

The Tripod

September-October 2024



Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, PO Box 2323, Seward AK 99664
<http://www.iditarod100.org> IditarodHTA@gmail.com
The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

The Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance promotes awareness of the Iditarod National Historic Trail and its gold rush and Alaska Native heritage by encouraging education programs and historical research, assisting in the protection, improvement, maintenance and marking of the Trail and developing partnerships that foster stewardship, commitments, and support.



Time to renew

Alliance membership dues for 2025 are due by the end of December. Renewing on our website is easy - <https://www.iditarod100.org/membership.html>. This is also a good time to upgrade your membership level. Every member is an important part of our mission to preserve, protect and promote the Iditarod National Historic Trail.



Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance Annual Meeting

The annual business meeting will be by Zoom on December 10 from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. RSVP and receive the Zoom link by emailing your RSVP to IditarodHTA@gmail.com

IHTA Establishes Fund with Alaska Community Foundation!

The **Iditarod Historic Trail Fund** is up and running at Alaska Community Foundation (ACF). You can donate to this fund at <https://alaskacf.org/funds/> and use the search function to find the fund name.

IHTA recently opened a non-endowed fund with an initial deposit of \$25,000. We hope this fund will grow over time to provide a sustained source of funds to support the work of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance. “Non-endowed fund” means all the resources in the fund are available for spending as project needs arise.

Recent completed projects include substantial refurbishing of the Topkok Shelter cabin and partnering with White Mountain Search & Rescue and White Mountain Native Corporation to construct an entirely new shelter cabin in the Topkok hills. Ongoing projects include creating an Oral History of the designation of the Iditarod as a National Historic Trail with UAF and creating interpretive materials with the help of State Parks Interpretation & Education unit.

ACF is an organization that pools and invests the resources of many (2250 at present count) diverse Alaskan non-profit organizations in order to enhance the investment opportunities for the individual fund organization.



From the Past....

"The Cordova Daily Times" February 12, 1923

WOMAN MUSHER BRINGS PRAISE SOURDOUGHS

With a rifle over her shoulder, a pack on her back, and a crochet hook and a ball of thread in her trouser's pocket, Mrs. Pearl Shough has wrested from Alaska the reputation of being one of the best mushers on southeastern trails. So does the way of the woman survive even in wildernesses where white men are not seen for months at a time and Indians seldom penetrate.

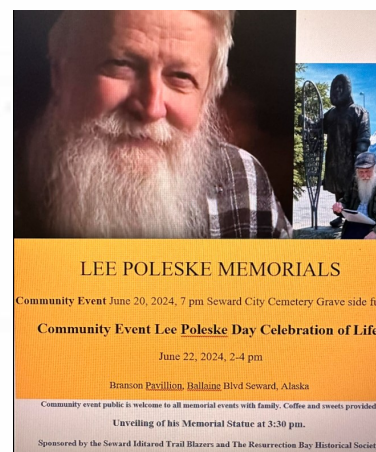
In Alaska she is known from the Portland Canal to Cook's Inlet as one of the best men in the hills. Her husband, Harry C. Shough, prospector, says proudly, "She's a better man than I am." He plainly wasn't thinking of Gunga Din when he said it either. He was thinking of his "pard," Pearl Shough, who "handles the powder" when they drive a tunnel because her nerve is steadier than his.

Old Time Prospectors. The two have been prospecting together between the British Columbia line and Willow Creek since 1909. For months, during that time they have heard no voices but their own. There are stories of mining partners who finish fights, gouged on by the fiendish monotony of one another's company. But these two dismiss the phenomenon of a Mr. and Mrs. existence in the wilderness with an unwondering. "Yes, I guess we're happily married all right. We ain't grown sick of it yet."

The two have made home wherever they made camp. Sometimes it was a little cabin where they holed in for the winter to do construction work on a claim covered many feet deep with snow. One of the cabins, they tell about overlook Cook's Inlet. For months the sound of a boat passing on the water far below would bring them to the window in the middle of the night just to look at this proof that life was still going on in the outside world. In summer they usually prospect in the glacier country higher up, so they sometimes do not see green grass and brown earth for the year round.

Mr. & Mrs. Shough are guests at the Hotel Seward. They arrived here Sunday on business connected with their mining claims. "Green grass certainly does look good to me." the husband said exuberantly. Mrs. Shough pointed to a roll of crocheting lying on the table. It is the same work she carried in her hip pocket through miles of wilderness where bears are as common as dogs on a city's streets.

Lee Poleske...



Lee Poleske, long time IHTA Board Member, member of the Seward Iditarod Trail Blazers, and Trail historian, passed away on August 12, 2023. Lee was also the long-time editor of *The Tripod*, publication of which was on hiatus after his death. On June 22, 2024, his friends and colleagues honored Lee with a community gathering and the unveiling of his memorial statue along mile zero of the Trail in Seward. Note Lee's ever-present camera around his neck.