

the passenger manifests. Families, in contrast to senior citizens, are more likely to take inexpensive, informal self-guided tours than to join group tours. Families, moreover, are also likely to go either to published standard guidebooks or cruise the Internet for specific information.

At present, a search of the Internet showed that only the Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau references NHLs. Even the NPS park web sites for SITK and KLGO, which do feature historic resources, do not inform the public about the NHL

status of these resources. Our ship—literally and figuratively—has come in. We must meet it with information in hand.

Note

* G. Donald Adams, "Cultural Tourism: The Arrival of the Intelligent Traveler," in *Museum News*, November/December 1995, Vol 74, No 6, p. 32.

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Landmark Makes Good The Aleutian Historic Area

Panoramic view of Unalaska and Dutch Harbor. Most of the significant World War II resources remain on the uplands. Development crowds the coastal areas. Courtesy NPS.

This is a place where so much of the history has involved the appropriation of Aleut land and waters and the submergence of Aleut culture beneath waves of European and American influence—economically, politically, and militarily.

—Ray Hudson, former teacher in Unalaska, local historian, and artist, letter dated 9/28/91.

The Aleutian Islands are a thin arc of rugged mountainous islands that cut across the Bering Sea. On a map the islands look like a child's game of "attach the dots." The chain of islands extends for over 1,000 miles from the edge of the Alaska mainland to within a couple hundred miles of the eastern Siberian coast of Russia. The Native Aleut¹ have occupied the islands for at least 10,000 years. For the last several hundred



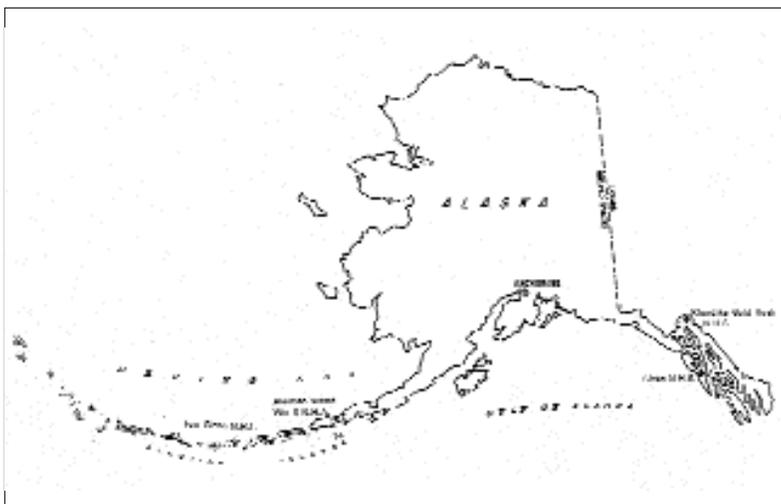
years the islands have been the crossroads of Russian exploration and American enterprise. During the 1940s, the events of World War II transformed the Aleutians into a military theatre. Caught in the middle of the wartime build-up, the Aleut lost many of their traditional villages and churches and suffered immeasurable losses to their culture and heritage.

The Aleutian Campaign in the War in the Pacific during World War II—known as the Forgotten War—dramatically touched the lives of tens of thousands of American, Canadian, and Japanese military and civilians in the early 1940s. The bombing of Dutch Harbor on Unalaska in 1942, the Battle of Attu, and the invasion of Kiska Island in 1943 were the crucial events of the Campaign, an offshoot of the Battle of Midway and the larger War in the Pacific. During this Campaign, the Native village of Attu was captured and destroyed. These events forced the relocation and internment of over 800 Aleut for the duration of the war, leading to the death of nearly 80 Aleut leaders and elders. This unheralded loss devastated Aleut culture and demographics in the Aleutians for years following the war.

In 1969 Brian Garfield wrote in *The Thousand-Mile War*,

The Aleutians have not changed in the twenty-five years since their forgotten war was fought. Rusting relics of battle still litter Attu's mountainsides. Giant B-29 hangars

Alaska map courtesy Linda Cook.



Elephant magazine
at Aleutian World
War II National
Historic Area.
Courtesy NPS.

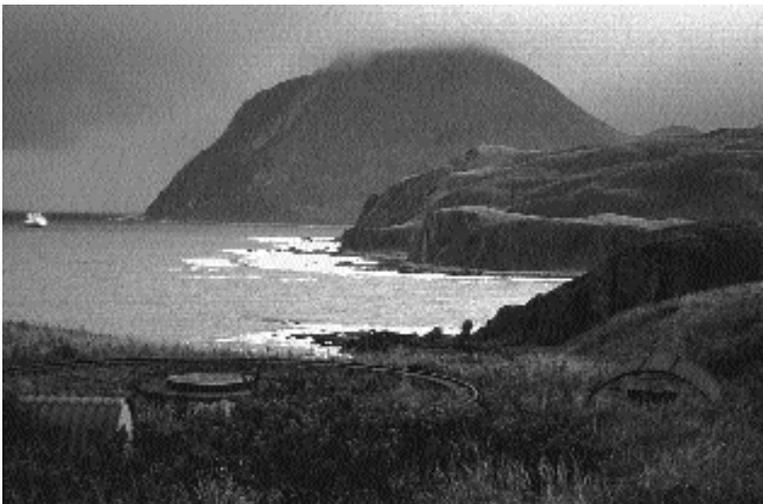


and a huge hospital are crumbling into ruin on Shemya. Half-collapsed World War II quonset huts can be seen on the hills of Adak. The Navy has authorized the sale of 5,253 acres of surplus property at the former naval base at Dutch Harbor.²

By 1996, the Aleutians changed considerably. Environmental cleanup and remediation, development, vandalism, base closures, new technology, erosion, weather, and time had put the area's World War II resources in an ever growing state of deterioration.

No longer so remote in the eyes of the world (though still protected by the challenge of weather), the Aleutian Islands represent a unparalleled opportunity for interpretation and preservation of both cultural and natural wonders. The Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 takes a first step in telling the story of the Aleut, the Aleutians, and World War II. The Act designates an 81-acre parcel of land at Ulatka Head, Unalaska, an "Aleutian World War II National Historic Area." In both prehistoric and historic times this point of land has been a natural view point to scan the harbor entrance to the

Coastal defenses,
ammunition sheds
and panama gun
mounts at
Unalaska. Courtesy
NPS.



islands. During the war, Ulatka Head formed the king pin of the defensive Iron Ring across Unalaska Bay. The site is within the boundaries of the Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and Fort Mears, U.S. Army National Historic Landmark (designated in 1987) and retains very high integrity as a nationally-significant cultural landscape.

Establishment of the new area represents an opportunity to preserve and protect Aleutian resources in alliance with the traditional residents and managers of the land. The land is owned by

the Ounalashka Corporation (OC), the Native village corporation in Unalaska, and lies within the municipal limits of the City of Unalaska. OC will administer, manage, and operate the site as a "historic area" with NPS technical assistance. NPS recognizes the property as an area affiliated with the national heritage represented in the national park system.

The NPS affiliated areas comprise a variety of locations in the United States and Canada that preserve significant properties in association with the national park system. They each draw on technical or financial aid from the NPS. In 1995, there were 23 properties affiliated with the NPS, including Roosevelt Campobello International Park, Benjamin Franklin National Memorial, Pinelands National Reserve, and Ice Age National Scientific Reserve. Like landmarks, affiliated areas must be deemed nationally significant.

A total of five National Historic Landmarks in the Aleutian Islands commemorate the events of the Aleutian Campaign; four others have Russian and archeological significance. The Aleutian World War II National Historic Area is but one cornerstone in recognizing and preserving resources in the Aleutians. Federal and state lands at the other landmark sites contribute to the interpretation and resource base that has just begun to be defined at Unalaska.

Notes

- ¹ The Unagan is the preferred traditional name for the native people of Unalaska.
- ² Brian Garfield, *The Thousand-Mile War: World War II in Alaska and the Aleutians*. Fairbanks, Alaska: Classic Reprint Series, p. 306.

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