



Resources & Inspiration
for Historic Preservation

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

CALLING ALL JOURNALISTS

Do you like to interview people
and find out their deepest secrets?

Do you like to write?

The Volunteer Newsletter
needs you!

Do you have an interesting story
about yourself or another volunteer
you would like to share? Would
you like to describe what you do at
the AHC?

The Volunteer Newsletter
needs you!

Can you create a creative title for
the "Volunteer Newsletter?"

The Volunteer Newsletter
needs you!

Next issue will appear in early
January – so please join the
newsletter staff soon.

Contact Joan at 503-231-7264 or
joanb@VisitAHC.org.

WORDS FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The activities of the Architectural Heritage Center are currently supported by more than 180 active volunteers. These volunteers infrequently have the chance to work or socialize with each other and may not realize how large and varied the volunteer corps is. This newsletter will try to foster a sense of community – to put in touch the volunteers who help us so much and who have the common bond of valuing the goals and purposes of the AHC.

The volunteers' quarterly newsletter will not compete with News and Notes and will not provide information about the exhibits, education programs, and events of the AHC. It will introduce volunteers to each other and engage them in both writing the articles and reading them. In this first issue we will explore the "secret life" of a volunteer, listen in as a volunteer describes his job at the AHC, get to know a Board member, and learn about the contributions of our summer interns.

I may also use the newsletter to recruit for specific volunteer jobs. Right now our most pressing need is for volunteers to help with the annual "Riches of a City" Heritage Auction on Saturday, October 24 at the Governor Hotel. Many volunteers have already signed up for their favorite jobs, but we still need people to help with the silent auction, the oral auction and working with check-in and check-out. Come join the fun.

Contact Joan at 503-231-7264 or
joanb@VisitAHC.org.

Staff of the First Volunteer Newsletter Includes:

WONDERFUL WRITERS:

Grant Scholbrock

Is a part time glass artist and is learning the delicate art of home gardening.

Fred Leeson

Is an actual writer with bylines in the Oregonian.

Ita Lindquist

Is allowed to live in her hundred-year-old southeast Portland bungalow by two labradors - one supermodel, one sumo-sized.

VIVACIOUS VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:

Joan Baucus

Who, on her day off, volunteers at the desk of another museum.

GORGEOUS GRAPHIC DESIGNER:

Mary Doyle

Who was untimely ripped from volunteering and reclaimed by full time employment.

AND INCREDIBLE INTERN!

Cara Curley

Who appeared magically and saved the day. (Laid out the entire newsletter)

BITS AND PIECES

Standing in the lobby of the Architectural Heritage Center, you may sense someone looking down on you. It's not a ghost – it's Gus!

The large wooden figure mounted high on the wall began his life supporting an elaborate balcony above the front door of the Kamm Block at SW Pine and SW 1st streets. He was one of a pair of "Atlas" figures on the building which was completed in 1884 at a cost of \$125,000. The Kamm Block was demolished in 1948. No one knows where Gus' brother is, but two female figures removed from the facade now reside in the vestibule of Pioneer Courthouse's west entrance.

For more information about the Kamm Block and to see a photo of Gus in his former life, see [The Grand Era of Cast-Iron Architecture in Portland](#) by William Hawkins III.



This book is on display in the AHC lobby.
Why do we call him Gus? Ask Bill Hawkins.

BEHIND THE SCENES

BY GRANT SCHOLBROCK

We all remember the last scene from Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark where a worker in a government warehouse is pushing a cart containing the crated-up ark. This crate will be stored among mountains of other crates never to be seen again. In the warehouses of the Architectural Heritage Center we are still looking for our "lost ark."

Ben Milligan and Jerry Bosco amassed the 5th largest collection of architectural pieces in the United States. They were passionate collectors, but not trained curators. They often recorded the provenance of an object on an index card, but all these years later it is difficult to match the object with the correct card. This is one of the many challenges of the formal cataloging of this immense collection.

Volunteering my time to help catalog items in the collection for the past year and a half has been both rewarding and informative. Doug Magedanz, the Curator of Collections, has a wealth of knowledge about the items in the collection and their former owners, including Delahunt, Knapp, Abington and Ladd. He has guided me and other volunteers through the process of identifying, describing and numbering thousands of artifacts.

These artifacts are stored in 67,000 cubic feet of warehouse – a dark and dusty place with treasures piled on shelves reaching almost to the ceiling. It's often dirty work – some items have been sitting, bundled together in boxes for 20 years. I come to work in old clothes and bring protective gloves.

The collection is cataloged by category. I have worked on windows, plaster medallions, cast iron, brackets, and am currently working my way through the doors.

Cataloging the plaster ceiling medallions presented the most Indiana Jones type of puzzle. Multiple medallions had been put in nearly 100 boxes and over a 20 year period had broken and been mixed up. Going through these boxes we pieced together 400 medallions by matching fragments of scroll work, floral details and even faces. The floor and tables were covered with giant puzzles.

Each medallion was assigned a unique number and that number is attached to the written description. I paint on a small rectangle of white pigment on each medallion and when it dries I write the catalog number in India ink. I have a steady hand and legible handwriting – two requirements for this job.

We photograph each artifact and this photo is later attached to the description and entered into a museum cataloging software called Past Perfect. The time consuming cataloging process really pays off when we are trying to locate artifacts for exhibits. And when the process is finished, we will have a total inventory of the collection.

Indiana Jones asks the G-man who is researching the ark and is told, "We have top men working on it right now." Top men? Just think of Doug, me and other volunteers in the vast and dusty warehouse with so much left to be done.



Norm Gholston with reassembled plaster medallion.

MEET A BOARD MEMBER

BY FRED LEESON

As a custom cabinet and furniture builder, Jeff Varner's design sense pulls him back in time, from the Arts and Crafts era through Frank Lloyd Wright.

But as a board member of the Bosco-Milligan Foundation for seven years, his eyes are focused clearly on a future aimed at making the Architectural Heritage Center a well-used resource for artists, builders, homeowners, designers and even the merely curious.

"I came on the board at a really cool time," says Varner, 43. "It was 2002, and we were pushing hard to open the building (which opened in 2005). We were thinking, 'When it's open, what uses can we come up with? We wanted it to attract business members and the public.'"

Varner was working full-time renovating houses in older Portland neighborhoods at the time. He tried to research the history of his properties, looking for key design elements and color palettes that would reflect their original characters and help them fit their neighborhood contexts. "I want to see us become that resource for people who don't know what to do with their house."

Varner also became a key player in another idea that surfaced during his early days on the board: The AHC's annual Old House Fair. For the past three years, the fair – held in tents on the street adjacent to the AHC – brings together businesses involved with restoration and Portland-area residents interested in old houses.

Varner has worked with every phase of putting on the successful fairs, from recruiting sponsors and vendors to physically erecting the tents. "My big goal is to make sure all the stakeholders are pleased with it," he says. "I want vendors to see value in it and I want the public to see value. I think it has fit that purpose quite well."

Besides mingling with vendors outside, fair attendees could listen to a variety of brief educational programs inside – offering design pointers for age-

appropriate renovations and explaining ways to research a house's history.

Varner says the intent was to introduce the AHC to visitors and to give them an idea of the kind of the resources it offers. "I want to give the building an identity and get people to see it as a place to start and where they need to go."

Varner was hardly finished with the recent Old House Fair before he was into his next adventure intended to bring new faces and vitality to the AHC: An artists' exhibition called Found Portland. Participating artists will show arts and crafts inspired by Portland's historic and modern built environment.

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"It should bring a different demographic of people coming through the doors," Varner says, referring both to the artists and art lovers who come to see the show, which opens at the AHC on Nov. 2. Varner hopes the show will attract a diverse mix of artists working in a variety of media, all showing how architectural cues inspire new art.

"I'd really like to see it become an annual thing," he says. Coming as it does close to the holiday season, Found Portland could help put the AHC on the map as an innovative shopping venue.

Varner, a native Portlander, attended Cleveland High School and graduated from Oregon State University with a communications degree in 1989. He spent about a decade holding office jobs with Columbia Sportswear, Adidas and Danner Boots, but found himself happier renovating old houses.

"I've always been a hands-on person," he says.



He felt the best value in renovating older homes was to blend modern conveniences with traditional designs and colors. He'd grown up in a Craftsman-era bungalow, so the simplicity of Arts and Crafts attracted him. "The honesty is in the materials – you let the materials do the talking and not the ornamentation." That said, he's also partial to mid-century interior design and has built some Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired furnishings. His own furnishings include Danish Modern.

"If a house is done right," he says, "it's not the right things that jump out at you. It's the wrong things."

He wants the public, remodelers and contractors to see the AHC as a resource where they can learn to eliminate those "wrong" things.

SAVE THE DATES NOW

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION
LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH
12:00 - 2:00

HOLIDAY SOCIAL FOR
VOLUNTEERS, BOARD AND
STAFF

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH
2:00 - 5:00

POTLUCK AND THE FAMOUS
"WHITE ELEPHANT" EXCHANGE

THE REST OF THE STORY— ROBERT JORDAN

BY ITA LINDQUIST

Robert's affiliation with the Architectural Heritage Center (AHC) began in 2004, when he and his wife paid a visit to the German Consulate at 200 SW Market Street, in Portland. This also happened to be the temporary headquarters of the Bosco Milligan Foundation (the owner and operator of AHC) during the time that the West's Block Building was being renovated. Robert's interest in architecture and history led him to investigate, and that visit was to inspire a long and productive relationship with the AHC.

Robert has been an active member, Volunteer of the Year and, as of April 2009, a board member. He has participated in nearly every activity available to AHC volunteers, including chair of the Education Committee, facilitator for walking tours (most recently, Cast Iron Portland: Skidmore-Old Town Walking Tour), exhibit installations, and a regular stint at the front desk.

But Robert's interests take him to much more exotic locales than West's Block.

A retired biologist, Robert also manages to find time in his busy schedule to work on important malaria research, an ongoing project that takes him to Africa several times a year. Funded by grants from the President's Malaria Initiative and Marathon Oil Co., this project involves the collection of patient blood samples to be processed for use as teaching slides for microscopy. The slide sets that are produced from this work will be used to help health care professionals correctly differentiate the four types of malaria and evaluate the stages of the disease. The goal is to produce 200 slides for each patient sample, requiring many patient samples in order to view the different developmental stages of the malaria.

Each trip to Africa lasts from one to two weeks, with an arduous 20-hour flight at the beginning and end of the journey. The itineraries have taken Robert to Kenya, where he attended a World Health Organization course in Nairobi, and Benin, where samples were



Joanne Carlson presents Volunteer of the Year 2007 to Robert Jordan

collected and processed for slide sets. In October, Robert will return to Africa for another research trip, this time to Equatorial Guinea. The work is exacting, complex and often complicated by local situations over which the researchers have little control. Robert's fluency in both French and Spanish has been helpful with language barriers. We look forward to receiving postcards from his journeys to Africa, even if the postcards reach us months later!

Robert offered some advice to new volunteers at AHC: "Find something you really like to do, so you'll stick with it." It's great advice and it comes from someone who continues to serve AHC in many different ways. Thank you, Robert!

Introducing Our Interns



Elena Lien

Georgetown University
Undeclared

Was there a particular experience you enjoyed while interning?

I suggested using the image of a stained glass window to advertise our fundraising campaign progress. Actually painting the window and filling in the colors with craft store supplies was an unexpected and fun task.

How did you become interested in an internship at the AHC?

Jessica Streicher

Oregon State University
International Business



I became interested in an internship at the Architectural Heritage Center because I was looking for a learning opportunity in the marketing field and the list of qualifications and activities that were posted for this job were exactly what I was looking to experience.



Errin Creed

University of Vermont
Masters, Historic Preservation

What is your favorite part of working at the AHC?

I'd say the vast knowledge and dedication of the staff and volunteers. Everyone is passionate about what they do and dedicated to the foundation's mission. Another neat thing is being able to attend the educational programs.

What projects have you been working on during your term?

Wilderness Cowan

University of Oregon
Masters, Historic Preservation



I have worked in the warehouse and on Past Perfect photoshopping and attaching images of brackets and doors. I have worked on some marketing projects: the fall newsletter and auction catalog; also posting educational programs weekly online. I have also been working on building an excel Master Contact list that the entire foundation should be able to reference for many reasons which will be used for many different occasions to contact people such as architectural firms, city officials, architectural and design schools, etc.