

*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/](http://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

# 2007

# 2008

## January 2007

## February 2007

## March 2007

## January 2008

## February 2008

## March 2008

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## April 2007

## May 2007

## June 2007

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## June 2008

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## July 2007

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## September 2007

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## October 2007

## November 2007

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## October 2008

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## December 2008

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### Holidays and Observances

Jan 1	New Year's Day	Jul 4	Independence Day	Nov 12	'Veterans Day' observed
Jan 15	Martin Luther King Day	Sep 3	Labor Day	Nov 22	Thanksgiving Day
Feb 19	Washington's Birthday	Oct 8	Columbus Day	Dec 25	Christmas Day
May 28	Memorial Day	Nov 11	Veterans Day		

### Holidays and Observances

Jan 1	New Year's Day	May 26	Memorial Day	Oct 31	Halloween
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day	Jul 4	Independence Day	Nov 11	Veterans Day
Feb 14	Valentine's Day	Sep 1	Labor Day	Nov 27	Thanksgiving Day
Feb 18	Washington's Birthday	Oct 13	Columbus Day	Dec 25	Christmas Day



ALASKA COMMER

PRINCIPAL STREET IN UNALASKA, ALASKA.

PSHUNT  
51370.

# January, 2007

## *Unalaska Before the War*



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14	15 Martin Luther King Day	16	17	18	19 New Moon	20																																																																																												
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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 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century participating in the Orthodox Christmas tradition of "starring." Courtesy University of Alaska Fairbanks.









# 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.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Full Moon
11 Daylight Savings Time Begins	12 Last Quarter Moon	13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
18	19 New Moon	20	21 Vernal Equinox	22	23	24
25 First Quarter Moon	26	27	28	29	30	31



# 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”



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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <small>April Fool's Day</small>	2 <small>Full Moon</small>	3	4	5	6	7
8 <small>Easter</small>	9	10 <small>Last Quarter Moon</small>	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 <small>New Moon</small>	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 <small>First Quarter Moon</small>	25	26	27	28
29	30				<small>March 2007</small> 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	<small>May 2007</small> 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



# May, 2007

## *The Battle of Attu, May 1943*

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

-LT. DONALD E. DWINNELL, VETERAN OF ATTU



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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6	7	8	9 <small>Full moon</small>	10 <small>Last Quarter Moon</small>	11	12
13 <small>Mother's Day</small>	14	15	16 <small>New Moon</small>	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 <small>First Quarter Moon</small>	24	25	26
27	28 <small>Memorial Day</small>	29	30	31		

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, 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 28<sup>th</sup>, 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*



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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 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 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 Prokopheuff (?) 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 aircraft carrier Ryujō before launching the attack 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

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29 <small>First Quarter Moon</small>	30	31																																																																																													
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	<small>Full Moon</small>																																																																																														



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
<small>July 2007</small> 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	<small>September 2007</small> 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
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Last Quarter Moon						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
New Moon						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	First Quarter Moon					
26	27	28	29	30	31	
		Full Moon				



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
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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
			First Quarter Moon			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Fall Equinox			Full Moon			
30						
					<small>August 2007</small> 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	<small>October 2007</small> 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

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









# 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
<small>October 2007</small> 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	<small>December 2007</small> 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	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Daylight Savings Time Ends		Election Day			New Moon	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Veterans Day						First Quarter Moon
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
				Thanksgiving Day		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 flight. **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].”*

GERTRUDE (HOPE) SVARNY, UNALASKA



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<small>November 2007</small> 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	<small>January 2008</small> 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
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Hanukkah Begins		Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
New Moon						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	First Quarter Moon					Winter Solstice
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Full Moon	Christmas Day				
30	31					
	Last Quarter Moon New Year's Eve					

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.