

Good morning. Here is your BECON for Feb 19. Apologies for getting it out late this week.

Announcements:

- 1 more volunteer is needed for Bites of Billings on April 22. Contact Dina if you are interested or for more details.
 - District Convention is set for May 21-23 in Butte.
 - BEC nominations will begin March 19 and elections will be held on April 16. If you are interested in serving on the Board or as an officer, get yourself nominated!
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Our only guest was our speaker, Amber Reger, Education Coordinator at the Moss Mansion . Amber gave an interesting presentation on the Moss family and the Moss Mansion.

In 1892, entrepreneur Preston Boyd (P.B.) Moss moved to Billings and, in 1903, he built the Moss Mansion. The Mansion was designed by New York architect Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, designer of the original Waldorf Astoria and Plaza Hotels. Montana is the western-most state to host one of his designs. The Mansion has 23 rooms in which 10 people would reside: P.B. and his wife Martha, their 6 children, and Martha's parents. It was built for \$150,000 in 1903 and is now valued at approximately \$1 million (although insured for \$17 million).

Melville Moss, the third child of P.B. and Martha, resided in the home from age 7 until her death in 1984 (nearly 82 years) and it is due to her protectiveness and care that the house has its original fixtures and remains nearly intact.

The last living member of the Moss family is Marilyn Moss Castleman who is the daughter of David, the fifth child of P.B. and Martha. The Billings Preservation Society completed the purchase of the Moss Mansion from Marilyn and her mother in 1986.

P.B. Moss has a lasting legacy in Billings. He became very prominent in banking, organized the first dial telephone company in the area (Billings had dial telephone 2 years before New York City), founded a newspaper that was a forerunner of the Billings Gazette, and started a central heating plant and the Billings Utility Company. He also assisted in the development of the Billings Light and Water Power Company, the Northern Hotel, the sugar factory, and the Billings Polytechnic Institute (now Rocky Mountain College).

The Moss Mansion is self-funded through (1) tours, (2) grants and donations, and (3) events and fundraising. Approximately \$2 million has been put into the house the past few years. In the past 2 years, the second floor has undergone renovations, the roof has been updated, and the basement has received renovations including reinforced columns and a new floor.

Events at the Moss Mansion include summer camps, live-action Clue, Springfest, Mysteries at the Moss (Sherlock Holmes themed in April), Murder Mystery Dinners, and weddings. To check out the Moss Mansion calendar, or to look into volunteer opportunities, check out their website or look them up on Facebook.

<https://www.mossmansion.com/>

Have a great week everyone!

Your BECON editor,
Tanya Tweten

