

Montana Historical Society
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting
April 21, 2022, 9:00 MST
Montana State Capitol Building, Room 317

CALL TO ORDER

President Hal Stearns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Jodel Fohn took roll call.

Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present: Norma Ashby Smith, Carol Donaldson, Tim Fox, Ed Jasmin, Bill Jones, Kent Kleinkopf, Lorna Kuney, Douglas MacDonald, Steve Lozar, Ken Robison, Jay Russell, Thomas Minckler, Jude Sheppard, Hal Stearns, and Candi Zion.

MHS Staff Present: Molly Kruckenberg, Director; Denise King, Administrator; Eve Byron, Public Information Officer; Ginny Sullivan, Development Officer; Jodel Fohn, Membership Services; Roberta Gebhardt, Research Center Program Manager; Jennifer Bottomly-O’looney, Museum Program Manager; Martha Kohl, Outreach and Interpretation Program Manager; Diana Di Stefano, Publications Program Manager; and Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer.

Introduction of new Trustee Candi Zion.

Review of Minutes

Bill Jones moved to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2022, meeting. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President’s Report – Hal Stearns

The annual staff picnic is planned for Wednesday, July 20 at Tizer Gardens. This is the night before the July Board meeting each year. The picnic is a way for Trustees to acknowledge the work of the staff. Trustees were asked to each make \$150 contribution for the cost of the staff picnic. . President Stearns then spoke about the MTHS History Conference that will be held September 29 to October 1 at the Rock Creek Resort near Red Lodge, MT. The conference brochure will be mailed this summer. President Stearns thanked Steve Lozar and Kent Kleinkopf for their time and service to the Board of Trustees by presenting them with a certificate. Their terms do not end until June 30, but this is their last official meeting. Molly also presented President Stearns with a certificate thanking him for his service to the Board.

Director’s Report – Molly Kruckenberg

New Employee Introductions –New employees were introduced by their supervisors. Ginny Sullivan introduced Claudia Bickel, Development and Grants Coordinator. Claudia introduced herself to the Board and spoke about her experience. Roberta Gebhardt introduced Aaron Rau, an archivist, and Dan Karalus, Project Management Specialist. Dan introduced himself and his work. Denise King introduced Buddy Rivera, the new security guard. Buddy introduced himself and spoke about his work experience.

Molly shared the visitation, reference interactions, and outreach review. Member, subscriber and social media statistics were reviewed. Molly stated that with a portion of the Homeland Exhibit closed, the stats are low, but it's also early in the year.

There will be a beam signing tour of the final beam to be installed in the MT Heritage Center the last week of April and first week of May. The final pieces of structural steel will make trips across the state to 15 public schools, where students and other Montanans will be invited to sign the beam. A list of cities and dates was shared. Molly shared a brief update on activities in the Development, Marketing and Membership areas, including the work on rebranding the MTHS.

Eve Byron shared that President Stearns will be speaking today in the MTHS auditorium at 4:30 p.m. Eve shared You-tube statistics, highlights from press releases, and information on the beam signing tour. Social media numbers continue to climb. Eve and Ginny recently attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Molly discussed recent progress on rebranding efforts for MTHS. Molly explained what the new brand represents, how the color palette was selected, and shared examples of how the new logo will be used.

Ginny Sullivan reported that Development continues to be in the silent phase of the Capitol Campaign. She shared the spring appeal letter theme. We received confirmation of a \$250,000 donation for the Sensory Garden from the Montana State Library. Ginny spoke about a grant opportunity with the Economic Development Association for \$1.9 million that, if successful, would be committed to the visitor experience. Though the primary fundraising has been accomplished, there is still more to support.

Molly shared a list of naming opportunities for approval, including shared two significant donations. The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation has donated \$25 million. Tim and Carmen Sheehy of Bozeman donated \$505,000. Molly reviewed the list of current naming opportunities that have been offered to donors to the Montana Heritage Center project.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the list of Naming Opportunities. Ken Robison seconded the motion. The motion passed. Lorna Kuney abstained from voting.

Molly spoke about the proposed donor wall for the Montana Heritage center and shared images. She also discussed progress on the People and Lands Mobile / fundraising program is progressing.

Molly is advising Trustee Tom Minckler and a group of private citizens who are working to acquire the Minckler Collection. Tom has been collecting for more than 50 years and has acquired more than 10,000 items that document Montana's history. Money will be privately raised to purchase the collection and the collection will then be donated to the MT Historical Society. The artifacts are a perspective of Montana History.

Governance Committee

Kent Kleinkopf thanked the Governance Committee for meeting in Polson. Kent presented nominations for each of the members of the Executive Committee.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the nomination of Jay Russell as Secretary of the MTHS Board of Trustees for the ensuing term. Jude Sheppard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the nomination of Tim Fox as Vice President of the MTHS Board of Trustees for the ensuing term. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the nomination of Jude Sheppard as President of the MTHS Board of Trustees for the ensuing term. Tim Fox seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the nomination of Ed Jasmin as a Member at Large of the MTHS Board of Trustees for the ensuing term. Tom Minckler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Lozar moved to approve the nomination of Bill Jones as a Member at Large of the MTHS Board of Trustees for the ensuing term. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Heritage Keepers Award

Molly shared information on the nominations for the 2022 Heritage Keepers and Heritage Guardian Awards. Norma Ashby Smith and Doug MacDonald spoke about their results from the serving on the Governance Committee for the Heritage Keepers Award. After discussion, the Board voted.

Kent Kleinkopf moved to approve Arlene Reichert for the 2022 Heritage Keepers Award. Bill Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Norma Ashby Smith moved to approve Margie Smith for the 2022 Heritage Keepers Award. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Tim Fox moved to approve the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers for the 2022 Heritage Guardian Award. Lorna Kuney seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Discussion ensued regarding review of applications for Heritage Keepers award nominations.

Bill Jones moved that all Board Members are to review the Heritage Keepers nominations in 2023. Norma Ashby Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed. Lorna Kuney opposed the motion.

The Board Members discussed having separate award categories for individuals and institutions.

Program Managers Reports

Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer, reported that SHPO has received a \$50,000 National Park Service Grant for Underrepresented Communities to chronicle Montana's historic Chinese population and

associated places in a Multiple Property Documentation form. SHPO is working to broaden the narrative for preservations to appeal to a more diverse, broader age group, and adapting to climate change.

Kyler Mozell and Kate Hampton gave a presentation on the GIS and historic Sanborn Maps interactive that SHPO has been working on. Work has been done to overlay these maps so you can see where diverse populations lived in different decades with the assistance of censuses and the Polk Directories. Slides were shown with various locations in Montana. These maps serve as a model to better understand under-represented populations in Montana. While these maps are not yet available to the public, they will be freely available when the work is completed.

Montana Heritage Center Update

Jennifer James spoke about Main Street coming for a visit at the beginning of May. Jennifer reviewed outreach to agencies, Tribal representatives, and users' groups. Other outreach opportunities include the project website, working with the City of Helena, State Library Commission, and the neighborhood surrounding the job site. The project website (montanamuseum.org) have a livestream of the construction. Jennifer gave an interpretive design update. The Homeland and Russell Galleries are progressing.

Russ Katherman shared the construction update, including working closely with the construction team, user group coordination, and value engineering exercises to address market forces. Russ thanked everyone for working well together. Project price increases are due to delay times, inflation, labor shortages, and supply chain issues. Even with the budget challenges, the Montana Heritage Center is still on schedule to be completed in the later part of 2024.

Roberta Gebhardt, Library & Archives Program Manager, reported on the status of the NDNP project and staffing changes. There are more than 2,500 Haynes photos that have been uploaded to the Montana Memory Project. A film crew from PBS's "*Finding Your Roots*" shot back up footage several months ago and it is now airing. The reference room will be closed in January of 2023 for approximately two years for the packing and relocation of the collection. The Library & Archives Program is working to let patrons know of this change. Roberta presented the April 2022 Deaccession list for approval.

Jude Sheppard moved to approve the Deaccession List. Lorna Kuney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Bottomly – O'looney, Museum Program Manager, shared an update on the progress of the Homeland and Russell galleries. Packing and inventory are going well and continue. The Museum Program has been working on mount making for artifacts and plans for installation of the new exhibits. Jennifer answered questions about artifacts and storage locations.

Martha Kohl, Outreach and Information Program Manager, spoke about the new fourth grade textbook, "*Montana: History of Our Home*." Outreach and Interpretation has awarded travel grants to schools around Montana that are located further than 50 miles from Helena, to provide funding for buses so students can visit the Museum. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Friends of the Society. The Friends of the Society started in 1972 and has given more than 254,000 hours of volunteer time. There

will be a celebration in June. The 50th anniversary of the Montana Constitutional Convention will be in Helena on June 15 & 16. The May lecture series is on Thursday afternoons from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Martha shared that they will have two interns this summer.

Diana Di Stefano, Publications Manager, shared that the summer issue of *Montana The Magazine of Western History* will have an article about the Constitutional Convention. The magazine issues this year commemorate the 150th anniversary of Yellowstone National Park and public lands. The Press is releasing "A Black Woman's West" about Rose Gordon. Diana also shared that the magazine has won five awards recently:

- 1) Western Heritage Award (Wrangler Award) for best short non-fiction from the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum for Tracey Hanshew's article: "Here she comes wearin' them britches!" Saddles, Riding Skirts, and Social Reform in the Turn-of-the-century Rural West," Winter 2020.
- 2) John M. Cleary Homestead Honoree to *Montana The Magazine of Western History* for outstanding support to Western literature and the Western Writers of America (WWA).
- 3) Spur Award Winner for best Western short nonfiction to Shane Dunning, "The Right Man to Do a Wrong Thing: Charlie Thex, the Bear Creek Sheep Raid, and the Primacy of Fear," Summer 2021, from the WWA.
- 4) Spur Award finalist for best Western short nonfiction to Rosalyn LaPier, "Ella Mad Plume Yellow Wolf: Photographs by a Native American Woman in the Early 1940s," Winter 2021, from the WWA.

Spur Award Winner for best Western Juvenile nonfiction to Steph Lehmann, "Montana History for Kids in 50 Objects: With 50 Fun Activities!" from the WWA. Published in cooperation with MHS Publications. The Emerging Scholar Contest Winner was James Compton, a graduate student at UM. He wrote about Marines and their families who protested against U.S. involvement in China after World War II.

Diana was able to attend the Western Heritage Awards in Oklahoma City to support author Tracey Hanshew when she received her award.

Denise C. King, Administrator for Central Services Division, shared staffing changes. Denise shared a store merchandise update, with new Native American jewelry, Pendleton products, Montana pottery, and more. Denise reviewed the financial report and answered questions.

Denise asked Trustees to approve the hiring of Claudia Bickel, Development Grant Coordinator; Aaron Rau, Archivist 2; Dan Karalus, Project Management Specialist; and Buddy Rivera, Security Guard.

Bill Jones moved to approve the hires. Kent Kleinkopf seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

The Montana Heritage Center report was given previously to allow for consultant's time constraints.

New Business

Molly explained that the Heritage Keepers ceremony is usually presented at the History Conference. MHS staff feel that there would be many benefits to having the ceremonies in the recipient's hometowns, so they can be surrounded by family, friends, and colleagues. The awardees would still have their biography in the History Conference brochure.

Ed Jasmin moved to have the Heritage Keepers ceremonies in the recipient's hometown. Bill Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Tim Fox spoke of future staffing changes for the Administrator position that will present salary inconsistencies. Discussion ensued.

Tim Fox moved to Increase the Director's pay rate to \$61 per hour starting July 2, 2022, pending approval from the Governor's Budget office. Ed Jasmin seconded the motion. A Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Bill Jones spoke about the possibility of the Trustees meeting outside of the official capacity to get to know one another.

Tim Fox suggested the possibility of a Board Retreat.

Board Members were asked to meet on the steps inside the Rotunda for a group photo following adjournment.

Steve Lozar sang a Salish Honor Song.

Ed Jasmin moved to adjourn the meeting. Tim Fox seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.



Jude Sheppard, President