North-Missoula Community Development Corporation

Moon-Randolph Homestead
June 2003

Prepared by the Hill and Homestead
Preservation Coalition
**Mission:** The Hill and Homestead Preservation Coalition works to preserve the Moon-Randolph Homestead as a cultural landscape where active stewardship respects and conserves complex layers of human and natural history; where urban development and protected wild lands meet in balanced rural inter-relationships; and where people work together, grounding their present and future in a shared awareness of the past.

1. **The spirit of the place**

   The Homestead maintains a delicate balance between being a living place, where historic activities continue and new uses are established, and a place where natural processes of aging and ecological renewal can be appreciated. The Homestead’s inhabitants from the end of the Nineteenth until the end of the Twentieth Centuries practiced an ethic of salvage, repair and reuse that speaks to lean economies molded by human inventiveness. The Homestead is neither a typical tourist site – where visitors view historic relics as if in a museum – nor a conventional recreational park. The Homestead’s spirit forms the foundation for all management, preservation, and interpretation decisions.

   Central to the Homestead is its power to invoke a strong sense of stewardship and to instill positive ideals of shared values and shared community work. Among the wide range of visitors affected by this collaborative impulse are children and young people. Active participation in farm work, clean-up work, and creative activities of repair with items on hand – “recreation” most literally – fosters this connection more strongly than tourist visits or casual recreation. Extended or repeated contact, through overnight stays, camping, or programs of regularly scheduled activities, is particularly effective in developing an expanded consciousness of both tradition and change – a way to judge progress by reflecting on the past. It is its power to engage and inspire that, above all else, makes the Homestead an invaluable civic asset to the city of Missoula and beyond.

2. **Preservation of historic structures**

   **General principles**

   The preservation philosophy adopted at the Homestead is founded on an ethic of respect and reuse as suggested above. This philosophy embraces a commitment to carry on the resilient tradition of materials adaptation and re-use evident, already, in the site’s structures. More specifically, it
attempts to balance the gradual decay of the structures with the need for functional space to carry out programs and to redevelop some areas of the Homestead as a still-functioning farm. It does not attempt to restore buildings back to a specific historical “period of significance.”

To the extent possible, stabilization, preservation, and rehabilitation work will be carried out in ways that provide opportunities for citizens, including children, to be involved as volunteers at a variety of skill levels. Historically significant structures that can be kept in use or have a reasonable potential for a return to use will not be allowed to deteriorate beyond the point where they can be rescued. Reconstructed buildings or any newer structures must be built in accordance to building codes regarding foundations, roofs and structural (bearing) members. Buildings or parts of buildings that cannot be saved should, whenever possible be recycled in other Homestead structures.

**In order to protect the site, effectively manage programs, and sustain the Homestead’s spirit as a living place, it is vitally necessary to provide accommodations for an on-site manager. The preferred option for doing so is to rehabilitate Bill Randolph, Jr.’s house.**

**Actions and objectives**

- Rehabilitate Bill Randolph, Jr.’s house as a residence for a site caretaker and manager. Make the structure livable, comfortable and safe; construct in compliance with municipal codes; honor the original external form and the building’s original footprint; use existing or recycled materials as possible; create an ADA accessible restroom, that can be accessible to the public; and install a cistern as a water source.
- Give simultaneous attention to several other structures. There is an immediate need to stabilize and clear out the root cellar, the barn, and then the farmhouse. Only then, after further examination, determine if the central (original) section of the barn can be stabilized and rehabilitated for functional farm use (as a horse or dairy barn, for storage, or temporary bunkhouse use).
- Establish a process for overseeing the work of volunteers, contractors and craftsmen on future restoration, preservation, or rehabilitation work. Provide for the active involvement of an architect, engineer, or other professionally qualified advisor other than the contractors or craftsmen themselves. Changes to the original plan of work should not be made without the affirmative sign-off of the Coalition, following consultation with the architect or other professional advisor.
- Reduce the risk of fire by mowing entire area and removing dead wood from gullies and trees around the homestead.

**3. Curation and interpretation**

**General principles**

To the greatest extent feasible, objects will be made available for handling by visitors and for creative use in programs. The Homestead is not a “DO-NOT-TOUCH” museum. The use of found objects for various creative and building projects involving the public has been carried out
with great success and is considered by many to be a hallmark of the Homestead approach. Yet the Coalition also recognizes that this ongoing use of objects may at some future time exhaust the supply. Further consideration needs to be given to the question of how to use objects without unsustainably mining them. Two possibilities are: 1) ration the use of objects carefully, thereby stretching their availability over a long (and potentially very long) time; 2) “reseed” the site with objects after use. Try to keep all objects found on site for viewing, interpretation and reuse. There are many options for art making available at the homestead. Objects altered for aesthetic purposes should be keep on site. Objects altered should not be altered permanently, rather arranged to allow for the return to their original state, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by the Coalition’s purposes.

Better security will be needed, especially as the site becomes known to and visited by a broader public. This must be managed in a way consistent with the spirit of communal stewardship at work in the Homestead and with the philosophy of curation outlined above. An on-site presence offers the best form of security and should be chosen wherever feasible. Otherwise, consideration needs to be given to securing large, but removable, objects and to protecting smaller ones of value, by placing them securable places.

**Actions and objectives**

- Create a permanent; secure storage area for the Homestead’s archival materials and small artifacts in the back room of the Moon Cabin.
- Complete the computer catalogue of Homestead documents and artifacts. Store one copy with the City of Missoula Historic Preservation Officer and the other with the materials on site, for public research use.
- Create a space for indoor exhibition of the Homestead implements and tools, possibly to be housed in the Moon Cabin, Tack Shed and/or revolving arrangement in the Winch Shed, allowing it to decay as a building already beyond salvage.
- Continue to develop small exhibits in the Milk House, with visitor participation when possible. Use of the Milk House for book sales and visitor contributions.

**4. Use and management of the site**

*General principles*

Management of the Homestead shall seek to sustain and enhance its potential for offering citizens of Missoula and the region opportunities for education and recreation that are consistent with the Homestead’s spirit outlined above. Thus the Coalition places the highest priority on learning programs for young people, especially ones involving active work (agricultural, building restoration, clean-up, creative work). Many of these programs are most effective when they include overnight stays at the site. Tourism and casual recreational uses of the site are also encouraged but are of secondary importance.
Consistent with the spirit of the Homestead site, the Coalition also places a high priority on efforts to restore elements of the Homestead landscape to active agricultural use and to involve citizens as volunteers and learners in farm work. Immediate opportunities include the orchard and garden. In the future, it may be also possible to return some of the pastureland to haying with horses, and to establish a small dairy operation.

To maintain the programs and spirit of Homestead as one of continuing function and civic involvement, facilities for short-term accommodation at the homestead are critically important. In the short term, tenting will be appropriate. In the medium- to long-term, it will be desirable also to provide bunkhouse accommodations with the possibility of temporary residence for visiting artists, curators, archaeologists, building craftsmen, or program leaders. The intent is to provide appropriate options for a wide range of programs that require overnight presence at the site without stressing the site beyond its carrying capacity.

As much as possible, visitors should be encouraged to walk to the Homestead. A parking lot close enough to the Homestead to allow visitors to walk in will remove most motorized vehicles from the Homestead itself and allow visitors to approach the Homestead on foot, taking the time to appreciate the beautiful and distinctive landscape of the North Hills and to adjust to the Homestead’s pace. It will also ease the impact of homestead visitation and provide an access point to the North Hills trail system. Provisions for accessibility by others in need of such accommodation will always be available.

Actions and objectives

• Work with the City and Five Valleys to amend the conservation easement to allow for short-term accommodation, with specified limits on location, numbers, and duration of stay.
• Work with the Parks Department to set policy on user fees, short-term accommodation, and public use of the Homestead for special events.
• Decide on the most appropriate structure for bunkhouse accommodation (the Moon Cabin, Barn, or a reconstructed Winch Shed).
• Investigate the possibility of providing a small-unpaved parking area at the second fork in the access road. Carry out a land survey as soon as possible to determine exact property boundaries, and consult Five Valleys Land Trust to determine the feasibility of locating a parking lot within the easement as a measure to enhance the protected conservation status of the rest of the property.
• Work with the City to plan and develop a new trail that skirts the homestead boundary to the south and leads to a North Hills trailhead on Spurlock Road.
• Create a detailed plan for the eventual development of the Homestead property: road grading, gates, street furniture (trash cans, sign stanchions, leaflet boxes, sign posts), and other services (water, sanitation).
• Create a space for the Homestead as a hub in an expanded trail system that will eventually reach the Rattlesnake Wilderness area.

5. Relationship with the Parks Department
General principles

The Coalition reaffirms its appreciation of the value of a good working partnership with the City of Missoula’s Parks Department and intends to continue seeking opportunities for collaborative projects. The Coalition proposes the definition of the Homestead’s spirit of operation (above), as well as the policies that flow from it, as a basis for further developing this important partnership.

The Coalition believes that the Homestead offers substantial and indeed unique recreational benefits to the City of Missoula and the region, which are outlined above. In addition, it offers opportunities for limited, “low-impact” tourism, and for much-needed connections to the North Hills trail system. While it would be inappropriate to manage the Homestead as a park in the sense of an urban, downtown, park, as a wilderness, or as an area for sports, the Coalition believes that a Moon-Randolph Homestead Cultural Conservation Area can make a uniquely valuable contribution to the recreational resources that the City of Missoula provides for its citizens.

Actions and objectives

- Request that the Parks Department designate a staff person as a liaison with the HHPC, who will attend HHPC meetings and be directly involved in decision-making for the site.
- Co-sponsor programming of children’s activities at the Homestead in summer 2004.
- Advertise Homestead programs and open days in Parks publications.
- Continue to work with the Parks Department to identify and meet general needs at the Homestead, such as signage, sanitation, seasonal mowing, and road maintenance, community work projects and building stabilization projects.
- Seek Parks Department investment in capital improvements and yearly budgetary costs.
- Transportation for various educational programs, staff time for development and outreach of educational programming.

6. Education Project

Multiculturalism

After emergent stabilization needs are taken care of, it would be advisable to begin creating a more detailed interpretive plan that incorporates Native American experiences and perspectives as outlined with regional tribal representatives. As far as such recognition is consistent with tribal views and sensibilities, attention might include identification of trails and other special places and education about native flora and fauna and their indigenous uses as well as presentations of tribal points of view on the Homestead Act and its local impact and significance on Native American Indian lives and heritage. While the development of such an interpretive plan is not an immediate necessity, tribal participation should be sought before it is formally undertaken. At the most local level, the HHPC could outreach and collaborate with local Indian advocacy organizations such as the Missoula Indian Center and Indian People’s Action.
**General Principles**

Preserve the Moon-Randolph Homestead as an historical, cultural and educational resource for the community that demonstrates traditional and sustainable archaeology, agriculture and early homestead and depression era farm life. To do so honestly the Coalition, in conjunction with the Tribes should acknowledge and educate about the area’s Native American Indian past. The Coalition should assess past experiences at the homestead and from those discussions put into writing a written curriculum for children’s programs both summer and after-school activities. Develop programs that will provide young people and adults with positive educational and mentoring experiences and hands-on opportunities to assist in site cultural research, management, artifact excavation, restoration and agricultural development and animal husbandry.

**Actions and Objectives**

- Organize curriculum development meetings in conjunction with the Parks Department and individuals who have run educational programs, those who have participated in programs in the past at the homestead and those who have a vested interest and knowledge of the homestead and its educational opportunities.
- Assemble a curriculum development-working group that will develop a written curriculum for a tier of educational programs at the homestead.
- Develop lessons plans and determine transportation needs, adult supervision and logistics.

**Tier 1**
Elementary School Programs: Summer camp and after-school homestead club
Middle School: Summer Camp and After-school activities
High School: Writing workshops and art programs

**Tier 2**
Youth Mentoring:
Mentoring Children of incarcerated parents: the Parenting Place
Mentoring Teens through the GUTS program and the Boys and Girls Club

**Tier 3**
University students research opportunities, internships, and teaching assistants

**Tier 4**
Visiting artists and writers in the community
Adult Education- coordination with the Natural History Center

- Identify interested instructors and guest naturalists who would participate in the summer programs and devise a fundraising plan for educational curricula, seek money from the City, and coordinate with Parks and Rec. (Co-Sponsorship by Parks and Rec.)
- In the spirit of MUD camp, create a written curriculum and set of activities available that a host of instructors and counselors could use for a two-week to eight-week summer club, the Scavenger Club/Adventures’ Club at the homestead. Partner with Lowell, the Clark Fork School
and a host of other schools that could plan summer activities at the homestead such as; 4-H type programs. Schools claim a section of the heirloom garden and take ownership by producing goods at the homestead to be used in the classrooms.

- Develop an Outreach working group who would introduce the programs to the local county public and private schools. Develop an informational brochure on educational programs and informational pamphlets.
- Establish a concrete working relationship with the Missoula Youth Homes Summer Programs and devise a clear and concise schedule for the summer months and further an after school-mentoring program for the fall season.
- Collaborate with Inner Roads Wilderness Therapy Program on possible funding sources and joint program funding. Funds from the organization may help pay for a Bunkhouse to house future therapy groups through Inner Roads and the Court Systems.
- Collaborate with the Art Museum Missoula for children’s programming and summer arts’ camps. Hold artist’s lectures and walks.
- Begin work with the Parks Department and local naturalists to coordinate hikes, butterfly and insect walks.
- Establish University internships through the department of social work department, Environmental Studies Program and the Fine Arts Department, which could include working space for visiting artists or writers. University students could assist in running summer youth programs or help interpret and incorporate artifacts for thesis research.

7. Fundraising

General principles

The Coalition should assess the potential for fundraising and create a development plan that includes government support, foundation grants, individual contributions, annual or bi-annual fundraising events, and program fees and other earned income. Fees should be assessed for programs and eligibility requirements determined for a low-income sliding scale. Careful consideration should be given to how equitable fees for Homestead programs can be perpetuated.

Actions and Objectives

- Develop a projected budget that presents a clear picture of what it will cost to manage the site in the future. This should include both operating and capital expenses and should include options (such as minimally stabilizing buildings versus putting them back into service). Full time staff, caretaker, fundraiser, summer instructors, interns, and Americorps staff for enhanced program development.
- Work with the Parks Department to set policy on user fees: summer children’s programs, public tours, school tours, after-school programs (September-October), 4-H programs, fall harvest activities- school and farm connections in-school demonstrations and field trips, etc.
- Parks and Recreation should formalize a City of Missoula commitment and contribution by including the Homestead in an annual budget as a functioning part of the Open Space System,
Parks network, Trails System and recreation program administration.