

## Annotated bibliography

Coates, Ken. *North to Alaska: Fifty years on the world's most remarkable highway*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1992.

This book, published in 1992 to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the Alaska Highway, is an excellent source of information about the history of the road, as well as an in-depth look at the communities that line it, including those that existed before 1942 and those established as a result of the highway's construction.

According to Coates the Alaska Highway is far more than just a route to enable a traveler to go from point A to point B. Driving the Alaska Highway is a "holiday excursion all by itself." And for those who living along it, "the highway is a lifeline, a connection to the larger world" (p. 12). These two contrasting perspectives of where the highway goes—residents who see the Alaska Highway as the road into town, versus travelers who believe it to be the ultimate highway out of town, is one of his major themes. He relies on a variety of government documents, memoirs and memories of the men and women who worked and lived along the Alaska Highway. He argues that those who thought the highway was going to be the "Northwest's coming out party" were sadly mistaken, as it never really brought the financial bonanza that many had predicted

Cole, Terrence, Jane G. Haigh, Lael Morgan, William E. Simeone. *Alaska or Bust: The Promise of the Road North*. University of Alaska Museum. 1992.

This is a collection of short essays that accompanied a museum exhibit on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the Alaska Highway in 1992. "Alaska or Bust: The Promise of the Alaska Highway" by Terrence Cole, details how and why the highway became such a high priority to the United States during World War II. William E. Simeone's article, "Fifty Years Later: Alaska Native People and the Highway" is especially valuable in understanding the effects that the Alaska Highway had on Native people living in its path. Jane Haigh's "Looking Back: Material Culture of the Alaska Highway" focuses on a wide spectrum of artifacts used to interpret the highway's history. Lael Morgan's "Miles and Miles: Honoring Black Veterans Who Built the Alaska Highway" focuses on the five black regiments—about one-third of the 10,607 men who labored on the highway—and highlights their long neglected contributions.

Brebner, Phyllis Lee. *The Alaska Highway: A Personal and Historical Account of the Building of the Alaska Highway*. Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1985.

Phyllis Brebner was an employee of the R. Melville Smith Co. at Fort St. John in 1942-1943 working on the Alaska Highway. When the Camp closed, she went to Chicago and worked for the United States Engineering Division to assist in completing the paperwork relating to the building of the highway. Before arriving in the North, she

had visions of “Dog sleds and Mounties” but after a few weeks in the frozen North, she began to understand the full extent of the job that lay ahead for the road construction crews, and kept a personal account of life in the camps, small villages and among army and civilian workers.

Her observations of the highway construction provide insight to the building of the highway from a woman's perspective. The book is well illustrated with photographs from the Whitehorse Archives, the Public Archives of Canada, the United States Department of Defense.

Remley, David. *Crooked Road; The Story of the Alaska Highway*. Fairbanks: McGraw Hill Company. 1976. Republished by UA Press September 2008.

This book is an excellent source of oral and written history of the Alaska Highway, with topics ranging from the U.S Army's building of the highway, to the impact of the highway on Native communities.

Using recorded oral histories, personal interviews, written documents and many first hand accounts of construction workers and local residents, he portrays a vivid picture of the road's early history, and the way laborers dealt with the wilderness, the weather and the hardships of daily life along the road. In section two of the book, Remley focuses on the changes that occurred in the communities along the highway, discussing among other topics the introduction of cash into communities where previously there had been very little, the spread of disease, violence, greater access to urban amenities, etc.

Coates, Ken S. Best Left as Indians: Native-White Relations in the Yukon Territory, 1840-1973. McGill-Queen's University Press. 1991.

This is a detailed history of the Natives of the Yukon from 1840 to 1973. The years he chose for this book straddle important historical events; in 1840 the first white, European fur traders arrived in the region, and in 1973 Yukon First Nations settled their land claims agreement in Ottawa. This book by prolific historian Ken Coates gives the reader an idea of how Natives were affected by white civilization since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and puts into perspective the radical changes that came with the highway. For generations trapping and the fur trade had been the mainstay of the economy, but with a drop in fur prices and demand, many Natives worried about how they would earn cash to supplement their subsistence harvests. The drop in fur prices was due to supply and demand- the fur trade was no longer one of the most lucrative industries in the North. Though many were able to get jobs working on the construction of the highway, airstrips and other highway related jobs, these were not permanent jobs and therefore was not sustainable. While the highway did offer new opportunities for paid labor, the First Nations' peoples felt the loss of hunting and trapping, and the cultural dislocations this helped exacerbate. The Alaska Highway itself cannot be blamed solely for the social and cultural challenges of modernization that the indigenous inhabitants have endured since

the 1940s, but it did have dramatic effects that would change the Native way of life forever.

Haigh, Jane. "The Alaska Highway: A Historic Photographic Journey." Wolf Creek Books, Canada. 2001.

The book is a historic photo history, in which Haigh uses photographs from the Alaska Polar Regions Department at UAF, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art and the Yukon Archives in Whitehorse. She follows a northwest direction from Dawson Creek to Kluane Lake, and features photos with explanatory captions that represent life for workers and communities along the highway. The book is intended to give the reader an idea of what the highway was like before, and soon after it was built. The historic photos tell a lot about the past, and Haigh uses them to tell the story of the Alaska Highway.

Coates, Kenneth. *The Alaska Highway Papers of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Symposium.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985.

This book is a collection of the papers presented at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Symposium of the Alaska Highway. There are 14 papers which illustrate the significance of the highway and explore many diverse themes including: Canadian-American relations, British Columbia politics, American military history, threats to Canadian sovereignty, the impact on Native peoples, engineering problems, and the evolution of northern society. These are snippets of four papers, to give a general idea of the contents of the collection:

John T. Greenwood details the history of General Bill Hoge and his experience with pioneer highway building and military service. His thesis is; the United States military faced unknown hardships; they were unaware of how to deal permafrost, northern weather and how to strategically manage a large project in such a remote site. The entire project was a logistical nightmare for the most part, but the Army still managed to complete it in the eight month allotment given by the U.S. government.

Curtis R. Nordman assesses U.S military involvement in the Canadian Northwest, and its effect on Canadian sovereignty. His thesis is that the United States military was using Canadian lands for construction of the highway. There were no ulterior motives, and the highway was even turned over to Canadian engineers in 1947 after the United States military had completed the construction of the initial pioneer road.

In Ken Coates' paper he analyzes the effects of the Alaska Highway on the Indians of the southern Yukon, and he accounts for how they dealt with the changes. His thesis is that while Native people were involved in the building of the Alaska Highway, there was so significant gain in status, and many Natives faced government intrusion on traditional hunting and trapping practices, along with disease from Outside.

Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank analyzes the impact of the Alaska Highway as a "Gravel Magnet." She notes that many people do not see the Alaska Highway as a single, defining event, but an important influence on community changes during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Her thesis is that significant changes did occur among Native life ways, such as illnesses

and alcohol abuse. Her work in the southern Yukon reveals that many of the Natives she spoke with witnessed the changes.

Morrison, William R, Kenneth Coates. Working the North: Labor and the Northwest Defense Projects 1942-1946. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1994.

Labor conditions and opportunities in the North is a unique strand of northern history from the dirt up. The authors rely on a variety of sources, from oral history interviews to archival collections such as that of The United States Army Corps of Engineers Office of History, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Fort Bevoir, Research Collection. They also incorporate surveys distributed to laborers who took part in the building of the highway, articles, other books, newspapers and periodicals.

Many Native men worked on the highway—such as those who guided the surveyors laying out the highway’s route—but they soon returned to their traditional livelihood in between odd jobs. Morrison and Coates' book sheds light on this often ignored aspect of the highway, and includes information about Native employment, as well as the affect of the highway on Native people.

Coates, K. S, W. R. Morrison. The Alaska Highway in World War II. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.

This book addresses the social, economic, environmental and cultural aspects of the American invasion of the Canadian northwest to build the Alaska Highway between 1942 and 1946. Coates proves his thesis, that the imminent threat war with Japan gave the United States a sense of urgency when planning and building the highway. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt quickly gave the go-ahead to the Army to begin work on the road, and gave the builders an eight month time frame, which amazingly, was met.

Also covered is the build up to the highway's construction, and the political battles that ensued over which route to build the highway. Coates analyzes the actual building of the highway to a limited extent, its effects on Native people and communities, the population boom in the North, and the future of the North.

McClellan, Catharine. Part of the Land, Part of the Water; a History of the Yukon Indians. Vancouver/Toronto; Douglas and McIntyre, 1987.

McClellan, a renowned anthropologist who worked for 35 years in the Yukon, assesses the history of the Yukon Indian People through their stories. She and four others collected the stories of the people about life as it was in the past and as it was in the present in the 1970s. The book is about “How the Indians have responded to a changing world” p.1-2. The people discuss everything from Ice Age history of the Yukon Indians to more current issues such as language and organizations for First Nations. Much of this history is based on oral history and accounts of the past through generations. The Alaska

Highway is brought up often by the people, because it made a huge impact on them. McClellan writes, “When the wind is just right then men can hear the faint sound of the heavy trucks shifting gears on the Alaska Highway, climbing the foothills along the opposite shore of the lake. The older man thinks again about how the animals must dislike the noise. The younger man thinks about how soon he will be able to buy a pickup truck of his own. p.14.

*Part of the Land, Part of the Water* is wonderful for understanding life before White contact, before the Alaska Highway and other modern amenities that First Nations were not accustomed to. The book is also full of beautiful photos, both historical and modern to help give the reader a mental picture of the Yukon Territory.

Cruikshank, Julie. *Life Lived Like a Story; Life Stories of Three Yukon Elders.* Lincoln and London; University of Nebraska Press, 1990.

The book is broken up into three sections; each of the stories of women First Nations of the Yukon Territory -- Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned. The collection of stories are a life history study from Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank that weaves oral history and cultural anthropology. Cruikshank notes, “My expectation had been that our discussions would document the social impact of the Klondike gold rush at the turn of the century, the construction of the Alaska Highway during the Second World War, and other disruptive events.” p.2. But instead, the women told stories about how the world came to be and each of their family's histories, and related powerful events to the progress of their community and family lives while maintaining the use of traditional narrative to tell their stories.

The importance of this book is to understand life in the Yukon Territory from the view of three First Nations elders' stories. Through their beautiful life stories, they describe what life was like before the coming of the White man and the Alaska Highway. They also talk about life after the highway, and the changes incurred in the communities. Everything is told in story form, many of the stories being similar between the three women, reflecting each other's views and personal histories. The enduring tradition of story telling still persists in the Yukon Territory, and each story told is a wealth of knowledge and cultural history.

McClellan, Catharine. *My Old People Say; An Ethnographic Survey of Southern Yukon Territory.* Hull, Quebec; Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2001.

*My Old People Say* is an ethnographic description of three groups of First Nations living in Southern Yukon Territory. The First Nations are broken up into separate linguistic groups; the Athabaskan speaking Southern Tutchone, Tagish, and Inland Tlingit. The period described mostly covers the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when whites first arrived in the Yukon Territory.

Much of the book focuses on life based on hunting and fishing, and the nature of human beings. This is the first survey of the area, and it was conducted by McClellan in the summers of 1948 and 1949, and the winter of 1950-1951. The book uses “detailed

memories of late 19<sup>th</sup> century social organizations, subsistence strategies, and resource allocation, as well as aesthetic, spiritual and intellectual traditions” (review).

The book was written when some of the changes had been freshly introduced such as the construction of the Alaska Highway, but people remained historically socially organized. The descriptions in this survey of the Southern Yukon is valuable because it tells the history of the three groups of Southern Yukon Indians from their perspective, and sheds light on the past of the First Nations people.

### **Journals**

Harp, Elmer Jr. “North to the Yukon Territory via the Alcan Highway in 1948: Field notes of the Andover-Harvard Expedition.” Occasional Papers in Archaeology No. 14. Yukon Tourism and Culture, 2005.

Harp's day to day journal of his trip to the Yukon Territory in 1948 is filled with casual observations, facts, and archaeological features. Harp is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Dartmouth College. His 35 year career at Dartmouth includes numerous expeditions to the East and Central Arctic, as well as work in Alaska and the Yukon. His journal reads as if it were written for the general public. It is very accessible, and insightful regarding what the Alaska Highway was like in 1948, and the challenges and wonders one experienced in heading North.

He photographs and observes many Indian settlements such as Aishihik and Klushu villages. Together his companions and he attempt to fish, mostly resulting in a good time but no luck, and dig pits in search of archaeological artifacts. Frequently he notes that he finds bones, wood chips or flakes. This book is interestingly written, and unedited.

### **Government Produced Texts**

“Annual Traffic Report 1959 Alaska Highway.” Alaska Highway Division Planning Section with the U.S Department of Commerce Bureau of Public Roads. 1959. The other years available include 1959-1984. This traffic report, compiled by the Alaska Highway Division Planning Section with the U.S Department of Commerce Bureau of Public Roads gives traffic counts along the Alaska Highway. For instance, an average of 11,856 vehicles a day was recorded as driving from Fairbanks at the Chena River bridge to the Canadian border, at station 2-62. The closer to the Canadian border the stations are, the lower the number of vehicles traveling. It is interesting to compare different years, especially before and after the highway was paved in 1976. This source does not detail road conditions or construction, it is meant to keep daily totals of traffic on the Alaska Highway.

Lothain, W.F. Yukon Territory: A Brief Description of its History, Administration, Resources, and Development. Ottawa: Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs Lands, Parks and Forest Branch, 1947.

Created in 1947, before the Alaska Highway was opened for civilian travel, this short booklet on the Yukon Territory gives a brief history of the territory, and notes the historical events such as the gold rush and exploration of the Northwest. It is a government issued report, and contains factual information on 1940s era education, towns and settlements, communication and transportation. Lothian includes a separate Alaska Highway section, delving into such particulars as the construction, the route, and maintenance operations.

Also noted are tourist attractions. Mostly water and air routes are noted, because the highway was not opened yet to the public. Many of the gold rush tourist destinations such as Dawson and Skagway are still attractions today, due to their timeless renditions of the “Days of 98” and other Klondike era events.

A chapter is devoted to Aborigines as well, and Lothian addresses changes in Indian and Eskimo communities, respectively. He does not mention the negative effects the highway brought to the Native communities along the highway. Though the book is short, it covers the basics of the Yukon Territory and the Alaska Highway. It is interesting to the researcher to read works created shortly after the completion of the highway, and compare the reports of today. The latter differ dramatically in content, concern for ethnographic and anthropological issues and take into account the impact of the highway on surrounding communities retrospectively.

Darbyshire and Associates, Northwest Alaskan Pipeline Company. “Socioeconomic Community Profiles; A Background for Planning.” Research Design Productions. June, 1980.

This collection of socioeconomic community profiles from 1980 provides an excellent background on Delta Junction, Dot Lake, Northway, Tanacross, Tetlin and Tok. Each separate fold-out pamphlet covers the community, a map, mileage chart, economy and employment, land ownership, transportation, education and other socioeconomic topics. With great changes occurring in all communities along the highway, this having being created 38 years after the highway was completed offers a snapshot of an interim point in the history since the highway's construction. This collection of profiles is useful to any researcher looking at the history of transportation and the transformation of communities along the highway.

### **Ethnographic Works**

Mishler, Craig, William E. Simeone. *Tanana and Chandalar: The Alaska Field Journals of Robert A. McKennan*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2006.

Robert McKennan was a noted anthropologist and ethnographer. The value of this collection of journals and photos stems from the fact that the journal was originally kept by McKennan in 1929 of the Upper Tanana region, and in 1933 in the Chandalar-Yukon river area. His journals are detailed, but not theoretical or based on scientific notes.

“ They are simply a running letter to my wife and parents in which I attempted to note the homely details of everyday life which find no place in an ethnographic monograph and are likely to be soon forgotten unless they are recorded in time. . .”

Mishler and Simeone edited and created a more readable journal, but overall it is still very intact. The excitement in his descriptions of the country and environment illustrate his love of the outdoors and nature. His journals radiate a happiness that he feels being in the wilds of Alaska.

This collection of journals is a wonderful piece of pre-WWII/ Alaska Highway observations. McKennan's presence in the communities for extended periods of time allowed him to not only collect stories and myths from them, he was also able to form lasting friendships and learn bits of the languages. His efforts to learn about the Athabaskan people went above and beyond what many anthropologists would exert; he mushed, walked and boated hundreds of miles in unspoiled terrain, sometimes alone in an effort to collect his information. This is a must read for anyone interested in the pre-highway lifestyles of the Indians of the Upper Tanana and Chandalar Rivers.

Legros, Dominique. “Oral History as History: Tutchone Athabaskan in the Period 1840-1920.” *Occasional Papers in Yukon History No.3 (1)*. Yukon Tourism and Culture. 2007.

This book addresses whether orally transmitted historical knowledge is credible, and how this knowledge changes over time. Legros consulted interviews with Tutchone elders from the 1970s and attempts to follow the changes over time. This is an excellent source for understanding the southwestern Yukon prior to the highway's construction. The book stops at 1920, but this time period was only 26 years before the highway was created.

While the book is dense with methodology and some theory, it is a valuable tool for understanding how life was prior to the highway construction. Legros addresses many of the problems with using historical materials (such as material from 1840 may not accurately represent 1900, even though there were few changes occurring at this time.) She covers descriptive topics such as hunting, trapping and sustainability of the Tutchone people, and most interestingly the impact of new European implements in the 1900s. Also featured are maps, some hand drawn, diagrams of hunting and trapping mechanisms, and historic photos of Native people in the area.

This book, as Legros notes, will be of interest to First Nations, historians and ethnohistorians of the Yukon, archaeologists of Subarctic environments, cultural ecologists, anthropologists focusing on technological and cultural change, and scholars interested in hunting and gathering peoples and the transmission of oral tradition across generations.

Easton, Norman Alexander. “An Ethnohistory of the Chisana River Basin” Volume 1-Origins, Places and Culture. Yukon College.

Easton, Norman Alexander. “An Ethnohistory of the Chisana River Basin” Volume 2- History (1860's-1950). Yukon College.



Easton's two part ethnohistory of the Chisana River basin involves a detailed history and background on the Upper Tanana Indians. Until the arrival of white traders in the early 1900s, they had almost no contact with the Outside. Part one presents the origins of the Upper Tanana including where they came from, their eventual settlement in the region and their temporary camps and caches. Easton stresses the Indians spatial intelligence and the importance of place names.

Part two focuses more on the coming of whites through trade, missionary work and gold mining. All of these had impacts on the the Indians of the area, but none as much as the building of the Alaska Highway. Easton devotes the whole second half of the book to the highway and its impact on the Chisana River Dineh. He uses oral history from several Native people who express their fears, experiences and problems with the way they were treated when forced to attend school and learn “White” ways. While the highway had a positive effect on many communities by connecting them and making travel and the purchase of goods easier, it also had a negative impact on culture, health and the psychological well-being of many of the Native people living along the highway.

### **Personal Accounts/Memoirs**

Christy, Jim. “Rough Road to the North.” Doubleday and Company, 1980.

Christy's experiences with highway were as a child, working along with and helping his father on odd jobs. He was only a boy when the highway way built, but spent many years later in life in the North, with his primary interest being the highway and its construction. The main themes of the book are construction and its logistics. Christy uses factual information, along with his childhood impressions and the memories of others to re-create the story of the Alaska Highway's construction. He also features many photos from the Yukon Archives, an excellent source for material and information about the Alaska Highway, and communities along the highway. It is an informative and entertaining read, and full of quotes and anecdotes from those who were there to build and live along the highway.

Morritt, Hope. “Land of the Fireweed: A Young Woman's Story of the Alaska Highway Construction Days.” Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1985.

Hope Morritt's memoir of her adventurous three and a half years in the Yukon working for the Canadian Army along the Alaska Highway reflects on her experiences and the excitement of heading north to Whitehorse. She was originally a journalist in Edmonton, Alberta for the *Edmonton Journal* and took the job on a whim in 1946. She frequently puts to use her journalist reporting skills throughout the book, describing her experiences with people in Whitehorse.

Morritt's book focuses on the sociology of the highway, observing other Canadians and their perceptions of the highway. The women in the barracks, as well as some of the civilian soldiers Morritt met while in Whitehorse would sit and chat about the highway, and their various experiences and mishaps. Morritt carefully collected many

of these stories, and combined them into a descriptive and informative account of the building, completion and maintenance of the Alaska Highway.

Davignon, Ellen. "The Cinnamon Mine: Memories of an Alaska Highway Childhood." Studio North Ltd. Whitehorse, Yukon. 1988.

Davignon's book "The Cinnamon Mine" is an entertaining, and informative account of her upbringing on the Alaska Highway. Her personal memories and anecdotes fill in gaps left by government and statistical writings. She was raised all along the highway, from Whitehorse to tiny settlements, and finally settled at Johnson's Crossing in the Yukon. Her parents opened a lodge, The Big Trout Lodge, which later became Johnson's Crossing Lodge. Davignon's parents were both Danish, and worked hard to establish themselves, building the lodge to house the increasing stream of tourists flooding the highway in the 1950s. The book offers a view of life along the highway in the early 1950s before many of the comforts of late 20<sup>th</sup> century life reached remote outposts in the Yukon. The greatest contribution of this book is that it offers impressions of how people lived without most comforts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The book provides hilarity and wonderful stories of a by-gone era.

### **Photographic Collections**

Cole, Dermot. "Historic Photos of Alaska." Nashville: Turner Publishing Company, 2008.

The organizations and corporations Cole worked with in the collection and use of these photos includes; the Alaska State Library, Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center, Library of Congress, Rasmuson Library University of Alaska Fairbanks and University of Alaska Anchorage Consortium Library. Cole presents an overview of Alaskan life and its dramatic transformation through hundreds of quality photos, notes and text. The book is arranged chronologically by the years of the late 1800s to 1905, 1906 to 1919, the area between the world wars, and military and construction booms. In the section of military and construction booms, there are several excellent photos depicting the Alaska Highway and its construction process.

Griffith, Cyril. Trucking the Tote Road to Alaska: 1942-43. Saskatchewan: Naicam, 1989.

Trucking the Tote Road to Alaska is a collection of memories written by Cyril Griffith. He was a worker on what became the Alaska Highway in 1942-43 for Newman Brothers, which eventually became Okes Construction. He begins with stories of the hardships of being a fuel hauler on the highway, and the time and effort all tasks required. His truck became his home, like many other truck drivers on the highway. He mentions the freezing cold temperature and explains how he prepared for it.

He talks about returning to Alaska and Canada as a tourist over 40 years later, and witnessing the drastic changes that occurred, ranging from the presence of roadhouses, a well graveled highway, cleaned up equipment and service stations. He also features photos he took while working on the highway, and more recent photos he took on his return trip to Alaska and Canada.

### Articles

Bucksar, Richard G. *The Alaska Highway: Background to Decision*. University of Calgary, 1968.

In his article, Bucksar discusses the expenses and project planning that went into the building of the Alaska Highway. The construction of the Alaska Highway was seriously considered as early as 1929, with was some vague interest in such a project during the previous decade. Bucksar explores the reasons for interest in the highway: it would allow for Alaska's development by providing access, the highway would be a great contribution to the welfare of North American citizens for travel and tourism, and opening to settlement, investment of capital and employment. Opportunities since the planning for the highway occurred before World War II and America's necessity to facilitate a large system of airfields, it was not considered until the 1940s that the highway would be used for purposes of national defense.

Bucksar analyzes the costs, expected expenses and the initial time frame of eight months, and how this played into the actual construction of the highway. He uses correspondence from President Roosevelt, Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, and Anthony J. Dimond Delegate from Alaska to the House of Representatives. This article is useful to gain a better understanding as to the origins, planning and decisions that were made in regards to the construction of the Alaska Highway.

Pierce, J. Kingston. *The Biggest and Hardest Job Since the Panama Canal*. American History, February 2001.

Pierce discusses the extreme difficulty and criticism faced by the United States in building the highway. While there were originally four routes chosen for the highway, a fifth one, compiling the other four was the final choice. The other four had severe drawbacks, such as large mountain ranges and miles of forests, and a fifth route was chosen. On February 11, 1942 President Roosevelt gave the go-ahead for Brigadier General William H. Hoge and the United States Army to begin construction of the highway.

Unknown to the builders heading North were the vastly different topographic forms and challenging territory that lie ahead. Many men came North and discovered the frigid temperatures, mosquitoes and mud were not what they had planned for, but the highway had to be built. And in eight short, grueling months, the highway, as a pioneer road for trucks in the winter was completed. Kingston uses many colorful anecdotes and quotes from the men who worked on the highway, and provides a general, yet informative history of the construction of one of the most logistically difficult highways in the world.

## **Historical and Interpretive Museum and Displays**

The George Johnston Museum, Teslin, Whitehorse Canada. The museum houses colorful exhibits, dioramas and artifacts honoring the lives of George Johnston, the Inland Tlingit and other Teslin Lake residents. The museum also has a theater and features films about the Tlingit people, a gift shop, and summer programs. The museum displays the first car in Teslin, owned by George Johnston, as well as other interesting information related to the Alaska Highway.

University of Alaska Museum of the North in Fairbanks features a display on the building of the Alaska Highway during World War II, and its implications for the future of North America. The Alaska Highway exhibit shows how the 97<sup>th</sup> Army Corps of Engineers, and all-Black regiment built the Richardson Highway, Tok Cut off and the ALCAN highway from Delta to the Canadian border. The museum is open year around and requires an admission fee.

The Alaska Highway Interpretive Centre in Watson Lake, Yukon Canada. This Centre is operated by Tourism Yukon and offers videos on the Alaska Highway and Yukon history. There are slide show presentations and displays including photos from the 1940s showing the construction of the highway. It is free, and open May to mid-September.

The Beaver Creek Visitor's Centre features an Alaska Highway historical photo collection. This visitor's centre is open daily May through late September and also features a display of dried Yukon wildflowers in addition to the Alaska Highway scrapbook with historical photos of lodges and life along the north Alaska Highway.

## **Websites**

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

“LitSite Alaska” is a gathering place for families , teachers and community members to share their stories and to inspire readers and writers everywhere. The narratives on LitSite Alaska illustrate many aspects of life in Alaska. The Digital Archives Partnership is a collaboration between LitSite Alaska and Alaska's Digital Archives. Alaska's Digital Archives present a wealth of historical photographs, albums, oral histories, moving images, maps, documents, physical objects, and other materials from libraries, museums and archives throughout the state. This site is run by the University of Alaska Anchorage.

<http://www.alaskahighwayarchives.ca/en/chap1/index.php>

“The Alaska Highway: A Yukon Perspective” was researched, developed, and presented by the Yukon Archives in Whitehorse, Yukon. The Yukon Archives is part of the Cultural Services Branch of the Department of Tourism and Culture, Government of Yukon. All original photographs, textual materials, maps, films and sound recordings are from the collections at the Yukon Archives. All photographs of artifacts are from the collections of the Yukon Transportation Museum in Whitehorse, Yukon.

“The Alaska Highway: A Yukon Perspective” is partly based on a hard copy display available at the Yukon Archives entitled “Highway to the North”. This display was developed in 1992 as part of the 50th anniversary commemorations of the construction of the Alaska Highway.

<http://alaskahighway.albertasource.ca/>

**THE ROAD:** Constructing *the Alaska Highway* website is a joint project of the Art Gallery of Alberta and the Heritage Community Foundation.

THE ROAD: *Constructing the Alaska Highway* Web site was made possible through a partnership involving the Art Gallery of Alberta (formerly the Edmonton Art Gallery) and the Heritage Community Foundation. Phase 1 of the project involved the creation of a national, touring exhibition co-curated by Catherine Crowston, Deputy Director and Chief Curator, and Andrew Hunter, and organized and circulated by the Art Gallery of Alberta with the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage – Museums Assistance Program. The exhibition consisted of art works, artifacts, documentary materials and films produced from the time of the Highway's inception in 1942 right up to the present day. Phase 2 involved creation of the Web site and this was made possible with funding support from the Community Initiatives Program, Alberta Lotteries.

<http://www.tc.gov.yk.ca/archives/hiddenhistory/en/highway.html>

“Hidden History: Black History of the Yukon” is presented by the Yukon Archives in Whitehorse, Yukon. The Yukon Archives is part of the Cultural Services Branch of the Department of Tourism and Culture, Government of Yukon.

The content for this web exhibit is based on a three panel hard copy display entitled Hidden History: Black History of the Yukon which was produced in 2006 by the Yukon Archives, the Yukon Human Rights Commission and the Yukon Status of Women Council. The display is available for circulation in the Yukon by contacting the Yukon Archives at the phone number listed to the right.

### **Archival Material**

#### **University of Alaska Fairbanks: (Finding Aids)**

### **Alaska Highway 1942-1991**

This collection is a comprehensive bibliography of material available in the Yukon Archives and MacBride Museum in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory.

### **Alaska Highway Snapshot Album**

This collection consists of a leatherbound album containing 229 black and white photographs relating to the construction of the Alaska Highway during World War II. The photos depict the many aspects of the construction of the Alaska Highway and the typical experiences of those whose job it was to build the highway.

### **Alaska Highway 1953 Photo Collection**

This collection consists of 32 prints documenting Herb Woodling's 1953 trip up the Alaska Highway by private car. Most of the photos are of landscapes and the highway.

### **Alaska Highway Construction Photos, 1943**

The Alaska Highway Construction Photographs of consists of 80 images on postcard stock taken along the route of the Alaska Highway during construction of the highway, received by the UAF Archives in 2003.

### **Hajdukovich, John [1879-1965], Papers 1904-1958.**

The Hajdukovich papers contain correspondence, businesses papers, ledgers and journals reflecting his varied occupations and interests. They include Pioneering in Alaska, gold mines and mining, fur trade in Alaska, stores and retail records and correspondence, business records and the Big Delta region of Alaska. Hajdukovich and his brother Milo were store keepers and traders in interior Alaska and the Yukon. They are considered to be some of the first Europeans to arrive to the area, from Montenegro, Yugoslavia.

### **Robert Addison McKennan papers, 1928-1980**

McKennan, Robert A. (Robert Addison), 1903-1982  
40 boxes

The Robert Addison McKennan papers include McKennan's anthropological research, field notes, writings, and photographs, as well as some personal and biographical material. His field notes and journals particularly record his work among the Tanana and Chandalar Kutchin people.

### **Yukon College:**

[NOTE: This information is taken from the Yukon Archives' descriptions of the collections]

### **Willis Grafe Fonds**

Willis Grafe was an Engineering Aide with the U.S. Public Roads administration on the Alaska Highway from April, 1942 to November, 1943. In 1942 he worked as a surveyor on the preliminary location between Burwash Landing and the White River, then later near Contact Creek south of Watson Lake. After a winter at Haines, he spent the 1943

season with a construction crew at the south end of Kluane Lake, and then at a camp west of the Donjek River. He spent some time in the U.S. Navy and completed engineering school at Oregon State College. Grafe worked for the Public Roads Administration and its successors, the Bureau of Public Roads and the Federal Highway Administration in the Pacific Northwest. In 1969 he was assigned to the Washington office of the Federal Highway Administration, and then later returned to Oregon as Chief of the Preliminary Engineering Branch, Federal Highway Projects Division. He was involved in the Administration's "History of Highways" project, which was part of the U.S. Bicentennial celebrations. He was living in Albany, Oregon.

**DATES:**

[1942?]-1982

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The fonds consists of records created by Willis Grafe, either during his work on the Alaska Highway, or in subsequent reminiscences and writings. Included are photographs of highway construction, slides copied from the National Archives, some of which are described by Grafe; Grafe's diary kept while working on the construction; a cassette tape made by Grafe of his personal reminiscences and adds detail to events mentioned in the diary. He also donated a copy of "Construction of the Alaska Highway", a 21-page report he wrote in 1975 for the U.S. Bicentennial. Maps were removed from a booklet written by Don Menzies in 1943 on the Alaska Highway and put with an annotated route map that had been part of C.G. Polk, Alaska District Engineer's records. Also included is a letter to Jack Schick describing the contents of the collection.

**United States Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration photograph collection**

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

22 photographs : b&w prints ; 27 x 34 cm

**DATES:**

1942-1943

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The collection consists of photographs of the construction of the Alaska Highway, 1942-1943. Views include bridges, scenery and construction crews in Yukon and B.C.

**Harry Carpentier fonds**

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:**

943 photographs : b&w and colour

**DATES:**

1942-1943

**ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:**

Carpentier was a member of "A" Company of the 18th Corps of Engineers for the United

States Army. He came to the Yukon April 1942- January 1943 to help build the Alaska Highway. In 1993 he was living in Forest City, Iowa.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT:**

The fonds consists of photographs taken by Harry Carpentier and Army photographers during the construction of the Alaska Highway. They document all aspects of the construction, including leisure activities, views of bridge construction, camps, soldiers, and scenery. The photographs taken by Army photographers were sold or distributed to the soldiers.