

1963 1965 2005



The City of Seward, Alaska
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA



City Council Chambers, 410 Adams Street

Please silence all cell phones and devices during the meeting

Chair Tanguy Libbrecht
Vice Chair Sue Ward
Commissioner Mary Ann Benoit
Commissioner Donna Walker
Commissioner Art LeMaster
Commissioner Laura Erickson
Commissioner Todd Mashlan
Assistant City Manager Jason Bickling
Museum Curator Allison Stacy
City Clerk Kris Peck

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Time: Immediately Following Work Session

- 1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON ANY SUBJECT
5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA
6. SPECIAL ORDERS, PRESENTATIONS, AND REPORTS
7. CONSENT AGENDA
8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None
9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolutions - None	
B. Other New Business.....	43
1) Discuss Historic Preservation Award Nomination Deadlines & Process	
2) Hoben Park Updates	
3) Stucco Johnson Homesite Sign	
4) St. Peter’s Episcopal Church Discussions	
a. Booklet on Jan Van Empel	
b. Preservation Proposal Updates	
10. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND REPORTS <i>(No action required.)</i>	
A. Reminder of Meetings	
1) Regular Meeting and Work Session on Thursday November 14, 2024	
a. HPC Priorities & Meeting Schedule.....	44
B. Other Items.....	47
1) Seward Local Register Plaque Updates	
2) City Admin. to begin working on 2024 HPC Report	
11. CITIZEN COMMENTS <i>(There is no sign in for this comment period. Time is limited to five (5) minutes per speaker.)</i>	
12. COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO CITIZEN COMMENTS	
13. ADJOURNMENT	

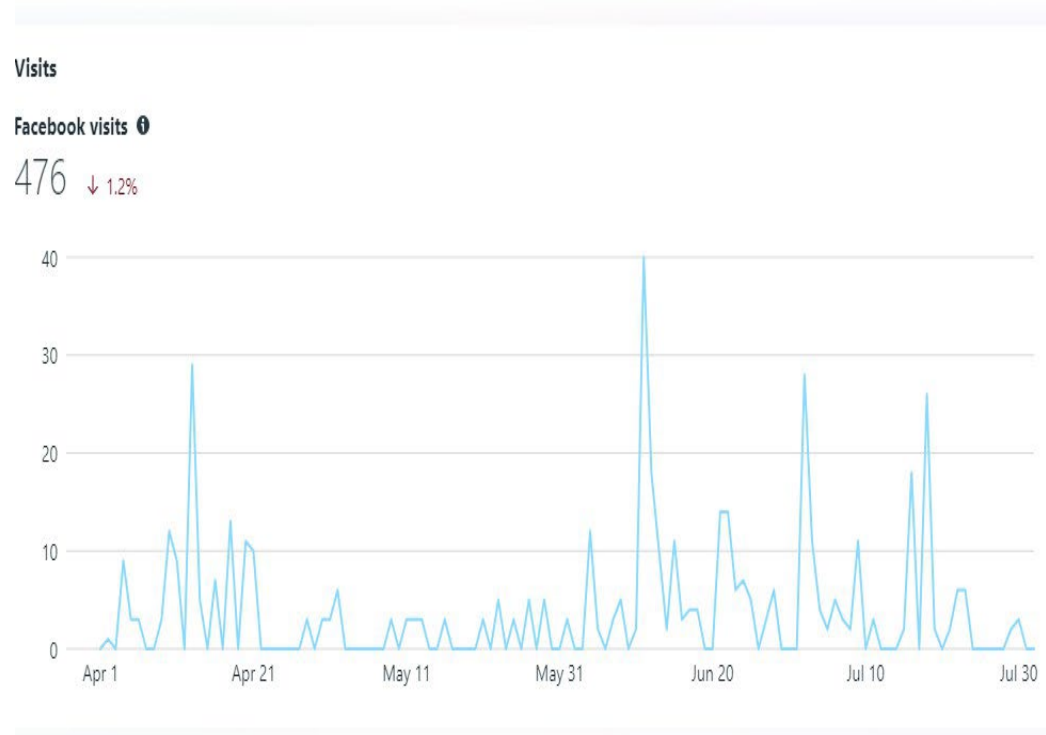
# Facebook Page Report

September 12, 2024 HPC Meeting

Mary Ann Benoit

## Overview

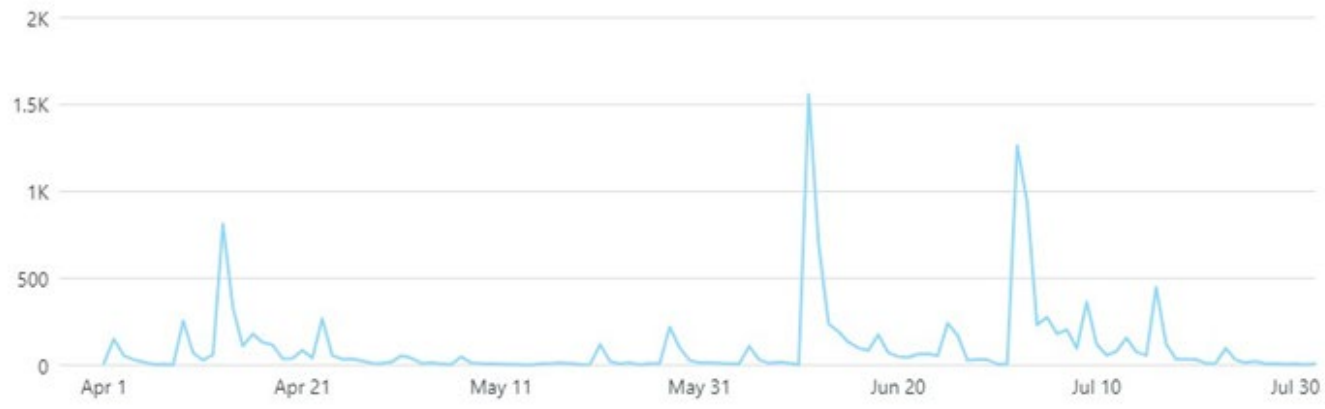
The data below reflects the statistics for our Facebook page from April -July. Our page visits were about the same (476), our reach was up over 300 % to 8K people. We gained 127 new followers, for a total of 1006. Interaction with our posts is up 13%. Our followers are consistently more women than men and they are all age ranges, generally over 25 years old. Most are from Seward and Anchorage. People interacting with our posts (555) went up over 13%. Our top post, as is typical now in the summer is about the Mount Marathon race.

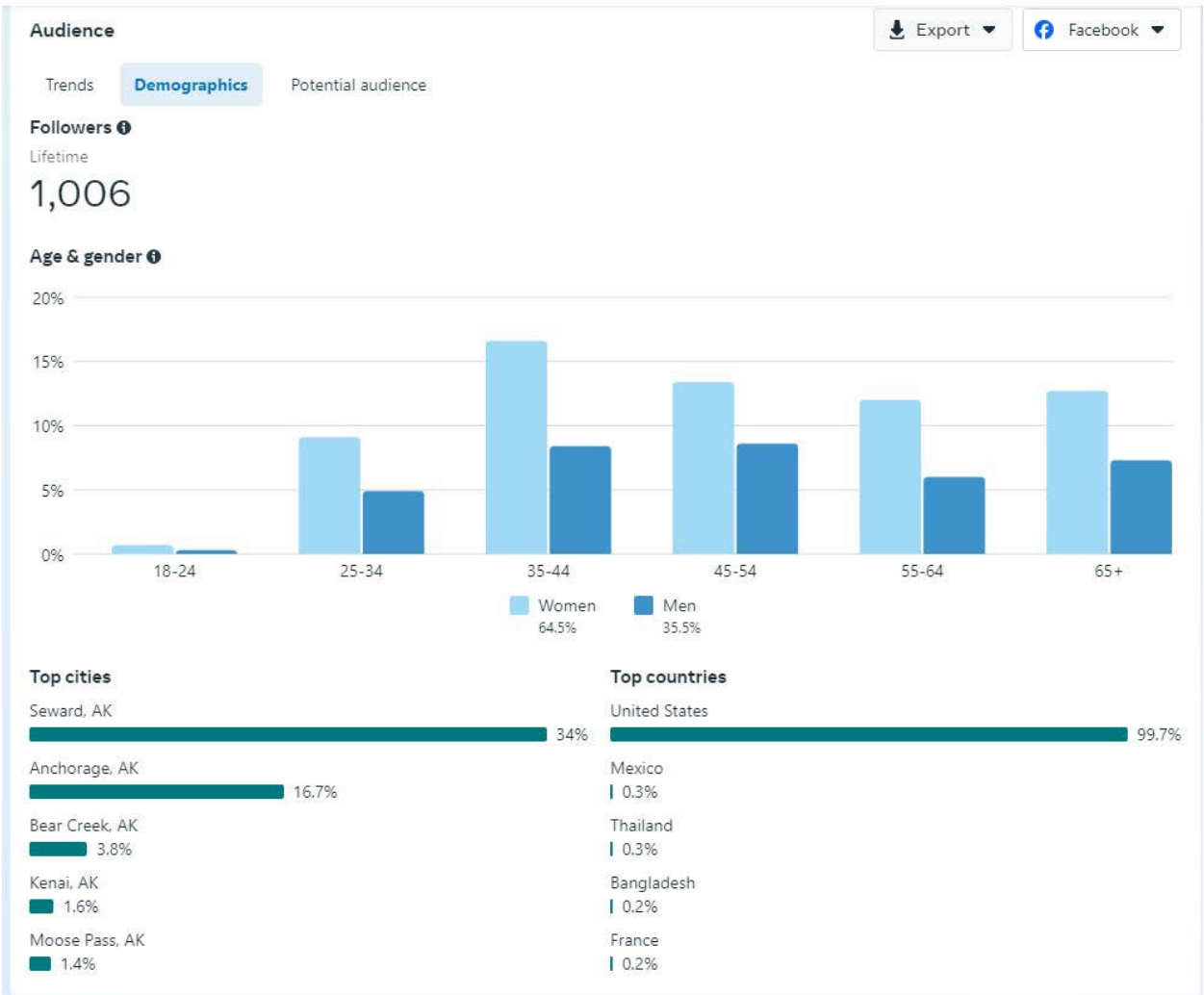


## Reach

Facebook reach ⓘ

8K ↑ 325.7%





Ad account: Seward LibMus 23842606034770742

Facebook

Apr 1, 2024 - Aug 1, 2024

Content overview

Breakdown: Organic/ads

All Posts Stories Reels Videos Live

Reach

8K ↑ 325.7%

3-second views

2 ↓ 96%

1-minute views

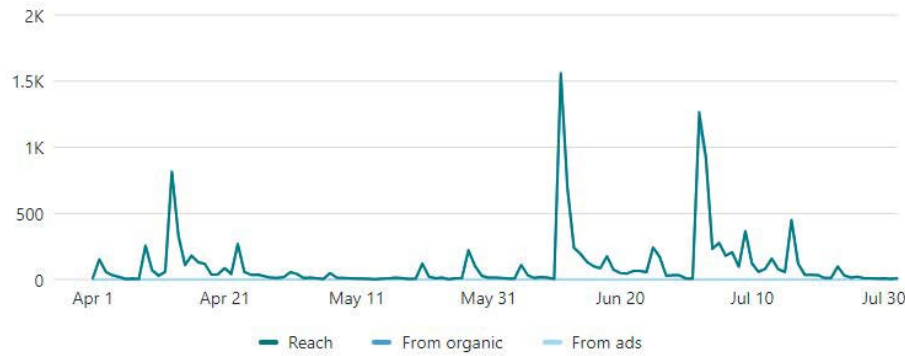
1 ↓ 80%

Content interactions

555 ↑ 13.3%

Minutes viewed

2m 28s ↓ 93.7%



Reach breakdown

Apr 1 - Aug 1

Total 7,970 ↑ 325.7%

From organic 7,946 ↑ 329.5%

From ads 0 0%

Top content by reach

Boost content

See all content



Many tales of races on Mount Marathon...

Tue Jul 2, 11:00am

3.4K 89



The L.V. Ray Building at 500 Adams Stree...

Tue Jun 11, 11:00am

3.3K 114



On this day in History: In 1924, Seward was ...

Sat Apr 13, 11:00am

1.7K 31



One of the sites on our Historic Walking Tou...

Tue Jul 16, 11:00am

565 27



This little cottage at 338 Fifth Avenue is...

Tue Jul 9, 11:00am

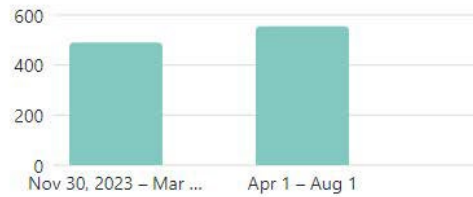
497 24

Content overview

All Posts Stories Reels Videos Live

Interactions **555** ↑ 13.3%

Post interactions by period



Post interactions by media type



Top posts by interactions

Boost content See all content

<p><b>On this day in History:</b> In 1924, Seward was ...</p> <p>Sat Apr 13, 11:00am</p> <p>47 31 0 17</p>	<p><b>The L.V. Ray Building</b> at 500 Adams Stree...</p> <p>Tue Jun 11, 11:00am</p> <p>43 114 7 7</p>	<p><b>Another Seward</b> Historic Walking tou...</p> <p>Tue Apr 23, 11:00am</p> <p>34 30 2 2</p>	<p><b>Many tales of races on</b> Mount Marathon...</p> <p>Tue Jul 2, 11:00am</p> <p>24 89 5 25</p>	<p><b>Congratulations to the</b> following properties...</p> <p>Wed Apr 17, 6:17pm</p> <p>24 23 2 1</p>	<p><b>TI</b> 3:</p> <p>Tu</p>
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The following posts can be scheduled through November 1, 2024. Any additions from commissioners?

# OCTOBER



Inside the Sexton Hotel, George Sexton is behind the counter and Sylvia Sexton is at the typewriter.  
Resurrection Bay Historical Society, RBHS 502.1.1.

Here is a glimpse inside the Sexton Hotel, where you can see Sylvia's Sexton's father George Sexton behind the counter and Sylvia Sexton at the typewriter. This photo is available through the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, RBHS 502.1.1.



The Sexton Hotel and her store burned in a fire in 1935. Sylvia was devastated and lost everything. She moved across the street to the former Seward Commercial Company briefly, and then into the annex to the north which is now the Generations building (L. Poleske). She opened her store, Sylvia's, and operated it until 1951.  
<https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg10/id/207/rec/6> (picture will come from the link)





Sylvia Sexton in her later years.  
Seward Community Library Association, Sylvia Sexton collection, SCLA-1-588.

Sylvia Sexton sold her store in 1951. In 1959, she moved to Washington to live in the Odd Fellows Home. She died in 1969. A large collection of Sylvia's photography is available on [Alaska's Digital Archives](#) and through the [Seward Community Library Association](#) and [Resurrection Bay Historical Society](#).

### A 100 YEAR FAMILY AFFAIR

1903 - T.W. Hawkins and Charles E. Brown opened a general store in Seward, Alaska. The store was located on 3rd and 4th streets. It was the first general store in Seward and the first store in Alaska to have a bank on the premises. The store was successful and became a landmark in Seward. In 1913, the store was expanded and a bank was added to the premises. The store continued to operate until 1951 when it was sold to Sylvia Sexton. The store was a family affair and was operated by the Hawkins family for many years.



### Brown & Hawkins

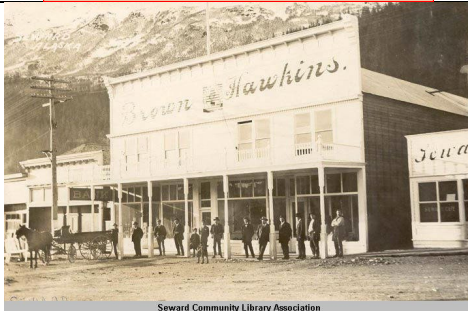
Brown & Hawkins is the oldest continuously operated business in Seward. T.W. Hawkins came to Seward in 1903 and went into partnership with Charles E. Brown, building what would become a general store, clothing store, and the Seward Commercial Club (now Sweet Darling's). They provided provisions to pioneers throughout the territory and became the first bank and telegraph office in Seward and more.

# November



Virginia Darling walking south on Fourth Avenue, circa 1943.  
Resurrection Bay Historical Society, 2014.010.0031.p43.

In 1946, ill health forced Hawkins OF Brown and Hawkins to lease the store to his son, James. T.W. Hawkins died later that year, and James ran the store for 10 years. In the 1920s, James had taken lessons from the famous Dutch painter Jan van Empel, who painted the unique Ascension painting at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church. There are several of James' original paintings upstairs in Brown & Hawkins. James turned the store over to his sister Virginia in 1956 and left Seward for San Francisco to pursue his dream of becoming an artist. This great picture of Virginia Darling circa 1943 is available through the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, RBHS 2014.010.003. pg.43.



Seward Community Library Association

Under Virginia's leadership, the buildings were recognized for their historic significance and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Virginia was instrumental in establishing the Resurrection Bay Historical Society in Seward. She hosted many high school dances upstairs in the famous ballroom and was always there for families in need of clothing, food, and money.

In 1989 Virginia passed the torch to son Hugh Darling and his wife Iris, and they began a complete renovation to preserve the building and restore it to its original condition. Thanks to 100 years of family stewardship, Seward has retained a unique glimpse into the past carried on now by current artists and historians Michelle and Jeff Cobble.

<https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg10/id/166/rec/3>

(Photo will come from link).

### SLID DOWN A HILL AND SURVIVED IN ONE PIECE

The Swetmann house is an architectural jewel for Seward. It was built in 1916 by locally renowned craftsman Gerhard "Stucco" Johnson as his residence. Gerhard was famous for his beautiful and long-lasting exterior stucco work during the early 1920s and 1930s. This house also slid down the hill, went sideways, and survived in one piece! That speaks to a well-built home.



### Swetmann House



The Seward Drug Company and Alaska Curio Shop, circa 1920s  
 Reprinted by Historical Society, 9C-10a Gilman, 9C-11

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Elwyn Swetmann arrived in Seward in 1919 and worked at the Seward Drug Company as a pharmacist. In 1921 he purchased the business and operated it through the 1940s. Around 1921, Elwyn wanted to buy this beautiful house from Johnson under the condition that it be moved from its steep location on Dairy Hill to Swetmann's property. Johnson agreed and contracted with the Alaska Transfer Company to move it. According to local writer John Paulsteiner, the Alaska Transfer Company anchored a deadman in the hill and used it to help slide the house down the steep hill. When almost to the bottom, it turned sideways. They straightened the house and brought it to Swetmann's lot by horses and skids, where it stands today. The fact that the house survived in one piece during the moving adventure enhanced Stucco Johnson's reputation as a superb craftsman and builder.

Photo available from the Resurrection Bay Historical Society. F.G. Hale Collection, 511.1.1.

# DECEMBER



Bank of Seward, circa 1940.  
Resurrection Bay Historical Society, 504.1.10.

Elwyn married Viola Triplett, who came to Seward to teach school. Elwyn was one of the founders of the National Bank of Alaska and the First National Bank of Alaska. Elwyn also had a controlling interest in the Bank of Seward. When Elwyn died in 1951, Viola succeeded him as president of the National Bank of Alaska's Seward branch. Photo of the Bank of Seward, circa 1940 available through the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, 504.1.10.



Portrait of Viola Swetmann.  
Seward Community Library Association Art Collection, SCLA 149 by  
Harvey Goodale.

The Swetmanns were active in civic affairs, particularly the community library where Viola was board president for many years. The couple ensured the library had a place in the community by giving it a home in the Bank of Seward basement in 1938. Upon Viola's death, the family deeded this home to the Seward Community Library Association, which later sold it to a private party. The Seward Community Library Association (SCLA) awards a scholarship each year in memory of Mrs. Viola Swetmann. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit is part of the Seward Community Library Association Art Collection.



The Swetmann House is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its connection with the people and events important in the birth and growth of Seward and Anchorage and the building of the Alaska Northern and the Alaska Central Railways. The National Register of Historic Places nomination notes that the building stands out for its artistic design and integrity of its construction.

This house is a testament to the craftsmanship of builder “Stucco” Johnson, and the Swetmanns who lived here and contributed so much to Seward. Photo by M. Benoit.

**CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY, SHARING OUR STORIES**

Seward is home to many interesting stories and places. The story of the Swetmann House is a testament to the craftsmanship of builder “Stucco” Johnson, and the Swetmanns who lived here and contributed so much to Seward. Photo by M. Benoit.

**Community Library & Museum**

Seward is located within the ancestral homelands of the indigenous Sugpiaq people (also referred to by the Russian-derived term “Alutiitq”). The area was colonized by Russian explorers who in 1792 built a fort and shipyard at Resurrection Bay. The Russians abandoned the fort in the 1840s as the fur trade declined.

Between 1883-1884, Franklin G. (Frank) Lowell and his wife Mary Forgal Lowell settled in the Seward area. Mary, born of an Alaska Native mother and Russian father, was raised in English Bay. Frank, who came from Maine, was a fur trader and entrepreneur. Frank and Mary established a trade station in Resurrection Bay, but by 1892 the fur trade had declined and Frank left to lead a different station on the Alaska Peninsula. Mary stayed at her Resurrection Bay homestead, hunting, fishing, and gardening with six of her children in what would become the southern section of the Seward townsite.

In 1903, Seattle developer John Ballaine and a group of settlers landed in Seward with the hope of building a railroad that would open up Interior Alaska to ships from the lower 48. In 1903, Mary Lowell relinquished her rights to her homestead claims to Frank Ballaine for \$4,000 and 37 city lots, and the community of Seward began to take shape. As the gateway city for construction of the Alaska Central Railway (which would become the Alaska Railroad), Seward saw a rapid influx of people. Seward churches, businesses, and the local paper participated in a “circulating library.” This community library effort was formalized and incorporated in 1930 as the Seward Community Library Association (SCLA), which was run by volunteers. As the library grew, it moved in 1938 and 1962.

Through great community support, the library found a home in 1968 in a former grocery store on the corner of Adams and 5th Avenue. Funded in large part by Viola and Elwyn Swetmann, a children's wing was constructed in 1968. In 1988 the library became a city department.

The Seward Museum opened in 1966 with objects, documents, and photos collected by the Resurrection Bay Historical Society (RBHS), and was run by volunteers. Originally located in the basement of City Hall, it was moved 1989 into the remodeled former Post Office at 3rd Avenue and Jefferson. Volunteers maintained the Museum until a new library and museum facility was proposed to celebrate Seward's centennial in 2003. A combined facility for Seward's museum and library was brought to life through a joint project with the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, the Seward Library Association, Seward citizens, and the City of Seward. The Seward Community Library & Museum opened in January of 2013, celebrating ten years of community effort. It continues to collect our stories and connect our community.

We hope you that you will visit our Library & Museum, and enjoy this Seward Historic Walking Tour throughout our city.

# January

## THE BEATING HEART OF SEWARD

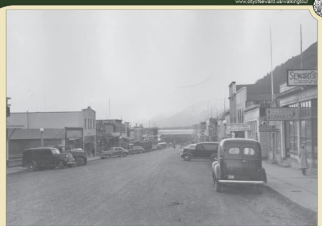
Fourth Avenue has been the beating heart of Seward's commerce since the City's founding in 1903 and has always been the place to enjoy community celebrations, particularly Fourth of July. As the gateway from the lower 48 to Southcentral and Interior Alaska, early risk-takers and entrepreneurs invested their energy, creativity, and finances to make Seward the center of commerce in Southcentral Alaska. Seward was planned with modern amenities using modern technology in mind from the start and unique for its time. The railroad attracted courageous men and women willing to endure extreme weather, wet and cold conditions, blasting winds, floods, and lots of mud! These people came to build the wharf, lay railroad tracks, and construct bridges, roads, and homes. Businesses were developed to provide food, clothing, shelter, and entertainment.

Fourth Avenue was the main street for businesses, while Third Avenue was generally where business owners lived, and Second Avenue was where workers lived. Fourth Avenue's direct connection to the main wharf made it convenient to unload supplies off ships and trains to deliver to local businesses up the street. It was also handy for visitors and workers to access local shops, restaurants, and hotels.

Businesses came and went, often due to their destruction by fire. In 1941, most merchants on the east side of Fourth Avenue burned down, from the south end north to the McMullen building. Because of the influx of money and opportunity associated with local military ramp-up for World War II, many businesses were able to rebuild almost immediately. Similarly, a separate fire destroyed many of the buildings on the west side of Fourth Avenue between Washington and Railway, including the original Lively Theatre.

You are standing at Kavabe Park, where the Seward Steam Laundry used to be. The business was owned by Harry Kawabe, a Japanese businessman who settled in Seward in 1912 and contributed significantly to Seward's economy and community. Shortly after the devastating fire of 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and Harry and his wife, Sora, were detained and removed to Archorage in the internment at Fort Richardson. While interned, Harry became a spokesman for the Alaskan Japanese internees at Fort Richardson. He did return to Seward after World War II but eventually resided in Seattle.

The early Seward business owners were courageous and generous people who looked out for one another, supported their community, and gave philanthropically. They were progressive thinkers that were influential in Seward and Alaska.



Looking south along Fourth Avenue. Harry Kawabe's wife, Sora, started Kawabe Car Wash in 1924 near the Seward Steam Laundry. Photo circa 1941.



Photo taken at Kavabe Park, July 1905 in Seward.



View from the north looking south along Fourth Avenue toward Resurrection Bay, circa 1906.



A man delivers groceries in a dog cart on Fourth Avenue Resurrection Bay in the background, circa 1910-1915.



A parade in downtown Seward. Men and women rode in float car decorated with flowers and flags, circa 1920.

## Fourth Avenue Business District



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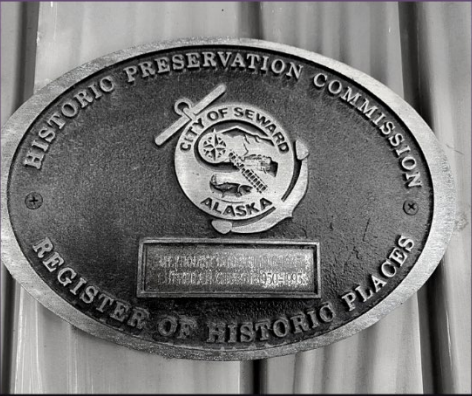
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**NOMINATE A PROPERTY FOR THE  
SEWARD REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



**What is the Seward Register of Historic Places?**

The Seward Register of Historic Places was established by City Council Ordinance No. 95-10 in order to provide for public recognition of local cultural resources worthy of preservation. The hope was that identifying and recognizing properties that were important in Seward's history would help change the way Seward perceives its historic resources, and encourage private citizens and public officials to preserve these resources. In addition, the research and documentation that result from completing the local register application provides a valuable historic resource. Since there is nothing regulatory about being listed on the Seward Register of Historic Places, **placement on the local register does not place any restrictions or limitations on a property.** Anyone can prepare and submit an application to nominate an eligible property for the local register. See the [HPC webpage](#) for [guidance](#) and an [application form](#).



# Seward Historical Walking Tour



The Seward Historic Preservation Commission  
The City of Seward  
Funded by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office

Are you interested in learning more about the history of Seward and the Seward Historic Walking Tour? Check out this short but fun video on the history and the 26 signs on the tour. Pick up a walking tour map at the Library. The Historic Preservation Commission will be looking for new grants to add additional signs to the tour in the future.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD9aUOGRT9M&t=2s>

The flyer features a map of Seward with 26 numbered points of interest. It includes a list of these points, a QR code for downloading the map, and logos for the Seward Rotary Club and Imagine Rotary. The text on the flyer includes: 'Seward Historical Walking Tour Map', 'Protect the Environment', 'Save a Tree', 'Download Our Map', 'SCAN ME', and 'THIS SIGN FUNDED BY: Rotary Seward Rotary Club'. It also mentions 'IMAGINE ROTARY' and 'Corvus Design'.

Do you care about history and protecting the environment? Check out the historic walking tour and download the map to your phone to save paper. Thanks to the Seward Rotary Club, Corvus Designs, the Seward Community Library and Museum and the Historic Preservation Commission for promoting going paperless. Download it here:

<https://www.cityofseward.us/home/showpublisheddocument/2320/637655036396330000>

# February

## PERFECT TIMING

In the summer of 1941, as preparations for World War II were beginning, the military arrived and established Fort Raymond.

In October 1940, the lot in front of you was sold by Leon Urbach to construction contractor Ray James for \$500. The James Construction Company agreed a contract to construct an apartment building by December 1941. It was perfect timing, as the November 23, 1941 fire destroyed at least 16 buildings on the east side of Fourth Avenue, including 56 apartments and 100 rooms. These new apartments came at a good time, when many had lost their home.

After the fire, people joked that "when the Japanese fly over they won't bomb us because they will think we have already been bombed."

Then, on December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked, drawing our country into war. A January 6, 1942 letter by the National Resources Planning Board stated, "Seward is a pathetic spectacle. The town is staggering under the blows of the 1). The prospective change of the Alaska Railroad Terminus to Whittier, 2). The fire, 3). Quartering here of 3000 soldiers and 4). The war with its blackouts, evacuation orders and virtual taking over of the town by the military, etc."

With war at hand, there was a shortage of building materials, with long lines for cigarettes, nylon stockings, liquor, and more. Even worse was the lamented shortage of women! "The Line" (Seward's infamous Red Light District) was just a short walk down the alley from this building. Although it got its start during hard times for Seward, this building still stands today and serves as a home for a wide range of locals and visitors.



Aerial of Fort Raymond during World War II.



Looking north on Fourth Avenue in 1941, before the fire destroyed many businesses on the east side of the street.



Looking west on Seward, Seward on the morning following the November 23, 1941 fire.



East side of Fourth Avenue after the November 23, 1941 fire.



A line of troops on parade. James Lee House in background.

235 Third Avenue



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WHY ENCOURAGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION?



IT PRESERVES THE HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL, AND AESTHETIC CHARACTER AND HERITAGE OF A COMMUNITY OR AREA, AND HELPS TO PROVIDE A SENSE OF PLACE AND CONTINUITY

Historic preservation preserves the historic, architectural, and aesthetic character and heritage of a community and helps to provide a sense of place and continuity.

Brown and Hawkins is a great example. It makes a connection to the past as soon as you enter. Brown and Hawkins is the oldest continuously operated business in Seward! T.W. Hawkins came to Seward in 1903, went into partnership with Charles E. Brown and built what would become a general store, clothing store, and the Seward Gambling Hall (now Sweet Darling's). They provided provisions to pioneers throughout the territory and become the first bank, telegraph office and more!



One of the sites on our historic walking tour is Jan van Empel's House, built in 1925. Van Emple, 1880-1940, was a famous Dutch/American artist from the early 20th century. He traveled to Seward in 1924. He lived here for two years while he painted his first sacred picture, "The Resurrection" for the back wall of Saint Peter's Episcopal Church. He used Seward residents and himself as models.

This site currently does not have a sign, is listed on the Seward Historic Walking Tour. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

See his famous painting in St Peter's Church [at https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg13/id/2796/rec/81](https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg13/id/2796/rec/81).

## What is Historic Preservation?



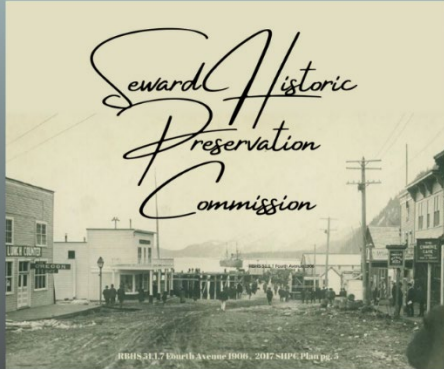
**Historic preservation means safeguarding the existence and appearance of historic elements of the community.**

What is historic preservation and why should you care?

Historic preservation is the practice of identifying, protecting, and conserving buildings, landmarks, and artifacts of historical importance. It involves recognizing and designating such places, implementing legal safeguards, conserving and restoring them, and often repurposing them for modern use. Historic preservation serves to safeguard cultural heritage, promote sustainable development, and educate the public about the value of preserving the past.

## March

### 2025 SEWARD HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD!



GET YOUR NOMINATIONS IN NOW

Do you know someone who has made substantial contributions towards historic preservation in the community of Seward? Please nominate them on this simple one-page form and honor them for their hard work in making our community better for all of us. You can find the form at:

<https://www.cityofseward.us/home/showpublisheddocument/3243>.

Thank you for caring about our history!

[#Seward](#) [#Alaska](#) [#history](#) [#historicpreservation](#)



Seward's Day is a state holiday in Alaska celebrated on the last Monday in March (March 31). That commemorates the signing of the Alaska Purchase treaty on March 30th 1867. It is named after Secretary of State William H. Seward who negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia for \$7 million. Since Alaska is about one-fifth of the size of the rest of the it seems a pretty good deal, but he was criticized for wasting money and it was known as "Seward's Folly."

The treaty was ratified on April 9th 1867 and the formal transfer of control took place on 18 October of that year. This formal transfer is which is now celebrated as another holiday, Alaska Day.

**NEW STORE OPENS.**

Leon Urbach, recently of the Seward Commercial Company, opened his men's furnishings and grocery store this morning, in the place formerly occupied by S. L. Colwell's store, two doors below the Post office. Mr. Urbach has not yet received his full stock but decided on opening today as he stated he would do.

**Seward Gateway  
26 July 1915 p 6**



**One of the sites on our historic walking tour is Urbachs Clothiers, built in 1942.** Urbach's has been in business since 1915. While a fire destroyed the original building in 1941, Leon wasted no time and rebuilt it in 1942. Leon was one of Alaska's unofficial leaders. He passed the business on to son, Larry, and his wife Dorothy. Dorothy continues the family tradition of leadership and in 2020 received an award from the mayor for her 30 years of leading the Friends of the Library and her many years of service to the Seward community

On the Seward Historic Walking tour, at 1111 Second Avenue, you can see a sign. "Clues To Seward's Past", about Stucco Johnson's Historic Home Site in 1916. Look for the sign across the street from Rotary Park. This was the site of master craftsman Stucco Johnson's unique Spanish Mission Style cottage before it was moved by horses to 327 Fifth Avenue around 1920. The house slipped through the ropes guiding it down the cliff on moving day and slid down the hill on its side without developing a crack, cementing Stucco's reputation as a master craftsman. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

# April

## MILLIONAIRE'S ROW

Eugene (Gene) Hale was instrumental in the founding of Seward. Like the other Millionaire's Row, his house was built in 1905 for the prominent citizens in town. The Hale family was a visible feature of Seward's business, art scene, and social life. The family's patriarch, F.G. Hale, was the president and a founder of the Bank of Seward and the Seward Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Eugene Hale was the vice president of the Seward Ladies' Auxiliary. They formed committees on religion, arts and crafts, photography, geology, transportation, wildflowers and fruits, literature, needlework, and education.

F.G. Hale had three sons. Eugene (E.E.) Hale worked at the Bank of Seward, Dr. C.L. Hale was a local dentist, and Fred M. Hale also worked at the Bank of Seward. Fred became active in the Seward Gun Club, the Volunteer Fire Department, the Seward Commercial Club, the local school board, and the Arctic Brotherhood. The Arctic Brotherhood was a fraternal organization organized in 1899 by Gold Rush stamperders. As a member of Seward Camp 21, Eugene was "keeper of the nuggets" in 1906.

The Hales were hunting enthusiasts. One such hunt happened in 1911, where Eugene and his brother Fred competed with teams of other well-known local citizens.

The Hale family's photo collection (F.G. Hale Collection) housed at the Resurrection Bay Historical Society within the Seward Community Library and Museum provides an insightful window into early Seward society life.



Second Annual Hunt, Kanaq Peninsula, Seward, Alaska, Nov. 3, 1911 taken by Rev. L.H. Pedersen. In the front row, Gene Hale is fourth from right, holding a gun, and Fred Hale is 6th from right.



Millionaire's Row in Seward. Eugene Hale's (left) and Frank Hale's House (right), circa 1905-07.



View looking south on Millionaire's Row. Second from the right is the Eugene Hale House, July 3, 1904.



Part of Seward's high society (from left): Fred Hale, his mother, the Hale, and his father F.G. Hale, circa 1905-1910.



Mr. Hale, (far right) stands with Mrs. Fred Hale, and an unidentified woman who assisted on an Alaska Central Railway station, circa 1905-10.

## The Hale House



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Historic preservation can provide an opportunity for the imaginative or creative use of a building that has stood empty because it outlived its previous use, and at the same time solve a community problem. For example, The Seward Depot was no longer used as a train station after the 1964 earthquake destroyed the tracks. It was later restored and has been used for several purposes since then, most recently serving as the site for several shops and restaurants. Photographer unknown.

### WHY ENCOURAGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION?



Van Gilder Hotel 1920

**IT CAN BE A GOOD  
INVESTMENT**

Why encourage historic preservation? It can be a good investment. Historic buildings can be affordable for businesses to rehabilitate because of the possibility of tax incentives, grants, and other support for that activity.

They attract business, simply because people are often fascinated by them.

Setting up a business in a historic building is a great way to build a unique character for your business and attract customers.

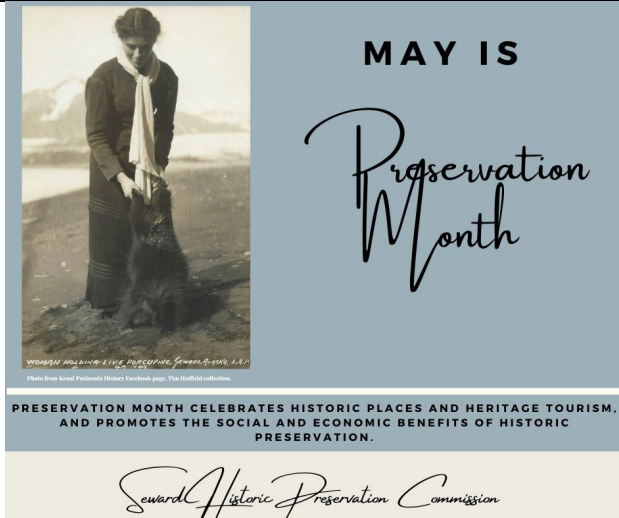
For example, the Van Gilder Hotel's historic character, as well as its ghost stories attracts business.





Another site on the Seward Historic Walking tour is The Wayne Blue House, built in 1920, at 319 Third Ave. Wayne Blue purchased this lot in 1916. He was a manager at the Alaska Transfer Company, an agent for the Seward Water and Power Company, and a business manager for the Seward Gateway paper. This is currently the site of Alaska Coastal Properties, and we hope to get a walking tour sign for this property in the future. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

## May



Historic Preservation Month, celebrated in May in the U.S., is dedicated to promoting historic places and cultural heritage. Initially started as National Preservation Week in 1973, it expanded to a month-long celebration in 2005. Organized by groups like the National Trust for Historic Preservation, events during the month include architectural tours, lectures, and festivals to raise awareness of the importance of preserving historical sites and artifacts

# Seward Historical Walking Tour



The Seward Historic Preservation Commission  
The City of Seward  
Funded by the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office



May is Historic Preservation Month! What better time to learn about Seward's history by listening to this video on the Historic Walking Tour, and then getting out in our nice (fingers crossed) weather for a walk to check out the signs.

See the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID9aUOGRT9M>.

Pick up a map at the library, or better yet, download one to your phone from the decal on the library door or on the Historic Preservation webpage.

## CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY, SHARING OUR STORIES

Seward is located within the ancestral homelands of the indigenous Sugpiaq people (also referred to by the Russian-derived term "Alutiiq"). The area was colonized by Russian explorers who in 1792 built a fort and shipyard at Resurrection Bay. The Russians abandoned the fort in the 1840s as the fur trade declined.

Between 1883-1884, Franklin G. (Frank) Lowell and his wife Mary Forgal Lowell settled in the Seward area. Mary, born of an Alaska Native mother and Russian father, was raised in English Bay. Frank, who came from Maine, was a fur trader and entrepreneur. Frank and Mary established a trade station in Resurrection Bay, but by 1892 the fur trade had declined and Frank left to lead a different station on the Alaska Peninsula. Mary stayed at her Resurrection Bay homestead, hunting, fishing, and gardening with six of her children in what would become the southern section of the Seward townsite.

In 1903, Seattle developer John Ballaine and a group of settlers landed in Seward with the hope of building a railroad that would open up Interior Alaska to ships from the lower 48. In 1903, Mary Lowell relinquished her rights to her homestead claims to Frank Ballaine for \$4,000 and 37 city lots, and the community of Seward began to take shape.

As the gateway city for construction of the Alaska Central Railway (which would become the Alaska Railroad), Seward saw a rapid influx of people. Seward churches, businesses, and the local paper participated in a "Community Library." This community library effort was formalized and incorporated in 1933 as the Seward Community Library Association (SCLA), which was supported by residents. After the library burned in 1938 and 1962, through great community support, the library found a home in 1968 in a former grocery store on the corner of Adams and the Avenue. Funded in large part by Viola and Elwyn Swetnam, a children's wing was constructed in 1968. In 1988 the library became a city department.

The Seward Museum opened in 1968 with objects, documents, and photos collected by the Resurrection Bay Historical Society (RBHS), and was run by volunteers. Originally located in the basement of City Hall, it was moved 1988 into the renovated former "Red Ox" site of the Avenue and Jefferson. Volunteers maintained the Museum until a new library and museum facility was proposed to celebrate Seward's centennial in 2003.

A combined facility for Seward's museum and library was brought to the through a joint project with the Resurrection Bay Historical Society, the Seward Library Association, Seward citizens, and the City of Seward. The Seward Community Library & Museum opened in January of 2013, celebrating ten years of community effort. It continues to collect old stories and connect our community.

We hope you that you will visit our Library & Museum, and enjoy this Seward Historic Walking Tour throughout our city.

## Our Community Library & Museum



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## WHY ENCOURAGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION?



IT PRESERVES OLD METHODS OF WORKMANSHIP

Implementing Promising Community Interventions - Chapter 26. Changing the Physical and Social Environment. Photo of the Swetmann House built by "Stucco Johnson".

Historic preservation preserves old methods of workmanship. Many modern buildings are built to last a short time – 25 to 30 years. Workmanship and building methods are often not as careful or durable as methods used in the past, when buildings were expected to last indefinitely. By working on historic buildings, new generations of craftsmen learn the techniques to improve modern buildings as well. Seward has many stucco buildings still standing by locally renowned craftsman Gerhard “Stucco” Johnson. The Swetmann house, considered a jewel of Seward architecture, slid down a hill, tipped over and survived in one piece. It was built as his residence in 1916. He was famous for his beautiful and long-lasting exterior stucco work during the early 1920s and 1930s. His stucco is beautiful and has preserved the wood underneath for many of our historic structures. Photographer unknown.

## June

### THE CLASSIEST STRUCTURE ON THE STREET

This building was created by a lady for the ladies, and upon its completion, was declared “the classiest structure on the street.” Mrs. Jessie Ellsworth was industrious. In 1916, she had Architect C.W. Winstead design and construct her new cement building to become Ellsworth’s millinery shop and sell women’s clothing and accessories. To keep the ladies happy, this was a necessary service in a pioneer country. The Ellsworths were not all work and no play; they were a musical family. Mr. Ellsworth worked as a chemical assayer, and in 1916 was the town bandmaster while Mrs. Ellsworth sang in the quartet and played the piano. In May of 1920, she and a group of Seward musicians performed in Anchorage to “a large and appreciative audience” and received a favorable review by the Anchorage Daily Times. In 1927, Ellsworth’s was sold to the first in a series of owners who continued the tradition of keeping the ladies happy by selling women’s clothing, accessories, and fabrics. After 1937, Carl Orlander opened Orlander’s in the old Ellsworth’s building to sell fine jewelry for women and men. Orlander was a kind man and a loyal



Best businessmen, Carl Orlander and Jess Ellsworth, circa 1920.



Boxes in front of Ellsworth’s store. An undated film camera (left), Jessie Ellsworth (right), circa 1917.



Children meet on Fourth Avenue on July 4th. Ellsworth’s is visible just in background, circa 1924.



Thelma Ellsworth, her mother, Jessie and the family dog, circa 1920.



Willy and Jessie Ellsworth, circa 1920.



View southwest along Fourth Avenue. Swetmann House (Orlander’s Ellsworth’s and later Orlander’s), circa 1930s.

### Orlander Building



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friend. After the 1964 earthquake, with his valuable jewelry exposed through broken storefront windows, his only concern was caring for the safety of those around him. A friend recalls that when he entered his shop with another friend, Bill Miller, he picked up a watch from the broken glass on the floor and gave it to Bill, telling him that it made him feel useful, not like an old man of no value. At that moment, the building was no longer the classiest structure on the street. But Carl Orlander certainly showed others what genuine kindness and class were all about.



Another site on the Seward Historic Walking Tour is the L.V. Ray Building at 500 Adams Street, built in 1916. Built by the Harriman Bank of New York, it served as a bank until 1922, then as the local high school from 1925-28. L.V. Ray, a prominent pioneer attorney, bought the building as his home and office and lived there until his death in 1946. His wife, Hazel, converted it into apartments.

<https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg21/id/21497/rec/6>



Owners of historic properties, here's why you should care about preservation:

- It honors our cultural heritage.
- Boosts property values and tourism.
- Saves the environment.
- Adds unique charm.
- Offers tax incentives.
- Strengthens community identity.
- Provides education and pride.
- Protects against unsuitable development.
- Drives economic growth.
- Legal obligations may apply.

Preserve the past for a brighter future! 🏛️ ☀️ #HistoricPreservation #CommunityPride



One of the sites on the Historic Walking Tour is the International Order of Odd Fellows Hall, built in 1918, at 504 Adams Street. The IOOF hall was completed and opened to the public with a dance and basket social in 1918. It was one of the favorite dancing and grand ball locations in Seward through the 1940s, and served as a community center for many years. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

July

There are many tales of races on Mount Marathon before the first official race what Alaskan stories are made of. Native Alaskans may have conquered this “I Russians, the early residents such as the Lowells, or later characters like Al Pee the arrival time of the steamers. Many have run and won this great foot race, learned it would be the terminus for the Alaska Railroad. Locals celebrated thi dances, and the first formal race on Marathon Mountain. Runners in that race Daykin. Walters came in first with a time of one hour and two minutes and wo third, winning \$5.00. Seward businesses donated prize money with the hope t become a favorite place for Alaskans to celebrate the nation’s holiday. Alex Bc and 12 seconds. His record stood until 1928, when a young boy named Ephraim Ephraim was a resident of the Jesse Lee Home and was just 14 when he won v record stood unbroken until 1957. Ralph Hatch of Seward was a six-time winn conquered this “hill” long before the first official race in 1915. It calls to young mountain’s dare, including warrior women and kids like the Jesse Lee boys. Th fun. Even families have made a day of it, as well as solo hikers just looking for races in America and is still going strong today.



This little cottage at 338 Fifth Avenue is one of the sites on the Historic Walking Tour. It was built in 1930. This 405 square-foot cottage was a typical size for many homes in the 1930s. Its two neighbors to the south are also similar. We don't have much history on this one yet but have heard these houses were used to house military officers at one time. If you have any history information on this one, we would love to hear it. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.



One of the sites on our Historic Walking Tour is the huge, beautiful open-grown Sitka Spruce tree at 212 Fifth Avenue. Likely over 70 years old, it is the most outstanding tree in Seward for its history, exemplary shape, beauty, and size. Note the sidewalk curves around it. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

## Heritage Tourism



CULTURAL TOURISTS SPEND MORE, STAY LONGER AND TAKE MORE TRIPS. HOW MIGHT THAT BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS?

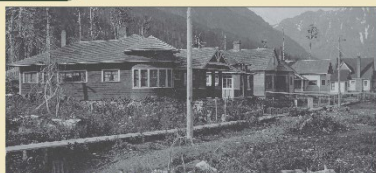
Heritage tourism is a branch of tourism focused on the cultural heritage of the location where tourism is occurring. Cultural tourists spend 60% more, stay longer and take more trips. How might that benefit your business?

Heritage tourism, involves travelers visiting places of historical, cultural, or natural significance. It offers several advantages to a town, including economic benefits, preservation of cultural heritage, increased awareness and education, community development, cultural exchange, support for local artisans, sustainable tourism, improved infrastructure, revitalization of historic areas, and the promotion of cultural identity. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.

## August

### MILLIONAIRE'S ROW

From Seward's earliest days, Millionaire's Row (built between 1904 and 1906) reflected the town's role as a gateway to a frontier town that did not yet have a permanent population. The homes were built by the wealthy men of the day, and they reflected the town's role as a gateway to a frontier town that did not yet have a permanent population.



Holland House

M. B. HOLLAND'S HOME, 1904

1904

1904

1904

From Seward's earliest days, Millionaire's Row (built between 1904 and 1906) reflected the town's role as a gateway to a frontier town that did not yet have a permanent population. This beautiful row of houses is on the west side of the Seward Highway (Third Avenue).

Many locals believed Seward would become the New York of the Pacific, Alaska's fetched today, as it also did then to more skeptical visitors and business investors.

The Holland House belonged to Murray B. Holland, the general storekeeper for the town. It was the home of Winter's house and J.B. Cameron's. That summer, "the clang of pounding nails

These interior photos showing the Holland House represent what must have been because it is challenging to find interior pictures of Seward homes from that era.

The Holland House was placed on the Seward Historic Register in 1999.



# FOUNDERS DAY!

AUGUST 28, 1903



Ballaine House 1903. Photo courtesy of City of Seward AK.

LET'S CELEBRATE OUR HISTORY

Founders Day! Save the Date! August 28.

Note Founders Day community events.

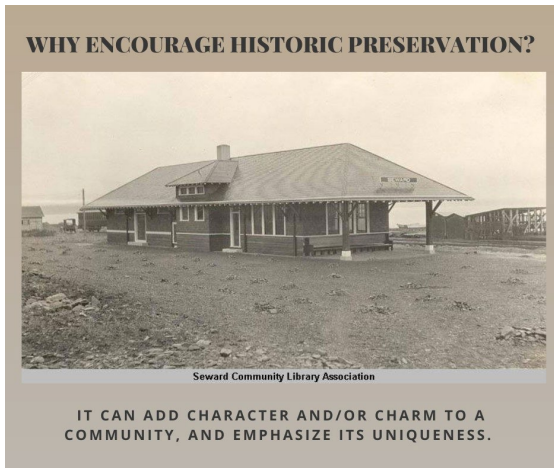


125 Third Avenue was once the Mary Lowell Homestead, The Line, and Alaska Transfer Company. This corner, which is part of the Historic Walking Tour, was once a bustling center of activity. It originally was the site of the Mary Lowell homestead. Frank Ballaine had a house built for her here. Later the house was the home of Lydia and Al Peel and known as the Peel House. He was a manager of the Alaska Transfer Company, located where the parking lot is now. His wife was associated with Seward's notorious red-light district known as The Line, where the line of cottonwoods now stands. Behind the cottonwoods there once were 21 little houses owned and operated by local businesswomen. The Line closed down in the mid-1950s. Photo by Mary Ann Benoit.



See the beautiful old 1943 Norway Maple at 420 Third Ave, one of the sites on the Historic Walking Tour. Mrs. Amend bought this beautiful tree through the Sears catalog in the late 1930s and planted it as a sapling. It may be the largest Norway Maple tree in Alaska. Photo by Carol Griswold.

## September



**Historic preservation adds character and charm to a community and emphasizes its uniqueness.**

Our old buildings make Seward unique, and give Seward a lot of character and charm that attracts tourists and attracted many of us to move here. Businesses in our old buildings, such as Zudy's and Primrose Provisions in the old train station, often provide a unique experience that attract locals and visitors alike.

**IF WALLS COULD TALK**

**Malloy House**

**If Walls Could Talk- The Malloy House- 313 Sixth Ave**

Named for its original owner, Bessie M. Malloy, this house had a previous life on a hill above Second Avenue. After avalanches buried some of the neighboring houses, Malloy purchased this lot for \$250 and moved the house here.

This house has seen a lot, including an influx of more than 3,200 soldiers in Seward during World War II, Alaska statehood in 1959, and the most exciting of all: the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake. During the earthquake, the Anderson family (who lived in the house at the time) had to run for their lives, leaving the front door wide open as the Standard Oil tanks a block away exploded and the earth shook.

In 1970, the National Research Council described the devastation of that day by saying, “probably nowhere in south central Alaska on March 27, 1964, were there more hairbreadth escapes than among the 2,300 inhabitants of the seaport town of Seward...”.

Owner Susie Anderson White was 9 years old when she wrote, “All of a sudden everything broke loose, and we were shaking real bad. I started to scream, and my sister Sharon told me I didn’t stop screaming. We saw a huge explosion. It was the Standard Oil tanks going up in flames. When we went past the boat harbor, we could see boats being lifted up by the tidal wave.” Her father, Val Anderson, wrote, “We spent the night listening to the Standard Oil tanks exploding, the tidal waves coming in and watching the great red glare of the fire lighting the skies and mountainsides. We didn’t think there was a chance in the world our house could survive.”

But the house did survive and kept adapting to changing times. Today Seward depends more on tourism, and this house offers nightly lodging to these travelers. It hears their stories, and now they hear its story.

### WHY ENCOURAGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION?



Seward Community Library Association

IT CAN ADD CHARACTER AND/OR CHARM TO A COMMUNITY, AND EMPHASIZE ITS UNIQUENESS.

**It can add character and/or charm to a community, and emphasize its uniqueness.** The preservation of old buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes can determine the look of a community, and may be an attraction for tourists as well. If these elements are historically significant or unusual, they can also be a source of community pride, and lead to other improvements.

### How Can You Preserve History?



Anchorage Museum of History & Art, Library & Archives.  
Photo from Kenai Peninsula History Facebook page, The Halfhill collection.

Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, Reconstruction

Historic preservation includes four possible activities:

**Preservation** is preserving a place as it is in the present

**Rehabilitation** fixes up a deteriorated historic property, often for a use other than its original one

**Restoration** means putting a building or landscape back the way it was originally, or at a historically significant time in its past

**Reconstruction** is the creation of a historically accurate copy of either a specific historic property that no longer exists or an example of one from a chosen historical period.

# October

## AN ADVENTUROUS, CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHER

This building, constructed in 1916, and known as the Generations Building, is often referred to as the Sexton House. Sylvia Sexton was a dynamic, creative, and adventurous woman who embodied the Alaskan pioneer spirit. One of the most popular young businesswomen of Seward and a prominent Alaskan photographer, her beautiful images capture the essence of the daily life of her friends, family, and the outdoor activities she enjoyed. She was well known, loved, and active in the community. Sylvia moved to Seward in 1904 from Sunrise when her father, George Sexton, was transferred to be Seward's first deputy U.S. Marshal. She brought her passion for photography with her to Seward. Sylvia moved freely around the town and captured Seward's daily life in pictures during this pioneering time. Her photos made Sylvia one of the most recognized photographers on the Kuskokwim and famous for her scenic work. George Sexton bought the Colman House in 1907, and Sylvia opened her store there, selling curio, collectibles, and photography. George renamed it the Sexton House in 1913. The Sexton Hotel and her store burned in 1930. While the store was a total loss, Sylvia was undeterred, opening a temporary new store in the former Seward Commercial Company building, a then a permanent location in the Generations Building, which was an annex of the Seward Commercial Company. The store, aptly named "Sylvia's," operated until 1951. In the pocket of fourth Avenue below the first, the Generations Building is visible on the right side of the street, with the awning.

"Generations" pays tribute to how the Sextons and this 1916 building, called the Sexton House, have withstood the test of time, including the 1934 earthquake and tsunami. The Generations Building reflects the spirit of Seward's adventurous photographer, Sylvia Sexton, and her family.



A photo taken by Sylvia Sexton of women on the wharf with their babies, circa 1905.



Sylvia Sexton in her later years.



Inside the Sexton House, George Sexton is behind the counter and Sylvia Sexton is at the typewriter.



Sylvia Sexton in a field with two men.



Sylvia Sexton in a field with two men and her camera bag.



August 1933 Fourth Avenue view. The destroyed the Sexton Hotel and Sylvia's ice cream and photo shop.

## The Sexton House

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Sylvia Sexton in a field with two men and her camera bag.

Seward Community Library Association, Sylvia Sexton Collection, SCLA-1-584.

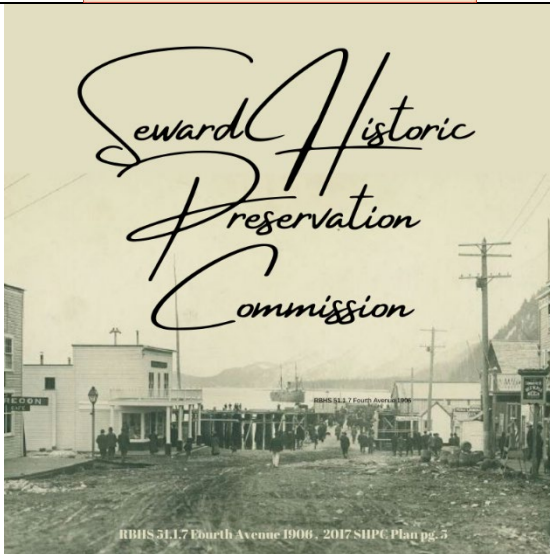
Sylvia Sexton liked to get out in the field to get her beautiful photos of Alaska that give us a glimpse into our history today. She looks like she is having fun!

This photo is available through the Seward Community Library Association. SCLA-1-584.



Sylvia Sexton on a photo excursion.  
Seward Community Library Association, Sylvia Sexton Collection, SCLA 1-558.

Here is a photo of Sylvia Sexton out on one of her photo excursions. Notice the outfit, camera gear, and what I imagine as her no-nonsense, "Come on, let's go, I have pictures to take" look 😊



RBHS 51.1.7 Fourth Avenue 1906. 2017 SHPC Plan pg. 5

The Seward Historic Preservation Commission is a group pf dedicated volunteers from our community that care about our history and historic buildings and sites. Membership on the Commission is open to citizens of The City of Seward and surrounding areas.

Contact the City Clerk's Office to inquire about applying for this commission.

We meet quarterly on the second Thursday of each month, except for July when they are on hiatus, the commission meets at 6:00 p.m. with a work session followed by a regular meeting. Stop by and listen or watch us on YouTube. [Learn more.](#)

## CALL TO ORDER

The April 11, 2024, regular meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Chair Tanguy Libbrecht.

## OPENING CEREMONY

Commissioner Benoit led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

## ROLL CALL

There were present:

Tanguy Libbrecht, presiding, and  
Sue Ward  
Dona Walker  
~~Laura Erickson~~

Mary Ann Benoit  
~~Art LeMaster~~  
Todd Mashlan

comprising a quorum of the Commission; and

Allison Stacy, Museum Curator  
Kris Peck, City Clerk  
Jodi Kurtz, Deputy City Clerk

Excused – Erickson, LeMaster  
Absent – None  
Vacant – None

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON ANY SUBJECT - None**

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

**Motion (Ward/Mashlan)**

**Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

**Motion Passed**

**Unanimous**

The clerk read the following approved consent agenda items:

Approval of the January 11, 2024, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

## SPECIAL ORDERS, PRESENTATION, AND REPORTS

**Proclamations and Awards -None**

**City Administration Report -None**

## **Chair Report**

**Chair Tanguy Libbrecht** said he was thankful to have a full commission. Libbrecht noted the commission's support for the Brown & Hawkins CLG grant application. He said the Historic Walking Tour continued to gain popularity. The new walk tour QR code was being utilized for the digital version of the walking tour map. Lastly, Libbrecht thanked the new Museum Curator and the clerk's office for their assistance to the commission.

## **Other Reports and Announcements**

### **Historic Preservation Facebook Page Report**

Benoit provided an update of the Historic Preservation Facebook posts, click-links, content interaction, demographics, and followers. She said there was a jump of 170 new followers. There would be a new post going out shortly to congratulate the latest recipients of the Historic Preservation Commission awards. Lastly, Benoit said there would be posts for new events taking place during Historic Preservation Month.

### **Presentations - None**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Other New Business**

#### **Approve the 2024 Historic Preservation Award Recipient**

Libbrecht noted there had been no nominations received. The commission recommended extending the deadline to April 25, 2024 and heavily advertise it to encourage nominations.

#### **Assign Council Date to present 2024 Historic Preservation Award**

Libbrecht said the May 28, 2024 council meeting would work if they received a nomination.

#### **Assign Council Date for presenting the 2023 HPC Annual Report**

Libbrecht said May 28, 2024 would be a good a date to present a report.

#### **Approve National Historic Preservation Month Activities**

Libbrecht said the commission had a vibrant work session discussion on Historic Preservation Month activities.



## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND REPORTS**

### **Reminder of Meetings**

Regular Meeting and Work Session on Thursday, August 8, 2024

### **Other Items**

#### **CLG Process Updates (Seward Historic Register & Historic Walking Tour)**

Libbrecht said there were so many other great applicants that the Historic Preservation Commission did not get awarded the CLG grants during this cycle. Libbrecht was thankful for the commission previously getting the grants and gave kudos to those who got the grants this time around.

#### **Grant Station Updates**

**Museum Curator Allison Stacy** said the city IT Dept would be setting up the grant station computers on April 16, 2024. These would be made available on any city computer in the library.

Ward said she had always wanted a grant library and now here it was.

Mashlan said the website [www.grantstation.com](http://www.grantstation.com) provided tutorials and webinars. The longest tutorial was 52 minutes and provided an overview on how to use grant stations.

Stacy said the library staff would also receive training on the grant stations so they could help others use the resource.

Libbrecht said he was very happy about the new grant stations.

#### **Hoben Park Updates**

Ward said the commission typically handled the flower urns. There were particular plants that survived better than others.

Benoit said the city had recently agreed to water the plants.

Benoit said an anonymous donor had paid for a memorial bench for Lee Poleske. The plaque says: In memory of Lee Poleske, teacher, historian, Iditarod Trail Blazer.

#### **Seward Historic Register Nominations**

Benoit said it was important to let the property owners know about the awards before they found out about it in the media. She had contacted the owners for the three owners that were recently awarded.

## Historic Walking Tour Signs

Benoit asked about applying for another grant and regarding the next top 10 properties. The next grant opportunity would be in the fall of 2024. She wanted to keep the top 10 properties in the loop on the Historic Walking Tour progress.

Libbrecht said he would check when the next rounds of grants would be. He said the commission could discuss during the August meeting if there was an opportunity in the fall. The grant they had just applied for was a 60/40 split and they asked for \$15,000.

Benoit said each walking tour sign was roughly \$1,500.

Mashlan asked about corporate sponsors availability. Libbrecht said the commission could not accept any money or donations.

Ward noted there was more demand for the walking tour signs now that people had seen what they look like.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** -None

## BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS & RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS

**Ward** thanked the staff and support people for all the things that go on behind the scenes.

**Benoit** echoed the previous comment. She was thankful for a full commission and supportive city staff. She liked all the ideas for Historic Preservation Month.

**Mashlan** asked about the update on establishing historic districts. He also expressed interest in focusing on Alaska Native history in Seward.

**Stacy** said the Qutekcak Native Tribe was collaborating with the library for some Alaska Native exhibits. She said some representation from the commission would be wonderful.

**Libbrecht** thanked everyone for their support and was looking forward to the rest of 2024.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

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Kris Peck  
City Clerk

(City Seal)

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Tanguy Libbrecht  
Chair

## **OTHER NEW BUSINESS**

- **HP Award Nomination Deadlines & Process (City Clerk)**

- **Hoben Park Updates (Benoit)**

A plaque in memory of Lee Poleske was installed on a bench near the fountain and great.

Sadly, the lilac we planted from the historic stock from the Ballaine House has died. The shoots I collected last year also died. We might consider purchasing lilacs for planting.

- **Collaborative Project -Stucco Johnson Homesite Sign (Benoit)**

Although we did not get grant funding to do the latest list of walking tour signs, which included the Stucco Johnson homesite sign on city land, City Parks and Rec agreed to pay for it. I have developed a draft sign in collaboration with Carol Griswold who developed the original sign and with Colleen Kelly of RBHS after doing research at the museum for new info and photos. I will be submitting this to the sign designer soon. The sign design will be done with another for Rotary Park so they can be shipped together to save on costs.

- **St. Peter's Episcopal Church**

- **Booklet on Jan van Empel (Benoit)**

Doug Capra has offered to create a book on **Jan van Empel** and his painting in St. Peter's church to celebrate the centennial of the painting and provide support for potential future grant applications related to restoration of the building. A committee has been formed including Doug, Todd, Mary Ann, and Valerie Rose to work on the idea.

- **Preservation Efforts & Proposal Updates (Mashlan)**

## 2024 Historic Preservation Commission Priorities & Meeting Schedule

Updated on 09/04/2024

DATE	MTG-WS	BUSINESS	PRIORITIES	RESULTS
Dec. 28		HPC MATERIAL DEADLINE: Turnover to Admin.		
Jan. 11 5:30pm	WS	Finalize HPC 2024 Priorities & Meeting Schedule to present to City Council. Discuss Properties for City’s Historic Register Nomination (There are 6 Brass Signs). Present Historic Properties for added Interpretation Signs for the Historic Walking Tour. Proposal & Agreement on CLG Grant Application to SHPO. Begin public noticing for HP Award nominations.	Enhance and educate on Historic Preservation	
	MTG	Approve August & October 2023 Minutes. Approve HPC 2024 Priorities & Meeting Schedule. Approve scored Local Seward Register Applications. Approve Priority Order of Walking Tour Interpretation Signs. Assign Commission Member to work with City Admin to write Annual Report.  Discuss all Reports.  Discuss Hoben Park & Second Avenue Project Updates.  Review & Update Draft of Seward’s Day Proclamation to present Council on March 25, 2024 (Seward’s Day is March 27, 2024).  Discuss Updates on CLG Process.  Discuss Public Noticing for Historic Preservation Award.	Present 2023 annual report & 2024 priorities to council  Submit annual CLG Report Draft Plan for National Historic Preservation Month Finalize a Shared Accessible Grant Library for Commission  New Social Media Posts to enhance Public Access.	Minutes Approved. Priorities & Meeting Approved.  Local Seward Register Nominations: Quonset Hut, Standard Oil Manager’s Home, Urbach’s – All 3 sent to RBHS and approved for Register. Resolution Approved (March 11, 2024)  The Seward’s Day Proclamation was presented and approved.  CLG Grant sent on January 22, 2024. Rejected on March 16, 2024.
7:00pm				

## 2024 Historic Preservation Commission Priorities & Meeting Schedule

Updated on 09/04/2024

DATE	MTG-WS	BUSINESS	PRIORITIES	RESULTS
March 27		HPC MATERIAL DEADLINE: Turnover to Admin.		
April 11 5:30pm	WS	Discuss plan for National Historic Preservation Month (May). Review HP Award Nominations and vote on winners. Discuss Founder's Day Proclamation & Activities (August 28, 2024) and transfer all duties to RBHS. Discuss & Develop plan for St. Peter's Church.	Present HP Award Recipient to Council (May 13 or 28). Finalize HP Month Plan. Develop plan to bring St. Peter's Project to September.	For HP Month the following will occur: HP Display at Library & Museum; Invited Doug Capra to speak at St. Peter's Episcopal to promote historic preservation of the church; Walking Tour; Social Media Posts.  No Nominations as of meeting. Deadline extended to April 25.  St. Peter's – Mashlan will reach out to Diocese HQ in Fairbanks. Grant Station to look into Fall.
	7:00pm MTG	Approve January 2024 Minutes. Approve HP Award Recipient. Approve National HP Month Activities.	HP Award presented by council (May 28, 2024)	Received 1 HP Award Nomination and they declined. No HP Award Recipients to report to Council.  Approved all HP Month Activities.  Keep St. Peter's Discussion in "New Business" so the conversation continues.  Keep Hoben Park on the Updates because of the flowers and preservation efforts.
July	Hiatus	No work session or meeting		
Sept. 4		HPC MATERIAL DEADLINE: Turnover to Admin.		

## 2024 Historic Preservation Commission Priorities & Meeting Schedule

Updated on 09/04/2024

DATE	MTG-WS	BUSINESS	PRIORITIES	RESULTS
Aug. 8 Sept. 12 5:30pm	WS	State Historic Preservation Office's "Meeting in a Box" Workshop	Complete & send to State Preservation Office. Necessary to have Seward's Input in the State Historic Preservation Plan.	
7:00pm	MTG	HPC Facebook Page Report Approve April 11, 2024, Minutes Discuss HP Award Nomination Deadlines & Process Hoben Park Updates Stucco Johnson Homesite Sign Updates St. Peter's Episcopal Church Updates & Preservation Seward Local Register Plaque Updates Admin to begin Annual Report.	CLG Grant Dates are TBD  St. Peter's Episcopal Preservation Efforts  Begin discussion for 2025 Projects  Complete Annual Report by Nov. Meeting	
Oct. 30		HPC MATERIAL DEADLINE: Turnover to Admin.		
Nov. 7 5:30 pm	WS	Review Annual Results & Priorities for Report. Schedule Date to present Annual Report to Council. Proposals on new CLG Grant Applications for Jan. 2025.  Create HPC 2025 Priorities		
7:00pm	MTG	Approve August 2024 Minutes. Approve Annual Report & Council Presentation Date. Approve New HPC 2025 Priorities	Finalize HPC Priorities list for 2025.	

### ONGOING TASKS & PROJECTS:

- Continue Seward Historic Preservation Online presence through Facebook.
  - Work with Curator to share events, promotions on RBHS Social Platforms.
- Continue St. Peter's Episcopal Discussion & Preservation Proposals
- Monitor Seward historic properties and make recommendations as appropriate.
- Verbal and/or Written Reports to Council
  - Annual Report will be done in November 2024

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS & REPORTS**

- **Seward Local Register Plaque Updates (Libbrecht)**
- **HPC 2024 Annual Report (Stacy)**
  - Please submit any Annual Report material by Wednesday, October 2, 2024.