



Newsletter

Volume 35, Number 3
Winter 2004

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Museums Association of Montana (MAM) promotes professionalism and cooperation among the Museums of Montana. MAM is an organization for all types of museums—art, history, science and general—and individuals who are interested in improving and strengthening Montana's museums.

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**THE DEADLINE
FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES
FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS
March 20, 2004**

The MAM Newsletter is published quarterly by the Museums Association of Montana, a nonprofit organization of institutions and businesses, dedicated to promoting communication among all types of museums in Montana. MAM is an all volunteer organization whose support comes from its membership and from occasional public and private grants.

As a forum for exchange of information and ideas, the MAM Newsletter needs your contributions. Deadlines for submitting articles and announcements are: September 20; and December 10, and March 20, 2005.

Please send information to: Susan Near, MAM Newsletter Editor, Montana Historical Society, Montana's Museum, PO Box 201201, 225 North Roberts, Helena, MT 59620-1201. Phone 406-444-4713, FAX 406-444-2696, email: snear@mt.gov.

As the new year gets closer we are going into the final stages of getting ready for the annual conference. The conference will be held in Glasgow on March 10th thru the 12th. This years theme is "Bones, Beads and Barnyards: Collections Care and Access." We have some great workshops lined up and the usual informative sessions. Sessions this year include the ever popular round table discussions as well as a session on museum security and investigation. We will also be addressing the issues of partnerships, fundraising/grants and maintaining landscapes outside the walls of your museum. There is also a need to fill conference sessions both for this year and up-coming conferences. Do you have a topic you feel you can speak to, or know someone in your museum who can? Keep the annual conference in mind, member participation is always welcome and we promise not to automatically put you on the board just because you speak up.

We hope that a lot of you will take a serious look at the security issues. With the rise in the value of collectibles and the ease at which items are being sold on eBay, your collections have become more valuable than you think. Last year there was a serious incident of museum collection theft across a nine state area, including Montana where at least two museums had items stolen. In late summer an antique dealer was arrested in conjunction with stolen museum items and the investigation is still under way. The last report stated that over two thousand stolen items had been identified in the dealers possession. A high-profile theft of an irreplaceable gun belonging to the Montana Historical Society from the Phillips County Museum in Malta is the most recent incident in our state. In smaller museums with limited staff and security, theft is only going to become more of a problem.

It is through these types of sessions that MAM can help to keep you, our members, updated on the ever present concerns of museum management as well as the newer issues that continue to arise. The round table discussions that we started in Red Lodge two years ago have become one of the favorite ways that museum folks can share experiences and concerns and hear from their peers on how these issues are dealt with.

The "Discover Montana's Museums" map directory is becoming more and more popular. Each year we have to decide how much money we have to see if we can increase the amount we have printed. The map is broken down into the six Montana Tourism regions with an individual map of each country and our member museums listed with contact information. This is one of the benefits of your membership, getting the word out there that you exist is the one thing we all need more of. We are also looking at updating the Montana Heritage Resources Directory (published in 2000). This is a project we must seek additional funding to do.

Continued on Page 2



**2004-2005
Museums Association of
Montana
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Vacant, Glacier Country

**— IF YOU ARE
INTERESTED IN
SERVING ON THE
MAM BOARD, PLEASE
CONTACT PAUL SHEA**

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Keeping track of all of our members and getting them the information they require of us has always been a challenge. All of the board of MAM are volunteers and as board members come and go sometimes things get lost in the shuffle. Beginning in October, with the help of a Montana Arts Council Cultural Trust grant, we hired a contract worker to deal with our membership data and help with the newsletter. We hired Bill Peterson, formally Executive Director of the Northwest Montana Historical Society and Museum at Central School in Kalispell. Bill has moved on into private history consulting and we felt with his back ground in MAM he would be a great resource to us. This should allow us to better keep track of the memberships, and we will be pursuing funding to keep this position funded.

Since the last newsletter two more board members have left us due to change of jobs and time available. So we will be looking for replacements in the near future. If you or someone you know at your museum would be interested in serving please get a hold of me at my contact information below. Board members serve three year terms and meet four times a year, one meeting is the annual conference. A small travel stipend is given for attending board meetings. We have several committees that function to promote and advocate for museums around the state as well as put together the conference. We hope that someone out there will be able to step forward to participate in this great organization.

Paul Shea
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pshea@yellowstonehistoriccenter.org

Attention all Museums

“Come And Get It”

From the Montana Committee for the Humanities

A Call for Proposals was sent out to all Montana museums for hosting the Smithsonian exhibition *Key Ingredients: America by Food*. *Key Ingredients* will tour six museums throughout the state beginning in May of 2006 and ending in March 2007. Montana Committee for the Humanities offers a \$2,000 grant to assist each museum with its plans.

If you are interested in applying to host the exhibition and its spin-off activities and did not receive an application, please let MCH know and they will post one to you. The deadline for applications is January 10th, 2005. If this date poses a problem because of needing to convene your board, or other reasons, please contact MCH for a possible extension.

Museums that were host to *Barn Again: Celebrating an American Icon* are again eligible to apply. For further information contact Yvonne Gritzner, state coordinator for *Key Ingredients*, (406) 243-6022, (800) 624-6001, yvonne.gritzner@umontana.edu.

Eastern Montana Museums Meeting

The *Eastern Montana Museums* had their annual meeting in Terry on September 25. Museums and representatives from Baker, Broadus, Glendive, Fort Peck, Hardin, Jordan, Lambert, Miles City, Wibaux, and Terry were on hand to give updates on their activities over the past year. In light of recent events security was a popular topic of discussion and will continue as such with this group as well as within the Museums Association of Montana. The women associated with the museum in Terry provided an excellent lunch after which Johnnie Lockett Thomas told stories of early Miles City. The next meeting of the Eastern Montana Museums will be in Baker in the fall. All are welcome.



A Special Thanks to Darla Bruner

The Museums Association of Montana depends on many museum people who willingly give of their time and expertise to keep the organization going. From our many supportive members to those who serve on the Board, countless folks make up this great collaboration. One of our great and faithful supporters is Darla Bruner, who recently retired from the Board of Directors after more than twenty years of association with MAM.

While working at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula as Curator of Education, Darla began faithfully attending MAM annual conferences. During one of these events, she attended a MAM Board meeting as “an interested observer” and wound up as newsletter editor. She gracefully filled the void left by the death of longtime newsletter editor Hank Pope of Loma who was an MAM stalwart. After a few years at that position, Darla moved onto the Board and served as MAM Treasurer for four years – a position which she took on again in 2002, after completing terms as Vice-President and President. A move to Billings and a new job at the Western Heritage Center occurred right in the midst of her presidency! Despite huge changes in her personal and work life Darla served the organization admirably, working on numerous special projects and committees – even presenting programs at the annual conference.

No matter what, Darla can be counted on for support – and she also supplies a smile. She, like many of us, believes deeply in the mission of the Museums Association of Montana – to promote professionalism and cooperation among the museums in our state. Darla values keeping involved in strengthening the museum profession and keeping in touch with colleagues and friends in the field. MAM is lucky to have had such a good worker for its cause these many years, but in “retirement” from MAM Board involvement Darla remains a forever friend to the organization and to all those who are lucky to know and work with her. Next time you see or talk with Darla, please let her know her efforts are appreciated.

On behalf of all of us at MAM – THANK YOU DARLA!



We Want to Hear From You

We want to hear from our members about what is going on in their region and at their museums. Montana is a big place with fascinating history and culture. Each of our member museums works hard to preserve and present educational programs for the rest of us. All of us in the museum community want to know what is going on— whether it is a new exhibit, an award, or a fun project. Contact MAM and we will do our best to get your news in the newsletter.

American Association for State and Local History Announces 2005 Awards Program

The American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) invites submissions to the 2005 Awards Program. Now in its 60th year, the AASLH Annual Awards Program is the most prestigious national recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of local, state, and regional history.

The Awards Program was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout America.

The AASLH Awards Program recognizes exemplary work completed by state or federal historical societies, institutions, or agencies; regional, county or local historical societies, institutions or agencies; specialized subject societies in related fields such as oral history, genealogy, folklore, archaeology, business history, railroad history, etc.; junior historical societies, privately owned museums or foundations; individuals; and organizations outside the programming, special projects, media/publications, individual achievement, and preservation for restoration projects. Nominees need not be member of AASLH to qualify.

Nomination forms may be obtained from the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, at Building #322-Fort Missoula, Missoula, MT 59804 406-728-3476 extension #1, 406-543-6277 fax, or ftmslamuseum@montana.com. Nominations are due to the Montana State Award Representative, Dr. Robert M. Brown, Executive Director, Historical Museum at Fort Missoula on March 1, 2005. A national committee then reviews nominations in the summer of 2005, with formal presentation of the awards made during the AASLH Annual Meeting, September 21-24, 2005 in Pittsburgh, PA.

The American Association of State and Local History is a not-for-profit professional organization of individuals and institutions working to preserve and promote history. From its headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, AASLH works to advance the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of local history in America. AASLH publishes books, technical publications, a quarterly magazine, and a monthly newsletter. The Association also sponsors regional and national training workshops and an annual meeting. For more information about the Awards Program and AASLH, contact Harry Klinkhammer in the AASLH office at 615-320-3203.

◆Contact Robert M. Brown 406-728-3476, Fax 406-543-6277, email ftmslamuseum@montana.com

Montana Committee for the Humanities wins excellence award

The Montana Committee for the Humanities was honored recently with the Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize for Excellence in Public Programming, given by the Federation of State Humanities Councils. It is the fourth time MCH has been so honored since the Schwartz Prize was founded in 1982. The award was presented November 13 in a luncheon ceremony in Washington, DC, with National Endowment for the Humanities Chairman Bruce Cole. For the full story visit <http://www.humanities-mt.org/schwartz4.htm>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The State of Montana will transition to a new domain name for the official state website and all State employee internet e-mail addresses beginning January 2, 2005. The change is being made at the urging of the federal government because the .gov domain is the only domain that is controlled and regulated by the federal government. Almost two years ago the .us domain was opened up so that any entity could purchase a domain name on it, so it is no longer secure. This change effects all State of Montana employees including Montana Historical Society staff. New e-mail addresses will be changed from

firstname.lastname@state.mt.us to firstname.lastname@mt.gov. Inbound e-mail coming to name@state.mt.us will still work until December 2005, but please correct your e-mail address

FROM OUR MEMBER MUSEUMS

The Carbon County Historical Society Announces New

Officers and Board Members

At the November Board of Directors meeting, the *Carbon County Historical Society and Museum* elected Red Lodge resident Lou "Skip" Aleksich as its new president. Before assuming this office Aleksich served on the board for two years.

The Executive Committee also includes Neil Isto of Joliet, vice president, Don Kinney of Luther, secretary Kit Richards and Sally Wenz, both of Red Lodge, as co-treasurers.

Dennis Christ, Bart Langemeier, Donalyn Mikles, and John Overton, all of Red Lodge and Melvin Stene of Joliet have been appointed to the Board of Directors as new members. Continuing their tenure on the board are Earl "Andy" Anderson, Red Lodge; Eakle Barfield, Luther; Rusty DeVries, Roberts; Pat Haggerty-White, Red Lodge; Paul Henry, Luther; Nancy Krekeler, Brian Roat, and Mitzi Voracheck, all of Red Lodge. Senia Hart, Robert Moran, and Shirley Zupan all of Red Lodge serve as ex-officio members.



Northwest Montana Historical Society and Museum at Central School Announce New Exhibit.

The *Museum at Central School* is preparing a presentation featuring the culture of the Montana Native Americans. It portrays the life in an Indian village. Members of the community have been quite supportive by offering artifacts to be used in the display. Topics include tools, housing, clothing, food hunting and gathering, children's activities and the importance of the buffalo. Displays planned are tipi, hide preparation, food drying racks, bow and arrowhead making, and women making and decorating clothing. The opening is scheduled for mid-January; the display will remain until mid-June 2006.

For more information contact the Museum at 406-756-8381

Holiday Hours at the Hockaday Museum of Art

The Hockaday Museum of Art will be closed to the public from Thursday, December 23, 2004 through Monday, January 10, 2005 for reorganization of the building and the installation of exciting new exhibitions that will open in January. These exhibits, opening January 20, include a display of watercolors of the jazz age by local artist Susan Arthur; a retrospective of works by David Shaner (1934-2002), a local ceramic artist whose innovative work had considerable impact on contemporary ceramics; and the reinstallation of the Glacier National Park permanent exhibition. The Hockaday Museum's regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm. For more information, call 755-5268. Hockaday Museum of Art, 302 2nd Ave. E. Kalispell, MT 59901, ~ www.hockadaymuseum.org

MONTANA TECH MINERAL MUSEUM TOPS AT DENVER SHOW

By Karen Sullivan

The Montana Tech Mineral Museum recently won the first place "Best of Museum" competition at 37th annual Denver Gem and Mineral Show.

The Mineral Museum's display, titled "Got Zeolite?" was prepared by Ginette Abdo, a hydrogeologist with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology and the program director of Tech's Mineral Museum. The Theme of the Denver show "Zeolites and Associated Minerals." The first-place award provided a \$1,000 prize, which Abdo used to purchase a rhodochrosite mineral specimen n display on the show. The specimen will accessioned into the Tech museum display collection.

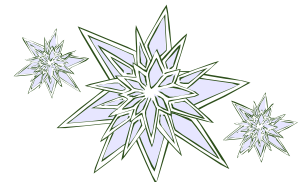
Zeolites, which usually are formed in volcanic rocks, are a group of more than 60 different minerals know for their variety of attractively formed, delicate crystals. The name "zeolite" means "boiling stone" - the minerals readily release water and may fuse and bubble when heated in a flame. Both natural and synthetic zeolites are used as ion exchangers to purify water and to absorb or purify gases. The minerals also can act as catalysts, and as molecular "sieves."

Abdo's display depicted the many commercial uses of zeolites, which could be described as the "aspirin of minerals." Abdo said the mineral can be used for odor control, blood coagulation, removal of impurities and heavy metals, filtering of water, and enhancement of turf. Trademarked names such as "Zeo-Pure" and "Zeobrite" are used to market products such as kitty litter, swimming pool filters and golf-course turf materials that enhance the growth of greens.

Abdo said forms of zeolites have been used on the battlefield, where physicians have used zeolite-based products to accelerate blood coagulation to stop massive bleeding. Such products have also been used in the medical field, as filters in kidney dialysis. Abdo said zeolites were used to remove radioactive materials from nuclear accident sited, as at Chernobyl, and Three Mile Island.

In her research for the Denver Display, Abdo found a man who sells live bait out of vending machines. The addition of zeolites to the water in the machines has increased the life of minnows to be used as bait from three to seven days she said.

"It's a magic rock," said Abdo, who made zeolite cookies as part of her Denver display.



Grant Deadlines

January 6th– NSF, Full Proposal due for Informal Science Education Grants.

January 14th–AAM is offering scholarships to the AAM annual conference. For details go to aam-us.org

February 1st– IMLS, National Leadership Grants for Museums.

NEH, *We the People* Challenge Grants in United States History, Institutions and Culture.

February 3rd– NEH, Implementation grants for Museum and Historical Organizations.

NEH, Implementation Grants for Special Projects.

March 15th– IMLS 21st Century Museum Professionals Grants.

MAM HOLDS LEGISLATORS LUNCH

At noon on Friday, January 14, 2005 MAM Board members and supporters will host an informal lunch for State legislators at the State Capitol. The objective of this get-together will be to raise the visibility of the Museums Association of Montana—an all volunteer organization—in the eyes of our State's governing body and their constituents. We will outline the group's activities such as the annual conference, Montana Museum Directory map, and participation in a variety of Montana Tourism initiatives. If you would like to participate by coming to Helena for this event, or by personally inviting your representatives, please call Paul Shea at 646-7461.

MUSEUM CONFERENCES



American Association for State & Local History

Annual Meeting—*History's Mysteries*—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania—September 21–24, 2005: see www.aaslh.org under Dispatch.

Questions? Call 615-320-3203 or email Natalie Norris at norris@aaash.org.



American Association of Museums

Annual Meeting—*Museums at the Crossroads*—Indianapolis, Indiana—May 1-5, 2005: see www.aam-us.org.

MPMA

Mountain-Plains Museums Association

Annual Meeting—*The Multiple Faces of Our Museums*—Omaha, Nebraska—September 12-16, 2005; see www.mountainplainsmuseums.org

Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism —Helena, MT—March 21-22, 2005: Montana Promotion Division, contact 406-841-2870, or www.visitmt.com.



Gypsy Fortune Teller Conservation Project

The Montana Heritage Commission received a private donation to contract with a conservator for needed conservation work on a priceless item in the Virginia City Collection. The Gypsy Fortune Teller resided in the back of Bob's Place for many years. Time has taken its toll on the fabrics, paper mache and beading. In addition to the fabrics and paper, the mechanical parts of the Gypsy also need attention. Conservator John Kjelland of Missoula, has the Gypsy in his care to accomplish the delicate task of restoring this historical piece.

The photo below shows the current conditions of the Gypsy, demonstrating the importance of this restoration work. The hope is to have the Gypsy in operational order by the summer of 2006, pending availability of needed materials for repair. The Gypsy will then be displayed and available for operation on a regulated basis in order protect her fragile state.



Bison mount offered to Montana Museums

A large, clean, well-mounted bison head mount is available to a Montana museum willing to exhibit and care for it. A member of the Yellowstone herd, the bison was legally shot the last year Montana permitted hunting of out-of-park animals. The large contemporary mount is light enough to be lifted and hung by one person.

Contact: George Oberst, Montana Historical Society, 406-444-0359.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Membership Year July 1, 2004–June 30, 2005)



MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Individual Member \$ 20 _____
•Newsletter (published quarterly)

Institutional Member

- Newsletter
- Membership decal
- Listing on the MAM map (2005 map)
- Listing on the MAM website
- One vote at annual membership meeting

Annual Operating Budget
Below \$50,000 \$ 25 _____
\$50,000 - \$100,000 \$ 35 _____
\$100,000 - \$200,000 \$ 45 _____
Above \$200,000 \$ 55 _____

Additional Newsletters –
\$10/year for each subscription \$ 10 _____

Benefactor \$100 _____

- Newsletter
- 10% advertising discount in Newsletter
- Listing on the MAM website

Corporate (for profit) \$300 _____

- 3 Newsletters
- Membership decal
- 20% advertising discount in Newsletter
- Listing on the MAM website



So that we can better serve you, please fill in all information and return form and payment to address below.

Organization (you are associated with) _____

Individual/Contact (year round contact) _____

Title _____

Mailing Address _____

Street Address (need for map) _____

City/State/Zip (zip - mailing & street) _____

Tourism Country _____

Phone Number (year round contact number) _____ Fax _____

Email Address _____

Seasons/Hours of Operation _____

Make checks payable to: Museums Association of Montana

Send above form and check to: **Susan Near, Montana Historical Society, 225 N. Roberts St., Helena, MT 59620-1201.**

Long-forgotten Bozeman carriage needs someone to 'Pimp My Ride'

By Perry Backus of The Montana Standard - 11/22/2004

VIRGINIA CITY — For decades, the once sleek Landau carriage languished in a dark, dank little corner of Nevada City's Eberle Blacksmith Shop.

Only the packrats seemed to like it: they nibbled on its aged leather and nested in its comfortable seats. Back in its heyday at the end of the 1800s, the likely turned heads as it made its way gracefully down the streets of Bozeman. Its passengers could keep their feet warm on a coal-heated warmer during the winter or lower the panes of glass with a patented device during the warmer months. Back then, the Landau was state-of-the-art transportation.

"We have no idea how it came to Nevada City," said Pat Roath, the curator of collections for Virginia and Nevada cities. "It's likely that Bovey picked it up somewhere and brought it here, but it could have been someone else who donated it to the collection."

And there's precious little to connect the carriage to the company that apparently owned it more than a century ago. A dented brass light indicated it was number six of a fleet owned by the Bozeman Cab Co., but that's about all Roath knows for sure.

She recently spent hours pouring over records hoping to uncover more about the company. All she could come up with was a photo of Bozeman that included a carriage similar to the Landau.

"If anyone had any information that they could share about this, we'd love to hear from them," she said, adding the number to call is 843-5441.

But what's important now is to make sure that the Landau survives to be enjoyed for generations to come. The carriage was recently moved out of the blacksmith shop to its new resting place at the Kiskadden Barn in Virginia City in a first step in its eventual conservation. "We're really going to start working on it now," said Roath.

At the same time, Roath and others in Virginia City are hoping that they'll be able to come up a source of money to help fund much of the conservation work. "Just to alleviate some of the problems with the carriage could cost tens of thousands of dollars," Roath said. "If I had to make a wild guess, it could cost as much as \$50,000 to get this project completed. It might be less." Roath has put together a presentation that she'll use to hopefully locate money for the project. It's hard to say where that money might come from.

Virginia and Nevada cities are filled with historical artifacts that need work to ensure they don't just fall apart and fade away. Funding for those projects can happen in extraordinary ways.

For instance, an heir to the Mills Novelty Co. visited the towns recently. While he was there, he spotted a gypsy fortune teller machine that had resided in the back of Bob's Place for years. It was built decades ago by the Mills Novelty Co. The heir donated money to the Montana Heritage Commission to hire a conservator to restore the priceless item.

Private donations play an important role in getting work accomplished in the historic towns, said Jim Carpita, the Montana Heritage Commission's Virginia City site manager.

For the full article and a slide show on the carriage please visit the Montana Heritage Commission website at Montanaheritagecommission.com and follow the "what's new link."



A carriage light from Bozeman cab No. 6 is examined recently by Pat Roath.

2005 Annual Conference

BONES, BEADS, AND BARNYARDS: COLLECTIONS CARE AND ACCESS

Glasgow, MT

March 10, 11, and 12, 2005

- See a full conference schedule in the next Newsletter
- Proposals are now being accepted for hosting the 2006 MAM Conference to be held in Russell County. Contact Penny Redli for info: peaks2plains@tgesolution.net

Join us for a fun and informative MAM conference March 10-12 in Glasgow !



c/o Montana Historical Society

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Visit the MAM Website at

www.montanamuseums.org

