



San Juan Historical Society & Museum

Summer/Fall 2019

Have you seen your Historical Museum lately? There have been some changes...

It has been an active year at your Museum. Several plans have been put into motion and a number of projects have been completed. From improvements to the grounds, updated interpretive signage, a new roof, new volunteers helping with our many lists of to do's, more development in the MHI and everything in between. Learn more inside.



Clockwise from top left: A new connector path directs visitors to the Resource/Welcome Center, complemented by one of three orientation signs that provide an overview of the grounds. The entry to the Museum of History and Industry (MHI) features logos for the MHI and specific icons for each industry profiled. A new roof going on the Scribner cabin. Overgrown shrubs were removed from in front of the Resource Center replaced with new beds, prepared for planting next spring as the first phase of a multiyear landscape plan to enhance the grounds.



President's Message

- Robin Jacobson, Board President

With this year's Board of trustees election in March, we welcomed new board members Mitzi Johnson, Jennifer Rigg, Kevin Roth, and Andy Zall. Each brings their own areas of expertise to our experienced and dedicated board. Andy was also elected to the position of vice president. All board members, new and returning, look forward to leadership

roles within our society. It's going to be a great year! The support that Museum members generously give through financial donations and volunteer time to keep the doors open is appreciated every day. You make things happen. You make our mission possible. Thank you all!

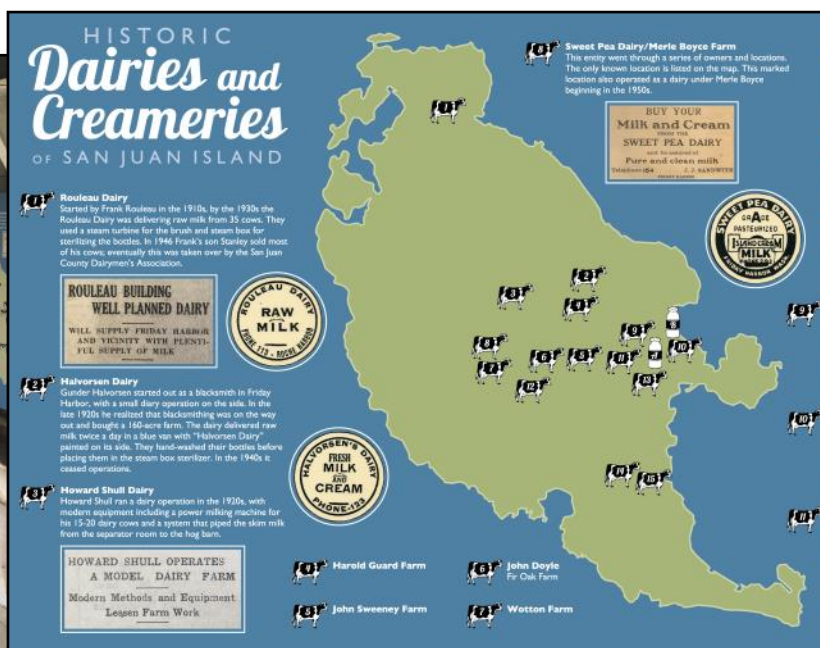
New milk house exhibit unveiled

Following our new exhibit design theme carried over from the MHI, the new milk house exhibit features visually appealing and content rich interpretive panels. The new exhibit has enhanced the 8 x 10 ft., space and provides a much improved visitor experience.

Visitors are given a basic overview of typical dairy operations on small farms with insight into how milk was processed into various dairy products. A narrative of health and safety standards, which came to the fore in the 1920s, and a description of how cream separators were integral to dairy operations are also included. The dairy history of the island is illustrated in part, by a map showing dairy farms and the creameries that once existed on San Juan Island.

Funding for the exhibit was made possible by the San Juan County Historic Preservation Grant Program. We thank the San Juan County Council for making these funds available to aid in completing projects like this. Since 2009, the Museum has benefited from this grant program which has helped to fund eight different historic preservation projects.

The milk house is one of the four original structures remaining from the King farm. The building underwent a restoration in 2013, where the roof was replaced, part of the siding was replaced and the building was made structurally sound.



From the Collection - Divers Helmet



One of the more unique artifacts in the Museum's archives is this Diver's Helmet. The records show it was used by a man by the name of Art Hook in 1918 when he tended the fish traps on the Salmon Banks, located on the south end of the island. This is an excellent place for a researcher to begin, with lots of questions. Who made the helmet? Who was Art Hook? It's off to the internet we go!

The helmet bears a medallion on the front that reads "A.J. Morse & Son, Inc., Boston Mass" It is a 3 light, 12 bolt model - meaning there are three glass areas for the diver to look about, and twelve bolts on the breastplate used to secure the diving suit. Most helmets have at least four lights (one on the top). From the medallion, we can date the helmet's manufacture as between the company's incorporation and when it moved from Boston to Rockland, MA, before 1940. At one point, Morse began manufacturing all diving helmets used by the US Navy,

but this model was for commercial diving. Additional research on the value of the helmet revealed that this style is somewhat rare. The serial number has just recently been found on the helmet, and the Museum will follow up on that and report back to our readers.

Art Hook turned out to be Captain Art Hook, from Bellingham, a well known sea diver who claimed ten thousand dives in his lifetime. When he retired from diving in the 1940s, he went around the country making presentations. A poster from that era announces "Captain Art Hook, World Famous Sea Diver, Hero and Adventurer" and "It will thrill you beyond measure to hear and know this strange man of the sea and land."

What next for this artifact? Determining the exact year of manufacture. Next, research on the appropriate restoration and preservation, then incorporating into the fishing exhibit in the MHI, after the artifact is fully documented.

If you knew of Art Hook, or have photos or stories from divers operating around San Juan Island, please contact us. If you would like to be involved in similar research projects as a volunteer, please let us know - we have a few hundred objects that could use your attention!

You know you're an islander when...*

- You know that "Island Time" means adjusting your time to everyone else's schedule.
- You remember when 10 acres was once traded for a refrigerator.
- You invite 23 people to a party, only 5 RSVP, but 31 show up.
- Your three jobs still won't support you.
- You haven't had a reason to honk your car horn in months.
- You only have to give out the last four digits of your phone number.

**The title of a booklet published in 1999 which contained 110 pithy comments about island living. The booklet was the work of Jan Jameson and Jeanie Rouleau with illustrations by Sam Connery.*

The Image Archive Story

Volunteers working in the Image Archives have had a busy year. Five networked computers are now dedicated to organizing, scanning and categorizing island history.

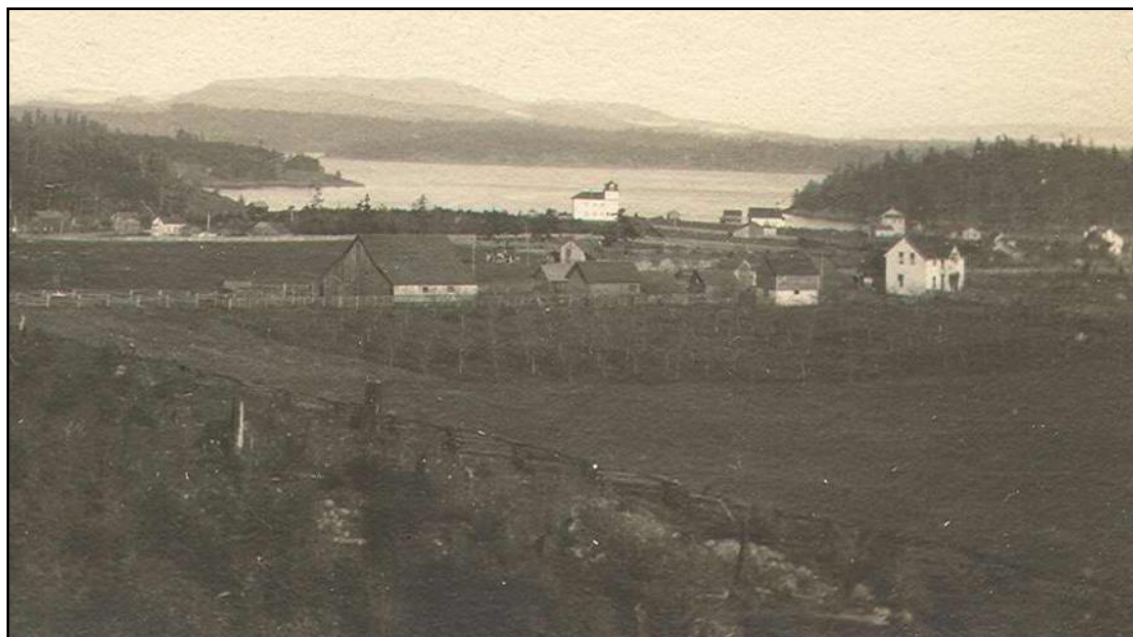
There are about 5,000 images in our archive with many more to add already in our possession. When we receive images, whether still photo prints, slides, scans or movies and video, they are categorized, scanned and entered into our archive system. Originals are kept in a fireproof cabinet for safekeeping.

Recently we've been honored by several families who have entrusted us with their photos and movies. This greatly expands our ability to understand, celebrate, and display our island's history. This also allows families or the descendants of these families, to share in the pleasure of connecting with their history. The images are also available to scholars when researching the history of Washington State.

Every kind of image, from glass plate negatives to slides and prints, is scanned at very high quality. That ensures every image you might have is accessible. We are happy

to accept donations for our permanent archive, or to scan and return the originals to you. Sorting out your files or going through the boxes in your basement, closet or attic isn't necessary. We'll do that work for you. All images are important to us - we don't screen or reject any image as connections are often found in seemingly unrelated images. In an early image of Friday Harbor, you can see a coffee can nailed to the front of the wooden sidewalk. That coffee brand was the first to be offered as pre-ground instead of whole beans. It was a favorite of cowboys out on the prairies and apparently of town residents, too. We always look carefully at each image when cataloging to find all these hidden gems.

There have been many wonderful surprises during the organizing process. One of the most intriguing is the discovery of 35 glass plate negatives taken by Friday Harbor Drug Store employee and noted photographer J. A. McCormick. These images were taken in and around San Juan Island in 1904, and are a wonderful snapshot of the time for their spectacular clarity and the detail the glass plates were able to capture.



A shot of Friday Harbor, from a glass negative, taken in 1904 from about where the Town of Friday Harbor water tank is located today. It shows the James King Farm, site of today's San Juan Historical Museum, with its orchard at peak size. The once impressive orchard consisted of 300 pear and apple trees. Two trees from that orchard survive to this day.

MHI Updates

The past few months have seen a great deal of work being done in the MHI. The farming wing is coming together in each of its two exhibit areas. Island pioneer Jim Crook's (1873—1967) wool carding machine occupies an area which will be devoted to the Crook family that homesteaded the former English Camp in 1875 until it became a unit of the National Park Service in 1966.

Over the years various individuals and groups have kept the memory of the Crook family intact. Jim Crook's most notable creation is an ingenious, handmade, 20-foot-long, two-ton wool carding machine, fashioned from a manure spreader's wheels, which was powered by a belt connected to his tractor. Throughout his life, Crook tinkered with machinery. He once said, "I've always had a mind for inventions. I had an idea for a flying machine – never did have the money to develop it. Then the Wright brothers came out with something very much like I had in mind myself." However, as a life long bachelor, he did invent a machine that would make his bed.

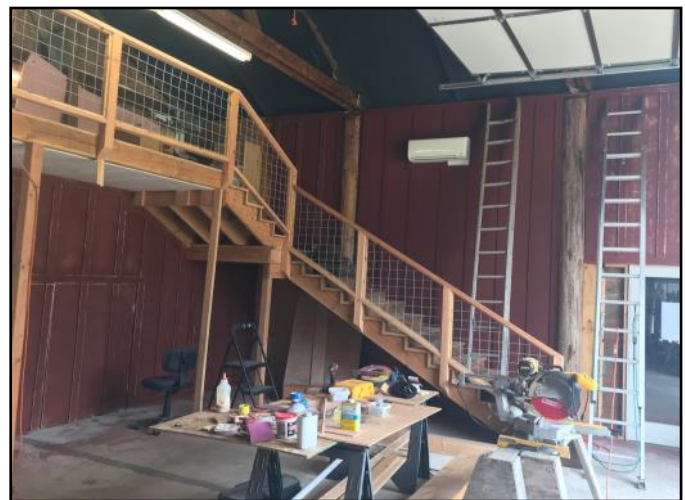
Clockwise from top right: A large panel welcomes visitors in the MHI entrance depicting iconic images and specific color-keyed logos specific to each industry. A "hayloft" will provide additional exhibit space and walls are treated to mimic weathered barn wood. Jim Crook's "magnificent" carding machine in place with related artifacts to come. The flooring is reclaimed dock material donated by the Port of Friday Harbor.



The main farming exhibit space has received the most attention with the hayloft construction, interior walls and interpretive panels completed.

Interpretive panels cover a number of historical, farming related themes on San Juan Island. Partial funding of the exhibit has been provided by a San Juan County Lodging Tax Grant award.

The overall MHI project is nearly two-thirds complete. The lime wing completion will happen next as fund raising continues to get us closer to completing the entire project. We ask for your assistance to help us get there. Please contact director Kevin Loftus to learn more about the project and for ways to help.



Scribner cabin gets a new roof



The new roof glistens in the morning sun.

The Scribner log cabin located on the grounds of the Museum recently had the roof replaced. A benevolent, anonymous donor provided the funds to cover the cost of the project. We thank them for their generous gift to help preserve the 128-year-old structure.

The cabin was a gift to the Museum in 1988 by island residents Sondra and Jack Raub. It was moved from their property near the shore of Mitchell Bay. After the move, the cabin was restored.

Edward Scribner, his wife Alice and three of their children came to San Juan Island from Michigan, around 1890. In 1891, Edward, his father James and father-in-law Arthur Malcolm built the cabin. The planks that form the walls were hewn with broad ax and adze from massive old growth logs. The tell-tale markings of these tools is clearly evident. The well-built cabin has stood the test of time and is indicative of dwellings built during the homestead era, which began in the 1870s.

The family lived in the cabin for twelve years while Edward worked as a carpenter and shipwright. In that time, Edward and Alice raised nine children – six of whom were born in the cabin – which consisted of two rooms and a sleeping loft. The family moved to a home on Web Street in town around 1903 and welcomed three more children into the family.

The Scribner family gathers at their home on Web Street, in Friday Harbor for the occasion of Edward and Alice's 50th wedding anniversary, February 22, 1936.



Moments in time

June 1967: Two Radiosondes, (weather balloons) launched by the National Weather Service (NWS) at Quillayute Field on the Olympic Peninsula fell from the sky onto San Juan Island. One fell near the Friday Harbor Labs, landing in a tree and the second landed on private property. Radiosondes, have been used by the NWS since the 1930s to take upper air observations. The balloons expand 20-25 ft., then reaching a certain height, burst and a parachute opens to allow the sensitive equipment to descend safely. They can ascend to heights of 115,000 feet and drift about 180 miles from the release point.

August 1900: A fire in the hold of the schooner William G. Irwin occurred at Roche Harbor. The responders closed and sealed the lid of the hold, leaving it to burn itself out. Rumors swirled that three of the schooner's sailors had been fired the afternoon the fire was discovered. The Irwin was built in 1881 and broke records for the fastest passage from San Francisco to Maui in 8 days and 17 hours. She served the Roche Harbor lime trade, and later the coconut shipping trade. She was laid up in San Francisco in July 1920 and gradually fell into disrepair then sold and burned on May 15, 1926.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Diana Mancel, Board Secretary and Volunteer Coordinator

After the summer craziness subsides, and the relatives/friends have gone back home, you might be looking for something to immerse yourself in for the fall and winter – we have just the ticket! Make a difference in your community by volunteering for a project at the Historical Museum. Here's how it works:

- Meet with the volunteer coordinator at the Museum, take a tour, learn about all the projects currently needed and underway. There is everything from landscaping to artifact research to guiding tours!
- Choose the project that best suits your available time and interest. This is all about what YOU want to do because it is your time, your effort, your enjoyment that is critical to a volunteer sign up.
- Meet the other volunteers, learn about their projects, and join a team of folks who are interested in giving back to the Island's history and the Museum's collection.

New and Renewing Members and Donations

Since last newsletter publication 3.1.19

Current Business Members

*Ameriprise Financial
Hanacek & Associates
Gene Hanacek
Thompson & Associates, CPA's
Barnyard Farm Supply/
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MHI Contributors

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Kevin Roth
Diana Mancel & Rich Norris

Thank you for your generosity!

We strive for accuracy please let us know if we omitted your name.

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The Museum is a recipient of grant funding from San Juan County lodging tax funds. Proceeds derived from this grant help to defray a portion of operating expenses. We thank the San Juan County Council and their lodging tax advisory committee for this grant award. We thank the islands lodging owners and their guests for the continued financial support of the Museum.

☐ **Please contact me for volunteer opportunities.**

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