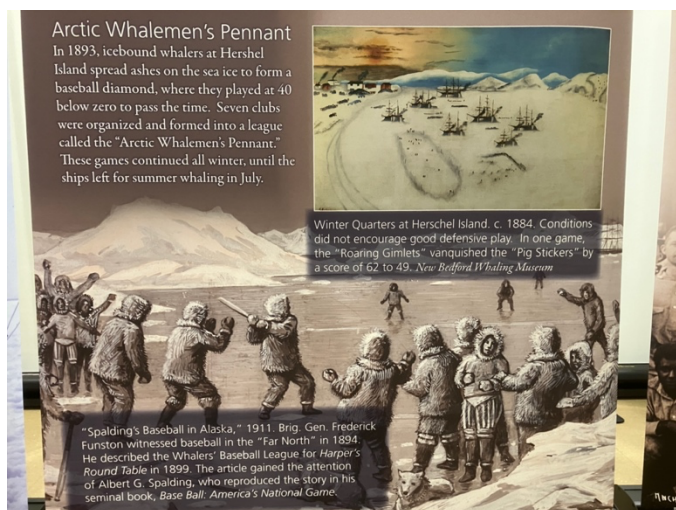


AMERICA250 TRAVELING EXHIBIT

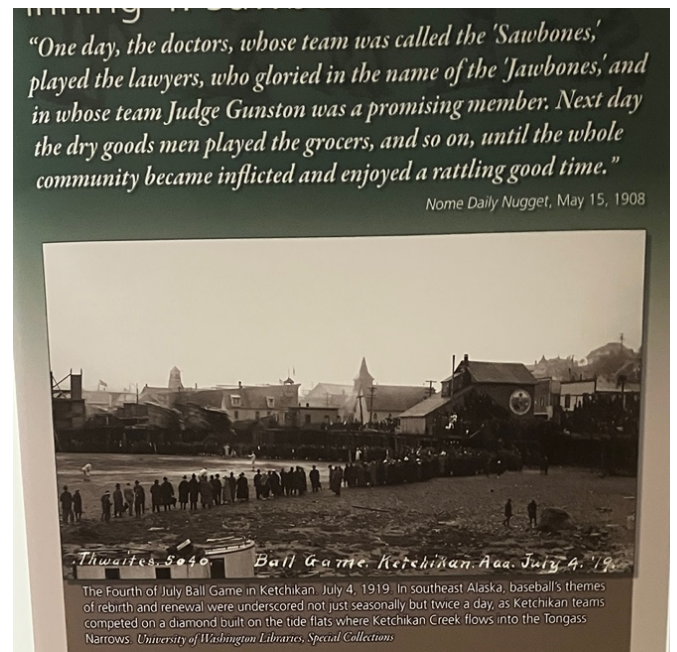
In honor of the nation's 250th anniversary, the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology has created a traveling exhibit, *Alaska's Fields of Dreams: America's Pastime in the 49th State*. Seward Museum is hosting the exhibit through the month of August.



The traveling exhibit features 9 innings of Alaska baseball history and photos, with the extra 10th inning highlighting the hometown of Seward.



Inning 3 panel (above) shows Alaska baseball in its early days.



Inning 4 panel (above) is titled Sawbones vs. Jawbones and tells how a team of doctors played a team of lawyers in Nome in 1908.



Part of the **4th inning** panel features members of the Seward team from a century ago. Looking closely, you'll see Gus Manthey (2nd from right) and sponsor Harry Hoben (3rd from right). Besides being a tremendous pitcher, Gus was the local butcher. Hoben is the namesake of Hoben Park.

Alaska has a deep history with the game of baseball, starting at least 150 years ago with the Knock Down and Skin 'Em ball club on St. Paul Island.

This summer Fairbanks played the 120th annual Midnight Sun Game.

The Alaska Baseball League and teams like the Fairbanks Goldpanners have served as feeder programs to the Major League since the 1960s – Satchel Paige even played an exhibition game in AK in 1965.

And of course the many Little Leagues across the state have given young Alaskans a lifelong love of the game!

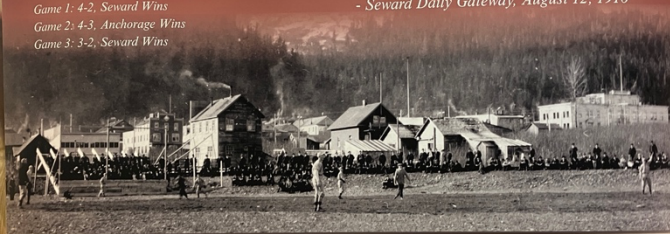
EXTRA INNING

The 10th inning panel highlights Seward.

Inning 10: Here is your Seward starting lineup!

Homestand: Anchorage vs. Seward
"Quite a big bunch of money is up on this series. Jack Robert, of Seward, has already bet \$380 and went to the bank today and drew \$1,000 more with which he paraded down to the camp of the enemy."
- Seward Daily Gateway, August 12, 1916

Game 1: 4-2, Seward Wins
Game 2: 4-3, Anchorage Wins
Game 3: 3-2, Seward Wins



Baseball game at the bottom of Sixth and Seventh avenues [now Ballaine Boulevard], 1910.
RBHS 2302.1.1

Baseball in Seward has historically drawn the most local enthusiasm. In the early 1900s, the town supported men's, women's, and children's teams, funding uniforms and equipment through community events like weekly dances. The Seward Baseball Club raised funds for the first official team uniforms, which arrived in August 1914 and featured a gray-and-white color scheme with a green "S" on each uniform. Games were first played north of town at Branch Park, which later expanded with grandstands as crowds grew before a new field was built in town.

BASEBALL TEAM IN NEW SUITS
The Seward baseball team showed for the first time this season in their new suits Sunday, and while they made a classy appearance on the new diamond they put on exhibition the poorest article of ball that they have shown this season. The game was ragged in all departments and not interesting enough to hold the attention of the spectators.

The Seward Baseball Team got caught looking Seward Daily Gateway September 8, 1914

The sport reached its "Golden Age" between 1915 and 1917, driven by intense rivalries with neighboring communities like Anchorage, Cordova, and Valdez. The sport temporarily declined during World War I, leading to a quieter 1920s. Baseball traditions returned in Seward with softball leagues in 1933, and renewed interest came from soldiers at Fort Raymond during World War II.



Left: Seward Hardware Baseball Team, sometime between 1930s - 1940s.
RBHS 2302.1.3



Right: The Seward Ball Club, The Champions of S.E. & N.E. Alaska August 15, 1916
RBHS 2301.1.4

Legends of the Diamond
The Swingin' Grannies softball team was organized in 1979 and actively played through the 1980s. Besides playing softball, the Grannies promoted Seward and raised money for local charities. The Grannies would greet cruise ships and participate in parades and festivals around Alaska. The team was coached by former Seward Chief of Police (and later Mayor) Louis A. Bencardino.



Batter Up!
Baseball remains a prominent sport in Seward. Each summer, one can find kids playing on the Little League Ball Field downtown, while adults participate in the local softball league at Jon Perry and Ryan Lewis Memorial Fields next to the high school.

*Above: Swingin' Grannies Team, 1980s
Below: Grannie Teammates, 1983
RBHS Archive*



Photo Drawing: Carol Souza