



# BARANOV QUARTERLY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE KODIAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY ♦ WINTER 2007-2008

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## Baranov Museum receives Save America's Treasures Award

The Baranov Museum is pleased to announce receipt of a grant award from the Save America's Treasures program in the amount of \$273,750.00 to fund preservation work on the 200-year-old National Historic Landmark building in which the Museum is housed. Funding will support work to both the interior and exterior of the building and will mitigate the most pressing threats to the integrity of the two-story log structure.



Interior work will include the installation of a fire suppression system and a new electrical system. The building will be completely rewired, and receive new track lighting in the gallery and historic lighting fixtures appropriate to the period for which the building is significant. Exterior work is designed to protect the building and the Museum collections from water damage. Failing window units will be carefully removed, restored by a historic mill work specialist and re-installed to prevent any further water infiltration. The redwood siding, put up by the Alaska Commercial Company in the 1880s, will be stripped of its many layers of paint, repaired as needed, primed and repainted.

"It has been our greatest wish to honor the upcoming bicentennial of the building's construction by initiating the preservation work necessary to ensure its future," says Historical Society Executive Director Katie Oliver. "This grant makes it possible. It is a wonderful gift to Alaska."

The Baranov Museum project was one of only 31 out of 340 applications selected to receive funding through this very competitive grant program. The federal grant must be matched by private, state or local funds.

## Bicentennial Poster Design Contest

It was a difficult selection with many outstanding entries, but the judging is complete for our Bicentennial poster design contest! Over the course of the past two months, students of all ages visited the Museum to explore the exhibits and find inspiration. Students were encouraged to reflect on the theme *Connecting Past and Present: 200 Years of History within these Walls*. Any historical topic, event, industry or even a specific object or artifact housed within the Museum was eligible subject matter for the posters. The fifty-six entries were judged on artistic merit, originality, expression of theme, and their accompanying written statements.

We are pleased to announce the following winners: Michelle Canete, Grand Prize Winner for *Seeing through 200 Years and More*; Rachelle Fields, first place ages 15-18 for *Reflections*; Aaron Koch, first place ages 12-14 for *Sea Otter*, Joanna O'Gorman, first place ages 9-11 for *The Baranov Museum*; and Devon Cummiskey, first place ages 4-8 for *SnowFalling Parka Doll*. In addition, several entries were selected for Honorable Mention including Angila Rivera for *Bear Muzzle Carving*, Michael Flaherty for *Holy Resurrection Orthodox Cathedral*, Carina Stihl for *Hats*, and Marina Cummiskey for *Alutiiq Style Basket*. The posters will be exhibited around town throughout the month of January. Stop by the Gerald C. Wilson Auditorium, the Kodiak Post Office and the Kodiak College Library to see how these talented Kodiak kids interpret and express local history.



Devon Cummiskey,  
*Snow Falling Parka Doll*  
First Place: Ages 4 - 8

"I chose to draw this because I like the snow falling parka. Alutiiq people wore these long, long ago."

see page 4 for more winning entries...

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It has been a wonderful month. On December 12, 2007, the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities confirmed what Kodiakans have known for decades: the preservation of the Baranov Museum building is essential to the integrity of our national heritage. In making the announcement of \$7.6 million dollars in preservation awards, Committee Chairman Adair Margo stated "Save America's Treasures represents an exceptional process that blends the best expertise of our federal cultural partners and the National Park Service to select and recommend projects of exceptional value to our nation's cultural and historic legacy. With the support of Congress and the White House, this program exemplifies what the public and private sector can accomplish together in preserving these pre-eminent symbols of our democracy and cultural values."

The momentum behind the Save America's Treasures award began back in 2003 when Steve Peterson, Senior Historic Architect with the National Park Service, Alaska Support Office, completed a condition assessment survey on the building. Peterson's report identified twenty-eight areas of concern. I came into directorship at the Kodiak Historical Society one year after the condition assessment report was completed and couldn't help but feel slightly daunted by the scope of work identified in that report as necessary to preserve the building. Year by year, with financial and technical support from the City of Kodiak, we worked through the list, checking off our accomplishments. A new one-hour fire door. Site drainage improvements. Moss removal from the roof. Renovations to the crawlspace. All the while, planning, working on research and design for the major work to the exterior and the interior.

I have always believed the building merited the work and the funding necessary to enact it. And I have always believed we would have community support in this endeavor. If I have learned anything as Director of the Baranov Museum, it is that the existence of this building and the collections within are the result of triumphant, grass-roots preservation efforts led by local people over a period of four decades. Over the next year, we will look to you again. Stop by the Museum to talk with us about the work. Visit our web site ([www.baranov.us](http://www.baranov.us)) and download our capital campaign brochure. And make a gift, of any amount meaningful and significant to you, to support the preservation of this uniquely Alaskan national treasure.

Happy Holidays,

Katie Oliver,  
Executive Director

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

### MUSEUM HOURS

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



Acquisitioning Members and Objects

When the Baranov Museum accepts donations or purchases objects for the permanent collection, there is a process of reviewing objects for their historical significance relative to the Kodiak area and consistent with the goals of the museum. At the June 29, 2007 Kodiak Historical Society board meeting two new members were appointed to the Acquisition Committee, reorganizing the six member committee. **Nancy Kemp**, a current Kodiak Historical Society Board Member and the Executive Director of the Kodiak Arts Council replaces board member, Reed Oswalt. Nancy has a long history of association with the Baranov Museum, particularly in collections, and exhibit design and development. **Libby Eufemio**, a member at large, replaces long-standing member Peggy Dyson, who stepped down earlier this year. Libby is a registered professional archaeologist in Alaska. She has considerable knowledge of Kodiak prehistory and Sugpiaq/Alutiiq material culture. Libby recently worked for the Baranov Museum as a consultant on our exhibit label renovation project and continues to volunteer upgrading the museum labels.

Recent donations that the committee accepted into the permanent collection this year range from stone artifacts to a brass samovar. Objects and donors are listed below:

- Slate and granite artifacts and a ceramic sourdough jar from William & Beryl Torsen
- Three Baskets woven by Eunice Neseth: An Aleut style basket with lid woven in raffia, a small open basket with fluted edges made of raffia and a grass fish basket from the Kodiak Senior Center.
- Fur Parka purchased in 1946 from the Erskine Store from Joyce Bubendorf Korenek.
- Corporate Seal for Uganik Trading Company from Deedie Pearson.
- Iron Mortar & Pestle possibly used in mining gold on Kodiak Island from St. Mary's Thrift Shop.
- Brass Samovar from Sentafont & Pelegaya Malutin family that was used in Afognak and Kodiak from Olivia Brisbane
- Russian Orthodox Church book written in Russian and English - Instructions in God's Law, 1923 from Olivia Brisbane
- Stone artifacts from Walter Mason/Marge Thera Estate
- Creamer Metal Donut Cutter from Myrtle Olsen
- Three Russian Orthodox Icons, family heirlooms from Laura Resoff
- Flensing knife used at the Port Hobron whaling



*Senafont and Pelegaya Malutin owned this brass samovar and used it in their family homes in Afognak and Kodiak. Their granddaughter Olivia Brisbane donated it to the Baranov Museum last spring.*

- station and a scythe from Bell's Dairy from Forest Blau.
- Plate commemorating "The Seal of the Territory of Alaska" from Deedie Pearson.

Sometimes objects donated to the Baranov Museum don't fit the scope of collections for the museum. An example are two pieces of Athabascan beaded footwear, which were made in the interior of Alaska in the Glenallen area. Exquisitely beaded mukluks and slippers, part of Walter Mason's donation, were offered to the UAF Museum of the North in Fairbanks. They were happy to accept these examples of Athabascan beadwork, providing the Baranov Museum a great opportunity to share with another museum in Alaska.

Again, we thank and appreciate all the generous donors who gave donations to the Baranov Museum. Please keep the Baranov Museum in mind when cleaning out that closet, bookshelf or family estate for objects, documents and photographs relating to the history of our region that could be permanently stored at our museum for generations to enjoy.

Grand Prize Winner -  
Michelle Canete  
*Seeing through 200 years and more*

My poster connects the past to the present by the use of a window. The windows of the Erskine House create a passage connecting the 200-year-old building and its historical contents to the present world. Each windowpane represents an important event or resource. The top left windowpane represents the 1964 Earthquake and the tidal wave Kodiak experienced. I also included the Russian style teacup and the modern teacup to show that although times have changed and it may seem like we live a life different to those before us, we can still connect with them through tea which the Russians traded sea otter pelts for. The multicolored sky symbolizes the many nations that enjoy the beverage and because tea can be enjoyed at any time of the day. The right top windowpane presents the extraordinary baidarka, the creator of the baidarka, an Aleut, and the reason the Erskine House was built, a sea otter. The bottom left windowpane shows that the Erskine House had also witnessed the times during World War II. The final windowpane is a stained glass king crab, an item hung in the Erskine House. The stained glass king crab represents the present and crab is also an important resource. The background is of the wallpaper put up in the Erskine House and fades to the original walls, which again create the connection of past and present.



Joanna O'Gorman, *The Baranov Museum*  
First Place: Ages 9-11

I like art and I enjoy the Baranov Museum's art collection. I included in my poster several items from old to new I saw when I recently visited the museum. I saw a Balalaika in the museum and included it because my father also plays one. I drew a basket because I liked it's colors. I also drew the Alaskan State Flag because it was in the museum, it is colorful and shows a newer Alaska when it became one of the United States.

Aaron Koch, *Sea Otter*  
First Place : Ages 12-14

The sea otter was the center of the Russian American Company. The Baranov Museum held sea otter pelts and acted as an office for the Russian American Company during the time of Alexander Baranov. Sea otter fur was prized for its warmth and luxurious texture. During the Russian American period otters were hunted to almost extinction. Gladly today we still see these cute little creatures swimming in the channel below the Baranov Museum. It is common to see a sea otter with its chest out of the water, eating a clam. It has taken many years and many mistakes to figure out that over-hunting is harmful.





It is obvious to see in the photographs below that Santa has the attention of all the children in the villages as the Coast Guard make their stops with the "Santa To The Villages" in the early 1980s.

The program began in the late 1970s. The Coast Guard Wives Club (now known as the Officers' Spouses Association) and the Star of the Sea Chapel prepared and distributed the Christmas packages. Stops were made at six remote villages on Kodiak Island and at the logging camp at Danger Bay on Afognak Island.

No-one in these photographs, taken by U.S. Coast Guard personnel, has been identified. If the reader can identify anyone pictured please give me a call here at the museum at 486-5920. I would greatly appreciate receiving and adding this information to the archives.

- Alice Ryser



Above: The children of Karluk eagerly awaiting their gifts from Santa.



Clockwise from above: Two members of the Coast Guard Wives Club showing off their handmade bags that will be filled with gifts and goodies for the children in the villages and Danger Bay.



Children gather around Santa on the beach at Port Lions



Santa makes his last stop at the village of Ouzinkie

Collections Conservation Assessment

There has been much excitement (and great work accomplished!) recently in terms of preservation efforts on our building and on the 3-hatch baidarka. Still, the Kodiak Historical Society is committed to ensuring the safety and integrity of all the objects in our collections, large and small. This is the work we have been doing quietly and steadily for fifty-three years.

This past December, Objects Conservator Dana Senge provided expertise and assistance in this area when she completed a conservation assessment of the collections and Museum environment. The scope of her assessment included an inspection of exhibition and storage areas, checking monitoring equipment, and reviewing our policies relating to the collections.

The conservation assessment offered the opportunity to examine and discuss the history and condition of many objects within the collection. Dana provided training in preventative measures with handling and moving objects and simple treatments we could apply, such as the safe removal of old surface residues. Dana's report will prioritize recommendations for continued improvements in collections care at the Baranov Museum. This important work was supported through the Alaska State Museum grant-in-aid program.

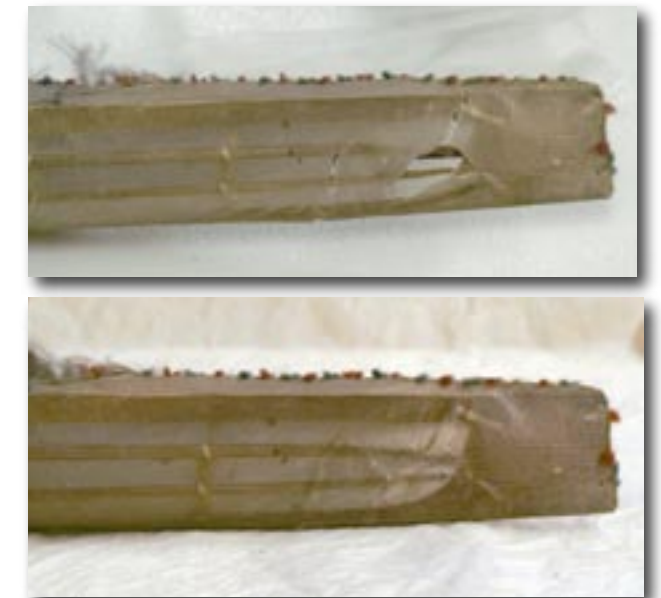


Kodiak Crab Festival - Call for Photographs

Do you have some great snaps of the Shrimp parade? How about the Blessing of the Fleet or the Chad Ogden Ultra-marathon? The Kodiak Chamber of Commerce and the Baranov Museum are producing a retrospective exhibit on 50 years of Kodiak Crab Festival, and are seeking contributions from the community. Photos of all Crab Fest events from all decades are needed. Pull out those boxes of pictures, open up the old scrapbooks and find those Crab Festival gems!

Guest curator for the exhibit is former Baranov Museum director Marian Johnson. The exhibit will be on display throughout May and June, 2008. Contributors have the option of donating photographs to the Baranov Museum, or loaning photographs for the purpose of creating high resolution digital scans for the exhibit. Exhibits are at their best when they are collaborative in nature. Take the time to share your memories with you friends and neighbors by contributing pictures to this special exhibit.

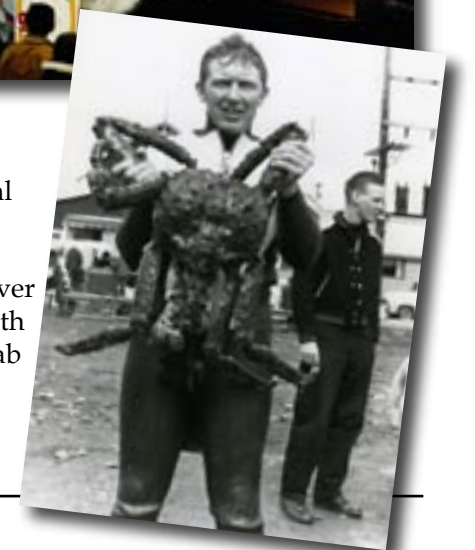
For more information contact the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce at 486-5577. Contribution deadline - Jan. 15, 2008.



During her visit to the Baranov Museum, Conservator Dana Senge treated tears to this early 20th century two-hatch baidarka model donated by the VonScheele family of Afognak. The model has a wood frame with a gut shell, storage lashings of dyed wool and wood figures dressed in fur and skin coats. The photo at left shows the model in its entirety. The photos above show details of the stern piece before (top) and after (below) treatment. Photos DKS Conservation Services.



Above: Snow Bruin's float at the Crab Festival Parade, 1979.



Right: Scuba Diver John Warren with a large King Crab during the 1961 Festival.



## MEMBERSHIP

We would like to extend sincere thanks to all of our new and renewing members from October, November & December. Your continuing support is truly appreciated.

### BENEFACTORS Kodiak CHARR

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Roy and Linda Madsen

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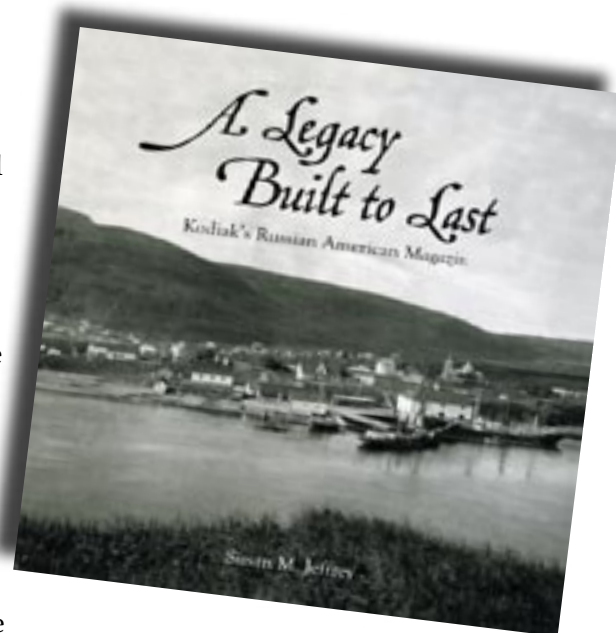
To become a new or renewing member please call the Baranov Museum at 486-5920. If we have inadvertently left you, your spouse, or your business off the list, please call for corrections.

The Baranov Musuem is operated in partnership between the Kodiak Historical Society and the City of Kodiak. The Kodiak Historical Society is funded in part by the City of Kodiak, Kodiak Island Borough, Alaska State Council on the Arts, Alaska State Museum, Museums Alaska, the Rasmuson Foundation, and many private donors. We thank you all for your support!

## Publication Announcement - Coming in Spring 2008!

The Kodiak Historical Society is pleased to announce its upcoming publication of *A Legacy Built to Last: Kodiak's Russian American Magazin*. This richly illustrated book chronicles Kodiak's history with interpretive emphasis on the industries and individuals associated with the Baranov Museum building. As a silent witness to 200 years of commerce, cultural convergence, and change, the old Russian American *Magazin* is the perfect narrative tool to relate the stories that have played out under its gaze.

Kodiak writer Sue Jeffrey has crafted an elegant manuscript, thoroughly researched, drawing heavily on oral histories gathered from long-time Kodiak residents. Her writing is enhanced by more than eighty-five illustrations and photographs from the Baranov Museum archives. As Dr. Mark Schreiter explains in the book's foreword, "Few residents of or visitors to the Kodiak archipelago fail to notice the signal presence of its most historic landmark, the Russian American *Magazin*; many, however, fail to understand the pivotal role the building has played in Kodiak's heritage and that of Alaska and the world beyond. This book provides not only that understanding but also a means to engage on several levels with the unique spirit of Kodiak, to feel the life that pulsed through its past and recognize its influence on the present and the future."



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### Yes! I want to help preserve and share Kodiak history

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please send a gift membership from me to: at the \$\_\_\_\_\_ level

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

My check made payable to the Baranov Museum is enclosed

Please charge my membership(s) to my credit card:

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to begin / renew my membership as a:

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