



The Orcas Islander

Newsletter of the Orcas Island Historical Society - Fall 2012

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :

- ♦ 'Living High' ~ June & Ferrar's granddaughter Skye Burn to speak at History Matinee
- ♦ Annual Meeting on Dec. 2 ~ this year in the afternoon
- ♦ Volunteer Appreciation venue
- ♦ New 'History Mysteries' blog
- ♦ Humanities Washington lecture

Coming Soon...

History Matinee ~ Skye Burn
Sunday November 18th
Orcas Senior Center - 3pm
By donation at the Door

MUSEUM HOURS
Fall / Winter Season
open Saturdays only
11am to 4pm

OIHM Office Hours
Monday thru Friday 11am to 4pm



What is it? Check out our new blog, Orcas Island Artifact Mysteries, to chime in on various mysterious items found in our collection or presented to us by museum members. This item was brought in by a museum member who purchased it at a private auction on Orcas Island a few years ago. Even the auctioneer didn't know what it was! Go to page two for a more information on the blog and also read about our featured lecturer from Humanities Washington for November 14th: Harriet Baskas. She will present a slideshow and talk entitled "Hidden Treasures in Washington Museums: an off-beat tour of Washington history through the stories of museum artifacts that are rarely - or never - shown to the public." See page 2 for more info.

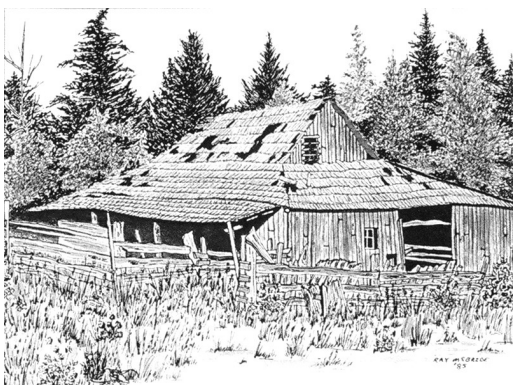
DIRECTOR'S CORNER:

It is with great pleasure that I address you, with this, my first newsletter as director of the Orcas Historical Society Museum. To say that we have been busy at the museum this past summer would be a gross understatement. Since my arrival in July, the museum has been involved in several outreach programs and a self guided tour of historic barns, a stunning achievement for a museum of any size and even more so given we are a small community-based historical society. Sincere thanks goes out to the many volunteers who made these events possible and to the museum staff for orchestrating it all. These efforts reflect one of the most valued assets of our museum, its members who show their dedication through the enumerable hours they volunteer to see our many projects through to fruition. Behind the scenes, concurrent with our return to winter hours (Saturdays only until late May), we started our inventory of the collections. All museums, periodically, go through their collections to maintain

consistency and accuracy of the records. Because it has been a number of years since an inventory was conducted, we propose to do a complete inventory of the museum starting with the historic cabins and their contents. This a painstaking task whereby every artifact in the museum is described, photographed and its condition noted, with all data being entered into our computer tracking system. The purpose being to not only record what the museum holds, and make it readily available to our public, but also to monitor the object's condition to better preserve our historic treasures for posterity. This will be a multi-year project but we hope to finish all our exhibited materials in time for the 2013 season. For our Spring opening, we are currently planning two feature exhibitions: a photo expose' of early Orcas based on glass and nitrate negatives from our vast archive of visual Orcas history and we hope to create an entirely new and hopefully rotating exhibit with the help of our Island's art connoisseurs.

Douglas Brewer, Director

New 2013 Historic Barns calendar / New 'History Mysteries' blog now online



Can you place this barn?

Now is the time to stock up on holiday gifts with our new 2013 Historic Barns calendar featuring twelve beautiful paintings by artist Ray McBride. Now on sale at Orcas Museum, Darvill's Books and the Country Corner, they are priced at \$12, and supplies are limited. The photo at left shows the barn for July and we are offering a free OIHM membership or one year renewal to the first person who can positively identify where this barn stood. The 'Mystery Barn' is also the first post on our new blog, Orcas Island Artifact Mysteries,

at www.orcasislandmysteries.com. On it we will post a new item each week and invite the public to help us gather information on certain items we have in our collection. We also welcome museum members to submit photos of items of their own which are in need of identification. These could include old photographs, documents, letters, maps, works of art, or anything else related to Orcas history. The site is interactive, so we invite our computer-friendly friends to subscribe via email and keep an eye out for new posts as they appear.

Humanities Washington lecture: Harriet Baskas "Hidden Treasures in Washington's Museums"

It is a well-known fact that, due to space restrictions, most museums generally only display about ten percent of their holdings, but you would be surprised to learn the many and varied reasons why some of these items are kept from view. Considerations that are political, philosophical, artistic, aesthetic and environmental all play a part in the decision by any particular institution to display or not display something that is controversial. The Orcas Museum, having just been the recipient of all the personal belongings of Colton Harris-Moore (a.k.a. the Barefoot Bandit) is now in this very position. Many people feel strongly that the young thief should not be given any more notoriety than he already has, and yet no one can deny that he has a place in the annals Orcas Island history.

Join us at Benson Hall on Wednesday night November 14th for a fascinating, fast-paced slideshow and somewhat off-beat tour of Washington history through the stories of museum artifacts that are rarely — or never — shown to the public. Examples include a collections of Bing Crosby's toupees in Spokane, a quilt made of Ku Klux Klan robes in Yakima, and Native America spirit boards in Tacoma. Seattle based journalist Harriet Baskas has produced a major radio series on hidden museum artifacts which aired on NPR, and was sponsored by the Smithsonian. She also maintains her own blog called MuseumMysteries.com. This presentation is another sponsored by Humanities Washington and will be co-hosted by the Orcas Library and Orcas Museum. Admission is free.



Harriet Baskas writes about airports, museums and a wide variety of other topics for msnbc.com, *USA Today*, the *AAA Journal* and other publications. She has written several books including *Washington Curiosities*, *Washington Icons* and *Oregon Curiosities* and is in the process of finishing a book about hidden treasures in museums.

Staff Changes at Orcas Island Historical Society & Museum



New Staff: archivist Maria Doss (left), and office administrator Kathy Everett.

We've had a general 'changing of the guard' here at the Orcas Island Historical Society: aside from our new director Douglas Brewer, we have two new staff members. Former office administrator Eirena Birkenfeld has handed over many of her responsibilities to the very competent Kathy Everett, who some of you might know through her work with the American Legion, or perhaps you've met her at her former job at the Islands Sounder front desk. Eirena will now be concentrating on membership management, media, graphics, volunteer coordination and community outreach. Getting familiar with the world of museum collections management is Maria Doss

who is working closely with Dr. Brewer. She has already made amazing progress, working her way through the museum, cabin by cabin, cataloging every item. When the displayed artifacts are done, they will begin on the archives items and work right through the 2013 season. Maria (pronounced 'Mariah') is with us on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and spends two days a week back at her former job as Orcas School Librarian. An email to our membership will soon go out with a general staff directory, schedules and new email addresses, so you will know who to contact and when. We welcome both Kathy and Maria!

Volunteer Appreciation Party to be merged with our 2012 OIHM Annual Meeting with a new daytime schedule

In response to several members who have expressed dismay that the Annual Meeting always takes place on a dark December night, the Orcas Island Historical Society Board of Directors has decided to make a change for the better: this year the event will begin at 2:30 in the afternoon on Sunday December 2nd at the Camp Orkila dining room. Disabled access is still available right to the door, and shuttle vehicles will be available to transport other guests from the upper parking area. We consider this event to be our end-of-the-season 'Volunteer Appreciation Party', as we will formally recognize our many and valued volunteers, and will be sending out a coupon in the mail to each of them for an optional half price discount on the scrumptious meal (menu to be announced). The Orcas Island Historical Society Annual Meeting is always open to the public, and we encourage volunteers and attendees to bring friends for good eating, door prizes, special presentations, and of course, the annual drawing for the quilt raffle! The beautiful reversible 'wedding ring' pattern quilt has been on display all season at the museum entrance, and was constructed by the 'Willis sisters', Dorothy Lundquist and Betty Marcum. We will be advertising and sending out other invitations and reminders throughout November, but we request that you please RSVP as soon as you can so we can get an accurate count in time for the caterers order. Please call the OIHM office on any weekday between 11am and 4pm to make your reservation. We hope to see you there!

SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

How do we begin? The October 2012 'History Lives Here' tour of **Historic Barns** was a great success and the biggest 'thank you' of all goes to former OIHM Board President **Margot Shaw** for tirelessly orchestrating every detail. We offer our thanks also to artist **Ray McBride** for allowing us to use his work for the very beautiful **2013 Historic Barns Calendar**, and to **Edrie Vinson** for skillfully pulling together that project in a timely manner. Many thanks also to Edrie for doing the work of assembling the informational panels that were on display at each of the seven barns. Board member **Denise Wilk** also filled in with much of the preparation, and organized the **Silent Auction** which took place in the museum entrance during the tour, for which we owe thanks to the many donors. The **Barns Tour Committee** members put in their hours doing in-depth research and taking photos: thank you to **Charles Toxey, Harold Lentzner, Jeanne Morris, Edrie Vinson, Denise Wilk and John Willis** for their time and efforts. Special big-time thanks to **Boyd Pratt** who lent his expertise based on the county-wide study of historic barns he had previously completed, and who helped with our understanding of architectural terminology. Our dedicated and weather-resistant helpers who volunteered to be docents at each location are to be commended: **Velma Doty, Sandy Huie, Marilyn McGuire, Irene O'Neill, Wally Morgan, Phil and Marta Branch, Bill Hagen, Bogdan and Carol Kulminski, James Lobdell, Doug Pearson, Carl Twentier, Patty Pirnak-Hamilton, Jean Dickerson, Margaret Alic, Anita Holladay, Anthony Ayer, Judy Turksel, Vicki and Mike Bartram, Samara Shaw, Reed Schielbach, Kim Rose, Sequoia Hartman and Markay Newman**. We were fortunate to have available our special presenters to lead the talks, demonstrations and discussions at each barn: thanks to **Tom Welch, Russel Barsh, Madrona Murphy, Jeannine Rodenberger** for their willingness to share knowledge. The **Barn Dance** at Westsound Hall would not have happened were it not for **Peter Stock and Eirena Birk-enfeld**, as well as caller **Mike Cohen** and the musically talented **Hands Four**. Lastly — and of course not least! — a big thank you to the property owners and caretakers of the barns: **Gary Piaget, Gene & Tish Knapp, Bill Perry, Jim Perry, Jerry & Nancy Schmidt, Michael & Marie Brennan, Walter & Rachael Henderson**, as well as **Dimitri Stankevich and Steve Miller** of Camp Orkila. Our thanks to one and all.

Welcome New Members

- ◆ *Elaine Shiozawa*
- ◆ *Terri & Stephen Mason*
- ◆ *Bernard Jalbert*
- ◆ *Carol Jones*
- ◆ *Ann & Mark Bofenkamp*
- ◆ *Ann Reinking*
- ◆ *Richard Reinking*
- ◆ *Bill & Celie Westlake*
- ◆ *Lawrence Jackson*
- ◆ *Page Bristow*
- ◆ *Rick & Marlace Hughes*
- ◆ *Leann Vinson - Cardinell*
- ◆ *Sharon Ho*
- ◆ *Nancy & Irma Zuackenbush*

Orcas Island Historical Society & Museum

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2012 Board of Directors

Carl Twentier, President

Bill Buchan, First Vice President

Judi Watson, Second Vice President

Jim Biddick, Treasurer

Denise Wilk, Secretary

Anthony Ayer

Jean Dickerson

James Lobdell

Ron Montgomery

Maggie Vinson

John Willis

Staff

Dr. Douglas Brewer ~ Director

Maria Doss ~ Archivist

Kathy Everett ~ Office Administrator

Eirena Birkenfeld ~ Community Outreach

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The Orcas 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.



**Skye Burn, grand-
daughter of June
& Ferrar Burn, to
speak at History
Matinee**


Join us for a very special History Matinee on Sunday November 18th at 3pm as we welcome Skye Burn to tell stories and answer questions about the lives and adventures of her grandparents June and Ferrar Burn. Best known for her autobiographical book 'Living High', June wrote for *McCall's* magazine until she met her future husband, a recent WWI veteran, and relocated to the San Juans Islands. They were able to snatch up the last remaining land in Washington state under the Homestead Act: tiny Sentinel Island. They eventually settled on Waldron Island and raised two sons. Later they went north to teach Eskimo children, crossed the United States in a covered wagon, and lived as a family of wandering minstrels. June chronicled all these adventures in several periodicals and a number of books. History Matinee is a monthly presentation sponsored by the Orcas Island Historical Society, and takes place at the Orcas Senior Center. By donation.

LIVING HIGH



an unconventional autobiography

June Burn



We are GRATEFUL To ALL of our Valuable Volunteers & Contributors !!

Orcas Museum & Crow Valley School Greeters

Margot Shaw, Doug Pearson, Mike Douglas, Marta Nielson, Irene O'Neil, Wally Morgan, Carol Kulminski, Susan Fletcher, George Garrels, Joyce Pearson, Dorothy Cwak, Betty Marcum, Dorothy Lundquist, Bruce VanNoy, James Lobdell, Neil & Ann Hawkins, Pegi Groundwater, Michael Moss, Barbara Born, Sandy Huie, Ingrid Karnikis, Ann Waltersdorph, Judy Turksel, Lynn & Glenna Richards, Marj Franke, John Willis, Margaret Alic, Ron Montgomery, Velma Doty, Robyn Lowe, Bill Buchan, Carl Twentier, and Bill Hagen.

Festival of the Fourth

Tom Miuro, Michel Marshall & the Orcas Island Chamber of Commerce, Leslie & Don Seaman, James Lobdell, Neil & Ann Hawkins, Peter Stock, John Fleischer, Bill Buchan, Carl Twentier, Denise & Dan Wilk, Jean Dickerson, John Willis, Edrie Vinson . . . a VERY BIG thank you to the Harvey Family and employees of Harvey Logging LLC, and also all the speakers, singers and vendors who made the day unique.

Historical Day Fair & Parade

again James Lobdell, John Willis, Leslie & Don Seaman, Denise & Dan Wilk, as well as Donna & Quinn Wildman-Gossett, Mark Shantini, Clay, Tina Roye, Terry Lundgren, Ed Cunningham, Nancy Jones, Bobbie Berdan & the Berdan Boys, quilt-makers Betty Marcum & Dorothy Lundquist, Michael Budnick of Northwest Concepts and the Helsell family at Turtlehead Trails.

Orcas Museum Pie Booth at the Historical Day Fair

Dixie Walmsley for expertly co-ordinating this booth, and all the booth helpers: Barbara Jamieson, Terrill Kaplan, Barbara Born, Iris Parker-Pavitt and Iris's friend, June West, Eirena Birkenfeld, Peter Stock, Peg Manning, Ann Waltersdorph, Tina Roye, Carolyn Wayland, David & Geri Turnoy, Kathy Alicea and the 64 talented cooks who contributed wonderful home-made pies & goodies. Also a BIG thank you to Island Market for supplying the vanilla ice cream, and Lopez Island Creamery for donating the luscious Lemon Drop sorbet.

History Readers & Digitization Projects

Gerry Van Gohren, Rebecca Frisino, Linda Tretheway, Irene O'Neil, Betty Jean Densmore, Dorothy Lorda, Terri Vinson, Pegi Groundwater and Joyce Pearson.

Family History Researchers & Consultants

Edrie Vinson, Joanne Johnston, Virginia Jensen & Jane Barfoot-Hodde

Collections Committee & Consultants

Judi Watson (Chair), Debra Madan, Tom Tillman, Bob Kimple, Bill Perry, Irene O'Neil, Tom Welch, Chris Dickerson, John Fleischer, Steve Kastelitz, John Willis, Edrie Vinson, Virginia Jensen, Norm Exton, Leith Templin, Heidi Hudlet.

Historic Barns Tour Committee & Consultants

Margot Shaw (Chair), Denise Wilk, Bill Buchan, Boyd Pratt, Harold Lentzner, Edrie Vinson, Eirena Birkenfeld, Douglas Brewer, Charles Toxey, Carl Twentier, Jeanne Morris.

Buildings & Grounds

James Lobdell, Peter Stock, Jean Dickerson & Jean's phantom midnight gardeners.





Ongoing & Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Front Desk Greeter

Greet visitors to the museum, accept admission fees, process store sales, provide museum and community information. This involves commitments of two and a half hour shifts, either from 11am to 1:30 pm, or from 1:30 to 4pm. During this summer season we have been open only five days a week, due to volunteer shortage. Please help us stay open on our normal season schedule by offering to put in some hours. Training is provided of course!

Events

From our monthly History Matinees to special gatherings, lectures & season parties We always need help setting up and cleaning up afterward, as well as sound or video operation, donations of finger food and beverages or other logistical help such as offering to provide accommodations for a visiting speaker.

Crow Valley School Museum

Be a greeter at our one-room schoolhouse museum! Located near the north trailhead of Turtleback Mountain, this museum is set up to showcase all the first schools in San Juan County. This volunteer position is a unique & fun experience. We also welcome help with maintenance and seasonal cleanup both inside and out.

Indexing & Digitization

Help Orcas Museum enter the information age by typing in data from our old hand-written collection records, so future researchers can find what they need in a snap. Luddites and computer-free volunteers can help us by reading non-indexed books on Orcas history and keep a hand-written tally of who, what, when and where.

Oral History Project

Help us catalog the backlog of oral history recordings that we already have, or choose someone in the community who you'd like to interview. We'll set you up and give you some guidelines.

Administrative Help

Tell us what office skills you have and we'll find a way to have you help with ongoing and special projects.

Building & Grounds

If you're handy with tools and know how stuff works, drop by to take on a small or large project, or change a few lightbulbs, or make our day by fixing something that is broken. If you have green thumbs, you might enjoy contributing to our burgeoning heirloom garden at the front of the museum. In the near future there will be work that needs doing at the rear of the property where a shelter is to be erected to house the antique farm equipment.

Board of Directors

If you are community-minded, have a particular interest in local history, and are able to attend monthly meetings, ask for an application to be on our Board of Directors. Help us steer this organization into the 21st century with wisdom and smarts!

Lifesavers

Pitch in anywhere, any time, for anything! We can put your name on a list of contacts for when the museum needs miscellaneous things done, and you can decide at that point whether you can help with the project we contact you about. Or, just call and ask if there's anything that needs immediate attention. We always appreciate it!

Call or drop by the rear entrance office

Monday through Friday from 11am to 4pm

And let us know how you'd like to help!

