



Google Street View

## Buffalo Lodge

Mile 266 Richardson Highway, Delta Junction, AK (907) 895-9913

License Issued: 1948 to George N. Norton **CLOSED 2012**

Amenities: TV, juke box, darts, pool table, liquor store

Web site: Facebook.

History and Notoriety: This is the oldest established business in Delta Junction. George, his wife Angeline, and their children moved from Nebraska to Fairbanks in 1945 where George served as the Chief of Police. They moved to Delta Junction and built the lodge, naming it after the herd of buffalo (actually bison) that were transplanted to this area in 1923. The lodge soon became a favorite of hunters and fishermen as well as a gathering place for the community. It offered not only the bar, but food, rooms, and a gas station. The lodge served as an official polling place during the 1950's, and hosted the Delta Junction townsite lot sale in 1955. That same year, the Buffalo Lodge installed the first television in town. Buffalo heads were mounted on the walls during this time period

In 1961, George sold the Buffalo Lodge to Art Anderson, Fairbanks businessman and namesake of the town of Anderson. George opened a tire store next door to the Buffalo Lodge, and was elected to the first Delta Junction City Council in 1962. Jimmy & Claudette Holbert bought the lodge in 1966. Jimmy and his new wife Neda were the owners in 1973, and Neda became the sole owner in 1980.

Author Kat McElroy has written about her time working as a bartender at the Buffalo Lodge. On her *White Trash* web site, the chapter entitled "Crazy" describes how she ended up in Delta Junction ("Malfunction Junction"), learned how to tend bar, how to roll dice for drinks, and about her girlfriend named Lizzie who everyone called "Crazy." Kat explained that "...the Buffalo wasn't just a bar, you see, it was our social club and it was

our office.” She and Crazy would make the rounds in Delta, visiting the other local bars (Big D, Tom's Inn, Clearwater Lodge, Cherokee Two, Trophy Lodge, Evergreen). One of her friends summed up life in Delta Junction with “There's a rumor going 'round that there's a serious drinking problem here in the Junction. Fortunately, or unfortunately, no one has ever sobered up long enough to investigate it properly.”

Visiting the Buffalo Lodge: This historic bar is well known throughout Interior Alaska, and is definitely worth a visit. The buffalo heads are still here as is the original cash register with a hand-crank for when the power goes out. On weekends, the locals are out in force at this bar.



# BUFFALO LODGE

Delta Junction—Phone 895-4543

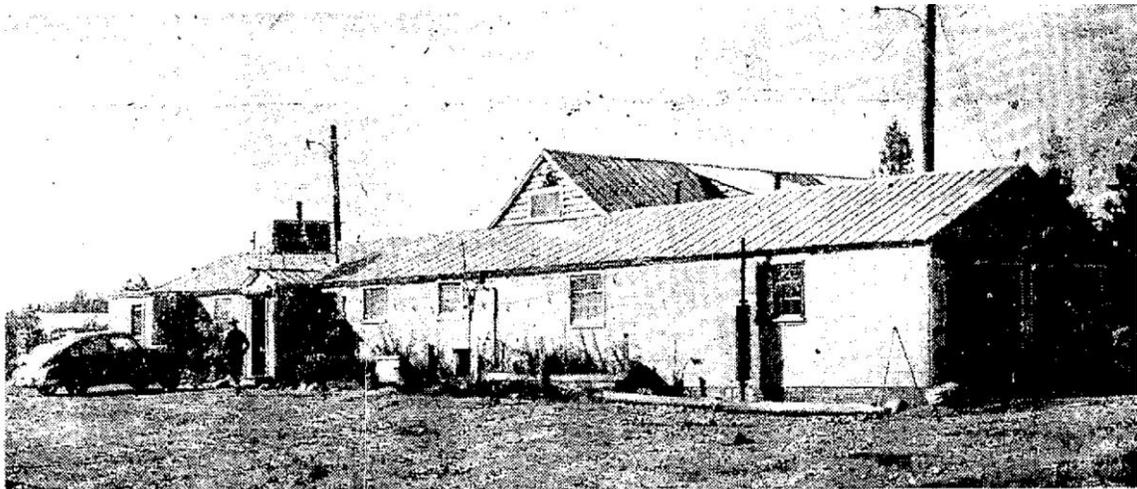
• **BAR** • **RESTAURANT** • **ROOMS**

Come in and see our mounted Buffalo Heads

**OPEN  
24  
HOURS**

- Alaska Game Tapestries For Sale •
- Barber Shop • Bus Stop

Ad from *Visitor's Guide, Fairbanks Daily News Miner*, June 3, 1967



**BUFFALO LODGE** — Located at Big Delta, with the spectacular beauty of the Alaska Range to the south, is the Buffalo Lodge (97 miles southeast of Fairbanks). The lodge is on the Alaska and Richardson Highways and offers fine food, com-

fortable hotel rooms, a modern bar, service station and garage facilities. Wild buffalo herds in this area inspired the name of the lodge, owned by George Norton.

(News-Miner Photo by Phil's Studio)

From the *Fairbanks Daily News Miner Progress Edition*, November 20, 1957



Exterior of the Buffalo Lodge  
Photo from Facebook



Interior of the bar at the Buffalo Lodge  
Photo from Facebook