



EUREKA TIMES



vol. 9 number 3

The Newsletter of the Job Carr Cabin Museum

Fall 2011

“No More” - The Day that Changed Tacoma

The drama took place on November 3, 1885.

The participants were not players on a stage, but Tacoma businessmen and laborers on one side – Chinese small-business owners, farmers, servants and their families on the other. This was the day that Tacoma eliminated its “Chinatown.” To this day, there is no “Chinatown” in Tacoma – the only large West Coast city without such a community. Was this done in a moment of passion or a fit of rage? No... it was the culmination of a methodical progression within Tacoma’s citizenry of anti-Chinese sentiments. It was a day many years in the making.

Chinese immigration to America began in the mid-1800’s, as people fled a homeland rife with overpopulation and civil unrest. Some who came were business owners who had a strong business sense. Early on, these more affluent Chinese were welcomed into local communities, but as the flow of immigration grew it was increasingly made up of unskilled laborers, called “coolies.” They worked hard for low wages, building railroads, working in mines, farming and serving the needs of middle- and upper-class Americans throughout the West. Most of the money they earned was sent home to support families.

Westward expansion and the coming of the Industrial Revolution made the West Coast of America a land of opportunity for the masses. If you could get there, surely you would find a way to build a better life. Whether you were coming from New York City or Atlanta, Dublin, Oslo or Shanghai, the story was the same. It didn’t take long for Chinese immigrants to be viewed by others as the chief competition for jobs – even though they often did work that no one else

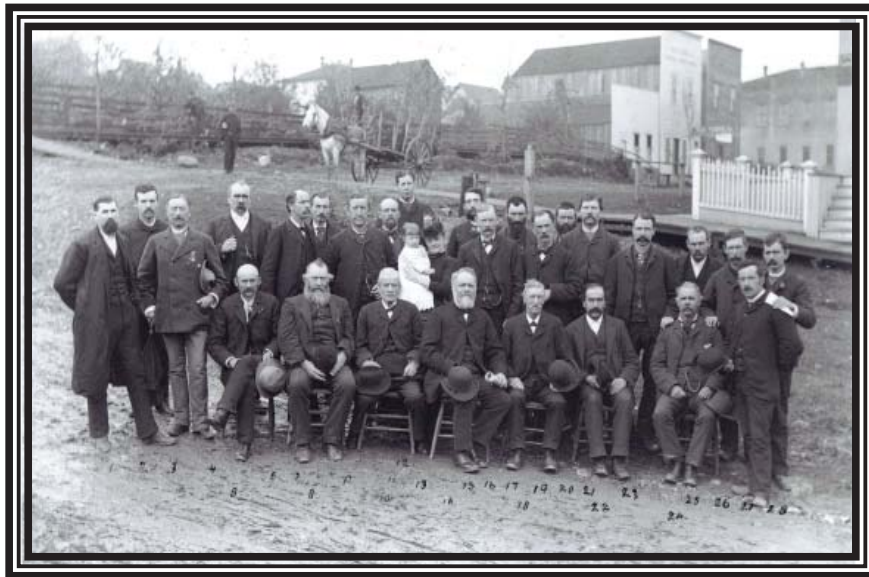
wanted. “It has been said,” stated Herbert Hunt in his History of Tacoma, “that the Transcontinental Railroads never could have been built without coolie labor.”¹ It is estimated that over 10,000 Chinese were involved in building the Northern Pacific Railway.

Unfortunately, as the major railroad building came to an end, many men of a variety of races found themselves without work. The Canadian Pacific was the last major transcontinental line to be built. It was completed in 1885. That same year,

the Northern Pacific’s line over Stampede Pass was finished. All that was left to make that line profitable was to build the tunnel under the Cascades that would make the treacherous pass line (with its many switchbacks) unnecessary. As the railroads laid workers off, they migrated to the centers of population where they thought they could find work in the factories or construction.

Local populations grew, but there weren’t enough jobs to go around.

Dissatisfaction with life and competition for available employment led to a rise in protests against those who employed Chinese laborers. Clinton A. Snowden, author of History of Washington: The Rise and Progress of an American State, sums it up this way: “The idle always have time to listen, and are easily persuaded that somebody other than themselves is responsible for their idleness. Their passions are easily inflamed; it is particularly easy to arouse in them a hatred for, and encourage an opposition to an alien race.”² All over the West, the Chinese were being encouraged to leave.



The “Tacoma Twenty-Seven pose at 11th & A Street. Mrs. J.A. Comerford poses with her child in her husband’s place. He was on a business trip. Photo use with permission: Tacoma Public Libraries

Local populations grew, but there weren’t enough jobs to go around. Dissatisfaction with life and competition for available employment led to a rise in protests against those who employed Chinese laborers. Clinton A. Snowden, author of History of Washington: The Rise and Progress of an American State, sums it up this way: “The idle always have time to listen, and are easily persuaded that somebody other than themselves is responsible for their idleness. Their passions are easily inflamed; it is particularly easy to arouse in them a hatred for, and encourage an opposition to an alien race.”² All over the West, the Chinese were being encouraged to leave.

(Continued page 4)

JOB CARR CABIN MUSEUM
located at
2350 North 30th Street

Executive Council

Officers:

Jason Kors, *President*
Stuart Young, *Vice-President*
Jim Lineweaver, *Secretary*
Jennifer Unrau, *Treasurer*

Directors:

Mark Holcomb, *Past President*
Greg Brewis
Shari Campbell
Rick Carr
Brad Cheney
Bob Hall
Gordon Hamilton
Karen Poole
Kasi Walker
Judy Wheeler

Brent Wojtanowicz

Staff:

Executive Director:

Mary Bowlby

Program Director:

Kathy Westlin

Eureka Times Editor:

Mary Bowlby

Mission:

**“To promote and preserve the
 early history of Old Town Tacoma,
 the birthplace of the city.”**

Mailing Address:

**Post Office Box 7609
 Tacoma, Washington 98417
 253-627-5405**

www.jobcarmuseum.org

email us at:

**mbowlby@jobcarmuseum.org
 kwestlin@jobcarmuseum.org**

Open Wednesday - Saturday

1 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

**School and Group visits
 by appointment**

Free Admission

Donations encouraged

The Job Carr Cabin Museum
 is registered as a non-profit,
 501(c)(3) organization in the
 State of Washington.

***Eureka Times is a quarterly
 JCCM publication.***

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

MESSAGE by: Mary Bowlby

Progress... success... how do you measure them? In Job's day, it was about growing the population of a fledgling city. "The more, the merrier..." Established businesses and improving infrastructure all raised the hopes of Tacoma's early residents that the hoped-for railroad terminus would be theirs. The Hanson & Ackerson sawmill was the first large-scale employer in the area. The steam-driven mill in turn brought grocery men and saloon keepers to meet the needs of the town's residents. Dr. Sargentich opened a small hospital and treated sickness and injury. Janet Steele opened a hotel and provided clean beds and good food to those who came to visit or needed lodging while a home was being built. Thus, the community progressed from settlement to town. It was a good thing in the eyes of people like Carr & McCarver, who wanted to capture the attention of the Northern Pacific Railway. Looking back, we think it's a pretty good thing, too. Because of their forethought, we live in a beautiful city alongside a lovely bay at the foot of a magnificent mountain (not that I'm partial, or anything...).

"Pardon our progress." Those who have lived in Tacoma since the seventies may remember these signs, which were posted around town when significant road improvements were in process. The implication is that progress may not always be a positive thing. It can be painful to those who like the status quo – no matter how "primitive" it may be. In the 19th century good intentions fueled the push for increased commerce and demanded that the "frontier life" be left behind in exchange for a modern, civilized city. With our modern values, it is very hard to understand the impact of such changes on all who lived in here over a hundred years ago. Those early changes along the shores of Commencement Bay were viewed by most of the Euro-American settlers as a good thing, but it isn't hard to imagine that such change grieved the displaced members of the Puyallup and Nisqually tribes.

Our feature article in this issue looks at an event in Tacoma history that we view today as shameful – the 1885 expulsion of the Chinese community from Tacoma. It is sad to think that people lost homes and possessions at the insistence of a determined mob, but the mob's action was seen by many as "progress" and the completion of the deed – including the burning of homes located on Old Tacoma's waterfront – "successful" improvement for the city.

As hard as it is, when we interpret history it is important to be sure to set aside our "21st century glasses." Any contemporary leanings that define us today can lead us to judge history instead of understanding it. While we prepare for the completion of "Chinese Reconciliation Park" and reach out to a people whose ancestors were treated cruelly over a century ago, let's at least try to see this event – as disturbing as it is – in the context of western expansion and a world that was far from the "global" thinking that we share today.



Regards, Mary Bowlby

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

by: Kathy Westlin

In the tradition of back-to-school, I'm titling this piece, "How I Spent My Summer at the Cabin..."

Like the rest of you in Tacoma, most of my summer was spent dodging what seemed like endless rain. Despite the typical Washington weather, the museum had intrepid visitors constantly coming and going and field trips continued to be popular. We welcomed the Widow & Widowers group led by Lois Tuell, the Federal Way Boys and Girls Club divided their kids into age categories and, as such, came through on three different occasions, and North Tacoma Montessori visited for an educational and fun-filled morning. We had groups of all ages and sizes, each one different from the last, and each group experienced something different that they could relate to. That's the beauty of being a small, flexible museum situated in Old Town – we can customize the experience to the visitors. We're fortunate to have great relationships with Captain Tony, Old St. Peter's Church, Debbie Birkey and Karen Haas, all of whom are happy to help with the summer groups when we ask them.

The educational trunk items were cleaned, repaired and reorganized. One trunk was used by a Brownie troop and one had its contents featured in the August/September issue (page 28, if you missed it – wink) of South Sound Magazine. We thank Josh, Lisa and the staff of South Sound for their support! The education committee didn't take the summer off, and Mary Kokich is almost through adding information on early transportation to the trunk educator notebook. Meanwhile, Kasi Walker has been busy gathering information and structuring a program so we can offer Brownie and Girl Scout badges in the future. Thanks to the Russell Family Foundation grant, we have canoes ready to add to the trunks to tie-in with the new information. For an additional bit of fun and discussion for the kids, we also added a miniature chicken to the wagon contents this year.

The festival and walking tours went splendidly. There was no dodging the rain during set-up since it was coming down in buckets, but it didn't deter our brave-hearted board members from getting the job done on a Saturday



**The Cabin needs You!
Be part of the team.**

morning, and once all ten tents were in place the skies finally cleared. At least one family stayed at the event all day – enjoying the various pioneer activities, being mesmerized by Heath the magician, chatting with and learning from the various artisans about their crafts, and listening to music from the trio from Mooncoyne. Fun was had by everyone who danced the Virginia Reel – led by Faith from Ft. Nisqually – despite the fact that that's when the skies decided to open up again!

We welcomed volunteers and docents who came on board this summer and invite you to stop in and meet them. Charlene Anderson's enthusiasm is contagious and Bonnie Ragan's easy-going style and love of history will have you asking for more information. Nick Hilby joined us to earn his community service hours for Puyallup High School and he did a variety of things that helped keep us on track. Our new docents join our loyal group of James Bentley, Ken Biller, Bill Carr, Cyndie Carr, Meg Justus and Margot Webb. We'll be honoring them, and our other volunteers, at a breakfast this fall.

Now that summer is winding down I hope you have Sunday, September 11, marked on your calendars to be at St. Peter's Church at 2 P.M. Karen Haas will be performing her "Sisters in Time" routine. I've seen it before and can vouch for her amazing talents and the entertainment/educational aspect. You won't be disappointed! Cathy Russell, from The Hawthorne Tea Room, will be donating fresh homemade cookies (I can vouch for those, too...) and the Church will be providing refreshments afterwards. Please come enjoy some of Old Town's friendly hospitality. All proceeds from this event will go toward our education fund. The suggested donation is a mere \$5 and I suspect that you'll be so impressed that afterward you put a little more money in the box.

Thanks to everyone for your generous contributions, in so many ways, which allow us the opportunity to offer free educational activities to our kids and community. Rain or shine, we're here to do it – and we're able to because of you!

Ciao! Kathy Westlin



MARK YOUR CALENDARS
Santa Claus Comes to Old Town on December 1, 2011!

Old Town Tree-Lighting Ceremony, 4:00 P.M.

Refreshments provided - while they last



“NO MORE...”: (continued from page 1)

In Tacoma, Chinese immigrants had been living and working in the city since 1873 – only nine years after Job Carr arrived here and two years before “Tacoma City” became incorporated. Lung Fat opened his laundry business here that year. (Note: resources do not clarify if his business was located in Tacoma City or New Tacoma.) That same year, the Northern Pacific Railway’s first line rolled into town. Many of the Chinese laborers who had helped build the railway opted to stay, and took employment in the sawmill or procured land and started farming.

By 1885, about 700 Chinese lived in Tacoma. They lived on land leased from the railway, along the waterfront between the two Tacomas. Living quarters were minimal – many small structures built close together (some over tidal land), and it wasn’t unusual to have livestock (chickens, ducks, and pigs) within the compound. Some of the living conditions endured by these people may have been no different from those in their homeland – China’s population topped 400,000,000 in the nineteenth century – but many lived frugally, saving as much money as they could. Some sent their earnings home; others were saving enough to get passage to go home or to send for a bride (there were 27 men to every one woman from China at the time, living throughout the West). They seldom spent money in local shops, and few adopted the customs of their American neighbors – factors that served to set the Chinese people apart.

Some Tacoma residents connected with their foreign neighbors. Certainly, many households sent their dirty clothes to be cleaned at one of the many Chinese laundries in town and there were Chinese farmers and shopkeepers who were respected; Chinese servants were quite common in the affluent parts of town. Churches provided social and religious outreach services to help improve lives. The Methodist Mission School was overseen by Mark Ten Suie – a Chinese national; it had 22 pupils and was clean and well-maintained. Many Tacoma women held Sunday School classes for Chinese women and children in their homes. Although such programs were conceived out of a sense of charity, not everyone had pure motives.

Discontent with the Chinese presence in Tacoma was publicly known as early as early 1878, when a debate was held on the subject at the Literary Society’s first meeting. In 1884, it began to emerge as a focal point in the formation of fraternal organizations and local unions, which demanded that local factories cease to employ Chinese laborers. Jacob Weisbach, a local groceryman and Tacoma’s Mayor, spoke openly in favor of expelling the Chinese from the city. In early

1884, the first meeting called to formulate a plan for this was held upstairs in Weisbach’s store. Subsequent meetings were held by various clubs, unions and fraternal organizations – most private, some quite secret – with the plan taking shape steadily over time. In February of 1885, a petition calling for “an effective and proper method” to expel the Chinese was circulated about town.

On August 7, 1885, the Daily Tacoma News contained an article that stated, in part, “The more this subject is investigated,... the stronger becomes the appeal... for more stringent measures either to restrict (Chinese) importation or at least enforce some compliance with the rules of decency, cleanliness and order, consistent with the health and safety of our own citizens.”³ The issue was being openly discussed now. There was concern throughout the community about the growing anti-Chinese sentiment. City leaders cautioned against violence, though few spoke against expulsion. From city ordinance to a decline in employment, life in Tacoma became less desirable to the Chinese population, but the opposition would not be satisfied with only a portion moving out of town.

At a time when medical science was making significant advances against disease, the substandard living conditions in the Chinese quarters were seen as a possible source of contagion. This suspicion produced laws throughout Puget Sound, stipulating that the sleeping space occupied by one person must be at least 500 cubic feet. Many Chinese were arrested when their cramped quarters were inspected. Other ordinances were enacted in Tacoma. Chinese laundries were declared a nuisance, because it was found some didn’t use fresh water regularly. Farmers carried food for their pigs from local restaurants the traditional way – in two buckets balanced on the ends of a long pole. Many spilled their loads when they were tripped by wires set up as a joke by young boys. The resulting mess was seen as the fault of the Chinese, so these slop-carriers were banned from the sidewalks.

As 1885 progressed, the movement continued to grow stronger. The Anti-Chinese League was formed, with Mayor Weisbach as president, in June. A statewide congress on the subject was held in Seattle on September 28. A “Committee of Fifteen” for both Tacoma and Seattle was selected to guide the process of determining the best method of driving the Chinese out of the Puget Sound region. Resolutions were passed, including one that mandated all Chinese to leave the area by November 1, 1885. In Tacoma, another committee – the “Committee of Nine” came together in secret. This group had one member who was also on the “Committee of Fifteen,” but they had

a militant agenda that would prove to be pivotal in the final outcome of this challenging time in Tacoma history.

While these meetings and deliberations took place, three incidents outside Tacoma fueled the debate. A riot in Rock Springs, Wyoming and ambushes at Squak Valley and Coal River mines in Washington Territory all led to bloodshed and the deaths of several Chinese. This encouraged those who wanted swift action and worried leaders who feared the impact it would have on their city. The Chinese residents were warned to leave town. Leaders of their community appealed to Washington Territorial governor, Watson C. Squire for protection, which was their right by international treaty. Squire, in turn, appealed to President Grover Cleveland to send federal troops from Ft. Vancouver. The President was reluctant to get involved in local affairs. Local leaders reassured Governor Squire that Sherriff Byrd was “both efficient and vigilant” against potential violence.

The Chamber of Commerce, led by General Sprague and Ezra Meeker, had cautioned against violence. There were others that advocated non-violence (Father Hylebos was one) and a few spoke out for the rights of the Chinese. Both those pro-Chinese and non-violence advocates were ostracized for their views. Reverend WD McFarland preached against the movement; his congregation dwindled and his life was threatened as a result. No one identified as a dissenter during this time could get elected for a number of years.

As the November deadline approached, demonstrations and mass meetings were held to stir the masses. In back rooms, the “Committee of Nine” was building a plan. Each committee member had recruited nine more and they, in turn, had done the same. Only the original nine met, but word spread effectively throughout the community. On November 5, 1885, at 9:30 A.M. the Atlas Foundry whistle blew, and men from all corners of the city poured into the streets. Every man was assigned a destination. They converged on the Chinese settlements and businesses, giving the people no choice but to pack their belongings and leave. Then, the long march to the Lake View train depot began. Children, women and infirm elders were allowed to ride on wagons.

Later that evening, the abandoned Chinese quarters near Old Tacoma were being “inspected” when a fire broke out. Soon enough, the fire had spread and destroyed the entire settlement. Governor Squire received a communiqué the next day: “The Chinamen are no more in Tacoma, and the trouble over them is virtually at an end. Yesterday they were peaceably escorted out of town and put upon the freight and passenger trains this morning...”⁴ Explaining the “peaceable expulsion” they reported that 25 to 30 business owners were

given an extra day to pack and ship store goods.

With knowledge of the incident wide-spread, legal action against the perpetrators was demanded. Twenty-seven men were indicted for their role in the event. They were escorted to Fort Vancouver by Captain Whyte of the Tacoma Guard. Bail was set and posted by everyone, and they returned to Tacoma to a hero’s welcome. The case never came to trial. One of the participants, William P. Bulger, renounced his involvement in an interview years later: “It was wrong. We were young and hot-headed... We were inflamed over an evil condition...”⁵

As difficult as it is to tell this story in the 21st century, it must be told – and remembered. Today, we view actions taken in 1885 with no little embarrassment. We can quantify the effects of Chinese expulsion in the lack of Chinese citizens, as well as a “Chinatown” in Tacoma. The Port of Tacoma has only established formal shipping relations with China in the past 25 years. In fact, China refused to ship to Tacoma for much of the 20th century. On April 14, 1993, the Port established a “sister port” relationship with Tianjin, China. In October, 2011, the City of Tacoma will dedicate “Reconciliation Park,” which is being built just south of Hyde Park on the Old Town waterfront. These are good developments. However, we must not grow complacent and think that this shift in thinking is permanent. The true test of Tacoma’s international reputation will be told when our time is a part of history. Will we be seen as a community that builds connections or tears them down?

End Notes

¹Hunt, 356.

²Snowden, 319.

³Daily Tacoma News, August 7, 1885.

⁴Snowden, 327.

⁵Hunt, 383.

WORKS CITED

Harvey, Paul, Tacoma Headlines, Tacoma News Tribune, Tacoma, 1962.

Hunt, Herbert, History of Tacoma, SJ Clarke, Chicago, 1916.

Snowden, Clinton A., History of Washington: The Rise and Progress of an American State, Century of History, New York, 1909.

---, Daily Tacoma News, “The Chinese Curse,” Friday, August 7, 1885.

<http://www.library.thinkquest.org/20619/Chinese.html>

[http://www.portoftacoma.com/About the Port/Facts & Stats](http://www.portoftacoma.com/About%20the%20Port/Facts%20&%20Stats)



Camp Fire USA leaders led the flag ceremony



Ready for company...



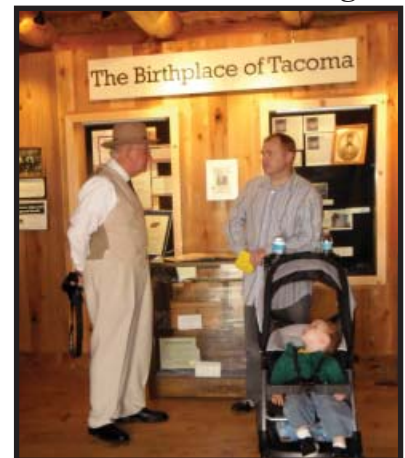
"Gold" nuggets and coins were here for the taking.



When was the last time you danced the Virginia Reel?



Artisans, like Marsha Sommers, demonstrated their craft all day.



Mel Carr greeted Cabin visitors throughout the day.



Volunteers are at the center of a successful event.



This year, the Meeker Wagon joined us for the day.



Carr descendant Cohen Miller loves the Festival. He came last year, too!



Having fun the old fashioned way...

RECOGNIZING OUR SUPPORTERS

Recent Grants, Gifts, and Memberships That Sustain the Museum's Mission

Memberships

New:

Daniel & Theresa DeLorenzo
Bannon, Carlson & Kessel, Inc.
Dianne & Ronald Huston
Cohen Miller

Renewals:

Gregory & Rebecca Angelmeyer
John Atwill & Laura Hull
Antone Beritich
Mary Boskovich
Dianne Oliver Budinich
Bob & Karla Buttorf
Dave & Margaret Clogston
Bill & Ann Evans
William & Phyllis Gill
Bob & Mary Hammond
Spencer & Leilani Jackson Lee
Robert & Judy Schuller
Margot Webb

Donations:

Al & Aileen Bacon
Wes & Mary Bowlby
Mel & Janet Carr
Rick & Francie Carr
Robert Carr
Brad Cheney
Frank & Judy Colarusso
Dan & Denise Davis

Chris & Karen Donahue
Anna Marie & Robert Duncan
Peter & Janine Elswick
Robert & Lisa Fiano
Nancy J. Fishburne
Cliff & Carolyn Flintoff
Mark & Debbie Gallinatti
Bob & Tammy Hall
Gordon Hamilton & Rose Lincoln
Jill & Corey Hess
Mark & Wendy Holcomb
Jason Kors
Steve & Natalie LaBerge
Rober & Lora Lee
Jim & Christy Lineweaver
Linda McKeag
Charlie McManus, Primo Grill
Phillis & Byron Olson
Phil & Gwen Phibbs
Steve & Kathleen Pierce
Scott Pinkston & Tara Jensen
Karen & Tom Poole
Ryan Reichman
Doug & Alice Sharp
St. Patrick's School
Glenn Sutt
Erik Waterland
Laurie & Wayne Wenneman
Christine & Kenneth Wickstrom
Lila Wideman
Brent & Lisa Wojtanowicz
Stuart Young

Grants:

Ben B. Cheney Foundation
Woodworth Family Foundation

In-Kind Donations:

BCRA
Belina Interiors
Camp Fire USA
CM Creative
Corcoran's Lock & Key
Sprague Pest Control
Tully's Coffee, Old Town
United Way of Pierce County



Thank you for your commitment to the Job Carr Cabin Museum!

Our 2nd Annual Pioneer Festival & Walking Tour was a success - because of our wonderful volunteers!



Upcoming Events



October 11

*Classical Tuesdays
at Slavonian Hall:
US China Music
Ensemble (free)*

November 8

*Classical Tuesdays
at Slavonian Hall:
String Trios (free)*

December 1

Santa visits Job Carr Cabin

December 13

*Classical Tuesdays
Benefit at Connelly Law Office
Opera Arias (\$25 admission)*

JOB CARR CABIN MUSEUM

P.O. Box 7609
Tacoma, WA 98417-0609

NONPROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

TACOMA, WA

PERMIT NO. 584

return service requested

In this issue... The Chinese Expulsion... Pioneer Festival Pictures... Volunteer Needs...

Discover Job's Spirit

Become a Museum Member

JOB CARR CABIN MUSEUM preserves and promotes the history of Old Town Tacoma - the birthplace of Tacoma - and its early residents.

Show your support for the Cabin and its mission by joining our Circle of Friends.

JOB CARR CABIN MUSEUM is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, recognized by the IRS and registered as a Charitable Organization with the State of Washington.

Call 253-627-5405 for information

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Check if Gift Membership

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Email _____

- Corporate/Large Business (over 100 employees) \$125
- Small Business/Agency (under 100 employees) \$75
- Family/Non-Profit Organization \$35
- Individual \$20
- Senior \$15
- Student \$12

