valves from Alaska.*

Near Ketchikan, Hump Island Oyster Co. cultures bivalves and air-freights fresh product to the Lower 48. Oyster farms dot bays on northern POW.

**The nation's largest** kelp farm floats offshore of west POW, where Seagrove Kelp Co. tends 127 acres of ribbon kelp and sugar kelp. The company cultures seed at OceansAlaska nursery in Ketchikan, plants and harvests kelp and sells product both in bulk and in branded consumer packages. Seagrove harvested nearly 170 tons in 2022. Across the globe, seaweed goes into products from dietary supplements to processed foods and cosmetics.

More than half a dozen other would-be kelp farms near Ketchikan and POW await state permit approval. The State of Alaska helped by increasing its permit-review staff in 2021. Alaska's permit applications average 540 days to decision, compared to about 10 years in California.

# PROCESSING FOR PROFIT

**Fish processing started** in the Ketchikan area with salmon salteries in the 1880s, but fires and high costs thwarted many entrepreneurs. Fish were plentiful but far from end markets and production costs were enormous. But sockeye in the can was popular and supply followed demand.

In 1896, Alaska's 20 salmon canneries—most within 75 miles of Ketchikan—packed 40 percent of Pacific volume. That year, about 2.4 million cases were produced; each case held 48 1-pound cans.

Fidalgo Island Packing Co. was built south of town in 1900. Ketchikan businesspeople persuaded New England Fish Co. of Boston to put up a cold storage plant in 1908; before then, fishermen chipped ice from LeConte Glacier near Petersburg. Fishermen weary of rowing and sailing small dories soon welcomed gas motors on their boats.

A bump in canned salmon prices in 1910 lured investments. New canneries were under way in 1911-12 in the city and outside. Ketchikan investors built Ketchikan Cold Storage Co. 1913. The facility created 70 tons of ice each day and froze 90,000 pounds of fish. That prodigious capacity drew halibut fishermen.

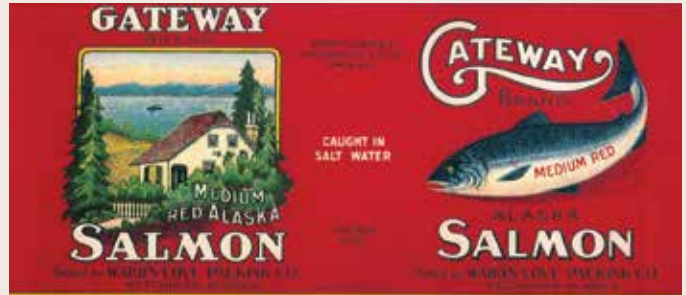
**Enter the floating fish trap**, an innovation credited to J.R. Heckman of Ketchikan, who adapted conventional traps attached to pilings in shallow waters. Floating traps could move to take greatest advantage of salmon runs; enormous numbers of fish were penned and held alive awaiting canneries' transfer scows.

WWI boosted demand for Alaskan salmon to feed the troops. In the 1920s, flourishing employment in fisheries made Ketchikan the most populous city in Alaska. Canadians pushed their railroad to Prince Rupert, B.C., in the early 1920s, providing halibut processors with another means to market just 90 miles south by water. That brought yet more halibut fishermen to the First City, whether as residents or part-timers.

By 1930, more than 150 halibut boats called at Ketchikan and a fleet of close to 1,000 salmon boats supplied 13 canneries and a cold storage. The annual canned salmon pack was valued at \$5 million.



*Ketchikan Cold Storage processed tons of halibut each week in the '30s. Some of the fish arrived, via rail through Canada, in major U.S. cities in just days. Salmon packed in Ketchikan-area canneries traveled the world wrapped in colorful and homey artistry—seen now in reproductions on city trash cans.*



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

## Piracy plagued salmon trap owners

**In the early days** of industrial-scale salmon canning, the fish pirate was canneries' nemesis—a buccaneer who swiped salmon from fish traps and sold them to canneries as if they were his.

It was illegal. It wasn't right. But it wasn't unheard of for an accused fish pirate's peers, sitting as a jury, to let him off. Some fish traps were operated by Alaskans, but big cannery companies based outside of Ketchikan, with largely foreign workforces, weren't universally cherished by the home folks. Piracy became so endemic that

canneries put watchmen in shacks on the traps. But some watchmen could be persuaded with cash to turn their backs on a trap raid. They say some canneries hired watchmen for the watchmen, putting Pinkerton security men on trap reconnaissance.

**There's a legend** of an especially slippery piracy: A packer boat towing a scow filled with fish arrived at the dock after a night in thick fog; when the crew jumped off to tie up the towed scow, they found their boat hitched instead to a raft of logs.

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GREGG POPPEN

# VISITOR INDUSTRY

*History in the making passes history made. Norwegian Cruise Lines' Encore departs Ward Cove from a cruise dock newly opened where Ketchikan Pulp Co. once operated a gigantic mill, employing hundreds, until 25 years ago. On the massive ship's port side are historic buildings of the now-closed Wards Cove Cannery. The new cruise ship dwarfs an IFA ferry and commercial boats, its presence in the cove signifying vast changes in Southeast Alaska's economy.*

FROM A RECORD SUMMER  
TO AN UNPRECEDENTED BUMMER ...  
AFTER A PAINFUL INTERVAL, KETCHIKAN WELCOMED  
SIGNS OF RESURGENCE IN A PRIMARY ECONOMIC SECTOR

**R**ecord numbers of visitors alighted in Ketchikan in 2019. The forecast for 2022 exceeded even those figures. But between those wave crests fell a deep trough called “pandemic.”

Ketchikan and Southeast Alaska endured an economic low point when COVID-19 circled the globe in 2020, just weeks before a travel season that was expected to be the best ever for visitor-oriented businesses. Exactly one small excursion vessel and zero cruise ships called at a port where about 1.2 million cruisers had been expected. Air travel by independent visitors was negligible. Most retail

stores didn't even open up. Charter boats and excursion vehicles and flightseeing aircraft remained idle. Local governments' sales tax coffers rang hollow. For most of the dismal visitor season that *wasn't* in 2020, only federal payments and retrenchment kept hope alive.

**Skip forward** to the latter half of 2021. Vaccines restored confidence among many would-be travelers whose vacations had been forcibly deferred. With a push from Alaska's delegation, Congress temporarily suspended a law requiring foreign-flagged ships to include a Canadian port call on Alaska cruises—an impossibility

when Canada was entirely closed to the cruise industry. Meanwhile, cruise lines' and airlines' COVID safety protocols were largely successful in eliciting ticket sales while limiting the contagion. Ketchikan lost more than 80 percent of its scheduled cruise-ship traffic in 2021, but a modest slate of ships from July to October brought some cash flow and cause for hope to those shoreside. Still, a survey of visitor-sector business people (by the Southeast Conference) found half of them struggling to pay bills. Nearly a third of them said they would have closed up permanently if not for federal relief. >

The global cruise industry waited out the virus—assured that Alaska would retain its allure in a reviving sector: roughly one-twentieth of global cruising transits Southeast Alaska. The owners of the former pulp mill property at Ward Cove partnered with an Alaskan company long involved in Interior tourism and finished a new deepwater dock in the cove while preparing the old mill site as a destination and a transfer hub—an investment of tens of millions of dollars. Norwegian Cruise Lines’ commitment to use the dock

supported the long-term plan. NCL ties its ships at Ward Cove from April to October.

Indeed, in 2022 the schedule for port calls by cruise ships of all sizes along the Inside Passage set a record. Cruise lines new to Inside Passage itineraries entered the market while established lines brought new vessels to Alaska’s summertime seas—48 ships and 637 port calls in all were scheduled. The glow of those numbers was dimmed somewhat by soft occupancy statistics in the early season, ranging from 30 to 50 percent of passenger berths

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GREGG POPPEN



HKI ILLUSTRATION



SEANNA O'SULLIVAN

sold. But industry insiders forecast that over the season upwards of 70 percent of 1.4 million berths would be purchased—even if discounted.

Disaster in the cruise-related economy in 2020-21 distracted attention from a quiet but lucrative influx of independent travelers to the region. In the first pandemic summer, Alaska’s isolation as much as its wild beauty drew a particular class of virus-avoiders: yacht owners. Yacht-spotters in Ketchikan saw more than the usual number and length of luxury vessels. The most spectacular was the Bravo Eugenia, owned by Jerry Jones; at 358 feet, it’s as long as his Dallas Cowboys’ playing field plus the end zones. Dozens of other luxury yachts—a third more than usual, by one count—rode out the pandemic in Southeast Alaska in the 2020 season.

**COVID constricted** the typical surge of seasonal visitors. Arrivals by airline were off by more than 55 percent in 2020, arrivals by state ferry down by 70 percent (due partly to reductions in sailings). Southeast’s visitor sector cut employment by nearly half.

*Ketchikan’s visiting day trippers, most coming off of cruise ships, engage in widely dispersed activities, such as rain forest trail treks offering two-hour immersions in our lush natural setting. The Herring Cove bridge long used, and dangerously, as a bear-viewing platform routinely got so crowded and perilous that the state designed a replacement span with two sidewalks for pedestrians and improved flow for motorists. In town, flightseeing passengers returning from Misty Fjords touch down on Tongass Narrows, sharing the water corridor with visitors on guided tours in fast inflatable boats.*

If 2020 was mostly a bust for would-be travelers and for destination businesses, the 2021 season justified confidence in independent travelers: i.e., couples, families and groups of friends who do their research, devise a bucket-list-worthy itinerary in Alaska and spend good money and time enjoying it. Ketchikan Visitors Bureau (KVB), the community’s tourism promoter, has increasingly targeted these travelers, investing in extensive social-media outreach while maintaining conventional modes of promotion: a web site; travel



SEANNA O'SULLIVAN



SEANNA O'SULLIVAN

*Retailing is big downtown and distinctive, locally owned stores and galleries are numerous. Quads and Jeeps roll on rough, remote roads for those who like bouncing in backcountry. Among visitors scattering from the busy city center are snorkelers, who discover color and variety in near-shore waters. Ketchikan's history and cultural highlights are detailed in Joe Williams Jr.'s walking tour. The 'duck tour' wheels through the heart of the city and the West End before splashing into the harbor for a look at Ketchikan from the water.*



SEANNA O'SULLIVAN



GREGG POPPEN

planners on paper and online; trade show booths; and enticing contacts with U.S. and foreign travel writers. **For visitor-based** business and for municipalities, 2020 is remembered for cancellations and dire quiet. KVB's tag line is "Our lifestyle, your reward." But local governments depend on the inverse: Visitors rewarding themselves with a trip to Alaska support *our* way of life. Taxable sales of visitor-related retail, tours and entertainment declined by more than 90 percent, 2019 to 2020—a drop of some \$60 million. But destination businesses in several sectors saw remarkable upticks in bookings for 2021. Lodging operators and charter skippers in particular benefited from pent-up demand. Business in 2021 was "strong from the start," in the words of one provider of fishing excursions and sightseeing trips. "Many who canceled in 2020 booked for 2021. Lots of people had saved money from trips they hadn't taken and were looking to vacation, particularly in a place where there weren't a lot of people," he said. "We



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also had people who saw COVID as a wake-up call to their own mortality and were booking a trip that had been on their bucket list for some time." **Through the worst** of two diminished seasons, most businesses hung on and a few were confidently founded on expectation of a coming rebound. Cases in point: Partners bought the old fire station on Main Street and opened a distillery and tasting room; a charter skipper refitted a boat to accommodate fishers with disabilities; a new business harvested kelp and sea asparagus, cooking up retail products from salsa to pesto. Many

other entrepreneurs set out in 2022 on visitor-oriented offerings from charters to B&Bs. Hoping that a 100-year pandemic was behind us and we could again manage for growth, KVB led a program to implement "tourism best management practices"; the aim was to ensure compatibility and cooperation among visitors, businesses and residents. The borough planning department took up a long-term perspective, initiating a "tourism destination management strategy" in cooperation with a university and tourism specialists. **Meantime, in the** small town of Klawock on western Prince of Wales Island, the visitor industry was aborning at the site of a withered Alaskan mainstay. Partnering with two other Alaska Native corporations already involved in tourism, Klawock Heenya Corp. scheduled four 2023 port calls, at a former log-ship dock, by a mid-size Oceania cruise ship. Extensive shoreside development was on the drawing board. It's a start. And as other destinations in the region can attest, there will be no stopping it.

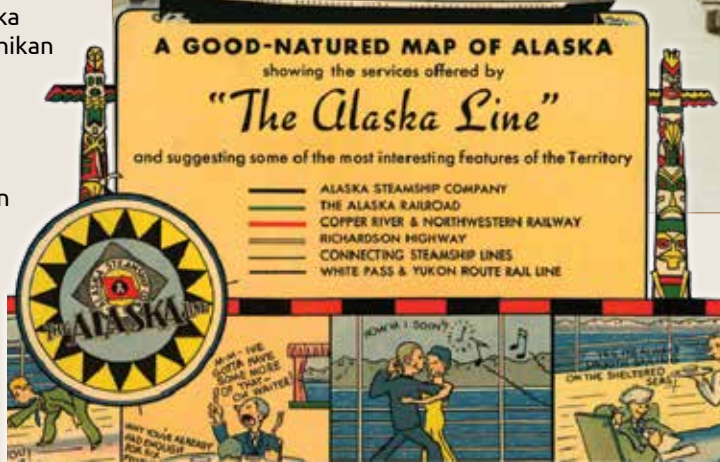


# CRUISERS DISCOVERED THE ALASKAN ALLURE EARLY ON

**Ketchikan's first tourists** arrived not long after the first white settlers. Even before 1900, steamships brought pleasure travelers and early stores stocked Alaskan "curios."

Some cruises included side trips to unoccupied Alaska Native village sites. History lays harsh judgment on the Harriman Expedition of 1899, led by railroad baron Edward Harriman. Well-heeled sightseers cruised with scientists, anthropologists, artists, photographers and officials of National Geographic and Smithsonian. The expedition was decried later for appropriating totem poles and Alaska Native "artifacts" on a swath from Ketchikan to the Aleutians. (SEE 29 FOR MORE.)

**History records 1915** as a peak year for steamship travel to Alaska. World War I scuttled European vacations for the leisure class and they fixed sights on Alaska. As many as four steamship lines plied the Inside Passage by the 1920s. President Warren G. Harding's visit to Alaska in 1923 was a marketing boon. Journalists glowingly chronicled Alaska from Ketchikan to the Interior.



**RISING TIDE FOR TOURISM**  
A steamship moored at low tide looses passengers onto Mission Street in the early 1920s, when the territory was already marketed as a fun and casual destination for shipborne visitors.

## LOST FRONTIER *Some visitor queries are quirky*

The best question ever asked of a Ketchikan resident by a visitor is a Ketchikan inside joke—an apocryphal story that we love because of its proximity to truth.

**visitor** Little fella, does the rain in Ketchikan ever stop?  
**boy** I don't know, mister. I'm *only* five years old!

The *real* questions that *real* visitors ask can amaze. Are these people *lost*? Joe Williams Jr. has heard doozies in decades of leading interpretive walking tours in Ketchikan and Saxman. He's an Alaska Native and former mayor of Saxman and Ketchikan Gateway Borough. He knows how to be diplomatic when confronted by unfortunate inquiries. Examples ...

*This is an island? So, does that mean there's water all around it?  
Do you folks take American money here?  
How long have you been an Indian?*

Williams says goofy questions are dwindling and good questions are increasing. "Travelers are getting smarter," he says. "I think it's because of the Internet."

Below are actual questions by visitors to Alaska and some possible answers that we're just too *nice* to provide.

**What's the elevation in Ketchikan?** See the water under your ship? Sea level. That's zero. Count up. Go on, use your fingers.

**What time do the Northern Lights come on?** They're on a randomizer. If they're on in the day, only people in wells see 'em.

**Where do you people go in the wintertime?** Oh, you know. Some of us do temp gigs at the North Pole, some just den up.

**How old do deer have to be before they turn into caribou?** It's not their age. It's about their capability to wear bigger antlers.

## half baked alaska

Fifty years ago, Mark Wheeler published a paperback book of shaggy husky stories and riffs on Alaska's eccentricities. Wheeler was a noted watercolorist who dabbled in comic drawings and humorous writing.



All this rain makes more water in the water, which makes more space between fish ...

**PERMAFROST** The problem with the stuff is that it does melt a little in the summer. It melts just enough to make things pretty muddy and, if you build a house on it, you might find it canted over to one side just a bit because the ground never melts evenly. Real estate agents always have a tough time, and when faced with having to sell these houses that now are leaning over every which way, they got a brilliant idea. Real estate people refer to these houses as being "Listed."

**ALASKA VS. TEXAS** Alaska varies greatly in size at various times of the day. This is because of the tides. At low tide Alaska is about two and one half times bigger than Texas plus the areas covered by downtown Denver; New Castle County, Delaware; Yankee Stadium; and the hangar deck of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Midway. At high tide Alaska is only two and a half times bigger than Texas but hopes that nobody got caught in the tide in those other places, especially Denver.

**half baked alaska** by Mark Wheeler – 1972 – 160 pp. Out of print, but copies are available online from booksellers and private sellers.

# MOTORLESS & MOTIVATED

RACE TO ALASKA IS 750 MILES OF WINDS, WAVES AND ANXIOUS DAYS. TEN GRAND IN CASH FOR FIRST PLACE, CUTLERY FOR SECOND AND PERIL FOR ALL WHO SET OUT FOR KETCHIKAN.



CREGG POPPEN

*The crew of Pure and Wild sailed into Tongass Narrows with a favorable southerly wind to win the 2022 Race to Alaska and the \$10,000 first prize. The team's time of 4 days, 4 hours and 32 minutes wasn't the fastest-ever for R2AK, but their 44-foot sailboat Dark Star finished while the closest rival was about 230 miles behind them along the 750-mile route. The Pure and Wild team carried impressive maritime credentials. Skipper Jonathan McKee (at left in photo of the celebratory trio) is a former Olympic sailor. Matt Pistay (right) was a defending champion: He was on the team that won R2AK in 2019 before the two-year pandemic hiatus. Alyosha Strum-Palerm rounded out the crew celebrating with wellwishers at the finish line, the Baranof Fishing Excursions dock in Thomas Basin.*

**Race to Alaska impels** contenders on a North Pacific Ocean feat of skill and endurance that its organizers dub "the Iditarod with a chance of drowning."

Dozens of racers in a motley flotilla take up the challenge of sailing, rowing or paddling without benefit of motors from Port Townsend, Wash., to Ketchikan: 750 miles that can be calm or calamitous—usually some of each.

The race resumed in 2022 after a two-year suspension forced by the pandemic. The sixth iteration of the race was the first to permit qualifying contestants to take a route in open



CREGG POPPEN

waters west of Vancouver Island rather than solely an Inside Passage track. Three teams of the initial 44 tried that longer route—including the winners.

Race to Alaska was conceived in Port Townsend in 2013. "It's the Pacific Northwest and Alaskan spirit," said Jake Beattie, whose brainstorm

engendered the race. He's director of Northwest Maritime Center. "We can get over ourselves, but we can do impressive things. Extreme things can be impressive but commonplace."



**Beattie uncorked** the race idea with friends in a beer tent. In summer 2014, they announced that the inaugural Race to Alaska would launch a year hence. "We declared a \$10,000 prize, but we didn't actually have it," he said.

Promotional efforts online and in the sailing community drew two dozen

entrants for the first race in 2015. Cheeky marketing helped. First prize of ten grand in cash would be nailed to a board in Ketchikan. Second prize, a set of steak knives, would be handed over without apology or ceremony. The stated reward for just finishing: "cathartic elation."

**Few entrants expect** cash or cutlery. They share the R2AK devotion to motorless boating. "We're developing a message and promoting an ethic," said Beattie. "We want to demonstrate that simple and affordable boats can do great adventures, can work in unison with the elements rather than overpower them."

Entrants depart Port Townsend on a 40-mile shakedown leg to Victoria, B.C.; entrants must arrive within 36 hours to remain in the race. Monohull sailboats are most numerous. Sleek catamarans and trimarans set a quick

pace. Homemade hybrid vessels and watercraft with pedals or oars venture out. In year three, a paddleboarder completed the 750-mile transit.

**Many are called**, but a few are frozen. Capsizes, breakdowns and mishaps winnow contestants and 40 percent of entrants typically don't make it to Ketchikan. In 2022, a widespread gantlet of drifting logs along Vancouver Island knocked a number of boats out of the race—hitting multihull sailboats and nighttime sailors particularly hard.

R2AK's web site provides a real-time race tracker, linked to GPS beacons on the boats. Hundreds of thousands of race fans have followed the event. CNN, NPR, *Outside* magazine and *Senior Living* are among many media outlets that have published favorable reports over the years. The sponsor roster in Washington state and Alaska has grown. The Alaska Legislature approved a contest splitting ticket revenue with the entrant guessing closest to the winner's finish time.

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**Ketchikan**  
MUSEUMS

TONGASS HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
TOTEM HERITAGE CENTER

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Daily  
May through September

1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Tuesday – Saturday  
October through April

[KetchikanMuseums.org](http://KetchikanMuseums.org)

**Tongass Historical Museum**  
629 Dock Street  
(907) 225-5600

Through artifacts and historical photographs, learn what Ketchikan is... a story of resilience, independence, and the resourcefulness to not only survive, but to thrive.

**Totem Heritage Center**  
601 Deermount  
(907) 225-5900

Learn about 19th century totem poles and the living artistic traditions of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian who gave rise to the original totem poles on display.



GREGG POPPEN

# AVIATION

*An icon of Ketchikan's historic aviation provides a bright welcome to those arriving on Revilla Island from Ketchikan International Airport, seen across Tongass Narrows in twilight. This representation of Grumman Goose amphibians from the mid-1900s is part of projects to upgrade airport ferry infrastructure and improve the airport terminal for passenger convenience.*

ALASKA HAS MORE PILOTS AND PLANES PER CAPITA BECAUSE ALASKA HAS MORE OCEAN, LAND, ISLANDS, SMALL TOWNS AND REMOTE DESTINATIONS. FLOATPLANES HAVE BEEN BUZZING IN OUR SKIES FOR EXACTLY ONE EXCITING CENTURY. TODAY'S SMALL AIRCRAFT SHARE THE AIR WITH TWO OF THE LEADING NATIONAL AIRLINES, ALONG WITH COMMERCIAL HELICOPTERS AND FREIGHT CARRIERS.

**T**he skies above Ketchikan feature the sort of aerial mix you find only in Alaska. Floatplanes, jet aircraft, commuter planes on wheels, helicopters and bald eagles share an airspace bounded by mountainsides and offering landing sites on saltwater and tarmac.

Aviation is essential in this regional economic hub. While commercial aviation recovers from the shear winds of the global pandemic, massive capital projects on Revilla and Gravina islands will upgrade convenience and safety for outbound and inbound users of Ketchikan International Airport. A second pair of airport ferry landings will straddle the narrows. At the terminal, substantial improvements will include a long-sought second jet bridge.

**A century after the first** floatplane splashed down in Ketchikan (SEE PAGE 53), the local floatplane fleet is linked to shore along miles of waterfront, where docks provide passenger and freight access to small aircraft. We have a number of one- and two-plane businesses that make most of their revenue in the summer, when visitors see Alaska, close-up, from small aircraft. Operators also provide charter service to remote lakes and cabins. The aviation

matrix includes larger enterprises running several aircraft during the peak season.

The throbbing chuff of the DeHavilland Beaver's engine is the most familiar sound in Ketchikan's air year-round—aside from the cries of eagles and ravens. The Canadian-built plane on floats is the local workhorse for most carriers. But DeHavilland's turbine Otters are also in the air. Plane-spotters can spy a smattering of Cessnas, including Caravans.

**Recreational fliers keep** small floatplanes ready for flight, mostly during summer season. Piper Cubs are common in the pleasure fleet; one dates to 1939, with more than 60 years of flying logged around Ketchikan.

Misty Fjords National Monument, 30 miles from Ketchikan,

*While commercial aviation recovers from the shear winds of the global pandemic, massive capital projects are upgrading convenience and safety for users of the international airport*



About 100 aircraft on floats and wheels are based in Ketchikan. Most of them, like this DeHavilland Beaver coming in over Tongass Narrows, are workhorses carrying flightseers, traffic from outlying communities, mail and light freight.

is a favorite sightseeing destination. Flights to that dramatic wilderness are essential in operators' summer revenues.

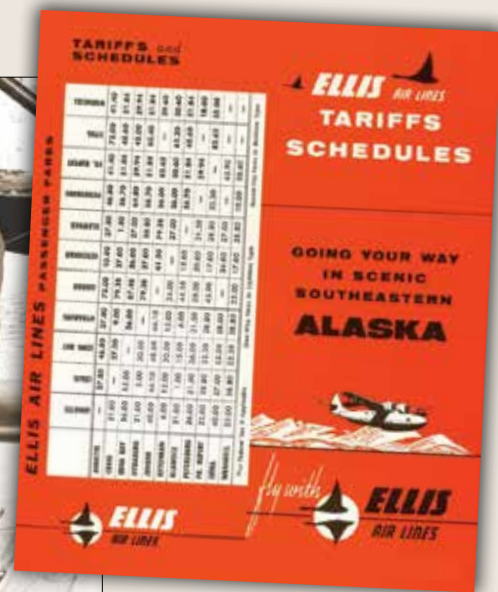
**Ketchikan International Airport** turns 50 years old in 2023 in the midst of years of capital upgrades—both in the terminal and in the airport ferry system. Gravina Island and the “city side” feature new ferry docks and ramps that add redundancy in case of breakdowns or damage in critical infrastructure. The Revilla Island side boasts new covered passenger waiting areas and improved vehicle flow. Parking on the city side is more than doubled, to 380 spaces. Art by residents graces the new construction.

Project costs of about \$70 million are paid from a remnant of a mid-1990s Congressional earmark for a bridge to the airport—the so-called “Bridge to Nowhere.” That \$223 million federal allocation was accepted by the state but was divided and diverted to projects around Alaska.

**The airport's golden-anniversary** year is scheduled for the first work on a major renovation in the terminal. TSA's security area on the first floor will be improved and passenger flow enhanced.

Local folks will be pleased by installation of a second jet bridge linking the terminal to commercial aircraft. For 50 years, whenever two jets were at the terminal, >

*COVID hit hard in 2020, when KIA logged 125,000 arrivals—just 46 percent of arrivals in the prior year. In 2021, traffic was back up to 81 percent of pre-pandemic loads. While major carriers cut flights or carried empty seats while the virus scared off travelers, charter and personal flights showed strength. Record numbers were seen by FSS in 2021 as safe social bubbles landed in Alaska.*



**ELLIS ISLANDS** Bob Ellis posed on his Waco in 1936. In the '50s, island-hopping Grummans carried passengers across a region from Prince Rupert to Juneau.

## FIRST PERSON | BOB ELLIS

“ In addition to the routine of flying and managing my small company, I took on many other activities. I kept track of the wives out there in the West Coast who were approaching motherhood, so that I could get them to the hospital in time. I kept track of the prisoners in the Ketchikan jail who were about to be released so that I could get them home before they got into further trouble, and also of the West Coast patients in the hospital, so I could report back on their progress to their relatives. I even sadly returned their dead bodies, when things did not work out so well. On every trip back to Ketchikan I stuffed my pockets with notes: buy me this, bring me back that. This I did as I wheeled about town on my bicycle. I never had a baby born in a plane that I was flying, but I had many a close call. I remember particularly Mrs. Arlie Dahl, the wife of the school principal at Craig. I urged her not to wait for the next day to go in to Ketchikan to have her baby because a storm was moving into the area. She hurriedly packed and away we flew toward Ketchikan, but the storm was not “tomorrow”—it was “today”! I butted my nose into half a dozen passes, only to find them choked with falling snow. Finally I had to go back to Craig for more gas. With Dolly still cheerfully riding along, I tried again and this time elected to land in Klawock Lake to watch the pass for a break in the visibility. The snow came down so fast it covered the wings of the Waco while we sat and hoped and waited for a clear spot. I went ashore, cut a spruce bough and when the break came I swept the wings clean. At last we sailed happily through the Harris River Pass and in twenty minutes landed at Ketchikan. One hour later Dolly's baby was born in Ketchikan General Hospital. It became a standard joke: get Ellis to shake you up for a quick, painless birth!

— From *What? No Landing Field? Adventures of an Alaskan Seaplane Pilot*, by Robert (Bob) Ellis and Margaret (Peg) Ellis, edited by Elizabeth Richardson. Bob Ellis Aviation Scholarship Foundation, 1998. Used with permission.

## FIRST PERSON | KEN EICHNER

“After I learned to fly solo and prior to getting my license ... we had a lost preacher. A Methodist preacher had gone up Deer Mountain to make a long-range hike across the mountains and was to end up in White River. A day later the airplane went to pick him up, and he wasn't there. A search started, and a couple of days later they finally spotted the preacher in a river valley where there were a lot of salmon and a lot of black bear. He was waving a handkerchief, but he apparently couldn't walk, so they came to TEMSCO and needed a helicopter to rescue him.



Ken Eichner is legendary in Southeast Alaskan aviation.

The helicopters were all out working, and I was the only one there. I had the B-model, but I didn't have a license, so I couldn't do it. They said, "You've got to do it. The preacher's

been out there three nights now, and we've got to get him." So I said, "Well, okay. I'll tell you what I'll do. You send Jack Cousins"—he'd located the preacher—"over to George Inlet, and he can locate the preacher for me by circling him. I'll come over with the helicopter and land wherever I can and pick the preacher up and take him to the beach in George Inlet, where Jack can take him back to town. That way nobody but you two will know I did it, because if I'm hauling people without a license, I'm liable to never get my license."

I took off and Jack spotted the preacher for me. I found a little muskeg which looked pretty good. It was pretty narrow, but it was big enough to get into. I had a couple hundred feet for a takeoff area, which you kind of needed with the old B-model Hiller. I landed in the muskeg and shut off the helicopter. Then I hiked down the creek and got the preacher. I was surprised to see that he had been eating dead salmon. Actually, when you get right down to it, parts of the salmon were still pretty good. The bear liked it, and the preacher said it wasn't too bad. It was sure better than nothing. The preacher's feet were so sore he couldn't walk, so I assisted him by half-carrying him back to the helicopter.

This was my first landing and takeoff in a confined area. I lifted up about a foot and made a running takeoff. I flew him down to the beach ... and Jack took the preacher to town in his little Luscombe seaplane. Well, the preacher wanted to tell the media and his congregation about the rescue, and he wanted to mention my name. I said, "No, you can't ... or I'll never get my license." ... He honored my request begrudgingly.

— From *Nine Lives of An Alaska Bush Pilot*, by Ken Eichner. Taylor Press, 2002. Used with permission. Eichner died in 2007.

*The preacher wanted to tell the media and his congregation about the rescue ... I said, 'No, you can't ... or I'll never get my license.'*



CINDY BALZER

Two national passenger carriers use Ketchikan's airport. They share a runway with express shippers; local carriers; private pilots; and occasional military training runs.

the passengers for the second had to use portable stairways pushed against the fuselage—a scene more charming in scenes from old movies than in Ketchikan's winter gales.

Alaska Airlines brings several flights a day north- and southbound to the airport. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is 680 air miles away—about one hour and 40 minutes. Juneau is 225 miles and 40 minutes distant. Rivals such as Western Airlines and Delta contended with Alaska Airlines in the 1980s and 1990s before giving up. Alaska-based MarkAir competed for less than a year before folding. Delta returned in 2015 for summer-only service.

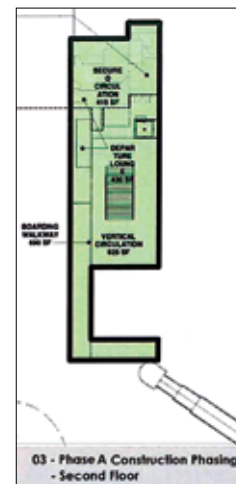
The ferries were built at Ketchikan Shipyard. MV Oral Freeman honors a Ketchikan businessman and state legislator; MV Ken Eichner II was christened as a tribute to the legendary pilot (SEE SIDEBAR AT LEFT).

Walk-on passengers pay \$6 for a same-day round trip on the ferry. An automobile costs \$7 each way.

Ketchikan International Airport's federal Flight Service Station advises aircraft on the runway and floatplanes on Tongass Narrows. Airspace in Ketchikan is unique in the nation. Along a narrow, two-mile band, floatplanes and wheeled planes share the sky above a busy waterfront of fishing vessels, cruise ships and recreational craft—a port area tightly restricted under Homeland Security. It's officially designated "uncontrolled airspace" because the air traffic isn't subject to tower control. Call it *coordinated* airspace.

Ketchikan's sky is particularly busy in summer. FSS staff count about 30,000 contacts with fliers each July, compared to a typical February tally closer to 3,500. Floatplane flightseeing to Misty Fjords National Monument is a boon to local commercial aviation and makes up for some of the passenger traffic lost when the timber industry collapsed 25 years ago. Floatplane trips to remote fishing lodges are another seat-filler for local operators, who emplane some passengers at the airport's floatplane dock.

Flight Service Station staff estimate that about 100 aircraft on wheels or floats and about 20 helicopters are based here.



This is a bridge to somewhere: KIA will install a second jetway.

# AERIAL DARING: EARLY PILOTS OPENED A FRONTIER A CENTURY AGO

## KETCHIKAN CELEBRATES A CENTURY OF AVIATION

**One of Ketchikan's own** completed the first flight from Seattle to Ketchikan on July 17, 1922. Roy Jones touched down in his small Curtis MF "flying boat" on Tongass Narrows to the cheers of hundreds of residents crowding floats and rooftops downtown. Ketchikan thus became the First City for coastal flights, not just for plodding steamships. The inaugural aircraft wasn't much: a double wing with a push-prop engine mounted on an open boat hull. But it was a flying start.

Jones sold his passenger seat in Northbird to dozens of excited flightseers that summer. He also developed a business flying passengers out to inspect fish traps, to look at mining prospects or to take quick trips to outlying communities. Jones' short-lived prominence in Alaskan aviation was rewarded with permanent honors: two mountain peaks in the ridge behind Ketchikan are named Roy Jones Mountain and Northbird Mountain.

The next historically notable flights came in 1929 and featured Bob Ellis, a native Vermonter who was navigator for the first Seattle to Juneau non-stop that year; Alaska Washington Airways' Lockheed Vega made the trip in about seven hours. The airline soon made regular circuits of the region. Ellis earned his pilot's license and flew out of Juneau for several years, learning tricky weathers and challenging terrains. In 1936 he took the yoke of his own flying business, founding Ellis Air Transport in Ketchikan and writing aviation history.

## AMPHIBS RULED THE AIR

**Ellis' personal enthusiasm** and aerial skills, complemented by a loyal hangar crew, powered steady growth. Ellis flew regularly to the west coast of Prince of Wales Island and occasionally to Seattle. He served in Alaska with the Navy Air Force during the war and was elected mayor when he came home. His company flew half a dozen aircraft and employed a couple of dozen people by the 1940s. At its zenith, the re-



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*In 1922, Roy Jones and the Northbird made the first flight from Seattle to Ketchikan. Jones posed in his open cockpit in Juneau in 1923. Note the Hills Bros. coffee endorsement sign above him.*



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*Commercial aviation arrived in March 1929.*

named Ellis Air Lines had versatility and passenger capacity unmatched in Southeast Alaska, operating eight Grumman Goose amphibians and a PBY. Pan Am's Ketchikan-bound passengers landed on the runway at the WW II air base on Annette Island and rode Ellis Air Lines' 18-mile amphibious shuttle to a water landing in Ketchikan—a 12-minute flight. The company took visitors into the sky for flightseeing during the summer season. Shuttles, flightseeing, charters and mail flights kept 100 Ellis Air Lines employees busy into the 1960s.

Local aviation burgeoned in Alaska after the war and every city of consequence boasted one or more flying services. The timber industry's demand for convenient travel to far-flung sites and visitors' desire for flightseeing drove demand. Ellis merged his airline with Alaska Coastal Airways in the '60s. Coastal-Ellis folded into the fleet that became Alaska Airlines.

**Southeast Alaska's** first helicopter service grew along with increasingly diverse industrial activities. Ken Eichner was a pilot of wheeled and float-mounted small aircraft when he branched into choppers in 1959. His business listed its customer base in an acronym, TEMSCO: Timber, Exploration, Mining, Surveying and Cargo Operations. Choppers were handy for mining prospectors. TEMSCO provided aid to businesses and agencies developing mountaintop communications. The company flew surveyors and timber cruisers and provided field support for heavy-lift choppers. Tourists boarded TEMSCO whirlybirds for flights over the so-called Ketchikan Alps. TEMSCO extended to Juneau in the 1980s and provided contract service in the Lower 48.

Eichner was a founder of Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad. KVRS relied on TEMSCO's helicopters for search and rescue.

## PAN AM CAME AND WENT AND CAME BACK

Ketchikan's scheduled commercial air connection to Seattle and the Lower 48 opened in August 1938, when Pan American Airways brought in floating Clipper aircraft for test flights. Townsfolk were so excited about the first flight that police cleared crowds from the docks for fear they'd sink. The thrill was short-lived: Pan Am ended service four months later, defeated by Alaskan winds and weather.

**Pan Am resumed** so-called Ketchikan service after World War II, landing wheeled DC-3s at a wartime runway near Metlakatla; passengers shuttled to Ketchikan in amphibians. By 1958, Pan Am was flying Boeing 707s to Annette. The airline was decertified in Alaska by the FAA years later and other carriers took over.

In August 1973, Ketchikan International Airport opened on Gravina Island with a 7,500-foot runway and south taxiway (suited to our predominant winds). A federal grant added a north taxiway in 2005.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*Pan Am 'landed' four-engine aircraft in 1938. Paved runways were years and one island distant.*

# PURSUIITS

NATURAL FEATURES AND FACILITIES WE'VE BUILT  
PROVIDE MYRIAD RECREATIONAL OPTIONS.  
KETCHIKAN PEOPLE TAKE UP ALL SORTS  
OF PURSUIITS—WITH THE EMPHASIS  
ON OUTDOOR ALTERNATIVES  
FROM HIKING TO SCUBA.

**K**etchikan has practically numberless recreational opportunities. Do the math. Multiply four seasons by our two environments, land and sea. Factor in elevations from sea level to thousands of feet and multiply again with human-powered and motor-driven options.

Go the other direction from the top of the tide: Snorkelers and scuba divers find that our clean, clear water is a plus for observing sea life.

A couple of decades of decisive public investments have made sure that there's something active and engaging for everyone, from tots on trikes at the Rec Center to seniors backstroking in the public lap pool.

Dozens of serious runners chase improved times and fitness, while families engage in the running club's fun events on pavement and trails. Hikers follow sunlight to alpine heights. Snowmachiners pack white trails into the backcountry. We support youth baseball, soccer, football, basketball and softball.

**Adults go** to the ocean to paddle quietly in kayaks or to zip up and down the channels in high-powered skiffs. But alongside all of our other recreations, we are simply passionate about this fishing thing.

Outsiders seem to think all we do for kicks up here is to fish for king salmon. Not true!

*Hiking trails  
wind through rain forest  
up to alpine heights, where the  
islands of this archipelago come into view.*



RAFAEL VALENCIA





There are coho salmon and sockeyes. There are halibut and ling cod. And those are just the saltwater targets. Visit freshwater and you're looking at steelhead, cutthroats and Dolly Varden.

**Fishing really is** a great pastime because it occurs when the weather is best; it's a good family activity in the outdoors; and when you're lucky, you get something tasty out of it.

King salmon return as adults in May and June. Pinks and chums are back in midsummer. Cohos, or silvers, arrive as two subspecies: summer cohos and fall cohos. There isn't a week of summer when there isn't some salmon species swimming through our waters. And if you like the white meat of bottomfish, drop bait or a lure to the bottom and jig for a halibut—*our* other white meat. You don't have to own a boat to enjoy salmon fishing. Ingratiate yourself with friends who have boats, or rent from any of several waterside businesses. When pinks and cohos are running plentifully, you can hook them from shore. But be sure you're legal for season, gear and area. In 1909, the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries was compelled to post a warning on Ketchikan Creek: "Tourists are prohibited from catching salmon in the creek with their bare hands."

## WE'RE SWITCHING TO THE SILVER STANDARD

**The pinnacle** of local salmon fishing is the annual salmon derby, sponsored by the Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailers Association (CHARR) and benefiting their scholarship fund. Salmon derbies have been perennial features of local angling since last mid-century. The contests took the form of king salmon derbies until 2018. Organizers switched the target over to coho, or silver, salmon on the counsel of state biologists concerned about king counts. The abundance of natural and hatchery cohos is believed to better support the efforts of hundreds of participants. Besides, said silver derby boosters, three days of fishing for 15-pound cohos is a better fit for family fishing than three weekends of chasing rare, 40-plus-pound king salmon.

The new silver salmon derby ran two years before a pandemic hiatus in 2020 and 2021. The contest returned in 2022, slightly re-branded, as the First Annual CHARR Silver Salmon Derby and was conducted on the three-day Labor Day weekend. First prize for the heaviest coho landed was \$5,000 and two round-trip tickets on Alaska Airlines. In a conservationist concession for a revamped derby, organizers did away with the longstanding annual cash prize for greatest total poundage of salmon weighed in by an angler; the thought was that the prize encouraged excessive harvest of the salmon run.

Is this a great scheme, or what? They give Alaskans a chance at cash prizes for something they do anyway.

*The silver salmon derby is a whale of a good time for anglers—and that's literally true when humpback whales feed amid our boats. Kayakers go quietly along island shorelines and enjoy our wild coast up close.*

Steelhead fishing is popular in remote streams on Revilla Island and on Prince of Wales Island. Dolly Varden and several species of trout abound throughout the region. Crabbing and shrimping are popular pursuits. Subsistence sockeye harvest is allowed in some rivers nearby. >



Remote cabins are the places to be for solitude and fishing. U.S. Forest Service has recreational cabins throughout Tongass National Forest; more than a dozen are within 75 miles of Ketchikan. Some are on salt water, some on estuaries, many on high lakes accessible only via floatplane. They're rustic, but they're well-maintained and sited in spectacular settings. Many are equipped with small boats. Reservations are available online with USFS.

**In winter**, if it's raining downtown, it's probably snowing 2,000 feet up. That brings out the Ketchikan Snowmobile Club, which has developed high-country trails. Most are at 1,500 feet in elevation or higher. A member described parts of KSC trails as "aggressive—not for the faint of heart." The club maintains an alpine cabin on Forest Service land.

## TAKE A HIKE

Hikers have a leg up, so to speak, partly due to the work of the Ketchikan Outdoor Recreation and Trails Coalition. The group participated with government agencies on design and construction of trails.

The U.S. Forest Service maintains miles of trail through the forest. Several reach into alpine country and offer grand vistas of summits, islands and sea.

**Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad** recommends hikers pack emergency Spot beacons with them on backcountry visits. The potentially lifesaving devices are available as free loaners. KQRS distributes the beacons through Ketchikan Visitors Bureau tour centers and the public library.

Residents have invested generously in recreation facilities. The borough's Parks and Recreation Department runs the popular Gateway Recreation Center, built in the 1990s. Two basketball courts are also used for indoor soccer, roller skating and pickleball. The workout room has weights and fitness equipment. Three courts welcome racquetball, handball and squash players. Aerobics, dance, martial arts and special programs use a large room with a custom floor. The rec center offers kids' activity space, meeting rooms and table tennis. Runners and walkers use a twelfth-mile track on the mezzanine. Parks and Rec rents rec gear.

Skateboarders have a new facility beside the creek at a concrete bowl where dozens of youngsters hang out and practice tricks on sunny days. The borough donated land and funding; the City of Ketchikan contributed site prep. Ketchikan Youth Initiatives spearheaded the project.

## POOL FACILITATES FITNESS AND COMPETITION

**The Gateway Aquatic Center** beside the rec center offers an eight-lane competition pool for



Free loaner Spot beacons can be lifesavers.



GREGG POPPEN



ZOE SOBEL

*State Highway 7 stretches only about 34 miles from end to end, but our Harley-Davidson riders make the most of the macadam. Their massed transits on well-shined bikes are usually benefits for kids or for local folks in need. Ketchikan Running Club organizes year-round runs (and walks, and trail treks)—from marathons for the fittest to sprints for the littlest. Classic-car enthusiasts toil away in their shops until special occasions such as Independence Day call for a Ketchikan Krusters exhibit of autos; here, a visitor admires a '33 Packard, Shelby GT and two-tone Studebaker.*



GREGG POPPEN



KGB



TY RETTKE



COURTESY OF KWVC



SAUNYA ALLOWAY



MARINE LIFE WHITNEY CRITTENDEN



NICK BOWMAN

*Snowmachine enthusiasts make tracks when winter loads snow on remote public roads. At roads' end, high country beckons, with long alpine ridges providing miles of white stuff and panoramic views.*

fitness-swimming adults and competitive swimmers. Ketchikan has scads of recreational sports leagues. Young basketball players participate in the recreational Dribblers League. Ketchikan Youth Soccer League has a fall season outdoors and a mid-winter season indoors. Ketchikan Little League provides baseball for boys and softball for girls each summer. Adults compete in a fall-winter basketball league and take to the softball fields for fast-pitch and slow-pitch over the summer.

Ketchikan Running and Walking Club sponsors a season of marathons and shorter runs from March to late summer, including 5Ks for fun and a grueling sprint up and down Deer Mountain. The Totem to Totem Run sends runners and walkers from Totem Bight State Historical Park on the north end to Saxman's Totem Row—a half-marathon distance. Tongass Treks trail events and runs for youngsters round out the club's offerings aimed at fitness and camaraderie.

## DEEP SUBJECTS

**Scuba diving is a popular pursuit.** Dozens of avid divers go to the depths year-round. Gateway Aquatic Center provides competitive and fitness swimmers alike with first-class facilities—but some folks just want to do the water slide. The skate board park, scenically situated beside the creek, has two bowls. A new disc golf course at Point Higgins engages Frisbee fans. Divers find a world of surprising color and variety in our pristine ocean waters. A commercial shop caters to divers.

Most use dry suits. Summer temperatures at 30 feet are typically about 50 degrees Fahrenheit; winter water is around 42 degrees. Clarity is slightly better during winter, but visibility is good any time of year. North Pacific waters hold a wealth of colorful and exotic species, from corals and sponges to octopuses and rockfish. Anemones and shellfish abound. Wind & Water Charters and Scuba, Ketchikan's only commercial dive shop, provides gear, supplies and training.

# RECREATION WORKED AROUND NATURE

TIME FOR RECREATION was scant in Ketchikan's early days. Frontier folks fished for food more than for recreation. They cut trees to clear homesites, not to vie for July 4th chainsaw championships. Those pursuits came much later.

But even pioneers found time for the national pastime—in the time between high tides, anyway. Ketchikan had a tidal-flats baseball field from about 1903. Local guys competed against teams from Metlakatla, Juneau and Canada. Fishing boats rested at the margins of the nearly level alluvial silt. (Home plate was 12 feet under at highest tide.) In the 1920s, baseball moved to a filled expanse above Schoenbar Creek; by 1933 the creek mouth was dredged out for Thomas Basin.

Canoe races on Tongass Narrows drew crowds to the wharf on the Fourth of July in the early 1900s—but these canoes were long wooden models made in traditional style by Alaska



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

EVERY GAME WAS A TIDE GAME—LOW TIDE Hometown hero Lawrence Kubley was a blur after a hit against Juneau in this August 1912 baseball game on the tidal flats. Ketchikan Miner reported that Kubley 'put one on the dry kiln' of the nearby mill for a home run in Ketchikan's 2-1 victory.

Natives. Nearer mid-century on the Fourth, local folks formed a flotilla of boats and barges for a picnic at Black Sand Beach on Gravina Island.

WINTER RECREATION employed snow and gravity. City-sanctioned "coasting" occurred on Main Street after deep snowfall. Skiers used Nordic gear on

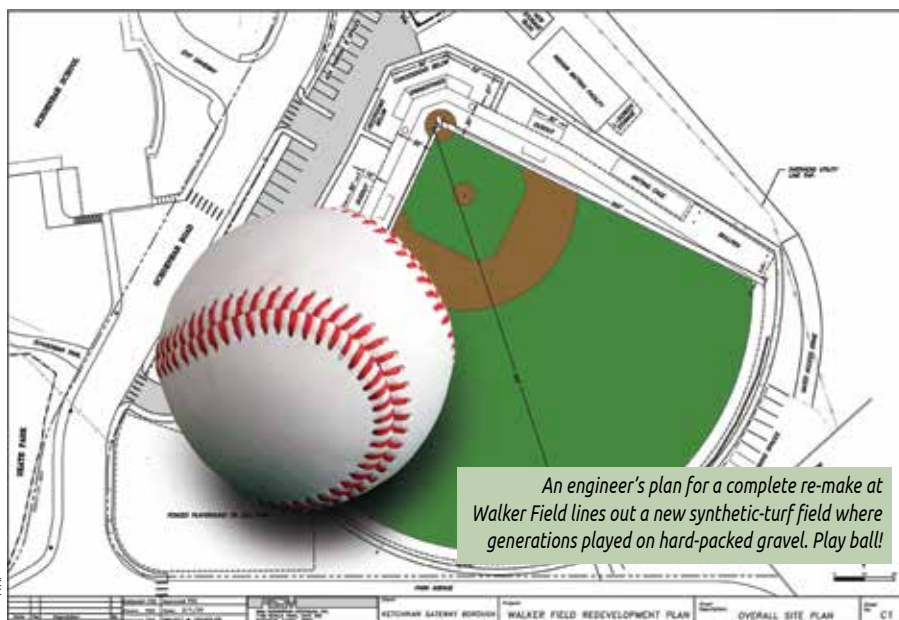
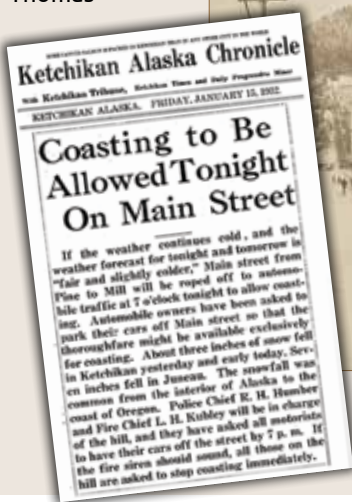
mountain slopes, climbing for each run. A diesel-powered rope tow was run by volunteers at a small ski slope near Lake Harriet Hunt in the 1970s-'80s.

As the timber industry boomed in the 1960s, a loggers rodeo at Walker Field joined Independence Day activities. Loggers came in from farflung camps to compete in cutting and climbing events, sometimes joined by local men. That so-called "timber carnival" ended early in this century as timber industry employment waned.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

Pedestrians and sledsters only: Five blocks of Main Street often became a 'coasting' course by civic decree. This 1932 afternoon paper notified eager families of a snowy slope given over to fun.



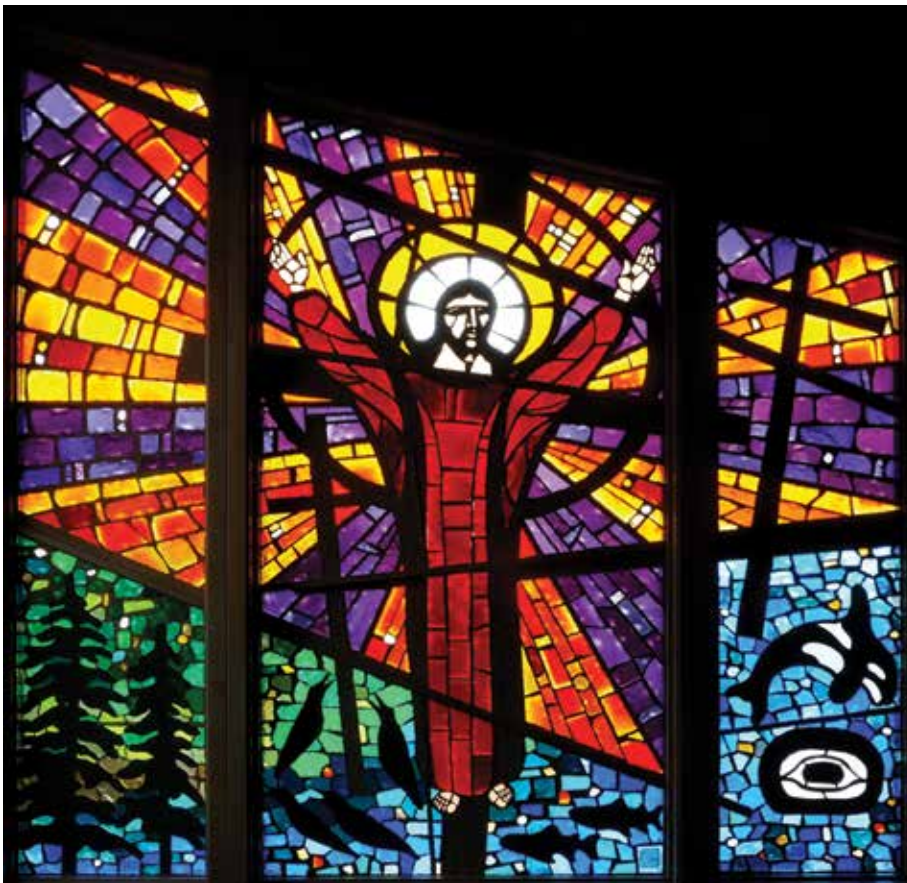
An engineer's plan for a complete re-make at Walker Field lines out a new synthetic-turf field where generations played on hard-packed gravel. Play ball!

## BALL FIELDS ARE IN FOR UPGRADES

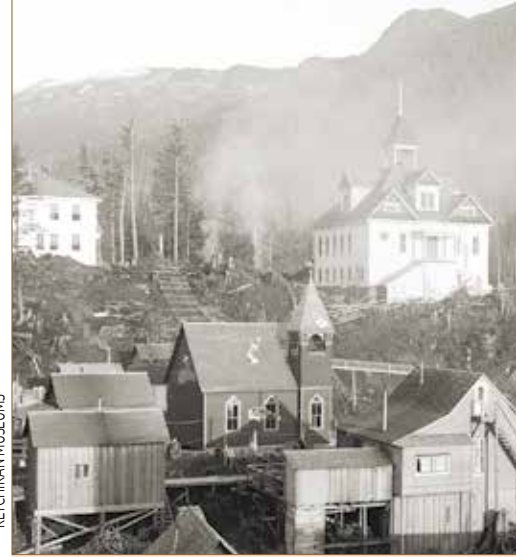
New fields for Ketchikan's baseball and softball players will follow decades of eccentric bounces, mudholes and bandaging over gravel abrasions.

Voters in Ketchikan Gateway Borough in 2021 approved \$6.1 million in bond funding to remake Norman Walker Field and North Dudley Field with artificial turf. Major upgrades in facilities from seating to scoreboards and lighting are also in the plans. South Dudley Field and Houghtaling Field will also be upgraded and amenities improved, but those playing surfaces will still be sand.

Funding for the projects is expected to come from an existing half-cent sales tax for recreational facilities.



*CHROMATICALLY DAZZLING CHRISTIANITY* The stained glass window at Holy Name Catholic Church artfully poses the Redeemer with local elements taken from nature and Alaska Native culture.



*Methodists' new church was down the hill from Main School—at today's Main and Grant streets.*

## GOSPEL RUSHED TO ALASKA WITH MINERS AND FISHERS

**Ketchikan was opened** to the gospel in a sort of missionary cascade as the 19th century gave way to the frontier's frenzied boom. Early-arriving denominations established congregations still active today.

The first to preach here was the Rev. James Young, a Presbyterian who founded a Saxman school in 1895 for Tlingits relocated from villages.

In 1897, the Episcopal Rev. A.J. Campbell offered services around Ketchikan, mostly for Alaska Native people. In 1898, Agnes Edmond opened an Episcopal mission school. A Jesuit priest, the Rev. A. Trivelli, celebrated mass in 1899. The Rev. V. Roy Bennett, a Methodist, followed in 1900. Fellow Methodists in 1901 were first to build a Ketchikan church: at Grant and Main, where First United Methodist stands today. St. John's Episcopal Church went up beside the Edmond mission school in 1903. The church is still in use; fill has pushed the sea back hundreds of feet, to Thomas Basin.

**The Jesuits, in 1904**, refashioned a schoolhouse as their church. It was used until 1969; Holy Name Catholic Church is now in the upper West End. Presbyterians established a mission in 1925 and built a church on Stedman Street in 1931; they meet nowadays on Second Avenue. First Lutheran Church lifted its steeple in 1930 in Newtown, amid an enclave of Norwegian fishermen.

# WORSHIP

**T**he visitor or new resident interested in a congenial church home will find the range of Christian denominations well-represented in the community.

St. John's Episcopal Church is in the heart of downtown on Mission Street—the very street named for its pioneering mission on the frontier. Congregants worship in a wood-paneled sanctuary built in 1903.

First United Methodist Church parishioners worship at Main and Grant streets, where their forebears were the first in Ketchikan to erect a church building.

First Lutheran Church E.L.C.A. calls worshippers to a prominent sanctuary founded literally on the rock—surmounting an outcropping at the edge of Newtown.

**Holy Name Catholic Church** is one of the larger congregations in town.

The parish sanctuary is along Jackson Street in the West End.

Many other churches are firmly established in Ketchikan. Among them are Baptists and Presbyterians; Church of the Nazarene and Church of God; Church of Christ and the Assembly of God; and Seventh-Day Adventists.

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have active ministries in Ketchikan.

**Clover Pass Community Church** is on the north end and a sister fellowship, South Tongass Alliance Church, is at Fawn Mountain south of town; the two ministries are affiliated with Christian Missionary Alliance.

The Salvation Army has a strong presence at harborside downtown.

A group adhering to the Baha'i Faith is active.



GREGG POPPEN

Uncommon pupils pass through the commons at Ketchikan High School, beneath suspended artwork evoking Alaska Native culture. Among the stellar students in recent years were national champions in academics and Alaska champs in several athletic disciplines.

## THE COMMUNITY COMMITTS TO SUCCESS IN SCHOOLING FROM PRE-K TO POST-GRAD

**K**etchikan is committed to a public education system with diverse school choices from elementary grades to high school and up-to-date technology all the way.

Beyond high school, young adults and lifelong learners find a rich array of classroom-based and distance-delivered offerings at University of Alaska Southeast Ketchikan campus—which boast resources of the U of A system and the close-up concerns of the community college that thrived here from the 1950s.

Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District has five elementary schools and sends the community’s youngsters on to three options for middle school and two choices for high school.

Ketchikan High School is a spacious and light-filled place designed to accommodate 650 students. A challenging and broad-based academic program is housed in the distinctive architecture of so-called Kayhi.

Vocational programs at the high school include courses in conventional “shop” areas, but Ketchikan’s proximity to the sea and to commercial fishing grounds drives an appropriate program in maritime education. Faculty use the commercially equipped, 45-foot-long MV Jack Cotant and a 16-foot skiff as classrooms. And they’re not just going through the motions. Kayhi’s maritime program is the only one in Alaska to own a permit to fish commercially for halibut.

## SCHOLARS GET SUPPORT AND THEY ACHIEVE

**Public schools in** Ketchikan marshal 160 dedicated professional educators, dozens of paraprofessionals and other support staff. The special-education program serves all disability categories. Advanced placement courses are offered in math, science, English and social studies. Kayhi’s AP program was recently ranked in the top 50 in the U.S.

Ketchikan’s music and extracurricular programs excel in the region and statewide. The KHS drama, debate and forensics team won the Alaska title in 2016. The academic decathlon team won the state competition in 2018 and, months later, the squad was a national champion. Athletics squads have also excelled in recent years (SEE SECOND PAGE FOLLOWING).

In late 2022, Disney licensed the Kayhi theatre program for production of the stage version of *Frozen*. Only one scholastic drama department in each state won that honor, which spares the production from licensing fees.

In 2022, the KHS graduating class claimed more than 200 academic and vocational scholarships amounting to more than \$3.4 million.

**The district and the community** support our athletes. Kayhi teams compete regionally and statewide in basketball; swimming; volleyball; wrestling; soccer; baseball; softball; track and field; and cross country. They’re truly student-athletes: in 2017 our boys’ basketball team won the third-place trophy at the state tournament and ranked highest academically. We also prize the social



Schoenbar Middle School

aspect of athletics: Kayhi's baseball team took the good sportsmanship award at state in the same year.

Borough homeowners levy property tax to support local public schools. More than half of school operational funding comes from the State of Alaska. The state has been a vigorous champion of school construction in recent decades, reimbursing the greater part of building costs.

The \$10 million renovation of Schoenbar Middle School brought the community's primary facility for 7th- and 8th-graders up to date several years ago. Middle-schoolers may also enroll for 7th and 8th grades at Ketchikan Charter School or Revilla Junior-Senior High School. Revilla School, with about 100 students, is based on independent study with subject packets, led by professional teachers.

## AN ARRAY OF PRIMARY COLORS

**Valley Park Elementary School** opened in 1973 in Bear Valley, cutting-edge at the time for its open classroom plan and massive timber posts holding it above a play area. The building is emblematic of Ketchikan's demand for education options: It houses both Ketchikan Charter School, a core-knowledge elementary program founded in 1997, and Tongass School of Arts and Sciences. Point Higgins Elementary opened in 1986 12 miles north of



Fawn Mountain Elementary School



Point Higgins Elementary School

town. Houghtaling School, established in the 1950s, offers a traditional neighborhood setting. The newest facility, Fawn Mountain Elementary School, traces its lineage to White Cliff Elementary School, which closed in 2003.

Ketchikan's elementary schools augment classroom programs with Battle of the Books and Scripps Spelling Bee. Students are introduced to Alaska Native culture and visits with culture bearers enhance the immersion. Ketchikan kids look forward all year to Beach Days.

## FAST TRACK IS AT ONLINE SPEED

**The district launched** Fast Track Virtual School in 2009. Fast Track enrolls local and distance students. Online classes are supervised by highly qualified teachers and the program provides support to home-schooling families. Every student receives a computer, an internet connection and financial support for the curriculum. Customized instructional methods ensure all students' needs are met. PACE School, based in Craig on Prince of Wales Island, has a Ketchikan program for K-12 students. PACE (Personal Alternative Choices in Education) provides funding for conventional and online components. The curriculum, led by qualified teachers, is delivered online. PACE provides Internet access and computers.

# Surviving middle school

## 'SURVIVOR SCHOENBAR' IS CAMPING SMARTS PLUS SCHOOLING IN OVERCOMING MISHAP

**No one is voted** off the island—but *everyone* gets graded.

For half a century, Schoenbar Middle School 8th-graders have ended their school year with the "survival trip"—science learning designed partly to train Alaskans to keep a maritime mishap from turning into a deadly disaster.

Scores of middle-schoolers carrying modest provisions and minimal gear are dropped off on a remote island shore in late May for a two-day exam. There's one overarching test question: How would you survive until rescuers arrive?



PHOTOS: JACKIE KIMBALL



Sea cukes, primitively processed, are survival trip fare. Plastic sheets make simple shelters.

Among correct answers are: sheet-plastic shelters; smoky fires; intertidal critters cooked in coffee cans; and cold nights on hard ground—plus, don't eat the mussels.

### Schoenbar teachers

Steve Kinney, Lyle Huntley and Don Knapp devised this addition to the science curriculum in 1973. Back then, it was common for youngsters to help on their families' commercial fishing boats—so the population at risk on the sea included teachers' pupils. As a commercial

fisher and marine educator, Kinney saw the value in schooling kids on how to tough it out after disaster and before rescue.

Science teachers open the curriculum for 7th-graders with lessons on camping, clothing, firebuilding and bear safety. They also cover orienteering and first aid. A night of remote camping in May tests students' learning.

Eighth-graders' training boosts the privation index. Kids study how to forage safely in the sea and ashore and how to make shelters. They practice cold-water safety and learn how to avoid marine toxins such as PSP—commonly found in local shellfish. They get a refresher on firebuilding. On the side, students learn to assemble a waterproof survival kit for their families' boats. Former students have told teachers that these kits were lifesavers when boats sank.

**On a late-May week** with at least passable weather, a fleet of local boats ferries 8th-graders, teachers and a handful of parent chaperones to some wild island shore. Each student lands with a sleeping bag; plastic sheeting; a length of cord; and whatever fits in a coffee can—e.g., rice, fire starter, pocket knife, snack bars, salt and pepper.

Generations of students have graduated from Ketchikan's survival trip—a science class with lifelong benefits.



# AcDc was aces in national triumph

**Ketchikan High School's** academic decathlon team was U.S.-best in their first-ever national competition.

Kayhi AcDc hung a national-champ banner in the Kayhi commons after the 2018 contest in Frisco, Texas.

Eight KHS "decathletes" won twenty-five individual medals, taking at least one medal in all 10 events. The team earned the trip to Texas by winning Alaska's academic decathlon for the first time in 2018. In Texas, Kayhi contended in Division III for small schools and



MARY FABRY

Adrian Ronquillo Charisma Manalo Emme Andersen Max Varela Largim Zhuta Lydia Sumrall Megan Cornwall Mackenzie Fousel Coach Peter Stanton

claimed rookie of the year honors as the highest-scoring team new to the championship. National competition drew 49 U.S. teams. Kayhi can also claim to be as good as China's best. Twenty

Chinese teams and three from the United Kingdom competed in Texas and the Kayhi AcDc octet tied for first in Division III with Beijing National Day School.

## KAYHI HANGS STATE-CHAMP BANNERS

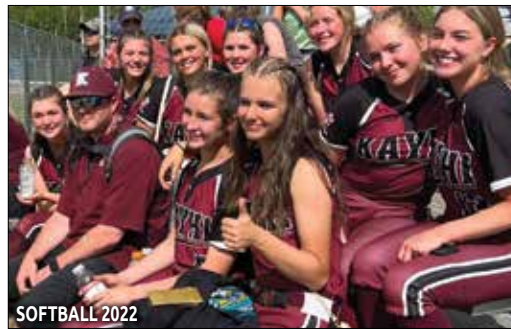
Kayhi Kings and Lady Kings athletes won Alaska championships on both sides of the pandemic.

The boys' basketball team won the 2019 Alaska championship for large schools. The dozen did it dirty, overcoming an 8th-place seeding and three successive double-digit, second-half point deficits. The triumph in Anchorage earned the Kings their first state banner in 45 years. The Ketchikan High School cheer squad also claimed a first-place trophy in the 2019 state meet.

In 2021-22, the first full school year undimmed by pandemic, Lady Kings softball won the state trophy convincingly, outscoring opponents 35-11.

The girls' basketball team took third place in the state tournament in 2021-22.

Kayhi's boys soccer team turned an at-large berth into a best-ever third-place Alaska finish in 2019. Kayhi's baseball team, long accustomed to statewide success, earned second place in 2019.



SOFTBALL 2022

COURTESY OF KAYHI SOFTBALL



BASKETBALL 2019

ASAA.ORG



CHEER 2019

ASAA.ORG

## A CAMPUS OF THE STATEWIDE U. IS THE LOCAL LINK TO HIGHER ED

**University of Alaska** Southeast Ketchikan Campus offers strengths of the statewide U of A system plus close-up benefits of an award-winning local faculty.

Programs and technology at Ketchikan Campus are designed to meet the needs of distance and on-campus students—whether in single courses for professional and personal development or in work toward a degree. The supportive staff keeps students on track for local and distance-delivered certificates, associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees.

Ketchikan Testing Center offers more than 500 different professional exams on 22 different testing platforms. The facility



Traditional classroom instruction and a broad range of distance-learning credits are available through UAS.

gives professionals, students and job-seekers alike opportunities to take exams on-campus, saving time and travel costs.

**UAS Maritime Training Center** in Ketchikan is home to the region's only Class A full-mission bridge ship simulator. Students and working professionals use the tech for training in simulated seascapes and environmental settings of Southeast Alaska. The maritime center also offers more than 30 U.S.C.G.-approved courses for career paths such as able seaman, deckhand, ship's captain and QMED (qualified member, engine department).

UAS Ketchikan offers affordable tuition and excellent instruction for those training for specific high-demand jobs, earning industry credentials or studying for a certificate or degree in one of more than 70 programs.



# SCHOOLING WAS IN FOCUS FROM THE FOUNDING

**Frontier Ketchikan** rang in a new century and sounded a school bell pretty much at the same time.

Among the first acts of the Ketchikan Common Council after incorporation in 1900 were electing a School Board and setting a property tax of 7.5 mills, heavily weighted toward support of education.

Local leaders budgeted \$752 for a six-month school session and spent \$1,377 to build, and \$180 to paint, a schoolhouse along boardwalk Main Street. One teacher was hired.

In the early years, schools popped up at Saxman, Gravina Island and Wacker City near Ward Cove. (The Saxman schoolhouse from the late 1890s is the oldest local building.) There was a state school at Charcoal Point, near today's Alaska ferry terminal, for kids out a rough road. Clover Pass families opened a school at the far north end in the '40s. (The building's restoration was a project conducted by north-end neighbors with support from Historic Ketchikan Inc.)



*Gravina Island families supported a one-room school in the early 1900s.*

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

**Main School** served students from kindergarten through high school. In the 1920s, fast-growing Ketchikan was the most populous city in Alaska, with more than 5,000 residents. In 1927, White Cliff Elementary School opened for Newtown and West End kids. It was Alaska's oldest school building when it closed in 2003; the building was renovated for offices years later.

Alaska Natives attended a Bureau of Indian Affairs school in Ketchikan's first half-century.

Lawsuits, time and hard-won wisdom ended that separation in the late 1940s.

**Houghtaling Elementary** in the upper West End opened in the 1950s, as did a new Ketchikan High School, responding to the population boost tied to the pulp mill's startup.

Schoenbar Junior High was built at creekside in the 1960s and came in for a thorough renovation in 2005.



*BIA ran a school for Alaska Native children on Deermount Street.*

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



*North-end families built Clover Pass School after WWII.*

HKI

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# ARTS



Alaskan eyes  
Alaskanize canvas  
and paper in  
diverse styles.



Ray Troll *KATMAI BEARS*  
Terry Pyles *NEW EDDYSTONE AFTERNOON*  
Dave Rubin *EVELYN VANDERHOOP*  
Mary Ida Henrikson *ROAD LESS TRAVELED*



**K**etchikan is uniquely nourishing and encouraging for visual and performing artists. The community also boasts an amazing array of talented crafters. There's a wide array of galleries and stages for artistry of all kinds and an audience that's eager to enjoy it all.

And in the shadow of a forest, art fashioned from wood fiber is the native glory. Crane-your-neck totem poles and intricate basketry woven from conifer root and bark express a living heritage.

We were already vitally active in Northwest Coast arts and Western European art forms in the 1990s, when an author named Ketchikan among the "top 100 small art towns" in the nation. Alaska Native artists and traditional painters alike find a home in this charged scene. The First City also boasts a variety of what you might call "participation arts"—performing groups, artisan exhibitions, folk-art gatherings and seasonal festivals.

If we're a *small* art town, we're also a *tall* art town. Totem poles and sculptural pieces on harbor pilings represent the salience of creativity in our lives.

**Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council (KAAHC)** is the hub for arts programs. The nonprofit produces some of our favorite cultural events and provides an umbrella for volunteer-led organizations. The arts and humanities council collaborates with other arts organizations, as in Giggelfeet Dance Festival, produced with First City Players and Ketchikan Theatre Ballet.

Several long-running arts features are homegrown and engage the community. KAAHC's Wearable Art Show each February stretches fashion into fantasies of myriad materials. First staged here on a small scale in 1986, "Wearable" has grown to encompass three sold-out evening performances

FINE ART. FOLK ART. FIBER ART.  
 ECCENTRIC WEARABLE ART.  
 DANCERS AND QUILTERS.  
 JAZZ, CABARET, COFFEEHOUSE.  
 NO END IN SIGHT—OR SOUND.

that put dozens of eccentric and elaborate artistic pieces on the runway.

The arts and humanities council brings performers to town in the Torch Nights Performing Arts series. A new enterprise in art and culture debuted in autumn 2022 with the IDEA Festival.

The humanities side of the council is engaged in Stories at Latitude 56: informal presentations of first-person narratives *a la* "The Moth."

**Main Street Gallery** in KAAHC's historic building downtown presents diverse fine-art exhibitions

in monthly series. Remarkable resident talents and selected outsiders deserving our attention put up work across a generous range—painting, sculpture, fiber art, photography, even sound. Several private galleries, from old downtown and Creek Street to the Plaza mall in the West End, are open year-round and show amazing arrays of Alaska-born art. Two of them feature traditional artwork in the Northwest Coast tradition.

**First City Players** (FCP) produces a full season of mainstage and second-stage shows. Each fall's musical production enlists scores of community members. The likes of *Cabaret*, *My Fair Lady* and *Mamma Mia!* have opened recent FCP seasons in the auditorium at the high school, which features professional-quality theatrical apparatus. The community theatre group's seasons range into drama and comedy. Youngsters learn theatre arts in summer productions by the student company. >



GREGG POPPEN



GREGG POPPEN



GREGG POPPEN



MONTHLY GRIND

*Ketchikan's Wearable Art Show is always eclectic and oftentimes electric—as in artist and model Loren McCue's lighted piece 'Dreamweaver.'* First City Players' seasons range through musicals, dramas, comedies and youth shows. Andiamo Dance Company is an outlet for professional-level dancers and aspiring student performers. Monthly Grind variety shows enliven the clan house nine months of the year.



CREGG POPPEN

*SONGS IN A MAJOR QUAY* Local musicians perform outdoors on the ship berths in summertime, a program sponsored by the arts and humanities council. In a historic building downtown that was converted from longtime use as a Christian Science reading room, Main Street Gallery hosts monthly exhibits of creative work by residents and occasionally features talented visiting artists.

FCP's Jazz & Cabaret Festival every January brings in professional musicians for a song camp with local singers and instrumentalists, followed by gala evening performances.

Ketchikan Theatre Ballet trains scores of young dancers each year in areas from classical ballet to jazz and tap. KTB is Alaska's oldest dance school. Professional instructors and volunteers produce shows in February and May and present *The Nutcracker* every holiday season. Andiamo Dance Company is a professional-level nonprofit focusing on training and performance.

Our populace is deeply engaged in creative and expressive endeavors. Quilters, painters, folk dancers, bagpipers, harpists, Renaissance fanciers, drummers and lovers of any number of other pursuits find their outlets in Ketchikan.



CREGG POPPEN



*'Whimsical'* — Quilted by Marva-Lee Otos.

## CONTACT POINTS FOR THE ARTS IN KETCHIKAN

*These organizations—many of them affiliated with the arts and humanities council—serve the breadth of our creative and expressive pursuits, from social dance to bagpipes, from harps to quilting.*

**Boombal Dance Hall**  
907-225-2211 | Facebook

**First City Players**  
907-225-4792  
FirstCityPlayers.org | Facebook

**Ketchikan Area Arts & Humanities Council**  
907-225-2211  
KetchikanArts.org | Facebook

**Ketchikan Artist Directory**  
907-225-2211  
ketchikanartliveshere.org

**Ketchikan Community Chorus**  
907-617-6661 | Facebook

**Ketchikan Community Concert Band**  
907-225-3650  
ketchikanconcertband.org  
Facebook

**Ketchikan Medieval and Renaissance Society**  
907-225-2211 | Facebook

**Ketchikan Theatre Ballet**  
907-225-9311 | KTBDance.com

**Misty Thistle Pipes & Drums**  
907-225-2211 | Facebook

**The Monthly Grind**  
907-225-2211 | Facebook

**Rainy Day Quilters**  
907-225-5422  
rainydayquilters.com | Facebook

**StudioMax Dance Studio**  
907-821-0498 |  
studiomaxktn.com

**Totem Heritage Center**  
907-225-5900  
ktn-ak.us/totem-heritage-center | Facebook

# UNDER COVERS

## KETCHIKAN RESIDENTS HAVE THEIR HANDS IN A NUMBER OF PRINTED BOOKS

Ketchikan artist Evon Zerbetz illustrated *Alaska Is for the Birds!*, her second collaboration with writer Susan Ewing. The pair hope to inspire young people to love birds via witty verses on 14 birds found in Alaska and beyond, exploring avian habits and peculiarities: water birds, song birds, hole drillers, nectar drinkers, dancing birds, migratory birds and residents. Zerbetz's distinctive linocut portraits capture birds' personalities in varied environments.

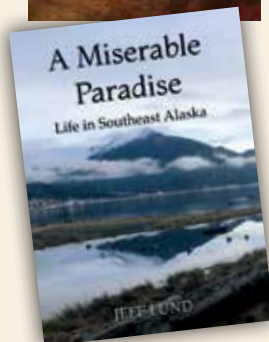
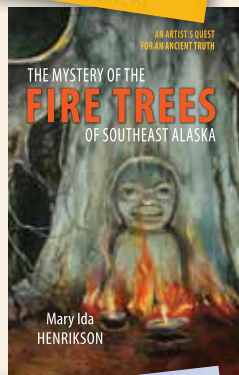
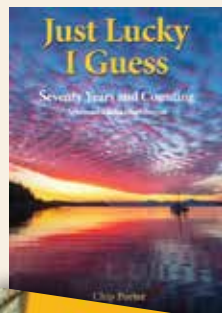
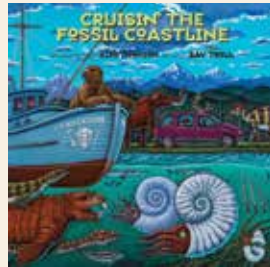
Ray Troll's fish art is seen around the world on T-shirts and album covers and in museum exhibitions. The artist's fanciful depictions of ancient life forms spawned three books with paleontologist Kirk Johnson. The latest is *Cruisin' the Fossil Coastline*, a "road trip" by car, plane and boat from Baja California to northern Alaska in search of the fossil secrets of North America's Pacific coast.

Chip Porter's lifetime on Southeast Alaskan waters and his decades of encounters with characters and critters informs his memoir, *Just Lucky I Guess*. Porter is a professional photographer and has been both a commercial fisher and charter skipper.

Commercial fisher LaDonna Gundersen knows fish. The *Little Alaskan Salmon Cookbook* is a collection of her most popular salmon recipes. Photos by her husband, Ole, give a glamorous gloss to cooking and to the couple's life on an Alaskan fishing boat.

In *Fire Trees of Southeast Alaska*, visual artist Mary Ida Henrikson weaves personal history and a lifelong love of sea and forest with speculation that Alaska Natives cached fire in the bases of cedar trees and may have used the technique to create navigation aids.

The pandemic season of 2020-2021 prompted outdoorsman Jeff Lund to ponder environmental ethics, resource management, his teaching career and our society's perspectives on outdoor life—a wide-ranging inward journey collected in *A Miserable Paradise: Life in Southeast Alaska*.



## ILLUSTRATED KIDS' LIT, MEMOIR, PALEONTOLOGY, PHOTOGRAPHY, SALMON COOKERY, SCHOLARSHIP AND SASQUATCH

An art-history scholar raised in the shadow of Ketchikan's totem pole parks documents the New Deal-era federal program aimed at restoring Tlingit and Haida carving—to become a U.S. cultural treasure and an economic boon for Alaska Natives. Emily L. Moore's *Proud Raven, Panting Wolf* also tracks the ways that the CCC project furthered Alaska Natives' pursuit of cultural and political rights on their ancestral lands.

Michael G. Harpold is a retired Immigration and Naturalization Service officer in Ketchikan. *The People We Wanted to Forget* recounts his part, in the late 1970s, in rescuing refugees from Vietnam—and of altering U.S. policy by an act of bold compassion.

In Tom Hunt's first novel, *The Cove*, a self-exiled daughter reluctantly comes home to care for her ailing father in a remote Southeast Alaskan cove.

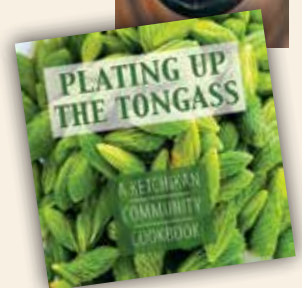
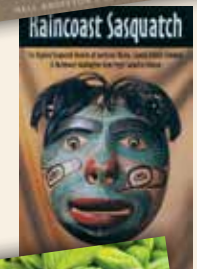
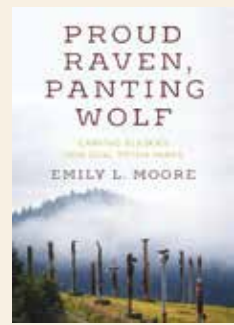
Biz Robbins published a memoir of teaching in a Southeast Alaskan logging camp and of overcoming family tragedy in *Life Jacket: A Memoir of a Float Camp Teacher*.

Hall Anderson photographed local events and personalities at *Ketchikan Daily News* for 30 years; his distinctive photojournalism and images from more idiosyncratic pursuits are collected in *Still Rainin' Still Dreamin': Hall Anderson's Ketchikan*.

*Raincoast Sasquatch* is J. Robert Alley's exhaustive account of "a large, reclusive species of relic hominid" in coastal B.C. and Alaska—built on interviews, field research and ethnographic study.

*Plating up the Tongass: A Ketchikan Community Cookbook* features local foodstuffs harvested in the sea and forest, from salmon to salmonberries. Residents submitted recipes for this publication by the Ketchikan Wellness Coalition. Volume 2 is in the works.

Many of these titles are at *Parnassus Books*, an independent book seller on *Stedman Street* beside the *Chief Johnson Pole*. *Soho Coho Gallery* at *No. 5 Creek Street* carries art-oriented books, including those featuring co-owner Ray Troll. Some titles are available from online sources.





# PUBLIC ART

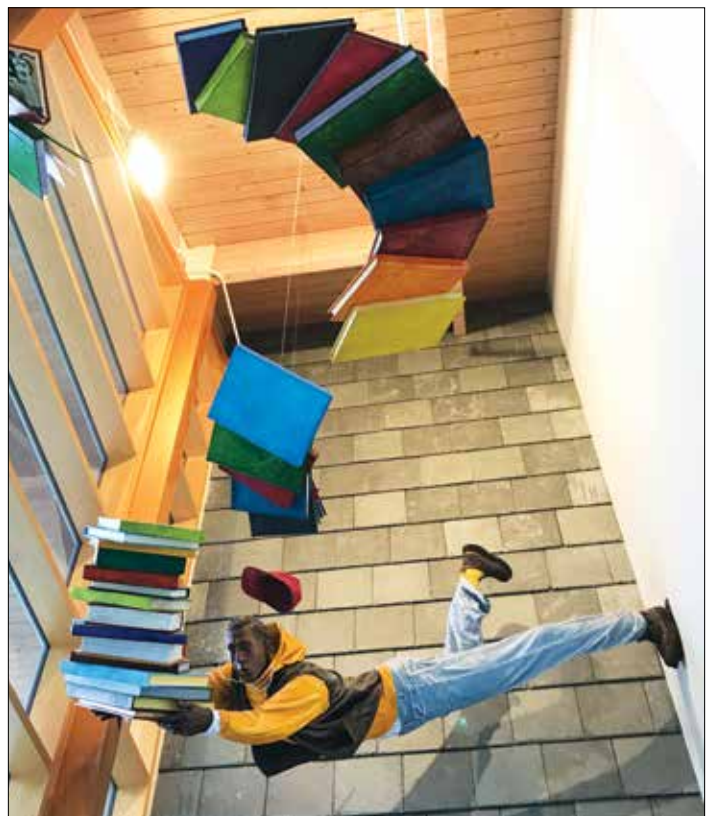


## OPEN FOR INTERPRETATION

Ketchikan prizes public art. Here's a small sampling of pieces. The arts council has good information on art that's accessible for public viewing.



*Ricardo Búrquez's whimsical mural on the concrete of Rendezvous Senior Day Center imagines a world amid pilings: marine life, derelict boats, inscrutable piping. In other concrete art, a builder pressed indelible determination into a retaining wall at a residence. 'A Trip to the Library' is a good way to look up Evon Zerbetz's and Rich Stage's clumsy bibliophile—sensationally suspended above patrons in the arctic entry. The seven statues of 'The Rock' by Dave Rubin on Berth 2 honor monumental figures in our history. Terry Pyles' tile mosaics on harbor pilings beside Salmon Landing Market creatively re-cast marine life and are—well, they're must-see attractions for public-art aficionados. Cammy Walker's stained glass glows on posts along the Len Laurance Waterfront Promenade. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP*



PHOTOS: GREGG POPPEN

# HERITAGE IMAGES AND ACTIVISM ARE ALL IN THE FAMILY

**PARALLEL TRACKS OF PHOTOGRAPHY** and civic engagement extend more than a century to connect Janalee Minnich-Gage to her earliest Ketchikan forebears.

Minnich-Gage is the great-great-granddaughter of the community's first resident photographers, Forest and Harriet Hunt. Like her prominent pioneer kin, she sees Ketchikan through a camera lens and serves it as a civic leader.

Photography was always an essential feature of her life. "I grew up around boxes and boxes of photos" left behind by Forest and Harriet Hunt and succeeding generations, Minnich-Gage said. The Hunts' large-format cameras recorded the early townsites, pioneer businesses and residents' everyday activities. Those images from the first decade of the 1900s onward were bequeathed to Ketchikan Museums.



Harriet Hunt



Janalee Minnich-Gage

The Hunts arrived in 1900, self-taught as photographers but experienced in running retail stores. Harriet Hunt set up a photo studio and darkroom in the family store; she developed a sideline selling her images on postcards and souvenir plates. The Hunts' bulky view camera and stout tripod were familiar fixtures around town and were also carried into remote areas.

**GREAT-GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER** Janalee Minnich-Gage picked up a Rolleiflex twin-lens film camera as a teen-ager. Her amateur images—such as those for the high school yearbook—tilted toward the documentary mode. She soon shifted to photography as art and earned a B.F.A. in photography at L.A.'s Otis-Parsons School. Photography was an avocation as she moved around the Northwest and Alaska before returning to Ketchikan with a husband and three kids.

She exhibited a collection of photos to advance disability awareness. Her images advocated for Alaska Natives and for women's rights. She pointed her Nikon digital camera at LGBTQ+ activists. In keeping with the Hunt heritage, her eye has also fixed on history—but within an artistic frame. Her series of closeup photos of retired, recumbent totem poles makes a reverent record of the past.

"I also did the entire set of 35 board stairways in Ketchikan because those things are just not gonna be around always," she said, recalling that as a girl she ran up and down many of them. "When things start to change and we take certain things for granted, I gravitate toward photographing them."

**MINNICH-GAGE SHARES** with her great-great-grandparents a commitment to civic activism. She was elected to the Ketchikan City Council in 2015 and twice re-elected. More than a century ago, Forest Hunt was on the same city council and later served in the territorial legislature. Harriet Hunt founded the Ketchikan Lyceum, which became the public library board, and created a women's chamber of commerce. She was appointed as Alaska's first female member of the Republican National Committee. A picture-perfect lake in the mountains of Revilla Island was named in her honor.



JANALEE MINNICH-GAGE



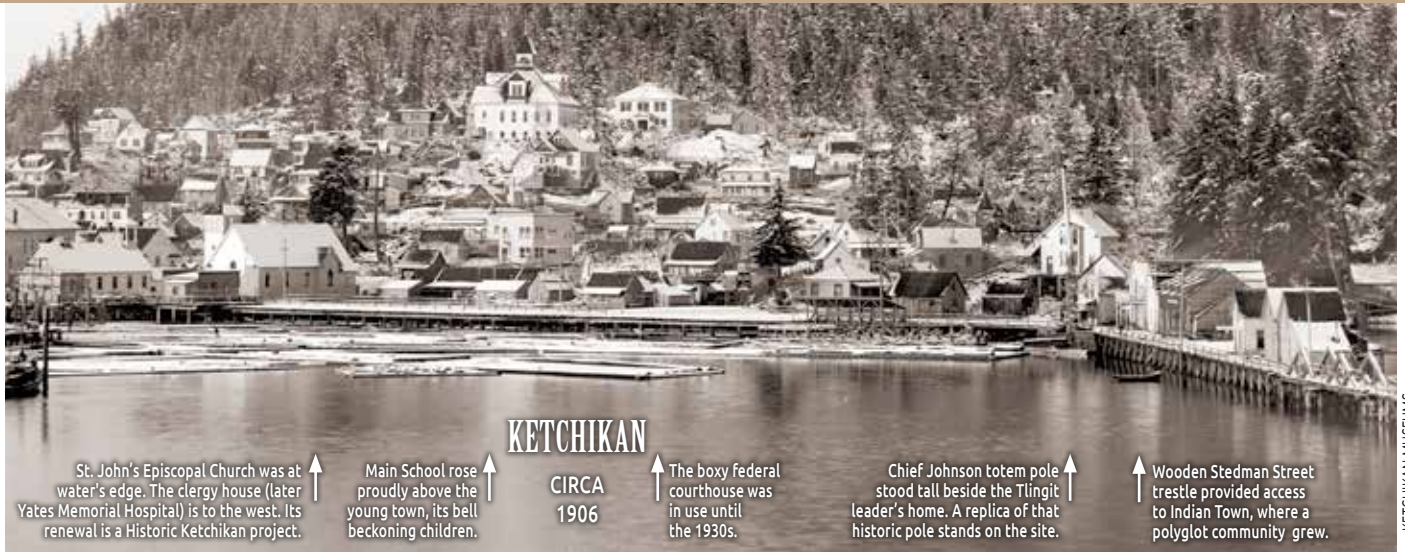
HARRIET HUNT / KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



JANALEE MINNICH-GAGE

*'Broken Past' is in Janalee Minnich-Gage's series on fallen totem poles. Great-great-grandmother Harriet Hunt's camera preserved her cherished library for the eyes of history—and captured board stairs that would draw her descendant's interest generations later. The light of our own contentious times finds a 'pride' demonstration participant in a corona.*

# DOWNTOWN NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT



↑ St. John's Episcopal Church was at water's edge. The clergy house (later Yates Memorial Hospital) is to the west. Its renewal is a Historic Ketchikan project.

↑ Main School rose proudly above the young town, its bell beckoning children.

**KETCHIKAN**  
CIRCA  
1906

↑ The boxy federal courthouse was in use until the 1930s.

↑ Chief Johnson totem pole stood tall beside the Tlingit leader's home. A replica of that historic pole stands on the site.

↑ Wooden Stedman Street trestle provided access to Indian Town, where a polyglot community grew.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

RICHES OF FISH, MINERALS AND TIMBER PROPELLED OUR EARLY GROWTH. INCREASING VALUE RESTS IN HERITAGE EXPRESSED IN ARCHITECTURE AND A UNIQUE STORY.

**T**he First City's foundation was the rickety and quickly constructed piers that held up a wharf, a saltery and then a cannery. But it wasn't long until a booming young town had homes and a church and stores —some on timber pilings on tidelands, others pushing back the forest and settling on solid ground.

In just the years from 1887 to 1900, the population increased from 40 to about 800 as mining and salmon processing threw the economy into high gear. Two large stores opened, professionals moved in and residents constructed plank walkways above muddy footpaths. Hotels catered to business travelers, fortune-seekers and newcomers awaiting other homes; lesser lodgings provided waystations for miners, fishermen and other working people. In the early 1900s, three movie theaters ran at one time in the heart of downtown. Prosperous merchants brought up automobiles to rattle the board streets.

Far-sighted entrepreneurs put up concrete, multi-story buildings in the commercial core. A modern Main School, surmounted by a tall cupola, looked down over the turrets of the Stedman and Revilla Hotels, and the steamships belching black smoke.

**Fish traps' industrial-scale** harvesting of salmon runs enabled Ketchikan to take on its nickname, "Canned Salmon Capital of the World." Ketchikan Spruce Mills, successor to Ketchikan Power Co., processed timber on a massive pier south of today's



## DOCK STREET RETAINS MANY FEATURES OF ITS HISTORICAL FACE



- *First National Bank (First Bank) bears the century-old look of the original.*
- *Miners and Merchants Bank is a rare local expression of the mason's craft and retains many original features.*
- *The third, concrete iteration of the Heckman Building (1923) remains in mixed commercial use.*
- *Tongass Trading Co. was founded in 1898; this concrete building went up 15 years later.*

Mill Street. Most of the juice for quick growth was supplied by privately owned Citizens Light, Power & Water; the city bought the business in the '30s and now uses CLP&W's concrete home as City Hall.

**By 1930, the city** population increased to 3,800—the greatest in Alaska. Downtown remained the mercantile and banking core for decades and was the hub for waterfront action at two long wharves. Residential streets extended into "New Town" to the north and then to the West End—in a city "three blocks wide and eight miles long."

Much of the heritage from early times remains: More than half of the buildings in the city center were standing in the '30s, when the First City was first in Alaska in many ways.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



# LANDMARKS OF A DOWNTOWN WITH A LOT OF UPSIDE



Properties overlaid with blue have historical features that contributed to federal recognition of the Downtown Historic District.

## Downtown National Historic District

DESIGNATION OF THIS DISTRICT PAYS TRIBUTE TO A HERITAGE AND CAN PROVIDE CATALYSTS FOR PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES.

KETCHIKAN BOASTS THREE HISTORIC DISTRICTS. NO OTHER TOWN IN ALASKA HAS MORE THAN ONE.

The city core's concentration of buildings from the early days draws increasing attention from both the private and public sectors—particularly important as more and more visitors tune in to the historical and cultural features of travel destinations. It's called "heritage tourism" and Ketchikan is well-placed to take advantage.

Historic Ketchikan Inc. has provided leadership and technical expertise in this effort.

### FRONT STREET

- 1 Nob Hill Tunnel (1954)
- 2 348 Masonic Temple (1947-51)
- 3 340 Reid Building (1937)
- 4 334 City Hall (1925)
- 5 Pioneer Way / Chief Kyan Way (early 1900s)
- 6 314 Pioneers Hall (1900)
- 7 320 Gilmore Hotel (1926)
- 8 312 Fo'c'sle Bar (ca. 1900)
- 9 300 Stedman Hotel (1906)
- 10 226 Tongass Trading Co. (1913)
- 11 314 Ingersoll Hotel (1924)
- 12 118-124 Pioneer Hotel (1926)
- 13 116 Front (Rainbird Bar) (1912)

### MAIN STREET

- 14 335 Elks Lodge / Fireside (1951)
- 15 319 Fire Hall (1943)
- 16 331 First National Bank (1911)
- 17 213 J.R. Heckman Store
- 18 201-209 J.R. Heckman Store #3 (1912)
- 19 338 Red Men Hall (1924)
- 20 330 Christian Science Hall (1946)
- 21 306 Miners & Merchants Bank (1923)
- 22 100-106 Hardcastle Bldg. (ca. 1900, 1972)

### DOCK STREET

- 23 435 Chico's Restaurant (c.1920)
- 24 309 Agnes Edmond House (1904)
- 25 501 Ketchikan Daily News (1925)
- 26 301 Bawden / Fosse Building (1908)

### MISSION STREET

- 27 405 Coliseum Theater (1957)
- 28 411-413 Mission (1920)
- 29 423 Yates Memorial Hospital (1905)
- 30 503 St. John's Church (1903)
- 31 603-607 Mission (1919)
- 32 617-621 New Deal Bldg. (1930)
- 33 625-629 Mission (late 1920s)
- 34 633 Mission (circa 1920)
- 35 422 Bon Marche (1913)
- 36 316-320 Scanlon Gallery (1906)

### MILL STREET

- 37 Betty King Alley (1900s)
- 38 Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1898)
- 39 Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902)
- 40 Dock Street Wharf (ca. 1915)
- 41 Ketchikan Wharf (1890s)
- 42 Heckman Wharf (early 1900s)
- 43 Spruce Mill (entrance) (1903)
- 44 Welcome Arch (1920s)
- 45 Historic stairways

# CREEK STREET NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT



CREGG POPPEN

*A red-light district for a notorious half-century, Creek Street is now a unique place of museums, galleries and private residences.*

## INDUSTRY AND INIQUITY SET THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A QUAIN OLD PLACE WE TREASURE

**D**evelopments along Creek Street since settlers arrived embody all the principal economic engines of Ketchikan's history. Entrepreneurs from down south established a rough townsite and salmon saltery near the creek mouth to establish the fishing industry. Infrastructure is represented in dammed creek water that, in the early 1900s, drove pioneers' small hydroelectric generators. Manufacturing was seen in a creekside cooperage that built barrels for salmon shippers. A mill operator built a long flume and spilled creek water over a 22-foot wheel, driving an apparatus that whacked shingles out

of local logs—the timber industry. Even the mining industry is here, in the form of the Venetia Lode mine, struck into the hill above the creek. And in 1903, residents of the original townsite ordered prostitutes to the other side of the creek. What you could call the *leisure travel* of miners, fishermen and loggers constituted a kind of visitor industry!

Tens of thousands of visitors now stroll the boardwalk of Creek Street in summer, attracted by the old district's quaint architecture, appealing gift stores, eateries and artist-owned galleries. There are also opportunities to see salmon, eagles and

*Creek Street Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014. Property owners had long before established design standards for renovation and new construction. Historic authenticity makes Creek Street a point of community pride and one of our most popular visitor destinations.*



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*Before a neighborhood developed on the creek, it was a working part of our waterfront. A shingle mill drew creek water to power a paddle wheel and skippers moored small commercial boats between high tides.*

sometimes harbor seals and river otters. One of the brothels from red-light days, Dolly's House, is preserved as a museum of the half-century when milling and mining faded from the creek and, well, entertainment was preeminent.

**There were only** about 30 platted lots along Creek Street, but their residents created scandal out of proportion to their numbers, in the forms of prostitution, gambling and liquor sales. Territorial Alaska's "bone dry law" in 1917 and federal Prohibition in 1920 only spun Creek Street's speakeasies and cathouses into cruising gear. About 20 brothels operated on the creek as Prohibition ended in 1933. Bootleg liquor from Canada and home brew from local stills fueled raucous behavior. Card games and drug use aggravated a seamy scene.

Campaigns to clean up Creek Street came and went, but the town was somewhat ambivalent: Creek Street was unseemly, but the working girls were fairly discreet, limited by local custom as to when they could shop in town or see a movie, etc.; they contributed to community causes; and not least, they brought men to town to spend money in legitimate businesses.

A federal grand jury in Juneau and a prosecutor went after brothel owners, bootleggers and even taxi companies in the mid-1920s, but Creek Street's principal trades reflowered later. World War II closed down the street, but by the early '50s the reviving sin district worried the U.S. Coast Guard. Histories of the time say that the guard was instrumental in bringing American Social Hygiene Association investigators to the creek. Ketchikan's competing newspapers carried articles, letters and editorials on the cultural debate over whether to outlaw prostitution and rid the First City of its worst vices.

**Twilight for the red lights** came in 1953-54 with a grand jury's indictment of the recently resigned police chief for operating a bawdy house and abetting bootleggers. A police captain was charged with malfeasance linked to the street. The city manager and district attorney were tarred. Brothel owners, rumrunners and cabbies were called to account. The business community was mindful that the red-light district—which had spawned scandal headlines in newspapers nationwide—might interfere with developing the new pulp mill at Ward Cove. So prostitution went underground.

Creek Street subsided into quiet and many buildings slumped into mossy disuse. But since the 1970s, new property owners have renovated creekside buildings and created a historic district that preserves some of the tone and design of the old area.



**Dolly Arthur**  
No. 24 Creek St.

*A number of historically important buildings are in (non-scandalous) use on Creek Street. Some are familiarly known by the names of working girls who inhabited them during the 50-year red-light era.*

### LANDMARKS OF CREEK STREET

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| No. 2 (built ca.1920)              | No. 20 (ca.1920) Beatrice Greene     |
| No. 4 (ca.1920) Annie's House      | No. 24 (1905) Dolly's House          |
| No. 5 (1903) Star House dance hall | No. 28 (1902) Preacher's House       |
| No. 10 (ca.1921)                   | 203 Stedman St. / June's Cafe (1903) |
| No. 11 (1927)                      |                                      |



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*Creek Street was shanties, scanties and scandal in the 1940s. Many residences were, for decades, homes for pairs of 'working girls.' The boardwalk of today passes buildings that date back a century; they house galleries, museums, shops and residences.*

**“ KETCHIKAN ALASKA IS A TERRIBLE TOWN! IT IS VICE-RIDDEN AND CORRUPT. ONE MIGHT EVEN GATHER THAT IT IS ABOUT THE WORST PLACE IN THE WORLD.**

— **Forest J. Hunt** Territorial Senator from Ketchikan, quoted in the *Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle*, 1925



GREGG POPPEN

*Once notorious, now visitor-friendly: Ketchikan's unique creekside neighborhood welcomes history lovers whose innocent selfies belie the district's onetime seamy side.*

# STEDMAN-THOMAS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



*Stedman Street was a busy mixed neighborhood of residences, small shops and cafes in the early days. And in summer, it was foul territory on the third-base side during baseball games on the tidal flats. In this game, a team from Prince Rupert, B.C., matched up against the hometown squad. Spectators crowd both Mill and Stedman streets.*

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CREEK DEVELOPED DISTINCTIVE DEMOGRAPHICS

**T**his district developed as a place apart, divided from the early townsite by Ketchikan Creek and designated as the home of Alaska Natives—so-called “Indian Town.” As Ketchikan’s commercial fishing industry and salmon-processing businesses grew, cannery workers from Asia and the Pacific Islands also settled here on the south side of the creek.

A rough wooden trestle was built across the creek mouth in the first years of the 1900s, tying together the incorporated townsite and its fast-growing southside extension. Thomas Street thrust out on pilings along the silty creek mouth. Inman Street, a boardwalk like many others crossing Ketchikan’s terrain, led to newly built homes above the cannery district. The bridge was improved over the years as the south-end population increased.

Canneries provided employment for scores of seasonal and resident workers, many of them immigrants from China, Japan and the Philippines. A business district developed along Stedman Street early in the 20th century, with Japanese immigrants foremost among the entrepreneurs.

**The Ohashis operated** a store at 223 Stedman St. from 1910. The Shimizu family ran the New York Hotel and Café at 207-211 Stedman St. (the hotel was restored in the 1990s and operates today). Harry Kimura was behind the counter at Harry’s Place at 325 Stedman St. Jim Tanino ran Jimmy’s Noodle Café at 227 Stedman St. The Tatsuda family opened their grocery at 339 Stedman St. in 1916 and later moved to a modern building a couple blocks up the street. (That store was crushed by a rockfall in 2020 and wasn’t re-opened.)

The Japanese community had a small school and meeting house on the hill above Stedman Street, where adult volunteers taught English to the children of immigrants.

**Dredging of the** Ketchikan Creek mouth by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opened up acres of boat moorage in Thomas Basin in the early 1930s. Business flourished along Stedman and Thomas streets as scores of skippers and crewmen came off of transient vessels and, all the year round, boats tied up in front of cafes, hotels, grocery stores, machine shops and other storefronts. Through it all, canneries along south Stedman Street steamed and clanked through the summer, bunkhousing workers on site for the most part but generating significant business for Ketchikan’s wholesale sector and service businesses.

**Two actions by the** U.S. government significantly altered the Stedman-Thomas area. By the 1920s, Congress had passed severe restrictions on immigration by Chinese and then Japanese citizens. That opened the door for natives of the Philippines, who came to Alaska at the behest of recruiters for the canneries. Ketchikan’s Filipino population took root along Stedman and opened a social club that became the Filipino Community Club. (SEE MORE IN THE ARTICLE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.)

The Japanese air force’s attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 devastated the community on Stedman Street. Within a year, dozens of Japanese-born residents and Japanese-American family members were forced from homes in the neighborhood and were forcibly resettled in internment camps in Western states. Given scant notice of this relocation and compelled to board southbound steamships, carrying little but suitcases, these well-established Ketchikan residents had varying degrees of success in securing their homes and businesses. Many didn’t return after the war. For them, the Last Frontier was a lost frontier. But some families were more fortunate and their property was looked after by friends in Ketchikan; the luckiest came home and picked up where they had left off.

**Property owners in this** district have invested in historic preservation. Interpretive signs produced by the Ketchikan Historic Commission and Historic Ketchikan Inc. are placed on notable buildings in the area; historical text and archival photos offer indispensable information for those who want to learn about this important foundational district in the First City.

# HERITAGE *FILIPINOS' HISTORY MEETS AN EQUITY EFFORT*

**TAKE A LOOK AROUND** the City of Ketchikan and you'll find that one of every 10 people you see has Filipino heritage. Improving healthfulness and health care access for that one in 10 is the goal of a multi-year project.

The City of Ketchikan's Filipino community is one of the most concentrated in Alaska and is believed to be the first to celebrate its identity. Ketchikan Filipino Social Club was founded in the 1920s, when seasonal workers and immigrants from the Philippines poured into the young town. Most were so-called "Alaskeros," young men who worked in canneries. For those who shipped in from the states or from the Philippines only for salmon-packing season, a cannery bunkhouse was typically home. But Filipinos and Filipino-Americans in ever-greater numbers settled down in Ketchikan.

They were easy to find back then. An unwritten but rigid code relegated most of them to "Indian Town" south of Ketchikan Creek—effectively a polyethnic enclave of Asian immigrants and Alaska Natives. The Filipino Community Club founded on Stedman Street in 1938 was the first of its kind in Alaska. Beyond its social function, the club also addressed city government with the neighborhood's issues.

**FEDERAL LAWS EXCLUDING** Chinese and, later, Japanese from the U.S. in the early 1900s ceded Alaskan jobs to residents of the Philippines—then a territory of the U.S., like Alaska. The 2020 U.S. census shows that more than 12 percent of the population in the City of Ketchikan is of Asian descent; most of them by far claim Filipino heritage. Their families and culture are woven into the fabric of Ketchikan. The Tagalog language is commonly heard in town—even in the call-answering system at the medical center and in PSAs on local

radio stations. Filipino restaurants have been fixtures since the 1930s—personified in family-run Diaz Cafe, open on Stedman Street since the 1960s. Elders and youths performing Filipino *tinikling* (stick dance) in cultural costumes participate in Giggiefeet Dance Festival and other events.

**BUT DESPITE HISTORICAL** cohesiveness and verve in the Filipino-American community, leaders see unmet needs. They say the community needs better understanding of, and access to, the health care system. And they believe that system needs to do more to instill confidence and provide ease of use.

The First Annual Filipino-American Festival in October 2021 rolled out a program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Solutions for Health Equity. The three-year, \$300,000 project is one of just 10 funded by the Johnson Foundation in 2021—out of more than 1,000 applications.

Alma Manabat Parker organized the festival and oversees this health equity effort for Ketchikan Wellness Coalition. Its Tagalog title is Sama

Sama Tayo sa Kalusugan: "healthier together."

Manabat Parker said guiding her community to healthful eating and conducting wellness checks are parts of the effort. But big barriers to wellness must be addressed with partners among health-care providers. "Language barriers are some of the system challenges we face," she said. PeaceHealth Ketchikan and the state's public health agency are involved with her on that issue. Many Filipinos are reluctant to engage with the system. "Diversifying medical staff is critical to reducing hesitancy in the public," Manabat Parker said. A Filipino-American physician and a handful of Filipino clinical staff now working at the hospital bring that goal closer.

**BORN IN THE** Philippines and a resident of Ketchikan since early childhood, Manabat Parker said she brings firsthand familiarity with Filipinos' place in the local health care system. Her mother worked at the hospital for 30 years.



Clara 'Mama' Diaz is a community icon at her cafe on Stedman Street. The Filipino Community Club was active and organized in 1953.



Ketchikan's Filipinos are involved in outreach efforts as part of a health equity project.



Historic Ketchikan Inc. places interpretive materials such as this kiosk and plaque beside the New York Hotel at 207 Stedman St. Other plaques produced with the Ketchikan Historic Commission are on buildings along these streets.

*Architectural authenticity and historical charm are easy to find. Ketchikan Creek, once a dividing line, spills into an area where century-old buildings embody a legacy of enterprise and resilience.*

## LANDMARKS OF STEDMAN-THOMAS DISTRICT

### STEDMAN STREET

- 203 June's Cafe (1903)
- 207 New York Hotel & Cafe (1924)
- 223 Ohashi store (ca. 1908)
- 329 (ca. 1920)
- 507 (ca. 1910)

### THOMAS STREET

- 121 (1920s)
- 124 (1920s)
- 126 Potlatch Bar (ca. 1925)
- 130 Union Machine Shop (1936)

### INMAN STREET

- 108 (ca. 1910)
- 114 (ca. 1904)

# BUILDING ON OUR HERITAGE



## Christian Science Hall

The building was renovated in 2009 by the Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council, recasting the 1946 structure with very little exterior change except in color. Offices and a gallery are on the upper floor. The City of Ketchikan, Wells Fargo and a funding campaign accomplished purchase; private contributions and grants funded renovation.

## Bayside Hotel

The creekside building that many oldtimers still call Bayside Hotel was put up in 1927 as Thomas Basin Rooms and was restored in historically appropriate style 90 years later. Built of local lumber by pioneers Forest and Harriet Hunt, it featured 20 small boarding rooms. Cafes, groceries and other retail uses operated at street level. The edifice had a social purpose: the Hunts disapproved of the young town's wickedness—prostitution, bootlegging, gambling and drugs. Thomas Basin Rooms provided clean rooms, wholesome meals, loans and moral counseling to its boarders, who worked in canneries, fisheries, logging and mining. Thomas Basin Rooms was sold in 1941; the building was renamed Bayside Hotel in 1950. It was Ketchikan's longest-running boarding house, deteriorating until it was shut down in 2011 for health and safety. Complete restoration for mixed commercial use (first-floor retail, lodging on upper floors) was completed in 2017 by preservation partners Michel Wollaston and Stephen Reeve.



GOVERNMENTS, NONPROFITS AND PRIVATE INTERESTS HAVE KEPT THEIR EYES ON THE COMMUNITY'S HERITAGE AS THEY RENEWED AND REDEVELOPED PROPERTIES DOWNTOWN AND IN OTHER DISTRICTS



## Burkhart | Dibrell House

Pioneer business man H.Z. Burkhart built his home at 500 Main St. in 1904. It's our last Queen Anne-style residence. Years of renovation by then-owners, the Reeve family, ended in 2010 and earned the owners a restoration award from the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places.



## White Cliff Elementary School

Generations of children passed through White Cliff between 1923 and 2003, endowing the concrete edifice with incalculable community esteem. After the school closed, a developer bought the building and refashioned the interior for offices. The borough bought the property and uses offices here while leasing some office space. White Cliff maintains a historical face while providing the community with further generations of utilization.



## Reid Building | Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. | Gilmore Hotel

Privately owned Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. put up its concrete building in 1925. The fourth floor was added after the Ketchikan Public Utilities took over electrical distribution. The building is now City Hall and was renovated in 2015—with attention paid to the simple, traditional facade. The Gilmore Hotel has stood beside the utilities building since 1926 as a succession of businesses occupied the ground floor (a restaurant and lounge at present). The handsome exterior expresses authenticity that earned a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Reid Building, at the north end of this historic trio, was built in 1937 and housed many businesses before borough government moved in. When the borough left for the White Cliff School building on First Avenue, Coastal Real Estate Group bought the building and completed extensive renovation; the formerly plain, stucco exterior was recast in historical style in 2011.



## Little Flower Hospital laundry

This concrete commercial building on Bawden Street reflowered in 2012, when architects Welsh & Whiteley renovated it for their offices. The building had provided the wood-frame hospital beside it (now demolished) with housing for a boiler, a laundry and lodgings for nuns and nurses. Bawden Street Brewing Co. occupies the ground floor of this utilitarian 1944 building, which is important in our cultural and architectural history.

# HISTORIC KETCHIKAN INC.

HISTORIC KETCHIKAN INC.  
IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
THAT PROMOTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND  
HERITAGE TOURISM

*Our Town* presents our community's proud history and vibrant present.

Our work in leadership, consultation and promotion is shown here and in other places in this publication.

In a town as great as Ketchikan, historic preservation just never gets old.

## MAKING HISTORY

**Walking Tour** Historic Ketchikan Walking Tour is one of our signature programs and fits our goal of celebrating our heritage. It's slow food for people with an appetite for history. Tours of downtown and Newtown take in places and properties that make Ketchikan a place like no place else. With Pioneer Printing Co. Inc., HKI produces a map with interpretive text. Pick it up at visitor centers, at Ketchikan Daily News and at select businesses.

**KPU water warehouse** HKI worked with the City of Ketchikan to forestall intended demolition of one of our oldest remaining wood commercial structures, the creekside warehouse built in the 1920s by Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. The city agreed to demolish an attached garage and build a viewing platform overlooking Ketchikan Creek. Ketchikan Youth Initiatives made its home here and continues to refurbish and restore the site.

**Clover Pass School** HKI led the way in reclaiming an abandoned north-end schoolhouse dating to the 1940s and which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Funds and hard work from neighbors around this site 15 miles north of town supplemented grants. HKI transferred this heritage site to the Potter Road Park Association in 2016.



GREGG POPPEN

When you're the First City in the Last Frontier, you develop myriad *Colorful Characters and Places*. HKI and the Historic Commission present distinctive stories and photos at historic sites. Fifteen of the installations are in the Creek Street and Stedman-Thomas districts. Another 10 are newly placed in the downtown district and plans are in the works for more.



## THE YATES, WAITING

*Yates Memorial in early days and as envisioned in renovation.*

An iconic pioneer building is on a national list of endangered places while HKI keeps it on the priority list for saving. The National Trust for Historic Preservation named Yates Memorial Hospital on Mission Street to the 2020 list of "America's 11 most endangered historic places." The list raises awareness of threats to the nation's treasures.

Vacant for 15 years, Yates has narrowly escaped demolition. The roof and foundation are failing and the interior is damaged by lack of heating.

"Designation of Yates as one of America's 11 most endangered places is a statement about the national importance of this site and the value of rehabilitating the hospital to share Ketchikan's story," said Stephen Reeve, executive director of HKI. "Yates Memorial is ideally situated to provide an authentic and memorable experience." The building was put up in 1905 as a clergy house, then repurposed to provide medical services for a vast region. Original features from operating rooms to windows are intact and the building looks much as it did in early photos. Restoration can create a tangible history of the dedicated nurses who cared tirelessly for the sick and injured.

# WALKABLE WATERFRONT PROJECT BRINGS THE PORT INTO UP-CLOSE HISTORICAL FOCUS



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

The First City's downtown waterfront is a remarkable stretch of potentiality. Historic Ketchikan Inc. is involved in embracing our heritage and enhancing economic development as the City of Ketchikan develops phases of a nearly 1.5-mile Waterfront Promenade. The city hired HKI to conduct preliminary scoping and design, consulting with local and state agencies in a long-term project to create a world-class walkway. Recent completion of sections along Stedman Street and Thomas Basin brings fulfillment of this exciting program to the near horizon.

## SEE WHY IT'S CALLED WATER STREET?

Ketchikan built up from tidelands and reconfigured the old wooden Newtown thoroughfare in the 1950s. Businesses on the upland side operated behind a slender sidewalk until the wide, paved street was complete atop concrete pilings. Present-day development on the water side boasts a broad promenade along Berth 3, seen here. This project spearheaded by HKI extends to a uniquely dramatic vantage point at the end of the Thomas Basin breakwater.



GREGG POPPEN

Ketchikan's long portside pedestrian path offers residents and visitors alike easy access to our best liquid asset: the First City's working waterfront. A new section (at right) skirts Thomas Basin on boardwalk between the Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show arena and Alaska Fish House.

GREGG POPPEN



## PIONEER IN VISITOR INDUSTRY AND HERITAGE LENDS HIS NAME TO THE PROMENADE



Len Laurance

**Len Laurance** was instrumental in Ketchikan's development as a visitor attraction and treasured the community's historical heritage. The City Council in 2022 honored the late businessman by affixing his name to one of the town's signature features: Len Laurance Waterfront Promenade. The Australia-born Laurance arrived in the 1960s and with his wife, Judy, operated a travel agency. Laurance was also active in marketing local businesses while avidly promoting Ketchikan as a destination. He was a founder of Ketchikan Visitors Bureau and of Historic Ketchikan Inc.—serving diligently on the boards of both entities

for decades. He was also elected to the Borough Assembly and appointed to the hospital board. Laurance believed unwaveringly in Ketchikan's appeal in terms of heritage tourism and he saw historical preservation as an economic lever. Along with vigorously promoting development of the promenade, he worked on HKI publications, on the walking tour and on historic-preservation projects. Laurance represented the First City so often around Alaska in visitor-industry and civic circles that he was nicknamed "Mr. Ketchikan." Laurance passed away in 2021 at the age of 88.



# NEWTOWN HOPKINS ALLEY

THE EARLY TOWN SITE WAS PINCHED BETWEEN THE CREEK AND A ROCK. THAT STONE OBSTACLE MADE A TICK MARK IN THE TIMELINE. SETTLERS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF NOB HILL WERE IN 'NEW TOWN.' MODERN NEWTOWN HOSTS COMMERCIAL GROWTH IN A TRANSITION POWERED BY VISITOR NUMBERS.



*Northern Machine Works, seen in 1913, was an early 'New Town' business, conducting repairs on fishing boats. Service and retail businesses thrived while homebuilders settled on the hillside above.*

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

**T**he *new Newtown* is capturing some of the energy that flows from Ketchikan's visitor industry. Businesses have moved into new buildings behind Berth 4. Private renovations along the upland side of Water Street coincide with a municipal project rebuilding the wooden viaduct that cuts through Hopkins Alley, a key historical area. A diverse blend of retail, restaurant, tavern and service businesses is at home in historic buildings where owners have committed to maintaining authentic character through a design overlay. The Hopkins Alley Revitalization Project—a collaboration of Ketchikan Gateway Borough, the City of Ketchikan and Historic Ketchikan Inc.—aims to reclaim an area that was vital in Ketchikan's early days. Pioneers who built homes and businesses in "New Town" in the first years of the 1900s were on a rising tide of activity—literally, in the case of fishing boats that anchored here. Ketchikan was *the* Alaskan city, its population propelled by salmon salteries and canneries; gold rushes up north; mining on Prince of Wales Island; and the incipient territorial timber industry. Much of that growth made landfall beyond the rock knob. In time, a narrow wooden walkway on pilings linked the townsite and the new town. By the 1920s, big salmon canneries and marine service businesses built out into the water, and the U.S. Lighthouse Service settled in. Advances in seafood refrigeration boosted market access for the halibut-fishing fleet, whose schooners tied up by the dozens. Fishing skippers built fine homes above the harbor. The area developed with bakeries; laundries; neon-sign makers; saloons (or speakeasies, during Prohibition); machine shops; general stores; and other retail businesses. A wider planked viaduct to downtown eased commerce by the late 1920s, when automobiles and trucks were common in Ketchikan—even with just a few miles of city streets and rough rural roads. **The piling-borne** main route through Newtown was called Water Street. Hopkins Way angled off into a residential area and took on its appellation as Hopkins Alley later on.

The tunnel that pierces Nob Hill was finished in 1954. By that time, the so-called West End—north and west of Newtown—was flourishing as the pulp mill fired up at Ward Cove and timber became the leading economic influence in Ketchikan. Schoenbar Bypass now bisects Newtown as a link to Bear Valley.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



HKI

*The Horse Shoe Bar operated at 702 Water St. The flatiron building was constructed in 1912 to accommodate Hopkins Way's angle off of Water Street. The sharp vertex was later cut off.*

## LANDMARKS OF NEWTOWN AND HOPKINS ALLEY

### WATER STREET

522 Newman's Paint Shop (1920)  
618 Zimmerman House (c.1902)  
630 Kubley House (c.1917)  
702 Flatiron Building (1912)  
728 Erwick's Fisherman's Store (1914)  
730 Union Hall (1920)  
744 Alaska Creamery (1929)  
834 Young/Sparhawk Store (1900)  
904 Burgun's Grocery (1902)  
910 Fisherman's Union (1926)  
918 Pioneer Cabinet shop (1924)  
1010 Schlothans' Building (1925)

### HOPKINS ALLEY

744 Hopkins Alley (c.1905)  
810 Hopkins Alley (c.1913)  
816 Hopkins Alley (c.1909)  
820 Hopkins Alley (1917)  
826 Hopkins Alley (c.1909)

### YOUNG STREET

312 Johansen House (c.1902)  
325 Young Street (c.1927)

A photograph of a dense forest floor. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a dappled light effect on the ground. The forest floor is covered in moss and various green plants, including large-leafed ferns. A fallen log lies across the middle ground, also covered in moss. The background shows tall, thin trees reaching towards the sky.

# FOREST & resources

## NEW POLICIES ON FEDERAL TIMBER AND PRIVATE CARBON CREDITS MARK AN ERA

**G**reen is the new green. In a region where felled trees were long a primary economic resource, standing trees in pristine rain forest are the new currency.

Decisions in Washington, D.C., are hastening a process that reduces allocation of old-growth timber for harvest in Tongass National Forest and favors goals as diverse as recreational opportunity and community resilience. And in forest stands managed by an Alaska Native corporation—the region’s biggest private land owner—the silent process of “carbon sequestration” is replacing the noise of chain saws.

Changes in forest management across the more than 500-mile Alaska Panhandle portend more difficulties for a timber industry scrambling to hold on to a fraction of former glory.

**As of 2021**, Tongass National Forest officials manage old-growth timber under terms of the Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy (SASS), a policy project of the Biden Administration. Most old trees in undisturbed forest will remain unmanaged while U.S. Forest Service staff divert logging into “young-growth” stands—trees that grew out of last mid-century’s clear cuts. Recent allocations of old growth to mills are about 40 million board feet a year. The Tongass forest plan written in 2016 directed the Forest Service to step down old-growth harvest across 15 years, aiming for a maximum of 5 million board feet per year in 2031. Federal timber managers hoped that young-growth trees would mature to marketable size in the interim—enabling the agency to shift most timber sale offerings away from mature spruce, hemlock and cedar. Pressure to keep chain saws out of old growth is itself decades old in an ecosystem that many call “the last intact temperate rain forest” and the most avid environmentalists call “the lungs of the earth.”

The SASS schedule tears more than a decade out of the calendar inked in 2016, immediately reducing logging in old tree stands. SASS commands action on recreational values, forest restoration and resilience against climate change. There’s also emphasis on collaboration with communities,

particularly Alaska Native tribes. The policy sent down from D.C. at the same time restores the “roadless rule” prohibiting new tracks into old growth. That dictate, laid over national forests late in the Clinton administration, was contended in Alaska for two decades and briefly voided for the Tongass in the Trump White House’s last months.

**The sustainability strategy** prescribes “a diverse economy; community and cultural resilience; and conservation of natural resources.” Beneath the controversies occasioned by reducing logging in old growth and by hitting reset for the roadless rule, SASS is developing its identity with money: small but numerous project grants. An interagency group reviewed 270 proposals in 2022 and awarded \$25 million for community-based projects. They span a wide range. Among them are supporting Alaska Native cultural heritage; processing and marketing salmon; building trails; and developing a demonstration plant for production of biomass fuel from wood fiber. The Forest Service vowed that SASS projects would respect “local priorities.”

Remaining representatives of the timber industry decried the Forest Service’s sudden turns. Viking Lumber Co. of Klawock is the last major sawmill in Southeast Alaska and only a slender remnant of timber cutters, road builders and timber marketers is still working. The Alaska Forest Association (AFA), their advocacy group based in Ketchikan, said that years of cooperative work to supply timber and support timber jobs became “a monumental loss” with implementation of SASS. As AFA saw it, “Professionals, not politics, should manage the region’s natural resources.” The Alaska Resource Development Council, which stumps for industries from mining to tourism and from oil to timber, straddled the issues—mildly supporting the SASS objectives of a diverse economy and community resilience, but objecting to reimposition of the roadless rule and severe protections for old growth.

Alaska’s members of Congress hit out at the revoking of that brief exemption from the roadless rule. The delegation argued that SASS breaks promises of U.S. support for timber jobs during the transition to young trees. A senator decried the \$25 million SASS grants as a “pay-off for killing off sustained economic development ...”

**The owner** of the largest swaths of private timber lands in the Panhandle signed up for the “lungs of the earth” model of economic development. Sealaska Regional Corp. locked away its old trees for a century—for a fee. The Alaska Native business in

## FOREST FACTS

■ Tongass National Forest has about the same land mass as West Virginia.

■ Of the nearly 17 million acres of the Tongass, 52 percent is forested and 48 percent is covered by rock, ice, wetlands or muskeg.

■ Less than 8 percent of the forest is developed, mostly from past timber harvest. About 35 percent is set aside as wilderness, national monuments or other restricted status.

■ Recreational visits number about 3 million every year, valued at \$380 million.

2018 sold carbon credits to California oil-industry interests in a bargain that lasts a century. Sealaska’s 23,000 shareholders agreed to leave their conifers intact on about 160,000 acres—pulling carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere while BP pays a figure reported to be \$100 million to offset carbon emissions linked to oil drilled in Alaska. About 360,000 acres of U.S. land were conferred to Sealaska Regional Corp. in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Sealaska Timber Co. closed its doors in 2021 after 40 years of harvest. The parent corporation had cut an estimated three-quarters of its old-growth trees before it quit the game.

On federal lands, timber sales on several USFS old-growth stands were in progress as SASS policies came down and those will play out. In recent years, timber harvesters have patched together some log supply with help from the State of Alaska’s “roads to resources” program and purchases of timber from the Alaska Mental Health Trust and the University of Alaska—public entities obliged to derive funding from their land holdings.

**The continuing collision** of values, of timber vs. NIMBY—not in *my* back yard—was most prominent in 2016. The mental health trust threatened to clear-cut timber on Deer Mountain, Ketchikan’s unblemished backdrop. Congressional intervention and a swap of remote Tongass forest timber for trees behind Ketchikan settled the issue. As happens in this forest, trees were a currency of exchange.

# U.S. Forest Service

MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT  
COVERS 17 MILLION ACRES  
OF TIMBER, REC AND CULTURE

**KETCHIKAN** WAS the first HQ for Alaska’s federal foresters and it’s still a hub for management of the nation’s largest national forest.

Nearly 150 people work here for the U.S. Forest Service, including the forest supervisor. Ketchikan Misty Fjords Ranger District is based here.

Tongass National Forest comprises nearly 17 million acres of land spanning 500 miles, southeast of Ketchikan to northwest of Yakutat. About four-fifths of Southeast Alaska is in the national forest.

USFS manages for multiple uses: timber harvest; mining; recreation; wildlife habitat; and cultural preservation. Ketchikan is home to foresters, engineers, biologists, archaeologists, recreation programmers and other specialists.

**THE AGENCY’S WORK** is seen on forest trails and at 15 remote cabin sites. The public uses logging roads for recreation access—particularly on Prince of Wales Island.

Interpretation specialists provide information on the forest’s natural history and the human presence. But much of the agency’s work is not so apparent. Stream rehabilitation projects and fish ladders improve salmon stocks. Archaeologists inventory and protect culturally important sites. USFS scientists study living things from fish to forest pests.

Public properties managed by the agency are integrated into the local way of life while accommodating the multiple-use mandate. Several scenic and well-maintained forest trails on our road system are open to commercial tour operators but are managed to balance user groups. In the same manner, USFS oversees orderly and limited floatplane landings in Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness: public access tuned to essential wilderness values.

The Forest Service also links up with partners. Ketchikan Indian Community members participated in a watershed restoration project in a salmon stream and remote recreation site at Margaret Creek, about 25 miles north of Ketchikan.

LOCAL FOLKS' CAMPAIGN  
TO PROTECT A SPECIAL PLACE  
ACHIEVED SPECIAL STATUS FOR  
ONE OF ALASKA'S MOST-VISITED ATTRACTIONS

# MISTY FJORDS

**S**traddling the mainland and the east side of Revilla Island, Misty Fjords National Monument Wilderness embraces 2 million acres of glacier-gouged valleys, waterfall-slicked granite cliffs and verdant alpine highlands. In summer, thousands of people visit in boats and floatplanes for sightseeing excursions. Visitors with time and temerity kayak the fjords, or bunk in remote public cabins, or hike and camp in an ecological region preserved for all time. Wildlife is abundant, from mountain goats and deer to bears. This grandeur of landscape and wildlife led to a nickname linked to another national treasure: "Yosemite of the North."

Decades ago, the place was a remote destination for plucky Ketchikan people, but it wasn't protected. Enter Southeast Alaska Mountaineering Association. In the late 1960s, members of the group boated in to hike and camp in this backcountry that they prized as "East Behm Canal" or "back of the island." But timber harvesting was reaching farther into Southeast Alaskan habitats and this untouched area wasn't exempted.

**Malcolm Doiron** was a log scaler and a member of the mountaineering group. His job depended on timber

harvest, but he and other outdoors people wanted USFS and industry to consider other uses. They formed Tongass Conservation Society (TCS) and sought to set aside a special area.

**"We envisioned a wild, untamed place,"** Doiron said. "We wanted a place where floatplanes could land and where existing cabins could stay. But it needed protection." TCS led a 12-year campaign of lobbying and PR. Opposition was almost universal in Ketchikan, a timber-industry town. At some point, Doiron said, someone had to map the proposed monument and name it.

"I drew it on the map, the watershed boundaries including

some of Revilla Island and into the mainland. And one night I just wrote down 'Misty Fjords' for the name," Doiron said.

**President Jimmy Carter** created Misty Fjords National Monument in 1980. Congress later made wilderness status of the huge area irrevocable.

*Glaciers ground down ancient granite to leave a magnificent, misty wonderland.*



KVB



*'East Behm Canal' was the prosaic local name when a Forest Service ranger boat visited in the 1940s.*

USDA/FS

## THE BREADTH OF ALASKA IS SEEN ON A VISIT TO THE DISCOVERY CENTER

**Southeast Alaska Discovery Center** is where people go indoors to get really *inside* of Alaska. The facility on Mill Street presents natural history and the human presence in five exhibit areas, starting with touchable totem poles in the foyer. "Native Traditions" displays village life. "Alaska's Rainforest" and "Ecosystems" appeal to families and offer educational activities and kinetic interpretive displays. "Natural Resources" features world-class exhibits and recorded commentaries on timber, fishing and mining. Videos play on a 28-foot screen in Elizabeth Peratrovich Theater.

**The Discovery Center** is operated by the USDA Forest Service and is one of four Alaska Public Lands Information Centers in the state. It's open daily during our visitor season. There's a \$5 fee for summertime admission to the exhibits. In the off-season, the center presents educational programs, such as popular Friday Night Insights.



*Southeast Alaska Discovery Center has sophisticated exhibits with fun stuff for kids and fascinating interpretive material for adults.*

GREGG POPPEN



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

USDA/AFS

*Waters along Stedman Street often provided holding pens for rafted logs bound for the sawmill. The wood-waste burner at Ketchikan Spruce Mills was a fixture for decades.*

## WE CAME, WE SAWED, WE CONQUERED

TIMBER WAS A CORNERSTONE RESOURCE ON THE FRONTIER— ESSENTIAL FOR BUILDINGS, BOARDWALKS, FISH BARRELS, BOAT MASTS, PILINGS, MINE TUNNELS, RAILROAD TIES, UTILITY POLES AND CASH. FOR EIGHT DECADES IN THE CENTER OF KETCHIKAN, THE ROAR AND THE SMOKE OF A BIG MILL WERE ROUTINE.

**Early-days timber** cutting in the District of Alaska was somewhat of a free-for-all. Three sawmills operated in Ketchikan in 1902 as President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve. One was in Wacker City along Ward Cove, near the future site of Ketchikan Pulp Co. Tongass Tlingits ran a mill in Saxman, the Native village a couple of miles south of Ketchikan. Tsimshian Indians operated a sawmill on Gravina Island. None lasted more than a few years.

Ketchikan Power Co. was founded in 1904, built on pilings over the water in booming downtown. The facility sawed local timber and supplied power to the fast-growing community by burning waste wood under boilers. The electricity sideline was sold in 1925 to municipal Citizens Power, Light and Water Co. But concentrating on lumber production only benefited the plant. The name was changed to Ketchikan Spruce Mills and production capacity doubled. As the U.S. Corps of Engineers dredged the Ketchikan Creek mouth to create Thomas Basin, finishing in 1931, the mill took fill material to extend its tideland property. The mill was the first electrically



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*A flyover of downtown in 1954 shows Ketchikan Spruce Mills fully built out at its half-century mark. Mill buildings on pilings process logs pulled from rafts outside Thomas Basin; the tepee wood waste burner sends up a plume of smoke and stevedores load a freighter with sawn lumber. A passenger ship is tied at busy Heckman Wharf—where Berth 2 welcomes cruise ships today.*

driven sawmill in Alaska, generating juice from boilers fired with wood waste fed from the mill floor. Waste unfit for the boilers was shunted to a tepee burner—a conical landmark on the skyline until 1969. K.S.M. produced construction materials and fish boxes for canneries, along with other products.

**In the 1960s** and after, Japanese freighters tied at the dock to load cants: large, rough-sawn lumber sent for finishing as dimensional lumber in Japan. The Forest Service required “primary manufacture” of saw-quality timber from Tongass National Forest. The mill was sold to Georgia-Pacific in 1965 and later was operated by Louisiana-Pacific. L.P. closed the mill permanently during a strike by mill workers in 1985. (L.P. ran its Ward Cove pulp mill until 1997, its sawmill at the cove a couple of years longer.) Local folks called the downtown property “the Spruce Mill” long after it was sold to the City of Ketchikan and the buildings were scraped away.

In the late 1980s to 1990s, and emblematic of tourism as an economic force, the federal government built the \$10 million Southeast Alaska Discovery Center near the sawmill site. Private interests put up retail and office buildings and the Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show arena. Where a major sawmill had for many years loaded export lumber, cruise ships now offloaded passengers bearing another kind of wood fiber: paper money.



GREGG POPPEN

*Crushed limestone from Calder Mountain on Prince of Wales Island rides south with Ketchikan-based Olson Marine, bound for Columbia River Carbonates in Puget Sound. Prized for its whiteness and chemical composition, this humble but valuable mineral fits into a potentially resurgent mining sector. In 2010, CRC bought the Calder quarry—where prized marble was mined early in the 20th century.*

# MINING

## KETCHIKAN ANTICIPATES A BOOST FROM MINERAL RECOVERY ON THE EAST SIDE OF PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND

**A** Canadian mining company is running the countdown clock for development near Ketchikan of a world-class source of metals that are essential in electric vehicles and consumer electronics. Ucore Rare Metals Inc. is poised to exploit rare earth elements (REEs) in the established mineral resource at Bokan Mountain's Dotson Ridge zone on southeast Prince of Wales Island. The raw material may eventually undergo initial processing in an innovative facility in Ketchikan.

REEs in Ucore's mineral claims are expected to boost North America in competition with China to supply global industry. The 17 rare earth elements—as metals and oxides—are used in myriad products, such as magnets in electric-vehicle motors; rechargeable batteries; LCD screens; and wind turbines. They're found in commercially recoverable concentrations in very few places on earth. Steady upticks in rare earth oxide (REO) commodity prices may be lining up with Ucore's anticipated production costs for market-ready development of Bokan and other U.S.-allied minerals.

China controls about 80 percent of the world's REEs. Ucore has explored its Bokan-Dotson Ridge claims since 2007 and calls the prospect one of the "highest-grade" heavy REE resources in the U.S. Investors poured more than \$80 million (Canadian) into Ucore via stock exchanges while the company acquired Bokan Mountain, conducted exploration work and clinched technical and strategic partnerships.

**Ketchikan expects to** benefit from Ucore's development of its Alaska Strategic Metals Complex (SMC) within the next few years. At the facility, more than 40 people would separate rare earth elements from U.S.-allied mineral concentrates before shipping finished rare earth oxides to Lower 48 plants for further refining into usable metals and alloys. Ucore says the Ketchikan facility would use the company's proprietary RapidSX separation technology to claim a competitive advantage in processing cost and

environmental considerations. Ucore acquired Innovation Metals Corp. and RapidSX in 2020.

**Ucore linked up** with Southeast Conference in 2021 for cooperative development of Alaska SMC, expected to be built in Ketchikan. Southeast Conference is a regional economic-development authority comprising governments and businesses—and empowered to draw on federal and Alaska funding sources. Ucore previously won a commitment from the Alaska Industrial and Development Authority (AIDEA) for a bond issue of as much as \$145 million to support the Bokan-Dotson Ridge project. Ucore continued to pursue the development of Bokan Mountain in mid-2022, sending a crew of geologists for extended assessment of the REE mineral resource—to firm up confidence that commercially viable concentrations can be extracted.

Another mining prospect on Prince of Wales Island is getting enthusiastic attention. Blackwolf Copper and Gold, based in British Columbia, achieved a "significant geological breakthrough" in 2021 at its Niblack project. New analysis of geological formations and core samples in the Lookout area seem to indicate greater likelihood of recoverable concentrations of copper, gold, silver and zinc. A portion of Niblack was mined decades ago by another company, then was abandoned. Blackwolf is conducting several rounds of helicopter-aided drilling to assess the mineral resources in two areas of its Niblack property. The company expected that before the end of 2022 an independent contractor would report out a technical and market assessment of the Niblack project. Niblack on southeast POW is close to tidewater and to the island road system.

**Blackwolf Copper and Gold** (formerly known as Heatherdale Resources), like Ucore, could draw on AIDEA bond funding—up to \$125 million in this case. The borough and Blackwolf have a handshake deal for cooperative development of ore-processing facilities in Ketchikan if Niblack goes into production.

*Steady upticks in commodity prices may be lining up with anticipated production costs for market-ready development*

## ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STRAIT — We thrived by provisioning POW miners

**THE FIRST MINING CLAIM** recorded in Alaska—immediately after the purchase of the Great Land from the tsar in 1867—was the Copper Queen lode on the Kasaan Peninsula of Prince of Wales Island. The site is just across Clarence Strait from Ketchikan. Copper Queen yielded marketable quantities of its namesake metal as the nation electrified.

Geology on that side of the strait proved favorable to copper miners for decades. The Salt Chuck, Hadley and Sulzer copper mines flourished in the first decade of the 20th century. As many as 70 men worked the mine at Salt Chuck; rusting relics of massive machinery are a visitor attraction to this day. At Hadley, a town with a hotel flourished for a decade around the copper deposit; time and the forest have swallowed the remnants.

Gold mining on eastern Prince of Wales was not as successful as copper mining. Claims near present-day Hollis bore optimistic names such as Lucky Nell and Crackerjack, Croesus and Golden Fleece, but the difficulty of getting ore to smelters in economic volumes constrained development.

**GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS** within 25 miles of Ketchikan inspired a few miners to stake gold claims, but little of the metal was found. Ketchikan benefited much more as the supply nexus for mines on Prince of Wales Island. The young town's first news sheet, *The Mining Journal*, was a hyperbolic booster of Ketchikan's prospects. The most famous Ketchikan miner was John Schoenbar, whose unproductive "mine" was probably a device for exploiting investors at the turn of the century. The mine site in Bear Valley is lost to history, but Schoenbar's name lives on in the nameplates for a school and a road.

While metal ores lured hard rock miners to difficult and short-lived spoils, a simple mineral was found in abundance and well-situated for removal from POW. Calcium carbonate, the mineralized litter of ancient seas, was abundant as marble and limestone. Vermont Marble Co. exploited a massive formation near Tokeen for almost 15 years leading up to World War

I. At peak production the Tokeen quarry had about 100 men at work sawing blocks of superb stone and moving them to tidewater docks. That marble graces buildings from Hawai'i to Boston—and is prominent in Alaska's capitol.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

*In 1904, the Hadley mine on Prince of Wales Island had generated a small town. Impending mines will create fewer on-site impacts.*

# HUNTING

## GOATS, DEER AND BLACK BEARS FEATURE IN THIS REGION'S BIG-GAME HUNTS

**HUNTING MOUNTAIN GOATS** in the high reaches of Southeast is hard work, but hunters take remarkable billies. Typical males weigh around 260 pounds. They're found above treeline. In the Ketchikan area and Misty Fjords National Monument, seasons open Aug. 1 or Aug. 15.

Sitka black-tailed deer are numerous throughout the region. Depending on the area, two or four bucks may be taken per year by resident and nonresident hunters. The season runs Aug. 1 to Nov. 30.

**BLACK BEAR SEASON** extends from September through June. Around Ketchikan, nonresident hunters need licenses, harvest tickets and locking tags. Those regulations also apply for guided nonresident hunters on Prince of Wales Island; non-guided nonresidents also need drawing permits. Black bears on local islands grow larger than mainland cousins because they don't compete with brown bears. Nonresidents may take one bear; non-guided hunts require Fish & Game permits.

Waterfowl hunting season runs Sept. 1 to Dec. 16 in odd-numbered years and Sept. 16 to Dec. 31 in even-numbered years. Prey species range from ducks and sea ducks to snipes and sandhill cranes. Shooting times are half an hour before sunrise through sunset. Only steel shot may be used. Felt-soled boots are prohibited in Alaska's fresh water.



GREGG POPPEN

*Sitka black-tailed deer are hunted late summer into winter.*

### STATE OF ALASKA HUNTING REGULATIONS

#### BIG GAME IN THE KETCHIKAN AREA

[www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/gmu1.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/gmu1.pdf)

#### BIG GAME ON PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND

[www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/gmu2.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/gmu2.pdf)

#### WATERFOWL IN THE KETCHIKAN AREA

[www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/waterfowl.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/wildliferegulations/pdfs/waterfowl.pdf)



CINDY BALZER

# WATERFRONT

*CROSSING PATTERNS* Ketchikan's waterfront is busy enough with pleasure craft and commercial vessels of all sizes. Add in the 'airfront' of floatplane and airport traffic and you have an uncommon scene along Tongass Narrows. In this summertime image, a local Beaver floatplane touches down in front of a slow-moving seine boat; small recreational boats churn up wake while a Disney cruise ship rests at one of four deep-water berths; to the right in the distance is a major U.S. Coast Guard base.

KETCHIKAN IS ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING PORTS FOR SEAFOOD LANDINGS. HUNDREDS OF COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL BOATS HOMEPORT HERE. MORE THAN A MILLION PEOPLE VISIT EACH YEAR ON CRUISE SHIPS. A MAJOR SHIPYARD BUILDS AND REPAIRS LARGE VESSELS. TWO FERRY LINES AND FOUR BARGE OPERATIONS USE THE PORT. THE U.S. COAST GUARD MAINTAINS A BASE FOR PATROL AND RESCUE MISSIONS. FLOATPLANES BUZZ IN AND OUT AMID THE VESSEL TRAFFIC. IT'S A MARITIME MAIN STREET.



ERIC STONE / KRBD-FM

*MV Hubbard, one of a matched pair of Alaska Class ferries, was built in the Ketchikan Shipyard for the Alaska Marine Highway System.*



# Shipyard takes its place in a maritime titan

**K**etchikan Shipyard has more than just two floating drydocks to give it a buoyant outlook as its 30th anniversary approaches.

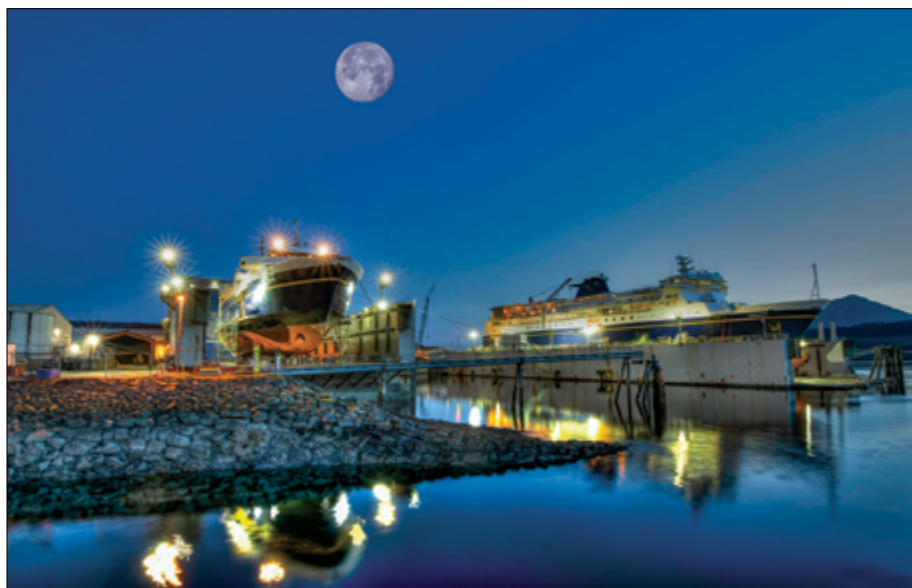
The base of potential customers rose with recent Congressional action and with the homeporting of newly arrived federal vessels just miles away. Its parent company merged with another U.S. business to form an aptly named Titan of maritime services. And through it all, its local leadership remained in place.

The shipyard and other Pacific Northwest operations owned by Vigor Industrial merged in 2019 with Virginia-based MHI, owned by the Carlyle Group and Stellex Capital. The new entity, Titan Acquisition Holdings, subsequently added a major San Diego shipyard to its brand in 2020. Notably, Titan's shipyards on both coasts concentrate on services to federal fleets such as the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, as well as work for ferry fleets. Those specialties fit Vigor Alaska's longtime market niche.

"The combination of all these entities into one creates synergy and heft, especially in ship repair, that substantially raises the profile of all Titan-owned entities," said Jill Mackie, Vigor's senior v.p. for public affairs.

Vigor executives expect the farthest-north shipyard in the bicoastal Titan operation to maintain its edge. "Many of our customers are based in the Pacific Northwest, yet serve Alaska directly," said Mackie. "The presence in Alaska allows us to provide options to our customers and be in locations where they may need us. The Ketchikan Shipyard allows Vigor to serve customers more fully."

**Ketchikan's first modern** shipyard opened in the 1980s on a site developed by the State of Alaska for repair and maintenance on state ferries. That local operation failed. Another local business re-started service in 1994 as Alaska Ship & Drydock. Acquisition of the physical plant by the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority in 1997 ramped up capital investment. In



*Founded nearly 30 years ago as a small, local enterprise, Ketchikan Shipyard grew into an industrial powerhouse and major year-round employer. The shipyard's floating drydocks here hold state ferries lifted off the water for repair and maintenance.*

WARD MACE

2012, Vigor Industrial took ownership of operations, managing two floating drydocks, a massive ship assembly hall and facilities for fabrication and repair spread across nearly 20 acres.

**In the five years** to 2021, average annual employment at Vigor Alaska was nearly 150 people. Annual payroll averaged \$10.6 million.

In the last 20 years the shipyard built two Ketchikan airport ferries; an experimental U.S. Navy vessel, the MV Susitna; a 140-foot commercial longliner, the FV Arctic Prowler; and two 280-foot Alaska Class Ferries, the MV Tazlina and MV Hubbard. The versatile crew also kept up with contracts for ship repair and modernization, the core business.

Ketchikan Shipyard will continue as the primary support site for vessels of the Alaska Marine Highway System. Numbers of large commercial vessels, from fish processors to barges, will also rest in the shipyard's 10,000-ton and 2,500-ton drydocks.

**Congressional action** should enlarge the customer base. Legislation in 2018 and 2020 allows the U.S. Coast Guard to use full and open competition for work on vessels in District 17, enabling Ketchikan Shipyard to compete for contracts originating in Alaska. The Coast Guard recently posted a third 154-foot cutter to Ketchikan. NOAA's research ship Fairweather is also newly homeported here. (SEE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR MORE.)

**Vigor Industrial** estimates that year-round employment will range from 100-125 in coming years, depending on the work available in the market.

Vigor Alaska is eyeing the future of the physical facility. The company hired economists at McKinley Research for a market study intended to guide infrastructure investment and maintain the a competitive edge. Vigor requested \$8.1 million in state capital support for improvements to the assembly hall, both drydocks and the machine shop. Vigor Alaska received a federal grant for small shipyards in 2017 and invested \$533,000 of company funds plus a federal match to purchase tools and equipment for project efficiency.

Ketchikan Shipyard was recognized in 2022 by the Shipbuilders Council of America with an "excellence in safety" award. Vigor Industrial yards took four of 13 awards for safety.

**Vigor Industrial** counts stability in personnel as a market edge. Vigor Alaska's longtime president, Adam Beck, and others retained roles when Vigor joined the Titan group. "The Ketchikan Shipyard is important to Vigor, but more importantly it is important to the local community," Beck commented. "With year-round jobs paying substantially above the local average and the local purchasing we engage, we have a positive impact. These are critical jobs held by terrific people committed to their craft."

# U.S. AGENCY DEVELOPS A NEW FACILITY FOR ITS VESSEL

## *Alaska and local officials celebrate as NOAA builds a home for Fairweather*

**KETCHIKAN'S WATERFRONT** will boast a new federal maritime facility with completion of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) home port for its Alaska-based ship.

The \$19 million project south of the city center includes a new office building and an access bridge to a new floating pier. The agency is also upgrading electrical and water utilities.

Ketchikan has long been, at least nominally, home port for NOAA's Fairweather, a 231-foot, ice-strengthened vessel that typically spends about 150 days at sea each year. The ship's specialty is ultra-precise sonar surveys of the ocean bottom to refine nautical charts. The technical data also help in analyzing tsunami risks posed by ocean slopes. Scientists go aboard for marine ecosystem studies, fisheries habitat maps and other research projects. The ship is managed by NOAA's Office of Marine & Aviation Operations.

**IN GROUNDBREAKING** for the Ketchikan project in 2021, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves lauded the "climate-resilient infrastructure" designed into the facility. "The investment we are making in partnership with the State of Alaska will help ensure that NOAA can continue to support safe navigation and commerce in Alaska efficiently and effectively for years to come," Graves told an enthusiastic



TIM SMITH / NOAA

*A ray of light for the local economy: NOAA's Fairweather will be at home at a new local pier.*

audience. The project contract went to Ahtna Infrastructure and Technologies LLC of Anchorage.

**IT'S A WIN FOR ALASKANS** who kept pressure on NOAA to follow through on federal legislation in 2001 that designated Ketchikan as home port for the Fairweather. But NOAA's dock along the industrial stretch of south Stedman Street was deemed unusable, scuttling the plan. State and local officials worked for years to fund a facility from scratch.

U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan praised their persistence. "This is a story of, first, relentless advocacy and a community, Ketchikan—all its leaders, its tribal leaders—who would not take no for an answer, who refused to say, 'We're going to give up this ship,' which by law is supposed to be homeported here," Sullivan said before a dozen officials happily sank shovels in ceremonial dirt. State Sen. Bert Stedman, who led

efforts to pass state funding to Ketchikan Gateway Borough in support of the project, was advocating for phase two at the NOAA site before the groundbreaking audience dispersed.

The Fairweather carries a crew of 51, including 11 commissioned officers. The ship can also accommodate a number of scientists and technicians for its broadly defined research missions.

The Fairweather's new Ketchikan home base and capacious float will also serve the port calls of other vessels in federal service.



GREGG POPPEN

**A U.S. NAVY FACILITY** on Back Island north of Ketchikan ensures that the nation's submarine fleet is as quiet as it can be. Southeast Alaska Acoustic Measurement Facility (SEAFAC) is a proving ground for submarine stealth technology. Since 1991, SEAFAC has measured subs' sound output with acoustic measurement arrays and tracking hydrophones. SEAFAC also lowers submarines to about 400 feet for tests of their static state with AC, pumps and other gear in use.

Upgrades at Back Island in 2007 improved

testing efficiency and allowed newer, quieter subs to undergo measurement. Testing can now be completed in conditions of waves and weather that previously compromised results. SEAFAC tests subs in the Los Angeles, Ohio, Seawolf and Virginia classes.

**THE BEHM CANAL SITE** was chosen in 1989 for its quiet depths and light boat traffic. The proposal to bring nuke-bearing submarines to Back Island was controversial, but a local advisory vote went decisively in favor of the navy.

*One boat trolls. That other one patrols. A good half-mile beyond these anglers, a U.S. Navy submarine surfaces in Behm Canal north of town during a visit for testing its sound profile.*

**NAVY BARGES AND SHORESIDE** facilities are modest signs of SEAFAC's presence and the Pacific Fleet's big subs are rarely seen. The indication of a sub in the neighborhood is a local radio PSA asking boaters to cut their engines when alert lights flash in the broad testing area. Everybody knows: Successful test-taking calls for quiet.

# Coast Guard boosts complement of boats and buildings

## ARRIVAL OF THIRD NEW FAST CUTTER COMPLETES A MATCHING SET IN THE FIRST CITY

**BIG INVESTMENTS** ON the water and ashore characterize the U.S. Coast Guard presence in Ketchikan in recent years.

Three newly built ships of the USCG's fast response cutter (FRC) fleet have been stationed in the First City since 2017. The 154-foot cutter Douglas Denman arrived in August 2022. The cutters John McCormick and Bailey Barco tied up at Base Ketchikan five years earlier as the first of a new class of vessel to be stationed on the Pacific Ocean from Oregon to Kodiak Island. Each of the FRCs carries a crew of 24. Top speed for the cutters is more than 28 knots—suited to their missions of patrol, rescue and interdiction.

**THE U.S. COAST GUARD** is the largest agency in the Department of Homeland Security and has a vital presence in Ketchikan. Partnership of the agency and mariners in Southeast Alaska goes back more than a century: USCG's forerunner, the U.S. Lighthouse Service, was here in the early 1900s, when steamships plied the Inside Passage.



GREGG POPPEN

**VERSATILITY AND VELOCITY** The newly launched 154-footer Douglas Denman comes to Ketchikan to join two sister vessels: 'fast response cutters' serving broad missions near an international border.

The Coast Guard in Ketchikan has a broad roster of responsibilities: homeland security; search and rescue; law enforcement; vessel safety; aids to navigation; and marine pollution response. The agency patrols the U.S.-Canada border southeast of Ketchikan in Dixon Entrance and watches all the waters of Southeast.

### BASE KETCHIKAN

south of the city came in for major changes between 2015 and 2017. A \$27 million project provided upland facilities for vessel maintenance and other services. Mooring facilities were enlarged, partly for the new cutters.

The 175-foot buoy tender Anthony Petit remains in service out of Base Ketchikan.

Station Ketchikan provides marine search and rescue capabilities with two 45-foot response boats and two 29-footers. There is also a marine safety detachment.

**NEARLY 200 PEOPLE** work in military and civilian roles for the Coast Guard in Ketchikan; most military personnel serve three-year tours. USCG honored Ketchikan as a "Coast Guard City" in 2015 in recognition of the long, positive relationship of the agency and community.

## *MV Malaspina slated for restful and respectful retirement in its home port*

**THE ALASKA FERRY SYSTEM'S** first mainline ship is avoiding the fates of other decommissioned vessels and will ease into retirement, still serving Alaskans and visitors.

The MV Malaspina was purchased by private interests and is expected to remain tied up north of Ketchikan. Ward Cove Dock Group (WCDG) plans to use the ship for worker housing and perhaps in the future as a maritime museum and training platform.

The ship left Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) service in 2019 when costs of repair and operation exceeded state government's willingness to pay. WCDG paid \$128,250 for "the Mal"; crucially for AMHS, the sale offloaded hundreds of thousands of dollars in insurance and upkeep costs.

AMHS has decommissioned several vessels in recent years. MV Taku launched in 1963 and sold for \$171,000 in 2018. The ship reportedly ended up scrapped in India. Twin vessels MV Chenega and MV Fairweather sailed Southeast for only 15 years, beset by problems with their engines and propulsion gear. They were sold in 2021 to a Spanish

ferry business for about \$5.2 million—a small fraction of their cost.

**OPERATING COSTS** of state ferries are more than three times greater than ticket

revenues and every AMHS budget floats on legislative good will. Ferry managers scan the fleet minutely. Ferry gift shops on mainline vessels were shut down in 2014 to save \$1 million. Ships' small bars were shuttered for years, then tentatively re-opened in 2022.

But ferries' open-air solariums, observation lounges, restaurants and spectacular Inside Passage routes remain cherished amenities on restful itineraries. In a concession to the times and travelers' expectations, AMHS in mid-2022 put out feelers for a vendor that could install satellite-based wi-fi on Alaska ferries.



KENNETH J. GILL

*MV Malaspina under way in its heyday.*

# HERITAGE MACHINISTS' CRAFT IS STILL IN DEMAND

FOR ALMOST 90 YEARS and across four generations of one family, Union Machine Shop has specialized in the care and fixing of propellers and drive shafts—the true business end of boats.

When these particular parts fail, a boat is little more than an expensive raft. Skippers with issues have lugged distressed metal through the barn-red doors of Union Machine Shop since 1935.

Rod Bray runs the shop that his grandfather, Harley, built on pilings beside Thomas Basin. Rod's son, Tyler, works with him. The business' complement of customers has changed since the Thirties, but southern Southeast Alaska is still a maritime economy. Boats still have propellers and a prop rebuilt is still cheaper than a prop bought. People who need Union Machine Shop find it.

"We don't have a web site," says Rod. "We have Facebook and word of mouth. If everybody that needed work came in, we'd be overwhelmed."

Rod's grandfather built Union Machine Shop with lumber re-purposed from the disassembled Roe Point Cannery on Behm Canal 35 miles from Ketchikan. Thomas Basin had recently been dredged out of the Ketchikan Creek tide flats to offer a second harbor in the fast-growing town. Scores of trollers, seiners, longliners, tugboats and pleasure craft tied up. Marine machinists were busy. In that era before radar, depth finders and GPS, propellers got dinged on rocks and logs. Drive shafts needed repair or replacement.

**HARLEY BRAY TURNED THE SHOP** over to his son, Jim, in 1962. Well into Jim Bray's tenure operating the business, power tools on the shop floor were driven by long belts turning around overhead shafts; a motor on the second floor powered the entire noisy works. The massive metal lathe installed by Harley Bray is still operable, but an onboard electric motor replaced the belt drive. Other vestiges survive from the earliest days of Union Machine Shop, such as the heavy propeller table: Harley Bray built the table and settled



PHOTOS: GREG POPPEN



Rod Bray's personal collection of propellers bears the same distinctive finishing touch that Union Machine Shop applies to every customer's prop. 'It shows that you take pride in your work,' says the third-generation marine machinist. Tyler Bray takes on most of the shop's work on commercial trollers' power gurdies.

it on stout legs made from Model A and Model T axle housings. Props as big as 88 inches across have been on the table for repair.

Jim Bray opened up a family sideline when he took up commercial salmon trolling.

"We all used to fish in the summer," said Rod. He and his brother, Harley, and then his son, Tyler, crewed on the FV Silver Sea with Jim Bray. Operating a troller schooled the Brays in hydraulics; the shop offers hydraulic repair with its other services.

**THE NECESSITY** to keep trolling gear in working shape led to a specialty that Rod says is practically exclusive to his shop. Union rebuilds the hydraulically powered gurdies that trollers use to reel up steel fishing lines. The machinery enters the shop green with corrosion, spattered with spilled oil and clanking with bad bearings. Tyler takes on most of these reclamations. The devices go out free-spinning and glowing after a session in a bead-blasting

booth. Customers for this gurdy refurbishment range all along the Pacific coast. "We're the only people in the country doing this," said Rod.

As the Union Machine Shop heritage reaches into a fourth generation, Tyler says it's a natural for him. "I've been around here since grade school," he says. "It was meant to be." He supplemented on-the-job training with his father by taking three years of welding classes at UAS Ketchikan campus.



PHOTOS: ROD BRAY

When a commercial boat's propeller literally hits rock bottom, it goes to Union for reconstruction processes that only a few marine machinists know: bending blades back into alignment with heat and a 6-foot lever; grinding down to good metal; building up with welds; and last, grinding, balancing and applying Union's signature finish.

# MARITIME CRAFTS HAVE A PROUD HISTORY ON KETCHIKAN'S WATERFRONT



The Ketchikan fire map of 1916 depicts just one segment of marine enterprises that stood on long pilings in Newtown. This was an era when scores of halibut schooners homeported at City Float and when big freighters tied up to deepwater piers in autumn to fill their holds with the summer's canned salmon harvest.

- U.S. Lighthouse Service was the forerunner of the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Revilla Fish Products was one of several salmon canneries in Newtown in the early 1900s.
- Northern Machine Works operated from 1912 to 1972, servicing fishing, freight and pleasure vessels.

Newtown was a commercial hodge-podge in the early 1900s, boasting businesses from can-fabricators to neon sign makers, from laundries to taverns.

McKay Marine Ways stood for six decades as



A wooden vessel hauled for service at McKay Marine Ways.

the most prominent feature on Ketchikan's waterfront. The graceful lines of this 100-foot structure outlived the era when skippers hauled out wood-hulled fishing and freight vessels for repair. Operated from 1929 by founder Les McKay and then by the Ludwigsen family, the ways came down in the early 1990s, relics of a bygone era. Rock fill pushed back the sea for modern land uses that subsumed the—well, the old ways.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



GREGG POPPEN

**BLADE WALKER**  
A heavy propeller with a dinged blade takes the overland route to a shop.

# MARINE TRANSPORT

## FERRIES ARE THE ROADS LINKING US TO THE CONTINENT AND TO OTHER COMMUNITIES

**F**erries are highways in Southeast Alaska, where most communities are on islands and every town is on the ocean. Alaska Marine Highway System provides service to Ketchikan from Bellingham, Wash., on mainline ships. Passengers can walk on for the 38-hour cruise up the Inside Passage—or they can roll on with cars, RVs, boats and bikes.

End to end, the system stretches to the Aleutian Chain out west and 30 coastal communities are strung along 3,500 miles of ferry routes. Mainline ferries offer staterooms, lounges, open-air solariums and cafeterias for long-distance comfort.

Service to Ketchikan from Prince Rupert, B.C., was interrupted by the pandemic and partially restored in 2022. The Canadian city is on the continental road network six hours by ferry from the First City.

**Annual service** schedules for AMHS ferries are almost always controversial—and no one has complained of *excessive* port calls in recent years. Aging ships, ill-designed ships, tight state budgets and costly fuel have plagued the system. But some easing of ferry snafus may be on the horizon—given continued federal

support. Alaska's U.S. Senate delegation won a provision in the 2021 infrastructure bill that allows AMHS to use federal surface transportation money for operation and maintenance—a potential boon for state budget-writers when U.S. transportation allocations favor Alaska.

In Ketchikan, port projects worth about \$3 million were pending: ferry docking and mooring infrastructure as well as improvement to the AMHS terminal in Ketchikan's West End.

**At Ketchikan Shipyard**, where the MV Hubbard was built three years ago, the ship was brought back for \$15 million worth of work to build crew quarters. The ship is capable of oceangoing runs, but lack of crew quarters kept the Hubbard out of roles filling in for mainline ships out of service for repair or annual layup.

The state has initiated planning to build a new mainline ferry at a cost of \$200 million or more.

Ketchikan is also a port for the Inter-Island Ferry Authority, which runs a round trip daily from Hollis on Prince of Wales Island. IFA ships open up the nation's third-largest island to exploration. POW has hundreds of miles of roads and a number of friendly small towns.

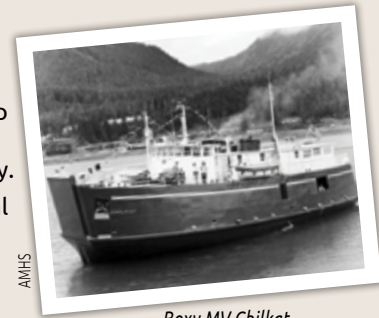
## FERRIES TIED THE NEW STATE'S TOWNS

**ALASKA'S FERRY SYSTEM** started with one small ship owned by a road authority.

The Territorial Road Commission put the new MV Chilkat into service out of Juneau in 1957. When the young state created the Alaska Marine Highway System in 1963, the Chilkat was its first vessel. The ferry system was long-sought by the Southeast Conference of government and business interests. The state brought three mainline ships into service in 1963: the nearly identical MV Malaspina and MV Matanuska, and the MV Taku.

**In 1968, AMHS** bought the MV Stena from a Swedish line, called her MV Wickersham and ran the ship from Seattle—but with daunting difficulties. By U.S. law, the foreign-built ship had to stop at a B.C. port on each trip; vehicle access below decks was knotty; and a deep draft limited routes on the Inside Passage. The ship was sold in 1974. In the '70s, AMHS lengthened the "Mal" and "Mat" by 55 feet. MV Columbia, at 418 feet, joined the fleet in 1974.

The sturdy old MV Chilkat was sold in 1988 and in 2021 sank while tied to a dock in Washington state.



Boxy MV Chilkat (99 LOA, 33 beam)



**BARGE RIGHT IN** If it's large and heavy and there's no great hurry, it probably moves on a barge. Construction materials, new cars, non-perishable foods, fuels—much of what we use and consume is towed from Puget Sound ports. Alaska Marine Lines has a large facility here and connects to other Alaskan ports. Samson Tug and Barge

also lands freight in Ketchikan; its home office is in Sitka. State ferries carry freight that needs a little more speed, such as reefer trucks and containers. Alaska Airlines' cargo service provides the greatest velocity to the First City—and in the summer, air transport is the speediest mode for our famous fresh seafood, jetting to distributors Outside.



CHRISTINA BARLOW

# NEIGHBORS

ONE OF OUR NICKNAMES IS 'THE GATEWAY CITY.' KETCHIKAN IS A PORTAL TO GREAT PLACES

*So-called 'P-O-W' is a big island of friendly, small towns and scenic backcountry. This view takes in Craig and its island setting from popular Sunnahae Trail.*

## PRINCE of WALES ISLAND

**Ketchikan is the takeoff** point for travel to the nation's third-largest island. The island we commonly call "P-O-W" has friendly small towns, tall mountains and a thousand miles of shoreline. The island is accessible for passengers and vehicles via Inter-Island Ferry Authority's daily transit to Hollis. Air carriers offer scheduled and charter flights.

Prince of Wales Island boasts nearly 2,000 miles of roads, from smooth highways to rugged backcountry tracks. More than 250 miles of roads are Alaska Scenic Byways. Visitors find many lodging options, from B&Bs to RV parks. The towns offer fishing charters and whale-watching excursions. The U.S. Forest Service conducts tours of massive El Capitan Cave on the north end. USFS cabins provide rustic getaways.

Native culture is prominent in totem parks in Klawock, Hydaburg and Kasaan. Kasaan also has the newly restored Whale House on its scenic waterfront.

**Prince of Wales Chamber** of Commerce provides a good roundup of information for visitors launching their explorations from Ketchikan. Browse online at [princeofwalescoc.org](http://princeofwalescoc.org) and [discoverpowisland.com](http://discoverpowisland.com).



JEANNE MCFARLAND

*The Forest Service offers free tours in El Capitan Cave.*



MARK MCCREARY

*Whale House in Kasaan is spectacularly revived.*

## METLAKATLA

The state ferry MV Lituya makes a 45-minute run between Ketchikan and Annette Island several days a week to put this unique community within reach. A 15-mile road leads from the ferry landing to the town of 1,400 people on scenic Chester Bay. Local air carriers make scheduled trips to Metlakatla.

Most residents are Tsimshians whose ancestors resettled here from Canada in the 1880s. Self-governing Metlakatla Indian Community is the authority in Annette Island Reserve—the state's only Alaska Native reserve.

For info about visiting the town and attractions such as Duncan Cottage and a historical church, browse to the tribal web site, [metlakatla.com](http://metlakatla.com).



WENDY CHATHAM

*Metlakatla's waterfront faces into scenic Chester Bay.*



*New clinical and surgical facilities at Ketchikan Medical Center overlook Bar Harbor in the West End of town. The hospital serves a wide swath of Alaska's Panhandle.*

# HEALTH CARE | hospital

## THE CITY PARTNERS WITH A NORTHWEST PROVIDER ON A VITAL MEDICAL CENTER

**P**aceHealth Ketchikan is the result of a more than half-century partnership between the City of Ketchikan and PeaceHealth, a regional health care system in the Northwest.

PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center (KMC) is a critical access hospital offering services that are remarkable for a rural facility with about 35,000 people in its catchment area of southern Southeast Alaska. KMC maintains a 24-hour emergency department, a surgery center, six specialized medical clinics and a comprehensive imaging department.

As the health care hub for the southern Panhandle, KMC and PeaceHealth Medical Group (PHMG) offer care for all stages of life. PeaceHealth Ketchikan employs 450 caregivers, including nearly 90 medical staff.

Almost 200 babies are born every year at KMC's New Beginnings Birthing Center. Medical group clinics include pediatrics; women's health; and family and internal medicine. PHMG provides orthopedics and sports medicine as well as general surgery and psychiatric care. The home health staff provides in-home nursing and other medical assistance to homebound patients. New Horizons Long-Term Care offers skilled nursing care.

**PHMG also provides** direct service in Craig on Prince of Wales Island through a primary medical care clinic. That clinic regularly welcomes visiting specialties including general surgery; women's health; behavioral health; cardiology; and pediatrics.

The modern West End hospital's physical facilities are owned by the city and operated by PeaceHealth, a nonprofit with a history linking medicine and ministry. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace established Little Flower Hospital downtown in 1923, but by the 1960s Little Flower was outdated. The sisters entered into a partnership with the city and the municipality built a new Ketchikan General Hospital on Tongass Avenue. The sisters provided health care services in the facility, which has undergone upgrades through the decades. A new 72,000 square foot clinical wing was finished in 2017.

Services are remarkable for a rural facility ... 24-hour ER, surgery, a birthing center, specialized clinics, comprehensive imaging

The sisters' organization grew in Ketchikan and in other Northwest communities to become PeaceHealth, a nonprofit health care ministry based in Vancouver, Wash. PeaceHealth in Ketchikan provides medical care to all, regardless of ability to pay.

**As a nonprofit** with a board composed of members of the community, the organization invests earnings in the hospital's technology, equipment and services. PeaceHealth reinvests

in the facility to bring state-of-the-art equipment to the region, such as 3D mammography and nuclear medicine. PeaceHealth also invests in promoting wellness in the community through a sizeable grant program.

More than 84,000 patient records are logged each year at KMC. Many belong to visitors to the First City—including cruise ship passengers who use the hospital and clinics.



KMC provides a wide variety of essential services:

- A trauma IV-rated emergency department that logs more than 9,000 visits every year;
- Surgical procedures from appendectomies to surgical cancer treatment using minimally invasive surgical techniques where possible;
- Orthopedic and sports medicine, including full-joint replacement, paired with pre- and post-surgery physical therapy;
- A modern birthing center with board-certified obstetricians/ gynecologists and certified nurse midwives;
- 3D mammography, nuclear medicine, MRI, CT scan and cutting-edge laboratory services using telepathology;
- 25 licensed inpatient beds in medical/ surgical, intensive care and obstetrics units;
- A 29-bed long-term, transitional care facility;
- A full-service sleep center and pulmonology clinic;
- A fully equipped suite for infusion therapy;
- A medical detoxification program.

**PeaceHealth Medical Group** provides primary and specialty medical care in Ketchikan and on Prince of Wales Island, with outreach clinics to Wrangell, Petersburg and Thorne Bay. Clinics include:

*Family medicine  
Pediatrics  
Orthopedic surgery  
Hospice*

*Women's health  
General surgery  
Psychiatry  
Home health care*



PHKMC



PHKMC

*Surgeons in Ketchikan use an operating suite equipped with new technology. Physical therapy through PHKMC also takes advantage of a top-flight facility.*

Visiting specialists provide regular clinical care for cardiology; oncology; ophthalmology; neurology; plastic surgery and ear-nose-throat care; urology; gastroenterology; podiatry; and allergy and asthma care.

**KMC ranks** as one of the leading hospitals in Alaska, regularly earning top marks in several areas of quality on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems. In 2020, the American Nurses Credentialing Center awarded PeaceHealth Ketchikan the Pathway to Excellence designation for creating a positive practice environment that empowers and engages staff.

PeaceHealth Ketchikan supports training of Alaska's health care students, offering rotations and clinicals to medical and nursing students; PeaceHealth also sponsors scholarships and tuition reimbursement.

PeaceHealth established the Prince of Wales Health Network of agencies strengthening health care and increasing access. PeaceHealth implemented a behavioral

health prevention and early intervention program with funding from the State of Alaska.

PeaceHealth's regional system has more than 800 physicians and providers and a comprehensive array of medical labs. Ten PeaceHealth medical centers span urban and rural communities in Oregon, Washington State and Alaska.

*KMC ranks as one of the leading hospitals in Alaska, regularly earning top marks in several areas*



KIC

## TRIBAL ORG TASKED WITH CARE

Ketchikan Indian Community Tribal Health Clinic in Ketchikan serves more than 6,300 tribal citizens of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian descent, as well as Aleuts and members of other tribal nations. Since 1997, KIC has had a compact with U.S. Indian Health Services to manage the tribe's health care.

KIC Tribal Health Clinic provides a wide array of services:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>Primary care</i> | <i>Women's health</i>                      |
| <i>Pediatrics</i>   | <i>Psychiatry</i>                          |
| <i>Dental</i>       | <i>Laboratory</i>                          |
| <i>Pharmacy</i>     | <i>Diabetes prevention &amp; treatment</i> |
| <i>Wellness</i>     |  |

Tribal patients also have access to specialty clinic, surgical, hospital and emergency care as well as diagnostic screenings and imaging with outside providers and partners throughout Alaska.



CSJP Archives

*THE FISHING HABIT* Sisters affiliated with Ketchikan's hospital enjoyed excursions on a local boat at mid-century.

## MISSIONS DEFINE HOSPITAL HISTORY ON THE FRONTIER

**Medical care** in early Ketchikan was rugged, like the town—but well-ventilated. As the mining and fishing hub's population grew quickly in the 1890s, physicians treated patients in canvas tents before moving indoors in a portion of the St. Agnes Mission.

In 1905, Episcopalians created the city's first hospital building by converting the clergy house on Mission Street. The facility was later named Yates Memorial Hospital in honor of a back-East benefactor. The flu epidemic of 1918 was a historic challenge.

Hospital competition arrived in 1923 when the Catholic Society of Alaska opened Little Flower Hospital on Bawden Street. The enterprise was operated by Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace of New Jersey. Hospital lore says a bishop named the facility for Saint Theresa, the "little flower in God's garden." Yates Memorial Hospital closed in 1925z.

**LITTLE FLOWER HOSPITAL** blossomed during World War II. A pediatric ward was finished in 1941. A federal grant in 1943 brought bed capacity to 75—the biggest private hospital in Alaska. Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace provided care at Little Flower through rough-and-tumble years, caring for routine medical needs, but also the—well, the *special demands* of the Creek Street red-light district, from stab wounds to illness and exhaustion. When polio hit in the '50s, the sisters worked with University of Washington epidemiologists to trace the outbreak and to provide immunizations.

By 1960, the fire marshal ruled out using the building as a hospital. The sisters were financially unable to replace the facility. The community stepped in with a 1 percent sales tax to fund a new facility; an advisory board provided oversight. The new Ketchikan General Hospital opened in 1963 on Tongass Avenue.

## JET CARECRAFT | Mediflights take off at a local base

**Alaska's biggest** medevac provider keeps personnel and a pair of aircraft at the ready in Ketchikan.

Guardian Flight's base at the airport links local medical providers with facilities in-state and around Puget Sound. Flight crews and medical personnel in Ketchikan are available 24/7.

Guardian has six other Alaskan bases.

The company stations two Hawker 400s at the Ketchikan airport. The aircraft enable medevac teams to handle a wide range of patients "from bed to bed"—from the doors of the Ketchikan hospital to a receiving facility. Guardian Flight points up rapid response times and after



15 years in Ketchikan the service also leans on familiarity with mediflight needs in southern Southeast. Surgical and cardiac cases routinely call for urgent transport. Pediatric ICU, obstetric and burn patients fly with Guardian. Trauma victims and newborns receive care in fast, pressurized aircraft.

**Apollo MT** by Guardian Flight offers membership as a hedge against high costs of emergency transport. Low-cost memberships are valid statewide and out of Alaska via Air Medical Resources Group. Guardian Flight provides non-urgent, pre-arranged medical charters statewide through its medevac bases.

## INDEPENDENT MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE CLINICS OFFER OPTIONS IN TREATMENT

**Independent clinics** in the First City provide a wide range of services, from wellness to acupuncture and from primary care to chiropractic.

Nurse practitioners staff Legacy Health Clinic. Family nurse practitioners offer care at several independent clinics: Creekside Family Health Clinic; Northway Family Healthcare; Power of Wellness Family Health Clinic; Rainforest Family Healthcare Clinic; and Serenity Health and Wellness Clinic.

**An M.D. at** Harmony Health Clinic provides family medical services and an option for acupuncture therapy.

Orthopedic medicine and surgery are specialties at SEAK Health, staffed by an M.D. and a physician assistant; the clinic also offers regenerative medicine.

**Chiropractic services** are available at several clinics around Ketchikan. Arctic Chiropractic is affiliated with a statewide practice. Family Chiropractic Clinic offers services from a pair of longtime chiropractors. Keystone Chiropractic Clinic debuted in 2022 as the successor to a retiring provider.

DruAn Kindred's clinic combines acupuncture and chiropractic.

Ketchikan Physical Therapy and Optimum Health and Wellness offer physical therapy at independent clinics.



# MEDIA

## TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY SOURCES KEEP US TUNED IN FOR NEWS AND AMUSEMENTS

**T**he hometown newspaper is in the morning box, but it's also on the web. The radio stations are on the dial, but they're all over social media and visuals are integral in their entertainment and information missions.

That is to say, Ketchikan media are technologically current.

The Ketchikan newspaper is off the press early in the morning six days a week and is available online with a click. Four local radio stations broadcast news, public affairs programs and music while providing web-based streams. An online news site compiles local and statewide news and spices up local conversation with a free-flowing letters page. A weekly shopper on paper and online provides classified ads and business ads. The municipal utilities' video production team covers hometown topics from sports to Native culture. For entertainment and news, two providers carry TV via cable or fiber-optic lines.

*Ketchikan Daily News* publishes every morning but Sunday from its longtime home on Dock Street. The family-owned paper delivers thousands of printed broadsheets to residential boxes and to stores; the web edition is popular with local readers, as well as travelers and folks Outside who need to maintain a bead on the community and Alaska. *Daily News* editors, reporters and photographers cover the community from local governments to sports. Circulation for the Weekend Edition is about 3,200.

**Four radio stations broadcast** from studios in Ketchikan. Honors for longest heritage go to KTKN-AM, linear successor to Ketchikan's first station. Weekday mornings feature the local "First City Forum" program of interviews, news and call-ins. (Oldtimers sometimes refer to the show by a former title, "Problem Corner.") KTKN airs pop music from a satellite feed and hourly headlines from CBS. KTKN provides live coverage of Ketchikan High School sports.

KGTW-FM shares ownership and facilities with KTKN. The FM station features country music. Both stations on the air in Craig on Prince of Wales Island, and both stream online.

KRBD-FM signed on in 1976 as a member-owned public radio station. So-called Rainbird Radio airs music shows produced by volunteers in diverse areas of interest, from blues and classical to indie pop and classic rock. The station maintains a two-person news department. Shows from National Public Radio and other networks fill out

the broadcast clock. The station broadcasts via an in-town tower and three remote translators, plus translators in four Prince of Wales Island communities. KRBD extends its reach with a streaming service and social-media outlets. KRBD is the primary emergency alert system broadcaster in the area.

**KFMJ-FM hit the air** in 1996. The station specializes in hits of the 1980s-1990s and adopted the nickname "The Rock"—not coincidentally, our moniker for Ketchikan. The station's web site provides a live stream. The owner of KGTW and KTKN manages sales and marketing for KFMJ.

The local web page [sitnews.us](http://sitnews.us) has published news and opinions since 1997 as an aggregator with a local focus. Its letters to the editor page is a popular site for commentary. Sitnews offers local and Alaska news and features, along with national material. Its home page features the work of local amateur photographers.

*The Local Paper* is a weekly printed shopper with local classified ads, published since the 1980s. The publication is distributed free at dozens of local businesses and its fare is also posted on the internet.

The most recent addition to the media matrix is KPU TV, a team producing local programs for Ketchikan Public Utilities' television service. KPU TV has won "Best of the Northwest" awards from the Alliance for Community Media Northwest Region—community-TV outlets in seven western states and Canadian provinces. The alliance honored KPU TV for community involvement and for overall excellence.

**Both KPU TV and GCI**, the privately owned Alaska-wide cable company, provide subscribers with live feeds of meetings of the Ketchikan City Council, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly, the School Board and the borough's Planning Commission.

# FOCUS ON MINING FOUNDED LOCAL PRESS

**THE FIRST NEWS SHEET** in Ketchikan was *Mining Journal*, founded in 1900. Ketchikan was flooded with prospectors—some visiting on their headlong hurry to gold rushes in the Klondike and Yukon, others staying to crack rock in this area. The latter bought more papers and the *Journal* provided news of mine claims and mineral discoveries. Publisher A.P. Swineford was President Grover Cleveland’s governor in the District of Alaska from 1885 to 1889. The *Journal* was gone at the end of the 'teens as fishing and timber surpassed mining.

*KETCHIKAN CHRONICLE* entered the scene in 1919 to offer local and global news. Wars and Prohibition and births and fishing seasons passed across *Chronicle* broadsheets. The weekly *Alaska Fishing News* hit the streets in mid-1934, sponsored by the Alaska Trollers Association. Sid Charles, once of the *Chronicle*, was editor. Charles bought the paper and went to thrice-weekly publication in 1939. Bud Charles joined his father in the business.

After World War II, Sid Charles, Bud and Bud’s wife Patricia incorporated Pioneer Press and moved the *Fishing News* to Dock Street. They installed a web-fed press, published

every weekday and changed the banner to *Ketchikan Daily News*. For a decade, until the *Chronicle* folded in '57, our town had it all: a prosperous fishing industry; a newly vital timber industry; a harbor busy with planes and steamships; two movie theaters; and that hallmark of higher civilization, competing newspapers.



Paper boys ready to deliver the *Daily News* in 1955.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

**LEW WILLIAMS JR. AND HIS WIFE DOROTHY** joined the *Daily News* in 1966, still owners of the *Petersburg Press*. The *Daily News* had just replaced hot-metal type with a photo-offset system. Lew Williams Jr., like Bud Charles, was the son of an Alaskan newspaper man: his father ran the *Wrangell Sentinel* from 1935 to 1968. In 1976, Lew and Dorothy bought the Ketchikan

paper. In the 1980s, they shifted to morning publication and added a weekend edition. In 1995, the couple sold the *Daily News* to their children. The paper, more than 80 years old, has been run by just two families.

A MONTHLY NEWSPRINT MAGAZINE covered Ketchikan from 1965 to 1992. *New Alaskan* ran personality features, business features, historical essays and more.

**KGBU-AM signed on** as the town’s first radio station (and Alaska’s second) in 1926. KGBU for years broadcast in the evening with a hodgepodge of music, weather forecasts, chit-chat and news about fishing. KGBU became KTKN in 1942 and still broadcasts local and network programming. KABI-AM broadcast from a Ketchikan tower in the 1940s and 1950s.

Oldtimers claim our town had one of the nation’s first cable TV services. Radio techs Chuck Jensen and Wally Christiansen strung a cable-TV system in 1953 with bars as their customers. KATV cablecast live local news from a makeshift studio downtown and played network programs from film mailed into Ketchikan. In the 1960s, KATV picked up Canadian shows via relay. Limited live U.S. fare arrived in the '70s—but even into the 1980s, many “live” shows were cablecast when recordings on tape came in the mail.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

The *Mining Journal* on Main Street published from the founding of Ketchikan in 1900—but survived less than 20 years.

# LAST FRONTIER’S FIRST MAGAZINE WAS BORN IN THE FIRST CITY



**BETWEEN TWO** world wars, as the nation struggled out of the Depression, the mail delivered stories of an elementally challenging land, where brave men really did match mountains and hunger was cured with a rifle or a bamboo fishing rod.

Those stories poured through an office on Mission Street in Ketchikan. Investors led by Emery Tobin founded *Alaska Sportsman* in 1935 as a monthly magazine. Editor Tobin brought Alaska to sportsmen

Outside and aimed to bring sportsmen to the territory: economic development by enchantment.

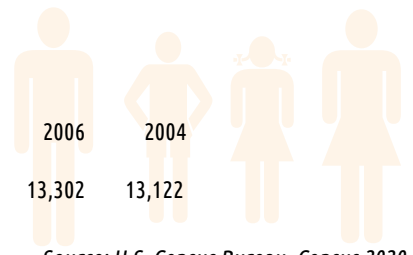
Tales of great grizzlies, teeming salmon, challenging snow and roaring rivers mixed with geographic features and ads. The magazine was sold in 1958 to two Alaskans and moved from Ketchikan, but retained its name.

**OVER THE DECADES**, the publication became nationally known *Alaska* magazine and is published by Morris Media of Georgia, which owns *Milepost*.

For decades, every issue had a Great Land-spanning digest of Alaskan deeds and people titled “From Ketchikan to Barrow.”



# POPULATION OF KETCHIKAN



	2020	2018	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008
Ketchikan Gateway Borough population	13,948	13,804	13,746	13,787	13,904	13,477	13,081
Population, percent change 2004 to 2020			+ 6.2%				

2006	2004
13,302	13,122

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020

## | AGES | GENDER | RACE

Persons under 5 years, percent	4.8%
Persons under 18 years, percent	20.6%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	17.7%
Female persons, percent	48.6%
White alone, percent	66.6%
Black or African American alone, percent	1.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	14.2%
Asian alone, percent	8.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent	0.4%
Two or More Races, percent	9.5%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	5.7%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	62.9%
Veterans, 2016-2020	1,064
Foreign born persons, percent, 2016-2020	8.9%

## | HOUSING | HOUSEHOLDS

Foreign born persons, percent, 2016-2020	8.9%
Housing units, July 1, 2021,	6,665
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2016-2020	63.9%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2016-2020	\$299,500.00
Median selected monthly owner costs with mortgage, 2016-2020	\$1,872.00
Median selected monthly owner costs without a mortgage, 2016-2020	\$601.00
Median gross rent, 2016-2020	\$1,188.00
Building permits, 2021	36
Households, 2016-2020	5,299
Persons per household, 2016-2020	2.56
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2016-2020	85.4
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+	10.8%

## | TECH | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT | INCOME

Households with a computer, percent, 2016-2020	93.3%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2016-2020	87.0%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2016-2020	93.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2016-2020	25.5%
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2016-2020	10.0%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	13.5%
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2016-2020	67.0%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2016-2020	64.0%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2017 (\$1,000)	56,315
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2017 (\$1,000)	109,877
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2016-2020	13.9
Median household income (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$74,678.00
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2020 dollars), 2016-2020	\$38,343.00
Persons in poverty, percent	8.3%
Total employer establishments, 2020	589
Total employment, 2020	4,469
Total annual payroll, 2020 (\$1,000)	236,283
Total employment, percent change, 2019-2020	-1.9%
Total nonemployer establishments, 2019	1,344
All employer firms, Reference year 2017	643
Men-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	355
Women-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	88
Minority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	46
Nonminority-owned employer firms, Reference year 2017	500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020

# PERSONAL INCOMES

## KETCHIKAN & ALASKA 2020

### PERSONAL INCOME PER CAPITA IN KETCHIKAN & SELECTED ALASKAN AREAS

	Income 2020 per capita	Rank in AK	Change 2019-20 in %	Rank in AK
Bristol Bay Borough	\$152,678	1	5.1	6
North Slope Borough	90,809	2	-2.0	24
Juneau City and Borough	74,162	3	2.6	14
Denali Borough	72,967	4	-11.7	27
Petersburg Borough	72,412	5	1.8	16
Sitka City and Borough	70,996	6	-0.7	21
<b>KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH</b>	<b>\$70,574</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>18</b>
Anchorage Municipality	70,477	8	2.4	15
Chugach Census Area <sup>2</sup>	69,369	9	(NA)	--
Kodiak Island Borough	66,988	10	4.4	9
Skagway Municipality	66,548	11	-18.0	28
Yakutat City and Borough	66,119	12	0.6	17
Haines Borough	64,956	13	-8.2	26
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	64,708	14	-1.0	23
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	63,675	15	5.8	3
<b>Alaska</b>	<b>\$63,502</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>--</b>
Lake and Peninsula Borough	63,397	16	-0.9	22
Fairbanks North Star Borough	62,254	17	5.2	5
Dillingham Census Area	60,792	18	-0.1	19
Aleutians West Census Area	59,674	19	6.0	2
Aleutians East Borough	59,574	20	-2.5	25
<b>United States</b>	<b>\$59,510</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>--</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough	56,139	21	3.9	12
Nome Census Area	55,950	22	4.5	8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	54,808	23	5.4	4
Northwest Arctic Borough	52,440	24	4.2	11
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	50,386	25	4.3	10
Copper River Census Area <sup>2</sup>	49,783	26	(NA)	--
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	48,970	27	2.9	13
Wrangell City and Borough	48,549	28	-0.1	20
Bethel Census Area	47,936	29	5.0	7
Kusilvak Census Area	33,968	30	8.1	1

### MEDIAN EARNINGS IN KETCHIKAN

	Total	Male	Female
Population 16 years+ with earnings	8,166	4,482	3,684
Median earnings (dollars)	33,699	40,428	30,520
FT, year-round workers with earnings	4,694	2,624	2,070
\$1 to \$9,999 or loss	2.0%	1.9%	2.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2.6%	2.7%	2.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	9.4%	7.9%	11.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	15.5%	13.3%	18.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	23.2%	19.5%	27.9%
\$50,000 to \$64,999	17.3%	18.4%	16.0%
\$65,000 to \$74,999	7.8%	7.5%	8.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.6%	16.4%	10.0%
\$100,000 or more	8.5%	12.3%	3.7%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Median earnings (dollars)		52,064	40,833
Mean earnings (dollars)	56,546	64,023	47,068

### MEDIAN EARNINGS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (DOLLARS)

	Total	Male	Female
Population 25 years+ with earnings	37,341	46,552	33,152
Less than high school graduate	30,434	34,524	18,229
High school graduate (includes GED)	34,227	40,280	31,866
Some college or associate's degree	36,380	45,325	30,625
Bachelor's degree	51,276	63,667	39,167
Graduate or professional degree	70,361	76,818	63,875

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020

# HOME PRICES

## SINGLE-FAMILY HOME AVERAGE SALE PRICES IN KETCHIKAN

2009-2021

Year	No. of Loans	Average Loan (\$)	Total Loans (\$)	Average Sale Price (\$)	Total Sale Vol (\$)
2021	111	371,336	41,218,280	439,961	48,835,717
2018	107	277,598	29,703,004	345,584	36,977,540
2015	56	250,186	14,010,401	281,764	15,778,800
2012	79	249,991	19,749,310	280,980	22,197,400
2009	49	209,134	10,247,583	254,889	12,489,543



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Division

# NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION

## SINGLE-FAMILY & MULTI-FAMILY IN KETCHIKAN

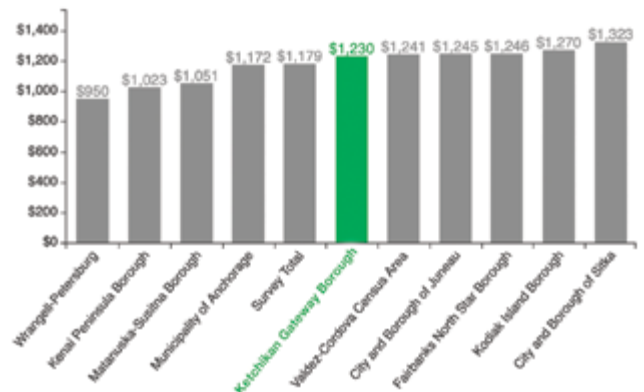
2012-2021

2021		
Total New Units	14	14
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2020		
Total New Units	38	38
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2019		
Total New Units	47	47
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2018		
Total New Units	48	48
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2017		
Total New Units	30	30
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2016		
Total New Units	46	46
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2015		
Total New Units	21	21
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2014		
Total New Units	36	36
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2013		
Total New Units	41	41
	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2012		
Total New Units	17	17
	Single-Family	Multi-Family

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and Alaska Housing Finance Corp.

# MEDIAN ADJUSTED RENT

## KETCHIKAN & SELECTED COMMUNITIES

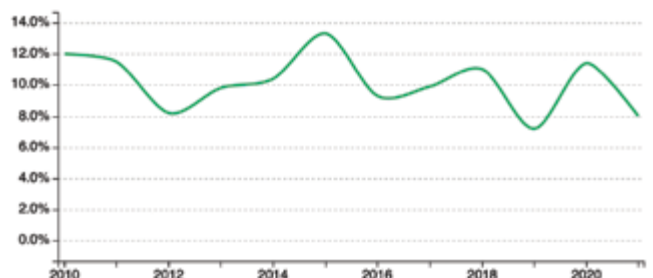


\*Adjusted rent is the amount paid to a landlord each month plus an adjustment for any utility costs excluded from the rent payment.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and Alaska Housing Finance Corp. 2021 Rental Market Survey

# RENTAL VACANCY RATE

## KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and Alaska Housing Finance Corp. 2021 Rental Market Survey

# BUSINESS SALES BY CATEGORY

## GROSS TAXABLE SALES IN KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

2016	2017	2018		2019	†2020	2021
5,565,968	5,968,109	5,645,586	Contractors	5,542,047	6,046,663	6,719,730
2,007,682	1,546,414	1,748,574	Finance, Ins., Banks	1,793,355	2,036,188	2,061,836
11,793,297	12,366,077	12,640,309	Hotels, motels, lodges	12,869,281	7,218,671	13,230,283
4,389,812	4,689,142	5,222,679	Manufacturing	5,349,991	1,771,470	2,312,707
18,119,740	18,757,906	18,502,405	Real estate	18,459,040	18,491,294	19,816,075
27,820,361	* 30,690,234	32,464,084	Retail trade	33,180,716	30,089,420	33,168,530
47,703,476	48,065,535	50,298,553	Retail food	50,663,923	46,519,823	48,923,313
21,377,744	21,679,741	22,850,987	Retail trade: bars, catering	23,474,690	14,721,406	20,880,815
11,215,029	12,097,969	11,818,053	Retail trade:automotive	11,391,876	12,133,489	13,583,312
7,287,085	7,486,125	7,887,455	Retail trade: specialty	7,631,960	4,608,290	5,271,276
70,125,322	73,182,012	77,909,412	Retail trade: jewelry, curios	79,588,800	36,675,744	49,233,004
4,482,247	5,015,701	5,334,870	Services: entertainment	6,521,307	491,499	1,222,826
5,446,349	5,858,131	5,976,778	Services: general	6,411,019	5,414,196	6,197,121
3,109,620	3,061,999	3,347,619	Services: professional	3,853,548	3,460,612	3,408,198
43,770,208	48,430,430	51,297,067	Transportation, comms., utilities	51,673,825	18,597,750	26,011,413
10,974	14,873	10,312	Wholesale trade	12,133	6,874	16,134
284,250,778	298,935,022	313,018,810	Total of all sectors	322,129,672	211,919,624	255,979,176

† Reductions in pleasure travel induced by the pandemic severely reduced sales in Ketchikan

\* 2017 was the first year of legal and taxable gross sales of marijuana; such sales were \$2.18 million in 2017 and more than \$4.9 million in 2021.

Source: Ketchikan Gateway Borough Finance Department

# WAGES PAID

## PRIVATE ESTABLISHMENTS & WEEKLY WAGES IN KETCHIKAN

2016	Number of establishments	Average weekly wage	2021	Number of establishments	Average weekly wage
Construction	71	\$1,325	Construction	64	\$1,219
Education and health services	52	921	Education and health services	58	1,061
Financial activities	42	897	Financial activities	52	1,116
Goods producing	105	1,026	Goods producing	102	1,052
Leisure and hospitality	87	433	Leisure and hospitality	81	475
Manufacturing	16	835	Manufacturing	18	920
Natural resources and mining	18	1,021	Natural resources and mining	20	830
Other services	37	564	Other services	37	578
Professional and business services	60	969	Professional and business services	58	759
Service providing	459	746	Service providing	467	870
Trade, transportation, and utilities	166	766	Trade, transportation, and utilities	171	880
Total, all industries	564	\$799	Total, all industries	608	\$965

Source: U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, quarterly census of employment and wages / 2021 year-end report and selected annual reports



# EMPLOYMENT & EARNINGS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA

	WAGES (2019)	SELF-EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS (2018)	TOTAL EARNINGS	ANNUAL AVG. EMPLOYMENT	SELF-EMPLOYED (2018)	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT
Government (incl. U.S. Coast Guard)	\$720,119,719	\$60,582,082	\$780,701,802	12,354	640	12,994
Visitor Industry	\$235,179,580	\$36,429,000	\$271,608,580	7,344	1,050	8,394
Seafood Industry	\$69,711,072	\$168,316,000	\$238,027,072	1,497	2,246	3,743
Trade: Retail and Wholesale	\$123,764,467	\$24,031,000	\$147,795,467	3,905	567	4,472
Health Care Industry (private only)	\$171,156,119	\$14,417,000	\$185,573,119	2,762	263	3,025
Construction Industry	\$92,347,611	\$38,999,000	\$131,346,611	1,332	571	1,903
Financial Activities	\$54,349,824	\$74,373,000	\$128,722,824	1,072	761	1,833
Professional and Business Services	\$78,474,062	\$43,487,000	\$121,961,062	1,622	1,319	2,941
Mining Industry	\$94,460,451	\$307,000	\$94,767,451	927	7	934
Social Services	\$40,307,321	\$3,977,000	\$44,284,321	1,227	187	1,414
Publishing, broadcast, telecomm.	\$22,941,315	\$1,358,000	\$24,299,315	475	60	535
Timber Industry	\$20,478,427	\$2,038,000	\$22,516,427	315	57	372
Warehouse, Utilities, Non-Visitor Transport	\$53,270,575	\$14,500,000	\$67,770,575	815	162	977
Other	\$60,615,872	\$25,120,000	\$85,735,872	1,657	903	2,560
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,837,176,415</b>	<b>\$507,934,083</b>	<b>\$2,345,110,498</b>	<b>37,304</b>	<b>8,793</b>	<b>46,097</b>

Compiled by Southeast Conference from most recent pre-pandemic statistics. Sources: Alaska Department of Labor 2019, U.S. Census self-employment statistics. Seafood industry includes aquaculture; fishing and seafood product preparation; resident commercial fishermen. Nonresident fishermen and crew who did not report income are excluded. Visitor industry includes leisure; hospitality; visitor transportation. Timber includes forestry; logging support; product manufacturing.

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN KETCHIKAN

### KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</b>										
Fawn Mountain	290	305	290	300	288	305	294	265	250	245
Houghtaling	341	325	346	364	392	366	382	394	357	355
Ketchikan Charter School	187	162	166	190	186	186	194	182	154	175
Point Higgins	253	239	248	276	263	295	294	297	268	253
Tongass School of Arts & Sciences	144	190	184	171	178	180	181	187	146	150
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>										
Schoenbar Middle School	298	286	263	253	287	287	241	260	256	257
<b>MIDDLE &amp; HIGH SCHOOLS</b>										
Revilla Junior-Senior High School	142	165	246	111	105	107	110	109	106	107
Ketchikan High School	572	619	646	633	622	590	589	569	524	552
<b>SCHOOLS</b>										
Fast Track	71	84	79	64	71	62	61	48	169	75
<b>TOTAL ENROLLMENT</b>										
District student enrollment	2,298	2,375	2,468	2,362	2,392	2,378	2,346	2,311	2,230	2,169

### UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST KETCHIKAN CAMPUS ENROLLMENT

#### SPRING SEMESTER ENROLLMENT

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
876	785	847	791	753	769	727	754	637	757

#### SPRING CREDIT HOURS

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
3,345	2,933	3,235	3,085	3,051	3,057	2,901	2,900	2,610	2,976

#### FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ENROLLMENT

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
224.1	196.8	216.6	205.7	203.4	203.8	191.1	190.5	172.3	196.1

Sources: Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District; University of Alaska Southeast.

# SENIOR LIVING

## A YOUNG STATE'S ELDERS AND KETCHIKAN'S SENIORS ENJOY NUMEROUS BENEFITS

**I**t hasn't been that long since the self-styled "Last Frontier" really was a frontier, and respect for seniors confers a number of benefits to present-day Alaskans.

Alaska became a state only in 1959, and not long after, the Legislature exempted the first \$150,000 of residential property value from taxation by municipalities; a Ketchikan property owner 65 or older with a house assessed at \$300,000 pays tax to the city and the borough on just half. This sweetener for

seniors has held up since 1972. The state confers free lifetime fishing and hunting licenses as 60th-birthday gifts to residents and grants one vehicle-registration fee exemption to those 65 and better. Ferry systems calling at Ketchikan offer senior discounts.

**Residents 65 and older** are exempt from Ketchikan's city and borough sales taxes.

Senior-related benefits particular to Ketchikan range from breaks on borough bus fare to discount days at grocery stores. The rec center and pool offer senior prices. Performing-arts groups and the newspaper provide discounts for seniors.

**Ketchikan's active AARP chapter** compiles a directory to help residents and visitors navigate issues from transportation to social services and housing.



GREGG POPPEN

"This community, as a senior-friendly community, is way ahead of most," said Ed Zastrow, longtime president of the AARP chapter in Ketchikan.



## IMAGES

Archival photographs from several sources are used in this publication. Our principal source is the City of Ketchikan's Tongass Historical Museum. With the aid of the Tongass Historical Society (THS) and individual contributors, the Ketchikan Museum Department (KM) has gathered a priceless trove of images of Ketchikan's past. Citations below provide information on photos from the museum that are used in this edition of *Our Town*.

Page 5 ● Ketchikan from Inman Hill—Tongass Historical Society Collection. Donated by Forest J. Hunt, THS 62.4.3.26

Page 10 ● Citizens Light, Power & Water Company Power House—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 71.9.7.71

Page 15 ● Fire department practice—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 68.10.4.21 ● Billy Mitchell—Ketchikan Museums: F.B.I. photo, KM 2000.2.23.3 & 4

Page 19 ● 1895 Ketchikan—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 76.8.7.1

Page 20 ● Pres. Warren G. Harding visits Ketchikan—Donated by Mrs. Odin Jensen, THS 74.5.5.2

Page 25 ● Welcome arch at far left—Ketchikan Museums: Otto C. Schallerer image, KM 2000.2.75.1 ● Third from left—Ketchikan Museums: KM 92.2.22.19 ● New Town and wood viaduct—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Forest J. Hunt image, THS 63.9.10.5

Pages 31-35 ● Lilly's feed—Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle 4/24/1925, THS ● Cow's milk sign—Ketchikan Museums: KM 96.2.33.1 ● Paving Front Street 1921—Ketchikan Museums: Forest J. Hunt photo, Donor: Bert Libe Estate, THS 86.1.42.116 ● New Tongass Trading Co. building—Ketchikan Museums: David Nicoll photo, Tongass Historical Society Collection THS 76.9.4.22 ● Chief Johnson pole—Ketchikan Museums: Otto C. Schallerer image, Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 70.7.26.506 ● Heckman & Co.—Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle 2/1/1921

Page 42 ● Unloading halibut at Ketchikan Cold Storage—Ketchikan Museums: Fisher Studios, Tongass Historical Collection, THS 76.1.13.13 ● Fish trap—Ketchikan Museums: New England Fish Company album, Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 76.1.3.34

Page 47 ● Steamship and Mission Street—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Elliot L. Fisher image, THS 61.8.1.300

Page 51 ● Ellis Air Lines tariffs & schedule card—Ketchikan Museums: KM 96.2.47.15

Page 53 ● Roy Jones and Curtis MF—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 84.1.85.6 ● Pan American "Alaska Clipper" Sikorsky 542 flying boat, 1940—Ketchikan Museums, 2001.2.16.30

Page 58 ● Baseball game—Ketchikan Museums: David Nicoll photo, Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 67.12.1.18 ● Coasting on Main Street—Ketchikan Museums: Elliot L. Fisher photo, Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 61.8.1.230

Page 59 ● Methodist Church and Main School—Harriet Hunt photo, Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 62.4.3.84

Page 63 ● School teacher—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 75.9.8.6 ● BIA School—Ketchikan Museums, Tongass Historical Society Collection, Otto C. Schallerer image, THS 95.1.10.4

Page 69 ● Main Street, Chamber of Commerce, board streets to early homes, circa 1910—Harriet Hunt photo, Donor: Forest J. Hunt, Tongass Historical Society Collection, 62.4.3.171

Page 70 ● Downtown at high tide—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Harriet Elizabeth Hunt image, THS 62.4.1.81 ● Dock Street, circa 1920—Ketchikan Museums: Photo by J. E. Thwaites, Donor: Doris Bordine, KM 99.2.9.1

Page 72 ● Ketchikan Shingle Mill—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Cecil Morrison image, THS 86.1.4.4

Page 73 ● Creek Street at Stedman Street—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, William Lattin image, THS 76.12.2.1 ● Dolly Arthur—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 90.1.10.5

Page 74 ● 1914 Baseball game—Ketchikan Museums: David Nicoll image, KM 96.2.4.11

Page 77 ● Yates Building, 1952—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 80.8.3.4

Page 78 ● Construction worker in skiff along Water Street—Ketchikan Museums: Paulu T. Saari photo, KM 2003.2.63.642

Page 79 ● Northern Machine Works—Ketchikan Museums: Pioneers of Alaska, Igloo #16 Collection, KM 93.2.19.24 ● Flatiron Building—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, David Nicoll image, THS 69.2.4.55

Page 83 ● Ketchikan Spruce Mills—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, THS 70.3.11.103 ● Downtown from the air, 1954—Ketchikan Museums: Paulu T. Saari, KM 2003.2.63.1727

Page 85 ● Hadley, houses and mining works, 1904—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Harriet Elizabeth Hunt image, THS 62.4.4.167

Page 91 ● McKay Marine Ways—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Sixten Johanson image, THS 77.2.7.101

Page 99 ● Mining Journal, 1904—Ketchikan Museums: Tongass Historical Society Collection, Harriet Elizabeth Hunt photo, THS 62.4.3.98 ● News boys—Ketchikan Museums: Paulu T. Saari photo, KM 2003.2.63.1870

# CONTACTS

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## MUNICIPALITIES | UTILITIES

### KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

907-228-6625

[www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us)

#### Ketchikan International Airport

907-225-6800

[www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/130](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/130)

#### Parks and Recreation

907-225-9579 — [www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/141](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/141)

#### Planning and Community Development

907-228-6610 — [www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/142](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/142)

#### Transit System

907-225-8726 — [www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/145](http://www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/145)

### CITY OF KETCHIKAN

#### City Hall

907-225-3111 — [www.ktn-ak.us/city-manager](http://www.ktn-ak.us/city-manager)

#### Port and Harbors

907-228-5632

[www.ktn-ak.us/port-harbors](http://www.ktn-ak.us/port-harbors)

#### Ted Ferry Civic Center & Convention Center

907-228-5655 — [www.ktn-ak.us/civic-center](http://www.ktn-ak.us/civic-center)

#### Tongass Historical Museum

907-225-5600 [www.ktn-ak.us/tongass-historical-museum](http://www.ktn-ak.us/tongass-historical-museum)

#### Totem Heritage Center

907-225-5900 — [www.ktn-ak.us/totem-heritage-center](http://www.ktn-ak.us/totem-heritage-center)

### CITY OF SAXMAN

#### City Hall

907-225-4166

#### Saxman Totem Park

907-247-2502

### KETCHIKAN PUBLIC UTILITIES

907-225-1000 — [www.ktn-ak.us/ketchikan-public-utilities](http://www.ktn-ak.us/ketchikan-public-utilities)

#### KPU Telecommunications

907-225-1000 — [www.kputel.com](http://www.kputel.com)

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## STATE OF ALASKA | U.S.

### STATE OF ALASKA

#### Alaska Legislative Affairs

907-225-9675

### U.S. GOVERNMENT

#### U.S. Coast Guard Base Ketchikan

907-228-0210

#### U.S. Forest Service / Tongass National Forest

907-225-3101 — [www.fs.usda.gov/tongass/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/tongass/)

#### U.S. Congressional Office

907-225-6880

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## TRIBAL GOVERNMENT | HEALTH CARE

### Ketchikan Indian Community

907-228-4900 — [www.kictribe.org](http://www.kictribe.org)

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## EDUCATION

### Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District

907-225-2118 — [www.kgbsd.org](http://www.kgbsd.org)

### University of Alaska Southeast Ketchikan Campus

907-228-4567

[www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan](http://www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan)

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## MEDIA

### Ketchikan Daily News

907-225-3157 — [www.ketchikandailynews.com](http://www.ketchikandailynews.com)

### KFMJ-FM

907-247-3699 — [www.alaska.fm/kfmj](http://www.alaska.fm/kfmj)

### KRBD-FM

907-225-9655 — [www.krbd.org](http://www.krbd.org)

### KTKN-AM & KGTW-FM

907-225-2193 — [www.ktkn.com](http://www.ktkn.com) | [www.gateway1067.com](http://www.gateway1067.com)

### SITNEWS (Stories In the News)

[www.sitnews.us](http://www.sitnews.us)

### The Local Paper

907-225-6540 — [thelocalpaper.com](http://thelocalpaper.com)

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## THE ARTS

### First City Players

907-225-4792 — [www.firstcityplayers.org](http://www.firstcityplayers.org)

### Ketchikan Area Arts & Humanities Council

907-225-2211 — [ketchikanarts.org](http://ketchikanarts.org)

### Ketchikan Theatre Ballet

907-225-9311 — [ktbdance.com](http://ktbdance.com)

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## BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce

907-225-3184

[www.ketchikanchamber.org](http://www.ketchikanchamber.org)

### Alaska Small Business Development Center

907-225-1388 — [aksbdc.org](http://aksbdc.org)

### Historic Ketchikan Inc.

907-225-5515 — [www.historicketchikan.org](http://www.historicketchikan.org)

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## INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

### Ketchikan Public Library

907-225-3331

[www.ketchikanpubliclibrary.org](http://www.ketchikanpubliclibrary.org)

### UAS Ketchikan campus library

[www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan/library/](http://www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan/library/index.html)

[index.html](http://www.uas.alaska.edu/ketchikan/library/index.html)

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## MEDICAL CARE

### PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center

907-225-5171

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## FRATERNAL & SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

### American Legion Joseph T. Craig Post 3

631 Park Avenue — @Post3.Ketchikan — 907-225-2021

### First City Rotary

@FirstCityRotary

### Rotary 2000 of Ketchikan

@Rotary2000

### VFW Ragnar Myking Post 4352


@KetchikanVFW — [vfw4352@gmail.com](mailto:vfw4352@gmail.com)

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## PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND

### Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce

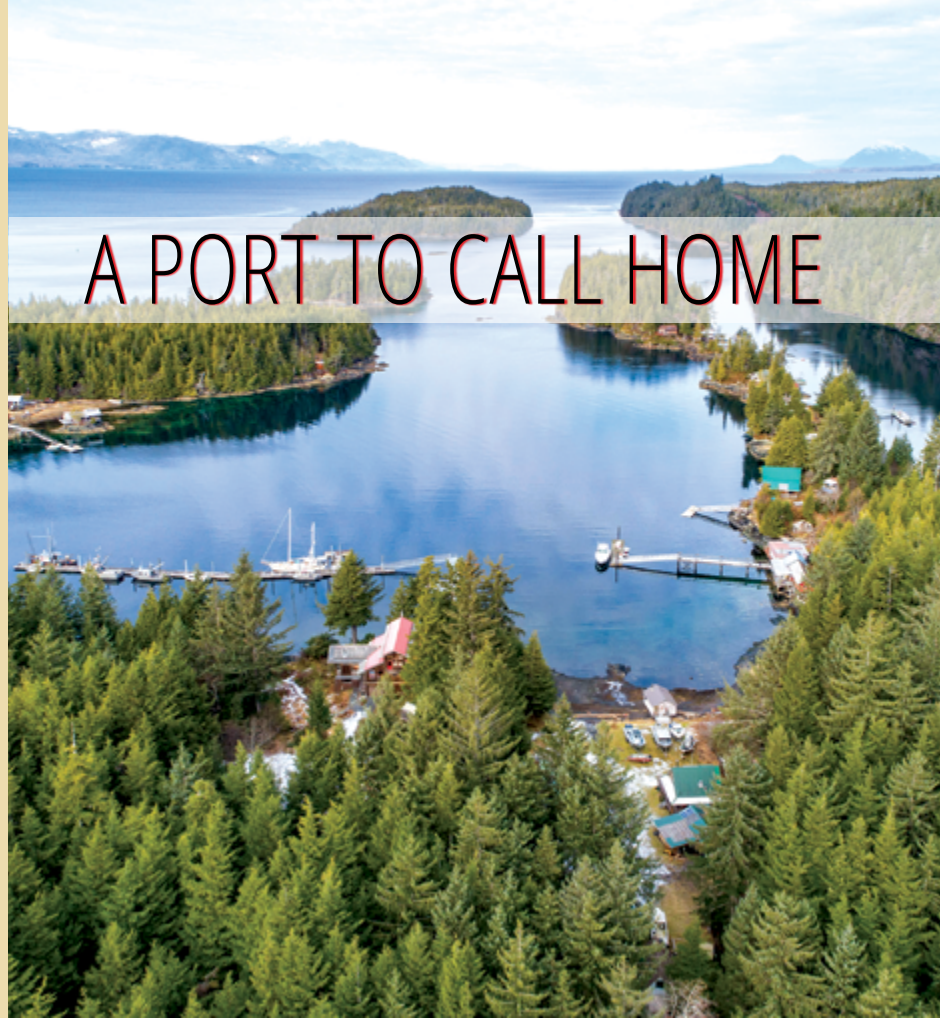
907-755-2626 — [www.princeofwalescoc.org](http://www.princeofwalescoc.org)



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[info@coastalak.com](mailto:info@coastalak.com)



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855-247-5811



344 Front Street  
Ketchikan Alaska 99901