

## CHENA CABIN



An old store built some time in the first decade of the 20th Century is seen Monday after being unloaded at the Tanana River wayside along Chena Pump Road. The cabin is one of few surviving structures from the town of Chena. Chena was an early competitor to Fairbanks during the Fairbanks gold rush that was located near the confluence of the Chena and Tanana. The store was moved to the Weeks Field airport some time around the collapse of Chena in 1917. The was later moved to the Barnette Street home of Alaska Stewart Linck and her son James “Jim” Moody.

The old store took an unusual route back to the old Chena townsite. Moody’s estate donated the historic building to Alaska State Parks. But earlier this month, Fairbanks police stopped the truck carrying the building on Airport Way for having improper oversize



load markings and for not having insurance or current registration. Police directed the truck and its cargo to the city impound lot, where it spent a week.

Truck driver Bob Darling, who volunteered to move the store because of his interest in the project, got the truck out of the impound lot last week. It required showing the city proof of insurance and ownership as well as paying fees, he said. After getting the truck outside the impound lot fence on

Wednesday, he and fellow historical preservationist Patty Peirsol returned on Thanksgiving to drive it the rest of the way to Chena Pump Road during the holiday lull in traffic.

“It was a combination of ‘Lassie Come Home’ and ‘Free Willy,’” Peirsol said. Alaska State Park plans to put a temporary roof on the old store this week and later put up an interpretive sign about the old town of Chena.

*Sam Friedman*

*Eric Engman photos*