

SUNLETTER

THE PEOPLE, EVENTS, & EXHIBITS OF THE GRACE HUDSON MUSEUM

FALL 2023 Volume 32, No. 3

Our New Collections Management System

Have you ever wondered how museums keep track of the many irreplaceable objects in their care? Just as libraries catalog their books, museums catalog artwork and artifacts—assigning them unique identifying numbers. Those numbers are used to keep items connected to information about their history and care. But, when you have over 40,000 individual pieces (like the Grace Hudson Museum does), that can generate a lot of data. Methods for keeping track of collections fall under the term Collections Management Systems (CMS).

In the past, collections information was recorded and kept solely in a physical form: in donation paperwork, catalog cards, or in ledgers. Here at the Grace Hudson, each donation has its own unique paper file. Staff then creates a catalog card for each individual artifact which keeps together the donor's information with descriptions of the object—including its measurements, physical condition, and other relevant data.

SPECIMEN I.D. <i>Photographs of Maps of Townshend, Vt.</i>							ACCESSION NO. <i>15644-15645</i>
							CATEGORY <i>PHOTOGRAPHY</i>
							<i>prints</i>
QUANTITY <i>2</i>	LENGTH	WIDTH	HEIGHT	DEPTH	DIAMETER	WEIGHT	ROOM <i>attic</i>
DESCRIPTION:							HUDSON-CARPENTER ESTATE DONOR
<i>15644 - photograph of map of Townshend, Vt. w/ specific names underlined - Howard, Nichols c. 1850</i>							RECORDED BY <i>MLL</i> DATE <i>1.3-30-77</i>
<i>15645 - photograph of map of Townshend, Vt. w/ specific names underlined - Howard, Taft d. 1850</i>							ACTION:
HUDSON - CARPENTER ESTATE ACCESSION CARD							

Catalog card from original inventory of Sun House collections in 1977

databases were created, using a now-very-outdated version of File Maker Pro software, to account for parts of the collection.

With countless sources of information living in a lot of different places and requiring time-consuming searches, the Museum determined it was important to consolidate all of it into one comprehensive and easily-searchable database. Additionally, CMS technology had advanced so that collection information could be accessed on different devices (desktop computer, portable laptop, tablet, and smart phone) and from any location, all tremendously useful features.

There are countless commercial Collections Management Systems available to modern museums, from basic options to custom-built software. After months of exploring these options, we decided that Past Perfect Museum Software would best fit our current needs. So, on July 1, the first day of our current fiscal year, the Museum began leasing its first comprehensive database. *(continued on back page)*

The size of our collection means that we have a lot of cards. This presents a challenge when one is trying to research a single object. Also, cards can only hold so much. Consequently, past Museum staff (for whom we are SO thankful!) found other ways to record information, including worksheets and inputting data into Excel-like computer documents. As technology changed, so did techniques for tracking objects. Over time, a number of different



A peek inside our material culture collections vault



Sun House Guild

GRACE HUDSON
MUSEUM & Sun House

For current hours and admission fees,
please visit our website, call, or email:

www.gracehudsonmuseum.org

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Celebrating the Museum and the Holidays

On behalf of the Sun House Guild, I want to thank everyone who attended—or who made donations in lieu of attending—our annual Gala fundraiser on Saturday, September 23. We enjoyed a lovely evening on the grounds around the historic Sun House, where today's Grace Hudson Museum got its start. The Gala is always a celebration of what the Museum does on a daily basis each and every year. We had a chance to recognize the important work that the Museum accomplished in the last 12 months and look forward to a new year of public programming and engagement.

This year we especially celebrated the resounding success of the exhibition *Something's Happening Here: Artistic Reflections on the Back to the Land Movement*, and were blessed by the presence at the Gala of some of the exhibition artists and also by many other back to landers. The exhibition was part of a bigger effort in our community to gather stories about Mendocino County's many back-to-the-land experiences, creating a throughline between the *Promise of Paradise* oral history project of 2018/19, created by Kate Magruder, Sarah Reith, and Laura Hamburg, and continuing with this fall's *Promise of Paradise* narrative theater production at Mendocino College, organized and directed by Ellen Weed, Magruder, and Hamburg.

Now, with the Gala behind us, the Sun House Guild board turns its attention to our winter traditions. The upcoming Holiday Open House and Craft Fair is a highlight that Ukiahans look forward to each year, kicking off the season with a weekend of festivities at the Museum. We'll have carolers, a visit from Santa, family activities, and more, including the participation of local artists and artisans vending their best work in hopes of inspiring your holiday gift shopping. And we'll see the return of the very popular White Elephant Sale, where you might be able to pick up a unique household treasure or vintage article of clothing at a bargain price.

As always, this event will be held at the Museum over two days on the first weekend in December: Friday, December 1, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., and on Saturday, December 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Details will be posted on our website and social media as the date approaches. To inquire about vendor booth space, or to donate items to the Elephant Sale, please contact Barbie Blake at beblake@hotmail.com.

The Holiday Open House also provides the opportunity to pick up your seasonal greenery from our annual Wreath Sale, featuring a variety of wreaths and swags from McFadden Farms. The order form is enclosed in this newsletter; please return it with payment to the Museum by November 27.



— Toni Wheeler, Sun House Guild President

Grace Hudson Museum Holiday Wreath Sale

Order by Nov. 27 and pick up at the Museum on Dec. 1 from 5 to 8 p.m. or Dec. 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wishing for a beautiful fragrant wreath or swag for your December holidays? Order by mailing this form and payment, or call the Guild Treasurer at (707) 391-7574 to order and pay. Orders taken until Nov. 27.



a.



b.



c.



d.



e.



f.



g.

WREATH PRE-ORDER FORM 2023

	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
a. Bay Leaf Wreath	\$33	_____	_____
b. Bay Leaf Wreath with Chilis and Raffia	\$35	_____	_____
c. Bay Leaf Heart Wreath	\$39	_____	_____
d. Bay Leaf Wreath with 3 Sets of Chilis	\$39	_____	_____
e. 3-Herb Wreath with Chilis	\$43	_____	_____
f. 3-Herb Swag with Chilis and Raffia	\$30	_____	_____
g. Bay Leaf Swag with Chilis and Raffia	\$26	_____	_____
TOTAL		_____	\$ _____



Sun House Guild

GRACE HUDSON MUSEUM

431 South Main Street ♦ Ukiah, California 95482

Mail this order form with check or credit card info to the address to the left, or call our Guild Treasurer at (707) 391-7574 to order and pay by phone.

NAME (PRINTED): _____ PHONE: _____

CHECK (PAYABLE TO: GRACE HUDSON MUSEUM) CREDIT CARD NUMBER: _____

EXPIRATION DATE: _____ CVC #: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Thanks for a Great 2023 Gala!

We'd like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who attended and participated in our 2023 Gala, *Back to the Garden*. You helped us raise a whopping \$47,464 for the Museum's operations and growth. Bravo!



Special thanks to Jeff Trouette for providing and pouring margaritas and Marge Thatcher for the beautiful flowers. Top: Jeff hard at work. Above: one of Marge's many arrangements. **All photos by Natalie Alysse Photography.**



Special Thanks to Our Gala Sponsors



Mary-Louise &
Leroy Chase
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New Staff at the Front Desk

Many of you have likely already met one or both of our new Museum visitor services receptionists, Shayne McCloud and Vanessa Gonzalez. Shayne covers the desk on eight of the ten days we are open to the public over a two-week period. Vanessa works every other weekend and provides additional support when needed. We

thought it would be nice to share a little something about the both of them.



Shayne McCloud

Though born in Ukiah, Shayne grew up in Santa Rosa until she was 15 before relocating to the Round Valley Reservation where she lived for her next 15 years. She then moved back to Ukiah to attend Mendocino College in pursuit of a certificate in Business Office Technology, and Medical Billing and Coding. Shayne is both Pomo from Manchester Point Arena and Mishewal Wappo from Alexander Valley. She practices traditional singing, dancing,

and regalia making, and loves to travel to cultural gatherings throughout Indian Country. Shayne has five children and two grandkids.

Vanessa was born and raised in Ukiah, and then went to college at UC Davis. There she studied Cinema and Digital Media, worked for the group that is responsible for campus entertainment, and was also a DJ at the campus radio station. In addition to music and films, her interests include hiking, attending concerts, reading, and exploring nature.

In the proud tradition of Grace Hudson Museum staff, both Shayne and Vanessa are cat owners!



Vanessa Gonzalez

Special Thanks for Collections Gifts

Received since May 2023

Susan Cellitti, in memory of Marguerite Crown, for donation of two Grace Hudson “sketches,” or unfinished paintings/studies. One is of a landscape, with mountains in background. The second features a field of flowers with an unfinished figure in the foreground.



Above: Sherwood Grammar School photo, by A.O. Carpenter.
Right: Pomo cradle basket, likely from Lake County.

Robert and Elizabeth Keiffer, for donation of a Pomo cradle basket, likely from Lake County, circa 1921. The basket was originally made for Mr. Keiffer’s uncle, the late Robert Enright.

Jenny Tollini Berg, for donation of a photograph of the first Sherwood Grammar School, taken by A.O. Carpenter, Grace Hudson’s father. The school burned down in 1922.

New Life Members

Dot Brovarney &
Brian Baker

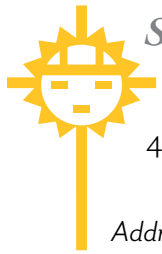
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Sun House Guild

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Recent Contributions

Linda Bailey * Dot Brovarney, *in honor of Sherrie Smith-Ferri* * Neil & Andrea Davis, *for Collections Care* * Dennis & Christine Dill Janet Rosen & Stuart Kremsky, *for Sun House Care* * Mary Jane Sheppard & William Radtkey, *for Sun House Care* * Diana & Steve Thomas, *for Collections Care*

New Collections Management System *(cont'd from Page 1)*

Having a comprehensive and searchable CMS will help Museum staff better care for the collection by enabling us to know exactly where every item is, when and how long it has been on display, and if it has any history of damage and/or conservation treatment. Plus, the database gives us better capacity to hold information on the cultural affiliation and significance of the Indigenous objects that we steward. This is particularly important when working with Tribal partners who inquire whether we have items connected to their culture.

The ease of using a database will not happen overnight, however. While we are hard at work inputting decades of collections data into our new CMS, it will likely take more years for the database to show a complete picture of everything we have. If you are interested in helping with data input, please contact me.

—Chelsee Boehm, *Curator of Collections & Exhibits*

Endowment Gifts

The Grace Hudson Museum Endowment Fund exists to provide long-term financial stability for the Museum and Sun House. The Endowment welcomes contributions of cash, stock, and real estate, and is in the process of updating its planned giving program. Heartfelt thanks to these recent donors:

Suzanne Abel

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in honor of Sherrie Smith-Ferri

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