Aleutian World War II National Historic Area 2007 Calendar

12 Months of Images of the Aleutian Campaign



Aleutian World War II National Historic Area

During World War II the remote Aleutian Islands, home to the Unangan (Aleut) people for over 8,000 years, became one of the fiercely contested battlegrounds of the Pacific. This thousand-mile-long archipelago saw the first invasion of American soil since the War of 1812, a mass internment of American civilians, a 15-month air war, and one of the deadliest battles in the Pacific Theatre. Each month the calendar focuses on one aspect of this little known chapter of our history.

In 1996 Congress designated the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area to interpret, educate, and inspire present and future generations about the history of the Unangan people and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the United States in World War II. In a unique arrangement, the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area and visitor center are owned and managed by the Ounalashka Corporation (the village corporation for Unalaska) and the National Park Service provides them with technical assistance. Through this cooperative partnership, the Unangax are the keepers of their history and invite the public to learn more about its past and present.

For information about the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area, visit our web site at: www.nps.gov/aleu/ or contact:

Superintendent Alaska Affiliated Areas 240 West 5th Ave. Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Ounalashka Corporation P.O. Box 149 Unalaska, AK 99685

Visitor Information (907) 581-1276 Visitor Center (907) 581-9944

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Holidays and Observances

Jan 1New Year's DayJan 15Martin Luther King DayFeb 19Washington's BirthdayMay 28Memorial Day

Jul 4Independence DaySep 3Labor DayOct 8Columbus DayNov 11Veterans Day

Nov 12 'Veterans Day' observed Nov 22 Thanksgiving Day Dec 25 Christmas Day

2008

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Holidays and Observances

Jan 1	New Year's Day
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day
Feb 14	Valentine's Day
Feb 18	Washington's Birthday

May 26 Memorial DayJul 4Independence DaySep 1Labor DayOct 13Columbus Day

Oct 31 Halloween Nov 11 Veterans Day Nov 27 Thanksgiving Day Dec 25 Christmas Day



January, 2007

Unalaska Before the War



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	З	4	5	6
	New Year's Day		Full Moon			
7	8	9	10	11 Last Quarter Moon	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Day	16	17	18	19 New Moon	20
21	22	23	24	25 First Quarter Moon	26	27
28	29	30	31		December 2006 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Bebruary 2007* S M T W T F S 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28



Unalaska had been at the crossroads of the world long before World War II put it on the map for thousands of Americans. Unangan settlements here were some of the most powerful in the Eastern Aleutians before the Russian arrival. After contact, the settlement became a crossroads for Russian traders, American whalers, Gold Rush prospectors, and many others. The Church of the Holy Ascension was the anchor of the Unalaska parish, covering hundreds of square miles and half a dozen islands. The Unangan community here remained one of the largest in the Aleutians, and the Unalaska chief exerted political clout over outlying villages.

Main Image: Unalaska in the early 20th century. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks. Above left: Kashega before the war. Courtesy University of Alaska Anchorage. Above right: Residents of Unalaska in the late 19th/early 20th century participating in the Orthodox Christmas tradition of "starring." Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks.



February, 2007 Windblown and Dripping

"It's like being invited to a seashore party when weather turns chilly and foggy and the liquor runs out and you can't get back to town." LIEUTENANT ALLEN PRESCOTT, NAVY AVIATION OFFICER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	March 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31			1	2 Full Moon	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Last Quarter Moon
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17 New Moon
18	19 President's Day	20	21	22	23	First Quarter Moon
25	26	27	28			



The weather was, for many Allied servicemen, their most formidable opponent. Rain and fog were constant companions, dampening both clothing and spirits. Wild winds of hurricane proportions, known as "williwaws," came up out of nowhere and bowled men over easily, flipping planes and dismantling quonset huts and runways. Just walking in this weather was a nightmare; flying in it was deadly, and more men were lost to the weather than to enemy fire.

Main Image: Man walking into a windstorm, PBY in the background. Courtesy National Archives. Above: Medical hut buried in snow. Courtesy National Archives.



March, 2007

The "Aleutian Stare"

"Once I was in a plane with six GIs in straitjackets, and they had it, the Aleutian Stare. They'd been on those islands too long." BENJAMIN DAVIS, PHYSICIAN, ARMY AIR FORCES



Soldiers came to the islands boyish and clean-shaven, but the dark, rain-heavy skies, and the numbing isolation, wore them down quickly. The waiting was awful: waiting for the attack, for the weather to change, for the boat home. Many waited the whole war out in the Aleutians, never seeing a rotation home or to another theatre. PBY pilots half-joked that the only way out was in a box. Tired, ill-supplied, ill-fed, they lived on their nerves. Some were sent home sedated, knotted tight in a straitjacket, their eyes fixed in the "Aleutian Stare."

Main Image: Barracks interior, Dutch Harbor Naval Base, 1943. Courtesy Harold Bloom Collection, Museum of the Aleutians

Above: Two officers from Dutch Harbor stare into the camera during a drinking party., circa 1943. Courtesy Harold Bloom collection, Museum of the Aleutians.



April, 2007

Dead Reckoning

"Oh, you know, I reckon I'll get us back or I reckon we'll be dead." -NAVIGATOR'S QUIP ON THE PHRASE "DEAD RECKONING"

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
April Fool's Day	Full Moon 9	10	11	12	13	14
Easter 15	16	Last Quarter Moon 17	18	19	20	21
22	23	New Moon 24	25	26	27	28
29	30	First Quarter Moon			March 2007 S M T W T F S 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	May 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 1 1



Aleutian pilots, lacking navigational aids, had to fly by "Dead Reckoning." To fix position, they took bearings off landforms - at night, they flew by the stars. But in a region governed by fog, where whole mountains can be swallowed up in mist, landforms and stars are often invisible. Many pilots, most young men fresh out of flight school, found themselves blown off course by the hurricane gales, lost in the fog, spinning towards a hidden mountain or towards the treacherous blackness of the Bering Sea.

Main Image: Major Milton Askins of the 54th Fighter squadron briefs P-38 fighter pilots prior to a run on Kiska. Courtesy National Archives Above: A crashed P-38 Lightning from the 54th Fighter Squadron. Courtesy Ken Taylor Collection, Elmendorf AFB

Courtesy Hanna-Call Collection, University of Alaska Fairbanks

May, 2007The Battle of Attu, May 1943

"It was rugged... the whole deal was rugged, like attacking a pillbox by way of a tightrope... in winter."

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 2007 S M T W T F S I 2 3 4 5 6 7 3 9 10 11 12 13 14 5 16 17 18 19 20 21 2 23 24 25 26 27 28 9 30	June 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	Full moon 9	10	11	12
U		Ū	5	Last Quarter Moon		12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mother's Day 20	21	22	New Moon 23 First Quarter Moon	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

-LT. DONALD E. DWINNELL, VETERAN OF ATTU



On May 11th, 1943, over 12,500 American troops landed at Massacre Bay on Attu Island, ready to expel 2,000 Japanese soldiers from the island they had occupied for nearly a year. Over the next two weeks, the Americans were harried by sniper fire and tormented by fierce Arctic conditions. On May 28th, the remaining 800 Japanese soldiers made a last stand in Chicagof Harbor near the site of the now-destroyed Attu village. All but 28 of the Japanese perished either under fire or by their own hands. The Battle of Attu became the second-deadliest battle in the Pacific Theatre in proportion to the number of troops engaged, falling just behind Iwo Jima.



June, 2007 The Japanese Attack, 1942



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	July 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				1 Full Moon	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Last Quarter Moon	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 New Moon	16
17 Father's Day	18	19	20	21 Summer Solstice	22 First Quarter Moon	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Full Moon



On June 3rd-4th, the skies over Dutch Harbor roared as Japanese Kate bombers swooped out of the clouds to rain fire on the Army and Navy installations below. Two days later, the Japanese invaded the island of Attu and took its 41 Unangan residents and schoolteacher prisoner. They were taken to Japan, where nearly half of them perished.

Main Image: The barracks at Margaret Bay, Dutch Harbor (current site of the Grand Aleutian Hotel) burn after Japanese airstrikes on June 3, 1942. Courtesy National Archives

Above: Agafina Prokopeuff (?) of Attu holds her baby in this remarkable Japanese POW photograph. Courtesy Alaska State Historical Library Left: Some of the Japanese pilots pose on the eigeraft carrier Durin before

on the aircraft carrier Ryujo before launching the attach on Dutch Harbor. Courtesy National Archives



July, 2007

Unangan Evacuation, 1942

"In all the years that have followed the war, our family was never all together again."

GERTRUDE D. [HOPE] SVARNY, UNALASKA

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			Independence Day			Last Quarter Moon
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 New Moon
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 First Quarter Moon	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 Full Moon	31			June 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	August 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



After the Japanese attacks in June, 1942, the U.S. Government evacuated 880 Unangan (Aleut) residents of the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands to Southeast Alaska. They were forced to live in rotting canneries and gold mines, suffering from malnutrition and preventable diseases, for the duration of the war.

Main Image: Unangan residents of St. Paul Island look out at their homes as the USS Delarof pulls away from the dock in June, 1942. Courtesy National Archives. Above: St. George residents at the Funter Bay camp. Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks Archives, Frederika Martin Collection.



August, 2007

The Kiska Blitz, 1942-1943

"Fight back. Push the enemy into the sea. Get Kiska back."

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ELEVENTH ARMY AIR FORCE & NAVY PATROL WING FOUR, 1942

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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5 Last Quarter Moon	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 New Moon	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 First Quarter Moon	21	22	23	24	25
26		28 Full Moon	29	30	31	



From 1942 to 1943, the Eleventh Army Air Force and Navy Patrol Wing 4 dropped seven million pounds of bombs on the Japanese on Kiska Island. The pilots, many of whom were fresh out of flight school, had to contend with both Japanese anti-aircraft fire and the unpredictable Aleutian weather. Fog, hurricane-force winds, and freezing temperatures were responsible for scores of deaths. The relentless bombing, coordinated with an Allied blockade, strangled the Japanese supply line to Kiska and Attu and prepared the way for an Allied invasion in August, 1943.

Main Image: North American B-25 'Mitchells' of the 77th Bomb Squadron, 28th Bomb Group, fly in close formation over water southeast of Attu, Aleutian Islands. September 1943. Courtesy National Archives. **Above:** Courtesy National Archives.



September, 2007

Lost Villages of the Aleutians



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Labor Day	Last Quarter Moon				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
		New Moon				
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
14			First Quarter Moon			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Fall Equinox			Full Moon			
30			Full Moon		August 2007 S M T W T F S	October 2007 S M T W T F S
					1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
					19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



When the villages of Biorka, Kashega and Makushin were evacuated by the U.S. authorities in the summer of 1942, a way of life that had survived through centuries of tragedy finally passed away. In these small and remote "Lost Villages," Unangan traditions, customs and knowledge had been carefully guarded from the outside world. When the villagers were hurled into the internment camps, their communities were ripped apart. At the end of the war, they were not allowed to return home, and so these villages, the last of their kind, disappeared into the Aleutian fog.

Images: Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks



October, 2007

Ulakta Head: The Fort at the Top



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Last Quarter Moon			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			1			
	Columbus Day			New Moon	CONTRACTOR OF	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
and and the	-				First Quarter Moon	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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28	29	30	31		Full Moon September 2007 S M T W T F S	November 2007 S M T W T F S
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			Halloween		23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	



The installations at Fort Schwatka on Mt. Ballyhoo were the highest coastal defenses built in the United States at 897 feet above sea level. The army built over a hundred buildings at Fort Schwatka and engineers reinforced the bunkers to withstand earthquakes and 100-mile an hour winds. The fort overlooks Dutch Harbor and was key to its protection. The gun mounts are among the most intact in the country. The fort is the landmass for the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area.

Image Credits: Howard Bloom was stationed in Unalaska in 1942 with the 250th Coastal Artillery. A keen photographer, Bloom left a legacy of rare historic photographs that document daily life in Unalaska during the war. All the Bloom photographs featured here are courtesy of the Museum of the Aleutians in Unalaska, where much of his work is housed and on exhibit.



November, 2007

The PBY: Aleutian Workhorse

"… continue (the bombardment of Kiska) until no bombs or no PBYs remain…"

CAPTAIN LESLIE L GEHRES, PATROL WING FOUR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	December 2007 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 31 41 51 51 51 51 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52 52			1	2	3
4 Daylight Savings Time Ends	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9 New Moon	10
11 Veterans Day	12	13	14	15	16	17 First Quarter Moon
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24 Full Moon
25	26	27	28	29	30	



Designed in 1933, the PBY (Consolidated Aircraft Catalina) was thought to be obsolete by the outbreak of World War II. The veteran plane proved herself essential, however, in all sea operations. Primarily a long-range reconnaissance aircraft, PBYs were an essential part of the Aleutian Campaign, snatching downed crews from icy waters, flying long recon missions, even getting a makeover as bombers. PBYs were very lightly armed with four machine guns - one each in the waist blisters (as shown above), one in the bow turret and one in the aft tunnel.

Main Image: PBY in flght. **Above**: A gunner in the waist blister of a PBY Catalina. Both images courtesy National Archives.



December, 2007

Far From Home

All the kids got to go home for Russian Christmas... but I was too sick even to go home. I was heartbroken. Just that once were the kids allowed to return to Burnett [Inlet]."

Wednesday Thursday Friday Monday Tuesday Saturday Sunday T W T F 1 Last Quarter Moon 2 3 5 6 4 8 Pearl Harbor Hanukkah Begins Remembrance Day 10 9 11 12 13 15 14 New Moon 17 22 18 19 20 21 16 Winter Solstice First Quarter Moon 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 Full Moon Christmas Day 30 31 Last Quarter Moon New Year's Eve

GERTRUDE (HOPE) SVARNY, UNALASKA



During the holidays of 1942, interned Unangan families had been torn apart when children were sent to the Wrangell Institute boarding school and their parents remained in the camps. Still, they struggled to preserve normality; in January of 1943 some children were allowed to visit their families in Burnett Inlet for Orthodox Christmas.

At the same time, thousands of servicemen bunkered down across the Aleutian Chain from Unalaska to Adak. They were far from home and their families, flying mission after mission against the Japanese on Kiska. They, too, tried to preserve the spirit of the holidays; some constructed faux Christmas trees from moss and baling wire, decorated with 50-caliber shells.

Main Image: Men from the 77th Bomber Squadron on Attu (November 1943) wait in line for Thanksgiving Dinner. Courtesy National Archives.

Above: Unangan children in a Christmas pageant at Wrangell Institute, December 1942. Courtesy National Archives.

Aleutian World War II National Historic Area

Image: The Aleutian World War II visitor center at Dutch Harbor is housed in the rehabilitated Aerology building. Photo courtesy National Park Service.