Baranov Museum Receives Preservation Funds

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Erik Wander/KMXT

The Baranov Museum has received an American Heritage Preservation grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in conjunction with the Bank of America Charitable Foundation to preserve an Alutiiq spruce root basket excavated from its grounds last June. American Heritage Preservation grants are awarded annually to museums, libraries and archives to treat, re-house and improve the storage environments of important collections.

KMXT's Erik Wander has more.

Baranov Museum director Katie Oliver said the basket was discovered during an archaeological excavation of Sargent Park on the grounds of the museum in June 2008. She said the excavation was held in conjunction with the Alutiiq Museum's community archaeology program and that historical archaeologists were brought in for the project.

-- (Oliver 1 55 sec. "One of the things they were ... where the building had been.")

Oliver said the find was unexpected given the length of time the basket was likely buried and the intact condition it was in when it was uncovered.

-- (Oliver 2 39 sec. "It's crushed, of course ... surrounding the basket.")

The 3,000-dollar preservation grant will go toward funding conservation treatment on the basket, after which it will be put on display at the museum. Oliver said the museum is bringing in an objects conservator from Seattle with whom it has worked in the past. She also said the process of treating and preparing the basket for permanent storage and exhibition can take up to nine months.

-- (Oliver 3 42 sec. "She's been completing some ... and also store it safely.")

The Baranov Museum is one of 39 museums nationwide
to received funding through the American Heritage Preservation Grant program in its inaugural year. The Institute
of Museum and Library
Services funded 53 projects totaling 152,308-dollars. It expects to award approximately 150 grants of up to 3,000-dollars each over the next three years to preserve works of art and historical documents held in small museums and libraries.

I'm Erik Wander

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