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THE MONTANA HISTORY
FOUNDATION

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Montana History Foundation Brings Forensic Canines to Montana for Workshop

HELENA, Mont.— Our four-legged friends are invaluable to us. And even after we die, they’re doing important work to ensure our legacies live on. That’s just one of the topics you can learn about at a three-day workshop in Helena this summer, where experts will go through different methods that preserve Montana’s cemeteries and unmarked gravesites.

The [Institute of Canine Forensics](#), (ICF) based in California, employs a multitude of dogs to help uncover human remains as old as 1,500 years and down to nine feet deep. Recently, ICF joined in the hunt for the remains of [Amelia Earhart](#) on an uninhabited island in the South Pacific. The dogs proved to be a powerful search tool, discovering new evidence into her disappearance.

“Canines are especially adept at helping identify the location of previously unmarked grave sites,” Adela Morris, Executive Director of ICF said. “Their sense of smell is unparalleled by other technologies, making the dogs perfect for older grave sites and rugged terrain where clunky equipment is ineffective.”

In addition to meeting and learning about grave-detecting canines, some of the technology on display includes Geographic Information Systems and mapping tools (GIS), and cemetery botany.

The cemetery preservation workshop is open to the public. The June 21-23 event includes two days of field trips to local cemeteries for hands-on demonstrations. Participants will hear from 14 experts in different technological fields, including grave-detecting dogs, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) and more.

“This is a unique opportunity,” President/CEO Charlene Porsild said. “We are showcasing how forensic dogs, drone photography and other technology can assist communities in preserving historic cemeteries.”

Interested in attending? Registration is now open. Go to the website, www.mthistory.org, and follow the Events tab to learn more and sign up before May 15. The sign-up cost is \$125 per person and \$65 for college students.

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The History Foundation started in 1985. It’s an independent, non-profit corporation preserving the rich legacy of Montana’s past one story, one community, and one project at a time. With the help of donors, the History Foundation has put nearly \$3 million into history projects in Montana communities. For more information, including how to donate and apply for grants, visit www.mthistory.org.

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Above: GPS data collection. 2016

Right: Forensic Canine, Kaylee, alerting to grave site in Virginia City, Montana. 2016

Part of 2016 MHF Grant Projects



Left: Amelia Earhart

Photograph by Getty images

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