

WHITE RIVER JOURNAL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WHITE RIVER VALLEY MUSEUM AND MARY OLSON FARM

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wrvmuseum.org

WHITE RIVER VALLEY MUSEUM CALENDAR OF EVENTS JANUARY-APRIL 2019

First Thursday of Every Month **Late Play Dates**
Arts, history and craft activities sponsored by the Auburn Arts Commission | 6-8pm | FREE

January 9-April 28 **MICROCOSMS: The Photography of George L. Kinkade**
Museum temporary exhibit open

February 1 **Winter Railroad Lecture**
7:30-10pm | \$5 adults, \$4 seniors

February 7 **Hike Like a Woman – FAQ's with Nikki Carson**
7pm | FREE

February 17 **Ansel Adams, Documentary Film Screening**
2pm | FREE

March 10 **Living History Program: Klondike, The Last Adventure**
2pm | Included in regular Museum admission

March 31 **Youth in Focus, Digital Photography Workshop for Teens**
Noon-4pm | \$40 per student

April 5 **Spring Railroad Lecture**
7:30-10pm | \$5 adults, \$4 seniors

April 10-14 **Auburn Spring Break Free Museum Admission!**
All week for Auburn students and their families

April 12-13 **Overnight at the Museum**
7pm-8am | \$35 per child

JANUARY 2019

White River Journal is a quarterly publication of the White River Valley Museum, which is supported in large part by the City of Auburn.

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White River Valley
Museum and Mary Olson
Farm Director

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City of Auburn
Multimedia Design

THANKS TO

4Culture for
ongoing support



For fees and registration information go to wrvmuseum.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

ADULT PROGRAMS

Hike Like a Woman - FAQ's

FEBRUARY 7, 7PM

Free Program

Bring your questions for an open discussion on being a woman in the outdoors with Nikki Carson from Hike Like a Woman Washington State. Whether you are new to the sport or a veteran hiker you will learn something new, meet likeminded ladies, and be inspired to go take a hike! Free program, no registration needed.



Klondike: The Last Adventure

MARCH 10, 2PM

Included with Museum Admission or Membership

The promise of riches and a new life during a time of turmoil drives one young woman to join a worldwide stampede in the last grand adventure of the 19th century in this historic performance piece by Living Voices.

RSVP encouraged at wrvmuseum.org.



YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

Story Club: Big Questions for Inquiring Young Minds with King County Library

FEBRUARY 5, MARCH 5, APRIL 2, AND MAY 7
4-5pm | Free Program, No registration needed

Not all picture books are fairytales. Kids ages 8-11 will engage in big questions with a story time, free snack, discussion and exploration of a Museum exhibit.

Youth in Focus Digital Photography Workshop

MARCH 31
12-4pm, \$40 per student

Teens age 12 – 16 will use professional cameras and photo editing software to explore the world of digital photography. Fee includes all supplies and photo prints! Space is limited and pre-registration is required.

Auburn Spring Break!

APRIL 10-14 | 12-4PM

Free Admission all week for Auburn students, faculty and their families. Wednesday through Friday we will have pop-up activity and story time at 1pm and on Saturday and Sunday come back to the Museum for a self-directed scavenger hunt.



M I C R O C O S M S

This Winter the White River Valley Museum Brings the Mountains to You!

**THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF
GEORGE L. KINKADE**

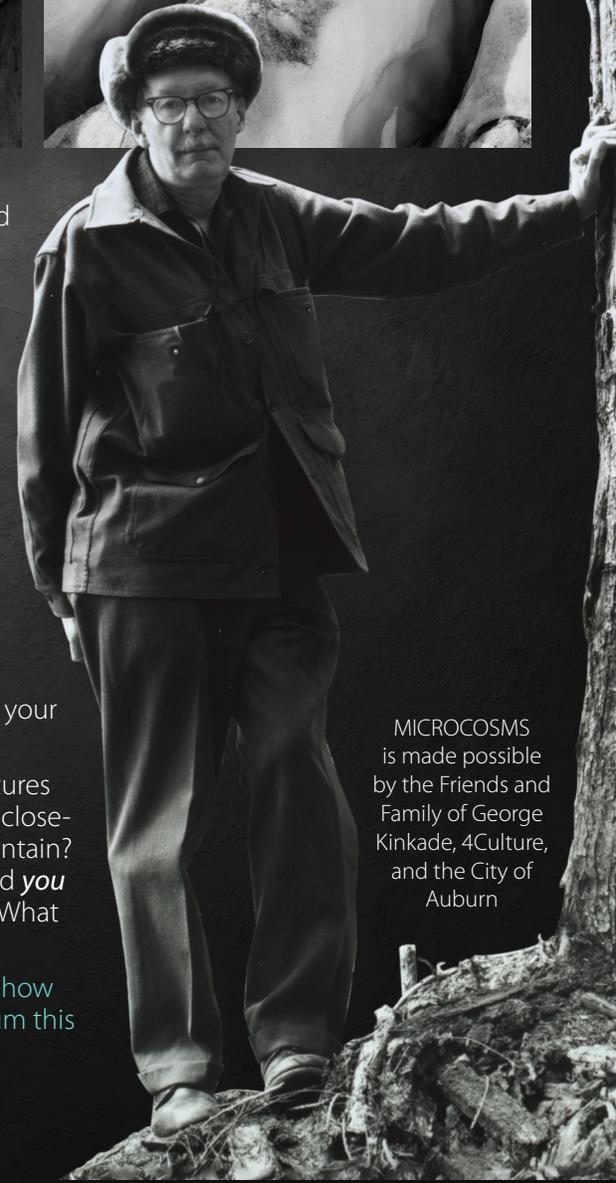
January 9-April 28, 2019

Local photographer George L. Kinkade created a truly astounding collection of photographs over five decades that asks viewers to stop and consider the beauty of the natural world around us, whether that is the smallest leaf or the largest mountain peak.

Kinkade had an eye for capturing endearing and powerful moments from his outdoor adventures in the Pacific Northwest. If you love living here, you'll love his photography. Here's why:

- He was the original weekend warrior – he worked as a typesetter for the Auburn Globe newspaper during the week and in his spare time he hiked and belayed to astonishing alpine views and captured photographs of the great Northwest outdoors.
- You might recognize some of the scenes in his photography. Come share with us how Kinkade's work reminds you of places you've seen or been.
- You might not recognize some places. You'll see photographs of places that aren't accessible or no longer exist today. Ice melts, and modern park rules are much stricter today than when Kinkade was working in the early to mid-1900s. Kinkade captured remarkable images of places like the ice caves and glaciers on Mount Rainier that are very different now than when he visited.
- Looking at Kinkade's work is a fabulous way to spend a winter day. Come by the Museum where it's nice and warm while still enjoying the phenomenal snowy alpine settings of Washington.
- Practice your own hand at photography – pull up a stool in the exhibit and photograph interesting objects using your cell phone and our tools to create your own masterpiece.
- Take a moment to relax and reflect. This exhibit is unique because it pairs textures and elements found in his larger landscapes with similar themes found in his close-ups of the natural world. Can't spend the weekend belaying up a snowy mountain? We get it, probably not so practical. But what can you find in the world around **you** that inspires you and makes you want to take a picture to remember it later? What exists in your Microcosm?

We invite you to explore the many tiny worlds, many microcosms, that show us how nature repeats its patterns at both miniscule and massive scales. Visit the Museum this winter for a cozy outdoor experience in the comfort of our exhibit!



MICROCOSMS is made possible by the Friends and Family of George Kinkade, 4Culture, and the City of Auburn

SAVING OUR RECORDED HISTORY

Hilary Pittenger & Ashley Rust

Historians love listening to recorded interviews. The inflections in someone's voice, their unique accent and patterns of speech, the emotions they convey with their tone – all of these are important pieces of information that give additional meaning to their words, and they are difficult if not impossible to capture in writing alone. When historians record interviews with people who share their stories of what life was like in other times and places, we call these interviews "oral histories". Oral histories are so important to the study of history because they allow people to share their experiences in their own words, and those words will continue to be shared through the generations as they are, not changed or summarized by a future author.

But how do we ensure these oral histories are preserved and shared?

Many oral histories in the world have been recorded on outdated media like wax cylinders, or in formats that degrade quickly like cassette tapes. Even recordings on relatively stable media like vinyl records have problems – you still have to physically travel to the place where the vinyl record is to listen to it, which prevents people without the time and money to travel to distant archives from ever being able to access that valuable information.

To solve this problem, the White River Valley Museum recently completed a project to digitize its collection of oral histories and make them freely available online for anyone to access and enjoy, and to protect the information on those recordings from damage and decay over time. Generously funded by 4Culture, Museum Educator Ashley Rust was able to follow the example of many larger archives and museums to completely protect our entire oral history collection, saving and sharing the stories of White River Valley residents that aren't available anywhere else in the world.

Where do we start?

Before we could start the project, we had to figure out exactly how many recordings we had and what condition they were in. The Museum was founded in 1970 and had been recording oral histories for nearly as long. Some of these recordings were part of formal projects, such as a series of interviews done for our Dressing Up exhibit in 2005. Others were more casually collected as the opportunity presented itself as single interviews, and still others were created by outside researchers such as Stan Flewelling's research interviews conducted when he was preparing to write the book *Shirakawa* about the history of the Japanese community in the White River Valley.

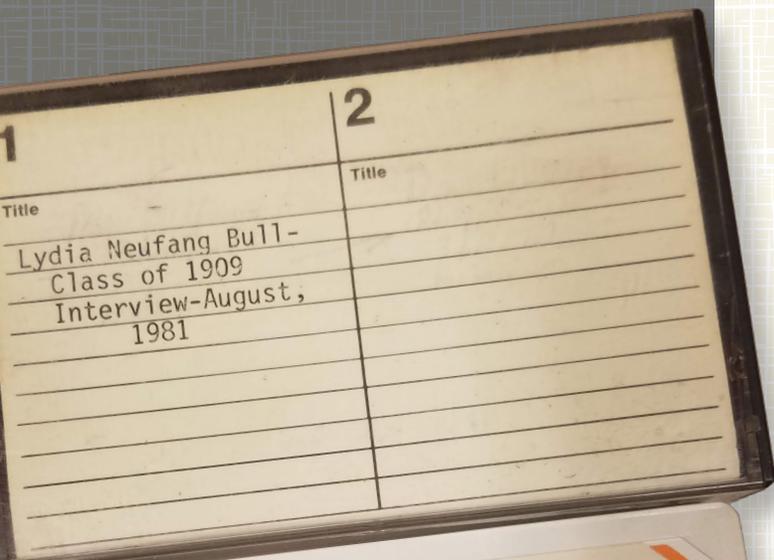
Once they were all collected together, we were able to determine that the Museum held 90 unique oral history interviews, collected over nearly 50 years on 150 cassette tapes, totaling over 100 hours of recordings. 85% of these interviews had been transcribed (written down in a readable format) at some point in their lives, but these transcriptions were often just a single paper hardcopy and were not easily accessible or searchable by researchers.

We also had a list of community elders we wished to interview and add to the collections. This project was a great chance to preserve their memories and make them some of our first oral histories to be shared online. (continued on page 5)





Museum Educator Ashley Rust works to transcribe for the collections database.



To view the transcripts and stories visit the museum website at wrvmuseum.org and click "Search our Collections"

Digging In

Each cassette tape needed to be converted into a digital audio file using a special audio recorder. Once a digital version existed, a transcript could be made of the interview. While the raw audio is the most important information to preserve, having a written transcript of the interview is also important for two main reasons: first, to make the interviews accessible to Deaf persons and those with hearing impairments, and second to make each interview searchable in their digital form. Being able to quickly browse through the text of an interview to find a specific word or reference makes the oral histories much more likely to be used for historical research than audio-only interviews. Ashley created brand new transcripts for roughly 15% of our oral histories – a total of 190 new pages of written materials for other researchers to use in their work.

Between these tasks, Ashley also worked to catalog all of our oral histories. Cataloging means that the important information about an object has been entered into our collections database, where it can be tracked and searched. Most importantly, cataloging means the oral histories are made available through our online collections search on our website. This means that when someone searches for a specific name, such as "Mae Yamada," in our collection, they will not only find pictures of her or documents related to her life, but also the recording of her oral history. Folks can now listen to the interview (or read the transcript) right from their computers at home, no matter how far away from Auburn their home is.

Finding Hidden Treasures

Every oral history teaches us something about what life was like in a different time. The following are a couple of Ashley's favorites:

Lydia Neufang Bull, who graduated from Auburn's Central School in 1909, told us about the school transportation she had as a child: "[Our bus] was a coal truck. Johnny Meade had a livery stable and he had a coal truck and a team and he delivered coal to people and in the evening, he'd sweep out that truck and put benches along each side and come down and get the children and take us home."

Grant Hirabayashi recalled fishing with his childhood friends in the 1920s: "Tom Horiuchi and Kenji Nomura and myself were all small for our [age], and we were known as the three chipmunks... One summer we went fishing in the creek right next to Nomuras', and, of course, our fishing pole consisted of a branch of a tree, and we took a nail and we would file it and bend it, and tie it with what we used to call 'pea string'. And then we put the worm on it, and then we would fish." ■

FROM THE MUSEUM BACK ROOM

Yokode kyusu

Japanese-style teapot with side-handle, c. 1950



Yuzamashi

Water cooler, c. 1950

From the White River Valley Museum collection, Gift of Dornford W. Stoliker, 1973.

This special set of Japanese tea tools were used for brewing *sencha*, Japanese loose leaf green tea. Loose leaves were put directly into the teapot and allowed to brew. Holes between the wall of the teapot and the spout act as a strainer, preventing the majority of the tea leaves from being poured into the teacups. The unique handle design kept the server's hand from being burned while pouring the hot drink.

The *yuzamashi* was used to cool down boiling water before pouring it into the teapot. Green tea is more fragile than its black tea cousin, and can be scalded if put directly into boiling water. Both of these tools would have been used when serving very fine tea to guests or for other special occasions.



HOMETOWN

TEAMS

HOW SPORTS SHAPE AMERICA

**On exhibit at the
White River Valley Museum
MAY 4-JUNE 16, 2019**

Hometown Teams has been made possible by

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WASHINGTON

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Smithsonian

CITY OF AUBURN PARKS, ARTS & RECREATION

**Love your Community?
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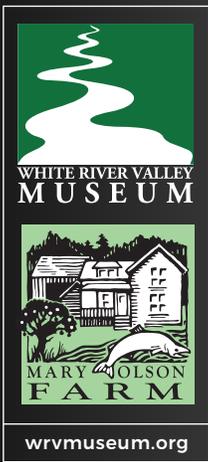
AUBURN
MORE THAN YOU IMAGINED

Become a Museum & Farm Fieldtrip Guide!

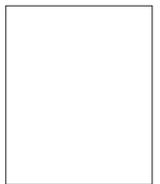
Every year the Museum and Farm tours over 5,500 students on fun and interactive fieldtrips that allow up close and personal encounters with history, science and culture. We need more volunteer fieldtrip guides to lead students on these memory making tours.

**Museum fieldtrip guide training is on
February 14, 2019 from 10am-12pm**

Interested in learning more? Want to attend the training? Contact Janet Wells at 253-804-5010 or jwells@auburnwa.gov



White River Valley Historical Society
918 H Street SE
Auburn, WA 98002



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- Hilary Pittenger
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Want to get our monthly e-newsletters?

Send your email address to arust@auburnwa.gov to be put on the list!

A New Direction

The Museum is pleased to announce the appointment of new Museum and Farm Director Rachael McAlister!

Rachael has served as the Museum and Farm's Curator of Education since May 2011. Her educational background is in art and museums with a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art from Belmont University and a Master of Arts in Museum Studies from the Johns Hopkins University. Originally from Nashville, Tennessee Rachael worked in special events at the Nashville Zoo and the Grasmere Historic Home before moving west to join the team at the White River Valley Museum. She is passionate about community building via history, arts and culture.

I look forward to developing a vision for the Museum that honors the institution's rich and wonderful legacy while preparing it for the future!



**Museum and Farm Director
Rachael McAlister**

White River Valley Museum

The White River Journal is edited by Rachael McAlister and designed by Sarah St. George

wrvmuseum.org
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MUSEUM HOURS
12-4pm Wednesday through Sunday,
6-8pm first Thursday
and by appointment for
group tours & research

ADMISSION
\$2 for children & seniors,
\$5 for adults
Museum members free
First Thursday and third Sunday free

