And the Winner Is . . .

From buildings and books to people and places, preservationists are making news!

Hand Raised Wins Best Nonfiction Book

Hand Raised: The Barns of Montana won the High Plains Book Award for Best Nonfiction on Saturday, October 20 in Billings. The book was also a finalist in the art and photography category.

The book, by MPA's very own Chere Jiusto and Christine Brown with photographer Tom Ferris, rose to the top among stacks of other inspiring titles. “We are quite humbled and extremely honored to have been among such an amazing group of writers,” says Jiusto. “The High Plains Book award is something we will all treasure. Many thanks to our Board and loyal members who supported the project, along with our partners the Montana Historical Society Press and Research Center, and the State Historic Preservation Office.”

The event was held at the majestic Yellowstone Art Museum and attended by more than 200 people. All in attendance were delighted to hear High Plains Emeritus writer and Montana novelist, Tom McGuane, expound on everything from suntan lotion to writing. Much gratitude is also extended to the High Plains Book Award committee, the Parmly Billings Library, Parmly Billings Library Foundation, Yellowstone Art Museum, and many other sponsors who hosted the Festival and awards program.

MPA Excellence Awards Honor Model Projects

Once again MPA honored another group of inspiring preservationists at our Preservation Excellence Awards ceremony on September 19. Every year it is our pleasure to applaud them at an elegant party. By honoring their enthusiasm and hard work we hope to inspire others and encourage new preservation projects around the state. And the winners are . . .

Rialto Theater, Deer Lodge

The Rialto Community Theater Board and Martel Construction were honored for their outstanding work to rehabilitate their community theater after a devastating fire in 2006. Now, six years and $3.5 million later, the beloved Rialto has been restored and is open once again. Rialto Board President Steve Owens’ enthusiasm allowed his community to reach a seemingly impossible goal, and in the end gifted the town with a carefully preserved facility that is an inspiration and historic preservation model for all.

continued on page 3

Get more detailed information at www.PreserveMontana.org
Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of year 25 at MPA, it is just so heartening to look back across the first quarter century and see how much our organization has grown and bloomed – from a little shoestring operation to a fully-staffed preservation clearing house. At the same time, the interest and capacity for saving and protecting our state’s amazing history is expanding in all directions. No one does this work alone, and the lineup of award winners this fall showcases people who hold tremendous dedication and love of heritage. Prepare to be inspired!

Happy Holidays from all of us at MPA!

Chere

Executive Director

What’s Happening?

Touchstone Saving History Workshop
Nov. 27-28, New Atlas Bar, Columbus
Once again MPA brings a team of traveling professionals to work on-site with small towns to preserve historic materials and structures that document their unique rural community. The two-day workshop is free and open to the public. Contact patty@preservemontana.org or 406-457-2822 for information.

Check It Out
The Architecture of “Mad Men”
Pick up the latest issue of Montana Magazine to read about the latest project of the Montana State Historic Preservation Office to document Montana’s stock of Modernist buildings and draw attention to the talented architects who defined the era. On newstands now.

Ivan Doig Reads in Helena
MPA, the Nature Conservancy Montana Chapter, and the Holter Museum of Art welcomed Montana author Ivan Doig on October 7 for a members-only reading of his new book, The Bartender’s Tale. In addition to reading, Doig signed books and answered questions about his writing habits, ranching experiences, and his plans for subsequent novels. The good news? He’s working on a sequel to Work Song, a novel set in 1919 Butte.

Saving History in Glacier National Park
Lon Johnson Wins National Award

Congratulations to Lon Johnson of Glacier National Park, the recipient of the 2011 Appleman-Judd-Lewis Award for excellence in cultural resource stewardship, given by the National Park Service at a September 19 ceremony in Washington, D.C. Johnson, who received a 2011 MPA Preservation Excellence Award, was recognized for his resourcefulness with cultural resources stewardship, climate change, and sustainable use. Specifically, he was awarded for his pro-active, innovative, collaborative efforts to protect perishable Native American cultural resources at risk from ice and snow melting related to climate change, and for his stewardship of historic architecture at Glacier National Park. Johnson is one of four National Park Service employees to receive the award this year.
Keim Building, Missoula
Mark Kersting spent the last 10 years restoring the Keim Building, an 1890s brick storefront building in Missoula’s Historic North Side Railroad District. The building was threatened with demolition when Kersting bought it in 2000 and he jumped in with gusto on an extensive restoration. He hired contractors to fix the failing roof system, but did most work himself, including stripping, restoring and repairing every wall surface inside and out. As a result, the now spectacular Keim building has others in the neighborhood spiffing things up.

Bob Valach, Lewistown
Over the past 30 years, Bob Valach, a third generation masonry contractor from Lewistown, has been instrumental in preserving the “City of Stone,” and in planning for historic resources across Montana. Working first with his father, Frank Valach, and now with his son, Joel, Bob’s impressive list of restoration projects includes the Bair home in Martinsdale, the White Sulphur Springs Castle, and dozens of historic Lewistown landmarks. In addition, Bob volunteers many hours of his time serving on boards and commissions locally and statewide. His dedication to historic preservation both in the meeting room and on the job site is invaluable to the Treasure State.

Mike Schaer, Billings
Mike Schaer has spent many years working to revitalize the downtown Billings Depot Historic District. In the 1990s, he spearheaded the effort to revitalize Montana Avenue, leading property owners to put up half the $1.2 million cost of street work and landscaping. He started by locating his business along Montana Avenue, and later created the McCormick Café, the Log Cabin Bakery, Club Carlin nightclub and hotel, Café Italia, Rue D’Artistes, and rehabbed other buildings for galleries, antique shops, offices, a yoga studio, Venture Theater, parking lots, and more. Schaer’s longtime neighborhood friend, Gene Burgad of the Rex, is emphatic about Schaer’s accomplishments, “Nobody has done more for this area than Mike Schaer.”

Marsha Fulton & Crystal Alegria - Extreme History Project
In a very short time, Marsha Fulton and Crystal Alegria of the Extreme History Project have made great strides to educate the public about Fort Parker and the Crow Tribe. In 2012 alone they collected hours of oral history interviews with key Crow tribal elders; brought students from MSU Billings College of Technology to perform 3D scanning of site remains; gave lectures about Fort Parker; and foremost, brought together land owners and the Archaeology Conservancy to negotiate purchase of the site for permanent preservation. Fulton and Alegria are honored for their enthusiasm and ongoing outreach to preserve Crow tribal history.

Chris Weatherly, Stevensville
For nearly 30 years, Chris Weatherly has worked to restore many of western Montana’s premier historic buildings including Historic St. Mary’s Mission, Chief Plenty Coups Cabin, Travelers’ Rest State Park, and Fort Owen. Weatherly has also donated his time and skill to other landmarks, including the Hangman’s Building in Virginia City, the Stevensville and Ravalli County Museums, and the Fort Missoula Barracks Building. He has also served for many years as the President of the Stevensville Historical Museum. In 2010, Weatherly was named Stevensville Citizen of the Year. He is deserving of much recognition and honor for all his contributions to saving heritage in western Montana.

Kennon Baird – Helena As She Was website
Editor Kennon Baird and Helena As She Was website contributors were recognized for creating and continually expanding www.HelenaHistory.org, a simple, fun and easily accessible history website for Helena history enthusiasts. Since 2006, the website has welcomed more than 100 contributors of Helena-related images and ephemera. The site is commercial-free and free to access; an average of 60 people per day visit. They come from almost every state in the union and from many foreign nations. Furthermore, the Helena As She Was Facebook page has an astounding 3,400-plus followers – a reach that is 10 times what many state and local history museums enjoy. This model website is an inspiration for other historical organizations to follow.

Icing on the Cake
Forest Service & MPA Receive National Award
To cap off a stellar season of accolades, the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation awarded the Forest Service Northern Region cultural resources employees and MPA with the Chairman’s Award for Achievement in Historic Preservation for the region’s Heritage Stewardship Enhancement (HSE) program. The HSE program fosters protection, stewardship, and public use of cultural resources. Since it began, funding has gone to more than 110 projects, including more than 40 historic properties, and 25 archaeological sites.

This award acknowledges not only the investment in the rehabilitation and protection of significant historic properties, but also the creation of many effective partnerships, such as the Region’s recent collaboration with MPA on the Montana Preservation Road Show event. All partners were on hand for the November 15 ceremony in Washington, D.C.
New Faces

Preservation People

**Kathryn Sears Ore, Compliance Officer**

Kathryn joined the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in May to aid in the effort to help preserve Montana’s rich cultural heritage. She received dual B.A. degrees in Anthropology and Art from the University of Montana and will soon complete her thesis for an M.A. in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon.

**Andrew Craft, Cultural Records Assistant**

The SHPO welcomed Andrew in September and he is already busy assisting with maintenance of the Cultural Records database and digital mapping of newly discovered archaeology sites. Andrew received a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and is currently writing his thesis to complete a M.S. in Cultural Resource Management Archaeology at Saint Cloud State University in Minnesota.

**Tash Wisemiller, Montana Main Street Coordinator**

Tash Wisemiller brings to the Department of Commerce over ten years of cultural resource management experience. He has a B.A. in History from the University of Montana, an M.A. in Public History/Historical Administration from Arizona State University, and is a doctoral candidate in Public History at Arizona State University. Tash has worked in Montana and the Southwest as a public historian, planner, trainer, and non-profit manager.

New Places

[Image of Homesteading Montana logo]

MPA and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lewistown Office have launched [www.HomesteadingMontana.org](http://www.HomesteadingMontana.org) to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Original Homestead Act. This easy-to-navigate website features an ever-expanding collection of compelling journal entries, letters, scholarly writing, radio interviews, historic and contemporary images and more.

The project is one of MPA’s many efforts to preserve Montana’s threatened historic resources, and expand awareness of rural, agricultural and community heritage. Similarly the BLM, as active stewards and public land managers of former homestead properties across the West, is playing a key role in efforts to preserve and commemorate this heritage. Events included a national BLM-hosted commemoration ceremony in May 2012, and a traveling Homestead Act exhibit. Through these various events and online resources, MPA and its partners hope to encourage a broad audience to explore and preserve Montana’s rural past with us.