

## Rimrocks, Rivers & Rolling Plains

Mark your calendars now because you do not want to miss the forty-fifth Annual Montana History Conference in Billings, September 27–29, 2018. There are many treats in store for the history enthusiasts who will gather in the “Magic City” for *Rimrocks, Rivers & Rolling Plains: History from the Yellowstone Valley*.

From the opening session, which will feature longtime Billings journalist Ed Kemmick examining the role of newspapers as the “first draft of history,” to the closing session with Billings Mayor Bill Cole, who will discuss the role of history in economic revitalization, the program is packed full. Presenters will discuss the role of railroads in community development and daily life; the Bearcreek Cemetery, where casualties of the Smith Mine disaster were laid to rest; Chief Plenty Coups’ public feasts; the storytelling of artist Will James; the history of Billings-based KOA camgrounds; early attempts to regulate the practice of medicine in the Treasure State; the contributions of mountaineer Fred Inabnit; and more!

Pre-conference workshops will offer special instruction for educators and archivists, while this year’s ever-popular Made in Montana Tour will focus on agriculture in the Yellowstone Valley. Tours will give conference goers the opportunity to explore such cultural treasures as the Moss Mansion, Western Heritage Center, Yellowstone County Museum, Billings Depot, and Chief Plenty Coups State Park.

In addition, the Northern Hotel—the primary venue for this year’s conference—is not only an architectural gem, but plays a significant role in Montana’s art history as well. From 1942 to 1952 the Northern housed the Malcolm S. Mackay Collection of C. M. Russell art, which now comprises the nucleus of the Montana Historical Society’s world-class Russell collection. At the time, the Mackay family wanted a suitable Montana location to display their treasured artworks and the Northern offered a “completely modern and fireproof” facility. Hotel manager L. W. Carter dubbed it “the finest inducement for tourists to stop of anything that has ever come to Billings.” Join us



Billings’ East Rimrock ca. 1945, MHS PAC 2013–5

in this historic structure, where Charlie’s masterpieces once hung. For more information on conference registration, go to: <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/ConferencesWorkshops>. ☼

## MHS Increases Outreach through Teacher Leader Program

Last year, MHS inaugurated a new Teacher Leaders in History program, training and authorizing seven elementary teachers to represent MHS across the state. During the following 12 months, these carefully selected master teachers shared MHS resources with fellow educators at presentations from Shelby to Glendive, and advised on the creation of new educator resources as part of MHS’s Teacher Advisory Committee.

Four teachers from this cohort have rejoined the Teacher Leader program for 2018 and three of them helped welcome and train our

second group of Teacher Leaders, seven middle school teachers who attended a very successful two-day summit June 19–20, 2018. All eleven 2018 Teacher Leaders have agreed to share MHS resources at presentations during the upcoming school year and to continue to serve as advisors to MHS. With the addition of these new teachers, MHS now has teacher representatives helping us spread the word in Cascade, Deer Lodge, Granite, Power, Roosevelt, Toole, Wibaux, and Yellowstone counties. Next year, the program will be expanded to the high school level. ☼

## A Fond Farewell to Ellen Baumler and Molly Holz

The Montana Historical Society is about people: the people whose stories are told through the collections and programs, and the people who tell those stories in so many ways. It has been a remarkable privilege to work with these amazing people for the past seven years. This year, we say goodbye to a couple of my heroes who have made their mark on Montana and the Montana Historical Society. This is in appreciation of Ellen Baumler and Molly Holz.



Ellen Baumler, retiring "rock star"

Ellen Baumler joined the Montana Historical Society in 1991 in the "Sites and Signs" program. She researched and wrote the National Register of Historic Places signs for many hundreds of locations across Montana. But that wasn't enough for Ellen, who during her tenure also wrote books, was featured in documentaries, gave innumerable tours and presentations, and provided consulting and research for Virginia City, the Old Forts Trail, and many other important historical projects. Ellen can (present tense) do it all in the highest of quality and in mind-boggling quantity. And Ellen always had a smile for her fans and colleagues. Ellen is our "rock star." The band will play on but without our lead singer.

Molly Holz joined the Montana Historical Society in October 1999 in the publications program as Assistant Editor of *Montana The*

*Magazine of Western History*. With the Spring/Summer 2005 issue, Molly's name was moved to the top of the credits as editor of the magazine and manager of the Montana Historical Society Press. She led the publications program with distinction. *Montana The Magazine of Western History* has been recognized as one of the top journals of western history in the nation, garnering 21 national or regional awards during Molly's tenure and being inducted into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame in 2014. Molly oversaw the production of nearly sixty editions of our great journal, and published an impressive list of books.

Ellen and Molly have things to do, people to meet, and a few things to check off of their "bucket lists." They have served Montana well and deserve nothing but wind beneath their wings and our gratitude.

I am often asked what I like about being a part of the Montana Historical Society. My answer is always the same: the people. You've read or heard from me about the passion, creativity, and energy among the staff of the Montana Historical Society. MHS is rich with talent and commitment to the work. Ellen Baumler and Molly Holz have been wonderful stewards and storytellers. We thank them and wish them well as they open a new chapter in their lives. 🌟



Molly Holz, outgoing editor

## The *Big Chief* and Four Other New Properties Listed in National Register



The *Big Chief* at its launch on Swiftcurrent Lake in the late 1940s. Courtesy of Scott and Barb Burch.

At its May meeting, the State Historic Preservation Review Board heard five National Register nominations, including one for the *Big Chief*—a boat constructed in 1945—which operates on Lake Josephine in Glacier National Park. Built by J. W. Swanson, the *Big Chief* is an excellent example of a carvel-planked boat constructed using traditional boat-working techniques and materials. Renamed the *Morning Eagle* in 1975, the *Big Chief* continues to provide scenic boat cruises and transportation to trails in the Many Glacier area of the park. Three other boats owned by the Glacier Park Boat Company are already listed in the National Register.

In addition to the *Big Chief*, the Review Board also heard nominations for the Jefferson Canyon Highway Historic District, Lookout Cave in Phillips County, Shaffer's Chapel AME Church in Butte, and the Cougar Peak Lookout in Sanders County. All nominations were passed by the board to be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C., who will make the final determination on whether to list the properties in the Register. 🌟

## Educators Win IEFA Award

On March 5, 2018, Outreach and Interpretation staff members Deb Mitchell and Martha Kohl received the Office of Public Instruction's (OPI) seventh Advocacy Award for Excellence in Indian Education for All. The award is given in honor of one of Montana's finest educators, Teresa Veltkamp.

The selection committee chose Mitchell and Kohl for wholeheartedly embracing the goals of Indian Education for All (IEFA). Together the two have accomplished an incredible amount in improving the teaching of Indian education across the state. Specific examples of their efforts include: *Montana: Stories of the Land*, the Society's award-winning textbook, which incorporated Native American stories and viewpoints into the telling of Montana's history; Montana museums and Montana schools as co-educators: best practices in Indian Education for All, a collaborative effort designed to help teachers work with their local museums and



Deb Mitchell and Martha Kohl proudly display their award certificates.

historical societies to better impart the tenets of IEFA to both their students and their communities at large; special tours and student programs that focus on Montana's incredibly rich Native American heritage; educator workshops designed to provide teachers with much-needed resources to effectively teach Indian history in their classrooms; and a wide array of classroom resources that have been made available to teachers and homeschoolers statewide. 🌟

## Montana History in 9 Easy Lessons

Interested in gaining a broad overview of Montana history? You can find just that on the MHS YouTube channel by selecting the playlist "Montana History in 9 Easy Lessons."

The presentations were recorded in April and May, during MHS's two-month exploration of 12,000 years of Montana history.

MHS staff and other subject matter experts presented talks on nine major periods in Montana history. Speakers included State Historic Preservation Office Review and Compliance Officer Jessica Bush (on pre-contact Montana), State Archaeologist Stan Wilmoth (on the early contact period), interpretive historian Ellen Baumler (on the gold rush), George Mason Uni-

versity Professor Emeritus Paula Petrik (on industrial Montana), Associate Editor Laura Ferguson (on the reservation era), Carroll College Professor Emeritus Robert Swartout (on homesteading), Montana Department of Transportation Historian Jon Axline (on the Cold War), journalist and MHS Board of Trustee Member Chuck Johnson (on politics from 1960s through the 1990s), and former CSKT Councilmember and Board of Trustee Member Steve Lozar (on Indian sovereignty today).

Individually, the programs offer compelling discussions of specific topics relating to Montana's past; together they provide a big-picture overview of the state's rich and fascinating history. 🌟

## Cheers to the Montana Brewery Oral History Project!

The Montana Historical Society's newest addition to the Digital Vault online exhibits gallery is the Montana Brewery Oral History Project. Established in 2016 and funded with a grant from Humanities Montana, the project captured twenty oral histories from individuals who worked in the brewing industry, or related industries, during the re-birth and rise of craft beer brewed in Montana in the 1980s and 1990s. These interviews cover the struggles and triumphs endured by brewery owners who in the 1990s fought to legalize the on-site sale of their beers through taprooms.

The online exhibit contains approximately eighteen hours of audio recordings from nineteen interviews. Full transcripts of these interviews are available along with photographs taken during the interviews. All twenty interviews can also be accessed in person at the Montana Historical Society Research Center. To view the online exhibit, please visit: <http://digitalvault.mhs.mt.gov/exhibits/show/breweryproject>. 🌟



State Historic Preservation Office Review and Compliance Officer Jessica Bush discusses prehistoric Montana in the first of "9 Easy Lessons."

## “Happy Kampers” at the Montana Historical Society

Remember those mid-spring/summer dreams of bright sunny days, starlit nights and chatting around a campfire? Well, as many of us head out to make those dreams a reality over this summer, we’re excited to announce the addition of an important new collection to the Montana Historical Society! This spring, Kampgrounds of America (KOA) donated their historical records to the MHS Archives program.

These fascinating records date from 1962 with the founding of the company in Billings, Montana. Local entrepreneur Dave Drum and his partners set up a campground

on his property just south of the Yellowstone River. The campground was opened to meet the needs of the travelers heading through Montana to attend the 1962 World’s Fair in Seattle. Following on that successful summer, Drum surveyed his visitors asking what they thought of the facilities, location, and general impressions of the campground. Their enthusiastic responses encouraged Drum and his partners to think bigger, and by 1969 they had expanded KOA into a network of over 250 modern campgrounds across the country.

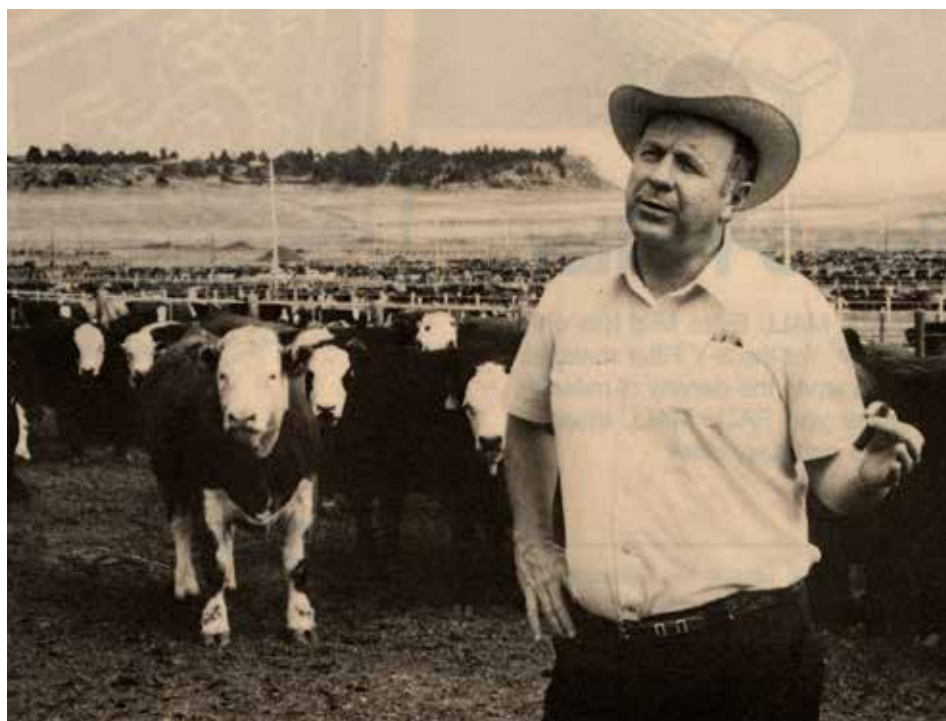
In time, KOA’s bright yellow logo became synonymous with Americans’ modern ideas of camping—hot showers, concession stores, swimming pools, game rooms, and other amenities meant to make camping accessible and attractive to a larger audience.

Today there are nearly 500 KOA campgrounds, either corporate run or as franchises, in the United States and Canada.

Generations of Montanans have loaded up gear, food, and family to find the perfect camping spot. As you enjoy “getting out there” this summer, take a moment to think about how your camping memories fit into the larger history of Montana. And if you want to learn more about a company that has been dedicated to making “happy kampers” for over fifty years, come see us at the Montana Historical Society. A description of the collection can be found by searching KOA in our online catalog, accessible from the Research Center’s page of the MHS website, or join us for the forty-fifth annual Montana History Conference in Billings to learn more. 🌟



The cover of this 1967 KOA directory emphasized the ease of car camping at their sites and featured their distinctive tepee-shaped logo.



In 1962 Dave Drum, local businessman and entrepreneur, noticing the high number of travelers heading for the Seattle World’s Fair, decided to set up a campground on his property just outside of Billings. The enthusiastic response led Drum and his partners to expand KOA into a network of modern campgrounds across the country.

# Hands-On Work and a Lot of Learning

Along with warm weather and outdoor excursions, summer also brings a variety of interns to the Montana Historical Society. In a true win-win situation, these paid internships provide MHS with much needed help while also providing young professionals with critical practical experience.



**Nick Zarnowski, Outreach and Interpretation Internship**  
Zarnowski is working on his Masters in Curriculum and Instruction at

Montana State University in Bozeman. An experienced classroom teacher, he is applying his expertise by helping MHS develop lesson plans and other teaching resources.



**Karly Watts, Swaney Family Internship**  
A Masters of History/Archives and Records Management candidate at

Western Washington University-Bellingham, Watts is processing and creating an inventory for the Swaney Family Papers. The collection documents the life of military officer (Mexican Revolution, WWI), state department ambassador to Scotland and China; and Montana Highway Department Chief of Right of Way Alexander Grant Swaney (1896–1987). The collection includes autobiographical and family history writings, correspondence, and photo albums and materials from his daughter Alexandra Swaney (1944–2017), who was a Montana musician, writer, activist, and folklorist.



**Sierra Ross, Capps/Zieg Family Internship**  
Carroll College English major and recent graduate Sierra Ross is digitizing select

materials from the Capps/Zieg Family Papers to prepare them for online access. The Capps/Zieg family of Missoula and Sun River donated records dating from 1908 to 1998 consisting of family correspondence (1930s–1990s), much of which is from Phillip Zieg to his family in Montana detailing his experiences working for the Bureau of Land Management; diaries of Willard Kirkham and Mydas Zieg (1920–1997); two family photo albums; an expense ledger, and biographical information and newspaper clippings.



**Derek Corder and Deanna Leiser, Mueller Family Internships**

Corder, who is working on a Masters of History/Archives and Records Management at Western Washington University-Bellingham, is processing the Oscar Mueller Family Papers while Deanna Leiser—who is completing her Masters in Library and Information Science from Kent State University—is working on the family's photographic material. Oscar Mueller (1877–1964) was a Lewistown, Montana, attorney and amateur historian and archaeologist who also served

Lewistown as both mayor and city attorney. The Mueller Family collection (1860s–2013) consists of correspondence, court documents, diaries, financial records, photographs, and research files documenting the family and the history of the Lewistown area.



**Gayle O'Hara, Student Archivist Internship**  
O'Hara is working on her Masters of Library and Information

Science degree with an Archival Emphasis at San Jose State University in California. She is working with Museum of the Beartooths Director Penny Redli and staff to inventory Stillwater County records so that they may be transferred to the museum for permanent preservation and access. O'Hara's internship is a joint venture between MHS, the State Historic Records Advisory Board (SHRAB), and the Museum of the Beartooths.



**Chris Gray, Livestock Brands Digital Project Internship**

A recent graduate of the University of Providence in Great Falls, Gray is digitizing and improving data for the Montana Livestock Brands collection on the Montana Memory Project. His work will make Montana's livestock history more accessible to the public. The Montana Livestock Brands project is supported by a grant from the Montana History Foundation.

*Interns (cont. on p. 6)*

Interns (cont. from p. 5)



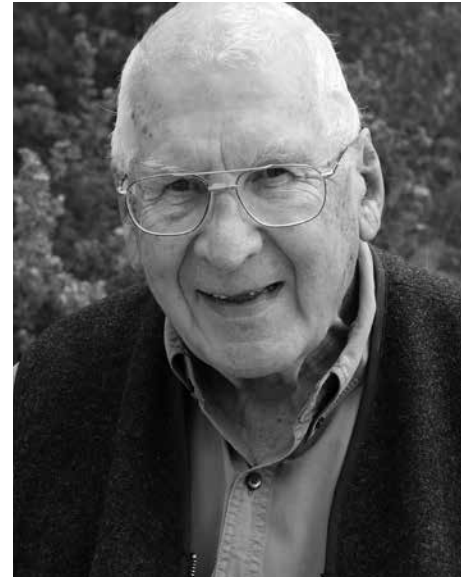
**John Rambur,  
Museum  
Program  
Internship**

Rambur is a Senior at Carroll College where he is studying history. His summer

internship consists of cataloging the Tammsis Day Firearm collection, which MHS acquired in 2017. After Day's death in 2016, the Tammsis Day Trust donated more than one hundred historic and contemporary guns that Day, a Montana resident, had collected throughout her life. The collection includes a Colt revolver that belonged to Big Medicine, who was a Crow leader, Custer scout, and Crow Chief of Police from 1900 to 1920; and a pistol that belonged to silent film star Tom Mix. 🌟

## Jack Lepley, Montana History Champion, Dies

With the passing of Fort Benton's John G. "Jack" Lepley on May 25, 2018, Montana history lost an invaluable friend. Lepley's state-wide service—including ten years on the Montana Historical Society's Board of Trustees—was considerable, but he is best recalled as Fort Benton's memory-keeper. Aided by his wife Sue, Lepley led efforts to establish the Montana Agricultural Center; erect the state's official bicentennial commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Expedition; reconstruct Fort Benton's historic fur trading post; and establish the riverfront Levee Trail with its historic signage and statuary. For these and other outstanding contributions to the preservation of Montana history, Lepley received a Montana Historical Society's Trustee Award in 1992, Montana



Tourism Advisory Council Award of Recognition in 1999, Honorary Doctorate from the University of Montana in 2006, and Museums Association of Montana's Peter Yegen Jr. Award in 2011. 🌟

## Montana's History Magazine Wins National Honor

*Montana The Magazine of Western History* received a Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City this spring. The

award was given for the article "All-American Indian Days and the Miss Indian America Pageant," written by Greg Nickerson and published in the Summer 2017 issue. This is

the eighth Wrangler Award won by the Montana Historical Society's magazine. The prestigious award recognizes "extraordinary contributions to shaping the American West's rich heritage."

The same article was named a finalist for a Spur Award, presented by Western Writers of America "for works whose inspiration, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West."

If you've misplaced the Summer 2017 issue, you can read the article at [gregorynickerson.com](http://gregorynickerson.com) or buy additional copies of the magazine from the Montana Historical Society by calling (406) 444-4708. 🌟



Author Gregory Nickerson and MHS Editor Molly Holz receive a Wrangler Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Museum on April 14, 2018.

# Hello, Members!

BY JODEL FOHN, MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

We offer a warm welcome to the new members of the Montana Historical Society and greetings to our sustaining members. We hope this summer you will be able take advantage of your unlimited visits to the MHS Museum and Research Center and the Original Governor's Mansion, both located in Helena.

At the MHS Museum, be sure to catch "Hooked: Fishing in Montana" in our lobby. This exhibit, which closes Saturday, August 18, showcases a Nez Perce-style dug-out canoe; flies and rods used by Norman Maclean and his family; gear used by Fish, Wildlife & Parks to transplant fish; and a variety of other art and artifacts. In our

Northeast Gallery, "Times of Trouble, Times of Change: Montana and the Great War" explores the lives of Montanans during World War I. At the Original Governor's Mansion, visitors can view additional artifacts from that era and learn more about how the war affected life on the home front.

For those unable to make it to Helena, we hope you are enjoying your other membership benefits, including your subscriptions to the *Society Star* and *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, free fulfillment of two research requests, and a 15 percent discount on most items in our Museum Store. The discount is available for both on-



*Hellow Sentral* (detail), illustrated letter by C. M. Russell, 1907, MHS 1986.06.22

site and online purchases, and staff will gladly ship gifts anywhere in the world. To browse or order, visit <https://app.mt.gov/shop/mhsstore/> or call (406) 444-2890.

We truly appreciate your continued support of the Montana Historical Society and look forward to visiting with you during the year. ☼

## Heard Any Good Books Lately?

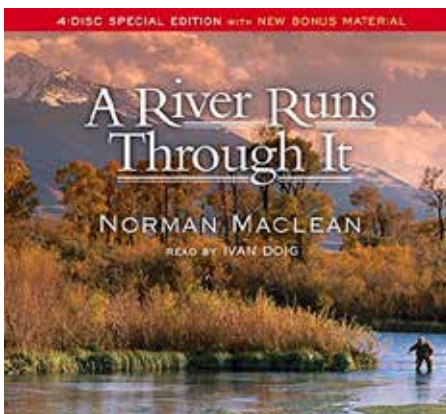
BY RODRIC COSLET, MUSEUM STORE MANAGER

What could be better than driving the Lewis & Clark Trail while listening to Stephen E. Ambrose's classic *Undaunted Courage*? Or heading out on a fishing trip with the rich voice of Ivan Doig reading Norman Maclean's *A River Runs Through It*?

Recently, we've received requests for Montana audiobooks to listen to while driving through Big Sky Country. In response, the Museum

Store now has a special selection of audiobooks that anyone can enjoy, either at home or in the car:

- *A River Runs Through It*, written by Norman Maclean and read by Ivan Doig. Special edition audiobook on 4 CDs with bonus material, including *On the Big Blackfoot*, read by Norman Maclean and his son John, and backed by the sounds of the Big Blackfoot River. \$24.95
- *Young Men and Fire*, written by Norman Maclean and read by Corey M. Snow. Audiobook on 8 CDs. \$34.99
- *The Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero*, *Thomas Francis Meagher*, written by Timothy Egan and read by Gerard Doyle. Audiobook on 11 CDs. \$19.99
- *Beyond Spirit Tailings: Montana's Mysteries, Ghosts, and Haunted Places*, written and read by Ellen Baumler with music by Philip



Four-CD version of *A River Runs Through It* read by celebrated Montana Author Ivan Doig

### About Us

The *Society Star* is published quarterly by the Montana Historical Society as a benefit of membership.

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  - ▼ Editor: Kirby Lambert
- [montanahistoricalociety.org](http://montanahistoricalociety.org)

Aaberg. Audiobook on 4 CDs with bonus music CD. \$25.95

- *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*, written by Stephen E. Ambrose and read by Barrett Whitener. Unabridged audiobook on 20 CDs. \$49.95

Any of these audiobooks would be a great choice to accompany your summer travel. And if you prefer to read a traditional book on your trip, the Museum Store carries the above titles in book form as well.

Order today by calling the Museum Store at (800) 243-5900, or order online at [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org) ☼

Big Sky. Big Land. Big History.

# Montana Historical Society

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*We are  
thankful for  
our members!*



*Montana Mainlines*, the Society's State Historic Preservation Office's 2018 poster, recognizes the enduring impact of railroads on Montana history. To receive your free copy, contact SHPO at [mtshpo@mt.gov](mailto:mtshpo@mt.gov) or call us at (406) 444-7715. Forward into the past!