

**Alaska State Library
Historical Collections**

Guide to Collection

Joyce, Mary 1899-1976.

Mary Joyce, Photographs and Papers, ca. 1899-1976.

PCA 459

6 boxes (2.25 linear ft.)
3 photograph albums
773 photographs

Prepared by: S. Lanksbury, August, 2006.

ACQUISITION: This collection was purchased in 2005 by the Alaska State Library Historical Collections from Ms. Mary Anne Greiner of Seattle, WA. The Alaska State Historical Collection purchased the majority of the Mary Joyce Collection in 2005 from Ms. Mary Anne Greiner. In 2006, Ron and Kathy Maas, former owners of the Twin Glacier Lodge, donated a scrapbook of early family photos which had remained at the lodge.

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

COPYRIGHT: Request for permission to publish material from the collection must be discussed with the Librarian. Photocopying does not constitute permission to publish.

PROCESSING: Folded and warped manuscripts and photographs were cleaned, humidified, and/or flattened, as necessary. Newspaper and magazine clippings were photocopied and then printed onto pH-neutralized paper stock. Albums with high acidity have been interleaved with pH-neutral tissue. One original newspaper clipping album (box 6, folder 2) was received with severe and irreversible water damage. The pages were digitally scanned, saved onto CD-R, and paper reproductions were placed into folder for viewing. Other items have been placed into Mylar sleeves and pH-neutral folders for protection. Photographs were hand-numbered. Manuscripts have been left described at the end of the collection at the folder level, with no further numbering. The collection was received in no particular order and has been redistributed by subject in an approximate chronology, with photographs preceding manuscripts. Original order has been maintained where possible and appropriate.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Mary Joyce is renowned for traveling solo from Southeast Alaska to Fairbanks by dog team. Mary Joyce was born to an Irish Catholic family in Baraboo, Wisconsin. She attended Nursing School in Chicago, Illinois and upon graduating, moved to Hollywood, California to pursue her career. In 1928, she was hired by Mrs. Erie L. Smith as a private nurse to care for her son, Leigh Hackley Smith (a.k.a. "Hack"), a World War One veteran suffering from war-related health issues. Mrs. Smith was the foster daughter of the prominent philanthropist Charles Henry Hackley of Muskegon, Michigan.

The Smiths' and Ms. Joyce arrived at the Twin Glacier Camp in 1930 on the Smiths' private yacht, the *Stella Maris*. Dr. Harry C. DeVigne, a physician for the Alaska-Juneau Gold Mine, built the hunting and fishing camp alongside the Taku River in the vicinity of Juneau, Alaska in 1923.

Following that visit, Mrs. Smith purchased the land. She handed the encampment over to Hack to tend with assistance from Mary. In return they quickly added more buildings and renamed it as the Twin Glacier Lodge. Mrs. Smith returned every spring with supplies on the *Stella Maris*. Hack and Mary raised Huskies for dog sledding at the lodge while entertaining guests as a diversion from Hack's health issues. Hack ultimately succumbed to declining health in 1934 at the age of 37.

Following Mr. Smith's death, Mary was given the deed to the lodge by Mrs. Smith, who continued to visit every year for as long as health permitted. She turned the lodge into a resort lodge during her ownership; it continues to function as one of Juneau's earliest man-made attractions to present day.

In December of 1935, Mary set out on a solo dog sledding trek, as a representative for the City and Borough of Juneau, to the Fairbanks Winter Carnival. She later claimed to have walked the majority of the mush. The rate of her progress slowed when she became ill en route, causing the public to fear for her safety and speculate on her whereabouts. She flew to the Winter Carnival after realizing she would not complete the trek in time, but returned to her sled and completed the mush after the event. The route Mary traversed followed the path of what eventually became the Alaskan Highway. For this effort she was awarded a Silver Cup from the city, a 2-month-old husky pup from friend Don Abel, Sr., and a rare "Honorary Member" title from the Pioneers of Alaska. Her story attracted national media attention.

Ms. Joyce also invested and co-starred in a film that was shot on location in the Taku River region. The film, "Orphans of the North" (1940), was directed by Norman Dawn. A copy is available in The Alaska State Historical Collection. Her voice was dubbed over by another actress after filming. Another later film, "The Flying Saucer" (1950) stars characters believed to be loosely inspired by Mary and Hack Smith. In 1936 Mary rescued Father Bernard R. Hubbard, the "Glacier Priest," after his boat capsized in the Taku River while fishing, stranding him on a rock in stream.

In the late 1930s and early '40s Mary became a Flight Stewardess on Pan-Alaska Airlines, a subsidiary of Pan-American Airlines. She served on Alaska to Seattle routes. Only certified

nurses could be stewardesses at that time. In the winter of 1939 Mary conducted sled-dog tours of the Sun Valley Resort in Idaho.

During the Second World War, she moved into the City of Juneau, after warnings of Japanese Invasion. She worked as a Nurse at St. Ann's Hospital until end of war. After 14 years and at the conclusion of the war, Mary sold the Lodge and purchased the Top Hat Bar in Juneau. Later she purchased the Lucky Lady on S. Franklin St and lived in an apartment above it. Ms. Joyce ran for the office of Alaskan Territorial Representative in 1950 as a Democratic Party candidate.

Mary Joyce is an important and well-loved Alaskan figure who was regularly invited to speeches and ceremonies both in Alaska and in the contiguous United States. With the exception of a short stay in Wisconsin during the 1940s, she lived in Juneau the remainder of her life. In 1976 she suffered two heart attacks, the second of which took her life. She is buried at the Evergreen Cemetery in Juneau.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

The Mary Joyce Collection contains personal photographs, documents, correspondence, and newspaper and magazine clippings spanning Ms. Mary Joyce's lifetime. This collection contains materials held in Ms. Joyce's possession during her lifetime. Additional materials were added by Ms. Mary Anne Greiner, Ms. Joyce's cousin, following Ms. Joyce's death in 1976. Most materials in the collection are directly related to key figures and event in Ms. Joyce's life, cover the Alaskan regions of Juneau, Taku River, Fairbanks, and are of related interest to the history of Alaskan Aeronautics, Dog Sledding, Filmmaking, Glaciology, Politics, and Art.

INVENTORY

Box 1: Photographs - Photograph Album, loose photographs (1-350.)

Folder 1: Family and adolescence photograph album [Wisconsin] – Extremely Fragile.

1-36 [pgs. 1-5.]

37-a... [pg. 6, multiple cut-out images glued to page.]

38-a... [pg. 7, multiple cut-out images glued to page.]

39-200 [pgs. 8-51.]

Folder 2: 201 – 213. Loose photographs from family and adolescence photograph album.

Folder 3: 214-344. Early adulthood photograph album [Mercy Hospital Nursing School, Chicago, Illinois; Hollywood, California and Hollywood Hospital ca.1922-1927.]

Folder 4: 345-350. Loose photographs from early adulthood photograph album.

Box 2: Photographs - Photograph Albums and loose photographs (351-488.)

Folder 1: 351-480. Taku Lodge and Juneau area photograph album. [Arrival on the Stella Maris in 1928. The sign in ledger includes Mrs. John Troy, and Mrs. Erie L. Smith. ca.1928-1937.]

Folder 2: 481-488. Loose photographs from Taku Lodge photograph album.

Box 3: Photographs - Oversized Portraits (489-506.)

Folder 1: 489-505. Oversized portraits of Mary Joyce.

Folder 2: 506. Oversized scenic photograph.

Box 4: Photographs (507-773.)

Folder 1: 507-513. Early photographs. Family and adolescence portraits. [Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; Hollywood, California, ca. 1899-1927.]

Folder 2: 514-520. Mary Joyce portraits.

Folder 3: 521-523. Miscellaneous portraits.

Folder 4: 524-579. Twin Glaciers Lodge, Taku River, and Southeast Alaska: People.

Folder 5: 580-600. Twin Glaciers Lodge, Taku River, and Southeast Alaska: Scenics, Aerials, Interiors.

Folder 6: 601-628. Twin Glaciers Lodge, Taku River, and Southeast Alaska: Scenics, Aerials, Interiors.

Folder 7: 629-646. Dog Sledding. Winter Carnival - Fairbanks, Alaska.

Folder 8: 647-651. Dog Sledding. Sun Valley, Idaho – Tours.

Folder 9: 652-674. Expeditions, [Father Bernard R. Hubbard, S.J.; etc...]

Folder 10: 675-704. Aviation.

Folder 11: 705-732. Parades, Ceremonies, Lucky Lady Bar, Top Hat Bar, later visits to Taku, Sitka, and Ireland.

Folder 12: 733-773. Animals. [Dogs, Huskies, Bear, Caribou, and Cattle.]

Folder 13: Duplicate and unidentified photographs.

Box 5: Documents and Clippings

Folder 1: Personal documents. [Birth Certificate, Driver's License, Passport, Death Certificate.]

Folder 2: Weather reports on note cards detailing solo mush from Taku River to Fairbanks, Alaska, 12/22/1935-03/01/1936.

Folder 3: "One Thousand Miles by Dogteam." [Photocopy of travelogue manuscript.]

Folder 4: "One Thousand Miles by Dogteam." [Original manuscript, self-authored travelogue.]

Folder 5: "My Alaskan Trail" [an unfinished, ghost-written travelogue,] hand-written notes describing Alaska places.

Folder 6: Poetry, song lyrics. [Bert Baldwin, Sherwood Wirt, William Percy French.]

Folder 7: Telegrams and assorted correspondence.

Folder 8: "Orphans of the North": Correspondence, receipts, clippings, miscellany. 06/06/1937-12/01/1940.

Folder 9: "Orphans of the North": Correspondence, receipts, clippings, miscellany. 01/01/1940-11/29/1942.

Folder 10: "Alaska: 34 Hours from Chicago" Columbia Broadcasting System transcript, 1941.

Folder 11: Ellis Air Transport correspondence.

Folder 12: Alaska West Line and Alaska Cruise Lines, Ltd. Menus featuring paintings of Mary Joyce's Huskies by Josephine Crumrine.

Folder 13: Personal address book.

Box 6: Documents (Folder Level Description)

Folder 1: Early news and magazine clippings [esp. Leigh Hackley Smith.]

Folder 2: News and magazine clippings scrapbook [Solo mush from Taku River, AK to Fairbanks, AK and filming of “Orphans of the North” – created by Mary Anne Greiner for Ms Joyce.]

Folder 3: News and magazine clippings.

Folder 4: Alaska Clippings, miscellany.

Folder 5: Letter from Mary Joyce to William Roger Abbis.

Folder 6: Unidentified documents.

(Descriptions for photographs 2-7 provided by Mary Lou Gerbi. 2/21/14)

1. Best Christmas Wishes, The Campbell Church, Fr’s;
2. Twin Glacier Lake and glaciers, Ward Collection Photo, nd. *Same as PCA 459-605*
3. Twin Glacier Camp; Taku River, Alaska. E. Andrews Photo. Dr. DeVighne. (2 copies) *Same as PCA 459-591*
4. *Mary J* on Taku River with Hole-in-the-Wall Glacier in back. Aug. 1941. Field 41-F-624. Ward Collection.
5. Pacific Alaska Airways—Mary Joyce and Joe Crosson. No notes. Ward Collection. *Same as PCA 459-693*
6. Pacific Alaska Airways—Mary Joyce and Joe Crosson. No notes. Ward Collection. *Same as PCA 459-691*
7. Mary Joyce photo with dogs at Sun Valley: Photo by E.L. Chapin, Sun Valley, nd. Ward Collection. *Same as PCA 459-649*

Folder 7: Manuscript Duplicates.

Folder 8: Fairbanks Winter Carnival Pennant.

Folder 9: Music CD – **Mary Joyce Project: Nothing to Lose**, Claire Daly Quintet

Items in Folder 10 were donated by Mary Lou Gerbi, February 2014

Folder 10: Mary Joyce Alaska Women’s Hall of Fame Certificate of Membership; February 28, 2013

Alaska Women’s Hall of Fame: Celebrating the Women Who Shape Alaska; Fifth Annual Induction Ceremony; Honoring 2013 Inductees.