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UM closes in on elusive time capsule

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UM News Tips

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April 6, 1993

■ **UM CLOSES IN ON ELUSIVE TIME CAPSULE** -- After months of effort, The University of Montana may be on the verge of locating the time capsule that was reportedly placed in the cornerstone of Main Hall when construction of that building began in 1897. A relic of the past and a message to the future, the capsule is sought as part of the University's ongoing 100th birthday celebration. Centennial sleuths pored over period accounts and photographs for months, even borrowing ground-penetrating radar equipment in unsuccessful attempts to pinpoint the capsule's location in the massive granite block. The turning point in those efforts came last week, when small holes drilled in a likely location revealed a promising cavity in the stone, Facility Services Director Hugh Jesse said. As early as next week, he said, workers will use a core drill to remove an eight-inch diameter plug from the cornerstone, permitting access to the cavity and its hoped-for contents, a six-inch-wide time capsule. Once the capsule is located, he said, the plug will be replaced. The capsule will not be opened until Oct. 2, when UM will cap its Centennial celebration during Homecoming. Centennial Coordinator Annie Pontrelli said plans call for a new time capsule, containing contemporary items, to be placed in the cavity along with the items from 1897. She is surveying campus groups for suggestions about what should represent 1993 in the capsule. Access to the capsules will be marked by a plaque indicating that the cornerstone should be reopened during the bicentennial celebration of 2093, starting a once-per-century tradition of discovery, she said. For more information call Jesse, 243-2788, or Pontrelli, 243-2649.

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