

MUSEUMS

KETCHIKAN

NEWS FROM THE TONGASS HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND THE TOTEM HERITAGE CENTER

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2005

Recent Acquisitions

An Eclectic Exhibit

*What do an ashtray from the Toot & Tell Drive In, a Sydney Laurence seascape painting, a 1920s-era electric meter, and a set of "brass knuckles" have in common? First, each of them is connected in some way to Ketchikan; second, all were added to the Museum's permanent collections during the last four years; and finally, they are all featured in **Recent Acquisitions**, the current exhibit at the Tongass Historical Museum.*

165 objects are included in the exhibition, which opened on March 4th. They range from a tiny, child-fare bus token, issued by the North Star Transportation Company in the 1960s, to a massive

Recent Acquisitions is a wonderfully eclectic exhibition. According to Museum Director Michael Naab, "the items in the show were selected to give the public an idea of the incredible range of 'good stuff' the Museum has acquired over the past few years, mostly through the generosity of present and former Ketchikan residents." (In a normal year, the Museum makes about seventy additions to the permanent collections. Some of these additions—we call them "accessions"—are single items; but others are a groups or entire collections of things. For example, the recently acquired Paulu Saari photographic collection includes more than 4,000 items.)



Museum patrons enjoy Recent Acquisitions.

Toledo scale, used in a local butcher's shop; from a traditional button robe, to a 1920s-era man's bathing suit; from a rare issue of Ketchikan's first newspaper, to a deck of "Iraq's 52 Most Wanted" playing cards.

Museum visitors are especially impressed by the remarkable array of art in the show, from the main entry piece, a dramatic Thunderbird performance mask by cutting-edge Haida artist Donald Varnell, to a serene seascape by Sidney Laurence. Seven important works by local artists, purchased in 2003 and 2004 with grants from the Rasmuson Foundation's Art Acquisition Initiative, are on display, some of them for the first time. Included are paintings by Mary Henrikson, David Rubin, and Terry Pyles; mixed-media drawings by Ray



Donald Varnell's Thunderbird Mask greets visitors to the spring exhibit.

Troll; and traditional Alaskan Native works by Jack Hudson, Norman Jackson, and Fred Trout.

Recent Acquisitions is a feast for the eye and an insight into the breadth of the Museum's ever-expanding collections. Don't miss it! The exhibit runs through April 17.

Tides of Change

Summer Exhibit Opens May 6th

*The ebb and flow of Ketchikan's colorful history will unfold for visitors to the Tongass Historical Museum when **Tides of Change**, the Museum's summer exhibit, opens on May 6th. Hundreds of vintage photographs and artifacts will tell the story of the people, places, events, and industries that have shaped our town, from its earliest days to the twenty-first century. The exhibit will run through September.*

Talbot's

One of Ketchikan's prominent pioneering businesses still remaining in operation today is Talbot's Building Supply.

Talbot's is named after one of its founders, Jack Talbot, who first came to Ketchikan in 1914, at the age of 21, as ship's writer for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. The following year Talbot returned with the Survey, as a member of the first Alaskan wire drag party. In 1916 he came back to make his home here, working for the Northland Dock Company. He soon met his wife-to-be, Elaine Hunt, middle daughter of Forest and Harriet Hunt. They married in May 1917. Talbot then enlisted in the army and spent a year and a half in service during World War I.

On September 2, 1919, the *Ketchikan Chronicle* noted that Jack Talbot had returned home and resumed his old job with Northland Dock Company. Later that same month, Talbot, along with Edmund W. Parker, purchased Northland Dock Company's coal and powder business.

Parker and Talbot's business partnership was brief, as Ed Parker, only 40 years old, died February 18, 1920, of double pneumonia. Shortly after Parker's death, Jack Talbot became partners with W.K. "Bill" Spaulding. Spaulding had come to Ketchikan

in 1911 with the Lighthouse Service. An advertisement appearing in the 1924 telephone directory publicized the business of Talbot & Spaulding as dealers in Ladysmith coal, Dupont



Talbot & Spaulding's office on the dock, circa 1922

powder, blasting supplies, cement, brick, lime, plaster, lath, etc. and Underwood typewriters.

On Monday, June 20, 1927, Ketchikan residents, especially members of the fishing fleet, were invited to attend a free dance to celebrate the completion of Talbot & Spaulding's new office and warehouse building (at today's current site). The 90x40 foot, two-story warehouse was built to supply building materials to local contractors.

Later in 1927, Talbot & Spaulding's coal sheds, located at the foot of Dock Street, were torn down. The old sheds, where steamships and freighters laid alongside the dock and swung coal into the sheds and on the dock, had been a significant part of Ketchikan's waterfront for twenty years. All of

Talbot & Spaulding's main stock was moved to their newly-built facility, but they still maintained a downtown office.

Over the years, Talbot & Spaulding

prospered, and in 1935 Jack Talbot bought out Spaulding's interest in the business. At the time, the firm was engaged in the selling of fuel, building materials and explosives, along with managing a public dock and being an agent for the Ketchikan Steamship Company. Spaulding went on to start a real estate and insurance business.

In addition to conducting his business interests and raising his son and daughter, Jack Talbot was very active over the years in civic and fraternal affairs. He served on the City Council in 1934 and was Ketchikan's mayor three times. He was a member of the School Board, president of the Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the territorial boxing commission, a member of the Alaska Development Board, president of the Red Cross chapter, and active in the American Legion. He also served as a volunteer fireman, and was a member of the Masonic Lodge, Elks, Eagles, Pioneers, Rotary Club and the Methodist Church. Mrs. Talbot's was also active in local civic organizations.

In 1949, Jack Talbot sold the corporation to his son-in-law, Jim Church, who had married Jack's daughter, Jane, in 1943. After enjoying two years of



Jack Talbot, 1950

Talbot's, continued

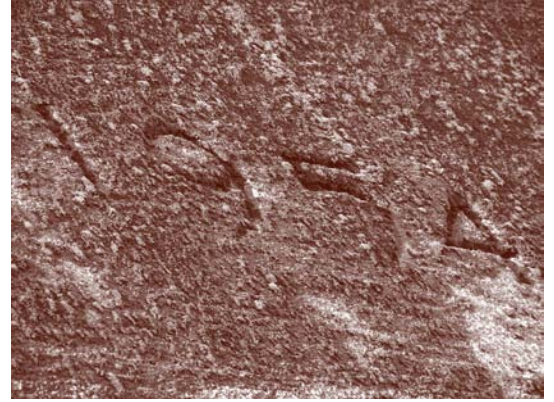
retirement, Jack died unexpectedly in his sleep on Friday, May 11, 1951.

Talbot's continued to thrive under Jim Church's management, until his death in 1978. Five years later, a letter was sent to Talbot's customers notifying them that Nancy, the youngest daughter of Jim and Jane Church, and her husband, Pete McNulty, had purchased Talbot's Building Supply.

Upon entering Talbot's today, you will instantly come across the industrious and knowledgeable Nancy, who demonstrates a strong and proficient dedication to the business. It is noticeable that Nancy inherited her father's quickened stride, somewhere between a hurried walk and just bordering on a full-out run, that hastily carries her from one end to the other of Talbot's historical structure following along in her father's and grandfather's footsteps.

Ketchikan Positive

65 photography buffs gathered in the gallery of the Tongass Historical Museum on Thursday, February 10, to view the work of 28 local photographers. A slideshow of images showcased 12 familiar local subjects, projected through the creative eyes of the photographers. From the "1954" incised on the face of the tunnel, to the beauty of raindrops glistening on the bright yellow beak of "Thundering Wings," the audience was enthralled with exquisite views of trees in winter, summer and fall; studies of downtown in daylight and at night; the majesty of cruise ships and the grace of small craft; imposing Deer Mountain; and the tradition of Saxman. The presentation showed the audience a unique perspective of everyday sights in Ketchikan.



The Tunnel. Richard H. Van Cleave, photographer

Special thanks to those that shared their work: Diane Anders, Hall Anderson, Jean I. Bartos, Kent Bowers, Jennifer Bowers, Mimi Eddy, Christine M. Edenso, Joanna Ewest, Nancy Jensen, Grace Kirkwood, Webster McKee, James Mix, Diane Naab, Kathy Peavey, Paul Perry, Terry Roberts, Judy Roush, Michael Schuler, Bruce Schwartz, R. John Seeds II, Shelley Stallings, Carl Thompson, Kip Tyler, Marya Tyler, Richard H. Van Cleave, Peaches Wallin, Harold Wingo, and Trudy Zellmer.

We Need Your Help!

Museum staff seeks information on colorful nicknames, local inventions.

For a future article in this newsletter, we're collecting colorful nicknames of characters in Ketchikan's past. (Think Paper Nose Charlie, Fish House Tessie, Boston Smith, Eat 'Em Up Johnson, for example.)

Ideally, the unusual names will be accompanied by information on how these people got their monikers and when; their real names; stories about them; photographs; etc.

Also, for an exhibit we'd like to put together, we are seeking information on local inventors, past and present, and their inventions. There must be dozens!

Tell us what you know! Call the Museum (225-5600) or send an e-mail to museum@city.ketchikan.ak.us

FUNDAY At The Museum

FUNDAY at the Museum, a new series of exhibit-related Saturday programs especially for kids, kicked off at the Tongass Historical Museum on January 22. Each event in the series will feature various interactive learning stations that relate to the current exhibit.

The initial *FUNDAY*, held in conjunction with the *Alaska Positive* exhibit, focused on principles of photography and light. More than sixty kids and parents engaged in five learning stations, including a Camera Obscura built for the occasion by Shelley Stallings, the Museum Department's Curator of Exhibits and resident photographer. A shadow wall, lens exploration, cyanotype printing, and stereoscopes rounded out the learning station selections. The second *FUNDAY*, scheduled for March 26 in conjunction with the *Recent Acquisitions* exhibit, will involve watercolor, scrapbooking, and Native headband stations. Participants will also learn how to create their own art gallery. Look for more exciting *FUNDAYS at the Museum*.

CITY UNVEILS NEW WEB SITE

The City of Ketchikan recently unveiled a new, updated website. The Museum Department's pages within the City website feature many new additions including information and photos on upcoming, current and past exhibits; newsletters; a calendar of events; etc. Students interested in the Totem Heritage Center's Native Arts Studies program can now access the latest class schedule and register for upcoming classes online.

Visit the new site <http://www.city.ketchikan.ak.us/departments/museums/index.html>

Tongass Historical Museum

629 Dock Street
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
(907) 225-5600

Totem Heritage Center

601 Deermount Street
Mailing address: 629 Dock Street
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
(907) 225-5900

Open Hours

May 15 - September 30
8 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily



City of Ketchikan

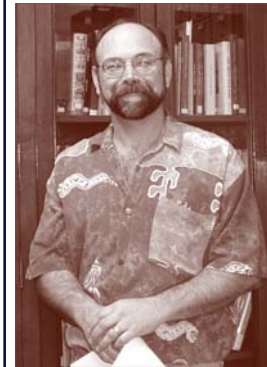
Museum Department Staff

e-mail: museum@city.ketchikan.ak.us

Museum Director.....Michael Naab
Administrative Secretary.....Karla Sunderland
Senior Curator of Programs.....Chris Hanson
Senior Curator of Collections.....Richard H. Van Cleave
Program Coordinator.....Sharon K. Thompson
Curator of Exhibits.....Shelley Stallings
Registrar.....(Position Vacant)
Visitor Services Manager.....Jim Marmon
Museum Attendant.....Regina Foreman
Program Assistant.....Aaron Burns

Ketchikan Museums Newsletter is published four times a year by the City of Ketchikan Museum Department. Copies may be obtained at the Tongass Historical Museum and the Totem Heritage Center. The Museum Department is funded by the City of Ketchikan. Additional funding is received from the State of Alaska; the Alaska State Council on the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; and the Alaska State Museum Grant-In-Aid program.

Staff Changes



Richard H. Van Cleave

Richard H. Van Cleave has been promoted to Sr. Curator of Collections, replacing Chris Hanson,

who moved to the Programs Division. Richard has been with the Museum Department in various positions for the past eleven years.



Ketchikan Museums

Tongass Historical Museum

Totem Heritage Center

629 Dock Street
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Nonprofit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Ketchikan, Alaska

Permit No. 95

Museum Calendar

EXHIBITS

Tongass Historical Museum

Recent Acquisitions

March 4 - April 17, 2005

Tides of Change: The History of Ketchikan

Opens May 6, 2005

Opening Reception

Friday, May 6, 5-7 PM

The First People:

Tlingit, Haida,

and Tsimshian Heritage

Ongoing at the Tongass Historical Museum



Gene, Jim, Joe, and Harold. Kennedy Street, June 23, 1938

Photographer: Edna and Wesley Caine

Brown Bag Lunch Series Caps Exhibit

Lunchtime audiences have had an opportunity for "up close and personal" conversations with artists whose work appears in the **Recent Acquisitions** exhibit with the Brown Bag Lunch series, held on Thursdays in the Museum's exhibit gallery. In the first three of the noontime programs, Donald Varnell and Ray Troll each shared their artistic inspiration and vision for future efforts, and Holly Churchill & Elmer Makua discussed the various items of regalia and other Native artifacts in the exhibit. On March 31, Chris Hanson will discuss how museums determine what to add to their collections, and Terry Pyles will speak about his art on April 7.