



WORLD WAR II IN ALASKA

A RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS





“Headquarters, camouflage Umnak” by Ogden Pleissner. (Anchorage Museum of History and Art)

Front Cover: American and Canadian soldiers made an amphibious landing on the island of Kiska, August 16, 1943. The Japanese, however, had already evacuated the island three weeks earlier under the cover of fog. Shown are the Infantrymen of the 13th Canadian Infantry Brigade Group disembarking from a landing craft during operation COTTAGE, the invasion of Kiska. (Library and Archives Canada, accession number 1967-052 NPC, item Z-1995-31)

Back Cover: Photograph by Sam Maloof, Master Sergeant with the 65th Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion stationed on Kiska, 1943. (NPS Sam Maloof WWII in Alaska Photograph Collection courtesy of Beverly Maloof.)



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Introduction

This resource guide is designed to aid students and teachers in researching Alaska's World War II history. Alaska's role as battlefield, lend-lease transfer station, and North Pacific stronghold was often overlooked by historians in the post-war decades, but in recent years awareness has been growing of Alaska's wartime past. This renewed interest generates exciting educational opportunities for students and teachers researching this chapter in the history of our state. Few people know that the only World War II battle fought on U.S. soil took place in Alaska or that Japanese forces occupied two Aleutian Islands for more than a year. Still fewer know of the Russian pilots who trained in Fairbanks, the workers who risked their lives building the Alaska Highway, or the Alaska Scouts who patrolled the Bering Sea coast. The lives of Alaskans were forever changed by the experience of war, and the history of that dramatic era is still being written.

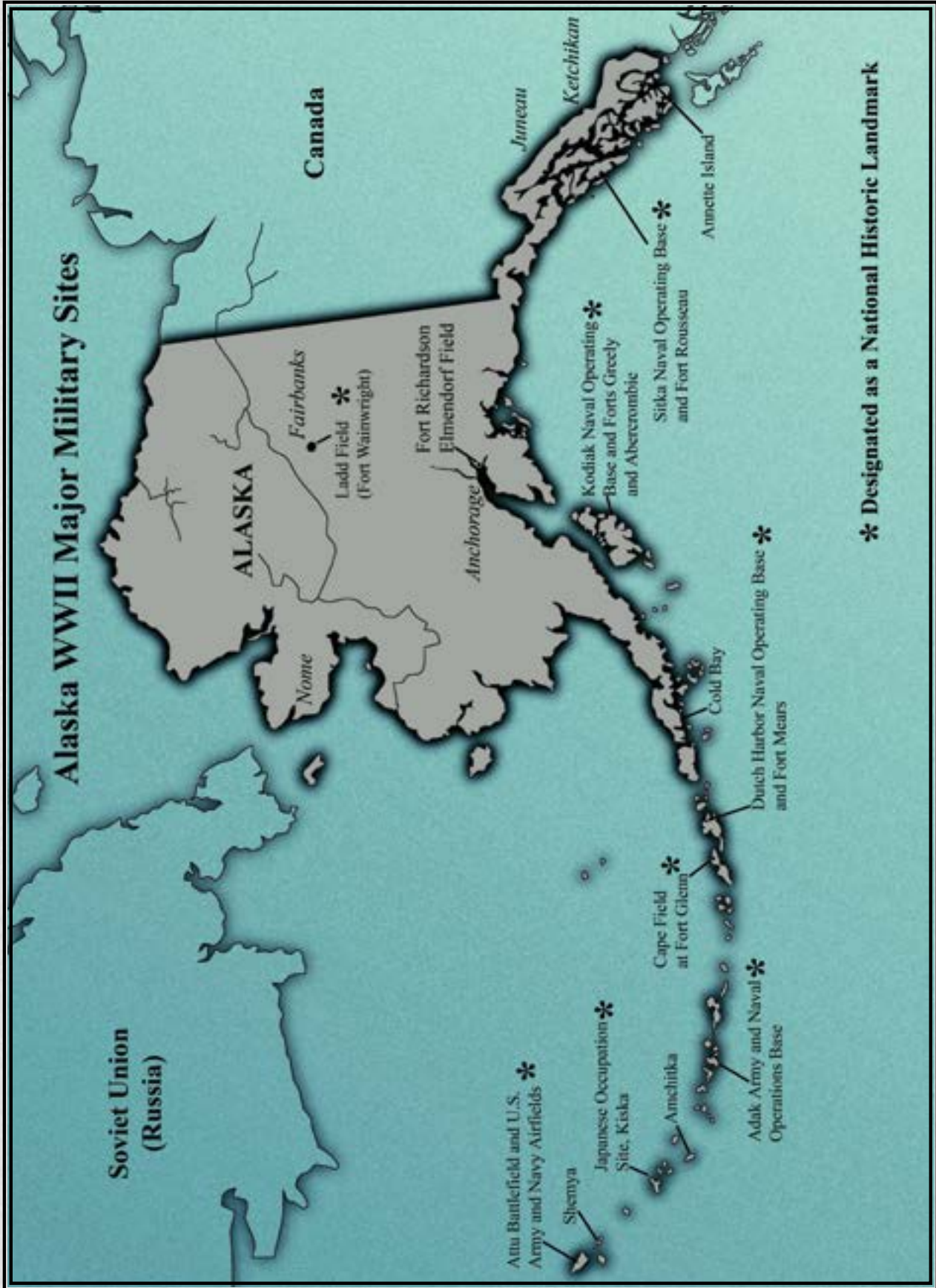
A map of important World War II sites, followed by a summary of Alaska's World War II experience is included. Information about National Historic Landmarks and Monuments related to World War II in Alaska is also included. The selected bibliography that follows is divided into twelve parts to aid student researchers in selecting topics:

- War Comes to Alaska
- Aleutian Campaign
- Alaska Highway and Canol Pipeline
- Wartime Construction
- Native Defenders
- Warplanes and Seacraft
- Aleut Evacuation
- Canadian Participation
- Japanese-American Internment
- Lend-Lease Program
- Japanese Naval Power
- Branches and Units

This bibliography includes books, journals, and videotapes that can be found in Alaska's libraries or obtained through interlibrary loan. The articles cited were selected for their relevance to a specific theme and can be found (with some exceptions) in Alaskan periodicals. The bibliography is not meant to be comprehensive, but is instead intended as a gateway to further research.

Information regarding Alaska's libraries and museums follows, with descriptions of collections relevant to Alaska's World War II history and a list of on-line resources. The individual museums and libraries are organized by city. The resource guide concludes with an introduction to the National History Day program and History Day in Alaska.

This resource guide was first published by the National Park Service, Alaska Support Office in cooperation with History Day in Alaska in 1999. With the passage of time new sources have become available and old ones have ceased to exist. This updates the original publication to reflect those changes.



Map adapted from Debra Dubac, *Alaska at War 1941-1945*

Summary of World War II in Alaska

Japanese Aggression in China

In 1931, Japan launched attacks in eastern China in an effort to seize control of China's eastern province, Manchuria. U.S. suspicion and mistrust of Japan intensified when Japanese military forces attacked a U.S. oil tanker convoy and the USS *Panay*, a U.S. Naval gunboat escorting the convoy, on the Yangtze River in 1937. Three people were killed in the attack and 11 seriously injured when Japanese planes fired on life boats and survivors on shore.

U.S. Northern Defense

With increasing hostilities in China the U.S. Government became concerned about the possibility of attack from across the Pacific. In 1935, Brigadier General William Mitchell urged Congress to adopt a strong northern air defense, declaring, "I believe in the future he who holds Alaska will hold the world." In 1939 Congress established a Panama-Hawaii-Alaska defense triangle to protect America's vulnerable western coast. Alaska, the largest and least fortified of the three, soon saw the construction of naval bases at Sitka, Dutch Harbor, and Kodiak.

War Comes to Alaska

Six months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese bombed the U.S. Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Fort Mears, near Unalaska Island and occupied the Aleutian islands of Attu and Kiska. For many decades following the War, the prevailing understanding about the Japanese Aleutian operation was that it served as a mere diversionary measure from their Midway operation. Recent research, however, concludes that the Japanese had a broader and longer term strategy to establish and expand an eastern defensive perimeter. In response, U.S. military strategists knew that they could not risk leaving the Aleutians open as stepping stones for Japanese attacks on the United States mainland. In addition, the occupation was a significant propaganda victory for the Japanese—the affront could not go unanswered.

Aleutian Campaign



Because planes departing from Kodiak and Dutch Harbor did not have the nearly 1,400 mile range to engage the Japanese at Attu and Kiska, U.S. forces built bases on other Aleutian islands as refueling and maintenance stops, allowing them to strike further west. Pilots and ground troops soon realized they were facing a second enemy, Mother Nature. Weather along the Aleutian chain is some of the worst in the world, with dense fogs, violent seas, and fierce wind storms called williwaws. Aircraft lacking accurate navigational devices or consistent radio contact crashed into mountains, each other, the sea—simply finding the enemy was a life-and-death struggle. For soldiers in the Aleutians, contact with the enemy was infrequent and fleeting, but the weather was a perpetual adversary.

Summary of World War II in Alaska

Native Defenders

When the Alaska National Guard was called to active duty in September 1941, Governor Gruening received permission to reorganize and establish the Alaska Territorial Guard. Many Alaska Natives joined units of the Alaska Territorial Guard to patrol Alaska's coasts and lead reconnaissance missions in combat zones.

Aleut Evacuation

Forty-two Aleuts living on the island of Attu and two Navy weather observers on Kiska were taken prisoner by the Japanese and sent to Japan where 17 died. In June and July 1942, the U.S. military evacuated 881 Aleuts from nine villages located on several islands including the Pribilofs and Unalaska. They were taken by a military transport ship in cramped conditions to abandoned canneries and mining camps in Southeast Alaska. Nearly a hundred died in the horrible conditions of these camps. During their absence, the U.S. military burned many of their homes to keep the Japanese from using them, and removed religious icons from their churches.

Japanese Internment

Under an emergency measure in effect in the western United States, Alaskans of Japanese descent were shipped to internment camps in the Lower 48. The fear of sudden attack also led to censorship of the media, food rationing, and obligatory blackouts in coastal areas.

Lend-Lease Program

The Lend-Lease Act was passed in 1941 as a means of providing military aide to allies. As part of the Lend-Lease program over 8,000 U.S. aircraft were transferred to Russia via the Alaska-Siberia (ALSIB) route beginning in 1942. The ALSIB route consisted of a string of new airfields constructed in Alaska and Canada that allowed American pilots to leapfrog through the Canadian and Alaskan wilderness to Ladd Field in Fairbanks. At Ladd Field Russian pilots were waiting to fly the planes across the Bering Sea and Siberia to Russia's Western Front with Germany.

Wartime Construction

Wartime construction brought major changes in transportation and communication with the outside world and within Alaska. Until 1942 passengers and freight arrived in Alaska two ways—by boat or plane. One of the biggest feats of the war time construction program was the construction of the Alaska Canada Military Highway, a 1,420-mile wilderness highway which was completed in less than nine months. Other construction included telephone lines, oil pipelines, railways, and roughly 300 military installations throughout Alaska.



Summary of World War II in Alaska

Population Boom

As a result of the War thousands of men and women moved to the sparsely populated territory, and many stayed. In 1940, just over 72,000 people called Alaska home. By 1950, the population nearly doubled to 129,000. Anchorage saw its population balloon from 3,000 to 47,000, while Fairbanks grew from 4,000 to nearly 20,000. While many military bases closed after the War some stayed open and even grew. The military population, which was about 500 in 1940 increased to about 22,000 in 1950.

Alaska's War Ends

On May 11, 1943 U.S. forces landed on Attu and began an uphill battle to retake the island. After nineteen days of fighting, the beleaguered Japanese soldiers launched a final banzai charge in an attempt to break through the American line. When the battle ended, only 29 prisoners remained of a Japanese force of roughly 2,600. Three months later the drama at Attu was matched by an equally dramatic anticlimax. Foul weather had delayed Allied attempts to retake Kiska, and when U.S. and Canadian forces finally landed on August 15, they were stunned to find that the Japanese were gone—having evacuated under cover of fog three weeks before. As the guns fell silent in the Aleutians, many Army and Navy facilities were closed, though fighting in the Pacific and in Europe continued for another two years.

National Landmarks

The Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, took steps to recognize the importance of Alaska's role in World War II history by designating eight sites as National Historic Landmarks. These sites include former Army and Navy bases, Aleutian battlefields, airfields, and an area on Kiska Island once occupied by the Japanese. National Historic Landmark status recognizes these places as being among the nation's most treasured resources deemed worthy of preservation.



Alaska's World War II National Historic Landmarks



Ulakta Head and Command Center, a feature within the Dutch Harbor NHL and the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area. (National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office)

The Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service, designated the following NHL sites to commemorate the significant events and human drama of Alaska's role in World War II:

- Adak Army Base and Naval Operating Base, Adak Island
- Attu Battlefield and Bases, Attu Island
- Fort Glenn (Cape Field), Umnak Island
- Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and Fort Mears U.S. Army, near Unalaska Island
- Japanese Occupation Site, Kiska Island
- Kodiak Naval Operating Base and Forts Greely and Abercrombie, Kodiak Island
- Ladd Field (Fort Wainwright), Fairbanks
- Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses, Sitka

Part of the National Park Service's role is to administer the NHL program. Available materials include a booklet entitled "WWII National Historic Landmarks: The Aleutian Campaign" and two lesson plans from the Teaching with Historic Places series entitled "Attu: North American Battleground of World War II" and "Ladd Field and the Lend-Lease Mission: Defending Alaska in WWII." The NHL program implemented an American Battlefield Protection Program grant which culminated in "The Cultural Landscape of the World War II Battlefield of Kiska, Aleutian Islands" 2012 report. For copies of these materials please visit the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office's National Historic Landmarks web page at: <http://www.nps.gov/akso/history/nhl-main.cfm>.

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area

Though visiting a real historic place is one of the best ways to gain valuable insights, several of Alaska's WWII sites are difficult to access. One resource for learning more about events in the Aleutians during this period is through the Aleutian WWII National Historic Area (NHA). Designated by Congress in 1996, the NHA is owned by the Ounalashka Corporation with historic preservation technical assistance provided by the National Park Service-Alaska Regional Office. The NHA includes the historic footprint of Fort Schwatka, along with a Visitors Center located in the former WWII Aerology Building, at the Unalaska Airport on Amaknak Island. The purpose of the NHA includes educating the public about the history of the Aleut people, and the role of the Aleut people and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the U.S. in World War II. More information can be found at the following NPS website: <http://www.nps.gov/aleu/index.htm>

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument

In December 2008, President George H. Bush established, by Executive Order, the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. The new monument was established to commemorate this "pivotal period in our Nation's history" and elevated nine historic sites in Hawaii, California, and Alaska to monument status. The Alaska unit includes historic areas on Attu and Kiska, and the Atka Island crash site of a Consolidated B-24D Liberator bomber. All of the Alaska sites are on lands managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument interprets the stories of the Pacific War including events at Pearl Harbor, the internment of Japanese Americans, and the Aleutian Campaign. The National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jointly developed a Foundation Statement for the Alaska Unit of the Monument. The document provides a vision for future decision making and the development of management and implementation plans that will define the Alaska Unit's operations, resource protection, and visitor experience. Similar foundation documents are being produced for the Hawaii and California units. Combined, these documents will set the stage for future planning and development of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. The document can be viewed and downloaded by visiting alaskamaritime.fws.gov/pdf/valor.pdf.

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Buildings burn following the Japanese attack on the fort at Dutch Harbor, June 3, 1942. A second, more damaging attack came the next day, though the P-40 Aleutian Tigers scrambled to intercept the enemy from a secret base (Fort Glenn) on Umnak Island. (Archives and Manuscripts Department, University of Alaska Anchorage)

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Black engineers build a trestle bridge during the construction of the Alaska Canada Military Highway. Black G.I.s made up roughly forty percent of the estimated 11,500 Army troops who in just nine months completed a wilderness highway linking Alaska with the contiguous United States. (Anchorage Museum of History and Art)

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Lend-Lease planes on the apron of Hangar 1, Ladd Field, Fairbanks, circa 1944, including A-20s and P-39s. (U.S. Army)



“Among the Japanese placed guns on Kiska Island was this 125-mm (6-inch) pre-World War I British naval gun used by the Japanese to guard the entrance to Kiska Harbor.” Photo taken by NAS Adak, 7 September 1943. (NARA, Record Group 80-G-80384)

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Attu, Aleutian Islands. Landing boats pouring soldiers and their equipment onto the beach at Massacre Bay. This is the Southern landing force. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.)

Museums and Libraries

ANCHORAGE:

Alaska Aviation Museum

4721 Aircraft Drive
Anchorage, AK 99502
Phone: (907) 248-5325
Website: <http://www.alaskaairmuseum.org/>

The Alaska Aviation Museum displays a wide variety of Japanese and American WWII memorabilia from the Aleutian Campaign. The collection also includes a Catalina PBY and the wreck of a P-40 Warhawk fighter, both used in the Aleutian Campaign.

Alaska Veterans Museum

333 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 227
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: 907-677-8802
Website: <http://www.alaskaveterans.com/>

Stories of Alaska's servicemen and women are available through oral histories, documentaries, artifacts, military uniforms, weapons, photos, and models, including a 1/72 scale model of the USS *Essex*, complete with fighter planes.

The Anchorage Museum

625 C Street
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 929-9200
E-mail: museum@AnchorageMuseum.org
Website: <http://www.anchoragemuseum.org/>

The Alaska Gallery of the Anchorage Museum of History and Art is home to three displays portraying WWII Alaska. These include the uniform and rifle of an Alaska Scout and details about the Alaskan Territorial Guard; a diorama of aircraft used during the Aleutian Campaign; and a vision of life inside a Quonset hut.

Consortium Library

University of Alaska Anchorage
3211 Providence Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: (907) 786-1848
Website: <http://consortiumlibrary.org/>

Consortium Library contains an impressive collection of books relating to Alaska's WWII history. Its Archives and Manuscripts Department frequently

exhibits material drawn from extensive collections of photographs, personal records, and government documents relating to Alaska's war experiences.

National Archives and Records Administration Pacific Alaska Region

654 West Third Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501-2145
Phone: (907) 261-7820
E-mail: alaska.archives@nara.gov
Website: <http://www.archives.gov/anchorage/>

The National Archives contain vast collections of U.S. government records and material entrusted to the National Archives by various agencies. All aspects of Alaska's WWII experience are represented in military records, municipal records, census information, and historical photographs.

Z.J. Loussac Library

Anchorage Municipal Libraries
3600 Denali Street
Anchorage, AK 99503-6093
Phone: (907) 343-2975
Website: <http://www.muni.org/departments/library/pages/loussaclibrary.aspx>

The Loussac Library's Alaska collection contains the majority of the books and articles cited in this bibliography, and is also home to a microfiche collection of Alaska's newspapers. It is one of the best places to find material on Alaska during WWII, either in person or by interlibrary loan.

FAIRBANKS:

Pioneer Air Museum

Interior and Arctic Alaska Aeronautical Foundation
Location: Alaskaland Park
2300 Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: (907) 451-0037
E-mail: curator@pioneerairmuseum.org
Website: <http://www.pioneerairmuseum.org/>

The Pioneer Air Museum has on display photographs, Russian uniforms, and other memorabilia related to the Lend-Lease Program, which ferried aircraft to the Soviet front via Alaska. The Museum is also home to a single-engine Norseman plane used during the War for cargo delivery and search-and-rescue missions.

Elmer E. Rasmuson Library

University of Alaska Fairbanks
310 Tanana Loop
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6800
Phone: (907) 474-7481
Website: <http://library.uaf.edu/>

Rasmuson Library includes an extensive Alaska collection containing many of the works cited in this bibliography. It is also home to the archives of the Alaska & Polar Regions Department, one of Alaska's richest sources of historical materials related to WWII.

JUNEAU:

Alaska State Library

Location: 8th floor, State Office Building
Juneau, AK 99811-0571
Phone: (907) 465-2920
Website: <http://library.alaska.gov/>

The Alaska State Library is an excellent place to begin searching for books and articles about WWII Alaska. In addition, the library's historical collection contains one-of-a-kind material and rare books on the same theme.

KODIAK:

Baranov Museum/Kodiak Historical Society

101 Marine Way
Kodiak, AK 99615
Phone: (907) 486-5920
Fax: (907) 486-3166
Website: <http://www.baranovmuseum.org/>

The Baranov Museum houses both historical photographs and memoirs relating to the Aleutian Campaign and the role of the Kodiak Naval Operating Base in particular.

SITKA:

Sitka Historical Society and Museum

330 Harbor Drive
Sitka, AK 99835
Phone: (907) 747-6455
E-mail: curator@sitkahistory.org
Website: <http://www.sitkahistory.org/>

The Sitka Historical Society and Museum holds WWII collections consisting of three-dimensional objects such as uniforms, medals, and military equipment, as well as an extensive photograph collection.

UNALASKA:

Museum of the Aleutians

314 Salmon Way
P.O. Box 648
Unalaska, AK 99685-0648
Phone: (907) 581-5150
E-mail: mota@aleutians.org
Website: <http://www.aleutians.org/>

The Museum of the Aleutians collection includes weapons, historical photographs, uniforms, diaries, flightlogs, and Japanese flags from the Aleutian Campaign

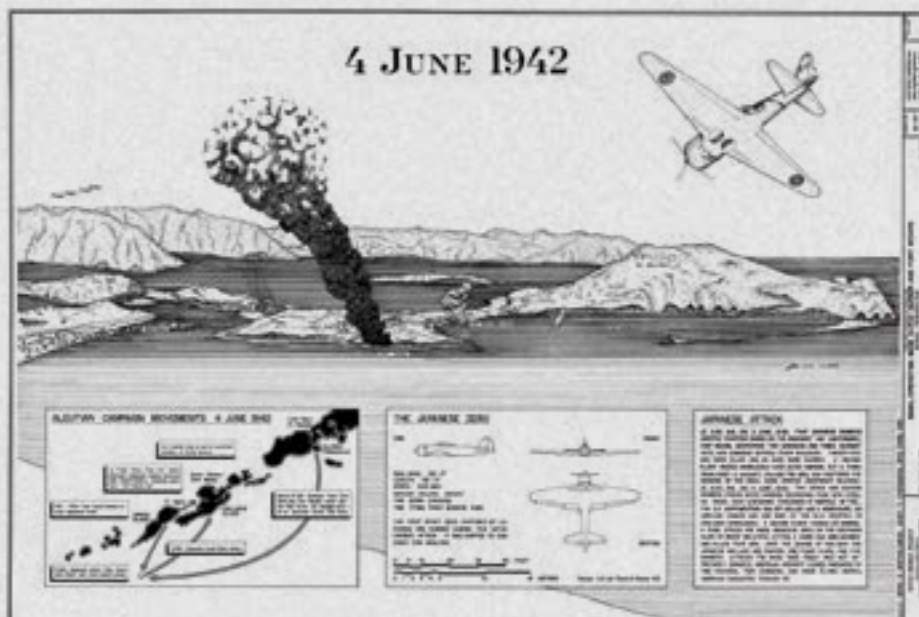


Illustration of the Japanese bombing of Dutch Harbor, as part of the Historic American Building Survey documentation found on-line at <http://www.loc.gov/library-digital.html>.

Online Resources

Alaska Digital Archives - <http://vilda.alaska.edu/index.php>

This site presents a wealth of historical photographs, albums, oral histories, moving images, maps, documents, physical objects, and other materials from libraries, museums and archives throughout Alaska. This site has a large variety of digitized photos, interviews, documents, and films from World War II.

Alaska Library Web Pages - <http://www.publiclibraries.com/alaska.htm>

This site offers a list of links to library web pages throughout the state and to SLED, which provides access to library catalogs and related resources. Alaska Library Web Pages is maintained by the Alaska Library Association.

Alaska Library Directory - <http://library.alaska.gov/forms/libraryDirectory.aspx>

This site provides a list of basic user information for every library in Alaska. The site is maintained by the Alaska State Library.

Museums and Historical Societies in Alaska - <http://museums.alaska.gov/list.html>

Here you will find a complete list of Alaska's museums and historical societies, each with user information and a description of facilities. The site is maintained by Alaska State Museums.

Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) - <http://sled.alaska.edu/>

SLED offers access to library catalogs and other resources of interest to Alaskans under the slogan "information resources for, about and by Alaskans."



Sitka Naval Operating Base, Easter Service, 1943. (Sitka Historical Society and Museum)

Internet Sites

The following sites contain information about WWII in Alaska. An Internet search under “World War II” will yield many others which examine the war as a global phenomenon or focus on specific events during the war years.

Aleutians Campaign, June 1942-August 1943: United States Navy Combat Narrative

http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/aleutians_campaign.htm

During WWII the U.S. Naval Historical Center began producing combat narratives of specific naval campaigns. This once-restricted document is offered by the NHC not as an official history but as a view through the eyes of the Navy in 1943.

The Aleutians Home Page

<http://www.hlswilliwaw.com/aleutians/>

This website began as a site to promote the sharing of anecdotes, photos, and links related to the post-World War II Shemya. Its content quickly grew to include experiences of World War II veterans of Shemya and other Aleutian Islands.

Aleutian Islands: The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II

<http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/aleut/aleut.htm>

This site contains a detailed U.S. Army article on the Aleutian Campaign. Included also are maps, illustrations, and a list of suggested reading.

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area

<http://www.nps.gov/aleu/index.htm>

This is the National Park Service website for the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area. It provides information on the Aleutian Campaign, Aleut Evacuation, interviews with veterans, and other information of interest to the general public, teachers, and students.

Forgotten Decades, WWII Alaskans Finally Get Their Due

<http://www.npr.org/2013/05/28/186485619/forgotten-for-decades-wwii-alaskans-finally-get-their-due>

This is a National Public Radio segment on Marvin “Muktuk” Marston and the more than 6,300 Alaska Natives that volunteered for the Alaska Territorial Guard during World War II.

Kodiak Alaska Military History Museum

<http://www.kodiak.org>

This site includes a variety of documents relating to WWII in Kodiak, with both historic and more current day images. The Museum is housed in an historic Ammunition bunker at Miller Point, the former Fort Abercrombie, which today is a State Park in Kodiak.

LitSite Alaska

<http://www.litsite.org/>

LitSite Alaska, showcases a living archive of lesson plans used in Alaskan classrooms and an extensive collection of excellent peer work by Alaskan students. It is a production of the University of Alaska Anchorage and has a number of sources discussing World War II in Alaska.

National Museum of the Air Force

<http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/>

This site is maintained by the National Museum of the Air Force on Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. It offers a series of short narratives concerning all aspects of the War in the Pacific, including the Aleutian Campaign.

Photos from the Aleutian Campaign

<http://eubank-web.com/Donald/Aleutian/index.html>

This site includes an impressive collection of WWII photographs taken in Adak and other Aleutian sites. The photos belonged to Dr. Will R. Eubank, an aviation medical examiner in the Army Air Corps. Together they help to tell the story of Eubank’s twelve month tour during the Aleutian Campaign.

Sitka’s WWII Site

<http://www.sitkaww2.com/>

This site, designed by a student named Mathew Hunter, is an excellent source for researching Sitka Naval Operating Base and Sitka’s military history. In addition to an historical narrative the site offers historic photographs, maps, and present-day snapshots of Sitka’s military installations.

Sources and Citation

While this guide is intended primarily to assist teachers and students in finding information about the World War II in Alaska it also important to be able to identify types of sources and how to properly cite them in a bibliography or note. Below is some general guidance and some links to more specific guidance to help you in you research.

Types of Sources:

Primary Sources

A primary source is a piece of information about a historical event or period in which the creator of the source was an actual participant in or a contemporary of a historical moment. Examples include historic photos, diaries, government documents, artifacts, and other written and tangible items created during the historical period you are studying.

Secondary Sources

A secondary source is a source that was not created first-hand by someone who participated in the historical era. Examples of secondary sources include journal articles and books written about historic events by historians, using primary and secondary sources. A secondary source is a person's interpretation of what a primary source means.

Tertiary Sources

Tertiary sources are based on a collection of primary and secondary sources and may or may not be written by an expert. Tertiary sources are only used as exploratory sources and should never appear in your bibliography. These include dictionaries, encyclopedias, fact books, and guide books and are intended to give you ideas about what to research. Wikipedia is popular tertiary source that should not appear in your bibliography.

Citing Sources:

A key part of any research project is citing your sources. For historians there are generally three accepted styles of citation: Turabian, MLA, and Chicago Style. If you are doing a National History Day project Turabian or MLA must be used to cite your sources, however it is recommended that you ask your teacher before deciding which style to use. Below are the citations for each of the respective guides written in their bibliographic formats. Note the subtle differences in each.

MLA. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th Edition*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.

Turabian, Kate L. 2013. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

University of Chicago Press. *The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition*. Chicago: University Chicago Press, 2010.

National History Day

One opportunity to research an Alaska World War II history topic is through the National History Day (NHD) program. NHD is an innovative curriculum framework in which students in grades 6-12 learn history by selecting topics of interest and launching into a year-long research project. The purpose of National History Day is to improve the teaching and learning of history in middle and high schools.

Following the school year, students

- select a topic related to an annual History Day theme
- select an entry category: website; documentary; exhibit; research paper; or performance
- follow guidance for conducting historical research and create an original project

These projects are entered into competitions in the spring at local, state and national levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates with the national competition held each June at the University of Maryland at College Park.

The National Park Service is a partner of National History Day. In Alaska, the National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office partners with the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation to bring the History Day program to schools across the state . Teachers may contact the state coordinator to request History Day curriculum guides or ask questions about the program by visiting the History Day in Alaska website at <http://www.alaskahistoryday.com/>



Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski visiting with Alaska's National History Day students on the Capitol Steps in Washington, D.C.



The Aleutian Campaign involved tens of thousands of U.S. land, sea, and air forces in defending Alaska from the enemy. Pictured are U.S. soldiers on Kiska with anti-aircraft gun emplacement, following Japanese evacuation of the island in 1943.