

# Pioneer Air Museum

October 2017 Newsletter



FALL

## Letter from the Curator

Hello All,

We shut down on the 10th of September and a lot has transpired since then. We had an Open House on the 28th of September which was well attended with lots of local people and members showing up (about 80 or more). Though getting the permit to host it was difficult (we had to navigate 5 different agencies and the permit arrived about 4:30 on the day of the open house), the Open House was very successful. We had live music by the Dry Cabin String Band, some HooDoo beer

and a bit of wine, as well as a great selection of food from Midnight Sun Catering.

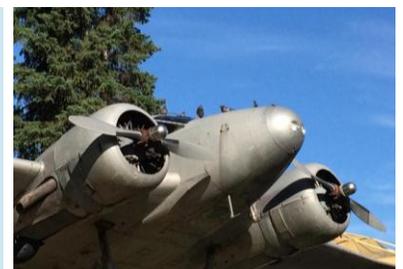
We had offered to host the 2018 Alaska Historical Society/Museums Alaska meeting but it was a bit too tight. The 2018 meeting will be held in Nome. Instead, we will consider the chance to host the 2019 meeting here as it gives us more time to pull it together. The Park has offered its support for the meeting, so it should be a very busy year.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Museum set up a table at the Aviation Explorers Post #747 Open

House event at the airport. The new Aviation Explorer's Post is being organized by the Airport Operating Community, and will help young folks look into aviation backgrounds. We are now looking into offering a ground school that will lead to a private pilot's certificate at the museum. I just need a retired ground school instructor/ flight instructor to teach the school. One of the requirements is that they have to do 50 hours of volunteer service. It might be a good source for some help on the swallow project and/or cataloging projects.

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## From Our Blog

### *Book Review- Noel Wien: Alaska Pioneer Bush Pilot*

It's hard to imagine a name more synonymous with Alaska aviation history than that of Noel Wien; through who's pioneering accomplishments and life story led to the development of the territory/ state's air transport industry. The 1974 biography, *Noel Wien: Alaska Pioneer Bush Pilot*, by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ira Harkey, tracks Wien's life from his birth in Minnesota in 1899, the son of Scandinavian immigrants, to his retirement years in Seattle in the 1970s, when he made monthly trips back to Alaska for the board meetings of the airline that bore his name. Harkey's biography is a great asset to the bibliography of Alaskan aviation; published just three years before Wien's death in 1977; and before Wien Airline's closure in 1985.

As UAF history professor Terrence Cole writes in the forward to the 1999 University of Alaska Press reprint, "Harkey did a masterful job in bringing the silent story of Noel Wien to life" (xv). Harkey drew heavily from Wien's scrapbooks and interviews with Wien, his wife Ada, and others. The book shifts perspective from third person omniscient, to first person, enabling readers to gain insights into the mind of the infamously quiet Wien, and those who knew him best. A reader will finish the book with the sense that they just ended a long conversation with the pilot himself, a testament to Harkey's skill in recording Wien's oral history. ...

Find the full blog article on our website:  
[www.pioneerairmuseum.org](http://www.pioneerairmuseum.org).

If you're interested in reading this book, you can pick it up at the Museum Gift Shop. Please call to arrange a pickup: (907) 451-0037

Harkey, Ira. *Noel Wien: Alaska Pioneer Bush Pilot*. Forward by Terrence Cole. Fairbanks, University of Alaska Press, 1999.

*Blog Post by Leanna Williams, the Museum's volunteer social media manager*



## Letter from the Curator, Continued

Pioneer Park's Halloween Trick-or-Treat Town event was this past weekend on October 28<sup>th</sup>. The Park and volunteers decorated and dressed up for the event. With no heat in most of the cabins there were lots of folks roaming around, and dipping into the Museum and the civic center to warm up. According to the Park, past counts figure that about 5,000 people show up annually.

Erin Kirchner, one of our summer interns, is working for us this winter here in the museum as the Collections Manager. She will be continuing the collections cataloging project, and will also be working on some of the displays. We are looking to open the museum one Saturday a month for a few hours to work on cataloging and to train volunteers to help with cataloging. Erin

will train people who need to learn about the process. Lots to do and learn!

One of the things going on this winter at the museum is planning for the future of the museum. A few of the topics for discussion are as follows: getting restrooms, expansions for a workshop/ renovation space, and making room for archives storage. While we move forward with this discussion, we are very interested to hear your thoughts! Where do you think the museum should be in the next 3 to 5 years? What changes would you like to see at the museum? Are you willing to get involved? Please let us know!

Call or email with any comments or questions:  
[curator@pioneerairmuseum.org](mailto:curator@pioneerairmuseum.org),  
907-451-0037.

Pete Haggland, Curator



## Fred Meyer Community Rewards

### Letter from the Collections Manager

We at the Pioneer Air Museum are looking to strengthen our community ties through establishing a committed volunteer program. By joining the volunteer team, you will not only help the Museum achieve its mission, but you will also have the opportunity to meet fellow aviation and history lovers, get a behind-the-scenes perspective of the museum field, and become a part of a dedicated community!

#### What do volunteers do?

Currently, the Pioneer Air Museum is undertaking a long-term project to catalog the museum's collection. Interested volunteers will assist the Collections Manager to document, photograph, and research a variety of objects in the collection. In the process, volunteers will have the opportunity to learn more about the different kinds of work that go into caring for museum collections.

#### How much time do I need to spend?

Museum volunteers have a variety of commitment levels according to each person's individual schedule. If you have an hour or a day, we appreciate any time that you wish to donate to the museum.

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming a museum volunteer, please email [collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org](mailto:collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org) with the following information: Name, Phone, Email, preferred days to volunteer and any other comments.

If you have a Fred Meyer Rewards Card, you can be helping the museum just by shopping! All you have to do is link your card to the Pioneer Air Museum through the Community Rewards Program.

Through this program Fred Meyer will donate a percentage of funds to the museum, quarterly, depending on how many people have signed up.

You can do this by logging on to your account online, and choosing the Pioneer Air Museum under Community Rewards. If you need help doing this, please contact Erin directly at [collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org](mailto:collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org).



## We want your feedback!

What kinds of events would you like to see?  
How often would you like to meet?  
What can we be doing to better serve you?  
Please send your responses by email or by mail to:

Pete Haggland  
[curator@pioneerairmuseum.org](mailto:curator@pioneerairmuseum.org)

Erin Kirchner  
[collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org](mailto:collectionsmanager@pioneerairmuseum.org)

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The Pioneer Air Museum is a 501(C)(3) Non-profit Organization. It is our mission to collect, protect, and preserve for the public objects pertaining to the history of Alaska aviation history.

### Pioneer Air Museum

2300 Airport Way  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Thank you for your support!