

Big Sky Roundup

<http://montanamsgs.org>



2019-2020 Officers

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October 2019

President's Message

I would like to take this opportunity to thank several hard-working, dedicated MSGS members who have contributed so much for our society.

First, our Librarian, Karen Huck needs to be commended for the hours she has spent coordinating the move of the MSGS Library from the 2nd Floor to the 1st Floor of the Lewis and Clark Library. She has organized much of the effort to scan books and other resources so that they will be available to more of us. MSGS has benefited from her efforts as Librarian for numerous years, and we are especially grateful to her and her numerous volunteers that are working non-stop to make the transition as painless as possible.

Next, a special thank you goes to Pat Ludwig, who has been Historian for MSGS for as long as I have been a part of the organization. Every year at Conference, Pat is out and about taking photos which she then compiles into a wonderful book full of memories that are preserved for all of us to re-live and enjoy. Pat has decided it is time to turn the reins of Historian over to someone new, so if you would like to take photos at Conference and then compile them for all to enjoy --- Please let me know!

Last, but not least, Carol Elliott finished her 2nd term as MSGS Secretary at this year's conference. During her 4 years as Secretary, Carol guided us through a complete revision of our By Laws and Standing Rules. Her knowledge of the entire process is greatly appreciated and because of her, the foundation and structure of MSGS is now current.

So many people contribute to the success of MSGS throughout the year that space prohibits my ability to thank each of them individually here. But please know MSGS is strong because of every one of you and your varied contributions are essential to keeping us that way. Thank you all,

Shawna Valentine, MSGS President



MSGS Executive Board Meeting Summary 19 September 2019

The meeting was called to order by President Shawna Valentine. Other members present included Verba Valentine, Shirley Rogers, Carol Elliott, Terry Atwood, Mary Pitch, Karen Huck, Pat Ludwig and Fern Kauffman. The minutes of the 13 July 2019 board meeting were approved. Treasurer Terry Atwood reported the checking account balance as \$7,943.62 and the savings account balance as \$27,824.26. He also reported that the Society has received a \$500 Digitization Grant to help offset digitization costs for the Montana State Genealogical Library transition project.

First Vice President Verba Valentine updated the board on conference registrations. She will provide a final conference report at the October board meeting. Shirley Rogers, 2nd Vice President, obtained ten conference raffle items from Ancestry, Fold3, Newspapers.com, Family Tree, Findmypast and MyHeritage. As the MSGS representative for the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), she reported that FGS and the National Genealogical Society (NGS) will merge in October 2020. Both organizations will hold 2020 annual conferences as planned.

Registrar Mary Pitch reported MSGS has 13 active societies and 615 members. Overall, five societies lost members in 2019 and one society, the Flathead Valley Genealogical Society in Kalispell, is no longer an active society. Historian Pat Ludwig would like a new person appointed as the MSGS Historian. Shawna will announce that MSGS is looking for someone to be the next Historian at the Annual Meeting and in the *Big Sky Roundup*. Fern Kauffman reported some problems with people sending in First Families and Early Settlers applications without documentation. The current application deadline for inclusion in FF&ES, Volume V, is 10 January 2020.

Librarian Karen Huck provided an excellent report on renovation plans of the Lewis and Clark Library and the impact on the Montana State Genealogical Library housed within it. The MSGS collection will be moved to new spaces within the open stacks of the Lewis and Clark Library; however, MSGS will still own the collection and will continue operating as a reference library. Electronic security tags will be attached to each book to prevent books from being removed from the library. MSGS will use the transition project as an opportunity to expand access to its collection and patron services with new technologies. The next board meeting will be held on Saturday, 5 October 2019, at 10:00 AM at St Paul's Methodist Church, Helena, Montana.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Elliott, Secretary

MSGS Annual Meeting Summary 21 September 2019

President Shawna Valentine reminded members of the approaching deadline for submitting First Family and Early Settlers applications and supporting documentation. Applications must be submitted by 10 January 2020 for inclusion in the next published FF&ES volume, Volume V. She also announced that MSGS is looking for someone to serve as the MSGS Historian. The following MSGS officers were elected unanimously: Shirley Rogers, 2nd Vice President; Mary Pitch, Registrar; and Jenn Vieth, Secretary.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Elliott, Secretary

Conference Highlights

MSGs State Conference Awards Al Huntsman 2019 Award

For over 25 years, Richard L. Davis has shared his technical expertise to help genealogists in Yellowstone County. He ensures that a computer, projector and microphone are available for meeting presentations of the Yellowstone Genealogy Forum. He also makes the arrangements with the LDS Church in Billings so that YGF has a place for their meetings. An accomplished presenter, he has given numerous programs for YGF and as a Vice-President and program chairman of the MT Big Sky Genealogy Computer Group, he has presented their monthly programs for a number of years. Since this group focuses on technology, the programs are a natural fit for Rick. If he can't be at a meeting for either group, he ensures someone from his family fills in for him to set up the equipment so the program can still be presented.

As Director of the Family History Center in Billings for several years, he has lent his expertise and knowledge to keep the computers running and is also willing to help any one with their computer program. He has successfully transferred old PAF programs to newer computers and given assistance to many when programs fail, even if that meant going to an individual's residence to fix the problem. Rick is long overdue for recognition for his dedication and mission to help fellow genealogists and is very deserving of the Al Huntsman Award.



Al Huntsman Award

Submitted by Sydney Gabel



Anna Mae Hanson Award

The Anna Mae Hanson Award was presented to Lindy Bunch of the Gallatin County Genealogical Society, Bozeman. Since reforming several years ago, a major focus of GCGS has been to produce indexes of several records groups from Gallatin County. Within the first year, the names extracted from these records populated their website in numbers that defied even their most optimistic expectations. And the project didn't lose steam. The momentum continued and 1000s of names were being added practically every month. Today, nearly 300,000 index entries appear on their website and credit for nearly 85% of them were contributed by one member – Lindy Bunch. Her consistent dedication wore out one reader, but she didn't let lack of equipment stop her momentum! She sought out a new machine and went back to work. Her tireless efforts have provided a valuable index for all researchers of Gallatin County, and she is most deserving of the Anna Mae Hanson Award for her continued dedication.

MSGS State Conference 2019 Evaluation Summary



The following is a summary of the Evaluation Sheets returned by attendees at the 2019 Conference:

Speakers in general: Fantastic! Both speakers enlightened my knowledge and gave me additional sources and tips to further my research. Both are excellent presenters. Kept me engaged on the subjects presented. Thank you!!

Kris Rzepczynski - Becoming American: Perfect, Great Speaker! Very helpful & covered very well. Wonderful presentation. Fantastic speaker.

James Beidler – Tackling “Born in PA”: Great Tips. Good coverage & presentation, makes me want to go back to work. Great ideas on where to look.

Kris Rzepczynski – Big City Blues: Haven’t paid attention to City Directories but will now. Great advice on “Plant Your Flag”. Thought provoking & well presented. Many pearls of wisdom. He kept presentation moving.

James Beidler – German Immigrant Waves: Very knowledgeable information. Packed full of sources. I liked comparison of 1700 to 1800’s. A great breakdown but too hurried. I now have an idea why they left.

Kris Rzepczynski - Midwest Repositories: Fantastic! Lots of sources. Thank you! Exactly what I wanted and needed. The best program so far! Liked the big picture.

Ellen Baumler – The Work is Never Done: Really enjoyed. Interesting speaker and exceptional story teller. Wonderful pictures. Banquet talks need to be light & short – too late in day to think so much.

James Beidler- Zigzagging...: Very helpful & great information. KBD good tip & resource. I liked the personal stories. Techniques are transferable.

Kris Rzepczynski – Beyond Names & Dates: Kept it lively & interesting. Love the stories. Great, great speaker. Excellent presentation. Wonderful examples & places to look. Entertaining.

James Beidler – Pioneers & Colonists: Liked colonist. Part about Volga Russian info I did not have. Intriguing history. Very technical, deserved more time. Good overview but fast! Great info I did not have. No German ancestors but good information.

Methodology Digital Organization & Storage, Ship Lists, Anything would be great. Netherlands research Record groups for Quebec & Ontario.

Technology: Clouds, GPS, Tablets, Mobil Apps, Podcasts, Preserving Records, Places/ideas of publishing stories. Short Workshops.

Other: Indians in MT, What to do with research before we die. MT resources, Iowa, Nebraska & Dakotas Research, Reason for Norwegian migration. How to use classes, software. Combining paperwork & DNA together, Upstate New York & New Jersey.

Topics to be covered: French who came to US from Canada/US, After PA German movement, Railroads, How land disposed of after Revolution, Fraternal Labor Unions, State by State Genealogy - a couple at a time. Migration patterns & the Oregon Trail, Scots-Irish in US, Migration to KY & TN after Revolution, Loyalists to Canada, locating living relatives, Land Records, Wills & Probate Records, DNA (21). More advanced German lectures, Genealogical Proof Standard, Fan Club, How to create citations, documenting source properly.

Suggestions & Comments: Good time space between morning & afternoon sessions & between individual sessions, shorten lunch break & breaks between sessions and/or eliminate the fifth session on Friday. Have a couple of door prizes genealogy related. It would be great if you could include in packet a list of who is researching various countries/states, surnames and email of the researcher so that we could connect. On name tags include Mother’s maiden name for the men. On surname lists list clubs or town to help locate people. Give phone # instead of having to run down. Start frolic bids at \$1.

I was impressed with entire conference. Mason jar logo was great & opening remarks to tie in were great. People should not talk during lecture. I think these speakers were more down to level of many of us. Thanks for an awesome conference. See you at Fairmont!



MSGS State Conference 2019 Prize Winners

1. Early Bird Drawing - Diane Hamilton, Absarokee
2. Conference Pin Drawing - Kimberlie Whitman
3. Ancestry DNA Kit - Jim Thompson, Bozeman
4. Family Tree Program, 30-day subscription to FindMyPast.com: Janene Probst, Helena
5. 6-month subscription to Ancestry.com & 1-year subscription to Fold3: David Donaldson
6. My Heritage Y-DNA Kit & 30-Day subscription to FindMyPast.com: Kathy Whitman, Missoula
7. 6-month subscription to Ancestry.com & 1-year subscription to Fold3 & Newspapers.com - Mary Pitch, Helena

Library Report 2019

By Karen Huck, Librarian



First of all we are not closing, but are moving.

Lewis & Clark Library has provided us free space since 1985 for the collection. With their remodeling, we are still receiving free space, but will be downsizing. They are allowing us 500 linear feet of book space on the main floor. We are still working out some of the fine details and logistics to fit into the new vision for their library. They expect to start phase I construction in November and be working upstairs by March. We are working very closely with the library for the benefit of both of us.

This project is allowing us the opportunity to share our collection with others through technology and to keep up with the "wave of the future". Seldom when people come into our library do they use the books. Many of the old books to be digitized, the pages needed sliced apart, so apparently no one has ever read them. Since younger people not stepping forward to volunteer, this will give us a chance to continue service to patrons only in a different way. We will still own our collection and make all decisions pertaining to it. After figuring out what books fill our 500 feet of space, we will buy security tags and put them in all the books so they cannot leave the library.

To accomplish our transition, Family History Library has furnished us with both a book scanner and a high speed scanner. We have 280 books in the process of book scanning. So far we have used the high speed scanner to scan approximately 12,000 Helena School Enrollment cards. We are starting the prep work with the Helen Sweet Collection by removing staples and marking all pages that has something on the back.

Copy right laws expired for any book prior to 1924 so are in public domain (except for the exceptions). We have concentrated on these books. There were many government long runs of books that we received from Montana Historical Society. We are comparing all books to see if they are digitized by Family History Library, if so we check to see that they have the same title page and are digitized thru the last page in our book. Since the end of July, we have handled approximately 3500 books and have found 280 to digitize with 160 finished and found 25 books with problems that were scanned by someone else. We still have over 4700 books to compare. Any book published prior to 1989 without a copyright, can be digitized (again except for the exceptions). For example, Polk directories cannot be digitized by FHL.

To digitize a book, after it is found not to be in Family History Library, we list them on an excel spreadsheet, listing the title, OCLC #, author, publisher and publish date and number of pages. From this FHL sets up the record to attach the book to. This is called Metadata. The book is scanned, then audited twice before sending thru the cloud to FHL. They require us also to use a tracking program so we know who has done each process for the book.

High speed scanning is done to a folder and then those folders are attached to a project that is setup by the Family History Library. These are then downloaded to a shuttle (detachable hard drive) through the Dcam program and sent to SLC weekly.

Eventually we may also use a "camera capture" to digitize things that do not fit either of the other scanners.



What's Happening on the Local Level...

Beaver Head Hunters Genealogical Society (Dillon)

The Beaver Head Hunters Genealogical Society has had an eventful year. In February we always have our "Love Your Ancestor" meeting, where we all bring an artifact or photo of an ancestor and tell a story about them. This is one of our favorite meetings as we get to do lots of visiting and laughing at some of the funnier stories.

Each summer we have a cemetery walk. This year was a little different as we held it indoors as a big summer storm blew in along with lightening, thunder, and sheets of rain.

Our summer outing was to go to Dell, Montana and have lunch in the "Calf-A" We took the long road there, around Clark Canyon Dam and stopped to hear stories of the old trains and ranchers. The "Calf-A" is actually in the old Dell school house which was open until 1962, and then the students were bussed to Lima. The original owner wanted to buy the bell, but they wouldn't let her. They said if she wanted the bell, she had to buy the whole building. So she did, and then had to think of something to do with the school house. She decided to cook dinners, but with a twist. She would cook whatever she felt like eating that day, and that was all that was served. So some days you would get roast beef and mashed potatoes, another day it may be fried chicken and French fries, and yet another day it may be meatloaf and baked potatoes. She would also serve this like Sunday dinner— a plate of roast, a bowl of potatoes, and a gravy boat. She would always bake pies, so many times people would just come for the pie and ice cream. Since the beginning, things have changed, and there is now a menu to pick from, but it is still good food like momma used to make.

We have been working to finish indexing the school census that runs from 1894 to 1972. Most of the rural schools are done, but it is really taking a long time on the Dillon school. Each year had about 800 students or potential students as everyone up to age 21 was listed with parents, and some years have birth days and mom's maiden name. It is a very good way to find out where your family was living in Beaverhead county. The school census index and all of our other indexes (marriage, naturalization, graves, obits, etc.) are on our website and easily searchable. Our website is <http://my.3rivers.net/~rockhaven/BHH/>

Each summer we have volunteers at the museum who search to answer questions from queries and those who walk into the museum and want to know about their family who lived in the area. This year had one exception. At the end of the summer the museum closed until next June. The museum is having some financial struggles, and are hoping that closing it all winter long will help cut costs. This was unfortunate for us, as we were housed in one corner of a back room. The closure necessitated that we pack up everything and move it into storage until we can locate a new place. In the meantime, we are still holding meetings every third Tuesday, except they are in members' homes. We are still answering queries, but we have to go open up a box or two to find the proper books when they are needed, and we don't have access to the family files that the museum has. But we are hopeful for the future and are looking forward to our annual Christmas potluck and our traveling Bingo game.

Submitted by Carla Andrus

Broken Mountains Genealogical Society (Chester)

Broken Mountains Genealogical Society had one of their four annual meetings earlier in September. At that meeting we had an inquiring discussion on why more of our small group do not attend the annual State Conference. Most do not because of age and then cost. We had a quick regular meeting because the day was one rare beautiful fall day and perfect for a visit to the main Chester Cemetery. We went to check and perhaps look for updates to our bulletin board in the information station and to do some photos for Find a Grave.

We took with us the list of unfulfilled photo requests from Find a Grave and then using the information on our Bulletin Board and our detailed maps done a few years back, we located all the requests and did photographs to be sent in with updated information. Because a wind did come up, using the maps became a chore but we did find all. This did prove to us that the information we have posted was valuable.

We then decided to have work meetings after the weather turns colder, to work on updating our files both at the museum and on our web site. We do search for and record additional facts which are recorded on cards for our personal use or for those who write to us or visit our town looking for additional information. We have had several people lately stop for a look at what they might find and we usually send them out to the cemetery if their family was buried here. We do individual queries and answer questions that come into our web site or at our courthouse.

We will have a full report of the Conference and utilize any of the materials that were presented there, either at our next work meeting or at our next regular meeting.

Submitted by Pat Ludwig

Butte-Silver Bow Genealogy Society (Butte)

The Butte-Silver Bow Genealogy Society contingent returned home from the state conference invigorated and full of new information and enthusiasm.

On the evening of October 8, our group co-hosted a Community Education event at the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives. Archives staff provided tours and research assistance, and our president Julie Bushmaker presented a program on introductory genetic genealogy and understanding [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) DNA reports. Over 40 people were in attendance, and a number picked up membership applications, so we are hoping to see many of them at our November 14 meeting.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at Fairmont Hot Springs next September for the 2020 state conference.

Submitted by Linda Lee Holmes

Gallatin County Genealogical Society (Bozeman)

Over a dozen members attended the 2019 MSGS Conference in Helena, 19-21 September 2019. The highlight for all was the awarding of the Anna Mae Hanson Award to Lindy Bunch, a GCGS member and an extraordinary indexer who has submitted nearly 85 percent of our society's nearly 300,000 online index entries.

During a spring cemetery walk around Sunset Hills Cemetery in Bozeman, members were surprised to see an unmarked common grave area where poor, itinerant and unknown people were buried. The area contained few headstones. Cemetery records contained almost no individual names of the people buried in this area. Over the summer, members of GCGS and the Mount Hyalite Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, developed a proposal for a Monument to the Bozeman Unknown Dead. This roadside memorial will be installed on the edge of the grave area and visible from the adjacent cemetery road. The monument has been designed, and the two groups are in the process of raising \$5000-\$6000 to fund the project.

GCGS also started a new membership and program year in September. Tricia Thompson provided an excellent presentation on "New Features on Ancestry" including examples of ThruLines, adding tags to your tree, and using listings of new and updated collections.

Submitted by Carol Elliott, GCGS Liaison

Great Falls Genealogy Society (Great Falls)

The Great Falls Genealogy Society does not hold meetings during the summer. During those months we concentrated on our library and projects.

Our Public Library pulled all the second and third copies of books out of their Montana History collection, giving us first option on buying any that we wanted – for \$1.00 each! We took 141 books, either to add to our collection or sell or trade.

Copying and indexing of the O'Connor Funeral Home records continues, as does the work with Hillcrest Lawn Mausoleum cremation records. Another source for details on George Company records has been found, so further work is being done there.

Our genealogy tourist season was not as busy this year. However, on September 24th we were privileged to host a group of 32 Norwegian genealogists who included us on their bus trip from Seattle to Minneapolis. Looking through Montana books several of them located relatives who had come to our state. They were like kids in a candy store!

In September we also resumed our meetings. Local member Diane Green spoke about her trip to Sweden this summer, where she met relatives and explored family related sites.

Monday, October 7th, the Great Falls Public Library began opening on Mondays. That means that the Great Falls Genealogy Society Library is now open Monday – Saturday, from 10 am to 4 pm. Come and see us. We keep adding resources for you to search.

Submitted by Larry D. Spicer, GFGS President

Lewis & Clark County Genealogical Society (Helena)

The Lewis & Clark County Genealogical Society meets year round on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the Covenant United Methodist Church Sept-May and at different locations during June, July and August. One of those meetings is usually a potluck picnic. This year it was held in a member's lovely backyard. Afterwards we went to Forestvale Cemetery where we stopped at 4 different stones each with a different kind of background—a member's immigrant ancestors, an uncle born in MO, the indigent section of the cemetery and finally a member's gr. gr. grandparents who were from a long-established American family going back to Colonial time. Until recently our member had no idea that they were buried at Forestvale as they had never lived in Helena & had no family living here at that time. At each stone a member spoke about those that were buried there. At the first stone a member of the Montana Granite demonstrated how to clean the stone of lime deposits using a single edged razor. The company also uses muriatic acid which is recommended to be used only by professionals as it is very toxic. Taking a rubbing of a stone was also demonstrated.

We have an Open House/Show and Tell in December where we bring ethnic treats to share. During the year several members have presented programs: Demonstrating Roots Magic, Family Tree Maker & the Family Search app "Relatives around me" for smart phones.

Members have shared their trips to Ireland, England and the Czech Republic where 2 of them connected with living relatives.

We had a Roots Tech update—where we learned about new features on Ancestry & Family Search and learned about "Intro to the Family History Guide". We also watched a video about weeding out our genealogy: what to keep and what to toss.

We had three outside speakers—one on Orphan Trains, one about the Military Museum Library at Fort Henry Harrison right here in our backyard and our latest was the author of Paper and Spit—about how he as an adoptee was able to locate his biological parents. The book can be purchased on Amazon. The author is Don Anderson from Portland, OR.

Our assignment for October is to have written 8 snippets of things we remember growing up. This is to help us eventually write our own story.

Submitted by Mary Pitch, LCCGS President

Park County Genealogy Society (Livingston)

The Park County Genealogy Society meets the 4th Thursday of the month at the Livingston Public Library at 5:30 pm. We meet September through May, taking the summer months off. There is a genealogy area in the library where all the society's collection of obituaries, cemetery indexes, veteran records from the local American Legion and other indexes from the archived records from the courthouse are kept.

Our main outreach to the community is a display table at the local Pioneer Dinner held in April each year. This dinner is to honor those who have lived in Park County for over 35 years or more and therefore our display is well received.

Some of our presentations for the year included a workshop at the local Family History Center, online cemetery sources, DNA, Daughters of American Revolution, skeletons in the closet and a digital scrapbooking session.

The society maintains a "Park County Genealogy Society" Facebook page and a website with some of the indexes online.

Submitted by Audrey Dodge, President

Western Montana Genealogical Society (Missoula)

As reported at the Montana State Genealogy Conference in September, the Western Montana Genealogical Society had a busy year. Our society meets every other month from September to May on the second Tuesday of the month at the Missoula Public Library. Our programs this year included our 2nd annual potluck meeting; a Brick Walls meeting, where members present brick walls they've been working on, and we put our heads together to help find new avenues of investigation; a presentation on using Newspapers.com; and an opportunity for members to share their Lucky Breaks.

In addition to our monthly meetings, we continued hosting our third Saturday work parties in conjunction with the local Sons of Norway lodge. These events have been great opportunities to socialize with members, members of the Sons of Norway, and others who come to work on their genealogy projects. We've also been able to provide one-on-one help to people who are just getting started, or need help in others ways.

Our outreach efforts also continue. This summer, we had tables at the 4th of July event at Fort Missoula and the Bitterroot Celtic Games and Gathering, where we answered questions and signed interested parties up for our newsletter. We also have an upcoming outreach event in October about which we're very excited about. In conjunction with our local Family History Center, we are hosting our first Genealogy Roadshow. This is a free public event where people can come and spend 15-20 minutes with one of our genealogists who will help them find information about their family on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org. We hope this will become an annual event.

We also have several ongoing projects. There are now approximately 50,000 photos of cemetery markers available. We also have 85 thousand cemetery bio sheets, of which about 5,000 have been digitized. To date, 537,577 vital records, spanning from 1870-1953, have been indexed and the Missoulian subject index contains 274,168 entries. These collections, along with many other genealogy records, can be accessed at the Missoula Public Library.

Submitted by Leslie Rieger, Vice-President

Yellowstone Genealogy Forum (Billings)

The Forum has educational program monthly, January through November

JUNE - Back to Basics (B2B) was on Dragonspeak, by Kay Cahill. It is a software that allows you to dictate your information to your computer programs such as Word or genealogy software. It is a fast way to transcribe documents such as wills. Heide Reed, a native of Germany, presented the main program on the history of German family names and some basic language and pronunciation. Standards for spelling were not in place until 1907.

JULY - For B2B Shawna Valentine explained how to apply for First Families/Early Settlers. The main program was a webinar on "Misbegotten Children: tracing family lines of the illegitimate. We also had our annual ice cream social and \$1 discount on memberships.

AUGUST - Genealogy software programs were extensively reviewed by splitting into small groups. Members shared their knowledge of Roots Magic, Legacy, and Family Tree Maker while viewing the software on large screens so that everyone could see. Those members who were not interested in software met for a "brick walls" session.

SEPTEMBER - B2B covered information about volunteering at Mountview Cemetery to help update data. We viewed a webinar by Judy Russell "Picture This: Images You can Freely Use". Library of Congress has an enormous amount of prints and photos online.

Billings Public Library and the Forum are holding weekly genealogy classes throughout Family History Month. The Genealogy Room is open afterward.

Forum member Rick Davis received the Al Huntsman Award at 2019 MSGS conference. Rick was director of the Billings FHC for several years. He presents programs at the Forum and at Montana Big Sky Computer User Group. He also supplies electronic equipment for programs. Rick is always willing to help others with research. Congratulations, Rick.

Handouts from programs and listing of future programs and events are listed on the Forum's website <https://yellowstonegenealogy.org/>. The catalogue of research materials in the Gen Room are searchable online. Researchers can also submit queries.

Submitted by P. J. Smith, YGF President

Gun Registration in Montana During WWI

By Larry D. Spicer



As I travel around Montana, I am always on the lookout for resources to add to the Great Falls Genealogy Society Library's holdings. Last month I was on my way to a Men's Retreat near Lavina, and took a round about way to get there. After stopping at the Lewistown Public Library, I then drove to Grass Range. Going on to Roundup, I saw a sign for the Musselshell Valley Historical Museum and stopped to investigate.

The volunteers on duty were helpful, but the local books offered for sale were all ones that we had. They went on to show me local resources they thought I might find interesting. The thing that caught my

attention was a binder of photocopied forms they said were gun registrations forms required by Montana law during World War I.

When I got home, I Googled "Montana WWI gun registration" which turned up a blog on Granite County History that read: "One day George Byrd summoned me into his antique shop in downtown Philipsburg and showed me an early 1900s era Sheriff's log recording such items as investigations and arrests. Also in the log was a detailed but undated list of gun owners in Granite County along with the model and serial number of every gun in each person's possession.

The gun registration list was created pursuant to SB 4, a law passed in a special session of Montana legislature in February of 1918. The law provided that each gun owner would provide an affidavit concerning the firearms in possession, as well as the place that person was born. Several original forms were found in the records of Missoula County.

It seems apparent that the purpose was to create a list of all German immigrants and their firearms. Perhaps it would also have had the purpose of keeping track of the firearms of Irish immigrants since many Irish were unhappy with the United States taking the side of Britain in the war. Indeed the Irish used the occasion of WWI to stage a major revolt against British rule in Ireland. Germany attempted to aid in that effort. Gun control was part of a package of legislation passed in Montana during World War I that has been criticized as part of a campaign of pro-war hysteria. For example it became dangerous in this time frame to criticize Woodrow Wilson as a crook (as did Montana rancher Ves Hall) as such sentiments might earn a person a stretch in a federal prison. The War hysteria as it pertains to Granite County is covered in *The Mettle of Granite County, Book One, Patriots Chapter Seven*, (pp. 271-272), including the provisions of the Firearms registration."

I couldn't leave it at that, and went looking for the actual Law and found this online:

1918 Mont. Laws 6-7,9, An Act Entitled "An Act Providing for the Registration of All Fire Arms and Weapons and Regulating the Sale Thereof and Defining the Duties of Certain County Officers and Providing Penalties for a Violation of the Provisions of This Act," ch. 2, §§ 1, 3, 8.

Text:

§ 1. Within thirty days from the passage and approval of this Act, every person within the State of Montana, who owns or has in his possession any fire arms or weapons shall make a full, true, and complete verified report upon the form hereinafter provided to the sheriff of the County in which such person lives, of all fire arms and weapons which are owned or possessed by him or her or are in his or her control, and on sale or transfer into the possession of any other person such person shall immediately forward to the sheriff of the County in which such person lives the name and address of that purchaser and person into whose possession or control such fire arm or weapon was delivered. § 3. Any person signing a fictitious name or address or giving any false information in such report shall be guilty of misdemeanor, and any person failing to file such report as in this Act provided, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. § 8. For the purpose of this Act a fire arm or weapon shall be deemed to be any revolver, pistol, shot gun, rifle, dirk, dagger, or sword.

Speaking with a former Cascade County employee they told me they were aware of these records for Cascade County having been in our courthouse. When space for a desk for an additional employee was needed, the records were moved and cannot now be found.

The gun registration forms included birth information and may well be of interest to genealogists. Note that the law states the information was to be "provided to the sheriff of the County in which such person lives." That may be the starting point to look for these records for your Montana county.



First Families of Montana Project

Get your First Families of Montana applications sent in now!
 The deadline for getting into Volume V of the series is 10 January 2020!

Don't miss Volume V!

If you have questions, email Fern Kauffman fnkauff@yahoo.com



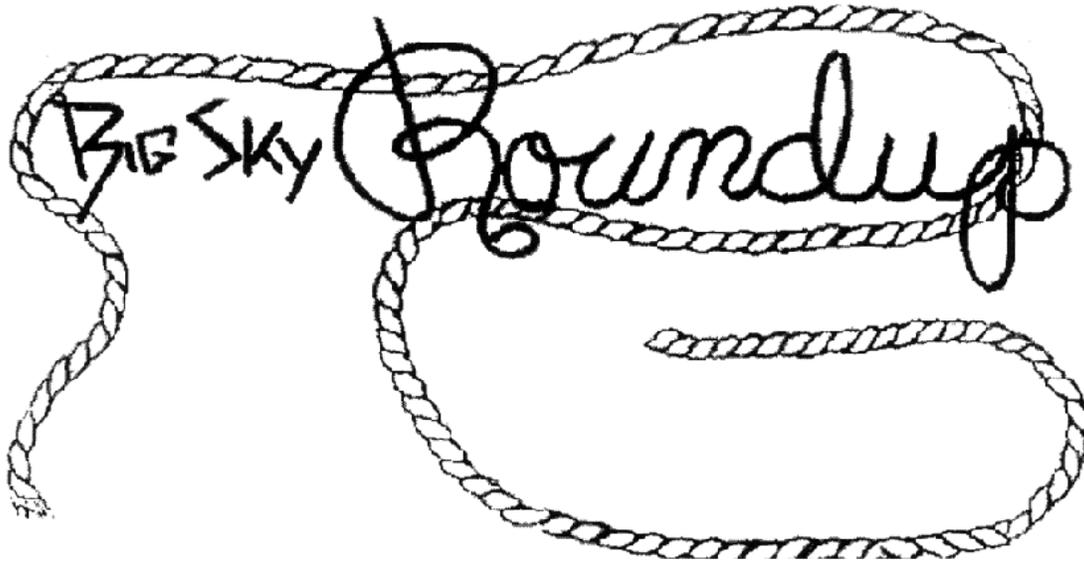
MSGS	
Profit & Loss	
November 2018 through October 2019	
	Nov '18 - Oct 19
Income	
2019	
C- Raffle & etc	445.00
C-REG	13,570.00
Conference Exp	
Coffee	-87.09
Conf-Mailing-handouts-posters	-691.40
Motel	-8,044.00
SPEAKERS	-4,038.81
Total Conference Exp	-12,861.30
State Table	
Club Pins Inc	
Pins Bought	-506.00
Club Pins Inc - Other	290.00
Total Club Pins Inc	-216.00
Fun Stuff	
Fun Stuff Expenses	-21.01
Fun Stuff - Other	142.25
Total Fun Stuff	121.24
Total State Table	-94.76
Total 2019	1,058.94
Bk Frolic	592.13
Club and Individual Membership	670.00
Digitization Grant	500.00
FFM and ES	
FFM & ES Expenses	-53.18
FFM and ES - Other	841.00
Total FFM and ES	787.82
Interest Income	6.78
Other Inc	5.00
Total Income	3,610.67
Expense	
Bank Charges	33.82
FGS Delegate Reg and Expenses	1,079.28
FGS Dues	95.00
Mont Share Catalog	
Lewis & Clark share	-200.28
Mont Share Catalog - Other	800.11
Total Mont Share Catalog	599.83
Nat Gen Soc Member Dues	50.00
Newsletter	287.00
OCLC MS & LC Library	
OCLC Lewis & Clark Share	-56.47
OCLC MS & LC Library - Other	225.88
Total OCLC MS & LC Library	169.41
State Annual Tax Report	20.00
Total Expense	2,334.34
Net Income	1,276.33



Next Issue will be in January 2020
 Society articles are due January 10, 2020
 Send to: msgsbigskyroundup@gmail.com



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Helena MT 59602



**Make plans to attend the
31st Annual
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Shedding a Light on Our Past
At the Fairmont Hot Springs Resort in Fairmont, Montana
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September 24, 25, 26, 2020