

# Bulletin

ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS

Alaska State Museum, Juneau • Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka

**M**useums around the state will receive some needed improvements following the distribution of this year's Grants-in-Aid. In July, the Alaska State Museum announced the awarding of grants to 15 institutions for projects that will upgrade collection storage and exhibition, as well as address other museum issues.

Out of 23 applicants seeking a total of more than \$170,000, 15 were selected for grants totaling \$105,600. Those receiving grants are:

- **Alutiq Museum, Kodiak**, \$6,867 for an inventory and improved storage of collection records;
- **Carrie McLain Museum, Nome**, \$2,000 to support a Museum Assessment (MAP 1) survey;
- **Cordova Historical Society**, \$6,864 for continuing a photo collection cataloging project and developing a research handbook;
- **Eagle Historical Society & Museums**, \$7,737 for the replacement of large format exhibit photographs;
- **Juneau-Douglas City Museum**, \$9,787 to design and install a modular children's room exhibit;
- **Kenai Convention & Visitors' Bureau**, \$6,256 for the inspection and cleaning of artifacts;
- **Kodiak Historical Society**, \$3,299 for new office equipment;
- **Museum of the Aleutians**, \$7,700 to build a wall to separate the office from collection storage;
- **Museums Alaska**, \$9,940 for a statewide professional development conference;
- **Pratt Museum, Homer**, \$10,000 for oral history, video and web components of new *Kachemak Bay* exhibit;
- **Sheldon Museum, Haines**, \$10,000 to upgrade the collection management program and catalog archival material and photos;
- **Skagway Museum & Archives**, \$2,742 for the purchase of environmental monitoring equipment;
- **Soldotna Historical Society & Museum**, \$10,000 to upgrade the electrical systems in two buildings;
- **Talkeetna Historical Society**, \$3,140 to purchase collection management software and a digital camera;
- **Valdez Museum**, \$9,268 to catalog and re-house the museum annex collection.

## FY 2003 Grant- in-Aid Awards Announced

**I**n March 1927, a middle school student at the Jessie Lee Mission Home in Seward received a telegram that left him pale and speechless: he was the winner of a territory-wide contest to design a flag for Alaska. Benny Benson's simple design, featuring the Big Dipper constellation against a dark blue background, is now recognized by many as one of the most elegant of all state flags as well as an exemplar of good flag design.

The inspiring story of Benson and his flag is told in *Eight Stars of Gold: The Story of Alaska's Flag* an exhibition that commemorates the flag's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The

exhibition opened at the Alaska State Museum in January and is now touring the state. It is scheduled to visit other Alaska communities over the next two years. Online educational materials that complement the traveling exhibition are available through the Museum's Web site at [www.museums.state.ak.us](http://www.museums.state.ak.us), as well as on a CD-ROM, which is being made available to libraries and museums.

*Eight Stars of Gold* was researched and curated by India Spartz, who also wrote

the catalog that accompanies the exhibition. The catalog delves into the story behind the flag



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## Alaska's Flag: The Rest of the Story

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## Alaska's Flag (continued)

contest. In 1926 territorial Governor George A. Parks visited the U.S. Postal Service building in Washington, D.C. There, flags from other states and territories waved in the breeze, but Alaska was not represented because the territory had no official flag. This inspired Parks to arrange a flag



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MS 14-1-3-26

Contest entries that were not destined to become Alaska's flag.

design contest sponsored by the Alaska branch of the American Legion. The contest was open to all Alaska schoolchildren in grades 7-12. Students submitted a total of 142 entries.

Although there were many creative concepts, Benson's simple yet meaningful layout was unanimously declared the winner. Benny wrote: "The blue field is for the Alaska sky and the forget-me-not, an Alaskan flower. The North Star is for the future state of Alaska, the most northerly in the union. The Dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolizing strength (sic)." Benson later worried about the spelling error, but the judges overlooked it.

Benson's flag helped rally the territory for the long and difficult campaign for statehood. It also inspired

Marie Drake, secretary to the Commissioner of Education, to write a poem that later provided the lyrics for the song *Alaska's Flag* which is still

performed at many official state functions. Elinor Dusenberry wrote music to accompany Drake's lyrics.

A combination of factors led to the flag exhibition: the flag's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary; the existence of Benson's original submission at the State Museum; and the fact that the Alaska State Library Historical Collections still possessed the other original entries. The exhibit features 34 of these other designs submitted by Alaska students, including alternate designs submitted by Benson. Also included in the exhibit are: a handmade flag made by Benson, a miniature Alaska flag taken to the moon by Apollo 17, the gold pocket watch that was the first prize award in the contest, sheet music and recordings of *Alaska's Flag* and other materials.

The upcoming itinerary for the *Eight Stars of Gold* traveling exhibition is:

Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak  
June 3 – August 24, 2002

Museum of the Aleutians, Unalaska  
Sept. 6 – December 1, 2002

Sheldon Museum, Haines  
January 19 – March 31, 2003

Pratt Museum, Homer  
April 18 – June 1, 2003

Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka  
June 13 – Sept. 24, 2003

Tongass Historical Society, Ketchikan  
October 3 – November 30, 2003

Additional venues will follow.

## Two Museums Receive MAP Grants

THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM and Library Services (IMLS) announced recently that two Alaska museums would be receiving Museum Assessment Program grants in the current cycle. They are: the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository - Kodiak, for a governance assessment; and the Clausen Memorial Museum - Petersburg, for a collection management survey. MAP grants are \$1,775 and pay to have an outside assessor visit the museum and provide an evaluation.

IMLS and the American Association of

Museums also announced that starting this fall IMLS would offer **one** annual grant deadline to request MAP funding. The new deadline is December 1, which means the next MAP deadline will be December 1, 2002. Since this is a Sunday, applications postmarked Monday, December 2, 2002 will be accepted. IMLS funds eligible applications on a first come, first served basis, and the next awards will be announced in April, 2003. For all of the facts, click on: <http://www.imls.gov/whatsnew/current/041002.htm>.

## FY 2003 IMLS Grant Program Booklet Available Now

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Each year IMLS awards millions of dollars in grants to museums, libraries, professional museum and library service organizations, and museum-library partnerships. IMLS encourages all eligible museums and libraries to begin planning their grant applications for FY 2003 funding. For a FY 2003 Grant Programs booklet, contact IMLS at 1100 Pennsylvania Ave.,

NW, Washington, D. C. 202-606-8536, email: [imlsinfo@imls.gov](mailto:imlsinfo@imls.gov).

A PDF version of the booklet is available at: <http://www.imls.gov/pubs/pdf/2003ProgramsFinal.pdf>.

Grant application deadlines begin as early as October 15, 2002 for Conservation Project Support.

**T**he first of what promises to be an ongoing series of exhibitions highlighting the best contemporary Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian art opened June 5 at the Alaska State Museum. *Art & At.óow* opened on the eve of *Celebration 2002*, a large biennial gathering of Southeast Alaska Native dance groups that has become a major cultural event. The exhibition is organized by the Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Alaska State Museum and is on display through September 28.

The selection committee featured internationally renowned Haida artist Robert Davidson as head juror. Also on the committee were: Haida weaver Delores Churchill; Tlingit carver Nathan Jackson; Aldona Jonaitis, Director of the University of Alaska Museum, and Suzie Jones, Deputy Director of the Anchorage Museum of History and Art. The committee reviewed 86 entries from 36 artists. They selected 18 pieces for the final exhibit, which also includes several classic examples of Northwest Coast carving and weaving from the State Museum's collection as selected by Davidson.

Artist Clarissa Hudson won the Grand Prize Award for *Copper Woman*, a complete set of woven regalia based on traditional Chilkat and Raven's Tail designs. The regalia includes a capelet, apron, robe, headdress and bag. Other top awards were: First Place to Richard Beasley for *Owl and Humpback Shakee't*; Second Place to Preston Singletary for *Raven Hat*, and Third Place to Teri Rofkar for *Spruce Root Basket, Northern Style Cooking*.

Additional pieces selected for the exhibition are: *Eagle Mask - Bronze* by Mick Beasley; *Raven Shakee't* by Archie Cavanaugh; *Human Portrait Mask* by Michael Dangeli; *Bird* by Michael Dangeli; *Short Stories* by Yvette Lynn Diltz; *Cedar Basket* by Frances M. Jackson; *Kaach.adi Hat* by Norman L. Jackson;

*Spruce Root Bottle* by Opal Lee Olsen; *Mt. Fairweather Bulge Bowl* by William Daniel Pfeifer; *Traditional Ceremonial Bib* by Florence Marks Sheakley; *Beaded Motif - Eagle/Whales* by Florence Marks Sheakley; *Cedar Bottle* by Jeffrey P. Sheakley, Jr.; *Raven Tail Belt* by Rita Adams Sheakley; and *Raven's Wing Mask* by Preston Singletary.

Juror Robert Davidson is a carver and jewelry designer who is also known for his serigraphy and his argillite and metal sculpture. He is a descendant of Charles Edenshaw, one of the most well-known Haida artists, and he apprenticed with Bill Reid, a prominent contemporary Haida artist.

Beyond his activities as an artist, Davidson reintroduced and maintains a master/apprentice training system, and leads the Rainbow Creek Dancers, who performed at the opening reception for the exhibit. Davidson was born in Hydaburg, Alaska and now lives near Vancouver, B.C. He has received numerous awards including two honorary doctorates, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award, and the Order of Canada.

Davidson conducted a workshop and a critique for all artists who entered the juried show as well as other interested artists. It is anticipated the exhibit will become a regular event every two years, coinciding with *Celebration*.

*"Copper Woman"*  
by Clarissa Hudson.

# Art & At.óow The Sealaska Juried Art Show

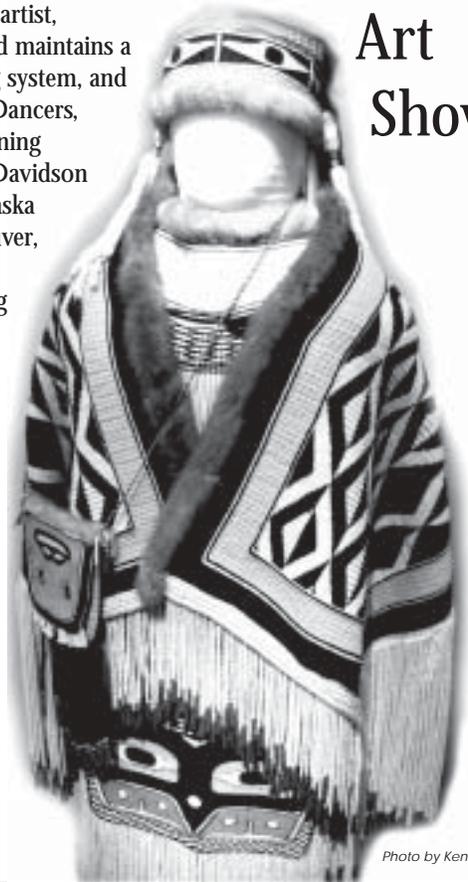


Photo by Ken DeRoux

## Preventive Conservation Videos

THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUM has 19 videotapes on preventive conservation available for loan to Alaska museums, historical societies or related organizations. Users may request up to three tapes at one time. Loans are for one week and the user is responsible for return postage. The tapes are about ten to fifteen minutes each, and were collaboratively produced by the Centre de conservation du Québec, the Canadian Conservation Institute and the Université du Québec à Montréal.

To borrow any of these videotapes contact: Ken DeRoux, Curator of Museum Services, at 1-888-913-6873.

The titles are:

1. Introduction to Preventive Conservation
2. Light and Lighting
3. Relative Humidity and Temperature
4. Pollutants
5. Integrated Pest Management
6. Packing & Transportation of Museum Objects
7. Storage
8. Protecting Objects on Exhibition
9. Disaster Contingency Planning
10. Closing a Seasonal Museum
11. The Condition Report
12. Handling Museum Objects
13. The Care of Paintings
14. The Care of Works on Paper
15. The Care of Sculptures
16. The Care of Metal Objects
17. The Care of Furniture
18. The Care of Textiles
19. The Care of Museum Objects

# Peter Corey Retires

**T**his Spring the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum honored Peter Corey, Curator of Collections at the Sheldon Jackson Museum, who retired May 1 after almost three decades of museum service in Alaska.

A retirement party for Corey was held on Saturday, April 27, at the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and was attended by friends and co-workers.

Corey came to Alaska from the Cooperstown Indian Museum in New York, and began his tenure with the state in 1969 as Curator of Collections with the Alaska State Museum, which had just moved into its new building in Juneau.

Corey left Alaska in 1972 and served as guest curator at the Peabody Museum at Harvard University.

Corey returned to Alaska, where he worked as Curator at the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan for a short time. In 1977 Corey moved to the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, where he remained the past 24 years.

Karen Crane, Director of Libraries, Archives

and Museums, and Bruce Kato, Chief Curator of the Alaska State Museums, praised Corey's work in preserving Alaska Native material culture.

"One of the highest tributes that we might point out about Mr. Corey is his dedication and persistence in working with the Native communities of Alaska in their goal of preserving their rich heritage and sharing it with people around the world," the officials said in a joint letter of commendation.

Corey's job has been the care and development of a collection of Alaska Native ethnographic materials that is unique in Alaska and perhaps unique in the world. The heart of this collection is some 5,000 items gathered by the Rev. Dr. Sheldon Jackson, the Museum's founder, more than 100 years ago. The Museum continues to collect selected items to round out the collection.

Instead of traveling thousands of miles to purchase and trade for items as Dr. Jackson did, Corey has more recently used the Internet to locate important artifacts.

In addition to his duties as Curator, Corey is also known for his scholarship on Tlingit spruce root basketry. Corey told an interviewer last year that, after his retirement, he looks forward to returning to the Museum to continue his research. "When the phone rings then," he said, laughing, "I won't have to answer it."



Photo by Mark Daughneise

*Nathan Jackson and Peter Corey share a laugh at Peter's retirement party.*

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