

Alaska State Museums Bulletin 58

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Interview with Addison Field, ASM Registrar

Addison Field is the new Registrar at the Alaska State Museum. Addison comes to the State Museum from the Juneau-Douglas City Museum, where he spent more than five years as Curator of Collections and Exhibits; prior to that, he was Executive Director at the Sheldon Museum in Haines. He holds degrees in museum studies from George Washington University and history from Virginia Military Institute. The following interview was conducted in mid-November after about a month on the job.

ASM: This is actually your second time working at the State Museum. Are you happy to be back?

Addison: I am very happy to be back. When I was here in 2004 I was just out of graduate school, full of energy and academic knowledge, but without a lot of hands on experience. Working here gave me a solid foundation to build the rest of my career on; now I hope I can give a little of what I've learned in the intervening years back to the organization that gave me my start.

ASM: Your first time around was in the Protection and Visitor Services, and you were working as the Executive Director while up in Haines. Your time at the Juneau Douglas City Museum was doing both exhibits and collections. So you have covered many different areas of the museum. Which one do you like best?

Addison: I've been lucky to have a broad and diverse experience in the field. Indeed, sometimes I feel like a battle-scarred old war horse, but in truth I've never met a museum job I didn't like. Every position I've had has been a positive learning experience and I've met so many wonderful people along the way that I could never list them all. I suppose I like this job best, because that is the one I am in right now.

ASM: What do you like about working in Alaska and working in the museum field in Alaska?

Addison: What I have enjoyed most about working in Alaska museums is what I have come to call “guerrilla museum work.” In my mind this is the situation where low cost, localized and sometimes unconventional means are utilized to provide for a basic museum need. Whether it is making an old building work for a new program, retrofitting a case from the local grocery store for a temporary exhibit or mobilizing a small army of volunteers and interns to complete a collections project, this is museum work at its most visceral. Museum people in Alaska meet challenges like these every day. I have enjoyed the opportunities I’ve had to take on projects and get important, necessary work done.

ASM: What do you think has prepared you most for your current job?

Addison: I think the most valuable job I’ve had in a museum was right here at the Alaska State Museum, when I worked at the visitor services desk right out of graduate school. I ran the cash register, gave tours, and made security checks. It wasn’t the glamorous part of the job, but it is what museums are all about. We are here to educate people, to show them our art and culture, to provide them with an experience. It’s the most important interface in the museum and I think it prepared me to understand the holistic nature of the beast.

ASM: What is your favorite part of your current job?

Addison: Right now I am really enjoying the intensive collections management aspects of the job as we begin preparation for the move. In a little over a year, we are going to have a six week window to move 32,000 objects. The challenge of preparing the collections for that move is very stimulating. Additionally, I’ve never worked with such a high volume loan program and there are a lot more variables that I am unaccustomed to dealing with. So I am having fun learning those new aspects of this job.

ASM: What do you see as the biggest challenges at the State Museum for the next few years?

Addison: I believe the biggest challenge for the State Museum in the next few years is preparing for the move. At this point we have fourteen months to get ready to move everything in the building. It’s going to be a big logistical dance and I am excited to be involved in it.

ASM: What advice would you give people still in school who want to eventually work in museums in Alaska?

Addison: Just get here; get into the state. There really is a close knit group of museum professionals in the State so the sooner you get here and get involved, the sooner

extraordinary opportunities will present themselves to you. I'm the perfect example of that. One of the first things I got to watch at the Tongass Historical Museum when I was an intern there a decade ago, was a totem pole raising following a treatment. Almost exactly five years later I was responsible for planning and organizing an almost identical project. Get here, get your feet on the ground, and the opportunities are endless.

ASM: Tell us something surprising about yourself that not many people know.

Addison: I have two daughters, 5 year old Lena and 3 year old Aurelia. Not so surprising in itself, but at this stage in their lives I would say that a surprise for me, is not necessarily an exciting thing. A surprise is the front door left open when the Taku winds are blowing, permanent marker all over the kitchen table, or a tootsie pop under my pillow at night. Again, not surprising, but I love being a father.



Addison Field

Ask ASM

Question: We are accessioning a large number of photographs from a single donor. There is everything from digital prints, color snapshots and traditional black and white. How should we go about classifying all the different types.

ASM: The Image Permanence Institute (IPI) in Rochester New York suggests using a Photographic Information Record (PIR). It is a standardized questionnaire that is being adopted in museums and other institutions around the world. You can download a copy here http://www.conservation-us.org/data/n_0001/resources/live/photograph%20information%20record_2009.pdf

In their recent newsletter, IPI said “The PIR is applicable to any photographic image, whether created using a 19th century technology such as albumen or 21st century technology such as inkjet.” IPI also recommends against using the term “Digital Print” as an identifier. There are actually several processes by which digital information in photographic form can be printed (inkjet, dye sublimation, electrophotography, etc.) and the print method can affect storage and preservation decisions. So when it comes to photography, being precise matters.

Shaking the Money Tree

IMLS

Museums for America

Deadline: January 15

Grant Amount: \$5000-\$150,000

Grant Period: Up to three years

Matching Requirement: 1:1

The web conference schedule for the FY2013 Museums for America grant program is as follows:

Wednesday, December 5, 2012, at 2 - 3 pm Eastern Time

Wednesday, December 19, 2012, at 2 - 3 pm Eastern Time

To participate in a web conference, a few minutes before it is scheduled to begin, log into:

[https://imls.megameeting.com/ωpage=guest&conid=MFA and NLG Webinar for Potential Applicants](https://imls.megameeting.com/ωpage=guest&conid=MFA_and_NLG_Webinar_for_Potential_Applicants)

Or here:

<http://www.imls.gov/applicants/detail.aspx?GrantId=11>

Then, using any touchtone phone, call 1-866-299-7945. When prompted to enter a passcode, enter 9910420#.

National Leadership Grants for Museums

Deadline: January 15, 2013

Grant Amount: \$50,000 - \$500,000

Grant Period: Up to three years

Matching Requirement: 1:1 requirement for budgets of \$250,000 and above

Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums

Web Conferencing with Program Staff

We also invite you to participate in one of two pre-application Web conferences to learn more about the program, ask questions, and listen to the questions and comments of other participants. The Web conference schedule for the FY 2013 Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums program is as follows:

Wednesday, December 5, 2012, at 3:30 – 4:30 pm Eastern Time

Wednesday, January 9, 2013, at 3 – 4 pm Eastern Time

[Click here for more information about this funding opportunity](#), including program guidelines, contacts, and Webinar access information.

Deadline: February 01, 2013

Grant Amount: \$10,000 to \$25,000

Grant Period: Up to one year

Matching Requirement: No matching requirements.

Spotlight on Grant in Aid

The Alaska Museum of Natural History was able to close a chapter in their capital projects upgrades for exhibit and collections. The museum recently, with combined Grant in Aid and Rasmuson Foundation grants, added fourteen new LED lit cases to exhibit and nine new collection lane cases. The museum now has a complete collections and exhibit storage capability for its extensive collections.



Storage cases



LED Lit case

Alaska Museums in the News

TANANA-YUKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- Lend-Lease brought cooperation, confrontation to Fairbanks

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Nov 12, 2012

<http://newsminer.com/bookmark/20813794-Lend-Lease-brought-cooperation-confrontation-to-Fairbanks>

Historical society sponsors anniversary ceremony and symposium on WWII Lend-Lease program.

AMERICAN BALD EAGLE FOUNDATION

- Apollo 14 astronaut supports Haines' eagle work

Capital City Weekly, Nov 28, 2012

http://www.capitalcityweekly.com/stories/112812/new_1070670010.shtml

Gala fundraiser features former astronaut at auction/dinner raising funds for the Foundation.

Alaska State Museum

- Recovery of the moon rocks
-

[Alaska's long-lost moon rocks back on display in Juneau](#)

Alaska Dispatch

On Thursday, the **Alaska State Museum** in Juneau will be displaying **Alaska's** long-lost moon rocks – some of the rarest rocks on planet Earth

[Alaska reclaims missing moon rocks](#)

Juneau Empire

[Long-missing moon rocks return to Alaska](#)

Anchorage Daily News

JUNEAU DOUGLAS CITY MUSEUM

- 'White House of the North' author to be featured at Saturday's Coffee and Collections

Juneau Empire, Dec 6, 2012

<http://juneauempire.com/art/2012-12-06/white-house-north-author-be-featured-saturdays-coffee-and-collections>

KENAI VISITORS AND CULTURAL CENTER

- Art Seen: Festive firs — Visitors center's halls decked out for tree auction

The Redoubt Reporter, Nov 21, 2012

<http://redoubtreporter.wordpress.com/2012/11/21/art-seen-festive-firs-visitors-centers-halls-decked-out-for-tree-auction/>

ALUTIIQ MUSEUM AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPOSITORY

Alutiiq items in Russian museum offer eye-opening view of early Alaska

Anchorage Daily News, Nov 24, 2012

<http://www.adn.com/2012/11/24/2702653/new-catalog-of-alutiiq-items-in.html#storylink=cpy>

Museum director helps publish catalog of artifacts housed at the Peter the Great Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in St. Petersburg, known as the Kunstkamera. This catalog provides both an accessible record of materials too vulnerable to travel as well as an inspirational reference for contemporary artists.

KODIAK MARITIME MUSEUM

- Project aims to document Alaska canneries

Anchorage Daily News, Dec 14, 2012

<http://www.adn.com/2012/12/14/2724346/project-aims-to-document-alaska.html>

Museum involved in new statewide project documenting every fish cannery built and operated in Alaska.

TALKEETNA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- A fresh look at the Historical Society

KTNA 88.9FM, Nov 30, 2012

<http://ktna.org/2012/11/30/a-fresh-look-at-the-historical-society/>

Talkeetna Historical Society gets updated as Jayme Spires, the Historic Sites Manager, re-arranges and re-organizes the rooms and the collections. Improved flow, more access, and better use of space are significant upshots of this latest development.

MUSEUM OF THE ALEUTIANS

- Museum budget goes to vote in January

The Dutch Harbor Fisherman, Dec 14, 2012

http://www.thedutchharborfisherman.com/article/1250museum_budget_goes_to_vote_in_january

This news item isn't about a museum event/project/initiative; instead, it deals with the nuts and bolts of passing budgets, operational costs, etc. It's not perhaps as exciting, but I thought I'd include it, in case you wanted to draw attention to the importance of public support, funding, etc.

Professional Development/Training Opportunities

Connecting to Collections (C2C)

Caring for Yesterday's Treasures—Today is a new series of free, online courses about the preservation of archival and historical collections. Tailored to the needs of staff and volunteers at libraries and archives, each course includes four to six interactive webinars presented by preservation experts. The instructors will address the specific questions that you and your fellow participants have about the care of collections at your institution. Each course will have its own Web page with handouts and links to additional resources. When the course concludes, participants will be able to continue the conversation with instructors and classmates via the *Connecting to Collections* Online Community.

Course Schedule

- [Collections Care Basics: Where Do I Begin?](#) – January 2013
- [Risk Evaluation: First Step in Disaster Planning](#) – February 2013
- [Protecting Your Collections: Writing a Disaster Response Plan](#) – March 2013
- [Caring for Digital Materials: Preventing a Digital Dark Age](#) – April 2013
- [Caring for Photographic Materials](#) – May 2013
- [Caring for Audiovisual Materials](#) – Fall 2013
- [Fundraising for Collections Care](#) – Fall 2013
- [Outreach Activities for Collections Care](#) – Fall 2013

Registration

Although registration is free of charge, we ask that participants submit a [permission form](#) signed by their supervisor to attend selected courses. Participants will earn a certificate of completion if they attend all the webinars in a course and complete simple homework assignments. Note the registration will close one week before the first webinar in each course.

REGISTER NOW!

Image Permanence Institute

Free webinars on the optimal preservation environment

The Image Permanence Institute is presenting a series of free webinars for collections care and facilities staff in cultural institutions is designed to enable collections care and facilities staff in cultural institutions to work together to achieve an optimal preservation environment—one that combines the best possible preservation of collections with the least possible consumption of energy, and is sustainable over time. This series is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities Education & Training grant program.

Webinar presentations will focus on broad environmental challenges and provide useful and effective suggestions for dealing with them. Webinars will be presented by IPI staff unless noted otherwise. Each webinar will be presented on a Wednesday from 2:00 to 3:30 Eastern Standard Time. You can get additional details and register for webinars at <http://ipisustainability.org/>.

January 9, 2013

The Evolution of New Standards – Defining an Optimal & Sustainable Preservation Environment in the 21st Century

February 6, 2013

Dealing with Winter Dryness

March 6, 2013

Understand the Role of Temperature-Relative Humidity-Dew Point in Creating a Sustainable Preservation Environment

April 3, 2013

Fundamentals of HVAC – What Shapes Optimal Preservation Environments

May 1, 2013

Best Practices for Collecting and Analyzing Environmental Data

June 5, 2013

Dealing with Summer Heat & Humidity

July 10, 2013

Investigate your HVAC System & Identify Potential Energy Savings – Guest Speaker Peter Herzog, Herzog/Wheeler & Associates, Energy Management Consultant

August 7, 2013

Practical Approaches to Environmental Control for Small Institutions – *Guest speaker, Richard Kerschner, Director of Preservation and Conservation, Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont*

September 4, 2013

Sustainable Preservation Practices—Key Team Activities

Professional Time Wasting on the Web

The best 15 minutes you can spend today

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIcwIH1vZ9w&list=PLsRNoUx8w3rPA1NEuC4rajDHM2F56eK8n>

I don't generally reblog but this is an interesting example about how damage can change the context of museum objects.

<http://collectionsconversations.wordpress.com/2012/12/14/to-show-or-not-to-show/>

KTUU Story and Video on the return of ASM's Moon Rocks

http://articles.ktuu.com/2012-12-06/state-museum_35655808

<http://www.ktuu.com/videogallery/73601629/News/Alaska-s-Moon-Rocks-return>

Have you seen the new Louvre outside of Paris?

<http://europaconcorsi.com/projects/117545-Mus-e-du-Louvre-Lens/images/3589488>

“There's a museum for that!” Some pretty cool images of RV's in the “RV Museum”

<http://www.rvmhhalloffame.org/>

Just another moon-rock-finding-story....

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/11/moon-rocks-from-apollo-11-are-discovered-in-minnesota-national-guard-storage-area/265604/>

