

can't believe a whole year has passed since our last newsletter. It was a very busy, productive year.

The biggest event of the year (maybe even ever) happened this summer. *New Harmonies: Celebrating* American Roots Music, a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street series, was shown in the Lower Gallery June 26 through August 8. The Hammer Museum and KHNS created small exhibits to enhance the larger exhibit, and locals Nancy Nash, Rob Goldberg, Norm Hughes, Nicholas Szatkowski, and Judy Erekson brought interesting instruments for display or to play. To celebrate local music the Museum hosted almost-weekly concerts by local musicians and groups from Tagish, Skagway, Sitka, Juneau and Ann Arbor, Michigan. The last roots music concert kicked-off the season's 3rd Sunday Recital Series with Rob Goldberg and Len Feldman playing Klezmer music.

Most of the history exhibits were moved upstairs to the Hakkinen Gallery to make room for New Harmonies. Before the history exhibits are reinstalled downstairs, some planning and a couple of projects must be completed. In the meantime, we are looking for input from those who have a history in Haines. Feel free to email Exhibits & Collections Coordinator Karen Meizner at museumexhibits@aptalaska.net or call to make comments about existing displays or to share information that has been left out in the past. The Children's Corner will return in a different area of the Lower Gallery.

Before the move, our aged fire suppression system will have a major upgrade. We are grateful to the Borough for taking on this project. There will be a



Lani Hotch leads Klukwan dancers at the "New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music" opening reception. More photos of "New Harmonies" events on pages 6-7.

new, much smaller panel in the Lobby, and some rewiring and replacement sensors throughout the facility.

In addition, the Lower Gallery will soon be lit with professional gallery track lighting, replacing the standard, energy hungry, tube fluorescents that have been used since the gallery opened. The Museum received a grant from the Alaska State Museum for the track lights and new, efficient fluorescent lights in the offices and work areas.

In the meantime, the Museum's collection of contemporary local art, mostly purchased through the Rasmuson Foundation's Art Initiative, is on display in the Lower Gallery.

See the article on page 3 for the Museum's most recent acquisitions through (Continued on page 2)

Sheldon Museum & Cultural Center

Director - Jerrie Clarke Operations Coordinator - Blythe Carter Educator Coordinator - Kathryn Friedle Collections & Exhibits Coordinator -Karen Meizner Museum Assistant - Nancy Nash

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SMCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES: President - Frankie Perry Vice President - Jim Shook Secretary - Gary Lidholm Treasurer - Mary Jane Valentine Bob Adkins Pam Randles John Svenson 2 vacancies (Interested parties please contact the museum.)

Volunteers - 196 volunteers donated 3,356 hours in 2008, and 214 volunteers have given 2,327 hours so far in 2009. Thank You Volunteers!

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Chilkat Valley Historical Society

CVHS DIRECTORS: President - Lucy Harrell Vice President - Jerrie Clarke Secretary - Joan Snyder Treasurer - Cynthia "CJ" Jones Director - Bruce Gilbert Director - June Haas Director - Myrna Kornelis

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New & Noteworthy (cont.)

Director's Corner by Jerrie Clarke

(Continued from front page) this generous program. Another grant, this one from the Alaska Humanities Forum, is helping us resume our oral history program. Former director, Cynthia 'CJ' Jones, and Klukwan Tlingit language

teacher, Marsha Hotch, have been hired to do



Eric Holle and friends perform at the Chilkat Center as part of the "New Harmonies" Concerts.

interviews with local residents. Former exhibits and collections coordinator, Andrea Nelson, will transcribe the interviews this winter. We expect to be able to add a minimum of 12 interviews to our historical records.

Special thanks also to the Chilkat Indian Village for helping to fund the Tlingit Language Class this winter.

Pick, Click and Give, a program introduced this year by the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, has given the Museum another opportunity to raise funds. This year donors contributed \$400 dollars by choosing the Sheldon Museum when filling out their Permanent Fund applications on-line. Thanks to all those who contributed! Please consider donating next year.

November has become a very popular time for auctions and other fundraisers, so this year we decided to try a silent auction at the Southeast Alaska State Fair instead. For our first attempt, we had a small auction with only 54 pieces and it was a great success. The Fair staff supported the idea, Fair goers thought it was a great idea and we grossed over \$3,000. Look for us again next year. We'll be sending out donation requests in the

spring.

Because we won't be spending a month preparing for Eagle Elegance this fall and early winter, we can focus our energies on trains, decorations and activities for a special Christmas Open House.

You'll read in other sections of the Newsletter about other projects and programs the Museum staff is working on to



SMCC Board President Frankie Perry assists Dawne Thomsen to bid during the Museum's Silent Auction at the Southeast Alaska State Fair.

provide interesting and fun school and public programs, and to make our work more efficient. One brand-new addition is a PayPal account for the Museum store. This will make it easier to purchase items on-line and to make donations to the Museum and its programs. Visit us on line at www.sheldonmuseum.org.

New Art for the Museum We are once again indebted to the rasmuson foundation



"Lily Pond" oil painting by Rod Weagant.

The Sheldon Museum is proud to announce the acquisition of two oil paintings and a Northwest Coast-style ivory carving purchased with funds from the Rasmuson Foundation's Art Acquisition Initiative. The goal of this fund is to support living, practicing Alaskan artists through museum purchases, to enhance the permanent art collections of Alaskan museums, and to encourage Alaskan museums to develop formal collections policies.

The bold strokes and vivid style of **Rod Weagant**'s painting "Lily Pond" caught the breath of viewers in his recent Six Week Spotlight exhibition at the museum.

Rod's mentor, the Harlem Renaissance artist Jacob Lawrence, advised him to "accept the challenge about which he felt most passionate." Consequently, Rod has spent the last 25 years trying to communicate the wonder he feels about the Alaskan landscape, by balancing the academic formalist background with the pure emotional response he feels when surrounded by the natural world.

In 2000, he and his wife fulfilled the dream of returning to Alaska when they moved to Haines. Rod loves the small town atmosphere and the proximity to great landscape subjects which "provide more than a lifetime of painting inspiration."

Donna Catotti is another veteran of the Six Week Spotlight Program. Her pastel painting "Autumn Colors, Chilkat Valley" portrays a familiar and breath-taking sight at the mouth of the Chilkat River.

Donna has been painting, drawing and creating since she was a young child. A versatile artist, she works professionally in pastel, oil, watercolor and serigraphy and is also exploring sculpture for bronze casting. She enjoys taking painting and sculpture classes, drawing outdoors from life and indoors with models, and studying the works of other artists both past and present. She has received several 1% for Arts commissions in Juneau and has been published in International Artist Magazines. Donna has had numerous shows and her work is currently available in galleries in California and throughout Alaska.



"Autumn Colors, Chilkat Valley" pastel by Donna Catotti.

Debi Knight Kennedy's Northwest Coast Style carved piece "Dominion" is made of fossil walrus ivory, abalone and human hair.

Born and raised in the Puget Sound region of Washington State, Debi began creating fabric human and animal sculptures at a young age. In 1995 she was invited by Inside Passage Arts in Skagway to visit and demonstrate ivory carving. Debi fell in love with Southeast Alaska and one month later she and her two teenaged daughters moved to Haines.

"Dominion" is a representation of the delicate balancing act humans are in with the rest of the Earth and our fellow inhabitants. "In all appearances we humans seem to be sitting on top of the pile, but aren't we really there because we are being held up my everything else?"

Don't miss Debi's work in an upcoming Six Week Spotlight Exhibition with Sharon Svenson in May 2010.

All of these beautiful pieces are currently on display in the Museum's Lower Gallery.



"Dominion" fossil ivory sculpture by Debi Knight Kennedy.

Preparing for History Exhibit Reinstallation

Or "What's up with the Lower Gallery?" by Karen Meizner



A portion of the temporary Pioneer Exhibit in the Hakkinen Gallery.

With the departure of New Harmonies we now have an almost-empty lower gallery in which to reconstruct the museum's history exhibits. Three years ago, under thendirector Addison Field, the museum developed an Interpretive Plan for upgrading all of the exhibits in the museum. Now we have an opportunity to act on that plan and fully develop exhibits that will engage residents of the Chilkat Valley as well as visitors, encompassing the highlights of Haines' history through a wide lens.

The museum staff has been discussing how we will approach this task and have concluded that organizing a series of exhibits covering specific topics may work out to be the best way to tell our stories. We have created a list of potential topics and will begin by installing a broad general exhibit, similar to the one currently in the Hakkinen Gallery, that will gradually be refined by section or topic until we are satisfied. This will be a multi-year project, including lots of grant funding, volunteer hours, and staff hours.

One thing we would like to see in these new exhibits is some sort of interactive or hands-on component in each segment. These might include very "low-tech" things such as wheels that can be turned to explain a story: flaps to lift up to reveal answers to further explain a particular exhibit; a small bellows to give an idea of what the large bellows could do; and a model of a "perpetual motion" machine to give visitors an idea of why the project was so intriguing to Carl Bjornstad and to the community. **We could use help designing and building these interactive components**.

We are planning more "high-tech" installations as well, providing snippets of history from our oral

history archives, to allow visitors to hear the stories in the voices of people who lived them, adding music where appropriate, and providing a public access computer to allow visitors a more in-depth look at topics that might interest them. Farther down the road, we'd like to add geographical "pod-casts" that would allow visitors to download information they can then take to the spots where the stories actually happened.

We will be poring through our collected oral histories, contacting and working with local historians and elders, and hosting some public meetings. We will also hold "soft" exhibit openings during which we'll present what we have planned and ask for input from particular groups or individuals.

While we don't have the space to thoroughly cover every aspect of Haines history, we are hoping to touch on the areas that have had the most impact on what Haines is today. Exhibits will begin with the Presbyterian Mission to the Chilkat people and end with "Haines today."

Please visit us on-line for a list of potential topics at: www.sheldonmuseum.org/upgrades.htm.

HAVE IDEAS? Interested in helping?

Please call or email the museum at museumexhibits@aptalaska.net (907) 766-2366

Sheldon Museum

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www.sheldonmuseum.org

Fun for Kids! (and Adults Too!) The Education Department by Kathryn Friedle



Children had a great time dressing up during the 32rd Annual Doll Fair held this past October.

Winter is upon us and with it another season of fun-filled activities. This fall, school groups enjoyed learning about apples, agriculture in the Chilkat Valley and Charlie Anway from Bob Henderson.

The Doll Fair held October 25th, was a blast. Children brought their favorite doll, dressed up and made arts and crafts with Kris Reeves and Mary Jane Valentine. Children and adults alike enjoyed the doll displays and Melina Shield's delightful story reading. The annual event concluded with a yummy "tea" facilitated by Georgia Sampson and generous community donations.

With November comes the Museum's annual hands-on interactive wildlife "Eagle Activities," available during the Eagle Festival and the week after.

Last spring, with a grant from the Alaska Council of the Arts, the Museum organized a woodblock printing class for adults taught by local artist John Svenson. We are currently pursuing funding for future art classes. Look for posters and announcements in local media.

In 2008, the Museum organized a community wide Big Read celebration featuring *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*: Activities included: after-school Tom Sawyer crafts, games and movies at the Haines and Klukwan Libraries; an art contest; a "fishingon-the-river-day" at Klukwan, including learning how to smoke fish; a live Mark Twain performance by John Venables; book club and round table discussions; reading from the book at the Haines Senior Center; Reader's Theatre performances by the Haines 8th grade class; and the Final Event: The 31st Annual Doll Fair. The Sheldon Museum is proud to announce the third annual *Big Read* coming February and March, 2010. Funded by the National Endowments for the Arts and Arts Midwest, this program is designed to encourage children and adults to read.

The featured book is *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett. Herolded the father of the modern detective novel, activities will focus on all things "mysterious." There will be scavenger hunts, a mystery dinner theater, art and writing contest, reading groups, Senior Center readings, and more. Spy our schedule in January, and be sure to prepare your art piece for the Art Noir contest. Investigate details on the Museum's website!

Last but not least, a children's area is planned for the Lower Gallery once the history exhibits are upgraded and re-installed in the spring (see facing page for Upgrade details). This will have rotating interactive activities for children; often enjoyed by adults as well.

So...it might be snowing and the bears might be hibernating, but we're not! Stop by the Museum any time or visit us on-line to see what's happening!



When you fill out your PFD application, you can donate a portion of your Permanent Fund to non-profits like the Sheldon Museum!

New Harmonies:

Celebrating American Roots Music



The Haines Acappella Women's Chorus and the Men of Note performed at the Presbyterian Church.

In the fall of 2008, Nancy Nash (part-time museum staff, professional musician, and music teacher) alerted the Museum to a special opportunity from the Smithsonian Institution: a traveling exhibit called *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*.

Nearly a year later, *New Harmonies* became a reality. With the help of many volunteers, the Lower Gallery was emptied of the Pioneer and Fort Seward Exhibits, which were temporarily reinstalled upstairs in the Hakkinen Gallery, to make way for this 800-square-foot exhibit. Local businesses and individuals sponsored weekly concerts which KHNS Radio enthusiastically promoted. KHNS also provided a selection of Alaska "roots" music for display at the Museum, and the Hammer Museum shared a display of "Drinking Mallets" from the 1930s, once used in New York nightclubs by audience members who wished to applaud the acts on stage. Many locals provided unusual instruments from their own collections for display



Hannah Reeves



The Fishpickers at the Chilkat Center Lobby.

singing and dancing to traditional Tlingit songs and concluding with a rendition of "Amazing Grace" sung first in Tlingit and then in English. Audience members gradually joined the performers in song during the English translation, tangibly confirming the unity engendered by the exhibition.

For six weeks the museum reverberated with the sound of drums, chimes and rattles from the children's hands-on corner, and snatches of blue grass, old country, gospel and disco from the interactive displays. It was our hope that, like music, *New Harmonies* would bring the community together in celebrating our cultural heritage. We're happy to say it did. Thanks so much to all the numerous volunteers, musicians, and business sponsors who made this special series possible!



Sylvia Heinz, Tom Heywood, Heidi Robichaud and Fred Einspruch.

New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music



Left: Men of Note performing at the Presbyterian Church; right: Nancy Nash and Steve Tada at the Chilkat Center.



Left: Sweet Sunny North; middle: Nicholas Szatkowski; and right: Len Feldman and Rob Goldberg playing Klezmer music.



Left: Silver Jackson at center on guitar performing with Breath Owl Breathe; right: Eric Holle and friends.

Six Week Spotlight Featuring Solo Exhibits by Local Artists



"High Exposure" woodblock print by John Svenson in 2005.

The ongoing Six Week Spotlight Program is designed to provide a way for local artists to put together museum-quality shows in a local venue. Since our last newsletter the following artists have had solo exhibitions.

SUZANNE McCOLLUM: INCUBATING

In September of 2008, Suzi's acrylic paintings and ink and quill drawings transfixed visitors with vibrant color and a dreamlike poignancy.

Suzi says she taught herself to draw in dreams as a child. Although she attempted formal artistic training in college she "didn't take well to it, preferring to learn the hard way." She has made countless baubles, doodads, puppets and fairies to support herself in her travels over her years of wondering and began to paint in earnest when she found Haines. Suzi says her acrylic paintings are the products of her heart.

"Color follows light and a line always knows where it's going, though I never know where I'll end up."

KERRY COHEN: UNFOLDING

The raw earthy nature of clay and the delicate translucency of Japanese Chiyogami and Washi papers transformed the Hakkinen Gallery in May of 2009 with hand-formed vessels and organically-shaped sculptures by Kerry Cohen.

Kerry has been creating primarily commissioned tile work for nearly twenty-five years in Alaska. While these projects offered some latitude for personal expression, commissioned work tends to be driven to a great degree by the needs and aesthetic values of the client. Consequently, for the past few years Kerry found herself increasingly drawn towards working with clay in a more spontaneous manner that would express her "authentic artistic voice." The Six Week Spotlight Series offered just such an opportunity. Over the winter months, Kerry created a series of beautiful pieces best described as "an organic unfolding of shapes and textures, mirroring the natural world."

JOHN SVENSON: WOODBLOCK RETROSPECTIVE

As a mountain guide and climber, John Svenson is known for his unique translation of the mountain image through watercolor and woodblock printing. His work inspired visitors to the Hakkinen Gallery in March of 2009.

While sorting through and "rediscovering" his many block prints of the past for the show, John was amazed at the time dedicated over the years to this unique and exciting medium.

"I look at these prints, which I produced over a 25-year period; I see high points and low. There are brilliant moments combined with what I've referred to as 'drooling geek' phases, when the brain almost shuts down and motor nerves take over. These tend to be my personal favorites."

John is always dabbling and searching for new ways to express his unique take on life.



Left: Guests enjoy Suzi McCollum's paintings at her opening reception. Right: Kerry Cohen and her "Self Portrait," a work which included a wind-sculpted branch, dried moss and an intricately-painted paper globe.

Don't Miss These Up-Coming Six Week Spotlights! Featuring Local Haines Artists





April 2010 **Andrea**

Nelson & Amelia Nash

Curious Vicarious Found Art

Artwork above by Andrea: "Finding Oneself Distracted in Beautiful Places" and at left by Amelia: "Madame de Pompadour's Dinner Party."





Мау 2010

Debi Knight Kennedy & Sharon Svenson

> Art Puppets & Mosaics

Artwork above by Debi: "Kate and Jane, Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" and at left by Sharon: "Heron Mosaic."



July 2010 Sarah Cohen Sculpture Featured above "Only Me."



September 2010 George Figdor Photographs of People Around the World Featured above is an image from India.

Six Week Spotlight Applications will be accepted again in Spring of 2010. Watch for an announcement in the Chilkat Valley News, KHNS Radio and the Museum's website: www.sheldonmuseum.org.

"The Summer of Sheldon"

by Nancy Nash



This is a view of Tim Vogel's saloon, which stood on the northwest corner of Second Avenue and Main Street. Tom Valeur's Hotel de France (now the Pioneer Bar) is visible in the background. In what appears to be a ceremonial occasion, Jack Pringle is pouring a soldier a beverage. Jack Pringle was a postmaster at Porcupine and his name appears in the Porcupine Trading Company ledger of 1900-1903. Tom Valeur was an early 1900s Haines businessman, active in the first Haines Chamber of Commerce (1909-1910). He ran for the City (Common) Council in 1910. A 1907 Haines Pioneer Press article mentions his hotel's authentic French cuisine, prepared by Tlingit chef John Benson. Erik Oslund has also been identified at the extreme left of the photo. If you have any information on this photo, please call or email the Museum! Accession # C1no16 (Pre 1920).

his has been the "Summer of Sheldon," or the Sheldon Photo Collection. Sue Chase (who volunteered this past winter and spring) began the systematic entering of the thousands of photos from this collection into our PastPerfect computer program. I continued the project when I resumed my seasonal position as Museum Assistant in May. Until now, these photos, although sorted into folders by categories, had to be physically researched. Now well over 500 photos of this important resource are easily searchable by computer as to the people, places and activities portrayed in them. A decision was made to work with the older photos in the largest categories first. For some of the very oldest photos, from the early 1900s or even earlier, this involves a combination of detective work and utilization of my memory of my thirty-five years of residency in the Chilkat Valley (and sometimes, my husband's sixty-plus vears in Southeast Alaska).

My photo sleuthing has brought up two topics that, when fully researched, will yield significant additions to the known history of the Chilkat Valley and the town of Haines: cemetery history, and the ever-changing townsite of Haines.

The Arctic Brotherhood, or AB (not to be confused with the Alaska Native Brotherhood) was an early northern fraternal organization. A chapter was formed in Haines in April of 1904, and soon after that, efforts to establish a town cemetery began. The Museum archives contain ledger books and records of meetings of the Arctic Brotherhood, and our photo collection has views of cemeteries. In searching through both these resources, I was able to trace the evolution of the Arctic Brotherhood cemetery to the current Jones Point Cemetery. By 1913, other service organizations, such as the Moose, were contributing to the maintenance of the cemetery, and by 1926 the city of Haines was also supporting it. Every name contained in the complete cemetery records has now been entered into the Museum database.

Building history is another fascinating lens through which to view a location. Thankfully, we have the Building History: Survey of Historic Structures book commissioned by the City of Haines in 1983. Unfortunately, only structures still standing at that time were researched making for a very sketchy picture of the historic townsite. I keep a copy of the book's plat beside me as I encounter old photos of the area, filling in the blank spaces on it when I can identify an historic building that was gone by 1983. Now I know, for example, that Tim Vogel's saloon once stood on the northwest corner of Main Street and Second Avenue. I envision using modern computer graphics to generate a decade-by-decade series of templates of all the buildings that were ever built in Haines, from Mission days on to the present, when and if the book is reissued.



CVHS Secretary's Report

By CVHS Secretary Joan Snyder



he first meeting of the Chilkat Valley Historical Society for 2009 was held January 12 in the Conference Room of the Haines Borough Public Library, and was presided over by Bob Henderson. It was agreed to continue the Brown Bag program (which ran February through April). The CVHS jointly with the Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center continues to underwrite the Museum Talk, a radio program which airs weekly on the local radio station KHNS. Cynthia Jones (CJ) and Dan Henry have been presenting "In Their Own Voices," digitized recordings taken from Oral History interviews made more than 20 years ago on standard audio cassette tapes. These tapes have begun to deteriorate. Through a grant, KHNS has been working with the Sheldon Museum to start digitizing the museum's audio collection. It has been fascinating to hear some familiar voices, now silenced, telling stories of their experiences in the Chilkat Valley.

The Society continues to contribute prizes for History Day.

The Society's main effort is the Anway Cabin Restoration Project, led by a committee spearheaded by Cynthia "CJ" Jones. In January the

At left: the Anway Cabin. Charlie was an innovative man. Notice the right angle where the roofs meet; on the inside (seen here at right) Charlie fashioned wooden braces to support the snow load during the winter.



Alaska Department of Transportation approved a grant request in the amount of \$31,217, which would help to supply electricity to the cabin.

The CVHS also met in April and again in July, following the annual picnic at the Anway property. Several work parties were held at the Anway property throughout the summer. Interesting finds included the type of clay Charlie used to fill spaces between the logs of his cabin and flattened gallon cans thought to have been used as roofing "tiles" for the cabin. Unfortunately, in late August an infestation of ants was discovered while repairs to the roof were being made. It is hoped that prompt action to exterminate these invaders has prevented any serious damage.

The Society received a letter from John Born, a resident of New Jersey, asking if we would be interested in a collection of about a hundred 35mm slides taken in Haines, 1950-1951. These were among the personal effects of a relative who had died recently. Mr. Born was referred to the director of the Sheldon Museum, who accepted the slides into the museum's collection.

The next CVHS General Meeting of the Society will be in January, 2010.

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February 26th-April 2nd

The Big Read featuring The Maltese Falcon

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