

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
TV & Video Preservation Survey
AMIPA
Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association

History

The preservation of television and video are especially important to Alaska because it became a state in 1958, right after television became available to the households of America. Television has been the documenter of choice for the state during this time period. Unfortunately, in the early years, not much was kept. Beginning in the 1970's, however with oil money coming into Alaska, there was money to buy into the new technologies such as television. The birth of a new state, the building of the oil pipeline and the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act, giving millions of acres of land and millions of dollars to Alaska's Native people defined not only those first decades of statehood but also Alaska's future. Alaska would be dramatically changed. The state funded production facilities with state of the art equipment that local network affiliates could only dream of.

A young state with a well educated population, the new technologies were a natural. Ambitious politicians sought out gurus such as Marshall McLuhan, Tony Schwartz and the new growing profession of political consultants such as Joe Napolitan, Bob Squier and others. AMIPA's archives hold many of these TV works. Because the land mass of the state was one fifth the size of the entire US, with a population approaching a half million people scattered in small isolated communities throughout the state, television was a way to communicate and unite Alaskans. Alaska was once called the "State of Telecommunications. It was the first state to develop information highways via communication satellite. It was a pioneer in distance education and a model for third world and other developing countries. Alaska was trying to reach out to every village in the state delivering news, event coverage, education, health and politics. Television was the medium of choice.

As long as oil money was abundant, Alaska was leading the nation in telecommunications. With the drop in the price of oil beginning in 1986, Alaska decided telecommunications was unaffordable and defunded it across the state, leaving film, sound, television and video materials without caretakers. This was the reason for the establishment of AMIPA, the Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association, to save these materials that had recorded a unique historical period in the state's history.

Collection Criteria

AMIPA is trying to save everything that is Alaskan. That is its collection criteria. Obviously, production values, sociological and historical importance, unique and artistic merit will determine what is kept.

Obstacles

Major obstacles to accomplishing our mission is the difficult job of educating the public, government officials and civic leaders about the importance of preserving these materials. The expense of saving these materials is a major obstacle. The cost of Beta SP and D2 video tape is enormous. If tape manufacturers could donate or cut the price of master tapes for archives, it would be a major contribution to the saving of these materials.

Once Tv'/video materials are saved, the major obstacle to their use will be copyright issues. Our concern be that legal rights and the public interest have equal footing in public access negotiation.

EDUCATION Alaska is entering the 21st century where its stories and history will be told with images and sound as well as text on the latest computerized technologies. AMIPA's mission is to try and save not only sound and moving images given to its own archive but those materials that reside throughout the state in public and private collections. The materials most at risk are video and audio. Ironically most of our recent history has been documented on these formats. While print is still the most common, video has

been the most compelling, and sound the cheapest to produce and most accessible. Moving images and sound is the preferred choice of our young people which therefore make these formats a dynamic teaching tool.

The value of these materials is that they have the integrity of classics when viewed for themselves only. They are also raw footage that can be re-interpreted and re-worked by historians, academics, educators and producers into new products and programs. A second life is offered them in state of the art technologies such as CD ROM and computers.

We have a commitment to not only preserve but to make these programs again available to the general public, academics, film / television and radio producers and most importantly to our state's schools and libraries.