

# City of Gustavus

## 2020 Endowment Fund Grant Application

### **I. Project Summary**

Total amount requested: \$4,787.00 plus shipping \$150.00 = \$4,937.00 Total

The requested funds will be used to purchase a 12 unit Audio Guide System from Listen Technologies located in Bluffdale, Utah for the Strawberry Point Museum opening spring 2021. The system is complete with 12 rechargeable handheld/ neck lanyard loop compatible devices and a 10 unit overnight Charger/Uploader. These units are made specifically for cultural attractions/museums as a multi-content playback device that delivers to visitors the descriptive information at the right time and place. Audio tracks, stories, and timely information is downloaded to the device using its free Audio Master 3 software. This information enhances the visitors experience using headphone/earbuds (supplied by GHAA and used once). Using an intuitive keypad for easy manual operation, the Gustavus visitor can skip to the next exhibit, listen to descriptive accounts and relative adjuncts associated with the exhibit, and manage their time and interests making for an exceptional visitor experience. Multiple visitors can tour the museum at any given time, being able to accommodate a small bus load of tourists, school children, or Gustavus family members, while each are advancing throughout the 30 plus exhibits (over 1,000 artifacts already displayed) at their own pace in quiet surroundings.

### **II. Brief Overview of Organization or Entity**

Type of organization: 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation

Name: Gustavus Historical Archives & Antiquities (GHAA)

Tax ID: 205090234

Address: P.O. Box 14, Gustavus, Alaska 99826

Phone: 907-697-2242

Web Page: [www.GustavusHistory.Org](http://www.GustavusHistory.Org)

Principal Contact: Linda S. Parker  
[LindaParker@GustavusHistory.Org](mailto:LindaParker@GustavusHistory.Org)

Phone: 907-697-2242

Email:

Linda Parker has approximately 20 years of experience documenting, categorizing, writing historic scripts for such major community events as “The Chronicles of Strawberry Point” & “Tales, You Win”, the Strawberry Point newspaper, and most recently involved in all aspects of the museums preservation of over a thousand artifacts (already on display) and thousands of original historic documents and photographs. She has taken courses and been educated by the State of Alaska in preservation, resources, and techniques. And GHAA is a member of Alaska State Libraries, Archives, and Museum.

GHAA is fortunate to be able to have a lead recording voice in Lee Parker with experience in voice overs, radio broadcasting, theatrical plays and musical productions. Other recording voices would include local children describing historical events that occurred when, for example, in the early post office exhibit, the homesteader children would race to scamper up the famous “climbing tree” to see who could be first to spot the once-a-month mail boat. Actual voices of some of our early homesteaders (even one of our 1914 honeymooners!) are also on tape reminiscing and may also be used in appropriate applications.

### **III. Project Description**

#### **Project Description:**

\*Problem Statement: GHAA (and by important extension the community of Gustavus) has a wealth of historic artifacts, documents, photographs and stories representing almost all of our early homesteading families as well as close neighboring vicinities—for example rare photos of Excursion Inlet’s POW war years, and Lemesurier Island’s original writings & gifts from Joe & Muz Ibachs’ own hands. Many of these artifacts and items are currently on display in exhibits in the Strawberry Point Museum which is categorized as a History Museum, focused entirely on the life and times of our early homesteading settlers 1914 thru the 1950’s. Many of our earliest settlers brought with them household artifacts that were already vintage at that time and date to the mid to late 1800’s. Our museum is small and packed with artifacts that are a delight to view, but have stories that would explain, multiply, and magnify the rich history of our remote location and the Strawberry Point homesteaders *if they could be told*. For example, through a personal listening device, visitors would learn *why* a certain chair has a chunk of wood cut out of it (to repair a broken fiddle that required a delicate curve). Or *what*

comprised our honeymooning settlers first 1914 Thanksgiving dinner (a really tough, unfortunate eagle that took 3 days to cook). Or *how* Lester Rink's shoe came to have a hundred nails pounded in the soles of it (to provide traction on ice). *It is simply not efficient or feasible to have a curator attempt to gauge interest and to tell these accompanying stories (and countless more) for every visitor, and impossible for multiple visitors at a time.* The self-directed Listen Technology Audio Guide System does it all.

\*Community Benefit: Museums play a crucial role in preserving local culture. With careful documentation and artifact preservation, a culture can be recorded, remembered, shared and understood. The Strawberry Point Historic Museum documents daily life and the ingenuity and perseverance that played such an important role in adaptation and survival of the remote territorial years in Alaska. Our historic museum educates and will connect our tourists, families & children with our heritage, preventing cultural loss that otherwise would take place over time. The alternative would be for these artifacts, documents and important (and entertaining!) stories to be lost or shielded from public view by homesteader family's private collections all over the country. There is no question that a community is immeasurably enriched by the telling and retelling of the stories of the past. Judging from the public feedback GHAA regularly receives, and the response so far from those who have had peek previews of the museum, many of our citizens are very thankful and encouraging of this community commitment. And per Innkeepers & local taxis, our tourists are clamoring to be able to access these memorable times and colorful stories.

\*Link to City's Goals: The City of Gustavus does not currently have an operational plan (or even a stated goal) for the preservation of important historic documents, artifacts, and stories. GHAA strives to fill that void and has spent years collecting, documenting, authenticating, archiving, and recording stories from local residents and descendants of homesteading families now scattered all over the country.

\*Concluding Statement: The Strawberry Point Museum would have opened this year 2020 with existing exhibits, but for Covid related setbacks and restrictions. It is currently (at the time of this writing) lacking the completion of the build-out of only 2 exhibits to be fully utilized. These exhibits will be completed by spring/opening 2021 and this audio guide, self-directed listening system will be

able to be managed safely even if Covid restrictions remain in place. If funds are awarded, the audio guide will be the most important addition GHAA is able to offer from opening day one, as the artifacts without the informational stories are important, but the sometimes almost unbelievable, short and pithy stories will be what is remembered—and ultimately what defines us.

Founded in 2006 as a nonprofit organization, GHAA has endeavored to accomplish its stated goals of collecting and preserving Strawberry Point & Gustavus history as a sacred trust for the entire community. For years we have accomplished much on a shoestring budget by a troop of volunteers who believe that our mission is vital. We have also been blessed with a number of small grants that have boosted our efforts along the way. In short, GHAA has a long record of being of benefit and a go-to resource to this community, successfully completing every project it has undertaken. Our website boasts hundreds of scanned and documented stories and artifacts and has been contacted and been a resource to researchers around the world. We have written and published over 60 historic articles highlighting early Strawberry Point/Gustavus, sponsored historic educational presentations at the public library and local school, and provided hands-on field day events. GHAA raised local cultural awareness by creating & hosting many community events such as the 2 hr. production “The Chronicles of Strawberry Point”, and later the 1 ½ hr. production at our 3 day Centennial event “Tales, You Win”. We responded to numerous requests by local residents to clear land and provide a cemetery for residents who choose Gustavus as their final resting place. We received a grant and built a monument building at the cemetery to highlight and remember the lives of our neighbors and friends who occupy the cemetery, and built a museum room within its walls that highlight and preserve our homesteader’s 10’ lathe. In collaboration with Rita Wilson, we wrote and published the “Complete Guide to the 1957 Plane Crash” booklet that is still today purchased by most of our visitors. We applied for and received a grant for the construction of a bronze plaque memorial located in the veteran section of the cemetery to memorialize the crew of the plane crash. In addition, Gustavus can now rest assured that the many original documents and photographs, interviews and stories are safely housed in the fireproof cabinets that the City provided by past grants. Now, GHAA has dedicated its time, energy, and limited resources to open Gustavus/Strawberry Point’s first ever historic museum. And we are grateful to be considered for this

very important purchase of the Audio System that will augment the museum artifacts by telling the stories to anyone who will listen! And just like our other endeavors, we will effectively and successfully manage this one as well.

#### **IV. Project Goals and Objectives:**

If awarded funds, GHAA will purchase the 12 unit Audio guide system December 15, 2020. Between the purchase order and arrival, GHAA will identify the museum artifacts and stop locations for appropriately linked stories and script the information. By March 15, 2021 the accompanying stories (and even music that our 1914 honeymooners cranked out “All Dressed Up and No Where to Go”) will begin to be utilized and voice recorded on the software that will come with the audio system. By May 15, 2021 GHAA will complete at least 25 storied points of interest on the audio device ready for our projected museum opening of June 24, 2021.

Full initial funding is required for purchase of the Audio system. All other aspects of the project will, as always, be carried out on a community volunteer basis. The on-going need for individual earbuds will be purchased by GHAA fund-raising funds and not a part of this request. Success will be measured by a fully operational audio self-directed guide system that provides at least 25 stops and point of interest stories and information. As do most museums, there will be continual additional growth of the offerings on the system as time and further achievement allows. There are almost unlimited tracks to the device that can be changed, upgraded, added to, and in as many languages as needed.

The Strawberry Point Historic Museum will be open to the public at regular published hours and/or by appointment. This community asset will be free to the public to walk through with just a suggested small donation if able. However, signage will describe a fee to obtain the audio device (that does not require reliable internet or smart user phone), a yet-to-be determined amount—likely about \$10.00 per visitor. This method of visitor choice for level of cultural immersion is used successfully around the world in museums both great and small. It is expected that a high percentage of visitors will utilize this offering to make the most of their visit and see it as a worthwhile purchase. The ongoing revenue will continually augment and go towards museum operating expenses.

## V. Budget

For the completion of this project, the partnership in funding would be provided by the City of Gustavus and GHAA exclusively. GHAA will provide all the additional equipment needed, such as individual one-time use earbuds, cleansing stations for device cleaning, etc. GHAA's fund raising is an ongoing way that the organization procurs funds for multiple projects and expenses. 2020 has not allowed for the usual amount of events and the cost purchase for this important system is outside the ability for GHAA to fund. The audio system will prove to be an on-going revenue generator for the organization's monthly expenses, such as electric and heating requirements.

The audio system is complete and operational (the listening device and recharging station) only when fully funded, as there are not parts and pieces that could prove successful by themselves. The 12 unit Audio Guide System is necessary so that at any given time, units that require re-charging can be readied for service while others are in use.

If necessary, GHAA is able and willing to fund the projected \$150.00 (or likely more) shipping fee due to lithium batteries complication. In that case, the total funds requested would diminish to \$4,787.00. This is a one-time cost purchase that enables the museum to both offer an enhanced visit and preserve storied community history, and at the same time, generate on-going revenue by its use.

Vendor Source: Listen Technologies, 14912 Heritage Crest Way, Bluffdale, Utah 84065

Priority	Source	Item	Matching Funds	Funds Requested
Highest	Listen Technologies	Audio Guide System	None	\$4,787.00
High	UPS Ground	Shipping	None	\$150.00
Total Request				\$4,937.00