

# For Immediate Release

September 21, 2011

## 2011 HISTORIC PRESERVATION EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Helena, Montana -- MPA announced the recipients of this year's Historic Preservation Excellence Awards on September 21st to an enthusiastic crowd at the Florence Hotel Governor's Room in Missoula. Each year, MPA takes great pleasure in celebrating individuals who have gone above and beyond to save and protect Montana's special historic buildings and places. Not only do we applaud good stewards and advocates for heritage properties, we also promote the importance of historic preservation as a tool for economic development, community vitality, and increased tourism.

This year, we honored seven outstanding projects that span a wide array of preservation initiatives. Those people and groups honored stand tall among Montana's keepers of history, those whose passion for place, community, and architecture leads their vision and sustains their work. By honoring their achievements, we hope to inspire others and encourage a host of new preservation projects.

And the honorees are . . .

### **Big Arm Association, Big Arm School For outstanding community preservation project**



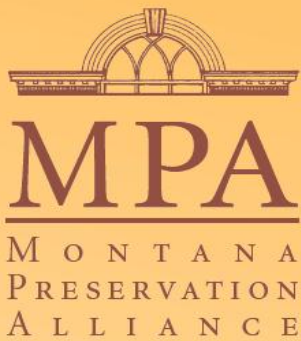
The Big Arm community has always rallied around their one-room school house as a social, educational, and civic locus. In 2006, the local school district's efforts to balance their budget threatened that significant place. They proposed demolishing the building and selling the land on which it stands. Fortunately, the hard-working members

of the Big Arm Association recognized the significance of the place and its

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potential to continue to serve the community in a pro-active way. They worked closely with the school district and MPA to halt the demolition and secure a lease for the property, listed the school in the National Register of Historic Places, secured a grant through the National Trust for Historic Preservation to assess the building's condition, and hosted workshops to facilitate a long-term plan for the building's rehabilitation and use as a community center and educational venue. Plan in place, they rolled up their sleeves and worked even harder, raising money and volunteering their time and resources to reroof the school, remove a non-historic addition, construct a historically-accurate entry, daylight the windows, and completely restore the interior of the building. The result is nothing short of spectacular.

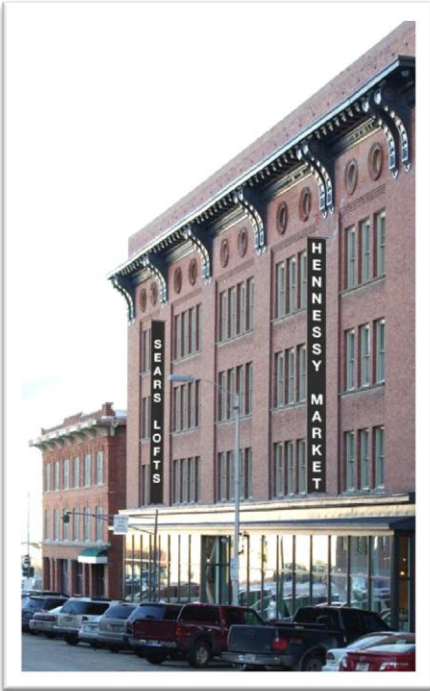
Big Arm townspeople constructed the Big Arm School in the mid-1910s, which served the students of the community, both Indian and non-Indian, for fifty years. The school house was used not only as a classroom, but also as a dance hall, meeting forum, and polling place. The school was closed in 1952 and students were bussed to Polson thereafter.

Embracing their community heritage, the Big Arm Association recognized the value of the school house and worked together to reestablish it as "an integral part of the village." To this end, they rallied hours of labor, exhibited sensitivity and masterful artisanship. The Big Arm Association, lead by Alison Meslin, succeeded in not only restoring the building, but also gathered stories, photos, and documents associated with Big Arm's history, to be stored, displayed, and interpreted in the building. As a pilot community in MPA's Touchstone Project, the Big Arm Association's project exemplifies the power of preservation, pride, creativity, and determination to invigorate and celebrate community heritage.

### **Sears Building, Butte – Nick Kujawa For outstanding commercial rehabilitation**

The Sears Building is located in the Butte-Anaconda National Historic Landmark District, the nation's largest historic district. W.A. O'Brien, a local Butte architect who also designed the Leonard Hotel, the Napton Apartments and the Ansonia, designed the Historic Sears Building, which was originally constructed in the early 1900s as an annex to the Hennessey store building located immediately to its the west, with miners apartments on the upper floors.

In 1941, Sears, Roebuck and Company opened its first retail store in Butte on the first floor, where it stayed until the mid-1970s. Subsequently the owners of the building defaulted on their property taxes and the building reverted to the City of Butte. Serious consideration was given to demolishing the building, but in the early 1990s, as a result of the work of the Butte Silver Bow local historic preservation office and the Urban Revitalization Agency, the building was sealed and stabilized, its future to be determined. In winter 2006 Nick Kujawa of Kujawa Development LLC approached the City of Butte and later purchased the Sears Building.



Over the next five years Nick, his father Patrick, and brother Cass assembled a rehab plan and funding package that included State and Federal Rehab Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits, private investment and a lot of sweat equity. Their investment of \$7.8 million fully rehabbed the 80,000 square foot building, made 34 market rate apartment units available, and introduced the Uptown Market grocery store to a neighborhood that hadn't had a grocery in over a decade. Future plans include an Exploratorium inspired science center in the basement level.

“A privately funded building project approaching \$8 million is rare in Montana, and gives a boost to our economy,” says Pete Brown of the State Historic Preservation Office. “The rehab investment and scale of the project is a first for the rehab tax credit program in Montana. The combination of tax credit programs is a model for others in our state to make languishing buildings thrive once again.”

### **Sacajawea Hotel, Three Forks For outstanding commercial rehabilitation**

Just days after purchasing the iconic Sacajawea Hotel in Three Forks in the autumn of 2009, Wheat Montana entrepreneur Dean Folkvord pledged to return the hostelry to “...grandeur, prominence, and economic success,” announcing that structural and mechanical issues and other improvements would mean a grand-reopening in the spring of 2010. Folkvord’s vision was to “keep history intact but have the amenities for the modern American.” The work included completely repainting the clapboard exterior, reconstructing the commodious front porch, and retaining the lobby’s light fixtures, steam heat registers and 14-foot high beamed ceiling. The cellar bar’s wainscoting was “recycled” fir flooring from the front porch while the boot rail is repurposed porch balustrades. The hotel’s original rooms were totally refurbished and refurnished to better conform to contemporary expectations. A deck was sympathetically inserted between the 1862 Madison House (moved from the original Three Forks townsite decades ago) and Pompey’s Grill dining room.



The high quality and quantity of craftsmen's work is evident throughout this structure which has made Three Forks one of the area's most distinctive destinations. The anchor of downtown Three Forks, the Sacajawea Hotel was built in 1910 by Milwaukee Road land agent John Q. Adams, only one year after the town's platting south of "Old Town" Three Forks. Prolific Bozeman architect Fred Willson designed the three-story clapboard Colonial Revival hotel to draw tourists traveling the Milwaukee Road to Yellowstone National Park and house railroad workers. The hotel's initial success began to fade, however, as the electrification of other segments of the Milwaukee Road led to the razing of its dispatcher office, car yard and roundhouse in 1915. The railway's 1927 construction of the Gallatin Gateway Inn shifted Yellowstone-bound tourist traffic away from Three Forks.



Over the next 80 years, six different owners operated the hotel. Working with MSU's Director of the School of Architecture Clark Llewellyn (FAIA), Jane and Smith Roedel, woodwork was refinished and painstakingly replaced in the early 1990s. In September, 2009, Dean Folkvord, president and founder of Wheat Montana, purchased the hotel for a "fraction of what the previous owners were asking." Noting Three Forks to be the "best small town in Montana," Folkvord said, "Part of our motivation is to give back, and invest in, our own community. Three Forks is a special place and we expect the Sacajawea Hotel to play a major role in continuing to make this town unique." The Sacajawea Hotel reopened to the public in its centennial year, April 2010, and it appears Folkvord has met his aim in reviving a gathering place the local community is proud of.

## **Glacier National Park For outstanding federal preservation project**

Glacier National Park is one of the crown jewels of the nation's National Park system. The park is prized for its majestic mountains and wild alpine landscapes, and at the same time, admired and visited for its many charming and comfortable historic buildings. Just as managing the many natural resources of the park is a demanding task, preserving and maintaining the historic buildings, structures, and roads in Glacier National Park is a monumental effort. For the past 25 years, Glacier Park staff has tirelessly and carefully undertaken the restoration of dozens of historically significant buildings and structures throughout the park. Working together with local, state, and federal agencies, Glacier Park's Superintendent's Office, the Cultural Resources Department and the park's Preservation Crew, have consistently made historic preservation a top priority. From the

restoration of the humble Lincoln Creek cabin to the Sperry Chalet, Lake MacDonald and Many Glacier lodges, and the daunting Going-to-the-Sun Road, Glacier Park staff continually show outstanding stewardship no matter the size of the project.



A retaining wall along Going-to-the-Sun Road is reinforced and a replica stone veneer makes it blend with the original design



*Many Glacier Hotel dining room with dropped ceiling before restoration*



*Many Glacier Hotel dining room ceiling during restoration*

Going-to-the-Sun Road is undoubtedly the park's crowning preservation achievement. It is renowned as one of the most beautiful mountain roads in the world and it's one of our country's great marvels of road engineering. Keeping the road open to tourists while preserving its original character is a major and ongoing initiative in the park and a herculean task undertaken by the park with the utmost care. The highway was built between 1921 and 1933 and today sees more than 475,000 travelers a year. By the early 1980s, decades of severe weather, traffic, avalanches and rockslides had severely compromised the safety of the road. Within the last 10 years, everything

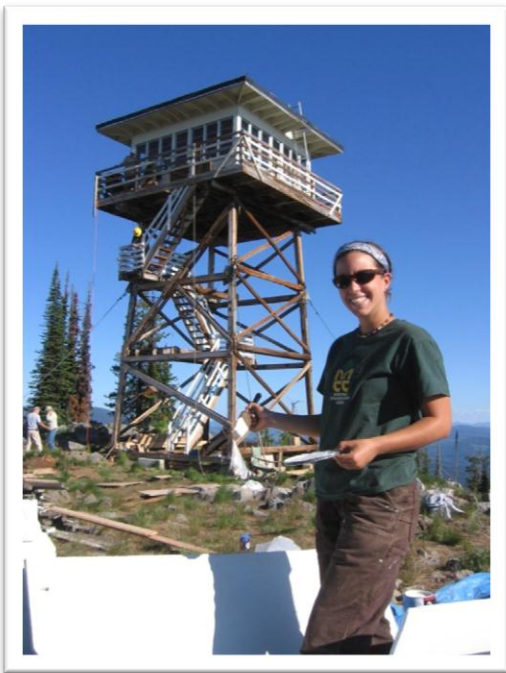
from the pavement and guardrails, to the retaining walls, arches, tunnels and drainage systems have been repaired, restored, and upgraded.

Another current project in the park is the restoration of the Many Glacier Hotel. The first three phases of the rehabilitation focused on the building exterior, structure stabilization and most immediate needs. These three phases were completed in 2005. Current work, scheduled to be

complete in 2012 involves interior restoration of the north half of the building. In addition to restoring administrative areas, guest rooms, restrooms, and employee areas, the work also includes removing the dropped ceiling in the dining room to reveal the original timber and iron roof trusses, and restoration of the original window configuration, decorative pergola, and the massive stone fireplace. As the park continues to carry on and start new and ambitious preservation projects, MPA applauds their amazing efforts and recognizes their stalwart stewardship of these rare and beautiful masterpieces of early twentieth century architecture.

## **Montana Conservation Corps**

### **For outstanding contribution to local, state, and federal preservation projects**



For the past twenty years, the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), comprised of adolescents and young adults, have worked on a range of historic built environment and landscape projects across Montana, preserving these irreplaceable pieces of our state's history. Founded to "inspire young people through hands-on conservation service to be leaders, stewards of the land and engaged citizens who improve their communities", the Corps annually contributes more than 90,000 volunteer hours working with diverse governmental and nonprofit entities on conservation and preservation projects throughout the state.

The Corps' very reasonable fees (covering the costs of transportation, tools, safety equipment, camping supplies, crew leader and other staff salaries, etc.) has meant that many historic preservation projects which otherwise might not have been undertaken due to insufficient funding not only take place but are completed successfully.

Perhaps the most long-lasting benefits the MCC's projects yield, however, are for the young crew members themselves. As the MCC's web site notes: "Participants receive the experience of a lifetime through challenging projects and the rigors of camp life, coupled with education aimed at creating engaged citizens and lifelong environmental stewards. All of these factors create an ideal situation for personal growth that leads to increased confidence, communication and leadership skills, and the ability to work well with people from all walks of life."

**Recent MCC historic preservation projects include:**

- Annual historic preservation projects at Nevada & Virginia Cities including masonry and foundation repairs, log building repair, streamside restoration of historic placer diggings, historic objects collections maintenance, etc.
- Ghost town preservation for Montana State Parks and BLM, with the MCC noting: “These have been successful projects for members – very hands on, educational, and full of practical work skills learning.”
- Projects with the National Park Service including corral repair at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, an NHL; annual tepee ring maintenance at Big Hole Battlefield; excavation of historic structures in Bighorn Canyon; stonework preservation and Blacktail Bridge stabilization in Yellowstone National Park; and, with the USFS, the conversion of historic fire towers and ranger stations into education centers.
- Recent partnership with the Lewis and Clark County Historical Society to stabilize the nationally significant Robert Reamer-designed Green Meadow Ranch granary and blacksmith shop with loft stabilization for the granary and shingle demolition/roof resheeting for both structures.



**Brian Shovers**  
**Outstanding Individual Achievement**

Whether analyzing the metropolitan character of Butte’s two-story walk-up flats or recounting litigation emerging from Montana’s struggle to allocate water, historian Brian Shovers has doggedly documented and diffused the stories of our state’s historic built environment and landscape to a public audience for nearly 30 years. Since moving to Montana in the very early 1980s, this Racine, Wisconsin native’s work has served as a catalyst for the appreciation and preservation of Montana’s industrial heritage and the cultural landscapes it presents.

One of Brian’s most enduring contributions to preservation in Montana was his “Butte, Montana: An Architectural and Historical Inventory of the National Landmark District” (1986), with Dale Martin, that laid the foundation and constructed a perspective of the city’s built environment still operative today. He excels at linking Montana’s industrial past to the preservation and economic problems of the present and challenges for the future. Brian’s essay, “Remaking the Wide Open Town: Butte, Montana at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”-- published both in *Montana, The Magazine of Western History* (1998) and *Western Technological Landscapes* (edited by Stephen Tchudi, 1998)-- assessed Butte’s persistence and community resilience, particularly in regard to its built environment and landscape.

In addition to Brian’s substantial body of research and publications, he co-founded, with industrial historian Fred Quivik, the Klepetko Chapter of the Society of Industrial Archaeology (SIA), one of only twelve in the U.S. Building upon his research skills and on-the-ground knowledge, he has conceived and organized the majority of the chapter’s quarterly tours to nearly-forgotten industrial sites around Montana and the region, greatly enriching appreciation for these gritty yet fragile manifestations of capital and political power. He has also researched and organized/co-organized tours of neglected sites for numerous Montana History Conference tours, for such national SIA fall

tours to Butte (1989) and to northeastern Montana (2003) to view “bridges, beets, dams, oil and more” and the post-VAF 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting tour of Helena and environs.

For nearly three decades, Brian’s enthusiasm, generosity, and willingness to share his considerable knowledge about Montana’s industrial heritage has benefited researchers, history buffs, and decision makers. Without his dedication and knowledge, Montanans’ appreciation, understanding and motivation to preserve our historic built environment would be greatly diminished.

**Mark Greytak, [www.MontanaPictures.net](http://www.MontanaPictures.net)  
Director’s Technology Award for historic preservation through  
digital media**

For many years, Mark Greytak and his crew have provided an invaluable service to Montanans, both in-state and out-of-state. Camera in hand, Mark has traveled all over the state to photograph its remarkable places, documenting historic Montana in stunning images that he shares on his website, [MontanaPictures.net](http://MontanaPictures.net) -- ‘The website for people homesick for Montana.’



This unpretentious and humble website offers both free and low-cost picture tours of well visited and remote parts of Montana. Visitors to the site can also make requests and Greytak, who also holds a full-time job in Helena, will head out on the weekends and on summer vacations to document his fans’ favorite Montana places.

“There’s something about seeing a quality picture of “home” that gives people hope and a smile,” says Greytak, who has been extremely generous in allowing MPA to use his images for mailings, our website, and promotional documents. His love for Montana and understanding of the importance of documenting and preserving these remarkable places is inspiring and contagious, and should be more widely recognized.

To learn more about MPA’s Getting to Know Modern Tour or Preservation Excellence Award winners, call Chere Jiusto or Christine Brown at 406-457-2822. For information on MPA and Montana preservation projects, visit MPA online at [www.preservemontana.org](http://www.preservemontana.org). Photos available upon request to [christine@preservemontana.org](mailto:christine@preservemontana.org).