



# San Juan Historical Society & Museum

Fall 2017

## *Archival Project Update: Digging into History, a success story*



In January, the Museum celebrated the start of its next 50 years as a Museum by completely dismantling the Etta Egeland Resource Center. This building has housed the museum's collection of ephemera, photos, artifacts, documents, textiles, flags: everything boxed up and put away for safekeeping. Over time, the collection had become a bit unruly and was overflowing its space. Reorganization seemed the only solution, so a team of volunteers began a 12-week project to set everything to rights.

Someone once said: "Change is hard at the first, messy in the middle and gorgeous at the end." Volunteers had to organize the *process* of organizing. Every item was removed from the Archival Rooms placed into boxes – 200 boxes to be exact. When the team of 20+ volunteers arrived to begin work, they each took a box, removed everything onto their workspace, and recorded what was found. The items were then distributed: books, ephemera, photos, etc., and then it was on to the next box. After the 200 boxes were emptied and sorted, the team began work of the stacks of photos, books, and artifacts. The goal was to discover what was in the collection, compare it to the database list, and resolve any discrepancies.

The team discovered many items that had not

been added into the archival database, several that should not have been added (in that the item had no connection to the Museum's mission) and hundreds of photographs!

Every Monday through Saturday, the team worked in the Resource Center. At times, there was barely enough room in the workspace to accommodate all the volunteers. It was detailed work, recording, researching, sorting, discovering. The team worked quietly and diligently, adhering to the code that no one worked more than two hours at a stretch. Another rule was that if a volunteer found something really interesting, they had to tell the group.

At the end of the 12 weeks, the team's overall accomplishment was amazing. All items in the Resource Center had been reviewed and sorted; and yes, the place was a bit cluttered, but everything was marked and the subsequent work to be done on it was clearly described.

The Archival Team consisted of: Susan Waters, Diana Mancel, Lynn Weber Roochoarg, Alan Roochvorg, Tom Starr, Carole Sue Conran, Robin Jacobson, Michael Hansen, Don Nixon, Romona Jones, Sue Nielsen, Sally Rogers, Eleanor Shippen, Sarah Ann Miller, Donna Alexander, Mike Vouri, Regina Kammer, David Kane, Lenore Bayuk, John Miller, Sandy Strehlou, Mary Jane Anderson, Frances Robertson, Parin Columna, Dave Zeretzke Diane Buganski and Kevin Loftus . New volunteers to the continuation of the project include Andy Zall, Mo Sloane, Ron Hanson, Jack Gibson, Judy Bentzen and Leslie Baker. Thank you team for a job very well done! That was how the museum ended the original project, with new projects emerging, new discoveries to share, and a clear vision of what needed to happen next. Stay tuned!

## MHI Update

Developing the Museum of History and Industry continues with further additions to the Limestone and Logging wings and the installation of custom engraved commemorative bricks at the entrance to the MHI.

The Logging exhibit additions tell the story of the early Friday Harbor waterfront sawmills, the methods used for felling trees featuring a 57 lb. Sears Craftsman two-man chainsaw that dates from the 1950's. The beast of a chainsaw hangs from a vintage scale to wow visitors as to its heft.



*Images depict the Friday Harbor waterfront at the turn of the 20th century and the mills which processed dimensional lumber and provided early electrical power to Friday Harbor*



*A way to incorporate vintage saws - cross cut, two-man or "misery whips" - into interpretive panels.*

In the Limestone wing, the newest addition is a life size 3-D cut-out of limestone baron John McMillin against a backdrop of the kiln operations at Roche Harbor in 1923.

A large scale model of a working lime kiln is in development and will give visitors an illustrative example of how a kiln operated. The concept can be somewhat confusing and the model will give an excellent insight to how the kilns processed limestone into quicklime.

Fundraising is ongoing and plans are in place to begin a full development of the farming exhibit as more funding becomes available. ***As of this writing, \$150,000 is needed to complete the MHI project. Please consider a donation to help us reach our fundraising goal.***



*John S. McMillin was an imposing figure, and we aimed to illustrate that point. The doorway for the Dr. Capron House, which stood at Roche Harbor for decades, was repurposed for this use. The sidelights will be filled with the "faces of Roche Harbor," individuals who played a part in the history of Roche Harbor during the limestone era.*



The Bellevue Poultry Farm (above) was located on Westcott Bay near the entrance to Roche Harbor Village. Among the fowl raised were Crystal White Orpingtons, a breed developed in England in 1886.

See additional story on page 5.

A fancy presentation (below) of delectable fowl is displayed in this promotional piece, which states in part: "We come from Bellevue Poultry Farm. To Broil or to Roast, the Frizzle or to Fry, to remind you once more of Mother's Pot Pie."



## ***Moments in Time ...***

*From the May 1905 Friday Harbor Journal: "Divorce was denied for (unnamed couple) as "both are of loose moral character and guilty of adultery."*

*October 1980: San Juan County commits to buying an IBM computer.*

*Optimism of February 1900: Work is being pushed on the new cannery roof and if the fine weather continues it will be nearly, if not quite, completed by the end of the week.*

*What do the names of the ferries mean? Here are a few: Hyak is "fast", Kaleetan is "arrow", Yakima is "to become peopled" and Elwah is "elk".*

*January 1980 newspaper ads for local restaurants included: Simmco Central, Mariner, The Wild Hare, The Electric Co Tavern, Sweet Tooth Saloon, and Turnagain Restaurant and Lounge.*

*In 1973, the Friday Harbor Journal had a special section regarding the changes in the town. Listed as "Growing Concerns" were American Legion Club, Friday Harbor Drug, Jeri's Apparel, Kings Market, The Roberts Buildings and San Juan Properties, Inc.*

*In May 1981, the Sprouse-Ritz store had their grand opening in Friday Harbor.*

*In July 1971, a runaway bus toppled a tree and fence surrounding the Tourist Hotel.*

*In 1974 cable television was on its way to Friday Harbor, per San Juan Cable. There will be 9 channels, 3 Canadian, 4 Seattle, 1 Bellingham, and a weather channel.*

*In August of 1980, seven WWII PT22s performed a "dog fight" over Griffin Bay.*

*For the Historical Society and Museum, Electric power was \$93.80 and Water/Sewage Fees were \$95 FOR THE YEAR in 1970. For 2017, the numbers are somewhat different.*



### ***Bringing history to a younger generation***

Eleanor Shippen (at right) grand-daughter of Museum members, King and Pamela Fitch, contacted the Museum well ahead of her summer vacation and requested a volunteer position for the two weeks she would be visiting her grandparents here on San Juan Island.

Eleanor was assigned a project involving the hundreds of unidentified photos (we call them UFO's). Her job was to make photocopies of the photos, put the originals into a plastic sleeve for temporary storage, then prepare the photocopies for review; in this manner, we might be able to discover the identities of some of these adorable children, loving couples and large family groups. In the coming months, the Museum will be make available at several locations books of these unidentified photos so the public can look them over and add their suggestions.

Eleanor took this project on with great enthusiasm! She worked diligently and quietly at her tasks, coming in to work at the Museum each day with a purpose. The project that had been estimated to take several weeks to complete was 90% done by the time her two week stay on the island was done. Sarah Ann Miller, another high school volunteer from the island, has taken over the project to finish it up.

Eleanor was a pleasure to work with, asked great questions, and has all the makings of an archival historian! She was able to recognize duplicate photos out of the hundreds she was scanning, and we were subsequently able to identify some of the photos due to her diligence. She promises to come back next year, and we are going to hold her to that! Thank you Eleanor!



### ***Dressed Poultry De Luxe, Yesterlaid Eggs and more from Bellevue Poultry Farm at Roche Harbor***

Roche Harbor was known for more than limestone processing during the McMillin era. The Bellevue Poultry Farm raised assorted breeds of chickens, turkeys and produced various agricultural products as another part of the McMillin holdings.

The farm featured products which could be shipped directly to the consumer via parcel post courtesy of the U.S. Mail. The farm assured high quality products at reasonable prices with strict adherence to the sanitation standards of the day. A sales pamphlet from 1914 highlights a sampling of the products offered: *chickens, turkeys, Peking ducklings, Belgian hares, Carneaux squabs (a breed of pigeon), fresh eggs, dressed suckling pigs, homemade butter, cut*

*flowers, seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables, comb honey and a variety of homemade jams, jellies, pickles, stuffed peppers and other farm delicacies too numerous to mention.*



*Shipping crates from the Bellevue Poultry Farm await export in this undated photograph.*

## ***New & Renewing Members and Donations***

### **Business Members**

*God's Pocket Photography*  
*Barnyard Farm Supply/*  
*Horshu Ranch*  
*Benedict Restoration and Repair*  
*Olympic Lights B&B*  
*Store More Storage*  
*Harbor Lands, LP*  
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*Ernie's Cafe*  
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*San Juan Pest Control*  
*Friday Harbor Suites*  
*San Juan Interiors*  
*Animal Inn & Wellness Center*  
*Harbor Rental & Saw Shop*

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 Andy Zall  
 Sonya Arend Flaherty  
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 Jeanie Garrett  
 Susan Reed

## ***Memorial donations***

**Charles Lindenberg**  
 Nancy Lindenberg

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 Robert Guard

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**Steve & Mona Douglas**  
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**Kendo Yasuda**  
**Juanita Rouleau**  
**Ed Tuck**  
**Al Sundstrom**  
**Jack McMurray**  
 Gary & Shawna Yasuda

## ***MHI Contributors***

Jim Boyce  
 James & Linda Bergquist  
 Nancy Lindenberg  
 Frank & Pat Lacy

Deb Nolan,  
 Deb Nolan Custom Catering  
 Gary & Shawna Yasuda  
 Rich Norris & Diana Mancel

Carol Spaulding  
 Anonymous

## ***Wish list***

- *Volunteers for: greeting visitors, research, data input, grounds maintenance and exhibit design.*
- *Gasoline or rechargeable electric blower for clearing sidewalks of grass clippings and leaves.*
- *Fireproof filing cabinets for archival storage.*
- *24" or larger flat screen computer monitor.*
- *LED lightbulbs—60W equivalent.*
- *Historic images to borrow, relevant to San Juan Island and Friday Harbor. Especially images from the 1950's to 1990's. We'll scan and return to you.*
- *Tools and lime barrels from the Roche Harbor limestone era for use in MHI Limestone exhibit.*
- *Brochures and memorabilia from the Tarte Family Roche Harbor "Boatel" era.*
- *A gently used iPad (2017), iPad Pro 9.7", iPad Air 2, or iPad Air for a Square credit card reader.*
- *Trash bags, 13 and 33 gallon.*
- *Copier paper, 8 1/2x11 and 11x17.*
- *Did we mention VOLUNTEERS? See first item.*

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Please detach this form at dotted line and return with your donation today. Thank you!

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**This is a (check one)**  Renewing Membership  New Membership  Donation

Yearly membership contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (amount of your choosing)

Additional contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the developing SJI Museum of History and Industry (MHI)

Please make checks payable to San Juan Historical Society, PO Box 441, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

The San Juan Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, tax i.d.# 23-7022221.