



# THE RALLY



Volume 45, Number 2 — Summer 2021

## ANNUAL FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION RETURNS TO FORT MISSOULA

*By Matt Lautzenheiser*

The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula is pleased to announce the return of our annual 4th at the Fort Celebration. On Sunday July 4th, the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula and the Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History will partner to present a number of family friendly activities to celebrate our country’s independence. Many familiar aspects will return including educational activities for kids, and antique engine and tractor show, mining demonstration, model railroad exhibit, and the ever-popular miniature ponies. In addition, we are happy to be able to get our sawmill up and running for the first time on nearly two years.

While much of the celebration will be familiar, there will be some changes this year. We are working closely with Missoula County to assure for the safety of our community. With that in mind, we will not be hosting traditional elements of our event that encourage people to gather in one spot. With this in mind, we will not have live music, a tent, or a formal program this year. We are disappointed not to be able to offer these things in 2021, but safety must come first. Speaking for the entire staff of the museum, we are all looking forward to 2022 when these elements can return to our 4th of July celebration.

While the event will be a little smaller than year’s past, we do plan to offer a variety of food options for visitors, and will be selling Pepsi and Beer to benefit the Friends of the Historical Museum.

One last change I’m happy to announce is that in 2021, the Historical Museum and the Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History will not be charging a set admission price. This year we are going to an admission by donation. We know that 2020 was hard on a lot of our friends and neighbors and we don’t want an admission price to be a barrier for folks who want the attend the event. If visitors are able and want to make a donation, it will go towards the education and preservation work of the Friends of the Historical Museum, the Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History, and the wonderful young people from the Future Farmers of America.

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## LOOKING CLOSER AT INTERNEES: ARTHUR SHINEI YAKABI

*By Anne Smyrl*

Arthur Shinei Yakabi was born in Peru in 1922. Both of his parents had immigrated to Peru from Okinawa, in Japan, several years earlier. The family was not wealthy, and Yakabi was only able to complete his schooling through the fourth grade before having to drop out for lack of money. Despite this, Yakabi recalled having a good childhood, with time for sports and other entertainments as well as work.

During the 1930s and ‘40s, anti-Japanese sentiment was building up among non-Japanese Peruvians, culminating in a 3-day race riot in 1940, where hundreds of Japanese-owned homes and businesses were destroyed. The violence was widespread, but most concentrated in Lima, where the largest population of Japanese Peruvians resided. The total damages to the community totaled over \$1.6 million.

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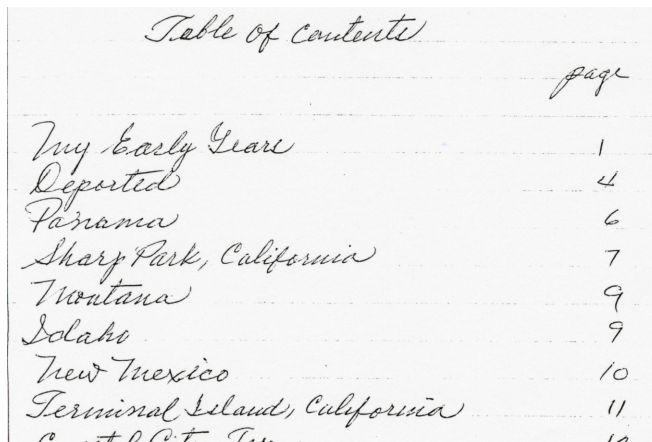
Yakabi does not mention the event in his autobiography, but he was living and working in Lima at the time, so likely was impacted in at least some way.

After the bombing at Pearl Harbor, the United States needed Japanese prisoners to use in prisoner exchanges with Japan. The government did not want to use Japanese Americans in these exchanges, because they were worried that Japanese American prisoners would sabotage the US war effort by giving information to Japan once they arrived. Instead, the government negotiated with countries in Central and South America, asking to use their Japanese populations for prisoner exchanges instead. Peru was among the most enthusiastic in agreeing to this.

In February 1943, Yakabi was arrested by Peruvian police at his workplace. Initially, the police had come for Yakabi's boss, the owner of the bakery in which he worked, but the boss was able to bribe the police into arresting Yakabi instead. Yakabi recalls that he did not have enough money to bribe either the police or the prison guards to set him free.

After two days in a Lima jail, and without anyone telling him why he had been arrested or what crime he was being accused of, Yakabi was loaded onto a transport ship with other Japanese prisoners and taken to a US Army camp in Panama. According to the guards, all the prison camps in the United States itself were full. The Peruvian Japanese stayed in Panama for three months before being loaded onto another transport ship and taken to Sharp Park, California, a holding station for imprisoned enemy aliens.

After two months in California, Yakabi and about 100 other Japanese Peruvian prisoners were transferred to Fort Missoula. Yakabi reports little change between his life in Sharp Park and his life at Fort Missoula, although he specifically mentioned being able to join a soccer team at Fort Missoula. When the opportunity came for prisoners to take jobs at the Kooskia CCC camp, in Idaho, Yakabi took the opportunity.



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During his time at Kooskia, Yakabi began learning English – as a Peruvian native, his first language was Spanish, and he spoke no English when he was arrested and deported. After a few months in Idaho, Yakabi was again transferred, this time to the detention facility in Santa Fe, New Mexico. From there, he was sent to Terminal Island, in California, for imminent deportation to Japan.

Although his parents had immigrated from Japan, Yakabi himself had never been, and desperately did not want to go. Like most of the Peruvian Japanese, Yakabi wanted to return to his home in Peru.

Ultimately, Yakabi was not sent to Japan, thanks to the work of lawyer Wayne Collins, who took on the cause of the Peruvian Japanese prisoners. However, the Peruvian government refused to allow the arrested Peruvian Japanese to return, insisting that they were now the problem of the United States. Therefore, like captured Italian Merchant Marines before them, the Japanese Peruvians found themselves suddenly labeled illegal immigrants in a country they had been forcibly and unwillingly brought to.

Without a home or country, Yakabi lived in the camp at Crystal City, Texas until a large canning factor in New Jersey – Seabrook Farms – sent word that they would sponsor any prisoners who were willing to go work for them. Yakabi jumped at the opportunity.

Soon after arriving in New Jersey, Yakabi met his future wife Laura, a nisei from California who had been imprisoned at Manzanar. He was also able to gain citizenship by taking a citizenship course offered by the American Legion. The rest of his family had been able to remain in Peru throughout the war, and Yakabi was eventually able to visit them with his wife. However, by the time he was granted permission to go back, his father and one of his brothers had passed away.

Yakabi remained in the United States for the rest of his life. After many years of fitting classes in between his work, he was able to earn a high school diploma, an accomplishment he was extremely proud of. In 1981, he testified before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, recounting his experiences. Yakabi died in 1994, and his wife Laura died in May of 2020.

To this day, the United States government has not offered an apology to the Latin American Japanese arrested and imprisoned during the war, nor were they deemed eligible for the reparation payments offered to imprisoned Japanese Americans.

## MUSEUM COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

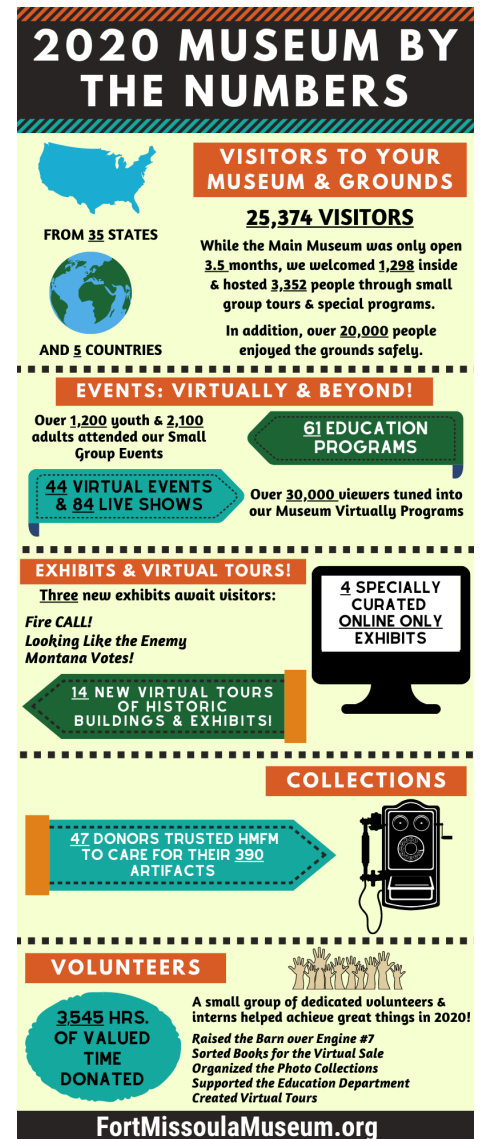
By Emma Sieh

HMFM has been collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Missoula County and Western Montana since its establishment over 45 years ago. The museum was founded to provide a refuge of sorts for the history and artifacts of the area and as the county's only historical museum, HMFM serves a major need for the people that live within our community. But what happens with the artifacts after they have been donated to the museum?

Collections management is an ongoing process. From the minute the item comes through our doors it is our duty to document, track, preserve, and display artifacts within the collection. The initial process can take anywhere from a few days to months or years depending on the size of the donation. After being assigned an identification number (or Object ID as we call it), the item is placed in specially-made archival materials that help to slow down the deterioration process and protect from a range of potential damaging factors like light, dust, or improper handling. Objects made of similar materials are stored together in one of our nine storage rooms. These rooms are also monitored for temperature and humidity to make sure that the general environment is not doing damage to the items while they are being stored.

After 45 years of collecting, HMFM has over 50,000 objects in its permanent collection and you can imagine the amount of space they may take up! The museum, having nearly reached its storage capacity, has started looking critically at its storage spaces to find ways to improve the care and preservation for these objects. Rehousing is a term used in the collections department to describe a project that involves taking objects out of their current home, assessing their condition, updating their related documentation, and either placing them in new protective enclosures or moving them to a different location (or sometimes both!). These projects are a way for collections staff to check on our objects and ensure that they are receiving the best care possible.

The HMFM Collections Department does small-scale rehousing projects throughout the year – maybe one or two objects at a time – but we are looking at undertaking quite a few large-scale projects – hundreds of objects at a time – to better understand our current storage capacity before we endeavor to build new storage facilities onsite. We are excited to have two of these major projects underway with the help of our Browman interns Bethany and Emily who are helping us rehouse our book and framed object collections. We look forward to working with more volunteers on future projects now that we are open to the public again!



## AND SHE'S BACK!

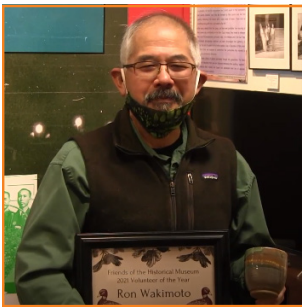
By Emily McMath



Hello! My name is Emily McMath and I am a summer intern at HMFM. You may remember me as the 2019-2020 AmeriCorps Leader serving at the museum within the Education department, but this summer I will be assisting with collections. I am returning to Missoula from Indiana where I am pursuing my Master's Degree in Museum Studies focusing on collections care and management and preventive conservation. My project within the collections this summer will consist of rehousing and organizing our collection of books and updating the condition in which they are housed. Currently we have about 1000 books in need of rehousing and I am super excited to take on this task. When I am not at the museum you can find me floating down the Clark Fork, at a Paddlehead's game, or Big Dipper.

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## HMFM HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING



**Ron Wakimoto**  
Volunteer of the Year Award

On Friday April 16th, the Friends of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula held their annual Business Meeting. This event allows the Historical Museum an opportunity to gather our membership, announce newly appointed Board Members, and present our annual awards.

The meeting began with a welcome from Friends President, Steve Bixby, who provided introductions of all the Museum's Friends Board Members and Trustees. This was followed by a "State of the Museum" address by Executive Director Matt Lautzenheiser. Lautzenheiser spoke on the challenges of the last year and the major accomplishments made by the museum despite these challenges. These included the construction of a pole barn over the Willamette Locomotive and the new parking lot. Lautzenheiser also recognized the incredible accomplishments of the staff as they used creativity and technology to find new ways to reach visitors and school groups.



**Tate Jones**  
Lt. James Moss Award

Following the "State of the Museum" address, Bixby introduced the new members of the Friends of the Historical Museum Board. They are Katrina Himmelreich, Tom Berich, and Leif Frederickson. All will provide new and interesting perspectives to the Museum and Board, helping the museum to continue to progress and find new ways to meet the needs of our community.

The 2021 award winners were then announced. The Lt. Moss Award for Exemplary Service to the History of Missoula County was presented to Tate Jones, Director of the Rocky Mountain Museum of Military History. Tate has served their museum for many years and has been a constant champion for local history. Ron Wakimoto was selected as this year's Volunteer of the Year. Ron has long been an active member of the museum. He serves on the Friends Board and works with Education Director Kristjana Eyjolfsson to provide programs for the thousands of students who visit the museum. The final award winner was Dani Graves. Dani received the Post Commander Award for youth volunteer of the year. Dani has served the museum through the Junior Docent program, as a building host, and done an excellent job in the annual Lantern Tours program. From all of us here at the Historical Museum, congratulations to Tate, Ron, and Dani on their well-deserved awards.



**Dani Graves**  
Post Commander Award

The meeting ended with a development report from Development and Marketing Director Jessie Rogers. Jessie touched on all things fundraising and shared the many accomplishments of the museum the past year despite the challenges of the pandemic.

This year's program was a first for the Historical Museum as it was entirely done virtually. We think it turned out well, all things considered, and we thank all those who attended for their patience and willingness to try something new.

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## THE FRIENDS OF HISTORICAL MUSEUM AT FORT MISSOULA ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS



**Leif Frederickson**

is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Montana



**Katrina Himmelreich**

is a long-time volunteer and recent graduate of the University of Montana



**Tom Berich**

works for Montana Public Radio

**WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME THESE FOLKS TO THE MUSEUM TEAM!**

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## EDUCATION UPDATE

**By Kristjana Eyjólfsson**

Greetings from the Education department! I feel like a broken record, but our spring season was a little different this year! Happily, it was still quite productive, ending with a handful of last-minute field trips that helped me remember how fun it is to share Missoula's history with kiddos. In addition to the last couple of frantic end of school year field trips, we continued to provide activity kits to Empower Place at the Food Bank, and Boys and Girls Club, hosted a virtual History Day competition, and partnered with the ZACC, Jeanette Rankin Peace Center, and All Nations Health Center to provide a series of covid-19 related art/history workshops to local group homes and shelters.

Looking ahead, we have a fresh batch of Jr. Docents ready to learn how to bring HMFm's stories alive for visitors. They will have camp just before 4th of July, so make sure you say hello if you meet one. For the 4th of July we will have our buildings hosted by knowledgeable volunteers, craft stations, and demonstrations. Later in July we will welcome back History Camp to our site, which is always a fun and exhausting endeavor. Throughout the summer we'll enjoy hosting summer camp groups from all over Missoula and highlight our historic buildings and theme through fun drop-in kids' activities. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook for more info! In the meantime, we could use some fresh recruits to help us share our history with visitors of all ages. If you like talking to people and want to learn more about Fort Missoula's history, contact Kristjana or Carolyn.

# A COVID-19 SILVER LINING: TEACHING INTERPRETIVE TECHNIQUES TO STUDENTS AROUND NORTH AMERICA!

By Kristjana Eyjólfsson

As a museum educator and historic interpreter, I love nothing more than passing around artifacts, telling expressive stories, and watching visitors have “light bulb moments” where they connect with an event or person from long ago.

As you might imagine, Covid-19 closures made that difficult! Although my one-on-one interactions were limited this past year, the switch to online or virtual programs did provide a golden opportunity or two. A few years back, I became a Certified Interpretive Guide Trainer for the National Association of Interpretation. That is a mouthful, but what it means is that I learned how to teach budding naturalists, environmental educators, living history interpreters, and heritage interpreters how to connect their audiences to their resource or site. Unfortunately, due to all the other fun things I do at work, and the dispersed nature of Montana’s population, I had not been able to share that skill beyond our docents and junior docents - until it went virtual!

Along with my fantastic colleague Christine Morris from the Montana Natural History Center, I led two Certified Interpretive Guide Courses in the past 6 months, resulting in 39 newly minted CIGs. I also helped teach interpretation to the new class of AmeriCorps members serving with Montana State Parks across the state. Although teaching virtually was not as dynamic as teaching in person, we connected with students from all over the country and Canada! Friendships were formed over the month-long courses, and the variety of perspectives, experiences, and subject knowhow added to the quality of the course. Although I would have loved to sit down with all these students in person, I doubt we could have brought together folks from Toronto, Helena, Georgia, St. Louis, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Alaska twice a week for a month! So next time you are on vacation visiting a zoo, battlefield, nature center, or museum in another state, you might just be speaking to someone trained by your very own local museum professionals!



Field Trip Kiddos Exploring All Angles of the Trolley 🍌



🍌 Activity Kits in Action at Boys & Girls Club



🍌 Group Photo of our Virtual CIG Class

## MEET OUR NEW INTERN

*Cassidy Vandervoort*



My name is Cassidy Vandervoort and I am a student here at the University of Montana going into my senior year as a History major with a minor in Geography. I am from Billings, Montana and have always loved this state and its vast beauty. I am excited to be spending my summer here in Missoula and interpreting Missoula County history at Fort Missoula! I will be interning full-time at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula over the summer under the Angie Palin Internship as well as through AmeriCorps working with the Director of Education, Kristjana Eyjolfsson. Through interning at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula I will be working towards obtaining a Public History Certificate that is offered at the University of Montana.

## MISSOULA GIVES SURPASSES 1 MILLION DOLLARS FOR OUR COMMUNITY!

This year 4,088 donors gave \$1,223,503 for 164 area nonprofits, including over \$25,300 for the Historical Museum. We are so thankful to be part of this community and to be YOUR Museum!

Missoula Gives 2021 was truly an inspiring event and YOUR generosity made history, Wow! Thank you!

**HMFM**  
Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

**THANK YOU!!**



MISSOULA GIVES

## WHY BECOME A MEMBER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM?

SUPPORTING THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND KEEPS YOUR MUSEUM ALIVE & INNOVATIVE

### What does the Historic Preservation Fund support?



**100% OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES GO TO:**

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**INTERNSHIPS**   **VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING**  
**YOUTH ACTIVITIES**   **PARK MAINTENANCE**  
**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**



### JOIN OR RENEW TODAY

**GET THE PEACE OF MIND THAT COMES FROM ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO THE PRESERVATION OF WESTERN MONTANA'S RICH HISTORY & CULTURE**



# HMFM

Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

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www.FortMissoulaMuseum.org

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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 4 at the Fort** returns! Hours: 10am to 4pm, **ADMISSION BY DONATION**. Bring your favorite picnicking supplies and join us in welcoming back Missoula's Favorite Fourth of July Celebration!

**July 19 - 23 History Camp** for ages 9-13, day long (9am to 4pm) activities on site, if interested contact our Education Director, Kristjana Eyjólfsson at 258-3473 or email [keyjolfsson@missoulacounty.us](mailto:keyjolfsson@missoulacounty.us).

**August 11 - 13 Western MT Fair** 2021, Cheese Curds Return! Hours: 11am - 10pm (Wed - Sat) 11am - 8pm (Sun), Missoula Fairgrounds

**Fall (Date TBD) Harvest Fest Returns!** Please check our Facebook page and website later this summer for more details.

*We are so happy to be open again and we can't wait to see you!*

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