

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center
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Guide prepared by: Amy Valentine, Archivist

TITLE: Nan Elliot Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2019.018

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1973-1992

Extent: 1 folder

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Nan Elliot

Administrative/Biographical History:

The following biography came from the Alaska Conservation Foundation website on May 21, 2025:

By profession, Nan is a journalist, writer, and filmmaker. By nature, she is an adventurer. Like many Alaskans, she has worn “a lot of different hats.”

Nan has worked as a reporter for daily newspapers, staff to the governor of Alaska, writer for the National Park Service, field researcher/writer for a Presidential Commission under President Jimmy Carter, and assistant professor for a scientific research branch of the University of Alaska. She has been down in the coal mines of Appalachia; directed film crews onboard Japanese fishing boats in the Bering Sea; lectured on cruise ships sailing the Inside Passage of Alaska; mushed dogs down the Iditarod Trail; [...] and produced award-winning television and radio programs on the history, fisheries, and science of Alaska. For two winters, Nan was a filmmaker/photographer for one of Alaska’s beloved characters, Joe Redington, Sr., on his “Iditarod Challenge Expeditions,” traveling 1,200 miles by dog team across Alaska along the Iditarod Trail.

Nan first came to Alaska in 1973 for a summer job to teach cold-water swimming in Yup'ik [...] villages along the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers—and she fell in love with the people and the country. Nan is a graduate of Williams College and the University of California, Berkeley.¹

Scope and Content Description:

The collection will span Nan Elliot's career in Alaska, beginning in 1973 with swimming projects in the Yukon-Kuskokwim to her work for the Anchorage Times, Anchorage Daily News, National Geographic, the Alaska Task Force for the National Park Service, Lake Clark National Park, The Alaska Public Forum (Office of the Governor under Jay Hammond), and Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center (AEIDC) – University of Alaska. It will also cover work in Southeast Alaska as a naturalist on cruise ships, as filmmaker for the University of Alaska, and as an outdoor adventurer, highlighting, people, place, everyday life (and humor) all over Alaska.

As of May 2025, the collection consists of 15 photographic prints, one promotional print, and one article written by Nan. Possible addendums expected to include photographs, slides, prints, proof sheets, negatives, videos, equipment, ephemera, and documents.

Arrangement: Collection arranged by format.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

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

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

The Anchorage Museum is the owner of the materials and makes available reproductions for research, publication, and other uses. Written permission must be obtained from the Anchorage Museum before any reproduction use and all photos must be credited to the photographer and collection. The Anchorage Museum does not necessarily hold copyright to all of the materials in the collections. In some cases, permission for use may require seeking additional authorization from the copyright owners. Photographs by Nan Elliot may not be used for political or commercial purposes unless granted permission from the donor.

Preferred Citation: [photographer], Nan Elliot Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2019.18

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

¹ "Board of Trustees: Nan Elliot, Secretary." *Alaska Conservation Foundation*, <https://alaskaconservation.org/about/people/board-directors/>. Accessed 21 May 2025.

Acquisition and Appraisal Information
Collection donated by Nan Elliot October 24, 2019.

RELATED MATERIALS

B2006.023 Joe Redington Sr. Family Collection

B2015.001 Anchorage Newspaper Photographs

B2021.007 Brian and Sharon Davies Collection

I'd Swap My Old Skidoo for You: A Portrait of Characters on the Last Frontier by Nan Elliot, Call # CT222 .E45 1989

SUBJECTS

Anchorage Times

Artists

Authors

Bird Creek (Anchorage, Alaska)

Boats and boating

Elliot, Nan

Hubbard Glacier (Alaska)

Iditarod Sled Dog Race

Juneau / Dzánti K'ihéeni (Alaska)

Nome / Sitnasuaq (Alaska)

Palmer (Alaska)

Restaurants

Soldotna (Alaska)

Winter sports

Detailed Description of the Collection

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.1 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1988. “Fast Eddie” Fortier. Edward J. Fortier, last living spy from WWII in AK. [Portrait, featured in October 1990 Alaska magazine]

.2 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1980. “Commander” John H. Hale. Palmer, AK. State fairgrounds. Homesteader, Nancy Lake, 1947. Hale former director of State Fair, City Manager of Aniak, Mat-Su Boro Manager.

.3 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1988. Joan Daniels at her cabin on Bird Creek “Tapping Birch Trees” [Joan holding buckets]

.4 – [on back:] Bill Spear – Juneau artist and pin designer. Warm Springs Bay, Baranof Island. 9-4 b.) ...Dressed in his annual skunk cabbage costume which he describes as “unwearable art.” Credit: © Nan Elliot. Pg. 92. In honor of Fred Bahovec’s 99th Birthday... Costume Parade.

.5 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1987. Teddy Pedersen. Bear Cove, Kachemak Bay. Once a cabin boy in the last steam whaler in the Arctic. In the lighthouse service in Aleutians. [Teddy standing in rowboat]

.6 – [on back:] Peter McKay, Juneau. 4a) The “Old Salt” misjudges the tides and gets caught high and dry in Gastineau Channel. (Not using) Credit: © Nan Elliot. *Peter rowed hundreds of

miles thru Alaska waters. He rowed from Seattle to Juneau on his first trip to Alaska. [Peter pulling sailboat through shallow waters]

.7 – [on back:] Channel Bowl Café, Juneau. 12-3. Teeny Metcalfe (L) and Laurie Berg (proprietor) (R) Credit: © Nan Elliot, 1988. From Book: “I’d Swap My Old Skidoo For You” pg. 131 [Two people seated at table]

.8 – [on back:] 1973. Frank Mullen, Jr. Bear Cove, Kachemak Bay. Fisherman / “Homestead Kid” [Frank holding hatchet, next to log]

.9 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1975. Log-cabin builder / pilot. Jimmy Hitchcock. Palmer, Alaska. [Jimmy playing guitar]

.10 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot, 1975. “Old-Time Newsroom,” set-up at The Orange Door, 723 W. 5th Ave. Pat Dougherty (L), Mike Kennedy (R). *At the time, both Mike and Pat lived at The Orange Door and worked for The Anchorage Times, as I did. They worked on the Sports Desk. The back-shop made up old-time headlines. I did a series of these photos for Sam Kimura’s photography class at UAA. Kennedy went on to work for the Los Angeles Times and was bureau chief in Beirut, Lebanon. Pat became managing editor of ADN.

.11 – [on back:] Chapter: First Homesteading Family in Soldotna. Peggy (L) and Marge Mullen on the walkway of their restaurant “The Four Seasons” (not using) © Nan Elliot, 1988. For the Book: “I’d Swap My Old Skidoo For You”: A Portrait of characters on the last Frontier By Nan Elliot. [Peggy holding wine bottle and with her arm draped around Marge who holds a basket of bread]

.12 – [on back:] In Southeastern Waters – Hubbard Glacier. “The Cunard” Ship. 1986 – “Sagafjord” (?) © Nan Elliot. I worked as naturalist on the Explorer Starship, sailing Inside Passage. This shot ran with a story I wrote for the Sunday Magazine of the Anchorage Daily News.

.13 – [on back:] Mary Kemppel, center, and her daughters Denali and Nina. Ski for Women, 1998, Kincaid Park. © Nan Elliot. Nina on U.S. Olympic X-C team.

.14 – [on back:] © Nan Elliot. Nome, Alaska 1993. Under the Burl Arch. Joe Redington, Sr.’s “Iditarod Challenge” Members of the Expedition from Knik to Nome. L to R: Dario Martinez, Joan Daniels, Joe Redington, Sr., Dave Olson, Max Hall, Nan Elliot, Bryan Gabbard, Cathy Rasmuson, Monty Hotchkiss, Joan Chitea, Brian Davies, Dave Nitch

.15 – 1992 – Bird Creek, Alaska. Janis Fleischman, Jill Fredston, and Jerry Lewanski © Nan Elliot [on back:] Jill is an avalanche expert and author of several books, including “Rowing to Latitude.” Janis, former math teacher, co-founder and owner of Fire Island Bakery. Jerry, former chief ranger, Chugach State Park; co-founder / owner, Fire Island Bakery.

Authored Materials

- Promotional material for *Alaska Best Places: Restaurants, Lodgings, and Adventure* publication, edited by Nan Elliot.
- Elliot, Nan. “‘Fast Eddie’ Fortier: Alaska’s Last Living Spy.” *Alaska magazine*, Oct. 1990, pp. 88.

Guide written: May 21, 2025