

Linda S. Thibodeau

Director

Division of Libraries, Archives,  
& Museums

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STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Bruce Kato

Chief Curator

Alaska State Museums

395 Whittier St.

Juneau, Alaska 99801-1718

907.465.2901

## Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ALASKA STATE MUSEUM SPONSORS PAPER CONSERVATION RESEARCH PROJECT

What happens to paper records and artifacts when they are stored, year after year, in unheated buildings in northern Alaska? That is one question the Alaska State Museum is taking steps to answer, along with the related question of how best to preserve these materials. The museum currently has Grace White, professional paper conservator from North Carolina, traveling to several locales in Alaska to examine collections, provide professional advice and, where necessary, perform basic treatments on paper-based holdings.

White is first focusing her efforts on collections in Eagle, Alaska, where their archive of important historical documents and photographs has been stored in an unheated building for more than 30 years. The materials have been documented and cataloged in a systematic way and will thus provide a good research model. The results of the research will have an impact on other archives in remote locations throughout the state. Currently there is no information about letting these collections “go cold” over the winter, or otherwise endure large annual temperature and humidity changes.

Additionally, White will provide collection assessments, treatments, lectures, and workshops in Barrow and Fairbanks, working with the Inupiat Heritage Center and Consortium Library in Barrow and the Museum of the North and the University Archives in Fairbanks. The State Museum is also seeking additional partnerships in smaller villages that have paper archives. The results of the research will be published by the State Museum at a later date.

The Friends of the Alaska State Museum are co-sponsoring the project, with support from the Rasmuson Foundation and the American Institute for Conservation. Participants are contributing in-kind resources. White, a developing expert in cold climate paper conservation, is donating her professional fees, and will be involved in similar projects in Antarctica after her work in Alaska. She is a professional associate of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) and has a master’s degree in conservation of fine art, works on paper from Northumbria University, England. She currently works as the associate paper conservator for Etherington Conservation Services in Greensboro, NC.

The project director is Scott Carrlee, Curator of Museum Services at the Alaska State Museums. He is a Fellow of the American Institute for Conservation and has worked as a museum conservator for over 15 years. In his current position he provides technical support to the more than 75 museums around the state.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Scott Carrlee

Phone (907) 465-2901 Fax (907) 465-2976

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