"GESUNDHEIT—"
"SKAAL"

and

"HERE'S MUD IN YOUR EYE"

Ketchikan's Newest

BEER PARLOR

Opens
TOMORROW NIGHT
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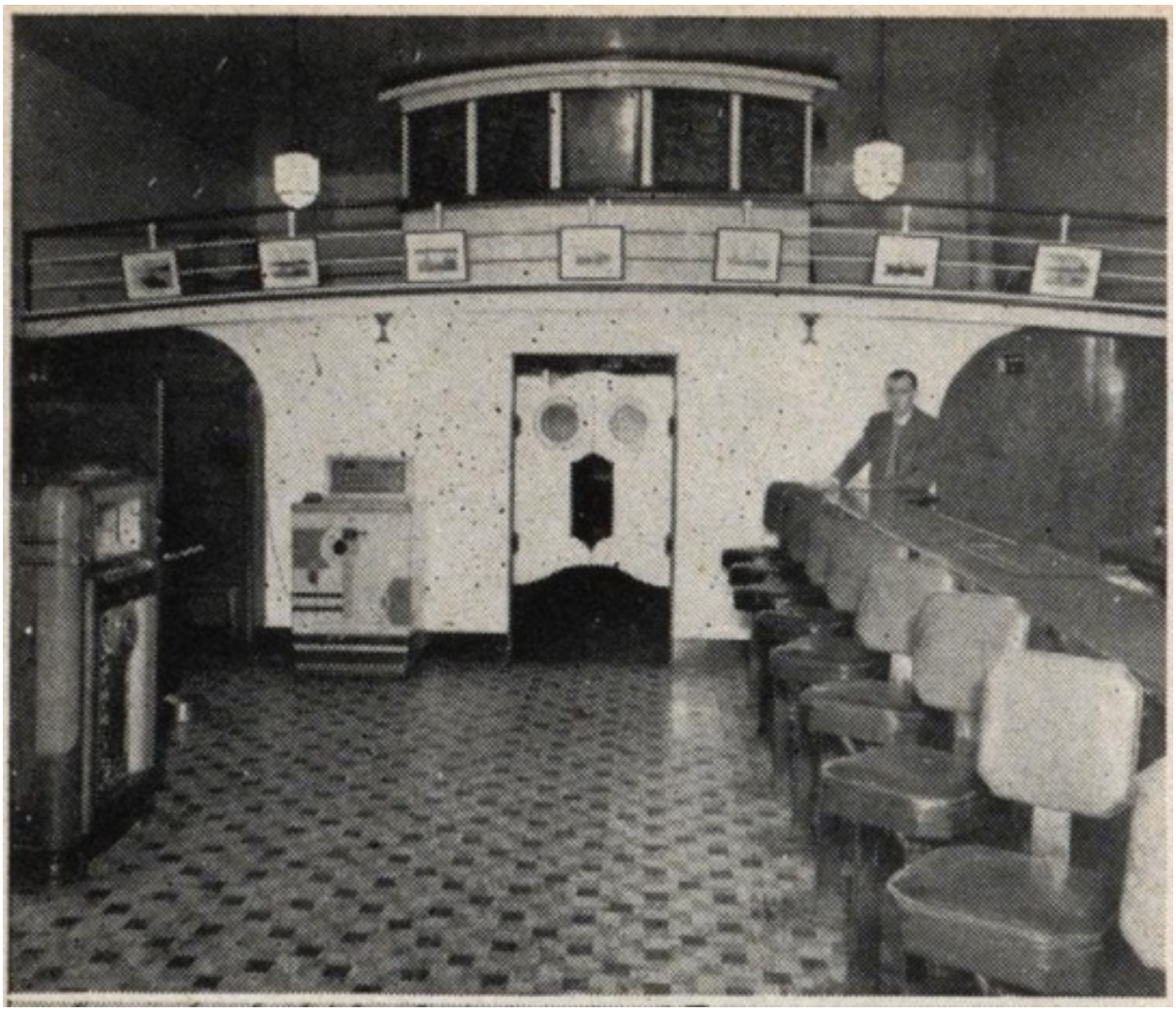
YOU BUY ONE and
THE HOUSE BUYS ONE

MRS. J. BARSETH
Proprietor

The Fo'c's'le

Opposite American Meat Co.

Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle – **June 8, 1934**



FOC'S'LE BAR

Beautifully decorated in the nautical manner for the complete enjoyment of its patrons; refreshments of all kinds served the way you like them; for atmosphere plus an evening of relaxation be sure to visit the Fo'c's'le Bar; Cecil Wheat, owner.

From *Alaska Life* magazine – September 1945

From the *Alaska Sportsman* magazine

Photo by John Chandler

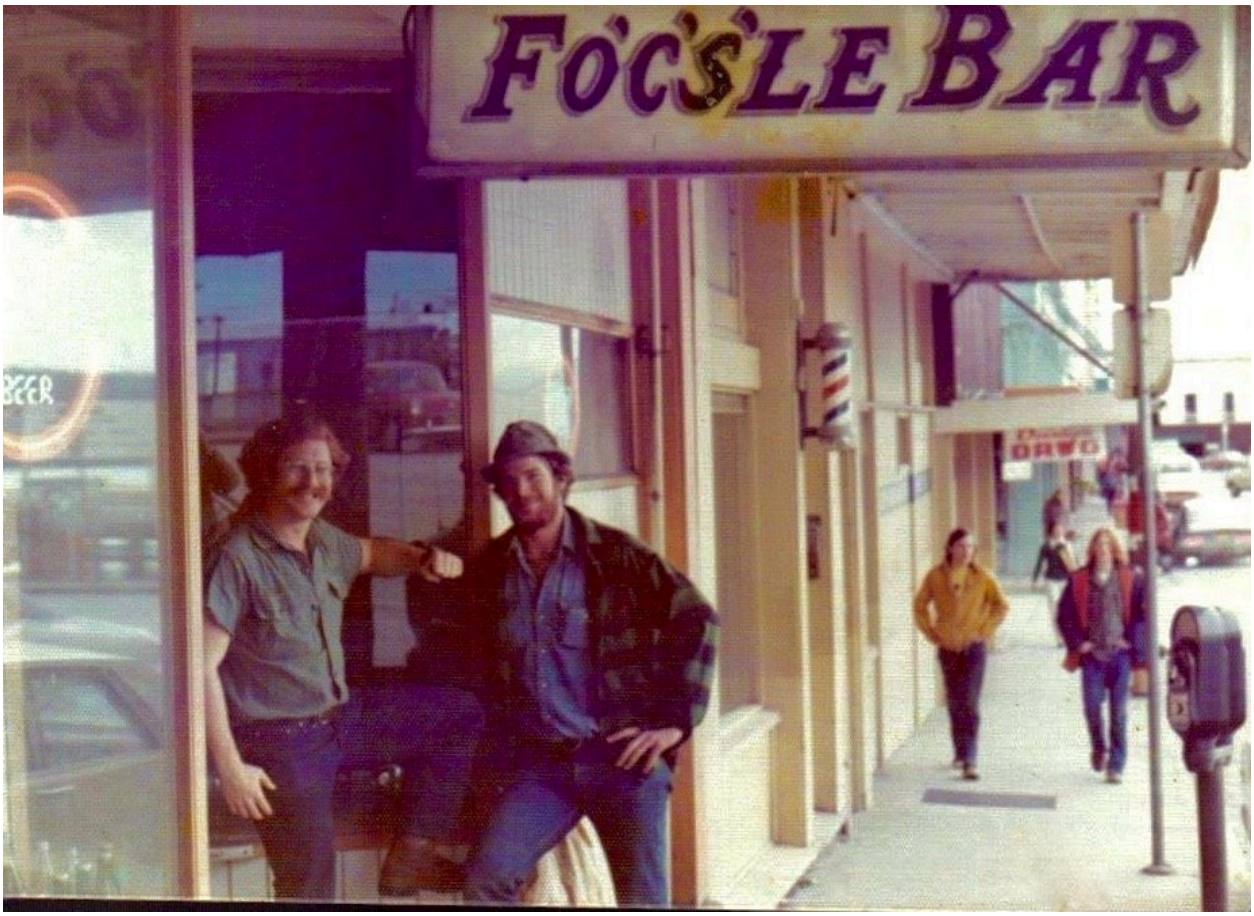


Photo by Tom Dye

Fo'c'sle Bar Not Closing Down

Business May Relocate & May Change Name

Story by Dick Kauffman - Photos by Chris Wilhelm

January 31, 2003

Friday - 12:45 am

A variety of rumors have been floating around Ketchikan that the Fo'c'sle Bar is closing down.

James Elkins the manager of the Fo'c'sle Bar said the business is not closing down but possibly may be moving from its current location at 312 Front Street. Elkins said negotiations are underway with an undisclosed curio company that is interested in renting the building in which the Fo'c'sle Bar is currently located.

Fo'c'sle's Boat

Photo by Chris Wilhelm ©Wilhelm 2003

James Elkins said the agreement with the undisclosed curio company is not yet finalized and the curio company is presently in the process of obtaining approval from state and local governments in order to renovate the building. Jamie Elkins said if the curio company is able to obtain the approval needed to renovate the building and if the rental agreement if finalized, the Fo'c'sle Bar will close down in its present location by February 16th. He said the business will then relocate and may have a new name.

The building in which the Fo'c'sle Bar is located is the one of the oldest structures in Ketchikan according to Elkins. He said the bar opened in the building in 1936 or 1933 or maybe earlier.

Elkins said if the rental agreement is not finalized, the Fo'c'sle Bar will continue to remain in business at its current location.

The Fo'c'sle Bar is currently located on property owned by James Elkins' father, Jim Elkins.

Fo'c'sle Bar - Photo Gallery

Photos by Chris Wilhelm

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January 31, 2003

Friday - 12:45 am

The Fo'c'sle's wall of trophies....

The Fo'c'sle's wall of photographs....

Jamie Elkins sits inside the Fo'c's'le Tuesday morning, the day he announced that Ketchikan's oldest bar will close after last call on Saturday. Staff photo by Hall Anderson

Last call:

Fo'c's'le closing doors for good this weekend

By TERRY MILLER
Daily News Staff Writer

It will be the last "last call" at the Fo'c's'le Bar Saturday night. Owner Jamie Elkins said Tuesday Ketchikan's oldest bar is closing, and the space will be rented to A&A Gems of New York.

Closing isn't the preference of Elkins or his customers, he said, but there it is. "We've been having a few bad years, and I've still got some debts to get taken care of," Elkins, the third generation of his family to run the business, said. The customers "don't want it to close, but there's not enough business to go around, and people's drinking habits have changed."

Elkins took the business over from his father, Jim, in 1999. When he first expressed interest in it, he was in junior high school, he said, and the idea went nowhere. "My father said it was not an option."

But times changed, the bar needed help, and on Super Bowl Sunday 1995, Jamie Elkins worked his first shift as a bartender.

Looking back, he said, taking over management of the company in 1999 was probably premature.

"I had a lot of things to learn. I just finally started turning the bar around, but it's too little, too late, I guess," he said.

A combination of factors has led to the closure, Elkins said, citing the recently announced closure of the Ketchikan Five and Dime.

"You know, there aren't that many businesses that have been around as long as the Fo'c's'le and the Five and Dime," he said. "It's another landmark that's going to be sorely missed."

His grandfather, Red, bought the place with a partner

See 'Fo'c's'le closing, page 5

Fo'c's'le closing

Continued from page 1

His grandfather, Red, bought the place with a partner in 1968, and Red's son, Jim, came in as a partner in August of that year.

The bar itself was opened in 1936, in a building that was already historic. The original building, in back of the bar, was built around 1898, he said. And the "new" one was later attached to the old. According to an article by June Allen in the July/August 2002 edition of "Toast" Magazine, borough records list the bar as of "major historical significance," the city's oldest remaining commercial structure.

The bar was home to the halibut fleet, Jamie said, which is the source of the idea for having a the boat bridge at the back of the bar to this day.

Loggers took to the Fo'c's'le, as well. And now? Things aren't like they used to be.

"Gone are the days when you'd get 20 loggers in there on a Friday, each with a $2,000 check, and they'd all be broke by Sunday," said Elkins. "A lot of the loggers got married and settled down even before the closing of the Tongass (National Forest). The rest of them are tramping around the country looking for work."

The decline of logging is but one factor in Elkins' decision to close the bar. Another is increasing use of illegal drugs. "I've lost a lot of customers to crank," he said.

The state alcohol tax increase didn't help much, either, he said, although he didn't raise prices after the increase went into effect. "None of my customers got a raise — I didn't see why I should raise my prices," said Elkins. "I was going to hit the tourists with it when they came."

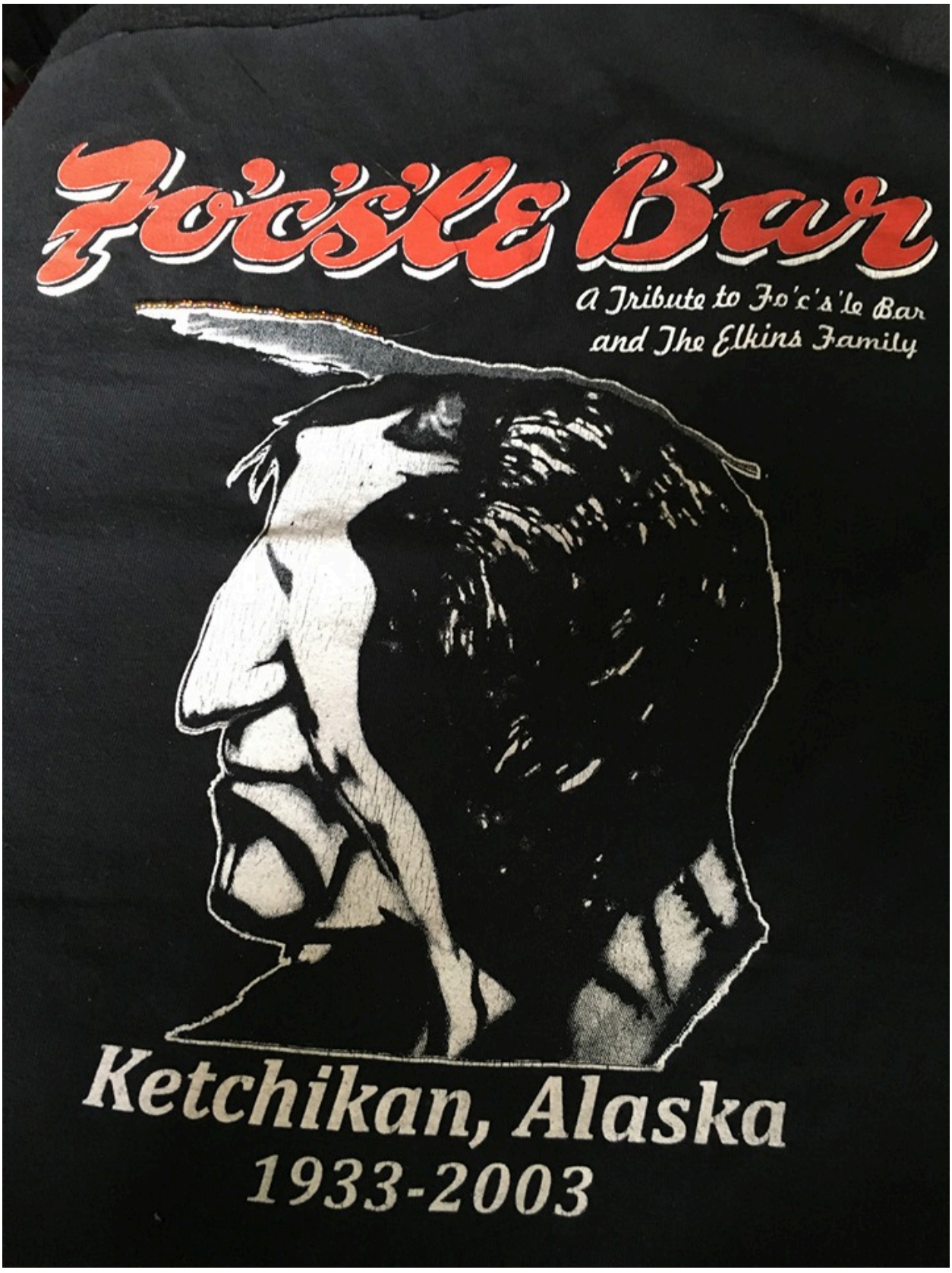
But it was not to be. Come Saturday, "we'll be open that day, and we'll call 'last call' that night, and it will really be last call," he said. They might be open while they are clearing the place out on Sunday, but not regular hours. The new business will begin to remodel the space around April 21, said Elkins.

He'll still be running the family business, which includes a liquor store. He'd like to open another bar someday, though he doesn't see that happening soon; the demand just isn't there in Ketchikan these days.

"I'm gonna miss it," Elkins said, the third and last Elkins to run the Fo'c's'le Bar. "As much aggravation as it is, I'm gonna miss it."

Ketchikan Daily News – **April 9, 2003**

Fo'c'sle Bar
KETCHIKAN, ALASKA


Fo'c'sle Bar
A Tribute to Fo'c's'le Bar
and The Elkins Family
Ketchikan, Alaska
1933-2003