

# Phil Scriver *Explore the Big Sky* Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event Papers

**Inclusive Dates:**

1999-2006

**Name and Location of Repository:**

William P. Sherman Library and Archives Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage  
Foundation, Great Falls, MT

**Collection Processed by:**

Dick Smith, 2007

**Finding aid prepared by:**

Dick Smith, 2008. Revised by Shelly Kath, 2016.

**Collection Number:**

AR 013

**Name of Creator:**

Phil Scriver

**Extent:**

1.5 linear feet.

**Historical Note:**

From 1999 through 2006 Phil was a member, then chairman, of the Upper Missouri Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission (a regional group comprised of Cascade and Choteau Counties); board member of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Association; board then a regular member of the Portage Route Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. (LCTHF); co-chairman of the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard Signature Event Committee (participating in 25 of the 33 days of the Honor Guard's historical re-enactments during the signature event); a member of the Explore the Big Sky planning group (serving on the finance committee and the events committee).

Phil has been actively involved in Lewis and Clark since 1972 and a member of LCTHF since 1975. He also chaired/co-chaired the Great Falls annual four day Lewis and Clark Festival, headed by the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Association, for four years, an event that started in 1989 and still continues today. Phil, a relative of Montana artist Bob Scriver, headed up two projects that commissioned Bob to create outdoor bronze statues of Lewis and Clark – *Explorers at the Marias* in Fort Benton, Montana and *Explorers at the Portage* in Great Falls, Montana. Both were large budget, multi-year projects.

In the late 1990s, Phil was actively involved in three of the four different Lewis and Clark organizations in Great Falls. Jane Weber, director of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center and board member of the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council sent an e-mail to Phil (which he attributes to his diverse background of involvement) suggesting a proposal be submitted to the National Council to host a “signature event” in Great Falls during the bicentennial. Phil mulled the idea over for six months but never responded to that e-mail. He received another e-mail from Jane reiterating the suggestion of a signature event in Great Falls. A brief meeting between Jane and Phil resulted in Phil developing a proposal using Jane’s basic outline of what the National Council wanted.

Phil drew on his Festival Chair experience and historical knowledge to develop a project he named “Discovering the Big Sky.” The project would cover a period of 33 days during June and early July of 2005 corresponding to the dates the expedition was in the Choteau/Cascade County area in 1805. Phil’s knowledge of the local groups made it clear to him that no single organization or group existed to host the signature event. A new entity would need to be established for the express purpose of staging the event then “go away” when it was completed. However, a document needed to be prepared and an acceptable proposal first needed to be submitted to the National Council.

Phil took on the challenge and drafted the proposal. Next an informal steering committee came together to review the proposal and establish the working group that would stage the event, once National Council approval came. Phil invited representatives from various groups he had worked with to put together the Lewis and Clark Festival. The National Council approved Phil’s proposal and the working group established. With its work done, the steering committee dissolved. As the working group came together new events were added to the initial proposal and the name was changed to “Explore the Big Sky.”

**Scope and Content:**

These files contain the papers Phil accumulated while planning for and participating in the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial from 1999 through 2006. They show his involvement in local, regional and state Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committees/Commissions as well as his focus on the signature event held in Cascade and Choteau Counties of Montana.

**Arrangement:**

Phil’s papers are arranged in three series. Series one is material on Phil’s involvement with various Bicentennial Committees: Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee, Upper Missouri Bicentennial Commission and the local Bicentennial Commission. Series two is material about the Discovering the Big Sky Lewis and Clark Bicentennial signature event which became the Explore the Big Sky Lewis and Clark Bicentennial signature event.

**Subject Terms:**

Discovering Big Sky Country  
Explore Big Sky Country  
Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event  
Lewis and Clark Honor Guard  
Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee  
Upper Missouri Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission

**Accession Information:**

Acquired on October 1, 2007. Accession number 2007.020.

**Acquisition Source:**

Phil Scriver delivered the papers to the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation office in Great Falls, Montana.

**Access Restrictions:**

The collection is open for use.

**Use Restrictions:**

LCTHF does not own copyright to all of the materials in the collection. In some cases permission for use may require seeking additional authorization from the copyright owners. The names and addresses on the envelopes may not be used in any manner. No more than 25% of any folder may be copied.

**Preferred Citation:**

Item description and date. *Phil Scriver "Explore the Big Sky" Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event Papers*. AR 013. Box and Folder numbers. William P. Sherman Library and Archives, Great Falls, MT.

Phil Scriver *Explore the Big Sky* Lewis and Clark Bicentennial  
Signature Event Papers, 1999 – 2006  
AR 013

**Box Listing:**

Box 1:

Series 1: Bicentennial Committees/Commissions

Sub-Series 1: Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee

- Folder 1: Application and form to serve  
Grant Applications and proposals  
Newsletters  
Case Study  
Correspondence

Sub-Series 2: Upper Missouri Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial  
Commission

- Folder 2: Meetings, agendas and packets
- Folder 3: Current Month
- Folder 4: Correspondence, meetings, grant applications
- Folder 5: Committee Projects

Sub-Series 3: Great Falls Area Bicentennial Commission

- Folder 6: Local Bicentennial Commission

Series 2: Discovering the Big Sky/Explore the Big Sky Lewis and Clark Bicentennial  
Signature Event

Sub-series 1: Discovering the Big Sky Signature Event

- Folder 7: Original Application
- Folder 8: Correspondence
- Folder 9: Miscellaneous
- Folder 10: Discovery Council
- Folder 11: Events Committee  
Honor Guard Re-Enactment
- Folder 12: Finance Committee

Sub-series 2: Exploring the Big Sky Signature Event

- Folder 13: Lewis and Clark Honor Guard Planning Vol. 1
- Folder 14: Lewis and Clark Honor Guard Planning Vol. 2
- Folder 15: Lewis and Clark Honor Guard Planning Vol. 3