



THE RALLY



Volume 44, Number 2 — Summer 2020

MISSOULA'S FIRST FOURTH AT THE FORT

July 4, 1976

In light of the very difficult decision that the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula had to make regarding this year's Fourth at the Fort Celebration, we thought it would be fun to reminisce about the beginnings of our community celebration. What follows is a little history on the origins of the celebration and information on what guests experienced as they came out to Fort Missoula on July 4, 1976.

Before we get to the first ever Fourth at the Fort, it's important to understand a bit about the backdrop of how museums and public history institutions were changing in the 1970's. For decades in the early 20th century, museums and even history were viewed from the top down. Stories of working class people, minorities, and generally of those not "in power" were ignored or minimized. History books tended to be sweeping narratives with a focus on white men, founding fathers, and industrial millionaires. Much of this changed beginning in the 1950's and 1960's due to policies like the G.I. Bill that let returning soldiers seek a college education. Individuals who in previous generations would not have gone to college, now had access to higher education. This meant more opportunities for women, African Americans, and working class people. Some of these folks also went on to pursue advanced level degrees. When they reached academia, they weren't content to simply rehash the same stories, instead they drove an interest in the history of everyday Americans, people who looked and thought like they did. This was the birth of Social History.

By the 1970's, Social History had taken root in popular culture and in public history. The results were books that would never have been published decades earlier, and in popular culture, television shows like *Little House on the Prairie*. This also trickled down to small communities throughout the United States, and there was a flourishing of local and county historical societies and sites. The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula (Founded 1974) is just one example of the impact of Social History.

As organizations were founded to preserve local history and tell the stories of a community's past, they were greatly aided in the mid 1970's by the public interest generated as part of the country's Bi-Centennial. It was a perfect storm of local history and Social History that gave birth to the countless organizations that preserve community history today.

Another change was in how these new local history museums told the stories of the past. The days of book length narratives and static exhibits gave way to things like craft and trade demonstrations, recreated historic villages, and reenactments. This new type of programming was immersive and helped engage people who previously viewed history as something that was elite or boring.

As the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula planned its first ever Fourth of July at Fort Missoula celebration, all of the above ideas and different ways of sharing local history were applied. At the time, the museum was still a relatively new institution in Missoula, having grown out of the Western Montana Ghost Town Society and the Save the Fort group that was organized to preserve the original 1877 Non-Commissioned Officer's Quarters. The Bi-Centennial was a big deal, and plans were made to create a celebration that would acknowledge that fact. What isn't certain is whether the planners knew the long term impact that their community event would have. Not only was the Bi-Centennial celebration important for Missoula, it also helped to establish and raise awareness of the work being done at the Historical Museum.

Work began in early 1976 to plan the first ever Fourth at the Fort celebration. The focus was on creating an event that looked like an 1870's celebration picnic. It featured a 1870's town with a main street, homestead, farm, military area, and an industry area. Each of these areas hosted activities and events that reflected their theme. In addition, each area featured active displays



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with antique machinery including a printing press and a steam powered thresher. Visitors were even treated to “down home” music that was performed throughout the day.

Many activities were planned throughout the day to engage young people. These included a frog jump competition, turtle races, and even sandlot baseball. Kids could participate in gunny sack races, an egg throwing contest, and hoop races. One of the highlights of the day was a children’s parade with kids dressed in vintage clothing.

An opening ceremony took place that was dedicated to the new museum. It involved the presentation of American Flags. To formally acknowledge the Bi-Centennial a special program was held at 5pm to commemorate the country’s 200th birthday. The closing ceremony was one of the highlights of the day as the Missoula City Band played a selection of patriotic songs.

Many groups contributed to the successful day with the University of Montana School of Forestry providing 160 feet of false fronts to create the Main Street area. KGVO broadcasted live throughout the event and wooden nickels were sold, assuring that those in attendance could go home with souvenirs.

Much like our current Fourth of July celebrations, the 1976 event would not have happened without hundreds of volunteer hours and the overwhelming support of the community. Some things don’t change.

As we all celebrate a new version of our Independence Day this July 4th, I hope each of you will spare a moment to reflect on the importance of celebrating community. This year will be difficult, but like everything, this too will pass. Before we know it, COVID-19 will be part of the past and we will again be able to gather and celebrate our community and its history at Fort Missoula.

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

A New Way of Doing Business

Like many of you reading this column, here at the Historical Museum we are adapting to a new normal. Things we once took for granted are now vastly different in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these new challenges, we are working hard to keep local history relevant and to continue to serve our community and visitors to Missoula.

To this end, we reopened the museum to public visitation beginning June 1st. As of this writing, we have welcomed over 240 visitors to the Historical Museum. These visitors have embraced our new way of doing business. This includes new hand sanitizer machines, arrows directing you through our galleries, a mandatory sign-in sheet, and our request that visitors wear masks. I can assure you that none of these precautions feel normal to us any more than they do to our visitors. I think the important thing to remember is that we all must adjust and be flexible so that our country can continue to rebound. We all must give a little for the wellbeing of everyone and so that we can continue to stay open. Thank you everyone who has supported us through this difficult time and all those willing to support our new policies and practices.

We have also had to make some very difficult decisions in the last few months regarding some of our large outdoor events. At this point, the Historical Museum is limiting any events to a maximum of 50 people. Unfortunately, this means that we will be unable to host our Annual Fourth at the Fort Celebration in 2020. This will be the first time since 1977 that this beloved community event will not take place. This was an incredibly difficult decision for the Friends of the Historical Museum Board and the staff at the museum. In the end, we just did not feel it was in the best interest of public safety to gather several thousand people at the Fort on July 4th. We hope you understand, and we look forward to celebrating the return of this event in 2021.

Away from the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to make progress on several museum projects. Fundraising is going well for the locomotive, and work is progressing quickly on the construction of a pole barn to protect the locomotive from the harsh western Montana winters. We were also incredibly pleased last month to receive our third grant from the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. This \$40,000 grant will help us to complete a full architectural assessment and planning for a restoration of two original Alien Detention Center barracks. When complete, this project will help us continue to raise awareness of the 2200 Italian and Japanese Nationals interned at Fort Missoula During WWII.

As always, we thank each and every one of you for supporting the museum. This is a difficult time, but eventually things will get back to normal. When that happens, we look forward to celebrating together.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE MUSEUM
SIGN UP TODAY!

- ★ Free admission to the Museum & Events
- ★ 10% discount at the Museum store & educational programs/camps
- ★ Some levels gain Membership in the North American Reciprocal Association Includes Access to over 1000 museums, zoos, & many others
- ★ Youth enrolled in the Fort Missoula Kids Club includes: Hands on History Passports & special activities

HMFM

Yes! WE'RE OPEN

PLEASE, RESPECT OUR GUIDELINES WHEN VISITING

- Please, wear a mask while in the Main Museum
- Practice physical distancing
- Sign in with your contact information
- The main museum building has a limit of 10 visitors
- Take advantage of free hand sanitizer
- Respect traffic patterns in our galleries

MONDAY - SATURDAY: 10AM - 4PM & SUNDAY: NOON - 4PM
HOURS OF 10AM - 12PM ARE RESERVED FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.
WE WILL CLOSE AT 4PM DAILY FOR CLEANING & SANITIZING.

THEOPHILUS STEWARD: CHAPLAIN OF THE 25TH INFANTRY

Dr. Theophilus Gould Steward, born in 1843 to a family of free Blacks in New Jersey, found his life's calling when a traveling minister came to his town. Abandoning his nascent career as a sailor – a choice influenced by the romanticism of the sea rather than any true aptitude or knowledge of what sailing entailed – Steward entered the gospel ministry, and in 1864, at 21, was appointed a traveling minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, usually referred to simply as A.M.E.

Steward's position within the A.M.E. church was as an itinerant minister, and it was the church, not Steward, who determined where he should go and how long he should stay. Although he expressed a desire to travel south and preach to freedmen, his elders at the church felt that he should learn his craft in a more forgiving environment, and his first appointment was to a church in South Camden, New Jersey. After nearly a year in South Camden, Steward's wish was granted, and he joined a delegation of A.M.E. Bishops and ministers heading to Charleston to set up a new branch of the church. Steward would remain in the south until 1872, serving in various churches across South Carolina and Georgia. While in Charleston, Steward met Elizabeth Gadsden, and the two married in 1865. Together, they would have 8 children, of whom 7 survived to adulthood.

(Fifty Years in the Gospel Ministry from 1864 to 1914, T. G. Steward, 1916)

At these postings, Steward developed his ministerial approach, one that he would maintain throughout his career. Although hailing from a very different background from his congregations, he made it a point to connect with them on an individual, human level. Everywhere he went, Steward established schools, often serving as the only teacher. He helped build churches, both metaphorically and physically, often negotiating successfully with White property owners who staunchly opposed having a Black church in their vicinity. He became involved in politics, and in 1868, wrote the platform for the Georgia Republican Party, in preparation for the state's re-entry into the union. For Steward, like other Back men in Georgia, this marked the first time he was permitted to vote for President, a right which he exercised and which he encouraged his congregation to exercise as well. However, by the time of the election the anti-reconstruction factions in Georgia had firmly taken charge, and control of the state legislature went to the Democratic Party. Although the legislature had initially included several Black members, the Democrats summarily expelled them. Black political leaders across the state were threatened and ordered to leave, Steward among them. He resisted the pressure, and continued to serve his congregation in Macon, Georgia, until 1871, when he and his family were sent north.

Steward continued to serve as an itinerant preacher, moving across various churches in the north and establishing himself as a scholar. Although he had always had a keen interest in education, his time serving in established northern congregations gave him space to begin writing and publishing. He also attended Wilberforce University, in Ohio, and received a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1881. In 1891, Steward accepted an appointment as Chaplain of the 25th Infantry Regiment, a decision which would profoundly shape his beliefs and philosophies for the rest of his life. He was only the third Black man to receive an official appointment to the position of army Chaplain.

Steward's first post as Chaplain was in Missoula, and he arrived on August 24th, 1891. Entirely unfamiliar with army life, Steward immediately set to work getting to know his new congregation and immersing himself in their experience. He took his turn doing routine chores at the fort, and learned to hunt, fish, and ride horses. Steward quickly won the loyalty of the soldiers, as well as the respect of his fellow officers. Steward also occasionally served as guest minister in churches across the valley, returning most often to Lolo. Although many of the Missoula Valley's settlers were former Confederate soldiers or their relatives, Steward never recorded receiving any trouble or pushback while preaching. He credited the soldiers of the 25th Infantry for this reception, as their decade of service at Fort Missoula had left the local citizens with nothing but respect and admiration.

During his time in Missoula, Steward recorded only one racist incident. Chaplain Ritner, serving at Fort Keogh, came to Missoula for a visit and invited Steward to dinner at the Florence Hotel, where Ritner was staying. Although Steward was allowed into the hotel, he found himself barred from the dining room, which did not admit people of color. When Chaplain Ritner challenged this rule, he was told that admitting a Black man into the dining room would cause all the White patrons to leave. Steward later noted that this was the only establishment in Missoula that had refused him entry. Upon his return to Fort Missoula, his commanding officer, Colonel Burt, heard of the incident, and he and Steward publicly consulted a prominent lawyer about what actions could be taken against the hotel for their discrimination. As hoped, the owner of the Florence immediately backed down, apologizing to Steward and agreeing to change the exclusionary policy.

In 1893, Steward's eldest son James died. A few months later Steward's wife Elizabeth also passed away, leaving a grieving Steward charge of their six remaining children. Three years later, he met and married Dr. Susan McKinney, the first Black woman to graduate from medical school in the United States.

(Fifty Years in the Gospel Ministry from 1864 to 1914, T. G. Steward, 1916)

When the 25th Infantry Regiment was ordered to Cuba in 1898, Steward remained in the United States on recruitment duty. After the battles of San Juan and El Caney, in which the 25th Infantry played crucial roles in securing a United States victory, Steward rejoined his regiment. When the regiment was sent to the Philippines less than a year later, Steward went with them. There, he became actively engaged in the lives of the local Filipinos, particularly those living in Manilla where he was stationed. When United States troops had overwhelmed the Filipino forces fighting for independence, Steward immersed himself in the task of "Americanizing" the local schools.

Steward retired from the army in 1907 after 16 years of service. He and his family moved to Wilberforce, Ohio, and Steward became a professor at Wilberforce University, where he established the History department. He continued his scholarly work, becoming a prominent member of the American Negro Academy, founded to honor the memory of Frederick Douglass, and publishing several well-received books. His experience in the army had convinced him that military life and discipline was the key to raising strong and morally upright citizens, and he argued his whole life that the army was an excellent place for Black Americans to seek opportunities and develop careers. His witnessing of the 1906 Brownsville Affair, in which 2 entire companies of the 25th Infantry were discharged without honor after being implicated in a shooting in Brownsville, Texas, did little to shake Steward's faith in the army as an institution. Steward saw military service as a way for Black Americans to establish their right to citizenship by proving themselves willing and able to fight for their country. This attitude would be echoed half a century later, during the Second World War, when Japanese-American men, facing discrimination and hatred for their heritage, joined the military as a way to conclusively prove their loyalty to the United States.

Steward died in 1920, at the age of 77. He left behind an impressive legacy of scholarship, but just as importantly, a legacy of service and dedication to the men, women, and children, soldiers and civilians alike, to whom he had ministered over his 50-year career. His published works continue to be invaluable sources for those interested in Black soldiers, and his personal life, documented in his own words in his memoir *Fifty Years in the Gospel Ministry from 1864 to 1914*, is the story of a passionate, dedicated man who saw clearly the injustices around him and worked tirelessly to lift up his people in the face of strong, occasionally nearly crushing, opposition.

RALPH B. "RING BELL" ADAMS – EARLY DAY US FOREST SERVICE TELEPHONE AND RADIO INNOVATOR AND MISSOULIAN

In 1996, Ann R. Regier of Newton, KS donated a collection of photographs, documents and a scrapbook belonging to an extraordinary innovator in the early days of the Forest Service named Ralph B. Adams. Adams is highlighted in the new HMFM exhibit, *"Fire Call! A Walk Through the History of Backcountry Communications in the US Forest Service."*

If one person gave the Forest Service telephone systems a unique quality it was Missoulian R.B. Adams, a telephone engineer with Region One headquarters in Missoula. He was known throughout the Service as "Ring Bell," and early manuals credit him with several diagrams and most instructions for tree-line construction.

Adams joined Region One when fire suppression on the national forests became a priority, especially following the 1910 "Big Blow-up," and quick, immediate communication from the fire lookouts to the guard and ranger stations, and the consequent saving of valuable time deploying firefighters and equipment to the scene, became even more important and drew more investment.

The telephone was the first administrative tool employed by Forest Supervisors to keep in daily contact with their Rangers. Although the telephone's usefulness was limited by the location of the telephone lines, the Forest Service was quick to adopt this handy tool. The dictum that "in firefighting, a minute may mean millions" meant that the telephone became "the instrument of salvation."

Ralph B. "Ring Bell" Adams was born in Illinois in 1881. He moved to Missoula in the early 1900s to work for Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company, a large concern based in Salt Lake City, UT chartered with covering telephone service in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah. Adams married into the Missoula pioneer family the Rathbuns when he married Lulu Rathbun in 1908. They had a child, Lila, in 1912.

The Missoulian refers to Lulu in the engagement announcement as "one of the most popular society girls in the city. She has a grace and charm of manner wholly her own; she possesses many accomplishments, being a musician of ability, and the sweetness of her disposition and beauty of her character not only win for her many friends, but bind them closely to her with the strongest affection."



Of Adams, the same column states "Mr. Adams has made his home in Missoula for the past several years and since his arrival he has steadily grown in the estimation of the people; his man splendid qualities have brought him friends without number, all of whom will take pleasure in extending the heartiest of congratulations to him and their felicitations to the charming young woman who is to become his wife."

In 1911, Adams was offered the position of "Superintendent of Telephone Construction" with Region One of the USFS and promoted to "Telephone Engineer" in 1916. The Telephone Trouble Book for Region One was prepared by Adams in 1923 and expanded for all the Forest Service in 1925.



Two of Adams' most significant technical contributions were the design of a hand-held portable phone that could be clipped to the telephone line, as well as a "howler" that notified far-flung crews that someone was trying to get through to them, a static remover for telephone lines, and was also an early advocate of "wireless telephone."

An early forest ranger G.M. DeJarnette, retired 1962 said about Adams, "On the communications improvement side was old R.B. (Ringin' Bell) Adams, who gave me so much hell for the way I built my first telephone line that I sure learned how to build 'em 'neat and pretty' but quick. He was the first man I ever heard predict the radio for our communication, and that was almost before radio was."



In 1925, the Adamses relocated to Portland, OR to pursue other opportunities, but would often return to Missoula for visits throughout the years. Ralph and Lulu remained in Portland until the early 1940s when they moved to Monterey, CA to be closer to Lila, who was teaching in nearby Pacific City. R.B. passed away in the fall of 1945, followed a year later by Lulu.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN TADAIMA! A COMMUNITY VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE

The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula is excited to be a community partner for this year's virtual pilgrimage, called Tadaima!. Tadaima means "I'm home" in Japanese. According to the organizers, "Tadaima is our way of acknowledging that we are all home right now and the important reasons for why that is, while also celebrating the history, diversity, strength, and vibrancy of the Nikkei community".



Since 1969 members of the Japanese American community have returned to the sites of WWII confinement to remember the suffering of their families. The pilgrimages started with a visit to Manzanar and have grown to include most of the War Relocation Authority Camps. What began as a solemn memorial has grown into an incredible educational opportunity for subsequent generations and extended community members, a celebration of culture, and now, a virtual pilgrimage. Pilgrimages are places where camp survivors can reunite and share their stories with new generations with the hope that through sharing stories something like Japanese American Incarceration will never happen again. With covid-19 in full effect across the country all of this summer's pilgrimages were cancelled – that's when an outstanding group of organizers jumped in and started pulling together Tadaima!.

Hosted by the National Park Service and the Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages (JAMP), the virtual pilgrimage program is full of content contributed by organizations across the county, including ours! You will find full documentaries, short site tours, features on exhibits, live streams about food, poetry, art, personal stories, podcasts, and more! Each week centers on a different theme and Fort Missoula will be part of Week 5: A Question of Loyalty. Tadaima! Will take place between June 13th – August 16th, but don't worry if you missed the beginning, you can always go back and watch material from previous weeks. Registration is free and people of all backgrounds are encouraged to engage with the pilgrimage material. Check out www.jampilgrimages.com/virtualpilgrimageregistration or search online for "Tadaima Virtual Pilgrimage" for more information.

The banner features a background photo of a group of people sitting around a table, possibly in a classroom or meeting. The text is overlaid on this image.

EDUCATION CORNER

FROM ONLINE ACTIVITIES TO SUMMER CAMP, THE HMFM EDUCATION CREW HAS YOU COVERED

- Virtual Lunch & Learns
- Summer Camp Update
- Educator Resources
- Grounds Activities
- Scavenger Hunts
- New Online Content

Join our amazing Education Director as we use our online platforms to explore different parts of the Historical Museum, historical topics per your requests, and historically inspired crafts and games.

New Online Content Coming Soon! Visit our website, YouTube channel, or Facebook page for weekly activities.

MEET OUR NEW INTERN

Matthew Holter



My name is Matthew Holter, and I am interning at the Historical Museum for the summer of 2020. I am a fourth-generation Montanan who grew up in Lolo, Montana. I graduate this fall at the University of Providence (Great Falls) with a B.A. in History and a minor in Theology and Ministry. I am on the Cross Country and Track teams at the University of Providence. Exploring different individual stories and competing understandings of freedom throughout the development of the United States has always been edifying to me as a student of history. Moreover, I thoroughly enjoy reading and writing about historiography and church and state, finding both topics to be fascinating. Gaining an insight into public history this summer will help me in my future endeavors, whatever they may be. Reading, researching, writing, running, watching TV, and meditating consumes most of my time.

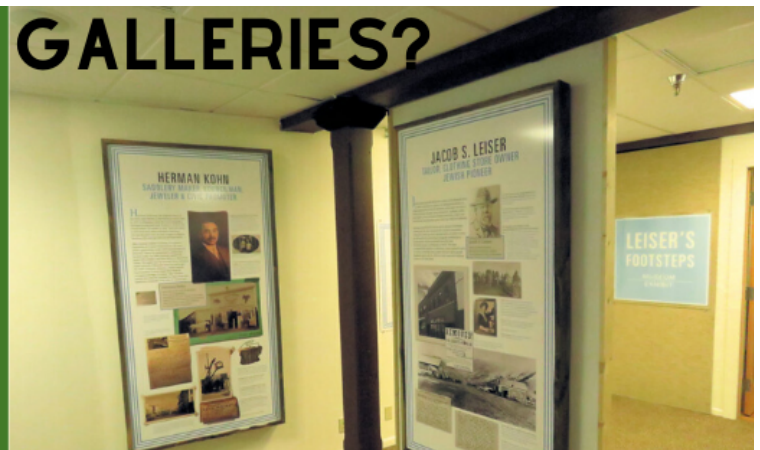
WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE HMFM HAS BEGUN ACCEPTING BOOK DONATIONS!

All book donations accepted by pre-arranged appointment only. NO EXCEPTIONS. Please, do not bring books to the museum without an appointment. We will not be able to accept them. Thank you. To donate books e-mail Matt Lautzenheiser at mlautzenheiser@missoulacounty.us or call 406-258-3471.

To help us reduce risks for our volunteers, if you can, please pre-sort your books into boxes before your scheduled drop-off or pick-up date. Visit www.fortmissoulamuseum.org/event/annual-used-book-sale/ for a complete list of genres.

MISSING OUR GALLERIES? VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR NEW ONLINE EXHIBITS

- Leiser's Footsteps: *The Uncovered History of the Jewish Community in Missoula*
- The Odyssey of Thomas Francis Meagher
- No Enemy Movement Observed: *The Vietnam War Through the Eyes of a Frenchtown Marine*
- We've Been Working On the Railroad*
- The Brownsville Affair: *the Continuing Story of the 25th Infantry*



Visit our Online Exhibits page at www.fortmissoulamuseum.org/explore/our-online-exhibits/

THE JOURNEY TO RESTORE ENGINE #7

This spring has been a remarkably busy time in Engine #7's story. Volunteers have been working hard and if you visited the Museum grounds recently you may have seen the major changes taking place. That's right, when this Rally hits your mailbox the protective display barn will probably be complete, and we will be starting to work on Engine #7 itself!

The support and speed of this project has been utterly amazing. From a record-breaking Missoula Gives which raised over \$14,000 to raising the shed in two days, it is full steam ahead.

None of this could have happened without your support, businesses and companies stepping up to help with in-kind donations of equipment, supplies, and labor, and the hours (and hours) of work volunteers have so generously given to the project. And when we say hours of work, we mean it. Hardworking volunteers, in all types of weather, have removed the old deck, prepped the site area, weed-whacked, dug footings, inserted rebar cages, set the base plates in place, spread 30 yards of gravel (by hand), poured concrete footers, milled needed lumber, designed and cut steel plates, built HUGE trusses, raised the 24' piers, and literally raised the barn. Did we mention the roofing, too!? What an achievement.

Another wonderful aspect of having so many volunteers on this project is the depth of knowledge we have been able to share. The day all the trusses were set in place we were able to take part in a bit of timber building tradition! Thank you to one of our volunteers for sharing this bit of history:

"There is a long tradition of placing a branch or bough on the highest point of the timber framing. The tradition is known as 'setting the wetting bush', and it said that the tradition's roots originates in Northern Europe centuries ago.

The evergreen bough is nailed into to place at the top of the final beam's placement before the walls roof enclosure. A time long ago when life was slower, the labor component much more significant and the absence of cranes and power tools, a quiet moment was purposefully drawn to honor the trees that went into the structure, for blessing the future activities to be held in the new structure and the celebration of a safe raising well done. Of course, it was not uncommon to raise a drink in toast as well!"

A huge shout out to the businesses who have so generously helped us with this project: Hunts Timbers Inc., Jackson Contractor Group, Boyce Lumber and Design Center, Western Excavating, Midway Rental, Knife River, CD'A Metals, MOMs Rental, Pacific Steel & Recycling, Montana Nuts and Bolts, Western States-Cat Rental Store, Heritage Timber, and Rodda Paint Co...

So, come on out to the Museum and check out Engine #7's new look.



HMFM

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

July 5 – Last day to see Leiser's Footsteps

July 15 - Nov. 6 – Montana Votes!

July 19 – Last day to see No Enemy Movement Observed

Opening in October – Behind Barbed Wire

PUBLISHED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM AT FORT MISSOULA
3400 Captain Rawn Way, Missoula, MT 59804 • (406) 728-3476 • www.FortMissoulaMuseum.org