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Photograph Credits: Clark Yerrington (above top), Ellen Carrlee (above).
Museums Alaska Thank You

I think we all agree that the Valdez conference was a great one. Thank you to the contributors who made it possible AND to the many people who made it happen:

Host Committee
Patricia Relay, Director, Valdez Museum & Historical Archive
Andrew Goldstein, Curator, Valdez Museum & Historical Archive
Wendy Goldstein, Collections Coordinator, Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum

Conference Contributors
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Exhibit AK
McLain Heritage Consulting
Allen Expedition
Hope Chamber of Commerce
Pacific Studio, Inc.
Oxford University Press
Safeway
Western Center for the Conservation of Fine Arts
Thank You Conference Volunteers

FROM THE MAXINE & JESSE WHITNEY MUSEUM AND PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
  Dawson Moore - aka Governor Egan
  The Caribou Chili Boys
  Scott Fronzuto, PWSCC IT Services— Scott did all the set-up and tear down of the computers
  Pam Lunt and her staff at the Valdez Civic Center
  PWSCC Saff and Students, who donated food and time for the fish fry luncheon
  Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum Staff Chloe Milton & Kerra Apolo

FROM THE VALDEZ MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL ARCHIVE
  Patricia Relay
  Emmie Swanson
  Faith Revell
  Andrew Goldstein
  Theresa Randall
  Brooke Alexander
  Joe Stanford
  Jenessa Ables
  Doreen Hodges
  Trish Stowe
  Tom McAlister
  Gloria McAlister
  Carol Harris
  Gary Minish

Museums Alaska Program Planning Committee
  Holly Cusack-McVeigh
  Allison McLain
  Patricia Relay
  Wendy Goldstein
  Andrew Goldstein
Congratulations to the 2011 Donna Matthews Professional Development Fund Recipients

Marie Acemah, Curator of Education
Baranov Museum, Kodiak Historical Society

Amy Carney
Library Museum Aide-
Seward Community Library Museum

Molly Conley
Museum Studies Graduate
Student
University of Florida

Toby Sullivan
Executive Director
Kodiak Maritime Museum
Rachelle Brown’s Nuts and Bolts of Copyright for Museums and Archives
Marie Acemah, Curator of Education, Baranov Museum, Kodiak Historical Society

Rachelle Brown provides legal advice regarding copyright issues to the Smithsonian as their Associate General Counsel, and shared her knowledge of copyrighting issues with Museums Alaska members at their 2011 annual conference. Her talk, titled *Nuts and Bolts of Copyright for Museums and Archives*, provided both the historical context of copyright law and an overview of how museum and archives professionals can be mindful of copyright issues inherent in their work.

While most Alaska museums and archives do not have the capacity for a dedicated staff person to emphasize copyright compliance, several key points stood out from Brown’s talk of relevance to all museum professionals. First, almost every creation (e.g. photograph, script, song, artwork, letter, etc.) is copyrighted even if not officially registered, and even if missing the © sign. In other words, my two year old son could scribble a drawing on a sheet of paper, and that drawing is automatically copyrighted. While the thought of virtually everything being copyrighted sent shivers down the spine of many in the audience, the applicable takeaway was to *always credit your source*. As Curator of Education, if I create a promotional flyer for an educational event, I should provide a credit for the images I use. If a Conservator compiles an instructional handout for volunteers, all websites used for the creation of the handout should be cited.

On the flipside, a second key point emphasized in Brown’s talk was for museum professionals to consider when to officially register an item for copyright. Museum employees are constantly generating copyrightable material, ranging from blog-posts and interpretive labels to logos and instructional manuals. While these materials are automatically copyrighted as museum material upon creation, for $10 - $20 dollars, a museum can officially register these items for copyright. An official copyright is advantageous if any litigation issues do arise, which hopefully would be infrequently. This official copyright also helps people to appropriately cite your work.

Lastly, Brown’s talk emphasized just how complicated and intricate copyright best practices can be. Each circumstance has its own unique challenges, whether you are a museum professional wondering how to properly cite a painting of unknown origin, or a museum trying to determine whether it is appropriate to publish a former employee’s writing in a journal. When in doubt, consult Rita Pantalony’s *WIPO Guide on Managing Intellectual Property for Museums* at http://www.wipo.int/copyright/en/museums_ip/guide.html.

At the conference, copyright was discussed further in the session Perspectives on Emerging Copyright Law and Policy, organized by Holly Cusack-McVeigh. Rachelle Brown (at center with microphone) discussing with session presenters (left to right) Arlene Schmuland (Archives & Special Collections, UAA Consortium Library), Jacqueline Hernandez (Sitka Historical Society and Museum), Holly Cusack-McVeigh (Pratt Museum), and Bob Forshaw (Alaska Digital Project). Photograph by Allison McLain.
Reflection: The Conference Workshops
Amy Carney, Seward Community Library and Museum

Pre-conference Workshop – Collections Management: Mount Making
Workshops are perfect for newbies in the museum field. That’s why I jumped at the opportunity to learn about making mounts for museum storage. Our Seward Museum is headed into a new era of a library/museum combo. With the new building being built, as we speak, greater storage space is becoming a radiant hope for us. But with that new facilitation for storage comes the responsibility to file things away accordingly.

In this workshop “Collections Management: Mount Making”, Darian LaTocha and Carolyn Kozak offered me and nine others a chance to learn about proper object storage and space saving techniques. After a fantastic PowerPoint presentation that zipped us through a crash course in collections handling and management, everyone had the opportunity to try their hand at making a variety of storage mounts and boxes for real objects.

Armed with glue guns, Exacto-knives, and tri-rod foam, all of us set to work piecing together custom-fit boxes and trays out of blue board. We measured, we cut, we glued. We became acquainted with one another, and learned about other museums in the state. We asked questions, and we learned the answers. Best of all, we had functional trays and boxes that the Anchorage Museum could actually use. After a couple of hours of measuring, cutting, and gluing, everyone seemed excited about applying their new skill within their museum back home. And not only were we sent home with a new skill, but we also took back a large all-inclusive toolkit! Fortunately, flying within Alaska has its perks when carrying home sharp knives and oversized cardboard sheets.

With their new tools before them, workshop participants prepare to make their first trays, boxes and supports under the watchful eyes of Darian LaTocha and Carolyn Kozak. Left to right are: Holly Cusack-McVeigh, Anjuli Grantham, Darian, Carolyn, Amy Carney, Selena Ortega-Chiolero, Jacqueline Fernandez (hiding behind Selena), and Levi Ballard.

Thanks, Darian and Carolyn, for sharing your knowledge and skills to those of us who needed some training in museum basics! This was one of my favorite events of the Museums Alaska / Alaska Historical Society Conference in Valdez.

Photographs by Allison McLain.
Amy Carney’s article continues here...

Workshop: Objects Labeling with Ellen Carrlee
What do you get when you put B-72 beads in acetone? According to Ellen Carrlee, it’s the perfect recipe for labels that attach to museum objects. In her crash course workshop “Objects Labeling”, Ellen shared with us the dos and don’ts of applying a label to any object. Via her PowerPoint presentation, we learned about how a variety of materials react with acetone-based labels. We reviewed the past ways of labeling things, which are now heavily frowned upon. Then we learned about paper labels.

Paper labels are essentially tiny slips of paper, with an object’s accession number on it, sandwiched between two layers of lacquer. But, beware, not all materials react well with this lacquer. Apparently, it loves metal but despises plastic. At the end of this very informative workshop, we had a chance to practice labeling objects. I must admit that it is intimidating, at first, to apply a foreign material to a sacred museum object. However, Ellen was close at hand to reassure us that it was safe and simple.

For more tips from Ellen on conserving museum valuables, visit her fact-packed blog at: http://ellencarrlee.wordpress.com. Thanks, Ellen, for taking the time to share museum basics with us and compile an indispensable toolkit, which includes a wonderful guide to labeling all things Alaskan. This was a great ending to my wonderful experience at the Museums Alaska / Alaska Historical Society Conference in Valdez.

Behind the Scenes preparation for the Objects Labeling Workshop, Norm Lagasse, Scott Carrlee and Chris Hanson put together the workshop toolkits. Photography by Ellen Carrlee.

Have you renewed your MA membership for 2012? You can do so right now at www.museumsalaska.org
Navigating the Challenges of Shipping in Alaska and other conference reflections

Molly Conley, Museum Studies Graduate Student, University of Florida and Intern, Alaska Aviation Museum

As a scholarship recipient for the 2011 Museums Alaska annual conference, I was asked to provide my perspective on both the conference and one session in particular. To me, the location of the conference was particularly special. I lived in Valdez during the summer of 2010, where I interned in the collections department at the Valdez Museum & Historical Archive. Returning to Valdez provided me with the opportunity to reunite with friends and former co-workers and to remember what I loved about Valdez: the small town atmosphere where you run into people you know almost everywhere you go. It was great to see the new Exxon Valdez Oil Spill exhibit at the Valdez Museum, which curator Andrew Goldstein was working on while I was there as an intern. Not only was I impressed with the exhibit (great job, Andrew!), but was excited to see about a dozen “found in collection” artifacts I had personally documented and cataloged were included in the new display.

I recently made a permanent move to this amazing state, and found the conference to be a wonderful introduction to the issues and challenges faced by Alaska museums. Marjorie Schwarzer’s keynote speech was especially powerful, and provided important perspective on where Alaska museums have been and the directions they are headed. I also enjoyed the Saturday morning retrospective, led by Scott Car relie and Marjorie Schwarzer, a frank discussion about what museums are working on and some of the challenges they are facing (and for the most part overcoming). Additionally, I enjoyed meeting museum professionals from across the state, and made some great connections.

My background is primarily in collections management, so I was drawn to sessions that dealt with collections issues. I found all of the sessions I attended were well presented and informative. I gained new understandings about a variety of topics, including copyright law, looking at paintings for condition, shipping objects to and from Alaska, the legal and ethical ramifications of both acquisitioning and de-accessioning undocumented artifacts.

I was asked to summarize and discuss one session in particular – “Navigating the Challenges of Shipping in Alaska,” presented by Ryan Kenny and Carmen Bria. In this session, Ryan and Carmen provided session attendees with practical information on safely shipping artifacts to and from Alaska.

Many important aspects of shipping were discussed. Ryan talked about the pros and cons of shipping by air, sea, and land, providing advice and lists of companies for shipping by each of these methods. Couriering was also discussed in detail, including courier responsibilities and tips for making the process go as smoothly as possible. Carmen discussed how to ship artwork with a variety of reasonably priced pre-made boxes available from several companies. I left this session with knowledge of the many shipping options available and the ability to weigh each of these options to make the right decision for each individual object.

I am grateful to Museums Alaska for awarding me a scholarship to attend this year’s Museums Alaska annual meeting. It was a truly wonderful experience, and I look forward to attending many future conferences.
A Conference Reflection: Keynote Speaker Marjorie Schwarzer
Toby Sullivan, Executive Director, Kodiak Maritime Museum

When Marjorie Schwarzer, the MA Keynote Speaker began talking about what it is that Alaska’s history museums exhibit, what their audiences think about those exhibits, and what Alaskan museums might be exhibiting but are not, I knew we were hearing something interesting.

Ms. Schwarzer, an expert in the history of American museums, is, by her own admission, not an expert in Alaska’s museums. She had noticed on her visit here however, that Alaskan museum history exhibits seem to focus on that window of time between Alaska’s transfer from Russia to the U.S in 1867 and Statehood in 1959. She also noticed that while most Alaskans live in urban places, these exhibits mirror the Alaskan creation myth which still defines Alaska in popular culture--a place of individualism, ingenuity born of hardship, and heroic man-versus-nature narratives of Jack London and Deadliest Catch. However, according to the Alaska museum visitor comments Ms. Schwarzer gathered, some people who are not from Alaska wonder if that narrative still applies, and seem to look to Alaska’s museums to tell a more complete story.

As we who live here know well, the individualist narrative of Deadliest Catch does not really explain life as we live it now, if indeed it ever did. And yet, there is little in Alaska’s museums to help visitors or Alaskans understand how that creation myth narrative relates to our present lives, how the past Alaska intersects with the present Alaska, and how we got from there to here. In Ms. Schwarzer’s opinion this is a huge interpretive vacuum which Alaska’s museums are uniquely positioned to address.

Article continues on next page
A Conference Reflection, continued...

Ms. Schwarzer also wondered why Alaskan museums seem so preoccupied with Alaskan art and seem to ignore art from or about other places. She wondered if this was strictly a function of the Rasmuson Foundation’s vision, or if Alaskans are genuinely disinterested in art from elsewhere. The visitor comments she had collected seemed to indicate visitors to Alaska weren’t quite as interested in Alaskan art as we Alaskans are. However, although Ms. Schwarzer didn’t quite make the connection between the lack of latter day Alaskan history and the ubiquity of contemporary Alaskan art, perhaps we can understand this better if we see that the stories of present day Alaska are currently being told metaphorically by Alaskan artists rather than by museum curators or historians. Perhaps because that art is a local creation, the language of symbols and allusions therein is not so easily understood or appreciated by people not from Alaska.

After the conference, I read Ms. Schwarzer’s book, Riches, Rivals, And Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America. I was taken with her story of how museums in America started in the 19th century as exclusive collections for the rich that have been been steadily democratized. Over the last thirty years especially, American museums have become community spaces where discussions can take place about issues and with communities in our culture which have been neglected or are difficult to have in other rhetorical arenas.

All of this, both Ms. Schwarzer’s address and her book, made me consider the fact that Alaskan museums have only rarely mounted exhibits about current cultural and social events or questions, or about communities and parts of our culture that stand outside the perceived central narrative of Alaska. Unlike museums in the Lower 48, Alaskan museums seem to have not yet to be places for difficult discussions like the effect of oil development on the culture of Alaska, or the effects of the recent privatization of Alaska’s fisheries on Alaska’s coastal communities, or about the cultural and political tension between urban and rural Alaska, or our long history of racial and cultural diversity.

Contemporary Alaska artists are talking about these things, but not Alaskan history museum. Perhaps this is because communities and committees don’t always agree on the narratives of such stories, and those disagreements make it hard to decide how to tell them, or from whose viewpoint. But Alaskan museums are places of common interest and discussion, and part of a vast cultural network reaching deep into our communities. And like museums elsewhere in the United States, museums here have a large public trust quotient compared to other public institutions. All of this presents an opportunity for Alaskan museums to do as Ms. Schwarzer suggests—start talking about the Alaska we have become, not simply the Alaska we once were.
Collin MacCartey
2011 Museums Alaska Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient

In Memoriam
For Years of Volunteer Service at the Pratt Museum

The Pratt Museum community suffered a major loss in the summer of 2011 with the passing of long-time museum volunteer Collin (Cowboy) MacCarty. Cowboy’s generosity and talents spanned many years and touched just about every part of the Museum. He was a mainstay in the Marine Gallery (volunteered each week as a regular gallery docent) and Harrington Homestead Cabin (interpreter). He led the Pratt’s walking tours of the Homer Harbor and many school children over the years enjoyed his stories as he shared his vast knowledge of the area. He made a special and lasting contribution to the Pratt Museum. He will be missed.
If you need to identify a beetle, display a kayak, find a new HVAC contractor, understand the ins and outs of capitalizing collections, locate a publisher for your article, or conserve a photograph there is one person in Alaska who can answer all your questions - in detail - Scott Carrlee. The Curator of Museum Services at the Alaska State Museum, Scott is a force in the Alaska museum world. Energetic and amazingly knowledgeable about all things museum, Scott works daily to connect Alaska’s museums to each other and to the best practices of the profession.

Scott’s work is well known and widely appreciated. His job tasks him with acting as a resource for Alaska’s Museums and museum professionals. His innovative internship program sent young museum professionals across the state to assist with special projects. His partnership with AASLH allowed a cohort of Alaskan Museums to participate in a professional visitor surveys and enhance their services, and his monthly on line chat sessions regularly connect museum professionals and provide access to resources. These are just a few examples of Scott’s effective, on going efforts to build community among Alaska’s repositories.

Scott has been a particularly valuable colleague for the Alutiiq Museum. He has led on site trainings, reviewed policies and practices, advised on grant proposals, helped to improve evaluation, answered innumerable questions, and most importantly convinced us that the our small tribal repository could gain accreditation. Through his presentations at Museum Alaska and his work with staff members, he showed us the path to accreditation and renewed our sense of enthusiasm for the effort. He made us believe that this long held goal was attainable, and with the help of an exceptional intern from his state-wide program, helped us to launch our bid. Today the Alutiiq Museum is an accredited museum. Scott helped us get here. The process strengthened the Alutiiq Museum – improving everything from our facilities to our exhibits and policies. We believe that many Alaskan museums have profited from Scott’s expertise. Our experience is not unique, it just one example of Scott’s impact as an advisor across Alaska.

For his enthusiastic can-do attitude, willingness to travel to the far corners of the state, great ideas, unswerving professionalism, and dedication to uplifting all Alaskan Museums, the staff of the Alutiiq Museum nominates Scott Carrlee for the Museums Alaska President’s Award. Alaska’s Museums are more professional, more united, and reaching for higher standards because of Scott’s contributions. His hard work has strengthened many organizations and in doing so, is making a lasting impact on the preservation of Alaskan culture and history. We can think of no better candidate for the 2011 Museum’s Alaska President’s award.

from Scott’s nomination. Photograph by Allison McLain.
Remembering Our Colleagues and Mentors

At this year’s Museums Alaska/Alaska Historical Society Joint Annual meeting we remembered the following individuals for their contributions to Alaska history, anthropology, museums and cultural preservation:

- Ernest S. (Tiger) Burch, Jr.
- Robert (Bob) Neil DeArmond
- Desdia Neva McKittrick Egan
- Richard “Dick” Bruce Engen
- Светлана Григорьевна Фёдорова/Svetlana Grigor’evna Fedorova
- William (Bill) S. Hanable
- LeRoi Heaven
- Collin S. MacCarty, Jr.
- Gail Parsons
- George Rogers
- Walter Alexander Soboleff, Sr.
- William (Bill) George Stroecker
- Elizabeth (Betsy) Tower
They descend in silence upon a museum-in-need...angels with the ability to label artifacts, create storage boxes and exhibit mounts, re-arrange exhibitions, and leave plexi-glass without any fingerprints....they are....

MUSEUM ANGELS

Seriously, though, our museum angels are rarely silent— there were jokes, teasing, and laughter as well as serious discussions of collections care and object labeling as these volunteers worked their way through the Maxine & Jesse Whitney galleries the day before our conference started last September. This year’s volunteers were:

Ellen Carrlee    Scott Carrlee    Norm Lagasse    Molly Conley
Carolyn Kozak    Chris Hanson    Holly Cusack-McVeigh

A note from Wendy:

I want to sincerely thank the Angels who came to the Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum prior to the MA Conference this year and began with me the hugely daunting task of labeling our collection. It’s amazing how much got done in just a few hours! If not for this push in the right direction, I would never have felt comfortable starting this project. The Angels concentrated on labeling the items they knew I would have the hardest time accessing by myself—things in vitrines and secure cases. Ellen gave us a lesson throughout, and we developed an organized process which worked great.

Thank you,
Wendy Goldstein
Maxine and Jesse Whitney Museum

Ellen Carrlee takes the lead in guiding the Angels Project to label artifacts at the Whitney Museum.

Photograph by Scott Carrlee.
MUSEUM ANGELS

Molly and Carolyn working as a team to label some ivory and baleen model boats. Photograph by Scott Carrlee.

Ellen sewing a Tyvek label inside the parka of a fur and ivory doll. Photograph by Scott Carrlee.

Holly Cusack-McVeigh makes a tray during the Mountmaking workshop as part of her Angel commitment. Her finished tray (above right). Photographs by Amy Carney.

More photographs of the Angels on next page
**MUSEUM ANGELS**

Carolyn Kozak creating a box for a Yup’ik mask and a tray to fit into that box that will hold all the mask attachments. This is a great concept because it keeps the mask and its components all in one storage container.

Photograph by Amy Carney.

Impressions of Valdez....photographs by Ellen Carrlee.
Alaska Veterans Museum Veteran’s Day Programs a Huge Hit!

Alaska Veterans Museum made 11/11/11 a resounding success with its varied programs showcasing the service and sacrifices of Alaska’s veterans

Col. Suellyn Wright Novak, USAF Retired, Alaska Veterans Museum Executive Director

The day began at 4:45 a.m. for Executive Director Novak who had to prepare, then oversee the placing of the bronze Alaska Territorial Guard Eskimo Scout statue in front of the museum at 333 W 4th Ave in Anchorage. Hickel Construction placed the statue at 6 a.m., and it remained draped until being unveiled at the afternoon ceremony.

In the morning, Ms. Jennifer Spain’s Optional Program Class of 5th & 6th graders from Eagle River Elementary School came for a Civil War living history and AVM tour. The students brought AVM a homemade Veteran’s Day wreath with a $600 donation to AVM from the class’ taco-in-a-bag sale. They also brought Col Novak a bouquet of flowers.

At noon the students gathered around the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 1620 who gave the students a living history class that began with a talk on the commerce raider CSS Shenandoah.

We have a white canvas tent, cannon, static displays, uniformed re-enactors and their ladies, hardtack and Johnny cake (Molasses optional) samples, and a class on paper cartridge making for the weapons of the day.

Also there will be a display of how veterans are still serving their state and nation.

All the above will be provided by the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 1620.

Some of the uniformed re-enactors that were part of the living history lesson.

Photographs courtesy of the Alaska Veterans Museum.

This illustration describes the living history class that the 5th and 6th graders experienced thanks to the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 1620 volunteers.

Article continues on next page
Alaska Veterans Museum Veteran’s Day Programs, continued.

At 2 p.m., a large and enthusiastic crowd gathered to dedicate the Alaska Territorial Guard (ATG) statue. Present were three ATG members:

   Mr. Harold Bahr, ATG Drill Location: Nome
   Mr. Holger Jorgenson, ATG Drill Location: Haycock
   Mr. Earl Wineck, ATG Drill Location: Palmer

The AK National Guard Honors Team presented the colors, John Teemer sang the National Anthem and the Alaska Flag Song, and City Manager George Vakalis thanked the Alaska Veterans Museum for making sure this statue was on public display (it languished 2 years in a Parks & Rec warehouse). Major General Thomas Katkus, Adjutant General, AK National Guard, was the guest speaker, and he and Verdie Bowen, Director, Alaska Military Affairs presented the ATG members with specially minted silver coins denoting their service to Alaska in World War II. Then Mr. Bowen and AVM Executive Director Suellyn Wright Novak released the ubiquitous blue tarp to reveal the Alaska Territorial Eskimo Scout on guard.

The statue is located outside the Alaska Veterans Museum in downtown Anchorage.


Photographs courtesy Alaska Veterans Museum.
Dorothy G. Page Museum Celebrates the Old Fashioned Way
Bethany Buckingham, Curator, Dorothy G. Page Museum

It has been a flurry of activity at the Dorothy G. Page Museum in Wasilla. We thought after the tourists had gone for the season we would be able to take a bit of a breather.

Not for us. October saw two huge events back to back.

We started with our second annual Brassieres to Nowhere Breast Cancer Awareness Exhibit. Artwork from local artists adorned the walls of the Museum. One of the highlights this year was a piece titled “Save the Ta-Ta-Ta-Ta-Ta-Ta’s” by Adriana Fisher and Amy Lehman-Etingué. It was a life-size Paper Mache Dog standing on a bra-quilt. This submission was from two local veterinarians who were explaining the occurrence of breast cancer in dogs and cats. “As veterinarians, we see too many of our patients suffering from breast cancer. Through this piece we want to raise public awareness that this disease in dogs and cats is almost one hundred percent preventable by early spay surgery,” Fisher wrote.

Another talk of the show was “Slippery When Wet” by Meredith Buchman. This artist makes salmon skin baskets and thought this would be an interesting use of salmon skin. “I created this piece in memory of my grandmother who passed away from breast cancer,” Buchman wrote. During the auction, Buchman stated that if the winner wanted a bra in their size, she would be willing to make one.

The Museum partnered with Casting for Recovery and auctioned all the pieces during the second annual Masquerade and Bra-Auction. Local radio celebrity, Kathy Mitchell, performed as auctioneer for our event and the food was catered by a local restaurant, Jalapenos. Artists and attendees enjoyed an evening of fun and food as well as raise over $1,200 for Casting for Recovery.

The next day after the Masquerade and Bra-Auction was the Museum’s first annual Wasilla Old Town Autumn Fest. After cleaning up the bras and a quick redecorating of the museum from pink to black and orange, we hosted over 300 children and their families to celebrate autumn and Halloween.

Article continues on the next page.
Dorothy G. Page Museum Celebrates, continued...

Children trick or treated in the old town site buildings that were sponsored by local businesses. They made their own trick or treat bags in the old school house and enjoyed various games and face painting in the Museum. A local family donated a hay wagon and families climbed aboard for a tour around the town site. Afterward the children drank hot cider and cocoa while they viewed all the submissions from our pumpkin decorating contest. According to visitors, this is a must have event for next year.

After a boom in October, things quieted down a little while before staff began decorating for the annual Wasilla Community Christmas Celebration. This event takes place the first Saturday in December.

Each year the City of Wasilla and the Dorothy G. Page Museum invite the community to enjoy an old fashioned Christmas in the town site. There is music in the old school house and Mrs. Claus reads to the children. Families help decorate the City Christmas Tree or take a ride around downtown on a hayride. Children come inside the Museum for photos with Santa and to make cards or small decorations. Cocoa and Cookies are available for everyone as the Mayor lights the tree as we sing along with carolers. There are usually over 400 in attendance each year, no matter the weather.

After this busy fall season, the Museum can finally take a breather for a while. Then again, Museum staff are already planning next year’s festivities.
Introducing...

The Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum in Fairbanks has a new book—“Alaska’s Fountainhead Collection: Vintage Treads and Threads.”

Our new book, Alaska’s Fountainhead Collection: Vintage Treads and Threads, has arrived from the printer. This glossy, 120-page softcover book takes you inside the Fountainhead Museum to explore 42 of our finest automobiles, such as the only Hay Motor Vehicle ever made and the last-surviving Argonne. Some of the other marques represented include Compound, Hertel, Daniels, Franklin, Cartercar, Owen Magnetic, Heine-Velox, Stutz, Cadillac, Wills Sainte Claire, Packard and Moline-Knight. The book also features chapters on Alaska's automotive heritage and our historic clothing collection.

"This book is an invaluable introduction to the Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum, one of the little-known treasures of Alaska, where an essential slice of 20th Century history is brought to life. The auto collection is among the finest in the country, a solid tribute to the spirit of innovation."

Dermot Cole, Fairbanks author and Daily News-Miner columnist

"Fairbanks really isn't a very big town, and to be honest, I wasn't expecting much from the museum, but I could not have been more wrong. The place absolutely blew me away."

Dennis Gage, host of "My Classic Car with Dennis Gage"

There are well over 200 color photographs inside, plus archival photos from Alaska's early motoring days. This high-quality book is a great bargain at only $19.95.

Copies may be purchased at the museum or Wedgewood Resort Visitor Center, or by mail by calling 907-451-2100 (please note: shipping charges will apply).
University of Alaska Museum of the North completes Russian Blockhouse Preservation

SEPTEMBER 2011 - An 1841 Russian blockhouse is again sitting tall on the grounds of the University of Alaska Museum of the North.

The roof was removed from the Kolmakovsky blockhouse in 2006 due to questions of structural stability and safety. In December of 2009, the National Park Service awarded the museum $75,000 to preserve the Kolmakovsky collection. After relocating the building to a tree-sheltered site, the preservation team completed the work on the blockhouse by adding a sod roof made with moss and tamarack poles.

“We used materials with rot-resistant properties to help the long term preservation of the building,” said Angela Linn, the museum’s ethnology and history collection manager.

The Kolmakovsky blockhouse features a sod roof made with locally-collected moss.

The blockhouse was the first structure built by the Russian-American Company at Kolmakovsky Redoubt near Aniak. It is one of the oldest Russian-era structures in Alaska. In 1929, the blockhouse was disassembled and moved to Fairbanks.

Linn worked closely with log preservation specialist Sandy Jamieson on the project. He was especially intrigued with the unique notching system used in the original blockhouse construction. The design featured self-locking dovetail notches built into the chinkless white spruce logs, something he had never seen before.

“It was very satisfying to reassemble the building,” Jamieson said. “Everything just went together – click, click, click. It was a nice connection to the guys who had cut those logs 170 years ago.” Linn hopes to use the information the team gathered about the blockhouse’s architectural design in future projects. “There’s a whole story embedded in the logs themselves,” Linn said.

Photographs courtesy University of Alaska Museum of the North.  

Article continues on next page
Russian Blockhouse Preservation, continued...

The blockhouse is popular with visitors. In this photo, the blockhouse is almost fully reassembled in its new location behind the Museum.

The blockhouse and approximately 5,000 archaeological artifacts from the site help document the period in Alaska history when outsiders were first coming into contact with the Native populations. The artifacts represent almost 90 years of occupation at the Kolmakovsky site from the original Russian traders to the American employees of the American Commercial Company, which operated at Kolmakovsky from 1867 until 1917. The Save America’s Treasures grant also provides funding to improve storage for the artifacts and make them more accessible to researchers. “For me, as an anthropologist, the objects are great in and of themselves, but what’s really intriguing are those stories associated with the objects,” said Linn.

Putting the roof back on the blockhouse was the last step in stabilizing the building. Now the structure will serve as a trailhead marker to an interpretive trail on campus. Soon Linn will have two houses to protect. The St. Michael blockhouse will soon return to UAF after being on loan to UAA since the 1980s.

“These objects keep people aware of this time period. We are achieving our goal of outreach and education by sharing them with the public,” said Linn.

A collections drawer at the Museum of the North shows some of the Kolmakovsky Redoubt archaeological collection.
“The Fifty Stone Lithographs of Fred Machetanz”

Anchorage Museum displays rare, complete set of Fred Machetanz prints

Fred Machetanz (1908-2002) was one of the state’s most popular artists, known for his paintings and prints depicting daily life in Alaska. One of his most impressive accomplishments was the creation of 50 stone lithographs between 1946 and 1980. He printed just 100 of each design.

Today, Machetanz’s 50 lithographs are some of his most sought-after work. Only three public institutions are known to have complete sets. “The Fifty Stone Lithographs of Fred Machetanz” exhibition displays the Anchorage Museum’s rare, complete set of Machetanz lithographs featuring beautiful renderings of Alaskans, Alaska Native traditional life, wildlife and more. Often Machetanz’s lithographs combine portraiture and close ethnographic observation. For instance, “Eskimo Mother” is a tender depiction of mother and child, but it also documents the traditional way women carried babies on their backs, leaving their hands free for chores. “Old Alaska is rapidly disappearing, and I want to preserve what I can before it too is gone,” Fred Machetanz said in 1965. “In a way I want to do for Alaska what Remington did for the Old West.”

Fine art lithography is a notoriously frustrating medium. First an image is drawn with a greasy substance onto a flat, prepared stone. Then, the image is etched into the stone’s surface, so the grease etching will repel ink. One-by-one, the stone is inked and an impression is made on paper. If one thing goes wrong, the print is irreparable.

The Anchorage Museum’s set of Machetanz lithographs was donated by former Alaska National Insurance Company chairman George Suddock and his wife, Linda. This exhibit is on view Nov. 29 through Feb. 26, 2012. Learn more at www.anchoragemuseum.org.
Reflections: Western Museums Association Annual meeting
September 2011

Angela Linn, University of Alaska Museum of the North

The Western Museums Association (WMA) annual meetings are always a combination of inspiring keynote speakers, great networking opportunities, educational concurrent sessions, and fun out-of-session encounters. The 2011 meetings in Honolulu, Hawai‘i were no exception. I was looking forward to Honolulu for a number of reasons… beyond the obvious bonus of the location, this would be my fourth and final year of serving as an officer with the Registrars Committee-Western Region (RC-WR). This was a bittersweet end for me – it has been four years of hard work and engagement, but I leave with a stronger connection to collections professionals in institutions and private practice across the western states of Alaska, Hawai‘i, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Idaho, and Arizona.

This year’s conference provided opportunities to do hands-on volunteer work, through the RC-WR-sponsored volunteer event, CSI: Registrars, at Queen Emma’s Summer Palace; to get in-depth training on collections preservation planning, in the RC-WR sponsored workshop, Surveying and Assessing Collection Needs, taught by Janet Ruggles, Balboa Art Conservation Center (BACC) Executive Director and Chief Conservator of Paper; and to experience three days of sessions that ranged from the practical (planning for collections moves, the ups and downs of inventories, and understanding the value of appraisals) to insightful (models for reviewing indigenous collections in museums, board meetings that inspire).

Despite the conflict in timing (the same days as Museums Alaska), the only bad thing I can say about WMA 2011 is that there were too many great sessions I was unable to attend and too little time to spend with my incredible western-region colleagues.
Help is on the Way!

Guidance Program for Small and Mid-Sized Museums

“If I could be so bold to claim that the Baranov Museum is enjoying a certain spiral of success, then I must share that a key contributor to the spiral is the Museum Assessment Program.” — Katie Oliver, Executive Director, Baranov Museum, Alaska

Do you want the answers to help your museum move forward?

Would you like a roadmap for future success?

Consider participating in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), which assists all types of small and mid-size museums (e.g., aquariums, art, history, natural history, public gardens, science centers and zoos). MAP helps museums achieve excellence and meet standards through self-study and a consultative site visit from an expert peer reviewer. Reviewers provide a comprehensive report featuring recommendations and resources to help museums identify their strengths and areas needing improvement. Participation gives museums the tools to strengthen operations. In less than a year, MAP will help you develop strategies for improved operations, planning, staff and board education and fundraising.

Since 1981, over 4,300 organizations have participated in MAP as a low-cost method of becoming more sustainable. Become the next museum to take advantage of MAP.

Application deadlines are July 1 and December 1. To learn more about MAP, visit www.aam-us.org/map or contact MAP staff at map@aam-us.org or 202-289-9118.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

MAP is administered by the American Association of Museums through a cooperative agreement with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The next MAP deadline is July 1, 2012.
American Association of Museums Museum Assessment Profile:

Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, Kodiak

“As a newly founded institution, the Alutiiq Museum sought to develop its policies and practices in professional ways. We wanted to show the world that Alutiiq cultural values could be combined with Western museum practices to create a great organization. Our board and staff saw the Museum Assessment Program as a way to bring additional expertise to the process. Professional evaluations were a way to help guide the museum through its first decade, to give us feedback on our work and provide building blocks for project development and fund raising,” says Amy Steffian, Deputy Director when asked why the museum selected to participate in MAP.

“The Alutiiq Museum participated in all available MAP programs, systematically implementing the majority of reviewers’ recommendations,” she says. As a result, they were able to restructure their staff to hire a full-time archivist, which led to stronger collections stewardship. Additionally, they created their first marketing plan, allowing the museum to think more strategically about promotion, and as a result, fundraising and development. They used their MAP reports to help prepare for several successful grant proposals, including funds for improving their archival care and emergency management as well as the allowing them to re-record rare and fragile recordings of the Alutiiq language onto new media formats for preservation.

“MAP helped the Alutiiq Museum attain AAM accreditation,” says Amy. “Underlying our participation in MAP was a long-range goal to obtain this national certification. We relied heavily on our MAP reviews to identify the key areas that needed strengthening, and to help the museum chart a course toward accreditation. In August of this year, 14 years after we set the goal, we earned accreditation. It worked!”

April Laktonen Counciller, manager of the museum’s language programs, consults remastered Alutiiq language recordings.

Carmen Ceron catalog photographs as part of a Picturing the Past, and IMLS funded photograph care project that evolved from the museum’s MAP2 survey.

Marnie Leist photographer, courtesy the Alutiiq Museum.
Preparing for the Unknown

Reflections from the Western Museums Association Annual meeting, September 2011
Marnie Leist, Registrar, Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository

Imagine arriving at your beloved museum to see it washed away — strewn over a city block with much of it missing.

Most of us have not ever experienced this type of devastation, and in our hectic daily lives we rarely think about it. But preparing for the inevitable emergency is critical. I was reminded of this important fact at the National Park Service’s session - Cultural Resources Emergency Response in the West, Alaska, and the Pacific, presented at the joint Western Museum Association, Pacific Island Museum Association, and Association of Tribal Libraries, Archives and Museums conference in Honolulu last September.

Interpreter Lau Sualevai’s voice shook and he swallowed hard fighting tears, as he described how the visitor’s center for the National Park of America Samoa was decimated by the tidal wave in 2009. Hearing him speak about his experience was a powerful reminder of the importance of having an emergency plan, emergency supplies, readily available back-ups of important records lined up in case of an emergency – large or small. From an injured guest to pest infestation or a major a water emergency, being prepared is crucial, especially in Alaska. Museums in Alaska are often in remote locations with limited resources. Unlike the National Park Service, we do not have the ability to fly in an emergency crew and supplies within 72 hours. Now is the time to prepare for emergencies.
ANTICIPATION BUILDS FOR A NEW UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA MUSEUM OF THE NORTH EXHIBIT

“I WANNA SEE THAT NOW”, Grey, age 3

“Daddy, this looks really creepy...when can we go to Fairbanks to see it?”
Emily, age 7

"I am very excited about this exhibit because I want to be an entomologist or biologist when I get big." Owen, age 7

This University of Alaska Museum of the North exhibit explores the wildlife that lives among us, spiders and insects of the phylum Arthropoda. These creatures are known for their many legs and their many relatives. They are the most numerous and adaptable creatures on the planet.

This exhibit will feature several interactive elements:

- Live arthropods on display – spiders, tarantulas, cockroaches, millipedes, praying mantises, walking sticks and more.

- A darkened gallery where visitors can enter the secret world of nocturnal insects.

- A close-up camera will let visitors explore animal lairs.

- Videos showing arthropod behavior – spiders spinning, beetles stalking – and the sounds they make.

Arthropods are invertebrate animals that have external skeletons, segmented bodies, and jointed appendages. They include insects, arachnids, crustaceans, and myriapods.

- Arctic lady beetle
- An arctic ant tending larvae
- Jumping spider stalking flies at ␪-mesmer beets
- Velvet ants abundant along the shoreline
Carmen Brian, Western Center for the Conservation of Fine Arts, leads his session — How to Look at a Painting for Conservation.

Photograph by Ellen Carrlee.

Melissa Jenski, Jacqueline Fernandez, Anjuli Granham, Carolyn Kozak, and Bethany Buckingham during the collections mountmaking workshop. Photograph by Amy Carney.

Table top exercise during the “Don’t Panic” emergency preparedness workshop. Photograph by Scott Carrlee.

Participants get training on fire extinguishers at the Valdez Fire Department during the “Don’t Panic” emergency preparedness workshop. Photograph by Scott Carrlee.

Photograph by Ellen Carrlee.
Levi Ballard and Anjuli Grantham show off the results of their collaborative effort to design and construct a blue board box.

Photograph by Allison McLain.
Pictures from the 2011 MA/AHS meeting in Valdez

Old Valdez. Photograph by Clark Yerrington.

From the Valdez Museum Reception

At left: Karen Meizner and Pete Haggland.

At right: Aurora Lang and Scott Carrlee.

Below right: Ron Inouye (l) and Bob Banghart (r).

Photograph by Clark Yerrington.
MEMBERSHIP 2012

ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

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