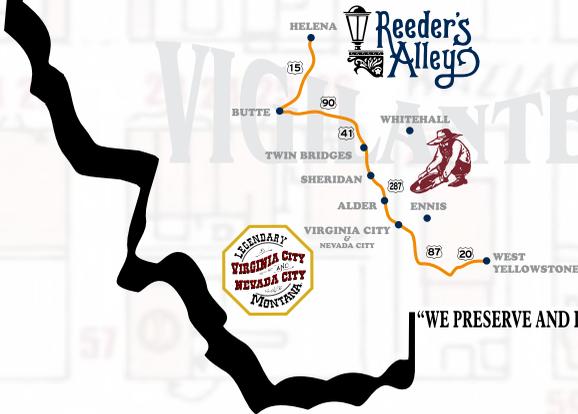


2017 - 2018 Biennial Report

MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION



"WE PRESERVE AND PROMOTE OUR HISTORY, FOR OUR FUTURE"





Biennial Report to the Legislature

Montana Heritage Preservation and
Development Commission (MHC)

Our Mission

The Montana Heritage Commission (MHC) preserves and manages historic resources in Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley and promotes the appreciation of history through quality visitor experiences.



Background and History



In 1997, the **Montana Legislature purchased Virginia City and Nevada City** from the Senator Charles Bovey family for \$6.5 million.

In 2000, **Reeder's Alley was gifted to the state** by Darrell and Kathy Guston.

Today the value we insure our properties and artifacts at is \$47.98 million.

The Montana Heritage Commission takes pride in managing some of the most valuable and fascinating historic sites in Montana – **Virginia City** and **Nevada City**, plus **Reeder's Alley** and the **Pioneer Cabin** in Helena. Our

goal is to preserve and promote these sites while encouraging Montanans and our children to become excited about the rich history of this great state. Virginia City was the site of our territorial capital from 1864 – 1875.

MHC offices now occupy Montana's Territorial Capital Building in Virginia City, Montana.





Strategic Highlights

The Montana Heritage Commission oversees **276 heritage properties** that range from the 1860's to 1875 time period and **1.3 million Americana artifacts that reside on 1,960 acres** making Virginia and Nevada City, Montana one of the largest historic sites in the United States.

Virginia and Nevada City are Montana's number one state-owned tourist destination through collaborative efforts with the Town of Virginia City and private businesses. It is estimated that over 500,000 tourists come visit from Memorial Day to Labor Day each year. Our economic footprint is \$74.6 Million that contributes to 1,226 jobs.

**\$74.6 Million Economic Footprint
Contributes to 1,226 Jobs**

(Source: Rocky Mountain Economic Improvement District)



MHC operating budget FY 2018:

\$2,102,978 (expenses)

÷ \$74.6 Million (economic footprint)

= 3,547% Return on Investment

Investing in history pays for Montana!



Strategic Priorities



The MHC has the following six (6) strategic priorities:

- (1) **PRESERVE:** Establish a more effective system to ensure proper allocation of resources, preservation and maintenance prioritization, and cataloging of historic buildings and artifacts.
- (2) **SUSTAIN:** Establish a financial sustainability plan that represents balanced reliance on state and federal appropriations, private funding, and revenue generation in support of achieving long-term sustainability.
- (3) **PROMOTE:** Expand marketing and promotional efforts to strengthen image and identity of the historic resources managed by The Montana Heritage Commission.
- (4) **EXPERIENCE:** Enhance visitor's physical experience by providing engaging, memorable, and a unique understanding of where Montana's history began.
- (5) **PARTNER:** Broaden local, state, and federal support and understanding of the important contribution heritage makes to Montana's economy, cultural identity and sense of historic community.
- (6) **MANAGE:** Build the management and strategic capacity of the Commission, Board, Management and Staff to support effective and efficient administrative functioning.





2021 Biennium Program Goals

- Implement approved strategic and business plans to help us achieve economic sustainability for operating costs and to contribute to the promotion and preservation of the areas we manage.
- Improve commissioner engagement implementing a training plan for all commission members.
- Continue to complete the sale of real and personal properties that do not have any significance to Montana.
- Expand our information collection practice to include gathering data from visitors, their activities at historic properties and using this data for future resource allocation planning.
- Improve and increase educational outreach programs, internships and interpretation programs to improve the public enjoyment and understanding of our historic sites.
- Seek additional public and private funding support through grants, donations, and appropriations to further our goals.
- Continue to educate and implement best practices for managing historic sites nationally.
- Continue the conservation and care of valuable historic artifacts and make it more visible to the public by entering into electronic database that makes it more visible, organized and viewable to the public.
- Improve ways to streamline required archaeological research and historic preservation review for projects effecting state lands.
- Recruit and utilize volunteers to increase efficiency of operations and leverage limited state funding.
- Make strategic investments in the development of our sites, properties and buildings to improve site interpretation, public access, historic fabric and visitor experiences.
- Work closely with local government and non-profit partners to leverage funding and achieve goals to enhance historic sites in our stewardship.



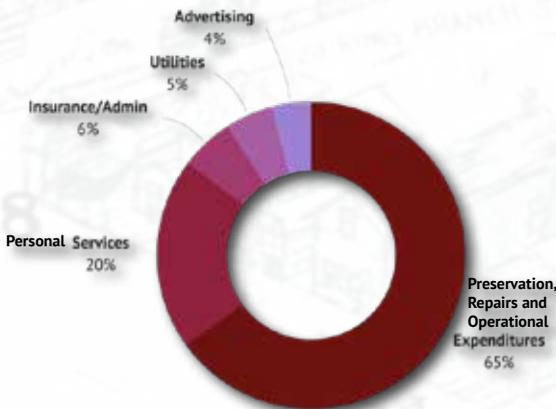
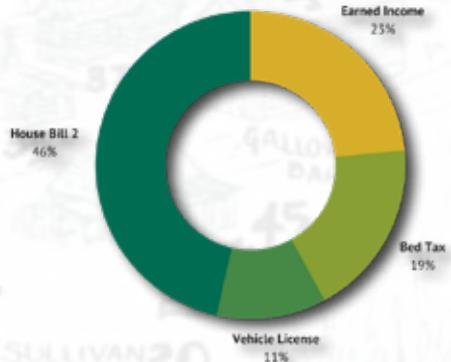
Income and Expenses

INCOME: Statutory Funds and Earned Revenue

The Montana Heritage Commission operates on bed tax allocations, a voluntary vehicle license plate fee, and MHC earned revenue generated from MHC property rentals, hotels, and entrance to museum fees. HB2 and long-range funding have been allocated in the past and are not an annual appropriation.

FY 2018 Income Summary:

- \$504,458 - MHC Earned Income
- \$400,000 - Statutorily Appropriated Bed Tax
- \$247,057 - Voluntary Vehicle License Fees
- \$1,000,000 - House Bill 2 funding



EXPENSES: MHC Operations

MHC Operations in Virginia City, Nevada City, and Reeder's Alley

Operating costs include all personal services, preservation, promotion, repairs, maintenance, insurance, administrative and fees.

FY 2018 Operations Summary:

- \$1,367,128 - Preservation, Repairs, and Operational Expenditures
- \$425,526 - Personal Services
- \$118,577 - Insurance/Admin Fee
- \$104,490 - Utilities
- \$87,257 - Advertising



Historic Building Preservation and Maintenance

MHC repairs and preserves over 276 historic structures and buildings in Virginia City, Nevada City, Montana and Reeder's Alley in Helena, Montana.

Highlights from Fiscal Year 2018:

In the last fiscal year, 63 lodging rooms and restrooms were updated with funding from House Bill 2, which allocated \$1 million to the MHC. Updates included repairs and new construction on the hotels, inns and historic homes on the Nationally Registered Landmark building registry. Updating these properties will greatly improve the experience for tourists who come to **"Stay and Play in Montana's History."**



Governor Thomas Francis Meagher Cabin was updated for vacation rental.



The Fairweather Inn added 17 bathrooms along with a fire suppression system and furniture upgrades.



The Bonanza Inn bathrooms were remodeled, including electrical and plumbing upgrades as well as new furniture in the rooms.



Sarah Bickford Home - Sarah was recently inducted into the Montana Historical Society Hall of Fame and was recognized as the first African American woman to have an incorporated business in Montana.

Historic Building Preservation and Maintenance



The Nevada City Cabins and Nevada City Hotel received updated bathrooms and furniture.



Dr. Daems and Corbitt Residences were updated for vacation rental.



Harding Residence was updated for vacation rental.



Virginia City - Brewery Park, Fishing Pond, and Ellingsen Park received much needed landscaping and renovations for park enhancement including interpretive signage and bathroom upgrades to all parks. A stage, pavilion, and storage shed were built in Ellingsen Park for special event use.





Collections and Archaeology

“Virginia City has one of the largest Americana artifact collections in the United States.”

– New York Times - July 21, 2002

Our current Americana artifact inventory count is 1,317,281

We preserve, stabilize and track collections using museum practices and standards for historic sites, catalog the objects, establish a written and electronic record, research the objects and their significance to Virginia City and Nevada City and the rest of the collection. We educate the public through research and exhibition of these historic objects.

View our artifact collection online at:
www.virginiacitymt.com



Gypsy Verbal Fortune Teller



U.S. Cartridge Box Plate as found in the Bonanza Inn



U.S. Cartridge Box Plate

Education Outreach and Living History Interpretation



MHC offers a diverse range of educational programs and reaches out to Montana schools K-12. School groups from across Montana visit Reeder's Alley and enjoy guided tours in Virginia City and Nevada City from May to September to learn about Montana history and the territorial capital at Virginia City. **Approximately 5,000 Montana students come each year for school tours.**



The Chicago Times has ranked the Montana Heritage Commission Living History program in Virginia and Nevada City **#4 in the nation as a 'Top Living History Destination.'**

The Montana Heritage Commission Living History program helps tourists understand what it was like to live in the 1860's through interactive interpretive experiences.





Promotion and Business Development

The Montana Heritage Commission's marketing campaign has a diverse campaign that encompasses Social Media and E-Commerce, Print Ad, TV, Radio and affordable packages such as the Vigilante Stay and Play pass. Through collaborate efforts with the Town of Virginia City and business owners, **Virginia and Nevada City are Montana's number one state-owned tourist destination** with over 500,000 tourists coming to visit each year.



\$149

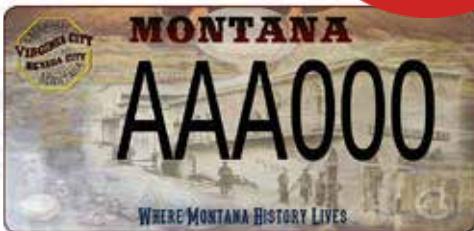
Come and Stay & Play

Available Sun - Thurs

- ◆ One night stay in our historic properties
- ◆ Unlimited rides on the train
- ◆ Gold panning at the River of Gold
- ◆ Entry to the Living History Museum
- ◆ Discounts at participating businesses



Town sign completed in 2017



Partnerships



The Montana Heritage Commission (MHC) is a small state agency and partnerships are critical for us to leverage funding and staff resources. Partnerships help us gather expertise and skills to achieve our goals.

Some of the partners we have worked with over the past two years include:

- AmeriCorps (NCCC)
- Ancient Order of the Hibernians (Butte/Helena)
- Butte Silver Bow Public Archives
- Elderhostel (Dillon)
- Friends of the Cumbres Toltec Railroad
- Madison County
- Mai Wah Society
- Montana Conservation Corps
- Montana Historical Society
- Montana History Foundation
- Montana Preservation Alliance
- Montana State University - Project Archeology
- MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- MT Ghost Town Society
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Ruby Valley Conservation District
- Town of Virginia City
- Trout Unlimited
- University of Montana
- US Forest Service
- Virginia City Area Chamber of Commerce
- Virginia City Preservation Alliance
- Volunteers for the MT Heritage Commission
- Washington State University
- Youth Challenge (Dillon)





MHC Commissioners and Staff

Marilyn Ross (Chair) - Historic Preservation
PO Box 298
Twin Bridges, MT 59754

Bill Howell (Vice Chair) - Tourism
PO Box 337
West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Pam Bucy - Business Woman
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Helena, MT 59601

Stan Ozark - Business Man
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Glasgow, MT 59230

Andy Poole - Member at Large
2855 West Shore Drive
Helena, MT 59602

Philip Maechling - Community Planning
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Florence, MT 59833

Shera Konen - Member at Large
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Fish, Wildlife & Parks
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Helena, MT 50601

Marty Tuttle
(proxy for Pam Haxby-Cote)
Department of Commerce
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Helena, MT 59620-0501

Bruce Whittenberg, Director
MT Historical Society
225 N. Roberts
Helena MT 59601

Dr. Timothy Lehman - Historian
312 Alderson Avenue
Billings, MT 59101

Tourism Advisory Council
3247 Gardenbrook Lane
Bozeman, MT 59715

Bill Beck - Appointment by the
Speaker of the House
PO Box 2049
Whitefish, MT 59937-2049

David Hoffman - Appointment by the
President of the Senate
5780 Vulk Drive
Helena, MT 59602

MHC Staff:
Executive Director
Elijah Allen

Collections/Curators
Marge Antolik & Kate Slawski

Preservation Specialists
Jeff Cleverly & Donny Steeley

Tourism Event Coordinator
Becky Digiovanna

Education Outreach Living History
Creative Edu Ventures - Leona Stredwick

PRESERVING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORY



Honorary Donors



The following individuals and organizations have dedicated over **25 years of volunteer service** or have **allocated and donated significant financial contributions** that help keep our historic sites preserved for future generations.

- Ellen Baumler
- Governor Steve Bullock
- US Department of Interior
- Donnelley Foundation
- Tom and Barbi Donnelley
- John Ellington
- John Hamilton
- Christian and Nora Hohenlohe
- Evalyn Johnson
- McFarland Family Trust
- Lee and Ruth McFarland
- Montana Department of Commerce
- Montana Historical Society
- Montana History Foundation
- Montana State Legislature
- Representative Karl Ohs
- Governor Marc Racicot
- Robert Urdall
- Penelope Wilson

Help preserve the
TREASURES
of the Treasure State

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Your donation goes directly to the preservation & operational expenses of Virginia City & Nevada City!

MEMBERSHIP
levels

All members names will be listed on the Montana Heritage Commission Annual Report!

- \$25 {Garnet}
- \$50 {Ruby}
- \$100 {Silver}
- \$250 {Gold}
~name on donor TV at VC Train Depot
- \$1,000 or more
{Vigilante Lifetime Membership}
~name on plaque at VC Train Depot
- other \$ _____

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

CHECK ENCLOSED (PAYABLE TO MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION) \$ _____

CHARGE MY:
 Am Ex Visa
 MC Discover

ACCT # _____ / EXP DATE _____ / SEC CODE _____

SIGNATURE _____

OR YOU CAN VISIT WWW.VIRGINIACITYMT.COM TO MAKE A DONATION ON YOUR CREDIT CARD

I MADE MY DONATION ONLINE FOR \$ _____

PLEASE MAIL YOUR DONATION & DONATION FORM TO
MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION • PO Box 338 • VIRGINIA CITY, MT 59753





PO Box 338
Virginia City, MT 59755

