

Photos courtesy AAHP

- 4th Avenue Theatre, Anchorage
- Kake Cannery, Kake
- McCarthy General Store, McCarthy
- Red Dragon Reading Room and St. George's Church, Cordova
- Three German Bachelors Cabin, Talkeetna
- Talkeetna Wireless Transmitter Site, Anchorage



Red Dragon Reading Room and St. George's Church in Cordova

“Physically, it's in a lot of trouble and everyone knows it. The present owners don't seem to want to talk about it. But it's iconic and we want to keep it in the public eye.”

— Allegra Hamer of the AAHP, on the 4th Avenue Theatre

slative with 13 other people in the Lane Hotel fire in 1966, the year that the first of the two buildings was started. Though dated, the buildings have been maintained and occupied over the years. What makes them “endangered?” That's a subjective term as well, Hamer said. In the case of a functioning office building, the concern is that anyone wanting to lease the space could make alterations that would permanently alter the period character of the place or efface its historical connection. Several of the properties on this year's list appear battered but remain in use more than 100 years after they were built. They include the Red

Dragon Reading Room and St. George's Church in Cordova. It was the first church built in that town and was once overseen by Eustace Ziegler, one of Alaska's best-known painters.

The McCarthy General Store, saved from decay by local volunteers, is used for educational programs by the Wrangell Mountains Center. A large dock and indoor area would seem to offer possibilities at the Kake Cannery. The barracks building at Fort William H. Seward in Haines is one of the biggest buildings in the neighborhood, and might be used as a recreation or interpretive facility.

But being used isn't always a good thing. There used to be another barracks building, a twin to the one that sur-

vives, that housed the office and press of the local newspaper. It burned to the ground in 1981 when someone forgot to turn off the hot lead linotype machine.

Other places on the list are clearly hurting. The old octagonal Alaska Railroad water towers used in the steam era had a structural defect that caused them to split apart. The last one left, now in Willow after having been moved from Montana Station in the 1950s, faces the same problem.

No less precarious is the peril faced by a 1930s-era log cabin in Talkeetna, the so-called “Three German Bache-

lors” site, one of the most photographed relics in the town.

The building belongs to the Talkeetna Historical Society and sits on land belonging to the Alaska Railroad, which charges \$550 a month to lease the land. To cover the cost, the society rented the space to an artist. That made it a commercial property and the Mat-Su Borough started charging the Historical Society property tax.

“The building is now heavily listing to one side,” read the nomination petition to AAHP. “The building cannot

See Page E-8, HISTORIC



Fairbanks' production of "L'Italiana in Algeri"

Photo by Greg Sandstrom

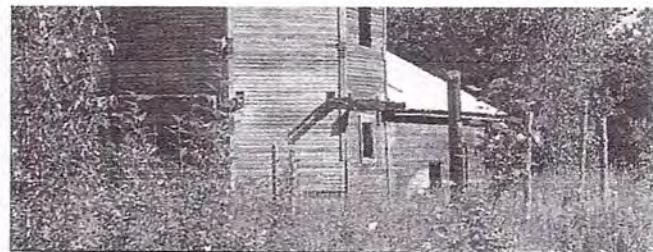


Photo courtesy AAHP

Alaska Railroad Montana Station Water Tower at Mile 95.6 of the Parks Highway

HISTORIC: Sites on previous years' lists have been saved

Continued from E-5

be moved, or it endangers the historic district of Talkeetna. Since the society does not own the ground underneath the building it cannot be righted without permission from the railroad. There is a conundrum. If it cannot have a proper foundation it will fall over and rot into the ground. If it is moved, it loses its historic significance."

seem to want to talk about it. But it's iconic and we want to keep it in the public eye."

With enough attention, she hopes, the theater and other

The magnificent Holy Ascension Church in Unalaska was rebuilt even as it was crumbling into sawdust, thanks to the creative use of federal interstate highway funds by the late Sen. Ted Stevens.

SUCCESS STORIES

Sometimes the stories have happy endings, Hamer said.

The Chief Shakes house in Wrangell is a good example of the restoration and preservation of an important historical and artistic treasure. The Oscar Anderson House is another example of a once-doomed building that has been rescued — at least for the time being. The massive Kennecott Mine Complex is now drawing attention from preservationists around the world. The magnificent Holy Ascension Church in Unalaska was rebuilt even as it was crumbling into sawdust, thanks to the creative use of federal interstate highway funds by the late Sen. Ted Stevens.

Other alumni from the list linger in limbo, like the Jesse Lee Home in Seward, the igloo on the Parks Highway and the 4th Avenue Theatre in Anchorage.

"[4th Avenue Theatre] has been on the list for several years," Hamer said. "In fact, it was on the first list we did back in 1991."

"Physically, it's in a lot of trouble and everyone knows it. The present owners don't

sites under Damocles' sword of time, change and fiscal imperatives will stay around long enough for someone to come up with the right idea and the right resources to keep them around for the future.

Unlike the Berg-Brown Cabin in downtown Anchorage, also known as the Brown Cabin, thought to have been one of the oldest buildings in the city. It went on the Ten Most Endangered list in 2012 and again in 2013.

Then, in October of last year, it was gone.

"One day it was knocked down," Hamer said. "Just demolished without notice."

Reach Mike Dunham at mdunham@adn.com

Courtesy UAF

Five pianists will continue to the final rounds of the Alaska International Piano-e-Competition.



a dessert reception. There'll also a bit of theater when Steven Hunt directs a staged reading of Zack Rogow's "Tangled Love: The Life and Work of Yosano Akiko."

New literary awards applications open

Speaking of reading and writing, the Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation and Alaska State Council on the Arts are starting a new program for writers, the Alaska Literary Awards. The awards "will recognize and support writers of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, playwriting, screenwriting, and mixed genres." The awards are sponsored by former state writer laureate Peggy Shumaker and Joe Usibelli.

Any Alaska writer over the age of 18 is eligible to apply for a select number of \$5,000 fellowships, to be awarded this fall. There are no restrictions on the writer's use of the award. The deadline to apply is Sept. 2. More information is available at bit.ly/AKLiteraryawards.

Back from the dead

The next "Stories at the Cemetery" event starts at 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 13. This is a self-guided walking tour with 10 costumed actors standing at the gravesites of their characters. Maps will be available at the John Bagoy Gate at Seventh Avenue and Cordova Street. The presentations end at 8 p.m. The event is free, but it's nice to tip the actors.

Reach Mike Dunham at mdunham@adn.com

Orchestra in Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony" and, on July 26, Beethoven's "Choral Fantasy." The choir for the latter is being prepared by Emerson Eads. The major concerts take place in Davis Concert Hall.

Also returning is the "Sounds of Nature" feature, in which festival musicians debut pieces written in a short time frame by participants in Stephen Lias' "Composing in the Wilderness" workshop. Speaking of wilderness, the orchestra will perform in Denali National Park on July 19. More information is available at fsaf.org.

Literary awards announced

The 2014 Contributions to Literacy in Alaska awards will go to former Alaska writer laureate Nancy Lord of Homer, Fireside Books store owner David Cheezem of Palmer and UAF's Alaska Native Language Archive. The Kashunamiut School District and the Association of Alaska School Boards will be the first recipients of a newly created literacy award on the basis of a Cup'ik language interactive reading program developed in Chevak.

The awards are presented annually by the Alaska Center for the Book. The formal presentation will take place starting at 7:30 p.m. on July 15 at the University of Alaska An-

ole s
rged
iving
aving
it and
license.
one to

up

art
onal
the
ir-
he
af.edu/
d Fri-
med
thoven
th of
with
estra.

anks
s
ed
nceled
ction
ival is
shops
gs,
nd
homp-
olow,
udi-
las-
ies,
ors.
ry,
July
sa