



# The Orcas Islander

Newsletter of the Orcas Island Historical Society & Museum - Spring 2011

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

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## Coming Soon...

**O.I.H.M. Season Opening Party**  
Fri May 27 4-6pm

**Saturday July 2nd**  
**Historical Day Fair & Parade**  
10am ~ 3pm

**Bison BBQ Fundraiser TBA**

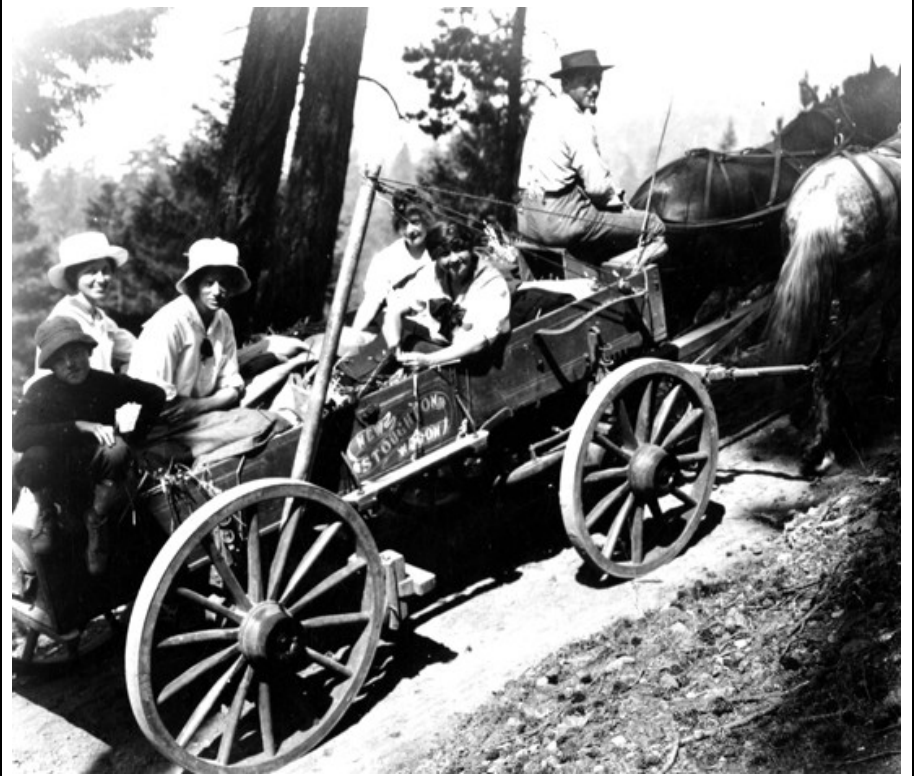
## MUSEUM HOURS

Starting May 28th our Museum is  
**OPEN**

Wednesday thru Sunday  
11:00 am to 4pm

## OIHM Office Hours

Monday thru Friday  
11am to 4pm



Our archivist Kay Clark has been busy digitizing more than sixty photos from the OIHM collection for the Washington Rural Heritage website. Seen here are a group of brave souls heading up the rugged and steep dirt road to the top of Mt. Constitution circa 1914. The expanding collection, which includes informational captions, may be viewed from the WRH link on the main page of the OIHM website at [www.orcasmuseum.org](http://www.orcasmuseum.org)

## the Presidents Corner:

I am pleased to report that the owners of the Crow Valley School have agreed to proceed on a proposal to deed their property over to the Orcas Museum. If all goes well, the Museum will be able to continue providing docents for the School as in previous years. The ownership and some related insurance issues were clouding whether or not the Museum would be able to continue this relationship this summer.

Many, many thanks to Margot Shaw and her merry band of innkeepers for putting on our Spring fundraiser event, the 'History Lives Here' tour of historic lodgings, held Saturday March 26th. This event raised about \$2000 for the Museum, and was

enjoyed by island visitors and residents who hadn't had an opportunity to tour these historic homes. Participating inns were: Kangaroo House, Turtleback Farm Inn, Blue Heron Inn, The Place at Cayou Cove, Deer Harbor Inn and the Outlook Inn. The Museum also participated, and we need to thank our Board member Denise Wilk for filling the Museum's exhibit room with a beautiful display of memorabilia from the heyday of Orcas resorts dating from the '20s to the '50s. If you happen to have missed the tour, this exhibit will be on display throughout the summer along with our first showing of the cast replica of our *Bison Antiquus* skull.

*Bill Buchan, OIHM President*

## The Orcas Islander



The **Crow Valley School Museum** was originally built in 1888 entirely by volunteer labor, and it housed its highest enrollment of 47 students in 1893. After the school closed in 1918 the building continued to be used as a meeting place and in 1929 was purchased by a women's club called "The Willing Workers". Many of the club's members had been students at the former school. In the 1960's Richard Schneider and Bud McBride bought the property and began caring for the old schoolhouse and its contents and grounds. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987, and the schoolhouse has been open summers as a Museum since 1989. One of the highlights of the current display is a collection of photographs of many of the County's original schools. We expect that the property will soon be deeded over to the OIHM and the CV School Museum will be open during the summer, Saturdays and Wednesdays, from noon to 4pm starting Saturday July 2nd.

### ***Bison Antiquus* has been "cloned"**

along with a few other significant bones to a company in Los Angeles called "Bone Clones" who specializes in casting perfect replicas from ancient skeletal remains. The replicas and the originals finally arrived home safely and we are now busy preparing a 6 x 15 foot corner backdrop mural for the items, which will depict the grassland near Olga where this creature lived over 14,000 years ago, along with a rendition of the hunters who scientists believe caused the demise of this particular species of 'mega-fauna'. The completely intact skull was found during the excavation of Ayers Pond several years ago, and is considered to be one of the finest specimens of its kind in the world. The original skull is kept in our archive room for safe keeping but the very beautiful replica will soon be part of our permanent natural history exhibit.

It was a nail-biting few weeks after we shipped off our priceless and irreplaceable *Bison Antiquus* skull

### **The newly engraved bricks are here!**

Every year the Orcas Museum collects orders for custom-engraved bricks to be permanently installed into our entrance walkways, and during the following winter we send the complete order off. The 2010 order has just arrived and we are hoping to have them all laid by the Opening Day Party on Friday May 27th! A few bricks that had mis-spelled words or had somehow become damaged were also replaced with this order, so we're looking forward to getting them all in place. Orders for engraved bricks are taken throughout the year and order forms are available from the OIHM office or from the Bricks Page on our website at [www.orcasmuseum.org](http://www.orcasmuseum.org). Prices are: \$50 for an 8x4" brick, and \$100 for an 8x8" brick. Gift certificates are also available. It's a great way both support the Museum and provide a special commemoration for a loved one, family, or business, or to immortalize a favorite quotation or sentiment.



**A Big Thank You . . .** to the Orcas Island Garden Club for bestowing a \$500 grant to the Museum for tree pruning and landscaping. We have gone ahead with getting pruning done on the ancient apple trees on the Museum grounds and adjacent Village Green. Next-door neighbor and 'Our House' owner Josephine Bangs lent her expert skills to this work.

## Welcoming our newest Board Member: Mindy Kayl

We feel fortunate to have an experienced new member added to our OIHM Board of Directors roster this season as we welcome Mindy Kayl. As a farmer, wetlands consultant, and 20 year resident of Orcas Island, Mindy says she has 'witnessed history being made' and would like to support it's preservation. Mindy's past position as Chair of the Eastsound Planning & Review Committee, and her current position on the Board of the San Juan Preservation Trust provide a perfect compliment to her participation with the Museum. Thanks Mindy for stepping in!

## Volunteer Greeters Needed

If you've ever wanted to work in a Museum, or just want to have an opportunity to do some community service and get more familiar with the rich history of your island home, now is the perfect time to give us a call and sign up for the coming busy season. Our dedicated and talented volunteer docent **Jim Clark** is heading up the coordination of volunteers for the Orcas Museum and Crow Valley School Museum this year and will be leading orientation sessions starting very soon. Our Orcas Museum "Front Desk Greeters" generally take two and a half hour morning or afternoon shifts throughout all or part of the summer season, which begins May 28th and continues through Labor Day. Crow Valley School docents work four hour shifts from noon to 4pm on Saturdays or Wednesdays during July and August. All scheduling arrangements are very flexible and the team of volunteers try hard to fill in for each other when unexpected things come up. Please call the OIHM office or Jim Clark at 376-5236 to get on the Docents / Greeters list. Thank you.

## SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

To **Fred Enge**, a.k.a. "Freddiebones", for offering his artistic talents in helping OIHM Board member and Exhibits Chair **Denise Wilk** put together the first display of our *Bison Antiquus* skull replica with a diorama in the corner of our main exhibit room. A big 'thank you' to Denise & Fred!

To **Toni Hermansen** for choosing Orcas Island Historical Museum as the non-profit where she will fulfill her required hours for community service as part of completing her Accounting degree at Shoreline Community College. You may recognize her as one of our former San Juan County Building Inspectors, or as proprietor — along with husband Mark Sawyer — of Buck Bay Shellfish Farm. Toni has been coming in every Tuesday morning to help with the innumerable tasks that are always on our "to do" list.



Cheers, Toni!

To **Dorothy Lundquist** and **Betty Marcum** for the gorgeous new quilt which will be the 2011 prize for our annual quilt raffle. The new quilt is in muted reds, whites, blues, browns and tiny floral prints, and is pieced together in the 'log cabin' style. This year they made a larger king-sized quilt which is now on display next to the front desk in the entryway of the Museum. Come take a look and buy a few chances to win! Tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5. The drawing is always held at the end of the summer. Year after year Dorothy & Betty have come through for us, and we really appreciate it!

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Becky Burns**

**Jennie Joplin**

**Derry & Ron Godar**

**Sandra & David Olson**

**Joan & Wayne Haslett**

**Tim Ordwing**

**Evelyn Franklin**

**Trish & Bruce Porter**

**Joan & John Fletcher**

**Dana & Jake Jacobus**

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Mindy Kayl  
Leslie Seaman

### Staff

Kay Clark ~ Archivist  
Irene Demetri ~ Office Admin

*Members who would like to receive this newsletter via email in PDF format please email the museum with your name and current email address.*



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.

## Pies! Pies! Pies! ... and cookies!

The 2011 Historical Day Fair will soon be upon us and we are looking to enlist some home bakers who would like to contribute a pie or two — or whatever baked goodies that inspires you — to sell at the Museum's Pie Booth. The Fair and Historical Day Parade will take place this year on Saturday July 2nd from 10am to 3pm. The theme for this year's parade will be "Celebrating the Arts" with Frank & Jan Loudin as grandmasters of the parade. Why not celebrate the arts by creating a culinary masterpiece? Whether you're a Pie Picasso or more along the lines of chocolate chip cookies a la Grandma Moses, we'd love to sell your edible delights at the fair. We also need volunteer sellers at the booth. Please call Dixie Walmsley at 376-5084 or the OIHM office at 376-4849.

## Season Opening Party!

Mark your calendars for Friday evening May 27th from 4-6pm for the Season Opening Party at the Orcas Island Historical Museum. Join us in kicking off the new season with live music, good things to eat, and a look at the new displays. **Members and non-members alike are invited and admission to the Museum is free for the duration of the event.** Starting the following day on Saturday May 28th, the Museum will be on it's early season schedule — open five days a week from 11-4pm on Wednesday through Sunday. By late June we will add another day and be open on Mondays as well. If you would like to sign up to be a Front Desk Greeter or volunteer in any other way, we would welcome your help! Please call Irene at the OIHM office or Jim Clark at 376-5236.