



# The Orcas Islander

Newsletter of the Orcas Island Historical Society - Winter 2011

"We educate, inspire, connect and involve our community and visitors as stewards of island history."

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ◆ The Annual Appeal ~ see insert
- ◆ Bison Antiquus news
- ◆ Collaborations with PCF Gallery
- ◆ Volunteering opportunities
- ◆ The Historic Boats quilt returns !

## Coming Soon...

### Mar 26th: "History Lives Here"

A historic lodgings B & B Tour  
to benefit the  
Orcas Island Historical Museum

**See back page  
for more info**

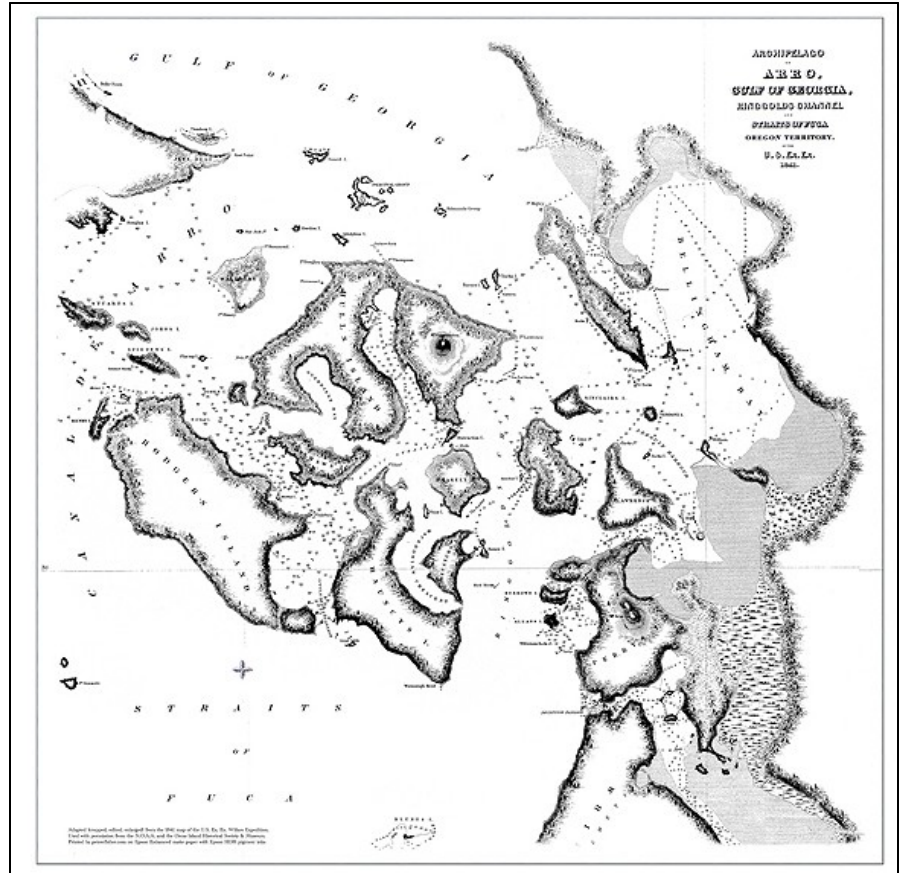
### MUSEUM HOURS

In winter months our Museum is  
**OPEN**

Saturdays only  
from 10:30 am to 3pm

### Office Hours

Weekdays  
11am to 4pm



A detail of Capt. Wilkes US Exploring Expedition map of the San Juan Islands from 1841. See page 2 for more information on this map project.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

First of all, some good news about our **Bison Antiquus skull**: We found a firm that is making a reasonably priced reproduction of the skull, so that we will have it available for display purposes. Their bid left enough from the Carper Foundation's designated gift to also reproduce one of the larger bones, and the bone thought to show knife marks. These castings will be able to be safely handled in our display area, and taken around to schools and meetings. Board members Denise Wilk is working with local artist Fred Enge to design a mural backdrop for the skull display, depicting a grasslands scene representative of where the bones were found on the Ayer property near Olga. Our goal is to have the display ready to go for our Memorial Day season opener. **Annual Appeal** In our last newsletter, I went into some detail on our financial situation. To sum up, if we have a good fundraising year, we will be able to use available bequest monies to pay down our outstanding construction loan and be debt-free. The interest savings would be the equivalent to a donation of over \$600 each month! So I appeal to all members, friends, islanders — please fill out the enclosed Annual Appeal form (or go online to our website at [www.orcasmuseum.org](http://www.orcasmuseum.org)), and help keep our gem of a Museum a showplace for our community. As added incentive, gifts of \$200 or \$400 will receive two or four tickets (value \$25 each) to our March 26th historic lodgings tour, **History Lives Here**. Read more about this fun event on the back page of this issue.

*Bill Buchan, President*

**MUSEUM FRIENDS: IF YOU ARE GOOD AT:****THEN YOU COULD HELP US BY:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ◆ Interior Decorating & Design .....   | Setting up Exhibits, Labeling Displayed items |
| ◆ Organizing Materials and Files ..... | Helping Irene with Administrative items       |
| ◆ Listening and Typing .....           | Transcribing Islanders' Oral Histories        |
| ◆ Gardening and Landscaping .....      | Beautifying the Grounds                       |
| ◆ Word-smithing .....                  | Writing Grants (help us raise funds)          |
| ◆ Writing Articles .....               | Helping with Publicity                        |
| ◆ Carpentry, Odd Jobs .....            | Making Minor Repairs, Exhibit set-up          |
| ◆ Talking to Strangers .....           | Becoming a Museum Greeter                     |

*Please use our Annual Appeal / Membership form to let us know how you'd like to help !*

**OIHM and the Peter C. Fisher Gallery ~ ~ an interesting alliance**

The Orcas Island Historical Museum and the Peter C. Fisher Gallery will be teaming up on a number of interesting projects this year, not the least of which will be a collaboration to produce two very fascinating maps that have come our way. The first is a cropped and enhanced version of the 1841 Wilkes U.S. Exploring Expedition map which will show only the San Juan Islands, including the two fictitious islands that were included as result of a spiteful trick played on Capt. Wilkes by one of his subordinates (see an image of this map on the front page of this newsletter). The second map is an 1889 rendition of the vegetation ground cover of Orcas Island, an extremely detailed map of all the original swales, roads, footpaths, orchards and natural vegetation of that time. The ground cover map will be scanned at high resolution and digitally cut up into over-lapping sections, which will be available for Museum visitors to view and/or purchase from our archive collection. The Wilkes map is being readied to be reproduced on high quality acid-free paper and will be available as a print, at approximately 24" square, in our Museum store. Both maps reveal a fascinating history of these islands and we feel they will be a great addition to our archives. Peter and our Board President Bill Buchan have also been discussing another collaboration on a number of beautiful old photographs and postcards that have become available, to be made into both postcards and prints to be shown at the PCF Gallery, and to sell in both the gallery and the Museum. Peter has access to very high quality, large-scale reproduction equipment and we are looking forward to having these exquisite historical photos made available to the general public.

**We would like your input & suggestions ~ ~**

Please let us know, via email or phone, or through the soon-to-be-posted Suggestions Page on our website any thoughts, feedback or suggestions you may have on how to improve our Museum or it's services. We welcome your thoughts! Our OIHM website is located at: [www.orcasmuseum.org](http://www.orcasmuseum.org) and our email address is [orcasmuseum@rockisland.com](mailto:orcasmuseum@rockisland.com). You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter for all you techies !

**A donation was received from George & Janice Hall  
as a**

***"Memorial to George B. Hall & Betty Ann Hall "***

**A donation was received from Jan Cleveland & Chris Dickerson  
to benefit our Oral History Project**

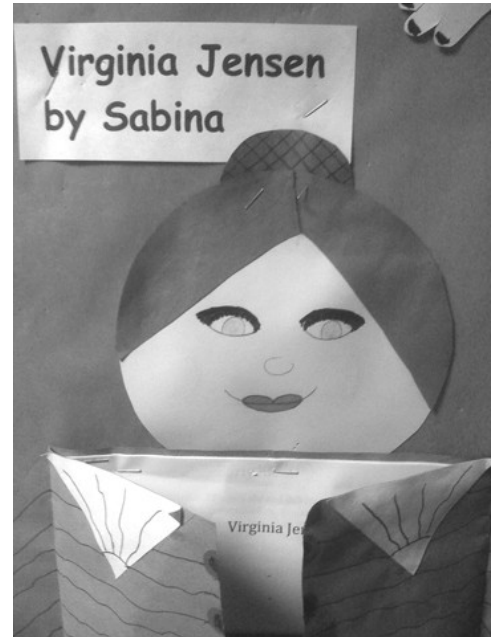
**QUILT NEWS!**

**Patty Sponseller** of Seattle, winner of the 2010 Journey Stories Historic Boats quilt, has donated the quilt back to the Museum for the enjoyment of islanders and visitors alike!

**Thank You Patty!**

**Welcome two new Board Members . . . teacher Nancy May Knapp . . .**

Last fall Nancy Knapp's 4-5th grade class had a special tour of the Orcas Museum thanks to volunteer Marj Franke, and they got a special viewing of our fourteen thousand year old Bison Antiquus skull to boot. Nancy's main objective was for her class to get to peruse our Oral History room, where each child was asked to choose a person who interested them, and then do a report and an artistic rendition of that person. The results are spectacular and are on display in the upstairs hallway of the Orcas Elementary School. We were very pleased afterward when Nancy let us know that she would be interested in serving on our Board of Directors. She has involved her kids in a number of fascinating projects, including the **Pennies for Peace** program which you may have read about in the Sounder, a fundraiser to build schools in Afganistan spearheaded by the author of the book *Three Cups of Tea*. We look forward to working with Nancy and creating more of a liason between the Museum and island schools.



**Virginia Jensen, one of our research volunteers, was chosen by Sabina for her Oral History project at Orcas Elementary School.**

**. . . and inn-keeper Susan Fletcher!**

As many of you know, Susan and her husband Bill are proprietors of Turtleback Farm Inn. Susan has graciously responded to our urgent call for a Treasurer which went out in our last newsletter, and we heartily welcome her. Leaving the Board are our Journey Stories chair Andrea Cohen, and Gwyneth Burrill who have both needed to move on. John Willis has stepped down because, according to our by-laws, his tenure timed out after a six year stint of dedicated service. We hope to still see your smiling faces here in various other volunteer capacities.

**DID YOU KNOW ... You can subscribe to weekly installments of Orcas Island history by going to our website and looking for the History Corner icon. Click on the icon and look for the email or RSS feed subscription buttons on the right side of the page. These short stories were originally written by Tom Welch for the Weekly newspaper and are just as interesting today.**

**SPECIAL THANK YOU'S**

We wished **Miles McCoy** a happy 80th birthday at Christmas time and we are SO grateful for his continued assistance in taking care of our recycling & garbage disposal week after week.

Thank you to **Jim Clark** for offering to take over scheduling & coordination of our Front Desk Greeters for this year. He is taking over for **Robyn Lowe** who did a fabulous job last year. Cheers to both!

All of our winter-time **Front Desk Greeters** who devote Saturday hours so that our Museum can remain open at least one day per week throughout the year. Stay warm! Wear layers!

To **Sue Wood & Judi Watson** for their combined efforts to help us stay on top of our new membership management system. Judi has been spending every Friday morning doing data entry on our new Past Perfect museum software program in the OIHM office. And Sue follows up by sending out thank-yous.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

**Ann Irish**

**Marta Nielson**

**Tom & Karen Ritter**

**Donna Wildman-Gossett**

**Tina Roye**

**Joe Thoron**

**Millie Vaccarella**

**David & Kaaren Slawson**

## Orcas Island Historical Society & Museum

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### 2011 Board of Directors

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**Judi Watson, Second Vice President**  
**Susan Fletcher, Treasurer**  
**Denise Wilk, Secretary**  
**Anthony Ayer**  
**George Garrels**  
**Nancy May Knapp**  
**James Lobdell**  
**Leslie Seaman**  
**Tom Welch**

### Staff

**Kay Clark ~ Archivist**  
**Irene Demetri ~ Office Admin**

# ECRWSS

*If you would like to receive this newsletter via email in PDF format please email the museum with your name and current email address . . . [orcasmuseum@rockisland.com](mailto:orcasmuseum@rockisland.com)*



The Orcas Island Historical Museum is now on FACEBOOK . . . .  
Become a fan and stay current with up-to-the-minute news and information!

The museum is a recipient of Hotel/Motel Tax dollars. Many thanks to San Juan County, the Islands Lodging Industry and Lodging guests for their very generous support.

## *“History Lives Here” 2011 - B & B Tour*

### Historic Lodgings Tour

#### Sponsored by the Orcas Island Historical Society

Do you know which Orcas Island resort was originally called The Norton Inn? Which B & B boasted a unique and exotic animal resident? Which was originally a working farm and is still raising sheep today? Do you know which well-known Orcas B & B once harbored a friendly ghost?

An exciting event will be taking place Saturday Mar 26th. This will be your chance to wander the halls, guest rooms and grounds of seven historic inns, resorts and B & Bs that are still in operation today. Some began as lodgings, other as private homes. Some have been lovingly restored, some expanded, and all have been popular vacation destinations for many years, a few passing the 100 year

mark. The museum is included on the tour, and will be displaying a portion of it's Resorts exhibit.

Tickets for this self-guided tour will go on sale March 9th and will be available at Darvill's Bookstore and the OIHM office (376-4849). Prices are set at \$25 for adults, \$15 for students. Inserted in this newsletter you will see the appeal for funds to help the Society accomplish its mission: "to educate, inspire and connect our community and visitors as stewards of island history." This year we are offering thank you gifts for your donations: 2 tour tickets for a donation of \$200 or more; and 4 tour tickets for a donation of \$400 or more. We hope you will take advantage of this offer, and enjoy our History Lives Here tour.