

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 23 1976

DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC ~~AND/OR COMMON~~ Cape Nome Roadhouse (AHRS SITE NO. SOL-069)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Nome-Council-Highway, Mile 14

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN  
Nome

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Alaska

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Alaska

CODE  
02

COUNTY  
Nome Division

CODE  
180

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Bonnie Hahn

STREET & NUMBER  
Box 392

CITY, TOWN  
Nome

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Alaska 99672

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. District Recorder

STREET & NUMBER  
Box 431

CITY, TOWN  
Nome

STATE  
Alaska 99762

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRS)

DATE  
March 1972

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Alaska Division of Parks 323 E. 4th Avenue

CITY, TOWN  
Anchorage

STATE

Alaska 99501

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

---

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In side profile this is a modified New England "salt box" design, except for the functional practicalities. For here, unlike a true salt box, the front and side elevation features (doors and predominant windows) are reversed. It is doubtful if the design was premeditated. The largest expanse of roof section, sloping from two stories to one was probably a concession to heavy roof snow, drifting snow and prevailing winds rather than to any aesthetic consideration. The appearance is uncommon for Arctic Alaska at any time--but was even more so in the early part of this century. As an Alaska roadhouse, Cape Nome is definitely unique, atypical.

Initially the interior was barracks-like; to provide a maximum of sleeping accommodations in two large, unpartitioned rooms which utilized most of the space; plus a smaller dining room and kitchen. Eventually more partitioning was added. Other slight modifications were made when the use changed to merchandising rather than provision of room and board; and more recently as essentially a family residence. But despite the absence of known floor plans, drawings, or interior photographs, sufficient visual evidence exists to enable identification of the early roadhouse features.

To cope with an overwhelming trade demand, the initial 1900 crude basic log structure was enlarged in 1901 with sawed timber framework and elevated in its dominant section to two storeys. Manufactured doors and windows were added and the entire unorthodox-shaped structure was covered with milled horizontal siding shiplap.

With the exception of the cottage-like residential wing added at the rear, the general exterior profile impression has remained essentially unchanged. Paint, trim and more windows and doors added over the years--particularly in the past decade--provide a more contemporary appearance that was seen in the gold rush period, or through the dogsledding era.

Although Cape Nome Roadhouse gives the impression of being larger, the roof peaks at 21 feet, the width is 44 feet, and the length (heightened visually by the elongated sloping roof) is 55 feet.

No photographs of the original 1900 long structure have been found, but it has been described as squat, sturdy and convenient. Heavy demand coupled with better availability of lumber and other prefabricated building materials, undoubtedly brought about the early enlargement. Except for modifications noted, the building it situ, has existed for three quarters of a century.

With the exception of the highway and the World War II reminders, the surrounding terrain appears to have changed very little since 1900.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1900, 1925

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cape Nome Roadhouse is significant as a surviving, albeit somewhat atypical example of an important Alaskan roadhouse; for its role in the dramatic Seward Peninsula-Nome Gold Rush; the Fairbanks and Iditarod Trail; and Leonard Seppala's famous diphtheria serum dogteam "Race to Nome".

### Historical Background

With news of "Gold"--the strikes of 1898 and 1899 reported to the World,--some 20,000 men and some women, by the summer of 1900, had rushed to the Seward Peninsula off the bleak Bering Sea to form the tent city of Nome. Seasoned sourdough miners from the Klondike and the Interior, adventurers, "Chechako" entrepreneurs and their pyramiding supplies and equipment were scattered along the beaches for miles. The nearest diggings were along the tide-washed beaches. Cape Nome Roadhouse, initially built of logs hauled by horses from the Council area some 80 miles distant, came into being in 1900 and played its part in the peak excitement of the next few years; and then in the more orderly mechanized mining which developed and continues to this day as the Peninsula's principal industry.

Following its intimate interrelationship to the gold rush, Cape Nome Roadhouse continued to serve as a major stopover for dogteams travelling the historic Nome to Fairbanks Trail, and soon also the Iditarod Trail, originating at the open seaport of Seward. Had the trials, tribulations and adventures of thousands of travelers been logged or recorded at Cape Nome during the stopovers, they would provide a rich and colorful source history of Sourdough Alaska in the first three decades of the 20th Century. In any event, being 14 miles from Nome--considered a good day's travel--Cape Nome was a popular first or last day stop for countless travelers.

One of the dramatic events, well documented, occurred in 1925. A diphtheria epidemic struck Nome. The only way to get serum to that winter-isolated place was by relays of crack dog teams and mushers racing from Nenana, 650 miles away. The last stage of the race was run by Leonard Seppala, one of the great dog-trainers of the North, who twice won the All-Alaska Sweepstakes. Two of Sepalla's team which ran the final 200 miles, were Togo and Balto. The later dog, immortalized by the Press, had a monument erected in his honor in New York's Central Park. Cape Nome is the only surviving roadhouse used by Seppala in that event.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gollier, A.J., The Gold Placers of Seward Peninsula, Alaska, USGS Bulletin 328, 1908.  
 Brooks, Alfred Hulse, Methods of Placer Mining, USGS Bulletin 314, 1913.  
 Interview and Correspondence, Bonnie D. Hahn, 1972, 1974, 1975-6.  
 Colby, Merle, A Guide To Alaska, MacMillan Co., N.Y. 1939.  
 Alaska Division of Parks, Alaska's Historic Roadhouses, History & Archaeology Series No. 6, 1974.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1

UTM REFERENCES

A 501-225 7146-250  
 [0 3 5 0 0 8 0 3] [7 1 4 5 1 0 8]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Mile 14, Nome-Council Highway

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Alfred Mongin, Architectural Historian  
Michael S. Kennedy, State Historian

ORGANIZATION Alaska Division of Parks

DATE July 7, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 323 East 4th Avenue

TELEPHONE (907) 272-4401 X 225

CITY OR TOWN Anchorage

STATE Alaska 99501

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Russell W. Cabell*

TITLE

*SHPO*

DATE 7/17/1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <u>12/12/96</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>12/6/76</u>
ATTEST	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 22 1976
DATE ENTERED	DEC 12 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Cape Nome Roadhouse (AHRS SITE NO. SOL-069)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1 of 1

---

With the coming of commercial aviation following building of the Nome-Council Wagon Road, the roadhouse was no longer in demand for lodging, meals and shelter, and it became, following the severe influenza epidemic of 1917-8-a Methodist Church Orphanage. During World War II, and into the 1950's it was a Federal Aviation Administration Communication's station. More recently the roadhouse has been an in-resident grocery store, presently owned and operated by Bonnie D. Hahn.