

**2015 Preservation Award for Outstanding Preservation Advocacy
Montana History Foundation**

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Originally established in 1985 as the Montana Historical Society Foundation, the mission of the Montana History Foundation from the beginning has been to support the preservation of the rich legacy of Montana's past – "one story, one community, one project at a time." Dr. Michael Malone of MSU-Bozeman served as the Foundation's first president. In its first decade of existence, the Foundation established itself as an active and successful partner to the Montana Historical Society. Its efforts were many and varied, including raising and providing funds for the Society's press publications, museum acquisitions and exhibits, library programs, and public education and outreach.

During the late 1990s, the Montana Historical Society Foundation expanded its focus to include working with other historic properties and entities in Montana. The Foundation proved instrumental in advocating for the purchase of Virginia City and Nevada City from the Ford Bovey Trust in 1999 and it continues to

support the ongoing preservation and interpretation efforts in these two most-historic places.

To avoid confusion with the Montana Historical Society, a state agency, and to reflect its expanding role of support for other Montana historic assets, the organization changed its name to the Montana History Foundation in 2001.

Today, the Montana History Foundation serves history organizations across the state of Montana. In addition to the Montana Historical Society and the Montana Heritage and Development Commission that oversees Virginia City, MHF is actively involved with the Original Governor's Mansion Restoration Society, the Museums Association of Montana, and the Montana Preservation Alliance.

Most recently, in 2012 the Montana History Foundation established the Preserve Montana Fund, a grant program supported largely through donations to assist in the preservation of Montana's history and historical places. Project categories included oral histories, collections and artifacts, training and education, and, of course, buildings and structures - including one-room schoolhouses. *Visions and Voices – Montana's One Room Schoolhouses* author Charlotte Caldwell works

with the Foundation to distribute all revenues from her popular book to efforts to stabilize and restore one-room schools across Montana.

Over three granting periods, the Montana History Foundation has helped 57 preservation projects with \$233,305 in grant funds. Their support has touched 71 towns in 36 counties.

The commitment of the Montana History Foundation to the Montana Historical Society, to Virginia and Nevada Cities, and to small communities and organizations across the state through the Preserve Montana Fund, has literally changed the landscape of historic community preservation in Montana. As they celebrate thirty years of protecting our state's history, we take this opportunity to say thank you, and recognize the Montana History Foundation with a 2015 State Historic Preservation Award for Outstanding Preservation Advocacy. We welcome Board of Trustee Chair Chris Warden and Acting Director Emily Hibbard to accept the award.