

Alaska State Museums Bulletin 60

January 2013

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Slam Project Breaks Ground!



“We are finally here!” With that rousing statement Linda Thibodeau, Director of Libraries Archives and Museums, opened the ground breaking festivities for the new State Libraries, Archives and Museums (SLAM) building in Juneau. Excitement was in the air as the ceremony commenced on Wednesday January 16 at noon. All the appropriate dignitaries were there, Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell, Juneau’s Mayor Merrill Sanford, legislators, commissioners, architects, builders, Elders, community representatives.



Linda Thibodeau opens the ceremonies. Photo by Damon Stubner

It was a rainy day in Juneau but that did not stop the community from turning out for the event. Linda was the “Mistress of Ceremonies” and introduced all of the speakers. Linda thanked not only those present who have helped get us to this point in the project, but also the entire state of Alaska for making this building possible.



The Crowd gathers. Photo by Damon Stubner

Juneau Mayor, Merrill Sanford was the first to speak. He reminisced about visiting the State Museum as a young boy growing up in Juneau and his memories of the stuffed moose and the stuffed bear on display. He said he supported this project because it was “Preserving the history for all the state’s children.”



Mayor Sanford speaks. Photo by Damon Stubner

After the Mayor, spoke Sorrel Goodwin. Sorrel is a member of the Auk Kwaan Big Dipper House whose ancestral lands stretched from downtown Juneau to Auk Bay and whose family

owned title to the land that the new SLAM building is being built upon. Sorrel spoke of the importance of such buildings and opportunities connecting the whole state. “We are all connected” is how he put it.



Sorrel Goodwin at the mic. *Photo by Damon Stubner*

Next to speak was Pat Kemp, Commissioner of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. He noted the universal support of the project from around the state and in the legislature. He said that the project should “theoretically go smoothly.” He also told an anecdote of how he use to climb on the howitzer when it was in the territorial museum.



Commissioner Kemp of DOTPF takes his turn. Photo by Damon Stubner

The final speaker was Mike Hanley who promptly stated that Commissioner Kemp would need to be supervised in the new museum to make sure he did not climb on the artifacts. He went on to extoll the virtues of the new facility which will double the size of the exhibits and triple the size of storage but be done for the same operational costs.



Commissioner Hanley of EED rounds out the speakers. Photo by Damon Stubner

Groundbreaking is about shoveling dirt but the weather did not cooperate. Undaunted, the action took place indoors in a specially made box of dirt and with a special golden shovel.



The official shovel! Photo by Damon Stubner

The first to shovel full of dirt was turned over by Phyllis DeMuth, who was a member of 1967 Alaska State Museum Committee that was instrumental in building the current museum building. Assisting her was Ron Inouye, the President of the Alaska Historical Society.



Phyllis DeMuth, and Ron Inouye get the first shovel. Photo by Damon Stubner

After that, everyone wanted to be a part of the action. Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell and the Juneau legislative delegation took their turns.



Lt. Gov. Mead Treadwell and the Juneau Delgation. Photo by Scott Carrlee

While the festivities were happening on the inside of the museum, the real shoveling was going on outside.



The Real Groundbreaking has begun! Photo by Scott Carrlee

For more information on the SLAM project click here <http://museums.alaska.gov/LAM/slam.html>

Ask ASM



Question: We had water get into the basement of the museum after a bad rain storm. I heard you are supposed to leave the lights on but then I read somewhere else that air circulation is more important and you are supposed to turn the lights off. Which is it?

ASM: This is a great question and there has been confusion even amongst the staff here at the ASM. So, through a former ASM conservation intern Christa Pack, who wrote about mold in Bulletin 51 <http://museumbulletin.wordpress.com/2012/04/18/alaska-state-museums-bulletin-51/#1>, we were able to get a statement from a mycologist (person who studies fungi).

"Regarding mold after storms, the biggest key issue is water and saturated building materials, which can often stay wet inside long after the surface is dry. Light will not inhibit mold growth unless it is UV. However, most fungi need light for sporulation, so keeping lights off can reduce the number of spores produced by fungi and subsequent airborne spread. Good air circulation is important for drying, but heavy air movement by fans will spread spores. So, the key is getting material dry."

I think the confusion might come from the fact that UV or black lights are used to kill mold in some instances. But normal lights do not have enough UV to do the job. So it looks like it is better to keep them off so that the mold does not create spores.

Spotlight on Grant in Aid



Naomi Szpot was an intern at the Seldovia Museum this past summer. One of the major projects she worked on was to repair the museum's 13 shadow boxes that house stone points. Some of the artifacts in the boxes were falling off their backings and needed remounting. She researched different mounting methods and found that using colored threads to reattach the artifacts would work best. Naomi removed the artifacts from the backing and cleaned off the adhesive that was used to attach them to the shadow box backing. In her time at the Seldovia Museum, she was able to get all but two shadowboxes finished but had trained the new museum curator how to do the work and the last two boxes will be done before reopening in the spring of 2013 for the season.



Naomi also helped with work on the museum's policies and procedures for proper museum standards. There was some fine tuning to do with them at the point of her departure at the end of July and they are now being sent to the Tribal Council for approval in January of 2013. By having these policies and procedures in place, staff will now be able to more clearly communicate to community members what the museum can accept and take care of in the limited capacity at the present time.

This grant helped the Seldovia Museum better serve its community by being able to have someone be a spokesperson and educator for the museum, by being visible during the summer when visitors were coming to see our museum. The intern worked on the shadow boxes in an area where visitors could watch her and ask questions. The museum staff is better educated on how to take care of what is in the museum and what can be accepted in the future to take care of in perpetuity. This has been a great learning experience for the museum staff who are moving forward with being a better museum and someday maybe even being accredited. It is with help from the Alaska State Museums that has made all this possible.

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

- [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/>.

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

Interesting website on conservation

<http://lw.lsa.umich.edu/kelsey/ConAntiq/intro.html>

Cool video on the Lend Lease program

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WsLiA6yGRM>

Navigating a Changing Economy: A New Normal for Museums?

<http://engagingplaces.net/2013/01/15/navigating-a-changing-economy-a-new-normal-for-museums/>

Great video of about the curator of an exhibit on Nunavut art that is at the Alaska State Museums right now and is traveling around the state. Well worth watching

http://yukonartscentre.com/calendar/event/nunavuts_culture_on_cloth/

And while you are thinking about Nunavut art, check out Nunavut Gangnam Style

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bk-vcCwq280>

Article on the Science on at Sphere like the one at the State Museum

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/08/science/digital-globes-a-new-way-to-view-the-world.html?hp&_r=0

Making a difference in Iraq

<http://www.udel.edu/udaily/2013/jan/iraq-conservation-012313.html>

Social media policies at non-profits New York Times article on the legal issues involved

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/22/technology/employers-social-media-policies-come-under-regulatory-scrutiny.html?_r=1&

When is art so damaged that it is no longer art?

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/culturebox/2012/11/what_happens_to_art_that_gets_damaged_no_longer_art_at_columbia_reviewed.html

Interesting video about conservators fixing art damaged by hurricane Sandy

<http://www.artinfo.com/video/fixing-art-damaged-by-sandy/851253>

Beautiful historic photographs of survival in the north

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2253029/Historic-photographs-document-Alaskas-Inuit-Eskimos-survived-worlds-coldest-winters.html?ito=feeds-newsxml>

Sad news from the Field Museum in Chicago

<http://www.adn.com/2012/12/19/2728972/field-museum-cutting-staff-overhauling.html>

Art handlers humor

<http://arthandlin.tumblr.com/>