

REFERENCE CODE: AkAMH

REPOSITORY NAME:

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TITLE: M/V Health Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER: B2001.035

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Dates: 1950-1952

Extent: 44 items, 0.01 linear feet

Language and Scripts: The collection is in English.

Name of creator(s): Jeanne Schaver Boone

Administrative/Biographical History:

The *M/V Health* was a “floating clinic,” a marine unit of the Alaska Department of Health. The program was created to facilitate the battle against tuberculosis in Alaska after World War II. Tuberculosis was an urgent concern in Alaska at the time, particularly in Indigenous communities. The *M/V Health*, along with the *M/S Hygiene* and the riverboat *M/V Yukon Health*, were mobile health units that allowed medical professionals to treat rural Alaskans in their villages. The *Health* and *Hygiene* serviced the coastlines of Alaska, from Southeast Alaska to the Aleutian Islands and as far north as Point Hope, while the *Yukon Health* serviced the lower Yukon River. Villagers usually boarded small boats and rowed out to *M/V Health* for chest x-ray screenings, blood tests, health checks, vaccinations, treatment, health education, and dental care. At times when the weather was bad or villagers could not leave their homes, the medical staff made house calls. The medical staff also met with village councils to discuss how to care for sick members of the community after the ship left, particularly those diagnosed with active tuberculosis.

Jeanne Schaver was a public health nurse on the *M/V Health* from 1951-1952.

Scope and Content Description:

This collection consists of 28 black-and-white photographs, nurse reports, newsletters, and ephemera. The photographs primarily depict villages and villagers in coastal Alaska, particularly on the Alaskan Peninsula, the Aleutian Islands, St. Lawrence Island, and Norton Bay. Some photos of the villagers are taken in the ship's clinic. There are also some photos of the crew of the *M/V Health* and the ship itself. Nurse Reports from Jeanne Schaver include descriptions of locations, the communities, and the work performed.

Arrangement: Collection arranged by format by previous archivist.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS AND USE

Restrictions on Access: The collection is open for research use. Restricted items noted in the finding aid. Please contact ARC staff for details.

Physical Access: Original items in good condition.

Technical Access: No special equipment is needed to access the materials. Light box may be needed to view strip negative images.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

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Preferred Citation:

M/V Health Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2001.035

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition and Appraisal Information

This collection was found in collection at the Anchorage Museum on September 19, 2001. It is part of the original donation from Jeanne Schaver Boone in December 1991.

Processing Notes

One newspaper clipping photocopied and original discarded.

While updating the finding aid in June 2025, it was discovered that these materials were part of the original donation B1991.046. All collections connected with the original donation are noted in Related Materials.

Notes

The following items have been masked for sensitive and/or restricted content: .3, .4, .6, .9, .10, .11, .33, .34.

SUBJECTS

Schaver Boone, Jeanne
Blair, Hazel
Gordon, Marshall
Hittson, Jack
Gronning, Clarence
Wasilla Public Library
Health (Ship)
Board of Health (Alaska)
Public health—Alaska
Public health nursing—Alaska
Tuberculosis
Measles
Head Louse
Typhoid Fever
Immunization
Dentistry—Clinics
Medicine
Alutiiq/Sugpiaq
Inupiat
Unangan
Saint Lawrence Island Yupik
Yup'ik
Chevak (Alaska)
Savoonga (Alaska)
Saint Lawrence Island (Alaska)
Hooper Bay (Alaska)
Scammon Bay (Alaska)
Saint George (Alaska)
Saint Paul (Alaska)
Perryville (Alaska)
Kotzebue (Alaska)
Alitak (Alaska)
Kodiak Island (Alaska)
Chignik (Alaska)
Sand Point (Alaska)
Unga (Alaska)
Belkofski (Alaska)
King Cove (Alaska)
False Pass (Alaska)

Ikatan (Alaska)
Akutan (Alaska)
Gambell (Alaska)
Boxer Bay (Alaska)
Sledge Island (Alaska)
Nome / Sitnasuaq (Alaska)
Solomon (Alaska)
Rocky Point (Alaska)
Golovin Bay (Alaska)
Moses Point (Alaska)
Koyuk (Alaska)
Norton Sound (Alaska)
Shaktoolik (Alaska)
Stebbins (Alaska)
Unalakleet (Alaska)
Wasilla (Alaska)

RELATED MATERIALS

B1991.046 Jeanne Schaver Boone Slides
B2005.013 Clarence and Winona Gronning Collection
B2010.023 Margaret Lantis Collection
B2013.049 Katherine G. Kane Manuscript
B2015.019 Rhoda Edwards Collection
B2001.036 Martha Quimby Photographs
B1995.014 Eugene Tetinek Photographs (photos of M/V Yukon Health)
B1995.010 George E. Allen Collection (photos of M/S Hygiene)
1991.065.1-.3
Albrecht, Earl (vertical file)
Public Health Nurses (vertical file)
RC313.A63 F67 2005 *"Must We All Die?": Alaska's Enduring Struggle with Tuberculosis*
RA644.T7 M47 1998 *Alaska's Search for a Killer: A Seafaring Medical Adventure*
RA447.A4 A3 1954 *Fourteenth Annual Report 1953-1954*. Alaska Department of Health

Detailed Description of the Collection

Folder 1

Photographs

- .1 – [The *M/V Health* near land. At least six individuals stand on deck.]
- .2 – "X-Ray Lab Technician Marshall Gordon" [One individual identified as Lab technician Marshall Gordon facilitates a chest x-ray on a youth. One adult individual watches from the side.]
- .3 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]
- .4 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]

- .5 – “M/V Health Crew.” [twelve individuals pose for a picture on the ship’s deck. Black dog runs by in the foreground.]
- .6 – [Restricted due to sensitive content] “Dr. Hazel Blair.”
- .7 – “Reception – M/V Health.” [One individual at reception on *M/V Health* greets youth and caregiver.]
- .8 – [Crew of the M/V Health. Same group as .5 with an additional two individuals, total fourteen, pose for a picture on the deck of *M/V Health*. Black dog is now held by an individual in the bottom-left.]
- .9 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]
- .10 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]
- .11 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]
- .12 – “Reception Room. *M/V Health*.” [Group of at least nine Indigenous individuals, adults and youth sit in a clinic reception area on the *M/V Health*. Reception desk in the right of the photograph, next to hanging coats.]
- .13 – “Savoonga.” [Unidentified smiling youth with side braids and a parka.]
- .14 – “Savoonga.” [One individual, possibly identified as Mabel Toolie, wearing a floral print fabric parka.]
- .15 – [Close-up of youth wearing parka on the deck of *M/V Health*. One individual partially out of frame holds the youth upright from behind.]
- .16 – “St. Lawrence Is.” [At least nineteen individuals stand in line on the beach on St. Lawrence Island.]
- .17 – “St. Lawrence Is.” [Seven youth stand on a beach wearing parkas on St. Lawrence Island.]
- .18 – “Hooper Bay.” [One youth stands on a hill carrying a toy or a blanket. On shore below is a fishing boat and a kayak in Hooper Bay.]
- .19 – “Leaving the Health.” [Group of adults and youth climb into a small boat to leave the *M/V Health*.]
- .20 – [Unidentified youth in small boat with rigging and a kettle. Picture taken from above.]
- .21 – [At least three adult individuals and three youth stand outside of wooden structure in village. Fish drying.]
- .22 – “Scammon Bay.” [View of the beach at Scammon Bay. Kayaks and canoes elevated off the sand. Small building on the left. Fish drying on a rack. A white ship can be seen offshore.]
- .23 – [Unidentified individual stands next to house. Dog next to house.]
- .24 – [Unidentified individual wearing glasses and parka.]
- .25 – “At Fish Camp.” [At least five unidentified individuals stand outside of fish camp.]
- .26 – “St. Lawrence Is.” [Four individuals stand next to a boat in the snow.]
- .27 – “Wasilla Public Library. Wasilla, Alaska.” [Postcard of Wasilla Public Library, log cabin.]
- .28 – [Three youth individuals sit on steps wearing dresses.]

Folder 2

Reports, newsletters, ephemera

.29 – Clipping. “M.V. Health Sets Sail for Far North Again.” No date. [Lists crew of M/V Health, probably 1952. Dr. Hazel Blair, physician in charge; Jeanne Schaver, public health nurse; Dr. J. H. Hittson, dentist; Mrs. Hittson, dental technician; Marshall Gordon, x-ray technician; Clarence Gronning, captain; Mrs. Gronning, clerk for medical staff; Charlie Larson, first mate; Joe Akers, chief engineer; Tommy Hopper, boatswain; Patrick Ermaloff, deck hand; Jessie Curtis Ainsworth, cook; Wilma Akers, assistant steward.]

.30 – Typescript. “Narrative Report.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. Dated June 1951. [Locations: St. George., St. Paul, and Scammon Bay. Key Words: Skin infections, x-rays, tuberculosis infection, caregivers sick.]

.31 – Typescript. “Narrative Report, July 1951.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. [Location(s): Hooper Bay, Chevak (spelled Chedvak). Key Words: Tuberculosis (area had a 23% infection rate), boat travel at high tides, fish camp.]

.32 – Typescript. “Nurse’s Narrative Report, March 1952.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. [Location(s): Alitak, Kodiak (spelled Kodiak) Island, Chignik. Key Words: Public health, health talks.]

.33 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]

.34 – [Restricted due to sensitive content]

.35 – Typescript. “Nurse’s Monthly Narrative, June 1952.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. 2 pages. [Location(s): Ikatan, False Pass, Akutan, Savoonga, Gambell. Key Words: Whaling station, coaling station, clinic, head lice, x-ray, tuberculosis, DDT, home visits.]

.36 – Typescript. “Nurse’s Narrative Report, July 1952.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. [Location(s): Gambell, Boxer Bay, Sledge Island, Nome, Savoonga, Solomon, Rocky Point, Golovin Bay. Key Words: x-ray, blood typing, skin boat, gold mining.]

.37 – Correspondence. Manuscript letter to Jeanne Schaver, signed “HB.” Dated “Tues. A.M.” [Instructions for head lice treatment in homes. Key words: delousing, head lice, DDT, nits.]

.38 – Typescript. “Nurse’s Narrative Report, August 1952.” Signed by Jeanne Schaver. 2 pages. [Location(s): Golovin, Rocky Point, Moses Point, Koyuk, Norton Sound, St. Michael, Shaktoolik, Stebbins, Unalakleet. Key Words: Measles, tuberculosis, children’s health, x-rays, dental care, immune globulin, malnourishment.]

.39 – Plan. “Rest of the crew live above, back of the pilot house. Engine room and storage are below us.” [Manuscript sketch of floorplan of M/V Heath.]

.40 – Newsletter. “The Daily Bulletin, St. George Island, Alaska, Monday, June 11, 1951.” [Article on the arrival of *M/V Health* on June 10th, x-rays available on the ship, no dentist aboard.]

.41 – Newsletter. “Perryville Star, 4/3/52.” [*M/V Health* arrived 4/2/1952, typhoid immunizations, blood tests, Health education, health exams.]

.42 – Newspaper. “The Mukluk Telegraph, Kotzebue, Alaska, February 28, 1952, Vol. 4, no. 1.” [National and local news. Airplane crash killed pilot Reggie Joule, his wife, and Bill Porter. Village news from: Koyuk, Teller, Selawik, Koyukuk, Shishmaref, Point Lay, and Espenberg.]

.43 – Newsletter. “Alaska’s Health, Juneau, Alaska, July-August, 1950, Vol. 8, nos. 7 and 8.” [Key topics covered: Alaska food resource study completed in twelve geographical divisions of Alaska, lost Indigenous plant/health knowledge, Vitamin C sources, mental health, public health nurse activities, typhoid fever epidemic, BCG tuberculosis immunizations.]

.44 – Newsletter. “Alaska’s Health, Juneau, Alaska, June 1951, Vol. 9, no. 6.” [Key topics covered: *M/V Health*, *M/V Yukon Health*, and *M/S Hygiene*; Seward Sanatorium, tuberculosis treatments, measles outbreak, typhoid immunizations, orthopedic clinics to remote villages, Alaska plant poisonous/beneficial guide, Influenza, public health nurse activities, tuberculin testing, BCG tuberculosis vaccinations, polio.]

Guide Updated: June 16, 2025