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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 Damaris Cherry Hoadley

Address P.O. Box 137 Lima, Montana 59739

Phone Numbers 406-276-3398

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**ABOUT YOU**

In case we need more information about your nominee.

Nomination Submitted by Cherry Long and Lynnette Carlson

Address 729 US HWY 12 W Helena, MT 59601 #805 Joslyn #343 Helena, MT 59601

Phone Number 406-449-4705 406-431-3301

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto:jlewis@mt.gov) , or FAX to: 406-444-2696.  
For information call: 406-444-1799

## Heritage Keeper and Heritage Guardian Award

### Nomination for Damaris Cherry Hoadley

As this nomination is reviewed, Damaris Cherry Hoadley will be 91 years old. She is the "go-to" person in southwestern Montana for history. Throughout Damaris' life she has compiled a massive amount of material on Lima's history and spent many hours visiting with the areas older citizens, carefully recording all the history she could before it disappeared.

She receives numerous calls and letters asking about individual's family histories and the history of the area, which she answers verbally and with copied documentation. Almost always she can add local stories from research and oral histories. To facilitate these requests, she even bought a copy machine to make answering these queries easier.

Most recently Damaris saw the completion of a lifelong dream of a written history book of the Red Rock Valley, focusing on Lima in Beaverhead county. This two hundred-plus page book covers the years from 1850-1945. This volume features chapters including the following topics: Coming of the White Man, Native American presence, Freighters and Wagonmasters, Coming of the Railroad, Building of the Town, Settlers, Agriculture, Natural Disasters, Development of the Educational System, Celebrations and Entertainment, Water and Road Development, Construction of the Lima Dam (s), Settlement of Dell, The cemetery and The War years. This book was contributed to by Richard Gosman and assisted with by Jack Hutchison. A dedicated committee saw to publishing and distributing 500 copies.

In order to track local burials, she has served for numerous years on the Cemetery Board. This was not enough so she read through all the available microfish at the museum, library and the Historical Society. She studied old newspapers and made copies of all the obituaries. This effort resulted in a book of obituaries and headstone photos of all the local burials. Family History graduate students from Ricks College came to her home and copied this entire book. Also, she loaned it to the Montana Historical Society Research Center so they could record a copy of it.

Damaris is an originating member of a group that has now published a local newspaper for nine years. Every two weeks she has researched and written 2-3 articles for this publication. That total 500-700 articles! For several years, Damaris and her husband, Lew, also folded, stuffed and mailed the copies to subscribers locally and in numerous different states.

The purpose of the paper is to facilitate community togetherness by gathering, sharing and protecting stories of the people of the past and of the present. Damaris' articles have covered: "The Cemetery Series, Early Settlers, Railroad History, Early Schools and Early Churches.

Damaris and her husband, Lew were privileged to participate in at a historical archeological site at Lima Reservoir in September of 1988. They unearthed prehistoric artifacts, including a woolly mammoth tooth that measured 13" long. These "Merrell Site" items are on display at the Museum of the Rockies

At Christmas time 2010, The Montana Standard Newspaper requested remembrances of Christmases gone by. Damaris wrote an article on the Great Depression Christmas that was the Front Page story! Just an example of another way she has preserved life in harder times.

## Particular Strengths and Impacts

I think one of Damaris' strongest attributes are her philosophy. This is a quote from an article she wrote to encourage participation of others in saving history.

"As the population shifts to more concentrated areas, the history of the small, but once thriving towns is being forgotten and eventually lost. Pioneer diaries and manuscripts are going out of state and records from our past are being destroyed, sold or given away; taken from us forever.

It is not only a privilege but an obligation, of local citizens to retain the history of their locale by preserving pictures, family stories and local events." (Feb 2015)

Damaris loves to hear and record the history of this small railroad and ranching area. Native American history also came to be important and she and Lew hunted and collected Indian artifacts. They then learned more and more about the settlement of Lima area by digging and collecting antique bottles. Some of the other items they now have amassed are some 5000 antique postcards, railroad memorabilia, antique buttons and glassware,

A special trait is that Damaris has a commitment as a preservationist. She sees that particular items are returned to appropriate family members and organizations. One example was a school teachers desk from Nicolia Creek School. She purchased, renovated and returned it to the family from that rural one room school.

Also Lew and Damaris have given presentations to classrooms in Lima, Dillon, Butte and Helena. These have been showing arrowheads and teaching Indian lore. They have also shared their collections of antique bottles, glassware and postcards with various church, school and civic groups.

Lew and Damaris have now been married 72 years and both celebrate March birthdays, turning 93 and 91.

It is my honor to suggest the Montana History Keepers and Heritage Guardian Award be presented to this Lima Legend.

## Biographical Sketch

### Damaris Cherry Hoadley

Damaris Cherry Hoadley is the third of eight children born to John Dee and Rachel Cherry. She spent her early childhood in Menan Idaho. The family moved to Lima when Damaris was 14 years old. She worked at the Lima Rexall Drug Store all through high school and graduated from Lima High School in 1946. It was while working at the drug store she became intrigued with stories the old timers would tell her about themselves, their families and Montana. She fell in love with history of the area and vowed it would not be forgotten.

It was when this new family moved to Lima and the five Cherry kids enrolled in school that Damaris met Lewis Hoadley.

They dated when he came home on leave from the Navy in January 1944, and corresponded for the duration of World War II. On September 1, 1946, four months after Lew was discharged, they married and have spent their lives in Lima. They raised four children and made an impact on the community, working hard to build the Lima Community Swimming Pool, supporting the PTA, VFW and many other projects.

Throughout the years, as a couple, they have hiked, hunted, collected railroad memorabilia, antique bottles, postcards and arrowheads. As they developed friendships and heard life stories of the pioneers of the area, they saw the importance of recording all they could of this fantastic history.

Written notes, oral histories, pictures of headstones, buildings, and people helped solidify the history. They have read microfilm, visited museums and Historical Societies, as well as driven and walked all of the area they have been able to record and preserve.

Lew worked for the Union Pacific Railroad for nearly twenty-nine years before being forced into retirement by heart disease. Damaris founded the School Lunch program and loved the association with the students. She perfected and cooked for up to 120 kids daily. When their lives changed directions, they raised weaner pigs commercially, ran an upholstery shop and made and sold hundreds of unique birdhouses. They still live in the house they bought 63 years ago.

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P.O. Box 108  
Lima, MT 59739

March 2, 2019

Heritage Keeper Awards  
Guardians of Local History  
P.O. Box 201201  
225 N. Roberts  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Montana Friends,

Wouldn't it be wonderful if every town and city in Montana had a person or group who was dedicated to saving the history of their community?

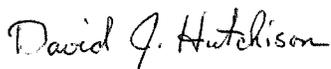
In Lima, Montana, we are so grateful to have just such a person. Her name is Damaris Hoadley, and she has spent a goodly part of her life in researching, compiling, salvaging, and restoring much of the past of our community and the rural areas around it.

In September 2018, Damaris became a published author when "Welcome to Lima" was published by Stoney Dale Press. It was the culmination of the many years of work that she and co-author Richard Gosman (now deceased) spent combing through archives in area museums, newspapers and county court houses from Helena to Dillon and beyond. This material was added to the vast accumulation of historical material that Damaris had collected throughout the eight decades that saw her graduate from Lima High School, marry a Lima boy who served in WWII before retiring many years later from the Union Pacific, raise a family of four children, and serve for multiple years as the leader of the school lunch program.

Damaris and Lewis have become the "go to" sources of information about the Lima area. Both are now living in their ninth decade, being together for over 70 years and still graciously handling the affairs of the Lima Cemetery and greeting those who come to their door, requesting information about the "old days."

I heartily recommend Damaris Cherry Hoadley for your consideration as a Guardian of Local History for the Heritage Keeper Awards.

Sincerely yours,

  
David J. Hutchison

Educator Lima Schools

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March 12, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the nomination of Damaris Cherry Hoadley for the Heritage Keepers Award, Guardian of Local History.

I have known Damaris for many years. She loves the history of the Red Rock Valley which includes Lima, Dell, Red Rock and the Centennial Valley. She formed friendships with some family members of the early day settlers of the area, and took the time to visit with them and learn the histories of those families. She wrote much of the information down to preserve it for future generations. They also shared some of the written information they had recorded, with her.

Approximately fifteen years ago she started going to the Historical Society in Helena and making copies of old newspaper articles that included local events and obituaries of this area. She spent numerous hours, days, weeks, years of her time and personal dollars doing further research on the history. She contacted members of families that had left the area, also. Everything she has done has been carefully researched and verified for accuracy of dates, names, and places. She has preserved the history!

In addition, Damaris has been a founding member of, and major contributor to the Red Rock Review, a bi-monthly newspaper published by a local editorial staff. Within the recent past she has shared her collection of items by spearheading the formation of the Red Rock Valley History Keepers organization. As a result a book containing that historical information from 1805 through 1945 was published last year. We, as a community, are grateful. The publication is evidence of her unprecedented dedication to the project.

The support and encouragement of her family and husband, Lew Hoadley, has been such a blessing for her. She and Lew have made some local and personal history by celebrating seventy-two years of marriage in September of 2018.

It is without reservation that I recommend Damaris and ask that she be given full consideration for this award.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean Huntsman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jean Huntsman

*Lew & Damaris Hoadley*  
*9-8-19*



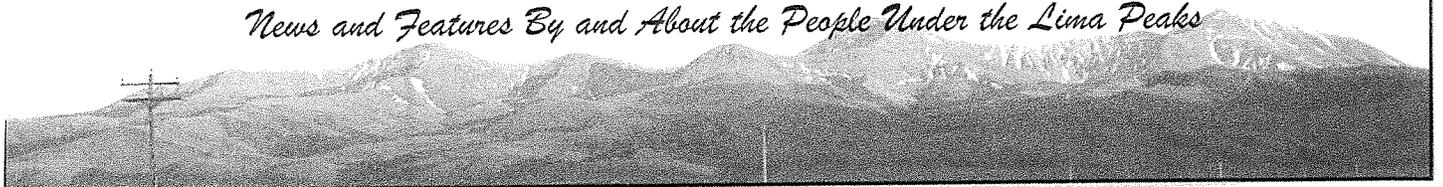
*Damaris Cherry Hoadley*



Red Rock River Publications

# The Red Rock Review

*News and Features By and About the People Under the Lima Peaks*



*Letterhead for bi-weekly paper*