

# Interior



# Shelves

## *History from the Source @ Morristown NHP*

*Sarah Dixon Minegar, PhD, Archivist and Museum Educator, NPS*

Until graduate school, I had never set foot into an archival repository. As a student of history and former classroom teacher, I was naturally drawn to the study of primary historical documents, but it was not until I first visited an archive that I engaged with history so intimately. At Morristown National Historical Park (MORR), we want to give high school students the unique opportunity to study historical manuscripts firsthand, and we believe our archives-based educational program, Primary Source Seminar, gives young people a jumpstart on archival research while promoting historical thinking. The main objective of Primary Source Seminar is to bring historical documents out of archival storage and into the hands of young learners so that they may practice guided observation and analysis



Archival Ambassadors participants examine original manuscripts from the Lloyd W. Smith Archival Collection, at Morristown NHP.

activities and gain practical research experience. Our program encourages participants to become critical thinkers and independent historians. Primary documents enliven perspectives. Our philosophy: when possible, use the real deal. Though an unlikely site for a collection that contains Ferdinand and Isabella, Booker T. Washington, and Susan B. Anthony, MORR, preserved as an historic site for its role in the American Revolution, is home to a diverse assortment of manuscripts and rare books. The Lloyd W. Smith Archival Collection includes approximately 15,000 printed works and nearly 300,000 manuscripts, spanning from the fifteenth through the early twentieth century. From its inception, Primary Source Seminar intended to utilize, in various capacities, the Lloyd W. Smith Archival Collection for student seminars and teacher development projects. Primary Source Seminar provides an opportunity for curatorial staff to take on

the educator-facilitator role to stimulate interactive immersive experiences with students and teachers. Working firsthand with authentic, unedited materials, students are encouraged to interrogate history, challenge assertions, and engage in scholarly debate. This program is public history at its finest. Not only does it prioritize historical thinking, it cultivates conscientious historians and future park stewards. By demonstrating our confidence and trust in young learners to work with special collections, we have found that the learning experience is enhanced for all parties involved, as this arrangement promotes a reciprocating teacher-learner exchange. This exchange also opens a dialog about preservation, historical interpretation, and museum and park careers. Offshoots of the Primary Source Seminar program include classroom and online resources; lesson plans; digital exhibits; and Archival Ambassadors, a stewardship program that brings high school and graduate level college students together to study history via primary sources. Please visit MORR's Museum and Library Blog at <http://morristownnhpmuseum.blogspot.com/> and Education Blog at <http://www.primarysource.seminar.blogspot.com/> for more information.

## *Preserving Alaska Native Cultural History*

*Bureau of Indian Affairs*

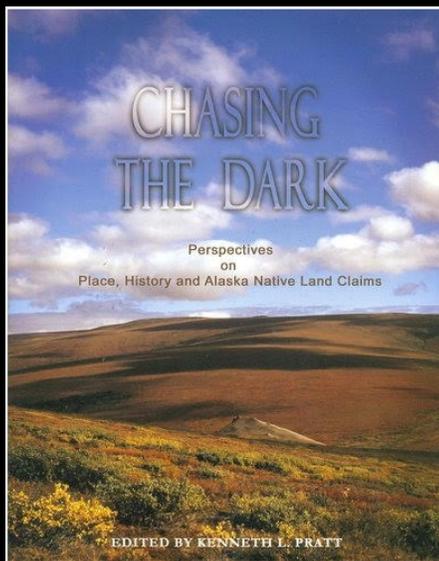
The Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Program houses a nationally unique collection of ethnographic, archeological, and archival materials. Established pursuant to Section 14(h)(1) of the Act, Program staff perform thorough investigations of Alaska Native historical places and cemetery sites, and produce fair and legally valid certifications for all claims. Certifications are based on field investigations of the claimed lands and associated historical, archeological, and ethnographic research, the combined findings of which are presented in final reports.

The ANCSA Program protects cultural and natural heritage resources and increases knowledge of these resources by conducting oral history interviews, analyzing data collected during investigations, preserving archeological and archival collections, and making these collections accessible to researchers. *(continued p. 2)*

## Preserving Alaska Native Cultural History (continued from p.1)

The Program has a museum collection consisting of 2,000 tape recorded oral history interviews; approximately 1,000 oral history tape transcripts; note files on 600 untaped oral history interviews; 2,300 Alaska Native historical place and cemetery site reports; 4,500 field notebooks; 130 annotated, composite field maps; more than 20,000 archeological artifacts; about 50,000 photographic images; and approximately 1,600 original ANCSA Native Regional Corporation site identification note files. These materials contain irreplaceable information on a wide range of topics related to Alaska Native culture, history, and land use. Because many of the Native elders interviewed are no longer living, the oral histories often represent the only records of their knowledge and life experiences, which may be used to teach future generations about traditional life and tribal history. The collection as a whole is rich in information critical to establishing or validating Native claims concerning customary and traditional subsistence harvesting sites and activities. The ANCSA collections are housed in Anchorage with additional archival records maintained at the Rasmuson Library in the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Additional information about the ANCSA Program may be found in *Chasing the Dark: perspectives on place, history, and Alaska Native land claims* (Volume 1 Shadowlands), Ed. Kenneth L. Pratt, 2009.



## New Interior Museum Exhibit Explores DOI's Pop Culture Tracy Baetz, Curator, Interior Museum

Interior headquarters will get its pop culture fix starting June 29 with the opening of *DOI Pop! On Air, On Screen & In Print*. This exhibition explores the intersection of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) with popular culture. The Interior Museum reveals just how often America's public lands—and even the headquarters building in Washington, DC—have been cast in memorable supporting roles in television shows, feature films and bestselling publications by highlighting classic examples dating from the early 1900s to the present. The exhibit includes objects and imagery from the Interior Museum, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, historical societies, university libraries, and private individuals.



The exhibition also illustrates how the Department itself has enlisted icons such as the Roadrunner, Snoopy, and Bill Nye to help in publicizing its missions over the years. DOI has also created its own icons to help spread the word. Included on display is a wide selection of memorabilia relating to Johnny Horizon, the fictional mascot originally created by the Bureau of Land Management in 1968 for an anti-litter program. It was later adopted by DOI to be the face of a nationwide environmental awareness campaign to "Clean Up America" in time for the country's bicentennial in 1976.

Visitors can test their knowledge of movies filmed on public lands based on photo clues or try their hand at being a location scout to match sites to the host of real-life commercials, television shows, movies, music videos, etc. filmed at particular locations on public lands.

*DOI Pop!* is on view from June 29, 2015 through late winter 2016. Please visit [www.doi.gov/interiormuseum](http://www.doi.gov/interiormuseum) for more information.



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