Exhibit Development

There are many new exhibits up at the Hammer Museum for the 2014 season. Founder Dave Pahl has been hard at work brainstorming and building new displays.

The first exhibit installed focused on patented claw hammers. These hammers have almost an entire wall dedicated to displaying the various types of claw hammers as well as the patents that explain their different uses.

In the same room is the second new exhibit- one that is all about nails! An important part of the history of the hammer, the nail was first used in 300 BCE.

Community Outreach

The museum has been continuing its involvement in the Haines community by hosting workshops and participating in different events. Beerfest was a smashing (pardon the pun) success for the museum, raising nearly 430 dollars in a single afternoon!

The Fourth of July’s nail and spike driving contest drew quite a crowd despite the pouring rain.
Meet Our Newest Board Member!

Name: Tom Spencer

Previous Life: He spent 33 years as a USAF Pilot. He also spent ten summers as a tour bus driver and five winters as an over the road semi truck driver.

Reasons for joining the Hammer Museum Board: Tom has always had a connection to hammers. His family, originally from Michigan, were farmers who used hammers for all sorts of projects. As a DIY homeowner and pickup truck mechanic, hammers are an important tool for him to have around.

Favorite thing to do in Haines: Work on his tugboat doing DIY projects.

Gene Kennedy and Michael Marks helped run the nail driving contest, while Greg Rasmussen ran the spike driving contest. As always, thanks to our Board for volunteering their time!

On June 21 and 22, the museum hosted a blacksmithing demonstration on the back lawn. The purpose of this demonstration was to let kids get a better idea of what is involved in blacksmithing, and hopefully spark their interest in working with their hands! Over the weekend there were about twenty participants - not all of them children. It was a great way to spread awareness about the museum while educating future generations about some of the older crafts.

The annual Southeast Alaska State Fair was the weekend of August 1st. There was a great turnout, and luckily the weather cooperated for the duration of the fair! Dave, Carol, the interns, and the Hammer Museum board all pitched in to run the High Striker.
Grants and Conservation

The Hammer Museum has been awarded the State of Alaska grant-in-aid mini-grant for the eighth time! The museum plans to use this money to buy a professional grade printer in order to produce promotional materials, sponsorship packets, and posters that will help the museum reach its goal of raising enough money to hire a director.

Conservation is an important aspect of any museum, and has been an ongoing project at the Hammer Museum.

Although it is difficult to keep a small museum temperature and humidity controlled, the museum has been hard at work attempting to install different methods of conservation. The wire that has been typically used to keep the hammers on the wall is now in the process of being coated with plastic tubing to prevent scratching and corrosion. Dave has also been experimenting with customized acrylic holders that could act as replacements for these wires. We have also been working on installing UV light covers to protect both our hammers and important paperwork.

Conservation is a long process, but we are slowly but surely getting it done.

Meet the Interns: Rachel & Emily

Rachel Cannon is from Washington, DC and holds a BA in International Relations. She will graduate with an MA in Museum Studies from George Washington University in December.

Emily Mathay just graduated with a BA in History from Lewis & Clark College and is thinking of getting her Masters degree in Museum Education.
Also included in this nail exhibit is a nail box dating back to the late 1800s.

Dave’s plan for an Alaskan hammer exhibit has finally come to fruition. When visitors make their way towards the back of the museum, they are greeted by a wooden cut-out of the state of Alaska, painted in the style of the state flag. This exhibit is the new home of the Tlingit warrior’s pick, which Dave found under the museum in 2002, as well as a hammer carved from caribou bone, a whale blubber hammer, and a few others.

In the front room is the exhibit showcasing the Lighter and Darker side of hammers, featuring the useless hammer, the electric hammer, the cattle stunner, and the pig killer. The purpose of this exhibit is to highlight how varied hammers are - there truly is a hammer here for everyone.

Although Hammer of the Week is still being posted on our Facebook, Twitter, and website, it now has a spot in the museum. Each week, Rachel and Emily research a hammer that has piqued their interest and put it on display in the front room. Not only does this educate visitors, but it helps the museum gather and catalog more detailed information about its collection.

Our smallest new exhibit is for our smallest hammers! This miniature exhibit is located in the front room and is home to many of our tiniest hammers, including a cereal box toy shaped like a hammer from Tootie Bird cereal, dollhouse hammers, and the Baltic Sea amber hammer donated from the only other Hammer Museum in the world (located in Lithuania).

The museum’s newest exhibit focuses on handle branding. The hammer donated by Tim Allen has moved from its spot above the door to a sealed case, complete with a Tim Allen handle brand and donated handle branding machinery. There are many different handle brands in this exhibit, including one from Stanley - perhaps the most recognizable company to the average visitor.

Dave has also added an entire new gallery to the museum this season. This gallery is focused on metal-working hammers, with an entire wall dedicated to the ball-pein hammer (or is it pean? Visit the museum to find out).

We are all working hard to keep this museum up and running in order make it as fresh and exciting as possible.
Museums Alaska and the Alaska Historical Society hold an annual conference in the state of Alaska on topics relevant to local museums and museum professionals.

The 2013 Museums Alaska conference was held in Haines, Alaska on September 25 through 28, 2013. It was attended by 160 people. The Hammer Museum participated in a roving reception, along with the Sheldon Museum and the Bald Eagle Foundation. We also hosted a breakfast round table for the Cannery Preservation Working Group, for those interested in documenting and preserving the history of Alaska’s canneries and commercial fishing industries.

Our board nominated Dave Pahl for the Volunteer of the Year award. Dave not only founded the museum in 2002, but has been running it as Volunteer Director since the museum became a non-profit in 2004. He has put in thousands of volunteer hours since founding the museum, and we were thrilled when he was chosen as Volunteer of the Year.

Thanks for a great season!

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS
Donors are vital to the continued success of the Hammer Museum. Thank you to:
The Marks Foundation
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Dedicated to preserving the history of the hammer.
Featured Hammer

**Ball-Bearing Hammer**

This hammer was featured as Hammer of the Week for July 21 through 26. Perhaps one of the stranger advertising hammers we have here, it was used by C.H. Fargo & Co. to advertise their “Ball-Bearing” Bicycle Shoes.

Located on Market and Quincy Sts. in Chicago, C.H. Fargo & Co. developed a line of shoes, eventually marketing over 100 styles of “Men’s, Boys’ Ladies’, and Misses’ Bicycle and Athletic Footwear.” The company’s reason for the use and copyright of the “Ball-Bearing” name was that: “The shoes are so constructed as to give the ball of the foot the greatest ease and freedom for action.”

Because women’s shoes tended to go up to the knee and required more cloth, they were more expensive. Men’s shoes were $3 for black, while women’s ranged from $4.50 - $8.

A guide for Skagway’s Chilkoot Trail from the 1900s suggested that women wear these shoes while hiking back and forth across the 33-mile pass. The women’s shoes were heeled, and they had to hike in dresses. Looks like Gold Rush era ladies were a bit tougher than the men.

One of the features often advertised for these shoes was their Pratt Lace Fasteners, which held the laces without tying them - perhaps the precursor to Velcro?