

The MONTANA Archivist

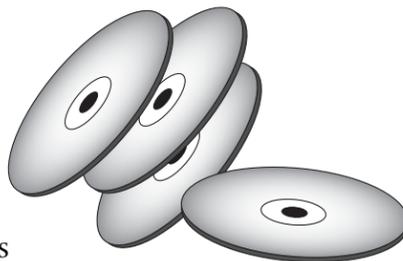
SUMMER/FALL 2007, VOL. 8 NO. 2

MONTANA NEWS

The Montana Historical Society (MHS) and the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) are currently sponsoring a project to capture Montana's records of historical and genealogical value. In 1993 the two joined forces to microfilm marriage records in each county. A complete copy of the microfilm that was produced is available at the Historical Society and is used heavily by many of our researchers. Participating counties in this phase included Deer Lodge, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Hill, Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Madison, Missoula, Phillips, Pondera, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sanders, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Valley, Wheatland, and Yellowstone.

The follow-up project, which began in October 2001, concentrates on filming genealogically significant records in each county's Clerk of District Court and the Clerk and Recorder offices (ca1860's to 1950). GSU volunteers conduct the digital imaging, using their own camera and supplies. The volunteers create DVD's of the following types of records:

- Birth Certificates
- Death Certificates
- Divorces
- Probate Records
- Land Records
- School Census Records
- Tax Records
- Cemetery / Death Records
- Voter Registrations
- Any other categories that you might have to add to the list. For example, Flathead County added the jail registers and sheriff's fee books.



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Upcoming Events

October 18-20	Helena, MT, Montana History Conference
October 23-25	Oklahoma City, OK, National Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums Conference

MONTANA NEWS cont.

To date, the project has completed digitizing in Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, Jefferson, Gallatin, Ravalli, Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, and Powell counties.

Jan Hardesty, Flathead County Records Manager, recently explained the cost savings realized by using this service, "This service does not cost Flathead County anything. The volunteers have been here since the middle of March and they have already saved our county \$47,543 for having the DVD's produced and

duplicated. By the time our project is done they will have saved at least \$132,013.20 if not more."

The Montana Historical Society and the Genealogical Society of Utah are excited about this project. We believe that it is a worthwhile endeavor that will provide both preservation and access to a wide variety of Montana's historically significant records. For more information contact Karen Bjork at the Montana Historical Society (kbjork@mt.gov).

GRANT/SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SHRAB Scholarships

The Montana State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) is pleased to announce the continued availability of scholarships of up to \$1,000 to paid and volunteer staff of Montana's cultural heritage institutions to attend training, educational workshops, or courses on topics related to the management and/or preservation of historical records. Funding may also be used to bring recognized experts into an institution for consultation related to the management, accessibility, or preservation of the historical records in its care. The scholarships are made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

An application for these funds is available at the SHRAB website: http://www.montanahistoricalociety.org/research/library/rc_brdscoms.asp or by contacting Jodie Foley, Montana State Archivist, at jofoley@mt.gov or (406) 444-6779.



NHPRC Grant Opportunities

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) recently posted on their website several new and revised grant opportunities of potential interest to listserv members. The application deadline for all of these grants is October 1, 2007.

The list of grant opportunities with an October 1 deadline includes:

- Professional Development Grants (NEW): The Commission seeks proposals designed to improve the training and education of professionals in the archival and historical publishing communities. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/development.html>
- Research in Historical Records Issues Grants (NEW): The Commission seeks proposals from researchers to investigate how the public, including genealogists, historians, and other scholars, gains access to and uses historical records through on-site archival research, print editions, and online collections. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/research.html>
- Strategies and Tools for Archives and Historical Publishing Projects Grants (NEW): This grant category supports projects that develop new strategies and tools that can improve the preservation, public discovery, and/or use of historical records. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/strategies.html>
- Archives Basic Projects Grants (NEW): The Commission seeks proposals for projects that support backlog processing and collections cataloging, phased preservation, and/or collections development. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/basic.html>

- Archives Detailed Processing Projects Grants (NEW): This grant category supports detailed processing and preservation of collections of national significance. These collections should also have high research demand or substantial preservation challenges. <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/announcement/detailed.html>

If you have questions on any of these grants, please contact NHPRC staff at <http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/contact.html>.

NEDCC Scholarship Opportunity

NEDCC's Persistence of Memory conference will be held in Seattle on November 28-29.

This conference about digital preservation is funded by an IMLS grant. NEDCC is offering a few **scholarships** for diverse professionals, applicants from under-funded organizations, and applicants that serve under-represented communities. There are 12 scholarships currently available to cover the registration fee. See www.nedcc.org for more info.

WORKSHOPS/TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Montana SHRAB Workshop

In conjunction with the Montana History Conference, October 18-20, in Helena, a pre-conference workshop will be sponsored by the Montana SHRAB. The half day workshop entitled Archival Basics for the Accidental Archivist will be held October 18, 8:30-12:00. This workshop is aimed at beginning archivists, volunteers, or librarians who find themselves in the position of "archivist" without any formal training in the profession. Proper archival procedures provide safe and affective collection management, thus extending the life of the materials. The workshop will introduce the fundamentals of archival appraisal, acquisition, and access, as well as common preservation problems and the use of proper storage materials. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions from their own institutions and/or experiences. For more information see the Montana Historical Society webpage at <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org/education/default.asp>

National Conference of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums

Guardians of Language, Memory and Lifeways: Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums, is a national conference seeking to build a network of support for tribal cultural institutions and programs. This unique event brings together people who share the common goal of tribal cultural preservation. The 2007 conference builds on two previous conferences that were held in Arizona during 2003 and 2005. This project is funded by a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency serving the public by strengthening museums and libraries. Additional support is provided by the Arizona State Library and the Arizona State Museum. For more information contact Susan Feller, Conference Director, 405-522-3259.

To register, go online to www.tribalconference.org. A preliminary conference program is available at <http://www.tribalconference.org/pdf/PreliminaryProgram.pdf>.

Society of American Archivists Offers Online Courses

Two online and on-demand course are now available from SAA:

Electronic Records: Preservation Options of PDF. This seminar addresses:

- ⊙ The use of PDF/A as a preservation format
- ⊙ The limitations of PDF
- ⊙ The ISO PDF/A standard
- ⊙ Processes for converting electronic documents to PDF
- ⊙ Quality control procedures and general preservation management for PDFs

Thinking Digital...A practical session to help you get started! This session enables you to adapt your current knowledge and skills to the demands of a digital environment. You'll explore the choices that have to be made in the development of digital projects and workflows!

Discussion includes:

- ⊙ Quality choices
- ⊙ Cataloging/metadata choices
- ⊙ Management choices
- ⊙ Storage choices
- ⊙ Delivery choices
- ⊙ Digital records

For registration information see SAA website: <http://www.archivists.org>.

OUR HIGHLIGHTED COLLECTION:

*Guide to
Conrad K. Warren
Personal Papers*



Conrad K. Warren
National Park Service Website

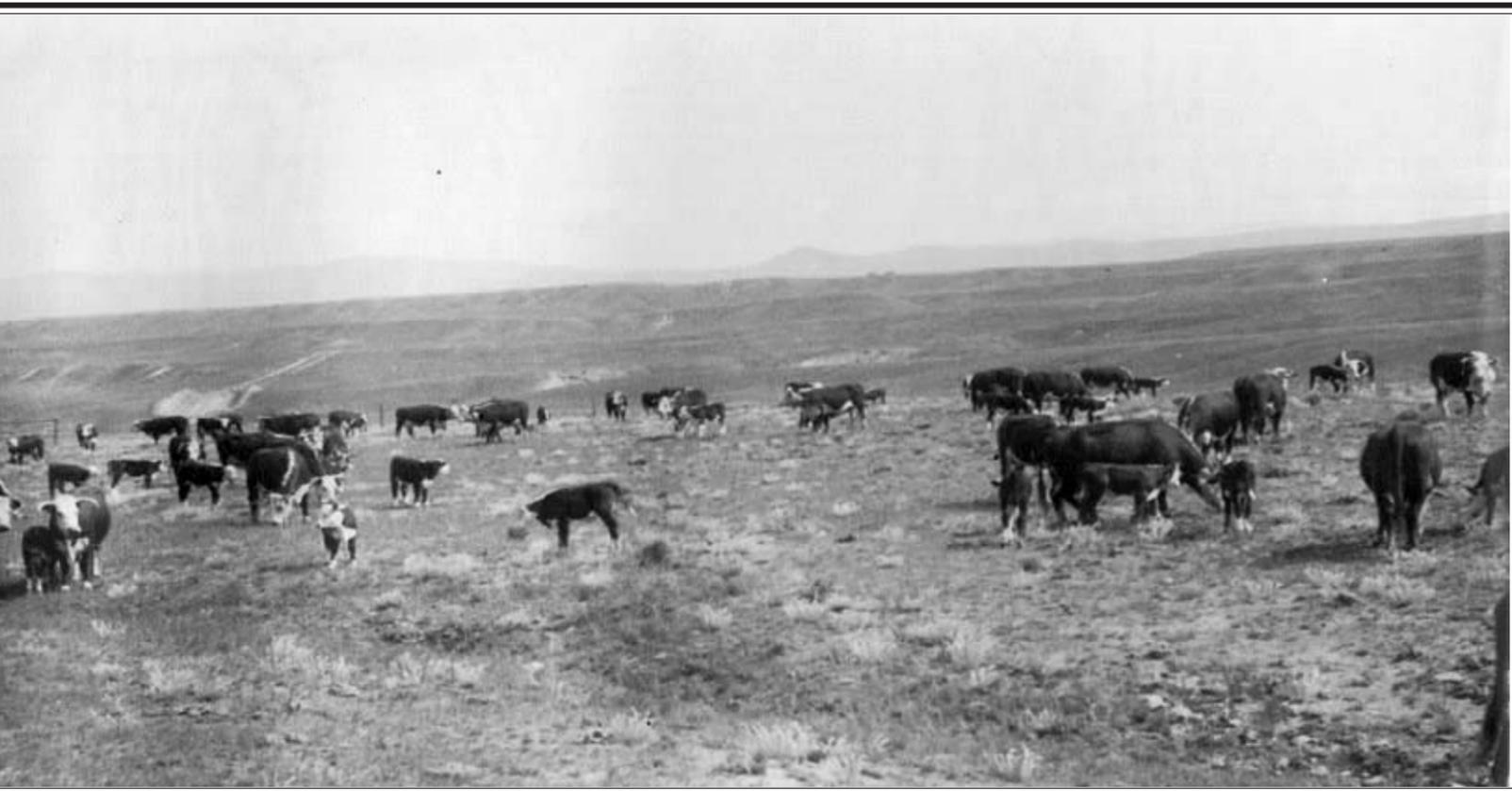
FROM THE STACKS...

Our contributor for this piece is Peggy Gow, Archivist Grant Kohrs National Park. Once the headquarters of a 10 million acre cattle empire, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site is a working cattle ranch that preserves these symbols and commemorates the role of cattlemen in American history.



The personal papers from the late Conrad K. Warren I pertain to his ranching operation of some sixty years. He was the grandson of Conrad Kohrs, one of the original owners and for whom the ranch is named. Conrad K. Warren took over the operation of the ranch in 1932 and raised Belgian horses and purebred Hereford cattle. His personal papers reflect ranching and mining activities. The papers range from 1862 to 1993 with the bulk of the papers ranging from 1932 when he took over management of the ranch and until the dispersion of his purebred Hereford herd in the fall of 1958.

Conrad Kohrs Warren was born in Helena, Montana on August 16, 1907 to Otey Yancy Warren and Katharine Kohrs Warren. His father died a few months after his birth. As a young boy, he was influenced by his grandparents, Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and his Uncle Johnnie Bielenberg. He was reared and educated in Helen, Montana, graduating



Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Park Service Website

from Helena High School in 1926. After high school he worked on a Wyoming ranch for a short period of time before going to the University of Virginia in Charlottesville for a couple of years. But he yearned to return to Montana and his grandparent's ranch. In 1930 he began working for the Conrad Kohrs Company Ranch and then in 1932 he took over as manager of the ranch. In 1940 he purchased the ranch from the Conrad Kohrs Company, which was a trust set up by his grandfather and run by the Union Bank in Helena.

Conrad Warren married Nellie Bradford Flinn in 1934. They raised two children, Patricia Nell and Conrad Kohrs Warren II.

Conrad Warren was active in several organizations including the Montana Hereford Association, American Hereford Association, the Montana Stockgrowers Association, American Association of Belgian Draft Horses, Montana Livestock Commission and Sanitary Board, Republican Presidential Task Force, and

several local county boards. He served as the president of the Montana Stockgrowers Association from 1950 to 1952. He was inducted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1989.

In 1972 after several years of negotiating with the National Park Service, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site was created. The original purchase was about 200 acres and a later purchase in 1988 brought the total acreage to over 1500 acres.

The bulk of the papers consist of financial records, ranching records, pedigrees, legal records, published and unpublished manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, and records relating to the establishment of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. There are twenty-two series of records. For an appointment to use the papers, contact the curator at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS at (406) 846-2070 X243. Our hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Considerations for Processing Collections and Managing Backlog



The following is adapted by Donna McCrea from Tom Hyry's article "More for Less in Archives" published in the Spring 2007 issue of Annotation, the newsletter of the NHPRC.

Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner's recent article, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," challenges long-held assumptions and traditions about collection processing and offers suggestions for dealing with backlogs of unprocessed records. They state that we must come to different conceptions of the words "processing" and "backlog" by allowing our standards to evolve.

Our goal should be to get a reasonable amount of work done on all of our collections, so that we no longer think of them as in a backlog. We need to move in this direction because the pressures causing our backlogs are not going away; if anything they will increase. As professionals, we are now being asked to do more than we ever have, staff resources are getting stretched ever thinner, and budgets rarely increase accordingly. Moreover, technological developments are causing our collections to become larger and more complicated, often involving many more record formats than before. In order to meet these challenges, we must work smarter and also make compromises in our traditional sense of craft by adapting our processing methods accordingly.

New methods of processing should rest on the following principles:

- *Every collection in a repository deserves some level of description.* Following that assumption, it is more important to have at least a minimal level of processing and description done on all of a repository's holdings than it is to have highly detailed work done on only a few collections, leaving the others unprocessed and thus hidden from researchers.
- *All collections are not created equal.* In a perfect world, we would process all of our holdings to an ideal level. In the real world, we must make hard decisions about which collections to process more fully and which can get by with less. These decisions should be closely linked with collection development policies, repository mission statements, and other appraisal tools and methodologies. While our most important and difficult collections still need detailed processing, the reality is that for most of us these collections likely make up only a small part of our total holdings.
- *Different parts of a collection need not be processed to the same level.* Even collections with extremely high research value often

include series within them that do not need detailed arrangement, description and preservation.

- *We process materials so that researchers can use them.* Our decisions about processing should be driven by how much work must be done before a collection can be used, as well as our impression of how much use the collection will actually receive. Time and resources are too valuable to be misspent.
- *Collections are not truly available to researchers unless they are described online.* At the least, a collection-level record should be created for each collection and placed in at least one venue that allows online discovery. In Montana such resources may include the Montana Shared Catalog, the Northwest Digital Archives finding aids database, the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, and/or the website of your own institution.
- *We should make our preliminary inventories available to researchers.* Ideally we would make these inventories available through the same mechanisms (online catalogs, finding aids and/or websites) that we use to make our processed collections available. In doing this, we may need to sacrifice some of our pride in craft, but we increase discoverability and ultimate use of our materials. From a user perspective, imperfect information is better than none at all.
- *We should allow researchers access to our unprocessed and under-processed collections, unless there is a very compelling reason not to.* Such reasons include collections with materials that are restricted, either by donor agreements or by law, collections that have very severe preservation problems, or collections with major potential for theft. While there are exceptions, our default should be to make collections available whether they have been fully processed or not.

Recommended Readings:



Greene, Mark A. and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68 (Fall/Winter 2005)

Hyry, Tom. "More for Less in Archives." *Annotation* 33.2 (Spring 2007)

Johnson, Greg. "Quality or Quantity: Can Archivists Apply Minimal Processing to Electronic Records?" MA Thesis from University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Accessed online <http://hdl.handle.net/1901/413> on July 12, 2007.

Jones, Barbara. "Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access to Unprocessed Special Collections Materials in America's Research Libraries." *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 5:2 (Fall 2004)

McCrea, Donna, "Getting More for Less: Testing a New Processing Model at The University of Montana" *American Archivist* 69 (Autumn/Winter 2006)

Weideman, Christine. "Accessioning as Processing." *American Archivist* 69 (Autumn/Winter 2006)

NEW RESOURCES

• **Photographs: Archival Care and Management.** Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Diane L Vogt-O'Connor, with Helena Zinkham, Brett Carnell, Kit A Peterson

An essential tool for custodians of photographs in archives, libraries, historical societies, and similar repositories who manage photographic materials. This authoritative guide provides pragmatic techniques for each aspect of managing collections of images—from appraisal and accessioning through arrangement, description, and research use.

• **Understanding Archives And Manuscripts (Archival Fundamentals Series II)**

James M O'Toole, Richard J Cox

"This thoroughly updated version of the 1990 edition is not only the best short introduction to archives for students, new archivists, and anyone interested in archiving, but also provides the experienced archivist an invaluable summary analysis of the field's burgeoning literature and increasingly complex issues."

WEBSITES, BLOGS AND WIKIS...OH MY!

The Montana Historical Society recently launched a new resource, the Montana History wiki (see [http://](http://montanahistorywiki.pbwiki.com/)

montanahistorywiki.pbwiki.com/) The wiki is designed to assist researchers in finding the best resource for their projects or topics. The site includes materials for the casual user or the seasoned researcher—quick Montana Facts to extensive subject guides. The site is still under construction so users are encouraged to send comments or suggestions for content to mhslibrary@mt.gov



PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Copies of the Montana SHRABs manual, *Preferred Practices for Historical Repositories* are still available, free of charge. This publication is a checklist and self-assessment manual and provides information on a wide variety of management and preservation topics related to archives and museums. Copies are available from Jodie Foley at (406) 444-7482 or jofoley@mt.gov. Additional copies of the SHRABs other publications, including *So You Have a Box of Papers* and the quarterly newsletter are also available.



Cowboys Grant-Kohrs Ranch
National Park Service Website



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