Guide to Collection

Harris, W. John

Harris Family Photograph and Oral History Collection, circa 1900-present (bulk 1930s-1950s)

PCA 566

30 b&w photographs

Processed by: Anastasia Tarmann, Jan. 2014

color prints

ACQUISITION: The collection was donated by William John Harris, Jr. (grandson of Richard Tighe Harris and son of William John Harris, Sr.), his son, John Harris, and his nephew, Butch.

ACCESS: The collection is unrestricted.

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PROCESSING: This collection has been described at the item level, placed in Mylar, and all items placed into pH-neutral folders. All the photographs have been digitized.
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The donor, William (John) Harris, Jr., was a grandson of Richard Tighe Harris, who is credited with co-founding the town of Juneau, and Kitty, a Tlingit woman from Hoonah, whose clan and surname are unknown. William John Harris, Jr., was born to William John Harris, Sr. and Helen Hudnut. Their children were: Bernice (Bunny), Mildred (Millie), Casey, Dick, Fred, Margaret, Pam, and Debbie, and William John Harris, Jr., who was born February 20, 1930. He grew up in Juneau, Alaska, where he graduated from Juneau Douglas High School in 1954. He died in Anchorage, February 24, 2016.

William John Harris, Sr. attended Chemawa Indian School in Oregon with his brother, Richard Tighe Harris, Jr. Both raised their families in Juneau. William John Harris later became a guide and painter in Juneau.

Richard (Dick) Tighe Harris, miner and prospector, was born near Cleveland, Ohio. October 31, 1833. In 1880, Harris contracted with Hall and Pilz in Sitka. Kowa ‘ee, a Tlingit man of the Auk Kwaan took Harris and Juneau to the Silver Bow Basin on Gold Creek, above present day Juneau, where there was a gold lode. The mining district was named Harrisburg, but then changed to Juneau. The Auk Kwaan had a fish camp in the town vicinity, and at the time were permanently located in Auke Bay, with lands up through Berner’s Bay, Admiralty Island, and down the Taku River. Harris claimed and operated his mines until 1885, when he lost most of them in a lawsuit.

During this period, Harris and Kitty married. They had two sons: William John Harris and Richard Tighe Harris, Jr. Their first son, also William John, and their only daughter died before her first Birthday. Kitty died at age 26, in 1893. Richard Tighe Harris, Sr. died in 1907.

[For a more extensive description of Richard Tighe Harris and family correspondence, see University of Alaska Anchorage archives. Richard Tighe Harris family papers, 1853-1969. Collection number: HMC-0131]

SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Photographs of the Harris family and Juneau in the 1930s-2012.

INVENTORY

Folder 1

1 Dick and William John Harris, grandsons of Richard Tighe Harris, with salmon catch.

2 Richard Tighe Harris Family, ca. 1930. William Harris Sr. and wife Helen Hudnut and William John Harris and Bernice “Bunny” in Harris’s arms. Mrs. Harris holds Mildred (Millie). Standing are [left to right] Casey#1, Dick, Fred, Margaret, Pam, and Debbie.

http://www.library.alaska.gov/hist/hist_docs/finding_aids/PCA566.pdf
3 John’s mother.
4 John and brothers
5 John and brothers
6 W. John Harris and John Harris in trailer home next to Douglas Bridge
7 John, brothers, and ?
8 W. John Harris and John Harris Christmas, 2012.
9 Grandma, ship, Spokane? [name, not port?] 
10 Grandma and Dickey
11 William Harris, Sr.
12 William Harris, Sr.
13 William Harris, Sr.
14 Casey Jr, Fred, Dickey, Sophie, Margaret, Pam
15 William Harris, Sr., Pam, Margaret, Johnny
16 Freddy, William Harris, Sr., Johnny
17 Margaret and friend
18 Margaret and Kenneth Frazier
19 Casey, Butch, W. Harris, Sr.
20 Butch and grandma
21 Sophie, Johnny, Casey
22 Casey and Bunnie
23 ?
24 ? and W. Harris, Sr.
25 W. Harris, Sr.’s hand painted sign
26 W. Harris, Sr.’s hand painted sign

http://www.library.alaska.gov/hist/hist_docs/finding_aids/PCA566.pdf
27 Sophie
28 Betty, Harvey, Arleen
29 Bunnie, Arleen
30 Margaret Frazier