

To: Montana Legislative Services Division
Fm: Bruce Whittenberg, Director
Re: BIENNIAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE

August 29, 2016

The Montana Historical Society, chartered in 1865 by the Montana Territorial Legislature, continues to pursue with passion the mission of preserving Montana's past and cultural heritage through the collection and preservation and access to fine art, artifacts, photographs and documents while educating Montanans and visitors through our programming, publications, Research Center, online resources and of course, *Montana's Museum*.

Key Themes

"A Society of your own creation..."

On February 2, 1865, the Historical Society of Montana was created by the Territorial Legislature and signed into existence by Territorial Governor Sidney Edgerton. The Montana Historical Society has been collecting, preserving and providing access to collection for over 150 years. In recognition of this milestone, the MHS completed robust schedule of public programs, symposia, publications, exhibits and celebrations, including major events on February 2, 2015 in the Rotunda and February 6, 2016 at the Historic Montana Club.

A Vital Educational Institution

First and foremost, the Montana Historical Society is an educational institution. The archives, collections and publications are accessible to all for purposes of education, research, exploration, genealogy or enjoyment. Our work in classrooms and public forums throughout Montana is expansive.

Increased Engagement and Access

A key to our success will be to continually strive to engage more and more Montanans and visitors in our work. More audiences, more access to collections, more engagement, more appreciation for our rich, fascinating history. This will be accomplished in no small measure to significantly increased digital access through web and application-based digital programs.

Strategic Issues 2015-2016

Outreach to All of Montana

- The 42nd Annual Montana History Conference was held in Bozeman, MT, September, 2015, and the 43rd Annual Conference in Hamilton, September. 2016.
- Over 900 teachers are engaged through the MHS Listserv, History Footlocker program and teacher workshops and classroom assistance.

- The “Richest Hills” program, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, involved 80 teachers from Montana and across the nation in summer of 2015 in a week-long exploration of Montana’s rich mining history, including visits to Bannack, Virginia City, Butte and Helena.
- The Montana history textbook, *Montana, Stories of the Land*, has been distributed in every county in Montana, over 12, 000 copies now in classrooms. Supporting classroom materials are easily available online and through teacher workshops conducted around the state.
- The MHS works closely with the Office of Public Instruction in implementing the “Indian Education for All” program.
- Dozens of free public programs are provided at the MHS and through our Outreach and Interpretation program across the state.
- The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has facilitated listings on the National Register of Historic Places in each of Montana’s 56 counties, and celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act in 2016.
- The SHPO continues to upgrade the State Antiquities Database, which now includes over 50,000 listings across Montana.

Marketing and Development

- We have adopted an integrated approach to marketing and development. We don’t have the luxury of separating the functions with additional staff. By working hard on public relations and marketing strategies, we build the brand and the visibility for all programs, fund-raising and audience-building endeavors. Plans and structure have been put in place to provide fund-raising and membership development capabilities to support MHS acquisitions, growth and capital needs, without adding additional staff, and with involvement of MHS Trustees.

Digital Strategies

- Expanding publications to eBooks, over 20 books now available electronically. E-publishing supplements our audience for publications, but does not replace print publishing.
- Montana The Magazine of Western History, the award-winning journal of western history, published continuously since 1951, is being indexed for online access and searchability.
- The web-based Montana Women’s History Project culminated in the publication of the book, *“Beyond School Marms and Madams,”* released spring, 2016.
- We are using social media widely to expand the reach of our content, growing those audiences significantly. We are currently on six social media platforms and host five blogs.
- Thanks to a private donation we have been able to build video programming capability in our Craney Studio and have over 220 videos available on YouTube through montanahistoricalsociety.org, and broadcast statewide on TVMT.

Security and Preservation of Art, Artifacts and Archives

- Even as all of our collection storage facilities, the MHS building, Scriver Center and “Highway Storage” are near capacity, we continue to work to improve conditions for the priceless collections. We have added security features at the Scriver Center, reorganized collections in all locations and continue the lengthy task of cataloging the enormous museum collection and constantly deal with climate control issues on our 66 year old building.
- Completed a modest project to improve and expand the storage capacity of museum collections. The new shelving provides better storage conditions for our collections, including high-value fine art.
- With a private grant as seed funding, the Montana Historical Society will be establishing the Montana Film and Media Archives to collect, preserve and provide access to important video and audio materials that chronicle the history of our state.

Montana Historical Society Renovation and The Montana Heritage Center

- The process of planning for expansion of the Montana Historical Society began before the 2005 session. During that session, the Legislature approved \$30 mil in authority and authorized \$7.5 mil in bonds for the project. The plans have been drafted and approved and we are following the Action Plan presented to the Governor and supported by the Board of Trustees at their January 19, 2012 meeting. We are prepared to raise significant private funds to supplement an appropriation or bonding by the 2017 Legislature. This is a critical issue as the deficiencies of a 66 year old facility housing world class collections are becoming more apparent and nagging.

Significant Acquisitions

Montana's Museum:

- National Cash Register from the Norris Bar, purchased by the bar in 1909 (2014.02)
- Horace Hastings Hand's chaps, early day freighter homesteader, Dewy, MT. He arrived in MT in 1872 (2014.15) (Gift of Shirley Groff)
- 1905 maternity dress worn in Wibaux, MT (2014.20)
- Glacier Park tricycle used to deliver mail inside the Park, 1930s-40s (2014.33)
- Jeannette Rankin mailbag used for sending official Congressional correspondence, ca. 1917-1919 (2014.67)
- MT Women's Mural *Women Build Montana*, by Hadley Ferguson, 2015 (2015.01)
- Reverend Ellis's fur hat and gloves, ca. 1884 (2015.48) – these go with Reverend Ellis's Columbia Chainless Bicycle (2002.45.01) which he used during his travels through the state establishing Sunday schools.
- Polio braces and therapeutic bath used at old Shodair hospital, ca. 1940 (2015.59)
- Marietta and John C. Peters Collection - artworks by Senska, DeWeese, King Kuka, Pogzeba, Dawson, Perkins, 2015.62
- Untitled (Samuel W. Langhorne and his dog and horse walking in the Helena Valley after hunting a deer) painting by DeCamp, 1897 (2015.68)
- Denney Neville's collection of Stan Lynde materials (2015.80)
- E.S Paxson paintings – three study sketches for the Paxson murals in the State Capitol ca. 1912, and a painting of an unidentified Indian ca. 1913 (2016.01)
- Teddy Blue Abbott Family branding iron in the shape of a "2" from his Three Deuce Ranch, ca. 1890-1930 (2016.09)
- OGM rocking chair that was used in the sitting room, 1913 (2016.25)
- Untitled William Standing painting of a Homestead Cabin in Winter, ca. 1930, along with the original cancelled check for purchase of \$5.00 in 1932 (2016.31)
- Sioux double bustle, ca. 1930 (2016.37)
- Items related to Linda Minich's work as a Journeyman Electrician for Montana Power, the only woman to have worked in this position (from 1973-2008) (2016.40)
- Original art by John Clarke, sculptures, sculptures in process, paintings, prints, artist's palette, portraits of John Clarke, books

MHS Research Center:

- Bud Lake and Randy Brewer Collection of Historic Crow Photographs includes 1281 black and white photographic prints, 372 chromolithograph and printed post cards-27 real photo post cards, 1 glass collodian, 72 glass negatives, 103 negatives, 118 stereographs, 7 folio prints, 4 lithographic prints, 27 photogravure, and 1- 16mm film. Includes views of Native Americans tribes (mostly Crow), Sun Dance ceremony, white buffalo, Little Big Horn Battlefield, Billings (Mont.), Montana & Wyoming landscapes, wildlife, rodeos, 20th anniversary of Custer Battlefield, and film entitled "Children of the Long Beaked Bird" and prints from Joe de Young negatives; Photographers included: Richard Throssel, Orlando S. Goff, William Wildschut, Frank J, Haynes, H. R. Locke (Locke & Peterson), David F. Barry, Baumgartner Studio, Fred Miller, Norman Forsyth, Joseph Henry Sharp, Frank Rinehart, T. A. Morris, Kenneth Roahen, Robert W. Griffing, Thomas N. Bernard, Fr. Peter Paul

Prando, Joseph K. Dixon, Stanley Morrow, R. R. Doubleday, Hillers, H. B. Calfee, Whitney & Zimmerman, and W. R. Cross.

- Fred E. Miller Photograph collection includes 135 original glass plate negatives, 704 vintage prints, copy prints, and archival materials from early plains photographer Fred E. Miller. Miller served in various government positions at the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Crow Reservation from 1898 to 1912. An adopted member of the Crow Tribe, Miller, whose Crow name was Boxpotapesh, photographed the Crow people over two decades. His images captured the last years of the traditional plains life of the Crow and a culture as it was forced into change. The collection also includes research files on Miller gathered by his granddaughter, Nancy O'Connor.
- Montana Territorial Legislative Assembly (1st: 1864) Records specifically, the original, enrolled edition of Council Bill 15 creating the Montana Historical Society on February 2, 1865, signed by Governor Sidney Edgerton.
- Home Ground Radio Interviews collection (1999-2014) includes a selection of interviews recorded for the Home Ground Radio show hosted by Brian Kahn broadcasted between 1999 and 2014. Home Ground Radio is a half-hour, weekly interview program broadcasted on more than 50 public radio stations throughout Montana and northern Wyoming and KGHL in Billings. Home Ground Radio Interviews collection consists of 147 digitized recorded interviews all conducted by Brian Kahn as a part of the Home Ground Radio program. Collection consists of selected interviews conducted between 1999 and 2014. Topics covered in the interviews range from the economy, religion, education, the judicial system, wildlife, medicine, the timber industry, conservation, agriculture, among other topics.
- John W. Bonner Photograph collection includes 299 black and white and color photographic prints and 1 black and white 16mm motion picture film and nitrate film negative. Includes views of John W. Bonner's career in the U.S. military during World War II and as Governor of Montana, Malta flood of 1952, and family views: military views include portraits of Gen. Bonner in uniform and receiving medals, troops, equipment and battle results; governor career views include Gov. Bonner's inauguration, ceremonies, Legislative tea with wife Jo Bonner, speeches, special visit by President Harry S. Truman to Montana, and celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the Custer battle and Golden Canyon Festival. 16mm film label reads: Campaign Speech "Oil in Montana" John W. Bonner.
- James and Lucy Holt Photograph collection includes 25 photographic prints, including views of the homestead life of James and Lucy Holt and their daughters and son-in-laws in Fergus County, Montana. Scenes show a family croquet game, wood gathering for winter, James Holt playing a fiddle, farm animals, family dogs, and school houses with children, harvesting in 1912, tar-paper shacks and other homestead buildings. Most photographs dated circa 1914-1919.
- Bollum and Bell Family Photograph collection includes 517 photographic prints and one album, including many scenes of family and friends of the Bollum family of Carter and Havre, Montana, and the Bell family of Oilmont, Kalispell, and Lakeside, Montana. The central figures in the family photos are sisters, Vione and Beryl Bollum, their parents, Harold and Lela Bollum, Vione's husband, Hubert J. Bell, their children, Marion and Norma, and their ancestors on both sides. Hubert Bell's work owning and operating automotive service stations in the 1930s and 1940s is documented, as well as the later Bell Manufacturing Company. Vione Bell's work with the Montana Federation of Women's Clubs in the 1960s and 1970s is also extensively documented. The album includes 86 pages with 267 photographic prints focused on the Bollum family from about 1914-1918, just prior to Lela Bollum's death from influenza in Nov. 1918, showing activities around Carter, Montana, including bird hunting and many children's activities, including a Tom Thumb wedding.

Publications:

- Northern Pacific Railroad Company. *The Wonderland Route to the Pacific Coast*. St. Paul: Northern Pacific Railroad, 1885. [Book]
- Great Northern Railway Company (U.S.). *Opening of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, Montana*. St. Paul: [Great Northern Railway Company], 1913. - Two-sided sheet promoting registration for the land opening on the Fort Peck Reservation, Montana. Includes information on travel to and from Montana on the Great Northern Railway.

- Wheeler, Olin D. *Indianland and Wonderland: Once Roamed by the Savage Indian and the Shaggy Buffalo, Now Dotted by Ranches, Towns and Cities and Cropped by Countless Flocks and Herds: A Region of Wonderful Phenomena, Reached by the Northern Pacific Railroad.* St. Paul: Chas. S. Fee, General Passenger and Ticket Agent, Northern Pacific Railroad, 1894.

On behalf of the MHS Board of Trustees and our fine staff, we thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Whittenberg", is centered on a light beige rectangular background.

Bruce Whittenberg
Director
Montana Historical Society