

# MONTANA ARCHIVIST



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### Student Archivist Program 2017: Apply Now!

Applications are now being accepted to participate in the Student Archivist Program during the summer of 2017. Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, this program unites a master's student in archival studies with a heritage organization to complete a 10-week intensive internship. The host institution gains the assistance and expertise of a professional archivist, and the student gains real world experience...a win-win for everyone! Past participants have included museums, local governments and libraries. The work completed has included collection processing and cataloging, collection inventories, preservation

projects (cleaning, repairing etc.), policy and procedure creation, and workflow creation. Host institutions are asked to provide a safe/dedicated workspace, specific work goals, and information about housing. The students are responsible for securing their own housing and transportation to the worksite. The host-application form is included with this newsletter. For more information, contact Jodie Foley [jofoley@mt.gov](mailto:jofoley@mt.gov) or 406 444-7482.

*"We are very pleased the Frontier Gateway Museum was awarded a Student Archivist... Our archives will now be searchable by computer and our records more detailed, because of the work the Student Archivist did. We're grateful for her many hours of work."*  
2016 host, Frontier

### Archives BLITZ! Program 2017: Application Process Now Open

The SHRAB is pleased to announce a new grant opportunity. The Archives BLITZ Program provides funding, training and support for one heritage institution to host a processing BLITZ. So what is a processing BLITZ? It is a week-long backlog reduction

project, planned and executed by the host agency with assistance from SHRAB members and area volunteers, that focuses on processing archival collections on a high level. The brain-child of Anne Foster from the Yellowstone National Park Archives, the BLITZ concept

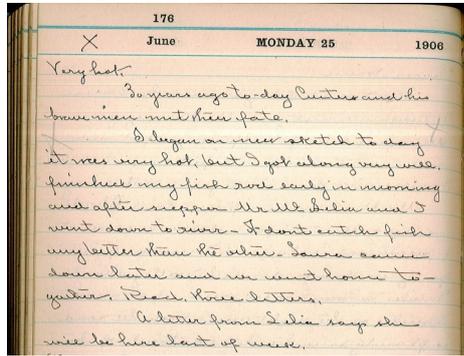
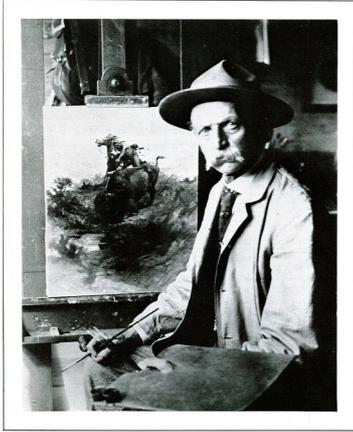
### Gateway Museum



2016 Student Archivist, Courtney Kramer

## Featured Collection:

### E.S. Paxson Diaries



The Montana Historical Society Archives recently received as a donation the diaries of renowned western artist Edgar S. Paxson (1852-1919). Paxson family members donated the diaries, which span twenty-one years of the artist's life (1898-1899, 1901-1919).

Edgar Samuel Paxson is best known for his ferocious depiction of the Battle of the Little Big Horn in his epic painting Custer's Last Stand. This seminal work spans 9 feet x 6 feet and took over two decades to complete. Based on extensive interviews with both white and Native American participants, letters exchanged with military experts, newspaper writings, and numerous visits to the site, the painting consumed the artist until its completion in 1899. Paxson's other works include portraits of Native American subjects and vast historical murals. The latter includes a series of six Montana history scenes for the Montana Senate Chambers in the Capital building in Helena, and a series of eight murals for the Missoula County Courthouse.

Paxson's artistic life drew heavily from his own life experiences in territorial Montana. Paxson, a native of New York, made his way west in 1875 and worked various jobs to make enough money to bring his family west. These jobs included working for a stagecoach company, as a outdoor guide and painter of theatrical backdrops. Paxson was able in 1878 to bring his family to Deer Lodge, Montana, where they remained for several years until they moved to Butte. In Butte Paxson was able to establish himself as a painter and opened a studio. In 1898 Paxson joined the Army to serve a year in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War.

Following his return to Missoula in 1899, Paxson's painting life took center stage as he completed "Custer's Last Stand" that year, exhibited his work in Chicago in 1903 at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, participated in the Louisiana Exposition in St. Louis in 1904 and the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland in 1905.

Paxson continued painting until his health deteriorated. He passed away in 1919. Upon his death fellow Montana artist and friend Charlie Russell stated:

"I am a painter too, but Paxson has done some things that I cannot do. He was a pioneer and a pioneer painter.... Paxson has gone but his pictures will not allow us to forget him."

### **History in the News:**

On November 16<sup>th</sup> the American Women's History Museum Commission presented their findings to Congress and the President recommending. Legislation creating the commission was passed by Congress in December 2014. In the report the commission affirms the need for a physical national museum (to be known as the American Museum of Women's History) honoring the impact and experience of women in America. The commission recommended the museum become an official part of the Smithsonian Institution and be funded with a combination of public and private funds with a fundraising goal ranging from \$150–\$180 million from the private sector. For more information about the report see <http://amwh.us/report/>

### **Training opportunities:**

AASLH Basics of Archives: online course: February 13-March 17, 2017 15-20 hours to be completed anytime during these dates Cost: \$85 members/\$160 nonmembers – Information and registration at: <http://resource.aaslh.org/view/basics-of-archives/#sthash.vqurO3LT.Mwrz452l.dpuf>

The newly revised Basics of Archives online course is designed to give organizations and individuals who are responsible for the care of historical records an introduction to the core aspects of managing and protecting historical records collections, using appropriate principles and best practices.

The course consists of five lessons: Archives and Archivists Acquiring Your Collections Processing Collections Housing Your Collections Access and Outreach The course is web-based and takes 15-20 hours to complete. There are no required times to be online. You may finish the course anytime during the four-week course period.

This course is a beginning level course designed for professional staff and volunteers of historical organizations and libraries with historical collections who have little to no experience with archival materials. Reminder: there are SHRAP Scholarship monies available for training. Contact Jodie Foley for more information at [jfoley@mt.gov](mailto:jfoley@mt.gov).

### **Highlighted Archival Resource:**

Archival "Word of the Week" from SAA: Word of the Week is a weekly email produced by SAA's Dictionary Working Group. It defines new archives terms and updates entries from the 2005. <http://www2.archivists.org/word-of-the-week> Get your word-geek on!

### **Publications:**

Highlighted SAA Publication: ***Managing Local Government Archives***, by John H. Slate & Kaye Lanning Minchew. See <http://saa.archivists.org/store/managing-local-government-archives/5412/> for ordering information.

Local government records are the records that most directly touch the lives of U. S. residents: deeds and property records, marriage licenses, school transcripts, law suits, and more, yet these records are often the most neglected records in the country. This guide is designed to appeal both to trained archivists as well as to those without formal training but find they are dealing with the administration of an archives program in a municipality, county, township or city, or a quasi-governmental entity such as a water district.

***Managing Local Government Archives*** describes and prescribes the essential elements and best practices of a local government archives program. It is intended to be both a text for classroom instruction and a self-help tool for both professional and paraprofessional archivists. It is also intended to be helpful to local governments considering the planning and implementation of a formal archives program. Coverage encompasses the various domains of archival enterprise as practiced in a local government setting:

- acquisition •appraisal •arrangement and description •preservation
- access •relationship to the records management profession, and other topics.

Help us Help You!!!

Please write us to let us know your training needs. Do you need help with preservation, accessioning, donor relations, electronic records or ?????? Let us know so we can plan our workshops to meet your needs.

You can send an email or letter to:

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**Montana SHRAB Board Members**

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Upcoming Events, Conferences and Training Opportunities 2017

- March 10-12, 2017, "Montana's Museums: Celebrating Great Expectations in Great Falls" Great Falls, Montana. See <http://montanamuseums.org/>
- March 29-March 31, 2017, Montana Library Association Annual Conference, Billings, MT See <http://mtlib.org/>
- May 17-19, 2017, Northwest Archivists Annual Meeting (joint with Inter-Mountain Archivists), Boise, ID. See <http://northwestarchivistsinc.wildapricot.org/Annual-Meeting-2017>

