

SAN JUAN ISLANDER COLUMN

History Lives Here!

During May, museums and libraries throughout the islands are celebrating *History Lives Here!* At the San Juan Island Library, we are featuring local history in several ways. As you come in the door, there is a display on the Chinese and Japanese immigrant communities on San Juan Island--pause there to learn more about this long-neglected aspect of our island's history. Near the salon area, the book display features many and diverse volumes on the history of the islands: archaeology, anthropology, natural history, and of course straight-up local history. Throughout the month *History Lives Here!* through several programs:

- Wednesday, May 11th, Mike Vouri will explore the 1850s Coast Survey, explaining how surveyors lugged 300 pounds of equipment into the field;
- Wednesday, May 18th, Annie Howell-Adams will discuss her Heritage Murals: how she researches and constructs a story and then designs and creates the large-scale panels;
- Sunday, May 22nd, Lynne Weber/Roochvarg will uncover the stories of the Japanese and Chinese of early San Juan Island; and
- Wednesday, May 25th Boyd Pratt (yes, that's me!) will survey the homesteading process and how it created the early multiethnic community on San Juan Island.

All programs are free and begin at 7pm, with refreshments provided by the Friends of the San Juan Island Library.

I also want to point out some helpful historical resources among the Library's databases. Ancestry Library Edition (which can only be used in the Library itself) helps you trace your ancestry--just click on the Search tab to lead you into a rich and varied world of primary sources (censuses, shipping manifests, death certificates--there's a lot!). HeritageQuest, which can be used remotely (with your library card number), is another useful tool for searching your ancestors' history. A particularly useful feature is the map of the federal census areas--it helps sort through the confusion of the many changes in county, state, and territory configuration. Last, but by no means least, is San Juan Island Heritage, a project of the Washington Rural Heritage hosted by the Washington State Library. Here you'll find all sorts of gems: an advertisement for the sale of the Doyle Farm in San Juan Valley; a Bell-Middleton (local grocery store) coffee jar; a bill of sale from Israel Katz's store to Robert Firth; and many historic photos, including some old aerials of Friday Harbor.

So come by the Library during the month of May and see how History Lives Here!

Boyd Pratt
Adult Programs Associate
San Juan Island Library