

Bulletin

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State Museum Welcomes New Conservator

Scott Carroll likes to travel. The new conservator at the Alaska State Museum comes to Alaska from the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), one of the Smithsonian museums in Washington, D.C., but prior to that he has worked in such far away places as Wuerzburg, Germany and Ankara, Turkey.

At NMAI, Scott's specialty was working with Native American material culture, something, which attracted him to the job in Alaska. When asked why he would want to leave the Smithsonian and move to Alaska, he said: "Basically I wanted to work with a beautiful collection in a beautiful location, that is why the Alaska State Museum in Juneau is right for me. I grew up in a rural area of the mid-west and have been missing that kind of environment ever since I started working in museums. Most museum conservation jobs are in the big cities in the East. Professionally, I was looking for a job where I could make a difference, a museum with a strong focus on Native American collections and a staff that is dedicated but still has fun doing their work.

"For my personal life, I was looking for someplace to live where I could be outdoors and do some hiking and climbing. [Just before starting work late last summer, Scott squeezed in an ice-climbing seminar on Mt. Baker.] I thought the mix of mountains and Alaska's unique Native cultures and cultural materials would be interesting and challenging. I also enjoy working with small museums, showing how to implement good preventive conservation measures, making the most of what you have at hand. I liked the idea that much of the job was providing outreach services to the state. Hopefully this will give me the opportunity to travel to some far off places in the state of Alaska."

Prior to his employment at the Smithsonian, Scott worked as the Senior Field Conservator at an archaeological site in Turkey and as a contract conservator at the Peabody Museum at Harvard, the Arizona State Museum in Tucson and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh. Scott received his MA with a Certificate for Advanced Study in Conservation from the State University of New York in Buffalo. During the MA program, he interned at the Maine State Museum, the Bishop Museum in Hawaii, and the Arizona State Museum. Before entering the program he interned at the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Pracher Conservation Studio in Wuerzburg, Germany.

His undergraduate degree was in Germanic Studies at Indiana University in Bloomington. Describing how he first became interested in conservation, he says: "I was looking for a summer job in Germany. My goal was to improve my German. I was lucky and I ended up working for a company that restored ceiling frescoes and altar paintings in small churches around Northern Bavaria. I thought this was a pretty cool way to make a living. I still think that."

For the past 10 years Scott has been actively publishing on topics of interest in the field of conservation. He is a co-author of the recently published laboratory manual, *Material Characterization Tests for Art and Archaeology*, published by Archetype books of London. Scott has also had the opportunity to lecture at conferences in Copenhagen, Denmark; Tokyo, Japan, and many cities throughout the US. Although Scott started his new job in August, he had previous commitments that recently took him to the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies in Illinois to teach a course

on materials testing, and to La Plata, Argentina to teach a class on general Preventive Conservation at the Museo de la Plata.

Scott is quickly becoming familiar with his new environment in Juneau, which means a much smaller laboratory space and a significantly larger landscape of responsibility. As Alaska's only museum staff conservator, and in keeping with the mission of the State Museum, Scott's work is largely targeted at other museums around the state. In his first three months on the job he has been overhauling and updating the conservation lab in Juneau and responding to numerous inquiries from museums around the state. He also attended the Museums Alaska Conference in Ketchikan and began meeting some of the museum community face-to-face.

Scott looks forward to seeing more of Alaska and Alaska's museums as his new position unfolds. Scott can be reached at (907) 465-4806, or toll free at 1-888-913-6873, or by email at: scott_carroll@eed.state.ak.us.

Conservation, Restoration, Preservation; Which is it?

By Scott Carroll, Conservator, Alaska State Museum

Since this is my first opportunity to write for the Bulletin, I thought it might be a good idea to give my definitions of the terms: Conservation, Restoration and Preservation. These three words are used often in museum circles and sometimes the exact meaning is not quite clear.

In my view, conservation is the umbrella term. It is really any activity in the museum that is involved directly with caring for the objects. Conservation encompasses both restoration, those activities that seek to return a damaged object to its original form, and preservation, those activities which are involved in keeping an object from deteriorating further. I saw an interesting quote on restoration the other day. It went something like this: "Restoration is an attempt to return an object to a state where normal preservation activities can resume." I thought this was good because it emphasized the fact that normal preservation activities are also a part of the plan.

If conservation is caring for collections then it is not necessarily only the conservator who does conservation. I have seen many museums with good conservation programs but without a conservator. Most of their activities, however, would fall under the preservation side of conservation, and are often called "Preventive Conservation." Preventive conservation is one kind of preservation activity. It is usually aimed at stopping or limiting future damage and much of it could be classified as common sense. Things like controlling the environment (light levels, temperature and relative humidity), wearing gloves to keep from staining objects, lining shelves and drawers with foam padding to protect against impact damage, checking for pest infestations, keeping objects dust free, proper handling, and even a good disaster plan can all be considered preventive conservation. All these activities and many more can go a long way to protecting artifacts from unnecessary damage.

There is also an invasive side to preservation. That is where a treatment is necessary and methods or materials are applied to halt the active deterioration of an object. This is rarely needed as often as people think. When it is necessary, however, then that is the time to call on a conservator. A treatment where an artifact will undergo a certain amount of change, even if it is for the good, must only be undertaken with the utmost concern for the integrity of the object and also the maker of that object. Some specialized knowledge of materials and methods is essential for a good treatment.

Probably more important, though, is knowledge of the cultural history of an object. Some objects are culturally sensitive and it may not be appropriate to change that object. There are also times when culturally applied coatings have to be protected during the treatment. Many objects, both in museums and out, have been damaged by well meaning attempts to halt perceived deterioration.

Sensitive surfaces can be altered or damaged and information about the piece can be lost. All of these things must be taken into consideration when designing an appropriate treatment.

It has been my experience that very few objects, even old ones, are really going to self-destruct as long as they are kept in a stable environment. I would venture to say that most damaged objects, the ones that are perceived as needing some sort of treatment, are in reality quite stable. The damage has already been done. They may not be aesthetically pleasing or they may not look like what they are supposed to look like, but they are stable. Many objects that people perceive as “needing conservation” do not need a preservation treatment to be stable. They might need restoration, but that is based on a complex set of criteria and ethics, different in many ways than preservation treatments. What are these criteria and ethical considerations for restoration? Well that is a whole other article, so stayed tuned.

AASLH WORKSHOP SERIES

The American Association for State and Local History has announced their workshop series for 2001. These workshops include a carefully designed two-and-a-half day schedule of interactive sessions, a team of experienced faculty, and a notebook of curriculum materials that will assist your learning for many months following the workshop or institute. The host sites offer both warm hospitality and stimulating learning environments that are often used as case studies or learning laboratories.

To register or receive a workshop brochure by mail, contact Tara White at AASLH by email: white@aaahl.org or call (615) 320-3203. The workshop information, agendas, and registration information also appear on our website at www.aaahl.org. *Register early as space is limited to provide a quality learning experience!*

Workshops coming up on the West Coast:

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR THE SECOND IN COMMAND

April 19-21, 2001: New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, Las Cruces, NM

Faculty: Harold and Susan Skramstad

Participants will be: members of top management teams at state and private institutions

Fee: \$295 for AASLH members

INTERPRETATION ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

July 26-28, 2001: Southern Oregon Historical Society, Medford, OR

Faculty: Tom Woods and Candace Matelic

Participants will be: new and mid-career professionals and dedicated volunteers

Fee: \$250 for AASLH members

Other workshops. Contact AASLH for more details:

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT AND PRACTICES

March 15-17, 2001: North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh, NC

July 19-21, 2001: Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, VT

Fee: \$250 for AASLH members

HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM ISSUES AND OPERATIONS

April 5-7, 2001: Historic Annapolis Foundation, William Pace House & Garden, Annapolis, MD

June 21-23, 2001: Minnesota Historical Society, Ramsey House, St. Paul, MN

Fee: \$250 for AASLH members

Upcoming AAM Workshops

Legal Problems of Museum Administration

March 22-24, 2001 - Washington, D.C.

For additional information, contact ALI-ABA's Courses of Study at (800) 253-6397, extension 1630; (215) 243-1630.

Co-sponsored by the American Law Institute-American Bar Association (ALI-ABA) and the Smithsonian Institution and with the cooperation of the American Association of Museums.

Exemplary Interpretation: Characteristics and Best Practices

June 15-16, 2001 - Portland, OR

This interactive program introduces the best of what the field knows about interpretation based on a two-year AAM study. Discover the characteristics of exemplary interpretation. Use specially designed self-study tools to improve your organization's interpretation practice.

\$325 AAM member / \$475 non-member. Register by April 29.

Current Issues in Museum Management Seminar

September 7-9, 2001 - San Francisco, Ca.

Join us on the West Coast for the eleventh annual seminar focused on current finance, human resources, and general administrative issues in museums.

In cooperation with the AAM Museum Management Committee.

For information on these and other workshops, contact: American Association of Museums, Professional Education Programs at (202) 289-9114, email: seminars@aam-us.org, or visit [AAM's website](#).

Alutiiq Museum Honored with Award at White House

On December 20, three museums: the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository in Kodiak, Alaska, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, and the Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia in Beckley, West Virginia were awarded the prestigious Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Award for Museum Service. The award was presented by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. The three museums joined only 19 other museums nationwide that have received the award.

"This national honor is a tribute to the power of museums to engage children, families, and communities, in towns and in cities all across America," noted the First Lady.

"This award is the only national recognition of the extraordinary public service role museums play in our communities," said Beverly Sheppard, IMLS Acting Director. "Each of these museums has an inspiring story to tell."

The Alutiiq Museum is dedicated to serving the Alutiit, a Native Alaskan people whose culture on Kodiak Island dates back more than 7,500 years. In 1987, the Kodiak Area Native Association's (KANA) Culture and Heritage program resolved that the exploration and celebration of Alutiiq heritage was essential to the health of Alutiiq communities. In 1993, the dream of developing a state-of-the-art repository and regional research facility to promote awareness of Alutiiq history, language, and arts was realized when KANA received a \$1.5 million grant from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council. The Museum is governed by the Alutiiq Heritage Foundation which represents eight tribal organizations. The Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository enriches their communities through innovative educational programs:

The IMLS cited the Alutiiq Museum's work in community archaeological projects and research, language preservation and arts activities in making the award.

"We are proud to be recognized for these achievements and hope that our collaborative programming will serve as a model for other organizations seeking to promote cultural awareness," said Sven Haakanson, Jr., Executive Director of the Museum. "Since the Museum's founding, the Alutiit of Kodiak have begun to truly recognize the power of their heritage. It is the Museum's honor to be selected for this award, as it recognizes the importance of heritage exploration and honors our goals of sharing, promoting, and teaching the Alutiiq culture. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our community, Alutiiq traditions will continue to shine brightly."

New RAP Web Site Provides Information from Conservation, Preservation Centers

The Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP) announces a new centralized source for information and education on collections conservation and preservation, now available on the Web. The start-up of the Web site is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal grant-making agency that fosters leadership and innovation by supporting museums and libraries. Museums, libraries, archives, and other repositories of cultural heritage are invited to visit the joint Web site, at<www.rap-arcc.org>, for comprehensive access to the publications and services of the nation's nonprofit regional conservation centers and preservation field services. The site is geared to support training of staff and to provide a ready reference for conservation and preservation professionals.

The Web site provides a guide to the Regional Alliance for Preservation (RAP), 15 nonprofit centers located throughout the United States. It includes a bibliography of hundreds of technical publications created by the participating centers with links to the online text or to the creating center. Some of the

centers have received support from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to create individual technical leaflets that appear or are referenced on the site.

Users can search the site for information about their specific conservation and preservation needs. Disaster response, pest management, environmental control, and staff training are only a few of the topics. Site users can locate educational leaflets on conservation treatment of a wide variety of media, including ethnographic objects, paintings, books, furniture, textile, and photographic materials.

DOT-MUSEUM (.museum) GAINS APPROVAL IN EXPANSION OF INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES

At the end of November the Museum Domain Management Association (MuseDoma) announced the approval of its proposal to establish .museum as a restricted top-level domain name on the Internet. The approval was made by the board of directors of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the nonprofit organization that provides oversight for domain names. MuseDoma's plan will give museums the possibility of registering Internet addresses with a dot-museum suffix and will allow Internet users to recognize this as a sign of authenticity, ensuring that sources of information about cultural and scientific heritage are verifiable.

MuseDoma is a newly formed nonprofit trade association created to obtain, maintain, and operate a restricted, top-level domain for and in the best interests of the worldwide museum community. It was founded by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the J. Paul Getty Trust and will have an open membership. The .museum domain will be restricted, with eligibility limited to museums and their professional organizations based on ICOM's definition of a museum, which continues to be discussed and modified as the museum field evolves.

ICOM is a non-governmental organization established in 1946 with over 16,000 members. It defines a museum as "a nonprofit-making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits, for purposes of study, education, and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment."

MuseDoma stressed, that in accordance with the new international standards (which aim to stamp out the current "cyber-squatting" and commercial profiteering in domain naming), they will NOT follow the previous "first come, first served" practice in domain naming, but will instead evaluate all possibilities and claims for any particularly popular prospective domain name. So anyone hoping to make a fortune out of rushing through registrations of www.national.museum or "www.the-very-best.museum" will be out of luck!

(Visit www.musedoma.org regularly to keep up with the latest developments.)

Alaska Native Arts Marketing, A Handbook for Expanding Audiences and Markets for Your Art

This 92 page handbook written by Claudia J. Bach was designed to provide information for Alaska Native artists on reaching new audiences and expanding markets for their artwork. The materials presented offer ideas and tools appropriate for all artists. Topics include how to develop a portfolio, document artwork, develop business relationships with galleries and shops, understanding sales arrangements and pricing, and other resources.

Price: \$12 by mail or \$10 at the ASCA office.

Available from: The Alaska State Council on the Arts

E-mail: info@aksca.org

To order by phone (907)269-6610 or toll-free in Alaska 1(888)ARTS-424.

This issue's featured museum web site: is [Global Museum](#). A weekly museum magazine on the web.

Grantsmanship Center Grant Writing Workshop in Bethel

April 2-6, 2001 - Bethel - Sponsored by City of Bethel, Parks & Recreation

Book early! This workshop coincides with the Camai Festival, another great reason to visit Bethel.

If you would like some top-level training in grant writing, this is the place to get it. The Grantsmanship Center provides training opportunities throughout the nation on an on-going basis, and periodically they are in Alaska, once or twice a year at different locations.

This is the training program, first offered in 1972 and continuously updated, that began a new era in training for nonprofit agencies. Designed for both novice and experienced grantseekers, this workshop covers all aspects of searching for grants, writing grant proposals, and negotiating with funding sources. The program will teach you to use TGCI's proposal writing format, the most widely used in the world. During the workshop you will search out funding sources and, as part of a team, you will develop a proposal for your own agency or help a classmate develop one. You will leave this workshop with new skills and the ability to apply those skills to the needs of your own organization. More than 30,000 nonprofit and government agency staff have attended these demanding, 5-day workshops. For further information and to enroll online, see the Grantsmanship Center website. For further information contact the City of Bethel, P.O. Box 388, Bethel, AK 99559, Phone 907-543-2088, (Betty Twitchell).

You can re-do your MAP surveys on our nickel, says IMLS/AAM.

Have you had a Museum Assessment Survey (MAP) done in the past, and feel like things have changed such that you'd like to do one again? Now you can do so without having to pay for the whole thing yourself. Any of the three assessments can now be taken a second time if seven years have elapsed, and you can receive IMLS grant monies for the survey. MAP grants are non-competitive and first come first served. The IMLS is also contemplating a new, fourth category, which will focus on governance issues.

If you'd like more information on MAP and CAP programs, contact Ken DeRoux at the Alaska State Museum, 1-888-913-6873.