Chapter Eleven: Interpretive Issues; The Park from the Visitor's Point of View

The first several chapters of this study have detailed the steps that various major groups over the years—Congress, the National Park Service, the Alaska Railroad, the Alaska Road Commission, the State of Alaska, concessioners, advocacy organizations, and other entities—have played during the park's 90-year history. The activities undertaken by many if not most of these groups had either a direct or indirect effect on the park's visitors. This chapter, by contrast, emphasizes the other end of the telescope, so to speak. Of interest in this chapter is how visitors, over the years, have been attracted to the park, what their perceptions of the park have been, how the experiences of package-tour visitors have differed from those of independent travelers, and what visitor activities have been offered in the park.

Park Interpretation During the "Cabins-and-Snowshoes Era"

As Chapter 3 notes, Congress established Mount McKinley National Park in 1917. Harry Karstens, the park's first employee, arrived at McKinley Park Station in 1921. For the time being, Karstens was the sole park employee, although by the end of that year he had hired the park's first ranger.

Sled dog demonstration, July 1959. DENA 11-60, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

Development proceeded soon afterward. In early 1922, Alaska Engineering Commission crews based at McKinley Park Station had completed the majestic Riley Creek Bridge, and by June 1923 they had completed the last remaining construction hurdles: the completion of a bridge over the Tanana River, and the conversion of the old Tanana Valley Railroad tracks from narrow gauge to standard gauge. Just a month later, President Warren G. Harding dedicated the Alaska Railroad at the "golden spike" ceremony just north of Nenana. After June 1923, passengers were able to ride from Seward all the way to Fairbanks in the same train car; the train's schedule, however, was such that those hoping to visit Mount McKinley National Park typically detrained in the late night or early morning hours.

Despite the construction-related impediments, a few early visitors filtered into the park, some as early as the completion of the rail line to McKinley Park Station. During the summer of 1922 the local railroad station was a rude, converted boxcar; the only local accommodation was Maurice Morino's rustic "Mount McKinley Park Hotel," a roadhouse that had been completed the previous December.[1] The park, at this time, lacked a concessioner; the park's eastern boundary was four miles west of the tracks; and the only route connecting the railroad station to parkland was a rough trail that the Alaska Road Commission had just laid out. Given those conditions, it is perhaps not surprising that Karstens and his staff recorded just seven park visitors that year. By the following year the NPS had selected its first concessioner—Dan Kennedy—and the Alaska Road Commission had bladed out its first two miles of road west from the railroad depot. Kennedy, for his part, laid out a rustic camp just east of Savage River. Visitation into the park, however, remained anemic; although 217 people got off the train that summer at McKinley Park Station, only 34 visitors ascended the trail and entered the park. Tourism in 1924 was not much better; although the road was by now extended almost all the way to Kennedy's Savage River Camp, continuing difficulties with train schedules limited the number of park visitors to just 62. The level of overall Alaska tourism during this period, it must be noted, was greater than it had ever been before, and by this time businesses in many towns, both along the Pacific Coast and in the Interior as well, were benefiting from the increasing numbers of tourists. Tourism at that time, however, was a mere shadow of what it is today; in all probability, fewer than 10,000 tourists visited Alaska each summer.[2]

Tourism at Mount McKinley finally began to come into its own in 1925. The Mount McKinley Tourist and Transportation Company—minus Dan Kennedy, who had helped establish the firm a year earlier—was the park's concessioner that year; the company was run by Fairbanks mayor Thomas Marquam and Richardson Highway Transportation Company chief James L. Galen, while Robert Sheldon served as camp manager.[3] These three men were well-connected and well-funded. They were experienced with tourists and respected throughout the territory, and for more than a decade they proved to be ideal concessioners. They provided accommodations that were well-suited to the park's visitors. The concessioner thus gave tourists the proper balance of comfort and adventure, and made a consistent profit while doing so.

During the period in which the Mount McKinley Tourist and Transportation Company operated as the sole park concessioner, most visitors to the Alaska Railbelt took package tours that combined the services offered by the major transportation carriers. By the early 1920s, the

During its earliest years, Savage Camp was a small collection of temporary tent structures: a horse barn and corral in the center, with a main tent structure to the right, and individual sleeping tents to the left. Karstens Library Collection #1476

main inland carriers were the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, which in 1911 had completed its line from Cordova to Chitina and on to the Kennecott copper mine; the Richardson Highway Transportation Company, which hauled stages (small buses) over the former Valdez-Fairbanks wagon road; the Alaska Railroad, noted above, which opened to through traffic in 1923; and the White Pass and Yukon Route, which in 1922 began to offer direct steamboat service between Nenana and Dawson City, Yukon Territory.[4]

In the first two years after the Alaska Railroad's completion, there was little coordination, on

Transportation routes of the 1920s package tours are shown here, and involved several modes including steamship, railroad, river steamer and overland road. Alaska's "Great Circle Tour" via the Alaska Railroad, Yukon River, and White Pass & Yukon Railway required 28 to 30 days of travel. Karstens Library Collection, Alaska Railroad Brochure 1927

either pricing or schedules, between these transportation companies. But during the winter of 1923-24, the various carriers worked out a "Gentlemen's Agreement" that pledged greater cooperation, and thereafter most tourists visiting inland Alaska were part of a tour package. The "Great Circle Tour" or "Yukon Belt Tour" combined a Yukon River steamboat trip with an Alaska Railroad trip. The "Golden Belt Tour" combined an Alaska Railroad trip with a ride along the Richardson Highway and, optionally, a ride on the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad. Still others adopted the "All-Rail Tour" and took an Alaska Railroad round trip from Seward to Fairbanks and back. Because Mount McKinley was a major territorial icon—the Alaska Railroad, in fact, adopted "the Mount McKinley Route" as its slogan in 1924—taking a trip through the area was a primary destination of most Alaska visitors, and beginning in the mid-1920s many thousands of visitors marveled at Mount McKinley through the windows of a train car. Tour packages, moreover, typically gave visitors the option to detrain at McKinley Park Station for either 24 or 48 hours before resuming their travels. Park visitation totals, however, suggest that a fairly strong majority of Alaska Railroad tourists—regardless of the tour package they selected—thrilled to views of Mt. McKinley from a train window but chose not to head west into the park.[5]

Those tourists who opted for a McKinley Park vacation were met at the station by the concessioner's auto stages and were then escorted up to Savage River camp, twelve miles away. (See Chapter 4.) Savage Camp, which was substantially expanded and improved in 1926, was the tourists' primary park destination, and the great majority of park tourists spent all of their evenings there.[6] One of the most popular tours that departed from camp was the "Big Game Drive," which was a nine-mile horse-drawn stagecoach or automobile trip up the Savage River valley to "Caribou Camp" at its head; brochures noted that sheep, caribou, bears, and foxes might be seen along the route.[7] The Alaska Road Commission, supporting the company's effort, improved this route during the summer of 1927. The following year, the ARC chipped in again and roughed out a two-mile pack trail down the west side of the Savage River, beginning at the bridge, and during the late 1920s and early 1930s the concessioner offered horseback trips over the route. To foster access and provide an additional activity, the ARC bladed out an airfield at Savage Camp in 1930, after which scenic flights were periodically offered to adventurous tourists.

Savage Camp provided park visitors with accommodations, meals and activities. The family pictured above travelled by stagecoach along the Big Game Drive to the headwaters of Savage River where they were served lunch. Candy Waugaman Collection

For the relatively few tourists who were able to arrange a park visit that exceeded 48 hours, the concessioner offered many ways to see the more remote portions of the park. One two-day saddle-horse trip, for example, took the visitor up the "Big Game Drive" route to Caribou Camp; it then headed west into the upper Sanctuary River drainage south of Double Mountain before descending the valley to the road. Another saddle horse offering was a trip to the concessioner's

Park superintendent Harry Karstens, seen center above, often stopped at Savage Camp and entertained visitors with stories of his Mt. McKinley climb. Karstens Library Collection #844

Igloo tent camp via Caribou Creek and the northern slopes of Double Mountain. And for the most dedicated adventurers, eight-day saddle horse trips could be taken all the way to the Copper Mountain area and the remarkable scenery surrounding Muldrow Glacier. In order to support these trips, the concessioner built small tent camps at Toklat River and Copper Mountain as well as at Igloo Creek. These trips, by necessity, were modified or eliminated altogether when construction of the park road made these previously-distant points more accessible. As park road construction progressed farther into the park, visitors were taken to more distant road destinations on "interpretive" auto trips.

What visitors learned while visiting the park was an eclectic mix of what the Alaska tourist brochures, the concessioner, and the park provided them. Contemporary accounts suggest that camp manager Robert Sheldon, along with other concessions personnel, provided most of the on-the-spot interpretation to park visitors. NPS staff, at the time, was so preoccupied with game patrols, building construction, and other tasks that most rangers and other park personnel had relatively little direct contact with visitors. Supt. Karstens, however, frequently stopped at Savage Camp and told visitors about his Mount McKinley ascent, and at headquarters, rangers as early as 1926 were catering to curious visitors who stopped at the newly-moved kennels; "the Alaskan sled-dogs," Karstens wrote, "are always a source of interest to our park visitors here."[8]

Park personnel had other interpretive jobs, too. During the mid-1920s, Karstens spent "a great deal of time ... in answering letters of inquiring from prospective visitors, etc." He complained that "in the absence of a park folder, it is necessary to write quite lengthy letters on the various topics of interest." During the winter of 1925-26, park staff began assembling the first park interpretive folder, hoping to have it ready by the following summer. In 1927 the first such guide appeared, bearing the rather inelegant title *Rules and Regulations, Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska*. Two years later, an updated and expanded product appeared, called *Circular of General Information Regarding Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska*.[9] Ever since the 1920s, the agency has had either booklets or brochures available to park visitors.[10]

Park staff also reached out to provide information to other Alaskans. In April 1924, informal weekly or bi-weekly "news notes" about the park and the McKinley Park community began appearing in the major Railbelt newspapers. By July 1927, these tidbits—which were probably written by the park's clerk, Ralph Mackie—had evolved into the "McKinley Parklets." Later called

As this July 1, 1927 photo shows, park visitors stopped by the superintendent's office at park headquarters on their way from the railroad station to their destination at Savage Camp. Haskell Photo, DENA #14976, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

"McKinley Park News," these continued at least until the mid-1930s.[11]

During the depths of the Great Depression, the park established the first inklings of an interpretive program. In mid-May 1932, well-known wildlife biologist Joseph M. Dixon arrived at the park for a summer-long faunal study (see Chapter 12), and accompanying him during much of his field work was a newly-appointed ranger, David Kaye. The two, according to Superintendent Harry Liek, were "spending much time studying conditions among the wild animals with the view of determining the cause for our great losses in sheep." Liek noted that Kaye "has taken to the naturalist work with a vim," and by the end of June he had given seven "lectures on the subjects." He gave additional lectures in July.[12] Dixon, during the summer, took "exceptionally fine colored slides" of the park's animal and plant life, and beginning in 1933, Supt. Liek repeatedly gave two different talks to the assembled Savage Camp visitors: one that featured the park's plant and animal species, the other (complete with motion-picture footage) detailing the ascent of Mount McKinley that he, Alfred Lindley, Erling Strom and Grant Pearson had undertaken the previous year.[13] The following year, Liek followed

Ranger Aubrey F. Houston presented interpretive talks about the flora and fauna of the park to Savage Camp guests, as seen in this photograph taken near the camp. Ickes Collection, B75-175-331, Anchorage Museum of History & Art

This 1929 photo shows the six-sided interpretive kiosk, and park visitors at the McKinley Station railroad depot being met by the Mt. McKinley Tourist & Transportation Company touring cars. Herbert Heller Collection, 79-44-1305, University of Alaska Fairbanks Archive

a similar pattern; he gave 20 slide shows and 6 motion-picture presentations at Savage Camp.[14]

In 1935, the park attracted 877 visitors, more than had visited in any year since 1930. In response, Liek asked Aubrey Houston, who had been a park ranger for the past year, to take over Savage Camp interpretive duties. Houston, that summer, gave talks on the park's flora and fauna.[15] The following summer, with visitation at an all-time high, Houston continued his Savage Camp talks; in addition, the superintendent invited visitors to his residence at headquarters and gave a number of talks (accompanied by movie footage) about his Mount McKinley ascent.[16] In 1937, both the mountaineering and biology programs were again shown; Liek gave most of his programs at the park headquarters, while Edward (Ted) Ogston, along with Houston, conducted the flora and fauna program at Savage River Camp.[17] The concessioner, since 1935, had operated a lunch station at Camp Denali (at Mile 66 on the park road, where Camp Eielson was later located), but the NPS made no attempt during this period to conduct interpretive activities either here or at any other place west of Savage River Camp.

Interpretive Growth, 1938-1956

By 1938, change was in the air. Under federal auspices, a large hotel was being constructed adjacent to the McKinley Park railroad station. That summer, however, the NPS moved to expand its interpretive offerings at Savage River Camp. As before, Aubrey Houston and Harry Liek continued to provide programs on the park's flora and fauna and the 1932 ascent, respectively. In addition, Houston began offering nature walks in the Savage Camp area (in midsummer these were held almost daily), and he also led occasional auto caravan trips out the park road. Houston, at one point, even gave a flora-and-fauna talk to the residents of the new Civilian Conservation Corps camp.[18] A short-lived "museum"—which may also have been Houston's handiwork—was housed within a six-sided kiosk near the railroad depot. Years later, a writer who had spent time at the park in 1938 recalled that "visitors stood outside the small structure and looked inside at wildlife and photo displays."[19]

The new McKinley Park Hotel opened on June 1, 1939, and that summer the park's interpretive activities shifted accordingly. According to new superintendent Frank Been, "the hotel management has cooperated in providing adequate space and seating facilities and welcomes this means for entertaining its guests. Needless to say, visitors have been most appreciative of this service." Ted Ogston gave the lectures for most of the summer; after his late-August departure, Senior Clerk Gerald Janes filled in for the remainder of the season. Been was eager to offer what he termed an "active educational service" to the visiting public. To fulfill that goal, he assigned a ranger to accompany each of the bus trips that the concessioner sent out the park road. (As noted in Chapter 5, the park's concessioner and bus-trip provider was still the Mount McKinley Tourist and Transportation Company, and it would remain that way until the close of the 1941 season.) The NPS's on-board interpretive service, which was conducted by Louis Corbley but

This 1939 photo shows (left to right) the interpretive kiosk, the McKinley Station railroad depot, and the Mt. McKinley Tourist & Transportation Company warehouse. DENA 4-72, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

implemented by John Rumohr and Ted Ogston, allowed NPS rangers the opportunity to personally interact with almost all of the park's 2,262 visitors that year.[20]

Been, unlike the park's two previous superintendents, had experience as a park naturalist, and he obviously enjoyed his former job.[21] Midway through the 1939 season, he wrote to agency director Arno Cammerer about the park's newly-expanded interpretive program:

> The sourdough park rangers of Mount McKinley National Park have become naturalists and lecturers in the program for public contacts established here. Chief Ranger Corbley and Ranger Rumohr, hard bitten Alaskans from way back, and Ranger Ogston ... are showing their mettle in an activity which is a far cry from mushing dog teams. The fine spirit which the men have shown in this educational work is almost inspirational.
>
> Due to the small ranger force and lack of maintenance crew, the rangers have been jacks of all trades. Hence, enforced occupation on maintenance jobs ... has kept the rangers from one of their most important duties—direct service to park visitors. The presence of the CCC camp has liberated the rangers to a large extent so that we have felt free to establish a definite educational program.
>
> When the train bearing tourists arrives, a ranger is at the station to meet the group and accompanies it to the hotel. There by moving about among the new arrivals, answering questions and being generally pleasant, a National Park Service contact is established. From the hotel, bus trips embark for sight-seeing and to carry people to Camp Eielson, a tent hotel sixty-six miles inside the park. A ranger accompanies each bus. If there are more buses than rangers, the men move from one conveyance to the other during the trip...
>
> A unique feature of these trips is the night time travel. Usually, departure from the hotel is in the afternoon and causes the buses to return about midnight or later. One party, a few weeks ago, started out just after midnight and returned for a late breakfast. ... The rangers accompany these expeditions with fine spirit and the tourists enjoy them because there is no darkness. In fact, night time offers the greatest possibility for seeing that unforgettable spectacle, Mount McKinley, as the clouds are less apt to obscure the view.
>
> At the hotel, illustrated lectures are given in the evening; or during the day, if the arrangement of groups justifies a day time presentation. As windows must be darkened for either day or night lectures, the conditions are practically the same.
>
> A feature of constant attraction, to which many visitors return during their stay in the park, is the kennel of Alaska huskies. These fine friendly

animals are always as glad to see the visitors as the latter are the former. Frequently, the rangers demonstrate the use of dog sleds by harnessing up a team. Then excitement prevails for all—the dogs are raring to go, rangers at wit's end to keep dogs and sled on even keel and tourists shouting and hopping around attempting to photograph the melee. ... The pleasure of the tourists is increased because of a rather general impression that huskies are savage beasts.

To simplify and improve the exhibition of this typically Alaskan institution, Ranger Rumohr is working out a device for placing a dog sled on inconspicuous wheels. Then we expect to be able to give the dogs much needed exercise as well as to provide more adequate demonstrations. As dog teams are giving way to airplanes, we hope that the McKinley Park huskies will always be retained as part of the historical interest of the park as well as of the Territory.[22]

In 1940, the interpretive program was largely a continuation of the previous year's activities, and Supt. Been continued to stress the importance of interpretation—which included both the lectures and the guide service—in park operations. There were, in addition, two new activities. One, conducted occasionally, was a ranger-led hike from the park hotel to Horseshoe Lake. (This 1.5-mile trail was completed by Alaska Road Commission personnel during the summer of 1940.) In addition, rangers began sled-dog demonstrations that year at park headquarters; they did so in recognition of the consistent fondness that visitors showed toward sled dogs, and because sled dogs were a well-known Alaska icon. Been, writing to doubtlessly-skeptical superiors in Washington, noted that "the hitching up and 'mushing' of a dog team, which demonstration is made possible by having a sled mounted on rubber tired wheels, never fails to arouse the tourists' enthusiasm and many consider it the high point of their visit."[23]

Been, pleased by the public's response to his interpretive innovations, moved to establish a new, seasonal ranger-naturalist position at the park. In June 1941 Herbert Brazil, a University of Alaska graduate student, commenced work. That summer, Brazil shouldered most of the park's interpretive program responsibilities, which consisted of hotel lectures, bus trips, sled dog demonstrations, and guided hikes. He performed those duties admirably; because of time conflicts, Supt. Been and the park's equipment operator, William Clemons, also led a number of interpretive activities that summer.[24]

Given the onset of World War II, Alaska was closed to civilian tourism for the duration, and in 1942 only 63 visitors were recorded at Mount McKinley National Park. But military officials showed a continuing interest in the park, and on April 10, 1943, the park hotel became the home base for the Mount McKinley U.S. Army Recreation Camp, and for the next two years military personnel from throughout Alaska came to the park for much-needed rest and relaxation. Most of the facilities that the soldiers used were located in the immediate vicinity of the hotel and were provided by the army. NPS staff, however, did what they could to provide recreational opportunities. The onset of war had severely reduced the number of park employees; in June and July 1942,

In 1939, ranger John Rumohr experimented with attaching wheels to a dog sled so it could be used for summer sled dog demonstrations. No other national park unit offered this interpretive activity, which was begun on a full-time basis in 1940. DENA 11-135, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

This 1940 photo shows the sled dog demonstration held at the park's dog kennels near headquarters. Tour buses brought visitors right up to the kennels area. DENA 11-13.5, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

for example, there were just two people on the park's payroll. But three new employees signed up over the next few months, and in April 1943 all five helped welcome the troops to the park hotel.

During the first several months after the recreation camp opened, Acting Superintendent Grant Pearson gave a number of lectures and showed motion pictures of his 1932 climb up Mount McKinley. Rangers John Rumohr and Oscar Dick, working out of the hotel, showed motion pictures that wildlife biologist Adolph Murie had filmed four years earlier. They also gave talks and conducted dog-sled demonstrations, and beginning in June they accompanied several groups that drove out the park road. The remaining park staff, Principal Clerk Louis Maupin and Clerk-Stenographer Raye Ann Ayers, remained at headquarters where they provided interpretive information and answered visitors' questions.[25]

Another addition to the interpretive program was the park museum, which opened in June 1943. The museum, apparently the result of the efforts of Wildlife Ranger Oscar Dick, was located in the original (1925) superintendent's office, at the north edge of the headquarters complex. Grant Pearson noted that the museum, as originally constituted, "contains trophies of some of our better known animals and a flower display." He felt that Dick "did a remarkable job with meager material on hand ... we have had many fine comments on it." That fall, longtime Kantishna resident Fannie Quigley donated "several interesting items to be placed on display," to which were added items from the 1942 equipment-testing expedition and other accumulated memorabilia. During the war most hotel residents ventured up to headquarters during their stay, and many of those who toured the headquarters area spent a few minutes at the "little log museum."[26]

By August 1943, the U.S. Army had issued a 30-page booklet outlining the military's recreation program at the park. NPS interpretation, however, suffered that summer; because park employees were obligated to take on a wide range of administrative duties, certain parts of the interpretive program had to be eliminated. Hotel-area interpretation, for example, was limited to "regular illustrated talks." These talks, supplemented by occasional staff-led tours of the headquarters area, continued until the recreation camp closed down in early 1945.[27]

Because wartime restrictions remained in effect, Alaska remained off-limits to Outside residents during the summer of 1945. The park attracted some Alaskans: military officers, Anchorage business people, and scattered tourists. The hotel, however, was closed, so those that came either camped, stayed at park headquarters, or overnighted at the Wonder Lake Ranger Station. Given the small numbers involved, the only interpretation carried on was when visitors toured the park museum.[28]

Constructed in 1926 as the superintendent's office at the current park headquarters, this building was converted, in its original location, shown here, into the park museum in 1943. It served as such until 1950 when it was moved to the maintenance area of park headquarters and used as an office. DENA 5-2, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

In the spring of 1946, the hotel opened for the first time in 15 months, and for the first time the Alaska Railroad was the active operator of not only the McKinley Park Hotel but the park concessions contract as well.[29] That summer, "illustrated talks were given to each group of visitors" to the park hotel. In addition, rangers rode in the concessioner's buses with groups of visitors "to explain the wonders of the Park to them." The only literature available for distribution that year was the park information circular.[30] But the following summer, additional publications became available; these included a U.S. Geological Survey map of Alaska and biologist Joseph Dixon's book, *Birds and Mammals of Mount McKinley National Park*, which had been published in 1938. Adolph Murie's *The Wolves of Mount McKinley* was added the following year; the book, in its third edition, sold for 75 cents.[31]

Beginning in the summer of 1947, the McKinley Park Hotel was open all year round, and NPS rangers did their best to provide interpretation to all park visitors. Illustrated talks at the hotel remained the primary interpretive vehicle during this period; they were given on a regular basis in

When the McKinley Park Hotel opened in 1939, it provided accommodations and meals and it became the center of most interpretive activities for park visitors. This 1949 photo shows two tour buses in front of the hotel. NPS Photo

the summertime (as often as every other night in July 1948), but during the off-season, talks were provided only "when the hotel manager advised them that the house count was sufficient." This usually happened 3 to 8 times per month.[32] Rangers did not ride along on bus trips during the late 1940s, but they occasionally showed Murie's wildlife film or assembled slide programs. In July 1949, park management stationed one ranger at "Wonder Lake during the month to furnish information to the visitors to that area," and in addition, occasional illustrated talks were given in the Anchorage or Fairbanks areas.[33] The park museum remained open, on request, throughout this period; new items added during the late 1940s included the pelt of a beaver killed by a railroad "speeder," a red fox caught in a wolf trap, a collection of mosses and lichens, and a three-dimensional model of the Mount McKinley massif, the latter created by wildlife ranger Harold Booth.[34]

Having arrived as a park ranger in 1948, William Nancarrow, center, became the first full-time, year-round park naturalist in 1951. He later served at the park as a carpenter and Buildings & Utilities foreman, retiring in 1981. Bruce Thompson Collection, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

In the summer of 1950 the Korean War began, and for the next three years the hotel remained open each summer for civilian tourists, but during the intervening winters, either Army or Air Force personnel filled the hotel seeking relaxation and rest. To assist with the interpretive program, the park in June 1950 hired Elton S. Thayer as a seasonal ranger-naturalist; his was the first such hire in nine years. Thayer remained for the summer. The following June, the park hired its first full-time, year-round park naturalist: William Nancarrow, a former ranger who had transferred to the park two years earlier from Lake Texoma National Recreation Area along the Texas-Oklahoma border.[35] Nancarrow was the sole interpretive employee for the time being, but in June 1952 James Castren signed on as a new seasonal interpreter. The following year, Castren's position was replaced by Theodore Lachelt; Nancarrow, meanwhile, stayed on. Ever since that time, the park has had a permanent position (either as naturalist or interpreter) to manage the park's interpretive activities.[36]

Perhaps because of these additional staff, the park was able to broaden its summertime interpretive program. In 1950 Elton Thayer, assisted at times by park ranger James Orr, offered daily illustrated talks at the park hotel on such subjects as "the Wildlife of Denali," "the Famous 1932 Ascent of Mt. McKinley," and "the 1942 Army Expedition to the Summit of Mt. McKinley." They also led nature walks, primarily to Horseshoe Lake. And on occasion, park staff conducted bus tours out the McKinley park road.[37] The following summer, Nancarrow crafted an interpretive program that consisted of "a 15-minute talk on the policy, history, size and interesting features of the park" followed by two short movies: "Climb of Mt. McKinley" (about the Army's 1942 McKinley expedition) and "The Wildlife of the Park" (with 1940 footage from Adolph Murie).[38] But by 1952, he had discarded the rescue-expedition film and replaced it with a second wildlife movie. He and Castren also offered two slide programs, they led hikes to Horseshoe Lake, and they began

In 1952, Building #22 (the original superintendent's office turned museum) was moved again to a location above the park road across from park headquarters. The building served as an exhibit room for visitors until 1959. DENA 13-5, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

to hold "informational sessions" in the hotel lobby to answer visitors' questions. Occasional activities in the headquarters area—specifically, orientation talks at the naturalist's office and the dog kennels—rounded out the program.[39] The 1953 program consisted of hotel talks and dog demonstrations; guided walks to Horseshoe Lake were also offered, although many additional visitors took advantage of the new self-guided trail pamphlet that park staff had developed the previous summer.[40] One point of interest that was not available to visitors during this period was the park museum; in July 1950 it was closed down and moved to another headquarters location, primarily because the museum building was judged to be structurally unsafe.[41]

In winter, activities surrounding the hotel during the early 1950s took on an entirely new cast because of its role as an army and air force recreation camp. As in World War II, military authorities created a diversified recreational program; activities offered to the soldiers and airmen included skiing, skating, and tobogganing. To complement that program, Orr and Nancarrow met with the local military brass to "work out a program of interpretation and orientation." Based on the results of that November 1950 meeting, NPS staff over the next several winters offered a two-pronged interpretive program: the presentation of frequent illustrated talks at the hotel, plus a bus trip to the park headquarters, where a ranger would "hook up the dog team and demonstrate this method of travel." Each of these programs would be offered every two to three days throughout the winter.[42] Superintendent Pearson, during this period, also played a continuing interpretive role. Given the presence of the Army Arctic Indoctrination School at the Big Delta Air Force Base (later known as Fort Greely), Pearson made frequent trips there to give talks and show movies, primarily during the wintertime, between February 1950 and July 1952.[43]

The military left in the early spring of 1953. That summer, recognizing that the military would not return, the Alaska Railroad decided to keep the hotel open to civilian use for the upcoming winter. Despite relatively low visitor totals, NPS staff that winter cobbled together a series of illustrated talks, films, dog demonstrations, and visits to the park's information center, which was located in the naturalist's office at headquarters.[44] The hotel remained closed during the winters that followed, but the summertime program for the next several years remained similar to those of previous years.

During the mid-1950s, owing to the lack of alternatives, the concessioner was largely responsible for taking visitors to the park's main points of interest. Those interested in heading out to the western end of the park road could take either a "White" brand Navy-surplus bus or a smaller limousine. But the sparse visitation during these years, combined with the concessioner's marginal finances (see Chapter 6), meant that many visitors never got beyond the hotel-headquarters area. In July 1955, for example, Wonder Lake Ranger Ralph Turman noted that "the hotel bus has been [here] two or three times during the month while the limousine has reached this point four or five times," and in August "the Hotel limousine was observed only a couple of times and the bus was not seen."[45] These trips were probably all-day affairs, inasmuch as the train schedule brought tourists to the park at either 12:30 a.m. or 4:30 a.m.[46]

Richard Prasil, above in 1956, prepares interpretive displays inside the exhibit room at park headquarters. On the log wall to the right is a bear hide and the three-dimensional model of the Mount McKinley massif created by wildlife ranger Harold Booth. DENA 13-2, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

The NPS offered a diversity of interpretive activities during the mid-1950s. Beginning in 1954, the park museum was open again, so visitors during this period had the choice of both talks and films at the park hotel, and at park headquarters, there were both dog-sled demonstrations and talks at the museum. A few visitors took guided walks to Horseshoe Lake; many more, however, picked up an NPS pamphlet and took the self-guided hike to Horseshoe Lake and followed numbered posts along the trail.[47]

A more detailed view of the park's interpretive program can be seen in the park's *Report on Information and Interpretive Services* for 1955. It noted that

> Four programs were scheduled: two narrated wildlife films, an illustrated talk on the effect of seasons on plants and animals, and a program on history and mountain climbing. Museum talks were generally concerned with the history of the park and the early ascents of McKinley. These programs, as well as the dog team demonstrations, were conducted six days per week throughout the travel season [June 15 through September 14]. Dog team demonstrations involved the harnessing and running of five dogs, and an explanation of the uses of dogs within the area, and a resumé of their history in the park and Alaska. Guided nature walks were scheduled three times each week, and hikes were conducted if more than four people registered for the walk. The number of visitors who took advantage of the nature walks was small, but understandably so, in view of the fact that the average age of the McKinley Park visitor is 50 years, then too, inclement summer weather results in the visitor taking advantage of demand bus trips out in the park when clear days are experienced.[48]

These activities were coordinated by park naturalist Richard Prasil and conducted primarily by seasonal ranger-naturalists Richard Riegelhuth (1954-55), Robert Badaracco (1956), and Thomas Choate (1957).

Construction of the Eielson Visitor Center was well under way in this September 1959 photograph. This Mission 66 visitor center opened to the public in July 1960. DENA 5-8, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

Mission 66 and Its Impacts

Throughout the early to mid-1950s, the park staff was well aware that a road was inching its way from the Richardson Highway (at Paxson) to McKinley Park Station and, as shown in Chapter 6, the widespread recognition that the park would soon be accessible to automobile traffic resulted in plans for various infrastructure and interpretive projects. By early August 1957, when the Denali Highway finally reached the park, the agency had improved several campgrounds along the park road, most notably Savage Campground and Wonder Lake Campground during the summers of 1954 and 1955.

Little thought was given toward interpretation along the park road, however, until park staff began working on the park's *Mission 66 Prospectus* during the winter of 1955-56. (See Chapter 7.) Plans, at that time, stated that a proposed road between Fairbanks and the park would enter the park via the north end of the Savage River Canyon and that it would intersect with the park road near the Savage River bridge. Based on that proposal, Mission 66's initial plans—bold indeed—called for the construction of a large, new public use building in that area. The park's Main Visitor Center, to be located there, would include an exhibit room, a 300- to 400-person auditorium, a library, and information office. The prospectus also called for a second visitor center, at Wonder Lake, which would include a 100-person auditorium along with an exhibit room and an information office. Self-guiding nature trails, similar to what had already been implemented for Horseshoe Lake, were planned for Savage River and Polychrome Pass.[49]

That summer, a team from the agency's regional office (in San Francisco) spent a day along the park road looking over what the park staff had proposed. Out of that visit came an initial suggestion to emphasize two new visitor centers: one at Polychrome Pass, the other at the site of former Camp Eielson. Polychrome Pass, for awhile, was slated to be the park's primary visitor-center site, with Eielson of secondary interest. It was soon discovered, however, that obtaining water at Polychrome Pass was problematic, so these priorities were reversed. By December 1956, the Eielson site had become "first in priority because of its urgent need." Development plans were focused there because "the superlative view of Mount McKinley and other features of the area merit orientational and interpretational exhibits, and as the location is the midpoint of the

concessioner bus tours, the area and building will be utilized heavily."[50] Agency interest in a Wonder Lake visitor center soon died away[51], and interpretation at Polychrome was soon downsized to a self-guiding trail, but for the Eielson site, development plans soon turned into action. In early 1957, NPS personnel quickly cobbled together architectural and interpretive plans for the new visitor center. By July, the agency was getting ready to issue a bid for the building's construction.[52] The following March a construction contract was awarded to J. B. Warrack, an Anchorage construction firm. Eielson Visitor Center opened to the public in July 1960; a year later, on July 15, 1961, Associate NPS Director Eivind Scoyen visited the park from Washington and dedicated the center in front of an appreciative crowd numbering about 60.[53]

During the early days of Mission 66 planning, the NPS (as noted above) retained a strong interest in a visitor center at the east end of the park, either in the Savage River area or in the vicinity of the McKinley Park Hotel. The agency, however, felt that it could not move forward until Bureau of Public Roads officials made a decision on where the road from Fairbanks and Nenana would enter the park. In 1956, BPR officials had tentatively decided to build a road through the Savage River Canyon, but during the critical winter of 1956-57—when the decision was made to construct Eielson Visitor Center—BPR withdrew its earlier recommendation and was in a wait-and-see mode. Several months later, BPR officials finally decided that the north-south route through Nenana Canyon was more practical and cost effective than a Savage River route. But by this time, the park's Mission 66 plans had already gone forward, and the fiscal window of opportunity had passed.[54]

Eielson Visitor Center was dedicated on July 15, 1961. DENA 5-26, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

Park staff had identified a need for roadside interpretive signs several years prior to the Mission 66 program,[55] but Mission 66 breathed new life into these efforts. Program officials felt that various "orientation exhibits and markers at scenic turnouts and other appropriate areas [along the park road] is deemed mandatory." At first they planned for markers at ten locations, soon upped to twelve; several of these were scenic or panoramic view sites, but virtually all offered interpretive markers pertaining to various natural history topics. The intended idea, conceptually, was that "roadside turnouts with exhibits or orientation devices [would] give meaning to the important park features," by which "not only will enjoyment of the park be increased, but enlistment of the visitor's intelligent cooperation in the protection and preservation of the area will be assured."[56]

Soon after the Mission 66 planning effort was commenced, Neil J. (Jim) Reid became the park naturalist. Reid, who was fully aware that the Denali Highway would soon be completed, knew that the park faced a daunting challenge; not only did it need to reach out to traditional visitor populations who arrived by train and stayed in the hotel, but it also had to find a way to appeal to auto-borne tourists, whose accommodations were divided among the park hotel, campgrounds along the park road, and accommodations outside the park. Reid, based on just a few months on the job, recognized that "some of the services that have proven to be highly successful interpretive media" in temperate zone parks (such as campfire and amphitheater programs) "cannot be applied to our most northern National Park." Instead, "the park road appears to be the logical place and roadside interpretive markers seem to be the best medium to contact the [newly-mobile] park visitor."[57]

Given that conclusion, Reid in mid-1957 began preparing a roadside interpretive plan that would include "20 roadside orientation and interpretive signs along the 93 miles of park road." By December 1958, the park plan was calling for a total of 33 interpretive signs at 17 turnouts along the park road, but the plan that was finalized two months later listed just 19 signs in 14 locations.[58] The park's interpretive plan was then presented to regional officials, and after some lively debates on "what roadside interpretive signs for Mount McKinley should be" (and some strident protests from conservationists who argued that signs ruined the "charm of the road"), final designs in 1959 were sent on to the Yosemite National Park, where the agency's sign shop produced them.[59] The following July, the park installed its first eight roadside markers. That fall, the sign-installation effort received a severe if unexpected setback; as a government report noted, "many of our wooden signs were destroyed by grizzlies ... prior to the hibernation period, and had to be replaced." Improved signs arrived in their stead, however, and in July 1962 the last four roadside signs were

This Mission 66 roadside interpretive sign was located west of the Toklat River bridge, overlooking the West Branch of the Toklat River and Divide Mountain. DENA 39-11, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

installed.[60] All proved informative to park visitors, and the only sign that smacked of controversy was one (at Mile 4) discussing permafrost impacts; in June 1963, for reasons of propriety, the park decided to cover over a sign describing a "drunken forest" with the more appropriately-worded "leaning forest." That overlay, however, proved temporary, and by the 1970s the original text was visible once again.[61]

Other signs were added, too. Mileage markers were in place by the summer of 1960, and perhaps as early as 1956. In 1961, new 4" x 4" redwood markers were installed with numbers on both sides, but by the summer of 1963, only those deemed "very important" were being replaced. Several new mileposts were installed in 1972, but most if not all of the park's mileposts had been removed by the end of that decade.[62] New signs also appeared at the two park entrances, the railroad station, the entrance station, the various park campgrounds, and even along Windy Creek, near Cantwell.[63] And regarding the Horseshoe Lake Trail near the park hotel, park staff in early

In June 1960, the Horseshoe Lake Nature Trail featured this sign that provided visitors with an interpretive trail guide. DENA 13-6, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

1963 made an about-face from their decade-old practice of distributing self-guided interpretive booklets and instead opted to place 25 or more plastic signposts identifying key features along the trail. These signs were installed over the course of the 1964 and 1965 seasons.[64]

Meanwhile, park staff—facing a dramatic increase in visitor numbers—did their best to carve out an interpretive program that would appeal to a newly-diverse visitor population. During the early summer of 1957, the program was much as it had been earlier: lectures at the park hotel, talks at the park's museum (or "exhibit room"), dog sled demonstrations, and occasional hotel-based guided nature walks, primarily to Horseshoe Lake.[65] Later that summer the number of visitors abruptly increased, but given no changes in staff, the program continued much as before. Both then and in 1958, the only new program element was an occasional campground program at Savage Campground, and because the park museum had been chosen as the new information center for auto-borne tourists, the former museum talks became orientation talks.[66]

This period also witnessed the birth of the park's—and Alaska's—first park cooperating association. As noted above, park staff in 1947 had begun selling a few educational materials, primarily books and maps. Through most of the 1950s, what was available to tourists was limited to the park brochure, plus two internally-generated, mimeographed publications: the Horseshoe Lake nature trail booklet and a seven-page road guide entitled *McKinley's Mammals and Where to Watch for Them*.[67] Park staff also spent considerable time during the mid- to late 1950s preparing a natural history handbook, but it was never completed.[68] To provide a vehicle for providing sales items to park tourists, park naturalist William Nancarrow, in late 1951, moved to form a natural history association for the park.[69] Two years later, he formed the McKinley Park Natural History Association and submitted paperwork to higher-ups for their approval.[70] That effort proved stillborn, but five years later park staff tried again, and on February 16, 1959 they successfully formed the Mount McKinley Natural History Association, the agency's 49th cooperating association. Jim Reid, the park naturalist, was the group's first executive secretary.[71] Of enormous help to the group's prospects was a $7,500 pledge, received in the summer of 1959, which had been included in the will of James William Walsh, Jr. Given that financial boost, park officials confidently predicted that the association would "be able to stand on its own feet."[72] Park employees were pleasantly flabbergasted by the promised gift—plus a second pledge of an even larger amount—because they had virtually no idea who Walsh was or why he would bequeath such a substantial sum.[73]

Slowly, over the next few years, new seasonal ranger-naturalists were added (there were two

Additional interpretive staff were hired to operate the new Eielson Visitor Center. Pictured here is the inside of the main viewing room at the visitor center, with exhibits and large windows for observation. DENA 11613, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

Eielson Visitor Center was the destination for concessioner tour buses until June 1981. DENA 5-35, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

in 1959 and 1960, three in 1961, and a surprising five in 1963), and as a result, the park was able to expand its interpretive program. The addition of a park entrance station, in 1959, provided a basis for providing park information[74]; another new service that year was the implementation of roving interpretive patrols along the park road. The interpretive-patrol idea was discarded in 1960. In mid-July of that year the new Eielson Visitor Center opened; it was staffed by a single seasonal ranger—Val Furlong—for the remainder of that season. The new center was devoid of exhibits that summer; perhaps to compensate, Furlong apparently conducted a number of area hikes in addition to his visitor center duties. Beginning in 1961, the agency offered a full-fledged interpretive program which included walks, talks, and information-desk services.[75]

As noted in Chapter 7, the park concessions program in 1958 emerged from an extended period in the doldrums when the Mount McKinley National Park Company—represented by Don Hummel and his nephew, Al Donau—became the park concessioner. By this time, Alaska Railroad schedules had been modified so as to bring visitors to McKinley Park Station during the midday hours. So as a result, those interested in heading out into the park were obliged to arise early, because the concessioner's bus tour left the park hotel at 4 a.m. The daily bus went just 65 miles out the park road (to the former site of Camp Eielson, where construction work was beginning for the new Eielson Visitor Center) and lasted just eight hours in order to have visitors back to the hotel in time for the southbound train. The sleepy bus passengers were assured that the early-morning departure was advantageous because "the best views of Mount McKinley ... are obtained in the early morning hours some distance from the hotel. Later in the day the peak is often hidden by clouds."[76]

Interpretation During the 1960s

At the east end of the park, the increasing number of annual park visitors during the 1960s caused growing pains in the interpretive program. At the hotel, evening programs (either slide shows or movies) had long been held in the facility's recreation room. But by June 1961, an average of 50 people—and sometimes crowds of "well over 100"—caused Verde Watson, the new park naturalist, to sarcastically complain that "extreme effort would be required to design a room less appropriate for [audio-visual programs] than the Hotel Recreation Room. ... Protection from inclement weather and insects are about the only good things that can be said" for it. Watson doubtless knew that the park's current master plan, which was a product of the Mission 66 planning process, called for the construction of a visitor center in the hotel area, and that Jim Reid, his predecessor, had been pressing the agency throughout 1960 to build such a center. Given that recommendation, Watson averred that "the need for a visitor center, probably at a location quite near the hotel ... indeed seems urgent."[77]

The hotel management was sympathetic to the overcrowding and the need for additional interpretive space, so during the winter of 1961-62 the concessioner approved an NPS plan to establish a visitor "information orientation station" in the hotel lobby. The information desk began operations in late May 1962—it was the third such facility opened since 1958—and by the end of June the

This room, added to one side of the hotel porch, served as the NPS visitor information and orientation center beginning in the spring of 1966. DENA 5-40, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

agency was glad to report that "responses thus far to the [new service desk] indicates this facility will render valuable public service."[78] In addition, concessions officials agreed to Watson's plan to provide an afternoon interpretive talk (with an accompanying movie) in the hotel's recreation room as well as an evening slide-show program. This new system was implemented beginning in July 1962 and soon became a staple of the park's interpretive program.[79] And in the fall of 1962, park personnel "temporarily" moved two small buildings to a site adjacent to the existing entrance station (which was located just east of where the road crossed the railway tracks) "to better serve those visitors entering the park by private vehicle."[80]

These improvements, though helpful in the short term, did not dissuade Watson from pressing for a new visitor center. By the summer of 1962, officials had completed a site-selection process and had chosen to locate the visitor center approximately 100 yards southwest of the hotel, and in 1963 regional officials visited the park and reviewed design plans. For the next two years, Watson continued to advocate for the center.[81] The agency, however, took a more economical alternative; in the spring of 1966, with the concessioner's blessing, the agency built a new information and orientation center (a 10' x 15' room) on the hotel's front porch. It opened on May 29, and in July the agency noted that the center had "increased public contact there more than fourfold since the facility was relocated."[82]

The enlarged facility was admittedly a stopgap measure; although it adequately fulfilled its narrow purpose, it did nothing to quiet the increasing number of complaints related to the various audio-visual presentations. As noted in the park naturalist's 1966 annual report,

> There is no adequate space in which visitors can assemble for proper orientation to the park. A visitor center with exhibit space and an auditorium is needed. Such a facility is programmed for [fiscal year] 1970. In the interim, the hotel recreation hall must double as auditorium. During the 1966 season 140 persons stood and sat beside pingpong tables and beneath steam and water pipes to listen to interpretive talks designed to recreate indoors the moods of this wilderness park. Quite a trick! Especially when the juke box in the next room blared the erotic music of the period.[83]

For the remainder of the decade, park staff continued to rail against the "critical shortage of ... visitor use facilities" and plead for a new visitor center. No such action was forthcoming, however.[84]

The park's sled dog demonstration continued to draw visitors to the kennels, seen in this July 1966 photo. DENA 11-116, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

Throughout this period, visitors who arrived at the park by train—and more than half of all park visitors did so—used the concessioner's buses to head west from the hotel and headquarters areas. As noted above, beginning in 1958 an 8-hour bus tour left the park hotel at 4 a.m.; it returned in time for the 12:30 p.m. southbound train. Just one year later, the concessioner added a second activity: a 12-hour tour (by van) to Wonder Lake, which returned in time for the 4:30 p.m. northbound train.[85] The longer tour, however, was less well known, and in both 1968 and 1971 advertisements touted only the 8-hour tour. (By 1971, this was being advertised as a "wildlife tour.") Those who wanted more personalized services—photographers, for example, or those headed off on a

Ranger naturalist Louis Ansorge leads visitors on a Horseshoe Lake Nature Trail walk in August 1965. DENA 13-17, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

backcountry hike—could rent a car, with driver, at the park hotel.[86]

The mid-1960s featured much the same interpretive program that had been established in 1962. At the east end of the park, the program continued to be comprised of dog sled demonstrations, evening slide programs, nature hikes (either to Horseshoe Lake or over the 1.7-mile Morino Loop trail), and afternoon programs. As late as 1966 the typical afternoon interpretive fare was a wildlife movie;[87] that fall, however, a new NPS-sponsored Alaska film entitled *Magnificence in Trust* was received so positively that it became the afternoon staple the following year. Complementing these programs were ranger talks at Eielson Visitor Center, and on a more sporadic basis, Eielson-based rangers led "tundra wildflower walks" in the area. Visitors, at times, were also able to watch a slide show at the park's entrance station.[88]

During this period, the fledgling Mount McKinley Natural History Association gained a solid footing, though not without some difficult growing pains. During the early 1960s, the park naturalist—who served as the association's executive secretary as a collateral duty—was preoccupied in appointing a board of directors and assembling a list of sales items. In its articles of incorporation, the association was intended to serve park units throughout Alaska; given that direction, a sales unit opened at Sitka soon after the group was formed (though its sales were limited to slides). Similar sales units at Glacier Bay and Katmai did not open until 1968 and 1971, respectively; even so, staff from all three monuments served as board members throughout the 1960s. The difficulties of holding an annual meeting with such far-flung members, however, soon became apparent, and in 1962 the board agreed that McKinley-based staff could constitute a quorum.[89]

Of obvious concern to the new natural history association was where the park's sales venue would be located and what items would be sold. At first, annual sales were small because the major sales outlet was in the small park entrance station. (Eielson Visitor Center, which opened in 1960, sold only a small number of items during the 1960s.[90]) Then, in 1962, prospects for the association's finances brightened considerably with the installation of a new publications display case at the newly-staffed information desk in the park hotel. (This natural history association sales area would remain until the summer of 1972, when it moved to the new Riley Creek Information Center.) The installation of two small exhibit buildings near the park entrance station, during the winter of 1962-63, provided an improved sales outlet to visitors arriving by automobile.[91]

As far as its sales items were concerned, the association first retailed existing books, maps, and film. But as Regional Naturalist Dorr Yeager noted, "the publication of information material ... frequently constitutes the greatest source of income for [park] association[s]."[92] Longtime park biologist Adolph Murie graciously agreed

Ranger naturalist John Trent, seen here, gave the first interpretive campground program at the Savage River Campground on July 6, 1968. DENA 13-23, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

to publish his *Mammals of Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska* through the association, and not long afterward he agreed to do likewise for his *Birds of Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska*. (His idea for a park "flower book" was considered but never published.)[93] These two publications were offered for sale at the park beginning in May and July 1963, respectively. During the early 1960s, revenues from book sales at the park were relatively modest, never exceeding $2,700 per year. Association profits, moreover, were minimal because "a large number of the association's two publications were given away" to colleges and secondary schools.[94]

Later that decade, the association branched out with assistance to other park units: in 1964 it published a visitors' guide to Sitka National Monument plus a *Glacier Bay National Monument Boating Guide*. Then, in December 1966, it purchased the nine-acre site where the old Dundas Bay cannery was located (in Glacier Bay National Monument), after which it donated the parcel to the NPS. In May 1967 it helped underwrite the construction of a scale model of Sitka (circa 1867) to help commemorate the Alaska Purchase centennial. Then, in 1968, it published a staff-prepared *A Coloring Book of Mount McKinley*.[95] In recognition of the association's statewide reach—and to also recognize the newly-independent management status of Glacier Bay and Katmai national monuments—the Mount McKinley Natural History Association changed its name, in 1970, to the Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association.[96]

During the last four years before the Parks Highway was completed to the park, a new activity was added to the park's interpretive program. In 1969, "rustic campfire circles" were placed at Savage River, Wonder Lake, and Teklanika campgrounds, and evening campfire talks commenced in 1970. The long-existing activities remained, but because of the burgeoning crowds coming to the park, their frequency multiplied: beginning in 1969, for example, there were two dog-sled demonstrations daily, and the summers of 1970 and 1971 often witnessed two showings of the afternoon movie (*Magnificence in Trust*), two nature hikes, and even two evening programs each day.[97]

The Impact of Traffic Restrictions on Park Interpretation

As noted in Chapter 8, the completion of the Parks Highway resulted in NPS Director George Hartzog's decision to ration traffic along the park road west of the Savage River campground. As a result of that decision, private automobile traffic along most of the park road was restricted, and to provide access into the park the NPS implemented a shuttle bus system beginning in early June 1972. The establishment of this system generated a huge demand for information about travel options. And because most of this demand was generated by automobile travelers, the NPS reacted by opening the Riley Creek Information Center, later that summer, near the entrance to Riley Creek Campground. That same year, they removed the information center at the hotel.[98] The other major implication of the new system was that the many roadside interpretive signs that had informed the motoring public were no longer needed. As a result, NPS staff quietly began to take down these signs. Some were gone just a few months after Director Hartzog announced the new traffic regime; a few signs, however, remained until the late 1970s.[99]

Given the road restrictions, people interested in visiting the western end of the park road had two options: the long-established tour buses or the new shuttle buses. The concessioner initially reacted to the new system by moving the former 4 a.m. buses to an even earlier 3 a.m. starting time. But by mid-July, it had made an about-face and moved the departure time back to 6 a.m. and, in addition, it added an evening wildlife tour. (Both tours went 66 miles out the road before returning; the new tour was ostensibly added "as a means to alleviate congestion caused by large visitor groups at Eielson Visitor Center.") The evening tour, however, proved unsuccessful, so in the spring of 1973 the concessioner offered two morning tours, at 4 a.m. and 6 a.m.[100] Twice-a-day tours remained the norm for the remainder of the decade; in 1977 the early tour still departed at 4 a.m., but by 1980, tour times were 6 a.m. and mid-afternoon.[101] As for the shuttle bus, it proved almost three times as popular as the tour bus during the summer of 1972.[102] Despite overcrowding problems that forced the NPS to acquire additional buses in midseason that year, the agency in the spring of 1973 advertised that there would be just five daily round trips to the western reaches of the park road: two to Wonder Lake and three others to Eielson. As the decade wore on, the number of these daily round trips increased.[103]

The mid- to late 1970s witnessed dramatically increasing visitor volumes to Mount McKinley National Park: there were fewer than 45,000 recreational visitors in 1971, the year before the Parks Highway reached the park, but by 1979, that number had skyrocketed to more than 251,000 recreational visitors.[104] During this period, the number of visitors who arrived by train increased slightly. The vast majority of new visitors, however, were those who drove to the park; rather than taking the long, difficult Denali Highway route,

Road traffic restrictions meant that all visitors–not just tour bus passengers–would travel the park road in larger groups, resulting in the need for expanded services. These two photographs were taken at Polychrome Rest Stop in July 1974, only two years after road travel restrictions were instituted. DENA 5745, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

most motorists accessed the park via the Parks Highway, from either Fairbanks or Anchorage.

In order to provide quality information to the new hordes of park visitors, park staff sought new interpretive opportunities. As noted above, the 1971 program had featured the following daily activities: two afternoon movies, two evening programs, two dog sled demonstrations, two hotel-based nature hikes, and various campground talks. By 1975, the afternoon movie had been eliminated entirely, and both the hotel slide show (which was now held in the afternoon) and the hotel-based nature walk had been trimmed back to once per day.[105] Campfire programs were being offered at the Wonder Lake and Teklanika campgrounds (as in 1971), but the Savage Campground program had been cut in favor of one at the much larger Riley Creek Campground. Dog sled demonstrations increased from twice- to thrice-daily (at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m.) beginning in August 1975. (Park staff noted that "this demonstration of the traditional use of sled dogs in Alaska and Mount McKinley continues to be the favorite and most highly attended visitor activity.") In addition, interpreters now offered a "tundra walk" each afternoon at Eielson Visitor Center along with a longer daily discovery hike which had been instituted in 1973.[106] Interpreters also were on hand twice each day at the McKinley Park railroad depot to offer information and guidance to arriving visitors. In 1976, the program was similar to what had been offered in 1975, except that it reestablished its hotel-based evening program four days each week, and on the other three days it inaugurated an evening walk

Polychrome Rest stop facilities are shown here in 2007. NPS Photo

A ranger naturalist provides visitors with an interpretive talk in the Eielson Visitor Center observation room, July 1966. DENA 13-20, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

starting at the hotel. In addition, Eielson-based tundra walks were offered in the morning as well as afternoon, and "bicentennial living history demonstrations" were offered at the "Historic Toklat Cabin" throughout the summer.[107]

By 1978, the park's interpretive program had witnessed even more changes. The daily afternoon slide talks and the four-per-week evening slide shows remained, as did the daily hotel-based nature walks and the three-per-day dog sled demonstrations. But Eielson-based tundra walks were now offered three times per day, and discovery hikes were now offered to both hotel-area and Eielson-based visitors. Campfire programs were offered at four campgrounds: Riley Creek, Savage, Teklanika, and Wonder Lake. In addition, children's activities were now offered daily at the Riley Creek Information Center, and interpretive programs were occasionally offered at McKinley Village, seven miles south of the hotel. (Rangers no longer greeted arriving train passengers.) In 1979, the agency was able to expand its slide-show programs to twice each day, seven days per week, and offsite programs were shifted from McKinley Village to Camp Denali and North Face Lodge. Otherwise, park interpretation continued much as it had the previous year.[108]

The dramatic increases in park visitation, and the limited, inadequate facilities at the park hotel, soon brought forth renewed calls for improved interpretive venues at both ends of the park road. Just two years after Eielson Visitor Center was opened to the public, large groups of visitors were overwhelming the facility; in particular, lunch-toting tour bus patrons descended on the center at mid-morning each day, and given the cool, blustery conditions that all too often prevail there, patrons commonly ate their box lunches in the center's main exhibit room, a practice that the NPS felt was "highly inappropriate."[109] By 1966 the situation was unchanged, as noted in this annual report:

> Eielson Visitor Center, in reality only a wayside museum, ... was frequently overcrowded. Eielson contains an exhibit-observation room with information desk, restrooms, and a multipurpose room used only as a lunchroom since its construction in 1961. ... The tiny room, into which about 20 persons would cram, is inadequate since busses disgorge upwards of 100 passengers at a time. Visitors overflowed into the observation room. ... As long as Eielson remains the terminus of the bus tours, overcrowding and overtaxing of facilities will be fact of life and the object of complaints.[110]

These conditions remained until 1972, when the establishment of the park shuttle bus system, plus ever-increasing visitor numbers, resulted in enormous new demands on the decade-old visitor center. By 1973, the agency finally de-

Groups of tour bus passengers routinely ate their sack lunches in the observation room of the Eielson Visitor Center, as this 1961 photograph shows. DENA 42-25, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

cided that the building needed to be redesigned and enlarged (see Chapter 8); plans called for additional restroom facilities, a new entryway, covered walkways, and a large, open observation tower that offered sweeping views (on clear days) of Mt. McKinley and other Alaska Range peaks. Bids were let in April 1974 and project construction began later that year. The work was largely completed by September 1975. A year later, new exhibits were installed there.[111] The expanded facilities, plus the concessioner's 1972 decision to offer more than one wildlife tour, eased the overcrowding problem at Eielson, although space concerns remained for years afterward.

At the east end of the park road, new calls were made for a park visitor center. The park's decision to schedule afternoon as well as evening programs—begun in July 1962—had helped, as had the construction of an NPS information center in the hotel (a small area in 1962, then moved and expanded in 1966). The 1972 opening of the Riley Creek Information Center—which was a double-wide trailer near the campground entrance—provided an even larger area where agency personnel could dispense information and interpretive materials. But by the late 1970s, crowds attending programs at the park hotel (a "temporary" structure built to replace the hotel that had burned in September 1972) were again exceeding the capacity of existing facilities.

In 1979, the NPS moved to improve its interpretive facilities. That April, it proposed that the existing information center—which was a single open room—be replaced with a larger, rustic-appearing log information station "capable of housing separately the major functions of campground registration, fee collection, Association sales, backcountry permits, and visitor information, plus having space for administrative use where accountability can be accomplished in private." Alternatively, it urged the construction of a "major visitor center which would contain all of the information station operations plus major exhibit rooms, an auditorium, library, museum, and interpretive office and administrative space."[112]

Inasmuch as the agency, at this time, was in the midst of the Congressional fight over Alaska's parklands, officials were not in a position to expend substantial new funds until after the lands question had been settled. The plans for a new information center, therefore, were held in abeyance for the time being. In 1982, the construction of a new office addition to the "inadequate double wide trailer" provided improved conditions and offered staff a modicum of privacy.[113] But more ambitious proposals remained in the planning stage until the park's Visitor Access Center (now called the Wilderness Access Center) was constructed in the late 1980s. But regarding an expanded venue for park interpretive programs, agency officials as a stopgap measure purchased

By July 1974, construction of additional restroom facilities, a new entryway, covered walkways, and an open observation tower were underway at Eielson Visitor Center. DENA 5749, Denali National Park and Preserve Museum Collection

a 40' x 60' red-and-white-striped "circus tent" and erected it just north of the park hotel in time for the 1979 visitor season. This tent, which was ostensibly "rented for the summer," was of marginal benefit; as park naturalist William Truesdell noted, it "allowed too much light to enter and the light that shown [sic] through the red stripes was very distracting. The tent was also uncomfortably cold most of the summer."[114] The year 1980 brought even greater discomfort; on June 18 the tent collapsed under a 12-inch snow load. Operations there could not begin again until July 4, and as staff noted, the tent was again "uncomfortably cold," primarily because "of another cold, rainy summer."[115]

Given the tent's obvious disadvantages, the NPS included a clause in its 1981 concessions agreement that called for the concessioner to build a new "audio visual room" adjacent to the hotel. (See Chapter 9.) This structure, later called an auditorium, was completed by the late summer of 1982 and it opened to the public in June 1983. But between 1979 and 1982, the tent hosted a wide variety of lectures and movies, the latter sponsored by both the NPS and the concessioner.

During the 1970s the Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association took on several new publications projects, and perhaps as a result, its fortunes increased. As noted above, when the newly-named statewide organization began (in April 1970) it had published three books about the park: Adolph Murie's volumes on mammals and birds (in 1962 and 1963, respectively), and the staff-created *Coloring Book of Mount McKinley*, published in 1968. In 1971 the association published *The Malamutes of Mount McKinley*, by agency employees Roy Sanborn and Tom Ritter, and soon afterward it published a bear warning folder (entitled *Grizzly Bear – Friend or Foe?*) and a new *Horseshoe Lake Trail Guide*. In 1974 it republished Murie's popular mammal book. Throughout this period, the coloring book remained available to park visitors.[116] In 1971 the association tallied about $8,250 in gross receipts at the park, a figure that had roughly doubled by 1975; just a year later, however, revenues shot up to $45,000 "due to the use of new multi-book display techniques, to maintaining sufficient stock, and the acquiring of slide sets and Kodak film products for sale."[117] The 1974-76 expansion of Eielson Visitor Center portended the potential for an increased sales presence, but throughout the late 1970s the association's sales selection was limited to maps, film, and slide sets.[118]

Revenues for the cooperating organization continued to increase during the late 1970s.

This circus tent, located just north of the hotel, served as a temporary auditorium for interpretive talks. Seasonal interpreters who gave programs there recalled that it was cold and the projection screen would undulate when it was windy. NPS Interp. Collection, #2408, Denali National Park and Preserve

During the 1977 fiscal year they totaled approximately $62,000, and between 1978 and 1980 they ranged between $80,000 and $100,000. Given the group's increasing revenues, it was able to hire its first employee (Wilma Mercer) in 1977. The following year it placed its first salesperson at Eielson Visitor Center, and in 1979 it sponsored the publication of Wyatt G. Gilbert's geology handbook, entitled *A Geologic Guide to Mount McKinley National Park*. By the summer of 1980, the Mount McKinley outlet of the cooperating organization had three sales personnel on its payroll; two worked for the summer season, while the third "worked part-time during the winter to take care of mail orders and deposits."[119] A major new element in the park's interpretation program emerged in 1979 with the first edition of a summer park newsletter, called the *Alpenglow*. This eight-page publication, which followed much the same guidelines as similar publications at "Lower 48" parks, proved so successful that it became a regular summer feature. At first, the agency paid all of the newsletter's printing costs; a few years later, however, the park's cooperative association began to assist in this regard.[120]

A new auditorium, located adjacent to the McKinley Park Hotel, was opened in 1983 and used for the presentation of interpretive audio visual programs. NPS Photo, Brad Richie Collection

During the late 1970s, the park's cooperating association dramatically changed its scope due to legislative activity taking place in Washington, D.C. As noted in Chapter 8, Congress spent much of the 1970s debating the Alaska lands issue, and its self-imposed deadline called for the issue to be resolved by December 1978. In anticipation of that deadline, the Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association moved in the late summer of 1978 to change its name to the Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA). Despite a delay in settling the Alaska lands issue, ANHA came into being in late November 1978. Recognizing that Congress, in due course, would pass a lands bill with managers from a variety of federal, state, and other entities, ANHA's directors stated that the new organization's purpose would be to support "the educational and scientific programs of federal and other governmental agencies and non-profit organizations concerned with the conservation, preservation and interpretation of natural, historical, and cultural resources of the state of Alaska."[121]

Park Interpretation During the 1980s

In December 1980, Congress passed—and President Carter signed—the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, and among its other provisions was creation of Denali National Park and Preserve in lieu of Mount McKinley National Park and a near-tripling of the park unit's acreage. Despite the millions of acres of new parkland, the vast majority of visitors remained along the road corridor in the so-called "old park." As a result, interpretation did not undergo significant changes because of Congress's action.

Instead, the 1980s witnessed incremental changes based on a continuing explosion in the number of park visits – from approximately 216,000 in 1980 to 436,000 in 1985 and 546,000 in 1990. Interpreters continued to offer the public the same opportunities that had been offered in years past: dog sled demonstrations, hotel-based nature walks, ranger-led talks and films, discovery hikes, campground talks, Eielson-based tundra walks, and children's activities operating out of the Riley Creek Information Center. Visitors enthusiastically attended these activities, particularly the dog sled demonstrations; total interpretive participation (for all park programs) rose from about 60,000 in 1980 to more than 212,000 in 1991.[122] To cope with the crowds, several of these activities were offered more often during the 1980s than they had previously. But for the most part, increasing visitation resulted in larger crowds attending the same number of interpretive presentations. (The thrice-daily dog-sled demonstrations, for example, remained constant throughout the decade.) A few new activities were attempted; the agency, for example, experimented with "welcome walks" during the 1987 season, and about 1990, park ranger-naturalists "randomly boarded shuttle buses to provide 'on board' commentary and contact with our visitors." The welcome walks proved short-lived, and after 1989 staff no longer offered daily children's programs. So-called "bus roves" remained, however, through the mid-1990s.[123]

The major interpretive facility developed during the 1980s was the Visitor Access Center. As noted in Chapter 9, the stopgap nature of the 1972 Riley Creek Information Center was widely recognized, and despite a 1982 addition, it was widely hoped that this facility could soon be replaced with a larger, more permanent structure. In 1982, the agency had announced plans—as part of its road corridor development concept plan—to build a new "interpretive/transportation center." This plan was approved in 1983, and the park's final (November 1986) general management plan reiterated the need for a "visitor access center" and further suggested the addition of an adjacent shuttle bus staging area.[124] Funding the new center, however, proved problematic, and it was not until early 1987 that the NPS awarded a construction contract. That September the winning bidder, the Ahtna Native Regional Corporation, began site preparation. The new Visitor Access Center (VAC) opened over Memorial Day weekend 1990; as Superintendent Russell Berry noted, the facility was "a vast improvement" over the 18-year-old double-wide that it was replacing.[125] After that date, the facility served as the primary way in which motorized visitors were introduced to the park and its various transportation, camping, and backcountry options. In addition, the VAC's auditorium showed a half-hour-long automated orientation slide show.[126]

Park interpreters provided visitors with an opportunity for short walks originating from the park hotel. Edible plants of the area was the theme of the interpretive walk shown here. Robyn Burch Collection

As noted above, the concessioner's bus tours underwent major changes during the 1970s, and between 1977 and 1980, the twice-a-day tours moved from morning-only departures to those that left at both 6 a.m. and the mid-afternoon. This schedule continued on into 1981, but a deadly bus accident in mid-June of that year (during the return run of an afternoon bus) just east of Eielson Visitor Center forced the concessioner to rethink its turnaround point. Recognizing that two previous, recent accidents—in July 1974 and August 1978—had also taken place toward the west end of the park road, the concessioner immediately decided to truncate the tour by establishing a new bus turnaround point at Stony Hill. (See Chapter 9.) Since that time, tour buses as a rule have not ventured beyond Stony Hill; indeed, bus passengers visiting the park on cloudy days have typically gone only as far west as the Toklat River.[127]

The twice-daily bus schedule—one in the morning, another in the afternoon—has continued ever since. In recent years the increased popularity of this tour[128] has exploded, requiring numerous morning departures (between 6:00 and 7:30 a.m.) and additional afternoon departures (between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m.), but the same basic schedule still holds. The shorter Denali Natural History Tour, which began in 1990 (see Chapter 9) keeps to a similar schedule; it also holds

Beginning in 1994, NPS interpretive rangers (in uniform or in costume as historical characters) provided presentations at the historic Savage River Ranger Patrol cabin. This was an opportunity for rangers to interact with passengers on the Denali Natural History Tour, operated by the park concessioner. In 1996 this function was performed by the tour bus drivers, and the following year the park concessioner began training its own staff to provide living history presentations at this venue. Ingrid Nixon Collection

morning and afternoon departure times, plus an additional midday departure.[129]

As noted above, participation in the old Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association had been limited to NPS units, and Mount McKinley National Park had dominated that entity, both financially and organizationally. The new Alaska Natural History Association, however, brought forth a new era of cooperation among both federal and non-federal agencies. Given that cooperative spirit, ANHA invited U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representatives to participate within months of the new organization's formation; ANHA and the agency signed an agreement in March 1979, and that summer association outlets were in operation both in Adak (Aleutians National Wildlife Refuge) and Fairbanks (Arctic National Wildlife Range). A year later—in fact, less than two weeks before President Carter signed ANILCA into law—U.S. Forest Service and ANHA representatives signed a memorandum of understanding, and in the summer of 1981 Chugach National Forest opened its first two ANHA outlets: at the Begich-Boggs Visitor Center in Portage, and on board the M/V *Bartlett*.[130] In 1985 a fourth member signed on—Alaska State Parks, where an outlet opened at the Eagle River Visitor Center that July—and in 1991 the U.S. Bureau of Land Management joined as well, with outlets both at the Coldfoot interagency center and the Public Services Room in the new Anchorage federal building.[131]

During the early- to mid-1980s, the surge in park visitation resulted in a dramatic increase in ANHA revenues: from approximately $97,000 in 1980 to $126,000 in 1984 and $211,000 in 1987.[132] (Part of this increase was brought about by the addition of books to the stock at Eielson, although in the late 1980s the outlet's offerings were still fairly limited.[133]) But given the more diverse function of the Alaska Natural History Association during this period, the economic dominance of the park in ANHA soon waned; in 1980, sales at the park outlet had comprised more than 60 percent of ANHA's total sales (and ANHA's executive director noted that "Mt. McKinley's sales have always been the backbone of the association's income"), but in 1984 and 1987, however, they had fallen to 43 percent and 27 percent, respectively.[134] The park, during this period, initially had two sales outlets: Riley Creek Information Center and Eielson Visitor Center. But ANHA personnel, sensing a business opportunity, sponsored the publication (in June 1981) of dog handler Sandy Kogl's *Sled Dogs of Denali* and then sold the book after the park's daily dog sled demonstrations.[135] During the 1980s the local ANHA branch sponsored the production of several other new items, including Kim Heacox's 1986 *Denali Road Guide*, Michael Collier's *Geology of Denali National Park* (1989), and a poster by Washington-based artist Jim Hays. ANHA revenues were also used to produce the annual *Alpenglow* and to assist the financially beleaguered park interpretive program.[136]

Park Interpretation, 1991-present

Beginning in 1990, Denali National Park and Preserve offered three primary interpretive venues. The Visitor Access Center was a focal

The Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA) sales outlet at the park dog kennels is shown on the right of this photo. At the end of the scheduled sled dog demonstration, as visitors make their way back to waiting buses, ANHA staff provided an opportunity for visitors to purchase park literature. NPS Kennels Photo

point for those who drove to the park or were potential shuttle-bus passengers; visitors to the center could obtain bus reservations and tickets, board the buses, and get both backcountry camping reservations and park campground permits. In addition, the center's auditorium showed an automated, introductory slide show, later complemented by various videos that the local Alaska Natural History Association offered as sales items. The separate auditorium building, located just north of the park hotel, offered narrated slide shows, and it also continued to show the park's award-winning film, *Denali Wilderness*, which had been completed in 1982 and first shown in 1983. (This film was shown to visitors until 1997.)[137] And the Eielson Visitor Center, 66 miles out the park road, offered exhibits. The hotel and Eielson served as the base for nature walks, and all three venues had staff to answer visitor inquiries and sell park-related books.[138] This trichotomy remained for the next 12 years.

As noted earlier, the number of park visitors grew sharply throughout the 1970s and 1980s. (Specifically, approximate annual recreational visitation was 45,000 in 1971, it rose to 216,000 in 1980, and beginning in 1986, it topped 500,000 and remained at that level through the early 1990s.) But as noted in Chapter 10, the political implications of the park's visitation level brought about changes to the tabulation methodology, and as a consequence the agency recorded fewer annual recreational visitors. More specifically, U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) in 1995 compared the 500,000-plus annual visitation figure with the annual number of bus passengers (which totaled approximately 250,000) and concluded that more than 250,000 people "were not able to enter the park" because the buses were full. Murkowski, moreover, used that figure to justify the need for a northern access route to the Kantishna-Wonder Lake area.[139] Faced with that political reality, the NPS's statistics unit (based at the agency's Denver Service Center) changed its visitor counting method from one that counted total vehicle traffic heading up the park road (i.e., number of *visits*, including casual local traffic) to one that more accurately reflected the actual number of park *visitors*. Given that change in counting methods, recreational park visitation slipped from 543,309 in 1995 to 341,395 in 1996 (a 37 per cent drop), even though there was only a slight dip in the actual number of recreational visitors.[140]

In 2001, changes to the park's interpretive program once again took place when the McKinley Park Hotel closed down. That closure, followed soon afterward by the hotel's demolition, engendered a four-year transitional period in which the Visitor Access Center was the park's only significant east-end interpretive venue. (See Chapter 10.) As noted elsewhere, park staff had been calling for a full-fledged visitor center in this area ever since the Mission 66 days of the mid-1950s, and the 1990 completion of the Visitor Access Center—while a positive step—did not mitigate the need for a new interpretive venue that could offer exhibit space and a quiet, state-of-the-art auditorium for talks and films. The need for this facility had been stated in the so-called Front Country Development Concept Plan, which the

NPS had approved in February 1997; despite the completion of that plan, however, hotel operations continued until Congress was able to underwrite the cost of new NPS facilities and, on a more practical level, until the termination of the concessioner's twenty-year contract.
Because the Visitor Access Center, during this period, was the park's primary visitor node, there was a widespread assumption (based on the 1997 DCP) that any new visitor services facilities would be located adjacent to the VAC. This assumption, however, was dispelled in November 2001 when the NPS released an environmental assessment (EA) for its planned visitor facilities. This EA proposed the construction of a multi-use "visitor services building," along with an adjacent science and learning center, which would be located on or near the footprint of the old hotel. NPS officials, in this plan, decided to locate new visitor services here, rather than the VAC site, because it was adjacent to the railroad station and because the new site protected park resources and animal habitat by using "pre-disturbed land."[141] This proposal was somewhat modified during the ensuing public process, but the final EA, approved at the end of January 2002, called for a 14,500-square-foot visitor center along with several adjacent support buildings and a new Denali Science and Learning Center.[142]

By the end of 2003, the agency had chosen a builder for both the visitor center and the learning center, and work was "underway and on schedule" on both complexes. The educational center, by now called the Murie Science and Learning Center, opened in August 2004.[143]

During the winter of 2004-05, construction crews and interpretive specialists completed their work on the three-building complex that included the Denali Visitor Center, the Denali Bookstore, and the Morino Grill. The visitor center complex opened to the public in May 2005, and three months later NPS officials held dedication ceremonies there.[144] As soon as the visitor center opened, the role of the 15-year-old VAC changed significantly. The park concessioner took over its management from the NPS, the center's name changed to the Wilderness Access Center, and backpacking permitting functions (which the NPS still managed) moved out to an adjacent trailer. The main park film, the newly-minted (and award-winning) *Heartbeats of Denali* was now being shown in the new visitor center, so in its stead was featured the recently-released historical film, *Across Time and Tundra*, which had been produced in 2002 by park employees Jane Bryant and Jane Tranel.[145]

Another new facility erected during this period was located in Talkeetna, south and east of the newly-expanded park. In order to manage the ever-increasing number of Alaska Range climbers, the NPS since 1977 had stationed staff at Talkeetna during the three-month climbing season. (See Chapter 13.) Staff first operated out of makeshift facilities, and visitors were hardly aware of the NPS's presence in town. But in 1984 the agency began renting a small, rough-hewn building just south of the Fairview Hotel; it was dubbed the "Genet Building" because the late mountaineer Ray Genet had helped erect it. Though the building was primarily intended

Park interpretive rangers continue to present regularly-scheduled campground evening talks. The theme of the Wonder Lake Campground presentation pictured above is mountaineering history. NPS Photo

as a climbers' orientation station, non-climbing visitors soon began to filter in. Agency personnel displayed minimal interpretive materials: large-scale photographs, mountaineering gear, a small outside kiosk, and similar items. To help answer visitors' questions, the agency began stationing Student Conservation Association personnel in the facility. The Genet Building, rustic in appearance and poorly constructed, retained its function until well into the 1990s.[146] But the increasing interest in Talkeetna as a visitor destination, as well as a continuing rise in the number of annual climbers, portended the need for a larger, multipurpose facility, and in 1989 agency officials began designing exhibits for a new facility that would be located in "downtown Talkeetna to serve the separate and specific function of providing assistance to Mt. McKinley climbers."[147] That facility was begun in 1995, completed in December 1996, and dedicated in June 1997 (see Chapter 13). The Talkeetna Mountaineering Center, known more informally as the Talkeetna Ranger Station, was "highlighted with several large panoramic photographs by Mt. McKinley's revered master, Bradford Washburn," and beginning in 1997 seasonal interpreters began working there to cater to the needs of non-climbing visitors.[148]

Although the number of park employees—both permanent and seasonal—has grown substantially since ANILCA's passage, the number of interpretive personnel has not kept pace with that growth. All too often, times of fiscal stress have tended to impact the interpretive workforce to a disproportionate degree.[149] As a result, interpretation in both the East District and West District of the park has been handled by seasonal NPS employees since 1980, if not earlier.[150] But even seasonal hires (some of whom have been local residents) have been reduced in recent years, and in 2004 the park had its smallest number of interpretive seasonals in twenty years. In order to fulfill the park's goals, park staff increasingly relied on Youth Conservation Corps workers, Visitor Use Assistants, members of the Student Conservation Association, and on volunteers, some of whom were seasonal workers who stayed on for the winter.[151] Indeed, volunteers have made major contributions in recent years; by the late 1990s, volunteer interpreters were contributing more than 2,000 hours of service each year, and the latest (2006) figures state that interpretive volunteers contributed more than 8,000 hours: almost four full-time years of volunteer effort.[152] Interpretive leaders during the post-ANILCA period have included William Truesdell (1975-1981), Doug Cuillard (1982-1987), George Wagner (1987-1991), Thea Nordling (1992-1996), Lisa Eckert (1996-1998), Blanca Stransky (1999-2006), and Ingrid Nixon (2006 to present).[153]

During this period, NPS officials continued to improve the interpretive program and to expand it where appropriate. In 1992, for example, the auditorium at the hotel offered both an afternoon and evening program (either a slide show or movie in each case). There was also a daily "naturalist's choice program" (which might include anything from a nature hike to a demonstration or children's program) held either in the VAC or hotel area. Discovery hikes were of-

Talkeetna-based interpretive rangers present informational talks to visitors and school groups, shown here in the main room of the Talkeetna Ranger Station. NPS Photo

Discovery hikes led by interpretive rangers typically last from three to five hours. Visitors ride shuttle buses to the beginning of the scheduled hikes. NPS Photo

fered; campground programs were given at Riley Creek, Savage River, Teklanika, and Wonder Lake campgrounds; dog sled demonstrations were still provided three times each day; and at Eielson Visitor Center, both tundra walks and "naturalist's choice" activities were offered each day.[154] In 1994, NPS staff initiated historical programs at the old ARC-built Savage Cabin, and a year later, park staff began offering additional programs including "streambed strolls," "Toklat Treks," and morning kennels-area walks.[155] In 1998, staff inaugurated a "naturalist's choice evening walk" three times each week, and four years later it initiated the "Denali discovery pack program," intended for families, in which a backpack contained "an activity guide, tools and materials to explore park resources and bring visitors closer to the small wonders of the natural world."[156] Throughout this period the agency, as noted above, showed an orientation slide show many times each day at the Visitor Access Center. It also offered Junior Ranger Program activities, initially through offerings in the annual *Denali Alpenglow* newsletter and later through an activity guide available free from park staff.[157]

Since 2000, the program has continued to evolve. During the summer of 2003, daily programs included dog sled demonstrations (still offered three times each day), an evening program in the VAC's theatre, evening programs at four of the park's campgrounds, a Horseshoe Lake hike, a Savage River walk, an "Eielson Stroll," and a discovery hike. By 2006 these had been modified somewhat because the VAC (now the Wilderness Access Center) was no longer the only NPS visitor node and because Eielson Visitor Center was being replaced (see below). The VAC's evening program and the "Eielson Stroll" were thus eliminated, and as well, the Savage hikes were replaced by the more generic "entrance area hikes and strolls" and a variety of either "short loops in the spruce forest" or "longer explorations that interpret various park-related themes."[158] All indications suggest that the park's interpretive staff will continue to experiment with new interpretive programs, and they will either add new programs or replace existing programs in response to changing budgets and emerging public interests.

The park's cooperating association has shown strong growth in recent years. During the 1980s, as noted above, the Alaska Natural History Association had two sales outlets: the double-wide Riley Creek Information Center and Eielson Visitor Center. In the spring of 1990, the completion of the new Visitor Access Center (with a large, modern sales outlet) replaced the old information center, and in 1995, the Joe Hankins Room at the Eielson Visitor Center was reconfigured into a larger, up-to-date ANHA sales area.[159] As a result of those initiatives, ANHA sales at the park dramatically increased from 1989 (with $226,000 in sales) to 1995 (with $679,000 in sales). More recent figures have shown even higher returns; between 1998 and 2004 the park's outlets consistently grossed between $825,000 and $975,000 in sales.[160] In the spring of 2005, the opening of the new park visitor center included the adjacent Denali Bookstore. Given that new facility, the park's ANHA outlet had its first million-dollar sales year in 2005, with $1,082,000 in gross

To enhance the visitor experience and to provide for the safety of increasing numbers of visitors, viewing stands (seen above) were installed at the kennels in 1998. In 2003, a total of 38,651 visitors attended dog demonstrations at the park kennels. NPS Photo

sales. In 2006 sales shot up even further, to some $1,465,000 (see Figure 2).

A key aspect of public-agency cooperating associations is that a significant percentage of gross revenues are returned to the agencies, with the money received being used to further various agency interpretive and educational goals. As noted above, so-called "branch support" or "direct aid" revenues gathered during the earliest years of the park's cooperating association were devoted toward the publication of various park books, followed in later years by posters, newsletters, and similar interpretive fare. Prior to 1975, these revenues were fairly meager. But in 1977, as noted above, they were sufficient to sponsor the park's first staff person, and during the 1980s the funds paid back to the park multiplied tenfold. Throughout the 1990s, these funds consistently topped $30,000 per year, and since 2000 they have often exceeded $60,000 annually.[161]

Given such a substantial, continuing revenue stream, ANHA officials in recent years have been able to engage in diverse projects to "facilitate the conservation, education, and interpretive programs" at Denali National Park and Preserve.[162] During the 1990s the association's primary efforts were aimed at discrete physical products: the publication of various books and the annual *Alpenglow* newsletter, along with an art print, a video highlighting winter patrol activities, and a CD-ROM about the park.[163] But funds also were directed to such diverse goals as VAC exhibits, library books, interpretive materials, and the construction of a climbers' memorial, and as early as 1996 direct-aid revenues were able to pay for Student Conservation Association interpretive interns.[164] After 2000, the scope of these activities was able to increase. By 2002, the association was able to shore up the park's underfunded interpretive division by hiring an interpretive planner along with four interns; it funded both summer and winter issues of the *Alpenglow*; it distributed 170,000 "companion booklets" (i.e., interpretive guides) to patrons on both the Tundra Wilderness Tours and Natural History Tours; it sponsored a subsistence brochure and newsletter; it published a book on the park's bird life; and it played a major role—financially and logistically—in sponsoring the park's annual Winterfest. The internships, the tour booklets, the twice-yearly *Alpenglow* issues and Winterfest-related activities became staples of the association's assistance program and have continued to the present day. To these efforts, in 2004, were added assistance in preparing exhibits for the new science and learning center and assistance in preparing the new *Heartbeats of Denali* film for the new visitor center.[165] In addition, ANHA has funded sundry other guidebooks, brochures, exhibits, and similar materials over the years.

Another way in which the Alaska Natural History Association was able to further park purposes was through its sponsorship of the Denali Institute. Wallace and Jerryne Cole, from Camp Denali, had spearheaded the establishment of this nonprofit educational organization, which was established in December 1998; its purpose was to provide

Figure 2. Park Cooperating Association Revenues, 1960 to Present

Mount McKinley Natural History Association:

Year	Total Sales	Program Support		Year	Total Sales	Program Support
1960	$994	$345		**1965**	$2,881	$866
1961	1,824	563		**1966**	3,820	584
1962	2,689	245		**1967**	3,530	2,323
1963	2,681	275		**1968**	5,494	705
1964	2,513	220		**1969**	4,858	2,687

Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association:

Year	Total Sales	Program Support		Year	Total Sales	Program Support
1970	n.a.	$ 956		**1974**	$39,025	$5,037
1971	$18,758	7,255		**1975**	46,818	3,534
1972	21,474	3,988		**1976**	81,815	5,485
1973	29,796	3,840		**1977**	109,236	7,078

Alaska Natural History Association:

Year	Total Sales	Program Support		Year	Total Sales	Program Support
1978	$119,807	$ 6,120		**1993**	$1,733,394	$487,987
1979	155,633	21,053		**1994**	1,869,087	480,065
1980	159,629	25,012		**1995**	2,117,393	514,967
1981	190,783	35,480		**1996**	2,286,380	574,092
1982	196,558	33,192		**1997**	2,328,335	606,989
1983	258,229	39,605		**1998**	2,375,109	444,852
1984	290,759	90,082		**1999**	2,538,392	587,191
1985	364,717	103,629		**2000**	2,649,662	531,534
1986	536,311	142,285		**2001**	2,713,835	652,073
1987	782,708	211,645		**2002**	3,423,993	854,269
1988	947,685	272,980		**2003**	3,307,124	787,629
1989	911,807	261,485		**2004**	3,934,247	908,664
1990	1,181,839	285,570		**2005**	4,415,455	828,503
1991	1,228,123	319,796		**2006**	4,998,246	668,170
1992	1,559,796	441,206		**2007**	5,573,600	710,968

Note: "Total Sales" includes sales of all branch sales, tour booklets, etc. "Program Support" includes all revenues given back to the NPS (either the park or the regional office) resulting of cooperating association revenues. Source: Charles Money files.

While the original Eielson Visitor Center was being torn down and a new one constructed, 2005 to 2008, a temporary contact station was provided in a large fabric-membrane structure at Toklat. That structure, shown above, contained a visitor information area, exhibits, and an ANHA sales area. NPS Photo

park visitors with in-depth field programs on the natural, cultural, and political history of the area. Beginning in 1999 it offered a program that monitored songbird populations in the Kantishna area; two years later, it broadened its scope by colluding with the NPS and hosted college-level (UAF accredited) field courses to entrance-area park visitors.[166] The institute remained an independent entity until 2003, when it merged with the Alaska Natural History Association; that same year, it also began to offer teacher training programs and a weeklong field camp (based at Igloo Campground) focused on wolf behavior.[167]

Beginning in 2004, Denali Institute activities were subsumed within the aegis of the new Murie Science and Learning Center. Then, after the 2005 field season, ANHA leaders—recognizing that a variety of public agencies were interested in sponsoring their own learning opportunities—merged the Denali Institute and its functions into the more comprehensive Alaska Natural History Institutes. The new organization offers a variety of field seminars and teacher trainings, all of which are based at the Murie Science and Learning Center; although it often coordinates its educational offerings through the NPS, it also works through the U.S. Forest Service and other entities.[168] The Murie Center, in its short history, has moved to the forefront of both teaching and research, not only for Denali but for seven other Alaskan park units; not only is it a focus of education for a wide variety of public interests, but it is also a center of inventory and monitoring activities for parks throughout interior and northern Alaska.[169]

Future visitors to Denali can look forward to a new, improved Eielson Visitor Center. As noted above, this visitor center was built between 1958 and 1960 and expanded between 1974 and 1976. Despite that expansion, however, the huge increases in park visitation between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s brought increasing overcrowding problems to the site—particularly on cool or windy days, which are all too common in the vicinity—and there was also a widespread recognition that the facility was too visually intrusive in that isolated, treeless area. Based on that reality, the agency recommended, as part of its 1996-97 *Front Country Development Concept Plan*, that Eielson Visitor Center be demolished and replaced with a more modern, ecologically sensitive structure.[170] Specific steps needed to fulfill that goal took place in 2003, when agency officials completed most of the design work for a new structure, and in the spring of 2004 the agency approved an environmental assessment that allowed construction work to begin.[171] That September the 44-year-old visitor center closed for the last time, and demolition began in mid-summer 2005. Present plans call for a new Eielson Visitor Center, which will have more than twice the interior space as the former facility, to open in the spring of 2008.[172]

Interpreting Beyond the Park's Boundaries

For more than a half-century after the park's establishment, NPS staff had few opportunities to broadcast the park and its attractions to non-visitors. To some extent this was because the park's small staff and limited budget constrained opportunities for these types of activities. In a

larger sense, however, the problem was technological: the only realistic media for speaking to a non-park audience was public speaking along with slides or movies, and the time and expense of riding the Alaska Railroad to outside communities severely limited the opportunity for these public presentations.

Given those constraints, park staff—almost always the superintendent—did speak to outside groups from time to time. During the mid-1920s, Supt. Karstens spoke to both the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the city's Women's Club.[173] Beginning in 1934, the agency reached out to territorial residents when federal-building offices opened in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Both offices turned out to be temporary, however.[174] No sooner had World War II ended than Acting Superintendent Grant Pearson spoke to several Anchorage civic organizations about park development, he gave several illustrated talks in both Anchorage and Fairbanks, and from 1946 to 1948 NPS rangers attended both the Fairbanks Ice Carnival and the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous, where they served as event judges.[175] From 1950 to 1952, as noted above, Superintendent Pearson made frequent wintertime trips to the military base at Big Delta, where he gave talks and showed movies.[176] Pearson retired in 1956, but he continued his outreach efforts in later years; in 1960 park staff lent him the film *The Wilderness of Denali* "for showing to native children along the Yukon River," and three years later he borrowed two films to show at various Fairbanks-area military facilities and to Nenana school children.[177]

Throughout this period, access problems made it difficult to provide interpretative messages to the various communities on the park's margins. But soon after the Anchorage-Fairbanks Highway was completed in 1971, park personnel began to increasingly interact with these and other local populations. The first year that the new road was open, park staff presented "environmentally oriented talks" to "schools and special groups" in Healy, Clear, Nenana, and Fairbanks, and elsewhere. In 1973 Daniel Kuehn, the new park superintendent, noted that "efforts have been made to bridge the communications gap between the neighboring communities of Healy and Cantwell," but he candidly admitted that the park's efforts were enjoying more success at Healy than at Cantwell.[178] The park's interpretive specialist, Bill Garry, then began discussions with local school staff about how the park could assist them. The result of those discussions was an environmental education workshop, which was held in Healy in February 1975. During this period, park superintendent Daniel Kuehn—who was himself the father of a Tri-Valley School student—served as a volunteer chaperone for the school's basketball team on its road trips, and he often used those opportunities to show park films and discuss park-related issues.[179]

Intermittent programs to local schools continued for the remainder of the 1970s and on into the 1980s, but it was not until 1991 that the park was able to expand its outreach opportunities. The first "Denali Week" was held that year, which reached over 300 students from communities from Talkeetna north to Nenana.[180] This outreach

The new Eielson Visitor Center, seen here under construction in 2006, opened in the early summer of 2008. NPS Photo

In 2007 a new interpretive program, the Kantishna Experience, was initiated, providing visitors with a thematic bus trip to the Kantishna Mining District where interpretive rangers presented programs on park history, including a visit to the Fannie Quigley House, pictured above. NPS Photo

effort expanded during the 1990s, and during the years since 2000 programs devoted to local schools have included "Denali Days," an updated version of Denali Week that includes visits to Willow and such off-road communities as McGrath, Nikolai, and Tanana; the Denali Discovery Camp program, a partnership program (with the Denali Foundation, now called the Denali Education Center) in which local students work in the field with park researchers; the Denali Science and Storytelling Camp, with a curriculum developed by the Denali Borough School District; the "Denali Project II," a simulated climb up Mount McKinley designed for middle school students; and staff-led development of curricula based on the park's bears, wildlife populations, and mountaineering.[181] Most of these programs have involved either staff visits to school facilities or school-group visits to the park, but since the mid-1990s the park website has been available as a learning tool, and since 2003 the agency has been able to offer students "electronic field trips" to the park.[182]

A partnership between the NPS and the Denali Education Center, Denali Discovery Camp has provided Denali Borough School District students with learning opportunities by working on projects with park researchers. These students are learning about sound monitoring from an NPS researcher (center). NPS Photo

Notes - Chapter 11

[1] *Fairbanks Tri-Weekly News-Miner*, December 1, 1921, 5.
[2] Frank Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun: The Tourist in Early Alaska*, Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 170 (Anchorage, the Commission, June 1985), 40.
[3] *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 11, 1929, 8.
[4] Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 42-43, 46-47, 58.
[5] Norris, *Gawking at the Midnight Sun*, 49-52. As Supt. Frank T. Been noted in a letter to his superiors, "There are places on the Alaska Railroad from where the 'mountain' is startling [sic] beautiful and impressive—occasionally, more so than from vantage points in the park. ... These railroad vantage points are far south and outside the park. ... Because of Congressional importance placed on travel figures, should we include through train travel on our travel reports?" Been to Regional Director, May 7, 1941, in "Interpreter's Reports" (File 207.11), CCF, RG 79, NARA SB. Travel reports from the late 1930s and early 1940s show that while a smattering of park visitors arrived via airplane, automobile (hauled on a railroad flat car), or even by motorcycle, about 99 percent arrived by train and relied on the park concessioner for in-park transportation.
[6] Various superintendent's reports note that concessions personnel, for a short time, considered the idea of moving their main camp westward as the road was extended; in September 1925, for example, Karstens wrote that "Igloo Creek, they believe, would be the logical place for the next move." But given the Savage Camp improvements in 1926, they evidently decided against it. SMR, September 1925, 4; May 1926, 3; June 1926, 4. Also see George Lingo, "Mt. McKinley National Park," *Cordova Daily Times All-Alaska Review for 1928*, 31.
[7] *New York Times*, January 4, 1933, 18.
[8] Lena Howard interview, August 4, 1972, Tape #506, DENA Archives; SMR, May 1926, 2.
[9] SMR, January 1926, 2, 3; February 1926, 3.
[10] The agency's library in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia shows that park folders have been published, revised, or reprinted every few years since the late 1920s. The only time in which more than three years lapsed between new issues was during the 1940s; due to World War II and its aftermath, no new folders were produced between 1942 and 1948. The lack of folders, in 1946, forced park staff to distribute a illustrated Alaska Railroad folder from 1941; in 1947, due to a reprinting, rangers were distributing the 1941 park guide. SMR, March 1946, 2; September 1947, 5; April 1948, 2.
[11] See, for example, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 5, 1924, 4; July 7, 1924, 8; August 25, 1925, 4; May 5, 1926, 2; *Seward Daily Gateway*, May 26, 1927, 4; July 11, 1927, 3; May 4, 1929, 6; April 27, 1935, 2.
[12] SMR, June 1932, 3; July 1932, 3.
[13] SMR, June 1933, 3; July 1933, 2; August 1933, 3.
[14] SMR, June 1934, 3; July 1934, 3; August 1934, 3.
[15] SMR, June 1935, 2; July 1935, 5; August 1935, 5.
[16] SMR, June 1936, 5; July 1936, 5; August 1936, 5; September 1936, 5. No motion pictures were shown at Savage River Camp during 1935 or 1936 due to a lack of power facilities at the camp.
[17] SMR, June 1937, 3, 5; July 1937, 4; September 1937, 5.
[18] SMR, May 1938, 4; July 1938, 4; August 1938, 5; September 1938, 3. As noted in the park's "Monthly Report of Educational Activities" (which was inaugurated in 1938), an August railroad washout forced 46 visitors to lay over for two extra days. Rangers responded to the challenge by providing impromptu lectures on the park's history, anthropology, geology, and botany.
[19] George R. Wilson, "McKinley Now and Then," *Alaska Magazine* 42 (January 1976), A2.
[20] SMR, June 1939, 3; July 1939, 4; August 1939, 3.
[21] Grant Pearson, in *My Life of High Adventure* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1962), p. 188, noted that "Once I saw Frank Been outside headquarters, examining a spruce twig. He had a magnifying glass. He looked absorbed, and happy. He was back with his first love, and I began to see how strange and difficult must have been the transition from naturalist to park superintendent."
[22] Been to Cammerer, July 13, 1939, in Folder 501 ("Publicity – General"), Box 1408, General Files (Entry 7), RG 79, NARA CP. As noted in Chapter 5, Bean's attitude toward the park dogs soon changed; by the summer of 1941 Been decided to keep only sufficient dogs for longer patrols and for interpretive demonstration purposes, and during World War II the park divested itself of all of its dog teams.
[23] SMR, June 1940, 2, 4, 5; July 1940, 2, 3; August 1940, 3. The NPS, as noted above, had been exhibiting the park dogs at the headquarters-area kennels since the mid-1920s. In 1936, rangers catered even more to visitors' interests when they brought four young pups to Savage River Camp. The photogenic animals spent the summer in kennels not far from the camp's tourist tents. SMR, February 1936, 3; July 1936, 6.
[24] SMR, April 1941, 1, 4; May 1941, 3; June 1941, 3; July 1941, 4, 5; August 1941, 2.
[25] SMR, March 1943, 2; April 1943, 1, 2; May 1943, 1; June 1943, 2; July 1943, 2.
[26] SMR, May 1943, 2; June 1943, 2; July 1943, 3; October 1943, 2; May 1944, 2.
[27] SMR, August 1943, 2; January 1944, 1; May 1944, 2; February 1945, 1.

[28] SMR, May 1945, 2; June 1945, 2.

[29] As noted in Chapter 5, the Alaska Railroad had operated the park hotel since its initial opening in June 1939, and it had held the park concession since the end of January 1942. But because of wartime restrictions, there had been no civilian tourist travel to Alaska during the summers of 1942 through 1945, inclusively.

[30] SMR, July 1946, 2, 4; August 1946, 3; September 1946, 3.

[31] SMR, January 1947, 3; September 1947, 5; November 1948, 2. The formal title of Dixon's book was *Fauna of the National Parks of the United States; Birds and Mammals of Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska* (Fauna Series No. 3); its contents were based on the data he had gathered during the summers of 1926 and 1932.

[32] SMR, September 1947, 3; November 1947, 2; January 1948, 3; September 1948, 5.

[33] SMR, July 1948, 3, 4; April 1949, 2; July 1949, 2.

[34] SMR, May 1946, 4; September 1947, 3; January 1948, 4; June 1948, 4. Superintendent Pearson noted that visitors were "surprisingly complimentary about the modest museum exhibits." He frankly admitted, however, that hotel staff directed many guests there "out of desperation to suggest methods for diversion." SMR, November 1947, 2; February 1948, 4.

[35] SMR, June 1948, 5; June 1951, 1; Alan K. Hogenauer, "Gone, But Not Forgotten: The Delisted Units of the U.S. National Park System," *George Wright Society Forum* 7:4 (1991), 10-11.

[36] SMR, June 1952, 2; NPS, *MOMC Park Naturalist Report*, March and June 1953, in DENA Archives; DENA Administrative History, Volume 1, Appendix D.

[37] SMR, June 1950, 2; July 1950, 3; August 1950, 2; September 1950, 3.

[38] SMR, July 1951, 2, 3; August 1951, 2; September 1951, 2.

[39] SMR, May 1952, 2; June 1952, 2; July 1952, 2; August 1952, 4.

[40] SMR, July 1952, 2; June 1953, 2; July 1953, 2; August 1953, 3; September 1953, 2.

[41] SMR, July 1950, 3; September 1950, 3. Jane Bryant (March 2007 review comments) notes that the building was moved first in 1950, and in 1952 it was moved again to its present headquarters location, north of the park road.

[42] SMR, November 1950, 2; December 1950, 2; January 1952, 1; February 1953, 2.

[43] SMR, February 1950, 1; March 1951, 1; July 1952, 1; Lyman L. Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest: The U.S. Army in Alaska and Western Canada, 1867-1987; Volume Three, 1945-1987* (Anchorage, Alaska Historical Society, 1999), 55, 60, 84, 93-99. The school was later known as the Northern Warfare Training Center.

[44] SMR, October 1953, 2; November 1953, 2; December 1953, 2; February 1954, 2.

[45] Ralph Turman (Seasonal Ranger) to Chief Ranger Robert Branges, "Monthly Narrative Report" for July and August 1955, in "A2615 Monthly Narrative Report, Chief Ranger" file, Box 2, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[46] NPS, "Annual Report on Information and Interpretive Services" for 1955, January 15, 1956, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[47] SMR, various dates, June 1954 to June 1957.

[48] NPS, *Mount McKinley, Annual Report on Information and Interpretive Services*, January 15, 1956, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[49] NPS, *Mission 66 Prospectus* for Mount McKinley NP, April 1956, pp. 9-12; in NPS-TIC Microfiche Collection #184/MPNAR. Visitor centers were largely a product of the Mission 66 era; the NPS had only three such centers prior to 1956, but by 1960, 45 visitor centers had been opened or authorized. Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (1986), Chapter 3, "Museums, Visitor Centers, and the New Look" section, accessed via NPS website.

[50] SMR, July 1956, 2; December 1956, 2, 4; NPS, *Mission 66 Prospectus MOMC*, p. 12 (revised April 12, 1957).

[51] Planning documents show that the Wonder Lake visitor center proposal remained viable throughout the Mission 66 planning process and was an element of the park's master plan, which was approved in February 1959. As noted in Chapter 7, agency personnel made numerous attempts during the Mission 66 period to build a lodge near Wonder Lake, and as late as June 1960 a proposal arose that would include a visitor center in conjunction with various "concession facilities." The construction of Eielson, however, largely mitigated the need for other west-end interpretive facilities. "Proposed Interpretive Facilities" (chart MOMC-3116-A, December 1958) and "Interpretive Facilities" (chart MOMC-3116-B, February 1959), both in NPS Aperture Card Collection, TIC; SMR, June 1960, 8.

[52] SMR, June 1957, 3; July 1957, 3, 5; NPS, *Mission 66 for Mount McKinley NP*, May 13, 1957, 8.

[53] SMR, February 1958, 5; March 1958, 5; April 1958, 4; July 1960, 5; July 1961, 2; *Anchorage Daily News*, April 11, 1958, 12; *Anchorage Daily Times*, April 12, 1958, 16.

[54] See E. T. Scoyen to Tony Smith, August 12, 1958, in File D30, "Mission 66 Road Issues" folder, DENA Archives; SMR, May 1957, 6, and March 1961, 5.

[55] Two large signs, to be installed at the Stony Hill road turnout, were crafted during the winter of 1953-54, and in 1955 personnel at both the park and regional office were hard at work on "roadside interpretational devices" at the park. SMR, February 1954, photo; July 1955, 2.

[56] SMR, March 1956, 2; NPS, *Mission 66 Prospectus*, p. 12 (revised April 12, 1957); NPS, *Mission 66 for Mount McKinley NP*, May 13, 1957, 3.
[57] [Neil J. Reid,] "Roadside Interpretive Sign Program, MOMC," in File D62-15, Visitor Center Planning, Box D, Catalog 9169, DENA Archives.
[58] SMR, August 1957, 3; "Proposed Interpretive Facilities" (chart MOMC-3116-A, December 1958) and "Interpretive Facilities" (chart MOMC-3116-B, February 1959), both in NPS Aperture Card Collection, TIC.
[59] SMR, February 1959, 3; April 1959, 3; May 1959, 6; June 1959, 4; July 1959, 4. Some of the purported downsides of a roadside sign program are discussed in "Roadside Interpretive Sign Program, MOMC," noted above. Adolph Murie, who was the park's biologist at the time, was a vocal sign opponent.
[60] SMR, May 1960, 4; July 1960, 7; May 1961, 6; July 1962, 5. Given the grizzlies' depredations, park personnel in later years boarded over the roadside markers each fall and removed the covers the following spring. SMR, June 1964, 3; September 1964, 2; May 1966, 3. Based on the recollections of longtime observers, park staff may have installed all 19 signs, or perhaps as few as 17.
[61] SMR, June 1963, 2; Steve Carwile interview, December 14, 2006.
[62] SMR, August 1956, 4; February 1961, 3; June 1961, 8; August 1963, 4; SAR, 1972, 7; Steve Carwile interview, January 16, 2007.
[63] SMR, November 1957, 2; March 1959, 2; June 1959, 6; June 1961, 5; March 1962, 4; August 1962, 5; August 1966, 3; May 1967, 2.
[64] SMR, February 1963, 2; August 1964, 3; August 1965, 2.
[65] SMR, June 1957, 4.
[66] SMR, April 1958, 2; July 1958, 4; August 1958, 3; September 1958, 3.
[67] SMR, January 1950, 2; May 1953, 2, June 1953, 3; January 1956, 2; March 1956, 2; May 1956, 2; July 1956, 4; August 1956, 3; May 1957, 4; October 1957, 4.
[68] SMR, November 1955, 2; December 1957, 2; September 1958, 3; January 1959, 2; June 1959, 4; October 1959, 2; April 1960, 4. The momentum for a natural history handbook appears to have faded away for two reasons: park naturalist Verde Watson showed less interest for it than his predecessor, Jim Reid, and by the spring of 1960 Adolph Murie (who had been asked to review a draft of the handbook) had made it known that he had completed a manuscript on the park mammals and that he was "working on a revision of the bird manuscript." (These manuscripts, as noted below and in Chapter 12, were published in 1962 and 1963, respectively.) The information in these books largely eliminated the need for a natural history handbook.
[69] Nancarrow, in a note to the regional naturalist, pragmatically noted that "from the looks of our budget it will be some time before the Naturalist Division here has much money to work with and a Natural Hstiory Association appears to be the one solution which can aid our work." Nancarrow to Dorr G. Yeager, November 19, 1951, in File 871 (Associations, Club, Committees, 1951-53), Box 84, CCF, RG 79, NARA SB.
[70] SMR, January 1952, 4; November 1953, 2; February 1954, 2; Jane Bryant email, December 15, 2006. By this period, national park cooperating associations had been in existence for 30 years (the first had been the Yosemite Museum Association, founded in 1923), and by 1952 there were 33 such associations in operation. Yosemite Association website (www.yosemite.org/newsroom/pressreleases/2002/032203.htm) and Rose Fennell (WASO) email, January 10, 2007.
[71] SMR, December 1958, 3; January 1959, 2; February 1959, 1.
[72] SMR, August 1959, 4; September 1959, 4. More than a year elapsed between the association's founding and the receipt of Walsh's funds because his will bequeathed money to the Mount McKinley National Park Association, a group that did not exist. Neil Reid to Acting Supt. MOMC, January 18, 1960, in "Annual Reports, 1960-70" folder, ANHA financial files, Anchorage.
[73] As park naturalist (and association organizer) Jim Reid noted in early 1961, "After a slight period of uncertainty, the James W. Walsh Jr. estate was settled. The Mount McKinley Natural History Association received a total of $16,404.59. We still have little knowledge of Mr. Walsh's past connection with Mount McKinley National Park, but we will make every effort to conduct the affairs of the Association, which he so generously supported, as a credit to his name." Reid to Supt. MOMC, January 20, 1961, in "Annual Reports, 1960-70" folder, ANHA. Walsh, it appears, had been a resident of Nassau County (on Long Island), New York, and either he or his family had been active in the American Alpine Club, which suggests that he knew Brad Washburn. American Alpine Club Photo Collection, accession P 2005.076.001 and -.002.
[74] The original (May 1959) entrance station, due to construction work near the Denali Highway's Alaska Railroad crossing, was placed along the road between the McKinley Park airstrip and the Alaska Railroad tracks, and northeast of the new gas station complex. A year later, with construction complete, the entrance station was moved north to a spot just east of the railroad tracks and perhaps 100 feet south of the highway right-of-way, where it remained for twelve years. NPS, "Annual Report on Information and Interpretive Activities, MOMC" for 1959 (January 15, 1960) and for 1960 (January 6, 1961), both located in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives; Steve Carwile email, December 20, 2006; Jane Bryant email, December 27, 2006.

[75] SMR, June 1959, 4; July 1960, 4, 5; June 1961, 6; NPS, "Annual Report on Information and Interpretive Activities, Mount McKinley" for 1960, January 6, 1961, in "Interpretation" file, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[76] W.H. Bergen to Sen. Theodore F. Green, July 29, 1958 and August 25, 1958, and Roger Ernst (Assistant Secretary of the Interior) to Senator Green, August 11, 1958, in File A3815 ("Public Relations, 1958-60"), Box 6, Accession 9NNS 79 90 002, NARA SB.

[77] SMR, June 1960, 3; August 1960, 8; October 1960, 3; June 1961, 6; NPS, Annual Report, "Information and Interpretive Services," MOMC, for 1961, January 26, 1962, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives. In 1960, agency personnel mapped out four possible visitor center sites, all located adjacent to the park hotel. Drawing MOMC-3140 (July 1960), in NPS Aperture Card Collection, AKRO.

[78] SMR, March 1962, 3; May 1962, 2; June 1962, 5, 6. The other two information desks were the park orientation center (which included the museum) at headquarters (which operated during 1958 and 1959) and Eielson Visitor Center (which opened in 1960).

[79] SMR, July 1962, 4; May 1965, 3; May 1967, 2.

[80] SMR, October 1962, 2; February 1963, 2; NPS, *MOMC Interpretive Report*, October 1962, 1, in DENA Library.

[81] SMR, October 1962, 2; June 1963, 3, 7; August 1965; Drawing MOMC-3102-B (June 1962), in NPS Aperture Card Collection, AKRO.

[82] SMR, April 1966, 2; May 1966, 2-3; June 1966, 2; July 1966, 3.

[83] NPS, "Information and Interpretive Services 1966 Annual Report," MOMC, February 14, 1967, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[84] SMR, March 1967, 1; May 1967, 7.

[85] Wallace Cole, in a conversation with Jane Bryant, noted that the concessioner continued to haul visitors in Navy-surplus "White" brand buses (see above) until 1960, when it obtained two 40-passenger Blue Bird buses. A third Blue Bird bus was added in 1967. Jane Bryant email, December 28, 2006.

[86] *Alaska Review* (Ketchikan), December 15, 1958, 4; "Watch for Caribou and Grizzly Bears," *Sunset* 128 (June 1962), 68; "The Great Wildlife Park is Alaska's McKinley," *Sunset* 140 (June 1968), 65; Anchorage Daily Times, May 20, 1971, 70-71; Wallace Cole observations, noted in Jane Bryant email, December 28, 2006.

[87] SMR, various dates, May 1963 through May 1967. In 1966, for example, daily activities included a two-hour "naturalist hike" at 8:30 a.m.; the 40-minute dog sled demonstration at 2:25 p.m.; the 40-minute "color movie" (a "film by Dr. Adolph Murie with commentary by a park naturalist" at 3:30 p.m.; and the 45-minute evening program at 8:15 p.m. NPS, "Interpretive Activities for Summer Season 1966," in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[88] Entries related to *Magnificence in Trust* are noted in the following SMRs: October 1966, 1; December 1966, 1; February 1967, 2; May 1967, 2. As noted in the 1966 interpretive schedule (see endnote above), a 13½-minute colored slide program at the entrance station and a tundra wildflower walk at Eielson Visitor Center were available upon request.

[89] SMR, February 1961, 4; May 1961, 5; March 1962, 3; April 1962, 3; May 1962, 3.

[90] Jane Bryant email, December 28, 2006.

[91] SMR, February 1962, 2; May 1962, 2; July 1963, 6; June 1966, 2; NPS, "Information and Interpretive Services, 1962, Annual Report" for MOMC, January 23, 1963, in "Interpretation" file, Collection 00495, DENA Archives; Steve Carwile interview, January 16, 2007; ANHA, Annual Report, 1972, 2.

[92] Yeager to Supt. MOMC, November 28, 1951, in File 871 (Associations, Club, Committees, 1951-53), Box 84, CCF, RG 79, NARA SB.

[93] In 1954, an NPS official noted that "the first draft on a popular botany manual is far along," and a decade later association personnel weighed publication costs for the book. See Frank R. Oberhansley to Regional Director, Region Two, March 11, 1954, in File K 3823 ("Sales Publications, 1953-1960"), Box 91, Accession No. 9NNS 79 89 005, NARA SB; SMR, April 1964, 5.

[94] SMR, November 1962, 3; January 1963, 2; February 1963, 2; July 1963, 6; January 1964, 5; NPS, "Narrative Report of Information and Interpretive Services, 1964" for MOMC, January 18, 1965, in "Interpretation" file, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[95] SMR, April 1964, 5; December 1966, 1; January 1967, 2; March 1967, 3; May 1967, 3; SAR, 1975, 2; ANHA, *Annual Report*, 1964, 3.

[96] NPS, "Articles of Incorporation of the Alaska National Parks and Monuments Association," November 27, 1970, in "Articles of Amendment" folder, "Articles, Bylaws, and Contracts" Section, ANHA files, Anchorage.

[97] NPS, "Information and Interpretive Services, Annual Report" for 1969, MOMC, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives; NPS, "Annual Public Contact Report" (MOMC) for 1970 and 1971, in "Annual Reports, 1953-72" file, Box 5, ARCC-00183 (DENA 00378), AKRO.

[98] SAR, 1972, 2, 6.

[99] Steve Carwile email, December 14, 2006.

[100] *Anchorage Daily Times*, July 17, 1972, 20; *Anchorage Daily News*, July 30, 1972, 17; "Mount McKinley Again Will Get Record Visitors," *Sunset* (Central Edition) 150 (May 1973), 59; SAR, 1972, 2. In 1973, the concessioner briefly experimented with serving hot lunches at Eielson. The logistics, however, proved difficult, and it soon reverted to serving box lunches. SAR, 1973, 2.

[101] *Anchorage Daily Times*, May 27, 1976, Visitors Guide:32; *New York Times*, June 4, 1978, X:1; *Anchorage Daily Times*, August 24, 1980, E-7.

[102] *Anchorage Daily Times*, January 4, 1973 (p. 2) noted that "9,000 tourists paid $15 a head to ride the Outdoor World Ltd. wildlife tour buses for eight hours, but 24,279 other visitors rode free on park service-provided shuttle buses."

[103] "Mount McKinley Again Will Get Record Visitors," 59.

[104] In early 1973, newspapers and magazines reported that park visitation from 1971 to 1972 had shot up more than 500 percent, from 58,342 to 306,027. It was soon revealed, however, that these figures represented *total* park visitation, which included all traffic on the Parks Highway. Soon afterward, the NPS agreed that a more realistic visitation figure pertained to recreational visitors; that total had roughly doubled from 1971 to 1972 (more specifically, from 44,528 to 88,615). *Anchorage Daily Times*, January 4, 1973, 2; "Mount McKinley Again Will Get Record Visitors," 58.

[105] Chief Naturalist to Supt. MOMC, "Interpretive Activities, 1975," January 15, 1976, in "Misc." file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives. The NPS's slide show was apparently moved from the evening to the afternoon because the concessioner instituted "movie nights" offering both current and classic feature films. These films, which proved popular both for visitors and park-area employees, continued for years afterward. Steve Carwile interview, January 16, 2007.

[106] Chief Naturalist to Supt. MOMC, January 15, 1976 (see above). As noted in the 1973 *Superintendent's Annual Report* (p. 4), the discovery walk was "an interpretive innovation using the shuttle bus system to get to various parts of the park to 'discover' what is there."

[107] The historic Toklat Patrol Cabin, built by rangers Grant Pearson and Lee Swisher in 1927, is now called the Pearson Cabin. Supt. MOMC to Area Director, Alaska, "Interpretive Activities, 1976," January 11, 1977, in "Misc." file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives; *Anchorage Daily Times*, April 22, 1976, 17; SAR, 1975, 6.

[108] SAR, 1977, 5-6; SAR, 1978, 2; Chief Naturalist to Supt. MOMC, "Annual Report Narrative, Interpretive Division" for 1978 (February 9, 1979) and 1979 (June 14, 1980), both in Catalog 9169, DENA Archives.

[109] SAR, May 1962, 3; SAR, June 1962, 5.

[110] NPS, "Information and Interpretive Services 1966 Annual Report," in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[111] SAR, 1972, 2; 1973, 2; 1974, 8; 1975, 6; Supt. MOMC to Area Director, Alaska, "Interpretive Activities, 1976," January 11, 1977, in "Misc." file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[112] NPS, "Riley Creek Information Station" briefing statement, April 4, 1979, in "General Visitation, 1971-80" folder, DENA Administrative History Collection.

[113] SAR, 1982, 1.

[114] NPS, "Annual Report Narrative, Interpretive Division" for 1979; *Anchorage Daily Times*, August 17, 1980, E-8.

[115] SAR, 1980, 4. During the 16 days that the tent was down, NPS staff offered special programs in the main hotel lobby and West Wing lobby.

[116] "Interpretive Activities, 1975" for MOMC, p. 2; NPS, "Mount McKinley National Park, Alaska" (park folder), 1973, in DENA Box 1, HFC. The trail guide had been in the works since the late 1960s; see SMR, March 1967, 2, and NPS, "Information and Interpretive Services, Annual Report" for 1969, February 17, 1970, in "Interpretation" file, Box 1, Collection 00495, DENA Archives.

[117] "Interpretive Activities, 1976" for MOMC, pp. 2-3. It was still hoped, during this period, that a park natural history handbook might be published, as well as a geology handbook. As noted elsewhere, the geology handbook was completed in 1979; the natural history handbook, however, was never finished.

[118] Steve Carwile interview, December 22, 2006.

[119] SAR, 1977, 6-7; SAR, 1978, 3; SAR, 1980, 5; "Annual Report Narrative, Interpretive Division," February 9, 1979 and June 14, 1980; Charles Money to author, telephone call, January 4, 2007.

[120] SAR, 1980, 6; SAR, 1985, 2. NPS Director William Whelan designated 1979 as "the year of the visitor," and the emergence of the *Alpenglow* may have been one manifestation of that commemoration. *Denali Alpenglow* 1 (Summer 1979), 1; Marisa James email, January 18, 2007.

[121] "Articles of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation of Alaska Natural History Association," February 26, 1979; "By-Laws of the Alaska Natural History Association," March 7, 1979; both in "ANHA, etc., 1951-96" file, DENA Administrative History Collection; ANHA, *1979 Annual Report*, 2, in ANHA files, Anchorage.

[122] SAR, 1980, 4-5; 1985, 2; 1986, 3; 1987, 5; 1991, 8; Marisa James email, January 18, 2007.

[123] SAR, 1987, 5; 1991, 8; Marisa James email, January 18, 2007; Ingrid Nixon email, March 23, 2007.

[124] NPS, *Draft GMP, DENA*, 16; NPS, *Final GMP, DENA*, 18.

[125] SAR, 1987, 3; 1988, 1; 1989, 2; 1990, 2.

[126] NPS, *Denali Alpenglow*, 1992, 12.
[127] Wallace Cole observations, noted in Jane Bryant email, December 28, 2006.
[128] The longer park tour was called the Tundra Wildlife Tour for many years; since 2003, it has been known as the Tundra Wilderness Tour.
[129] *Denali Alpenglow*, issues of 1992 (p. 9) and 2003 (p. 4).
[130] ANHA, *Annual Report*, editions of 1980 (p. 1) and 1981 (pp. 1-2).
[131] Charles Money, telephone call to the author, January 4, 2007; NPS, *Annual Report on NPS Cooperating Associations*, 1987 and 1988 editions; ANHA, *Annual Report*, editions of 1986 (p. 1) and 1991 (p. 16).
[132] SAR, 1980, 5; SAR, 1984, 2; SAR, 1987, 8; Kathy Loux email, January 9, 2007.
[133] Jane Anderson email, January 5, 2007; Kathy Loux email, January 9, 2007.
[134] NPS, *Annual Report on NPS Cooperating Associations*, 1986 and 1987 editions; sales chart (1959-2006) attached to Charles Money email, January 9, 2007; ANHA, *Annual Report*, 1980, 1.
[135] Kathy Loux email, January 9, 2007.
[136] SAR, 1985, 2; SAR, 1986, 2-3; SAR, 1987, 8.
[137] SAR, 1982, 1; 1983, 2; Marisa James review comments, March 22, 2007.
[138] Regarding book sales, Eielson has offered a natural history association sales outlet since the 1970s, but the concessioner replaced the hotel's NHA sales outlet with its own operation beginning in the early 1970s—either because of George Fleharty's on-site management, or financial arrangements made in the wake of the September 1972 hotel fire. Steve Carwile interview, January 16, 2007.
[139] *Anchorage Daily News*, August 11, 1995, B-1.
[140] SAR, 1996, 3-4; Butch Street (DSC) to author, email, April 12, 2006; Street to author, telephone call, April 13, 2006.
[141] SAR, 2002, 7, 15.
[142] NPS, "Finding of No Significant Impact, Construction of New Visitor Facilities in the Entrance Area, DENA," January 31, 2002, courtesy of Steve Carwile.
[143] SAR, 2002, 15; SAR, 2003, 7, 19; NPS, "National Park Service to Dedicate New Murie Science and Learning Center," *AK2Day* (electronic AKRO newsletter), August 12, 2004.
[144] NPS, "New Facilities and Visitor Services in Denali Opening in May," *AK2Day*, May 5, 2005; "Focus on the Parks," *Arrowhead* 12 (Spring 2005), 2; NPS, "Park to Celebrate Completion of New Visitor Facilities with Special Activities" (DENA Press Release), August 9, 2005.
[145] SAR, 2002, 12.
[146] SAR, 1977, 3; SAR, 1978, 1-2; SAR, 1983, 2; SAR, 1984, 2; Roger Robinson interview, January 23, 2007. The Student Conservation Association, according to its website, is a nationwide nonprofit founded in 1957; it introduces high school- and college-age students to careers in the conservation field.
[147] SAR, 1989, 2; SAR, 1990, 2; NPS, "Talkeetna Mountain Exhibit" (Drawing DENA-13003, sheet 2 of 12), August 1989, in TIC Aperture Card Collection, AKRO.
[148] SAR, 1995, 9; SAR, 1996, 5; SAR, 1997, 5; SAR, 1998, 5.
[149] Robert Cunningham, who served as park superintendent from 1980 to 1989, noted in an October 13, 2004 interview that "as budgets went down ... the only place you can really cut, and still maintain the mission of the park, is in interpretation. That's the only place you can cut."
[150] SAR, 1995, 12; Marisa James review comments, March 2007.
[151] SAR, 1996, 13; 1998, 8; 2004, 8.
[152] SAR, 1997, 7; 1998, 11; NPS, "Volunteers in Parks, Annual Activity and Expense Report" (DI-150), DENA, 1999 through 2006. Marisa James notes that the hours expended by SCA workers are included in the park's volunteer total, and in fact SCA workers since the mid-1990s have contributed most of the park's volunteer hours.
[153] Kris Fister email, January 18, 2007.
[154] *Denali Alpenglow* 14 (Summer 1992), 12.
[155] SAR, 1993, 3; SAR, 1995, 5; Jane Bryant review comments, March 26, 2008.
[156] SAR, 1998, 5; SAR, 2002, 13.
[157] *Denali Alpenglow*, editions of 1992 (p. 11) and 2003 (p. 10); SAR, 1995, 9; 2003, 11; Marisa James email, January 18, 2007.
[158] *Denali Alpenglow*, editions of 2003 (pp, 10-11) and 2006 (pp. 10-11).
[159] Kris Fister email, January 19, 2007.
[160] SAR, 1995, 11; NPS, *Annual Report on NPS Cooperating Associations*, 1995.
[161] NPS, *Annual Report on NPS Cooperating Associations*, 1987 and 1988.
[162] The quote is from NPS, *Management Policies* (December 1988 edition, p. 7:5); its intent is based on authorization language contained in the U.S. Code, Title 16, section 17j-2(e).
[163] New ANHA-sponsored books during this period included Sheri Forbes's *The Nature of Denali: Denali National Park Entrance Area Trail Guide* (1992), William E. Brown's park history, *Denali, Symbol of the Alaskan*

Wild (1993), Jon Nierenberg's *A Backcountry Companion for Denali National Park* (1995); and NPS, *Denali Adventures: Activities for People Young at Heart* (1997).

[164] Alaska Natural History Association, *Annual Report*, editions of 1993 (p. 9) and 1996 (p. 10).

[165] NPS, *Cooperating Association Annual Report of Aid and Revenue*, editions of 2002 (p. 8), 2003 (p. 6), and 2004 (p. 6); Marisa James email, January 18, 2007. The book on the park's bird life is *Birds of Denali*, by Carol McIntyre, Nan Eagleson, and Alan Seegert (2002).

[166] Jerryne Cole, "A History of the Denali Institute," unpublished manuscript, February 2007, courtesy of Ms. Cole.

[167] "Alumni from the 1980s," Univ. of Tennessee website (www.bio.utk.edu/division/alumni/1980.htm); NPS, *Cooperating Association Annual Report of Aid and Revenue*, 2003 edition, p. 6; Philip Hooge email, January 17, 2007. In the fall of 2006, this camp (now part of the Murie Science and Learning Center) was moved to a site near Teklanika Campground. Ingrid Nixon email, March 23, 2007. On January 1, 2008, the Alaska Natural History Association changed its name to the Alaska Geographical Association to better reflect its new role as an educational organization focused on Alaska's natural and cultural heritage.

[168] "Alaska Natural History Institutes," from ANHA website (www.akaskanha.org/alaska-institutes.htm).

[169] Ingrid Nixon email, March 23, 2007.

[170] NPS, *Final Development Concept Plan, Entrance Area and Road Corridor*, December 1996, 23-56.

[171] NPS, "Eielson EA Out for Comment," *AK2Day*, April 11, 2004; NPS, "Comment Period Extended for Environmental Assessment for the Construction of a New Eielson Visitor Center and a Permanent Toklat Rest Stop," *AK2Day*, April 26, 2004.

[172] *Anchorage Daily News*, September 22, 2004, B-1; NPS, "New Facilities and Visitor Services in Denali Opening in May," *AK2Day*, May 5, 2005; Mary Tidlow email, July 26, 2006.

[173] SMR, May 1924, 3; William E. Brown, *Denali: Symbol of the Alaskan Wild* (Denali National Park, Alaska Natural History Association, 1993), 135-36.

[174] SMR, November 1933, 2; April 1934, 5; June 1940, 3; January 1942, 1.

[175] SMR, September 1945, 2; March 1946, 1; February 1947, 2; February 1948, 3; April 1949, 2

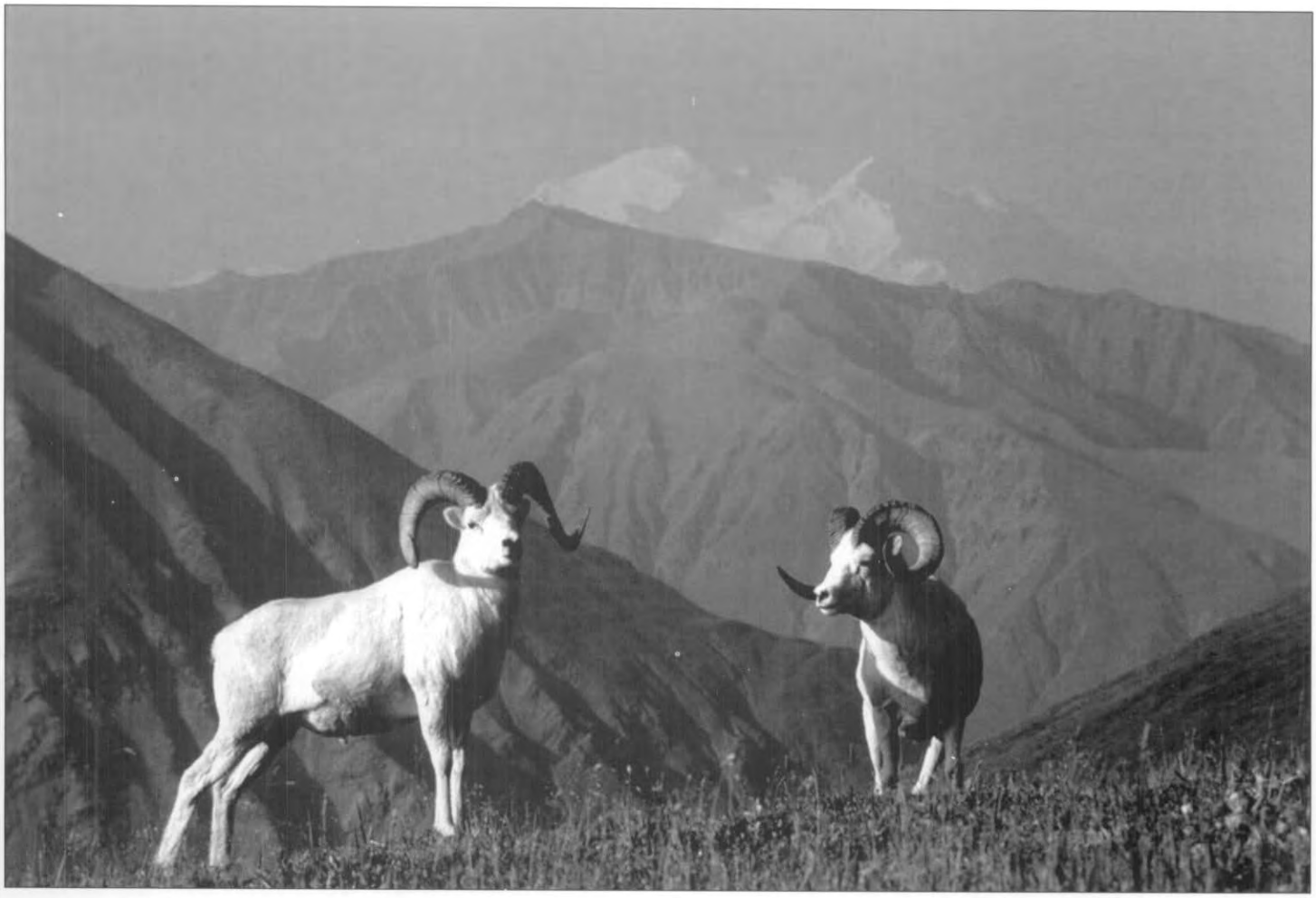
[176] SMR, February 1950, 1; March 1951, 1; July 1952, 1; Lyman L. Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest: Volume Three, 1945-1987*, 55, 60, 84, 93-99.

[177] SMR, October 1960, 3; October 1963, 2.

[178] SAR, 1972, 2; 1973, 9.

[179] SAR, 1974, 3; 1975, 5; Daniel Kuehn interview, October 11, 2004. Kuehn notes that one movie he showed on those road trips dealt with the "d-2" issue, a move which raised some ire among the Alaska congressional delegation.

[180] SAR, 1991, 8.

[181] SAR, 1993, 6; 1995, 12; 1998, 5; 2002, 11-13, 16; 2003, 9-10; 2004, 7-8; 2005, 5-9; *AK2Day*, May 2, 2002.

[182] "News Update," *Travel Agent* 303 (April 23, 2001), 84; SAR, 2002, 9; 2003, 10