Kiska WWII Travelling Exhibit Outreach

The World War II Kiska Battlefield is a slice of history that continues to fascinate audiences both in and outside of Alaska. Given this interest, the National Historic Landmarks program developed a set of Kiska WWII travelling exhibits for sharing this lesser known but compelling story with the wider public and to provide a NPS presence in a variety of communities.

The popular *Kiska and Adak: War in the Aleutians* exhibit hosted by the Anchorage Museum in 2010-11 (with an estimated 150,000 visitors), was adapted to create two versions to accommodate both small and larger venue spaces. Each version of the Kiska WWII battlefield travelling exhibit is a collaboration that combines a narrative with dramatic historic and, contrasted with, modern day landscape photographs by Dirk Spennemann.

The larger Kiska WWII travelling exhibit was first showcased at the March Field Air Museum, in Riverside, California, in part as a “thank you” to Beverly Maloof for her gracious donation to the AKRO of approximately 1800 photographs taken by her husband while serving on Kiska during WWII. The March Museum, a major military museum on the west coast, reported that nearly 9,000 additional visitors came to see the exhibit (an 10% increase in their visitation). Upcoming exhibit venues are confirmed for The Clausen Museum in Petersburg, the Museum of the Aleutians in Dutch Harbor (to be hosted in connection with the 70th anniversary of the Aleutian Campaign), and the Alaska State Museum in Juneau.

WWII touched so many lives including those in Alaska, and on the larger national (especially veterans and their families) and international scale. Including Kiska, there are eight World War II National Historic Landmarks in Alaska ranging from Sitka, Kodiak, and Fairbanks to sites along the Aleutian chain. The NPS plays an important role in protecting and promoting our Landmarks on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior. In keeping with the “Call to Action”, this outreach activity helps to advance the NPS educational mission by creating opportunities for learning about these significant places and by providing interpretation of America’s complex heritage. Exhibit support was provided by the Aleutian WWII National Historic Area Program.

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