Statewide News

Voters Approve Bond Proposition Building for State Library Archives Museum

The future Alaska State Library, Archives and Museum Building (LAM) in Juneau received a vote of confidence and needed funding. The voters in Alaska approved Ballot Initiative B in the November 2010 election so that the State can issue bonds for the construction of several educational facilities.

For the LAM building project this means $18.5 million dollars will be added to the existing $9 million dollars already appropriated. The anticipated total project cost is $126.5 million. The project will bring jobs to the state’s capital to build and replace deteriorating facilities.

Linda Thibodeau, Director of Libraries, Archives and Museums, said she's really excited about the increased opportunities the joint building would provide for sharing resources and preserving the state's collections. Reports on the project have outlined cost-savings in several areas, including shared storage of materials, fire-prevention and security systems, a shared laboratory for conservation and microfilm processing, and patron use areas.

"A lot of our collections are in danger and pulling them together like this will really be a benefit," Thibodeau said. "[The collections] have not completely identical needs, but compatible in many ways."

Read about the LAM Building Design Meaning.

Design Meaning That Functions for Building State Library Archives Museum

Filed by Bob Banghart, Chief Curator, Alaska State Museum. Portions of these two articles used by permission from the Juneau Empire--select to read the full story.

In a city where most buildings could generously be described as old and boxy, a major new building project is cause for celebration. The building’s suggested project design is conceptually linked to the history and culture of Alaska. It is both elegant and intelligent in form, so excitement about the new construction is entirely warranted.

Lead designer Thomas Hacker of THA Architecture in Portland, Oregon said the complex functions of the new building have informed the design at every step.

"It's not just a standard office building, it's like an instrument in that way," he said. "The building is sort of a tool for taking care of the artifacts and the books, so it needs to be carefully designed from the inside out as well as the outside in."

The building design, unveiled this past spring, was met with enthusiasm by LAM staff, said Bob Banghart, Chief Curator of the Alaska State Museum. This enthusiasm extends way beyond the appearance of the physical structure itself; the project is an all-encompassing one that involves complex restructuring of the way the state preserves, maintains, and provides access to the collections it holds. The new space would allow the integration of all three sections through the use of shared facilities, systems, technologies and staff.

--Design Meaning continued on page 22--
MUSEUMS ALASKA
Donna Matthews Professional Development Fund Award

Congratulations

Carolyn Ahkvaluk
Project Assistant,
Beringia Museum of Culture,
Kawerak, Inc., Nome

LaRue Barnes
Director
Ilanka Cultural Center, Cordova

Ryjil Christianson
Director of Education
Pratt Museum, Homer

Jerrie Clarke
Director
Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center, Haines

Tana Finnesand
Museum Coordinator
Ahtna Heritage Foundation, Glennallen

Steve Henrikson
Curator of Collections
Alaska State Museum, Juneau

Aldona Kouremetis
Board President
Kodiak Maritime Museum, Kodiak

Yuko Kugo
Student
University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau

Aurora Lang
Curator of Collections and Exhibits
Cordova Historical Museum, Cordova

Marnie Leist
Registrar
Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository, Kodiak

Patricia Linville
Director
Seward Community Library Museum, Seward

Ingrid Martis
Collection Manager
Museum of the Aleutians, Unalaska

Karen Meizner
Exhibits and Collections Coordinator,
Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center, Haines

Michele Miller
Development Director
Pratt Museum, Homer

Toby Sullivan
Executive Director
Kodiak Maritime Museum, Kodiak

Donna Westphal
Store Manager, Education Curator & Registrar
Eagle Historical Society and Museums, Eagle

MUSEUMS ALASKA

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Susan Larrabee • Kirsten Pickard • Cindy Schumaker

UAF Rasmuson Library Alaska & Polar Regions

Left and above: In Fairbanks, at the Wedgewood Resort conference site. Landscape Image by Allison Mclain. Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum Image courtesy of the museum.
Meeting Reflection and Winter Plans for Renewal

By Allison McLain, Executive Director, Museums Alaska

What a pleasure to see so many people attend the Museums Alaska / Alaska Historical Society joint annual meeting in Fairbanks! The Fairbanks host committee did a fantastic job organizing such a successful conference.

Many thanks to Angela Linn and Elizabeth Cook who led the efforts! Cheers to Diane Fleeks, Ron Inouye, Bridget Burke, Ross Coen, Dan David, Camilla Kennedy, Mary Mangusso, Tamara Martz and Candy Waugaman for their energetic contributions.

The annual meeting hosted 176 participants who attended 10 Museums Alaska sessions and 13 Alaska Historical Society sessions. Keynote speakers, John Bockstoce and Bernice Joseph, each inspired us with insightful presentations. One of the meeting highlights was the exhibits and communities session, moderated by Holly Cusack-McVeigh. By way of Skype video technology, we experienced an international cross-cultural discussion between Alaska museum participants and staff at the National Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. As I look at a picture of myself in the field this summer I turn reflective, remembering a great field season on Adak and wondering what the winter will bring. I hope it doesn't bring some of the field adventures (wind storms destroying tents and throwing field gear across the tundra…). I hope it does include much laughter and storytelling with friends and colleagues, great brownies and coffee, and warm feet!

One thing I know it will bring is a January 20, 2011 Museums Alaska Board of Directors retreat in Anchorage to review and revise the Museums Alaska long-range plan. That plan, GOALS FOR 2006-2008, will be emailed for you to review.

Please read and think about it as our long-range plan that we use to guide programs and projects that Museums Alaska undertakes. Ask yourself:

- What does my Museums Alaska membership mean to me?
- What does the Museums Alaska membership mean for the museum in which I work?
- What programs or projects would I like to see Museums Alaska provide for its members, both individual members and organizational members?
- What will I do as a Museums Alaska member to support and participate in programs and projects that Museums Alaska offers now and might offer in the future?

We need your help to answer these questions seriously because the responses can guide the future of Museums Alaska. Remember, we are all in this together—(thanks Red Green for the reminder!) Please send me your comments, observations, cogitations and meditations on our long-range plan so that I can take them forward to the Board during our planning retreat.

The Museums Alaska 2010 Annual Report will be published by mid-February 2011, and it will be distributed to all members and posted on our website. The financial reporting will reflect all the actual expenses and income for 2010 so you can see how program funds are distributed to do our work. The MA Board is reviewing our 5-year plan at the January 2011 board meeting, which will give us the opportunity to reflect on the past year’s finances and set some goals for 2011.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.
Learning Outside the Classroom

Text and Images by Yoko Kugo, Undergraduate Student, Social Sciences, University of Alaska Southeast

The Alaska Historical Society and Museums Alaska conference is a great learning place outside of the classroom. This conference was a great place for students to meet professional historians and educators, and to seek their next goals.

In 2009, I lived in Sitka and volunteered for the Sitka Historical Society as a Japanese translator. That experience introduced me to the world of museums, their historians, and curators and gave me a reason to study Anthropology and Native Arts, and to do fieldwork.

I was excited to come to my first conference. I was a little nervous, especially when I saw the big crowd at the opening reception at the University of Alaska Museum of the North. When I conversed with some people, they were very friendly and were happy to have a student at the conference. I was fortunate to meet scholars and educators, and talk with them about my research projects and future goals. They encouraged me to go to graduate school and suggested websites that might be helpful. I was fascinated to see that many historians and educators were interested in learning new information in the sessions – their research and study never ends!

In the session Resources of Southeast Alaska, I had a chance to listen to Anjuli Grantham, a graduate student from the University of South Carolina, talk about fish traps and social issues of Alaska Natives. Since she grew up in Kodiak, she was familiar with commercial fishing. Even though she lives far away from Alaska today, her research was cogent and organized. Each presenter discussed tools and the available local resources in Southeast Alaska.

Before modern technologies were available, Alaska Natives were energy sufficient because they used materials from their environment to survive. Because Alaska Natives' skills are significant, their ways of life are still discussed and practiced.

I was fortunate to present my paper in this session and will continue my research to see the dynamics in local ecological knowledge and resources used in the past and today.

I took this photo of a spruce tree on the trail near the Wedgewood Resort, Museums Alaska conference site. For my research project this spruce in the North looks different from the spruce trees in Southeast Alaska.

Museums Alaska 2010 Donna Matthews Professional Development Fund Awardee Yoko Kugo and center and right: Daniel Monteith, Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Alaska Southeast and Zachary Jones, Archivist, Sealaska.

“As a student I live on a small budget, so this grant was significant to support my travel to Fairbanks. I look forward to seeing more undergraduate and graduate students attending the conference next year. Thank you, Museums Alaska!”

Donna Matthews Professional Development Fund 2010 Museums Alaska Awards Sixteen Statewide

By Monica Shah, Treasurer, Museums Alaska

Sixteen individuals from across the state will return to enhance their museums and communities. This year the Museums Alaska Donna Matthews Professional Development Fund granted 16 individuals the necessary funds to attend the 2010 joint Museums Alaska – Alaska Historical Society conference in Fairbanks, Alaska. These individuals are from 13 institutions and from 10 communities around the state: as far south as Juneau, as far east as Unalaska, and as far north as Nome. The Museums Alaska Development Fund selection committee was impressed with all the applications, and each

--Awards Statewide continued on page 5
Reflection on A Sense of Place In the Interior

By Holly Cusack-McVeigh, Curator of Exhibits, Pratt Museum

All too often, we attend professional conferences with a directed purpose. We facilitate sessions, deliver our papers and exchange knowledge with our colleagues.

There was something special about this year's Museums Alaska annual conference, but what was it? I had just returned from a four-day conference in Phoenix, Arizona and upon reflection, realized that I never saw the desert! This was in stark contrast to my conference experience in Fairbanks.

The conference host committee's selection of Wedgewood Resort was a good one, indeed. This is a place of excitement and dramatic transition. The sandhill cranes flew over several times a day reminding us all of what makes this place special.

Wedgewood is nestled close to the well-known Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. Conference attendees moved from one conference session to another with a constant reminder that the season, no matter how warm the days, was changing. Several of us discovered the unique walking paths that surround the resort.

The newly established Wedgewood Wildlife Sanctuary (including a reclaimed gravel pit) was an unexpected treat. Some 75 acres have been set aside for seasonal and year-round birds and mammals.

The highlight for me was stopping to watch two beavers at sunset. As black-capped and boreal chickadees flitted overhead, two massive, brown figures made their way onto land, dragging large, leafy branches behind them. Their sense of purpose reinforces a sense of place in the Interior. This flurry of activity, outside the conference rooms, defines place in the Interior where change is a dramatic, central force.
The Nature of Visioning and Strategic Planning

By Michele Miller, Development Director, Pratt Museum

An engaging, off-the-cuff speaker, Bob Banghart said visioning consists of inspiration, con, faith, and hustle. Being a visionary can be a lonely place. He said a key part of the visioning process includes conversations among people who have absolutely nothing in common. I thought about this after returning to the Pratt Museum following the Museums Alaska conference in Fairbanks.

In the planning phase of an ambitious $8.5 million capital project, the Pratt is working to construct a new facility on its 9.3-acre site, with renovated exhibits; state-of-the-art collections storage; and badly needed conservation, classroom, and community gathering spaces.

The project is scheduled for completion in 2016. As we move forward in the planning process, the thought of bringing together dramatically different viewpoints can feel daunting. Although the timeline seems long, we need to be moving ahead every day. It is these kinds of discussions—between different kinds of people who bring radically different ideas—that are going to ensure the Pratt proceeds with ambition, new ideas, and vision.

We’ve been taking steps in this direction. Over the past couple of years, the Pratt Museum has been reaching out to various parts of our community and to diverse stakeholders to guide the planning process for the new facility. We’ve traveled to Alaska Native villages around Kachemak Bay, the Kenai Peninsula and Anchorage areas; met with educators and artists; brought in scientists; and launched a web survey. We held public forums at the Museum as part of a project called A Community Vision for a Community Museum, partially funded by a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

Our goal is not only to involve the community in planning the project, but to let the community be the visionary in shaping what the Pratt is going to look like in the years to come. Sometimes community members are more free to dream than Board and staff members. They aren’t hamstrung by concerns over budgets and timelines, by what has and has not worked in the past. Our goal has been to foster conversations where ideas can bubble up to guide the creation of new exhibits and to direct the planning of the new facility.

Workshop

Brass Mountmaking

By Taña Finnesand, Museum Coordinator, Ahtna Cultural Center, Copper Center, Alaska

At the Brass Mount-Making Workshop attendees got a full day of lessons and practical experience learning how to make brass museum mounts. Chris Hanson gave a summary of the process, practical tips, and sources for buying materials. Norm Lagasse, Alaska Aviation Museum, assisted with advice and encouraging words as we tried valiantly to produce masterpieces on our first attempt and even when our creations didn’t turn out so well.

The Fine Arts Building metals studio located at the University of Alaska Fairbanks was a great place to have the training. It was ventilated for smoke and fumes, had benches with good work surfaces, and plenty of scrap metal pieces to practice and use. One of the perks of the class – we were supplied with our very own beginner’s tool kit to keep.

We learned two pieces of metal can be joined by heating them rapidly, then applying a softer metal, the solder, which then melts and is drawn through the joint by capillary action. After the piece is quickly plunged into a water bath to cool it, the joint is bonded securely together. The joint is then pickled to remove oxidation.

Brass Mountmaking continued on page 7--
Leadership Communication

By Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections, Alaska State Museum

Session Presenters: LaRue Barnes, Bob Banghart, Alaska State Museum;
Cathy Sherman, City of Cordova Museum, and the author

Each presenter outlined their work in the museum field, spoke to the issue at hand by giving real-world examples drawn from their own experiences, and provided practical advice applicable to large and small projects. The presenters laid out philosophical musings on good leadership, based on many decades of observation and practice.

Cathy Sherman emphasized the importance of good communications: going out of your way to communicate on a routine basis as a way of connecting coworkers, team members, and superiors. While this takes a fair amount of effort, it is a good investment that can ultimately make everything go more smoothly and successfully. Sadly, it is often these kinds of investments that take a back seat to pressing day-to-day urgencies.

Sherman’s advice of keeping everyone well informed of both good and bad things broadens their understanding and leads to their support. In the same way, communicating with the public provides a basic understanding of your facility that is critical for gaining their support. Museums develop long-term relationships with their communities, and it is important to make contact through any means possible, and educating each generation about the institution’s mission and role.

My presentation focused in part on the importance of honesty: museums and museum people provide community leadership and are entrusted to be accurate, authentic, complete, and unbiased in providing information. We are in a position of trust and must be worthy of it by telling the truth—a tall order when the truth about certain events in the past can be hurtful or politically incorrect. We provide leadership when we thoughtfully speak the truth about history, even when history isn’t pretty and many people would love to pretend it never happened, or isn’t relevant today.

Another area I discussed had to do with professional standards. Leaders often find themselves in situations that are not covered by formal procedures, and then we must rely on our own skills to stay true to the mission and to chart the best course. The best leaders bring to their job a respect for standards tempered with a recognition that sometimes going by the book isn’t an option.

The art of leadership requires sensibility, responsibility, flexibility and creativity—not to bend or break museum standards, but to address challenging and unusual management issues in keeping with our profession. In the process, we provide leadership in developing new standards of practice that will in turn further develop the museum field.

Brass Mountmaking - continued from page 6

Flux keeps your joints clean – sounds like an herbal health remedy, doesn’t it? In the mountmaking world, a coating of flux before applying heat prevents the surface of the metal from oxidizing, which keeps the solder from bonding to the metal. You can buy flux from a jewelry supply outlet. Chris said to get flux that contains no fluorides, which are bad for the lungs.

Pickle is a chemical substance that cleans up darkened, oxidized metal. Mix it with water and keep it warm – a crock-pot works well. Don’t leave a piece in the pickle too long since it weakens metal. Tanning solution, lemon juice, or vinegar will also work. A pickle mixture will ruin your clothes, so be careful. Wash the pickle off after you’ve removed the piece. Pickle between each soldering! (I forgot this more than once.)

It’s all in the solder and wire. The advice on silver solder is don’t use plumbing solder, but you order jewelry silver solder from a jewelry supply store. Be sure to specify the “easier” kind – it’s a softer medium, and cadmium-free. Welding shops sell bronze brazing wire, which comes in 3-to 4-foot lengths in a variety of sizes, and it sells by the pound.
Alaska Museums Going Green

By Jerrie Clarke, Director, Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center

Session Presenters: Norm Lagasse, Alaska Aviation Museum and Scott Neel, Alaska Heritage Center

The Sheldon Museum staff is doing what we can to reduce our energy usage and decrease our electric and fuel bills. So I was pleased to see this going green session.

Norm Lagasse and Scott Neel both listed some of the things they are doing at their respective museums to decrease energy usage:

- More durable and sustainable materials in exhibits like medium-density fiber board and carpet tiles to make installation and replacement easier.
- E-mail rather than paper for newsletters and other communications.
- Longer-lasting, low volatile organic compound paints on walls and in display cases.
- Recycled construction materials such as Trex, a reclaimed wood and sawdust material.
- Install sensors or timers for the restrooms lights and fans.
- Conduct an energy audit on the building to discover air leakage and other weaknesses.

My main interest was in LED (light emitting diode) gallery lighting. The Alaska Heritage Center (AHC) installed LEDs in 3 exhibit cases and one gallery. Although various colors are available, the AHC chose white, which has a slight bluish tint but is close to the color of sunlight. Neel found online the PAR 30 and 38 and MR 16 bulbs.

Neel reported that the gallery lights are working out. The AHC installation cost was roughly $6,000, but based on the lights they previously had in the gallery, the expected savings in electricity during the first year will be $10,000.

The Aviation Museum is installing a grid system in some of their galleries. These grids hold square units that are made to fit into tiled ceilings. The lights are less than 100 watts each and can be dimmed. With other improvements to the buildings and the use of LED lights, Lagasse expects a substantial decrease in the use and cost of lighting and heating the buildings.

Preservation Ethics and Industrial History Collections

By Ingrid Martis, Collections Manager, Museum of the Aleutians

Session presenters: Norm Lagasse, Alaska Aviation Museum, Willy Vinton, Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum, and Scott Carlee, Alaska State Museum

Scholars and the general public have increasingly embraced industrial history as a significant aspect of our shared heritage. Large artifact preservation is a critical means through which researchers and the public may better understand history. In many cases, design blueprints, photographs and other documents are often the only surviving evidence of specific models of a large industrial artifact.

Diverse Alaska museums dealing with large scale artifacts were represented in this session to discuss the discrepancy of the historical plane, railroad and automobile in working condition, and the sense of crisis existing among institutions whose difficult mission is to stabilize and maintain large metal structures.

The Alaska Aviation Museum of Anchorage, the Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum and the Friends of the Tanana Valley Railroad (photo at right), both of Fairbanks, each took a turn to present their institution’s attempts to conserve specific pieces of equipment, while expanding on ethical conundrums relative to finding the funding to do so.
Leadership

If You Don’t Advocate, Who Will?

By Marnie Leist, Registrar, Alutiq Museum, Kodiak

Session Presenters: Mike Walsh, VP of Operations, Foraker Group

Winter is coming. Freezing winds are again ruffling the papers on the desk of the archivist at the Historical Society. The seals around the windows are decaying, and they need to be replaced. If the staff can feel the change in the weather, the artifacts will most definitely be affected. Funds are tight, as usual, but the Board agrees that the City’s designated funding for non-profits would be ideal for solving this problem. So now what?

Mike Walsh, VP of Operations at the Foraker Group, addressed this issue in the session Lobbying and Advocacy, helping audience members learn more about the laws governing lobbying and how to develop an advocacy plan.

While many of us advocate — talk about an idea to cause change — lobbying is specifically used to influence legislation. According to Internal Revenue Service (IRS), lobbying is direct communication with a legislator or a legislative staff member requesting action on a specific bill. Nonprofit organizations are not allowed to endorse or oppose a political candidate, but they are allowed to encourage a legislator to approve a bill, even one that includes appropriations for their organization. Additionally, organizations may conduct grassroots lobbying to influence the public, encouraging people to vote for a proposition or to contact their legislator.

It is important to note that the IRS wants to know what your organization spends on lobbying. Nonprofit organizations may spend no more than 5% of their annual budget on lobbying, so it is imperative you track your expenses. In contrast, the State of Alaska wants to know how much time an organization lobbies. As an individual representing your organization, you may spend 40 hours in direct communication with a legislator or legislative staff over a thirty-day period. That’s a lot of communication! If you intend on spending more money or time, your organization may hire a registered lobbyist.

To make the most of your advocacy work, organizations should develop an Advocacy Plan. Organizations should refine a 60 second spiel about the issue, identify who to talk to, and when and how to talk to them (email, in person, on the phone).

The underlying point of Mr. Walsh’s presentation was that advocacy is important, and it’s not work that we should expect others to do for us. If you won’t advocate for your own organization, who will?

“Advocacy...it’s not work that we should expect others to do for us...”

Call for Submissions – VIDEO SHORTS

Alaska State Museum

Invites Museums in Alaska to submit videos.
Alaska State Museum will show the videos on Alaska Museum Day celebration
May 14, 2011

• These self-produced short videos will be shown all day on May 14, 2011; at the Alaska State Museum’s Science on a Sphere projection system.
• A link to the videos will appear on both the ASM and Museums Alaska websites.
• Any museum that submits a video will receive a compilation DVD to show at the participant’s museum on May 14.

We welcome all Alaskan museums to participate.

Submit a digital video of your Museum
DUE: March 11, 2011

1. Make a 5-10 minute digital video of your museum.
2. Select your own subject/s: one or more of interior or exterior views; exhibit/s, or artifact/s.
3. Audio is optional. ASM reserves right to add a title line for each clip, a voice over and/or music track.
4. Enclose a brief text paragraph to describe when, where, and what is in the images.
5. Mini-DV is preferred any format is accepted.
6. Submit in as high a resolution as possible.
7. ASM reserves the right to edit if there are many submissions. Submit by March 1, 2011.

Send to: Scott Carlee
Alaska State Museum
Commitment, Trust and Respect for Community Voices

By Ryjil Christianson, Director of Education, Pratt Museum, Homer

The Community Voices in Exhibits session was filled with three hours of various case studies, each having its own target audiences and project goals. For me, the take home message was clear. It takes tenacity, patience, and a commitment to long term relationship building for community voices to be effectively represented in exhibits. This is not an overnight process. Both Karen Evenoff and Aaron Leggett's presentations were wonderful examples of how communities can shape exhibits.

Karen Evenoff with Lake Clark National Park and Preserve presented the story behind the creation of the Chaqenq’a Dena’ina Fish Camp exhibit that opened at the Pratt Museum during the winter of 2009. The exhibit explored the words and images of Dena’ina people as they participate and reflect on the fish camp experience. The exhibit represents an unwavering commitment to not having others interpreting the words of the Dena’ina community. Instead, the exhibit let these words stand alone and speak for themselves. What makes an exhibit like this possible? It takes years of relationship building and patience. At its root, this project was the byproduct of an ongoing relationship between Dena’ina community leaders, the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve staff, and the Pratt Museum staff. The result was an exhibit that feels authentic and genuine.

Aaron Leggett, a cultural historian at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, presented how it takes commitment and vision to inspire change. Aaron’s personal tenacity to bring the Denai’ina people’s stories and culture to the forefront of metropolitan Anchorage serves as an example of how a community can be the driving force for change. Communities can use exhibits to make their stories visible and to communicate the importance of Natuh (our special place). Today, Anchorage is home to the Alaska Native Heritage Center and the Dena’ina Center, both housing exhibits honoring the cultural legacy of the Dena’ina people.

The process of bringing community voices into exhibits at its heart must be based on persistence, longstanding trust and respect. Museums and cultural centers must be committed as much to the relationships they create with communities as it is to the exhibits it produces.

The Three Ps and C of Oral History

By Donna Westphal, Store Manager, Education Curator and Registrar, Eagle Historical Society and Museums, Eagle

Session Presenter: Robyn Russell, Collections Manager, Oral History Program, University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Rasmuson Library

The workshop was based on the three Ps and C of oral history. The Ps stand for: Preservation, Planning and Producing, and the C stands for Conducting. Robyn stated that the first step in doing an oral history is to decide: What will be the disposition of the oral history interviews?

The originals are as important as anything produced from the oral history interview. Protect and preserve the originals. Robyn stressed the importance of getting the appropriate authorization for use, and that the people involved know what will be used and where it will be used. She also suggested that the oral history be professionally transcribed and to keep the transcription accessible with the interview. Robyn went into detail about each of the points and gave us a wonderful handout for future reference.

This was the first time I attended this conference, and although I have attended many different types of conferences in the past, this was specific to my particular job. The level of professionalism is noticeable, and the dedication from people to a passion about preservation is admirable.
Exhibits and Communities: Bringing Community Voices into Exhibits

By Toby Sullivan, Executive Director, Kodiak Maritime Museum

Session Presenters: Holly Cusack-McVeigh, Pratt Museum; Karen Evanoff, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve; Aaron Leggett, Alaska Native Heritage Center; Jerrie Clarke, Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center; Eleanor Hadden, Alaska Native Heritage Center; Toby Sullivan, Kodiak Maritime Museum; Carol Diebel, UA Museum of the North; Kylie Ngaropo, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Heather Beggs

Six presenters from Alaska and two speakers from New Zealand by video teleconference, talked about the different ways they are including community voices and experiences in the interpretive process. The session featured discussions of oral histories, museum sponsored cultural and social events, and how museums solicit and incorporate interpretive advice about cultural objects, ceremonies, and history from community elders. A common theme is the increasing inclusion of community elders in the interpretive process by museums focusing on culture and history.

The presenters said the process of interpreting culture and history has evolved to a place where their museums now commonly welcome individuals from outside the institution to help curators interpret the cultural and historical context these individuals have lived through, not simply to provide facts about artifacts. This idea of interpreting history and culture through the experience of living individuals has necessarily resulted in the inclusion of communities in museum activities and interpretive decisions.

This process of inclusion has helped to create new exhibits and programs and to validate existing ones. Examples included gathering oral histories from Alaska Native elders and crab fishermen, including young people in storytelling sessions, and managing cultural sensitivities surrounding the exhibition of culturally sensitive objects in New Zealand. The discussion afterwards was wide ranging: questions about the ethics of sharing of communally held stories, protecting the privacy of community participants, and the value of simply letting people tell their stories in their own words, with as little editing and interpretation from interviewers as possible.

My museum’s board president Aldona Kouremetis and I walked out of the session with a better understanding of the way oral histories can pull communities into a museum, but also the importance for museums to have working guidelines addressing ethics and community values, as well as ongoing assessments as oral history projects proceed.

Museums Alaska Board Election Results

Jerrie Clark, Director of the Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center (Haines) was elected to a 3-year term on the Museums Alaska Board. Clark, a member for much of the past 25 years had previously served on the Board in the 2000s. She looks forward to continuing the work of Museums Alaska.

Sven Haakanson, Executive Director of the Alutiiq Museum (Kodiak) and Monical Shah, Conservator at the Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center, were each re-elected to an additional 3-year term. Haakanson, was awarded the prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship for his leadership in museums and communities. Shah has worked at the Smithsonian Institution, National Park and abroad. She has served as the secretary and treasurer during her terms on the Museums Alaska Board, and she looks forward to provide learning opportunities for the members.

“The conference is always a great way to find out what other museums are doing around Alaska and to find better ways to do museum work.”

“...the importance for museums to have working guidelines addressing ethics and community values, as well as ongoing assessments as oral history projects proceed.”
Introduction to Standards in Excellence Program (StEPs)

By Aldona Kouremetis, Board President, Kodiak Maritime Museum, Kodiak

Session Presenter: Scott Carrlee, Alaska State Museum

The Standards and Excellence Program for Historical Organizations, also known as StEPs, was created by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) to help museums achieve higher levels of institutional competence. Six Alaska museums initially participated in the pilot program to help develop StEPs, including the Baranov Museum in Kodiak.

The StEPs program provides a framework for museums to assess their organization using nationally recognized museum standards. The program is voluntary and allows institutions to proceed at their own pace. Participants in the program receive a workbook and links to the StEPs website for online forums, training sessions, forms, and discussions. The one-time sign up cost is $200 or $150 for AASLH members.

The six standard areas addressed in the StEPs program are: Mission, Vision, and Governance; Audience; Interpretation; Stewardship of Collections; Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes; and Management. Each workbook area provides performance indicators for an organization to rate itself as basic, good, or better. Unacceptable practices are also listed for each standard, as well as examples of how to get to the next standard level. Upon completion of the workbook, an organization can apply for a bronze, gold, or silver certificate.

Benefits to organizations participating in the program include education and awareness of standards, increased credibility from funders, improved policies and practice, and guidance in assessing progress.

I and Toby Sullivan, Executive Director, Kodiak Maritime Museum, attended the seminar together in Fairbanks, and we were moved to enroll in the StEPs program soon after we returned to Kodiak. The workbook has proven to be a valuable tool as we’re presently using the workbook’s collections standards section to assess and improve the museum’s collections policy and management.

Review Tips

Past Perfect Q&A

By Carolyn Ahkvaluk, Beringia Museum of Culture and Science

Session Presenters: Mary Pat Wyatt; Ingrid Martis, Museum of the Aleutians; Karen Meizner, Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center

I didn’t realize how the software Past Perfect can save much input. For one subject, there is much information that can be saved. A simple heading or subject can be researched and found easily.

During the Past Perfect Q & A, we discussed the difference of each file and how to use them. For example, the Authority file has a menu and lists of terms that can be used by a museum to control vocabulary. A good tip is to always use last name, then first name; the biography of a person can be listed also. The Classification is similar to the Dewy Decimal in libraries. Make sure if more than one person uses Past Perfect, they use the same Classification. In the Subject Authority, the details of the object are listed. When you list objects be consistent, plan and learn from experts; and control the list.

There are 5 different ways that objects can be researched. A few we discussed included Cataloging, who the Contact is, and by Keywords. To use the Research Maker, you will need to add a new report; choose a field; list the reason for the field; then run the report.

When using the Collections field, make sure that your collections guidelines are met. Will you be able to care for the objects? Preserve the history of each object with as much detail as you can. Assign a number and put the number physically on the object. Fill in the contact information and accession numbers when you receive objects. When you receive objects you should fill out the fields in Past Perfect immediately. The objects will need to be housed in a secure, clean, dry environment.

Once all is entered, print out a hardcopy file and keep a check list of what was entered into Past Perfect.

“This was my first conference sponsored by Museums Alaska. With the little experience that I have, I think that this is a wonderful program to use.”
In Seward, rain comes and goes regularly but is usually forgotten at first glimpse of those clear sunny days of a typical summer. However, summer 2010 with more than 30 consecutive days of rain, heavy at times had become rather tedious. That’s why when the Alaska Airlines jet lifted off the wet tarmac of the Anchorage airport and pierced through dense dripping fog into the sunny blue sky above I decided that whatever happened at the joint Museums Alaska-Alaska Historical Society conference would be icing on the cake.

I am not a stranger to the benefits of professional associations. As a public librarian for the last twelve years I have been active in both the Alaska Library Association and the Public Library Association. Our local community has been working on a plan to co-locate our library and museum in a new building. As our plans progress the need to have contacts within Alaska’s professional community is apparent. I see Museums Alaska and the Alaska Historical Society as great resources for the project, both immediately and for the long term, which brought me to the conference and the keynote address.

The message of keynote speaker Bernice Joseph, Vice Chancellor of Rural, Community and Native Education, University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) was particularly meaningful for me, especially as our community seeks quality and balance in offering library and museum services. She spoke eloquently of her heritage and her devotion to understanding through education.

While it is the responsibility of historians to interpret and provide access to Native or Aboriginal culture, that culture is ever changing, and the relationship between researcher and the subject should reflect that progression. Ms. Joseph stressed sensitivity to simple things such as wording on exhibit titles, and that visits and/or disturbing of burial sites could upset that balance of nature. Some researchers see villages and tribes as data mines for their next paper, which may account for the suspicion that many Natives view as intrusion into their lives.

As expected, my head was reeling with ideas and questions as I stepped onto the plane for the journey back home. I had learned just enough to know that I have a lot to learn about museum operations, but I also have the phone numbers and emails of those in Alaska who can teach me. Thanks for the opportunity, and the sunshine!
Points of View

Challenge in Planning Collections

By Aurora Lang, Curator of Collections and Exhibits, Cordova Historical Museum

This has been a year of firsts for me: my first permanent professional job; my first introduction to my new home of Cordova; my first Museums Alaska conference; as well as my first visit to Fairbanks. In June of this year I became the curator of collections and exhibits, and one-half of the staff at the Cordova Historical Museum.

Professionally, I am gearing up for my first museum move. In August 2012, we will be moving into a new facility that construction crews are working on as I write this article. Within this context, I was looking forward to the conference for trial-and-error-moving stories, helpful hints, and reassurance that I was on the right track.

Monica Shah facilitated the panel that included practical skills, moral support and discussion. Julie Farnham and Marnie Leist rounded out the trio. They touched on subjects from museum ethics, scope of collections to long-term loans. Helpful hints and advice were abundant. Professional life-lessons, anecdotes, and a positive atmosphere triggered wild discussion, laughs, and thoughts. There is comfort in knowing that others, for example, also find long-terms loans daunting or also have questions about legal documents. I was glad to see others laughing when Marnie referenced drive-by donations – an annoying occurrence, which apparently happens everywhere.

The perspective that Marnie brought from the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, an institution with a significant portion of their collection on long-term loan, spurred intrigue, questions, and a variety of points of view. My theoretical assumptions of ownership and ideal museum protocol were challenged, which provided me with a context for community relationships that I had not before considered.

The conversations, sessions, and inspiring individuals that I met throughout the conference did indeed reassure me that I am on track, both professionally and personally. I have moved to a fantastically supportive community for a job where I can’t wait to get to in the morning along with a boss who is mentor, friend, and superwoman all rolled into one. I have certainly made the right career choice, and Museums Alaska confirmed that.

Renewal

Trading Story

By LaRue Barnes, Director, Ilanka Cultural Center

In his presentation, Fur and Frontiers in the Far North, John Bockstoce quickly drew me into his unfolding story through lively dialogue and images.

I should preface his story with my own interest in this subject. As an Alaska Native cultural center director who exhibits beads with artifacts I’ve been asked countless times, “Where did they get beads from?” I would say, “Shell and bone beads came from here; glass and crystal were traded in.” I sometimes would say, “Beads came from as far away as China” and recount the photo of Chinese coins seen in anthropological references. Bockstoce’s well researched account of Bering Strait fur trade was a delightful affirmation and expansion to my knowledge of early Native trade.

Bockstoce has invested four decades of research in the Bering Strait region. His personal passion drew listeners into the world of eighteenth and nineteenth century arctic fur trade. He kept a good pace, moving and showing illustrations collected from a variety of sources, as he discussed the three trading river systems of the Anadyr in northeastern Russia, the Yukon/Koyukuk in Alaska, and the Mackenzie River system in Northern Canada.

Bockstoce Story continued on page 21--
Points of View

Challenge in Recap of Museums Q&A

By Karen Meizner, Exhibits and Collections Coordinator, Sheldon Museum & Cultural Center, Haines

In Museum Q&A those little niggling issues that aren’t covered in the conference can be discussed with a diverse group of colleagues. The questions might be pertinent to one particular place or situation, but often fit within a larger context.

Scott Carrlee moderated the session, beginning with a review of the conference. All the sessions received positive comments. We discussed the problem of competing museum and history sessions, but concluded there is no perfect solution.

The first question was about Pick-Click-Give. When applying for your Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD), Pick.Click.Give offers PFD applicants a way to donate money to select Alaska nonprofit organizations. There were few museum related organizations on the list this year.

Q: For one-staff person museums, the amount of yearly paperwork to join the program is daunting. What can be done to help?
A: As the program catches on, the amount of funding from this program will increase, so that the time spent on applying will pay for itself.

Q: Should a museum ever estimate the value of a potential donation for a donor?
A: No. Never. Refer potential donors to appraisers (a list is available from the Alaska State Museum) or suggest they do their own research. Some horror stories were shared.

Q: How can a museum director create an advisory board for an already established museum?
A: This unique situation spurred discussion of the relationship between historical societies and Friends groups. Many felt that a museum board would be more helpful than a Friends Group.

Q: How do other museums catalog live animals? What happens when they die?
A: Pratt Museum has been handling live animals and has a workable solution for this problem.

Q: Can we organize a statewide traveling exhibit around the airship Norge, which landed in Teller in 1926, and has parts scattered all over Alaska?
A: Carrlee would like a collaborative effort to find the parts and reunite them. He asked us to check our own communities for parts. A successful exhibit might serve as a model for others.

For Museum Day, May 18, 2011, Carrlee asked for museums to produce 10-minute videos representative of their museum to be shown at the Alaska State Museum and shared on DVD. When an audience member pointed out that with a potential 80 museums submitting videos, it result in over 12 hours of video, Scott Carrlee announced, “Bring it On!”
Museums Alaska Workshops

Above and below, images by Allison McLain
Seth Irwin (right), private paper and photograph conservator, demonstrates tear repair and surface cleaning for workshop participants (left to right) Angela Linn and Monica Shah. Each attendee received a kit containing the basic tools. Irwin’s techniques will, over time, help improve the stability of the collections by allowing museum staff to conduct basic repairs on their paper-based materials. This workshop was supported by a Grant-in-Aid from the Alaska State Museum.

Brass Workshop (left to right): Diane Fleeks, Scott Neel, Diana Martin, Darian LaTocha, Mique’l Akskren, Norm Lagasse, Chris Hanson, Tana Finnesand

2010 Governor’s Awards

Awarded recipients included Sonya Kelliher Combs, Anchorage, Individual Artist Award; Barry McWayne (posthumous), Fairbanks, Individual Artist Award; Tom Manning, Juneau, Arts Education Award; Nome Arts Council, Arts Organization Award; Gordon Pullar, Anchorage, Humanities Award; Paul Rosenthal, Juneau, Lifetime Achievement Artist Award; Bill Schneider, Fairbanks, Humanities Award; Ron Spatz, Anchorage, Humanities Award; Martha Lalla Williams, Anchorage, Native Artist Award.

Museums Alaska 2010 Notable Awards

Jean Turner, Director of Eagle Historical Society & Museums was awarded the 2010 President’s Award for distinguished service to the museum profession. Jean has served as director since April 1998. She took over the position and continued to carry on the legacy started in Eagle from Elva Scott who worked many years to develop and maintain the Eagle Historical Society and Museums.

Through Jean’s service in Eagle there have been many natural disasters including two earthquakes, two major fires, and two flood disasters, one of which included horrible ice damage that knocked one of the museums off its foundation and put many exhibits in peril. Jean rallied volunteers and rescued the items from destruction.

All the while her personal home had been destroyed. Submitted by Donna Westphal

Frances Mallory, the 2010 Museums Alaska Volunteer of the Year is now at the tender age of 80 just hitting her prime in Cordova. The mother of a couple of fishermen she moved from California (Ft. Bragg area) to Cordova so she could worry from a closer distance about her boys. Frances knew that keeping busy was a good way to keep from worrying so she has been working at a local cannery and volunteering at the museum since she moved to our area.

She has provided research for many of the historical society programs ranging from shipwrecks in Prince William Sound to baseball, lighthouses and naval radio stations. After a query from a local citizen she researched and compiled a list of all Cordova’s mayors, city managers (a long list) and U.S. marshals. Fielding questions from long lost relatives, Frances has informed people of birth and death announcements, located gravesites and connected family members. Her work has often been rewarded with flowers, fruit baskets and monetary donations to the museum.

Her most recent work and probably her biggest passion has been to compile a detailed history of all the canneries in the Copper River Delta and Prince William Sound region. Her work has been invaluable to the Cordova Historical Museum as they prepare to move into a larger facility and design new exhibits. An added bonus has been Frances’ ability to cultivate other elder volunteers! Submitted by Cathy Sherman. Image courtesy of Cordova Museum
Be ready to fill out a lot of forms that make you think, and then wait to see if you are one of the lucky thirty or so individuals selected.

The Getty Museum Leadership Institute (MLI) is an in-depth residential leadership program designed both to enhance the leadership of experienced museum executives and strengthen their institutions’ capabilities. It is for directors and senior executives who influence policy, effect change and have a minimum of five years of challenging work experience in museums.

My class had more than 30 people, from various US states, Australia, Hong Kong, Portugal, UK, and the Netherlands. Four other Alaska museum professionals have attended the course in previous years.

What is the program like? The program is a completely immersive residential experience. MLI describes the course as: academically rigorous, addressing such pressing issues as crafting strategy, building public understanding, achieving and sustaining financial stability, leading change, and enhancing personal and organizational effectiveness. MLI does not provide quick fixes or one-size-fits-all answers. MLI’s effectiveness comes from the commitment you and fellow participants devote to learning collaboratively from morning to evening throughout the program.

Translation: They work you and the other fantastic people 6-7 days a week. Typical schedule: Arrive at the Getty Museum via bus from the apartments; lectures in the morning; break for lunch; lectures in the afternoon; and break for dinner. Then team and individual assignments in the evening. Sundays—catch up on reading and assignments for the previous and next week. Repeat this schedule 6 days a week for 3 weeks. Sleep is in there somewhere.

Did I learn anything? For me it was a real privilege to spend the weeks in an amazing safe environment full of creative, probing, insightful and generous faculty, staff and participants. They all helped to lead me to new levels of understanding, humor and self-awareness. The food was pretty darn good too!
A $49,300 grant to Koniag, Inc. from the Institute for Museum and Library Services will support the Alutiiq Museum’s Karluk One Carlia’arluku project. This year long effort will enhance the care of the museum’s largest archaeological collection. Excavated over more than a decade, from a remarkably preserved Alutiiq village site at the mouth of the Karluk River, the collection contains more than 20,000 pieces, many of them made of organic materials.

Museum Registrar and project director Marnie Leist explains, “Archaeologists do not usually find wood, bark, or grass objects in Kodiak sites, but at Karluk One, very wet conditions preserved an amazing array of objects. The collection from the site provides one of the more complete views of Alutiiq life at about 500 years ago. However, the collection has never been completely documented or organized.”

Of the Karluk One collection, the museum will examine every object, create a computerized catalog of its contents and work with Ellen Carrlee, the conservator from the Alaska State Museum, to care for fragile objects. The funding will enable the museum to preserve this rare and important assemblage and to share its contents more broadly through future exhibits and publications. A monthly email broadcast and Facebook postings will show artifacts and information from the collection.

A monthly email broadcast and Facebook postings will show artifacts and information from the collection.

Weavers to Teach in Kodiak Villages

With a $19,200 grant from the Native Arts and Culture Foundation, the Alutiiq Museum will connect Kodiak youth with experienced Alutiiq artists to teach grass basket weaving. Five artists who traveled to St. Petersburg to study ancestral baskets in Russian collections will share their knowledge during spring trips to Kodiak village schools. The artists, Melissa Berns, Coral Chernof, Vickie Era, June Simeonoff, and Elizabeth Peterson will work with middle and high school students as part of the museum’s annual Traveling Traditions program, a partnership for heritage education with the Kodiak Island Borough School District.

Alutiiq Museum’s Executive Director Sven Haakanson, Jr. and Education Coordinator Sara Squartsoff will participate in the project, helping the artists teach the basic elements of grass weaving— from collecting grass to starting a basket, building the sides, and finishing the edge. Notebooks illustrating Alutiiq weavings will provide inspiration for the students’ work.

To encourage broad understanding of Alutiiq heritage and foster intergenerational ties for cultural exploration, the museum will invite community members and teachers to participate and, where possible, coordinate workshops to coincide with spring Alutiiq Week celebrations. The program will be made available to the global community through a summary article on the museum’s website and postings to its Facebook page.

Kodiak Maritime Museum

Fishing Vessel Restoration Begins

Kodiak Maritime Museum is beginning restoration of the 36-foot salmon seiner, *Thelma C*. This commercial fishing vessel is historically significant. It is one of a dwindling number of wooden salmon boats built by Alaskan fishermen with federal disaster relief loans after the 1964 earthquake and tsunami, which destroyed much of Alaska’s Gulf coast fishing fleet.

The restored vessel will be displayed as an outdoor interpretive exhibit on land near Kodiak’s Small Boat Harbor. The display will give visitors and non-fishing residents a hands-on appreciation of how men and women live and work on a commercial fishing boat, as well as the importance of salmon fishing to the cultural and economic history of Kodiak and coastal Alaska.

Interpretive details will show illustrations of basic fishing boat design and construction, audio recordings of fishermen describing life aboard a fishing vessel, and images of the 1964 earthquake and tsunami as it affected Alaska’s coastal fishermen. Other components of the exhibit will define nautical terminology, describe knot tying, and discuss the role of changing technology and management practices on Alaskan salmon fisheries. Supported through an Alaska State Museums Grant-In-Aid and a Kodiak Island Borough Community Development Grant, it will take more than two years to complete.

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Ketchikan: Tongass Historical Museum

Hall Anderson Photo Exhibit

The images of Ketchikan, by Alaskan photographer Hall Anderson will be featured this winter in the Tongass Historical Museum exhibit *Still Rainin’ Still Dreamin’: Hall Anderson’s Ketchikan*. Best known as the staff photographer for the *Ketchikan Daily News*, Anderson has been capturing scenes of Ketchikan and Southeast Alaskan daily life since 1977. From timber to tourism, the museum exhibit will highlight more than 25 years of prize-winning black and white photography featured in Anderson’s 2010 book of the same title. The exhibit opens December 3, 2010 and continues through February 5, 2011.

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Photographs by Hall Anderson will be shown in the Tongass Museum exhibit. Left, top to bottom:

*Ketchikan’s Centennial Cake*, at Ketchikan landfill, January 29, 2001 by Hall Anderson

*Sailmaker Louis Bartos*, March 26, 1988 by Hall Anderson
Indoor Butterfly Pavilion Opens

The Butterfly Pavilion opened at the University of Alaska Museum of the North in September, offering visitors a closer look at the lifespan of butterflies from around North America. Species ranging from the colorful Compton Tortoiseshells and quilted American Ladies to the more refining black-and-white-striped Zebra Longwings have made a home in the space designed by museum staff and constructed by Alaska Tent and Tarp.

More than 2500 people have watched butterflies emerge from their cocoons and feed on Gatorade-soaked sponges. The museum hosted a Butterfly Family Day in November 2010 to further explore the role of this insect in art and even climate prediction. Children learned how to pin a specimen so they could start their own collection.

The butterflies will keep arriving in their plastic takeout drink cups until the end of the year. For more information, call the University of Alaska Museum of the North at 907.474-7505.
McWayne Exhibit

The University of Alaska Museum of the North presents an exhibit of photographs by the Museum’s former art curator Barry McWayne. The display remains on exhibit through 2011, in the Art As Process section of the Museum’s Rose Berry Art Gallery.

“Barry unabashedly sought to depict the beauty of Alaska in his work. He looked for the grand view and the simple, elegant detail,” said Charles Mason, University of Alaska Fairbanks journalism professor and a consultant to the museum.

Barry McWayne spent 37 years at the museum, first making photographs for the institution’s research collections, exhibitions and publications, then originating and curating the permanent collection of fine art photography, and, for the final 15 years of his tenure, curating the entire fine art collection.

McWayne was honored posthumously with a 2010 Governor’s Arts Award for individual artistic achievement. His work is found in many of the state’s museums.

Bockstoce Story continued from page 14--

He started with the General San Martin’s voyage in 1819, who observed the pre-existing intercontinental Native trade network. Bockstoce described how fifty Native nations, Russians and eventually American and British traders came together at the Bering Strait. Along the three river systems, established trading post and forts hosted trading fairs where furs and walrus “teeth” were exchanged for manufactured goods, tobacco, tea, alcohol and hundreds of other things. Drawings and photos showed examples of Native technology, which included Eskimos from various places with bead ornaments, traps, pelt care, snares, and glimpses into Native homes showing the presence of iron pots. Trade invasions and resultant wars were described and depicted.

As a result of attending this presentation, I bought Bockstoce’s book, Furs and Frontiers in the Far North: The Contest Among Native and Foreign Nations for the Bering Strait Fur Trade (496 pages, published by Yale University Press. The thorough treatment of his subject, his pursuit of the most accurate picture of the places and time periods and the extensive credit to those who helped him in the development of the book have shown me how to tell a historical story.

Alutiiq Traditions

Have you ever wondered how to make an ulu? Did you know that Kodiak’s Alutiiq people once herded reindeer? Would you like to learn the rules to some Alutiiq games? The information is all in the Alutiiq Traditions booklet, a set of the Alutiiq Museum’s most popular educational handouts and exhibit brochures.

This second edition of the museum's lesson series is revised, reformatted, and updated. There are new and expanded lessons that reflect recent archaeological finds, current cultural research, and changes in the spelling of the Alutiiq language.

Written for a general audience and designed for use in Kodiak's schools, this publication was produced with support from the Kodiak Island Borough School District and the Alutiiq Heritage Foundation. It is a 48-page paperback featuring lessons on everything from petroglyphs and sod houses to the Alutiiq language, hunting practices, clothing and spiritual life.

Purchase a copy for $10 through the Alutiiq Museum’s online store or contact museum store manager Sarah Kennedy to place your order.

Quyanaa to Qik’tarmiut Alutiiq Regional Advisory Committee and the Native Education Curriculum Committee who reviewed the publication and provided helpful comments.
Happy Trails, Energetic Advocates

Rosemary Carlton, Curator, served more than 24 years at the Sheldon Jackson Museum. She is proud of her work with the Native Artist Demonstrators program, which began in 1988. During the summer invited Alaskan Native artists demonstrate their work in the museum and out-of-town artists can examine the museum collection. This fulfills a goal of Sheldon Jackson when the museum was established, “that the coming generations of Natives could see how their fathers lived.” After retirement Rosemary took a road trip north to see the newly expanded Anchorage Museum, Denali, the Museum of the North and to attend the Museums Alaska/Alaska Historical Society conference in Fairbanks.

Jean Turner, Director of the Eagle Historical Society and Museum, retired in Spring 2010. Read about her in Museums Alaska Notable Awards.

Marilyn Knapp, Chief Curator, retired from the Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center. Since 2003 Knapp was responsible for building and interpreting the Museum’s history collection and developing exhibitions and related projects. Knapp was previously a professor at University of Alaska Southeast. Known as the author of Carved History: A Totem Guide to Sitka National Historical Park, she also curated projects at the Sheldon Jackson Museum, the Bishop’s House, the Sitka Historical Society/Isabel Miller Museum, and the Sitka National Historical Park.

Design Meaning continued from page 1 --

The proposed building will be constructed on the existing site of the Alaska State Museum, as well as on an adjoining lot purchased by the museum in 2002. The plans include 120,000 square feet of new construction. Hacker’s design gives the entrance to the building roughly the same orientation as the current museum, facing Whittier Street, with the public areas of the facility located up front and storage areas at the back.

The fan-shaped part of the building, with its curved roof, also suggests the shape of a bird’s wing, is a design that recognizes the cultural importance of Alaska’s birds, especially the raven and eagle, and symbolically links the protective aspects of a bird’s wings to the building’s role in guarding the state’s treasures. It also has practical applications, in that the curved form suggests ways for the walls to work with, rather than against, Juneau’s abundant wind and water. Allowing natural light to penetrate public areas building is also a high priority.

Because the inanimate objects within the building’s walls must also be protected from light and other environmental damage, high windows (known as clerestory) are one of the ways to satisfy the human light requirements. High windows also accentuate the vertical character of Juneau’s landscape and keep the people within the building connected to the mountains.

You can follow the progress of the project by signing on to www.alaskalamp.blogspot.com The sight will be updated with the latest drawings and dialogs on the building.

Member Reflections

Marilyn Knapp

“Serving on the founding committee of Museums Alaska, it is extremely rewarding to see how both the Museums Alaska and Alaska Historical Society have grown, not only in membership numbers but in professionalism and organizational strength. Museums, cultural organizations and historical societies in Alaska are fortunate to have these two organizations to look to for leadership and support.

Autumn in Fairbanks offered many enticements this year. The beautiful fall scenery, meeting and greeting museum and history colleagues, and enticing sessions to stimulate the mind made the conference exceptional. Putting annual conferences together are a major undertaking for the boards of directors of the Alaska Historical Society and Museums Alaska, and especially for the host community. Many thanks to the Fairbanks host community and best of luck to the Valdez committee as they plan for 2011.”
Register now for
PROJECT ACCESS

National Database of Accessible Museums & Cultural Centers

Let the public know about the accessible features of your institution and the programs you have available for people with disabilities: register your institution on www.projectaccessforall.org

Created and coordinated by Art Beyond Sight/Art Education for the Blind (AEB), Project Access is the first national database of accessible United States cultural organizations, including art and history museums, science and technology centers, historical homes, zoos and aquariums, botanical gardens, and performing arts centers.

Partners include:
American Association of Museums
American Association of State and Local History
Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
A one-stop resource for people with disabilities and their families / friends to find out about your programs and facilities – where to park, accessible entries, etc.

Tells a positive message to the public and funders that your organization is committed to equal access for all. (This is NOT an accessibility audit.)

• FREE - No charge to register.
• Complete the data entry form (ten to fifteen minutes).
• Only those items checked or filled in appear on your listing.
• Registering organizations control their content and can update their listings as often as they wish.

As soon as several hundred cultural organizations have registered, the site’s search engine will be activated, and AEB will promote the site with the general public and organizations of people with disabilities and those serving people with disabilities.

If you have questions about registering on this site, email to:
info@projectaccessforall.org

Greetings & Welcome

Marie Acemah, Education Coordinator, joins the Baranov Museum, Kodiak Island. Marie is an Alaskan educationalist with experience teaching and consulting in the US and in east and West Africa. She taught at secondary boarding schools in Uganda and in Ohio, instructed youth at a vocational school for orphans in Uganda, and has developed primary and secondary level curricula in partnership with Ministries of Education in Tanzania and post-conflict Liberia. Her experience includes working as an international education consultant in Washington D.C., New York, Liberia, and Uganda for organizations including Relief International and the International Rescue Committee. Marie earned a B.A. from St. John’s College and an M.A. in International Educational Development from Columbia University, Teachers College. For sheer love of the island Acemah recently moved to Kodiak with her one year-old son and looks forward to becoming a part of the Baranov Museum community.

Kathryn Hurtley was appointed Executive Director of the Huna Heritage Foundation by the Huna Heritage Board of Directors. Hurtley has lived in Alaska since 2005 where she worked most recently as the Executive Director of the Valdez Museum. Her work in the nonprofit realm began in the elementary teaching field. She taught fourth grade education in Montana, her home state, and in Torreon, Mexico. Hurtley said, “My work in managing non-profits includes museums, libraries, the performing arts and public radio.” Her recent list of accomplishments include successful capital campaigns and fundraising events, grant writing, and education program development. Her consensus building with a wide variety of user groups aims toward a goal of developing programs and building facilities that reflect a community’s desire to enhance the overall quality of life through cultural programming and preservation.

Patricia Relay, Executive Director at the Valdez Museum & Historical Archive, has a lifelong love of museums and cultural organization. With a Bachelor of Arts in Art History (2001) from Western Washington University, and a Master of Arts in Arts Administration (2008) from Goucher College, Relay has ten years of experience working in Museums. She served as the Development Director at the Whatcom Museum, the Executive Director of the Washington Art Consortium, a collective of seven museums and galleries in Washington state. Relay served as manager of collections and special projects at the Lynden Pioneer Museum. She and her family moved to Valdez, Alaska from Bellingham, Washington, where she was also a business owner, educator, volunteer, wife and mother. Relay said, “Museums serve as vital community resources that provide gathering places where thoughtful exhibits and educational opportunities coexist, bringing communities together to learn, to play, and to delight in. We have some great temporary exhibits and programs planned for the coming year. I encourage all to stop by the Museum and step back in time to learn more about our community’s rich history.”

Images courtesy of the appointees.
People We Remember

Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections, Alaska State Museum and Allison McLain, Executive Director, Museums Alaska read memorials for culture bearers who are remembered for their dedicated contributions to our museums and Alaska.

Museum advocates who were previously published in earlier Network issues: Jean Carlo (Spring 2010) and Barry McWayne and Dr. Marianna (Missy) Woodward (both listed in Summer 2010) can be read at Museums Alaska Network online.

Herbert Anungazuk, Native Liaison, Native Heritage Specialist and cultural anthropologist served with the National Park Service, Alaska Region since 1985. He was born and raised in Wales, at the west end of the Seward Peninsula, where he was trained as a hunter by his elders. He graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe High School and attended Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas. He served in the Army with a two-year deployment in Vietnam. In 1983, he married Lena Riley and became a father.

His knowledge of Iñupiaq language, the history of Bering Straits communities, and his training as an Iñupiaq hunter and whaler facilitated his work. He volunteered at the Alaska Native Heritage Center from its start. As a whaling captain he authored a book on whaling. He was a major contributor to the Wales Inupiaq dictionary, and during his fieldwork on the Seward Peninsula, he filled many notebooks on language, lineages, history and culture of Iñupiaq people. He received the Professional Achievement Award (2010) from the Alaska Anthropological Association.

Karen Rifredi, Athabascan culture bearer, was born to Phillip Huhndorf and Agnes Manook Ostlund in Nulato on May 23, 1952. A shareholder of Gana-a Yoo and Doyon Ltd., she taught and demonstrated porcupine quill work, skin sewing, and beading for Holland America Cruise lines, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Healing Racism, Anchorage School District, University of Alaska at Anchorage and Fairbanks. In addition to teaching her daughter and family, she shared her knowledge so it would continue on. She became a mentor and her love for Native games and youth lead her to judge for Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Job Corps Native Youth Olympics Annual Games, Kenai Peninsula Winter Games, World Eskimo-Indian Olympics and Arctic Winter Games.

Della Waghiyi, Siberian Yup’ik Elder, teacher and artist was from the Kingeeuk family of Savoonga, St. Lawrence Island. She worked and taught Native culture and arts for the Anchorage School District and the Bering Strait School District. She volunteered as a cultural advisor and demonstrating artist at the Alaska Native Heritage Center from its inception (1999) until her death.

Because of her renown skin sewing and doll making her work was collected by Alaska’s museums and cultural centers. She published several books and co-authored a grammatical analysis of St. Laurence Island Yup’ik texts. In 2007 she was ordained as the first Native Alaskan elder at the United Methodist Conference. She was engaged in charitable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and fundraising for Siberian Natives in the Russian Far East. She was honored as an outstanding member of the ethnic community in 2007 by Anchorage’s Bridge Builders.

Stefanie Ludwig, archaeologist, was one of Alaska’s strongest advocates for historic preservation. She worked throughout Alaska during her 25-year career. At the Alaska Office of History and Archaeology she managed archaeological compliance requirements under Section 106 for the past ten years. Stefanie was a quiet, gentle person with a wry sense of humor and passions for gardening, hiking, dogs, and photography. She married Owen Mason in 1989. In 2000 they traveled extensively in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, and Europe, spending much time in Germany, Stefanie’s parents’ homeland. Vowing not to delay until retirement she and Owen made the most of their travels— sampling local food specialties, wine, and beer wherever they visited. The Alaska Anthropological Association plans to establish a memorial fund in her honor.
ART ACQUISITION INITIATIVE

By Michael Hawfield, Administrator Art Acquisition Fund

The Art Acquisition Fund is a very robust program that has served Alaska’s museum and artistic communities exceedingly well. There is no other program like it in the nation. The initiative was launched by the Rasmuson Foundation in 2003 in response to its concern that Alaska’s living artists be supported in their work and encouraged to remain in the state. Consequently, the Foundation turned to the museums of Alaska to carry out the program by developing their contemporary art collections through the purchase of recent Alaska art by resident Alaska artists. The Foundation has also established on its website a virtual gallery of all the artists and artwork purchased, which itself has become an important catalogue of contemporary Alaska art.

The Art Acquisition Fund in 2009, which marked the sixth year of the program, was a success. Due to the economic downturn of 2008, there were somewhat less funds to distribute in 2009 ($155,000) than the average in previous years ($210,000), but the Foundation was strongly committed to the Art Acquisition Fund and wanted to see it move forward, even in difficult financial times.

Twenty museums and culture centers participated in the program in 2009. As a result, 98 works of art were purchased, representing 71 Alaska artists.

Since the program began in 2003, the Art Acquisition Fund has supported the purchase of 545 works of contemporary Alaska art by 234 resident Alaska artists with distribution to Alaska museums and culture centers of $1,291,045. These are funds that not only make possible the enrichment of the state’s museum collections, but the funds go directly to Alaska artists encouraging them to continue their work in Alaska.

The 2010 Art Acquisition Fund Cycle

The Art Acquisition Fund for 2010 has been late getting started this year, but the board of directors of the Rasmuson Foundation has approved funding for the initiative for the next three years. As soon as a number of administrative details and the service agreement is worked out with Museums Alaska, the program for 2010 will begin. All the museums and culture centers are encouraged to participate. Those institutions that already indicated they planned to participate this year will receive an invitation to apply once the program is fully in place.

The procedures, guidelines, and application forms will be the same as in years past. The 2010 Guidelines and the 2010 Application form may be found at the Museums Alaska website or the Rasmuson Foundation website. Any questions or concerns about the program should be directed to Michael Hawfield, Project Administrator, hawfield@horizonsatellite.com, Tel: 907.299-0290.
AN INVITATION FOR ALASKA MUSEUMS TO HOST

Ray Mala Film Festival

Interested museums are invited to participate in a statewide film festival showcasing the work of actor / cinematographer Ray Wise Mala in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement and the release of a biography on the handsome Eskimo leader.

Born of an Inupiat mother and a Russian Jewish trader in Candle in 1906, Mala became the first and remains the only Native American to reach full-fledged star status in Hollywood and internationally. The ANCSA@40 committee, which is planning year long events to honor the land settlement anniversary, has scheduled the film festival for April and May 2011.

Producers are working with ANCSA@40; the Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association; the Alaska History Society; the state Department of Natural Resources, History and Archeology; the Anchorage International Film Festival organization; and book publisher Epicenter Press.

Universal Studios will allow nonprofit agencies to screen Mala’s Barrow based classic Igloo without charge. Eric Stedman of the Series Squadron.com has volunteered his well-edited version of Mala’s 14-part serial Robinson Crusoe of Clipper Island for the event. UCLA Film and Television Archives have volunteered use of the 1925 footage Mala shot for Pathe News of the diphtheria serum run to Nome.

Arrangements are in process to secure additional films at little or no cost to sponsoring nonprofits. Shipping costs, theater rental, and other incidentals would be left to sponsors.

Museums interested in showing Mala’s films, and/or putting together a companion exhibit of still photos and movie posters should contact Lael Morgan, author of Eskimo Star From Tundra to Tinseltown: The Ray Wise Mala Story.

Lael Morgan
Email: Morgan03@uta.edu (the 0 is a zero)
420 Ferry Road
Saco, Maine 04072
Tel: 207-282-8024

Museums of the Month

1. Spring: Museum Information and Resources
   • Reference and resource information you can use for your work. Articles written by MA members and from museum professionals elsewhere. Topics could encompass everything from grant writing to collections management. MA members can provide book reviews and a bibliography of additional readings and resources.
   • Museums I Know and Love: Members recommend their favorite museums, historical societies, or exhibits that they have visited.

   Museums Alaska Newsletter

NETWORK Submissions

Every issue of the Network newsletter will be electronically published and posted on the Museums Alaska website. You are able to download the file and print pages to use in your institution. This is convenient to have designed pages to add into grant and donor packets or transmit to other locations, outside of Alaska or your community.

In every issue we will use membership contributors and reviewers, statewide museum news, grants listings, resources and job listing. We want the publication to credit and/or assist your staff and volunteers to use the publication for their individual professional development. In addition, we are proposing the following new features for each seasonal issue:

1. Spring: Museum Information and Resources
   • Reference and resource information you can use for your work. Articles written by MA members and from museum professionals elsewhere. Topics could encompass everything from grant writing to collections management. MA members can provide book reviews and a bibliography of additional readings and resources.
   • Museums I Know and Love: Members recommend their favorite museums, historical societies, or exhibits that they have visited.

2. Summer: Pre-Conference Information
   • Information about the upcoming annual conference, speakers, workshops, sessions, scholarships, costs, and registration.
   • Related articles of themes and issues to the conference
   • Case studies of projects, funding, and outcome to communities and state.
   • Museum/s-of-the-Month: learn about an Alaska museum and local community.
   • Visitor season information.

   • Post-conference articles from scholarship recipients and reports from workshop participants;
   • Annual report of highlights of Museums Alaska finance and programs, membership and goals for the coming year.
   • Museum-of-the-Month: Learn about an Alaska museum and project or program initiatives.
   • Unique museum-produced gift items for the holiday season.

Email if you would like to contribute an article, provide updates or help with the Network newsletter. It is an educational and fun way to stay in touch with your colleagues!
Chat / Elearning

Meet Monthly Online with Alaska’s museums
Join in and ask questions about museum operations, collections care, professional development, grant writing etc. or just read along. Find out more at Museum Services Web Chats.
This FREE web-based interactive service called Elluminate allows for online collaborations like chatting and other interactive techniques.
If you don’t have tech support available, contact Scott Carrlee
TEL 907-465-4806.

GRANT DEADLINES

Conservation Assessment Program
Applications due January 20, 2011

The CAP 2011 Application was released on Thursday, November 18, 2010. PDF and Microsoft Word forms for applying to CAP are now available at www.heritagepreservation.org
An online form version of the application is also available at http://cap.heritagepreservation.org
Heritage Preservation began a new Cooperative Agreement with the Institute of Museum and Library Services to administer the Conservation Assessment Program in early November 2010. This agreement covers program years 2011, 2012 and 2013. Due to the delay in releasing the application, the deadline for Heritage Preservation to accept applications will be Friday, January 21, 2011.

National Endowment for the Humanities invites applications for Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants

This program provides support for the planning or initial stages of innovative digital initiatives in any area of the humanities. Activities eligible for Level I support include brainstorming sessions, workshops, early alpha-level prototypes, and initial planning.
Digital Humanities Start-Up Grants may involve planning and developing prototypes of new digital tools for preserving, analyzing, and making accessible digital resources, including libraries’ and museums’ digital assets.
More fully-formed projects that are ready to begin implementation or demonstrate proofs of concept are eligible for Level II support.

Receipt deadline is February 23, 2011 for projects beginning September 2011
For more information, use this NEH link.

April 27-30, 2011
Anchorage, Alaska
SAVE THE DATES

Alaska Native Libraries, Archives and Museums Summit
Northern Light: Keeping Our Stories Alive

Envisioned by a focus group of Alaska Native librarians, archivists, and cultural center staff.
• The Summit will offer training at the paraprofessional and professional level as well as serving as a launching point for a strategic plan to make training in our fields more accessible for cultural heritage agencies throughout Alaska.
• The Alaska summit will be patterned on previous national summits held in Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.
• It is geared to participants who are Alaska Native or whose agencies serve a significant Alaska Native population.
• Scholarships that cover lodgings, travel, and registration will be available.

We invite your participation.
A call for programs will be issued.
The project will launch a website that provides information about state, regional, and national training and professional development opportunities.

Project Leaders:
David Ongley, Tuzzy Consortium Library, Barrow; Sue Sherif, Alaska State Library, Anchorage; Linda Wynne, Alaska State Archives, Juneau

Major funding from Alaska State Library, Alaska Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums, Institute of Museum and Library Services

For more information
Sue Sherif
Email: sue.sherif@alaska.gov
Tel. 907-269-6569 or 800-776-6566 (in Alaska)

Alaska Museums Listserv
Send message to: list.manager@list.state.ak.us
There is a period between “list” and “manager.”
• Leave the subject line empty.
• In the body of the message type: subscribe eed-akmuseums.
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Save the Date - September 21 - 24, 2011
Valdez, AK

Museums Alaska Annual Conference

The Host Committee looks forward to your visit to Valdez for the 2011 Museums Alaska/Alaska Historical Society conference.

Featured is the Valdez Museum, known for historical exhibits that reflect the history of Valdez, the Copper River Valley, and Prince William Sound from the earliest days, when Native Alaskans first occupied the area, to the present day. Exhibits are located in two buildings that are four blocks apart. We recommend that visitors come to the Valdez Museum first for an overview of our history and then visit our Remembering Old Valdez exhibit to gain a broader understanding of the time period surrounding the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake.

While you are here, enjoy Valdez's natural beauty by hiring a fishing charter, viewing the towering waterfalls of Keystone Canyon or taking a flight seeing trip over some of the most impressive mountains and glaciers anywhere. Summer visitors can enjoy the town's many hiking trails, while winter activities include skiing, snow machining and ice climbing. Day-trip excursions may include a scenic trip to nearby Worthington Glacier, Glennallen, and historic Copper Center.

Next issue features: Whitney Museum, Valdez

Above and below: The Valdez Museum includes a restored 1907 Ahrens steam fire engine and the Remembering Old Valdez exhibit interprets Valdez history in the years 1945-1963, prior to the Good Friday Earthquake, which resulted in the town’s relocation. Images courtesy of the Valdez Museum.

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Member Angela Linn Reflects

“I became a member of Museums Alaska in the late-1990s when I was a graduate student at UAF and working at the University of Alaska Museum. I wanted to find a way to connect with and learn about other museums around Alaska. The newsletter gave me an entry to others who felt passionately about the museum profession and Alaska. In 2001 I attended my first Museums Alaska conference in Valdez where I was impressed by the sense of community. The next year I got involved with the host committee when Fairbanks hosted the meetings. Little did I know that eight years later I’d be helping to lead the way back to Fairbanks!

Museums Alaska helps museum professionals, from institutions of all sizes and missions, stay informed. I continue to learn from my colleagues while sharing my own experiences. My mentors (so many during the sixteen years!) instilled in me a drive to give back so others can benefit. Through the website, newsletter, and annual conferences, we have the resources to move Alaskan museums to the next level of professionalism. This excites me to stay involved.”

Angela with son Grey. Image by Josh Reuther

ALL MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31.

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