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Montana
Historical Society

**MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF TRUSTEES'
HERITAGE KEEPER & HERITAGE GUARDIAN AWARD**

NOMINATION FORM

ABOUT THE NOMINEE

Name of Nominee: Extreme History Project

Address: P.O. Box 5019, Bozeman, MT 59717-5019

Phone Numbers: 406-224-0731

E-mail: info@extremehistoryproject.org

ABOUT YOU

In case we need more information about your nominee.

Nomination Submitted by: Representative Laurie Bishop

Address: 211 S. Yellowstone St., Livingston, MT 59047

Phone Number: 406-223-1122

E-mail: bishopforhd60@gmail.com

Date Nomination Submitted: March 15, 2019

Return completed form, narrative & support documents **by March 16, 2019**

to:

**Heritage Keeper Awards Chair
Montana Historical Society
P.O. Box 201201, 225 North Roberts
Helena, MT 59620-1201**

Or e-mail to: Joy Lewis, jlewis@mt.gov , or FAX to: 406-444-2696.
For information call: 406-444-1799

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HERITAGE KEEPER & HERITAGE GUARDIAN AWARD**

NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Please see the attached nomination letter and narrative.

1. Contribution(s) to Montana history—please describe the project or on-going service within Montana's historical community that has been accomplished by the nominee. (Limit 500 words)

2. What are the particular strengths and impacts of the Montana history goals the nominee has achieved? What impact has the work accomplished had on the community/intended audience? (Limit 500 words)

3. Describe the nominee—provide a short biographical sketch/history of the nominee, including: length of involvement in service; effectiveness of service; level of prior recognition; and degree of commitment to the general concepts and highest goals of the historical community. (Limit 500 words)

4. Attach Supporting Documentation—i.e. news articles, commendations, letters of support. (Limit - three documents)



March 7, 2019

Dear Heritage Keepers Review Panel,

The Extreme History Project has become a staple of Bozeman public history through its various offerings of historical content such as its popular lecture series at the Museum of the Rockies, its downtown historic walking tours and its original plays like *Who Killed John Bozeman*. The Bozeman Area Community Foundation has been proud to support this energetic organization which offers historical experiences to locals and tourists alike by making history come alive. Extreme History has made an immeasurable and permanent impact on the Bozeman community by reminding Bozeman residents of their shared history and engaging new-comers into the historical significance of their newly adopted home.

Extreme History is an important voice for historic preservation in Bozeman. By educating the public through Bozeman Preservation Advocacy Group's First Friday Sack Lunch series, and by offering the public workshops and presentations on historic preservation and local historical properties, The Extreme History Project has made a significant contribution to the appreciation of Bozeman's historic neighborhoods.

Extreme History has also contributed new information on Bozeman's under-represented communities such as the historic Chinese and African Americans communities that once thrived in Bozeman. These offerings broaden the appeal of Bozeman's history and represent our growing diversity.

The community of Bozeman, and the Bozeman Area Community Foundation, has watched this organization grow into a vital contributor to the life and vitality of the city. The Bozeman Area Community Foundation enthusiastically supports the nomination of The Extreme History Project for the Montana Historical Society's Heritage Keepers Award. Their hard work and diligence in bringing history to the public deserves such recognition. If you have any questions, please reach out to me at bridget@bozemanfoundation.org or at 406-587-6262.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bridget P. W" followed by a horizontal flourish.

Bridget Wilkinson
Executive Director
Bozeman Area Community Foundation
406-587-6262

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TOBIN MILLER SHEARER,
CHAIR
 MISSOULA

March 1, 2019

Dear Heritage Keepers Review Panel,

It is an honor to recommend the Extreme History Project for the 2019 Heritage Keeper Award.

Frankly I don't know how Marsha Fulton, Crystal Alegria, and their many volunteers accomplish all they do with creativity, a strong commitment to public humanities, and belief that historical study should go beyond the clichés and stereotypes to make us think more deeply about western settlement. The Extreme History Project keeps delivering cutting-edge, thought-provoking, engaging programs that challenge our assumptions about Montana's past.

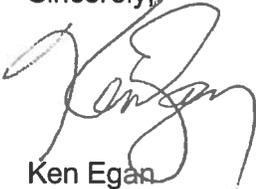
My organization, Humanities Montana, has supported many of those projects with grant funding, and for very good reasons: The proposed projects are fully thought-out, accessible to the public, and path-breaking. We provided, for instance, a fellowship to support Fulton's and Alegria's research on the first Crow agency, research that will result in a much-needed book about that overlooked historical chapter. More recently we supported a series of public-facing workshops focused on issues such as doing meaningful historical research in the Bozeman area.

But these examples only scratch the surface of the Extreme History Project's work. Humanities Montana often looks to their offerings as models of new kinds of history, new kinds of programming. Even a more traditional setting such as a lecture series at the Museum of the Rockies breaks new ground. I've had the good fortune to present two talks in that series and have been in awe of the full houses and lively question-and-answer that follow a talk. EHP welcomes diverse and challenging presenters, once again asking citizens to leave the familiar trails for the underreported, concealed, or forgotten destinations.

Fulton and Alegria also go and above beyond to partner with other history projects and programs. Consider their presence among the heritage groups in Bozeman, or their participation in the upcoming Public History Conference at Montana State University, or their lively presentations at the annual Montana Teachers' Conference. They are actively encouraging new kinds of historical thinking among teachers, scholars, and students across the state.

It's tempting to describe the Extreme History Project as the little engine that could, but it's not a little engine. It's a big engine, a game changer, a risk taker, a path breaker. Montana is so lucky to benefit from the original offerings of this unique organization. The Extreme History Project deserves recognition with the Heritage Keeper Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Egan', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ken Egan
Executive Director, Humanities Montana
311 Brantly, Missoula 59812
406 243-6022

https://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/dailyfeatures/history-fans-seek-support-to-preserve-bozeman-s-past/article_3d01002e-813c-50f0-8bba-fd4e35ea926e.html

History fans seek support to preserve Bozeman's past

By Gail Schontzler Chronicle Staff Writer Sep 3, 2016



Marsha Fulton and Crystal Alegria, Co-Directors of the Extreme History Project, pose for a photo outside the Bozeman Hotel. The hotel was built in 1890 to make Bozeman more “cosmopolitan.”

[Buy Now](#)

Rachel Leathe/Chronicle

Bozeman is blessed with a colorful history, from the cowboys, gold miners and rascals who started the frontier town in 1864, to the beer brewers and madams who first made downtown a destination.

Crystal Alegria and Marsha Fulton, founders of the nonprofit Extreme History Project, love local history and have worked to share it with newcomers and longtime residents alike.

They started a series of history walks — through Bozeman’s cemetery, downtown, former red-light district and neighborhoods. They also put on last year an original play, “Who Killed John Bozeman?”

Now the two history buffs say they’re worried that fast-growing Bozeman may be losing sight of the importance of preserving historic buildings that give the city its charm and stand as reminders of its unique past.

The city's historic preservation officer's job has been left vacant for many months, they said, and new building projects appear to threaten older neighborhoods.

"We feel historic preservation should be in the conversation so it doesn't get lost in the shuffle," Alegria said.

"There's definitely some indication that historic preservation isn't a priority," Fulton said. City commissioners don't feel the community has rallied behind historic preservation, and they'd like to see whether more people get involved, she said.

To raise historic preservation's profile, they are organizing free public events, called "Tea and Revolution," Sept. 12 to 17 – a lecture at the Museum of the Rockies, a public panel discussion and a workshop on how people can get involved.

People skeptical of historic preservationists question whether it's an elitist, not-in-my-backyard concern for a small group who already own expensive, historic homes, like those on Willson Avenue, and forget that young families need affordable housing.

Fulton said fixing up older buildings could actually be a cheaper way to provide lower-cost homes and rentals. Small, more affordable northside homes are being replaced by pricier new homes, they said.

"We want new stuff, too," Fulton said. But, she added, "It's the character of Bozeman history, the built environment, that's attracting people here – the charm of downtown, the charm of old historic buildings."

"We have to have a mix of old with the new," Alegria said. "If we get rid of the old, we'll lose our sense of place ... of shared history."

"It's what makes us Bozemanites," Fulton said.

On Saturday afternoon, Bekah Schields, a history and anthropology grad, gave a "From Tents to Town" tour through downtown Bozeman for honeymooning couple Steve and Kathleen Arehart of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Schields' tour started at Soroptimist Park at Rouse Avenue and Main Street, where the city's 1888 Opera House and City Hall building once stood – torn down after damage from the powerful 1959 Hebgen Lake earthquake.

Across the street still stands the Bozeman Hotel, built in 1890 when the city was competing to be the new Montana state capital and needed a cosmopolitan hotel.

Schiels walked down the street, pointing out buildings constructed by cattle baron Nelson Story, brewers Spieth and Krug, and blacksmith Frank Harper, as well as the former brothel above the International Restaurant, the Carnegie Library, Avant Courier newspaper building, Ellen Theater and Baxter Hotel.

“Bozeman has grown an incredible amount — we’re lucky we have historic buildings preserved,” Schiels said. “I still love to come downtown. You can’t say that about a lot of cities.”

The main event of “Tea and Revolution” week will be a community panel discussion on Thursday, Sept. 15, at 7 p.m., at Townshend’s Bozeman Teahouse on Main Street. Panelists will include an architect, city planner, builders and a historic home owner.

On Monday, Sept. 12 at 6 p.m., Montana State University associate professor Janet Ore will speak at the Museum of the Rockies on “Building community through historic preservation.”

On Saturday, Sept. 17, a daylong workshop on “Historic Preservation for Dummies” will be held at the Gallatin History Museum. All events are free, but registration is required for the Saturday workshop. The Western Lands & People Initiative at Montana State University, National Humanities Alliance and Townshend’s Bozeman Teahouse are co-sponsors of the events.

Extreme History’s summer walking history tours are winding down, but the “Ghosts of Bozeman’s Past” cemetery tour will be held today, Sunday, at 4 p.m. Tours cost \$10 for adults and \$7 for seniors and students. More information is online (www.adventurethroughtime.org).

Gail Schontzler can be reached at 406-582-2633 or gails@dailychronicle.com.

Gail Schontzler

Gail Schontzler covers schools and Montana State University for the Chronicle.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

[Everyday People](#) [Photo Galleries](#) [Photos from Readers](#) [Videos](#)

First grizzly bear sighting of 2019 reported in Yellowstone



Everyday People: The free throw shooter



Bozeman sets stage for affordable housing plan



County-supported bill for nonpartisan elections moves forward in Legislature





Montana State Legislature
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Laurie Bishop
Minority Caucus Chair
House District 60

March 15, 2019

Dear Ms. Smith and Board Members,

It is my honor to nominate the Extreme History Project to be a recipient of the Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees' Heritage Keeper award for 2019. I offer the following information to support my nomination.

1. Contribution(s) to Montana History—the project of on-going service within Montana's historical community that has been accomplished by the nominee.

The Extreme History Project (XH) has made history relevant in Montana and around the world on [social media](#) since 2011. Its programs and projects have focused on preservation, education, commemoration and collaboration, engaging the public and building community around shared history.

Preservation:

I first became aware of XH's work in my community as they worked to both preserve and interpret [Fort Parker, the first Crow Agency](#). Their important work with the Archaeological Conservancy resulted in the purchase and preservation of the site of 2015. Extreme History has also recorded and preserved over 15 [oral histories with Crow Tribal members](#).

In 2016, XH's research, fieldwork and documentation provided a digital map and database of the historic [Nevada City Cemetery](#), including accounting for its 358 unmarked Graves. Local Bozeman history was preserved through the **McDonald Family Oral History Project**, documenting one of Bozeman's earliest African American families.

Education:

Extreme History has managed extensive outreach and education through multiple venues that help them reach folks from in and out of Montana.

- Their [free monthly lecture series](#) at the Museum of the Rockies has run since 2012 and continue to enjoy great attendance.
- They participated in and helped design in the 2013 [MSU Virginia City Field School](#).

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- [Historic Walking Tours](#) have run in Bozeman since 2013 and feature under-represented histories such as Bozeman’s Chinese, African American, and working class communities as well as historic women’s stories.
- Extreme History’s 2013 [Memories Along the Madison](#) offered participants a day-long bus tour of sites along the Madison River.
- Local history came to life through two original theatrical presentations, [Who Killed John Bozeman](#) in 2014 and **Fort Parker: In Their Own Words** in 2015.
- Extreme History commandeered Bozeman’s **Pecha Kucha** for a special [“History Night”](#) in 2017 and “popped-up” on Bozeman’s Main Street in 2018 for **Pop-up History** surprising the public with historic tales.
- Their formal educational experiences include the MSU Wonderlust Course [Bozeman History: The Rest of the Story](#) and [Extreme Learning for Teachers](#) with the Yellowstone Writing Project.
- If you tune into local Bozeman radio, you might catch Extreme History offering one of its [Cemetery Stories](#) which can also be found as a blog
- In 2016, Extreme History initiated **Tea and Revolution** in partnership with Townsend’s Tea House and the Western Lands and Peoples Center at MSU to bring a week of educational events about Historic Preservation.
- 2018 saw the introduction of the **Making History Relevant Workshop Series** which offered three day-long workshops on researching historic structures, genealogy and archival research.

Commemoration

In 2014, XH organized a year-long series of events to remember [Montana’s Suffrage Centennial](#) including readings, lectures, online book club and costumed participation in Bozeman’s Sweet Pea Parade and the state commemoration at the capital. Extreme History has advocated for the adoption of [Indigenous People’s Day](#) to replace Columbus Day in Bozeman and partnered with Marsha Small of the MSU Native American Studies Department to write the first draft resolution that the City of Bozeman adopted in 2016. They have also worked during multiple legislative sessions to partner with other advocates towards the State adoption.

Collaboration

Extreme History was among the founding members of two professional groups in Bozeman; **The Gallatin Heritage Consortium**, which it founded with Angie Weikert of the Museum of the Rockies and the [Bozeman Preservation Advocacy Group](#) , which advocates for the protection of historical properties.

2. The particular strength’s and impacts of the Montana history goals the nominee has achieved & the impact that the work they’ve accomplished had on the community / intended audience.

The Extreme History Project excels by making history relevant to the current issues surrounding our community, state and world. Extreme History’s mission is to bring historical context to understanding the contemporary issues that have created our current condition. The Extreme History Project has proven its ability to recognize these historical foundations and to bring this information to the public in exciting and engaging ways.

Extreme History recognized the challenges faced by Montana's Native communities struggling through historic generational trauma. Their work to bring the history of Fort Parker, the first Crow Agency to the public hopes to validate the experiences of Montana's Indigenous people. Extreme History's extensive research and data collection has resulted in uncovering 1000+ historical documents and over 15 collected Tribal oral histories. By working with The Archaeological Conservancy, the site of the original agency has been purchased and preserved, offering tangible national recognition to a long denied history.

The Extreme History Project recognized the injustice done to Native peoples by honoring a man who caused massive slaughter of indigenous peoples. Partnering with the MSU Native American Studies Department, Extreme History took action to support Native students in their pursuit of Indigenous Peoples Day which was adopted by the City of Bozeman and Montana State University. XH continues to support and advocate for the cause at the state level.

The Extreme History Project recognized the need to promote women's voices and tell women's stories. XH's lecture series has consistently focused on women's history whether it was the story of Hazel Hunkins, Billing's own national suffragist, the women who helped create Yellowstone National Park, or the histories of Montana midwives, XH's lecture series and walking tours have brought many unknown women's stories to the public. In 2014, XH honored Montana's suffragists who worked to bring the vote to Montana women in 1914. A year-long series of events honored and remembered this history, reminding new generations of women's struggle for suffrage.

Extreme History believes that history can unite communities when people see themselves reflected in the building blocks of history. With this in mind, Extreme History has researched and brought to light the little-known stories of Bozeman's Chinese and African American communities as well as its working class community.

Extreme History believes that a shared history creates strong community bonds and the landmarks of that history serve to remind the public of this bond. XH has been at the forefront of Bozeman's historic preservation efforts at a time when increasing growth threatens Bozeman's historic landscape. By co-founding the Bozeman Preservation Advocacy Group (BPAG) and providing lectures and workshops on historic research and preservation, Extreme History has and continues to advocate for the preservation of Bozeman's shared heritage. Extreme History's walking tour program was designed to introduce new community members to Bozeman's unique history and to encourage their active participation in preserving Bozeman's past to continue these efforts into the future.

The Extreme History Project has brought these stories to the public in a variety of fun and engaging ways from bus and walking tours, to theatrical performances, to history experiences such as the popular "History After Dark" where participants have the opportunity to meet Bozeman's historical figures. XH is always looking for unique ways to share history with all ages.

3. Description of the nominee including: length of involvement in service; effectiveness of service; level of prior recognition; and degree of commitment to the general concepts and highest goals of the historical community

The Extreme History Project was founded by Marsha Fulton and Crystal Alegria when they discovered a need for historical context in understanding modern conditions. The project was initially designed around their research on Fort Parker, the first Crow Indian Agency, which they hoped would offer historical validation to Montana's Native communities. As their work progressed, they found more opportunities to make history relevant for their community through research, lectures, tours, programs and projects. They incorporated and received 501(c)3 status in 2012 and launched their website and social media platforms which expanded their reach globally. The organization now includes ten board members, professionals from across the history and archaeological communities, student interns and community volunteers who support Extreme History's mission of making history relevant for community, society and policy.

Extreme History's popular lecture series has been the entry point for the Bozeman community to connect with their work and has presented over 70 lectures since 2012. Over the years, lecture attendance has grown to almost full capacity of the 200 seat Hager auditorium at the Museum of the Rockies. Many of the lectures have been recorded for Facebook live and [archived on our website](#) for those unable to attend. Lecture Series attendees are added to their mailing list which currently numbers over 1500 names. XH's social media platforms have over 2600 followers from around the globe and offer daily posts of historical value as well as programs and events.

Attendance at XH's historic walking tours in Bozeman has also steadily increased since beginning in 2013. The tours attract mostly locals with some tourists, which means they reach the Bozeman community. Bozeman locals also attend our popular workshops and classes which often fill to capacity. It's clear that The Extreme History Project is reaching its target audience as program attendance and support increases.

Extreme History has been recognized by the Montana Preservation Alliance for an "Outstanding Tribal Preservation Project" in 2012 and by the City of Bozeman for "Outstanding Achievement in Preservation Stewardship" in 2018.

The Extreme History Project has an on-going commitment to make history relevant for the Bozeman community, the state of Montana and the world as it expands its reach through social media. Future projects include the publication of a book on Fort Parker, the donation of the Fort Parker research archive to the Crow Tribal Nation, publication of the Historical Activist Handbook, which details how to do "Extreme History" in your community, more online engagement through courses and workshops, new walking tours and programs. You can bet that The Extreme History Project is always working on new, creative ways to engage the public in history.

Thank you for your consideration,



Representative Laurie Bishop

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