

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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Guide prepared by: Bruce Merrell, museum volunteer

TITLE: Morgan Sherwood Alaska Railroad Photographs

COLLECTION NUMBER: B1999.022

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1949-1950

Extent: 77 items

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Morgan B. Sherwood, Steve McCutcheon, K. Boswell

Administrative/Biographical History:

Morgan Bronson Sherwood was born Oct. 22, 1929 in Anchorage and spent the first 19 years of his life here, graduating from Anchorage High School in 1947. He worked for the Alaska Railroad during the summer and fall of 1949, and perhaps in 1950, as part of an evaluation survey team "sent to plot and evaluate every piece of ARR property from Seward to Fairbanks." His fellow workers included Steele Wotkyns, Roger Erickson, Marvin Trump, and party chief Norval Miller.¹

Sherwood earned his master's and doctorate degrees in history from the University of California at Berkeley. He held teaching positions at the University of Maryland, the University

¹ From author's caption for image .19 in accession file; see also Bernadine LeMay Prince, *The Alaska Railroad in Pictures, 1914-1964* (Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, 1964), Vol 2, pp. 766-800 for a description of Alaska Railroad activities during 1949-1950, when these photos were taken. From 1946-1952, over \$70 million in improvements were made to the railroad, which was well-worn after heavy use during World War II. A summary of this rehabilitation effort is in Prince, Vol. 2, pp. 816-818.

of Cincinnati and the University of California Davis, the latter from 1965 to 1991, when he retired. While at U.C. Davis, he helped edit the journal *Agricultural History* for many years, served as editorial adviser to half a dozen scholarly journals and book publishers and was a member of or an advisory board appointee to a number of organizations devoted to the American West and environmental history.

Sherwood was the author of several books about Alaska and its history including *Exploration of Alaska, 1865-1900*, which was selected for *The Alaska 67: A Guide to Alaska's Best History Books* by the Alaska Historical Society in 2006. He also wrote *Big Game in Alaska: A History of Wildlife and People*, and *The Cook Inlet Collection: Two Hundred Years of Selected Alaskan History*. He was an editorial advisor for *Alaska Journal* and *Alaska History*. In 1983, he received an honorary degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. In addition to his research in American science and technology, the American West and Alaska, and environmental history, he maintained a lifelong interest in magic and quackery and their histories. Sherwood and his wife Jeanie built a cabin at Halibut Cove across Kachemak Bay from Homer and for three decades, spent their summers there. Morgan Sherwood died of cancer in Davis, California, on October 31, 2000 and at his request, his ashes were distributed over Kachemak Bay.²

Scope and Content Description:

The collection consists of 77 35mm color slides. Most images are of scenes along the railroad between Seward and Fairbanks, many featuring the survey crew. There are also generic images of Alaskan flora and fauna, some taken by other photographers, implying that the collection may have been used for a slide talk about Alaska. All but a few images were taken during the summer and fall of 1949.

Notable images include female Native section gang workers near Cantwell, the water tank and railroad yard at Matanuska Junction, and the Jonesville coal mine.

Arrangement: Collection arranged by donor, generally from south to north along the Alaska Railroad.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use.

² *Anchorage Daily News*, November 7, 2000, B7;

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/inmemoriam/MorgonBronsonSherwood.htm>, accessed August 23, 2012.

Physical Access: Items in good condition.

Technical Access: Light box or projector may be used to view slides.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

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Preferred Citation:

Morgan Sherwood Alaska Railroad Photographs, Anchorage Museum, B1999.022

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

Morgan Sherwood donated the collection to the Museum in October 1999.

Processing Notes

Forty-four scenic views and sixteen copies of published photos were discarded at the time of processing.

RELATED MATERIALS

B1995.031, Morgan Sherwood Gold Rush Ephemera Collection

B1970.062, Hugh Jones Collection [female section gang workers at Cantwell]

B1979.002, Alaska Railroad Collection

SUBJECTS

Alaska Railroad

Jonesville Coal Mine

Railroad workers—Alaska

Coal mines and mining—Alaska

Railroad speeders

Nenana (Steamboat)

Porcupines

Black bears

Dall sheep

Marmots

Fishwheels

Dredges

Seward (Alaska)
Seward Highway (Alaska)
Lawing (Alaska)
Bartlett Glacier (Alaska)
Spencer Glacier (Alaska)
Portage (Alaska)
Portage Glacier (Alaska)
Passage Canal (Alaska)
Whittier (Alaska)
Billings Glacier (Alaska)
Anchorage (Alaska)
Matanuska (Alaska)
Palmer (Alaska)
Glenn Highway (Alaska)
Curry (Alaska)
Mount McKinley National Park (Alaska)
Kantishna (Alaska)

Detailed Description of the Collection:

- .1—Seward, from Poindexter's Point
- .2—Seward, Mount Marathon
- .3—Seward, From atop Mt. Marathon
- .4—Seward, Army buildings
- .5—Southern end, Seward Highway, "Road to Gabe's," a bar
- .6—Porcupine [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .7—Kenai Peninsula, Snow River
- .8—Violets
- .9—Kenai Lake
- .10—Alaska Nellie's (Lawing) on Kenai Lake
- .11—Outbuildings on Kenai Lake
- .12—Trail Lake
- .13—Peasant's house, dog belonged to crew chief Cyrus Savage [Alaska Railroad speeder towing small flat car with doghouse]³
- .14—Wild iris [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .15—Wild forget-me-nots
- .16—Evaluation team, Kenai Peninsula [on bridge, near Seward?]
- .17—Old Loop in winter
- .18—"Toby" at Tunnel Station [black bear]⁴

³ For details about the dog and his owner, see letter from Morgan Sherwood to Diane Brenner, November 3, 1999, in the accession file.

⁴ See Prince, Vol 2, p. 785 for two more photos of Toby at Tunnel.

- .19—1949 evaluation team near Spencer Glacier: Steele Wotkyns, Roger Erickson, Morgan Sherwood, Martin Trump
- .20—Martin Trump near the face of Bartlett Glacier
- .21—At meridian moraine, Bartlett Glacier
- .22—Beer break at Spencer Glacier: Ken Cannon, Norval Miller, M. Sherwood (above), Martin Trump (reclining), Steele Wotkyns
- .23—On the way back from Spencer Glacier [three figures on top of distant rocky hill]
- .24—Track and clouds
- .25—Wild columbine
- .26—Portage Junction [diesel locomotive in background]
- .27—Into the bowels of the earth [evaluation team sitting on speeder, approaching railroad tunnel]
- .28—Portage Glacier and Lake [with railroad bridge in foreground]
- .29—Passage Canal [with Billings Glacier]
- .30—Whittier and Billings Glacier
- .31—Air-view Anchorage [looking east, from over Bootlegger's Cove. Note Holy Family Cathedral, under construction; Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .32—Fourth and C, Drunkard's End, Anchorage [Fourth Avenue bars; Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .33—Providence Hospital [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .34—Alaska Railroad water tower at Matanuska Junction
- .35—Palmer
- .36—Barn, silo and house, Matanuska Valley
- .37—Matanuska River east of Palmer
- .38—Cabin near Moose Creek
- .39—Jonesville Coal Mine
- .40—Glenn Highway, near Jonesville
- .41—Kashwitna River Bridge (mainline)
- .42—Curry Hotel and Curry Station from across the Susitna River
- .43—Norval R. Miller and survey instrument on Indian River
- .44—Chulitna River south of Colorado Station
- .45—California poppies along track near Colorado Station
- .46—Hurricane Gulch Bridge
- .47—Track north of Broad Pass Station
- .48—Blueberries thrive in Broad Pass [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .49—Double rainbow in Broad Pass
- .50—Part of crew on speeder at Summit, Roger Erickson [holding survey rod], Norval Miller, M. Sherwood
- .51—Mr. Plummer and Sherwood cleaning grayling at Broad Pass, 1950

- .52—Telling bear stories on Nenana River north of Cantwell Station, Mike Nelson (sitting), M. Sherwood, James A. Morrison, Resident Engineer, unknown, unknown white shirt, R. Jensen, unknown sitting, Albert Long with arms up-stretched telling bear story, R. Erickson⁵
- .53—Fireweed, north of Cantwell Station
- .54—Section crew, Cantwell.⁶ ARR women’s section crew. Moran Sherwood, photographer. Ca. 1949 [four Ahtna women with two men in the background working on railroad tracks]
- .55—Wild rose [K. Boswell photo]
- .56—Wild Alaska cotton [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .57—Mt. McKinley Park Hotel
- .58—Polychrome Pass, Mt. McKinley Park road
- .59—Toklat grizzly bears [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .60—Fish and people at Wonder Lake & Mt. McKinley: unknown, unknown, Wilma Morrison, Albert Long, Johnny Busia, ca. 1949
- .61—Shovel monument, McKinley Park valley
- .62—Johnny Busia with dogs in front of cabin, Kantishna
- .63—Johnny Busia’s cable ferry, Kantishna
- .64—“Denali” from the Park [Mt. McKinley]
- .65—Nenana River Canyon, between McKinley Park Station and Healy
- .66—New bridge under construction at Mile 350.3 (left, R. Erickson)
- .67—Ram & wife [Dall sheep; Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .68—Hoary marmot [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .69—Suntrana Station and Healy River Coal Mine (now Usibelli)
- .70—Fishwheel on the Tanana River
- .71—Nenana Station on Tanana River. Steamer *Nenana*
- .72—Fox (Steve McCutcheon photo)
- .73—Downtown Fairbanks [Lacey Street]
- .74—Gold dredge [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .75—Ptarmigan [Steve McCutcheon photo]
- .76—Arc of the midnight sun [K. Boswell photo]
- .77—An hour’s catch [of fish] at Bear Lake with Roger Erickson (left) and Sherwood (right)

Guide written: January 31, 2013

Guide updated: January 13, 2023

⁵ Information about Albert Long is in a letter from Morgan Sherwood to Diane Brenner, November 3, 1999, in the accession file.

⁶ Women from Cantwell worked on the railroad after World War II—between 1945 and 1950—when military railroad personnel left the railroad and there was a shortage of men. These women included Alice Norton, Grace Secondchief, Yaddy and Helen Stickivan, and Olga and Valdez Tyrone. (Prince, Vol. 2, pp. 694-695 and 754.)