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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: **February 23, 2011**

WEDNESDAY NOON LECTURE SERIES AT THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUM WET PLATES IN COLD CLIMATES: ALASKA'S OLDEST OLD PHOTOGRAPH—AND WHY

JUNEAU –Jim Simard, Head of the Alaska State Library Historical Collections, and Ron Klein, photographer and historian, will present “Wet Plates in Cold Climates: Alaska’s Oldest Old Photograph—and Why” on Wednesday, March 2, noon to 1 p.m. at the Alaska State Museum as part of the Wednesday noon lecture series. There is no charge for admission to this lecture.

Jim Simard and Ron Klein are on a search for the oldest photo taken in Alaska as part of their work in creating a new exhibit on early Alaskan photography. Using historical research techniques and an acute knowledge of early photographic processes, they are combing through numerous public and private collections to find the most interesting and earliest photographs of Alaska.

The exhibit, which will run through the summer of 2011, is tentatively titled, “The First 25 Years of Alaskan Photography,” and will be composed primarily of photographs and artifacts from the collections of the Alaska State Library, Archives and Museums. The exhibit will feature images by masters of “wet plate” photography who made significant contributions to the fascinating story of photography in the Alaskan frontier.

The exhibit will feature images by early photographer Charles Ryder, who accompanied the Western Union Telegraph Expedition of 1866, creating the earliest known Alaskan photographs. It will include the work of professionals such as Eadweard J. Muybridge, H.H. Brodeck, William H. Partridge, and other masters of “wet plate” photography. Amateur photographers who made significant contributions to the development of the art will be included. Stereo images, “magic lantern” slides, hand tinted cabinet cards and tiny cart-de-visites all contribute to the fascinating story of photography in the Alaskan frontier.

Simard and Klein will discuss the creation of this exhibit and present some highlights from the interesting and enduring works of art, created over one hundred and twenty years ago under extremely challenging conditions and with the most rudimentary equipment and chemical processes.

Admission is free for the lectures in this 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.

Winter hours at the museum are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Discounted winter admission for museum visitation is \$3. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. 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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