



ASHLEIGH FOX | THE SHERIDAN PRESS

**Jim Jackson stands in his shop at The Brinton Museum Tuesday, July 3, 2018. Jackson received the 2018 Al Stohlman Award for achievement in leathercraft.**

## Jackson receives international leatherwork award

BY ASHLEIGH FOX

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SHERIDAN — Jim Jackson boasts a storied career in leatherwork. He put in 43 years with King's Saddlery before moving into a position at The Brinton Museum, where he's combined his skills of leatherworking and painting to create pieces for the museum gift shop.

Now, Jackson has received the 2018 Stohlman Foundation Award. The Al and Ann Stohlman Awards for Achievement in Leathercraft are international awards honoring achievements in leatherwork — for example promoting and advancing the leatherworking industry by their work, teaching the craft and an artist's willingness to share, according to the foundation's website.

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**The 2018 Al Stohlman Award medal for achievement in leathercraft lies across the craftsmanship of Jim Jackson Tuesday, July 3, 2018. Jackson earned this year's award and has been in the leatherworking business since he was a young boy.**

# AWARD: Focuses on continuing the trade through education

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Jackson entered the leatherworking business as a young child when his father had Jackson work in the family shop. It was there Jackson worked and learned from what he said were the best in the business — Don King, Bill Gardner, Chester Hape and his father, Edward Jackson. Jim Jackson also credits King, Gardner and Hape for transforming Sheridan into a leatherworking mecca. The trio built the world championship saddles for professional rodeos for more than 20 years.

“Those guys were the best,” Jackson said. “They’re all gone now, but they were really good saddlemakers. Not just good, they were exceptional.”

Jackson fondly remembered working in his little corner of the Don King Museum, whose namesake won the same award Jackson did exactly 20 years earlier. Now, Jackson looks back on his first year of working at The Brinton in light of receiving the internationally-recognized award.

“It’s been really good. It’s been busy out here,” Jackson said. “They wanted me out here just to be here for people who come through and to build a few things for their gift shop.”

He loaded the gift shop up with his leatherworking craftsmanship last year, but Asian leatherworkers coming in for the leatherwork trade show purchased everything.

In addition to making items for the gift shop, Jackson educates and entertains a steady flow of visitors at his little shop on the museum’s tour circuit, which averages around 20 people per day. Jackson shares a history of the area and explains his handmade tools and how to work the machinery while stamping or tooling away at another project.

Because of the consistent flow of



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**Jim Jackson holds his 2018 Al Stohlman Award medal for achievement in leathercraft. Jackson has been in the leatherworking business since he was a boy working in his father’s shop.**

tours Friday, Saturday and Sunday, he struggles to find time to make things for the gift shop or otherwise. His involvement with The Brinton brings more than just product, though, as he is currently planning two large, international leatherworking exhibits and events at the museum in the next two years.

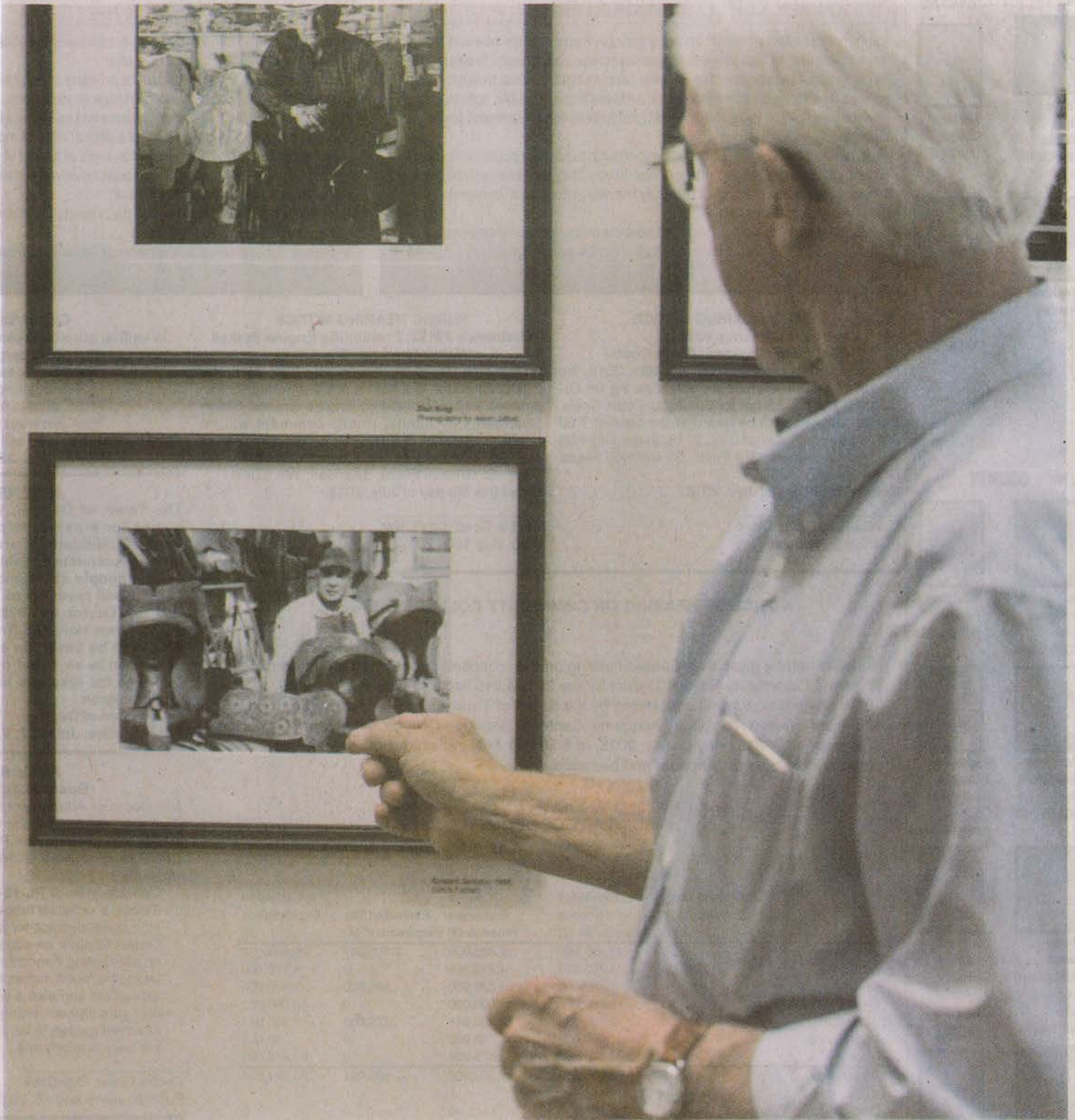
The award itself focuses on continuing the trade of leatherworking through education. Stohlman Foundation secretary/treasurer Dot Reis said Jackson was overqualified in almost every category of the award, but his focus on educating future generations in leatherworking

sent him above any other contender.

“He just does everything; he’s amazing,” Reis said. “I was amazed; I didn’t know all that about him.”

Jackson frequently hosts and teaches classes, writes for publications and travels around the world to continue educating. Reis said it is not a requirement of the award, but Jackson’s outstanding artistry helps.

From his required participation in the family leatherworking business to an internationally-recognized award, Jackson appreciates the people he has worked with and who helped bring him to the success he continues to find at The Brinton and beyond.



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## Al Stohlman Award

Jim Jackson points out a photo of his father in his workshop at The Brinton Museum Tuesday, July 3, 2018. Jackson received the 2018 Al Stohlman Award for achievement in leathercraft.