For Gib Moore, a long-term member of our Museum Advisory Board, the pulp mill was a family concern, employing his father, Leonard, and helping Gib through college with summer jobs and a scholarship award. Family connections were common throughout the local pulp workforce, ties that are sustained today by a group of former mill employees that has been meeting for months, helping museum staff to find and identify photos and artifacts relating to the mill, which was located on Fidalgo Bay between 20th and 15th streets. This area now contains Seafarers’ Park, Thrive and the Marine Technology Center and extends to the old log yard proposed for development by MJB. The pulp mill operated under various names for over 50 years, and for most of that time it was owned by Scott Paper Company.

Having grown up in the neighborhood myself, I have vivid memories of the mill’s aroma. Gib recounts, “the steam cloud when the digesters were released (top relief) was eye watering, nose offending and full of sulfur dioxide gas.” Pulp workers knew to live upwind. While I have no nostalgia for pollution, I do have pleasant memories of riding my bike with friends on the many gravel roads downtown, following behind a truck spreading “pulp liquor” to keep the dust down. A walk along the then-active railroad tracks revealed scattered yellow sulfur nuggets, brought to town by rail and ship to “cook” local Alder logs into something like a wood chip smoothie.

Our history is alive in this community, and we appreciate the collaboration with many who helped with this exhibit: Gib Moore, Ken Moore, Brian Rockom, Noel Johnson, Paul Lunsford, LeAnne Downs, Brad Walters, Jerry Annett, Bob Whitney, Bill Matson, Stan Shimkus, Andy Tubbs, Dan Coleman, Wayne Melvin, Reece Perkins, Cory Nibarger, Virgil Keltz, Dick Spradley and Diane Lundberg.

Puget Pulp Pioneers is an exhibit that already has added hundreds of artifacts and associated information to the Anacortes Museum Collection. We will continue in the coming years to tell the stories of plywood manufacturing, shipbuilding, salmon canneries, commercial fishing, tugboats and all of the maritime-connected culture that makes this place matter.

By Bret Lunsford, Anacortes Museum Director

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2014 Volunteer of the Year now docent at W.T. Preston

When Stephani Noar walked up the ramp of the W.T. Preston on Friday, May 11, to start her new job as docent, it wasn’t her first experience working at the museum. During the summer of 2014, as part of her history class at WSU, Stephani spent several weeks researching, identifying and cataloging unmarked items in the museum’s Artifacts Room. Because of her many hours of diligent hard work that summer, she was named the 2014 Volunteer of the Year.

Stephani arrived in Anacortes at the age of five with parents, Roger and Kati Noar, and sister, Jennifer. Stephani graduated from Anacortes High School and went on to Washington State University, graduating in 2015 with a degree in Humanities with a focus on Asian studies, Russian language, music and history. Stephani is also a graduate of the WSU Honors College. For her honors thesis, Stephani studied a Japanese animated film called “Castle in the Sky,” to determine why sound levels had been increased when the film was translated into English. For the thesis, she also studied a John Cage silent musical composition called 4’33” (which means four minutes and 33 seconds). These studies led Stephani to investigate how silence is viewed in different cultures and how silence impacts films and music. When she has time, Stephani still enjoys watching anime for relaxation.

After college, Stephani spent two years with AmeriCorps in Mt. Vernon. As part of that program, she was required to do 1,007 hours of community service each year. In the early part of her workday, Stephani mentored reading in K-5 classrooms. Later in the day, she worked at the Boys & Girls Club helping students with homework. She also planned literacy-based programming for the students.

When asked what she enjoys most about her new job on the W.T. Preston, Stephani shared a story of touring visitors from Norway, Russia, Asia and Australia! She loves having kids on board and enjoys showing them how the items in the Engineering Room work. During one of her first weeks in the job, Stephani enjoyed following a former crew member through the boat as he shared his memories of life on the W.T. Preston.

Stephani has been training with Dave Margeson, W.T. Preston and Maritime Curator, who has shared many of his best Preston stories with Stephani. He says she is doing an excellent job of greeting and touring visitors on the boat. “And,” he said with a smile, “she polishes brass!”

Welcome, Stephani!

A conversation with new educator Kate Clark

June 19 will be a day to celebrate when our new Education and Media Curator, Kate Clark, arrives to begin her work at the museum. Here are Kate’s words in answer to a few questions about her background, experience and what she is looking forward to about her new role.

When and why did you decide you wanted to do museum work? Kate: As a trained artist finishing art school, I realized I wasn’t interested in pursuing a career contingent upon the desires and whims of a gallery-based market, which is a pretty narrow slice of the world. I’m invested in hands-on public interaction and forming new conversations around shared histories. Considering other institutions designed for illuminating experiences, such as universities, churches, galleries, or even public schools, it seemed to me that museums had the opportunity to be the most flexible and imaginative when building relationships with people, regardless of age, sex, creed, race or class. That is when I began the Interpretive Guide Fellowship at the Hirshhorn Museum in 2009, and I have continued to work with museums since then.

What have been your most rewarding museum education projects? Kate: For the past two years I have been working with the National Museum of Natural History Curators and Collections managers to reconnect descendants to plaster life-cast replicas made of their ancestors by anthropologists in the early 20th century. As part of this research, I created a public program where people could watch the process of face casting with alginate and plaster. My museum studies students helped design and facilitate the event. Tristan Ahtone, a descendent of a Kiowa warrior, who had his face cast while a P.O.W. spoke about his great-grandfather and what it was like to see a plaster reproduction of his face. It was exhilarating to bring to life a complicated legacy of the museum through hands-on programming, student participation, and community outreach.

What are you looking forward to about education work in your hometown? Kate: Though Anacortes is where I grew up, my knowledge of its people, plants and animals is a mere scraping of the surface. I’m looking forward to learning about my home and connecting with those who have called Fidalgo Island their home in the past and present. I’m also excited to learn more about the resources in our community that could foster new events and collaborations.

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On Board…

Museum Advisory Board member Libby Walgamott is the first board member to be profiled for our new “On Board” feature.

Libby is a fifth generation Washingtonian, and grew up loving life on the water in Lake Sammamish. After graduating from UW, she married John Walgamott and moved to Sierra Madre, California, where they started their family.

In 1973, they returned to Bellevue where Libby became very involved with the PTA, leading the organization as president and working on the Ways and Means Committee.

In 1990, the Walgamotts landed in Colorado, where two of their daughters attended high school. Libby was surprised to find there was no PTA so, working with a friend, she started an organization to support the high school staff and teachers with volunteers. Coordinating over one hundred volunteers required a lot of organizational skill and telephone time. For her efforts, Libby received the Colorado Partners in School Award.

After returning to Bellevue in 1998, Libby participated in the Advance Bellevue Course and heard a speaker from the Bellevue Historical Society. That led her to read the out-of-print book, Bellevue’s First 100 Years by Lucille McDonald. In 2000, Libby became the project manager to update and republish the book when King County awarded a grant for that project.

Libby joined the board of the Bellevue Historical Society and was president when it was merged with the Marymoor Museum to become the Eastside Heritage Center. When King County evicted the Marymoor Museum from the Clise Mansion, Libby was part of the team that negotiated with King County for a one-year lease extension and money to move the collection into storage. Libby continued her work to see it through with this enormous task.

Now, Libby is a valued member of the Museum Advisory Board and, with her husband John, leads cruise ship tours through Old Town each Sunday. She loves connecting with the people and sharing the wonderful history of Anacortes. Libby also is a member of the Old Anacortes Rowing Society (OARS).

Libby and John share their home and beautiful view each summer by hosting an annual picnic for museum employees and members of the museum’s three affiliate boards. In her “spare” time, Libby loves to spend time with her four daughters and twelve grandchildren in Bellevue.

Thank you, Libby, for sharing your experience and skills with the Museum Advisory Board and the town of Anacortes. We are grateful for your support.

Volunteers tackling major projects

Major projects are jumping ahead – and a big one was just put to bed – thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the museum’s dedicated cadre of volunteers.

We had a surge in interest from high school students doing community service this year. Thank you to Ava Hawkins and Josh Smeltzer, who scanned several AHS yearbooks; Paul Kline, who photographed two scrapbooks; and to Orion Seaton, who photographed 16 Key Club scrapbooks.

Most noteworthy is the completion of a two-year effort to sleeve 30 years of news negatives from the Anacortes American Collection. We declared victory, and hoisted glasses of champagne to celebrate at the home of Suzette Richards, who tackled the project with Sally Hughes, Nancy Low, Ginger Thomas, Karen Thomson, Dani Usman and Tamara Willis. A thousand thanks! Some of these ladies have moved on to Wallie Funk’s slide collection (positive images), so we can no longer call them our “negative volunteers.”

We also continue to work to both keep up with and stay ahead of our textile volunteers – about 10 of them, including two who come monthly. It is so much work keeping up (and ahead) of volunteers that we had to put a temporary freeze on new volunteers until we are fully staffed again. We will brainstorm some new projects and hope to be ready to tackle some of them with new volunteers this fall.

Fidalgo School alumni celebrate 150th anniversary

Alumni and friends of the Old Fidalgo School are invited to a reunion and pot-luck lunch celebrating the 150th anniversary of the school’s 1868 founding at March’s Point. The event starts at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 28, at the “new” Fidalgo School, 13590 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes.

Photographs of the school and students will be displayed, courtesy of the Anacortes Museum. Attendees are asked to bring photographs or materials associated with the school to be copied for the museum’s collection.

Event organizer Carl Howard emphasizes that everyone associated with the school or interested in its history is welcome. For more information, contact the Anacortes Museum at 360-293-1915.

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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!

Thanks to Anacortes donors for recent grants

Allstate Helping Hands Grant

The Anacortes Museum has been awarded its third Helping Hands Grant of $1,000 from the Allstate Foundation in honor of the community service of Tamara Willis, local Anacortes Allstate Agent. The new grant will be used to purchase archival sleeves required protect a large quantity of Wallie Funk’s slides recently donated to the museum.

We thank volunteer Tamara for being such a positive force for change in our community and for her volunteer efforts at the museum. The Allstate Foundation supports the causes that Allstate agency owners, financial specialists, and employees care about most by providing Helping Hands Grants to nonprofits where they volunteer their time to bring out the good in their communities.

Kiwanis Noon Club grant pays fees to host online database

The Kiwanis Noon Club has awarded the Anacortes Museum Foundation a grant in the amount of $752 to pay the annual fees to host the museum’s online database of photographs and artifacts. The database is growing every year in size and use.

In 2017 alone, nearly 7,000 new images were added by museum staff and volunteers into this portal to Anacortes history. On every webpage of this internet database, this message is posted: “The Anacortes Museum’s photographic collection is available online thanks to ongoing donations from the Anacortes Noon Kiwanis Club.”

We are so grateful to the Kiwanis for their years of loyal support to the museum.

W.T. Preston/Maritime Heritage Center begin summer hours

Visiting the Maritime Heritage Center, guests will find many new items donated by former pulp mill workers and their families as part of their collaboration on the new Puget Pulp Pioneers exhibit that opens 4 to 6 p.m. on June 21.

Dave Margeson, W.T. Preston and Maritime Curator, would like to thank the Parks & Recreation Department for trimming shrubs and placing landscaping bark around the W.T. Preston. And as always, our docents are ready to share great stories about life aboard the W.T. Preston.

The W.T. Preston and Maritime Heritage Center are now open summer hours, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed Monday.

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.