Creating a New Exhibition

For the American Indian Collection

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Local hop rancher George Gannon purchased dozens of carriages and wagons both from individual owners and from other collectors who were refining their collections. Eventually they were housed in the Yakima Frontier Museum; when it closed in 1974, the Gannon Wagon Collection came to the Yakima Valley Museum—and it has been a popular feature here ever since.

Some of the vehicles in the collection have local Yakima Valley histories, and others do not. Some are in great condition, and some were already showing the effects of age and poor treatment at the time Gannon acquired them. Some are historically accurate (even if no longer in the best condition); some suffered from poor restoration or repainting even before Gannon bought them.

Over the years since they came to the museum, these vehicles have required constant care and ongoing maintenance to prevent further deterioration. At the same time, the museum collections have grown overall, requiring space and resources to be allocated fairly among all the various objects that help tell the stories of the Yakima Valley’s heritage and culture.

Accordingly, some years ago, the museum decided to begin a slow, methodical, and thoughtful process of concentrating scarce conservation resources on only those vehicles that both represent the best of Mr. Gannon’s collecting passion and are the most relevant to Valley history. As a result, some of the vehicles were moved into storage to be used as a study collection, some were integrated into museum exhibits on specific Valley topics, and some were selected for full restoration.

In this last category, the first vehicle to be fully restored is the mudwagon, a type of stagecoach especially well suited for use on rough roads. The museum’s mudwagon was built by the Henderson Stage Company in Stockton, California; restoration work was done by professional wagon conservator Rawhide Johnson in Cody, Wyoming over the past year. It is now on view in the museum’s Great Hall—looking much as it did when it was still in service in the late 1800s.

Another vehicle is now at the Wyoming conservation lab, awaiting sufficient restoration funds. This is the museum’s quite rare hotel omnibus—a horse-drawn multiple passenger vehicle similar in purpose to the hotel minivan shuttles that now greet passengers at airport terminals. We look forward to the time when this vehicle will also give visitors a realistic example of these large, rather unwieldy vehicles people once would have seen lined up outside train stations waiting for arriving passengers with reservations at local hotels.
ON EXHIBITS

By Andy Granitto, Curator of Exhibitions

The Challenge of Exhibiting American Indian Art and Artifacts

Perhaps the best of the Yakima Valley Museum's collections is our American Indian art and artifacts. The beadwork, bags, parfleches, and baskets from the Yakamas and other peoples of the inland Northwest is one of the best and most complete representations of Plateau culture to be found anywhere. Yet we rarely offer these objects in our exhibitions—but that is about to change. Thanks to a grant from the Yakima Valley Community Foundation, a new permanent exhibit of our American Indian collection is opening this summer.

Exhibiting these Indian items is a challenge, which involves both display and conservation issues. Many of the items, such as baskets and flat cornhusk bags, are made of delicate natural fibers that are highly susceptible to light damage; light triggers a chemical reaction that breaks down the fibers and eventually destroys the objects. Other objects contain wool fabric, which is one of the most fragile of natural materials, and these objects are even more susceptible to light damage than the baskets and bags. In addition, many of the objects are decorated with dyes and pigments that break down and fade when exposed to light.

Not all light is equally dangerous. Ultraviolet light (UV) is the most harmful; it is invisible and most abundant in natural sunlight. Although all light bulbs emit UV, to varying degrees depending on the type of bulb, the UV can be filtered and reduced significantly. Visible light is also harmful, although not as much as UV. Because of this, delicate objects must always be displayed in low light. And, even in low light, these delicate objects should not remain on exhibit for long periods of time; they should periodically be “rotated” back into collection storage and replaced with others. All of these factors combine to make the exhibition of Indian items a balancing act of light, material, and time on display.

Because of these conservation and display issues, the museum has kept the majority of its American Indian collections in dark, climate-controlled storage rooms...until now.

A funding grant from the Yakima Valley Community Foundation has allowed us to build five special exhibit cases that will have low-level, filtered light and special “slantboard” surfaces of various sizes to accommodate the wide range of objects that will rotate between them and collections storage. Each of the five cases is different—some will have very low light and are for the most delicate objects, and others will be more brightly lit and will display only objects without delicate materials. Similarly, different objects will stay on exhibit for different periods of time—the most delicate objects will be on view for only two years (in low light) before being replaced by others, while less sensitive objects can remain on view for up to five years before returning to dark storage.

Developing the “rotation schedule” for all the objects in the collection has been a challenge, but Collections Curator Mike Siebol has formulated a plan that brings approximately 300 objects onto exhibit for each rotation; there can be as many as ten rotations before an individual object returns for a second time—we have that many objects in our American Indian collections!

By the time you read this, the new exhibit cases will be open for view. Come visit the museum and see some of our best stuff! And support the Yakima Valley Community Foundation, which has made this museum project a reality.
How do you follow Head Over Heels Over Heels: The Exhibit? With a book, of course!

While putting together the exhibit of David Childs’ shoe collection, curator Andy Granitto suggested that it could also be made into a book. We all agreed and, after the exhibit opened in February, the book project became a serious endeavor. Several ideas were proposed, but all of them turned out to be too expensive to produce. What we finally decided on was a full-color "glamour shot" postcard book, which could be printed locally.

Since the postcard book could display only 30 pairs of shoes, we then had the difficult task of choosing them from the over 600 pairs that are in the exhibit. More than 250 pairs had already been photographed by Shay Young, a student working on her senior thesis (these have been turned into a 250-shoes-in-60-seconds montage which can be viewed on our YouTube channel); David Lynx took photos of others which were picked for the book.

The final selection shows the broad range of eras and styles found in the exhibit. Also included in the book are photographs of the exhibit and, to close, a picture of the big red shoe now on display in the museum lobby. The new Head Over Heels Over Heels postcard book will be available in the Museum Store and through our website yakimavalleymuseum.org.

What’s next? Head Over Heels Over Heels: The Movie?

Heart Mountain Interpretive Learning Center Opens

Land of Joy and Sorrow: Japanese Pioneers in the Yakima Valley, the exhibition that opened last October in the museum’s Gilbert Family Gallery, includes the story of the removal of our Valley’s Japanese families to Heart Mountain, Wyoming in 1942. The Heart Mountain internment camp was home for them and many other families until the end of World War II.

This August, the greater communities of Powell and Cody, Wyoming will welcome the former internees and their families and friends for the grand opening and dedication of an Interpretive Learning Center (ILC) erected at this former War Relocation site. The theme of this weekend-long celebration is Lessons from the Past – Guidance for the Future.

The first event, to be held on Friday, August 19 at the Park County Fairgrounds, will both reunite and honor the former internees and their families. The evening’s keynote address will be given by the lauded journalist and television icon Tom Brokaw. Formal dedication ceremonies for the Interpretive Learning Center will be at 10A.M. on Saturday, August 20, and will include an address by a senior member of the U.S. Senate. On Saturday evening, a panel of civic and political leaders will discuss the lessons learned from the wartime internment and how we can use them as a guide to shape future civil rights discussions.

The 11,000 square foot Interpretive Learning Center will offer exhibits that chronicle the lives and experiences of the camp’s inhabitants, and will also house the administrative offices for the Heart Mountain, Wyoming Foundation, two replicated barracks, a computer room, a reflection room, and a commemorative garden.

For more information about this grand opening celebration, visit www.heartmountain.org.
This spring, Gloria Munly called the museum to see if we were interested in having her parents’ uniforms from World War II. The story that she told me about them is too good not to share with you.

Gloria’s mother, Marguerita Alvarez, was born in the Yakima Valley while her parents were in the sheep business here. Marguerita’s brother Alex was also born here. In about 1920, the family returned to her parents’ native Spain. But then the revolution came; the Alvarez’s home in Irun was bombed and set on fire by the Loyalists. In the spring of 1936, her father and brother came back to the Valley. That fall, Mrs. Alvarez and Marguerita fled to Paris—where she met James Garcia. Shortly afterwards, however, the young lovers were separated when Marguerita and her mother departed for Yakima.

James Amado Garcia was born in New Jersey of Spanish parents and his family, like Marguerita’s, returned to Spain. They, too, arrived in Paris as refugees from their war-torn country. This unlikely set of coincidences led to his brief, fateful meeting with Marguerita. James held dual citizenship in both the U.S. and Spain. He joined the U.S. Army to fight in World War II, and spent 38 months with the Corps of Engineers in England, France, and Germany.

Back in Yakima, Marguerita Alvarez joined the Red Cross and spent the war years selling Series E war bonds, reaching the organization’s highest possible rank—four-star general—for her sales of over $5,100 worth. She sold most of them to her fellow Spaniards, who were eager to buy the bonds and help with America’s war effort.

James never forgot about Marguerita—his “Margot.” After he left the service, he returned to New Jersey to play for a professional soccer team. He asked for a few weeks off to travel all the way across the country, to Yakima, so he could marry his sweetheart and return with his bride. He came to the Valley, but instead of taking Marguerita back with him James abandoned his sports career for the woman he loved and settled here instead. He became an architect and, eventually, he and Marguerita were the parents of Gloria Garcia Munly.

The Army and Red Cross uniforms are in wonderful condition, but that is not the real reason why we accepted them as donations. It is the narrative behind these uniforms that make a great, compelling story.

The museum has been very fortunate to have Randy Becker come in and help identify the over 2,100 mineral and rock specimens in our geology collection. They will form the core of a new geology exhibit we are planning, but we need more local minerals and rock materials for it. We are looking for examples from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho to add to this picture of our geologic region. If you have a collection that you would like to loan or donate for the exhibit, Randy and I would really like to see it, and we would also be happy to help identify any items in your collection that you might be unsure of. You can call Mike Siebol at 248-0747, or email collect@yakimavalleymuseum.org.
Wondering what to do this summer? Wondering what you can do with all the kids together as a family? Worried that if you sign up for a summer camp it will take a huge chunk out of your day or week, and your summer budget? Well we have the answer for you—and we’re inviting you to **Join the Adventure!** In partnership with *Busy Bee* Magazine and the Yakama Nation Museum, the Yakima Valley Museum is launching a new low-cost summer program called **Explore Central Washington (ECW).**

**Explore Central Washington** is a summer field-trip program designed to get families excited about our region’s history, natural resources, and diverse cultures. By participating in a series of 15 field trips, you will get to see petrified trees at the Ginkgo Petrified Forest, buffalo on the Yakama Nation Bison Tour, and a bald eagle at the Raptor House; have the experience of riding a trolley at the Trolley Museum; and learn about historic locomotives at the Northern Pacific Train Museum. Other field trip destinations include the Selah Cliffs Interpretive Trail, Kittitas Valley Historical Museum, Yakama Nation Museum, Ahtanum Mission, Central Washington Agricultural Museum, CWU Planetarium, and the Wild Horse Renewable Energy Center. And, of course, the Yakima Valley Museum!

There are two ways to sign up for ECW; you can either register here at the museum, or mail us the registration form provided in the current issue of *Busy Bee* Magazine. Pre-registration is preferred, but you may register before any tour. The one-time $5 per child registration fee (with a maximum charge of $20 per family) covers any and all of the field trips you choose to join. Parent participation is required.

We hope to see you this summer! And if you are interested in being a volunteer parent leader on any of the trips or have questions about **Explore Central Washington (ECW)**, please contact Kathy Sample at 248-0747.

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**The Gilbert Garden**

The large American elm trees on the property of the H.M. Gilbert Homeplace grew from seedlings brought to the Yakima Valley by the Gilbert family and planted here 100 years ago.

In 1925, the Gilberts hired a landscaper to draw up plans to make the grounds look more like an estate. The lilacs, roses, and shade trees making a pleasant setting for the house were all part of his design.

The small lily pond south of the house was added in the early 1930s, and it is said that Mrs. Gilbert always stopped to look at it on her way to the mailbox.

In 1952, Tiny and Bill Donelson moved into the house and worked diligently to restore the yard to its former beauty. They planted boxwood hedges to set off the large flower beds of colorful goldenrod, daisies, and tulips. Vinca was added as ground cover, and the area between the driveway and Yakima Avenue was planted. One of the Donelsons’ last projects was the 1980 addition of the cement sidewalk running from the back door to the front driveway—with their names printed in it.

The house and grounds became part of the Yakima Valley Museum in 1982, and volunteers were organized to help restore and maintain them. One of the first jobs they tackled was weeding! The experienced gardeners on the Grounds Committee established both short- and long-range goals for keeping the appearance of the yard compatible with the Victorian-era house. They kept the rhubarb and gooseberry bushes and the snowberry bush by the fireplace chimney; additional plantings have been chosen with care so there is always attractive color throughout the growing season.

Other projects were also undertaken, such as widening the driveway, installing a brick walk through the yard north of the house, placing a bench near that walk, and building a seat around one of the large elms. White picket fencing and rose arbors were also added, and may indeed have been there originally.

Starting in the summer of 2010, another round of yard renovation began at the H.M. Gilbert Homeplace. If you drive by today, you’ll see newly rebuilt and painted fences, and rose arbors. Also, the pond that was so dearly loved by Mrs. Gilbert has been restored, and last fall approximately 500 perennial bulbs were planted around the grounds, resulting in a wonderful spring garden full of color.

Watch for the next project, scheduled to begin this summer.
BBQ Championship Goin' Hog Wild

Following its tremendous first-year success in 2010, the Tree Top Skewered Apple BBQ Championship will be returning to downtown Yakima late this summer. This national-championship event will be held on the weekend of September 10-11, 2011, with proceeds benefiting the Yakima Valley Museum.

Competitive BBQ chefs across the nation use apple juice in a variety of ways—to reconstitute rubs, as well as to marinate, flavor, and moisten their meats. So Tree Top, a major manufacturer of apple juice, is a perfect title sponsor for this all-American cooking and entertainment event. With suggestions from 2010 attendees, and last year’s experience overall, this year’s event promises to be bigger and better, with more food, more vendors, more entertainment, and more fun for the whole family.

The Skewered Apple BBQ Championship offers the largest winnings in the West. A total of $35,000 in prize money will be awarded, with $10,000 going to the grand champion. In addition, the winning team will likely receive an invitation to participate in the country’s largest BBQ cook-offs, because this is a sanctioned event under the supervision of the Pacific Northwest BBQ Association.

The Skewered Apple BBQ Championship is open to the public. In addition to the excitement of watching the competitors as they prepare their entries for the competition, attendees can also enjoy cooking demonstrations, mouth-watering food from various vendors, and a beer and wine garden featuring some of Washington’s finest beverages. Live entertainment will be provided by Star Anna and the Laughing Dogs, The Dave Rawlinson Band, and other performers to be announced. The event will take place outdoors, along Yakima’s historic Front Street, and merchants will be open to offer unique shopping and dining experiences. Teams will be competing on both days, and after their submission of each competitive entry, they will offer attendees samples of their BBQ creations.

Admission to the event is $15.00 for two days, and $10.00 for one day. Children 12 and under are free. Hours are 11:00A.M.-10:00P.M. on Saturday, September 10, and 10:00A.M.-6:00P.M. on Sunday, September 11. For more information, visit our website at skeweredapple.com.

A New Medium For Some Old Stories

Stories, photos, documents, and objects from the museum’s collections have been brought together in a short-video format by Associate Director David Lynx. The films can be viewed on the museum’s own YouTube channel.

A Pioneer, a Goat and a Dog Named Shep are the subjects of a three-minute story that looks at a special artifact in the Yakima Valley Museum’s collection, the dog-powered butter churn. To help tell the story, photographs of the Gleeds, who originally owned the churn, along with maps, historical documents and photographs, objects from the collections, and even the help of a staff member as a stand-in for Mrs. Gleed, form the visual treat which became the finished film.

He created the second film, Rough Roads & Relay Stations, soon after the M. P. Henderson and Son mudwagon was returned to the museum following its recent restoration. Photos of the mudwagon, period photographs and maps, objects from the collections, and voice-overs by other staff members help tell the story of this historic stagecoach.

Sign In, Please, the most recent film, looks at the visitor registers from the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific exposition in Seattle.

These three films are the first in a series of videos that are announced on Facebook and made available on our YouTube channel. They will be part of a new Smartphone tour and exhibit scheduled to open at the museum next February. And they will also be featured in a panel discussion during the upcoming Washington Museum Association Conference in Walla Walla this June.

To watch all three stories, and keep an eye out for new ones, visit the museum on YouTube at www.youtube.com/yakimavalleymuseum.
New York City in early May was alive with spring blossoms, theatre, fine (and not-so-fine) dining, and museums. A small, but mighty, group of museum members was there, too. We spent six days touring everything from the Alexander McQueen fashion exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, the Museum of the City of New York, and the Brooklyn Museum. It was great weather (with the exception of one rainy day), no one got lost on the subway, taxis magically appeared when needed, and the bright lights of Broadway failed to tempt any new recruits into a life upon the wicked stage. Yet another Yakima Valley Museum trip was a great success.

The only other museum-sponsored trip in 2011 will be the Trans-Siberian Rail Excursion from Vladivostok to Moscow in September, which is already sold out. Assuming everyone is approved for a Russian visa, there will be 22 intrepid travelers from the Yakima Valley on this junket.

However, it is now time to consider where the airlines can take Yakima Valley Museum groups in 2012. One destination that has been requested (and is virtually guaranteed to be visited if there is sufficient interest) is Charleston, South Carolina and perhaps Savannah, Georgia in the spring. An abundance of historic sites, great architecture, Low Country delectable foods, and other attractions in these charming cities will give you a taste of both the Ante-Bellum South and the vibrant urban life in the New South.

We have also been offered up to 11 overnight berths on three restored 1950s Zephyr Streamliner railroad cars; together, the three cars comprise a private five-star luxury hotel on wheels. They are attached to regular Amtrak runs that connect Oakland, California with Los Angeles, Santa Fe, Chicago, New Orleans, and Washington, DC. A custom tour can be arranged that takes in the Rockies and Great Southwest National Parks or any of the above-mentioned cities. Check out the website www.traintrips.biz/rockies-great-southwest-rail-2011.html for a sample of what might be possible.

Other options include a late summer trip to the fabulous folk art and baseball museums in Cooperstown, New York as well as the nearby Adirondack Mountains; Denver; or even Toronto.

Is there someplace else you’d like to go? Give John a call or drop a note to the museum with any destinations you have in mind. The 2012 schedule will soon be in the planning stages.
Native American Collection Filmed for Documentary

Penny Phillips and Morgan Blair of Mimbres Fever Productions came to the museum recently to film many pieces of our Native American beaded art. She and Steve Grafe of Maryhill Museum are working together to produce a documentary about beadwork.

Recently, Roberta Baldoz brought in her late father’s collection of vintage rodeo postcards so we could add them to the Yakima Memory database. The photos capture cowboys (and cowgirls, too) in mid-event, either riding or being thrown from their mounts. They were taken at the Ellensburg rodeo and Pendleton Round-up, as well as Yakima Valley rodeos; most date from the 1920s through the 1940s. You will soon be able to browse through this exciting collection on yakimamemory.org.
The Raffle Quilt Tradition Continues

Warmed by the museum’s 2010 raffle quilt Spring Pathways is its winner, Delphine Love of Yakima. Her winning ticket was drawn last December at the Victorian Christmas open house held at the H.M. Gilbert Homeplace.

Each year, a quilt is raffled to benefit the Yakima Valley Museum’s ongoing operations fund. The raffle began in 1978, and for many years the quilts were original creations designed and executed by the Museum’s Quilters Guild and staff. Photographs of these early raffle quilts are on display in the museum’s “North Tower.” Since the disbanding of the Quilters group, however, the raffle quilts have been constructed from vintage tops given to the museum for that purpose. The 2011 raffle quilt, a bright red and white, is one of these; it is currently being quilted and will soon be on display. Raffle tickets will then go on sale—for just $1 apiece, as always!

Awesome Museum Passport

The new "Awesome Museums of Washington State" passports are in! The passports feature 24 museums in the state of Washington, each with its own page of information and a place for the museum to stamp it when you visit. The passport gives you and your family a fun way to create a memento documenting each museum you visit. So if you will be museum-hopping in Washington State this summer and would like a passport to take with you, please come in to the Yakima Valley Museum and ask for one at the front desk. They’re free, while limited supplies last.

Museum Soda Fountain

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- Delicious Ice Cream Treats
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The Running Rabbit Museum Store

Head Over Heels Over Heels postcard books

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MISSION

The Yakima Valley Museum promotes an understanding of Central Washington history as it affects the lives of contemporary citizens. Through the collection, preservation, and exhibition of historic artifacts and stories, as well as related programming, the museum provides residents and visitors with historical perspectives that may influence decisions about the future of the Valley.

CALENDAR

ON EXHIBIT:

Head Over Heels Over Heels: One Collector’s Love Affair with Shoes - High fashion shoes from ca.1890 to the present. Collected by David Childs.


Events and Programs

July 8-10, 2011 (Friday-Sunday) Yakima Folklife Festival – Music, dance, crafts, food, kid's activities, and a mini Medieval Faire. In the Museum, Franklin Park and all over downtown Yakima. All events are FREE.


October 27, 2010 (Thursday) Members & Volunteers Evening - An event to honor our hardworking volunteers, with an annual meeting and member’s party. 5:00-7:00 P.M.

December 3, 2011 (Saturday) Holiday Open House Music in the museum from the Yakima Youth Symphony, Yakima Children’s Choir, and Melody Lane Singers. 12:00-3:00 P.M. FREE.

December 4, 2011 (Sunday) Victorian Christmas – The H. M. Gilbert Homeplace welcomes visitors for a special Victorian-Style Christmas. 1:00-4:00 P.M. FREE.

January 19, 2012 (Thursday) Diversions – A program produced by the Yakima Valley Museum and Yakima Symphony Orchestra. 6:00 P.M. Supper and drinks, 7:00 P.M. Program.

February 16, 2012 (Thursday) Diversions – A program produced by the Yakima Valley Museum and Yakima Symphony Orchestra. 6:00 P.M. Supper and drinks, 7:00 P.M. Program.

March 22, 2012 (Thursday) Diversions – A program produced by the Yakima Valley Museum and Yakima Symphony Orchestra. 6:00 P.M. Supper and drinks, 7:00 P.M. Program.
A Visit At The Indian Village
ca. 1912

Yakima Valley Museum Collections

Printed on Kodak Professional AZO paper
produced 1904-1918