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STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: **March 17, 2010**

Historic Documents Provide Information on Mask Carvers

An historical insight into the lives of Native Alaskan mask carvers will be provided by librarian Anastasia Tarmann during a brown-bag lecture Wednesday, March 24 at the Alaska State Museum. The talk goes from noon to 1 p.m. and is free.

Tarmann, a research librarian at the Alaska State Library Historical Collections, has titled her talk "The Men Behind the Masks: Letters of Alaska Native Mask Carvers from the Donald Burrus Collection." Burrus served as manager of the Alaska Native Arts and Crafts Clearing House (ANAC) in Juneau from 1944 to 1971. He knew many of the most prominent Alaska Native artists active in this time period, and in this presentation Ms. Tarmann will examine select correspondence, photographs, and other unique materials from the Burrus Collection.

Established in 1937, ANAC helped supply Alaska Native artists with raw materials and marketed their finished artwork. The Burrus materials were donated to the Alaska State Library Historical Collections by Jean Burrus Kline, Burrus's daughter. The collection significantly documents ANAC business and provides insights into the complex history of how Alaska Native art was created for trade under the auspices of a non-Native business enterprise.

The brown-bag lecture series is sponsored by the state Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums. It will feature two more lectures: on March 31, Museum Conservator Ellen Carrlee will speak on "Fur, Fuzz, and Fibers: Materials Identification at the Museum," and on April 7, Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections, will give a lecture entitled, "A Century in the Making: The Alaska State Library and Museum."

For additional information you may go to www.museums.state.ak.us. Hours at the museum are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Discounted winter admission 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:

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

www.museums.state.ak.us

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