“Extra! Extra! The early years of Anacortes newspapers” exhibit opening
4-6 p.m. Wednesday, March 13, 2019

To celebrate the website unveiling of digitized 1890 to 1922 Anacortes Americans, the Anacortes Museum has created a new exhibit to celebrate the role of journalists and newspapers on Fidalgo Island. The exhibit opening will happen on the 140th anniversary of the founding of Anacortes.

Anacortes was founded by a journalist whose wife’s name, “corrupted in the interest of euphony,” was officially bestowed 140 years ago on our post office on March 13, 1879. Amos Bowman, who wrote for Horace Greeley’s New York Tribune newspaper in the 1850s, followed his boss’ advice to “go west” and began publishing the Northwest Enterprise here in 1882.

From 1890 on, the Anacortes American covered local news, joined at various times by other long forgotten journals. Visitors to the exhibit will have the chance to read all about the lives and work of early Anacortes writers Douglass Allmond, Sophie Walsh, Charlie Gant, and their successors like Wallie Funk and all the rest. Their news is now our history.

We hope you will plan to join us between 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, March 13 in the Carnegie Gallery for the opening of our new exhibit, “Extra! Extra! The early years of Anacortes newspapers.”

Phase I of Anacortes American digitization complete for years 1890 through 1922

Phase I of the Anacortes American Digitization Project is now complete! The first 32 years of Anacortes Americans dated 1890 through 1922 are now online for browsing by the public. The Americans join the 1882-1886 Northwest Enterprise newspapers already on the Washington Digital Newspapers website.

The Anacortes American Digitization Project has been made possible by a joint effort of the Anacortes American, the Anacortes Museum and the Washington State Library, with support from the Anacortes Museum Foundation and the Skagit Community Foundation.

To view this amazing resource, simply click or enter this link to begin your journey of exploration into Anacortes’ early days:

https://washingtondigitalnewspapers.org/

https://www.anacorteswa.gov/333/Museum
Time Travel Sound Sessions resounding success

Thanks to local media coverage, the Time Travel Sound Sessions were a great success. Between January and February, the museum hosted three sold-out events featuring vintage phonograph records and radio shows. Staged as a guided DJ’d event, our ears traveled to the ‘30s, ‘40s, and ‘50s to hear the popular music, news programs, and stories that captivated Pacific Northwesterners long ago. The program was inspired by Al Bofenkamp and Jeff Weldon’s display of radios in the Anacortes Presents exhibition case at the museum.

Through sponsorship from the Anacortes Museum Foundation and the Anacortes Public Library Manieri Jazz Endowment, we were able to host Dan Greenwald as a presenter. Greenwald was a Top 40 DJ in the 1960s and ‘70s, including four years in the Air Force with American Forces Radio and Television. He is a trombone player with Skagit Swings and Camano Junction Big Band, and an announcer for the Skagit Community Band. Dan played a selection of phonograph records that spanned country, boogie-woogie, and big band, including Jimmy Dean and his Texas Wildcats 1955 song, “Big Blue Diamonds,” Joe Turner and Pete Johnson’s 1938 song, “Roll ’em Pete,” and Bon Bon and his Buddies 1941 song, “Sweet Mama Papa’s Getting Mad.”

Education and Media Curator Kate Clark also presented material to the audience, focusing on the politics of “fake news” and gender dynamics in early radio programs. Her subjects spanned President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “Fireside Chats,” Edward R. Murrow’s, “Hear it Now” reports of the Korean War, and WWII bombing reports by Audrey Russell, the only woman wartime reporter for the BBC.

Museum Docent Al Bofenkamp presented lively selections of Old Time Radio, including “Fibber McGee and Molly,” “The Burns and Allen Show,” and Orson Welles’ famous “War of the Worlds.” Many of these programs lasted for decades, becoming generational favorites.

For our final February 17 show, we were lucky to collaborate with the Anacortes Music Project, who live recorded our presentation. AMP produces musical events to enrich the Anacortes community and support our local musicians. They also oversee and produce the Anacortes Music Channel, an online streaming radio on the internet.

Thanks to AMP, you can now listen to a recording of the Time Travel Sound Session as an online podcast:

http://anacortesmusicproject.org/podcasts/

Join us on Social Media

The Anacortes Museum is digging into the world of social media. We’re posting information about upcoming events, artifacts in our collections, photos in our archives, and museum staff, board member and volunteer activities.

Please follow us on Instagram at:
@anacortesmuseum

and like our Facebook page:
@AnacortesMuseum

https://www.anacorteswa.gov/333/Museum
Winter on the W.T. Preston

The W.T. Preston plied Puget Sound’s rivers and other water bodies for 41 years, removing debris and maintaining navigation channels for regional marine traffic. The City of Anacortes took ownership of the W.T. Preston in 1983. It is located adjacent to the Maritime Heritage Center at 703 R Avenue.

Care and maintenance of the boat is ongoing but winter’s harsh weather events bring special maintenance challenges. This winter has been no exception. Cold weather activities include placing space heaters in the hold to keep water pipes from freezing. Foam tube insulation and heat tape help to keep water pipes warm. To prevent rainwater from collecting on the decks, long drainpipes are connected to many down spouts to direct the rainwater across the decks and over the sides of the boat.

During storm events, water drain holes and downspouts must be freed of debris to function properly. Buckets and sponges are placed under obvious ceiling leaks to collect water, and interior steel decks are mopped regularly to pick up minor wet spots and water puddles. Soft spots in deck floors are regularly identified and patched.

The boat rests above the ground on a steel rack. To provide ventilation through the hull, holes have been cut in the bottom of the hull and the first deck floor. Gas furnaces circulate warm air in the deckhouse.

Our thanks to Dave Margeson, W.T. Preston and Maritime Curator, who works hard to ensure our National Historic Landmark and largest museum artifact is cared for all year.

https://www.anacorteswa.gov/333/Museum

History Club First Meeting

On February 27th, the Anacortes Museum hosted an iteration of a common cause for gathering: History Club. Since Anacortes’ founding, settlers have documented and researched their presence on Fidalgo Island. Records reveal an 1898 Historical Club of Anacortes, and later, a Research Club of 1911.

For our first meeting, Mariah Erken presented her ongoing research about the Anacortes Storm System manhole covers.

Like many others, Erken’s interest about this earlier form of city infrastructure arose through the manhole covers’ humorous acronym: ASS. Comedic intrigue lead her down the rabbit hole of meeting with city engineers and documenting the removal of the manhole covers and the few remaining intact ASS drain covers of Anacortes.

At the History Club meeting, Anacortes Museum Curator Elaine Walker demonstrated how to search online for the newly digitized Anacortes Americans and other Washington State papers. (See related article on Page 1.)

Attendance at our first meeting was large: 35 people stayed for Erken’s presentation and the newspaper tutorial. Participants shared about their own research pursuits. Topics of interest varied from the history of Chinese labor on Fidalgo Island to house history, genealogy, and early local industries.

To learn more about how to use the Washington Digital Newspapers website, please visit our tutorial:


Our next History Club meeting will be Wednesday, March 27th, at 4:00.
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!

Maritime Heritage Center and W.T. Preston will reopen April 6

The Maritime Heritage Center and W.T. Preston snagboat will reopen for weekends on April 6. Call the museum at 360-293-1915 for more information.

“Anacortes’ Early Newspapers—Honest, Independent & Aggressive” presentation at Anacortes Public Library, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 20, 2019

Anacortes was founded by a journalist, Amos Bowman, who wrote for Horace Greeley’s New York Tribune newspaper in the 1850s and followed his boss’ advice to “go west.” He began publishing the Northwest Enterprise here in 1882. From 1890 onward, the Anacortes American covered local news, joined at various times by other long forgotten journals.

Join Museum Director, Bret Lunsford at the Anacortes Public Library at 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 20 to hear all about the lives and work of early Anacortes writers, Douglas Allmond, Sophie Walsh, Charlie Gant, their successors like Wallie Funk, and all the rest whose news is now history.

Radio historian and broadcaster, Feliks Banel, to speak at Library, 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 10

Feliks Banel will speak about early radio in the Evergreen State.

Look—and listen—back to the people, stations, and stories that made the early years of radio broadcasting a vital part of the culture of the Pacific Northwest. With a mixture of vintage audio, historic images, and expert storytelling, radio historian and broadcaster Feliks Banel will revisit the power of early radio in the Evergreen State, and look ahead to the unpredictable future of local radio in our communities.

Innovations in technology, programming, and business, and the realities of geography and topography, made radio from the 1920s to the 1940s in this remote corner a little bit different than the rest of the United States. As radio broadcasting came of age, local stations in cities big and small connected the people of Washington with events and entertainment from across the country and around the world.

Feliks Banel is a writer and producer, and serves as editor of “COLUMBIA,” the quarterly magazine of the Washington State Historical Society. He has been a host and contributor for KIRO Radio in Seattle. He created the history series “This NOT Just In” for KUOW Public Radio, and he produces documentaries for the Seattle Channel.

Thanks to the Anacortes Museum Foundation for financial support of museum education programs.

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