



HISTORIC KETCHIKAN INC. ILLUSTRATION

# HERITAGE

- ❖ Downtown ❖ Creek Street
- ❖ Newtown-Hopkins Alley
- ❖ Stedman-Thomas

Historic neighborhoods—three now accorded national recognition—express a proud history of enterprise, persistence and preservation

**K**etchikan's heritage involves a fascinating indigenous culture as well as the legacies of the pioneers who came North to Alaska. These features inspire community pride and provide unique appeal for visitors.

Ketchikan has the greatest number of historic properties of any community in Alaska and we treasure that legacy. Private property owners, local governments and nonprofits have embraced heritage values as they renewed, renovated or repurposed historic structures.

Historic Ketchikan Inc. has been integral in maintaining focus on heritage. The nonprofit has led many efforts to protect and preserve Ketchikan's unique character: planning and developing the waterfront promenade; printing books, posters and seven editions of *Our Town*; rescuing a historic rural school house and working to reclaim Yates Hospital on Mission Street; installing interpretive kiosks and signage downtown; providing historical consultation; and lobbying vigorously to carry forward

Ketchikan's precious past.

**KETCHIKAN  
HAS THE GREATEST  
NUMBER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
OF ANY COMMUNITY IN ALASKA & NOW  
CLAIMS THE THIRD HISTORIC DISTRICT  
RECOGNIZED BY FEDERAL AUTHORITIES**

**RICHES OF FISH, MINERALS & TIMBER  
PROPELLED OUR EARLY GROWTH.**

In late 2017, HKI celebrated the National Park Service's designation of the Downtown Historic District, founded on the nonprofit's historic properties survey and nomination.

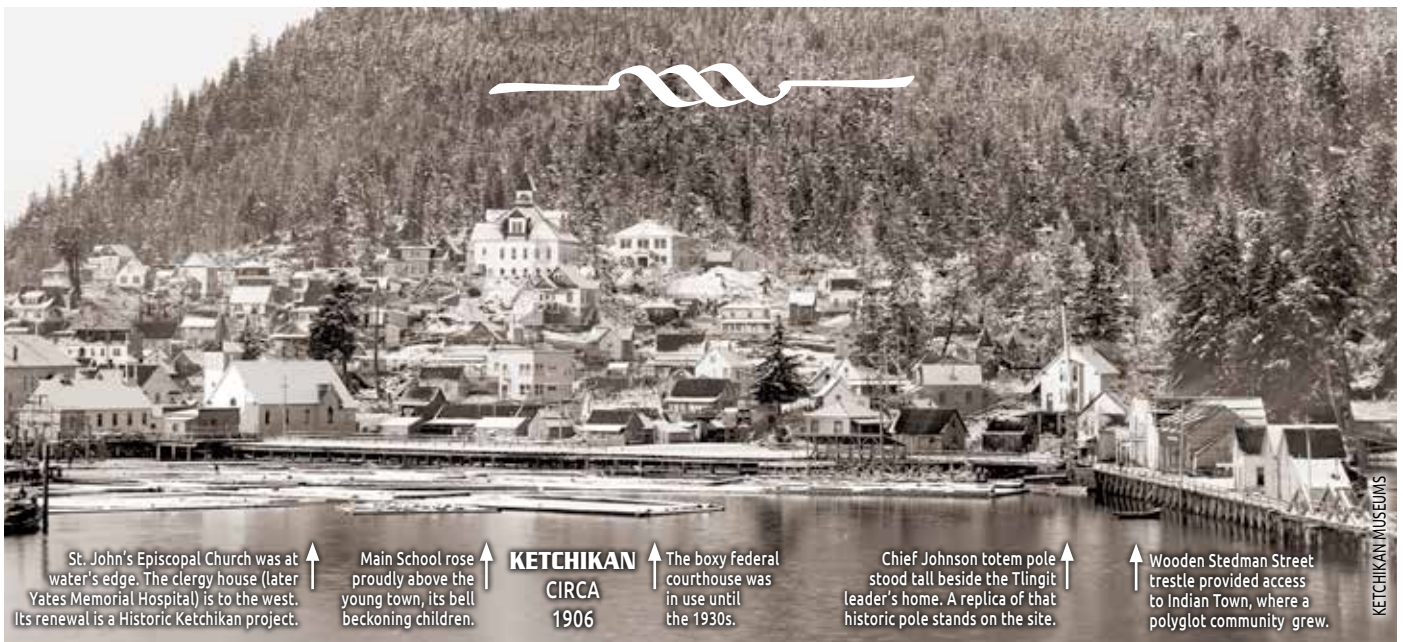
The next project of assessment and preservation is the Newtown and Hopkins Alley neighborhood, where Ketchikan expanded in the second decade of the 20th century along with the fishing industry.

**Canneries and marine** service businesses crowded the water side of Water Street. Enterprises from laundries to saloons built at water's edge or on sturdy pilings. The U.S. Lighthouse Service based its operations here. Craftsman homes settled on rocky slopes above Newtown.

Private development at Berth 4 and small-scale projects on the upland side of Water Street provide positive indicators that this neighborhood is poised for renewal.

The Hopkins Alley Revitalization Project has a goal of bringing property owners, community planners and municipal government into an alliance to nurture investment and preserve an indispensable heritage.

**INCREASINGLY VALUABLE IS A  
HERITAGE EXPRESSED  
IN ARCHITECTURE,  
LIFESTYLES &  
A UNIQUE  
STORY.**



↑ St. John's Episcopal Church was at water's edge. The clergy house (later Yates Memorial Hospital) is to the west. Its renewal is a Historic Ketchikan project.

↑ Main School rose proudly above the young town, its bell beckoning children.

**KETCHIKAN**  
CIRCA  
1906

↑ The boxy federal courthouse was in use until the 1930s.

↑ Chief Johnson totem pole stood tall beside the Tlingit leader's home. A replica of that historic pole stands on the site.

↑ Wooden Stedman Street trestle provided access to Indian Town, where a polyglot community grew.

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

# downtown national historic district

**The First City's foundation** was the rickety and quickly constructed piers that held up a saltery and then a cannery. But it wasn't long until a booming young town had homes and a church and stores—some on timber pilings on tidelands, others pushing back the forest and settling on solid ground.

In just the years from 1887 to 1900, the population increased from 40 to about 800 as mining and salmon processing threw the economy into high gear. Two large stores opened, professionals moved in and residents constructed plank walkways above muddy footpaths. Fine hotels catered to business travelers, fortune-seekers and newcomers awaiting other homes; lesser lodgings provided waystations for miners, fishermen and other working people. In the early 1900s, three movie theaters ran at one time in the heart of downtown. Prosperous merchants brought up automobiles to rattle the board streets.

Far-sighted entrepreneurs put up concrete, multi-story buildings in the commercial core. A modern Main School, surmounted by a tall cupola, looked down over the turrets of the Stedman and Revilla Hotels, and the black-belching stacks of steamships.

**Fish traps'** industrial-scale harvesting of salmon runs enabled Ketchikan to take its nickname, "Canned Salmon Capital of the World." Ketchikan Spruce Mills, ➔

## FULL STEAM AHEAD

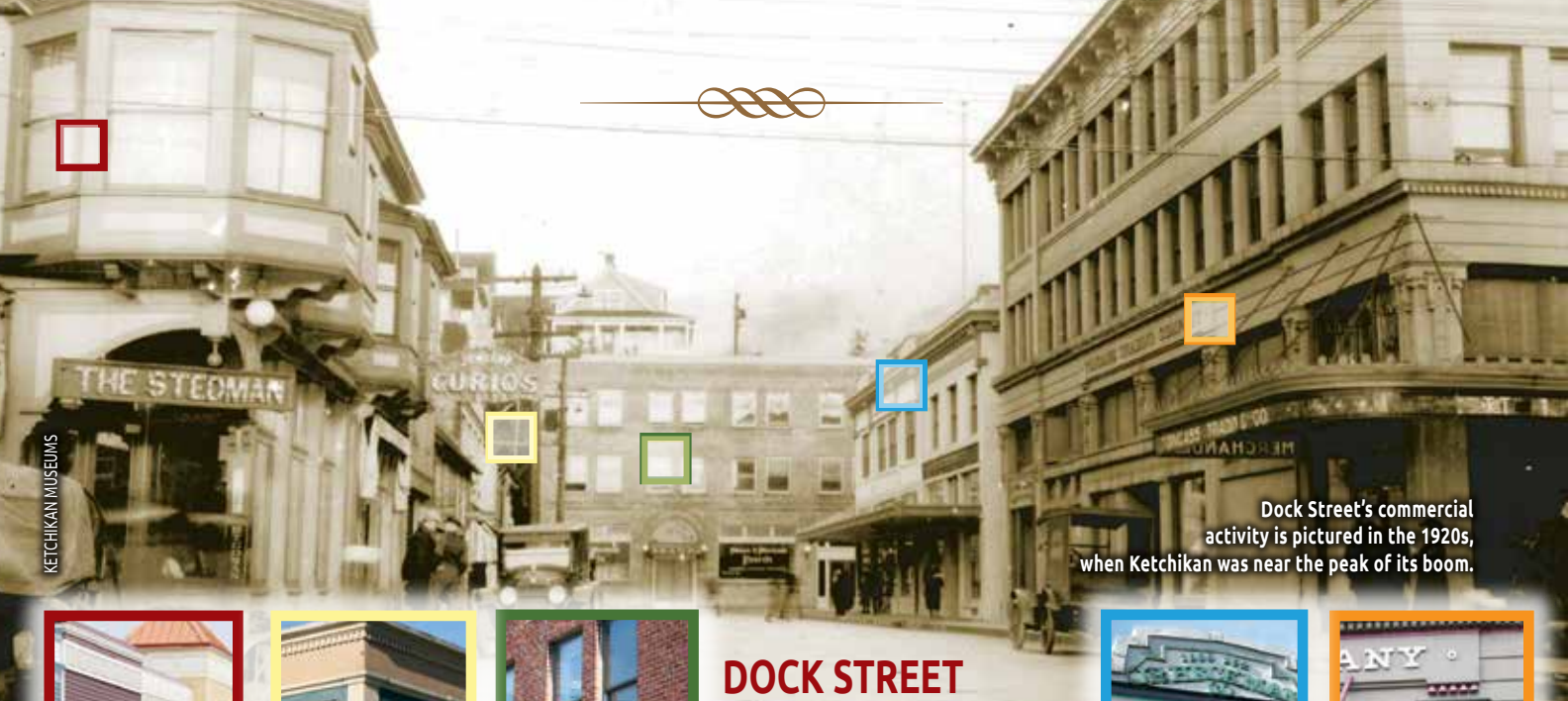


KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

Barely a decade after incorporation, Ketchikan embodied the promise and prosperity of the Alaskan frontier. At Front and Market (now Mission), an excited crowd gathered beside the SS Mariposa. The steamship brought freight and visitors and embarked with Seattle-bound passengers and those barrels of salted salmon. A second steamship (seen at left) waited for its turn at the dock. In the background of this 1912 photo, the new neighborhood aptly called New Town spreads up the hillside.







KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

Dock Street's commercial activity is pictured in the 1920s, when Ketchikan was near the peak of its boom.



## DOCK STREET

Today's streetscape shares many features with its historical face



[1] Historic Stedman Hotel was altered in the 1960s, its corner turret removed; a project in 2011 placed a tower on the building and re-established historical scale and design to the Front and Dock street faces. [2] First National Bank is now First Bank and retains much of the more than century-old look of the original. [3] Miners and Merchants Bank is Ketchikan's best expression of the mason's craft and retains many

original features; the handsome structure houses retail at street level, offices and clinics above. [4] The third, concrete iteration of the Heckman Building put up by a pioneer merchant remains in mixed commercial use. [5] Tongass Trading Co. was founded in 1898 as a dockside merchant; its concrete building went up 15 years later across the street and remains in use for the company's retail operations.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

**Front Street** was the first paved street in the Territory of Alaska, in about 1923. The photo at left, made with paving in progress, looks toward the northwest. Buildings on the left would disappear in fires or street widening. The building at the head of the street would be razed before construction of the tunnel in 1954. Today's Front Street is a lively, colorful commercial area when summertime brings thousands of visitors by ships and airlines every day.



GREGG POPPEN

successor to Ketchikan Power Co., processed timber on a massive pier south of today's Mill Street. Most of the juice for quick growth was supplied by privately owned Citizens Light, Power and Water; the city bought the business in the '30s and now uses CLP&W's concrete home as City Hall.

By 1930, the city population increased to about 3,800—the greatest population in Alaska. Downtown remained the mercantile and banking core of the city for decades and

was the hub for waterfront action at two long wharfs. Residential development spread into Newtown and the West End as Ketchikan became the city "three blocks wide and eight miles long."

Much of Ketchikan's heritage remains from those early times: more than half of buildings in the city center today were standing in the 1930s, when the First City was first in Alaska in many ways.



## LANDMARKS OF A DOWNTOWN WITH AN UP SIDE



### Downtown National Historic District

Designation of this district pays tribute to Ketchikan's heritage and can provide catalysts for historic preservation in individual properties.

Ketchikan now boasts three federally recognized historic districts; no other community in Alaska has more than one.

The city core's concentration of buildings from the early days draws increasing attention from both the private and public sectors—particularly important as more and more visitors tune in to the historical and cultural features of their travel destinations. It's called "heritage tourism" and Ketchikan is well-placed to take advantage.

Historic Ketchikan Inc. has provided leadership and technical expertise in this effort.

#### FRONT STREET

- 1 Knob Hill Tunnel (1954)
- 2 348 Masonic Temple (1947-51)
- 3 340 Reid Building (1937)
- 4 334 City Hall (1925)
- 5 Pioneer Way / Chief Kyan Way (early 1900s)
- 6 314 Pioneers Hall (1900)
- 7 320 Gilmore Hotel (1926)
- 8 312 Fo'c'sle Bar (ca. 1900)
- 9 300 Stedman Hotel (1906)
- 10 226 Tongass Trading Co. (1913)
- 11 314 Ingersoll Hotel (1924)
- 12 118-124 Pioneer Hotel (1926)
- 13 116 Front (Rainbird Bar) (1912)

#### MAIN STREET

- 14 335 Elks Lodge / Fireside (1951)
- 15 319 Fire Hall (1943)
- 16 331 First National Bank (1911)
- 17 213 J.R. Heckman Store
- 18 201-209 J.R. Heckman Store #3 (1912)
- 19 338 Red Men Hall (1924)
- 20 330 Christian Science Hall (1946)
- 21 306 Miners & Merchants Bank (1923)
- 22 100-106 Hardcastle Bldg. (ca. 1900, 1972)

#### DOCK STREET

- 23 435 Chico's Restaurant (c.1920)
- 24 309 Agnes Edmond House (1904)
- 25 501 Ketchikan Daily News (1925)
- 26 301 Bawden / Fosse Building (1908)

#### MISSION STREET

- 27 405 Coliseum Theater (1957)
- 28 411-413 Mission (1920)
- 29 423 Yates Memorial Hospital (1905)
- 30 503 St. John's Church (1903)
- 31 603-607 Mission (1919)
- 32 617-621 New Deal Bldg. (1930)
- 33 625-629 Mission (late 1920s)
- 34 633 Mission (circa 1920)
- 35 422 Bon Marche (1913)
- 36 316-320 Scanlon Gallery (1906)

#### MILL STREET

- 37 Betty King Alley (1900s)
- 38 Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1898)
- 39 Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902)

- 40 Dock Street Wharf (ca. 1915)
- 41 Ketchikan Wharf (1890s)
- 42 Heckman Wharf (early 1900s)
- 43 Spruce Mill (entrance) (1903)
- 44 Welcome Arch (1920s)
- 45 Historic stairways





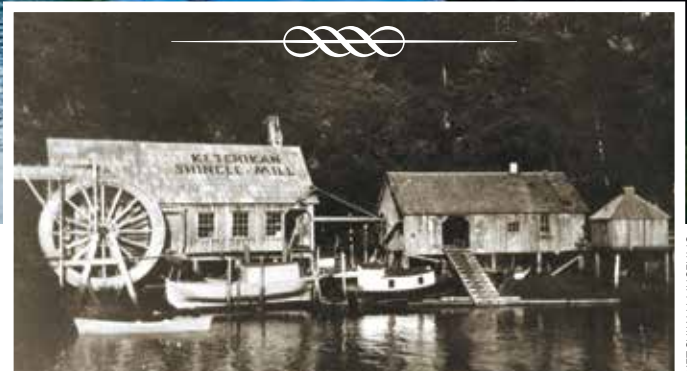
SANDY ROWAN

Paddle boarders float up Ketchikan Creek where a paddle wheel turned millworks a century ago. Creek Street has borne an amazing array of industry, iniquity and curiosity.

# creek street national historic district

## STREAM BANKS: AN ECONOMY CAPSULIZED IN A LIQUID ASSET

**D**evelopments along Creek Street since settlers arrived embody all the principal economic engines of Ketchikan's history. Entrepreneurs from down south established a rough townsite and salmon saltery near the creek mouth to establish the fishing industry. Infrastructure is represented in dammed creek water that, in the early 1900s, drove pioneers' small hydroelectric generator. Manufacturing is seen in a creekside cooperage that built barrels for salmon shippers. A mill operator built a long flume and spilled creek water over a 22-foot wheel, driving an apparatus that whacked shingles out of local logs—the timber industry. Even the mining industry is here, in the form of the Venetia Lode mine, struck into the hill above the creek. And in 1903, residents of the original townsite ordered prostitutes to the other side of the creek; so,



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

CREEK STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT WAS LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES IN 2014. LONG BEFORE, PROPERTY OWNERS ESTABLISHED A LOCAL HISTORIC OVERLAY & SET STANDARDS FOR MATERIALS & DESIGN IN RENOVATIONS & NEW CONSTRUCTION. RECLAIMED BUILDINGS HELP TO MAKE CREEK STREET ONE OF VISITORS' FAVORITE DESTINATIONS.

what you could call the—well, the *leisure travel* of miners, fishermen and loggers—constituted a visitor industry!

Tens of thousands of visitors now stroll the boardwalk of Creek Street in summer, attracted by the old district's



quaint architecture, appealing gift stores, eateries and artist-owned galleries. There are also opportunities to see salmon, eagles and sometimes harbor seals and otters. One of the brothels from red-light days, Dolly's House, is preserved as a museum of the half-century when milling and mining faded from the creek and, well, entertainment was preminent.

**There were only** about 30 platted lots along Creek Street, but their residents created scandal out of proportion to their numbers, in the forms of prostitution, gambling and liquor sales. Territorial Alaska's "bone dry law" in 1917 and federal Prohibition in 1920 only spun Creek Street's speakeasies and cathouses into cruising gear. About 20 brothels operated on the creek as Prohibition ended in 1933. Bootleg liquor from Canada and home brew from local stills fueled raucous behavior. Card games and drug use worsened a seamy scene.

Campaigns to clean up Creek Street came and went, but the town was somewhat ambivalent: Creek Street was unseemly, but the working girls were fairly discreet, limited by local custom as to when they

could shop in town or see a movie, etc.; they contributed to community causes; and not least, they brought men to town to spend money in legitimate businesses.

**A federal grand jury** in Juneau and a prosecutor went after brothel owners,

## “ KETCHIKAN ALASKA IS A TERRIBLE TOWN! IT IS VICE-RIDDEN AND CORRUPT.

ONE MIGHT EVEN GATHER THAT IT IS ABOUT THE WORST PLACE IN THE WORLD.

— **Forest J. Hunt** Territorial Senator from Ketchikan, quoted in the *Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle*, 1925

KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



Creek Street was all shanties, scanties and scandal in 1940.



The boardwalk of today passes buildings that date back a century; they house galleries, museums, shops and residences.

bootleggers and even taxi companies in the mid-1920s, but Creek Street's principal trades reflowered later. World War II closed down the street, but by the early '50s the reviving sin district worried the U.S. Coast Guard. Histories of the time say that the guard was instrumental in bringing American Social Hygiene Association investigators to the creek. Ketchikan's competing newspapers carried articles, letters and editorials on the cultural debate over whether to outlaw prostitution and rid us of allied vices.

**Twilight came in 1953-54** with a grand jury's indictment of the recently resigned police chief for operating a bawdy house and abetting bootleggers. A police captain was charged with malfeasance linked to the street. The city manager and district attorney were tarred. Brothel owners, rumrunners and cabbies were called to account. The business community was mindful that the red-light district—which had spawned scandal headlines in newspapers nationwide—might interfere with developing the new pulp mill at Ward Cove. So prostitution went underground.

Creek Street subsided to quiet and many buildings slumped into mossy disuse. But since the 1970s, new property owners have renovated creekside buildings and created a historic district that preserves some of the tone and design of the old area.



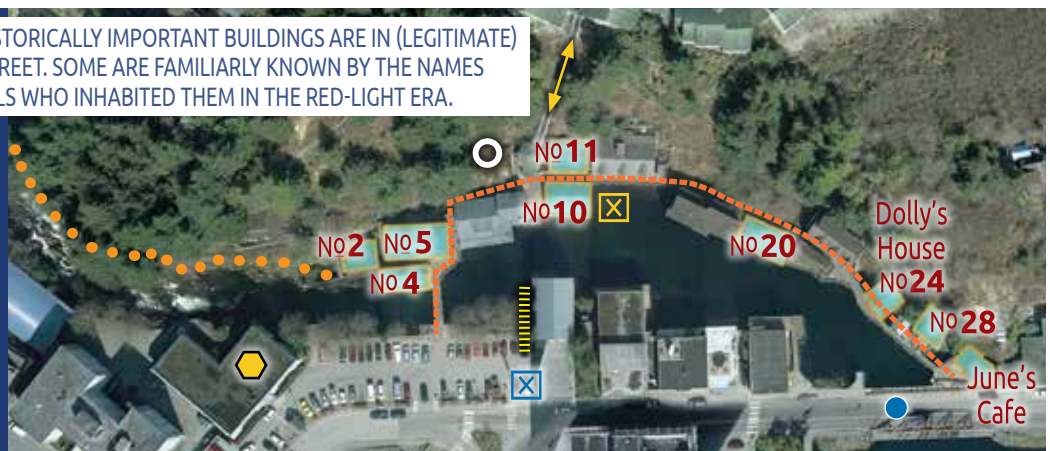
**Dolly Arthur**  
No. 24 Creek St.

A NUMBER OF HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS ARE IN (LEGITIMATE) USE ON CREEK STREET. SOME ARE FAMILIARLY KNOWN BY THE NAMES OF WORKING GIRLS WHO INHABITED THEM IN THE RED-LIGHT ERA.

### CREEK STREET

- No. 2 (ca.1920)
- No. 4 (ca.1920) Annie's House
- No. 5 (1903) Star House dance hall
- No. 10 (ca.1921)
- No. 11 (1927)
- No. 20 (ca.1920) Beatrice Greene
- No. 24 (1905) Dolly's House
- No. 28 (1902) Preacher's House
- #203 Stedman St. June's Cafe (1903)

- ☒ Chief Johnson totem pole (1902) and former village site
- Stedman Street Bridge (1944-45)



- Married Man's Trail (from early 1900s)
- Creek Street boardwalk & footbridge
- ☒ Site of Ketchikan Shingle Mill (1904)

- ↗ Funicular tram to Cape Fox Lodge; access to the civic center
- Venetia Lode mine claim

- Totem Way boardwalk
- Tongass Historical Museum



Masts of fishing boats are a floating forest in a stereo-optic card of Newtown from the 1920s. This was the heyday: canneries cantilevered over the water; fishermen's suppliers and machine shops crowded Water Street along with taverns and laundries. First Lutheran's spire spiked the boundary.

# historic newtown & HOPKINS ALLEY

THE EARLY TOWN SITE WAS PINCHED BETWEEN THE CREEK & A STONE KNOB.  
THAT ROCK OBSTACLE ALSO MADE A TICK MARK IN THE TIMELINE. SETTLERS ON THE  
OTHER SIDE OF KNOB HILL WERE IN "NEW TOWN." HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN THE MODERN  
NEWTOWN MIX WITH VIGOROUS COMMERCIAL GROWTH IN AN EXCITING TRANSITIONAL MIX.

**T**he new Newtown is capturing some of the energy that flows from Ketchikan's visitor industry. Businesses have moved into new buildings behind Berth 4. Private renovations along the upland side of Water Street coincide with a municipal project rebuilding the wooden viaduct that cuts through Hopkins Alley, a priceless historical area. A diversifying blend of retail, restaurant, tavern and service businesses is at home in historic buildings where owners have committed to maintaining authentic character through a design overlay. The Hopkins Alley Revitalization Project—a collaboration of Ketchikan Gateway Borough, the City of Ketchikan and Historic Ketchikan Inc.—aims to reclaim an area that was vital in Ketchikan's early days.

Pioneers who built homes and businesses in "New Town" in the first years of the 1900s were

on a rising tide of activity—literally, in the case of fishing boats that anchored here. Ketchikan was the Alaskan city, its population propelled by salmon salteries and canneries; gold rushes up north; mining on Prince of Wales Island; and the incipient territorial timber industry. Much of that growth made landfall beyond the rock knob. In time, a narrow wooden walkway on pilings linked the townsite and the new town. By the 1920s, big salmon canneries

and marine service businesses built out into the water, and the U.S. Lighthouse Service settled in. Advances in seafood refrigeration boosted market access for the halibut-fishing fleet, whose schooners tied up by the dozens. Fishing skippers built fine homes above the harbor. The area developed with bakeries; laundries; neon-sign makers; saloons (or speakeasies, during Prohibition); machine



Northern Machine Works, seen in 1913, conducted repairs for a big fleet of fishing boats. Service and retail business thrived in Newtown as homebuilders settled the hillside.



shops; general stores; and other retail businesses. A wider planked viaduct to downtown eased commerce by the late 1920s, when automobiles and trucks were common in Ketchikan—even with just a few miles of in-city streets and rough rural roadways leading north and south.

The piling-borne main route through Newtown was called Water Street. Hopkins Street angled off into a residential area and took on its appellation as Hopkins Alley later on.

The tunnel that pierces Knob Hill was finished in 1954. By that time, the so-called West End—north and west of Newtown—was flourishing as the pulp mill fired up at Ward Cove and timber became the leading economic influence in Ketchikan. Schoenbar Bypass now bisects Newtown as a link to Bear Valley.

## LANDMARKS OF NEWTOWN AND HOPKINS ALLEY



The building at 702 Water St. accommodated Hopkins Way's odd angle in 1912. The sharp vertex was later cut off. Coordination and planning for renewal of Hopkins Alley are under way, aiming to preserve a unique Ketchikan story.



Hopkins Alley is in transition. The wood viaduct was renewed in 2015. Borough planners coordinate revitalization efforts, contracting with Historic Ketchikan Inc for implementation.

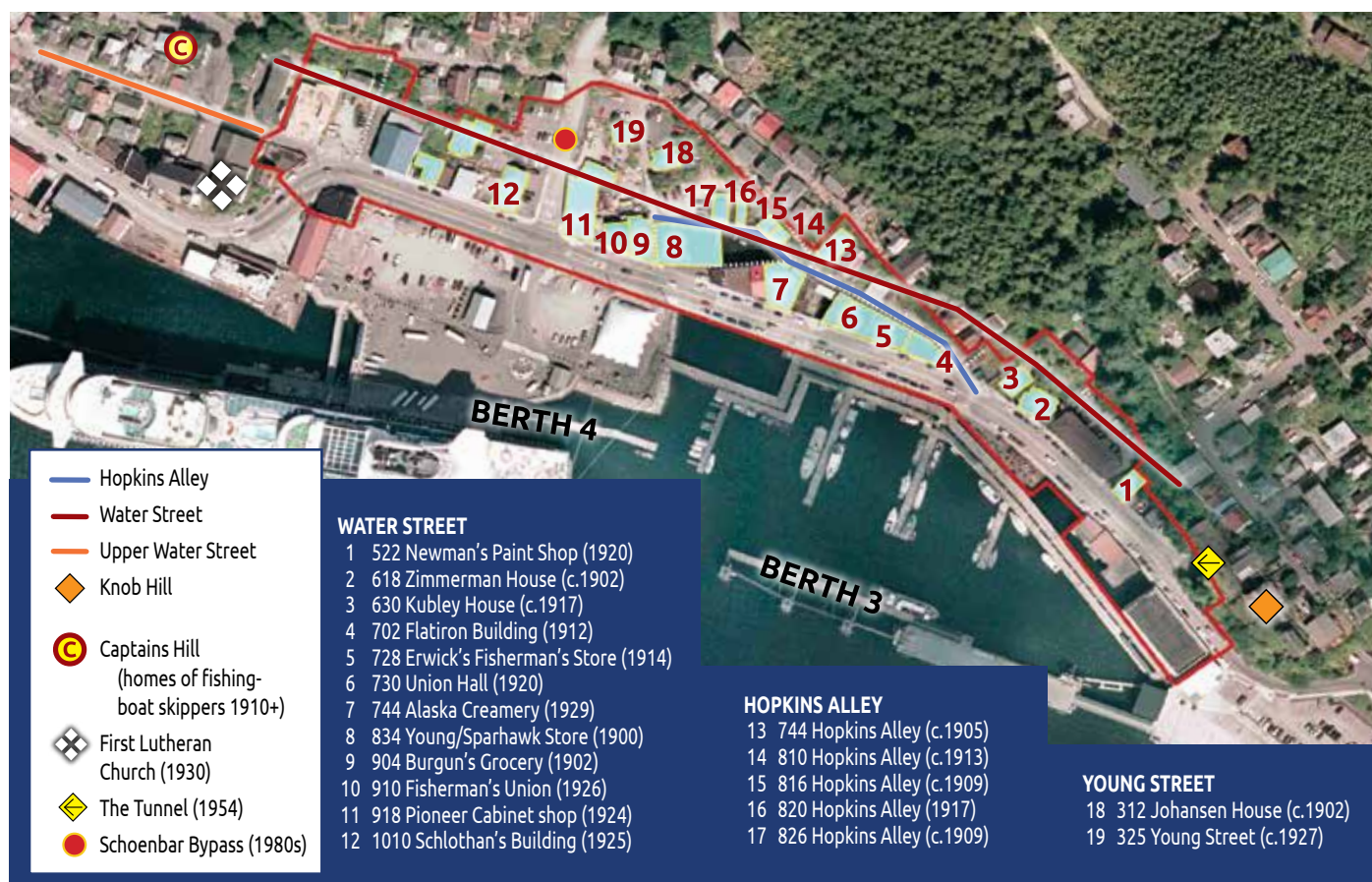
## NEWTOWN IS ROCKING AGAIN WITH COMMERCE & HISTORICAL INTEREST DRIVING REVITALIZATION



The Schloth Building (1925) was put up by the owner of Northern Machine Works and is in use as a tavern.



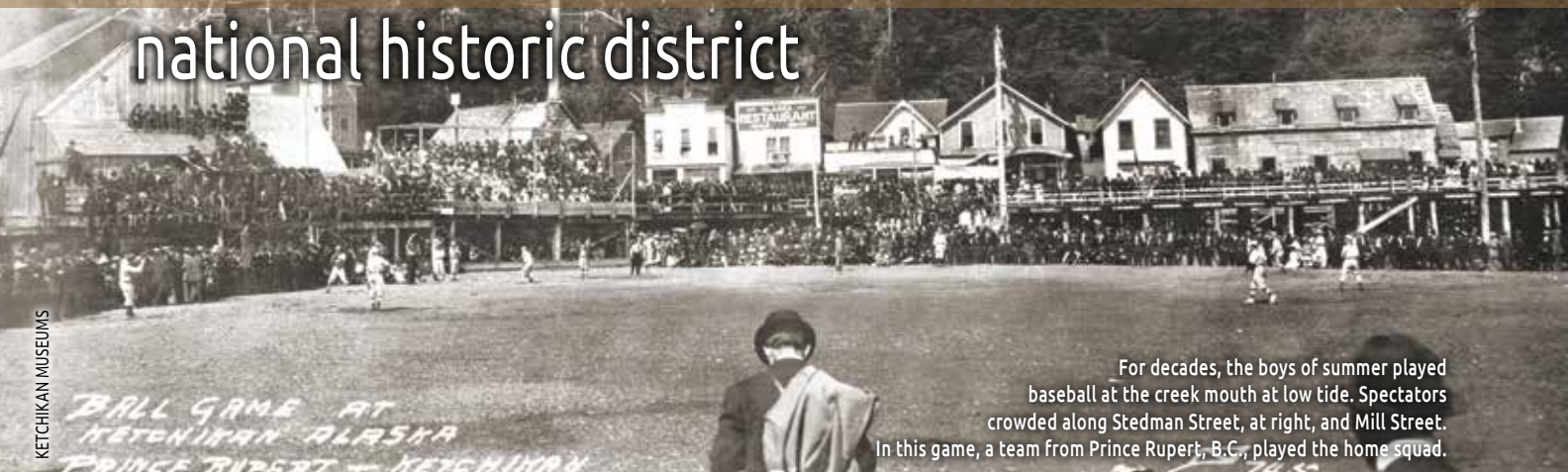
Kubley House (ca. 1917) was built by pioneers whose earlier home was right on the shore of rough-hewn "New Town."





# stedman thomas

## national historic district



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS

For decades, the boys of summer played baseball at the creek mouth at low tide. Spectators crowded along Stedman Street, at right, and Mill Street. In this game, a team from Prince Rupert, B.C., played the home squad.

ARCHITECTURAL AUTHENTICITY & HISTORICAL CHARM ARE EASY TO FIND IN THE LIVING TIME CAPSULE THAT IS THE STEDMAN-THOMAS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT. KETCHIKAN CREEK, ONCE A DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDING LINE, SPILLS INTO AN AREA WHERE CENTURY-OLD BUILDINGS EMBODY A LEGACY OF ENTERPRISE AND RESILIENCE.

**T**his district developed as a place apart, divided from the early townsite by Ketchikan Creek and designated as the home of Alaska Natives—so-called “Indian Town.” As Ketchikan’s commercial fishing industry and salmon-processing businesses grew, cannery workers from Asia and the Pacific Islands also settled here on the south side of the creek.

A rough wooden trestle was built across the creek mouth in the first years of the 1900s, tying together the incorporated townsite and its fast-growing, southside appendix. Thomas Street thrust out on pilings along the silty creek mouth. Inman Street, a boardwalk like many others crossing Ketchikan’s terrain, led to newly built homes above the cannery district. The bridge was improved over the years as the south-end population increased.

Canneries provided employment for scores of seasonal and resident workers, many of them immigrants from China, Japan and the Philippines. A business district developed along Stedman Street early in the 20th century, with Japanese immigrants foremost among the entrepreneurs.

The Ohashis operated a store at 223 Stedman St. from 1910. The Shimizu family ran the New York Hotel and Café at 207-211 Stedman St. (the hotel was restored in the 1990s and operates today). Harry Kimura operated Harry’s Place at 325 Stedman St. Jim Tanino ran Jimmy’s Noodle Café at 227 Stedman St. The Tatsuda family opened their grocery at

339 Stedman St. in 1916 and now runs a store a couple blocks up the street after remodeling their store for its centennial year.

The Japanese community had a small school and meeting house on the hill above Stedman Street, where adult volunteers taught English to the children of immigrants.

**The dredging of the Ketchikan Creek mouth** by the U.S. Corps of Engineers opened up acres of boat moorage in Thomas Basin in the early 1930s. Business flourished along Stedman and Thomas streets as scores of skippers and crewmen came off of transient vessels and the year-round boats tied up in front of cafes, hotels, grocery stores, machine shops and other storefronts. Through it all, canneries



TATSUDA FAMILY

The building that once housed Tatsuda grocery at 329 Stedman St. is in use—but the family business relocated up the street.

**STEDMAN-THOMAS  
IS ON THE NATIONAL  
REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.  
ITS DISTINCTIVE CULTURE & ECONOMY  
DERIVED FROM ITS BEING ACROSS THE  
CREEK FROM THE PIONEER TOWNSITE &  
HOME PRIMARILY TO ALASKA NATIVE  
& ASIAN RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN.**





Historic false fronts express real heritage in commercial structures along Stedman Street, where a busy, modern harbor is in the place of the tide flats of old.

GREGG POPPEN

along south Stedman steamed and clanked through the summer, bunkhousing their workers on site for the most part but generating significant business for Ketchikan's wholesale sector and service sector.

**Two actions by the U.S. government** significantly altered the Stedman-Thomas area. In the 1920s, Congress passed severe restrictions on immigration by Chinese and Japanese citizens. That opened the door for natives of the Philippines, who came to Alaska at the behest of aggressive recruiters for the canneries. Ketchikan's Filipino population took root along Stedman and opened a social club that became the Filipino Community Club in 1938—believed to be Alaska's first.

The Japanese air force's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 devastated the community on Stedman Street. Within a year, dozens of Japanese-born residents and Japanese-American family members were forced from homes in the neighborhood and resettled in internment camps across the

West. Given scant notice of this relocation and compelled to board southbound steamships, carrying little but suitcases, these well-established Ketchikan residents had varying success in securing their homes and businesses. Many didn't return. For them, the Last Frontier was a lost frontier. But some families were more fortunate and their property was looked after by friends in Ketchikan; the luckiest came home and picked up where they had left off.

**Property owners in this district** have invested in historic preservation. Interpretive signs produced by the Ketchikan Historic Commission are on buildings in the area; historical text and archival photos offer indispensable information for those who want to learn about this important district in the First City.

## TWO ACTIONS BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERED THE STEDMAN-THOMAS AREA

### LANDMARKS OF STEDMAN-THOMAS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT



Historic Ketchikan Inc. placed interpretive materials to tell a district's unique stories. This kiosk and plaque are beside the New York Hotel at 207 Stedman St. Other plaques produced with the Ketchikan Historic Commission are on significant buildings on Stedman and Thomas streets.



#### STEDMAN STREET

- 1 203 June's Cafe (1903)
- 2 207 New York Hotel & Cafe (1924)
- 3 223 Ohashi store (ca. 1908)
- 4 329 (ca. 1920)
- 5 507 (ca. 1910)

#### THOMAS STREET

- 6 121 (1920s)
- 7 124 (1920s)
- 8 126 Potlatch Bar (ca. 1925)
- 9 130 Union Machine Shop (1936)

#### INMAN STREET

- 10 108 (ca. 1910)
- 11 114 (ca. 1904)

- Stedman Street
- Thomas Street
- - - - Inman Street boardwalk
- Stedman Street Bridge

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# HISTORIC KETCHIKAN INC.

HISTORIC KETCHIKAN INC. IS  
A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
THAT PROMOTES ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT THROUGH  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
& HERITAGE TOURISM

*Our Town* presents our community's  
proud history and vibrant present.  
Our work in leadership, consultation  
and promotion is shown here and in  
other places in this publication.

In a town as great as Ketchikan,  
historic preservation just  
never gets old!



This kiosk and five others  
produced by HKI use archival  
photos and interpretive  
text to present our unique  
history. Placing of 'period'  
lamp posts downtown was  
instigated by HKI.

**KPU water warehouse** Historic Ketchikan  
Inc. worked with the City of Ketchikan to forestall intended  
demolition of one of our oldest remaining wood commercial  
structures, the creekside warehouse built in the 1920s by  
Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. The city agreed to demolish  
an attached garage and build a viewing platform overlooking  
Ketchikan Creek. Ketchikan Youth Initiatives made its home  
here and continues to refurbish and restore the site.

**Clover Pass School** HKI led the way in reclaiming  
an abandoned north-end schoolhouse dating to the 1940s  
and which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Funds  
and hard work from neighbors around this site 15 miles north  
of town supplemented grants. HKI transferred this heritage  
site to the Potter Road Park Association in 2016.

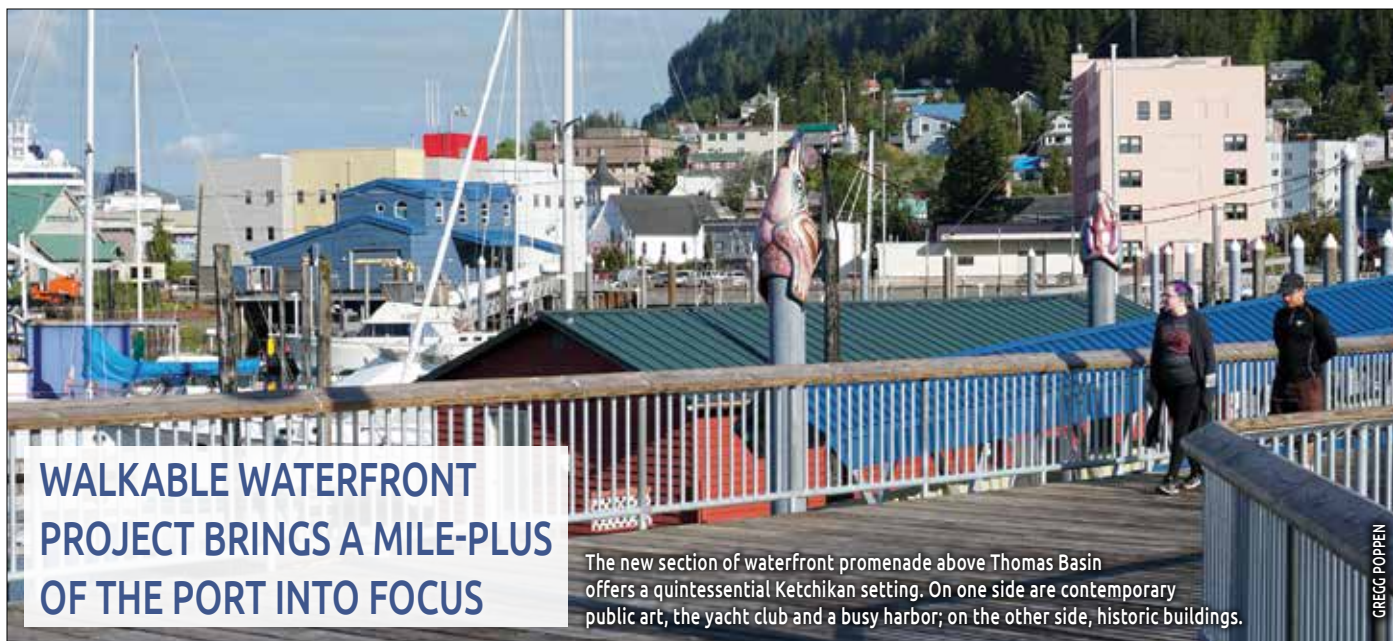
**Walking Tour** Historic  
Ketchikan Walking Tour is one of our  
signature programs and fits our  
goal of celebrating our heritage.  
It's slow food for people with  
an appetite for history.  
Tours of downtown and  
Newtown take in places  
and properties that  
make Ketchikan a  
place like no place  
else. With Pioneer  
Printing Co. Inc.,  
HKI produces a map  
with interpretive  
text. Pick it up at the  
visitor centers and  
at select businesses.

THE WALKING  
TOUR IS SLOW FOOD  
FOR PEOPLE WITH AN  
APPETITE FOR HISTORY.  
TOURS OF DOWNTOWN &  
NEWTOWN TAKE IN PLACES  
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KETCHIKAN A PLACE LIKE  
NO PLACE ELSE.

Visitors consult our Historic Ketchikan  
Walking Tour map and plot their itinerary—  
while two significant Main Street properties look down  
on them in a spring drizzle. Our history is a treasured asset.

GREGG POPPEN





## WALKABLE WATERFRONT PROJECT BRINGS A MILE-PLUS OF THE PORT INTO FOCUS

The new section of waterfront promenade above Thomas Basin offers a quintessential Ketchikan setting. On one side are contemporary public art, the yacht club and a busy harbor; on the other side, historic buildings.

GREGG POPPEN

**The First City's** downtown waterfront is a great asset. Historic Ketchikan Inc. is involved in embracing our heritage and enhancing economic development as the City of Ketchikan completes a

nearly 1.5-mile waterfront promenade, or boardwalk. The city hired HKI to conduct preliminary scoping and design, consulting with local and state agencies in this long-term project to create

a world-class walkable waterfront. Recent completion of sections along Stedman Street and Thomas Basin brings the fulfillment of this long-term project within sight.



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



KETCHIKAN MUSEUMS



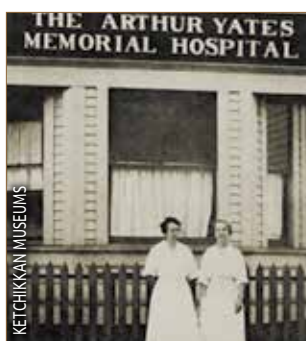
## ON A MISSION Preserving a landmark property

The clergy house became a hospital, then home for a magazine. A rendering depicts our vision.

**The community's** number one priority for historic preservation is a hands-on project for Historic Ketchikan Inc. The non-profit moved its office into the Yates Memorial Hospital building on Mission Street and is working to restore an important pioneer property.

HKI completed a building assessment in 2013 and initiated historically authentic exterior renovation on the Mission Street face. The roof and windows have been made weather-tight in the long-unused building. People are once again using and caring for this example of early-days architecture.

**The building was put up** in 1905 as a home for clergy and teachers in the Episcopal mission. St. John's Church, built in 1903, and the clergy house bookended St. Agnes Mission (now gone), which housed the school and a modest medical facility. When the hospital outgrew the mission house, one floor of the clergy house was used. When that was insufficient, a donor provided funds to outfit a 12-bed hospital, add a wing and build a new rectory.



Nurses posed in front of Yates Memorial Hospital a century ago.

The \$4,000 donation conferred naming rights: Yates Memorial Hospital was established in 1910 in honor of Arthur Yates, an Episcopalian philanthropist in Rochester, N.Y.

**The hospital closed** in 1925. The handsome building stood vacant until Emery Tobin installed his Alaska Sportsman magazine and a curio store in 1947, occupying Yates to 1966. The chamber of commerce was a tenant 1967-1978; the distinctive sun porch was closed in during those years. The structure then stood vacant until local churches and civic groups opened a drop-in Seamen's Center in 1984; that use ended in 2003. The once-proud Yates

endured a decade of disuse until HKI stepped in.

HKI is working with St. John's Church to restore the building. With the interior still in good shape, we are concentrating on exterior work, such as restoring cedar siding hidden under vinyl; bringing back the windowed porch; shoring up the wood foundation; and upgrading mechanical systems.





# BUILDING ON OUR HERITAGE



## Christian Science Hall

The building was renovated in 2009 by the Ketchikan Area Arts and Humanities Council, recasting the 1946 structure with very little exterior change except in color. Offices and a gallery are on the upper floor. The City of Ketchikan, Wells Fargo and a funding campaign accomplished purchase; private contributions and grants funded renovation.

## Bayside Hotel

The creekside building oldtimers still call Bayside Hotel was put up in 1927 as Thomas Basin Rooms and was restored in historically appropriate style 90 years later. Built of local lumber by pioneers Forest and Harriet Hunt, it featured 20 small boarding rooms. Cafes, groceries and other retail uses operated at street level. The edifice had a social purpose: the Hunts disapproved of the young town's wickedness—prostitution, bootlegging, gambling and drugs. Thomas Basin Rooms provided clean rooms, wholesome meals, loans and moral counseling to its boarders, who worked in canneries, fisheries, logging and mining. Thomas Basin Rooms was sold in 1941; the building was renamed Bayside Hotel in 1950. It was Ketchikan's longest-running boarding house, deteriorating until it was shut down in 2011 for health and safety. Complete restoration for mixed commercial use was completed in 2017 by preservation partners Michel Wollaston and Stephen Reeve.



## GOVERNMENTS, NONPROFITS & PRIVATE INTERESTS HAVE KEPT THEIR EYES ON THE COMMUNITY'S HERITAGE AS THEY RENEWED & REDEVELOPED PROPERTIES DOWNTOWN & IN OTHER DISTRICTS



## Burkhardt | Dibrell | Reeve House

Pioneer business man H.Z. Burkhardt built his home at 500 Main St. in 1904. It's our last Queen Anne-style residence. Years of renovation ended in 2010 and earned the owners, Erin and Falene Reeve, a restoration award from the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places.



## White Cliff Elementary School

Generations of children passed through White Cliff between 1923 and 2003, endowing the concrete edifice with incalculable community esteem. After the school closed, a developer bought the building and refashioned the interior for offices. The borough bought the property and uses offices here while leasing some office space. White Cliff maintains a historical face while providing the community with further generations of utilization.

## Reid Building | Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. | Gilmore Hotel

The privately owned Citizens Light, Power & Water Co. put up its concrete building in 1925. The fourth floor was added after the city's Ketchikan Public Utilities took over electrical distribution. The building is now City Hall and was renovated in 2013-2015—with attention paid to the simple, traditional facade. The Gilmore Hotel has stood beside the old utilities building since 1926 as a succession of businesses occupied the ground floor (the hotel's restaurant and lounge at present). The handsome exterior, reworked in 2001, expresses authenticity that earned a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Reid Building, at the north end of this historic trio, was built in 1937 and housed many businesses before borough government moved in. After the borough left for the former White Cliff Elementary School building on First Avenue, Coastal Real Estate Group bought the building and completed extensive renovation; the formerly plain, stucco exterior was recast in historical style in 2011.



## Little Flower Hospital laundry

This concrete commercial building on Bawden Street reflowered in 2012, when architects Welsh & Whiteley renovated it for offices. The building had provided the wood-frame hospital beside it (now demolished) with housing for a boiler, a laundry and lodgings for nuns and nurses. The utilitarian lines of the 1944 structure contribute to the architectural and cultural story of Ketchikan.



# A historic family business motors to a third generation

**Alaska Outboard's** statistical profile is simple.

*Decades in operation — 6.25*

*Generations of family involved — 3*

*Total of operating locations — 1*

*Politicians in residence — 1 at a time*

The business has sold and serviced marine motors since 1955. In a functional and unshowy showroom, heavy Yamaha outboard engines are locked into sleek standing poses—the only obvious signs that decades have passed. Well, the engines, plus an in-law with a wrench in his hand: generation three.

Oral Freeman established the family business in 1955 after trying just about everything else, as his son, Charlie, puts it. He fished for salmon in a converted lifeboat; wore the badge of a territorial policeman; and delivered mail to Ketchikan's boonies as Alaska's first rural carrier. Sons Charlie and Jim were Alaska Outboard gofers and sweepers from boyhood and became partners in the family business as adults. Pete Halvorsen married Charlie's daughter, Christine, and took up a partnership in turn.

Oral Freeman was respected in Ketchikan as a longtime business owner and acclaimed across the state for six terms in the Alaska House of Representatives—where his voice was essential in founding the state ferry system and the Alaska Permanent Fund. Charlie said that when their father died in 2001, he and his partner-sibling agreed right away to maintain brotherhood through any issues the business would present. "When Dad died, my brother and I came to an agreement: Only two people in the country *have to* get along. If you had a problem, you dealt with it" before leaving the shop. In other words, blood is thicker than engine oil. "Each of us tried to run the business after our father died. It wasn't working. Neither of us wanted to be the boss."

**Charlie Freeman is the spokesman** for Alaska Outboard when one is needed. He got the paternal gene for rhetoric, campaigning and going to long meetings in the evening. He was elected to five terms on the Ketchikan City Council in three separate stints.

Oral Freeman had his own local electoral wins, serving as mayor of the City of Ketchikan before and after a term in the first state legislature. Charlie figures his own successes and failures in 15 years of elected public service are "probably fifty-fifty. I managed to change some things—and some things I changed, changed back as soon as I left."

Not all campaigns ended well. "I've won one more than I've lost," he said. His run for mayor of the City of Ketchikan was a bust. Oral Freeman, too, sustained electoral crashes: in his first bid for re-election to the state House and in a campaign for governor. Few people in Ketchikan know those political footnotes. Oral Freeman's credentials, according to local history, are A Founder of the Ferry System and A Father of the Permanent Fund.

Posters for failed Freeman campaigns are *not* seen on the ceiling of the Alaska Outboard back shop, where the guys tack up political losers' leftovers (they allow any candidate for any office to put a campaign poster in the front window). There's a rule: no Freeman posters will ever go up with the overhead also-rans.

Some call this display "the ceiling of shame." Charlie doesn't. "Everybody remembers who won. Nobody remembers who came in second. There should be recognition for those who got off their dead fannies and bothered to run," he said.



Generations two and three at Alaska Outboard: Pete Halvorsen, left, with Charlie and Jim Freeman.

**Above that ceiling** is a storage room with several small streamlined boats that Charlie and Jim raced as young men: three-point hydros pushed by screaming two-cycle engines to speeds of 50-plus on lake water—when they weren't airborne or upside down. A dozen local guys raced, and crashed, the boats. Charlie's helmet left its blue paint on his boat hull in one majestic wreck. There's not much family footage of the races. Charlie's and Jim's mother, Fay, ran her 8mm film camera at the races, but maternal worry often overcame documentary devotion. "We have a lot of film of Mom's shoes when she let down the camera," Charlie said.

Pete Halvorsen—son-in-law to one Freeman, nephew-in-law to the other and partner in a boat-motor business—has an almost perversely sedate maritime practice. One of Ketchikan's first paddleboarders, he's often seen offshore of the shop—standing up for non-motorized recreation.

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