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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NAT REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

X New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Homesteading and Related Settlement, Glacier Bay Region

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

1. Homesteads and Homesites at Strawberry Point, Dundas Bay, and Lituya Bay 1914-1964

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Rick S. Kurtz, Historian

street & number 2525 Gambell Street telephone 907/257-2542

city or town Anchorage state AK zip code 99503

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official — Date 12/23/96

National Park Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper Date 1/9/97

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

1. Homesteads and Homesites at Strawberry Point, Dundas Bay, and Lituya Bay 1914-1964

This context shall provide an overview of homesteading and homesite development within the Glacier Bay area. The context begins with a discussion of Alaska as a component of the American homesteading experience. This is followed with an examination of homesteading efforts at Strawberry Point (known today as Gustavus), beginning in 1914. The context then examines the homesites established at Dundas and Lituya Bays--the last of which was vacated in 1964. The context likewise contrasts these homesites with those at Gustavus. Finally, some attention, where pertinent, is given to interaction between the park service and the various homestead and homesite owners.

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The singlemindedness with which many entrepreneurs pursued profits in Alaska often times allowed little room for putting down roots. Local folks complained that too many entrepreneurs only wanted to get in, take what they could, and then get out. Alaskan promoters envisioned a core group of permanent citizens who would provide stability and real growth to the territory. Many hoped that homesteaders would fill this role, as they had in the contiguous states. To many modern day Alaskans, the concept of establishing a traditional agrarian type homestead seems rather far-fetched. Geography and climate have proved formidable barriers to even the most modern farming methods. When placed within its historical context, however, the idea warranted consideration. Alaskan boosters anticipated that the territory would follow Thomas Jefferson's yeoman farmer thesis, developing permanent settlements based upon agrarian communities as had occurred elsewhere on the American frontier. The throngs of prospectors and the periodic food shortages which accompanied their influx during the late 19th century provided the initial justification for embarking upon such an agricultural experiment.[1]

With its damp climate, poor drainage, and mountainous landscape, most of Southeast Alaska was poorly suited for growing grain or many other commercial crops. A small garden of hardy vegetables with a few bushels left over for sale to local markets was the best most people could anticipate.[2] One of the few potential exceptions to this scenario was at Glacier Bay.

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[1]Mangusso, Mary C. and Stephen W. Haycox, eds., *Interpreting Alaska's History: An Anthology* (Anchorage: Alaska Pacific University Press, 1990), 334-335.

[2]Dept. of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, *A Cultural Resource Overview of the Tongass National Forest Alaska* Part 1:0, by Katherine L. Arndt and others (Fairbanks: GDM, Inc., 1987), 252.

The receding glacial ice sheet left behind a broad alluvial plain of glacial till and gently rolling topography in the lower bay area. Thus a trickle of homesteaders, beginning in 1914, made their way to the Glacier Bay area to farm the land.

Most of the Glacier Bay homesteaders settled at one of two locations, Strawberry Point or Dundas Bay. Strawberry Point--known today as Gustavus--lies outside of the present park unit boundary. The community's development, however, was intricately linked to the park. Homesteaders were not the first to utilize the advantages Strawberry point had to offer. For years prior to the coming of white settlers, Strawberry Point supplied Hoonah Tlingit with a portion of their subsistence needs. The Salmon River provided ample quantities of silver salmon. Strawberries and other berries were regularly gathered in the area. Early homesteader accounts noted the presence of a Hoonah smokehouse on the Salmon River about a mile up from the present bridge. Likewise discussed is a former potlatch house which was said to have been located near Point Gustavus within the present park unit boundary.[3]

The early homesteaders at Strawberry Point staked and farmed plots of up to 320 acres. The lucky ones eventually received a land patent for their effort. Early residents settling in the region included the Chase, Parker, and White families, Lester Rink, C. Boye, C. Madsen, and Carl Johnson. By the mid-1920s, the community of Gustavus was alive, if not necessarily thriving. Rutabagas, turnips, and other hardy crops were sold to local canneries or Juneau; on a few occasions local crops were shipped to Seattle. Some homesteaders also tried their hand at cattle raising and lumbering to make ends meet. In 1921 Abraham Parker constructed a small sawmill on the Salmon River. Remains of the mill are still visible today. Parker sold lumber to the local canneries for fish traps and related construction. He also peddled beef to the local canneries and in Juneau.[4]

The creation of Glacier Bay National Monument in 1925, just north of the community, presented homesteaders with new challenges. Bears from within the adjacent monument became a repeated nuisance, preying upon the homesteaders' cattle. Homesteaders were not allowed to pursue and destroy the marauders. In frustration, the Parkers constructed an eight foot high reinforced steel mesh fence which enclosed some 40 acres. This managed to keep most bears out.[5] President Franklin Roosevelt's subsequent expansion of the park boundaries in 1939, incorporated the community of Gustavus. Local residents were thrown into a state of panic, uncertain whether they would be allowed to continue farming, or if the NPS would compensate them should it decide to condemn their land. Although the settlers were allowed to remain on their land, relations with the park service continued to be strained. Bert Parker (son of Abraham Parker) was unsuccessful in his attempts to lease grazing land within the newly expanded monument boundaries. Tensions were eased when the park service gave Parker permission to graze his cattle on park land until some future time when it was for "park service reasons" discontinued.[6] Other complaints were not so easily resolved. By 1941 Gustavus residents were claiming that the NPS had allowed the local infrastructure to fall into disrepair. The local dock, bridges, and road were in terrible condition. Furthermore, the community could not

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[3]R.N. DeArmond, "Southeast place names," *Southeastern Log*, May 1986, A-16, University of Alaska Anchorage; James R. Mackovjak, *Hope and Hard Work: The Early Settlers at Gustavus*, Alaska (Gustavus: Goose Cove Press, 1988), 15-16.

[4]Mackovjak, 37, 45; DOI, NPS, *Glacier Bay Expedition 1939*, by Earl R. Trager (Mt. McKinley National Park: NPS, 1939), 11-12.

[5]Mackovjak, 44; Trager, 14.

[6]Carl P. Russell memo to the Director of 6 February 1941, National Archives, NPS Central Classified File, RG 79, Box 2226, GLBA File 201.

expand because of the park service's refusal to allow additional settlement within the monument's boundaries.[7]

Throughout the 1940s, Alaska's Territorial Governor Ernest Gruening and Congressional Delegate E.L. Bartlett petitioned to have Gustavus excluded from the monument. Success finally came in 1955 when Charlie Parker spearheaded a letter writing campaign which resulted in President Eisenhower signing an executive order removing 14,741 acres in the Gustavus area from the monument.[8]

Much of the Fairweather coastal region, like Gustavus, was incorporated in the Glacier Bay National Monument as part of the 1939 boundary expansion. Homesites pre-dating the expansion existed at Dundas Bay and Lituya Bay. None of the sites in these two areas could be referred to as traditional homesteads. Leased from the U.S. Forest Service, secured through mining claims, or merely the result of squatting, these homesites were not founded under homesteading provisions. Rather than focusing on farming as their principal means of livelihood, these individuals were involved in a variety of pursuits ranging from mining to trapping, fishing, and gardening to make ends meet. Still, their long-time permanent residency in the area qualified them as homesteaders in the Alaskan sense.

In 1928 William Horseman, (Horseman was commonly known as Doc Silvers, a name he acquired during his career as a professional boxer) and his wife moved to Dundas Bay. With the backing of an Oklahoma City oil well driller and a Juneau merchant, the couple spent the next eleven years prospecting for gold throughout the area. During their occupancy at Dundas Bay, Silvers and his wife occupied three homesites on land leased from the forest service. Their last and most prominent structure was constructed during the mid-1930s on a lovely wooded site some three to four miles from the mouth of the bay. The house was described as "a neat, comfortable, two-room log and lumber bungalow with a lean-to shed."[9] Next door was a large vegetable garden and chicken coop housing several fowl. With little success in gold mining, Silvers became actively engaged in trapping and commercial fishing to help make ends meet. Silvers leased his boat out to the park service and hoped to become a seasonal ranger, a hope which never materialized. The couple also tinkered with the notion of establishing a guided tour business in the region. With their lease expiring and no possibility for park service or other local employment, the Horsemans left Dundas Bay during the early 1940s.

Another Dundas Bay resident, Stanley "Buck" Harbeson, joined Silvers and his wife at Dundas Bay in the early 1930s. Harbeson spent his first season working at Silvers' claims. The two men had a falling out and Harbeson soon after constructed a cabin near the Dundas Bay Cannery. The cabin burned down two years after construction. Harbeson then built a new "squatters" cabin on the north end of the bay. The new cabin was a one story, four room structure. It was made out of a combination of vertical log poles and 2 by 4 inch studs with an exterior of wood shingles. About 30 feet behind the cabin, Harbeson constructed a woodshed. A wooden boardwalk connected the two buildings.[10] Harbeson also constructed a small one room cabin a couple miles upstream from the mouth of the Dundas River. The cabin served as his headquarters during winter trapping operations along the river. During the 1930s Harbeson ran joint operations with

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[7]Ibid; Undersecretary A.J. Wirtz letter to Anthony Dimond of 4 April 1941, National Archives, NPS Central Classified File, RG 79, Box 2226, GLBA File 201.

[8]Mackovjak, 82-83.

[9]Trager, 82-83; David Bohn, *Glacier Bay: The Land and the Silence* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1967), 78.

[10]Bohn, 78; DOI, NPS, "Historical Survey of GLBA," by Ray Miller (GLBA: NPS, 1982).

Horace Ibach, who was in the process of tearing down the former Dundas Bay salmon cannery. The two men constructed a total of five small lean-to cabins along the east side of the Dundas River to facilitate their venture.[11]

Aside from his joint venture with Ibach, Harbeson avoided socializing with other people. On occasion the recluse would row 20 miles to Elfin Cove to pick up supplies. Harbeson was even known to occasionally row to Juneau, an eighty mile journey. A large vegetable garden and hunting supplemented his meager trapping income. Harbeson also toyed with marten ranching--one of many fur farming fads which sprung up during the 1920s and 1930s. Aside from a female marten which he kept as a pet, Harbeson's fur farming was unsuccessful. Harbeson persisted, however, and remained at Dundas Bay until his death in 1964.[12]

To the northwest of Dundas Bay at Lituya Bay lived another recluse, Jim Huscroft. Unlike Harbeson, Huscroft was known as a gregarious fellow who welcomed the occasional prospector and mountaineering party which came to the bay. Huscroft had reportedly been born in Steubenville, Ohio and it was said that he had made and lost three fortunes before settling at Lituya Bay. Huscroft arrived at Lituya Bay about 1917, along with several other prospectors. When his partners left, Huscroft decided to remain behind. He constructed a cabin on the north side of Cenotaph Island. Later, during the 1920s, he constructed a new cabin on the west side of the island. Rather than continue with prospecting, Huscroft turned his attention to fox farming. Huscroft and his partner, a Norwegian fisherman named Ernie Rognan, tried their hand at it for several years. They finally gave up their efforts in the early 1930s. In 1930 Huscroft and Rognan constructed a 26 by 16 foot bunkhouse next door to the cabin. The bunkhouse was constructed of square logs with a large window facing the entrance to the bay. An open sided shed roof connected the bunkhouse to the cabin. Visitors referred to the bunkhouse as "Huscroft Hotel." Nearby was a large garden plot and a root cellar where Huscroft kept his garden produce and canned goods. An abundant supply of wild berries and salmon supplemented these stores. In addition, Huscroft had a trapping cabin about seven miles west of Lituya Bay on a small lake near Echo Creek.[13]

A man of simple pleasures, Huscroft would make an annual trip to Juneau to pick up chewing tobacco, a tub of salted mackerel, and other basic supplies to augment his provisions. In addition, he would collect a year's worth of newspapers, saved for him at the local Elks Lodge, and pick up his mail. On one such trip Huscroft was surprised to find his mailbox brimming with letters from outside. Seven of the letters contained proposals for marriage. It seems that Brad Washburn, a member of a recent Fairweather mountaineering expedition, had mentioned Huscroft in a story he wrote for *National Geographic*.[14]

Little today remains of Huscroft's homesite. The demise began in 1936 when a severe fall storm created a giant breaker wave which hit Lituya Bay. Huscroft and a young friend, who was visiting, escaped to higher ground as the wave swept over Cenotaph Island. The wave destroyed some of Huscroft's outbuildings and his garden. Shortly thereafter Huscroft's health began to fail. He was never able to complete repairs. In 1939 Huscroft died. A year later Brad Washburn, on behalf of the Harvard-Dartmouth Alaskan Expeditions, received permission from the park service to fix a brass plaque on Cenotaph Island commemorating Huscroft. In 1958, a

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[11]Trager, 78.

[12]Trager, 78-80; Bohn, 78.

[13]Francis E. Caldwell, *Land of the Ocean Mists: The Wild Ocean Coast West of Glacier Bay* (Edmonds, Wash.: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1986), 156-158; Bohn, 33.

[14]Bohn, 34.

subsequent earthquake-generated wave wiped out most remaining evidence of the homesite.[15] Recent surveys have turned up a few scattered remains of fox pens and little else.

F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

1. Homesteads and Homesites at Strawberry Point, Dundas Bay, and Lituya Bay 1914-1964

Name of Property Type: Homesteads and Homesites

Description: Homesteads and homesites in the Glacier Bay vicinity include a combination of structures and related physical manifestations resulting from homesteading activities. These activities began in 1914 and lasted until 1964. Among the principal structures are houses, cabins, and bunk houses constructed of logs and/or milled lumber. Outbuildings associated with these dwellings include tool and wood sheds, barns, outhouses, and other utility buildings. Like the houses, these are principally of log and/or wood construction. Beyond these structures are the manifestations resulting from various extractive activities. Primary among these were a mix of various farming pursuits which included, agriculture, livestock, foxes and other animals. Manifestations linked to these activities include cleared acreage, fences, pens, and a mix of hand tools and equipment.

Significance: Homesteads and homesites are significant under Criterion A in the areas of exploration/settlement, agriculture, commerce, and economics. The nominated properties are of local significance.

In the early 20th century Strawberry Point was perceived as some of the best potential agricultural land in Southeast Alaska. Homesteaders settled the area in the belief that the land would produce sufficient crops to supply produce to regional consumers. This and similar Alaskan homesteading efforts were perceived as contributing to a permanent population base, thus providing stability and real growth to the territory. In addition, the homesteaders at Strawberry Point engaged in complementary activities such as mining, lumbering, and commercial fishing operations.

Although not homesteading in the traditional agrarian sense, the homesite owners at Dundas and Lituya Bays likewise contributed to the region's growth and stability. Such individuals made long term commitments to Alaska, putting down roots and engaging in small scale enterprises--mining, fox farming, trapping--which fed into the larger regional economy.

Registration Requirements: Homesteads and homesites in the Glacier Bay vicinity are historically significant. Many of the properties have suffered effects of weathering and revegetation. These properties may sustain some alteration and still be eligible for the National Register if it can be shown that the properties contributed to the region's development and are representative of regional homestead/homesite settlement patterns.

To be considered eligible, the properties must maintain integrity of location and setting. All manifestations associated with homesteading and homesite development are considered significant so long as they remain in their original locations. The general physical setting must likewise maintain the character of place which was evident during the period when these properties were established. This applies to both naturally occurring as well as substantial human made alterations to the immediate landscape. On-site structures and apparatus which supported homestead/homesite development efforts must maintain integrity of materials, workmanship, and design. The predominant use of locally available materials and utilitarian aspects of design lend a common familiarity to these properties. So too does the quality of workmanship which was generally the product of jack-of-all-trade folks rather than skilled craftsmen.

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[15]Ibid., Caldwell, 174, 191-192.

Historic Properties: These sites should be considered in the future for nomination under Context One.

Mr. and Mrs. William Horseman (Doc Silvers) Homesite
Stanley "Buck" Harbeson Homesite
Jim Huscroft Homesite

G. Geographical Data

This multiple property nomination encompasses the area which lies within the current boundaries of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation
Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

The multiple property listing for homesteading and related settlement in the Glacier Bay region is based upon a 1994 National Park Service field investigation of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve consisting of the following team members: Rick S. Kurtz, Historian; Timothy Cochrane and Dottie Theodoratus, Cultural Anthropologists; Mary Beth Moss, Resources Manager; Hank Lenfter, Biological Technician; and Jennifer Sepez, Intern. The investigation required the team to utilize both air and water transport to gain access to various survey sites. Historic properties were marked on USGS topographical maps for future reference. Properties were recorded through the use of field notes, drawings, and extensive photographs. Research in support of the field investigation included the investigation of park service records; oral histories; and local, regional, and national archives and libraries.

A subsequent result of these investigations is the development of a historic resources study. The study addresses significant historic themes and developments within the park unit from the time of European contact through the Second World War. The historic contexts for this multiple properties nomination is based upon one of the various themes resulting from the historic resources study. The 1994 field investigation has likewise contributed to the development of an ethnographic history of the region, which will result in multiple property nominations for Native American sites. The significant property types identified in this nomination were derived from the historic context related to homesteads and homesites at Strawberry Point, Dundas Bay and Lituya Bay 1914-1964. The requirements for integrity of properties under this nomination were based upon predictions derived from historic trends in the region, the accounts of persons associated with Glacier Bay, analysis of previous field examinations, and development of the historic resources study.

I. Major Bibliographical References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

Bohn, Dave. *Glacier Bay: The Land and the Silence*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1967.

Caldwell, Francis E. *Land of the Ocean Mists: The Wild Ocean Coast West of Glacier Bay*. Edmonds, Wash.: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., 1986.

Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service. *A Cultural Resources Overview of the Tongass National Forest, Alaska* Part 1.

DOI, NPS. *Glacier Bay Expedition 1939*, by Earl R. Trager. Mount McKinley NP: NPS, 1939.

DOI, NPS, "Historical Survey of Glacier Bay," by Ray Miller. GLBA: NPS, 1982.

Mackovjak, James R. *Hope and Hard Work: The Early Settlers at Gustavus, Alaska*. Gustavus, Alaska: Goose Cove Press, 1988.

Primary locations where additional documentation is stored:

University of Alaska Anchorage Consortium Library

University of Alaska Fairbanks Elmer Rasmusson Library

Alaska Resources Library, Anchorage Federal Building

Z.J. Loussac Municipal Library, Anchorage

National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resources Records

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Library

National Archives of the United States, Washington, D.C. NPS Central Classified File, RG 79

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.