

Alaska State Library
Historical Collections

Guide to Collection

Biggs, William, 1904-1987

William Biggs Photograph Collection, 1928-1933

PCA 315

1 box (housed with PCA 316)
1 album (333 photographs)
2 framed certificates
1 leather bound index
1 large photograph

Processed by: Ken Nail, Jr., LAM
Revised by: Alea Oien, Apr. 2009
Revised by: Sandy Johnston, July 2016
Revised by: Jacki Swearingen, Nov. 2016

Addition:

2 boxes
17 folders
2 albums
1 wood block with metal plate picture
Loose photographs and negatives in envelopes

ACQUISITION: William Biggs collected and created the album. Mike Grummett obtained the album at an auction held at the University of Alaska Southeast. The Historical Library purchased it in 1988. Acc. no. 1988-51 and 1988-60.

ACCESS: The collection is available for viewing, however, the photographs may not be photocopied.

COPYRIGHT: Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian.

PROCESSING: The album was retained as received. The pages are interleaved with tissue. Many of PCA 315 Addition photographs have been sleeved in Mylar.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

William Biggs was born in Juneau in 1904, and lived there most of his life. He worked at the Hirst-Chichagof Mine in Kimshan (Kinshan) Cove on Chichagof Island from 1928 until 1941, as postmaster, radio operator, and storekeeper at various times. He married Petronell "Nell" Marthe in 1941, they bought a house in Juneau and stayed the remainder of their lives. After leaving the mine, William Biggs worked for the Daily Alaska Empire and held various other jobs around Juneau. He narrated the film "Gold by the Sea" to which he contributed many of the images. He and Nell were both actors in the Juneau production as well [Historical Library Video No. 51]. He was a lifetime member of BPOE Elk's Lodge No. 420, past president of the Juneau Igloo No. 6 of the Pioneers of Alaska, secretary-treasurer of the Juneau Centennial Commission and a member of the board of the Alaska Historical Society. He died in Juneau at age 83 in 1987.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

The album primarily concerns activities associated with the Hirst-Chichagof Mine in Kimshan Cove on Chichagof Island, where Mr. Biggs was employed. The images include scenics of the surrounding area and Turner Lake, mine workers and other individuals, reconstruction of the mine, and 3 photographs of Governor Parks at the groundbreaking ceremony for the federal building in Juneau. The album includes photographs of William Biggs, Frank J. Speckert, D.J. Williams, Mrs. D.J. Williams, Brian Harland, Bob Ellis, and C.F. Lane.

Other Hirst-Chichagof Mine collections include: PCA 161, PCA 239 Oversized, MS 141.

*Nash's Expeditious Measurer, or, The merchant and seaman's expeditions measurer**, belonging to Biggs, was added in 2004.

**The merchant and seaman's expeditions measurer : containing a set of tables, which show at one view the solid contents of all kinds of packages and casks, according to their several lengths, breadths, and depths : also, rules for determining the contents of all sorts of casks, in wine and beer measure. Stereotype ed., corr. New York : Unz & Co., [18--]*

Added to this collection was a large collection of Biggs family photographs. There are two boxes containing two photo albums, hundreds of black and white photographs sleeved in Mylar and some color photos. The images span from the 1800s to the 1980s. There are photographs of many other Juneau, Alaska, families, especially children, such as Messerschmidt and Shaw. At this time there is no inventory of photographs.

INVENTORY

Box 1

Photographic Album (333 photographs.)

1-12 Kimshan Cove 1939.

- 13-18 Hirst Chicagof Mine, Kimshan Cove.
- 19-24 Kimshan Cove, December 1933.
- 25-30 Deer at Kimshan Cove.
- 31-42 Tailings retreatment, Hirst-Chicagof Mine 1932.
- 43 Compressor.
- 44 Switchboard.
- 45-47 [Mine buildings]
- 48-51 Hirst-Chicagof Mill during reconstruction, 1929.
- 52 Frank J. Speckert [and] D. J. Williams, 1932.
- 53-58 Semi-domestic wild geese, Kimshan Cove.
- 59 [Passengers boarding an Alaska-Washington Airways float plane]
- 60 Mrs. D. J. Williams, Brian Harland, Bob Ellis – C. F. Lane, D. J. Williams.
- 61 [Mountain shown from water]
- 62 [Boat cruising in water]
- 63-64 Chicagof.
- 65 Jos. T. Bauer, John Soini – Radio-ville.
- 66 Hirst-Chicagof Mining Co. [train] No. 1.
- 67 [Boat Margaret on the rocks]
- 68 [Flowers]
- 69 [Dining hall?]
- 70 [Waves]
- 71 [Dining hall?]
- 72-73 [Water scenery]
- 74-75 Last days of Monte Carlo [on fire].

- 76-78 [Water scenery]
- 79-80 Construction of Power line, Chicagof to Kimshan Cove, Jan. to April, 1929.
- 81-83 Transformer station.
- 84-89 [Men at Kimshan Cove?]
- 90-95 Hummingbird garden, Kimshan Cove.
- 96-103 Wreck of Patco, Kimshan Cove [float plane]
- 104-107 Kimshan Cove.
- 108 [Mine seen from water]
- 109 [Water scenery]
- 110 [Boat on rocks]
- 111 [Dock]
- 112-113 [Boat on rocks]
- 114-115 [Flowers]
- 116-118 [Mine buildings]
- 119-124 [Mine workers in various settings]
- 125-126 [Float plan dock]
- 127-128 [Mine buildings]
- 129-130 [Tugboat]
- 131 [Man working with an ax]
- 132 [Water scenery]
- 133-148 [Mine pictures- some with people]
- 149-150 Juneau
- 151-154 [Scenic water shots]

- 155 [Swans on the water]
- 156 [Islands]
- 157 [Dock]
- 158 Hirst-Chicagof Mining Co. No. 1 [ore train]
- 159-160 [Pile of brush]
- 161 [Juneau - shot from water]
- 166 Hirst-Chicagof Mining Co. No. 1 [ore train]
- 167 [Boat on rocks- 2 views]
- 168 [Mine buildings]
- 169 [Woman on tracks with a dead deer]
- 170-171 [Boat foundering- blurry]
- 172 Doolth Mountain 2,120 ft.
- 173 [Juneau from water] "Federal Territorial Bldg., One of the public schools, St. Ann's Hospital" - identified.
- 174 W.H. Biggs, 1932.
- 175 [Power lines through mountainous terrain]
- 176 Humming bird [pictured in flowers]
- 177 [Float plane taxiing into beach]
- 178-187 Construction of power line Chicago to Kimshan Cove - 1929 - Jan-Feb-March.
- 188-197 Reconstruction of Mill - Hirst - Chicagof Mine - 1929. Kimshan Cove, Alaska.
- 198 [Man holding dead eagle by wing span]
- 199 [Float plane taking off]
- 200-202 "Bill Patmore".
- 203 [Alaska-Washington Airways float plane loading up]

- 204 [Float plane pulling up on beach]
- 205 Mike Yakopatz.
- 206 Mrs. Williams
- 207 [Alaska-Washington Airways float plane on beach, man holding line]
- 208-228 [Mine pictures]
- 229-232 [Boat "On Time"]
- 233 [blurry photo]
- 234 [Chicken yard]
- 236-240 Joe Bauer & John Soini, Radioville.
- 241 [Unidentified man]
- 242-245 [Water and boats]
- 246-250 [Unidentified men at mine]
- 252-255 [Mine pictures]
- 256 [Float house]
- 257 [Building]
- 258 [Wreck of float plane on the rocks]
- 259 [Float plane taxiing in]
- 260-261 [Water scenery shots]
- 262 [Wreck of float plane on the rocks]
- 263 [Blurry photo of sinking boat]
- 264 [Mine building]
- 265 [Sleeping man with magazine in his lap]
- 266 [Blurry photo of a man on a rooftop]
- 267 [Mine buildings- photo taken from hillside down]

- 268-270 [Mine buildings]
- 271 [Boat on the water]
- 272 [Mine buildings – photo taken from water]
- 273 [Mine building]
- 274 [Erecting a power line pole]
- 275 Hirst-Chichagof Mining Co. – Office & Store.
- 276 United States Post Office – Kimshan Cove, Alaska.
- 277 [Boat]
- 278-279 [Office equipment]
- 280-283 [Filled store shelves]
- 284 [Plane on runway- crowd of onlookers] Verso- “To Uncle Bill from George F. Shaw Jr.”
- 285 [Fallen trees on hillside]
- 286 Pioneers Home, Sitka, Alaska. Oct. 7, 1934. The Photo Shop Studio.
- 287 [Mine buildings]
- 288 [Seagulls]
- 289 [Mine buildings]
- 290-292 [Old boat on the beach]
- 293 [Crowd at a baseball game]
- 294 [Mine buildings]
- 295 [Man on back of beached boat, waving his hat]
- 296 [Mine buildings – photo shot from pier]
- 297 [Men with shovel with crowd behind – groundbreaking?]
- 298 [Mine buildings]

- 299 1500 lb Sea Lion. Caught at Barlow Cove near Point Retreat Alaska. c30 Ordway. Length over nine feet.
- 300-301 [Men with shovel with crowd behind] Verso: Digging ground for new capitol Bldg.
- 302-313 Turner Lake, 1928 [Scenery, some with men in skiffs]
- 314-317 Turner Lake, 1928 [men in skiffs]
- 318-319 Turner Lake, 1928 [men on land holding fish]
- 320-321 Turner Lake trout [showing fish on ground next to creel]
- 322 [Bridge over river]
- 323-325 [Multiple ships at a dock, displaying many flags on their masts]
- 326-332 Kimshan Cove - 1935 - December.
- 333 General Joshua and I or When The Midnight Sun Stood Still for Me; July 24, 1932, On board S.S. "Admiral Rogers", enroute Juneau to Seattle, T.N. Henry [Poem]
- 334 The Merchant and Seaman's Expeditious Measurer: Containing a Set of Tables, which show at one view, the Solid Contents of all Kinds of Packages and Casks according to their several Lengths, Breadths, and Depths; Also, Rules for Determining the Contents of all Sorts of Casks in Wine and Beer Measure. [Leather bound index, (9.75 x 4.5 in.)]
- 335 Juneau Lodge No. 420 Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks. Certificate of Meritorious Services, awarded May 30, 1956. [Framed certificate.]
- 336 Benedictio Domorum Tempore Paschali. Peace to This House and to All Who Dwell Here. Blessed during Easterweek, The Year of Statehood - 1959. Cathedral Parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Capital City of Juneau, Alaska. [Framed certificate.]
- 337 [11 x 14 in. portrait in brown folio] To my friend Billy Biggs, L.O Sloane. Winter & Pond, photographers. Sloane, L.O. (Leonard) Doctor in Juneau

Addition:

Box 2

Folder

1 album (6x8 inches) - 14 b&w photographs of family and dog
1 wood block with metal plate picture [Head and shoulder portrait of man]

Folder

1 photo album (7 ¼ x12 inches) Vacation Days: ca. 1909-1924
Towns: Juneau, Sitka, Skagway, Wrangell, Taku
People: Messerschmidt (George, Heine, Edith, Katherine, Francis, Roberta); Biggs (Harry, Bill); Larson (Gerald, sisters); Jimmy Miller; Joe Lynch; Shaw (George, Gerald, Al); Jack Burford; Curtis Brotherton; Fred Barragar; John Ganuck
Boats: T-58 Sewanee, Diamond "C"

11 Folders with sleeved photographs:

Juneau, Alaska
Nell Biggs
Bill Biggs
Shaw Family, Messerschmidts
Biggs, Mr. Harry and Family
Letter and two portraits
Elks activities
Kimshan Cove
3 folders of photographs - no specific subject

Box 3

4 Folders with sleeved photographs - no specific subject
Loose photographs and negatives in photographer's envelopes
Medallion - "The Seal Of The State Of Alaska"