May 27, 2001

Dear Carol & Joe,

A North Fork note — mentally quiet time even as thunder rumbles over us between Blane and the Whitefish Range. This is our first trip up of the season and we are already dealing with burn scars, sticky from pine sap, not stiff but sore from everything! We keep moving the dinner hour up a little each night cause we can’t go any longer! What’s most compelling about this trip, however, is that it is already so dry now as it seemed last August. The river is feet and muddy but not high. Here in the meadows we have a little green down — but nothing that needs moving. Pine needles crinkle underfoot...
on the way to the authorhouse. Dave has cut sever
several trees up under the house on the ridge as
part of his effort to save buildings - but - there
are so many trees.

The rest of our life is as strange - wonderful as
usual. Amanda will go to get another college come
July! Emily & Lewis believe they will live here (in
the N.F.) year around - never mind who has money. Our
new Editor and our new library, archives, beard
all - in your words - DANDY!

We wanted to be sure
that you knew how you
were being celebrated.

BISON BISON by Sue Spanke
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Missoula, Montana

Printed on Recycled Paper
November 12, 2001
Veterans Day

Dear Carol and Ivan:

I have yet to get the tape of Harry’s History Conference session ordered. So – a dab of newspaper evidence to tide you over!

What great good fun it always is to talk with you on the phone! I came away musing about how exuberant you guys always are—in a world where discouragement and discontent and tiredness hold most conversations together. I trust your good cheer to be real—because I trust your commitment to living that way. You would tell us, wouldn’t you please, when you could use a hand or some humor?

Dave and I returned yesterday from another quick 24 hours in Havre. Actually, Dave put 1700 miles on the new truck last week: Baker, Ekalaka, and one more trip to Havre. He can put away his satchel for a full 5 days this week—and is at peace! As it turns out, the LeHavre—has been replaced by a garish Town Pump, Lucky Lils Casino, and Townhouse motel combination. We continue to feel blessed at the Siesta: spacious clean rooms, comforting train noises, plug ins, a refrigerator, rockers, and this week—towels with some nap—all under the sign of the cactus.

We’ll be checking into Room 109 again next weekend for two nights—and exploring Havre’s Underground on Saturday. Amanda was wise enough to say to her dad: I know it’s going to be phony, but come with me so you can tell me all the right stuff when the tour is over!

I go to Kansas over Thanksgiving to move my dad to new assisted living quarters. Dave will go back to Havre! Thank goodness it is not a legislative year! Getting out of town regularly has lots to recommend it these days: Society discontent and troubling decisions; a paranoid and inept Governor. Did we tell you that Judy broke the longstanding tradition of handing out candy in costume at the Governor’s mansion? Instead, she delivered candy to the schools in a Humvee!!!

Please do build us into your Montana calendar for as much time as you can. In the meantime, we hope that you both stay well and out of mischief. I will so look forward to hearing about what it is that you are doing to steer clear of mischief—and to get the full lowdown on St. Petersburg!!!!!!!!!

Stay well and happy!

Dave

Dave Manuel.
Dear Marcella and Dave--

This is a Sunday when the weather is whooping in to such an extent that Carol and I aren’t sure we’ll carry through on our inclination to go over to the Olympic Peninsula and do a few days of Winter Brothers retracing of routes just for recreation--60-80 mph gusts out there with this storm, and other one coming--so I might as well try to bend your eyeballs with the long-promised report on our St. Petersburg gig. Hard to know where the hell to even start, but how about with the finale: there Carol and I are standing in the midnight-dark of the gardens outside the palace of Catherine the Great while every imaginable whimwham of fireworks exploded overhead, the smoke gathering against the palace outbuildings and behind the band in Napoleonic Wars period-costumes to make it all seem eerily like, say, the battle of Borodino, and all at once we notice one lone guy right in front of us, privately gesticulating and murmuring to himself as he took in the spectacle. Robin Williams, working out a routine just for his own satisfaction.

So, lo, it came to pass in the realms of Paul Allen’s megafortune that it was very much that kind of trip, where in one day we met Bill Moyers, David Halberstam, and Tom Stoppard, and our cruise ship suite neighbors on either side were the composer Michael Kamen (film scores for Mr. Holland’s Opus and Metallica) and James Watson, the co-discoverer of DNA. It was a lot of other kinds, too, as a slick new fleet of Volvo busses whisked us around St. Petersburg on excursions to the Hermitage and lots of bloody spots of history--you two history geeks will savvy what a kick it was for this one to stand in Palace Square and know that the Cossacks charged from right there, the archway of the General Staff Building, when they rode down Father Gapon’s followers on Bloody Sunday of 1905.

I also dabbled back into my college Russian stuff enough to get excited again about the natural poetry in the language, and while I still can’t get my head around Pushkin, St. Petersburg’s own bard, I lit up all over again at seeing what a usefully crazy poet Mayakovsky was. (Kind of spooky; he was so goddamn original even Stalin liked his stuff, although Mayakovsky killed himself before he would have pushed too far and ended up in the line of fire of the purges.) One of my favorite far-out books is Love Is the Heart of Everything, the correspondence between Mayakovsky and his lover Lili Brik in which they send years of delirious love missives--Russian first-name diminutives, especially the feminine, can be very playful and Mayakovsky went wonderfully crazy with nicknames: it’s as if, say, Dave would go berserk on his MHS e-mail and leave messages for Marcella which would start off with Marcie and keep spiraling out to Marsika, Marcellika, Marsyonok, Marsenochka, on and on, you get the idea--so one neglected lobe of my brain had a good time being tickled by the likes of Mayakovsky again. Down at street-level lingo, I got so I could read all the Russian signs by the time we were on the bus to the St. Petersburg airport.

And before I lose track of it, we now are also veterans of Estonia--spent a half-day there, on one of the sidetrips that Allen’s bottomless wallet just kind of spills out like loose change. Medieval! At least the old portion of the capital city of Tallinn that we tramped around, over endless cobblestones. Fine old turreted towers, roofed with red tiles, on the
ancient town wall, and the Baltic Sea beyond. Buildings need a lot of stuccoing, tuckpointing, and general spiffing up, although they’re in less bad repair than what we saw from the ship as we entered Russia, which is really a wreck along its maritime shore. And there was an attractive sense of design, maybe the Finnish influence, in streetside wall decorations and even what people were wearing. Our guide Mariliis, a tall late-twentieth blond blond blond, trekked us over all those cobblestones while dressed in a silvery sheened dress to her ankles, almost like a prom dress in this country but more simply tasteful. The Estonians of course have been out from under the Russians since ‘89, and while for them it’s always going to be like living next to a vast blob of appetite— one of the great newspaper leads ever written was that, after the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1938, the USSR ate those Baltic Republics like buns—they make an interesting point of historic stubbornness to start this walking tour: visitors such as us are taken first to the most prominent building in the city, the Orthodox Cathedral that the Russians imposed on the cityscape, and then to the fourteenth-century Lutheran Cathedral. Looking at its sober white-washed walls and dark wood, compared to the Orthodox gaudiness of decoration, it’s just plain as hell, or maybe it’s heaven, that those cultures could never be made to meld.

This Estonian trip in particular we did under just about presidential-level security, and of course all this was before Sept. 11. There were five couples of us and a singleton, all the helicopter would hold for the ride across the Gulf of Finland from Helsinki, and as soon as the Estonian Border Guards had stamped our passports, it became evident who our eleventh member was: head of our security detail. We saw some of the Allen private-security guys at work on the Alaska trip three years ago, but going up there was nothing like taking 250 guests of the fourth richest guy in the world into a mafia kleptocracy like Russia. Carol and I speculate that an immense amount of the security planning must have involved the greasing of palms, likely in the Russian government to persuade them to shape things up for a few days, but there were also endless guys like the one here, the instant we set foot into Tallinn, who introduced himself by first name only, pointed to the modest identifying button and the others who had suddenly materialized were wearing, and said they were all there to help us out if anything went wrong. In essence, the ten of us went through the Tallinn walking tour with six guards escorting us, much like a loose military patrol—one man out ahead on point, the security chief always close at hand to the bunch of us like he was a chronic straggler, and the other guards around and behind us like sightseers. They all carried innocent-looking backpacks, and as one of the Seattle women with twenty-something kids said, they were dressed in the absolute most current with-it clothes of their generation to blend in.

All of this wasn’t as stifling or even as obtrusive as it may sound, they gave the group a lot of leeway, and of course the pair of us like nothing better than to watch the workings of things like this. When the cruise ship docked at the English Embankment in St. Petersburg the next morning, we were the only ones on deck for about an hour, watching the real security being set up:
--Street ends blocked off.
--On that whole long block of Angliskaya, facing the ship, the only living things evident in any of the windows were houseplants—evidently a whole blockfull of enforced vacations.
--A barge on the other side of the quay the ship was moored to became the chokepoint of access to the ship: every time, on or off, our passports and visas were checked there.
--Meanwhile along the street, at any given time between forty and fifty security people were in sight—Allen’s ubiquitous backpackers, three different Russian uniforms, a police powerboat continually out on the Neva River the other side of us, and ultimately, as if no security setup can ever be complete without these standard-issue musclemen, the way
a wedding cake just has to have those bride-and-groom figurines, here came eight beefy Russian dark suits, for all the world like our FBI or Secret Service stereotypes in their Mormon-white shirts. Somebody gave them some orders and they planted themselves here and there, claspings their hands over their crotches, for whatever the duration was going to be.

Some of the stuff we saw, from inside this cocoon of security:

--The Hermitage fascinated and appalled all of us. The art is endless--it’s the only place I’ve been that made the British Museum seem small--and the conditions are scandalous, sunshine beating in through plain plateglass windows on the Rembrandts.

--Both nights in St. Petersburg, Allen rented palaces to throw parties in. First night was in the Tauride Palace, given to Prince Potemkin by Catherine the Great when they were sharing a bed, and there was wild Russian entertainment, ranging from clowns to astounding gymnasts to, you bet, Cossack dancers.

And this, which to me illustrates some of the clicks of brains during these Allen slingshot flings of people to far places: onto the stage comes a woman with what looked like a shortened electronic keyboard with a thick antenna on it. It turns out to be called a Theremin (her uncle invented it), and my dictionary describes it as “an electronic console-like musical instrument often used for high tremolo effects; pitch and volume are ‘space-controlled’ by movement of the player’s hands over and between the antenna oscillators.” The sounds, as she moved her hands through empty air, sort of like playing a harp that wasn’t there, indeed were eerie but entrancing. As she went into a second number, a crowd began to gather in front of her, and my antenna went up. There was the composer Michael Kamen, intent, arms folded, as close to her as he could get; but there also was the neurobiologist Bill Calvin, and the dancer-choreographer Gabri Christa, equally mesmerized. As a self-appointed Boswell of these trips, I decided that if heads as various as those three were into this, I better get myself in among them. It turned out Kamen knew of the instrument but said it’s usually been used for weird sci-f soundtracks, so he was intrigued to see it played ‘classical.’ Calvin was interested in what it means, in motor-motion terms, to play an instrument that if effect isn’t there; Gabri was wondering if it was perhaps a way to make your own music with your dance motions...

--The next night, it was onward to Catherine the Great’s own palace, the Versailles-size place at Tsarkoe Selo, and this was the banquet that ended with those fireworks. In between, in near endless courses, there was dancing by principals of the Kirov Ballet, a hilarious group picture of all 250 of us on a flight of steps--it was like herding cats for the photographer to get everyone in the shot, and when he kept asking for “One more!” he got back a chant of “di-gi-tal! di-gi-tal!”

Amid all this, Paul A. and his mother and his sis and brother-in-law float quite unpretentiously, albeit with a little different perspective on possibilities than the rest of us. We heard it said that Allen thinks of the fleet of planes he uses pretty much as we would think of our cars; by the time we were leaving St. Petersburg, he had decided to bop off to Venice, to compare canal cities, I guess.

Oh, yes, and Carol has now fired an AK-47; in the words of the Robin Williams routine I quoted in our Xmas letter, do not mess about with her. But that story is for another letter, or when we next see you. We’re still intending that will be in June or soon after July 4; we’re coming with another couple, people we’re quite sure you’ll like, and have to sort out schedule with them. Meanwhile, we hope you keep thriving.

Much love,
Monday evening
July 1, 2002

Dear Carol and Ivan –

A short letter – at least partially written in my head a dozen times over since you left.

Mostly – thank you, for the best of fellowship, ideas, general counseling, and great company! The house was ringingly lonely all the rest of the week.

Then – a couple weekends ago, I started The Yearling and couldn’t, of course, put it down until I was done. I hadn’t read it before. Of many elements that warrant re-reading, Rawlings’ knowledge of plants alone had me spellbound. Thank you!!

A quick synopsis of our world: You likely saw the enclosed story before you left Montana – but just in case! Fortunately, the response was swift and creative.

Last Friday, the Governor finally officially mandated budget cuts AND a special session, slated for August. The shortfall is apparently growing exponentially—far beyond the Governor’s authority just to cut. The Society began a 5.8% cut today.

My contribution is 10% (not 20). We are all worried about what the legislature will do. We’ll see what 4 free hours a week does for my soul and my gumption.

Amanda is now in Durango on that Mission Ridge fire. We are able to talk with her about every third night. She worked 38 hour straight at one point – tired to the point of nausea – but loving the money.

Rumor has it that Emily got a job with NPS at Glacier, but she hasn’t shared that with us directly. Dave made his first run to the North Fork last week – and found no one but the cat at home – and no note. We’ll head upon Wednesday of this week.

Dave’s cataract surgery went very well. Now the only question is when to work on the other eye.

But – mainly – as we hear the train whistle and watch Boonie and Edgar hit home runs – we think of you – and treasure – very much – your visit!

Love
Dave
The Value of Undies

From the Northwest Florida Daily News comes a story of a Crestview couple who drove their car to Wal-Mart only to have their car break down in the parking lot.

The man told his wife to carry on with the shopping while he fixed the car there in the lot. The wife returned later to see a small group of people near the car. On closer inspection, she saw a pair of male legs protruding from under the chassis.

Although the man was in shorts, his lack of underpants turned private parts into glaringly public ones.

Unable to stand the embarrassment, she dutifully stepped forward, quickly put her hand UP his shorts and tucked everything back into place.

On regaining her feet, she looked across the hood and found herself staring at her husband, who was standing idly by.

The mechanic, however, had to have three stitches in his head.
It's the first of December, so I assume the MHS is now helplessly sandwiched between your eruditions, Dave the basement slice and Marcella the top-floor one with the Liz Claiborne colors flying from a canape toothpick.

We've just survived Thanksgiving, having hosted 15 people here. The potluck dishes (we traditionally provide the turkey) were phenomenal this year--Jerusalem artichokes! celeriac! Waldorf salad! caviar!--and the gathering was purely friends, not a relative in the bunch, tra la.

Well, the tantalizing lead to "Kluxer Blues" petered out in Spokane when I called the Eastern Washington State Historical Society and persuaded 'em to photocopy Charlotte Erickson's source for me. No lyrics, alas, and worse yet, the sonofabitching Klan itself evidently generated what I'd hoped would be a rousingly quotable mockery: the reference turns out to be the title of a player-piano roll avbl from the publisher of American Hymns--it's right there on a page facing "Homer Rodeheaver's Gospel Records," and lo, there are seven other Klan "player rolls with words" on the list, including "Ku Klux Steppin Blues." Dave, you and I are sunk. We cannot possibly write satire when the nighthawks swipe black music for their parlor singalongs. I already knew KKK piano rolls existed, as a friend who's nearly 90 recalled for me hearing one played when her daddy was in the Iowa Klan, and she was able to sing me the words as I used them in the manuscript (I think maybe the same as that ditty you had in your magazine piece?). Anyway, if you ever have any use for this "list of Klan and sacred music," give me a holler. I'm not going to look further for the "Blues" lyrics as I don't think it'd reward the effort.

Well, what else. I ponied up some brand material this week to an editor at American Quarterhorse in, as she deliciously said it, AMarilla. She of course was sicced onto me by your MHS cohorts; oh, the responsibilities, now that the Doigs are the sugardaddies of all Montana livestock brands since the first ember of Eden...

And that's about the news from here, I guess. The world is going to hell so self-evidently I don't see that it needs any reiterating from me. Prairie Nocturne will be back to me from New York any minute now, for what my editors swear on a stack of erasers will be only mildest needed revisions. They actually seem to like the book a lot. We'll see how they back that up when it's published a mere 340-some days from now.

Here's hoping you have some warm and snug time together over the holidays.
Dear Marcella and Dave--

Considerable waters of chronos have gone under the bridge since our lunch together at the Windbag--you’ve gained a son-in-law, and Dave’s newfound fluency in Spanish, and Marcella’s budget packet of hours per week at the Society--and I’ve only lately managed to get far enough from my book (it’s now in New York on my editor’s desk) to report in on the rest of our Montana doings after we left the shelter of Chez Walter. You’ll note the presence of a bunch of pages beneath this letter, which you, Dave, brought on your sweet selves by saying you’d be glad to cast an eye over the Helena portions of my book; I’ll parse through that separately, but first let me fill you in on events such as the estimable Vernon Carroll guiding us to the Two Medicine site.

You’ll maybe remember we headed for an overnight at Wayne Arnst’s in Great Falls after leaving you, and as usual there was a fine sprawling family dinner with Wayne’s populous in-laws, some of whom were in high school with the two of us. Grim reports about Valier, natch. The next morning we headed out to Ft. Assiniboine (note the militarily-correct incorrect spelling I’ve adopted), skirting a forty-acre dust storm near Big Sandy, respecting the rattlesnake warnings at the old fort, grabbing off quick pics and notes, and then driving west like hell into a terrific wind to meet up with Vernon at the McDonald’s in Cut Bank as arranged. We had neglected to factor in 65 miles or so of road construction, but remarkably we pulled in less than five minutes late. There sat Vernon in a rig half again bigger than any Waltermobile--it turned out his policy was to rent the range vehicles that took the worst beating on his fairly hard-edged ranch--and when we all struggle the car doors open, I notice that Vernon has on a brand-new snug cap because no other headgear is going to survive that sonofabitching wind. I may not know much, but I know local knowledge when I see it sitting on somebody’s head, so off I go to Norman’s Western Wear for a cap of my own. I hopped in with Vernon and Carol followed in our rig for the twenty or so miles, the last third of it one of those ghastly clay-rut Rez roads, to the ranch he was in the process of selling. Blessings on the both of you for setting us up with him, as we liked him instantly and he was perfect for what we were up to: low-key, steady, thoughtful.

Carol left our rig on the north side of the Two Medicine, bandoliered herself with her cameras and climbed in with us, and the first step was to cross the river, running pretty high, on a sideless straddle bridge with maybe, oh, six inches to spare on the beams that the rig’s tires crept along on. Vernon pointed out the bluff we were going to, maybe three miles straight downstream, and fifteen miles of lurching over the range later--it took close to an hour--there we were. I can’t remember if I told you, but this all had some wondrous deja vu for me, because my dad and grandmother had worked on that ranch for about a year
for John McTaggart, the famously bullheaded Scotchman the Carolls bought the place from thirty or so years ago; I’d spent some weekends there, “home” from school. So, aswim in my family’s past as well as that of Lewis and the Blackfeet, we climb out at the bluff above what’s been identified as the fight site—and I must say, it sure as hell looks like it to me, from Lewis’s journal description. Vernon and I, connoisseurs of wind in that country, agree it’s about 40, 45 mph, and as I try to stand as a windbreak for Carol while she shoots pics, I notice Vernon smiling a little and I say something about him evidently being used to this sonofabitching wind. No way, he says, he’s just relieved: the forecast had been for 60 mph!

Thus we had an indelible experience, up there over the Two Medicine badlands. I don’t know if you’ve heard the next chapter of life Vernon intends: he was moving his family to Frenchtown, and maybe would go back to school himself in archeology or some such.

Then the next day, the real weather started.

We overnighted in Choteau, and the next morn, June 7, linked up with a Nature Conservancy staffer, Joe Moll, who was going to bop us around the country under the Front that day before installing us at the Conservancy dude ranch for the night. When the Conservancy offered us a guy for a day and asked what we wanted to do, we said that ought to be up to their folks along the Front, we were game for just about anything as long as it was in the Choteau-Dupuyer section I write about. But I about dropped the phone when they called back and said Joe would cruise along that part of the Front with us and then we were invited to lunch at the Rappold ranch. The more I thought about this, the more I wondered: what’s the dimension beyond déjà vu? We knew right away, and were happy with, the diplomacy the Conservancy was up to: a year or so ago they cut a very significant easement deal with Karl Rappold, swapping the Rappold brothers some grazing rights in exchange for a no-development easement on one of the most scenically situated old ranches anywhere along the Front. Carol and I had followed the news on this, distantly clucking our approval, but now something finally clicked in me and I got out a quadrangle map. Yup, the Rappold acreage sits right where I fictionalized Jick handing over his ranch to the Conservancy in *Ride With Me, Mariah Montana* in ‘89. I still mostly think it’s coincidence, logic of the land there and attendant economies, but it does set a person to mulling about life imitating art and vice versa.

So, we have a fine morning of back-roadsing with Joe Moll, the weather glorious, visit the Boone & Crockett Club’s facility up Dupuyer Creek—if you haven’t been there, it’s a stunner—and about noon we’re at a gate about a dozen miles west of Dupuyer with a sign that proclaims, The Rappold Ranch, Homesteaded 1882, topped with a dramatic metal cut-out sculpture of two riders roping a grizzly. We pull into the yard, and here come the Rappold brothers from the fence-fixing they’ve been doing: Karl, late 40’s or barely 50, goodlooking dark-mustached young Marlboro Man cowboy, build like a linebacker, big black hat, belt buckle the size of an axehad; and his bachelor brother Bill, my old high school classmate and schoolbus-riding buddy (it has dawned on me that those four years of three hours together on that bus, plus the school time, were about like being in the military service together), wearing an old tractor cap, a kind of French-looking striped pullover jersey, and every bodily part of him 50% larger than the corresponding part on me—I kid you not, his hands were almost half longer than mine when we shook. I don’t know what it says for holing up on the family place all your life—the Rappold generations as best I can piece them together have been Karl, John, Karl and John William (i.e. Bill), and Karl’s twentysomething son John—but Bill looks great, hardly any gray to him, big Max
Von Sydow characterful kind of face. He is, however, what might be called indirect; as we all stand there in the yard for the obligatory ten or fifteen minutes of talk about the grass and the weather, Bill casts his eyes mostly aside from us and in his surprisingly high voice spends the time chiding the dogpack that is industriously nosing our assembled crotchets: “Katy, quit! Spot, will you stop?” (The dogs, six of them, astounded me. Not a recognizably working ranch dog in the bunch; instead, the first dalmatian I’ve ever seen on a cattle ranch, the first cocker I’ve ever seen loose around a cowyard…)

Eventually we are escorted to Karl’s prefab home, smackdab out there in the middle of better scenery than David Letterman’s place south of Choteau; Bill bitches in the old family house. The two Rappolds fill the kitchen of the place as they bring out a pasta salad left by Karl’s wife, who works in Valier, plus about three pounds of roast beef coldcuts and a loaf of white bread and mayo and watermelon. The lunchtime conversation produces the news that the Rappolds have three grizzlies frequenting their ranch, and far from minding their presence, they’re downright proud of them. Quite a change from their father, who was one of the quintessential old shoot, shovel, and shut up ranchers along the Front.

Well, onward to the weather: imagine our surprise when Karl says during lunch, “You know, they’re talking about a couple of feet of snow next day or so.” That moved us to scoot on across Marias Pass that night, and as you no doubt heard, it snowed up to the doorknobs north of Browning and knocked out all the power in Waterton.

But one last note on the Rappolds: touched by the hospitality, I said to Bill as we were leaving that he should come by our place if he ever gets to Seattle. Well, says he, he hasn’t traveled much. He had just been voted out as county commissioner, and all the travel he’d done came from that: the Air Force, I suppose out of Malmstrom, flying him to Texas once and Colorado Springs a time or two on mid-air refueling planes—i.e., Bill’s view of the world beyond Montana has been belly-down, back there in the tail cone looking past the refueling boom.

So, that’s the gist of the rest of our trip. Since then, I’ve banged out the rest of the manuscript: more about that in the enclosed pages. We’re both doing well, although it’s a bit spooky not to have rain in Seattle: haven’t had a real rain since about the 4th of July. We hugely appreciated the wedding reports, and your latest North Fork missive, Marcella. After watching the final three games of the World Series, we conclude you’re right about the Angels; nifty solid team. As to Montana politics: Mike Taylor, good god almighty. Store up the details for us. We hope you’re both weathering these Martzian times as well as possible.

Keep low,

p.s. Re livestock brands, now that Carol and I are keepers of the branding flame: the Trib reporter punted the scheduled interview, Dave, when she got assigned to do a more immediate story, and hasn’t been back in touch. If you happen to cross phone lines with her on something else, give her a nudge back in my direction, how about. Life always gets more complicated toward the holidays, and we think we’ll go to Tucson for a little while in January.
Dave and Marcella, again--

As best you can manage in your copious free time, what I’d like is simply a quick surface go-through, the way you’d pick up any other book that’s set in Montana and you’re mildly interested in, to see if anything about the setting or the local history doesn’t ring right. I’m consciously going farther than I’ve usually done in stretching or amending history in this novel because the story seemed to me to need it: the diary device, the undertow of event transforming into memory and written record, I think require some touches of mythification which I’m trying to do with setting and circumstance—Monty’s audition at the Gates of the Mountains, for instance. I’ll ‘fess up to the worst of my historical stretchers (Pershing serving at Ft. Assiniboine 8 years ahead of actuality, for instance) in the acknowledgments/sources, but I’m also intending an epigraph quoting the great stage director Peter Brook that the intention behind the story is to create “the closeness of reality and the distance of myth, because if there is no distance you aren’t amazed, and if there is no closeness you aren’t touched.”

So, then, I stand fully guilty of any mythicism or grandiosity, but if you see any details that strike you as stinko, please zero in on them. A few random thoughts on this first of the three chunks I’m running by you:

--Lorie couldn’t come up with a pic of the capitol dome strung with lights, though I thought I’d seen one once, but I decided to light it up anyway. Susan’s house is at about Highland and Cooke, and Carol’s pics from there show a good enough line of sight down toward the capitol and where the Duesenberg was parked.

--I don’t like using the near-cliche of the dome “resting as if did on the center of the government of Montana like a giant’s copper helmet.” But you know, it’s kind of like making hay when the sun shines: trite but true. If you’ve ever seen any brilliant non-cliche term for the dome, I’d give a listen.

--It’d be pretty chilly for Monty to be out there polishing the car in late March or early April, but I absolutely need him seen and remarked on for plot purposes. I at least dressed him warm.

--I put the rodeo at the fairgrounds, does that sound reasonable? The rodeo participants are maybe earlier into bull-riding and rosinning up their lariats than in actual history, but again I need those as setting; any malleable details you see wrong in Monty’s rodeo-clowning?

Logistics of this: make it as easy as you can on yourselves, circling stuff in the ms or jotting in the margins—if it’s simplest just to pick up the phone after you’ve cast an eye over this, please do. In short, don’t get yourselves into writing extended analyses, what I need are gut reactions. Hell, it’s fiction, remember? If you could give me your thoughts by the end of the year, that’d be nifty.
To catch you up on what’s happened since the first chunk of ms: Susan obviously has taken on Monty as a pupil, and after various vicissitudes in her trying to train his voice, they’ve reached the point where his progress is highly promising. But as the start of this section indicates, it’s also where the Klan starts to sniff them out.

--I’d ask you to watch for any anachronisms here beyond my fundamental one of stretching the lifetime of the Zanzibar Club. I don’t know why I feel Clore Street needed a food vendor cart and availability of a tamale--could be I just fell for that chant of Baloney cold, molly hot!-- but maybe I was trying for a little exoticism beyond the usual white-guy description of a ghetto. Too exotic?

--The Zanzibar denizens kind of give Monty a bad time, I know, but I based that on bar memories from when I was a kid, those of us from the ranches all of a sudden a lot hickier when we went into drinking places in Bozeman or Helena or for Christ’s sake even Livingston.
This section is Monty’s return to Helena after he’s made it as a singer, been lauded in the New York papers as the latest Harlem rival to Paul Robeson, Roland Hayes, Taylor Gordon et al. The dialogue that begins the scene is between him and Susan, after most of a year apart. While he’s been having his meteoric rise via radio and the onset of the Harlem Renaissance, she’s spent the school year filling Angus McCaskill’s shoes (after his death, alas) at the South Fork one-room school. Some of the references that may otherwise mystify you:

--When the Klan made them targets, they were tucked away by Wes at Fort Assiniboine, which he earlier had bought lock, stock and rusting rifle barrel. The references to Bailey and his men, the “bruisers”—they’re the private detective and his operatives Wes hired to protect them and to work on busting the Klan in the Two Medicine country. (Which I have them do, a few scenes before this. Told you it’s fiction.)

--“Galvanized Yankees”: I go out of my way to put this phrase in Monty’s mouth because the Klan leader earlier was referred to as one, a Missourian coated over with Montana “respectability.” I think I’ll also define the term in the acknowledgments; if you have any handy references, Dave, I’d appreciate one.

--”The Rabiznaz”: Monty’s term for white New Yorkers who come up to Harlem for nightlife thrills, i.e. the reverse of how the Zanzibar Club’s denizens stick out in Helena’s population.

--J.J. and Cecil: Monty’s manager and accompanist, NY Harlem guys both.

--The Natatorium bit about draining the pool after the black guys have been in it: I know this is pretty rough on Helena’s civic sensibilities, but I have a hunch it’s not off the mark—what do you think? I consulted Lang on this whole deal of Monty and his little entourage staying at the Broadwater in mid-1925 and he said he didn’t think it would have been permitted unless some local heavy-hitting politico intervened for them, so I have Wes do so. Anyway, I want to walk some line of a “colored person’s” success and recognition and yet petty segregation tripwires everywhere—Paul Robeson right then was stumbling over them in London, where he and his wife were the toast of the Savoy Hotel one night and not let into the dining room the next because some English twit protested about having to eat with wogs.

--p. 315, reference to Senegalese: J.J. served in WWI in Harlem’s 369th Infantry which saw combat under French command, i.e. alongside the French colonial troops.

--The scenes of the earthquake, ah, the earthquake: I’ll really admit in the acknowledgments to conflating the 1935 Helena quake with this one of June 27, 1925, which as you likely know was epicentered nearer Three Forks. So, this version is meant to be mythic, but if there’s anything about it that’s utterly beyond “the willing suspension of disbelief,” lay it out for me.

And that’s that. You’ll get to see the rest of the stuff, in bound covers, in a mere 15 months or so. One more time, humongous thanks.
Dear Carol 'Iron-

A North Fork rate for you! I'm looking out from dining room window on the house or the Ridge across a river corridor of gold-green aspen crooks to the Rockies whose peaks are hidden in clouds ad whose sides are locally dusted in snow. We came up Friday afternoon and it's been damp, gray since — although the aspen gold is so powerful it seems like another light source. The clouds landed for us yesterday morning. I'm hungry for a night of Nathan Lights before we need the clouds to lift —

At the moment, Em' & Sergio are off in Eugene. One of their wedding presents was a pair of tickets to a Bob Dylan concert last night in Eugene. At one point, they planned to use that as a target date for moving back. Instead, it's become just an extension. Housing seemed to be a problem. Em really didn't want to leave — though Sergio seemed eager for a studio near by that
would let him finish his dissertation readily.
We've used the weekend to put everything in
the meadow to bed for the winter. I've tried
to clean & tidy up here.

And right now I'm keeping an ear to the
road/plan for Karen Teather's truck. We
invited her up for roast tonight I can't even
remember when last I saw her. And if she feels
like she has the time today to come up, we
will feel very lucky. She leaves Oct. 13 for
another stint of cooking at a research/military
facility in Antarctica - this time as head
breakfast cook. The South Pole seems to be
almost far enough away as sufficiently exotic to
help Karen shed her huge sense of
responsibility for Jerry - and her grief and anger.
Karen also lost a great environmental-advocacy
friend - ad her sister - both to cancer this
past year.

In my nervous that I've written a slab
of wedding vows before. Did I write during our
post-wedding clean-up weekend in August?
We will send some photos at Christmas that should give you a taste of this multi-cultural, hippie North Fork event. Last weekend I attended a Salish, Episcopal traditional wedding, and that brought waves of pleasure in an utterly funny counterpart!

And in Montana politics, you likely know that the Governor’s AP poll rankings are down to 20%. We had feared that it was closer to 7%.

My budget trimming 36-hour-week schedule remains strengthening, I’ve taken to working 4 nine-hour days. If Judy has her way and balances still deeper shortfalls with cuts only, I will look forward to 30 or 32 hour weeks. But other losses to the society are huge - W have already had to cut by 3 positions - so far from existing vacancies. The impacts to schools, universities, social services, you name it - so deep that I cannot imagine when or how we can “drink out” to some greater visibility and hope.
We hope that you are both well and just sufficiently busy with projects of your choosing! We are especially sorry that the Mariners didn’t make it to post-season for their benefit or yours – at ours. Softball Fields reminded us of you every line!

Take care –

Love –

Meucci

A week later. We hope you’ve kept up with Mike Inglis’s withdrawal from the Senate race – which will surely rank as one of Montana’s better stories!

We are leaving the law the Angels – and gorging outside soon for a stint in the sun at Garden Design.

Its endangered county – has become an old favorite. I suffer with red reading.

What do you think?
Dear Friends:

We hope very much that this season finds you able to salute your past and to anticipate adventures, difficulties, blessings, and routines still to come. At least for us, Don Enrique’s toast rings true. In these past 12 months, the dust in the corners of our house may not have been disturbed, but we witnessed and lived through momentous, sad, joyful, and fascinating passages.

Last winter, Amanda played her last college basketball game and made history at Montana State University Northern as she and her teammates respectfully and creatively engineered the dismissal of an abusive coach. The girls carefully documented his tantrums and threats. After the Montana State Supreme Court ruled in the team’s favor, another player said to Amanda, “I never knew that words could be so powerful.” Amanda’s summer firefighting job with the U.S. Forest Service let her work off a year of tension and put her basketball conditioning to great use on Oregon and Colorado blazes.

Emily and Sergio not only survived their winter’s stay at Dave’s family’s remote property up the North Fork of the Flathead. They thrived! Sergio proposed in the spring and they were married on August 17, a breathtakingly beautiful day, in front of the full expanse of the Northern Rockies. Sergio’s family and ours had great fun hosting the reception in the North Fork’s log community hall. Never mind that the hall has no running water! Through the summer and fall, Emily and Sergio found a variety of jobs in the area, including work for Glacier National Park.

My father, Paul Sherfy, died on February 24, three months prior to his 90th birthday. I was able to spend 10 days with him earlier that month. His last weeks and passing spurred me to look hard at what matters at work and in life and to treasure the gifts of friendship and caring. Come June, I took a week’s course for activity directors at senior facilities. Come November, I accepted a new job with the Montana Heritage Project. The Project helps Montana high-school students research and fall in love with the history of their communities. It’s a privately funded part of the Montana Historical Society.

As I write, Dave is working on materials for three December presentations of “Christmastime in Montana.” His newest book, More Montana Campfire Tales, just hit bookstores. Through the year, he continued to research and refine his program on the Montana’s World War I Councils of Defense. Those extralegal organizations threatened the lives and civil liberties of anyone judged sympathetic to the Germans and not sufficiently patriotic. Since September 11, 2001, Dave has welcomed the opportunity to give contemporary Montanans a look the price of suspending thoughtful judgment. Before “giving Emily away” this summer, Dave and I attended another reunion of the Civilian Public Service conscientious objectors who manned Glacier National Park during World War II. As Dave gathers new memories, we are heartened immeasurably by the lives of service that these men and their families continue to live.

In the lives we have just lived and those still to come, we find the greatest comfort and joy in Montana’s beauty, a good game on the radio, fresh raspberries, fine new books, the smell of trees becoming earth in the North Fork, and in our laughter, work, and play with you. Thank you!

Dave & Mandi
Dec. 14, 2002

Dear Deen - Carol,

Dave's signing looks in
Katapult tonight - ad doing
sister with Ed & Langio. The
a discover wind and 50°F temperatures
have made it a day of melting.
Skein water seen I need to put
something up - but this is my
presentation up - but this is my
favorite part of Christmas - music &
favorite part of Christmas:

I spent three days this week
on the road for my new job - to
in the road for my new job - to
announced, White Sulphur, Halsey, and
Townsend, White Sulphur, Halsey, and
Roundup. We visited the grade and
Roundup. We visited the grade and
White Sulphur High School libraries. White Sulphur
High School libraries. We had a great time and enjoyed
enjoyed at the most all the four schools
the most all the four schools
white. White Sulphur is especially
White Sulphur is especially
teachers are amazing in those

settings. I continue to feel lucky
to have beyond
beyond measure to now beyond
beyond measure to now beyond
discerning politics and legislative hearings
discerning politics and legislative hearings
to small towns and their histories.

Joyous Christmas
Joyeux Noël
Feliz Navidad
С Рождеством Христовым
恭祝圣诞
عيب رضوان بحتر

This year was all the more
magical for your visit. There's
leaves to be a very fine year
both to return to look signed
this fine in 2003. Meanwhile
be well and engaged in all that
you delight in.

Love,

Dave, Marnell
UNICEF works with children, mobilizes resources, galvanizes the world’s attention and focuses on efforts creating a better world where children are happy, healthy and live in dignity.

L’UNICEF oeuvre avec les enfants, mobilise les ressources et l’attention de la communauté internationale et privilégie les initiatives visant à créer un monde meilleur où les enfants vivront heureux, en bonne santé et dans la dignité.

El UNICEF trabaja con la niñez, moviliza los recursos y la atención de la comunidad internacional y se concentra en las actividades destinadas a crear un mundo mejor en el que niñas y niños sean felices, saludables y vivan con dignidad.

UNICEF arbeitet mit Kindern, lenkt die Aufmerksamkeit der internationalen Gemeinschaft auf ihr Schicksal, mobilisiert Gelder und setzt alles daran, eine bessere Welt zu schaffen, in der Kinder glücklich und gesund aufwachsen und in Würde leben können.

Eva Melhuish ★ 6328-B ★

For the well-being of the world’s children ★ Pour le bien-être des enfants du monde ★ Por el bienestar de los niños del mundo ★ На благо всех детей мира ★ 造福世界儿童 ★ Für das Wohlergehen der Kinder dieser Welt ★ لخير ورفاهية أطفال العالم

unicef

United Nations Children's Fund
Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance

10008

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21 May 2003

Dear Marcella and Dave--

No business today, this little missive is sheerly for fun. I had intended to surprise you with the enclosed within the format of my book, but now that bound galleys of Prairie Nocturne are seeping out into the world, and to Montana bookstores, it dawned on me you’d likely hear about it before I can lay it on you. So, herewith, the dedication page as it will appear in the book. It couldn’t happen to a better pair.

All best, and see you in Missoula

*without the editing excision mark on the period I had in there.*
Dear Marcella and Dave--

We’re just back from a week in Tucson, literally in the sunniest of spirits. Every day was in the mid-70s and brilliant. Did some desert hiking/walking each day, gawked at cardinals and Gila woodpeckers and other unaccustomed bird pleasures, went to the Desert Museum, and ate and ate. Meanwhile Seattle was under an open faucet, which added to our pleasure.

So, we’re now home to a coldframe bulging with lettuce, and buds threatening to pop on damn near everything, and the first few quince and forsythia blossoms already announcing themselves. Of course the price of this is the almost Stygian murk of fog and rain we drove home from the airport in, but we’re sure it’s worth it; Tucson has had only an inch and a half of precip since October, and Phoenix had less than three inches last year. Beats the hell out of us how those Southwest cities can keep defying the actuarial table of water, but they’re busy murdering the desert with suburbs at an undiminished pace.

Just before we left I shipped my manuscript to New York--your blessed comments, Dave, arrived right in time ahead of that--and to my utter astonishment I was rewarded with a spring-catalogue description of the book, done by some minion there in the house of Scribner, that I did not have to scream about at all. (The only correction I made in it was to change their thumbnail biography description of me as “son of Montana sheep ranchers” to “son of Montana ranch hands”: I’m still pretty snarky about the difference between the big house and the bunkhouse.) For the first time in these ten books I even had, or maybe manufactured, the leisure to compile a do-not-touch list to be passed to the copy editor, with stern instructions that, yes, I intentionally spelled “sonofabitch” several different ways, just as people pronounce it. As to the points the two of you so judiciously raised, here’s a quick rundown of how I resolved most of them:

--The hallway bath magically vanished, Marcella! I had rewritten that opening page at least two dozen times, but until your comment it never occurred to me to wonder, why the hell should I be telling the reader where the bathroom is? Obliterating it also gave me a better sentence there, which now begins: “Next a freshening of her face with cold water...”

--Susan’s typewriter and radio both stayed, necessary props needed for the storyline later. I know I’m pushing it a bit with her ready access to radio, but one of the broadbrush strokes I wanted in this book is the airwaves revolution, people all of a sudden able to hear things from hell and gone. My bible in all things ether-borne, Eric Barnouw’s 3-vol. history of broadcasting, says the American public in 1924 spent $358 million on radio equipment, so I have no qualms about making Susan a radio consumer.

--Susan locking her door and windows at night, which I’ve already had questions about in my one public reading of the manuscript and know I’m going to get a ton more of; sorry, but I don’t buy the old scenario of nobody ever
locking doors in old and peaceable Montana. My grandmother did, the kitchen knife that slid into the door jamb, every night of her life—and that was in thugless Ringling. Besides, in that scene I have to do virtually anything, including giving skin off my body, to lead in to that line about her hearing “the rhythm of him coming up the stairs to her for the first time in four years.”

—If I had thought of it in time, I would have had Hank Mathiason read the rodeo piece, right enough; but the fact of the matter is that there probably wasn’t rodeo clowning or bull-riding as early as 1914, so the scene will have to stand or fall as fictional legerdemain in any case.

—The wide open spaces between the fairgrounds and town should have occurred to me. Rather than have Monty hope they didn’t hear the “artiste” wisecrack across town, he now hopes they don’t pick it up and use it on him. And someday, Dave, we’ll have to have a rubber chicken research contest head-to-head; I’m betting something of the sort, and chicken-thief jokes, exist back there in vaudeville and thence made their way to the rodeo—although, again, not necessarily as early as I’m conjuring it.

—The Broadwater as “Montana’s finest” got sharpened up to “Helena’s finest, complete with plush grounds and natatorium.” And I refined the natatorium’s treatment of the NY blacks to the comment: “We are told we will have a generous portion of the pool to ourselves....Roped off for our very own use, I gather the procedure is.” Something of the sort would have been common wherever these guys were except in the Harlem they were accustomed to, but I want them to be a bit edgy about being out West and sticking out a mile in everything they do.

—Susan going upstairs to write in her diary so soon after the earthquake: that went the way of the hall bathroom. Now she just goes to her diary.

—And yes, lilacs last in the Helena dooryards bloomed (they were ending, but still colorful) in late June when we were down there eyeballing the Marlow site at sunset, and the sun down went behind the north shoulder of Mount Helena.

So that’s the sort of thing, multiplied by I guess dozens, that I spent the Xmas holidays on, not only the Montana end of things but the Western Front of WWI, Edinburgh, New York in 1925...the book finally feels the way I want it in verisimilitude—if a novelist has any business trying to make things real by making ‘em up.

Speaking of books, Carol and I have both happily nibbled into More Campfire Tales. Thanks immensely not only for the book, but the splendidly gratuitous mention anent the Red Corner; as I learned to say from that odd bodkin Stan Davison, a gift is no less appreciated just because it is undeserved. Dave, I imagine you’ve been into the Orville Anderson WWI diary, SC 289, but on the outside chance that you haven’t read it, that seems to me a ready-made piece of Montaniana, from the drama of going off to war from a reception at Senator Clark’s NY mansion to that almost-anonymous diary being retrieved from a dump.

Don’t know yet if we’ll see you this summer or it’ll have to be fall. I’m doing a reading for the Nature Conservancy at Pine Butte and we’re dragging along Seattle friends to roost there June 20-22, then going up to Head-Smashed-In etc. with them. Will keep you apprised as plans firm up. In the meantime, great thanks again for running the manuscript chunks through your inimitable heads. We’re both thriving here near the end of winter, and hope this finds you thataway too.

All best,
Dear Ivan and Carol:

I better confess that I writing from my new penthouse office. There’s so much about it that’s amazing: light, spaciousness, the smell of new paint and new carpet. Best of all, it’s not just quiet—it’s ringingly free of the first floor’s budget and personnel sniping. I can’t remember when I didn’t have to work in short bursts, trying hard not to hear or not to feel what was swirling around me!

I read your wonderful manuscript, Ivan, several Sunday afternoons ago, but did not get my notes written. And, with all of his 56 loaves of cranberry bread baked, Dave asked me for the manuscript not long ago.

So, quick thoughts, mostly questions, mostly about things that are really in your league and Dave’s—not mine.

Most of all, it’s not fair to wait another 15 months for the whole story. I want it now! The manuscript is as compelling as your writing always is.

I am writing this without driving Highland Street again, which I should do. Because my first questions have to do with that setting.

Page 2 - The hallway bath stopped me. I wasn’t sure how to peg the date and elegance of the house. The servants’ quarters space led me to picture Victorian with some size. Even with that a second bath on the first floor might be pretty unusual?? Installed for pupils who can’t wait?? The Original Governor’s Mansion (mid-sized to small late Victorian) had a second floor bath—-and maybe something in the basement, but nothing else.

Page 3 – I do struggle with the Capitol dome as a giant’s copper helmet, but it’s taken me a long time to figure out why. It’s not that the shape isn’t accurate. It’s proportion. The helmet perches not at the top of a vertical shape, but over a long low squat one. Maybe it’s also that I’ve just come to see a dome as a dome. But I can’t, for the life of me, summon a better analogy.

Page 4 – The typewriter and the radio left me wondering about Susan’s finances and technological acumen. Both items are possible in 1924 (first “portable” radio in 1923), but seemingly so new that it might beg the question of how she came to get them. I became willing to believe—as I read on—that Wes would just be buying her anything that her heart might desire!
Although the door and the key figure prominently and we are dealing with a single woman, I ended up wondering whether anyone in 1924 locked their doors.

I thought twice about a girl in overalls in 1896. Dave tells me that that’s possible, especially if she is wearing something from her dad or a brother.

I suspect that you have some very specific information on the black and white Scotty dog magnets that you mention. I knew only to wonder. I tend to think of decorative magnets as a later phenomenon, but honestly don’t know.

Now you were the ones making notes that evening when we stood on the old Marlow site, but I really thought twice about lilacs still blooming a week after summer solstice. In my perhaps flawed memory, our backyard lilacs usually bloom around the first week of June and then are starting to fade by solstice when the Russian olive begins to bloom, followed by the mock orange. But it is tricky here. Lilacs are always a month later in Avon and Elliston.

Otherwise, the element of your writing that always astonishes me is the depth of your characters’ thinking. I learn from it. I envy it. But I don’t live it. My mind dodges among some big thoughts and then on to groceries, my cold headache, Amanda’s birthday, etc. I’m not proud of that and I don’t know whether I’m atypical. But your folks think like the two of you!

One other “what about.” More description of the Mariow? It may be in other places, too.

The real word, though, is “wonderful” and there’s nothing much that I can see that you haven’t likely already researched and analyzed.

So I’ll let Dave read.

I hope that you’ve had a good holiday season. Ours has been quiet, but very wonderful. Amanda is, for 24 hours, over in Ronan with Bill the new boyfriend. He feels compelled right now to either be in Helena or to have Amanda there. To her great credit, Amanda at least knows better—but made this trip anyway. Dave and I are left in charge of her part-Siamese cat, which has to be sequestered in your room, and a Siberian gerbil, which is living on top of the freezer. This is, of course, the best of the football seasons for Dave. I continue to work on Christmas/seasonal cards!

Be well!
2003 Summer Institute
A Writers Conference for Teachers
June 22-28, Missoula

5th Annual Student Conference
for High School Scholars
March 31 - April 1, Helena
The **MONTANA HERITAGE PROJECT**

a student and teacher collaboration
to foster critical and independent thinking

The Montana Heritage Project seeks to foster partnerships between students and teachers to explore their community – its defining events and persons in the past, its relationship to the natural environment, its place in national and world events, its current challenges, or its future prospects. The goal is for students and teachers to form questions, gather evidence, and think critically, and through sharing their findings with the community, to express themselves clearly. As they develop the skills and confidence to find out for themselves what they want to know, students are encouraged to investigate how their individual stories relate to many larger stories.

What do young people in Montana today need to know and understand? What skills do they need to master? It was discussions about those and related questions at the Library of Congress and at the highest levels of state government in Montana that led to the establishment of the Montana Heritage Project in 1995. It was made possible through the leadership and financial support of the Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation and the vision of the Library of Congress.

The project is dedicated to helping young people learn to think clearly and deeply about the world they face. The basic methods are to form essential questions, to gather and understand evidence, and to report findings and conclusions in original works of scholarship.

The project’s broad mission has been developed by skilled teachers in twenty Montana communities into a diverse array of inquiries that have involved many hundreds of students. Research projects have been completed in Bigfork, Broadus, Browning, Chester, Columbus, Corvallis, Dillon, Eureka, Fort Benton, Harlowton, Lewistown, Libby, Pryor, Red Lodge, Ronan, Roundup, St. Ignatius, Simms, Townsend, and White Sulphur Springs. Each project culminates in written final products that are placed in the Montana Historical Society archives as well as in local school and community archives as resources for future researchers.

Research projects have been undertaken in diverse disciplines, including history, archeology, ecosystem biology, art, and literature. Schools have formed partnerships with local museums as well as state and federal agencies such as the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service. Community members have been invited into the schools to serve not as chaperones but as mentors and co-researchers.

It is important for rural communities to organize their schools to gather, preserve and present their cultural and natural heritage, because there will never be enough professional scholars to do this work. Even more important, if such work is delegated to specialists, people will not know for themselves what they need to know to shape their own destiny.

Today, the Montana Heritage Project finds its institutional home within the Montana Historical Society. It is governed by a board that includes Art Ortenberg, Liz Claiborne, and Brian Cockhill of the Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation; Arnold Olson, Director of the Montana Historical Society; Linda McCulloch, Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction; Mark Sherouse, Director of the Montana Committee for the Humanities; Peggy Bulger, Director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress; and Kris Goss, Education Advisor in the Office of the Governor.

*Cover photo: Hazel Moore, a World War II veteran of the Army Nurses Corps, was interviewed by Roundup High School student Sara Voise as part of a Veterans History Project. Photo by student Gina Hansen.*
A Gathering of Scholars
4th Annual Heritage Project Student Conference
April 8-9, 2002  Helena, Montana

Those who want to see educational accountability at its best might consider attending a Montana Heritage Project student conference. Over a hundred high school students from schools across the state present public exhibitions of their learning. Their writing, their presentations, and their speaking are on display before the public.

At the fourth annual Student Conference in Helena last April, Montana Historical Society Director Arnold Olsen and historian Dave Walter welcomed students by discussing the importance of the work they are doing for the State.

Then students took the stage. As at any other academic conference, participants presented their work to each other. They heard about research projects such as a history of rural schools in Beaverhead County completed by students from Dillon; historic crimes along the Musselshell researched by Roundup students; information about the 1910 fires collected by Corvallis students; a history of Rexford, a small town near Eureka, which was inundated when Libby Dam was built; the history and philanthropy of the Charles M. Bair family from the Harlowton area; and a history of Broadwater High School.

Several students spoke about their experiences interviewing veterans for the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project. Others discussed their interviews with community members after the September 11 attacks.

They spoke about topics such as their understanding of freedom, the importance of respect and kindness, the definition of "hero," their responsibilities to other team members, the importance of documenting the present, and the need for good communication skills.

On Tuesday morning Harry Fritz, Chair of the History Department at the University of Montana-Missoula, talked about Montana in the Twenty-First Century, and Mary Murphy, a history and philosophy professor at Montana State University-Bozeman, gave a presentation entitled "Picturing Montana: Photographs from the Great Depression."

In the final session, Governor Judy Martz addressed the students before accepting their gifts of scholarship on behalf of the State of Montana.

Their scholarly products are now at the Montana Historical Society archives, preserved for future researchers.

Above, Harlowton students look down from balcony of the Capitol Rotunda.
Below, Dillon teacher Jerry Girard (far left) and two of his students present their research on the history of rural schools in Beaverhead County.
Asking Important Questions

REMARKS BY LINDA MCCULLOCH
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

I would like to thank Art Ortenberg and Liz Claiborne for their vision in creating the Montana Heritage Project, and for their nurturing it with generous amounts of time and money to see it through to its current success, where it touches and changes so many lives. All of you here today are the best possible evidence that their idea was sound.

This past year has been an important one in many ways. I think we’ve all become more serious, more aware that we are living in historic times. I’ve thought about what those of us involved in education should be doing. Education is our name for a basic human process of finding out what works and then passing that on to others.

One of the things that certainly works is inquiry, a topic Art has spoken about often. The important thing about America, I think, is that we are free to find out what we want to know and what we need to know. For our institutions of self government to work, we need to gather information, weigh evidence, and come to conclusions.

We need to move past endless arguments and to form our questions in ways that can be answered by research. We need to cultivate a respect for evidence. We need to practice examining situations from various perspectives and withholding judgment until we have good information. These are things that work.

But for them to work, we are dependent on those who came before us, who built libraries and organized archives, who photographed details and wrote articles, who took time and energy to create the resources we need to educate ourselves. Education is a community effort.

One of the things that stands out for me is that every one of your research projects is also a service project: a way of giving something back to the community. One message the Montana Heritage Project communicates is that every student can contribute something of permanent worth to each town’s historical record. This is tremendously exciting in a time when we are accustomed to schoolwork being done in a “play world” apart from the real world.

We are here today to accept your research products on behalf of the State of Montana. But I hope your work is also being preserved and made accessible in your own communities. That may be where it is most important down the road.

Some of you have written biographies of elders in your community, some of you have researched and written histories for community organizations, some of you worked together to nominate a building owned by a local church to the National Register of Historic Places, many of you added new research papers to the local library’s archives, and others provided photo essays on community history for local
museums. In all these ways you have contributed to what sociologists call the “educational capacity” of your communities.

A town’s educational capacity includes not just its schools but also its libraries and museums and its living experts — the elders who experienced the past first hand. The past is where we look for examples, both of what we want and what we don’t want, where we look for innovations, and where we look for models. A town that doesn’t preserve and use its past has few resources when it needs to meet a crisis or make decisions about its future.

Now it’s your turn to add your contribution to that larger collection of work done over the years. The more of this you do, the more its value grows and becomes clear. Communities that have a seven-year collection of local historical materials, including maps and photographs and artifacts and texts, have an educational resource of tremendous value.

What your school and community will use this resource for, what it will choose to study and preserve, depends on what questions you are asking. And that’s mostly your decision. People are always, moment by moment, asking and answering questions. It’s what people do. These might be small questions, like “Why did David comb his hair that way?” They might be trivial questions, like “What should I wear to the game today?”

But sometimes they are big questions and important questions. What the future holds for you and for your town depends to a great extent on the questions you ask, and the quality of the information you find to help you create answers. You won’t get important answers until you ask important questions.

We don’t know what problems people will face in the future or what questions they will ask. Our job today is to ask the truly important questions that we face here and now. If we do that and work at finding answers, then we have done our part. Many of you have done that, and your work will only become more valuable with time.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if students fifty years from now could begin their senior research projects by browsing the archives, looking at the hundreds of research projects about the local community, examining some of the thousands of historical photographs, maps, and other documents that someone had preserved and labeled?

Most of our historical legacy does not exist in museums. Most of it exists in family records, boxes of heirlooms, prized letters and diaries, and family photo albums. This uncollected and uncatalogued information is the real frontier of historical research, and you have been on the cutting edge of it.

I would like to thank again Art Ortenberg and Liz Claiborne for their vision in creating the Montana Heritage Project.

And I would like to thank you teachers who have gone beyond classroom teaching to provide real community leadership, creating materials, inventing strategies, forging relationships. It’s far easier to assign the next chapter in a text than it is to coordinate large, complicated educational projects. I know how hard this is, and we all owe you a debt of gratitude.

And I would especially like to thank you young people. You give us all hope.
Ambassadors from the Montana Heritage Project have traveled to Washington, D.C. each year since the Project began to present their research to James Billington, Librarian of Congress.

This year's trip was unusually serendipitous. The group ran into President Bush (twice—once from about twenty yards); they met with Montana's entire congressional delegation after being told several weeks before hand that one of the members would be out of town; they shook hands with Hillary Clinton; and when they visited the National Cathedral, the National Symphony and the Cathedral Choir came in, set up, and began a full rehearsal. It was stunning.

Though it wasn't planned, the group ended up in Washington during the reception in the Grand Hall at the Library of Congress for the Veterans History Project. Earlier in the school year teacher Mary Sullivan had signed her class up as a partner in the Veterans History Project, so she had received an invitation to the event. The students were invited to bring a display, which was set up in the Library's Great Hall. The Bigfork project was the only project on display from Montana as well as the only one by a high school class. The students received lavish praise for their work.

The scheduled events went very well also. Students presented their research project to Peggy Bulger, Director of the American Folklife Center; Peter Bartis, Project Manager for the Veterans History Project; and other library staff. They met with Librarian of Congress James Billington, who was appreciative of their accomplishments. He signed a copy of one of his books for them. Dr. Billington is also a renowned Russian scholar, and when he learned the boys were third year Russian language students, he gave them a pop quiz.

Jossie summed up the trip in her journal: "Each day and night here has been so special, it is hard to say which was my favorite. Every day was. I feel lucky to have been given this privilege."

Four students from Bigfork High School were selected to present the research their class completed on veterans in their community to Librarian of Congress, James Billington. In May, Jossie Pekus, Megan Hinch, Ryan Kuhn, and David Solomon, along with their teacher Mary Sullivan, traveled to Washington, D.C. as ambassadors from the Montana Heritage Project.
Above, James Billington, Librarian of Congress, visited with Ryan and David both about Montana and about Russia. The Heritage Project began in conversations in his office with Art Ortenberg and Liz Claiborne, and each year since the Project’s first year he has hosted the young Montanans who visit Washington, D.C.

Right, The group poses for a portrait. From left, Mary Sullivan, Megan Hinch, Jossie Pekus, David Solomon, Ryan Kuhn, and, at far right, James Billington.

Above, John Hébert, Chief of the Geography and Map Division, showed the group several maps, including the earliest known maps of Montana. The Library’s map collection is stored in a room the size of two football fields. Dr. Hébert expressed an interest in coordinating some of the Library’s extensive digitizing projects to the needs of young researchers in Montana.

Above, The students formally presented their research to an audience of heritage professionals at the Library of Congress. Ryan runs the computer while Jossie reads excerpts from biographies she and her classmates completed about veterans living in Bigfork.

Below, John Cole, Director of the Center for the Book and author of Upon These Walls, gave the group a very personal tour of the historic Jefferson Building.

Above, Congressman Dennis Rehberg was a gracious host. He was pleased to learn more about the Montana Heritage Project in general and the students’ project in particular. Each year the Heritage Project ambassadors meet with all three members of Montana’s congressional delegation, allowing them a glimpse of how Washington works.
During the eighth annual Summer Teacher Institute, Heritage Project teachers took an expedition to 1910. Several hundred pages of readings focusing on incidents that had occurred in 1910, thoughts and policies that were developing, or industries and movements that were gaining momentum during the Progressive Era, were sent to participants about six weeks before the Institute.

Director Michael Umphrey introduced the theme with a PowerPoint and Don Baker, a historian and author from Billings, spoke about the railroads’ promotion of land and subsequent settling of Montana from 1910 to about 1920.

Clockwise from top left, After his lecture, Brian Dippie, American history professor from the University of Victoria and a leading authority on Charlie Russell, gave the group an insightful tour of MacKay Gallery of Russell’s art. Novelist Dee McNamee, a professor at UM, discussed the writing of fiction. Ed Dobb, contributing editor to Harper’s, talked about writing nonfiction. Jean Luckowski, UM professor, talked about using primary sources in the classroom.

Living Voices from Seattle did a dramatic presentation featuring a 1910 steamship trip from Ireland to America, Ellis Island, and the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York.

Montana Historical Society staff helped quite a lot with this Institute. Research historian Dave Walter (standing at right with teacher Jeff Gruber) and librarian Angie Murray helped teachers access resources at the Society, and Education Officer Kristin Gallas gave a tour of the Original Governor’s Mansion. Chief of Heritage Operations Marcella Sherfy gave a talk entitled “The Power of the Real.” Library and Archives Manager Charlene Porsild, Director of Museum Services Sue Near, Photographic Archivist Becca Kohl, and Education Officer Kristin Gallas talked about their programs.

Teachers spent two and a half days researching at the Montana Historical Society library (above, teacher Dottie Susag) and in a computer lab at Carroll College putting their research on-line. They created lesson and unit plans and digitized primary sources to use in their classrooms.

The group spent the Institute’s final evening critiquing the web sites that they had created. It was astonishing how much work was accomplished in such a short period of time.

Several teachers are taking their classes on an Expedition to 1910 during the 2002-2003 school year.

For more information about the Expedition to 1910, visit http://www.edheritage.org/1910/1910Expedition.htm
Field Notes: ongoing work around the state

The Heritage Project has been getting a lot of attention lately. In October, Renee Rasmussen took students Andrew Thorness and Bryan Ghekjere to present a workshop at the Montana History Conference in Havre. Their topic was “Using the National Register of Historic Places nomination process as the basis for a high school research unit.”

Also in October, Project Director Michael Umphrey took teacher Dorothea Susag and students Annette St. Onge and Trevor Steinbach from Simms to the National Rural Education Association conference in Portland, Oregon, where they presented the keynote address.

In November, the Heritage Project was featured in a Washington Post article based on an interview with Bigfork teacher Mary Sullivan, who caught the paper’s attention when she took students to the Veterans History Project reception at the Library of Congress. The article can be read at http://www.edheritage.org/articles/newspapers/02nov11_dc_bigfork.htm.

In December, Marcella Sherfy joined the project as Education Director. She got right to work, visiting Townsend (right top) to help students with their study of collecting.

Volunteers at the Broadwater School and Community Library (right middle) work at tables set up in front of the display case that was built to display and store Heritage Project work.

Roundup teacher Tim Schaff (right bottom) with his class survey Alonzo (Windy) Campbell’s homestead. He was believed by some to be the leader of a gang of horse thieves.

Students from Simms at the Marias River Massacre site (below) climb the bluffs overlooking the battlefield.
Field notes: ongoing work around the state

In Ronan, students in Christa Umphrey's class are working on a study of the 1960s on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Dillon students in Jerry Girard's Montana History class are researching histories of important places in Beaverhead County. Students in Jeff Gruber's class in Libby have completed a brochure illustrating the making of plywood at Libby's last mill, which closes this year. Students in Bob Malyevac's class are researching the history of Libby Dam.

Wyatt Schaeffer interviews retired coal miner Virgil Cross (left middle) about his experiences in the mines. Wyatt is working on a research project about the history of coal mining in the Musselshell Valley.

Students in Luke Brandon's Montana history class at St. Ignatius (left bottom) do a simulated archeological dig along Mission Creek where the Jesuit Mission once operated. They are studying the early Reservation period. This is Luke's first year in the project.

Teacher Nancy Brastrup (below), also new to the Project this year, works with her Heritage Class on their web site. They are researching the history of the five oldest homes in Meagher County, using them as a window into the past. They are reporting their findings on their website as they go.
Community Project Histories: 2001-2002
One-Room Schools, Past and Present
JERRY GIRARD, BEAVERHEAD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

The staff of the Beaverhead County Museum in Dillon, led by Vinola Squires, approached the Beaverhead County High School staff during the winter of 2000-01 with the idea of writing a proposal to the Montana Heritage Project. History teacher Jerry Girard accepted the challenge. Together, the team decided to work with high school students to compile a history of Beaverhead County’s unique public school system.

The county has operated over eighty schools, including one of the state’s first at Bannack. Currently, there are eight separate school districts in Beaverhead County, including K-8 rural schools in Jackson, Wisdom, Grant, Polaris, Wise River, and Glen. There are also rural schools in Divide and Melrose, just beyond the county border.

The Project began in the fall of 2001 in the Montana History class and included twelve students during the first semester and forty-seven in the second semester. The main question posed by the classes was simple: What is it that makes education in Beaverhead County unique?

Students began their research in the local archives at the Beaverhead County Museum, the Dillon Tribune, and the County Superintendent’s Office. In addition to statistics, they found documents such as report cards that helped personalize the information. Their next step was to collect oral histories of former students, teachers, and parents. They interviewed a retired professor at Western Montana College who had instructed rural schoolteachers. Each interview subject was photographed and the interviews were recorded on audio and video tape.

Accompanied by County Superintendent Dottie Donovan, the class traveled to six of the rural K-8 schools still in operation. They documented a typical school day with interior and exterior photographs and video footage. They made written descriptions, including physical measurements, and conducted interviews with all eleven teachers.

At the end of the project, the class donated several gifts of scholarship to the museum: all the oral histories and interview tapes of current rural school teachers as well as a brief interview with Dottie Donovan; written and video documentation of each currently operating rural school in Beaverhead County; a map showing the location of each of the past and present schools; a detailed time line of the history of education in the county from 1863 to the present; and more than fifty historic photos gathered from interview subjects. The time line and map will form the basis of a permanent exhibit to be mounted in the restored Argenta Schoolhouse which has recently been relocated to the museum grounds.

In rural schools parents are more involved than in larger schools and the school is a more important part of the community.

COLLIN ERB

Above, Ross Wells prepares Anne Hirschy for her interview. Mrs. Hirschy was the clerk at the East Fox School where her husband was a trustee.

Left, students Alex Hritsco, Brandon Kamps, Kevin Hammond, and Dustin Sutton watch John Barrows demonstrate how to research past issues of Dillon newspapers.

Photos courtesy of Jerry Girard
One Hundred Years by the Bay

MARY SULLIVAN, BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL

Each of the seventy-nine members of Mary Sullivan’s junior English classes interviewed a veteran and wrote a narrative based on the interview. Students gathered vivid stories from World War II, Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf War veterans. Because of the varying experiences of the veterans, the points of views expressed were diverse, with World War II veterans tending to be strongly patriotic while Vietnam veterans tended to be more skeptical of authority.

Stories ranged from the heartwarming to the heartbreaking. Ham Forkner described what happened after his plane was shot down over Holland. “Once on the ground in Holland, I evaded capture. I spent the first few nights in a haystack. The people passed me food through the hedges that divided the fields. Someone brought me a bike and found me a house to stay in. I was kept in a house, in the same room for thirteen months, hiding from the enemy.”

Students read to understand how to gather and use oral history. Studs Terkel’s Pulitzer Prize winning book The Good War, an oral history of World War II, proved invaluable. Reading it gave the students insight into the range and depth of perspectives that can be explored through oral history.

Mary stressed the importance of understanding the historical setting. Through readings and class discussions, students developed the questions they wanted to ask veterans and then evaluated and revised those questions. Student Michael White commented, “The veterans do not just throw out random facts and numbers, but they share actual experiences. This made me come to realize that every soldier is a person and that every loss is a greater sacrifice than I could truly understand.”

Lill Burgess said, “My father was in the Korean War. He never really talked to me about it until this oral history interview. Who would have thought my own father had gone through so much? I will never forget it. For the first time, I saw him cry.”

Students borrowed photographs from the veterans, scanned them, and incorporated them with narratives written from the oral histories as part of the public program.

The Veterans Recognition Night was held at the Bigfork Center for the Performing Arts on November 6. Over 450 community members of all ages gathered to watch and listen to a PowerPoint presentation, a military style show, and the choir and band performing the official songs of the five branches of the military.

The class was busy through the rest of the year. In December, they presented another public program: “Bigfork, One Hundred Years by the Bay,” as the culmination of a community history project they completed for the Chamber of Commerce’s centennial celebration.

Through the winter, they researched “Women in Montana” and in the spring they completed essays of place and a literary magazine.
End of an Era: 85 Years at Broadwater High

This class is far more advanced and interesting than any other class I've taken," said Callie Kimpton. "In the future, I will look beyond the obvious and wonder about everything's past." Callie was one of fourteen students in Darlene Beck's Western Literature class who worked in research teams to compile an eighty-five-year history of Broadwater High School after the old building was destroyed in June 2001 to make room for a new school.

The research included explorations of statistical records in the superintendent's office, working through the archives of the Townsend Star, the courthouse, the Broadwater County Museum and Historical Society, and studying a collection of high school yearbooks from 1916 to the present. "The process was more valuable than their product," said Darlene Beck. "They were caught up in the research. Most were intrigued by the newspapers and the museum archives. The project taught them to ask questions and to find answers to their questions." Student Sabrina Ravndal agreed: "The entire project was fun and extremely educational. I would have to say I enjoyed doing the research the most," she said, adding "I regret not taking the class last year, and I wish that I could take it again next year."

"With all the digging and research that my group did, I came to the conclusion that any type of historical research is a good thing" observed April Schleidewitz. "It expands one's thoughts to contemplate another person's life and times."

An exhibit telling the story of the school was set up in the library during April and May. Audio and video recordings of the interviews were placed in the local library archives, and an illustrated history of the school in PowerPoint was converted to a video to show at the spring parent/teacher conferences. The findings were organized by decade into a bound book, which was presented to the library archives.

"The Heritage Project takes a different approach to learning than any other class I have taken," said student Billy Holland. "It requires a lot of research coupled with good work habits, such as staying on task and organizing information. The class is demanding, but it is fun and interesting."

In what has become a tradition in Darlene's English classes, students held a Veterans Recognition Program on November 11 for approximately 225 community members. To prepare the program, fifty-eight students read books and watched videos to acquaint themselves with the time period and some of the issues the World War II generation faced. They then collected information about 128 local veterans to include on the Wall of Stars in the multipurpose room of the Community Library.

Students were in charge of all aspects of the event. They formed committees for speeches, poetry, music, registration, decorations, communications, publicity, and refreshments.
Building on the Past

RENEE RASMUSSEN, CHESTER HIGH SCHOOL

This was more than a paper to me,” said Jamie Sparks when she finished her research essay. “It was an experience I will never forget. I interviewed people about the most tragic event that has happened in their lives, and I learned a lot.”

Fifty-one students in Renee Rasmussen’s freshmen and junior English classes participated in the Heritage Project. They practiced a wide range of research techniques to get ready to complete historical pieces and essays.

To become familiar with the extensive collection of work completed in earlier classes, they researched that body of knowledge and wrote a local history column for the Liberty County Times. “This Week in Local History” was popular with area readers. Students also began work on 300-word local history pieces for the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber will use these pieces as the basis for the history sections of their new tourism brochures.

Students worked with the local museum collections. They identified photographs, researched them in the library and archives, and created displays for the Liberty County Museum.

To combine archival and interview-based research, students wrote papers about family heirlooms. This led them to think through questions about their relationship to their families and to reevaluate their notions about heritage and community.

Students practiced more structured and in-depth interviewing by organizing into groups and focusing on selected research questions, such as “How do people live through and respond to tragedy in their lives?” One group talked to an air traffic controller from the east coast who was on duty September 11. One interviewed a soldier from World War II who was on his way to invade Japan when the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb.

Listening to the historical record can be hard for teens when that “listening” means reading texts. Of course, texts remain vitally important, but for many students, it is the personal interview that provides the most compelling “listening” experience. One student talked of an interviewee unexpectedly crying during an interview. One talked of feeling a bond with the couple being interviewed. “It is this interaction between generations that makes the project work,” said Renee. When the interviews were completed, students used them to create web pages.

After students had completed these research projects, they tackled ten-page research papers, understanding that the finished papers would be bound into a single volume and donated to the local museum, the local library, the school library, and the Montana Historical Society as well as to any other interested parties. Kevin Fenger noted, “Writing this paper was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do.” Many students were surprised at how long the research process took. Bryan Ghekiere said, “I thought that the hundred hours of work Mrs. Rasmussen told us it would take was a joke. But after going through the process, I now know it takes that much and then some.” Jamie Sparks added, “Researching is more than looking in just one book for information. It takes time out of class, working before and after school on my own time.”

An ongoing project in Renee’s classes has been to place a basta brick house built in 1917 by Estonian immigrants on the National Register of Historic Places. The research on this house has been going on for the last two years. This year, students completed the application for nomination.
Exploring Cultural and Physical Landscapes

PHIL LEONARDI, CORVALLIS HIGH SCHOOL

Shanda Bradshaw said she was nervous on the first day of school when she went to her Heritage Geography class. “When Mr. Leonardi introduced us to the idea of Heritage Geography and told us he wasn’t sure what was to come either, I knew I was in for an adventure,” she said. “Little did I know what I would learn in just a semester and what kind of doors this experience would open for me.”

The twenty-one students in Phil Leonardi’s freshmen geography class began their study by talking about this question: How has the community dealt with the impact of forest fires? Interest in this question was stimulated by the historic fire season of 2000, which devastated much of the Bitterroot Valley. Through a series of assignments, students elaborated this big question into several more focused ones: What community icons have persisted through time? How did people adapt and change due to natural disasters? What effects of the fires can be seen in population statistics?

Each student also dealt with a more personal question: Who am I and how do I fit into this community?

Students worked through an extensive series of projects to gain the repertoire of skills needed by community geographers and historians. One of their first projects was thrust upon them just as it was thrust upon the rest of the nation: documenting local reactions to September 11. They videotaped interviews with parents, teachers, and other community members regarding their responses to the attacks. Along the way they learned interviewing skills, script writing, and storyboarding. A video was created and shown at the Heritage Open House later in the year.

Phil is not shy about telling students directly that their work has long-term value. Many students came to see themselves as related to many other people in the present and the past through the concept of place, and a particular locality, the Bitterroot Valley. As they learned to see all the ways that their place is related to other places, their understanding of the world increased. Max Masnick commented that because of the Heritage project, he thought about the way every town in the world has a history, and he began to think about how Corvallis is related to the world beyond the Bitterroot Valley. “The Heritage class has made me feel part of the whole, so to speak,” said Kevin Byrne. “When I do a project with the class, not only am I one with my classmates, I am also part of a legacy that will live on beyond my time.”

Students explored the five themes of geography by completing geo-portraits, in which they critically examined photographs of themselves from the recent past to develop an understanding of how they related to place.

To develop their historical consciousness, students examined the homesteading period, comparing and contrasting the Montana lifestyle of 1900 with their own. They read Percy Wollaston’s Homesteading, visited the Montana Historical Society’s traveling exhibit of photographs by Evelyn Cameron, then each wrote a “Postcard from the Prairie” describing the everyday lives of homesteaders.

They followed this up with a re-photography project. Each student found a historic photograph of a local building and re-photographed it, showing the same scene from the same vantage point today. They mounted both photographs with a brief history of the building, detailing the various uses to which the building had been put through the years, and displayed the finished products on a rotating basis in area businesses. Each class in the future will add to this collection of photographs.

To learn how to use quantified information about the past, students put information...
Then and Now Photos

The Hamilton Cereal and Flour Mill was built in 1888 by Marcus Daly, and was located in Hamilton near the Bitterroot River. In 1914, it was sold to L.A. Welk and J.J. Nickle, who remained in possession of it until their deaths. The mill processed grain from all over the Bitterroot Valley.

The Hamilton Cereal and Flour Mill no longer exists. It was destroyed by fire in 1968. The fire started in the attic where the dust collector was located. By the time the fire department arrived, it was too big to be extinguished. Little was left to salvage. The loss was estimated at around $115,000. Where the mill once stood, a shed was built. The shed was constructed on a part of the mill’s foundation that remained.

By Lindsay Parker

The Methodist Episcopal Church was completed in August of 1894. Reverend E.J. Stanley raised the necessary funds and Thomas Gibbins was the head carpenter. Construction had to be halted when Gibbins fell off the roof and broke his leg. The first resident pastor was G.B. Hilton.

The Methodist Church has stood in Corvallis for 108 years and has experienced very little change. The resident pastor is Mick Gray of Corvallis.

Excerpted from descriptions written by Jessica Carmona
The Montana Heritage Project is not just a class—it’s an experience!” said one senior at the end of an entire quarter focused on research and writing. Sixteen seniors in Nancy Widdicombe’s English IV class spent nine weeks researching the Charles M. Bair family and their notable philanthropies in Montana, particularly in Yellowstone, Wheatland, and Meagher counties. Students documented and researched artifacts at the Bair Family Museum, joined a sheep shearing operation at the Bair ranch, and interviewed thirteen friends and neighbors of the Bair family as well as museum docents and historians.

Students held an open house to show their work to the community on April 18, 2002. As part of that program, Cody Halsey and Kelly Warren wrote an introduction to the project:

Harlowton students...have conducted an extensive study into the Charles M. Bair family, using the resources of the Bair Museum in Martinsdale along with the adjoining ranch on the North Fork of the Musselshell. The class divided the work among several research teams, each taking a topic related to the Museum, the ranch, or the family’s many philanthropies...The research included sheep ranching in turn-of-the-century Montana, gold-mining in Alaska, the family’s relationship with Chief Plenty Coups, and an extensive cataloging of the artifacts in the Bair home, which is now a museum. Students did research at the U.S. Bank in Billings, the Alberta Bair Theater, and the Bair archives at the museum.

Students told the stories they found through a slide show and video presented to the community at an open house. They also published a seventy-four page book, The Bair Family: A Montana Legacy.

Teacher Nancy Widdicombe said the Project is worth the time and effort it takes because of what it teaches students: engagement with community members; an interest in and a love of area history; collaboration with peers and interdependence through a large-scale, complex project; and gathering large amounts of data, assimilating it, and choosing from it for a final presentation. “In other words, analysis and synthesis—those higher levels of thinking.”

Left. Student Melinda Berg (center) visits with June and Norman Voldseth of Lennep, Montana, during the Heritage Open House. Norman Voldseth is a local historian and has published a history of the Lennep/Martinsdale area. Both the Voldseths were friends of Alberta Bair.

Above. Docent Ethel Berg (pointing) gives students a tour of the museum. At left, she shows some of the many Navajo blankets the Bairs collected.

Above, Kelly Warren (left) and Cody Halsey present to the community at the Heritage Open House.
The Land and its People
learning a sense of place
JEFF GRUBER, ROBERT MALYEVAC, ROSE GYOEN, LIBBY HIGH SCHOOL

The Montana Heritage Project class taught by Jeff Gruber was organized around the ALERT inquiry process. The first semester was designed so that the eighteen students became familiar with the history of Libby as well as with the local resources available for research.

They began by reading local histories published by the Libby Writer’s Group: In the Shadow of the Cabinets, Times We Remember In and Around Libby, Tapestries of Yesterday, and Nuggets to Timber. Through group discussions, students formed questions for further research based on these readings.

To gain a more detailed understanding of the historical record, each student researched the history of a site and included this research in a detailed “history” of the present. They photographed the site to document its appearance today, and combined this with descriptions that included the precise location, the uses to which the site had been put, and a history of what had happened there. Their photographs were given to the museum for cataloging and archiving.

They investigated the way places are given meaning by writing Essays of Place, which linked the history and nature of specific places to the personal meaning that made these places important to them and their families.

To deepen their sense of personal connection while learning archival research skills, students visited the courthouse where they located the legal descriptions and appraisals of the houses where they currently lived. Using these records, they wrote brief histories of their homes.

They read Lincoln County’s War Record, a book compiled in 1920 to chronicle the contributions of Lincoln County to World War I. This text described the economic, scenic, and human amenities of each town in the county, and gave students considerable insight into how people in the 1920s thought about the future. Each student chose a single element—such as natural resources, employment opportunities, or wildlife—and wrote an essay comparing Lincoln County in 1920 to Lincoln County in 2001. As part of their research, they were asked to get an insight from someone who had lived in Libby for at least forty years.

This was followed by a concentrated focus on the interview process. The class invited Brad Phillips, a seventy-six-year resident of Libby, to be interviewed in class. Students asked questions, took notes, transcribed the session, and typed the questions and responses into a document summarizing some of Mr. Phillips’ life. After this “fishbowl” interview, each student interviewed a person of his or her choice, transcribed the tapes, then conducted a follow-up interview to be sure the transcription was accurate. They then wrote narratives based on the interviews. During this process, students discovered that ordinary people could and did accomplish great things in their lives.

With this background in historical research and the community’s history, students used their academic skills to complete several service projects. For the Montana Heritage Project, students contributed materials to the 1910 Expedition. They searched microfilm copies of local newspapers for interesting or significant events that occurred during 1910, retyped these articles, and placed the text online. They searched the local museum archives for photographs of Libby in 1910. They interviewed a woman who was born in 1910 and had lived her life in Libby. They put all these materials on the Project website.
For a local mill operated by Stimson Lumber Company, students completed an illustrated web site and color brochure detailing the manufacturing process. This included researching the impact of the company on the community. Students wrote questions, interviewed workers, and took a photographic tour at the plywood mill and finger joint operation.

Students also added to the collection of large format historic photographs that classes have been placing in area businesses. Five new photographs, including informational labels, were completed and placed at Millworks West, A1 Conoco, Saverite South, Stimson Lumber Company, and Munro Realtors.

According to Jeff Gruber, the project began to take off “when students realized that what they were doing was real work” and not just classroom exercises. “I ask more of students in this class,” he said, “and I meet some resistance and arguments early in the year. But as the year goes on most students begin to understand that it is a different class and that there are different outcomes expected.”

Each student did a culminating project based on research into a topic of his or her choice. They presented their research question and findings to about 160 community members at a Community Heritage Evening. Each student provided copies of the research essay, a photographic display, and a PowerPoint presentation. A replica of a historic Kutenay canoe was also on display. The presentations were informative and entertaining, and many community members stayed long after the presentations to examine displays and visit with students. The research products were donated to the Heritage Museum.

Left, Billie Anne Foote presents her research at the Heritage Evening. She used archival research and interviews to write a history of the Methodist Church in Libby.

Below, Students and community members visit at the Heritage Fair.

Oral Histories of the Tobacco Valley

David James, Eureka High School

Eureka is a small town in the beautiful Tobacco Valley in northwestern Montana, about fifty miles northwest of Whitefish and seven miles from the Canadian border. Students in David James’ American History class documented quite a lot of the area’s unique history. They recorded fifty oral interviews with relatives and other community members. They worked in pairs to research an assortment of topics in Eureka’s history, such as the coming of electricity to the valley, the history of the old town of Rexford (inundated by the waters of Lake Koocanusa when Libby Dam was constructed), and a history of 4-H in the Tobacco Valley. They read their research papers to the public in special readings at the Eureka Book Company. The transcripts from many of these interviews have been placed on the Project’s web site.

Left, David James photographs one of his students and her grandmother at the gathering.

Below, Eureka students read their essays to a crowd of about fifty community members at the Eureka Book Company.

Photos by Michael Umpleby
An Expedition to World War II

CHRISTA UMPHREY, RONAN HIGH SCHOOL

During the 2001-2002 school year, forty freshmen in Christa Umphrey’s English classes studied twentieth-century wars and interviewed local veterans as part of the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.

Before the interviews began, students read extensively to develop background knowledge. In small groups they chose books of nonfiction or historical fiction about war. The class as a whole read war novels. Christa put a large world map on the wall and had students find out where at least one of their grandparents were during World War II and to put a marker on that spot.

After September 11, the class interviewed community members about their reactions to the terrorist bombings. This allowed students to become familiar with interviewing procedures, the equipment used, and the process of turning transcripts into narratives. They created web pages based on these interviews.

When it was time to interview veterans, many students were reluctant, especially those who had limited interaction with those two generations older, so the first interviews were done at school. The local VFW sent four veterans who spoke to the entire class then gave interviews to small groups. Working through the VFW and the grandparents of some students, a willing veteran was found for every student. The interviews were conducted at school because freshmen are too young to drive.

Some of the veterans seemed as nervous as the students, but as the questions began the jitters receded. Though pairings between students and veterans were for the most part random, each student seemed sure he or she had been luckier than everyone else.

The least enjoyable part of the process of turning the interviews into finished products was transcribing the audio tapes. Getting from great stories full of details to texts on paper was a lot of work, but having the information in text form made the next steps much easier.

Students selected important ideas or themes and interesting stories from the transcripts and wrote narratives, which they took back to the veterans to be checked for accuracy. Most veterans made few corrections. Some added further stories that hadn’t been included in the first interviews.

Researchers requested photographs of their subjects during the war. These were combined with narratives to create PowerPoint presentations and web pages that highlighted excerpts from the narratives. The PowerPoints were presented to the public at a veterans appreciation celebration at the school. “I learned how revisions and letting others read your work can help you out a lot,” noted R.J. Olsen. As the presentations were readied, several critique sessions were held. Students reminded each other to speak up, to slow down, to speak more clearly. “By practicing our presentations, we found out we needed to be louder and to explain some things more,” said Aaron Skogen. “Setting them up took some time because we wanted them to be perfect.”

After the presentations, many students were impressed with what they had accomplished. “I didn’t think I was capable of making something turn out that well,” said Courtney Zimmerer. “I learned what makes a good interview, a lot of information about World War II, and how to give a good presentation.”
“Mischief on the Musselshell”

TIM SCHAFF, DALE ALGER, TONI GIES, ROUNDUP HIGH SCHOOL

Forty-four students in the Local Legacies class, the English II class, and the photography class completed a wide array of projects contributing to Roundup’s knowledge of its heritage. Most of this work was guided by English teacher Tim Schaff, librarian Dale Alger, and art teacher Toni Gies.

Roundup High School offered a Local Legacies class as an elective. The nine students in this class taught by Tim Schaff worked in four major areas that were related to each other: literature, archival work, community contact and interviewing, and historical research.

Students began the year with extensive readings to gain basic knowledge of the history of the region as well as a sense of the issues people face. They read all or part of The Ornery Bunch and Horizon’s O’er the Musselshell. All students read all of Montana, A History of Two Centuries, and each student had a choice of reading either Flags of Our Fathers or The Greatest Generation. The last two books, dealing with World War II, helped students prepare to interview local veterans.

Class members recorded interviews with eight veterans. They used the Library of Congress Veterans Project questions for both civilians and veterans. All the interviews were transcribed.

Students said the interviews were educational and personally gratifying. “When we interviewed Mr. Erbe,” said Gina Hansen, “We were there for 3½ hours. I was never bored for a second.” Though Gina felt the same way about doing the transcription of the tape, most students, like most other oral historians, felt that the transcription process was very tedious even though they recognized its value.

As part of an ongoing project, students made prints from copy negatives of museum photographs created last year. There were about 300 negatives that needed to be printed. Under librarian Dale Alger’s supervision, students made and displayed seventy-two prints in the fall quarter which were donated to the Musselshell Valley Historical Museum. In the final quarter of the year, Sara Voise, Gina Hansen and Destiny Feherenbach decided that their spring project for the final three weeks of the year would be to add an additional fifteen prints each to the collection. Sara added thirty-six on her own. Gina added another twenty-eight, and Destiny added twenty-two. The f-stop and exposure time for each print was recorded, along with the negative number and roll number so that future copies can be made with less effort. All the negatives were stored in acid free albums and archived.

As part of the “Mischief on the Musselshell” project, class members researched nine murders that occurred between 1911 and 1935. They used court records and old newspaper accounts to do the research. They discovered that newspaper accounts did not always jibe with the court records. They also found that complete transcripts of the cases usually did not exist. One case had a record of witness testimony, but it was written in shorthand. They have not yet found anyone who can translate it.

Twenty students in the English II class also contributed to the Heritage Project. They began with a reading of Ivan Doig’s English Creek for background history of the area. Students then interviewed family members to learn the stories of when family members first arrived in the Musselshell Valley. Some of these stories went back five generations while others had occurred very recently.

Students brought family artifacts to class and wrote seventy-five-word labels identifying their origin, history, and family significance. Over one hundred artifacts were prepared and a temporary museum was created. The class invited the third and fourth grade students along with their parents and grandparents to this museum. Fourth graders had been doing a family history project, and they were invited to display their work as well. Fifteen tables of displays were set up.

Fifteen students in Tony Gies’ photography class picked five historic barns from the surrounding area to document. Photographers shot each barn from five angles. They also shot the interior, drew the floor plan, and researched the building dates and who the original builders were when possible.

The materials created as part of the Heritage Project will be archived locally at the Musselshell Valley Museum as well as at the Montana Historical Society in Helena.

At the end of his Heritage unit, Tim Schaff observed that “Heritage work is full of rewards and surprises. But it also has its frustrations, and it can take tremendous amounts of time in and out of class, adding a lot of stress to a teacher's life.” He went on to say, “We have achieved all of our goals this year. Written transcripts of the interviews proved to be the most daunting for the students, but in the end that will probably be the most valuable to them. I don’t remember how many times I heard one of them say, ‘Oh, I don’t remember him [or her] saying that. Listen to this, everybody!’”
Myth and Truth in the Sun River Valley
DOROTHEA SUSAG, BILL DUROCHER, BELINDA Klick, SIMMS HIGH SCHOOL

I saw a lot of elderly people happy and excited to see young people working so hard,” said Kristen Kolski. “By doing the Heritage Project, I learned that elderly people have some very interesting stories to tell and it makes them happy to know that we younger people do care.” Community member Butch Walker agreed: “This project brings together all the generations of the community.”

The Heritage Project in Simms was a cross-curricular effort involving the junior English and history classes. Fifty-five students, four teachers, and twenty-five community mentors participated.

One emphasis of the project was on what truths lie behind the myths we have heard or known about our place. Students read either Killing Custer by James Welch or A Bride Goes West by Nannie Alderson and Helen Huntington Smith. They began identifying myths and forming questions about them for research.

Another emphasis was collecting oral histories for the Veterans History Project sponsored by the Library of Congress. Students were divided into five groups, each for a different war. In addition to reading extensively, students visited the Fort Missoula Museum, the Cascade County Historical Society Archives, and Wohlgemuth’s World War II Museum in Vaughn to research “their” war.

Working in groups of two and with an adult mentor, class members interviewed more than thirty people who had served in the military or on the home front during any of the Twentieth Century wars.

A selection of work from all the projects completed during the year was published in the fifth literary magazine produced by the Simms Heritage Project: Stories in Place, V. The junior class did the research and writing and submitted it to the senior class, who did the editing and production.

The final major undertaking was to transform the quarter’s work into a heritage fair for the entire community. Groups designed and created booths, committees planned music and ways to honor veterans and other community members who had helped, and all students helped write invitations and make phone calls.

This annual fair has become a community tradition that brings 200 or more people to the high school gymnasium, and students are aware of the high standard set by previous classes.

Evidently, this year’s fair was just as successful as past fairs. Student Kary Kolski said, “I heard lots of compliments. One lady said, ‘I cried during most of the presentation. It was wonderful.’ I told her I felt the same way.”

“One thing that won’t be on the Iowa Basics test is how important communication with others is,” said Kevin Mellinger. Gordon Hawks went further, “I learned that even though history and communication are good, they are nothing without a community to use them.”
Teaching for Understanding
Beginning with Essential Questions

MICHAEL UMPHREY

In Corvallis, Phil Leonardi’s classes inquire into how and why the physical and cultural landscape has changed through time. In Ronan, Christa Umphrey’s classes are organized around these questions: How did our community and society change in the 1960s? How was the Mission Valley influenced by social forces in the 1960s? Why do people rebel? And in Simms, various strands of the project led by teacher Dorothea Susag are held together by this overarching question: How do popular myths obstruct our understanding of underlying realities?

Such questions meet the criteria for essential questions that Grant Wiggins described in Understanding by Design:

1. They point to the heart of a discipline such as history or science. They are the “big ideas” framed as questions. They are essential because they point toward core issues in the different disciplines and lead toward enduring understandings. The big ideas at the heart of literary studies, for example, include the belief that our opinions should be based on reason and evidence and that through vicarious experience we can expand our knowledge and understanding.

2. They are arguable. They have no obvious right answers. They can be pondered, explored, discussed, and lived with.

3. They recur in professional work and in life, because they grow out of important conceptual and philosophical issues.

4. They engage student interest and can function as a doorway to inquiry.

Teachers often begin unit planning by listing the activities that will be done. If these activities aren’t at some point selected and shaped by three or four overarching questions, the unit will inevitably lack focus. The key questions frame the sequence of activities and they provide structure to the lessons, the field work and note taking, and the culminating scholarly products through which students exhibit their answers.

Project-based teaching easily degenerates into a series of disconnected activities. When students experience a unit as a smorgasbord, they often have trouble understanding the big ideas the unit should have uncovered. “Why are we doing this?” they wonder. Faced with a series of activities, they may not be particularly interested in learning what records are kept in courthouses or government archives. But when they can be engaged in a few key questions, the use of such resources becomes easier to see.

Organizing instruction around essential questions makes the unit’s intellectual challenge more clear, more coherent, and more engaging for students, so questions that lead to big ideas should be posted in the room, they should recur in class discussions, and they should appear at the top of handouts.

Though most teachers pose lots of questions, many are leading questions rather than essential questions. Leading questions can be answered by finding the facts. They are intended to uncover content, or to prompt recall, or to get facts on the table. “Who started this town and when?” Often, they are merely rhetorical or thinly disguised statements. Though such questions can be useful, a steady stream of them stifles thoughtfulness and engaged inquiry.

Just as good storytellers raise questions in the listener’s mind but delay providing answers, good teachers often introduce important questions that will not be answered right away. To create a sense of anticipation and to help them make sense out of the sequence of activities, students should encounter the big ideas and the overarching questions as early in the unit as possible. Event can follow event, as naturally as a story unfolds.

It’s true that the essential questions are sometimes too abstract and inaccessible to “hook” students at the beginning, so more specific unit questions can be used to organize particular content and inquiry. The essential question, “Who is a friend?” might lead to a unit question, “In A Separate Peace, is Gene a true friend of Phineaus?”

Of course, the overarching questions won’t work well as research questions for individual writing projects. They are far too big for that. Rather, they provide the organizing motive for the entire class, driving the readings and discussions. When students begin forming their own research questions, the essential and unit questions serve as the background and context for their narrower inquiries. While the class may think together about the essential question, “Why do people rebel?” an individual student might interview one person who protested the Vietnam War, not attempting to provide a comprehensive answer to the big question but shedding light on one aspect of it.

The main reason all this matters is that students need to wrestle with big ideas, but big ideas are seldom learned through lectures. Instead, they come to be understood by being explored, questioned, taken apart and put back together, used, reorganized, and confirmed. To reach understanding, students need to personalize the questions, sharing examples and experiences that bring the questions to life.

Without engaging big ideas through such active inquiry, most students will end up with a hodgepodge of opinions and clichés rather than knowledge and understanding. Teachers should do more than state what is known. They should design inquiries that allow students to see how knowledge is developed and upon what evidence it is based. This is so because, as Jamie McKenzie pointed out in Beyond Technology, “Questions and questioning may be the most powerful technologies of all.”
Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation supports libraries and archives in rural schools

For the past few years, the Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation has made funds available for Heritage Project schools to upgrade the reference collections in their libraries. Rural schools often don’t have extensive or up-to-date reference collections so the librarians have enthusiastically and gratefully taken advantage of this offer.

The books need not be related to Montana topics. Librarians are invited to select books that support the local curricula in all subject areas so that students have the chance to do high-quality research.

Tava Smathers, the librarian at Corvallis High School, said, “It is so wonderful that Ms. Claiborne and Mr. Ortenberg make this possible. We have received $4,500.00 of much-needed reference books which is equal to our entire library book budget for a year.”

A separate fund is available to libraries that wish to develop school archives to collect research done by Heritage Project students and make sure it is accessible to the community. Chester and Townsend have used this money to construct display cases with storage for research papers and other information gathered or created by students. Simms has used it to develop files of student work. “Archiving the student work for future researchers is half the work of the Heritage Project,” according to Simms librarian Mary Jane Johnson.
MONTANA HERITAGE PROJECT
Presenter Form

Event: 2003 Montana Heritage Project Summer Institute

Presenter and contact information (please doublecheck):
Ivan Doig
17021 Tenth Avenue N. W.
Seattle WA 98177
206-542-6658

Presentation:
"The Craft of Writing This House of Sky" 35 minute presentation with another 40-45 minutes for questions and answers among all of us. You get to ask us questions!

Date: Thursday, June 26, 2003
Time: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Location: Holiday Day Inn Express, Missoula, MT, 1021 East Broadway, Missoula, MT 59802

Logistical and financial arrangements:
The Heritage Project will book a room for you at the Holiday Inn Express for the nights of June 26 and June 27.
The Heritage Project will provide an honorarium of $1,800.

Special information on arrangements for the event:
This will be a group of about 25 high school teachers, most of whom have been accepted to participate in the Montana Heritage Project next year. Most everyone knows each other well. The atmosphere is usually informal. Teachers are usually very interested. Several take this for graduate credit.

Equipment or special room set-up needed:
Screen____; Power Point projector____; Laptop for Power Point____; Slide projector____; Overhead projector____; Other: Podium, stool, blackboard or whiteboard

Social Security or Tax Identification Number: __________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________

Note: Please attach your vita or resume.
February 2003 Montana Heritage Project Site Reports

Simms

Montana Heritage Project students at Simms High School spent a full week after Christmas immersing themselves in the literature, music, newspapers, records, and photographs of 1910. Project teacher Dottie Sussag experimented with this historical immersion exercise to give students context for the time period before they jumped into a specific topic. Librarian Mary Jane Johnson, co-teacher Sarah Zook, resource teacher Belinda Klick gathered ample local, state, and national materials from the time. One class of Project students then selected a historic photograph that intrigued them, drew research questions to pursue from the image, and are now preparing their written findings. Another class, working in teams, has employed oral histories, newspaper stories, and map and photography analysis to reconstruct on maps the main streets of Simms, Ft. Shaw, Vaughn, and Sun River. Prior to beginning her year’s work, Dottie created an advisory council comprised of community members, a non-Project teachers, former Project students, mentors, and current students. Not only was the council able to shape this year’s work effectively, its members have remain engaged in the student’s research and writing efforts.

Roundup

Heritage Project have created quilt/wall hangings on ranches, schools, businesses, main street, and coal mining. They’ve studied Joseph Kinsey Howard’s High, Wide, and Handsome. They’ve added to the community’s veterans history records, copied more than 150 historic photos loaned to the school, and visited historic outlaw hideaways. But students have most enjoyed indexing local stories from the front page of community weekly newspapers from 1908 through 1919. Using more than 2,000 keywords, students realize that they are creating an invaluable community research resource. And they are fascinated by what they have found.

Dillon

The Heritage Project in Dillon extends throughout the school year, giving Project teacher Jerry Girard and his students ample time to dig deep into the stories of ten historic buildings in the community. Students have toured buildings that illustrate a cross-section of Dillon’s early business, education, and civic life. They’ve conducted oral history interviews with building owners and occupants, past and present. They’ve solicited historic photographs for digitizing. Now they are writing essays about each place. Their research and writing has been shaped by questions that still resonate with Montana communities: why were these particular buildings built; why was a particular business successful and another not; how have these buildings changed in use and importance over time.

St. Ignatius

Luke Brandon, new Project teacher in St. Ignatius, sparked his freshmen and juniors’ interest first by encouraging them to pursue independently topics that fascinated them. Some students interviewed University of Montana history professors. Others created a website on the federal wolf policy and its effects on the ground in the Mission Valley. One student researched the
history of a long-time Valley family. Students created web pages to record their individual project findings. Now the students will work together to research the history, role, and impact of St. Ignatius’ volunteer fire and emergency services. In small Montana towns, these life and resource saving organizations often become social and political rallying points. Luke’s student will find how just how St. Ignatius’ rescue squads have functioned.

**Corvallis**

Phil Leonard’s energetic freshman class began the year by studying themselves and how they fit into their communities. Then, what looked to be a brief excursion into Montana’s past through the Frontier House PBS series became a major trip. Phil found that the TV format captured student interest and “set the table for an examination of hardship.” From Montana in the 1880s, students shifted to 1910 as they studied Percy Wollaston and Evelyn Cameron’s homesteading diaries and memories. To bring the that era home to the Bitterroot Valley, students chose an individual they found in 1910 census record and located additional information about that person, including the pertinent headstone in the cemetery. Students have located 150 more historic photos from this time period and digitized them for local archives. To hone their analysis skills, students are now critiquing the inflated claims in homestead era Bitterroot Valley promotional brochures.

**Chester**

Last fall, Chester Heritage Project students from the previous year taught part of a workshop for educators held at the Montana History Conference on innovative methods to explore Montana history in the classroom. Students valued that opportunity and the enthusiastic response from the audience. This year’s students are now immersed in helping the local museum by preparing interpretive text for historic artifacts, continuing to find interesting historic vignettes for a column in the newspaper, and tackling individual research topics. For example, a student is researching the Pugsley Bridge, a rare wooden vehicular suspension structure.

**Big Fork**

After Big Fork’s traditional Veterans Day interviews and recognition night, Heritage Project students began evaluating what makes their unincorporated town unique. That discussion sparked student interest in Big Fork’s volunteer firemen and quick response unit. Students are now pursuing the history and impacts of those organizations and plan to honor fire and medical volunteers with a Power Point program and dinner. The publicity that the Big Fork students received in the Washington Post and the Montana Education Association magazine continues to trigger support and student enthusiasm.

**Townsend**

If you go into the Townsend School/Community library right now you’ll see a collection of objects on display with interpretive information researched and written by Townsend’s Heritage Project students. Once Project students located a collection (typewriters, projectile points, barbed wire, china, dolls) that fascinated them, they researched the objects and interviewed
collectors about why and how they took an interest in a particular kind of object. These exhibits have drawn so much community interest that the librarian rotates them every two weeks to insure that all the collections are showcased. Another class is now pursing individual 1910 topics that fascinate them. Two recent events underscore the impact of the Project in Townsend. A local family with connections to Microsoft donated 30 software licenses to the school and the Broadwater County Museum would like Heritage Project Student help with to update and redo Broadwater Bygones, the published county history. In previous years, Project teacher Darlene Beck had a Heritage Project class. When curriculum changes eliminated that, Darlene decided to involve all 120 of our English students in the Project and, so far, is pleased with the results.

Harlowton

This year in Harlowton, ten Project students are immersing themselves for nine weeks in Hutterite culture—an important and often misrepresented or stereotyped component of the community and region. While students plan to spend extensive time in three local colonies observing and interviewing, they have already immersed themselves in historical information and begun work with colony leaders to insure that the experience is comfortable and respectful for everyone involved.

White Sulphur Springs

Nancy Brastrup launched White Sulphur Spring’s first year in the Project by taking her six elective class students to the ghost town of Castle. Students crafted information about and pictures from Castle into a website immediately, to share what they had learned and to provide it to the community. Now students are tackling research into Meagher County’s historic one-room schoolhouses. Community research has proven challenging. Local records on historic buildings are thin and the local library is currently condemned for structural problems.

Ronan

Christa Umphrey kicked off her Heritage Project investigations into the 1960s by creating a local and national timeline for the decade. Students were assigned a year to research in the newspapers so that they could add events to the master timeline. Then, each student chose an event, person, or speech from the decade and created one page of information on it, suitable for grade school use. The class bound everyone’s pages into a book, copies of which have been given to every third grader in the school. With an understanding of the decade under their belts, students will now begin interviewing military and home front veterans of the Vietnam War.

Libby

This coming spring, when Libby students hold their Heritage Evening they will do so in one of the Project’s successes: a renovated auditorium in Libby’s historic high school. Redoing the early school’s auditorium as a community cultural space was the dream of one of Libby’s first Heritage Project efforts as it modeled a community discussion around the 1940s Montana Study process. The dream is now a reality. At that event, Jeff Gruber’s students will report on their 1910 local legacies interviews, which were undertaken after students immersed themselves in the
time period. Jeff’s students have been learning how important it is to document ordinary community residents, not just the movers and shakers. Bob Malyevac’s students will be reporting on all the research they’ve conducted about the construction of Libby Dam and the impact of that on the area. For Bob’s students, the Corps of Engineers has provided a mother lode of photographs, historic documents, and film footage. Rather than struggle to find enough Dam information, Bob’s students will learn how best to winnow their windfall down. This Christmas, when the Stimson Mill shut down, the Libby Heritage Project could give especially meaningful gifts of scholarship to each Mill employee: last year’s Project documentation of the Mill now crafted into a booklet.
Saturday morning  
November 8, 2003

Dear Carol and Ivan:

I’m looking out on and feeling real winter here. There’s crusty old snow on the ground and in the street. The new furnace has not, of course, stemmed the drafts around the windows. We’re running the heater in the garage for the bunny. We seem to have about four hours of sun. And you were just here yesterday in weather that invited us to sit outdoors for awhile and lured us into thinking that Indian summer might be eternal. Rats.

Your visit sure adds to our sense of fall magic. We so enjoy visiting with you. You make us feel at home in our own home. So much so, of course, that I took dinner planning pretty for granted! Thank you for the autographed book, for the dedication that astonishes us every time we think about it (Friends and colleagues are just now stumbling on it and they’re pretty amazed too.), and for the Arica Gel. I just hooted when I opened the neat little package, Carol. Thank you!

Our lives since you were here seem to have hurried by. I’ve traveled to Dillon and White Sulphur twice each, gone to meetings in Missoula, paid my first-ever visit to the Bison Range on the first day of roundup, and staffed the Heritage Project booth at MEA-MFT in Billings. Dave has been on the road to a Lewis and Clark meeting and to sign “Christmastime in Montana” books in Kalispell. [The Society Press booked him at Borders rather than at Books West. So he called Joanne himself and set up a separate afternoon there. We aren’t, of course, in your range. But Dave sold 17 books at Books West to five at Borders. And at Borders, he got to draw his own sign!]

We closed up the North Fork in the middle of October, with good help from Amanda and Bill. Em headed back to Oregon then and continues to enjoy all the manifestations and attentions of her pregnancy. The following October weekend was the History Conference here – and as messages will have led you to figure out, the trustees gave Dave their Educators’ Award. He resisted and squirmed a great deal—especially because those awards have not gone to staff before. Amanda could join us for occasion and Dave especially liked the pizza we could order when the banquet was over and he could change into his jeans.

Amanda has begun coaching basketball for sixth grade boys where she is practice teaching. She won her first game as a coach and delights in outrunning her charges in sprints.

Meanwhile, we hope—very much—that you are both fit-as-fiddles and happy. Carol, I hope that you hand healed quickly. Ivan, I trust that your books continue to sell like hotcakes and that you can find fascinating vignettes all along your broader signing tour.

Keep us posted on when you might be coming this way. I’ll do the same. We treasure our time with you.

Dave

Dave & Manelli
Dear Ivan & Carol -

I can print too - so we'll see if this is more legible. There are two manual typewriters up here: the big old Underwood that George used to write letters to the girls from Winnie the Pooh (all in caps - with lots of planned and unplanned misspellings built in) and my high school portable tucked away in a meadow warehouse. But the last time I tried to use it manual (for one of the many recent job application covers) my error rate was high and my finger comfort nonexistent. So-printing...

It's 60, lots of clouds, a little sun, some wind. It rained earlier and threatens to again - and so the mosquitoes are ravenous. This kind of day will do us good. Yesterday - with lovely full sun and some breeze, we had mowed all the meadow "lawn," moved a couple of wood piles, moved and started the generator, killed a couple gophers, and cut armfuls of rhubarb by 2:00. Everything ached after that - like your Monday. Dave and I kind of shuffled around here the rest of the afternoon - reading, cooking, and listening to the Calgary Stampede. Dave - bless his heart - even began a book for page fun - a Peter Bowen mystery. That's one of the great North Fork blessings - its late night, rainy weather license for Dave to really read!

And with both of you in mind, I brought up a used-book store first edition of Winter Wheat and revealed that: What a treat. In the two novels I've read so far - Mildred isn't yielding to any unnecessary sentimental romance. Now I really want to hear your first-hand experiences, Carol!

We rather expect Amanda this afternoon - maybe with her current boyfriend, maybe with a Forest Service co-worker and maybe not at all because she was planning to hit Big Fork's
4th of July party with some vigor. The flank steaks are marinating and the chicken breasts are thawing — and the odds are good that we'll have lots of food left over. Amanda is still hoping fervently for a big fire with lots of overtime. But she told us midweek that she's not currently in the crew boss's good favor. She got a big FS truck stuck in a marsh last Sunday — driving somewhere outside the designated patrol area.

We think the Society trustees are contemplating some major changes. They are angry — as are so many staff — at Arnie's decision to end tours, close Mondays, and fill my old job with a retired Army officer — all without consulting with the trustees. We think they may be looking, too, at Charlie's book disastrous policy — We hope so for all of that.

On another political front, we don't know whether you would have seen that some independent analysis of how states collected and used taxes pegged Montana at 48th. Judy and her budget director, Chuck Swyszgood, were crying foul. The Republicans were meeting in Missoula the weekend you headed back to Seattle. Judy is still stringing them along even as her lieutenant — Karl Ochs — has joined others in finally saying that he will run. It's a fine kettle of fish, as my mother used to say.

How good it will be to visit with you with a little more leisure! Most of our project teachers are pretty conservative. The odds are good you knew even more about that. Judy Blunt was still ANGRY! You will have bundles of reviews in soon. You'll have Victoria's birthday experiences to share. Amanda will have started student teaching. (She's already told us that she knows she has to change her wardrobe — that 3rd grade boys don't pay a lot of attention to cleavage!) Meanwhile, we'll steer clear of (every
the bear that is turning over logs each night up here.
More thanks for folding us (Dave and me) (the Project)
into your vacation. Take care! See you soon!
And for whatever duly day it is, Carol,
(and I've had some good opportunities to ask — and
failed to do so.)

Happy Birthday!

Love

Dave & Manella
July 1, 2003

Ivan and Carol Doig  
17277 15th Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan and Carol:

Thank you, so very much, for adding the Heritage Project gig into your Montana and Alberta vacation. We—in this case the whole group, not just Marcella and Dave—loved you and learned from you. I know a little of how hard it can be to switch from play to performance and from the great outdoors to yet another dreadful motel meeting. You both made that transition last week seem effortless and easy on us.

And you did us good. Our teacher evaluations spoke about the joy of listening to a superb wordsmith. But several of them also “heard” your lessons about there being no substitute for hard work: “Superb. A superior word craftsman and artist who reminded all of us that lasting artistry is the result of diligent effort.” and “I liked the fact that Ivan was truthful about the reality that these projects take time. He had to re-write his introduction 75 times. We forget the amount of energy and time that goes into great work.”

So you did us proud and carried some great freight for, as another evaluation noted, what happens when an author marries great history and great writing. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Marcella Sherfy  
Education Director
June 4, 2003

Juan & Carol

Before too much more of June disappears, I wanted to send you:

1. A copy of our virtually final schedule. It may give you a better picture of the Institute’s focus than our earlier draft did.
2. A map of Missoula that shows the Holiday Inn Express on Broadway.

I also wanted to let you know that we have offered teachers the opportunity to tape or videotape Institute sessions and create educational materials from that. Teachers are still responding to us. I will be bringing taping or video release forms with me for those instances. **If you would prefer not to be recorded, I’d value a call or email prior to the Institute.**

Eighteen teachers are currently registered for the Institute.

I’ll be glad to field any questions that you might have. We continue to appreciate—very much—your help with our 2003 Montana Heritage Project Summer Institute.

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M-Th 9:15-10:00; 2:45-4:00
F 9:00-9:45; 1:45-2:30

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Rotates call in afternoon

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12:50-1:38, study hall 9:25-10:13

HARLOWTON
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2:30-3:20

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no prep

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A Day 1:37-3:15, B Day 8:15-9:48

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1:45-2:35, study hall 11:15-12:45

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10:15-11:05

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11:15-12:00

* denotes primary contact person.
Sunday, June 22, 2003

7:30 - 8:30 p.m. **Michael Umphrey: Orientation to the Expeditionary Model, the ALERT Process, and Essential Questions.** Discussion of Institute objectives, expectations, and logistics. Discussion of the Institute’s own essential questions. Solos (journal writing) and circles (group discussion).

1. How can we deepen students’ understanding of the places they live, drawing on the resources of the academic disciplines we teach?
2. What are some of the important essential questions for rural youth today, given the situation in Montana and the state and national standards movement in schools?
3. What processes and skills for forming questions, organizing and conducting research, and creating final written products can we adapt from professional nonfiction writers to our secondary classrooms?

Monday, June 23, 2003

7:00 - 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

8:30 - 11:30 a.m. **Drs. Bob Swartout, Mary Murphy, Harry Fritz and Moderator Martha Kohl: “Finding the Essential Questions of Narrative History.”**

(Break scheduled within this session. Speaker introductions: Marcella Sherfy.)

These Montana university and college history professors just published *Montana Legacy: Essays on History, People, and Place*, a Montana Historical Society Press compilation of historical narratives about critical topics in the state’s past. They will talk with us about what essential questions in Montana history led them to choose and write particular essays. Their collaboration in writing, editing, selecting works for, and publishing *Montana Legacy* brings this quartet of well-known Montana historians to our Institute.

**Martha Kohl** served as editor of the Montana Historical Society Press from 1995 through 2003. Among other projects in that capacity, she launched the Society’s community guide series, published *Journeys to the Land of Gold*, and most recently published Mary Murphy’s photo and essay investigation into Montana in the 1930s, titled *Hope in Hard Times*.

**Mary Murphy** is currently an associate professor of history at Montana State University and has also worked as a public historian in historic preservation. Her previous books include *Gender, Work, and Leisure in Butte, 1914-41* and *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*.

**Bob Swartout** has taught history at Carroll College since 1978 and served as Senior Fulbright Professr in the Department of North
American Studies, Hankuk University of Forest Studies in Seoul, Korea. Bob is the author of numerous articles and books that largely focus on Asian/American themes and oversees Montana's most intensive class for local history research offered to college students.

Harry Fritz is the Chair of the University of Montana’s History Department and has authored 30-some publications including Montana: Land of Contrast. He served three years each in Montana’s House and Senate and is one of the Committee for the Humanities most popular lecturers on topics ranging from Lewis and Clark to Montana in the 21st century.

Catered Lunch

UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN SESSION ONE (READING ASSIGNMENT: CHAPTER 1-2, PP. 1-37)

1:00 - 1:30 p.m. SOLO: JOURNAL WRITING ON YOUR OWN

“History is not the past. History is the set of questions we in the present have about the past.” Ken Burns.

Journal Writing Prompt: “What are your concerns about the present in your hometown that you might understand better by exploring people or events in your town’s past?”

1:30 - 2:15 p.m. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION OF JOURNAL ENTRIES.

How are your questions about the past similar to or different from those of the professional historians we listened to? What suggestions of theirs lead to ideas for research you or your students might do? What questions would you add to their list?

2:15 - 3:15 p.m. MICHAEL UMPHREY: APPLYING THE 4 FILTERS TO YOUR ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS, AND GETTING FROM PRESENT CONCERN TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAST. (UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN PP. 10-11)

3:15 - 3:45 p.m. Break

3:45 - 5:00 p.m. REVIEW OF ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FROM 2003-2004 HERITAGE PROJECT PROPOSALS

End UBD Session One

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Site Reports/Projections. Seven-minute summaries from each site including essential questions that will be pursued, and any dilemmas anticipated. All the proposals from each site will be handed out.

Tuesday, June 24, 2003

7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. JUDY BLUNT: “QUESTIONING ONE’S PLACE: WRITING FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.”
(Speaker introduction: Renee Rasmussen)

Judy Blunt is currently an adjunct assistant professor and assistant to the Chair of the Department of English at the University of Montana. In addition to her widely-acclaimed Breaking Clean, a book based on her own relationships with Eastern Montana and its
way of life. Judy has published *Not Quite Stone*, a poetry volume that won the 1992 Merriam-Frontier Award. Her essays and poetry have been published in sources ranging from *The Redneck Review of Literature* to *Oprah Magazine*. Most recently, Judy has directed a faculty/student research project documenting the narratives of eastern Montana homesteaders.

**Break**

9:45 - 10:30 a.m. **DONNA LUCEY: “CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE: EVELYN CAMERON’S IMAGES AND WORDS.”**
(Speaker introduction: Phil Leonardi)


11:00 - 12:00 a.m. **DONNA LUCEY: “FROM QUESTIONS TO STORIES: THE RESEARCH QUEST.”**

Our sense of various places is strongly influenced by the artists who lived and worked there. These two presenters offer students contrasting examinations of rural Eastern Montana life based on Judy’s case, on personal experience, and in Donna’s case, on a detailed examination of homestead-era photographer, Evelyn Cameron’s photographs, diaries, and letters.

**Catered Lunch**

**UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN SESSION TWO (READING ASSIGNMENT: CHAPTER 4, PP. 45-62)**

1:00 - 1:30 p.m. **SOLO: JOURNAL WRITING PROMPT:**
Judy Blunt and Evelyn Cameron focus more on personal relationships to place than upon large historical questions. What are your personal reasons for living where you live? What particular satisfactions or dissatisfactions with the place you live loom large in your own biography? What implications for your teaching do these satisfactions and/or dissatisfactions have for your teaching? How is personal experience reflected in the six facets of understanding (The ability to explain, interpret, apply, provide perspective, empathize, and use self-knowledge)?

1:30 - 2:15 p.m. **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION OF JOURNAL WRITINGS**
How do your personal experiences in your place influence the essential question you are forming for your Heritage Project unit? What personal experiences might you seek out, that would more deeply inform your understanding? What personal experiences can you provide for your students, to deepen their understanding?

2:15 - 3:15 p.m. **LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: WHAT ROLE DOES THE PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS PLAY IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRICULUM?**
What are the best ways we can use speakers, site visits, and other experiences to deepen students’ understanding? What are the best ways to assess whether the understandings we seek to develop are in fact being developed?

**End UBD Session Two**

**Break**

3:45 - 4:45 p.m. **DR. HENRY WIENCEK: “NEW QUESTIONS FOR OLD DOCUMENTS: RESEARCH-BASED WRITING.”**
(Speaker introduction: Jeff Gruber)
Dr. Wienczek's presentation will be based primarily on what he experienced when he asked new and essential questions of previously-examined primary source materials about George Washington and slavery.

**Henry Wienczek** is currently a Senior Research Fellow for the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Of his many books and articles, Henry may be best known for *The Hairstons: An American Family in Black and White* which won the 1999 National Book Critics' Circle Award in biography. Henry's presentation for us will be drawn from his forthcoming book *An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America*.

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**Wednesday, June 25, 2003**

**7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Breakfast**

**8:30 - 11:30 a.m. **Dr. Laurie Mercier: “Writing from Oral Histories: Questions Posed; Questions Answered.”

(Break scheduled within session. Speaker introduction: Christa Umphrey.)

Dr. Mercier has not only recorded Montana's best collection of oral histories, she has also used that material as the basis for extensive examination of communities' histories.

**Laurie Mercier** is currently associate professor of history at Washington State University in Vancouver. She was Montana's first professional oral historian and her interviews form the core of the Montana Historical Society's oral history research collection. Based on oral history and her interests in labor history, immigration, and migration, Laurie published *Anaconda: Labor, Community, and Culture in Montana's Smelter City* in 2001. She's authored a wide variety of articles, as well, addressing topics ranging from Mexican Americans in the Yellowstone River Valley to steelworkers in Cold War Montana.

**OUT TO LUNCH** in Caras Park

**1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Laurie Mercier: “Oral History Refreshers and Reminders.”**

**Understanding by Design Session Three (reading assignment: Chapter 5-6, pp. 63-97).**

**3:30 _ 4:00 p.m. Solo: Journal Writing Prompt:**

How can we assess what students learn from oral interviews? Consider an oral interview assignment you have given your students: What understandings did you want them to reach? How could you assess their level of understanding (Wiggins discusses six facets of understanding: explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self-knowledge.)?

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End UBD Session Three

**7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Dr. Sam Ham: “Teaching as Meaning Making: Translating Topics into Themes.”**

(Speaker introduction: Nancy Widdicombe)

Dr. Ham will share his experience in developing theme-driven interpretive text (rather than fact-laden text) for museums and parks and apply that experience to teachers' search for essential questions.

**Sam Ham** is a professor in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho. He consults with park systems and museums around the globe on environmental education and visitor interpretation. His book *Environment Interpretation – A Practical Guide*
Thursday, June 26, 2003

7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 - 10:00 a.m. **ERIC NEWHOUSE: “ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS OF CREATIVE JOURNALISM.”**
(Speaker introduction: Darlene Beck)

Mr. Newhouse’s Pulitzer-Prize winning exploration of alcoholism in Montana required him to zero in on the essential issues of the topic.

**Eric Newhouse** has served the *Great Falls Tribune* as news editor, editorial page editor, and project editor since 1988. Before joining the *Tribune*, Newhouse had an 18-year career with The Associated Press in five different cities. From St. Louis, he led the coverage of dioxin contamination at Times Beach, Missouri. Eric won a Pulitzer for his 12-part series on effects of alcoholism on Great Falls and Montana. That series has now been published as a book by the Hazelden Foundation.

Break

**UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN SESSION FOUR**

10:30 - 11:00 a.m. **SOLO: JOURNAL WRITING PROMPT:**

What is the most important “big idea” implicit (or explicit) in Eric Newhouse’s and/or Sam Hamm’s presentation? What processes or activities would you use to “uncover” that idea for your students? How would you assess their understandings?

11:00 - 12:00 a.m. **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:**

1. How can we assess what students learn from conducting an oral interview? List ideas for each of the six facets of understanding.
2. What is the most important big idea from the past two sessions?
3. Background for Socratic Seminars

End UBD Session Four

LUNCH on your own

1:30 - 3:00 p.m. **IVAN DOIG: “CRAFT OF WRITING THIS HOUSE OF SKY.”**
(Speaker introduction: Nancy Brastrup)

**Ivan Doig** has published nine books, all but one of which is set predominantly in his native Montana landscapes and themes. His tenth book which spans the distances between Montana and New York’s Harlem in the 1920s, will be released this fall. A Ph.D. historian, Ivan plumbed his own memory and many local research sources in writing *This House of Sky*, his first and still best-known book. *Sky* was nominated for the National Book Award and chosen “the best book about Montana” by a *Montana The Magazine of Western History* readers’ poll. Carol Diog, Ivan’s wife, photographs the settings that Ivan writes about and has been a journalist and a college English and journalism professor.

**UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN SESSION FIVE** *(reading assignment: Chapter 7, pp. 98-114)*
3:30 - 5:00 p.m. Socratic Seminar: From Novice to Expert Thinking
(Facilitated by Mary Sullivan and Nancy Widdicombe)
How do we use authentic research projects to help students grasp the essential ideas of the academic disciplines we teach (Texts: Understanding by Design, any of the speakers at the institute, any comments made in whole group sessions)?

7:00 p.m. Picnic at Council Grove State Park

Friday, June 27, 2003

7:00 - 8:00 a.m. Breakfast

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. Mike Umphrey: Implications for Unit Design
(reading assignment: Chapter 8: p. 115 - 133) and Re-Designing Your Heritage Project Proposal

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Opening the Doors to the Heritage Project: Innovation Projects, Demonstration Projects, and Senior Faculty
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Giving Back to the Community: Heritage Events Colloquium

LUNCH on your own

1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Standing Committee Planning Time

Break

4:00 - 5:30 p.m. "The Project for Its Next Year."
We will discuss how to apply essential questions to student work, how to involve students and teachers in the magazine, how to use summer internships options, and how we might continue to develop a Project guidebook.

Evening Social

Saturday Morning, June 28, 2003

7:00 - 9:00 a.m. Breakfast and Checkout

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. Michael Umphrey: Guidelines for Giving PowerPoint Presentations

9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Reflecting on the Institute and the Year to Come

Brunch and Break
11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **Summary of Information Needed for Assignments and for the Next Year.**
December 9, 2003

Dear Carol & Ivan,

I'm playing hooky from work just a bit to write quietly in the early afternoon sun. Then we head to Dulcinea to watch Elmo at her sixth grade play. She just had her first "conference" with a teacher angry that she was not playing his son more. We think she was not playing his son more. She's said that she thought the discussion went well. She said that the moment she left the room—easily to her honor—she burst into tears. She is funny and eloquent in telling us that this grown-up business of getting up, going to work, grading papers until you fall asleep, ad then getting up to do it all over again—is a good deal less glamorous than she imagined. Emily reports being "very big" at five months. So far she's steroid.

May you have a Happy Holiday and a Joyous New Year.

Dear of joining the working world! Dave is giving his Christmas talks but is hampered by the Society's absolute failure to do any Christmas marketing. We hope that *Noturne* 's sales are
Looking at that book tours have been bearable.
Now we hope that your both at home
enjoying good winter routines - or else off
on one of your exotic adventures

all our love - and thanks!

Dave & Maurolo
Christmas 2003

Godiva Country, Montana

She's a big country. Her undulations roll and flow in the sun. Those flanks quiver when the wind caresses the grass. Who turns away when so generous a body offers to play hide-and-seek all summer? One shoulder leans bare all the way up the mountain; limbs range and plunge wildly into the river. We risk our eyes every day; they celebrate; they dance and flirt over this offered treasure. "Be alive," the land says. "Listen--this is your time, your world, your pleasure."

William Stafford, June 16, 1993

You Reading This, Be Ready

Starting here, what do you want to remember? How sunlight creeps along a shining floor? What scent of old wood hovers, what softened sound from outside fills the air?

Will you ever bring a better gift for the world than the breathing respect that you carry wherever you go right now? Are you waiting for time to show you some better thoughts?

When you turn around, starting here, lift this new glimpse that you found; carry into evening all that you want from this day. This interval you spent reading or hearing this, keep it for life--

What can anyone give you greater than now, starting here, right in this room, when you turn around?

William Stafford, August 26, 1993

Dear Good Friends:

William Stafford is our hero for lots of reasons. He was born in Hutchinson, Kansas, in 1914. In World War II, he lived his faith as a witness for peace, serving in Civilian Public Service camps--like the Montana ones that Dave continues to research and speak about. He wrote a poem every morning, including all the years that he taught at Lewis and Clark College in Oregon. He died two days after he wrote You Reading This, Be Ready. He wrote a poem that day, too. We aim for his discipline, his passion, and his wide, loving alertness--his "breathing respect."

2003 sped by. In our historical memories, this is likely to be:

* Yet another year of fire and smoke. Blazing heat arrived the second week in July. Lightning triggered the Wedge Canyon fire on July 18-southwest of Dave's family's property in the North Fork of the Flathead. When the fire crews finally pulled out in October, an edge of the fire was just two miles away from the cabins. Rather than spending much time there, we tried to breathe and stay cool in our Helena basement. Montana's fires, however, were once again Amanda's bread and butter—as she worked through the summer for the U.S. Forest Service.

* A year of varying emotions about our work. Marcella found a full year of Montana Heritage Project work exhilarating. She got to travel to Project schools and to Washington, D.C. She's learning pedagogy and PowerPoint and PhotoShop and how to coordinate work
by email. Dave got to write "historical minutes" for legislators who robbed the Society of $700,000 in 12 months and for an institution that now focuses more on marketing than public service to Montana's historians. Dave looks to his speeches, his books, and his articles for reward and inspiration.

*A placid year at home.* We experienced the exasperations that go with home repairs and replacements; the return of our beloved Helena Brewers baseball team; Emily and Sergio's excitement in telling us of an impending child—their first baby, our second grandchild (Heather's Rhain being the first); heat-starved raspberries and fursome potatoes; the start of Amanda's student-teaching semester—her last; further sad losses in the bunny-garage (we're down to one); Dave's receipt of the Montana Historical Society Trustee's Educator's Award; Marcella's sorting (with her sister, Sonja) of the Sherfy family's last McPherson, Kansas, belongings.

**Beyond the events and heat and smoke and in the spirit of William Stafford, in our hearts, we will remember:**

* The reassurances of Em and Sergio's furniture moving and nightly fire reports from Polebridge, all part of their two-week summer vacation that became a much longer fire-watch—at the expense of Sergio's dissertation-writing time.

* That magical moment when 1,000 feet of garden hose and some discarded vacuum cleaner tubing carried water from a spring to an otherwise parched meadow.

* Amanda, poised and confident, surrounded by kinetic sixth grade boys huddling over her clipboard as she drew up basketball plays (a demanding student teaching sidelight).

* An untidy flock of magpies, scrambling from treetop to treetop to catch the VERY last rays of long summer sunlight.

* Ivan Doig's dedication of *Prairie Nocturne* to us, a beloved and puzzling talisman since Carol and Ivan are our teachers whose disciplines, imageries, and friendship shape our lives.

* The North Fork sunset that washed the Rockies with the most brilliant reds and oranges we can remember.

* The curious little fox who lingered around the cabins for a weekend—with his perfect Fuller-Brush tail and immaculate black sox.

* Simms High School juniors—poised, articulate, thoughtful—explaining to a crowd of 200 how the Sun River Valley has changed and has stayed the same since 1910.

* The great rush of joy and reassurance that we feel in seeing and talking with you—our good friends from all the past and current chapters in our lives—at the end of a day, over a meal, by phone, in the midst of book signings, through letters and emails. When we turn around, here and now, you are what we want to remember most into the evening.
Dear Marcella and Dave--

*Christmas in Montana* is gracing our coffee table, and we hope the ‘03 chapter wrote itself into merry history beneath your own roof. I do have to point out, Dave, you inexplicably had no scene of my family’s customary Christmases in White Sulphur, where Grandma, Dad, and I (Grandma the polar magnet of all this; Dad and I pretty much oscillating as we generally did about the Ringo pack of relatives) would fetch up at one of my uncle’s places, to be joined there by the other uncle and family, and we’d all maul through an evening remarkably unmoored from any kind of tradition or even organization. Carol was there for a few Montana Christmases, and from her family background where presents were opened on the basis of descending age, giving her as the youngest the sweet tingle of mounting anticipation, she was astounded that presents were handed around willy-nilly any old time and people tore into them randomly. And, before her time, there was the predictable annual chronicle of two of my much younger cousins, and possibly all four, pushing their luck (Cousin Dan: “Dave! That’s mine! *Dave, don’t!* You’re a grabbyguts!” Cousin Dave: “Hee hee, just let me look at it, crybaby.” Uncle Wally: “Quit, you two. You’re not being cute.” Cousin Dave with insufferable smirk: “Yes we are.”) until they got spanked and sent howling to a bedroom. So, the book is a wonderful calming influence on holiday memory hereabouts—it’s a beautiful job of production and, need I say, peerless research. Congratulations one more time.

We finished our own bookstore trail a couple of weeks ago, a total of 37 readings and/or signings. Along the way I encountered a cousin I hadn’t seen since we were ten; a guy I worked a college board job with for a few months forty-some years ago who was downcast, nay, downright miffed, when I didn’t recognize him on sight; the former Chief Justice of the New York state court system who has written me fan letters about my books and now is newly retired to Portland, only half-jokingly saying “A lot of those guys I sentenced back there are about up for parole”; so many ex-Montanans with starve-out stories of homesteading grandparents or even parents it makes your heart ache; and, blessedly, many hundreds of people who just like to read. As best I can tell, the book has been well-received, and booksellers in particular have loved the cover and even said some good words about what’s under it. Having reached that point, I guess it’s time to start the next one.

But first, Bill Stafford! The star of your marvelous Christmas letter, a galaxy unto himself in our fond experiences of him.

We met in one of those odd cross-wired circumstances that make a person think, gee, if I had twitched just infinitesimally in the other direction, that good stuff never would have happened. I was being asked year after year by one of Carol’s community-college colleagues who moonlighted as a fiction teacher at the U. of Washington to participate in their writers’ conference for what she blandly admitted was a pitiful fee and I kept indignantly rejecting. Finally came the year when I said hey, if you’ll leave me alone from now on, I’ll come down this once
and give a reading and answer questions and you can keep your lowly damn fee--
then hung up the phone thinking now why in the hell did I do that?

So down I go one summer day to the UW campus, lovely as the dells of
Camelot, to do this gig in what I know is the grimmest and dimmest old hall on
campus, and I walk in and discover (a) William Stafford is to do the session right
after me--i.e., I'm not needed there at all, he's one of the prime draws for writing
conference students in the whole SOBing universe, and (b) we're so far into left
field in the university's universe that we even have to set up the chairs ourselves to
hold class.

I sigh and have at it, and in walks a little guy who looks like a belated
custodian and asks if he can do anything to help, and I snap, "You could set up the
chairs." He doesn't say anything, pitches right in, and it takes me a while to
realize this is Stafford. I'm briefly flattered that he is showing up for my session,
but it turns out Bill has an angle: why don't we combine our sessions, says he,
give the students a chance to have a poet and prose writer exchange ideas. Rookie
that I am, I shrug and say it's fine by me, maybe I'll learn something too. When
the conference director pops back into the room and is presented with this little fait
accompli she goes grim. Took me a while to figure it out, but Bill had slyly eased
out of having to do his own session and just kind of kicked in things from the
sideline during my session.

So, from the start I figured here is a guy who knows the ropes, and Carol
and I started an immediate tradition of breakfast with Bill and Dorothy in Portland
when we would go down there for the Oregon Historical Society's Christmas
authors' gala. We always had a terrific time--the Staffords together were cute as
kittens, but with all the moral fiber you have properly discerned in Bill's approach
to life--and I picked up things from him I've used ever since. "Who better to
plagiarize from than yourself?" he would say innocently at his readings when one
of his poems backtracked over much-traveled territory. Another of his lines was
that all writers want from readers is that they take a look at our words and fall over
backward in their chairs kicking their heels in delight. I like to think that it was a
benefit to both of us that I wanted to talk about how I wrote poetry and he wanted
to talk about how I wrote prose. Out of that came one of the best questions I ever
asked: who did he look to as a supreme poet? Neruda. He's marvelous, Bill said.
And how many times have I marveled in Neruda's play of language since.

Bill had retired, nominally, by the time we met him but whenever we would
gather together he and Dorothy would be just back from a quarter or a semester at
Miami or some other sunny clime. At last came the breakfast together where we
asked where he'd been teaching lately. "Poland," says Bill. Poland? The one in
Europe? Yes, and Czechoslovakia and so on, and it devolved that he and Dorothy
had been on a five-month tour for the U.S. Information Agency, which runs
libraries in consulates and embassies overseas. You should do that sometime,
Ivan, says he. Yeah, sure, you bet. It wasn't six months later that I had a phone
call from the U.S. Information Agency asking if they could send me anywhere in
the world--countries of my choice--to do readings, and out of that came the great
journey Carol and I made through the full lengths of both New Zealand and
Australia. I told Bill I knew damn well he had brought it about, and he puckishly
insisted no, no, no, all this was done on merit.

In any case, merit he had miles of, and as an addendum to your lovely pair
of Stafford Christmas letter poems, here's our last chapter with Bill, a letter and
poem that arrived the day he died:

Dear Doigs--

Again our lives have been enhanced, made Montana-great, charmed and
charged: we have added heart earth to our holdings and we like it even more...
Zealously (jealously?), I have proled the sentences for gems aplenty. My ambition is to spur the language thusly, give it the Doig torque now and then. How come the words wake up when you all nudge them?

When we next meet I must relay a new stage for us writers: the ranger district at Winthrop has hired me to write seven pieces to go on signs for tourist sites along the Methow River. The idea is to combine information with some words that will induce right approaches to each scene. I’ll enclose one of my more irresponsible efforts (but the rangers have been hospitable and have accepted six of my efforts, even my wilder ones). Anyway—a new outlet for us writers: signs all over the West....

Adios,

Silver Star

Nobody cares if you stop here. You can look for hours, gaze out over the forest. And the sounds are yours too—take away how the wind either whispers or begins to get ambitious. If you let the silence of afternoon pool around you, that serenity may last a long time, and you can take it along. A slant sun, mornings or evenings, will deepen the canyons, and you can carry away that purple, how it gathers and fades for hours. This whole world is yours, you know. You can breathe it and think about it and dream it after this wherever you go. It’s all right. Nobody cares.

Here’s hoping that in ’04, you will have good times at the North Fork watching that purple. Keep in touch; nothing is on the horizon at the moment to bring us your direction, but we hope Marcella at least (we know Dave doesn’t want to fall off the edge of the world here where solid ground ends) can finagle a trip out here. Meanwhile we’re going to Tucson for a week in late January, and Carol is finally going to get me to see Zion and Bryce parks, in April. Otherwise we’re pacing along about as usual. All best to you both.
ESTONIAN HOUSE

Why Estonians came to Montana
How We Got Involved
Inside House Measurements

Why the Estonians left Russia
Who did it
Building Techniques

Travel in Liberty County
Our Future Plans
Site Map of House

Back to Chester Heritage Home

CHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
P.O. Box 550
School & Main
Chester, MT  59522

The Project in Chester

Heritage education has been a component of Chester's English classes for nine years.

**Sophomores** are introduced to the concept of using their community as a resource, classroom, and archives.

**Juniors** complete research projects during the year that fulfill requirements for college credit and serve needs in the community as well.

Classes have researched the history of education, buildings, families, as well as asked questions about the roles that the community plays in shaping the lives of its teens. They have completed exhibits for the local museum, placed buildings on the National Historic Register, and collected numerous oral interviews of local citizens.

Students research and write a weekly column for the newspaper called "This Week in Local History" as an introduction to the research process and the subject area.

**Seniors** often are recruited to do presentations locally and around the state about the research they've done.
Monday, October 30, 2006

Carol and Ivan:

Boy, it was good to hear your voices over the phone last night. You could probably tell that by my burst of nonstop talking! I think, Carol, that you got about one question out of your mouth before I was off and running!

I continued to picture you baking the Norwegian cod in your kitchen and keeping an eye on the lingering light across the bay.

Within moments of hanging up, the blizzard struck. It was about 14 this morning when I first looked at the thermometer and not much more than that when I shoveled. When it gets back up to 50 this weekend, I can waste no time in hanging storm windows and figuring out whether to put up the garage insulation or bring the bunny in to the basement.

When I looked more carefully at the bookplate in *Homefront*, I was struck all over again by Dave’s commitment to all elements of Montana history. He didn’t buy the book to work on the CPS project. He bought it when it came out.

There’s something very right in the world when 10,000 of us buy *This House of Sky* right now. How wonderful! Will any publisher package *Winter Brothers* and *Sea Runners*? I love both of those and, for me, they fit together—maybe most because they are your exploration of your new territory. I thought of them when I looked at *Montana the Magazine of Western History*’s cover story.

Take good care. Thank you!

[Signature]
When the war started, Evelyn “Chub” Tuss was fourteen years old, living with her family in Diehl, a town on the English Channel twenty-one miles from France. She recalled: “You could see France on a clear day. We were called Hellfire Corner. We were bombed, we were shelled, we were machine-gunned. We had warships coming and shooting shells on the beaches... Dad was in the ambulance [service] and mom was too... But when you were fourteen, everybody had to do a job... We were Civil Defense workers. We all had to wear the... tin hats. The fourteen-year-olds used the fire hydrants to [put out the] incendiary bombs. We used to climb the roof and put them out—that was our job.”

War experiences differed, of course, but there are commonalities among all the participants: scarcity of food, scarcity of clothes, scarcity of recreational opportunities. Scarcity is a relative concept, but all talked about how they and their families learned to “make do.” A comment from Ruth Batchen, who grew up on the outskirts of Liverpool, illustrates: “We were living pretty much as we were living before except for the air raids, the shortage of food. For instance, two ounces of butter a week per person and two ounces of meat per person to eat, so that was hard on my mother trying to, you know, eke out the meals for four of us. And it was difficult, but, you know, you think you can’t get by, but you can.”

Elvia Stockton, who grew up in a village outside of Paris, was seventeen when Hitler invaded France. Under German occupation, young girls returned to school and she recalled: “We went because we were allowed some biscuits—a kind of dog-biscuit-shaped thing with vitamins. We went for that... and of course, there was a little, how do you say, indoctrination. We were supposed to really obey the law and stuff—no food, no way to open your mouth. I mean you just knew that you were under very strong pressure. You had to be very, very careful [about offending the Germans].”

In general, the respondents did not elaborate on their memories of hardship. As Doreen Richard, who lived in West Bromage just outside of Birmingham, said of the air raids: It was “just unbelievable if you think back... that you lived through that. More unbelievable to think that you could accept it and cope. You’d go to work one morning and you would see your friends’ houses down. You’d see them digging bodies out. It was just unreal. It was like it was a nightmare... But I was a teenager and I got kind of brave. Well, most people did.”

Perhaps part of “getting brave” was accepting these horrific childhood experiences as normal. The respondents presented their experiences of wartime hardship as just one part of growing up, which, if not forgotten, was not viewed as a primary factor in who they were.
For the women interviewed, meeting one's husband, marriage, leaving one's family, and coming to the U.S. defined their lives. Their narratives are love stories, framed around gender and a set of expectations of love and marriage. The war years were a time of far-reaching changes in sexual behavior: there was an increase in venereal disease, illegitimate births, and an increase in rates of divorce as well as marriage. In England, there was also the breakdown of a relatively rigid class system since everyone worked in the war effort. Further, the arrival of U.S. and Canadian servicemen, sometimes called the "peaceful invasion," accelerated these changes.

Initially American soldiers were, for many, virtually mythological creatures, seen as symbols of hope for an end to the war. They were Santa Clauses who had so much when compared with French populations living under German occupation or with the British armed forces.

People made comparisons regarding their better uniforms, their food, and their apparent wealth and generosity toward the families of the girls they dated. (Servicemen learned quickly that the best way to a girl's family's heart was to bring food to dinner.) Marie Houtz, originally from London, remembered that one Christmas, "We were sitting in the dark. We couldn't get any coal. It was cold and all of a sudden there was a knock on the door and it was Earl and he had all these brightly wrapped gifts. We didn't have a Christmas tree or a gift in the house because everything was rationed and my family just fell in love with him. My mother dearly loved Earl."

In fact, A Short Guide to Great Britain, a pamphlet filled with practical advice given to servicemen prior to their arrival, warned that "if you are invited into a British home, and the host exhorts you to 'eat up, there's plenty on the table,' go easy. It may be the family's rations for a whole week, spread out to show their hospitality." Commanding officers began to encourage their men to take official "hospitality

rations when they went visiting, ... Fathers received cigarettes; mothers tinned fruit, ham, chocolate and candies." 10

Yanks laughed and were fun and for young women, greatly attractive, particularly in a setting where most of the young men had been called off to war. As Irene Owen, from Cheshire, explained: "I think some people would think, Why don't you marry someone from your own country? But I never went out with anyone from my own country. I was only nineteen and I was wanting to go out." 11

Besides the excitement expected from teenage girls at the arrival of a large number of handsome young men into their communities, the GIs were seen as symbols of hope, or as in Australia, defenders. Beatrice "Pete" Berrenger, from Rockhampton, Australia, recalled: "We welcomed them because Australia was left to fend [for itself]. Britain just kind of wiped us off. Until America came into the war ... the Japanese were getting mighty close. Americans were very welcome there." 12

Although all of the respondents noted how fun, attractive, polite, and considerate their future husbands were, not everyone had such positive views of GIs. Peggy Floerchinger remembered: "Oh, there was some animosity with certain people ... against the American soldier. ... They came over at a time when we were in dire straits. ... We had been going without for a long time, and the American servicemen were paid a lot more than the British servicemen. Consequently they were looked upon as show-offs. You know, they've got all this money and especially if a British girl went out with an American, they were stealing British girls." 13

Such ambivalence toward the Americans was common, and GIs were seen alternately as generous or spendthrifts, friendly or pushy, frank or boastful, slovenly or casual. As Elsie Persicke, originally from London, recalled: "Well, most Englishmen didn't appreciate the Americans being over there because
they took the women and then they had more money than our soldiers. . . . And they always had candy and fruit, which we couldn’t get.”

Less frequently mentioned by war brides was the general feeling that “nice girls” did not go out with U.S. Army men. The common saying in both Britain and Australia was that the “Yanks were over-sexed, over-paid, and over here.” Along these lines, Joyce DeLong recalled her mother’s response to her future husband: “I almost gave my mother a heart attack. She heard through her sisters . . . that ‘Joyce is dating a Yank.’ . . . They didn’t have a very good opinion because of some of the GIs. . . . They had a very bad reputation. I just went ahead and he seemed to be a very nice guy. Fell in love.”

In Norma Duff’s case, it was her father who objected to her dating an American. The town of Rockhampton, Australia, where Norma lived, had a population of about thirty thousand, and there were about sixty thousand servicemen (this was the Forty-first Division, which included members of the Montana National Guard). Norma’s husband, Roy Duff, explained: “He [her father] worked for the U.S. Army, . . . and he worked with the GIs, and all they talked about in the daytime was the girls they had out the night before and that kind of stuff. So he prohibited his daughters from having to do anything with the Yankees.”

Norma’s mother, on the other hand, was supportive. Norma remembered, “I used to go out with him, and then when I’d come home at night, so my dad wouldn’t know who I was with, my mom would stand at the window and move the window up and down to tell me it was time to come inside.” Perhaps her mother recognized that for Norma, as for all of the war brides, the desire to date—to have some semblance of a normal life—trumped any familial or community objection.

For Joyce and the other war brides, falling in love was the easy part. Parental desires, age of consent, and army regulations complicated the decision to marry for all of the respondents. Marie Houtz recalled that although Earl Houtz was twenty-three, he nevertheless had to get permission from his father, who initially opposed their marriage.

In addition to parental permission to marry, army regulations required an appearance before a committee. Marie recalled: “We had to have an interview I think with about six officers, very high-ranking officers, and a chaplain, and they called Earl in and questioned him. Then they called me in and questioned me. Then they called us both in and this is kind of a funny part here—they asked my husband, ‘Do you have to marry this girl?’ And he said, ‘No, sir!’ [laughs]. Then the chaplain kept smiling at me. Everyone else was very sober faced and they . . . denied our request to be married.” Only after a second letter from Earl’s father did they receive permission.

Joyce DeLong recalled a similar experience:

You had to get permission from your commanding officer. Colonel Bell said, “I don’t believe in foreign marriages.” He said, “If you want to marry her, you go back to the States and get your discharge and come back and marry her.” Russell [her husband] “didn’t like that answer at all. . . . He found out that some of the GIs were getting married to English girls. . . . He went to Colonel Bell and said, “How
come you are giving permission to some of these GIs to get married?" "Well, they are expecting a baby, so they have to get married... [T]hey need a marriage license on the birth certificate." Russell said, "Colonel Bell, I think that... is discriminating to the girls that don’t have to get married." So, [Bell] thought about it. He said, "Soldier, you’re right. I will sign the papers." Then, the chaplain came down to see me, to see what kind of girl I was, the house I lived in and everything. He talked to my mother. Finally it did go through that we could get married.20

Delong’s colonel was not the only one opposed to foreign marriages. Elizabeth Goff, a refugee from Poland and working for the U.S. Army in Germany when she met her husband, recalled: "He wrote home and told his mom that he met me. And her comeback was ‘Of all the beautiful American girls, why in God’s name would you want to bring a foreigner home?’ And I never forgot that. When I reminded her, she said, ‘Oh my, honey, why do you have such a good memory?’ Many thought they [the girls] just wanted to get to America."21

In retrospect, the respondents expressed few regrets about marrying. The regrets they did express dealt with leaving their families and enduring some very difficult times. All of the women viewed marriage as an inevitable and hoped-for step. For the most part, however, all of the respondents emphasized that they did not know what they were getting into. All explained that they were young, in love, and could not be assured of a future. As Marie Houtz noted: "You know, it was strange. We didn’t think we would live very long because, when we were married, there were still the V-2 rockets coming over and we just didn’t think we’d survive. So we didn’t think of the future... We just thought we were lucky to be alive that day and maybe by the end of the day we wouldn’t be."22

Being young and in love also meant that most of the respondents did not think about the difficulties of separating from their families until it was too late. However, when recalling their feelings about leaving their families and country, for the most part, despair was paired with love. The recollection of Chub Tuss illustrates a common feeling: "I knew he lived in Montana. He said, ‘Now, love, there are going to be lots of open spaces, but don’t worry about it. It’s going to be okay... He didn’t have a clue... [I] didn’t really know. I just was in love, I guess. I just thought it would be all right no matter where we were."23

Elvia Stockton recalled how upset her family was. Leaving the family was "very very difficult... It was terrible, terrible, but I was really too full of Bill... We never talked about money or anything. Absolutely none. I guess I was awfully naive. I just didn’t expect anything. But then too we loved each other."24

Elfriede Johnsen was living in Karlsruhe, Germany, under the U.S. occupation when she met her husband. Her memory of leaving was slightly different: "I didn’t feel bad [about leaving my parents]... But I was young and in love and adventurous, so you leave and a new life starts. Only for them [her parents] it was probably very sad, you know. And every time I went back to visit it was very sad on both parts to leave."25

For the most part, the respondents were well received by their husband’s families and the particular community. Further, for the most part, they felt they had been "told the truth" about Montana. Nevertheless, few imagined the reality of Montana’s spaces, mountains, weather, and small population. Chub Tuss recalled the trip west to join her husband in Lewistown in central Montana. She was on a train alone for four days and three nights before she arrived at the station in Harlowton where her husband met her.

[It] was just me... I was so scared [whisper], Just me, that’s all. I tried to make friends with people and everybody was nice... They were really kind and I got off at Harlowton, and I say, “Oh, my Lord!”... All I saw was nothing, nothing, nothing! [In the 1940s, Harlowton had a population of 1,897.] I mean land, land, land... You know in England it’s so crowded—shoulder to shoulder
Roy Duff and other members of the Montana National Guard were among the sixty thousand U.S. troops stationed in Australia and New Guinea during the Second World War. Duff, pictured right (back row, far right), and his fellow soldiers courted young women whose desire for normalcy in the midst of war often trumped any parental concerns.

Norma Duff’s father disapproved of her dating Roy; however, her mother helped Norma escape his watchful eye. Roy and Norma are pictured here on their wedding day, November 8, 1944, in Rockhampton, Australia.
The vast open space came as a surprise to many war brides arriving in Montana. Chub Tuss recalled, "All I saw was nothing, nothing, nothing!" when she stepped off the train in Harlowton, a community of about 1,900 people in the 1940s. Compared to the crowds in England, Montana looked empty and isolated, similar to the feel of this photograph of the state's sparsely populated, albeit grand, landscape.

on the pavement... It was really a shock. It was February and bare... I remember they were all waiting for me. I'd only been in a car once, we rode bikes... and buses. So going in the car was quite something and then seeing all that land.28

Doreen Richard's husband told her about Montana and her husband's family's farm, but she remembered wondering:

What is it going to be like? But everyone said to me, "Oh, they have cars and it doesn't take long to get from one place to another." Hello! I arrived here... in Great Falls about December the sixteenth and I thought that Great Falls was such a small town. This was so small, and everything. But anyhow we went to the farm and I thought it all looked alike... It was barren. Snow. And we'd go along and we would turn the corner, it was the same. No change. Absolutely none... It went on and on for such a long time. I said to my husband, "Don't we ever come to a town?" "Oh yes, we will be coming into Loma very soon." So I waited and I said to him, "When will we be coming into Loma?" "Oh, we did!" [laughs]. That was it. I hadn't even noticed it. So, that was my first experience.27

Peggy Floerchinger and her husband, Tom, whose family farmed outside of Conrad, came on the same ship to the United States and then took a bus to Montana. She remembered: "I didn't even have an awful lot until we got to Montana, which is so wide open... I got to see the majesty of the state. It was overpowering. It was a little daunting because I'm a person that needs to have trees and things around me. When I get out in the open spaces, I'm not at all happy. I'm not very good out in a wheat field with nothing around me, and I marry a farmer who is.28

There were problems of housing, family relationships, language, prejudice, loneliness, homesickness, and of learning the ins and outs of a new culture, from the currency to appropriate behavior. Most of the new marriages started in the groom's family home, due in part to the severe housing shortage and to the financial situation of the new couples. Some, however, were able to find their own place. Elfriede Johnsen remembered her first apartment in Billings: "The housing situation was terrible, so we ended up in a one-room apartment. We had to go through the furnace room that had a coal furnace to get to this one room, and there was a hot plate in the closet that we cooked on. There was a table and a bed. We had to share the bathroom upstairs. It was terrible, but believe me, I didn't mind it because I was in love.29

Many of the women had corresponded with their future in-laws and exchanged pictures and presents. However, even when families welcomed the new brides, problems arose. Peggy Floerchinger recalled: "I wasn't thrown into a den of lions, so to speak, so that was good, because I was terribly homesick... Tom's family was wonderful. They enveloped me, but there were so many changes that I had to make. I was very conscious of the way I spoke... or the way I, for instance, laid the table.30

The first time Chub Tuss met her husband's family was a shock:

I was an only child and we had a nice house—not fancy but a nice house and I came to one with eleven in it and it wasn't clean... They were Yugoslavian...[T]hey could speak English, but Grandpa couldn't very much. It was such a small place and... you had to give him [her father-in-law] money because that was what was expected. We lived there six months and then I went and got a place... They were kind to me, but it was just a shock to come into a house like that, with all those people, after being an only child and spoiled rotten.31

Most of the war brides' husbands met their new wives on their arrival; however, in several instances, the women arrived before the men. Both Elizabeth Goff and Marie Houtz arrived in the United States while their husbands were still in Europe. In both cases, the family met them, and they had a place to stay. And even in cases where husbands met their wives, in some instances, circumstances forced them to spend a great deal of time away from home. Joyce Vashro's husband was a railroad employee, and Joyce found herself left alone with her in-laws. She recalled:

Dick had to leave the second day after I got there [Minneapolis] because he had a job back in Montana. So he had to leave, and I stayed there for three months with the in-laws. I tried to make the best of it, but I did feel terribly lonesome for my folks and for the things I was used to... He finally found a place for us to live in Butte... I got to Butte, I thought, 'Oh, my Lord, what have I done?' So, I thought, 'Well, Dick will be here. Everything will be fine now and we'll have a good life.' Well, he found a room up on the third floor of this hotel and there was just two rooms and he went out and got some

Sometimes war brides arrived in Montana ahead of their husbands, leaving them to meet their new in-laws, settle into new living arrangements, and begin the often difficult adjustments alone. Dick Vashro met his bride upon her arrival, but for two years Joyce Vashro and her young daughter Mary Ann spent six days each week alone, rooming in a Butte hotel, while Dick worked out of town for a railroad. The Vashro family posed for this portrait in 1945.
sheets and blankets and some silverware and food, and he got it in all in there and then he said, “Well, I’ve got to run.” And I said, “Where are you running to?” And he said, “I’ve got to catch the train. I’ll see you next Saturday night.” This was on a Monday and in those days they worked six days a week, and I hadn’t realized that he’d be gone all week.32

Joyce lived in the hotel with her baby for two years.

For many of the women, a generally positive welcome eased the transition to life in America. Often, the arrival of a war bride was, as in the case of Ruth Batchen’s arrival in Great Falls, front-page news.33 For some of the other women, the entire family would be at the railroad station to meet them. Elfriede Johnsen recalled: “Everyone welcomed me in Broadus, . . . a very small town of maybe three hundred population. Everybody was very nice, very interested. Nobody made any remarks because I came from Germany. They were just awed by seeing probably the first war bride that they’d ever had in that town.”34

Jung Van Dam, from Korea, who moved to her husband’s hometown of Conrad after the Korean War, received a different reception:

Well, this is a small community here, so when you go to church, they all look at you, you know, like head to toe. Examine you, you know, to see if she’s fit enough to belong in our church and things like that. . . . My husband belongs to this church. He went to church ever since he was young . . . so when I came, I thought everybody going to accept me and give me a nice wedding shower and gifts and all that. Nothing like that! . . . Just his sister and his mom and dad was nice to me. . . . I took a lot of criticism, and . . . people would call me, you know, nigger, Jap, Chinaman. And squaw. . . . They are not like that now. Not now, no. This is forty-three years ago. . . . It was real hard, because, you know, people come to my house and . . . we’d be eating, . . . having supper and they go around the table to see what kind of food you are serving. Well, you know, oh, yeah, she put a lot of fruit, vegetable, a lot of vegetable and rice and things like that, and fish. Everybody used to like potato and gravy and all that, but now everybody likes Oriental food. And people like to come to my house and eat my Oriental dishes now, and I have a good many friends now. It took many, many years for people to accept me. I used to cry a lot. A lot. The first five years is horrible.35

Women interviewed remembered their surprise about food as well as differences in everyday behaviors, dress, manners, and language. Odette Saylor had worked as a cook in France and also held strong feelings about American eating habits: “I was a cook. I loved to cook and I couldn’t find everything. In those days, the only cheese you could find . . . it was all that yellow . . . processed cheese, yuck. . . . I didn’t like corn, I didn’t like peanut butter, I didn’t like potato salad. The first time I had potato salad . . . ah, I could have thrown up. . . . Sweet potato salad! Sweet tomato sauce!”36

In contrast, the dominant response to the availability of food was amazement. Doreen Richard recalled:

We went and had a meal and I shall never forget that, because we had been on rations. And I hadn’t had pork in so many years, and I had pork chops. . . . When it came, I had two pork chops. I couldn’t believe it. I thought to myself, ‘Well, I think that I am supposed to pass it to him and he will take his part.’ . . . Then, a piece of pie. . . . Oh, my gosh. I thought that the Americans were the greediest people I had ever seen. Honestly, I’d walk around and see these people. They’d have half a pie and sometimes even ice cream on it. . . . Even after we were married when I would go shopping, it took me a long time before I could remember that I didn’t have to ask, “May I have two loaves of bread?” Two, because I was so used to only being able to have one for so many years.37

Whereas the abundance came as a pleasant surprise, other cultural differences were less welcome. Janet Mohn, who moved from Rockhampton, Australia, to Kalispell, recalled: “When Bill [her husband] took me to a matinee or to a movie, I was so appalled to see these girls in their jeans and dirty saddle shoes and sweaters. I’d say, ‘Are they going to the show like that?’ He would say, ‘You are in America now, love.’”38
in the Winter time and again I would kind of like a change. I killed another three dollar coyote a few days ago. Well I guess this is all I can write this time.

Write soon.

Your son. Earl J. Martin

P.S. Tell mother not to send for Recreation any more.

After five years in eastern Montana, Martin finally left during the winter of 1907–1908. The previous winter had been one of the toughest he had endured, with heavy stock losses, lots of snow, and temperatures reaching 44 degrees below zero. Martin chose to go first to Minneapolis, where he lived on his savings, having earned “plenty of money” to pay for his expenses through the winter. While in Minneapolis, he considered his options; returning home to Nebraska was not one of them. Although he considered Spokane, he chose the Black Hills of South Dakota, where he had worked in 1901 and 1902.

The early part of the twentieth century saw the homestead boom on the Great Plains. In Montana alone, homesteaders filed over 114,000 homestead claims on almost 25 million acres of land between 1909 and 1923. When Martin arrived in Rapid City in 1908, he experienced the homestead rush firsthand. His letters give a taste of how those who had long lived in the Great Plains felt about these new settlers.

Rapid City, S. D., May 10 1908
Dear Mother:

Your letter of April 30 received. I have had steady work, but will have to look for a new job tomorrow. This country has changed an awful lot in the last month on account of that new Railroad. Every train has been bringing in scores of homesteaders, As soon as they have filed on their land, then they try to find work in the country neer their claims and they are willing to work for all most nothing.

Out in the country neer where I was getting 35 a month the ranchers are only paying 20 now. And they say there are two men for every job. And it is the same way here in town. Board is so high here that unless one has steady work they cant lay up any thing. If I cant find steady work I am going to get out of this. I like the people here and have several good friends here in town And I like working in town. I may go back to Minneapolis and I may go farther west. But not to the lonesome locality where I was before. I would rather work for less wages and be in a lively neighborhood. I saw an advertisement to day that they were needing men on the fruit farms in Washington, But I hate to go any farther west than Montana. I have gotten acquainted with several fellows from the East that are boarding where I do, that are working at odd jobs, And some of them have families two and are all most broke. I cant see how lots of these poor people are going to make a living. They dont know this country like I do, some of the claims they are taking are worse than use less. And they have so many dry summers in this country. I never saw so many old maids and school-marm's and they are all after claims. While I was on that ranch, four sisters from Iowa stopped there for dinner they were going 90 miles from railroad to take claims I'll bet they are sick of their job before next spring, they were all school-teachers two, lots of the people that come here have just enough money to get here and that is all. there will be lots of suffering next winter I am afraid. This would have been a good country for work this summer but for the homesteaders. They didn't hardly know that there was a panic here. Everybody had work all winter at fair wages.

Well one of my friends is trying to get me to go to church so I guess I will have to close for this time. Write as soon as you have time.

Your Aff Son

Earl Martin

Maybe you can read this I scribbled it in a hurry.

Martin found work near Spearfish, but he remained in South Dakota only through the winter of 1908–1909. By 1910, he had moved to Washington, where he worked as a barber in the Seattle area. At the age of thirty-seven he married Amette Ericson. He lived the remainder of his life in California, where he worked as a livestock handler. He died in San Francisco in 1960, one day shy of his eightieth birthday.

Molly Kruckenber is the Montana Historical Society Research Center director.
Remembering Dave Walter

Historians across Montana join friends, family members, and colleagues in mourning the death of the Montana Historical Society’s longtime research historian Dave Walter on July 19, at age sixty-three. Walter joined the historical society in 1979 and served as its research historian. He was the author or editor of hundreds of articles and a dozen books; he took pride in his work on Montana’s World War II conscientious objector camps, the state’s World War I Councils of Defense, the 1920s KKK movement, and Jeannette Rankin.

The breadth and importance of Dave’s work are reflected in the awards he received: an honorary doctorate of humane letters from the University of Montana in 1994; the Governor’s Humanities Award in 1998; the H. G. Merriam Award for contributions to Montana literature in 2001; and the Montana Historical Society Educator’s Award in 2003.

Dave’s indelible presence in my pages begins in my diary. In June of 1982, my wife Carol and I alit at the historical society to do research on 1930s Montana for my novel *English Creek*. Behind the library desk sat a man with a chest like a boulder and pleasant eyes and an uncanny intuition for what a researcher was actually after, however ill defined, or, in my case, downright novelistic, that researcher’s quest might be. After two days of what I recorded as Dave’s “swift, shrewd help,” we walked out with 305 pages of photocopied material.

Our professional acquaintanceship rapidly rocketed off into such a friendship that Dave and his wife Marcella always merrily provided Carol and me a roof over our heads whenever we were in Helena, fed us and regaled us, laughed into the night with us on starlit summer evenings in their backyard. Dave was a friend I fondly thought of as a kind of fjord—a person of deep privacies, where tides both serious and playful flowed, and, of course, a person shaped intrinsically by his man-made glacier of research.

Book after book, the magic Dave lent me by answering an almost infinite number of research questions lay in his genius-like sense of what was tucked away—what an obscure volume or stray collection of papers might have in its “hip pocket.” He loved Montana and its stories, its follies and its glories, and he knew the state and its history in a way probably none of the rest of us ever can. Nor will his exact keen glint of eye toward Montana and Montanans ever be duplicated. You didn’t have to be around Dave many minutes to realize that he not only had his wits about him, he had the blessed singular of that, wit. When he sent me some priceless nugget of research practically by return mail, he warned me severely: “Don’t let word get around that you received a response from us this quickly, as it will give us a lousy reputation. It is our policy to answer this quickly—it just isn’t our practice.”
Ultimately Dave figured so large in the contents of my pages that I simply put him there. He was, I believe, the only living person I ever enlisted in my fiction, and inevitably, in his scene in *Ride with Me, Mariah Montana* he is at work in the historical society library, where he compassionately helps Jick McCaskill with a vital piece of family research.

And one more time beyond that I was able to take delight in bringing Dave Walter openly onto the page, this time way up at the front of the book. It felt only right to try to repay, a bit, Dave’s immense dedication to the historical milieu of my books by putting him on the dedication page of *Prairie Nocturne*. That page carries these words: “To Dave and Marcella—for doing half the laughing and damn near all the history.”

*Ivan Doig*  
*Seattle, Washington*

I first met Dave when our community was doing research on its history. Dave always went out of his way for us. He would come over and put the book in my hand. He was always willing to help.

*Jack Hayne, Dupuyer, Montana*

I have known David since he attended the first class that I taught at the University of Montana. That was in the fall of 1965. David had come west fresh from an undergraduate education at Wesleyan University. He was planning on pursuing a graduate degree in English under the direction of the nationally known critic Leslie Fiedler. Unfortunately, or fortunately, Fiedler was headed east just as David was coming west. Deprived of direction in the English department, David drifted down the hall to history. There determined that I had little to do in the succeeding six quarters.

David befriended students—both undergraduate and graduate—and a large number of both owe their degrees to his interest and aid. He brought an intense professional questioning to seminars and elevated the quality of each one simply by being there. He recognized those elements of graduate work that were sham, but he also recognized and appreciated those aspects that were valuable and productive.

After a couple of years, I reviewed his academic record, noticed that he had not filed the requisite papers for the master’s degree, and called the fact to his attention. He said that he did not think he needed the degree. Three years later I once again reviewed his record and said, “David, you have more than completed the requirements for a PhD. I will prepare the paperwork on this one.” Once again, he declined. I respected this young man so much that I did not question his decision.

In so many ways, understanding David as a student means understanding that—from those earliest years to the present—he was a student by being a teacher himself. He had every bit as much fun helping someone else chase a good story to its conclusion as
he did corolling his work to the shape of an academic program. I advised all of my students who wished to pursue a Montana research topic to check with David before they launched their investigations. He advised, he encouraged, and he—in a very real sense—directed most of the research in Montana history for the next twenty years.

And he knew everything. Some years ago, a former student preparing a history of Superior, Montana, called me and asked what the “Montana Tiger” was. She had been reading an 1872 newspaper that recorded the construction of a saloon on Cedar Creek, and it stated that “the Montana Tiger will lurk in the back room.” I called Dorothy Johnson. She did not know. I assumed the Tiger was a local woman of ill repute. I called David. He said that Montana Tiger was a card game, the game of faro. So three of us knew it then. Now you do, too.

Montana is much poorer for David’s passing. He was a good scholar. He was a good historian. He was a good friend. But more importantly perhaps, and as a part of all of the former, he was a very, very good man.

H. D. Hampton
Professor of History Emeritus,
University of Montana, Missoula

I came to Montana shortly after Dave Walter began working at the Montana Historical Society. While, on the one hand, I, of course, knew that Dave had a past prior to sitting at the desk to the right of the library door, it never really registered because Dave-at-the-desk seemed timeless. And how on earth could he have acquired all that knowledge of Montana history, not to mention the Rolodex, unless he had been there forever? The Rolodex—surely it is among the treasures of Montana history. Pride of place on Dave’s desk went to the largest Rolodex ever manufactured; on its cards were the contacts of a man who fielded tens of thousands of inquiries over the course of his career. If you needed to know whom to talk to about agriculture in Garfield County, or the oil business in Cut Bank, or what local historical society might have material on any topic under the sun, Dave would know, consult the Rolodex, and give you the number. And if you got a call from someone saying, “Dave Walter told me to call,” you knew that you, too, were in that Rolodex.

In the reference room, Dave was unflappable, good-humored, gracious, and soft-spoken, whether the patron was a visitor tracking down a bit of genealogy, a student working on a paper, or a legislative aide with a question that had to be answered immediately. In between answering queries, Dave would add to the historical society’s vertical files, that repository of quirky

Dave was for many years a great friend to us at the Salish-Pend d’Oreille Culture Committee. He was one of the few who understood and appreciated our efforts from the beginning. He unstintingly supported our tribal history projects, providing guidance, advice, and of course—always—any information the historical society had regarding whatever we might be researching.

Salish-Pend d’Oreille Culture Committee
St. Ignatius, Montana

Dave and Montana Historical Society Library patron Hank Mathiason, 1986
and invaluable material. You can chart his knowledge and imagination in the files’ clippings, student papers, miscellaneous brochures and programs, many marked with a date or notation in black ink in his distinctive penmanship.

As much as his own scholarship, his innumerable public presentations, his initiation of the Montana Scholars panels at the annual Montana History Conference, and his oversight of a new Montana history textbook, Dave’s work as a reference historian is his legacy to Montana. I doubt there is anyone who has written on Montana history in the last thirty years who is not in Dave’s debt. Dave represented the Montana Historical Society with style and grace in many venues, and I have many memories of him. But first and foremost, I will remember him sitting at the reference desk, flipping through the Rolodex, and coming up with a ready answer.

Mary Murphy
Michael P. Malone Professor,
Montana State University, Bozeman

I had the pleasure of knowing Dave Walter for more than thirty years. I first met him when he was a young historian. Over the decades, I worked with Dave in many different contexts, including as a speaker for public programs in the humanities and as a Montana Committee for the Humanities board member from 1990 through 1993. Dave’s modesty, kindness, shyness, and quiet humor, together with his love of Montana and its people and history, made him a delightful friend and a wonderful scholar. I shared with others the pleasure of seeing his confidence grow and of seeing his work receive the recognition it deserved.

In addition to the many people who benefited from Dave Walter’s expertise and assistance at the Montana Historical Society, there are thousands in large and small towns across Montana who were stimulated by his work and his example. Dave was ever generous with his knowledge and time, and he grew to be one of the most effective humanities scholars in the state. For example, after Dave developed his interest in “jews in Montana history,” he created five different presentations for the Montana Committee for the Humanities Speakers Bureau, as well as five other program topics. Over the past ten years, he gave more than 125 Speakers Bureau programs across the state.

Dave Walter was an effective public scholar because he was a skilled researcher and because he could show how a quirky event related to its times and to ours—and he always did so in lucid, accessible prose, with wit and modesty, and without pedantry. Dave brought to his audiences the challenges and ambiguities of historiography. He could develop the links between story and history and between storytelling and the motives of history writing. He knew that history isn’t about the past. It’s about how we discuss the past in the present and how we shape present discussions to inform future discussions.

In his presentations, it often seemed that Dave could barely wait to end his speaking role because he wanted to reach the important matters that would surface in the conversation that would follow: How would others tell the same story? Why do we select one story instead of others? How will any of these stories be told in the future? He could even press the point of responsibility: How will you tell this story in the future?

Dave Walter stands in the finest tradition of the
humanities, for he led us to critical thinking about ourselves in a manner that was so gentle and so effective and so important.

Margaret Kingsland
Executive Director, Montana Committee for the Humanities, 1974–1995, Missoula, Montana

I met Dave Walter in 1998 when I attended my first Montana Heritage Project Winter Conference at the Montana Historical Society. Knowing just a few of the teachers and none of the historical society staff, I registered only a few fleeting names as I shook hands all around.

But Dave Walter made a significant impression. The casual professional with a blue shirt and tie, rolled-up sleeves, and a notepad on his knee, Dave sat in the back of the room and spoke only when addressed. He listened attentively to the teachers’ presentations of their students’ research and then praised each, saying, “You are, of course, the experts on local history.”

Ever the peer, and never—yet always—the expert himself, Dave Walter made the historical society a visible, viable, and very accessible resource for all. He taught us to probe even the smallest details in primary documents, and he showed us how to pursue the most obscure story with reverent delight. Quietly charismatic, with an open eye for contradiction, for irony, for the darkly humorous side of human nature, Dave Walter also demonstrated in his writing the utmost respect for the way human beings have come into conflict with their environments and with each other.

Dave would occasionally come to schools as a representative of the Montana Committee for the Humanities Speakers Bureau. While the presentations were always formal, his personal interactions, his questions directed to the students, and his eruptive laughter betrayed a true respect and affection for young people.

On one such visit, students were working in the library, and Dave and his wife Marcella entered the room, sat down, and began to ask them about their projects. Soon other circles drifted and expanded into one, with Dave and Marcella as part, not center. Students later commented, “Dave had that big smile and was really interested in us. He said, ‘You’re doing a great thing’ and we knew he meant it.”

But Dave Walter’s interest in the students didn’t stop at day’s end. In 2000, after talking with three young women regarding their research into the 1904 Fort Shaw Indian girls basketball team, Dave returned to Helena. A week later, a large manila envelope arrived in the mail. It held copies of every relevant newspaper article in the historical society’s archives. And then he celebrated their accomplishments by attending and sometimes providing a greeting at community heritage fairs and the annual Youth Heritage Festival in Helena. When one of those young researchers read of his passing, she called her mother and said, “He was the nicest man. It wasn’t all about history. Every time he talked to us, he would ask about our basketball season. He cared about us, not just the project.”

This gentle genius belongs to the ages—to all ages—for his writing, for his influence on the ways we conduct historical research, and for his generous enthusiasm for the efforts of teachers. He particularly belongs to the young across Montana. He belongs to those whom he mentored and taught, challenged, and inspired.

Dorothea M. Susag
Former Montana Heritage Project Teacher, Fairfield, Montana
In recent years, I often seem to find myself telling students that there is no such thing as boring history, only boring historians and boring textbooks, possibly written by those same historians. History is about the human drama and should therefore always be intriguing, interesting, and perhaps even exciting.

Dave Walter never forgot that essential truth about what history could and should be. Dave had an amazing ability to bring the past alive—but never in a melodramatic, simplistic, or manipulative fashion. Humor, irony, understatement, and a telling phrase were his constant companions, both in his presentations and in his writings.

These very traits, which grew out of Dave's core values, also drew students to him. One year when I was on sabbatical, Dave was kind enough to teach the history research seminar at Carroll College. My only reservation in asking Dave to accept the position was my conviction that I would never be able to fill his shoes once I returned. And, of course, I was right. Fortunately, those seniors in the seminar—I always thought of them as “Dave’s disciples”—all graduated, and thus the next generation of students never knew what they were missing.

What was it that made Dave so special, perhaps unique, as a teacher? The first quality that comes to mind was his genuine love of history, especially Montana history—a love that was so infectious that it had to rub off on those around him. His stories, often spellbinding, encouraged students to seek out their own stories.

I thought Dave was wonderful. I saw him quite often as a charter member of the Gallatin County Historical Society. ... Dave was good help.

Grace Bates, Manhattan, Montana

Dave was always generous with his own research. He would never hoard information, as some scholars might. He would share whatever he had learned without worrying about who would receive the credit. And the sharing occurred at all levels—with a high school or college student discovering the mystery of history for the first time, with a budding doctoral candidate hoping for a career in history, or even a veteran historian such as myself who couldn’t always keep his facts straight.

Another special quality was his determination to define history as broadly as possible. He would not limit himself to just the “major players.” He had a soft spot for the underdog, for the so-called “common people” who often receive only a passing reference, if that, in a typical textbook. As a result of this conviction, he encouraged students—whether in the classroom, at the Montana Historical Society, or during one of his many public talks—to explore the unknown, the forgotten, or the misunderstood. He would never dismiss a student’s topic or question as insignificant or as a “waste of time.”

“Time”—a simple word, yet it can represent so much. Perhaps Dave’s greatest gift to his students, to all of us, was his generosity, his willingness to give of himself. He would not only take the time to track down the answer to an obscure question or locate the rare document, he was also a wonderful listener. And as he listened to you, whatever your station in life, he made you feel important. You wanted to choose your words more wisely because he listened so carefully.

Robert R. Swartout Jr.
Carroll College, Helena, Montana
Starting this fall, Montana secondary school teachers will have a new tool for teaching twentieth-century Montana history: the **Montana Mosaic: Twentieth-Century People and Events** DVD and companion website developed by the Montana Historical Society with the help of a nearly two-hundred-thousand-dollar grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Each of the DVD’s twelve chapters tells the story of a particular era in Montana history, describing the events that occurred during the period as well as the ways in which they connected to national and world events of the day and to other eras in the state’s history. The vignettes highlight six overarching themes: industrialization and deindustrialization, relocation and dislocation, ethnic migration, federalization, environmentalism, and progressivism.

The **Montana Mosaic** project is the result of the work of many people over the last two years. Recognizing the dearth of materials for teaching twentieth-century Montana history, the Montana Historical Society (MHS) in 2004 hired Gita Saedi of West of Kin Productions in Missoula to develop the DVD with the help of a fifteen-member advisory panel made up of teachers, historians, and MHS staff. As the panel discussed the project and established its framework, two questions remained paramount: Will the story be interesting to students and will it make students want to know more about the topics?

When the planning stage was completed, Saedi and her research assistants began scouring the MHS collections and the archives of Montana PBS to find oral histories, photographs, newspapers and primary documents, film, and artifacts that would illuminate the fifteen to twenty-five minutes of documentary film used in each of the DVD’s twelve chapters. Then it was up to Saedi to weave the diverse strands into cohesive, compelling stories that would encourage debate as well as help students learn how to formulate questions, articulate statements, and synthesize new information.
Saturday afternoon, October 7, 2006

Carol and Ivan:

I’ll call after I’ve delivered this to the post office—where, under the current system and until some postal official changes it—this should leave Helena for Seattle yet tonight.

I sure liked hearing your voices on the answering machine last night. And it was good to know that you were safely home. Given your efficiencies, by now, all the travel laundry is done; the suitcases are stored; your journals are up-to-date!

For no really good reasons except dreariness and sadness, I ran one round of errands this morning and one load of laundry this afternoon -- and napped and read.

I liked life a lot a week ago when I still had your visit to anticipate and prepare for!

You may get dozens of these copies, but a three more can’t hurt.

And this gives me another way to thank you for a strengthening and healing visit—for the blessings of your time and good judgment and acceptance and fellowship.

Thank you!

[Signature]
September 22, 2006

Ivan Doig
17277 15th Ave NW
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan:

Thank you for your upcoming contribution to the Fall 2006 issue of Montana The Magazine of Western History. Please find enclosed, two copies of our consent to publish contract. Please sign and return the original, and keep the photocopy for your records. We are certainly looking forward to this upcoming issue of the magazine and we hope you are as well. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Tonya Easbey
Editorial Assistant
Montana The Magazine of Western History
(406) 444-0974
teasbey@mt.gov

Encl.
Consent to Publish

From: Montana The Magazine of Western History
A Publication of the Montana Historical Society
P.O. Box 201201
Helena, MT 59620-1201

To: Ivan Doig
17277 15th Avenue NW
Seattle, WA 98177

Date: September 22, 2006

Article's working title: "Remembering Dave Walter"

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If these terms are satisfactory, please sign and date this agreement, and include your Social Security number.

**For Montana Historical Society:**

Molly Holz
Montana The Magazine of Western History

Author:

[Signature]

6 Oct. 2006
Dear Molly--

Carol and I arrived back just hours ago from the Montana trip that took us to the Festival of the Book in Missoula and various research stops, including the MHS; sorry we did not have time to come by and socialize, but we were really piling into WWII research for my next novel.

In any case, here is the consent form back, as quick as I could get to it, with one change. I never give up the copyright on anything; my lawyer won’t let me, but it’s ingrained principle in me as well. Bill Lang faced this with me on my piece in the Winter ‘85 issue, and solved it satisfactorily by running my copyright line there in the tiniest type known to the human eye at the bottom of p. 3. If you have time to do something similar with my piece about Dave, please do, somewhere on the page even if it’s in my bio. If everything is already set in granite, don’t worry about it, but just make sure the copyright line is attached to any future use of the piece as described in paragraphs 2 through 6, okay?

Looking forward to the issue. Best wishes.
three-page fax to Molly Holz, Editor, *Montana The Magazine of Western History*

Molly, hi--

Here’s the 500-worder remembering Dave Walter. See you at the memorial service.

Regards,

[Signature]

2 Aug. '06

[Signature]
Remembering Dave Walter

Dave’s indelible presence in my pages begins in my diary. In June of 1982, my wife Carol and I alit into the Historical Society to do research on 1930s Montana for my novel, English Creek. Behind the library desk sat a man with chest like a boulder and pleasant eyes and an uncanny intuition for what a researcher was actually after, however ill-defined and in my case downright novelistic that researcher’s quest might be. After two days of what I record as Dave’s “swift, shrewd help,” we walked out with 305 pages of photocopied material.

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“Don’t let word get around that you received a response from us this quickly, as it will give us a lousy reputation. It is our policy to answer this quickly--it just isn’t our practice.”

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“To Dave and Marcella--for doing half the laughing and damn near all the history.”

###

Ivan Doig’s next book about Montana and its people will be a World War II novel.
922 Chouteau  
Helena, MT 59601  
August 18, 2006

Ivan and Carol Doig  
17277 15th Avenue N.W.  
Seattle WA 98177

Dear Carol and Ivan:

The week’s three work-days hurried by and I’m back in the quiet of the house. I was both desperately ready for a little more sleep and some time not to be “on,” and apprehensive about another block of time alone here. This morning I’ve replenished cat and rabbit food, stopped by the attorney’s office, made one post office run with packages for Em and Amanda. I have an electrician scheduled for this afternoon. The light with the pull-cord over the ironing board—that Dave replaced often—broke again Monday and so it seems time to install something that will be less fragile. Of things that Dave really didn’t like to do, but did anyway, being up on ladders and dealing with electricity were the two most feared.

Speaking of electricity, Ivan, it turns out that Monday’s power outage here had been—according to Northwest Energy—“planned” for this neighborhood. But none of the neighbors knew that either. The power came back on shortly after I got home from the airport.

I’ve read your Sunday remarks, Ivan, neigh onto daily. Thank you for coming back to Helena—flying and all—and for offering up for all of us the sharp observations of your writers’ eye and the caring of good friend’s heart. As you do in all your writing and thinking, you saw and described Dave with such specific detail and such examined perception. Your being here—your fellowship, your good questions, your perfect 800 words—continues to mean more than you will know. Thank you, Carol, for sharing Ivan for the weekend—even when you could not come along.

Carol AND Ivan, thank you for so many years of thoughtful friendship—for sharing so much of your time and interest and good humor and skill with both of us and most recently with me and with the girls. You’ve taught me that the grace of honesty and clear-eyed thinking combines pretty well with “the humanities.” Thank you for letting me cry on the phone and in person. Thank you for helping me—all along—to see myself as strong enough to cope.

So, I look forward—very much—to your September visit. Stay as long as you can and want! And whenever we talk, I’ll be eager to hear about jury duty, Carol, and how you handled it—and whether your flight back, Ivan, was as smooth as the one coming over—and what else is happening in your world.

[Signature]
Marella 100-99 glory Brian
- 7/26
- massive amu 07/12
- 32 ton in Sept.
- June finally
- did I have a well 81'30 14th/Aug
- who did love
- Silver Stary
- N Forte divided in April
- Heather AZ to St. L
- can preg again
- counselor after stroke
- MT Club/ren 6-ca
- 120 people/St. Paul's Church
- sanctuary

7/27 Aug. 13 Molly Hope
- Ran + Claire 2145
- Aug 13 1830 Sun, then MT Club
- Dorothy Bradley/mrs. job + fellowship
- 5-6 min on social justice
- "in" on island
- Margaret Reesland/MC
- Love Monae
- Swallow/students
- 5-6 min on Dave as researcher/ren did
- girls/need from cards
Marcella 6/22/06
- 6 days + TMT in Dec Cncl
- senior companion /ld coordinator
- federal program / 60+ low income
- people into homes of asx * needed
- not a fed employee
- territory: Haun + # Bellview
- interviewed for library job / chose
- RIF’d
- state job 2½ yrs / retire when the
- living in Westly in New alb
- pays
  $2400/year

Rachel Tompkins: Rural Sales

Dave: well, hurt permanently, typing better, fired
- open therapy / hard to multi-task

4 Strong Winds / 84-79

2d - 3d choice
12 May ‘06

Dear Dave and Marcella--

Whatever is quicker than a quickie, this is it. Am packing some stuff to the post office in the morning and want to pop a book to you then, so no time to do a letter. Couple of things, though:

--We did get to deepest Nebraska and back okay, and had dinner with Ted Kooser. Fine man, somewhat frayed around the edges by 200+ public appearances during his poet laureateship and some other concerns. Prompt us to talk about that when we show up in July.

--When we do hit town, we are staying at the Hampton Inn, on my publisher’s tab. No argument: we are not going to take the chance of being in the way of your routines in the house--we want Dave up and out and running footraces as soon as possible. Other than at night, we are available to you guys as much as you can stand. I’m at the Montana Book Co. 12-1 and again 5-6 on July 14. Our plan is grab early lunch (at 11, we pray) at the Windbag--if either or both of you can come, great, but we know the situation--and then we’d love to share supper and an evening of gab with you if that’s appropriate.

All for now. Told you it’s short (for me).

Keep low,
Carol & Juan -

It's very good to know that you're headed our way!

Dave's watching the Marines as I write (and pack for the Institute). The train whistle (at 10:00 a.m.) always makes me feel
connected. Thanks for the clipping on Mr. Seibert. The Society's fortunes are always under a cloud!

Love

Marcella
"OPENING LINES:" A MONTANA LITERARY QUIZ

Dave Walter

Every writing teacher worth his salt--working on any level--has devoted valuable class time to the topic of "opening lines." In fact, an experienced instructor will counsel that capturing a reader's attention instantly outweighs all other literary skills.

So authors agonize over those first lines: rewriting, retooling, revising, rewording. Whether their work is fiction or nonfiction, when writers craft and set the magic lure, readers truly hooked will go the distance into the writer's world.

Montana literature--astoundingly rich in quality for our small population--teems with unforgettable first lines and opening paragraphs that demand continued reading. But do you remember them? Can you identify significant Montana pieces by their "opening lines"?

This quiz will test the breadth of your reading in the field and place a premium on your attention to detail. To ease the pain, you may select the correct answer from a series of possibilities. A score of more than two-thirds correct is assuredly phenomenal!
Select the correct answer from the authors/titles provided for each of the "opening lines:"

1. Soon before daybreak on my sixth birthday, my mother's breathing wheezed more raggedly than ever, then quieted. And then stopped.
   The remembering begins out of that new silence. Through the time since, I reach back along my father's tellings and around the urgings which would have me face about and forget, to feel into these oldest shadows for the first sudden edge of it all.

   A. Ivan Doig, *This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind* (1978)
   B. Thomas Berger, *Little Big Man* (1964)
   C. Dorothy Johnson, *The Hanging Tree* (1957)

2. The Land and Its People

   Montana! A century ago, its inhabitants nicknamed it the "Treasure State," an apt title since mining then ruled its economy. Now the favored designation is "Big Sky Country," an equally appropriate sobriquet borrowed from Bud Guthrie's great novel of the fur frontier. Among all the fifty states, this one consistently ranks among the handful that are most romanticized and most characterized as singular, if not unique.

   A. Frank Chesarek and Jim Brabec, *Montana: Two Lane Highway in a Four Lane World* (1978)

3. The day dawned clear, but it had rained the night before, the sudden squally rain of middle March. Taking a look out the kitchen door, seeing the path lead down to the muddy barnyard and the tracks of his shoepacks splashed in it. Lije Evans was just as well satisfied that things were
wet. It gave him an excuse not to work, even if he could be mending harness or fixing tools. Not that he minded work; it was just that he didn't feel like working today. "Likely I'll go to town, Rebecca," he said, closing the door.
"To talk about Oregon," she said, not quite as if she blamed him.

A. Will James, *Cow Country* (1927)
B. A. B. Guthrie, Jr., *The Way West* (1949)
C. Walter Van Tilburg Clark, *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1940)

4. An ordinary road map of the United States, one that for courtesy's sake includes the first hundred miles on the Canadian side of the Line, will show two roads, graded but not paved, reaching up into western Saskatchewan to link U.S. 2 with Canada 1, the Trans-Canada Highway. One of these little roads leads from Havre, on the Milk River, to Maple Creek; the other from Malta, also on the Milk, to Swift Current.

C. Myron Brinig, *Wide Open Town* (1931)

5. In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen, and we were left to assume, as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman.

A. A. B. Guthrie, Jr., *The Big Sky* (1947)
B. Dan Cushman, *Stay Away, Joe* (1953)
6. MONTANA IS REMOTE

Home, home on the range
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard
A discouraging word...
And the skies are not cloudy all day!

It is debatable whether that is an authentic cowboy ballad, but its frank, singsong melody is genuinely western, and its lyricist has managed to impregnate the naïve lines with some fragmentary feeling for the Great Plains—to sing, briefly and superficially, of the limitless arch of sky and the distant sharp-etched horizon and the spirit of those who people this land.

B. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana: High, Wide and Handsome (1943)
C. Newton Carl Abbott, Montana in the Making (1931)

7. Bert Barricune died in 1910. Not more than a dozen persons showed up for his funeral. Among them was an earnest young reporter who hoped for a human-interest story; there were legends that the old man had been something of a gunfighter in the early days. A few aging men tiptoed in, singly or in pairs, scowling and edgy, clutching their battered hats—men who had been Bert’s companions at drinking or penny ante while the world passed them by. One woman came, wearing a heavy veil that concealed her face. White and yellow streaks showed in her black-dyed hair. The reporter made a mental note: Old friend from the old District. But no story there—can’t mention that.

A. Larry Watson, Montana 1948 (1993)
C. Larry McMurtry, Leaving Cheyenne (1963)
8. Now that the weather had changed, the moon of the falling leaves turned white in the blackening sky and White Man’s Dog was restless. He chewed the stick of dry meat and watched Cold Maker gather his forces. The black clouds moved in the north in circles, their dance a slow deliberate fury. It was almost night, and he looked back down into the flats along the Two Medicine River. The lodges of the Lone Eaters were illuminated by cooking fires within. It was that time of evening when even the dogs rest and the horses graze undisturbed along the grassy banks.

A. James Welch, Fool’s Crow (1986)

9. When the NO SMOKING sign flickered off above Butte, I groped between my uniform blouse and T-shirt for the pack of cigarettes resting against my belly. Beyond the silver wing, foothills climbed to meet the mountains until we were flying over the actual bald ridges and spruce-blued canyons of the Continental Divide. The plane nosed back toward earth, and I began to recognize drainages winding east through the mountains. But the land made little more sense from above than it ever had from below. And it didn’t matter. I wouldn’t be there long enough for anything to matter. What counted lay much farther north, in the heart of British Columbia.

A. Thomas McGuane, Nobody’s Angel (1979)
B. Larry McMurtry, Lonesome Dove (1985)

10. When I finally caught up with Abraham Trahearne, he was drinking beer with an alcoholic bulldog named Fireball Roberts in a ramshackle joint just outside of Sonoma, California, drinking the heart right out of a fine spring afternoon.

A. James Crumley, The Last Good Kiss (1978)
B. William Kittredge, Owning It All (1987)

11. When, on May 26, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln signed the act of Congress that established Montana Territory, he created as well a permanent land of contrast. The legislation, which fixed Montana’s boundaries in their present configuration, forever locked contrast and even contradiction into the land. Ever since 1864 Montana has been a contrapuntal society—a land beset by extreme differences and conflicts it cannot escape.

B. Merrill B. Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier* (1942)

12. When Louise White Elk was nine, Baptiste Yellow Knife blew a fine powder in her face and told her she would disappear. She sneezed until her nose bled, and Baptiste gave her his handkerchief. She had to lie down on the school floor and tilt back her head and even then it wouldn’t stop. She felt he had opened the river to her heart.


13. The weathered log buildings on a hillside with yellow grass would own me. From my first sight of the place, I was hooked. I started to invent a new life. Some country family lived in the mud-chinked house with sun glinting off its tin roof, but the ranch seemed abandoned, no sounds except the humming of yellow jackets, dry grass rustling as we passed. A few leghorns pecked at the last grasshoppers of summer. Home. If I lived here, who would I be?


14. The newspaper offices were dull and unexciting on that hot and sultry July night. The eyes of the nation were centered on the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia where the Republic celebrated one hundred years of existence as an independent nation dedicated to the immutable principles of freedom and justice for all. The Democratic and Republican conventions had passed into history with the nomination of two almost equally obscure and colorless personalities, and the canvass for votes had not yet begun in real earnest. But over all there was a tension of anxiety.

B. Edgar I. Stewart, *Custer’s Luck* (1955)

15. This time it was a girl Halverson knew, halfway eaten and her hair chewed off. She had been awake in the night; she’d been afraid and whimpering as the great bear nudged at the side of the nylon tent like a rooting hog. She held to the other girl’s hand, and began to scream only when the long claws ripped her out of her sleeping bag, continuing to scream as she was being dragged away, the feathery down from the sleeping bag floating above the glowing coals of the pine-knot fire. This time it was someone he knew; and he lay still in the darkness and the warmth of his own bed and tried to understand the feeling of knowing you were killed before you were dead.


16. “A Great Splash of Grandeur”
Montana is a big and brawny land “molded in the heroic style of terrestrial architecture,” according to her imaginative early promoters. Inhabitants once boasted that she was “bounded on the west by the Japan current, on the north by the aurora borealis, on the south by Price’s Army, and on the east by the Day of Judgment.”

A. Clark C. Spence, Montana: A Bicentennial History (1978)
C. K. Ross Toole, Montana: An Uncommon Land (1959)

17. September is like a quiet day after a whole week of wind. I mean real wind that blows dirt into your eyes and hair and between your teeth and roars in your ears after you’ve gone inside. The harvesting is done and the wheat stored away and you’re through worrying about hail or drought or grasshoppers. The fields have a tired peaceful look, the way I imagine a mother feels when she’s had her baby and is just lying there thinking about it and feeling pleased.

A. Mary Clearman Blew, All But the Waltz (1991)
B. Grace Stone Coates, Portulacas in the Wheat (1932)
C. Mildred Walker, Winter Wheat (1944)

18. “Speakin’ of cowpunchers,” says Rawhide Rawlins, “I’m glad to see in the last few years that them that know the business have been writin’ about ‘em. It begin to look like they’d be wiped out without a history. Up to a few years ago there’s mighty little known about cows and cow people. It was sure amusin’ to read some of them old stories about cowpunchin’. You’d think a puncher growed horns an’ was haired over.”

A. Charles M. Russell, Trails Plowed Under (1927)
B. Spike Van Cleve, Forty Years’ Gatherin’s (1977)
C. Robert H. Fletcher, Free Grass to Fences: the
"OPENING LINES:"

Montana Cattle Range Story (1960)

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19. That month of June swam into the Two Medicine country. In my life until then I had never seen the sidehills come so green, the coulees stay so spongy with runoff. A right amount of wet evidently could sweeten the universe. Already my father on his first high patrols had encountered cow elk drifting up and across the Continental Divide to their calving grounds on the west side. They, and the grass and the wild hay meadows and the benchland alfalfa, all were a good three weeks ahead of season. Which of course accounted for the fresh mood everywhere across the Two.

A. Dan Cushman, Plenty of Room and Air (1975)
B. Ivan Doig, English Creek (1985)
C. A. B. Guthrie, Jr., These Thousand Hills (1956)

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20. Luck! It began for Captain Meriwether Lewis, paymaster of the First Infantry Regiment, United States Army, when he reached his regimental headquarters in Pittsburgh on March 5, 1801, after a rough trip from Detroit, and found in his mail a letter from Thomas Jefferson, recently elected president of the United States. His thin, long-nosed face must have shown his mingled delight and astonishment. Jefferson needed a private secretary with unusual qualifications. "Your knowle of the Western country," he wrote, "of the army and of all it's interests and relations have rendered it desirable for public as well as private purposes that you should be engaged in that office."

C. David Lavender, The Way to the Western Sea (1988)

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21. Butte is unpredictable. Yesterday, today and probably tomorrow she is a city of paradox—virtuous yet wanton, vindictive and forgiving, hard-headed or charitable, kind, cruel, religious, agnostic, sordid, exalted, gay and tragic.

Magnificent when viewed by night from the Continental Divide, Butte has been likened to a diamond set in jet, but by day she is an uncorseted wench, dissipated from the night before. “Perch of the devil,” she has been called by some and “merciful mother of the mountains,” by others.

A. C. B. Glasscock, The War of the Copper Kings (1935)
B. Federal Writers Project, Copper Camp (1943)
C. Christopher P. Connolly, The Devil Learns to Vote: the Story of Montana (1938)

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22. Great Lone Land

From the Red River of the North to the Rockies, winter ruled. In the winter the chepuyuk, the ghost dancers of the aurora, made a shuddering and swishing sound like that made by a throwing-stick when the boys played games on a windy day. It was customary for a man to shoot a few arrows toward the chepuyuk before closing the tipi flap for the night, to persuade them to keep their distance.

A. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire: A Narrative of the Northwest (1952)
B. Walter McClintock, The Old North Trail (1910)
C. John C. Ewers, The Blackfeet, Raiders of the Northwestern Plains (1958)

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23. At the time of his arrival in Alder Gulch, Captain James Williams was twenty-nine years old, a strongly built, slow-moving man, 5-feet 10-1/2 inches tall, weighing about 190 pounds. Upon slightly rounded shoulders a short neck carried a leonine head. He had deep-set blue eyes which were kindly and humorous, unless excited by deep emotion; then the eyes turned jet black, and in anger their menace was deadly.

Take my word for it, the glance was terrifying! At such a time his voice was vibrant, of compelling timbre.
Generally, however, he had excellent control of his faculties. In the years I knew him, while out of humor frequently, I saw him in deep anger only once.

B. Nathaniel Pitt Langford, *Vigilante Days and Ways: the Pioneers of the Rockies* (1890)
C. Thomas J. Dimsdale, *The Vigilantes of Montana, or, Popular Justice in the Rocky Mountains* (1866)

24. I worked for Uncle Sam mostly as a herder and sometimes as a packer since I came to Montana in 1876. I followed the Boys in Blue through all of the Yellowstone country and parts of the Musselshell country when they went chasing after some band of Indians that was out plundering or on horse-stealing raids. At the different forts I would see all kinds of trappers and hunters come in; wild and woolly they were, with long hair and buckskin clothes. I was young and I used to look at them with envy and dream of the day when I would be one of them and go roaming over the prairies and hills.

A. Granville Stuart, *Forty Years on the Frontier* (1925)

25. Once the game wardens left, the little tent we’d set up seemed even smaller. I stood in front of it, shivering at a gust I thought I felt running across my neck. Could this really be my home now? My home for the next seven months? For the entire winter? Alone? I glanced up at the river canyon’s steep, dark walls, already cutting off the mid-afternoon sun. Nothing lay beyond those walls of stone and tree but more of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. I was alone in its very heart.

A. John K. Hutchens, *One Man’s Montana: An Informal Portrait of a State* (1964)
"OPENING LINES:"

B. Taylor Gordon, *Born to Be* (1929)

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**KEY TO THE QUIZ:**

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. C
6. B
7. B
8. A
9. C
10. A
11. C
12. B
13. C
14. B
15. A
16. A
17. C
18. A
19. B
20. C
21. B
22. A
23. A
24. B
25. C
---SUPPLEMENT TO "OPENING LINES" QUIZ:

Dave Walter
May 9, 2005

26. I lay on the floor by my father. I could have gone to my sister's bed, and she would have grumbled and cuddled me up, and let me curl my hands in her soft neck. I could have gone to mother, who would have chided me soberly, and taken me in; but I lay on the floor with my father. He was very long, lying there, and incredibly old. Mother told me at the last birthday cake that he was forty-nine. I was almost five.

A. Dorothy Johnson, When You and I Were Young, Whitefish (1982)
B. Grace Stone Coates, Black Cherries (1931)
C. Rick DeMarinis, Under the Wheat (1986)

27. In the tall weeds of the borrow pit, I took a leak and watched the sorrel mare, her colt beside her, walk through burnt grass to the shady side of the log-and-mud cabin. It was called the Earthboy place, although no one by that name (or any other) had lived in it for twenty years. The roof had fallen in and the mud between the logs had fallen out in chunks, leaving a bare gray skeleton, home only to mice and insects. Tumbleweeds, stark as bone, rocked in a hot wind against the west wall. On the hill behind the cabin, a rectangle of barbed wire held the graves of all the Earthboys, except for a daughter who had married a man from Lodgepole. She could be anywhere, but the Earthboys were gone.

B. Dan Cushman, Plenty of Room and Air (1975)
C. Peter Bowen, Specimen Song (1995)

28. I imagine the three men having a good time. I imagine them singing.
We know they'd had beer for breakfast at the Hammers' house, and we know that Lee's sister, Lynn, had served pancakes and ham. By 6 a.m. they were off to catch the early fishing at Rainbow Lake. It was mid-September, and at our altitude the nights were already cold. Sedge was receding in the lake now that the surface water was cooling, and the big rainbows were coming up. The three men expected to catch fish, and they felt festive.

C. Jon A. Jackson, *Deadman* (1994)

29. People who know me often talk as though I was from Texas. That is not correct. I was born at Cranwich Hall, Cranwich, County of Norfolk, England, December 17, 1860. But I came to Montana with a herd of Texas cattle in 1883.

A. Ernest Osgood, *The Day of the Cattleman* (1929)

30. The name "Montana" properly belongs to a certain part of Spain, and means "mountainous," a name that is applicable to the country for a wonder. Still, I think that the Snake Indian name of "To'ya-be-Shock'up" or "The country of the mountains" would have been more appropriate, for some parts of Montana have been the home of these Indians from a time far anterior to the discovery of America.

A. Granville Stuart, *Montana As It Is* (1865)
31. The Hi-Line Investors Corp.--Skeet Englestad, Johnny Medvic, Ken Peterman, Doc Hansen, Earl Vane, and Dick Reitenbush--huddled over coffee, the day of the big blockade, to decide, finally and forever, what to call their new steak house.

The chin-to-chin showdown with Castro had them all stirred up, and they spoke with the hushed urgency of generals. Their first choice of a name, the one they’d been running with, wasn’t going to work. The Tiki Room? Suddenly it was safe and ordinary, like something named by wives. And this was no ordinary bar and restaurant. This was part of the overall ability of the United States of America to call a bluff.

A. Gary Svee, Sanctuary (1990)
B. Deirdre McNamer, Rima in the Weeds (1991)

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32. The first thing I can remember is my home. From there I will tell you of the trail I’ve moused and the things a little black poor boy might experience on his trip through the great forest of delusion, canyons of bricks, wood and glass made by men.

A. Taylor Gordon, Born to Be (1929)
B. John K. Hutchens, One Man’s Montana: An Informal Portrait of a State (1964)
C. Robert Vaughn, Then and Now, or, Thirty-Six Years in the Rockies (1900)

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33. Martha Cannary was born sometime in the late 1840’s or early 1850’s in the Middle West, perhaps in Missouri or Iowa. While she was still a young girl her family migrated to Montana Territory. She and her younger brothers and sisters were neglected by their worthless parents who either died or deserted their young family. Martha was compelled to forage for herself and chose the easiest path. In her life of shame, she associated with the lowest types of miners, soldiers and railroad workers.

B. Dorothy Johnson, *Some Went West* (1965)
C. Roberta Beed Sollid, *Calamity Jane: A Study in Historical Criticism* (1958)

34. I, of womankind and of nineteen years, will now begin to set down as full and frank a Portrayal as I am able of myself, for whom the world contains not a parallel. I am convinced of this, for I am odd. I am distinctly original innately and in development. I have in me a quite unusual intensity of life. I can feel. I have a marvelous capacity for misery and for happiness. I am broad-minded. I am a genius.

B. Deirdre McNamee, *One Sweet Quarrel* (1994)
C. Mary MacLane, *The Story of Mary MacLane, by Herself* (1902)

35. My people said that, of all the professions, that of war was best suited to one of my temperament, and I agreed with them. Therefore it was intended that I should go to a military school, preparatory to entering West Point. But my lungs were not so sound as they should have been, and our family physician said that I must go west and live on the high, dry plains for a time. I went, well provided with letters to the members of a great fur-trading company at Fort Benton, Montana. One of them, dear old Kipp—or Berry, as the Indians called him—was appointed my guardian.

C. George Bird Grinnell, *My Life as an Indian* (1906)
EXTENDED KEY TO THE QUIZ:

26. B
27. A
28. B
29. C
30. A
31. B
32. A
33. C
34. C
35. B
922 Choteau  
Helena, MT 59601  
September 26, 2005  

Dear Carol and Ivan:

Thank you for two invigorating and heartwarming days. We are still drafting off the new ideas, the gossip, the scenery, the memories, and the gift of your caring and friendship. For instance, put me in a car with you for a couple hours, Carol, and you'll notice that I feel utterly comfortable telling all and, in return, hearing so much that makes sense and helps. And somehow, Ivan, turning off 89 into the Two Medicine country, with your narration, was—for both of us—like opening the door into another whole world of beauty and history. Thank you both.

As always, after a good visit, we remain full of questions. Did you blow away on Monday? Did the clouds part for your trip over Going to the Sun? Did you escape the cold and rain/snow that we got last Friday? Is the arnica still working its magic, Carol (I found a reference in My Antonia to using arnica after you left.)?

The week lumped along for us. Art and Liz haven’t changed their minds so far, but Mike reports that the emails are a little less hostile. Charlene’s last day was Friday, so there were sighs of pleasure and freedom in the building today. Last Saturday, three of our students did us proud at the Festival of the Book, reading great papers well. I got a chance to see Sue Hart’s PBS video about Dorothy Johnson. As best I would know to look, it was extremely well done—in fact, it appears extraordinarily useful to high school English teachers. The tomatoes just keep turning ripe. The Packers just keep losing. All is well here, in other words!

Keep us posted on the new book's progress toward publication, on your health and happiness and travels.

Take good care.

Thank you.  
Love  
Marilla