

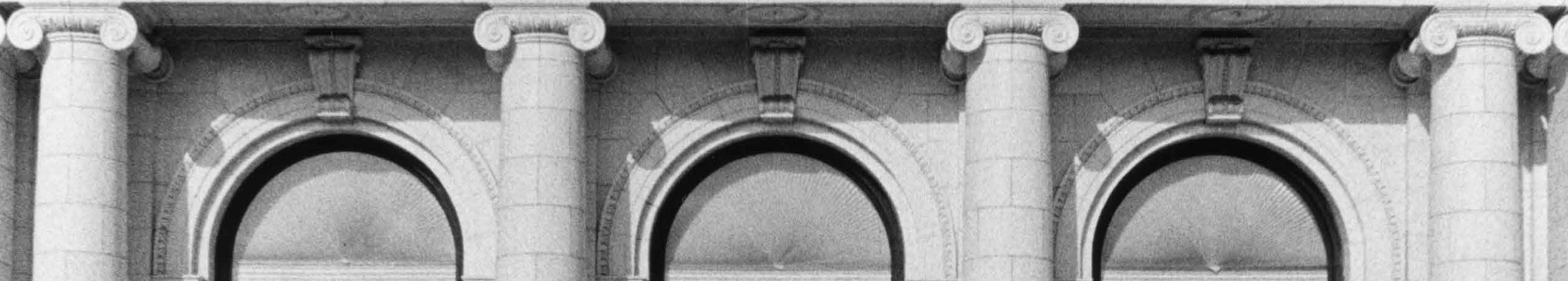
# Clarke Museum

2019 Annual Report





CLARKE MEMORIAL MUSEUM



# Letter from the President

Greetings, everyone!

As I'm writing this in the midst of the COVID-19 shelter-in-place, 2019 seems a long time ago, but it's good to be reminded of past successes as we plan for a different future. In fact, we did just that early in 2020 with our first strategic planning session in many years. We are already beginning to share the fruits of that exercise with the community, although not quite in the ways we were imagining back in February!

A big focus for the Clarke in 2019 was to engage on a broader and deeper level with the communities of Northwestern California, and I'm proud of the work the board, staff, and volunteers put in to make the museum a relevant and enjoyable destination. We had great attendance at our Saturday Speaker series, a couple of really spectacular exhibit openings, and our first Humboldt History Symposium in partnership with the Historical Society. As pandemic controls permit, we're looking forward to doing a lot more outreach in 2020.

Physically or virtually, we'll be celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of the bank building in August, along with the completion of the chandelier restoration project. Thank you to everyone who contributed money and/or expertise to the chandelier project – it has most certainly been a labor of love!

While we're unable to welcome visitors in person at this time, there's a lot going on at the Virtual Clarke! Please check us out at Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as the regular blog posts on our website and our email newsletter. And if you can spare a few dollars, please consider giving the Clarke building a birthday gift – I know she'd appreciate the love. I look forward to seeing you at the Clarke in person soon.

Shirley Laos  
Board President



# Community Outreach

*Taking the Clarke to the People*

# Saturday Speaker Series

This year, the Clarke hosted 6 Saturday Speaker events at the museum. The events covered diverse topics from quilt storage and preservation to how to edit locally relevant Wikipedia articles. One of our most popular ones was hosted by Steve Lazar, who discussed the photography of Jesse A. Meiser. Meiser took many of the most recognizable historic photos of Humboldt County despite only living in the county for a relatively short period of time.

**I am motivated by the fine  
work the museum has done  
for the citizens of Eureka &  
Humboldt**

—C. Robert Barnum



# Symposium

The first-ever Humboldt History Symposium convened on Nov. 9, 2019. Our mission to “energize our local and regional historical community in celebration of and engagement with historical narratives” turned into excitement when our team saw over one hundred people arrive to celebrate Humboldt County history in conference for the first time. For a full day, attendees learned about Humboldt history from a variety of perspectives. Topics spanned the whole of Humboldt County’s timeline, from local tribes who have been here since time immemorial and recently regained part of an important ceremonial site, to the historic landmarks that are still in need of saving. Organizations shared their stories and found new support, researchers shared their projects and gained new leads, and solo historians gained a community to learn from and connect with. The event hosted fruitful discussions with speakers and attendees throughout the day. This event was co-hosted by the Clarke Museum and the Humboldt County Historical Society at the Wharfinger Building with support from the City of Eureka, California Humanities, and a variety of local businesses and individuals. We look forward to co-hosting the event in 2020!



Image courtesy of Michael Berry and the Humboldt County Historical Society



Image courtesy of Michael Berry and the Humboldt County Historical Society



Image courtesy of Michael Berry and the Humboldt County Historical Society

# Exhibits

*Take a Tour of Humboldt's History*

# Industries

## *From Boom to Bust... And Back.*

**H**umboldt County in the 1840s was immersed in a sea of redwoods, fog, and mountains—hard to traverse and navigate. It was a world unto itself, where local tribes lived and practiced, uninterrupted by the Spanish mission system and other attempts at extermination. When the 1850's rolled in, the county's rural locale didn't exempt it from the settlement practices of Americans headed West in search of wealth: Settle, get rich quick, and leave triumphant (hopefully). These practices started the cycle of a boom and bust economy in Humboldt County, which persists today.

**H**umboldt County's early industrial past makes up the very foundation of the County's history, and continues to color the area today through place names like Petrolia and Gold Bluffs Beach, to the farming communities and historical buildings that remain on historic registers. The booms and busts of industry in the County's early days shaped the industries that continue to exist today—and reminds us that the cycle is long from dead.



# Whiskey in the Wall

## *Law and (Dis)order During Prohibition in Humboldt County*

This exhibit explored Prohibition in Humboldt County through a plethora of news stories demonstrating attempts to enforce and evade Prohibition. Stories of fearless mayors, crooked enforcers, teetotalers against the consumption of alcohol and stealthy liquor producers abounded in the exhibit, painting a colorful portrait of a segment of life in Humboldt County during the Prohibition period. Notable displays included police ledgers and mugshot books, giving visitors the chance to see what people were being arrested for and what they looked like just as photography of criminals was becoming a more common feature in law enforcement.



# When Designs Escaped Baskets

## *Weaving Patterns Through Time*

When Designs Escaped Baskets focuses on the visual language of basket designs of the Hupa, Karuk, Wiyot and Yurok tribes. The exhibit stitches together a timeline from pre-contact to today, focusing on moments when designs grew and changed for trade, within new materials, and more. Designs' breadth of shape and form are shown across baskets within the Clarke Museum collections.

We are lucky to have interviews from the late 1800s through the early 1900's with local Hupa, Yurok, and Karuk informants who were present during pre-contact times. Weavers' sentiments are recorded in ethnologist Lila O'Neale's Yurok-Karuk Basket Weavers from 1932, as well as Alfred Kroeber's Basket Designs Of The Indians Of Northwestern California from 1905. From these interviews we have some basis for what basket designs functioned like before trade changed them.



# Quilts

## *Stitching Together Community*

This exhibit is about the communities that were built around the act of quilting in Humboldt County. The act of making a quilt has historically been an outlet for women to share their thoughts, emotions, political stances, and memories with members of their household, neighborhood, and family. Today, quilt-making continues to be a community building and strengthening activity locally. This exhibit demonstrates the connections within our communities through the quilter's work, connections that can extend through generations.



# Women's Ceremonial Dresses

## *Then and now*

This exhibit highlights many of the ceremonial skirts and aprons from the Clarke's collections, including dresses that incorporate modern materials like canvas and beads alongside traditionally gathered materials like abalone, juniper seeds, and clamshells. The exhibit explores how dresses have changed over time, at the same time tracking their continued usage in ceremonies. The goal of the exhibit is to illustrate the active interactions between the past and the present, and references modern modes of transporting regalia to dances (like vintage Samsonite suitcases), discussions about the historically inaccurate descriptions of ceremonial dresses as costume that persist to the present day, and the active creation of dresses for modern day dances. Every three months the exhibit features a different dress, highlighting contemporary dressmaking from Libby Hailey (Hupa), Marlette Grant-Jackson, the Trinidad Rancheria and Wiyot tribe.



# Events

*2019 Highlights for the Clarke*

# School Tours

This year, the Clarke saw almost 550 students on school tours. School tours at the museum date back to the earliest days of the museum, when Cecile Clarke operated the museum at Eureka High School. Many of the students are in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade when they come to the Clarke, and in some instances, it is their first time visiting a museum. Some of the students travel from distant parts of the County, like Briceland and Hoopa, to visit the Museum, Eureka, and other fun and educational locales like the Zoo and Morris Graves. Our dedicated docent team made up of Volunteers Dina, Shirley, Lynn, and Nancy lead the students through the exhibits, providing information and prompting students to think about what life was like at different points in our region's history. These tours have an impact! We frequently see visitors who remember their trip to the Clarke 10, 20, even 50 years later!



# Get Out and Play Day

Every year, Get Out and Play Day Grows as more and more families venture out to explore what Eureka has to offer on one Saturday in July, and 2019' Get Out and Play Day had a little bit of something for everyone. Humboldt Bay Fire brought out their horse-drawn antique fire engine, which was set up next to a trailer to try out archery with Pacific Outfitters. Our tradition of free ice cream from Humboldt Creamery was a hit, as usual, but so was the mock sword fight hosted by the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA)! Representatives from the National Parks and Fish and Game made an appearance with wildlife-related crafts and encounters. The Fort Humboldt Brass Band also performed in Clarke Plaza, and one of their pieces, General Grant's March, was adapted from music in the Clarke Museum's own sheet music collection. It was a lot of fun to see Civil War era ladies with the Brass Band talking with Medieval era folks from the SCA.



# Homebrewer and Distillery Night

December's Arts Alive is usually a pretty exciting evening, with holiday songs and Christmas shopping in full swing. 2019's December's Arts Alive at the Clarke took it to another level. Carolers sang in the Visitor Center while the Humboldt Homebrewers, Alchemy Distillery, Dutch and Dewey Distillery and Humboldt Distillery served up tastes of their brews, a few days after the anniversary of the end of Prohibition. We also had the grand opening of our Weapons Vault permanent exhibit, which had been a project a year in the making to convert a former bank vault and storage area into a display space for the Clarke's expansive weaponry collection. We saw around 700 people that evening, a record breaking number for the year. Cheers!



Humboldt Homebrewers and  
Distillers Night at the  
Clarke Museum



Dutch & Dewey  
Distillery

HUMBOLDT  
DISTILLERY



A toast to Homebrewers, past and present  
Tastings of delicious and unique homebrews and liquors  
from the Humboldt Homebrewers, Dutch and Dewey  
Distillery, Humboldt Distillery, and Alchemy Distillery.  
Help us reduce waste by bringing your own cup!



December Arts Alive  
December 7, 2019

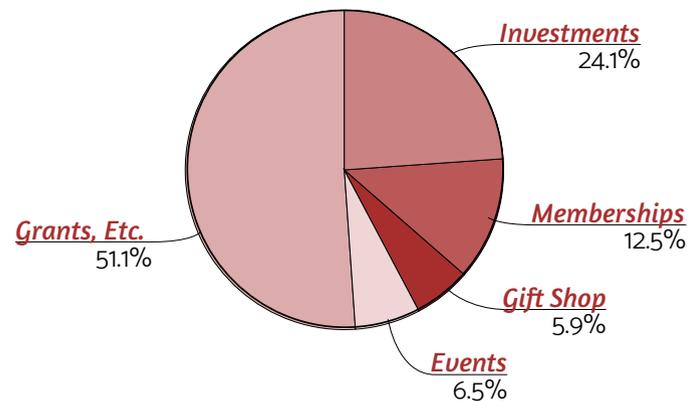
240 E Street, Old  
Town Eureka

# By the Numbers

*Every Statistic Has a Story*

# Income

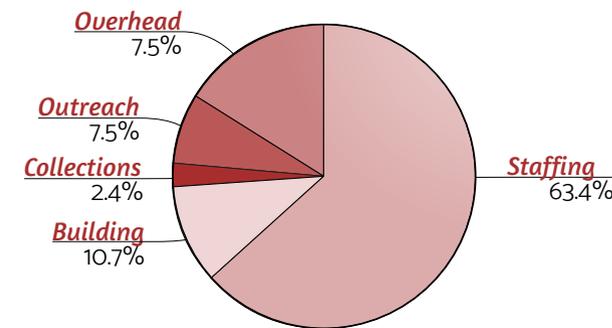
Throughout the year, the staff and board work on raising money for the museum to further its mission of acquiring & preserving items of local historic interest, and using those items to educate the public on our heritage. We rely on a variety of funding sources to increase our funding sources and stability, including visitor donations, specialty grants for specific projects, and our giftshop (co-operated by Humboldt Made). In the coming year, we hope to grow our membership numbers and expand our reach to those who may not typically go to museums.



<b>Grants, Rents, &amp; Misc</b>	\$129,682
<b>Events</b>	\$16,396
<b>Gift Shop</b>	\$53,544
<b>Memberships &amp; Donations</b>	\$31,695
<b>Cecile Clarke Trust &amp; Investments</b>	\$61,110

# Expenditures

Our largest expense is in staffing—our staff is a powerhouse team that puts on multiple events each month, works hard on pushing the limits of what we can do on a limited budget, and is passionate about our region’s fascinating history. Our staffmembers also wear many hats, from collections worker to volunteer manager, to event planner, construction worker, and much more. Their support, insight, big picture thinking, and optimism drives the museum to do more and try more in pursuit of preserving, researching, and sharing history.



<b>Overhead</b>	\$35,617
<b>Building</b>	\$23,948
<b>Collections</b>	\$5,345
<b>Staffing</b>	\$141,295
<b>Outreach</b>	\$16,686

# Clarke by the Numbers

## Volunteers

**2,124**

Hours donated by volunteers in 2019

**41**

Volunteers

## Events

**10**

Educational events provided to the community

**12**

Arts Alive events

**18**

Friday night markets

## Exhibits

**13**

New exhibits

**3**

Community case displays



# Meet the Staff

*We Couldn't Do It Without Them*

# Staff



**Katie Buesch**  
*Registrar & Curator - Main Hall Collection*

**K**atie earned her bachelor's in Anthropology and Religious Studies from Humboldt State University in 2017. She has been working at the Clarke Museum since the end of 2017. In her free time, she quilts, reads, and roller skates.

**Ben Brown**  
*Director & Curator*

**B**en earned a Masters of Arts in U.S. History and a minor in Borderlands from San Francisco State University and started working at the Clarke Historical Museum in 2008, having interned and volunteered there for many years before then. In his early years at the Clarke. Ben also worked for the Wiyot and Karuk Tribes, helping to catalogue their collections. He became overall director and curator of the Clarke in December 2012, and enjoys working for an organization that puts the community first.

Update:

Ben stepped down as Director-Curator of the Clarke at the end of 2019 to take up the position of CEO at the Redwood Acres Fairground. Since his departure, Katie Buesch has been acting as interim Director-Curator.



# Staff



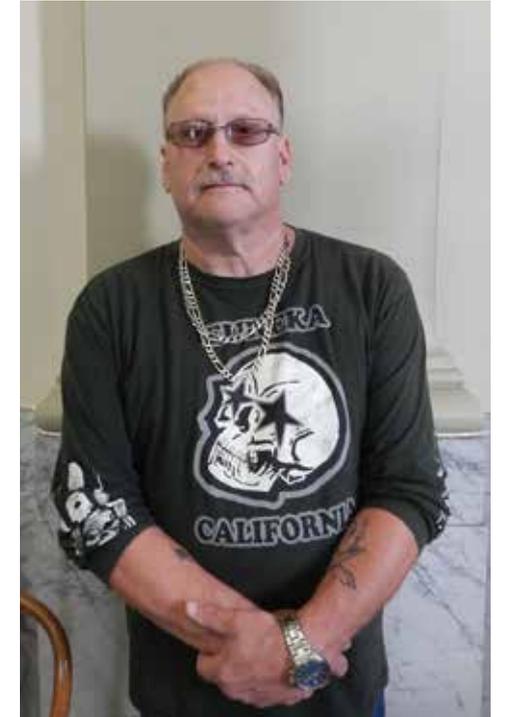
**Brittany Britton**  
*Registrar & Curator - Native American Collection*

**B**rittany is a Hoopa Tribal member who grew up in Humboldt county. She earned her MFA in Craft in 2015, and is a practicing studio artist. She enjoys gardening, cooking, and performance art when not at work.

**Jeff Roberts**  
*Maintenance*

**J**eff began working for the Clarke Museum in 2008 and has diligently kept the museum fully operating and clean. He is a jack of many trades and we feel lucky to have him on the team!

「 We believe your organization is doing important work that benefits our community greatly, and we are proud to support you.  
- Umpqua Bank Charitable Foundation's Community Giving Program 」



# Volunteers

## *Our Invaluable Partners*

**O**ur Volunteer team at the Clarke is an incredible group of individuals who love local history! They help us with a variety of projects around the museum from collections care and organizing, to research and talking with the public to construction and maintenance. This year, they donated over 2,000 hours of their time to help us share history with the public!

Here is a snapshot of a few of the things they accomplished this year:

- Assisted with installing exhibits throughout the year
- Moved collections storage out of one of the former bank vaults, painted cases, installed our weapons collection, and helped create a display that made sense to both gun enthusiasts and those who are unfamiliar with historic weaponry.
- Our Docent team led 17 school tours of almost 550 students to the museum
- Scanned over 1,000 images for digital preservation

Board members helped with our weekly Friday Night Markets, monthly Arts Alive, and other festival events (which Old Town is not short on!)



Interested in volunteering? Visit <http://www.clarkemuseum.org/volunteer.html> to learn more.

# Acknowledgements

# Thank you

**2019 Clarke Historical Museum Board of Directors:** Shirley Laos (President), Wendy Wahlund (Vice President), Lisa Slack (Secretary and Trustee), Elena David (Treasurer), John Winzler (Trustee), Lane Strobe (Trustee), Gerry Hale (Trustee), Dana Taggart, Gary Albee, Pat Bitton, Carly Marino, Lynn Sturgis, Rachel Sundberg, Bruce Pettit, Lonnie Wellman.

**This annual report was created by:** Katie Buesch and Andy Linde

**Photos courtesy of:** Michael Berry and the Humboldt County Historical Society, Katie Buesch, Ben Brown, Brittany Britton, the Clarke Historical Museum Archives, and Steve Lazar.

Thank you to the hundreds of museum members for their continued support of the Clarke Museum in the past, present, and into the future! We can do what we do because of you!

**The Clarke would like to thank some of our local community members, businesses, and organizations for their generous financial support this year:** Barnum Timber Company, Leon and Elaine Warmuth, O+M Industries, Bob White Electric, Umpqua Bank, Bertha Russ Lytel Foundation, Rick Slack, Times Printing, Albert Hailstone, and Humboldt Moving.

Thanks are also due to the many supporters of our Chandelier and Interior Restoration project. We look forward to revealing the results in 2020!

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COMPANY**

**A**s you enjoy our annual report, remember that it's donors like you who make these events and programs possible at the Clarke Historical Museum. To ensure the museum continues to serve the community and visitors alike for many years to come, please consider joining or renewing your membership, and encourage your friends to join - we'd be happy to provide a copy of this report to show them what their membership dues can do! With your help, 2020 will be an even better year at the Clarke.

## Thank you for your continued support

CLARKE HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
240 E ST, EUREKA, CA  
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there is something of  
interest for everybody  
at the Clarke.

-Dina, Clarke volunteer



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