



Montana History in 9 Easy Lessons

Join Montana Historical Society (MHS) staff members and other subject matter experts in a two-month exploration of the last twelve thousand years of Montana history. [Every Wednesday, 3:30-4:30, between April 4, 2018 and May 30, 2018](#), a presenter will discuss a major period in Montana history. Individually, these programs will offer compelling discussions of specific topics relating to Montana's past; together they will provide a big-picture overview of the state's rich and fascinating history. Come for one—or come for all. OPI Renewal Credits will be available. For more information call 444-4741 or email klambert@mt.gov.

[April 4: Pre-Contact Montana](#) What can archaeology tell us about the earliest inhabitants of the place we now know of as Montana? Join Jessica Bush in an exploration of the Anzick Burial, the Hagan Site, and other significant archaeological discoveries that reveal glimpses into life here from 13,000 to five hundred years ago. **About the speaker:** Jessica Bush is the State Historic Preservation Office Review and Compliance Officer for the Montana Historical Society. She received her Master's degree in Anthropology from the University of Montana, where her primary area of interest was pre-contact plains archaeology.

[April 11: Early Contact Period](#) Long before Euro-Americans reached the area now called Montana the effects of their presence on this continent transformed lives for the region's first peoples. Stan Wilmoth will discuss ways that horses, disease, and European trade goods impacted life here before the arrival of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. **About the speaker:** Stan Wilmoth started working for the Montana Historical Society in 1993. For much of those 24 years he has served as the State Archaeologist in the Historic Preservation Program. He has a particular interest in places of unique concern to tribes such as Traditional Cultural Properties, e.g. the Badger Two Medicine and Sweet Grass Hills. He received his Ph.D. in 1987 from Univ. of Calif., Riverside and taught at UM—Helena for more than 20 years as adjunct instructor for Anthropology and Native American Studies.

[April 18: Gold!](#) The discovery of gold and the creation of Montana Territory was a fundamental turning point in Montana history. Ellen Baumler will share some of her research into the daily life of the men, women, and children living in the territory's early mining camps. **About the speaker:** Ellen Baumler is the Interpretive Historian at Montana Historical Society. She received her PhD from the University of Kansas and has been at the Montana Historical Society since 1992. She has authored dozens of articles and several books, among them *Beyond Spirit Tailings*, honored with an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. She is also the editor of *Girl from the Gulches: The Story of Mary Ronan*, a 2004 Finalist Award winner of the Willa Literary Awards.

[April 25: Industrial Montana](#) The arrival of railroads to Montana Territory in the 1880s paved the way for the growth of large-scale extractive industries (particularly copper mining), immigration, and urbanization. Paula Petrik will discuss the creation (and long shadow) of Montana's urban, industrial culture and landscape. **About the speaker:** Paula Petrik is professor emeritus from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. She received her PhD from SUNY-Binghamton in 1982 and MFA from the University of Montana. She is the author of *No Step Backward: Women and Family on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* and co-editor (with Elliott West) of *Small Worlds: Children and Adolescents in America, 1850-1950*.

[May 2: Disintegration: Montana's Tribal Nations in the Early Reservation Years through the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act](#) Between 1879 and 1934, the United States implemented a policy of assimilation aimed at dismantling tribal sovereignty and extinguishing tribal identities. One aspect of this policy was the allotment in severalty of reservation lands, which checkerboarded Montana's Indian reservations. This fragmentation of the physical landscape not only transferred a large percentage of treaty lands into white ownership but also generated long-lasting social, economic, and legal

repercussions for tribes that intensified their cultural disintegration. **About the speaker:** Laura Ferguson earned her M.A. in Native American Studies at Montana State University. Since 2010, she has worked as an instructor of Native American Studies and Native American literature at Carroll College and Helena College and as a writer/editor of Indian Education for All education resources. Ferguson is a co-author of *Beyond Schoolmarm and Madams*, a collection of biographical sketches of Montana women. She currently works as an associate editor at the Montana Historical Society.

May 9: Homesteading Boom and Bust, According to Professor Emeritus Robert Swartout, homesteading brought about the greatest single economic and demographic boom in the history of Montana. Swartout will examine the special forces that brought about this boom as well as the unique factors that produced the most dramatic "bust" in Montana's storied history, before posing this question: Should historians consider the homestead collapse of the early twentieth century the most significant watershed event in all of Montana's history?. **About the speaker:** Robert R. Swartout, Jr., is Professor Emeritus of History, Carroll College, Helena, Montana, where he taught both United States and East Asian history from 1978 to 2014. His many publications include *Mandarins, Gunboats, and Power Politics: Owen Nickerson Denny and the International Rivalries in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980); *Montana Vistas: Selected Historical Essays* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1982); and *Bold Minds and Blessed Hands: The First Century of Montana's Carroll College* (Helena: Carroll College Press, 2009). In 2006, he received the Outstanding Educator's Award from the Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees. In early 2013, he was awarded the Governor's Humanities Award by the State of Montana and Humanities Montana.

May 16: Montana and the Cold War The Cold War had a profound impact on Montana. Although distant from Washington, D.C., and Moscow, the state's wide-open spaces and sparse population made Montana an important part of the country's Cold War strategy. Along with the nuclear missiles based here, Montanans took an active role in defending the security of the United States through Civil Defense groups like the Ground Observer Corps. **About the speaker:** Jon Axline is a graduate of Montana State University and has worked at the Montana Department of Transportation since 1990. He is the author of a number of books and articles, including *Conveniences Sorely Needed: Montana's Historic Highway Bridges*, *Taming Big Sky Country: The History of Montana Transportation from Trails to Interstate*, . and "Operation Skywatch: The Montana Ground Observer Corps, 1952–1959," which appeared in the Summer 2017 issue of *Montana The Magazine of Western History*.

May 23: Modern Revolution and Counterrevolution: Montana from the late 1960s through the 1990s Montana transformed from a conservative rural state to a more progressive urban one from the late 1960s through the 1970s, revolutionizing its state government through the adoption of its new constitution and reorganization of its executive branch. Under Democratic governors and legislatures, the state enacted numerous laws to protect the environment, establish a coal severance tax and trust fund, modernize its state institutions, and grant public employees to the right to collectively bargain. Journalist Chuck Johnson will outline the major events of this period, as well as of the more conservative era that followed in the 1980s and 1990s.. **About the speaker:** Chuck Johnson is a Great Falls native who covered most of this era as a journalist, working for 44 years as a state political and government reporter for the Associated Press, *Great Falls Tribune*, Lee Newspapers and *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*. . He has a bachelor's degree in journalism and an M.A. in history from the University of Montana and currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Montana Historical Society.

May 30: Tribal Sovereignty in the Self-Determination Period Tribal Sovereignty is a frequently misunderstood concept. Steve Lozar will give a short explanation on 'Traditional' Indian sovereignty and its evolution and application. He will then follow with a discussion of the benefits and disadvantageous of perceived sovereignty in the Self-Determination Era. **About the speaker:** A member of the Salish, Kootenai, and Assiniboine tribes, Steve Lozar received his BA and MA in anthropology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He served as director of education for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and taught anthropology at Salish Kootenai College for twenty-five years. As an elected member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council, Lozar was active in negotiating the CSKT water compact and the tribes' the purchase of the Kerr Dam. He has served on the Montana Historical Society's board of trustees since 2005.