

S C R

24

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

FIRST COMMITTEE OF REFERRAL

Date of 5-DAY NOTICE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNIFORM RULE 23

FURTHER

**FISCAL NOTE(S) MUST BE ATTACHED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS 24.08.035

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE 3/21/89

3/8/89
Mr. President:

Resources _____ Committee considered SCR 24

state's Russian Orthodox churches

and recommended:

- replace with CS SCR 24 (Resources) same title
 attached amendment(s) and new title
- _____ letter of intent adopted
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- further referral to FINANCE

FISCAL NOTE(S) attached zero fiscal impact
 appropriation no FN attached Gov. FN introduced w/ bill

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

[Signature]
[Signature]
Rich Halford
Aless Sturguluvski Do
Pass w/ amended fiscal
note

[Signature]
Chairman signature and recommendation

Committee backup attached

6-0910E
Bannister
3/29/89

Original sponsors: Faiks, Zharoff,
Sturgulewski, and Kelly

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
 2 CS FOR SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24 (Resources)
 3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
 4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION
 5 Relating to the state's Russian Orthodox
 6 churches.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 WHEREAS the history of the state has been enriched by the contribu-
 9 tions of its early Russian settlers; and

10 WHEREAS the state's Russian Orthodox churches and the cathedrals at
 11 Unalaska and Sitka represent the Russian Heritage that is today reflected
 12 in the religion and traditions of many of the state's Native people; and

13 WHEREAS Unalaska's Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church, portions of
 14 which may date from 1826, has a rich collection of icons, which are reli-
 15 gious objects executed in the Russian Orthodox style, books, and other
 16 artifacts that convey the craftsmanship and artistry of the Aleut and
 17 Russian people; and

18 WHEREAS in 1970 the United States Secretary of the Interior designated
 19 Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church as a national historic landmark
 20 because of its exceptional value to our nation's history; and

21 WHEREAS the long-term preservation of the church and the valuable
 22 artifacts that it contains is being jeopardized by the serious deterio-
 23 ration of the church, thus endangering one of the most significant col-
 24 lections of Russian Orthodox art in the state; and

25 WHEREAS it is important that steps be taken to preserve our history
 26 and to ensure that future generations can benefit from the rich cultural
 27 and religious contributions of Russia; and

28 WHEREAS the Alaska Regional Office of the United States National Park
 29 Service, which is preparing an historic American building survey, and the

1 Icon Preservation Task Force have expressed an interest in participating
2 with the state in compiling an inventory and documentation of the Russian
3 Orthodox churches in the state;

4 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests the Governor
5 and the state office of history and archeology to inventory and document
6 the art and architecture of the state's Russian Orthodox churches listed in
7 the National Register of Historic Places including, in particular, the Holy
8 Ascension Russian Orthodox Church in Unalaska.

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STATE OF ALASKA
1989 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION CSSCR 24 (Resources)

PUBLISH DATE: _____

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 29-Mar-89 Agency Affected: Natural Resources
 Title: Russian Orthodox Churches BRU: Parks & Outdoor Recreation
 Sponsor: Senator Faiks Components: Historic Resource Mgt
 Requestor: Senator Faiks

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND&STRUCTURES						
GRANTS,CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL		41.5				
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		41.5				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	0.0	41.5				

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

\$37.7 would be used to fund a proposal to assist Soviet Architects document landmark churches on St. Paul and St. George Islands, as described in the attached project description. Ten percent of this amount, or \$3.8, would be used by the State Office of History and Archeology to administer the project funds.

Prepared by: Carol Wilson Phone: 465-2400
 Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 29-Mar-89
 Approved by Commissioner: Lennie Gorsuch Date: 29-Mar-89
 Agency: Department of Natural Resources

Distribution (by preparer) :
 Legislative Finance
 Legislative Sponsor
 Requestor
 Office of Management and Budget
 Impacted Agency(ies)

Alaska State Legislature

Senate Resources Committee

Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp, Chairman

Senator Jay Kerttula, Vice Chairman
Senator Dick Eliason
Senator Steve Frank
Senator Rick Hallford
Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Senator Fred Zharoff



P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4907

March 29, 1989

Senator Tim Kelly,
Senate President
Capitol 111
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Kelly:

The Senate Resources Committee, in considering SCR 24, Relating to the state's Russian Orthodox churches, received a fiscal note of \$41,500 from the Department of Natural Resources to inventory and document the art and architecture of the state's Russian Orthodox churches.

Because of the fiscal impact, the committee recommended that the resolution receive an additional referral to the Finance Committee. The committee was also concerned that the proposed funding would only be sufficient to inventory churches at St. George and St. Paul, while the resolution calls for documentation of all of the state's Russian Orthodox churches listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bettye".

Bettye Fahrenkamp
Chairman

BF:dc.dnr

A PROPOSAL FOR THE INVENTORY AND DOCUMENTATION
OF
THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY ASCENSION, UNALASKA
AND
HABS PHOTO DOCUMENTATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER CHURCHES

Two Soviet architects will be coming to Alaska in 1989 to assist in the documentation of the landmark churches at St. Paul and St. George as part of an international cultural exchange. With additional funding we hope to expand the scope of this international effort and broaden the cooperative effort of the Icon Preservation Task Force to include the State of Alaska and the federal government.

The work will be accomplished under the supervision of the Icon Preservation Task Force, working with the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (a nonprofit 501c(3) corporation). The work undertaken with the State funds will be done in cooperation with the National Park Service and the Alaska Dioceses of the Orthodox Church.

SCOPE OF WORK: 1. Prior to October 1, 1989 a team, consisting of a curator, an architect, an historian, members of the church, and an objects photographer are to visit and complete a computer inventory of The Church of the Holy Ascension at Unalaska. The inventory will document, for scholarly purposes, the contents of the church and will serve as a document which establishes priority in the preservation and restoration of the building and the icons and religious artifacts within. A total appropriation of \$13,890 is sought to cover personnel, travel and supplies.

2. A two year photo documentation project of the 37 Russian Orthodox Churches in Alaska will be undertaken. The professional, large format photographs will be used for scholarly purposes, as a permanent record to be kept in the HABS collection of the Library of Congress and for exhibit in Alaska. Funds are needed to cover contracting expenses with an icon expert, transportation, and per idem for the HABS photographer, IPTF liaison, and for supplies. \$23,832 is needed for the first year which will focus on 19 of the 37 churches.

3. The total funds requested for Phase 1 and 11 are \$37,722.

BUDGET

SCOPE OF WORK - ITEM #1.....

- a. Curator - NPS
5 days in field
5 days processing inventory.....No cost
- b. Supervisory Priest (translator of Russian
and Old Church Slavonic records)
1 ea x \$120 x 8 days.....\$ 960
Per Diem: 8 days x \$115.....\$ 920
- c. IPTF Historian (Coordinate, assist with
field inventory and edit report)
1 ea x \$120 x 25 days..... 3,000
Per Diem: 8 days x \$115..... 920
- d. Museum Photographer (photograph every
accessioned object, 450 approx)
1 ea x \$300 x 8 days..... 2,400
Per Diem: 8 days x \$115..... 920
- e. Architect (Soviet exchange - NPS)
15 days in field
45 days preparing HABS drawings..... 8,400
- f. Transportation:
5 round trip airfare x \$754..... 3,770
- g. Supplies:
film and processing..... 500
report preparation/printing..... 500

TOTAL COST FOR ITEM #1.....\$22,290

SCOPE OF WORK - ITEM #2 - YEAR #1

- a. HABS Photographer - HABS
30 days in field
15 days in lab.....No cost
Per Diem: 30 days x \$43.....\$ 1,290
- b. Icon Expert
1 ea x \$200 x 45 days..... 9,000
Per Diem: 30 days x \$43..... 1,290
- c. IPTF liaison
30 days in field
Per Diem: 30 days x \$43..... 1,290

d. Transportation - Year #1

Juneau (Cordova-Tatitlek, Sitka)	
\$366 x 3 team members.....	1,098
Hoonah and Angoon	
\$100 x 3.....	300
Kodiak \$254 x 3.....	792
Kodiak-Old Harbor-Akhiok	
\$140 x 3.....	420
Kodiak-Ouzinkie-Port Lions	
\$70 x 3.....	210
Kodiak-Karluk	
\$130 x 3.....	390
Spruce Island (boat from Kodiak).....	200
Seldovia.....\$183 x 3.....	546
Unalaska.....\$754 x 3.....	2,264
St George & St Paul..\$866 x 3.....	2,598
Russian Mission (Marshall)	
\$428 x 3.....	1,184
South Naknek.....\$320 x 3.....	960

TOTAL COST FOR ITEM #2 - YEAR #1.....\$23,832

SCOPE OF WORK - ITEM #2 - YEAR #2.....

- a. The remaining 18 churches will be inventories in FY90. Expenses for year #2 will be the same as year #1.

TOTAL COST FOR ITEM #2 - YEAR #2..... \$23,832

TOTAL REQUESTED SUPPORT- FY89.....\$37,722**

**plus percentage retained by History and Archeology for grants administration.

Alaska State Legislature

Chairman
(907) 465-4523




Jan Faiks
Post Office Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Senate Judiciary Committee

March 20, 1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp, Chairman
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Senator Jan Faiks 

SUBJECT: SCR 24 - State's Russian Orthodox Churches

The following amendment to SCR 24 was suggested by Representative Leman and I believe it adds to the resolution. For this reason, I would appreciate the Resources Committee's consideration of it when it considers the resolution:

Page 1, line 16: insert and Russian after "Aleut", so that the line reads "artifacts that convey the craftsmanship and artistry of the Aleut and Russian people;

Thank you.

cc: Senator Fred Zharoff
Representative Loren Leman

Members
Mike Szymanski, Vice-Chairman • Rick Halford • Drue Pearce • Pat Roday

Out of Session
3111 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 • (907) 561-7610

ICON NEWS

Published by the Icon Preservation Task Force
c/o Alaska Pacific University
Anchorage, AK 99508

Newsletter #2, March 1989



ICON PANEL AT ANNUAL MEETING

Three contemporary icon painters of the Anchorage area will be the guest speakers at the second annual meeting of the Icon Preservation Task Force. The panel discussion, "Icon Perspectives," will be held in the Conference Room, ground floor of the Z. J. Loussac Library, at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 21.

Byron Birdsall, a contemporary interpreter of the icon tradition, and two local church iconographers will discuss the challenge of painting icons in the 1980s. Ron Rollins, iconographer at Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Anchorage, and Robin Armstrong of St. John the Evangelist Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Chugiak will join Birdsall. Each of the speakers will present slides of their work.

Rollins paints in a traditional style using tempera on wood. Armstrong recently attended a workshop in Pennsylvania on iconography sponsored by the St. John of Damascus Iconographic Society. She will report on new thinking about interpreting the ancient forms.

Birdsall, a commercial artist, began painting icons two years ago. His interpretations of some of the world's most famous icons, rendered in nontraditional media, have been a spectacular success in art galleries in Anchorage and Seattle.

An original painting of Alaska's four Orthodox Saints, presented by Birdsall as a gift to St. Innocent Orthodox Cathedral in Anchorage, was blessed by Bishop Gregory and consecrated as an icon in services at the cathedral a year ago. Offset prints of this icon are being sold by the cathedral and Artique, Ltd., with proceeds to benefit the construction fund

of the cathedral.

Birdsall is offering one of these prints to the Task Force for a membership drawing (see story on page 4.)

The panel discussion will be preceded by the annual business meeting of the Task Force, including a report on an inventory of the icons and liturgical furnishings of the Church of the Holy Assumption in Kenai.

Future projects, including an international exchange with Soviet architectural historians, will be described.

The public is invited to this event. There is no charge.

NATIONAL PARK SUPPORT

The National Park Service has been active in its support of the IPTF during the past year. Cooperative efforts will continue during the coming summer when the NPS will conduct building condition assessments and architecture documentation of the churches at St. Paul and St. George in the Pribilof Islands. Both churches are National Historic Landmarks. Soviet architects will assist as part of an international cultural exchange between the USA and the USSR.

If the IPTF can find additional funds, the architectural documentation project will be supplemented with the inventory and documentation of the icons and objects in these churches. It is our hope that by the end of the summer we will have completed the inventory of three National Historic Landmarks.

REMEMBER
OUR ANNUAL
MEETING

March 21

7:30 p.m.

Loussac Library
Conference Room
Everyone Invited

YEARLY REPORT

This past year has been a busy one indeed. We have been actively pursuing our goals to inventory and document the icons and the architecture of the historic Orthodox churches on several fronts. We have had discussions with state and federal agencies, representatives of private foundations, and Native corporations.

These efforts combined with the continued dialogue between the IPTF and the Orthodox Church in Alaska have allowed us to move forward in a positive manner. With each discussion of the project, enthusiasm builds. We are excited about our progress in 1988.

Kenai Inventory Completed

In April, the IPTF coordinated an inventory of the Church of the Holy Assumption at Kenai. (See article on page 3.) The results are exciting, and the end product represents the first written and visual record of the architecture and art of an Orthodox church in Alaska.

Legislative Support Sought

In November, Senator Jan Faiks asked us to present a proposal for the inventory and documentation of the Church of the Holy Ascension in Unalaska. Senator Faiks is concerned about the preservation of the building and the icons and historic art objects inside. A resolution in support of the IPTF proposal is winding its way through the legislature.

IPTF Incorporates

In December, the IPTF, now a subcommittee of the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation, began the process of incorporation as a nonprofit organization under its own charter. Bylaws were drafted and filed with our Articles of Incorporation. Attorneys Jim Wanamaker and LeRoy DeVeaux of Wanamaker and DeVeaux donated their time to provide assistance to the IPTF.

ICON TASK FORCE

The Icon Preservation Task Force (ICPTF) is a secular group organized in the spring of 1986 to launch a major effort aimed at preserving and, where necessary, restoring the remarkable legacy of Russian culture in Alaska—a heritage resource significant to the people of Alaska and to the nation as a whole.

As time passes, these irreplaceable treasures are becoming increasingly vulnerable to deterioration, vandalism, and destruction. The effort to preserve these treasures must be multifaceted and support must come from many sources. The IPTF wants to work with other organizations to achieve our common goals.

With full support of the Orthodox Church officials in Alaska, the IPTF has resolved to undertake a long-range program to insure the preservation of the cultural resources by:

- *creating public awareness and educational opportunities for the people of Alaska,*
- *sponsoring an inventory and documentation program to record the objects and historic structures within Alaska, both to serve as a*

useful historical and cultural reference,

• in a cooperative effort, assisting the Orthodox Church, the owners of the art objects, in the restoration, preservation, and maintenance of the art objects, icons, and selected structures.

In our last Newsletter, we printed a letter from Bishop Gregory wherein he clearly states our intentions: "We understand that the intention is to retain all of the icons in the churches where they now reside. If they are removed, it will only be for necessary restoration, and/or brief display in an educational program." He continues, "It is my pleasure to be associated with this dedicated group of Alaskans who have taken on such a big task, which we all know will take many years. Please be assured that my blessings are with your efforts."

Bishop Gregory is right. These goals will take many years to accomplish, but the time to begin is now. We welcome your support for this endeavor and encourage you to become a Task Force member today. (See membership application on page 5.)

World War II Damage Assessments

Finally, in January of 1989, a proposal was submitted to the the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association to assist them in their efforts to substantiate damages to the church properties as a result of World War II under the War Reparations Act, which was passed by Congress in 1988.

In summary, our year has been very busy and rewarding. We anticipate that next year will be equally as rewarding as we continue with our inventory efforts and hopefully begin with some of our restoration tasks.

—Steve Peterson

Icon Preservation Task Force Board of Directors

Dr. Robert D. Craig
Kathleen Lindfors
Father Paul Mercurief
Steven M. Peterson
Barbara Sweetland Smith

Editors of Newsletter

Robert D. Craig
Darcy Lockhart

THANKS TO CONTRIBUTORS

We gratefully express our appreciation to the following individuals and organizations who have graciously contributed their services, talents, and money to the Icon Preservation Task force:

Alaska Humanities Forum
Alaska Pacific University
Byron Birdsall
Gerri Clark
LeRoy DeVeaux
ERA Aviation
Ayse Gilbert
Mark Air
National Park Service
Southcentral Air
The Alaska Association for
Historic Preservation
University of Alaska
Jim Wanamaker

And to the following donors (of Anchorage except where noted):

Alaska State Museum (Juneau)
Joan M. Antonson
John R. Barns (Harrisburg, PA)
Byron Birdsall
Alan Borass (Soldotna)
Phyllis I. Carlson
Cordova Historical Society
Lucien Coutu (Montreal, Canada)
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Crittenden
Dr. Nancy Yaw Davis
Ty Dilliplane (Providence, RI),
James H. Ducker
Robert C. Ely
Leslie Starr Hart
Virginia Heiner (Vancouver, WA)
Robert Isly
Louise Kellogg (Palmer)
Orin Knee (Portland, OR)
Brooke & Wilda Marston
Isabel Miller (Sitka)
Diane Murgalo (Tuckahoe, NY)
Frank Norris (Seattle, WA)
Lee E. Poleske (Seward)
Alba Pratt
George Shaw (Kenai)
Eva R. Trautman
Richard W. Tyler (Homer)
Carol Urness (Minneapolis, MN)

PILOT INVENTORY COMPLETED

Icons by an Alaskan Native iconographer were among the exciting discoveries emerging from the first church inventory undertaken in April 1988 by the IPTF. Three icons in the Church of the Holy Assumption in Kenai were painted before 1858 by Grigorii Petukhov, an Aleut born at Unalaska. Petukhov is one of only two known native Alaskan iconographers from the Russian era. Until his death in 1858, he lived in Sitka, while Vasilii Kriukov, worked at Unalaska.

Another exciting discovery was an 1896-1906 Russian language inventory in the church archives by Reverend Marcarius Targonsky, priest of the parish. This document aided in the dating of many of the items.

Other significant finds include icons donated by monks on Mount Athos in Greece and books used by Abbot Nicholas, the first resident priest.

The inventory of the church was accomplished with money donated by members of the Task Force and with a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Kenai church was selected for the pilot inventory because it has had extensive architectural and historical documentation already, and also for its accessibility. The parish

was founded in 1849, and the present church was built in 1894. Some of the furnishings in the church date from the first church.

The National Park Service has architectural drawings and photographs of this church because of its designation as a National Historic Landmark. These will also become part of the inventory file.

The inventory process included describing, measuring, and photographing 171 items, including icons, vestments, liturgical utensils, altar and table coverings, candlestands, banners, crosses, a baptismal font, and historic photographs.

The collected information has been computerized. Each narrative description also includes both black and white and colored photographs. Slides have also been made for a number of the items.

Heading the inventory project was Barbara Sweetland Smith; Rev. Targonsky; Rev. Paul Merculief, Orthodox diocesan liaison on the project; Patrick McKnight, assistant curator for the Alaska Region of the National Park Service; Barry McWayne, Photograph Curator for the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks; and Gerri Clark, a freelance conservator. The National Park Service, the University of Alaska, and Clark donated their services to the project.

Transportation was donated by MarkAir, Southcentral Air, and ERA Aviation.



Barbara Smith measuring Kenai church vestment.

BIRDSALL DONATES PRINT FOR DRAWING

Byron Birdsall continues to be an enthusiastic supporter of the Icon Preservation Task Force. Last year, Byron donated proceeds from the sale of one of his icon prints. This year, Byron has donated a copy of "The Four Saints of Alaska" print which depicts Alaskan Saints Innocent, Herman, Juvenalii, and Peter the Aleut.

In May, the IPTF will hold a drawing for the print as part of its membership drive. New or renewing members will be eligible for the drawing. (See form on page 5.)

The Task Force greatly appreciates Byron's generosity and continued support.



The Four Saints of Alaska by Byron Birdsall
Photo courtesy of Artique, Ltd.

CONCERN FOR UNALASKA CHURCH

In February of this year, representatives of the IPFT met with Senator Fred Zharoff and his assistant, Penelope Goforth, in Anchorage. Senator Zharoff represents the Kodiak-Aleutian region where a major portion of Alaska's Orthodox communities are located. The meeting was an opportunity to introduce the Senator to the goals and objectives of the IPTF and explain how our efforts dovetail with other programs, such as the National Park Service Landmarks at Risk. Senator Zharoff expressed concern over the condition of the Church of Holy Ascension in Unalaska. He is interested in seeking a legislative appropriation for restoration of the structure and for an inventory of the church following the IPTF Kenai model. (See Legislative Support story on page 2.)

DON'T FORGET

Send in your annual
membership form
today

Be eligible for the
special drawing.

Come to our annual
meeting

March 21

Loussac Library

7:30 p.m.

THE FORGOTTEN FRONTIER

Barbara Smith, one of the founders of the IPTF, has become the guest curator for the Anchorage Museum of History and Fine Art, for an exhibit on Russian America entitled "The Forgotten Frontier." Steven Peterson, cofounder of the IPTF, prepared a short section for the exhibit on the Architecture of the Russian Colonial Period in Alaska which deals with the art and architecture of the Russian Orthodox Church. The exhibit will open in July 1990 at Tacoma, Washington, in conjunction with the Soviet-American Goodwill Games. In the fall, it will travel to Anchorage, where it will celebrate the 250th anniversary in 1991 of the North American discoveries of explorer Vitus Bering.

MAR 10 1989

Alaska State Legislature

Chairman
(907) 465-4523




Jan Faiks
Post Office Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Senate Judiciary Committee

March 10, 1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp, Chairman
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Senator Jan Faiks 

SUBJECT: SCR 24: Relating to the State's Russian Orthodox Churches

SCR 24 has been referred to the Senate Resources Committee for your review. I would appreciate the opportunity for it to be scheduled for committee consideration at your earliest convenience.

Last Fall I visited Unalaska and the Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church. The church, with parts dating from 1826, serves as a reminder of Russia's rich contributions to Alaska's heritage. Its icons, books and artifacts continue to convey the craftsmanship and artistry of the Aleut people.

Unfortunately, though, Holy Ascension has been identified by the U.S. Park Service as a "landmark at risk". The church's physical structure is deteriorating. The icons, religious artifacts, and art objects, which are intrinsic to the Orthodox faith and fundamental to their services, are in poor condition. They are uncataloged, with little protection, and kept in a uncontrolled environment without curatorial care.

To ensure future Alaskans will continue to enjoy this part of our heritage, it is extremely important steps be taken to preserve

Members

Mike Szymanski, Vice-Chairman • Rick Halford • Drue Pearce • Pat Rodey

Out of Session

3111 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 • (907) 561-7610

Alaska's Russian Orthodox churches, and in particular, Holy Ascension.

The National Park Service and Icon Preservation Task Force have expressed interest in working with the state to compile an inventory and documentation of Alaska's Russian Orthodox churches. SCR 24 requests the Governor and state office of history and archeology to take the lead with this project.

Additional information regarding this landmark is attached. Should you have questions or need further information, please just let me know.



Although maintenance work is done on a continuing basis, severe weathering conditions and structural problems threaten the long-term preservation of this magnificent church. Photo: CCC Architects

Landmark Condition

Although the church building is regularly painted and maintained, the cost of undertaking extensive, essential repairs to the foundation, cupola, and roof have been prohibitive for its parishioners. The property's location on the edge of an inlet means that the weathering process is unceasing. At this point, there is a serious structural problem at the bell tower dome and the central nave dome. Intrinsic to the Orthodox faith and fundamental to their services are the iconostasis, religious artifacts, and art objects within the church. These treasures remain in poor condition: uncatalogued, with little protection, and kept in an uncontrolled environment without curatorial care. Major funding will be required to meet the preservation needs of this significant structure for continued public appreciation.

Recommended Work/Costs

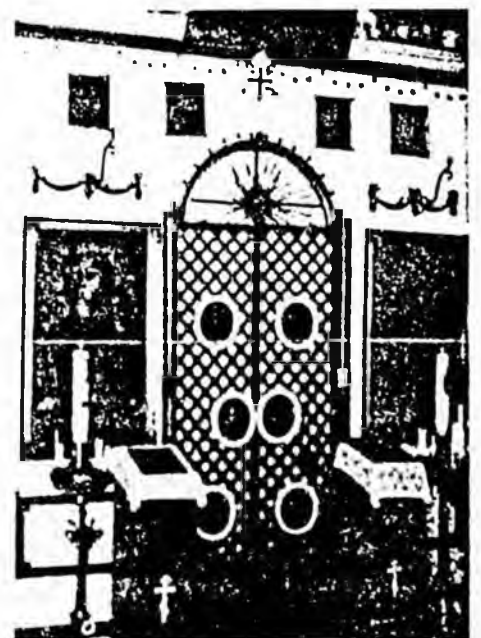
Data has been taken from a National Park Service-funded report, "National Historic Landmark Condition Assessment Report: Holy Ascension Orthodox Church, Unalaska, Alaska" by CCC Architects, Anchorage, Alaska. Work recommended for the church exterior totals almost \$423,000. Of that amount, \$198,000 will be needed to cover the costs of work considered critical to the longevity of the church, including partial replacement of foundation piers, major work on the bell tower, and replacement of deteriorated wood in the onion domes and decking. Another \$130,000 will be needed to correct serious exterior problems, such as providing proper ventilation for the foundation and replacing rotted wood "skirting" at the perim-

eter of the foundation. Finally minor problems, consisting mostly of replacing siding that has deteriorated under multiple layers of paint, then repainting with original colors, could be corrected for about \$95,000.

Total interior work is estimated at \$328,000. Of that amount, an estimated \$273,000 is for work deemed critical, including inventorying, cataloging, and cleaning the church icons based on a conservation plan; and replacing rotted flooring. Other interior work rated serious and minor would cost about \$55,000, and includes repairs to rotted horizontal ceiling members in both the central nave and bell tower due to long-term moisture penetration, and replacement of some floor joists. Finally, door trim and frames need repairing, and the entire interior should be repainted to match the original colors.

Incorporating a fire detection system in the church interior, and upgrading heating and electrical systems, are other needs deemed to be critical both to the longevity of the structure and its contents. Providing a fire protection system with auto dialers to the fire department will cost about \$15,600. Installation of an HVAC system to provide proper temperature and humidity control is estimated at \$108,000. An additional \$6,800 will be required to provide a fuel tank appropriate for the proposed HVAC system. The old electrical system will be inadequate when the climate control system is installed; a new panel box, wiring and service to meet code will be required and this is estimated at about \$22,500. Finally, cleaning and polishing the church chandeliers will cost about \$2,500.

The architects' detailed assessment is available from National Park Service offices (see HOW YOU CAN HELP, over).



The chapel's significant art work is in urgent need of conservation. Photo: CCC Architects

HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

Unalaska, Alaska

Its earliest portions dating from 1826, Holy Ascension Orthodox Church is significant as the oldest church in Alaska that features a cruciform plan with three altars. (The three-one story wings and the three-story front tower were added in 1894.) Of particular importance is the interior, with its rich collection of icons—religious objects executed in the Russian Orthodox style that convey the craftsmanship and artistry of the Aleut people.

Although the imposing white wood-frame

church almost seems out of place on the shore of a small Aleutian village, its presence is easily explained by historians. After the sale of Alaska to the United States, Unalaska and Sitka became vital economic and religious centers; the church diocese shared administrative responsibilities and each city had its cathedral. This picturesque Church is a visual reminder of the important role of both Russian contact and the Orthodox religion, not only among the Aleuts, but in North America

as well. In 1970, the Secretary of the Interior designated Holy Ascension Orthodox Church a National Historic Landmark for its exceptional value to our Nation's history.

Unfortunately, at this date, the long-term preservation of the Church is being jeopardized because of serious building deterioration. Also at risk is what may represent the largest collection of Russian Orthodox art in Alaska.

LANDMARKS AT RISK HOW YOU CAN HELP

Over 150 deteriorating and endangered National Historic Landmarks across the country need your help now.

You can assist these National Historic Landmarks through donations of money, building materials, or professional services.

The National Historic Landmark Fund, administered by the National Park Foundation in conjunction with the National Park Service, makes possible TAX DEDUCTIBLE MATERIAL AND CASH DONATIONS by individuals, organizations, or companies.

Donations may be used to support threatened Landmarks in general or a Landmark of the donor's choice. Donors may select a Landmark to assist based on its associations with specific historic themes, events or individuals; its architectural style; its building type; or its construction material. Landmarks in need of various services or building products which correspond to a donor's business can also be selected.

The National Park Foundation and the National Park Service give priority to those Landmarks in which critical needs have been identified through professional evaluation and planning.

If you want to donate to the National Historic Landmark Fund, or would like additional

information on how you can help Landmarks at Risk, please call or write:

Landmarks at Risk

National Park Service
Preservation Assistance Division
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127
(202) 343-9581 or

The National Park Foundation
P.O. Box 57473
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 785-4500

For information on how you may help Holy Ascension Orthodox Church in Unalaska, Alaska, contact the following offices and organizations:

National Park Service

Alaska Regional Office Cultural Resource
Division
2525 Gambell St.
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 271-2638

State Historic Preservation Office

Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor
Recreation
History and Archeology
P.O. Box 7001
Anchorage, AK 99510
(907) 762-4141

Local/State Preservation Groups

Alaska Association for Historic Preservation
524 West Fourth Avenue, Suite 203
Anchorage, AK 99510
(907) 274-2311

Owner Contact

Rev. Ismail Gromoff
P.O. Box 40
Unalaska, AK
(907) 581-1353

BARBARA S. SMITH

Alaska Historical Resources

8751 ROUND TREE DRIVE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99507-16
(907) 344-8810 846-2410

March 27, 1989

Senator Fred F. Zharoff
Alaska State Senate
P. O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Zharoff:

I am writing to support passage of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24. For several years, I have been involved with a citizen group, the Icon Preservation Task Force, which has begun the daunting task of documenting the cultural heritage of the Russians in Alaska. Students of Russian America are aware that it is the Russian Orthodox churches which reflect most clearly that unique heritage of Alaska, found nowhere else in the United States. The church structures themselves as well as the artistic and cultural legacy within them are superb examples of Russian construction and artistry. The U. S. government has recognized the exceptional value of many of Alaska's Orthodox church structures by naming no less than 36 to the National Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, there has not been the same attention to the cultural and artistic objects within the churches. The Icon Preservation Task Force came into existence to meet this need. We have begun, entirely through donated funds and services, an inventory of 48 significant collections scattered throughout every region of Alaska. In the Spring of 1988 we conducted a full-scale inventory of the Church of the Holy Assumption in Kenai. This pilot project allowed us to develop a realistic budget for additional such inventories. It is the intent of SCR 24, as I understand it, to apply this information to additional inventories.

To date, the work of the Icon Preservation Task Force has been accomplished through private donations, most in small amounts, and contributed services. It is entirely appropriate for the State of Alaska to join as a partner in this effort at long-term historic documentation and preservation. The state has a concern for the preservation of its cultural heritage, as reflected in the work of the Office of History and Archeology of the State Division of Parks. The state legislature also has provided funds in the past for renovation of historic buildings, some of them churches. I sincerely hope that this commendable concern will continue by adoption of SCR No. 24. The focus of this resolution on the Unalaska church is important, as this church is not only a National Historic Landmark, but has been designated an "endangered structure" by the National Park Service. This building served the function of a cathedral for the Aleutian Islands for many decades and contains a remarkable collection of Russian cultural objects. An inventory of this collection is a necessary first step toward restoration and preservation. The same is true of the other churches slated for documentation by the Icon Preservation Task Force and included in SCR No. 24. An inventory is required before conservation can begin.

I commend you and the other sponsors of SCR No. 24 for your dedication to historic preservation of this unique Alaskan resource. No other state in the United States has such a rich Russian heritage from the 18th and 19th centuries. With the help of the Alaskan Legislature we can work together to see that this heritage resource is preserved for future generations.

Sincerely,


Barbara Sweetland Smith



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ALASKA REGIONAL OFFICE
2525 Gambell Street, Room 107
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2892



IN REPLY REFER TO:

H34 (ARO-RCR)

28 MAR 1989

Senator Fred Zharoff
Alaska State Legislature
PO Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Zharoff:

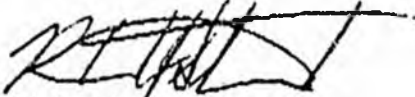
The National Park Service is committed to the preservation and interpretation of Alaska's Russian heritage as a part of its mandate to protect and tell the story of American history.

That commitment was first evidenced in a series of studies in the early 1960s that led to designation of several Russian-era sites such as Kodiak's Erskine House as National Historic Landmarks. The concern was then reflected in grants from the National Historic Preservation Fund that assisted in rehabilitation or reconstruction of some of those properties including St. Nicholas at Juneau, Old St. Nicholas at Eklutna, and St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka. The most recent evidence of this concern was the October 18, 1988, dedication of the restored Russian Bishop's House in Sitka National Historical Park. The dedication marked completion of a multi-million dollar, multi-year preservation effort by the National Park Service.

Our current efforts to support preservation of Alaska's Russian heritage include a major initiative to document, through measured drawings and photographs, the State's rich architectural legacy of Russian Orthodox Churches. The majority of these churches are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and several have the elevated status of National Historical Landmarks. Scattered throughout the State, often in remote locations and in deteriorating condition, these churches contain an irreplaceable treasure of icons and historic objects unique to the heritage of all Alaskans. These resources are of national, perhaps international, significance and importance.

The National Park Service would like to take this opportunity to offer support for Senate Concurrent Resolution 24, and the efforts of yourself and those of Senators Faiks, Sturgulewski and Kelly. We look forward to working with the Department of Natural Resources, Office of History and Archeology and the Icon Preservation Task Force to further the understanding and preservation of these valued resources. Inventory and documentation will be an important first step in accomplishing this goal.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Stenmark

Acting Regional Director

RECEIVED MAR 24 1989

ICON PRESERVATION TASK FORCE
c/o Alaska Pacific University
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

March 20, 1989

Senator Fred F. Zharoff
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V,
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: Senate Concurrent Resolution 24

Dear Senator Zharoff,

Please accept this letter in full support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24. Your efforts and those of your cosponsors in the introduction of SCR.24 are important first steps towards the inventory and preservation of the unique historic architecture and art of the Russian heritage in Alaska.

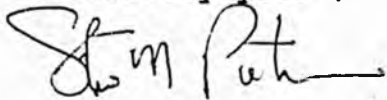
As you know, the Icon Preservation Task Force (IPTF) is a secular group organized in the spring of 1986 dedicated towards the inventory, preservation and restoration of the architecture and art of the Russian culture in Alaska. It is the belief of the IPTF that this heritage resource is significant to all people of Alaska and to the nation as a whole.

IPTF efforts to this point have focused upon the inventory of the orthodox churches and the art within. The inventories complement the architectural drawings and building condition assessments that have typically been prepared by the National Park Service. The end product is a comprehensive record and priority of preservation needs for each property. Additional scheduled inventory work will be undertaken in 1989 in the Pribilof islands as part of a cultural exchange with the Soviet Union. Support for our efforts has come from many sources, both private and governmental. The IPTF believes that if we are prudent and can all pull towards a common goal of inventory and preservation we can make a significant dent in the preservation of this heritage resource. The IPTF wishes to work with the State of Alaska and serve as a catalyst in this effort.

I have enclosed for your information a copy of our latest newsletter, The Icon News. If we can be of any further assistance to you please contact Barbara Smith at 343-6179 or Steven Peterson at 257-2667 (2900 Wentworth, Anchorage, AK 99508).

SCR 24 is a worthy beginning in the identification and preservation of a heritage resource which is important to all Alaskan's. We thank you for your assistance and support.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steven M. Peterson".

Steven M Peterson
Chairman, IPTF

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The IPTF is seeking to increase its membership through a membership drive. As you well know, donations are vital and provide critical funds, but they also show evidence of community support to the funding agencies to which we will be appealing. The project is large and will ultimately involve many thousands of dollars. We greatly appreciate your interest and your contributions.

If you send in your tax deductible membership contribution between now and May, you will be eligible for the drawing for the Bryon Birdsall print, "The Four Saints of Alaska." When you send in your contribution, your name will go into the drawing box. The drawing will be held in May.

Should you be interested in aiding us in the completion of this project, please fill in the following and return to the address below. Checks should be made out to the ICON Preservation Task Force. The Task Force is a project of the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation and as such is a 501 (c) 3 organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Yes, I am interested in joining your efforts to preserve the historical icons and architecture of Alaska. Please register me as indicated below:

- Student/Senior citizen \$10.00
- Basic Membership \$25.00
- Corporate Membership \$200.00
- New Membership
- Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

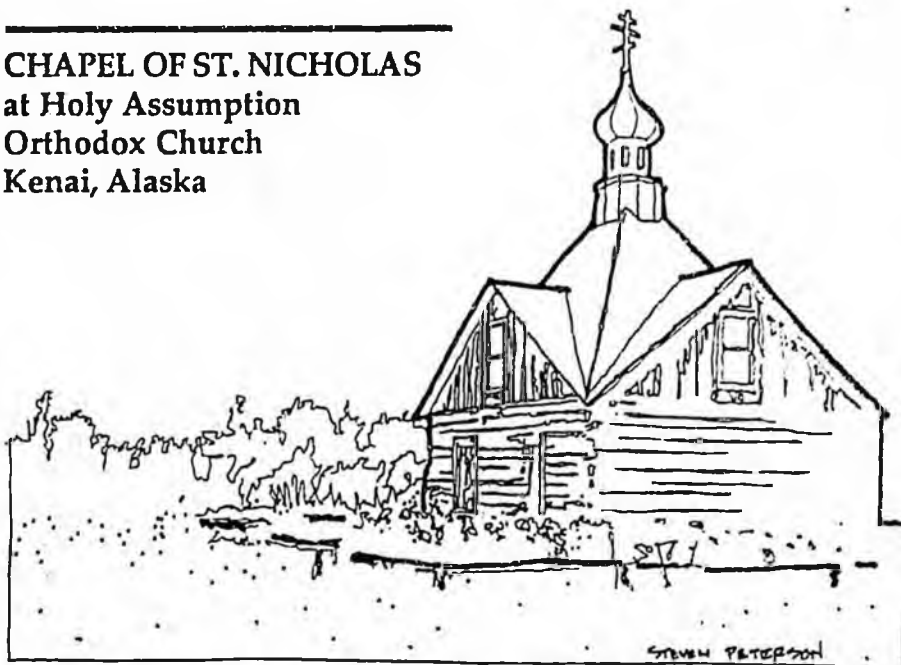
Send to: **ICON PRESERVATION TASK FORCE**
 c/o Alaska Pacific University
 4101 University Drive
 Anchorage, AK 99508

LANDMARK AT RISK

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church on the Kenai Peninsula was built in 1896. As such, it is the most enduring representative of the Russian culture in southcentral Alaska. Sharing both the history and magnificent setting is the Chapel of St. Nicholas, of significance in its own right as an outstanding example of Russian log construction. Built in 1907, the uncovered log walls recall the craftsmanship and engineering skills of Kenai's Fort St. Nicholas, constructed in 1791. (The chapel is built on the site of the earlier Russian Fort). The grave of Abbot Nicholai, the first missionary in the area, is said to be directly beneath the structure. For its exceptional value in our nation's history, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Chapel of St. Nicholas at Holy Assumption Orthodox Church, a National Historic Landmark in 1970. Unfortunately, at this date, the structural integrity of the chapel is being jeopardized and the longevity of the resource threatened.

To donate, contact the National Park Service, Cultural Resource Division, 2525 Gambell St., Anchorage AK 99503.

CHAPEL OF ST. NICHOLAS at Holy Assumption Orthodox Church Kenai, Alaska



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ICON PRESERVATION TASK FORCE
c/o Alaska Pacific University
4101 University Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

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