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Press Release

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AUGUST FIRST FRIDAY AT THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUM WWII AND PAINTER DAN DEROUX EXHIBITS CONTINUE

JUNEAU – If you have not yet taken in the summer exhibitions at the museum, visit on First Friday, August 3, when the museum is open for extended hours with free admission between 4:30 and 7 pm.

Professor Alexander Dolitsky, affiliated with the University of Alaska Southeast and Director of the Alaska Siberia Research Center in Juneau, will present an illustrated lecture, entitled “Alaska at War: World War II” on Friday evening at 6:00.

In 1941, the Russian air force was decimated by the German Blitzkrieg, and they called for assistance from their allies. Help from the Americans came first in the form of “Lend-Lease,” a program supplying Russia, Britain, and other countries fighting the Germans in Europe with \$50 billion worth of “tools,” including tanks, ships, aircraft, vehicles, munitions, and other needed goods. Aircraft and supplies were ferried to Russia via the Northwest Staging Route—a string of airbases leading from Great Falls, Montana to Siberia via Canada and Alaska. Over 21 months, the operation delivered nearly 8000 aircraft to Russia, with over 600 Soviet pilots stationed in Montana, Fairbanks, Galena, and Nome. 2012 marks the 70th anniversary of the Alaska-Siberia Airway, and will be celebrated in October in Fairbanks and Yakutsk.

The lecture is free and open to the public, and a book signing will precede and follow the talk.

On display at the museum are two World War II exhibitions: “When Over There Was Here and “Kiska: A World War II Battlefield Landscape.” This summer marks the 70th anniversary of two seminal events in both World War II and Alaska state history: the Aleutian Island Campaign and the construction of the Alaska-Canada (ALCAN) Military Highway. Through photos and other artifacts, these exhibits tell the story of Alaska’s role in WWII through a rare showing of actual weapons, uniforms, and other gear used by Allied and Japanese forces.

Also on display at the museum is Juneau Painter Dan DeRoux’s largest show of his career. DeRoux uses humor to paint a slightly different picture of Alaskan history, one in which the Dutch colonize Dutch Harbor, Marco Polo visits Southeast Alaska, and LaPerouse sports a walrus pin circa 1980s on his uniform.

Summer hours at the museum are 8:30 to 5:30 daily. Summer admission is \$7 with a \$1 discount for age 65 and older. 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:

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www.museums.state.ak.us

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