PUGET SOUND GROUP OF NORTHWEST ARTISTS

Interested in Processing a Hidden History of the Pacific Northwest Art Scene with the Seattle Area Archivists?

Join the Seattle Area Archivists at a special volunteer archival event to help process the Puget Sound Group of Northwest Artists Collection for donation to the University of Washington Special Collections Library on Saturday, September 29, 2018! The collection spans from 1928 to the present day and features a variety of media - from handwritten letters, drawings, paintings and behind the scenes photographs to auctions and burlesque theater productions.

IN THIS ISSUE

PSG Processing, page 1-2
Search Spotlight, page 3
Vietnam War Collections, 4-7
John H. Steen Exhibit, page 7-9
Upcoming Conferences, page 10
News and Happenings

PSG NWA EVENT, CONT

The event will be held at the home studio of PSG Historian and Mouth Painting Artist Brom Wikstrom in Magnolia with food and refreshments provided by SeArch.

This event is a great opportunity to learn about historic Northwest artists from an insider’s perspective and gain hands-on experience processing a truly unique collection. Space is limited so contact us at seattle.area.archivists@gmail.com today!

Puget Sound Group Northwest Artists (PSG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the discovery and development of extraordinary independent artists and audiences in the Pacific Northwest.

One of the oldest artist associations in the United States, PSG is committed to supporting the visual arts through four core programs: scholarship, education, fellowship and historic preservation. PSG was formed in 1928 by Eustace Ziegler and Dr. Richard Fuller, a national leader in the arts and founder of the Seattle Art Museum. Many prominent artists such as Guy Anderson, Kenneth Callahan, Morris Graves and Sydney Laurence have been members.

For nearly ninety years, PSG has sustained a rich community legacy by distributing over $100,000 in annual scholarships to local art students. Today, the organization has expanded programming to include a free and open to the public Artist Salon series, along with exclusive member opportunities for exhibition and mentorship.
Center on Contemporary Art (CoCA) is seeking a lead archivist. Depending on your experience and interests, duties may include: continued processing and management of the physical collection (approximately 100 linear feet of print material, slides and ephemera), continued development of the digital archive, digital preservation, intern/volunteer/Capstone management, fundraising, advocacy, and promotion. The CoCA Archives has a dedicated facility in Seattle’s Greenwood neighborhood. There is some grant funding for equipment, however, this is currently an unpaid position (grants have been secured from 4Culture in the past). This is a great opportunity to set your own schedule while working on a fabulous historic collection that holds a significant part of Pacific Northwest contemporary art history.

To apply, please send cover letter and resume to archive@cocaseattle.org. Deadline October 15 or until position is filled. https://cocaseattle.org/archives/

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

CoCA serves the Pacific Northwest as a catalyst and forum for the advancement, development, and understanding of Contemporary Art. CoCA is a space for creative expression, community and inclusivity in contemporary art. Our vision is to be a world class organization that presents meaningful exhibitions and critically engaging art experiences which support community in the Pacific Northwest and dialog in the arts today.
The Museum of Flight’s newest permanent exhibit, “Vietnam Divided: War Over Southeast Asia” opened over the 2018 Memorial Day weekend. The exhibit focuses on a variety of aircraft utilized in the Vietnam War, including the Lockheed YO-3A Quiet Star, the Bell UH-1 Iroquois “Huey” helicopter, and the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom. Later this year, the Museum will complete “Project Welcome Home” and dedicate a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park, featuring the restored Boeing B-52G Stratofortress “Midnight Express.”

In preparation for and support of these exhibits and the heightened interest it will bring, the Museum’s Archives team processed, cataloged, and created detailed finding aids for five collections about the Vietnam War. These collections are all relatively new to our institution, many of them coming to us via donations from museum docents and volunteers who were also involved in the exhibit design process. Because the collections are recent acquisitions, none had yet been featured in other exhibits or made available to the public. Some materials, primarily photographs and slides, were digitized and will be published online at The Museum of Flight - Digital Collections later this year.

The processing, cataloging, and digitization of these historically significant collections expanded on our previous work processing, cataloging, and digitizing our World War I holdings, which was our first foray into mass digitization. We look forward to being able to expand our digital holdings with these materials and future projects.

The Museum’s Vietnam War collections contain a variety of materials, including military records, photographs and slides, maps, yearbooks, patches, and ephemera. They provide personal stories from those who served in the war, as well as provide a glimpse into ongoing U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine military flight operations at the time.

**ROY T. CHURCH VIETNAM WAR PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION (2017-09-29)**

Church, a U.S. Marine pilot, arrived in Vietnam in February 1968 and flew a total of 198 night-time bombing missions in North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and Laos. The collection contains several snapshots and approximately 60 slides depicting the daily life of Church and his fellow soldiers.

[Grumman A-6 (A2F) Intruder/Prowler aircraft in flight] The Roy T. Church Vietnam War Collection
CALVIN AND YUN YAU KAM PAPERS (2017-03-24)

After joining the U.S. Army, Calvin Kam was assigned to the 240th Assault Helicopter Company as a pilot, flying missions in Vietnam from 1970-1971. Kam’s collection includes a small amount of military orders, including post assignments and award citations, but the real star are the slides (again!) which provide a glimpse into Kam’s daily military life, from military operations, aircraft such as the “Huey” helicopter, and encampments to scenic shots of the areas and people of Cambodia and Vietnam. Especially interesting is a small series of eight slides taken en route to an assault. The images feature the crew chief observing troops and testing the M-60 prior to the assault, formation flying and approaching the landing zone (LZ), and explosions in the LZ.

The collection also includes a very small amount of material from the World War II and Korean War service of Calvin’s father, Yun Yau Kam.

BRUCE MENNELLA VIETNAM WAR COLLECTION (2017-04-07)

Mennella joined the U. S. Navy in 1968 where he trained as a pilot in the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II. From 1970-1972, Mennella served as an Air Intelligence Officer, completing two tours of duty in Vietnam and Laos with the Naval Fighter Squadron (VF-114) nicknamed “Aardvark Squadron.” This collection’s most interesting highlight are the seventy-seven (77) aerial reconnaissance photographs of Vietnam and Laos from 1971-1972. Taken by the U.S. Navy, these photos include the normal identifying information, such as geographic information, date, and frame/sequence number, but many are also marked with boxes and arrows which denote military targets, including bridges and railroads, supply depots, and other strategic points. Some of the images also portray before-and-after shots of aerial bombardment.
BRUCE MENNELLA, CONT.

Mennella’s collection also includes over one hundred (100) additional snapshots and an intriguing piece of printed ephemera: a summer of ’72 booklet designed as a comic with “Joe Cool” [Snoopy look-a-like] in various settings and referencing events, people, and locations related to the Vietnam War and soldier experience.

ROBERT WITHROW VIETNAM WAR COLLECTION (2008-10-15)

Withrow served as a Fireman (E-3) aboard the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier for two western Pacific Ocean cruises in 1965-66 and 1966-67. While the collection contains a small amount of photographs of aircraft onboard the carrier, the highlights are the two cruise books, or yearbooks, for the USS Kitty Hawk tours of duty, and several patches. Like any yearbook, these are commemorative in nature and are comprised primarily of photographs. Shots include group portraits of military personnel, in addition to snapshots of military personnel and activities, such as daily work aboard the ship; a few aircraft are featured, as well as military armaments and sight-seeing snapshots during the cruises. Additionally, there are informational panels about the various squads and divisions.

The other highlight is the four colorful military patches, including one that reads “Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club” with an image of Vietnamese junk (ship) backed by three red horizontal lines. The United States Seventh Fleet used this light-hearted nickname during the Vietnam War, while engaged in combat operations such as patrol and reconnaissance missions and attack carrier air strikes.

![USS Kitty Hawk patch] Robert Withrow Vietnam War Collection

![Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club patch] Robert Withrow Vietnam War Collection

JAMES H. PLATT VIETNAM WAR COLLECTION (2017-10-19)

Platt served in Vietnam from 1967-1968 with the U.S. Air Force. First Lieutenant Platt was stationed at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base (NKP), Thailand and was Rescue Crew Commander. The crew would rescue downed pilots in Laos and Thailand.
JAMES H. PLATT, CONT.

This small collection of slides, taken by Platt, features military aircraft, including a great shot of a Lockheed C-130 Hercules refueling Sikorsky (S-61R) HH-3E Jolly Green Giant in flight and a de Havilland (Canada) DHC-4 Caribou. Many shots feature aerial and scenic views of landscapes and street scenes in Thailand or Laos.

[Lockheed C-130 Hercules refueling Sikorsky (S-61R) HH-3E Jolly Green Giant] The James H. Platt Vietnam War Collection

The Museum of Flight is pleased to be able to make these available for research for the first time, approximately 50 years after the creation of the materials. To access these collections prior to their publication online later this year, please visit http://www.museumofflight.org/Explore-The-Museum/Collections-and-Research or email curator@museumofflight.org.

JOHN H. STEEN AT THE PUGET SOUND NAVY MUSEUM
BY MEGAN CHURCHWELL, SEARCH BOARD MEMBER & CURATOR OF PUGET SOUND NAVY MUSEUM

JOHN H. STEEN: PHOTOGRAPHING THE PUGET SOUND NAVY YARD

The Puget Sound Navy Museum in Bremerton, WA is pleased to announce the opening of a new photography exhibit, “John H. Steen: Photographing the Puget Sound Navy Yard.” Steen’s body of work was donated to the museum in 2015 by the photographer’s granddaughter.

WORKING WITH THE STEEN COLLECTION

This exhibit is the culmination of several years of behind-the-scenes work by the museum’s Curator and two Collections Managers. The process started when Steen’s lifetime of photographic work arrived at the museum in seven boxes.

The collection was quite varied – from large, hand-colored prints, to glass-plate negatives, to nitrate film. As we sorted, we discovered quite a bit of nitrate film, and it was immediately bagged and transferred to our freezer because it is so flammable. Other photos were carefully rehoused in archival storage boxes and sleeves, replacing the old (and in some cases water-damaged) boxes.
JOHN H. STEEN, CONT.

Once the collection was cataloged, every object in the collection was digitally photographed or scanned. These scans made my job of curation much easier, because I could flip through digital images rather than handling fragile glass negatives in order to choose which photos would be on display.

Some of the images on display were chosen for their strikingly artistic view of ships at the shipyard. Others were chosen to represent themes that stuck out in Steen’s work. The resulting exhibition documents the Puget Sound Navy Yard and its people through the lens of both a professional photographer and a Sailor.

The Completed Installation of Steen's Works, photo courtesy of the author.

MEET THE PHOTOGRAPHER

John Harry Steen (1877-1969) joined the Navy in 1903 and arrived in Bremerton soon after, eventually settling in Seattle. His wife Edna also served in the Navy. During World War I, she was a “Yeomanette,” one of approximately 200 enlisted women serving at the Puget Sound Navy Yard at that time.

John was among the first to photograph the Puget Sound Navy Yard, founded in 1891. At the time, the Navy did not have an official job title of Photographer, so he served as a musician in a battleship’s band, while taking on unofficial duties as a shipyard photographer.

Photograph by Steed
JOHN H. STEEN, CONT.

Steen was one of the first photographers to document the shipyard and its people. What made this collection particularly interesting for the museum staff to process is that Steen did not focus on the numerous ships constructed and maintained in Bremerton in the leadup to World War I. Rather, he used his camera to document the lives of the people who worked there, whether they were on or off the clock.

Even his photographs of naval vessels show an artistic flair. For instance, the collection included numerous hand-tinted images of ships against the scenic backdrop of Mount Rainier. After his time with the Navy, Steen settled in Seattle and photographed Mount Rainier National Park, Woodland Park Zoo, and other local tourist attractions.

The exhibit, which opened on July 4th, features 20 of his images. The goal is to cycle through many of the more than 500 images forming the collection.

The Puget Sound Navy Museum is located in downtown Bremerton, between the ferry terminal and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. It is open daily from 10:00am to 4:00pm, and admission is free. For more information, visit http://www.PugetSoundNavyMuseum.org
UPCOMING CONFERENCES IN 2018

- Association of Science-Technology Centers Annual Conference. Hartford, CT. Sept 29 - Oct 2
- Alliance of Artists Communities Annual Conference. Philadelphia, PA. October 15 - 18
- ATALM International Conference 2018. Prior Lake, MN. October 8 - 12
- Southeastern Museums Conference Annual Meeting. Jackson, MS. October 8-10
- Western Museum Association. Tacoma, WA. October 21-24
- PastForward. San Francisco, CA. November 16-19

---

did we forget anything?

Questions, comments, communication, and newsletter contributions are always accepted and appreciated!

Please email us your ideas and projects, any articles you’ve authored. We're interested!

GET IN TOUCH

@SEAWA ARCHIVISTS

seattle.area.archivists@gmail.com