

FRIENDS *of the* ALASKA
STATE LIBRARY,
ARCHIVES & MUSEUM



2021
A YEAR IN REVIEW
AND A LOOK AHEAD TO 2022

Dear Friends,

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to interfere with the State's Library, Archives and Museum (SLAM) operations in 2021. First Fridays were put on hold and the cruise ship tourist visitors did not arrive until a few cruise ships sailed to the Capital City late in the season. Nevertheless, thanks to the dedicated work of the State Library, Archive and Museum staff, the Andrew P. Kashevaroff (APK) building was able to open its doors on a limited schedule beginning with a new exhibit *Illustrating Alaska* highlighting the process of illustrating children's books by four different Alaskan illustrators. The museum also displayed a solo exhibit *Mitch Did This³* crafted by Juneau-based artist Mitch Watley who transformed everyday objects into complex dioramas depicting futuristic landscapes. After a year-long delay due to the pandemic, the museum was able to display a most wondrous exhibit of Chilkat and Ravenstail weaving artistic skills in *The Spirit Wraps Around You*. Thanks to the generous donations of many individuals and business sponsors, the museum was able to display the "Coppers Robe", the earliest known Chilkat Robe in existence on loan from the Peabody Essex Museum. A very special gift from Janet Hall Schempf allowed the Friends to publish a 96-page full color paperback catalog to accompany the exhibit.

In addition to this year's wonderful museum exhibits, library and archive staff displayed an exhibit *Women of Alaska* to recognize and celebrate their contributions to Alaska's communities. Staff also hosted a number of hands-on youth activities including weaving a yarn basket, working with natural dyes, and learning basic book making skills.

On behalf of the Friends of the State of Alaska Library, Archives and Museum let me send a special "shout out" to the Director Patience Frederiksen, Freya Anderson, Acting Head of Historical Collections, Karen Gray, State Archivist, and Addison Field, Chief Museum Curator. Their commitment to safeguarding Alaska's cultural and historic records during the trying times of the Covid-19 pandemic has been outstanding.

Monthly Zoom video meetings became the norm for the Friends of the Alaska State Library, Archives and Museum (FoSLAM) Board of Directors as well as for our 2020 annual membership meeting. Until we see local Covid-19 case rates drop we plan to rely on video teleconferencing to conduct the Board's business. The Friends organization's financial situation continues to be secure and thanks to you, our annual memberships contributed \$20,000 to SLAM operations in 2022. In partnership with the Juneau Community Foundation, the Forever Friends Endowment Fund continues to grow and build a sustainable future funding source for the Library, Archives and Museum. The Friends Endowment Fund balance on October 21, 2021, was \$115,630.

At the 2021 annual membership meeting two new Board members, Puanani Maunu and Jackie Shoppert were approved by the membership. Heather McClain and Hannah Hamberg were approved by the Board as interim Board members subject to the full membership approval at the 2022 annual membership meeting. FoSLAM currently includes approximately 250 members. The Board welcomes and encourages members to consider volunteering to become a Board member. Members are also welcome to attend monthly Board Zoom meetings.

As the end of 2021 approaches and the 2022 year begins please renew your annual membership and consider making a Pick, Click, Give donation in your Permanent Fund Dividend application. Thank you for all your support and I look forward to seeing you at the APK in 2022.



Kurt Fredriksson
Friends of the Alaska State Archives, Library and
Museum Board President

FROM THE COVER

Photograph of cannery workers taking Mug Up.

In cannery parlance, the curious term "Mug Up" means coffee break. Mug Up fueled cannery workers with caffeine and pastries, provided a respite from the monotony of the slime line and momentarily brought people together from around the world.

<https://nncanneryproject.com/mug-up-coffee>

THE SPIRIT WRAPS AROUND YOU: NORTHERN NORTHWEST COAST NATIVE TEXTILES

Twenty-four rare, sacred Ravenstail and Chilkat ceremonial “dancing” robes woven by Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit Natives were displayed as if in motion at the museum’s summer exhibit. Labels detailed the history of the endangered art, evolving weaving techniques, and experiments with color dyes by the Chilkat Dye Working Group. View the closing ceremony at lam.alaska.gov/sway. A vividly colored, fact-filled exhibit book features past and present robes and weavers. Written by Curator of Collections Steve Henrikson and weavers Lani Hotch, Marie Oldfield, and Evelyn Vanderhoop, the book is available from foslam.org/store.

ILLUSTRATING ALASKA: ARTISTS MAKING CHILDREN’S BOOKS



In this interactive, fun exhibit, Sarah Asper-Smith explored the diverse children’s book illustration processes used by four Alaskan illustrators: Jim Fowler, Evon Zerbetz, Michaela Goade, and Mitchell Watley. The artists’ answers to children’s

questions were captured in a video. Visitors could also work on their own book sketches in the gallery.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Children packed the in-person and Zoom youth classes FoSLAM and you sponsored. They

- Developed a “Life in the Year 2020” collaborative digital exhibit with Tanna Peters. One participant deconstructed a laptop and created a robot, his “friend” during COVID-19 social distancing.
- Created their own books in Evon Zerbetz’ Tiny Books workshop.
- Wove yarn baskets around yogurt cups with Kay Parker.
- Made their own natural dyes in one workshop and created tassel keychains or zipper pulls in another class, both with weaver Lily Hope.
- Beaded a design inspired by Ravenstail robes with Jill Kaasteen Meserve and Davine (Cole) Drones.

- Painted watercolor scenes after exploring historic Alaska photos with Hollis Kitchin.

This annual youth program is partially funded by the City and Borough of Juneau and is sponsored by the Friends of the Alaska State Library, Archives, and Museum.



MITCH DID THIS³

Mitch Watley’s futuristic three-dimensional dioramas posed miniature sculpted figures living their lives in other-worldly settings with familiar items like socks, clothesline, deck of cards, an old airstream trailer repurposed to fit into its new environment. Each diorama takes up to a year to craft.

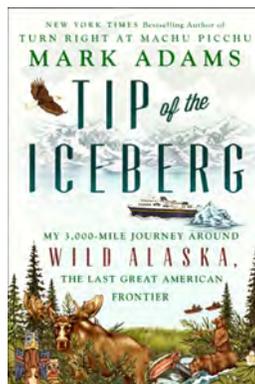
ATOMIC ISLAND

Ben Huff’s exhibit featuring the abandoned WWII and Cold War Naval outpost on the Aleutian Island of Adak combines his large-color photographs with archival images from the Alaska State Library to showcase a strategically located forgotten island in the Pacific Ocean. Once home to 6,000 people, it now houses fewer than 100.

WOMEN OF ALASKA

From the slime line to the Iditarod, from Native activists, entrepreneurs, teachers, and nurses to politicians, this exhibit features the women who helped sculpt today’s Alaska. This photographic exhibit, curated by the Alaska State Archives and Historical Library, is available on the second floor across from the library or worldwide online.

VIRTUAL ALASKA STORY HOUR FOR ADULTS



The Alaska State Library and Talking Book Center kicked off the Virtual Alaska Story Hour for Adults in October. For the kickoff, author Mark Adams read from his book, *Tip of the Iceberg*, spoke about his process and experiences, and responded to questions. In *Tip of the Iceberg*, Adams follows the path of the 1899 Harriman Expedition, exploring where, how, and why things have changed...or stayed the same. Visit <https://lam.alaska.gov/>

storyhour for information about joining the group and vote on the next book.

DOCUMENTING CANNERY WORK, PEOPLE & PLACE: MUG UP OPENS SOON AT THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUM

Katie Ringsmuth, Guest Curator

The NN Cannery History Project is partnering with the Alaska State Museum to produce a world-class museum exhibition called *Mug Up: The Language of Work* that will share the oft-forgotten stories of the multitudes who canned salmon and created an ethnically diverse, economically vital, cannery culture.

Framing the *Mug Up* exhibition is the cannery’s 15-minute “mug ups” that brought diverse cannery workers together, who provided essential labor and created unique social milieu within the canneries that, collectively, represented the industrial revolution of the North.

Divided into four sections, *Mug Up* takes visitors on a building-by-building journey through a salmon cannery, using each of the three temporary galleries and theater to spotlight the labor and social history behind one of Alaska’s most significant industries.

The first gallery presents *Storied Salmon*, which offers visitors two separate entry points into the exhibition. Here, visitors encounter five sections that establish a “sense of place” and introduce them to *Mug Up*, the canned salmon industry and the unprecedented salmon runs on which Alaska’s rich cannery history is founded. Rather than chronological, *Mug Up*’s storyline is



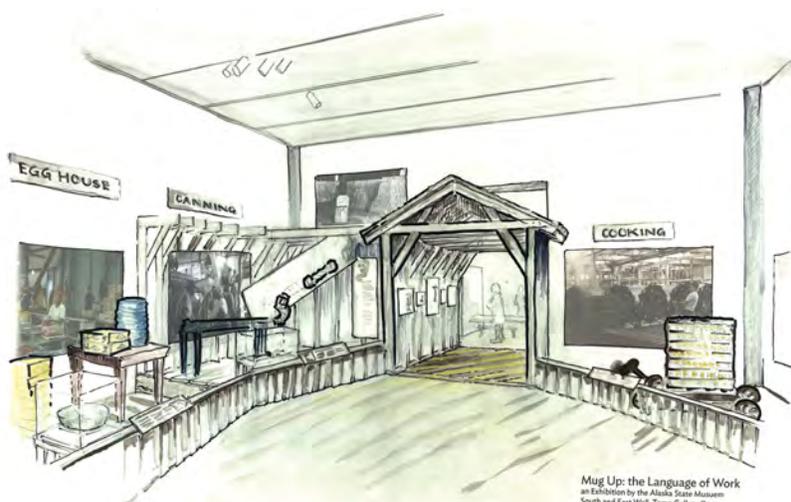
Mug Up: the Language of Work
an Exhibition by the Alaska State Museum
East end of Temp Gallery Three or the Long Gallery

place based, therefore, visitors start and end the exhibition at the same point. *Storied Salmon*’s proximity to the museum’s children’s gallery makes it a prime spot for a family-friendly activity: designing a personal salmon can label.

The second gallery presents *Working Waterfront*, which features eight sections highlighting the specific and highly skilled work tasks involved in canning salmon and the diverse laborers who conducted it. Included in *Working Waterfront* is a scale model of the NN Cannery, created by Alutiiq artist Andrew Abyo. The third gallery presents *Cannery Community*, which features seven sections on the cannery’s social experiences that mirrored broader currents of American history. A fourth space serves as a theater where visitors can view the 30-minute *Cannery Caretakers* film (produced by Jensen Hall Creative), the five-minute *The Rock: The Story of an APA*

Superintendent, Norm Rockness film (produced by Unangax filmmaker Anna Hoover), and several short digital storytelling videos (produced by Bristol Bay High School students).

Giving a face to the historically underrepresented is the ‘Cannery Chorus,’ an assembly of cannery figures represented through labels, objects and text, who guide visitors from building to building, introduce them to the diverse crews therein, and explain the undercurrents of the history and work activities.



Mug Up: the Language of Work
an Exhibition by the Alaska State Museum
South and East Wall, Temp Gallery One

2022 CALENDAR

JANUARY

Atomic Island closes

Ben Huff's work, Atomic Island, is a contemporary portrait of the largely abandoned Cold War outpost of Adak. The island, instrumental in the disruption of a mainland advance during WW2, and later as a nuclear submarine surveillance post, was abandoned by the Navy in 1997. At its height, the island housed over 6,000 people; today less than 75 call Adak home. Huff uses his own large format color photographs, mixed with archival images from the State Archives, to show the past and present of a forgotten island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

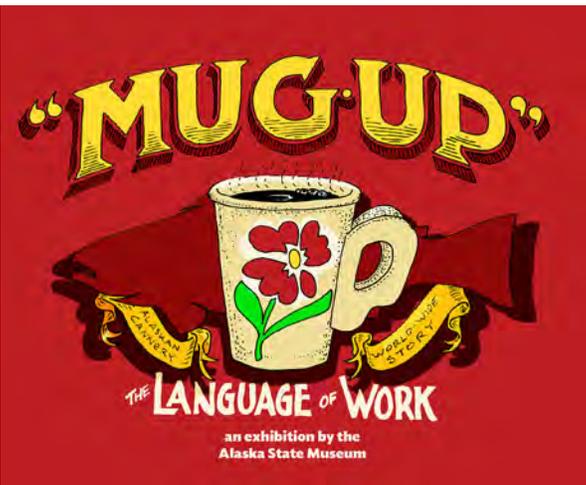


Kulluk Bay Neighborhood, Sweeper Cove (crop), 2017

FEBRUARY

AKLA Annual Conference

MAY



Mug Up: The Language of Work

Curated by Katie Ringsmith and organized by the Alaska State Museum

OCTOBER

Archives Month

Check out the blog for Alaska history updates: akstatearchives.wordpress.com

OCTOBER

APK Marketplace

Alaskan artists and authors sell their work during the Public Market

NOVEMBER

Solo Show: Tlingit artist Alison Bremner



Burt Reynolds. Collection of the Hood Museum of Art

DECEMBER

Solo Show: Alaska painter Gail Friday



Gail Friday, Autumn Underfoot

2022 Youth Activities, dates TBD

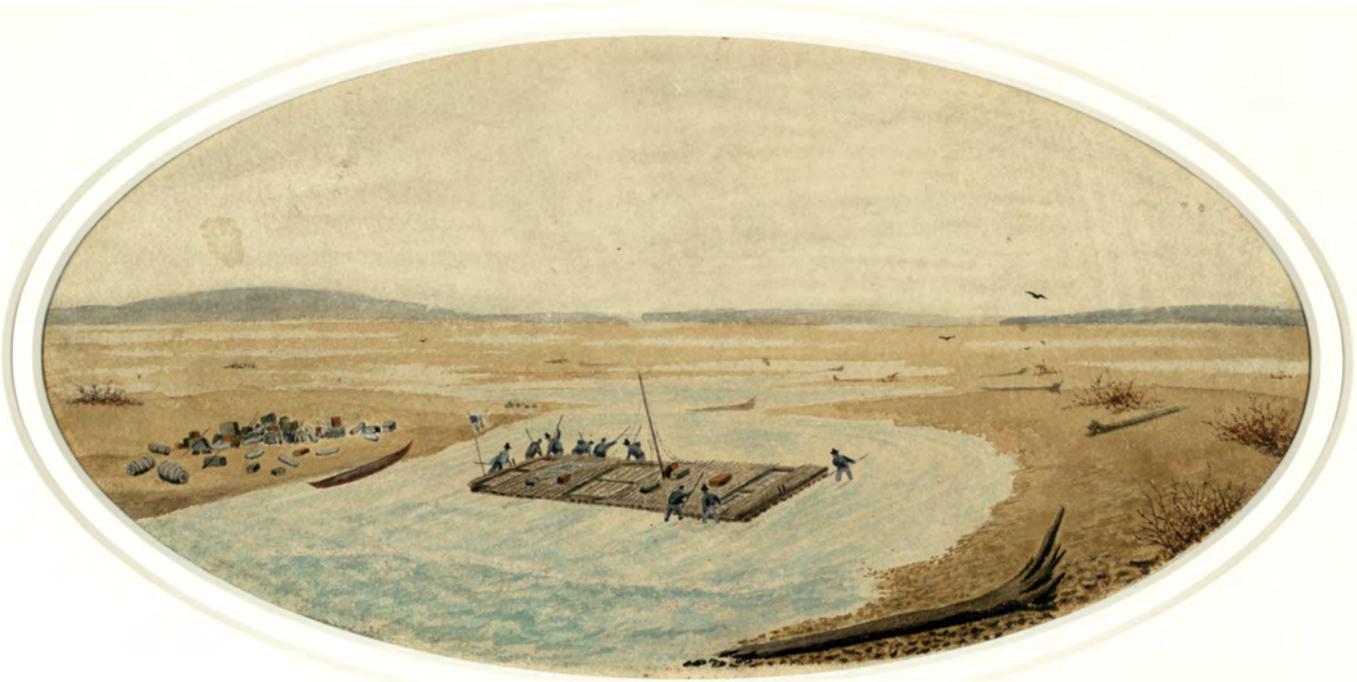
The youth activity program provides young people with opportunities to work with professional artists to learn artistic techniques and engage with art, history, and collections.

BEST FIND EVER: ALASKA STATE MUSEUM MEETS AMERICAN PICKERS

Steve Henrikson, Curator of Collections

Recently, an interviewer asked Mike Wolfe, star of “American Pickers” on the History Channel, about his “best find ever.” Here is Mike’s reply:

“You know, when people ask that, they usually want to know what I made the most money on. But for me, “best” is something different. My best pick was in Rock Island, Ill. I found paintings and original literature from the 1878–80 Schwatka Expedition, when Frederick Schwatka and his team made the longest trek in history through the Arctic in search of the remains of an ill-fated 1845 expedition. What I found were remnants of history that had been totally lost. To me, they were priceless. But I did sell them, for just \$5,000, to the Alaska State Museum in Juneau, where they truly belong.” (source: <https://www.antiquesandthearts.com/qa-mike-wolfe/>)



This image depicts the expedition's raft stuck on a sandbar in the Yukon River. The party built the raft on Lake Marsh, the source of the Yukon River. This painting was used as the basis for an engraving titled "Prying the Raft off a Bar" that appeared as a plate (page 145) in Schwatka's Summer in Alaska. Schwatka's account of the trip describes the scene, bringing to light one of the everyday difficulties for the travelers: "Sand bars and spits were particularly aggravating, and when the great gridiron of logs ran up on one of them in a swift current there was 'fun ahead,' to use a western expression of negation. Sometimes the mere jumping overboard of all the crew would lighten the craft so that she would float forward a few yards, and in lucky instances might clear the obstruction; but this was not often the case, and those who made preparations for hard work were seldom disappointed. In a swift current the running water would sweep out the sand around the logs of the raft until its buoyancy would prevent its sinking any deeper, and out of this rut the great bulky thing would have to be lifted before it would budge an inch in a lateral direction, and when this was accomplished, and, completely fagged out, we would stop to take a breath or two, we would often be gratified by seeing our noble craft sink down again, necessitating a repetition of the process...There was no more happy moment in a day's history than when, after an hour or so had been spent in prying the vessel inch by inch against the current, we could finally see the current catch it...." (Schwatka, A Summer in Alaska, Castle Books, 1988, p 144-7)

In 2006, long before Mike became a television celebrity, he contacted me about this material. Mike's collection consisted of 14 small, gem-like and detailed paintings from a field sketchbook carried by Charles Gloster, US Army, who accompanied Lt. Frederick Schwatka. Mike had gotten the story a little confused: this expedition actually took place a few years after Schwatka led the search for Franklin, in 1883. It's mission was to explore the Yukon River, and is among the earliest efforts by the United States government to visit the vast interior of Alaska, which it had purchased just sixteen years



According to Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank, the painting may be the only depiction the Athabaskan village of "Kowsh-hou" on the Yukon River, located about 12 miles downriver from the mouth of the Pelly River. Schwatka (*The Great River of Alaska*, *Century Magazine*, 1885, p. 822) indicates that this village was across the river from a larger temporary settlement called "Ka Tun." While the expedition was one of the first government "explorations" of Alaska, Alaska Natives had already explored it thousands of years previously.

earlier. Gloster's field sketches were later used to make engravings published in Schwatka's account of the trip, *Alaska's Great River* (1885).

At the time, the museum had a small but regular allotment of acquisitions funding in the state budget, and we used the funding very strategically to purchase material for the permanent collection. Based on many years of research into the composition of the existing collection, I had developed a good sense of what themes, movements, and people we needed to cover, to make the collection more well-rounded, to enable us to have comprehensive coverage of Alaska's history. Little did I know that with the SLAM project, we would have the opportunity to build a comprehensive exhibit on the human history of Alaska. Approximately one third of the artifacts currently exhibited in the ASM are the result of collecting during the 1980s to 2000s, when we were able to fill many gaps in the collection using acquisition funding. Today, thanks to acquisitions funding contributed by FOSLAM, the process of collecting continues.

The early American period in Alaska (1867 to 1912) is particularly weak in every museum collection in Alaska. So much of the activity was sponsored by the federal government that artifacts and artwork tended to go into federal museums and archives. Too, individuals who came to help in early industries--the fisheries, sealing, timber and mining--tended not to put down roots here. They typically moved on when

Boom went Bust--taking their few possessions and keepsakes with them.

For ASM, these small field paintings are among the few artifacts from a US Government expedition from the earliest years of the American occupation. Such material deemed "official" would typically have been preserved with the expedition papers in the National Archives. These sketches were apparently deemed personal papers (and Schwatka's account of the trip was self-published after his retirement from the Army). We have not yet discovered how the paintings ended up in Illinois, to be rescued from obscurity by Mike Wolfe.

The expedition's adventures bring to mind those experienced eighty years earlier by the Lewis and Clark expedition. In both cases, the party was unleashed upon the wilderness, carrying relatively little and making what they needed from found materials, and hunting along the way for their food. These 18th century American strategies, techniques, and modes of operation were still being used in late 19th century Alaska. By that time, Alaska had barely been touched by the Russians, and the Interior was still pristine. Subsequently, the Gold Rushes, WWII, and the Cold War accelerated the pace of development and modernization in Alaska. The Gloster drawings represent America's official efforts to trace, catalog, and wrap their heads around the vast territory they now possessed.



"Head him off!!" --a free-range Alaskan dog makes off with a rack of grilled Alaskan fish from the expedition's cooking fire--dodging rocks and a flaming stick flung by the aggrieved fishermen. Poor thing!

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM SUMMER INTERNS

The Alaska State Museum hosted three graduate student interns in the summer of 2021. Miranda Worl is attending Brown University and worked as ASM's intern through a partnership with First Alaskans Institute and FoSLAM. Miranda worked with the exhibition team, researched and provided recommendations for ASM's code of ethics, and took part in various conservation projects, highlighted below.

Adrienne Gendron and Alyssa Rina, New York and Delaware graduate students, spent the summer of 2021 as Alaska State Museum interns, training with Ellen Carrlee to become professional conservators, people who preserve and care for cultural materials. From dyes to dolls, their education was diverse and productive.

- The two interns studied commercial putties' adhesive properties for short-term use and determined putties damage artifacts even after a short time.
- They documented, cleaned, and labeled 1,000 formerly submerged Gold Rush-era materials (clothing, dishes, jewelry, tools) recovered in 2012 from the 1901 S.S. Islander shipwreck in 1901.
- They collaborated with the Chilkat Dye Working Group, a five-year alliance among Chilkat weavers, the Alaska State Museum, and chemists at Portland State University, who analyzed weaving and dyeing techniques and materials used in Chilkat and Ravenstail robes, baskets, and other Native-woven materials. The group's research was part of the Alaska State Museum 2021 exhibit, *The Spirit Wraps Around You: Northern Northwest Coast Native Textiles*.
- At the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka, the interns remounted four grass and cedar bark mats with custom mounting systems designed by Curator of Exhibitions Jackie Manning and



(Left to right) Céline, Adrienne, Alyssa, and Miranda examining a gutskin parka.



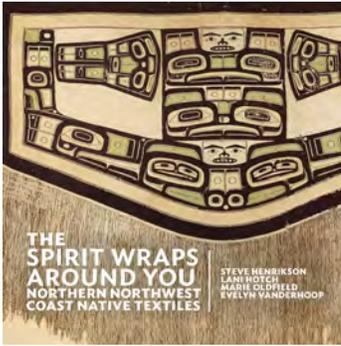
Adrienne and Alyssa cleaning Robert Murray's 1997 statue Nimbus.

Exhibits Specialist Aaron Elmore, sewing around plant fibers to attach sleeves and a wooden slat.

- Along with Miranda and Celine Wachsmuch (UCLA/Getty Program/Anchorage Museum summer intern), Adrienne and Alyssa examined, documented, and photographed gut and mammal intestine objects at the Alaska State Museum. Alyssa did in-depth conservation treatment of a Yup'ik doll, doing archival research by consulting Mary Ellen Frank, nationally recognized doll artist and director at the Aunt Claudia's Doll Museum, and then repaired tears to the doll's damaged arm and gut parka.
- The interns also cleaned Robert Murray's 1997 statue Nimbus.

In addition to conservation studies, the two conservation interns, with their host, Joyanne Bloom, hiked Juneau's trails, picked berries, watched whales, devoured salmon, and toured Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Juneau-Douglas City Museum. "Juneau has been a fantastic place to spend our summer," they said. "We are so grateful for the opportunity to visit and learn from all that Alaska has to offer."

SWAY CATALOG PUBLISHED BY FOSLAM



Due to a generous donation from a Friend, Janet Hall Schempf, the Alaska State Museum was able to produce and print a catalog for the first time in many years.

This catalog accompanies the 2021 exhibition at the Alaska State Museum in Juneau and traces the history of the sacred textiles known today as Raven's Tail and Chilkat robes.

Masterfully woven by Native women from the plush white fur of mountain goats, this art was born long before the arrival of Euro-American visitors to the shores of the northern Gulf of Alaska and carries forward to the present. Robes are used in sacred ceremonies, where leaders and dancers wear them to display their clan crests, and where the spirits of the ancestors gather.

PLANNED GIVING TO THE ALASKA STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM

Each year as we all grow older the phrase, "You can't take it with you" takes on new meaning. After a lifetime of working and saving the time comes to consider how our individual possessions and assets will be distributed into the future. By preparing an estate plan now you can ensure that your assets are directed to the people and organizations you choose. Without an estate plan, you risk government agencies determining who will receive your assets.

Leaving a charitable donation to the Friends of the Alaska State Library, Archives and Museum in your will, trust, or through a retirement account is easy. A planned giving donation assures your ongoing commitment to protecting Alaska's diverse history, art and cultures for future generations.

A Forever Friends endowment fund is established with the Juneau Community Foundation to provide a sustainable future funding source for SLAM exhibits, events, and acquisitions. You can make donations in any amount directly to the Forever Friends Endowment Fund. You can also make a gift to the endowment fund in your estate will or trust to protect and display Alaska's history for future generations.

Talk to your financial advisor, accountant, or lawyer if you want to make a gift to the Forever Friends Fund in your will or living trust, or to designate it as a beneficiary of an IRA or other financial account such as stocks and bonds, real estate, or life insurance.

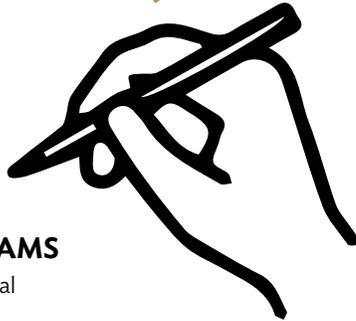
PURCHASE OF THE CHARLES "RED" NELSON COLLECTION AT AUCTION

Thanks to help from the Friends, and particularly Kurt Fredriksson and Deb Reifenstein, we were able to bid on two collections at auction. Both collections related to Charles "Red" Nelson, a cameraman who shot film from around the state. Unfortunately, we didn't win the film collection, which went out of our price range pretty quickly despite additional support from the Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association. However, we did win a collection of three large boxes of his papers, photos, and other ephemera. This even includes some physical artifacts. While not as dramatic as the film, we think that this will still be an exciting collection and a great addition, with the silver lining that it should be easier for us to handle. We couldn't have gotten it without the Friends' support.

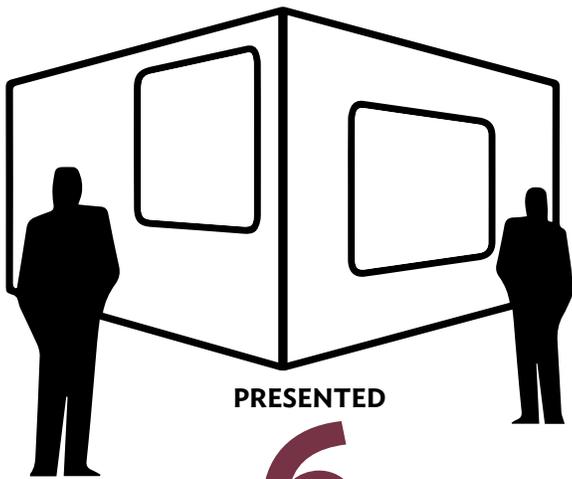
SUPPORTING SLAM

In 2021, we...

SUPPORTED
21
YOUTH ART PROGRAMS
both in-person and virtual



MANAGED
10
GRANTS & FUNDS
for museum acquisitions, exhibit support,
collection management and youth activities



PRESENTED
6
EXHIBITIONS



SOLD
250
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AROUND YOU CATALOG
which goes to support LAM programs



HOSTED
3
INTERNS



INCLUDING
2
TRAVELING
EXHIBITIONS

ASSISTED IN PROVIDING LAM WITH OVER
\$102,000

IN SUPPORT



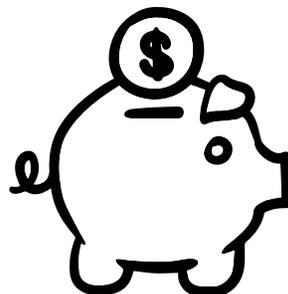
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\$25,000

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AND
2
ONLINE
EXHIBITIONS



SAVED
\$41,000
TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE
to the Forever Friends Endowment Fund,
bringing the total to \$120,000



WELCOMED
3
WEAVING
ARTISTS AS
DEMONSTRATORS



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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