It is with great sorrow that we note the passing of Wallie Funk, a founder of the Anacortes Museum, communicator extraordinaire and tireless patron of history and the arts. In his wake, he leaves a host of friends and a remarkable legacy of profound achievements.

A celebration of life, followed by a reception, will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at the First Baptist Church, 2717 J Ave., Anacortes.

A true Anacortes original, Wallie was drawn to history at a precocious age. Gregarious and personable from the start, he visited the pioneers in his Old Town neighborhood and soaked up wild and wonderful stories of days gone by. He never lost his fascination with his hometown. When he became co-publisher of the Anacortes American in 1950, his first editorial called for preservation of the city’s photographic history. People brought him old photos to copy, and the Wallie Funk Collection – the nucleus of the Anacortes Museum – was born. The number of images swelled into the tens of thousands when he rescued the work of photographer Ferd Brady, and he squirreled away more than a decade of the work of American staff photographers – much of it taken himself.

Most incredibly, he knew the “who, what, where, when and why” of almost every image – and much more.

“Wallie was an amazing individual. His home office was stacked waist-deep in 8x10 black and white prints. He could tell you where the photo was taken, who was in the picture, and what year it was taken. Even more amazing was his ability to locate just about any shot you might ask about,” said Rick Castellano, Executive Director of the Island County Museum – one of several museums with collections of Funk photos.

Anacortes Museum Director Steve Oakley said that when he was hired in 2007, Wallie was one of the first to welcome him and his family to the community, and one of the most supportive.

“I was impressed that first day, and for as long as I knew him, by the passion and exuberance of this unique man,” Oakley said. “His depth of knowledge and memory was legendary. Wallie was the first one called when the museum needed to identify people in an old photo. Not only would he instantly provide the names, but often a few nicknames as well... and a wonderful story was sure to follow. Wallie was devoted to all things Anacortes to the end of his remarkable life.”

Theresa L. Trebon, now Records Manager-Tribal Archivist for the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, was tasked with bringing permanent order to Wallie’s mountain of materials.

“Wallie Funk looms large in my life. I worked with the dear man from 2001-2004 cataloguing his massive collection of photos, ephemera, and countless newspapers,” Trebon said. “Prior to taking on the job for the Anacortes Museum Foundation I asked, ‘How many images are we talking about?’ The estimate was ‘around 14,000.’ It ended up being almost 100,000 images, the number representative of Wallie’s many ties to people, places, and events of the twentieth century. At the end of our work together, Wallie’s office, located just down the street from the Anacortes Museum, was emptied out, the contents being transferred to six different repositories... His impact will live on for generations.”

The Anacortes Museum received his images of Fidalgo and Guemes islands – many of them iconic. Judy Hakins, former Curator of Collections, said the Wallie Funk Collection makes up about two-thirds of the museum’s photo holdings. She treasured the years they worked together.

Elizabeth Joffrion, Director of Heritage Resources and Associate Professor, Western Washington University Libraries, credited Wallie with recognizing the importance of preserving his vast archive for future generations. She said she had not anticipated the caliber of the material.

“I was absolutely astonished by both the volume and quality of his work,” Joffrion said. “Driven by a desire to
provide an accurate record of history on film, his extraordinary collection of photographs offers a glimpse into the lives of both the famous and the ordinary, including six U.S. presidents, the Beatles’ and the Rolling Stones’ visits to Seattle, the famous capture of orca whales in Whidbey Island’s Penn Cove, as well as more commonplace topics such as emotional military homecomings and community parades. Because of his vision, future researchers are guaranteed ongoing access to his prolific body of work through collections held by Western Washington University, the Anacortes Museum and Island County Museum in Coupeville.”

“His photojournalism provides a time tunnel to our local past – as does his fantastic collection of historical images,” Castellano said. “So many of his photographs are important in that they’ve captured moments in history – from backstage with the Beatles in 1966 to the pastoral shot of two cows in a pasture – they were, and are, all important to our history.”

Although Wallie was a masterful photographer, he employed a unique and powerful tool – engagement: He did not passively observe his subjects, he actively interacted with them. Yes, even that pair of cows.

“A casual observer might look at a photo of two cows in a pasture, and think ‘It’s two cows in a pasture.’ However, if you take the time to really look at the photo, you will appreciate their reflections in the puddle they are standing in, the perfect lighting, the composition, and Wallie’s ability to get both cows to look at the camera at the right time,” Castellano said.

Bret Lunsford, Anacortes Museum’s Education and Maritime Curator, said this engagement allowed Wallie to capture the spirit of his subjects both photographically and journalistically.

“Wallie was a great interpreter of the personality of Anacortes, both the big picture and its individual manifestations. Wallie himself was certainly a prime example. His perspective on Anacortes fisherman, from *Pictures of the Past*, can be extended to our unique community spirit,” Lunsford said. He quotes from an article written by Wallie after he travelled on a fishing vessel with the crew to Alaska:

“What is most memorable ... is the camaraderie that existed not only among crews of each vessel, but among those who were traveling the route together on other vessels. It was as if they all were their brothers’ keepers as the challenges en route to the fishing grounds required reliance on one another as well as respect for individuality.”

Lunsford and Anacortes Museum Curator of Collections Elaine Walker (the author of the tribute you are reading), as well as other museum staff, worked with Wallie to publish *Pictures of the Past* two years ago. A bound volume of Wallie’s Anacortes American history columns of the same name, the book is lavishly illustrated with photos he either took himself or preserved. Also preserved in that volume, along with the great stories he told, is Wallie’s own voice – another of the many gifts he has left to us.

“I will miss his uniqueness, his warm sense of humor, and his famously loud and encouraging exclamation of “YES!”, when we agreed on the topic of discussion at any particular moment,” Castellano said. “I’m grateful we were friends. He still makes me smile.”

And now, he is history. And what a great story it is.
Anacortes architectural history featured in museum exhibit

Do you love the character of Anacortes? Much of this character is the result of a rich and diverse stock of historic homes. “At Home in Anacortes,” an exhibit on the history of the residential architecture in Anacortes, explores this heritage in the Anacortes Museum’s Carnegie Gallery.

More than 125 houses are depicted in the exhibit panels, and many enthusiastic visitors have already come in to find their homes – or their grandparents’ homes. Museum Director Steve Oakley and Curator of Collections Elaine Walker created panels that not only look at the types of homes in Anacortes, but also place the styles within the context of the town’s history.

The most striking feature of the exhibit is an original front door and porch, complete with columns. The entryway was salvaged from the house at 819 4th St. just prior to its demolition this spring. Steve rebuilt it (in a slightly abbreviated form) in the Carnegie Gallery. There is also an original fireplace mantle from the 1890 Childs house.

Many exhibit visitors returned to the museum for a jam-packed house history workshop on May 23 presented by the Anacortes Historic Preservation Board. For those who missed the event, museum staff can help them get started researching their homes. Click the AHPB tab on the museum’s webpage under the City of Anacortes’ site to find checklists, resources and forms, or call the museum at 360-293-1915 to schedule a research appointment. Photos of many historic houses also may be viewed on the Anacortes Museum’s searchable online database.

Meanwhile, be sure to drop by the museum at 1305 8th St. to see the exhibit. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday; closed Mondays.

Museum presents slideshow of historic homes at Anacortes Public Library

Elaine Walker, Curator of Collections, will give a slideshow presentation on Anacortes’ historic residential architecture at 7 p.m. September 27 at the Anacortes Public Library, 9th Street and M Avenue.

Elaine did the research and photography for “At Home in Anacortes,” the current exhibit in the Carnegie Gallery. She will share images from the exhibit, and will include others that couldn’t be included because of space limitations.

After the presentation Bret Lunsford, Education and Maritime Curator at the museum will answer questions from the audience about how they can start researching and documenting their own historic homes.
Northwest Career & Technical Academy and Texas Cadette Girl Scouts visit *W.T. Preston*

Summer school students of the Northwest Career & Technical Academy enjoyed a tour of the *W.T. Preston* on June 27. A recent letter from the academy said the Maritime Heritage Center and *W.T. Preston*, “certainly have a lot going for them and met our criteria for student learning. Especially insightful to our students were Dave’s presentations of the Preston’s history, operations and service – and mostly, his personal insight. He was very gracious with his time and took pains to address every question each of the students had. Dave’s quite an asset to your tour!”

In early July Kara Moy, a member of the Cadet Girl Scout Troop 1450 of Austin, Texas called to arrange a tour of the museum during the scouts’ visit to Anacortes. On August 1, the group of seven scouts and three adult chaperones enjoyed a tour of the Maritime Heritage Center and *W.T. Preston* lead by museum docent, Dave Margeson.

“We had fun at the museum and the snagboat. Thank you for letting us go on the *W.T. Preston*. Everyone was so nice, especially Dave our tour guide,” wrote Kara. The scouts visited Anacortes on their way to Friday Harbor and Olympic National Park.

Dave Margeson has been a docent at the W.T. Preston since 2014. Our thanks to Dave and docents Nancy Mudge-Coggon and Lyndon Greene for all their efforts to educate and entertain our guests at the Maritime Heritage Center and *W.T. Preston*.

---

One of Anacortes’ mysteries of history is solved

Education and Maritime Curator Bret Lunsford first heard about the Bowman memorial plaque from Carol Berard-Werner. She remembered the memorial attached to a rock near the Marine Stadium in her Cap Sante neighborhood. The two visited the trailside stone, now plaque-less, in preparation for a 2014 Histories and Mysteries presentation for the Anacortes Museum.

The plaque was introduced to Anacortes on October 26, 1939. The Anacortes American headline reads, “City Founders commemorated with bronze plaque,” and shows a photo of the plaque honoring Amos and Annie Curtis Bowman.

Later, another story surfaced. Steve Latham remembered a 4th grade bike ride in the early sixties with his pal, Kim Nibarger. They discovered the plaque, and wrote a letter to city hall suggesting that the plaque, rock and all, be relocated to the top of Cap Sante. This idea became moot when they noticed the plaque was missing on a later visit.

The plaque has been missing since then. While clearing out shelves in the Artifacts Room in anticipation of Steve Oakley’s last renovation effort, Curator of Collections Elaine Walker was very excited to find the plaque in a box high on one of the shelves.

Bret gave Carol a call about the find. She stopped in to see the renowned plaque. We’re pleased to share a photo of her smile.

---

In memory of
1839 Amos Bowman 1894
Founder of Anacortes
His Wife
1846 Annie Curtis Bowman 1906
For whom
Anacortes was named
Anacortes Lutheran Church member plays Packard Organ

On June 23, a group from Anacortes Lutheran Church came to the museum and was treated to a delightful impromptu pump organ concert by Mrs. Adrienne Eide. Curators gave her permission to exercise her feet pumping the beautiful c.1890s Packard organ that once was in the Noah Nelson house at 2205 S Avenue (demolished in the 1960s).

Mrs. Eide was in good company playing the organ. At an early museum exhibit opening, Mrs. William Bessner could be found dressed in period clothing playing the beautiful organ.

(Left) Mrs. Adrienne Eide, plays the Packard organ for her friends from the Anacortes Lutheran Church.

Historic J.C. Leadbetter Street Clock repaired

The museum’s J.C. Leadbetter Clock was repaired on August 16. Last month, the north and south faces of the clock somehow got out of sync by one hour. David Doto discovered that the hour and minute hands of the south face had come loose and to make the repair he had to remove the bezel.

This repair is the latest event in the Leadbetter Clock’s historic timeline. At the turn of the 20th century, cast iron clocks were a very popular form of advertising for jewelry stores and banks. This clock was made by Joseph Mayer of Seattle in 1905 and probably came to Anacortes in the 1920s, purchased by building owner W.V. Wells. J.C. Leadbetter’s name was painted on the face and it was placed outside his jewelry store.

J.C. Leadbetter jewelry operated from the early 1900s until March 1929 when Leadbetter quit the jewelry business to sell safety headlights. Leadbetter sold his jewelry business to A.S. Huey. With the exception of the addition of a neon sign, the clock has always retained the Leadbetter name.

The neon sign was added by Glenn Davis, owner of Studio San Juan from 1953 – 1961. Davis was responsible for copy negatives and the 165-175 photograph reproductions done at the request of Wallie V. Funk (Jr.) in 1958. His reproductions hung as an exhibit in City Hall and were the start of the Anacortes Museum.

3rd Street repaving project engineered with historic sensitivity

Gunnar Christiansen, a member of the City of Anacortes Engineering Department, serves on the Anacortes Historic Preservation Board. The design of the recent 3rd Street repaving, sidewalk, curb and gutter project reflects his interest in preserving the old while upgrading to meet today’s needs.

Sections of old sidewalks from c. 1909 were integrated into the new panels, while maintaining their darker color; their joints align. Sidewalk patterns embellish the ramps at the corner, and a brick border abuts the street, reminding viewers of the depth of history of our city. The project was completed in May 2017.

The museum and Anacortes Historic Preservation Board appreciate the Engineering Department’s focus on its work to upgrade and improve, while maintaining a focus on historic sensitivity. Congratulations to the Engineering Department on a project well done.

Historic J.C. Leadbetter Street Clock with neon “Photography” sign advertising the Studio San Juan.
New fence screen installed under W.T. Preston

A new fence screen has been installed under the W.T. Preston. It makes the east side of the boat more attractive from the street and hides the items stored beneath the boat.

Seeing how great the custom cut screening under the Preston looks, we thought the fencing might be a solution to our top deck barrier. Currently, we rely on cable and rope to block access to the area of the deck without railings. Once installed, a more porous black fence screen that stretches all the way across, with a cutout for the skylight, will look better and increase safety.

A new fence screen under W.T. Preston hides stored items.

Fall is a great time to visit the W.T. Preston and Maritime Heritage Center

The Maritime Heritage Center and W.T. Preston are open weekends in September and October; Saturday hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission to the W.T. Preston is free for Anacortes Museum Foundation members and $3-5 for non-members.

There is no charge to drop in to the Heritage Center to learn about the sternwheeler, local vessels such as the codfish schooner Wawona and Bijaboji, the dugout canoe Betty Lowman rowed solo to Alaska in 1937.

Anacortes Museum Foundation

Through memberships, the Anacortes Museum Foundation supports and assists the educational and preservation goals of the Anacortes Museum.

Become a Member—Support Local History!

Benefits of Annual Membership and Annual Membership Categories

- FREE admission to the W.T. Preston and Maritime Heritage Center
- 10% discount at the Museum store
- Invitation to exhibit openings and special events
- Quarterly Museum newsletter

Senior (65+)/Student ........................................ $20
Individual ....................................................... $25
Family ............................................................. $40
Business/Organization ................................. $75
Sponsor ......................................................... $100
Life ................................................................. $250
Donation ......................................................... $__

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

(Contributions tax deductible to fullest extent of law)

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Telephone:

Email:

Please make checks payable to: Anacortes Museum Foundation.
Send to: 1305 8th St, Anacortes, WA 98221. Thank you!

Anacortes Museum
1305 8th Street
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-293-1915

The Carnegie Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday. The Museum Office is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday.

The Anacortes Museum and Maritime Heritage Center exist to preserve and interpret the history of Fidalgo and Guemes islands and to nurture in the community an awareness and appreciation of its heritage.

This newsletter is produced by the staff of the Anacortes Museum and edited by Linda Yerby.