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**Winter
2017**

A Publication of the Cascade County Historical Society

Avalanche - The History Museum Mountain Goat

A drive along downtown's Second Street South reveals a new feature to the front of the museum – our goat sculpture has been installed thanks to hard work from Rocky Mountain Hardscapes crew, museum staff and volunteers!



Sculpted from cement in 1954, Montana artist Bob Scriver presented the 1,400-pound goat as a gift to the owner of the Ranch Supper Club located east of Cut Bank. It was a one-of-a-kind sculpture. In 1970, house mover Scotty Zion traded a jeep with a snow plow for the goat and promptly moved it to a hotel the family owned outside Augusta. The mountain goat sculpture was moved several years later to the Zion residence and subsequently donated to The History Museum by Zion's daughters, Candi and Sherry, in 2015.

In 2016, The History Museum held a contest to name the mountain goat. Young museum visitors submitted names – Cliff and Rocky were among the choices. "Avalanche" was the winning name!

And one blustery fall weekend in September, Brian Bergan from Rocky Mountain Hardscapes arrived with a crew to move Avalanche from the back rooms of the museum to his permanent home as sentry to The History Museum's front entrance.



Director's Corner



Have you noticed the mountain goat hanging around outside the museum door? He is attracting attention around town and I am pleased to put Avalanche and his story on the front page of our newsletter.

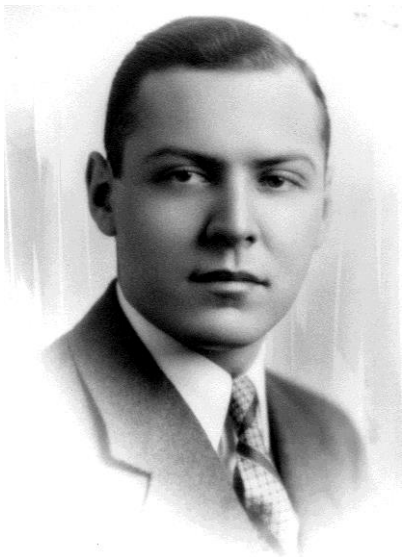
The History Museum is completing another wonderful year! With your help, we have continued to enhance the stature of this historical research center. We continue to educate the public with new exhibits, documentary films and our lecture series. Please see the story of our most recent lecture on this page.

This March, the museum will participate again in Western Art Week (please see page 3). We've had a record number of visitors this year and have been overwhelmed with donations to our archives and collections departments. We are happy to have energetic volunteers like Harry Nusser profiled on page 3. As we begin a large project in collections (please see collections story on page 4) we are outreaching for more volunteers to participate.

Our remarkable Gift Shop and Book Store is another source of pride for us. I hope you will visit on December 2nd to do some Holiday shopping during this special event and sale.

In December, I will be sending you a detailed letter reviewing the many accomplishments of this last year. None of these accomplishments would be possible without the generous financial donations from the many folks whose names appear in this newsletter. We thank you so much for your support and will work hard to exceed your expectations for this museum in 2018.

Stories from the Archives



Every now and then, a visitor will come to the museum with a research request or a donation that captures my entire attention for the day. One such item was a scrapbook of the life of I.W. Church – a name that may be familiar to some. I.W. (Jerry) Church was an attorney in Great Falls for several decades and did many things to the benefit our community. The scrapbook outlined his entire life with articles, pictures and a few items in its pages.

As I flipped through pages of the scrapbook, headlines caught my attention: “Wins Carnegie Medal” and “Montana Golfer is Modest Hero”. I read about a cold January day in Appleton, Wisconsin, when three college girls lost control while sledding, jumping the bank of the Fox River and breaking through the ice. Mr. Church, then a student at Lawrence College, heard their cries from several blocks away and sprinted to their rescue. He crawled on his stomach across the ice and was able to get them all to safety. He suffered from exposure and pneumonia, but received the Carnegie Medal for Bravery! This event ultimately led to Mr. Church relocating to Montana as his doctor recommend-ed coming to Montana for the high, dry atmosphere.

Mr. Church went on to establish one of the oldest and most respected law firms in the state of Montana, beginning in 1911. He served countless clients and even represented the Estate of Charles M. Russell in probate hearings in 1926.

There are so many interesting stories at the Archives and we want to share them all with you. If you have a question or just want to hear the latest story, come in for a visit! *Submitted by Megan Sandord*

Western Art Week Offerings

The History Museum will host the Arts Association of Montana's 5th Missouri River Fine Arts Show and Sale during 2018 Western Art Week. Eighteen local artists will offer a wide range of art for sale including watercolor and oil paintings, jewelry, mixed media and western art.

Last year's art show was attended by more than 1,000 people and also featured artwork sold by The History Museum. Art sold to benefit the museum this year will reflect a wide variety of styles from etchings by Branson Stevenson to prints and paintings by Gary Olds, King Kuka and others artists.

"Members wishing to help the museum will occasionally donate artwork meant specifically for fundraising purposes," stated museum director Jim Meinert. Please contact the museum if you have any art you would like to donate to this show; it will help the museum and provide a possible tax deduction for the fair market value of the art.

The show will be at the museum March 15-18, 2018. Mark your calendars!



Photo caption

Volunteer Spotlight



Museum volunteer Harry Nusser (left) saw Great Falls for the first time while serving seven years of his 20-year Air Force career at Malmstrom AFB. He lived in Great Falls after he retired from the Air Force in 1985 and earned an undergraduate degree in History from the University of Great Falls in 2005.

Harry and Lonnie, his wife of 47 years, moved back to Harry's home town of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, so they could each complete graduate work at Pennsylvania State University. Lonnie and Harry each received master's degrees in American Studies from Penn State in 2008. Harry worked briefly for the Historical Society in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Back in Montana again, Harry spends several days each week in the museum's reading room. He reviews and indexes old court records from Great Falls. "I've read six volumes of cases and decisions, each about 600 pages!" Harry exclaims. "I've learned how to cut through some of the legal jargon to find and type summaries with the important information!"

Harry is also spending time scanning photos for the museum's upcoming new military documentary, "*Thunder Under the Big Sky*". Watch for its release in 2018.

This and other tasks might overwhelm some volunteers, but Harry knows that his written case summaries will one day be a treasure trove of information for the right history researcher.

The History Museum is happy to profile both Harry and Lonnie Nusser for all they do. Volunteers are an important component to the museum's success!

Hartelius Portrays Washington in Lecture Series

The History Museum continued its 2017 Lecture Series on Wednesday, October 25th, with another visit from George Washington, of sorts!

Channing Hartelius, a Great Falls attorney and longtime museum member, entertained a crowd of fellow history buffs at The History Museum with his portrayal of George Washington. In period costume, Mr. Hartelius assumed the role of Mr. Washington and discussed his philosophical differences with his colleague, Thomas Jefferson.

Channing's interest in history has an emphasis on the Revolutionary War and George Washington in particular. He has appeared in reenactments many times in Montana and Arizona.

Admission to the Lecture Series and the museum are always free!



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Volunteer Opportunity ~ Collections Department Inventory Project



Volunteering in our Collections Department offers the unique experience to see our museum behind the scenes and to engage with artifacts firsthand. The History Museum holds a wealth of information and endless opportunities to learn about and to interact with our region's past. We invite you to become a part of the process!

Every object we accept into our collection receives individual attention and research that allows us to track the object's history: who it came from, where it came from, how old it is, and any other details or stories about how it relates to the North Central region of Montana. As our organization predates any computerized inventory database, hard work has been going on for years to put old records into the system along with new records of recently donated items. It's a large and time consuming task, which is why the Collections Department is reaching out to find volunteers.

Thankfully, with just a small amount of research and investigation, objects that may have previously been overlooked now have a reason to draw attention to themselves.

Judy Ellinghausen, an archivist who has recently come out of retirement to assist with policy and procedures for this project, recalls coming across a Polaroid camera with minimal attached documentation. With a small amount of research, she discovered that the camera was made in 1948. "I had no idea that Polaroid was manufactured that early. I think it's pretty cool that we have the first model of Polaroid [in our collection,]" says Judy.

Bringing in volunteers gives us a huge advantage, because each volunteer has their own experience, interests, and skills to offer. Call our Collections Curator Ashleigh McCann to tell her about the skills and interests you can share with The History Museum.

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