



MONTANA ARCHIVIST

NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD

In this issue:

- Student Archivist 2019
- Featured Collection
- Training and Resources

Student Archivist in Glacier Country:

The 2019 Student Archivist, Hannah Ermi, started work in June in Kalispell. Hannah comes to Montana from Syracuse University in Syracuse New York where she is a Master's Degree student in the Information Sciences Program.



Hannah will be working in two locations— Flathead County and at the Central School Museum.



Ms. Ermi started her internship with the Flathead County Clerk and Recorders Office, where she will be for five weeks. The county is focused on the creation of a preservation plan for their historic electronic records, both born digital and scanned. The plan will include best practices for formats, description, metadata, and storage, and will include policies and workflows. Hannah is working with Debbie Pierson, Clerk and Recorder, and Janet Clark, Record Specialist.



Hannah will be working with the Central School Museum from mid-July through early August. There she will focus on establishing best-practices for cataloging of archival collections held by the museum. She will be reviewing and editing existing cataloging processes (within Past Perfect) to ensure they are standards based and fit best practices. She will be working with Central School Museum staff under the supervision of Executive Director Jacob Thomas.

Featured Collection: C. Owen Smithers's Photograph Collections (BSB Archives)

By Aubrey Jaap

In 2018, the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives wrapped up a two-year National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant to rehouse and catalog the C. Owen Smithers Photograph Collection—our largest photo cataloging project to date with more than 25,000 images. For more than 50 years, C. Owen Smithers used his camera to document Montana's history as it happened. Smithers first came to Butte, Montana, in 1921 after his service in the First World War. He first worked as Chief Photographer for the *Anaconda Standard* from 1921 to 1923, putting his craft to work on the streets and in the mine yards of Butte, Montana, capturing the ever-changing landscape of the dynamic city. From 1923 to 1924, Smithers partnered with photographers

Frank Ward and Tom Manning before opening his own photography studio in 1926 where he practiced commercial photography, studio portraiture, event photography, and insurance photography. Smithers documented nearly every mining activity, fire, crime, major visitor, and everyday life in Butte from 1921 to until his death in 1972. He was active in the American Legion, the Bagdad Shrine Temple, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, the Butte Press Club, and the Kiwanis Club—all of which gave him a personal role in the community. Smithers captured photos from a journalistic perspective—documenting both every day and major events.

A surprising find in the collection was a five page reminiscence detailing some behind-the-scenes moments from a selection of photo shoots. This particular passage provided context to a series of otherwise unidentified images of a group of girls tromping though the snow in their swimsuits.

"... we lined up a bunch of ushers from the Rialto and American Theatres. They had the best looking Gals in town and they were certainly a bunch of good sports. We had an early spring thaw and we took the Girls to Gregson where they have many outside hot springs. The snow was deep and we had arranged for the girls to wear bathing suits and snow shoes or skis. They would take a dip in the hot steamy water then put the skis and snowshoes on and do their stuff over the deep snow. We figured that there should be a little more action

and finally steered them to a little hill. So far the Girls had been fairly successful with their ski and snowshoeing efforts. They thought it was easy and it was on the level. We set the camera up below the short hill. Frank was ready and I steered them to the top. They got started down the slope and found that they were only amateurs on the darn things and there was a mix up on the hill after they got started down. They ended up at the bottom in a tangle of legs, arms, screaming, and yelling in the deep snow and we sure got some out of the ordinary movie pictures. We got a bonus for that job."



C. Owen Smithers with his camera in hand. C. Owen Smithers Photo-

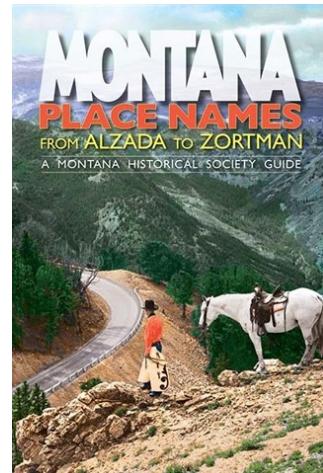


Three usherettes pose for the camera. Smithers.22.067.03,

Montana History Resources

- **Montana Place names:** see <http://mtplacenames.org/>

Use this interactive map to explore the stories behind the names of Montana towns and cities, geographic features, parks and battlefields, properties on the National Register of Historic Places, and more. A companion site to the Montana Historical Society Press book, *Montana Place Names from Alzada to Zortman*, written by MHS staff and drawing on the expertise of historians from around the state.



- **Montana Historical Society YouTube station:** see <https://www.youtube.com/user/MtHistoricalSociety/videos>

This station features historic films, recorded presentations and the popular series Montana History is 9 Easy Lessons. You will want to check back regularly for new content!



- **There's an App for that! ExploreBig mobile app:**
see <https://explorebig.org/>

This free mobile app helps you discover Montana's rich cultural resources. Curated by the Montana Historical Society, ExploreBig shares the history and architecture of selected buildings, neighborhoods, and cultural sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation. The app's mobile markers reproduce National Register signs placed at the sites themselves as part of a program, funded through the state's accommodations tax, to improve public knowledge and promote historic preservation.



An Old Time Chuck Wagon About 1885 (L.A. Huffman, MHS)

Training Opportunities: Webinars!

- **AASLH (American Association of State and Local History):**

Choosing a Collection Management System: Is your organization planning on acquiring a Collections Management System (CMS)? This webinar will help you plan the process whether you are acquiring a CMS for the first time or changing to a new one. You'll learn about the important steps in putting together an RFP and how to prepare for a transition into a new system.

Speakers Shelia Carey and Jessica Jenkins are co-authors of the forthcoming Technical Leaflet: *Choosing a Collections Management System*. Webinar participants will receive a copy of the Technical Leaflet. July 30, 2019, 3:00 - 4:15 pm EASTERN (Remember to adjust for your time zone); \$40 AASLH Members / \$65 Nonmembers

- **Council of State Archivists:**

Webinars include emergency preparedness, advocacy, projects planning and more. Most are available on YouTube. For more information see listing at <https://www.statearchivists.org/programs/videos-and-recordings/cosa-member-webinar-recordings/>

- **NAGARA (National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators)**

Managing Change for Positive Outcomes After a brief introduction of the general challenges of managing change positively, Ellison will share a variety of challenges including the stresses of moving and a change of work environments. This webinar will also address the challenges of digital change. The broader focus, however, will be how to encourage one another with the good repercussions of responding to change in a positive way. August 1, 2019

Simple Audit Tool: Tracking, Inventorying, and Auditing Content on Preservation Storage Join us to learn how the Simple Audit Tool works, how GW uses the tool in practice in its preservation workflows, requirements for use, and comparisons to other tools and strategies. August 13, 2019

When the Going Gets Tough... Cultural resources are found in government offices, archives, museums, libraries, historical societies, and other collecting institutions. When disaster strikes a community, recovery of these very institutions is crucial for continuity of government and for maintaining the community's identity, resilience, and economic vitality. September 5, 2019

- **SAA (Society of American Archivists)** see online calendar at https://mysaa.archivists.org/nc_upcomingevents for current offerings.



Early auto racing in Livingston, MHS 940-229

Upcoming Events, Conferences and Training Opportunities 2019

Local/Regional

June 24, “Making it Real: A Workshop for Elementary and Middle School Teachers”, Helena, MT.

Sept. 26-28, “Keeping Up With The Past”, Montana History Conference, Helena, MT

National

July 18-20, NAGARA Annual Conference, St. Paul, MN

July 31-Aug. 6 ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2019: TRANSFORMATIVE! Austin, TX

Montana SHRAB Board Members:

- **Jodie Foley, Montana Historical Society**
- **Aubrey Jaap, Butte Silver Bow Archives**
- **Anne L. Foster, Yellowstone National Park**
- **Heather Hultman, MSU, Bozeman**
- **Kathryn Kramer, Charles M. Russell Museum**
- **Kathleen Mumm, Madison County**
- **Eileen Wright, MSU, Billings**

2019 MONTANA BLITZ PROGRAM
Host Institution Application

The Montana State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) is pleased to announce an on-site assistance program for cultural heritage institutions in Montana. The Blitz Program provides funding and support for a week-long processing event to be held at a cultural heritage institution with significant archival collections, a proven need for assistance and a well-organized processing plan that includes collection descriptions, specific goals and guidelines.

Participating institutions will be responsible for overseeing local advertising for the program, soliciting local participants, providing a dedicated workspace for attendees, providing workflow guidelines, and information about local housing options for participants. SHRAB members will assist in these efforts and provide guidance and participate as processors in the Blitz. The Blitz should be planned for and completed by October 15, 2019. This program is made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). Application DEADLINE: July 23, 2019.

Return completed form to:

Montana Historical Society
c/o Jodie Foley SHRAB Coordinator
225 North Roberts
Helena MT 59620
or via email to jofoley@mt.gov

Applicant Name: _____ **Institution:** _____

Mailing Address:

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____ **Email:** _____

Questions: Please limit answers to 2 pages

What is your institution's annual budget? How many FTE (full time equivalent) paid employees does your institution have? How many FTE (full-time equivalent) volunteers does your institution have?

Describe the records you would like to see processed during the Blitz. Please be specific as to type (series), significance, extent and current condition.

How do you plan to promote the Blitz and find participants?

Please complete and attach a one-page project description that includes specific goals to be accomplished by the Blitz. (This may include but need not be limited to linear feet processed or inventoried, finding aids completed, guidelines and procedures established, online access/description, and/or cataloging entries created).

2020 MONTANA SHRAB STUDENT ARCHIVIST PROGRAM
Host Institution Application

The Montana State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) is pleased to announce the continuation of an on-site assistance program for cultural heritage institutions in Montana. A graduate level student archivist will be chosen to each provide up to 400 hours of archival project assistance to a Montana heritage institution over the summer of 2020 (June to September). The student will provide assistance based on specific goals set by the institution and may include archival surveying, collection processing, cataloging, basic conservation, archival basics training, creation of finding aids and creation of online inventory/content access options. Participating institutions will be asked to provide a dedicated workspace for the student, information about local housing options, and provide workers compensation insurance.

This program is made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

Application DEADLINE: February 15, 2020.

Return completed form to:

Montana Historical Society
c/o Jodie Foley SHRAB Coordinator
225 North Roberts
Helena MT 59620
or via email to jofoley@mt.gov

Applicant Name: _____ **Institution:** _____

Mailing Address:

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Questions: Please limit answers to 2 pages

What is your institution's annual budget? How many FTE (full time equivalent) paid employees does your institution have? How many FTE (full-time equivalent) volunteers does your institution have?

Briefly outline your institution's experience with historical records. Include any special projects that your institution has worked on or in which you are currently involved.

How would the Student Archivist's work fit your institutions goals/mission?