

Alaska State Museums BULLETIN

An Information Source for Alaska's Museum Community

State Museum Brings Interns to Alaska's Small Museums

Interns, interns everywhere. Summer 2008 marked the beginning of a three-year pilot project to sponsor summer interns at museums and cultural centers around Alaska. The Alaska State Museums received an Institute of Museum and Library Services 21st Century Museum Professionals grant, one of only ten grants funded that year. The project will bring graduate student museum studies interns to Alaska in 2009 and 2010 as well.

In 2008, the 10-week internships began in late May and early June and took place all over Alaska. For the summer of 2009, six more interns will come to Alaska and work at the following museums:

- *Museum of the Aleutians in Unalaska* -
- *Aviation Heritage Museum of Anchorage* -
- *Valdez Museum*
- *Kenai Museum and the Soldotna Historical Society*
- *Dorothy Page Museum in Wasilla* -
- *Russian Orthodox Church Museum, Anchorage* -



EAGLE: Sara Schuyler, from the Cooperstown (New York) graduate program in museum studies, assisted the Eagle Historical Society and Museum with entering their catalog records into their PastPerfect data base. Photo: Sara Schuyler



KODIAK: Elizabeth Manekin from Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island) split her time between two museums on Kodiak Island. She helped the Alutiiq Museum prepare for accreditation and she worked with the Baranov Museum to develop a collections plan. Photo: Elizabeth Manekin



ANCHORAGE: Jacqueline Fernandez from Tufts University (Massachusetts) worked at the Alaska Museum of Natural History, helping them with exhibits and developing educational programming. Photo: Jacqueline Fernandez



VALDEZ: Hayley Chambers from the University of North Carolina (Greensboro) assisted the Valdez Museum and Historical Archive with re-cataloging items that had been moved during a storage renovation project. Photo: Andrew Goldstein



SITKA AND ELFIN COVE: Katherine Fox, from Seton Hall University (New Jersey), traveled to both Sitka and the small fishing village of Elfin Cove. In Sitka she helped the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center properly store their collection, and at the Elfin Cove Community Museum she set up their PastPerfect collection database and helped with their exhibits. Photo: Katherine Fox



CORDOVA: Ashley Kircher from San Francisco State University (California) went to Cordova and worked with both the Alaska Cultural Center and the Cordova Historical Museum. She participated in a number of projects including cataloging collections, preparing exhibits and scanning photographs. Photo: Ashley Kircher

GRANT IN AID

museums.state.ak.us/grants.html

Forms for GIA,
mini-grant,
and intern grants
for 2010 are
now available online.
Application
deadline
is June 1, 2009.

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Alaska State Museum
395 Whittier Street
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone (907) 465-2901
Fax (907) 465-2976

Sheldon Jackson Museum
104 College Drive
Sitka AK 99835
Phone (907) 747-8981
Fax (907) 747-3004

To contact Museum Services:
Toll-free (888) 913-MUSE
Email: scott.carlee@alaska.gov

museums.state.ak.us

Changes Coming to Grant-in-Aid

In light of the success of the ASM internship program and the overwhelming demand for more interns to work in the field, the Alaska State Museum is answering the call by allowing museums to apply for a special category of Grant-in-Aid that will develop an internship project at the host museum.

Interns are a great way to get projects done. It is a good real world learning experience for them and a good chance to expose staff to the latest theories, standards and practices from the academic world.

Supervising an intern does require some knowledge in the proposed project's subject area, and this is often a stumbling block for smaller institutions with limited staff. Therefore, with this program, we will provide funding so that the primary intern supervisor at the host site will be able to take an online course relevant to the intern project.

The online course will be sponsored by the ASM and tailored to Alaska museums. For the first year of this program, the project area will be registration and catalog-

ing methods. The online course will be four weeks in duration and require about ten hours of work per week, and results in a certificate of completion.

The online course will take place during the winter prior to the summer intern's arrival. Future subjects for the internship programs will be: collections management, integrated pest management, exhibit development, museum cleaning, and disaster preparedness.

Grant applicants may apply for one grant only.

SLAM Project Update

The Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums is continuing to work with the consulting group RISE Alaska to move the SLAM project forward. SLAM is the working acronym for the unified State Library, Archives and Museums.



Bruce Kato talks with SLAM Stakeholder Advisory committee

In 2002, a \$1.5 million appropriation from the State Legislature secured a 1.8 acre property for the new facility. The location is an unpaved vacant lot behind the museum currently used for parking. \$1.4 million in planning money was awarded by the 2005 Legislature, and a facility space needs assessment document was produced the following year. Last year the legislature appropriated \$7.5 million for the design phase, and planning continues to send a Request for Proposals to designers later this year.

A statewide Stakeholder Advisory Committee was established with 25 representatives from across Alaska. This group first met in Febru-

ary to discuss four key areas: outreach, collections objects, programs, services, and the project process. They also considered who the LAM user groups are, and what works and doesn't work with the current arrangement. A few weeks later LAM division leaders met again with RISE and another management consultant to discuss internal organization and the possibilities for an integrated operations model.

The entire LAM division will be closed April 20-21 for a visioning meeting. This meeting will include presentations from consultants who have experience with planning a new facility. It will also be the first formal opportunity for staff to become involved in assessing where we are going programmatically in consideration of how to design the new facility. For information and updates on the project visit lam.alaska.gov/slam_building.html



Archives Rescue Corps Offers Free Training

Archives Rescue Corps (ARC) is underway and gathering momentum! The purpose of ARC is to locate archival collections throughout the state and assist archival caretakers with preservation and archival management needs.

ARC has recorded over 80 archival collections in the state, approximately 50 of which were previously unknown. ARC has documented archival collections in historic churches, city municipalities, tribal repositories, and private collections.

Very few museums have participated and we hope that museums around the state will take part in this new initiative to preserve archives. Museums in Alaska hold very important archives and ARC wants to make sure museums are not left out of this amazing opportunity to receive free training. There will be archival preservation training sessions held in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks in mid-July and we encourage museums to participate.

If you have newspapers, diaries, photographs, and other historical documents in your museum's collection, you should take this survey and be part of this great effort. To do so, go to our Web site at archives.state.ak.us/arc. This site will also give you more insight into the ARC project as well as provide you with tools to get on your way to preserving and managing your archival collection.



Hands-on Loan Program Now Available Online!

Go to museums.state.ak.us/sheldon_jackson/sjhandson.html, select "create an account," and begin searching for educational materials. Login using your password during future visits. For information call 907.747.8981

Ask ASM: Is it OK to use the word Eskimo nowadays?

Eskimo is a controversial term. In Canada it has been replaced with Inuit, which is a linguistically correct term for Canadian arctic-dwelling First Peoples. Inuit, however, is not linguistically correct in Alaska.

Many northern Alaska Natives, until relatively recently, were using Eskimo to refer to themselves. At the Alaska State Museum, exhibits were designed using one general term that applied to the Yup'ik, Inupiat, and Alutiiq (aka Pacific Eskimo). Increasingly, Eskimo is seen as a derogatory term.

In the future, when we change our exhibit labels, we will probably use the more specific language group terms – or generalized geographical terms that are commonly used at the State Museum like "Northwest Coast."



The Eskimo gallery at the State Museum is gradually updating to more culturally relevant labels

Museum Success Stories

*Before and after the 2007 remodel.
Photos by Rachel Oldfield*



Alaska Native Museum

The Alaska Native Museum in Fairbanks' Pioneer Park worked with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers to develop a plan on sharing Native Alaskan culture with visitors from all over the world. The project, completed during the summer of 2008, included the following:

- Installation of a video display room, Alaska mural, and several new exhibits;
- Creation of interpretive labels for the artifacts on exhibit;
- Purchase and set-up of equipment needed to record and share oral histories funded by a \$2,000 grant from the Alaska State Museums. The grant was used to obtain equipment needed to record and share oral histories. This included a video camera, large screen television display, musical recordings and educational videos.

Since many visitors to Pioneer Park do not have the opportunity to visit the Museum of the North at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, this little museum is a great way to introduce Alaska's many different cultures through the use of sound, video and artifacts.

Note:

There are new books in the ASM Field Services Library. Go to museums.state.ak.us/lending_library.html for a list. Books are available for 30-day loan to Alaskan museums with a postage fee. Contact Scott Carrlee at (888)913-6873 or scott.carrlee@alaska.gov.

THE BULLETIN

Alaska State Museums
395 Whittier Street
Juneau, AK 99801-1718