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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Media Advisory

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOPIC FOR THIS WEDNESDAY NOON LECTURE SERIES AT THE STATE MUSEUM: LOUIS BALES

JUNEAU – Alaska history is filled with bold, resilient characters who routinely faced privation and challenge in ways that seem almost superhuman today, and as generalists, could bring to bear an astonishing array of skills. Louis L. Bales (ca. 1859 - 1929) wore many hats during his long and adventurous life: mountain climber, mail carrier, census taker, trader, big game guide, woodsman, amateur naturalist, miner, collector of ethnological information and artifacts, witness to the 1912 Katmai eruption, writer and tour guide. His solo travels in Alaska earned him the reputation of a master survivalist: as one writer put it, “You could start this fellow out with a jack-knife and he would go all over Alaska.”

Until now, Bales’ life in Alaska was obscure, and his collection of 1100 Yup’ik artifacts purchased by the Alaska Historical Library and Museum in 1913 was wrongly credited to another collector. Two decades of research by Museum Curator Steve Henrikson has helped piece together Bales’ life and Alaskan travels.

In addition to collecting for the museum, Bales helped put together Alaskan exhibits for the international expositions in St. Louis (1904), Portland (1905), San Francisco (1915), and San Diego (1915-17). His many articles on Alaska for *Outdoor Life* and other journals helped popularize Alaska as a tour destination.

This presentation will summarize Bales’ legacy, and features recently-discovered historical images contributed by Bales’ descendents, and a selection of Yup’ik artifacts he collected for the museum in 1914.

This program is the second lecture in a series taking place every Wednesday noon hour through March 9. The series is an annual program of the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums, held in honor of the institutions’ first librarian and curator, Father Andrew P. Kashevarof, who served from 1919 until his death in 1940.

Admission is free for the lecture. Discounted winter admission for museum visitation is \$3. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. Admission is free for this Wednesday noon lecture series. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15.

Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact visitor services at 465-2901 before the visit for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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www.museums.state.ak.us

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