

MTHS Announces Heritage Award Winners

A lifelong historian, the cofounder of a local museum, and a civic leader and philanthropist are the 2023 Montana Heritage Keeper awardees, while the USS Montana Committee is this year's Heritage Guardian Award honoree.

Ellen Baumler of Helena, Ramona Holt of Lolo, and Gene Thayer of Great Falls recently were chosen by the Montana Historical Society's Board of Trustees to receive the prestigious award. The awards honor exemplary commitment, effort, and impact in identifying, preserving, and presenting Montana's historical and cultural heritage for current and future generations.

Awardees must have demonstrated commitment to a significant Montana history project or projects or to the identification and preservation of objects or property of general or specific significance to Montana history and culture. Organizations also must have a demonstrated record of accom-



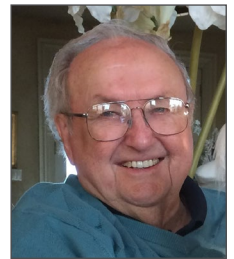
Heritage Award Winners USS Montana

plishment in the preservation and celebration of Montana's historical and cultural heritage.

"These are worthy individuals and organizations who have a long record of preserving and protecting



Ellen Baumler



Gene Thayer



Ramona Holt

Montana's history, as well as educating the public," said MTHS Director Molly Kruckenberg.

The MTHS will hold individual ceremonies for each award winner at a later date. Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/3P7wRDd>

Museum Acquires Historic Russell Mantle for Upcoming Display

More than 100 years ago, Malcolm Mackay was a Wall Street stockbroker, philanthropist, and outdoorsman who fell in love with the West as a young man. His ties to Montana were strong; in 1901 he formed the Lazy E-L Ranch near Red Lodge, and he met his wife, Helen Raynor, in Montana. He would divide his time between work on Wall Street, his home in Tenafly,

New Jersey, and his Montana ranch.

The couple became close friends with Charlie and Nancy Russell. In fact, the Mackays' dedicated an entire room in their Tenafly home to showcase their growing collection of Charlie's art. They lined the walls with logs and decorated the room with cowboy gear, Indian artifacts, and big game mounts.

On the Russells' first visit, the

Mackays held a special dedication ceremony for the new room, which included Charlie and Malcolm heating branding irons in the fireplace and burning brands all over the walls and mantle. Charlie burned his signature bison skull into the center of the mantle.

In 1952, the Mackay family made their outstanding collection available to

"Russell Mantle" (cont. on p. 3)

On the Move



During the past few months, the dedicated team members at the MTHS have been moving. *A lot.*

With the renovation of the MTHS's historic home now underway, the people and most of the collections housed there have had to find new, temporary locations. While our collections have been inventoried and packed on pallets for eventual relocation into new or renovated collections storage areas, our intrepid team has had to be more creative in their relocation.

As this issue of the *Society Star* reaches you, I can think of just a handful of MTHS folks who haven't moved to a new workspace. Museum staff led the relocation charge, setting up

shop in what previously was gallery and auditorium space. Resourcefulness was required to make workspaces out of wide-open areas. Four of our programs — the State Historic Preservation Office, Outreach and Interpretation, Publications, and most of Administration — have moved to a temporary, off-site office location at 910 Helena Ave. in Helena. The Library & Archives was the last group to move, relocating to the first floor of the existing MTHS building, squeezing into some vacated office and gallery space while they wait for their new workspaces to be completed early next year.


With all this moving around, though, we can still be reached at the same address, email addresses, and telephone numbers. Thanks to the superb information technology work of Rennan Rieke, we all are still in communication and easily accessible.

Each and every MTHS team member pitched in on this monumental moving effort, from packing our individual offices to moving our computers and labeling boxes. We were led by the extraordinary organizational efforts of Jerry McGee. From meticulous schedules, to precisely labeled floorplans, and the occasional reminder to laugh, Jerry expertly led us through a complicated packing and moving process.

We're all now (mostly) settled into

our new, temporary workspaces. But we know that another move is ahead of us. For some that will happen in a few months; for others it will take well over a year. The next time we move, though, it will be to our new home in the Montana Heritage Center. And that's pretty exciting to contemplate!

Even as we've been packing boxes and setting up our temporary offices, the dedicated MTHS team has kept our programs moving forward. While our exhibits and collections are closed, we have continued to engage with Montanans in many other ways. Our public programs are still being offered, in person at the Lewis & Clark Public Library and virtually on our YouTube channel. We are hosting teachers, preservationists, and others at meetings and workshops. Many of our collections can be accessed online and, of course, issues of "Montana The Magazine of Western History" continue to arrive in your mailboxes.

Please stay in touch! Come to our programs, search our online resources, and read our fabulous publications. Remember, even though we've been on the move, you can still reach us at our regular phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing address. 

Digitized Haynes Photographs Provide World-Wide Access

The Montana Historical Society Photograph Archives staff are wrapping up their largest digitization project to date.

The well-known photographs by F. Jay Haynes are one of the foundational collections of the MTHS Photo Archives. Since the early 1980s, more

than 6,000 original glass negatives (and associated reference prints) have been available to in-person researchers in Helena.

Haynes extensively photographed the development of the Northern Pacific Railroad and Yellowstone National Park from the late 1870s

to the 1910s, including notable photography in Montana. The dream of widening the accessibility of these nationally significant photographs has long been a goal of the MTHS's photo archivists. A grant from the Montana Legislature in 2021 through the

"Haynes Photos" (*cont. on p. 4*)

“Russell Mantle” (cont. from p. 1)

the people of Montana. Through their generosity, the Montana Historical Society has built its world-class collection of works by Montana’s favorite son and foremost Western artist.

Later, the Mackays relocated their Russell room from their home in Tenafly to the Russell Cabin at the Lazy E-L Ranch. Last year, the family generously loaned the original fireplace mantle, screen, andirons, brand boards, and Windsor-style chairs to the Montana Historical Society for display in our expanded gallery of Russell art in Helena.

But the MTHS couldn’t leave the Mackays’ Russell Cabin mantle-less. As part of the loan agreement, the MTHS provided a replacement fireplace mantle for the Russell Cabin at the Lazy E-L. MTHS museum exhibit preparator Jacob Franklin spent weeks working on a near-perfect replication. Christian Mackay re-created the brand boards, and craftsman John Simmons replicated the andirons and fireplace screen.

Franklin spent a few days at the ranch in May installing the mantle in the Russell Cabin.

Franklin noted that re-creating, in the sense of making new items look old, can be a lot of fun. It takes a variety of tools, mediums, layers, and techniques to apply in one package, which is quite rewarding.

“Given the provenance of the original, I feel honored for the opportunity because I too was a young man who wanted to be a cowboy, who loves great western stories, and wants to create art,” Franklin said. “I still can’t wrangle a cow, but I connect with C.M. Russell in a fanciful way. I relate to his fervency to capture what is real both through art and his relationships.

“All in all, what I found most rewarding was the opportunity to slip in a stand-in so a family legacy of storytelling and lending a long ear in an intimate space with friends can continue for generations to come. May your story live



Jacob Franklin traced the brands, then hand scribed them to the wood surface. The branding was mimicked with an electric wood burner.

long and your fire live longer.”

Jennifer Bottomly-O’looney, the Museum Program manager, said the mantle, brand boards, and other items on the long-term loan from the Mackay family will greatly enhance the expanded exhibit.

“We are very grateful to the Mackay family for making these Russell Room components available to us for installation into our future Russell Gallery,” she said. “You can almost hear the raucous laughter as Malcolm and Charlie brand the mantle and boards by the light of the crackling fire.”

Montana SHPO Honors Preservation Champions and Model Projects

BY MELISSA MUNSON

Five preservation champions and 24 property owners were honored in early May during the Montana Historic Preservation ceremony at the Myrna Loy Center in Helena.

Every two years, the event brings together a wide range of individuals with shared enthusiasm for Montana’s outstanding heritage places and the people who help preserve them. More than 100 people attended this year’s ceremony.

The five award recipients are historian Ellen Baumler and historic preservationist Chere Jiusto (both for Outstanding Service to Historic Preservation); the Como Schoolhouse

Corporation (Outstanding Historic Preservation Stewardship, the Como School in Ravalli County); Grove & Company, LLC (Outstanding Local Preservation Project, F.M. Mack General Store in Augusta); and Fagg Family Properties, LLC and HGFA Architects (Outstanding Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Project — Governor’s Award, the Kate Fratt Memorial Parochial School in Billings).

National Register coordinator John Boughton has organized the biennial celebration since 2009.

“This preservation awards ceremony represents a significant event for us to acknowledge those places

and people that make Montana the special and unique place it is,” said Boughton, who works for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a program within MTHS charged with promoting historic preservation across the state.

In addition to the awards, owners of 24 properties from 16 different counties received their official certificate for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2021 and 2022. Delia Hagen — author of “Black Montana’s Heritage Places” — also received a certificate for approval by the National Register of the award-

“Champions” (cont. on p. 6)

“Haynes Photos” (cont. from p. 2)

Cultural and Aesthetic Project Grants Program helped transform this goal into a full-fledged digitization project.

Haynes established himself in the photography business doing contract work for the Northern Pacific in the late 1870s as the railroad built across Dakota Territory. His work with the NP took him across the northern tier of the U.S. West through Montana. Haynes’ railroad photography is vital historical evidence of the effects of a major transcontinental railroad on several regions of the country, especially Montana.

However, Haynes is best known for his work in Yellowstone National Park, which he first visited in 1881. Haynes established a photo concession in the park and photographed its natural scenery and geothermal features. His photos were undoubtedly the most viewed visual representations of the young but growing tourist attraction.

For the past two years, the MTHS Photo Archives undertook a major

digitization project to make Haynes’ photos more accessible to researchers around the world. Archival photographer Tom Ferris systematically captured the original glass plate negatives with digital imaging equipment to create high-resolution digital surrogates, an essential preservation strategy. Becca Kohl developed pre-existing cataloging information into standardized and fully conceived descriptive information for each of the nearly 3,000 Haynes digitized photos. This often involved historical research into the people and events represented in the photos.

Finally, Jeff Malcomson provided quality control and final preparation of data and image files before uploading these to our partners at the Montana History Portal (MHP), formerly the Montana Memory Project (www.mtmemory.org).

Today, about 3,000 Haynes photos are readily searchable and viewable



The town and smelting works at Wickes, Montana Territory, Dec. 1885; photograph by F. Jay Haynes.

through the online database. Users can browse the digital collection by entering “Haynes Foundation Photograph Collection” in the main search box and limiting the format of the search results to “Image.”

Digitizing Haynes photos will continue, although at a much slower pace.

MTHS staff thanks the Montana Legislature; without its help this work could not have been accomplished. The Cultural and Aesthetic grants are funded in part by coal severance taxes paid based on coal mined in Montana, which are deposited in Montana’s Cultural and Aesthetic Project trust fund. ▼▼▼

Building on the Past: 50th Annual Montana History Conference

State history enthusiasts will gather on Sept. 28-30 for the 50th annual Montana History Conference at the Delta Colonial Hotel in Helena — the same location they convened for the first time in 1974.

MTHS librarian Harriet Meloy, archivist Brian Cockhill, and the Council to Preserve Montana History organized the first Montana History Conference, naming it “Montana and the West: New Directions.”

Then, as now, the conference endeavored to explore underrepresented facets of regional history and to recognize that the past is a continuum — not a dividing line — and its people, events, successes, and failures perpetually

ally impact our present and future.

With this year’s “Building on the Past” theme, we’ll continue that tradition, bridging the past, present, and future through lectures, panel and roundtable discussions, tours, and workshops on a wide array of fascinating topics. Thursday workshops cover issues ranging from historic preservation and publishing to teacher training and schoolhouse preservation. The ever-popular Made in Montana Tour will feature visits to a historic ranch, the former Western Clay brickyard, historic lime kilns, and more.

During Thursday evening’s welcoming reception in the majestic State Capitol Rotunda, attendees will have

the opportunity to walk across the street to see how the MTHS is literally “building on the past,” with special hard-hat tours of the new Montana Heritage Center addition. The evening

“Past” (cont. on p. 6)

ABOUT US

The Society Star is published quarterly by the Montana Historical Society as a benefit of membership.

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Sunburst Woman is Montana History Teacher of the Year

Hali Richmond, a third- and fourth-grade teacher at Sunburst Elementary School in her hometown of Sunburst, Montana, is the Centennial Bell Montana History Teacher of the Year.

Richmond received her education degree from the University of Montana and is working on her master's degree there. Her first teaching positions were in one-room schoolhouses in Sunset School near Missoula and Galata School near Shelby, teaching every subject and grade level, including history.

In 2022, Richmond became part of the Montana Historical Society's Teacher Leader Program, which enlists educators to help improve social studies education across the state.

Richmond uses the MTHS fourth-grade curriculum to teach Montana history, as well as her own lesson plans. In his nomination letter for Richmond, Sunburst Elementary School principal Dan Nau said that Richmond epitomizes what every person desires in a great teacher.

"She is passionate, energetic, positive, organized and has high expectations for her students," Nau wrote. "Mrs. Richmond is an excellent educator, and we are extremely

happy to have her as an employee at Sunburst Schools."

Fourth-grade student Bree Chilton nominated Richmond for sharing information about the different tribal nations and reservations in Montana, and for the way she treats her students.

"I am Chippewa, and she let me teach some Chippewa words," Chilton wrote. "Mrs. Richmond is a most worthy history teacher of the year because I care about her, and she cares about her students."

Richmond will receive \$4,500 from event sponsors the Montana Television Network, the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers (SDMP), and The Foundation for Montana History. The money may be used for classroom materials, guest speakers, field trips, or anything that enhances student learning.

For writing the winning nomination letter, Chilton will receive 100 gold Sacagawea dollars from Judge Judy Wohlfrom of California. Each student from Sunburst who attends the award ceremony will receive a gold Sacagawea dollar from Mike Collins, president of SDMP, and his wife. Other sponsors for this project are



Hali Richmond

the Montana Historical Society and the 1889 Coffeeshouse in Helena.

The History Teacher of the Year is part of the 34th Montana Statehood Centennial Bell Award. The public is invited to attend the Nov. 8 ceremony on Statehood Day at 10 a.m., at the State Capitol in Helena. Richmond and her students will ring the Centennial Bell at 10:29 a.m., the exact minute Montana became the 41st state in 1889. ▼▼▼

MTHS Textbook Receives Excellence Award from AASLH

The textbook *Montana: A History of Our Home* is the winner of the American Association for State and Local History's Award of Excellence.

The award is part of the AASLH Leadership in History Awards, which is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation of state and local history. AASLH

is a national nonprofit, providing leadership and resources to help the history community thrive and make the past more meaningful for all people.

Montana: A History of Our Home is a new fourth-grade curriculum, which includes a student textbook and a robust, activity-based teacher's guide. According to University of

Montana education professor Matthew Schertz, the book "is the most significant Montana state history textbook ever written for elementary students." He adds that the curriculum "cultivates an experimental and creative spirit by design. Students are afforded the opportunity to study diaries, maps, advertisements, census

records, paintings, and pictures."

Martha Kohl, the MTHS Outreach and Interpretation Program manager, wrote the textbook after receiving numerous emails and telephone calls from elementary teachers asking if she knew of any Montana history curriculum that

"Award" (cont. on p. 6)

“Champions” (cont. from p. 3)

winning Multiple Property Document. One property, the Yellowstone Bighorn Research Association Camp in Carbon County, was listed at a national level of significance for its contributions to the geological sciences.

Two outgoing members of the State Historic Preservation Review Board — C. Riley Auge of Columbia Falls and Carol Bronson of Great Falls — were recognized for their service of eight years. The Review Board approves nominations before official listing by the Keeper of the National Register.

Montana Historical Society Director Molly Kruckenberg and Lt. Gov. Kristen Juras assisted in making

the presentations.

“The identification and recognition of these properties ensure they never pass into obscurity,” Juras said. “The history and architecture found in our towns and countryside represent and illustrate the story of all Montanans, past and present.”

State Historic Preservation officer Pete Brown praised his staff’s investment in each of the properties recognized, “whether it’s pursuing grants that support research for Multiple Property Documents or working with people researching their properties and drafting their nominations.” He added that “without the dedication of property owners, we



Ellen Baumler (left) and Chere Jiusto were honored in May for Outstanding Service to Historic Preservation

wouldn’t be here.”

You can view the proceedings on HGTV at <https://www.helenacivictv.org/on-demand/4544> and view photos at <https://mhs.mt.gov/Shpo/NationalReg/AwardsCeremony>.



“Past” (cont. from p. 4)

concludes across town with desserts and Indigenous short documentaries at the Myrna Loy Center theater.

Friday and Saturday conference sessions will feature a wide array of 20th-century topics such as women’s history, Indian Education for All, communism, conservation, Modernism, Chinese history, social services, and renaming monuments. Friday night’s banquet dinner will take attendees back in time for a deeper look into the history of the early West. Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Elizabeth Fenn’s lecture will discuss Indigenous warfare, hunting techniques, envi-

ronmental conditions, horse-borne interactions, and plains power dynamics through the story of a one-month period of Sacagawea’s life.

Organizer Christine Brown noted that each year, many great partners make the Montana History Conference possible, including perennial partners the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation and new supporters Helena’s Valley Bank and Opportunity Bank.

“Just as with the first conference in 1974, we hope this 50th gathering of professional and non-professional historians will encourage deeper study and interpretation of Montana’s past, while suggesting new directions for

scholarships,” Brown said. “We could not pull this off without fantastic support from the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the Charles Redd Center, The Foundation for Montana History, Vital Energy Chiropractic, A&E Design, Historical Research Associates, Inc., the Bureau of Land Management, and artist Becky Eiker.”

Full conference information will be mailed in early July and online registration will open soon after. For hotel information and registration details, visit <https://bit.ly/MTHSHistoryConference> or email christine.brown@mt.gov.



“Award” (cont. from p. 5)

targeted fourth-grade students.

“While the MTHS has long had an active ‘hands-on history footlocker program’ that addresses various topics, we didn’t have anything comprehensive,” Kohl said.

“The need for a textbook was clear, especially once the Montana Board of Education approved new social studies standards, requiring that all fourth graders be able to explain how Montana has changed over time.”

The AASLH awards pro-

gram was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout the United States. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards not only honor significant achieve-

ment in the field of state and local history, but also bring public recognition of the opportunities for small and large organizations, institutions, and programs to make contributions in this arena. Learn more at: www.aaslh.org.



Employee News

Laura Marsh has joined the Outreach and Interpretation team as its Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist. In this position, she is responsible for developing community partnerships, overseeing public programs, and working with educators across Montana to improve social studies education.

For the last year and a half, Marsh — who has a master’s degree in anthropology from Stanford University — worked as a compliance officer at the State Historic Preservation Office, where she demonstrated her dedication to protecting Montana’s cultural resources. In addition, she teaches Native American Studies at Carroll

College. Before returning to Helena, where she grew up, Marsh worked as an archaeologist and as the director of the language department of the Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya in Lima, Peru. Her unique combination of experience, skills, interests, and temperament make Laura the perfect fit for this new position. ▼▲▼

High School on Wheels Wins Montana History Cup

The Montana Historical Society awarded the Montana History Cup for most accurate Vigilante Day parade float to the Capital High School students who created “High School on Wheels,” re-creating a train car that temporarily housed classes after the 1935 Helena earthquake destroyed Helena High.

Each of the students who participated in researching and building the float received \$100. They are Brooklyn Brisko, Madison Burda, Megan Carpenter, Kadin Creek, Kaiden Elliot, Zoie Jorgenson, Tizer Kamierowski, Morgan Kaufman, Derrick LeRette, Sam Post, Lilly Rippengale, and Sophie Schulenberg.

The parade was held in Helena on May 5. ▼▲▼

Recognizing MTHS Volunteers

BY KATIE WHITE

The Montana Historical Society could not function as it does without the help of its 80 volunteers.

Known collectively as the Friends of the Montana Historical Society, these dedicated volunteers perform vital work for all six departments of the Society: Administration, Museum, Research Center, Outreach and Interpretation, Publications, and the State Historic Preservation Office. Together they perform a wide variety of tasks, from ironing tablecloths to transcribing oral histories, from cataloging photographs to preparing for receptions, from providing educational tours to digitizing records, and from conducting research to assisting in the Museum store.

Every year the Society recognizes its dedicated Friends with years-of-service awards. This year’s honorees are:

25 years — Sandy Runkel and Charlotte Sanddal

20 years — Bonnie Bowler

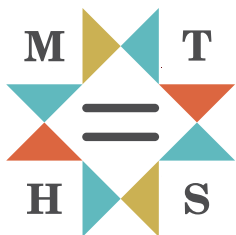
15 years — Judy Dorsch, Connie Erickson, Doreen Filson, and DiAnne Mantz

5 years — Ellen Baumler, Mike Connolly, Janet Harper, and Kathleen Turner

The generosity and dedication of the Friends of the Montana Historical Society is truly remarkable. All of Montana owes them a debt of gratitude for their hard work on behalf of the Treasure State. ▼▲▼



A dozen Capital High School students took first place for their Vigilante Day float.



MONTANA

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Big Sky~Big History

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The Store is Open!

Even though the Montana Historical Society Museum is temporarily closed, the store remains open as your one-stop shopping for Montana gifts.

We offer a wide variety of books relating to Montana history, Western history, Native American history, Western art, and Charlie Russell. We also feature prints, cards, jewelry, pottery, Native American beadwork, huckleberry products and souvenirs, with a focus on Made In Montana items.

Store hours are:

- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, and Friday
- 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday
- Closed weekends and holidays.

Shop anytime at mths.mt.gov