



BARANOV QUARTERLY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KODIAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY ♦ SEPTEMBER 2006

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New Exhibits this Fall at the Baranov Museum

There is more to see and learn this fall at the Museum. A recent donation from Martha Randolph of an embroidered monk's cloth table runner made by Father Gerasim Schmaltz caused us to take note of our collection of the beloved priest's handiwork. An exhibit in his honor, *Man of the Cloth*, now features his altar cloths, tablerunners, tote bags and wall hangings, as well as personal pieces he donated to the Historical Society in the 1950's. Father Gerasim arrived at Afognak Island in 1916 to serve as rector of the Nativity of the Holy Theotokos Church. For 18 years he served as friend and spiritual physician to the community. In 1935, Father Gerasim moved to Spruce Island to provide care and maintenance to the shrine of Father Herman. In the quiet of Monk's Lagoon, Father Gerasim would study, write, provide counsel and cross-stitch on monk's cloth. The embroidery and cross-stitchings were often gifts to personal friends. Over the years these gifts have been donated to the Museum for care and conservation. We are only too happy to share them now with our visitors and community.



Portrait of a Man by Eustace Ziegler
Original Oil, 1971. Baranov Museum 94-6-6.

This portrayal of Father Gerasim Schmaltz is among the many fine pieces featured in the exhibit *Man of the Cloth* at the Baranov Museum.

Alaska Positive Retrospective - 35 Years of Award-Winning Photography

In 1970 the Alaska State Museum launched a statewide photography competition called *Alaska Positive*, to present to the public the best works being done by Alaska photographers. Now, 35 years later, the museum is bringing out the award-winning photographs from many of those past competitions for a retrospective look at Alaska's most famous photography show. "The Best of *Alaska Positive* : 35 Years of Award-winning Photographs" will open on Tuesday, October 10th at the Baranov Museum and the Alutiiq Museum. The exhibit will be on view through Saturday, November 25th at both locations. More than 70 photographs are included, the earliest being from 1971 and the most recent from 2004. A catalog accompanies the exhibit, illustrating the award-winning photographs, and providing short juror biographies and quotes from past juror statements. The emphasis of the show has always been on the personally expressive use of the photographic medium, as opposed to commercial. This has been reflected in the selection of jurors, who have

continued on page 4

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

When the mornings get colder, and the afternoon winds knock around our old windows, we know that quieter days are ahead. This year our quieter days will see us re-examine our exhibition practices and refine our interpretive labels. With funding from the Alaska State Museum grant-in-aid program we are purchasing new equipment and supplies, and working with Libby Eufemio to articulate an exhibition philosophy to better marry the historic artifacts and works of art with their unique setting. Surely the collections of the Kodiak Historical Society, representing 52 years of donations, purchases, care and conservation, would be extraordinary in any setting. Likewise, the City of Kodiak's historic log building - a structure that has been at the epicenter of Kodiak history for 200 years - would be no less significant even if it were empty. But it is the enduring combination of the two that provides us with an exceptional and entirely unique Kodiak history museum.

The challenge, then, is in effectively telling the many stories encompassed in our objects, while giving the building the interpretive treatment it merits. We believe that the exploration of the historic building should facilitate the discovery of the cultural, social and political context of the building's creation and evolving use over time. The changes wrought on the building by it's owners and caretakers - the Russian American Company, the Alaska Commercial Company, the Erskine family, the Historical Society - have added new layers of meaning, and provide us with interpretive responsibilities.

Many Kodiak folks have personal experiences with the Erskine House. As we approach the 200th anniversary of the building's construction in 2008, we will be looking to you to share these stories once again. And we will be looking for your feedback on how effectively we share them with our visitors experiencing the Museum for the first time.

Stop by during these quieter days and see what we are up to.

Katie O. Parker
Executive Director

*A little less green
on the roof line...*

*All of the moss
that had taken
up residency on
the Museum roof
was removed this
summer, during
a stretch of rare
sunny days.*



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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Kodiak Historical Society is to collect, preserve, research and exhibit historically significant artifacts, documents, photographs and other data relative to the Kodiak and Aleutian Islands area; to evaluate and interpret the materials in the collections for educational purposes and presentation to the public; and to continue to develop and maintain a library of rare books about the Kodiak and Aleutian Islands area.

MUSEUM STAFF

Katie O. Parker, Executive Director
Alice Ryser, Archivist
Ellen Lester, Curator of Collections
Ani Thomas, Education Coordinator
Nancy Pierce, Gallery & Gift Shop

MUSEUM HOURS

Summer Hours
Mon - Sat: 10 - 4, Sun: 12 - 4
Winter Hours
Tues - Sat: 10 - 3
Closed Sunday & Monday
Admission \$3.00



In the early 1900s, this unique wooden chair belonged to the Frank Rier family on the Rier Ranch on Raspberry Island, Kodiak. Operations on the Rier ranch were severely challenged after the eruption of Mt. Novarupta on the Alaska Peninsula in June of 1912 blanketed the north side of Kodiak Island in ash, up to 18-inches deep. In her book *Now it Can be Told*, Wanda Fields recalls that the Rier Ranch and all household effects, including 100 chickens, were sold to the Herman von Scheele family of Afognak later that year.

Fast forward to 2006 when Diane Howe Charters, visiting the Baranov Museum with her granddaughter Nicole, spies the chair in the Museum's Kitchen Exhibit and recognizes her former place at the table. Diane remembers that she and her brother Harry, used the high chair as infants at the family's home on the Kupreanof Peninsula, west of Port Bailey, and later on Raspberry Island at Chadrick Bay. Diane's mother, Susanna (b. 1900) was the second child born to Herman and Eulavia von Scheele of Afognak. Susanna and husband Harry Howe lived at their two sawmill sites in the 1930s and early 1940s.

The chair was brought to the Baranov Museum in 1971 by Susanna's sister and then-museum curator Eunice Von Scheele Neseth. It features cast iron wheels and a back lever that converts it to a stroller. Renovation to the cane seat and overall refinishing was done by Howisey Brothers in Seattle. Today many visitors see the highchair and say, "My grandma had a high chair like that." This chair certainly has many stories to tell, namely which little boy tested a saw on its arm?

This antique high chair was first used by Kodiak youngsters in the early 1900s on Raspberry Island. The chair features cast iron wheels and a back lever that converts it to a stroller.
Baranov Museum, 71-202-1.



Harry Howe's Sawmill on the Kupreanof Peninsula, outside Port Bailey on NW Kodiak Island. This photo was taken in 1939 by Howe's business partner Dalmond Valley. Photo courtesy of Howard Valley

Continued from page 1

typically been involved in the arena of photography as an art, be they photographers, curators, critics or artists. Mark Daughhetee, Curator of Exhibitions at the Alaska State Museum, said, "For the past three and one-half decades *Alaska Positive* has been a consistent venue for Alaska photographers to showcase their artistic visions through the medium of photography. During its 35-year history, *Alaska Positive* has exhibited hundreds of images created by Alaskans, and those images have been viewed by tens of thousands of visitors."

Alaska Positive started small but has grown over the years. Last year's competition drew 276 entries from 81 photographers and artists. Initially, the competition was an annual affair, but in 1987 it changed to every two years. A Juror's Choice award is made for every show, as well as other awards, which have changed over the years.

Kodiak's Jay Barrett was awarded an Honorable Mention in *Alaska Positive* 2006 for his pigmented ink print *The Music*. View the Best of *Alaska Positive*, 35 years of Award-Winning photography, at the Baranov & Alutiiq Museums from October 7 - November 25, 2006. The Kodiak tour is made possible by the Alaska State Museum.

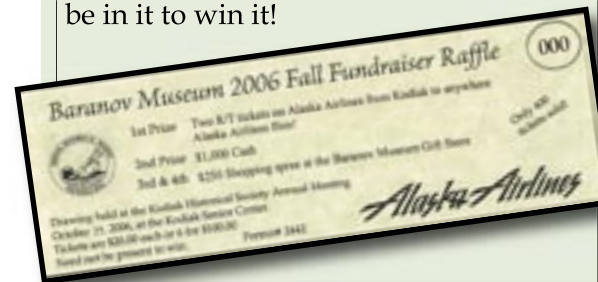


The Music
Pigmented ink print, Jay Barrett

KODIAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Fundraiser Raffle

At the end of the annual meeting, we will draw the winner for our fall fundraiser raffle. First prize, courtesy of Alaska Airlines, is two RT tickets from Kodiak to anywhere Alaska Airlines flies including the East Coast and Mexico! Second prize is \$1000 cash and third and fourth place winners will each receive a \$250 shopping spree from the Baranov Museum store. Tickets are \$20 each or 6 for \$100 and only 400 tickets will be sold. Remember, you've got to be in it to win it!



The 52nd annual meeting of the Kodiak Historical Society will be held on Wednesday, October 25 at 7pm at the Kodiak Senior Center. Our guest speaker will be Chris Wooley of Chumis Cultural Resource Services. For the past several years, Chris has been working on historic preservation activities with the Woody Island Tribal Council. In his presentation, Chris will discuss the history of Woody Island and the nomination of the Woody Island Historic Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places. Director Katie Parker will report on the Kodiak Historical Society's recent accomplishments and future goals. Board Treasurer Martha Randolph will provide a summary of our financial health. New board members will be elected and we will recognize our many committed and bighearted volunteers. If you have been looking for a way to become involved with the Museum, come to our annual meeting and see what we are all about.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 25, 7PM AT THE KODIAK SENIOR CENTER

Warren Holloway was stationed in Kodiak with the Army Signal Corps in the early 1940s. He recently returned to Kodiak as a passenger on the cruise ship Spirit of Oceanus, and he hand-carried with him Kodiak photographs to be donated to the Baranov Museum. I was quite surprised to see that among them was one of Val Malutin's wedding day taken in the Russian church.

In July 2001, in celebration of the 4th of July, a B-17 Flying Fortress and B-24 Liberator flew to Kodiak followed by a reception and festivities at the Kodiak Municipal Airport. I had recently put together two albums of WWII photographs donated by Don Brown, and for this event had taken them to be added to the Kodiak Military History Museum display of WWII memorabilia. Someone contacted Val, who was in town at the time, and told her they had seen her wedding pictures in one of the albums. Val visited the museum shortly thereafter to view the photographs and to place an order for copies to be given to her children. This was the first time she had ever seen any pictures of her wedding taken on that memorable day so many years ago.

I contacted Annie Kopang to let her know we had another picture from her sister's wedding here at the museum. It is occasions such as these involving the donations of Kodiak photographs to our museum that just make my day.

- Alice Ryser



The wedding of Val Malutin and Ed Laurel in the Russian Orthodox Church in Kodiak, 1943. The wedding was the last to be performed in the Church prior to the fire of 1943.

Kodiak Historical Society Warren Holloway Collection



Interior of Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Church in Kodiak, 1943.

Kodiak Historical Society Warren Holloway Collection



Verso reads: "Ted & Eleanor at the Orpheum Theater." Kodiak, early 1940s. Note the gallon cans over the car headlights to comply with wartime blackout regulations.

Kodiak Historical Society Warren Holloway Collection

Saltery Cove

Bight, 3 miles across, North shore of Ugak Bay, East coast of Kodiak Island

Salteries are among the many treasures, traditions and legacies brought to Alaska by the Russian colonists. Indeed, salted salmon from one of the world's greatest salmon streams, the Karluk River, helped sustain the first permanent colony in Russian America. The Russians were no strangers to the process of salting. In fact, they were quite adept. Many provisioning stations were set up around Kodiak Island including sites at Karluk, Old Harbor and Afognak Bay (Roppel, 1986).

Though some salted salmon made it back to Siberia, and other shipments of Kodiak's salted salmon made it to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), salted salmon never became a lucrative business for the Russians. The Russians seemed content to use the salted salmon for provisioning their own colonies and trading it for other goods when possible.

Americans, however, had their capitalistic eyes on the fisheries here while it was still a Russian territory. As early as the 1860's, American fishermen discovered that cod was abundant off the Shumagin Islands. This known resource was a factor in the sale of Alaska to the Americans in 1867. By 1868, 14 vessels from San Francisco were fishing the cod banks off Kodiak's Shumagin Islands. The ships faced the problem of transporting the cod to San Francisco markets without spoiling. The answer was salting. In 1876 the McCollam Fishing and Trading Company of San Francisco established a shore station and saltery on Popof Island in the Shumagin Islands which remedied the problem. American ships now sailed to San Francisco with holds full of stable salted cod.

Several commercial salmon salteries also sprung up all over Southeast and Southwest Alaska. In 1879 a commercial saltery went up at Karluk



Above: The Saltery at Eagle Harbor, owned by W.J. Erskine from 1911 - 1917. KHS Collections



Right: Barrels of salted fish line the AK Commercial Company dock at Kodiak, early 1900's. KHS W.C. Erskine Collection

(Roppel, 1986). In 1890 Kodiak Packing Company set up a salting station at present day Saltery Cove. According to the census taken that year, most of the residents of Eagle Harbor (across the bay on the south west shore) would come in the summer to work in the saltery (Fields, 2000). When sea otter numbers declined, the Alaska Commercial Company looked to new economic ventures; salmon. The Alaska Commercial Company put up several salteries including one at Eagle Harbor. In 1911 when the AK Commercial Company sold to W.J. Erskine, he acquired at least one saltery at Eagle Harbor (across the bay from Saltery Cove) and maintained it until 1916.

Even with the advent of canning, salting was still a viable and low cost operation. Salting salmon, cod,

and later herring, was at times very profitable for Americans, however, at least one world event conspired to end that.

World War II put an end to Alaskan salteries. American troops found canned pink salmon to be a well-suited food and continued to make it popular after the war by introducing it to family and friends at home. Canning operations in Alaska expanded and bought out many saltery sites. Also adversely affecting the salteries were the logistical difficulties of the war. Foreign markets were lost and supplies became more scarce. Today, of course we have many methods of preserving our fish, most of which contain at least a dash of that sacred salt. One more reminder of a history written into Kodiak's place names.

References:

Fields, Wanda. 2000. *Now it Can Be Told, Stories of Alaskan Pioneer Ranchers*. Anchorage, Alaska.
Roppel, Patricia. 1986. *Salmon from Kodiak*. Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History No. 216. Anchorage, Alaska.

MEMBERSHIP

We would like to extend sincere thanks to all of our new and renewing members from June, July and August. Your continuing support is truly appreciated.

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Can you identify the institutions of Kodiak's long-standing hospitality industry pictured here? *Hint: All are in business today, but are operating in different locations.*



1.



2.



3.

1. Tony's Place, 1943
2. The Rendezvous, 1956
3. B&B Bar, 1899

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Notice an improvement in the print quality of this newsletter? A generous donation from Kodiak CHARR has enabled us to bring you our collections, photographs and stories in sharp, rich detail. Thank you Kodiak CHARR!



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