

# POINTS WEST

FALL 2005

An oil painting of a cowboy with a beard, wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a red shirt, kneeling on a rocky bank. He is pouring water from a metal bowl into a stream. A dog is partially visible next to him. The background shows a rocky, hilly landscape with purple and green tones.

**WATERING THE WEST  
FRONTIER WEDDINGS  
COWBOY GRUB**

**BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER • CODY, WYOMING**





## Director's Desk

by Robert E. Shimp, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

Even though fall is technically three weeks away, when September rolls around, folks start thinking "autumn." As they ponder cooler temperatures and leaves changing color, many visitors ask the same question: "I'll bet you're breathing a collective sigh of relief now that fall is in the air, aren't you?" The idea is that we at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) can relax when "tourist season" ends.

Nothing could be further from the truth. First, our September attendance has begun to rival that of June. The Cody community continues to offer plenty for the off-season traveler to see and do, including Rendezvous Royale, September 21–24. This celebration of the arts includes our own Patrons Ball. The weekend before, we're hosting a golf tournament honoring the late Si Cathcart, long-time friend and trustee. Then, as the month winds down we gear up for the 29th Annual Plains Indian Museum Seminar.

Actually, there's hardly any "quiet time" at the BBHC. Staff is working on the 2006 exhibition of works by American artist William Ranney. In addition, we plan to reinstall the Buffalo Bill Museum (2007), the

Whitney Gallery of Western Art (2009—its 50th anniversary), and the Cody Firearms Museum (2011)—each requiring years of preparation. By the way, the family of sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor has made it possible for us to reproduce his studio as part of the Whitney reinstallation.

We're also taking new and bigger steps forward with our Cody Institute of Western American Studies (CIWAS), adding more and more substance to a great idea. For example, through donated funds we purchased a building that will be integral to CIWAS. In June, we hosted a number of scholars to help us determine the best way for BBHC to impact "the teaching of the West." Bob Pickering tells you more in his column on page 23. Finally, this October we're hosting a symposium entitled *The Culture of Water—Watering the West*. Take a look at Tom Sansonetti's article to whet your appetite and check our Web site for more information.

Indeed, the BBHC is one busy place—all year long. We invite you to come by any time to see for yourself. ■

### About the cover . . .



William R. Leigh (1866–1955), *Panning Gold, Wyoming*, 1949, oil on canvas, 32.25 x 40 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of the artist. 1.59

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The Buffalo Bill Historical Center is a private, non-profit, educational institution dedicated to preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the American West. Founded in 1917, the Historical Center is home to the Buffalo Bill Museum, Whitney Gallery of Western Art, Plains Indian Museum, Cody Firearms Museum, Draper Museum of Natural History, and McCracken Research Library.





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The Buffalo Bill Historical Center's website contains more information about many of the stories in this issue, including *The Culture of Water* symposium and natural history tours. Visit us online at [www.bbhc.org](http://www.bbhc.org).



# BUCKAROOS, WRANGLERS

## How the cowboys said it

By Frances Clymer, Director  
Park County Library System, Cody, Wyoming

Western words have a flavor all their own. Distilled from a variety of rich sources over the last two centuries, expressions identified with the American West often have colorful origins. Western vernacular is replete with terms that have their roots in the linguistic legacies of the Spanish, French, German, Native American and Anglo populations of the region.

For example, the term "earmark" is derived from the ancient custom of cutting distinctive notches in the ears of livestock to identify ownership. Western ranchers, in addition to owning a distinctive brand, often add an earmark to their cattle. Today we use this term to denote something set aside for a special use as in, "I have those funds 'earmarked' for a vacation."

The words "calaboose" and "hoosegow" evoke nostalgia for *Hopalong Cassidy* and his radio show, 1950s Saturday morning television programs, and B-Westerns. They come to us from *calabozo*, Spanish for dungeon which, when appropriated by the Louisiana French, became *calabouse*; and from *juzgado*, Spanish "for court of justice." A likely Latin ancestor is the word *calafodium*, a

combination of the pre-Latin word *cala* (protected place or den) and the Latin *foedere* (to dig). How's that for deep roots?

**The earliest cowboys  
were Mexican vaqueros  
(herdsmen or cowherds)  
and it is to them  
we owe many terms  
associated with  
the wild and wooly West.**



Thanks to the Mexican vaqueros, one of which is portrayed here by the artist Edward Borein, words such as "buckaroo" and "bronco" were added to the cowboy vernacular.

J. Edward Borein (1872-1945), *The Bandido*, 1910, pastel and watercolor on paper, 23.875 x 18 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of William D. Weiss. 32.86

In his *Dictionary of the American West*, Wilfred Belvins defined a wrangler as "...the hand who took care of the horses; now any cowboy, especially one who leads dudes on rides." Blevins attributes a Mexican origin (*caballerango*) to this term, which first appears in the context of the American cowboy in the 1888 writings of Theodore Roosevelt. In his 1899 work *Vocabulario de Mexicanismos*, Joaquín García Icazbalceta describes the *caballerango* as "the manservant at ranches or private homes who tends to and saddles the horses." However, according to a number of other sources, the word "wrangle" has much earlier roots in the Low German word *wrangeln*, which means to struggle or wrestle. Whatever its etymology, wrangle is an apt word for the often back-breaking work that goes into handling horses.

The earliest cowboys were Mexican *vaqueros* (herdsmen or cowherds), and it is to them we owe many terms associated with the wild and wooly West.



# AND HOOSEGOWS

"Buckaroo," "bronco," and "lariat" are but a few of the "cowboy" words of Spanish origin. As English-speaking populations began to arrive in the West, they had trouble pronouncing the Spanish words. Thus *vaquero* took on its Anglicized form and became "buckaroo;" and *la reata* became "lariat"—a braided rawhide rope 40 to 80 feet in length. It was used in the rounding up and handling of cattle. The Spanish word *bronco* means "rough" or "coarse" and was used



Wyeth's roper makes fine use of *la reata*, which cowboys translated "lariat." N.C. Wyeth (1882-1945), *Above the Sea of Round, Shiny Backs the Thin Loops Swirled and Shot into Volumes of Dust*, 1904-1905, oil on canvas, 38.25 x 26 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of John M. Schiff, 3.77

to refer to a mustang and later, by extension, to an unbroken horse. "Mustang" is itself derived from *mesteño*, a Spanish term used to describe wild horses and cattle. The vernacular of the West is deeply indebted to its earliest European settlers, the Spanish.

Symbolic of westward expansion in the nineteenth century, the "prairie schooner"—that essential means of transporting family and households across the broad plains of the West—has both English and French as its sources. The schooner, an 18th century North American ship, was important to trade along the Atlantic coastline, easily maneuvering through a variety of conditions. From a distance, as it progressed across the landscape, the prairie schooner, (a smaller, modified version of the Conestoga wagon) resembled a ship sailing on a sea of grass. "Prairie" is a word borrowed from the French *prairie*, meaning large, rolling grassland. The word "coulee" (a deep ravine), which appears in the old cowboy song "I Ride an Old Paint," also comes from the French.

Finally, when cowboys found themselves at the end of a long day on the trail, their colorful vocabulary peppered the tall tales they traded with one another. Then, each would swear to the story's truth saying, "Believe me; I ain't tryin' to hornswoggle ya none." *Hornswoggling* refers to the dodging and wriggling movement of a roped steer, which eventually throws off the rope. Thus, the steer *hornswoggles* the cowboy and makes its escape. Of unknown origin, this word has now come to mean to fool or dupe—and no cowboy worth his salt would admit to anything of the sort . . . at least not to another cowboy.

The language of the cowboy—colorful and descriptive, simple and direct—best tells the story of the Old West even today. ■

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*For a list of notes and further reading, send email to [editor@bbhc.org](mailto:editor@bbhc.org).*

# Feeding cowboys in the

By B. Byron Price,

(excerpted from his book, *The Chuckwagon Cookbook — Recipes from the Ranch and Range for Today's Kitchen*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004)



Old Charlie Collins looks a bit “worse for the wear” with his tin plate of trail vittles. Charles J. Belden, Charlie Collins, ca.1920, black and white glass plate negative, 3.625 x 4.75 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Belden. PN.67.39

Prior to 1870, a few basic staples dominated the menu in all cow camps. These included coffee, bread (in the form of biscuits, corn meal, or hard crackers), meat (bacon, salt pork, beef—fresh, dried, salted and smoked—and wild game), salt, and some sugar and sorghum molasses.

The quality and quantity of cowboy food depended on many variables including tradition, culture, region, sources of supply, the attitude of management, and the ability of the cook. Over the years Southwestern ranches gained a reputation as unimaginative and miserly in their fare, those on the Northern Plains as more

progressive and generous. “Those Texas outfits,” recalled “Teddy Blue” Abbott with characteristic candor, “sure hated to give up on the grub.” Some supplied only flour, salt, and coffee, but most also allowed some salt pork or beef along with corn meal and sorghum molasses. In South Texas and parts of New Mexico, Arizona, and California, Mexican culinary traditions that included tortillas, fried beans, chile, *chorizo* (sausage), and rice dominated the range fare.

Abbott claimed that superior food, including cane sugar, wheat flour, canned fruit, and other “luxuries,” induced many Texans to remain in Montana long after



# days of the open range

their less particular comrades had departed for sunnier climes. Contrasting the lot of the Montana-based cowhand with that of his Southern Plains counterpart in 1885, a Dodge City, Kansas, newspaper correspondent concluded:

Live! Why, these cowboys [in Montana] live higher than anybody. They have every thing to eat that money can buy, and a cook with a paper cap on to prepare it. The cook is so neat and polite that you could eat him if you were right hungry . . .

Many observers believed that ranchers' substantial profits would ultimately improve the cowboy's menu. In 1877, for example, a Colorado newspaper commented:

The cowboy works for a man who has capital, is making great profits, and is naturally liberal in the use of money. The result is that there is plenty of food and a great enough variety . . . Fresh meats of the best quality they can have at any time, and canned fruits and vegetables are found at almost every camp. Coffee, syrup, sugar and tea are among the comforts found, while of the more substantial kind of food there is no lack in either quantity or quality.

Canned goods were reported in abundance on the Colorado range in 1883 and within a decade were available to even the most remote ranching outposts throughout the West. The flourishing American food processing industry continually expanded its offerings so that by 1885 a typical Spur Ranch supply order included, not only canned tomatoes and peaches, but also cinnamon, nutmeg, cayenne pepper, Coleman's mustard, vanilla, and lemon extract. Meanwhile, the steady

advance of the farmer's frontier furthered the cause of fresh fruits and vegetables in ranch country, particularly among the largest and most progressive ranches.

Ranch provisions arrived from suppliers in tin cans, ceramic jugs, wooden boxes and barrels, and in sacks of paper and cloth. Not all of these stores reached their destination in first-class condition. In 1892, A.J. Majoribanks, owner of the Rocking Chair Ranch in Texas, struggled with spoiled flour and dried fruit, substandard molasses, and two cases of "very sorry" bacon, "about four-fifths being pure fat and waste." In August, he complained to a supplier about rotten prunes:

The 53 pounds of prunes you lately sent us were more wormy than prunes; it is an outrage to try to put off such filthy stuff on us; we utterly refuse to receive or pay for such stuff and the said sack of prunes and worms have been left ... to be returned to you.... It will save you a good deal of trouble if you will bear in mind that we will only receive and pay for articles that are good.

Although expenditures for food usually comprised the largest entries on ranch supply ledgers, the cost of feeding cowboys in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries appears nominal, costing only \$1.32 per day or less than 4 cents per man for a meal. This figure seems consistent with a 1901 William Curry Holden survey of the records of the well-supplied Espuela Land and Cattle Company that revealed a single twelve-man cow outfit in 1889 devoured an estimated 19.2 pounds of food that placed the cost of comfortably providing subsistence for a cowboy at one dollar per week or 14.3 cents per day. By 1916, inflation had pushed the cost as high as 53.5 cents per man per day in some places.

The quantity and quality of the chuck wagon fare



Cowboys on the range knew all the top outfits — especially those with the best food. N.C. Wyeth (1882–1945), *The Lee of the Grub-Wagon*, 1904–1905, oil on canvas, 38 x 26 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of John M. Schiff. 46.83

varied enormously — from excellent to awful. A cowboy working near the Red River in northern Texas during the 1880s perhaps spoke for the majority when he reported, “Our ‘chuck’ is substantial, but not aristocratically cooked.” Most considered range cuisine repetitious and bland, and some wondered how cowboys maintained their health with such “unvaried fare.”

One frontier settler speculated that outdoor work and riding the range helped keep cowboy digestive tracts in order. One recent study of the cowboy diet pronounced it deficient in vitamins A and C, calories and calcium — facts that no doubt account for the cowboy’s lean image. Calcium deficiencies, the result of a lack of milk, were blamed for bowlegs and bone

decalcification — although long hours in saddle surely contributed to the condition.

Perhaps an 1885 story said it best with this mouth-watering comment:

The table was bare, the plates and cups were of tin, and the coffee was in a pot so black that night seemed day beside it. The meat was in a stewpan, and the milk was in a tin pail. The tomatoes were fresh from a can, and the biscuits were fresh from the oven. Delmonico never served a meal that was better relished.

— “The Cowboy as He Is,” *Democratic Leader* (Cheyenne, Wyoming), January 11, 1885.

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For a list of notes and further reading, send email to [editor@bbhc.org](mailto:editor@bbhc.org).

Byron Price currently serves as the director of the Charles M. Russell Center For the Study of Art of the American West at the University of Oklahoma. He previously served as Executive Director of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center and for the National Cowboy Hall of Fame (now the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum) in Oklahoma City. He is a prolific writer and speaker on the subject of the American West. ■



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# Weddings on the frontier; tradition and innovation

By Maryanne S. Andrus and Donna L. Whitson, PH.D.

*“My Own Darling  
Papa:  
Well dear this is my  
last evening that  
I will be Arta Cody  
for tomorrow I plight  
my troth to Hort.”*

Arta Cody's words in a letter to her father, William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, on the eve of her marriage in 1889 were not unlike the words and feelings of most young women in the United States in the late nineteenth century. Weddings were thresholds of change in women's lives, and most met this crossroad with mixed emotions—anticipation, excitement, trepidation, and even sadness. Weddings were also important social events, which marked a couple's entry into community life.

In the mid-to-late 1800s, as thousands of Americans uprooted their families and migrated westward to an unsettled frontier life, some may have feared a loss of



Above: Arta Cody ca. 1890. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. P.69.944

Below: Horton S. Boal, Arta Cody's betrothed. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. P.69.235

family tradition. In reality, the ways in which women of the West celebrated their weddings—traditions, fine clothing, and receptions—were rooted in Old World customs and influenced by a new ethic of respectability in the late Victorian Era. To ease the pangs of separation from families left behind, many found continuity by closely patterning their lives in the West on their family traditions from the East.

Even when resources were limited, brides made every effort to include Victorian customs in their simple wedding celebrations. These influences on romance, courtship, marriage customs and beliefs, and wedding fashions spread across the country through letters, travelers' accounts, newspapers, magazines, and shared traditions.

The Victorian Era (1837–1901) was a time of great scientific and literary accomplishment in England and America. Despite the enlightened ideas in most areas of achievement, the period also gave birth to philosophies of marriage and gender roles that greatly restricted individual action.



Socially, men and women lived in separate spheres, which caused anxiety about marriage prospects for single people. The opportunities to mingle, court, and engage in "lovmaking" (building a relationship through courting) were limited.

Many of the holiday games of young people addressed these shared worries. More than foretelling a happy or sad marriage, their games of divination and future-telling questioned *if one would marry*

*Socially, men and women lived in separate spheres, which caused anxiety about marriage prospects for single people.*

*at all.* Young people appealed to a fate beyond their control in parlor games of divination, calming their fears about becoming the lone bachelor or old maid and of missing the threshold into economic security that marriage offered. So when chance and society brought young people together, a girl might peel an apple in a single strand and toss the skin over a shoulder to fall in the form of her true love's initials. She might also gaze at tea leaves, "pull the kale" (uprooting cabbages to read their future mate's character by the form of the cabbage root), toss cats into



Donna Whitson presents her weekly Docent Spotlight near the display of Arta Cody's beautiful wedding dress in the Buffalo Bill Museum.



new quilts, gaze in mirrors over a shoulder, and roast walnuts on the hearth — all to gain the assurance that a compatible future mate awaited.

As the Victorian Era matured, many of these early folk traditions gave way to a strong sense of propriety in wedding protocol that couples increasingly followed to gain standing in society. Mark Twain described the time period of 1878-1889 as the Gilded Age in America, due to enormous wealth among a few American industrialists. It was a time of conspicuous consumption and lavish lifestyles for the privileged few. The rest of the country emulated these individuals to the degree they could. As Cathy Luchetti wrote in her book *Home on the Range: A Culinary History of the American West*, "Gone were the days when a woman might wait months for a well-thumbed copy of *Godey's Lady's Book* or *Peterson's Magazine* to instruct her in the newest development. . . . Up-to-date information was easily found in *Harper's Weekly*, *Scribner's Monthly*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and more."

Wedding gifts, an almost non-existent custom in the early 1800s, were expected from all wedding guests as the century wore on. Rather than providing basic household items, which implied that a bride's father and soon-to-be husband could not provide these, wedding gifts were inordinately fanciful. "In addition to cash, couples now received silver cake baskets, sugar bowls, ice cream knives, napkin rings, and the like," according to Ellen K. Roghman in *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America*. These gifts expressed confidence in the ability of the provider and upheld the ideal of domesticity.

Gifts were intended as decoration rather than objects of function.

As weddings became more elaborate, not all a woman needed to set up house could be purchased or received as a gift. There was an increasing flurry in the last stages of courtship to be "fixing" for the household: shopping, sewing, packing, cleaning house, and always sewing more. "Assembling the clothing and linens for her trousseau was a woman's most time-consuming task," writes Roghman. The typical household and furnishings were changing by mid-nineteenth century, and the rising standard for middle class domestic life made couples face new demands. On the frontier, these demands were tempered by availability of goods and by distance between neighbors. However, a wedding held near Bozeman, Montana, in 1888 was as elaborate as those held in the East. The newspaper account of the wedding described "a long list

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of wedding gifts, beginning with a horse and cow . . . a parlor stove . . . a carpet . . . six fruit sets, five water sets, two salt castors, two carving sets, two toothpick holders, three silver spoons and holders, and three silver butter dishes."

On the frontier, weddings were especially valued as chances to socialize but were often tempered by practicality. The wedding date might be determined by the schedule of the circuit preacher, and peak work periods of farming and ranching were avoided. The wedding ceremony was usually conducted in the local church or at the bride's home. A local preacher or justice of the peace would conduct a simple ceremony while family and friends crowded into cramped



spaces to watch. The couple entertained their guests with music, food, dancing, and merrymaking, which went on late into the night. In the face of frontier circumstances, some couples made do with very little as illustrated by this instance quoted in Joanna Stratton's *Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier*:

Upon arriving at their destination they were ushered down six steps into a dug-out, where the mother of the bride was preparing a wedding feast. There was but one room and . . . two chairs. A sheet had been stretched across one corner of the room. The bride and groom were stationed behind this. Soon after the neighbors came in . . . the bride and groom emerged arm in arm from behind the temporary curtain and stepping forward to where my father was sitting, all became quiet and he pronounced the words that made them one.

Even when there was little food to share, people enjoyed the festivity; it brought welcome relief from the monotony of work. "At a Montana 'chivaree,' a host of settlers turned out with 'bells, whistles and even saws' to serenade the newly-weds," noted Luchetti. No food was offered, so the guests managed to find several apples and a cake to share. Often cooks would put out bowls of meat broth to curb appetites for the simple foods to follow... cornbread and black coffee with sugar...." Cake and cold water toasted the couple at another rural western wedding.

Wedding finery and custom for most weddings

became more elaborate as the nineteenth century progressed, keeping pace with the increased formality of the Victorian Era. Wedding finery included engraved invitations and wedding dresses of white muslin, tulle, or silk. Church weddings required guest lists, organists, the minister, bridesmaids, and cutaway coats fitted for the men. Wedding dresses of white were often dressed with orange blossoms, a symbol of happiness and fertility. Wealthier families often paid dearly for this dress that was worn only once. Victorian wedding dresses were often made in France and could cost from \$1,000 to \$5,000 dollars.

Whether wedding celebrations were events of finery and formality or simple family gatherings, they marked a threshold of change for women and men of the nineteenth century. Customs and rituals helped young people overcome the reticence that the Victorian age bred into social situations and allowed them to pursue courting rites and marriage. While some frontier weddings were festive but spare, other Western weddings were held with great ceremony and elegance. Following favored Victorian customs, both marked the begin-

ning of wedded happiness and introduced the couple as new members in a community. Wedding celebrations affirmed a couple's place in society. The new husband and wife crossed the threshold to start anew—a trustworthy, hardworking family unit, the beginnings of a new homestead, and a new anchor for the well being of the community. As with all traditions, the wedding customs of the nineteenth century held these community values of work, trust, and shared happiness in a celebrated place of honor. ■

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Arta Cody's ivory wedding dress, on exhibit in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Buffalo Bill Museum, exemplifies a late nineteenth century bride's common aim: to create a wedding celebration that asserts the couple's entrance into a changing middle class while upholding beloved traditions. Due to her family's social and financial standing, Arta enjoyed a festive wedding with many of these fine customs. Her ivory dress followed the preference for symbolic finery that depicted purity, piety, and domesticity.

Although we don't know the cost of Arta's dress of ivory silk taffeta moiré (meaning wavy pattern to the fabric), it shows us her care over her wedding finery. The dress is an example of the containment of women during that time. Arta wouldn't have been able to raise her arms higher than having her elbows at the waist when she wore the dress. Corseting was an often painful experience. One company advertised its corset in the 1890s as "a shape with a swirling twist which gives it the grace of Lilly Langtree and the ruggedness of Calamity Jane."

Not only was physical activity severely limited by the corset, but women were also more prone to fainting as the garments affected breathing and circulation. Bustles came in and out of fashion but were all the rage at the time of Arta's wedding. The bustle's job was to "plump the rump" yet hide the female shape. The wool pad was made in a crescent shape and was worn at the back of the dress.

Arta's dress was donated to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in 1983 by her grandchildren and meticulously restored by museum conservators and volunteers who spent over 400 hours on its renovation. ■



Arta Cody's ivory silk taffeta moiré dress from her wedding to Horton Boal in 1889. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Hayden. 1.69.2041

*For a list of notes and further reading, send email to [editor@bbhc.org](mailto:editor@bbhc.org).*

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# On the trail

by Ashley McCarten

*A fictional journal entry a young girl might have written as her family traveled West.*

BANG! BANG!

Every morning at four o'clock, the wagonmaster fires his pistol. It was time to roll out of bed and get an early start on the long day ahead. I was so tired and my body ached with every move. The stars were still shining in the dark morning sky, but my younger brother Michael and I had much to do before the sun came up. We cooped the chickens, rounded up the oxen, gathered buffalo chips for the morning fire, and helped mother start breakfast.

It wasn't long before the warm sun rose over the clouds and cast a bright orange glow on the tall prairie grass. By now, most of the families had finished their breakfasts and were preparing their wagons for the ride ahead. Our breakfast bread had been mixed with some wild berries that Michael and I had gathered along the trail yesterday evening. It tasted sweet, but I was still hungry. The men had little luck hunting the past few days, so we had no meat to eat.

After finishing breakfast, I gathered up the smaller children and read them a lesson from the Bible. This was one of my duties—to have a short school lesson each morning of either numbers or reading. Mother said we children had to keep learning on the trail, for there were sure to be the best schools out West.

Today was my family's turn to go ahead of the wagon train. Michael and I like being in the lead. When we have to travel at the rear of the train, we usually walk off the trail to get



In the mid-1800s, many a family such as this one headed West for a new life. John Clymer (1907–1989), *The Homesteaders*, 1969–1970, oil on canvas, 120.25 x 60.25 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Winchester-Western Division, Olin Corporations. 25.70



# headed West: day #87



away from the dust. While traveling on the wagon trail, we regularly round up a few of the other children to play tag or hide-and-go-seek along the way. We are often warned by the adults not to stray too far. They've told us many frightful stories about lost children left behind for dead. Mother says mean people capture wandering children, and neither are seen again. Many of the kids don't have a chance to play games with us, because they have to trail their family's cattle herds. Their job is to be sure that none are lost. What a hard chore this is! These families often come into camp far behind the rest of the convoy, covered in dust, but unable to bathe because of the lack of water.

The afternoon is always the most unpleasant part of the day. Today I was hot and tired and my feet were throbbing from trampling through the prickly pear needles. Sometimes I would hop on our wagon to rest my legs, but the ride was rough and uncomfortable. There is no padding on the seats, and the wagon threw me in the air with every bump.

Late in the afternoon, dark thunder clouds took over the brilliant blue sky and it rained down on us harder than we have ever seen. The captain called for us to circle up the wagons. The prairie rains frequently turn trails into muddy pits that stop the wagon wheels, and even the strongest oxen can't pull the wagons out. We rarely halt our daily trek before sundown for fear we will not make it to the West before the blizzard snows come. The violent winter storms are one of the most feared dangers of our travels.

Once the tents were pitched in the middle of the wagon circle, the women began to make campfires and prepare for supper. Father and Michael headed out with the other men, hopeful they'd

bring back a feast for dinner. Just as mother and I had finished setting up, we heard the men hootin' and hollerin' while dragging two large deer into camp. Everyone was excited with their mouths watering for this long awaited meal. The men skinned the animals and divided up the meat among families. What we didn't eat tonight we dried or saved for stew in the coming days.

After stuffing ourselves, we all pitched in for clean up. When the last of the chores were finished, everyone gathered around the wagon master's campfire to listen to ol' Charlie Jenkins play his fiddle and share tall tales.

As the sky grew dark, mother led us off to bed. She tucked us snugly in our bedrolls and kissed us goodnight. The night sounds of owls and wolves that usually kept me wide awake with fear had little effect on me tonight. I was too tired to worry, and fell fast asleep. Soon I was dreaming about the new life out West that awaited us at journey's end. ■



Register Cliff is one of the landmarks on the Oregon Trail. Located outside Guernsey, Wyoming, the cliff still bears the names of many pioneers who inscribed their names in the soft rock decades ago. Courtesy of National Park Service



# Water, the wellspring of

by Tom Sansonetti

They say water is the wellspring of life. Lately, though, water might just as easily be called the wellspring of lawsuits. Nowhere is that more true than in some of the key water-related litigation and attempts at settlement that occurred during the first term of the Bush Administration.

Lawsuits over water used to be filed primarily in the fourteen western states where the federal Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) had constructed dams and diversion projects. This is no longer the case. Litigation now rages from the Florida Everglades at one end of our country to California at the other. While many of the battles directly involve water allocation, as in straightforward ownership claims, other disputes do so indirectly. Increasing numbers of landowners, justifiably worried about their livelihoods, are concerned when the federal government's responsibility to protect various threatened or endangered species — especially fish — diminishes the amount of water available to them.

More and more disputes about instream flows to protect fish and their habitat are resulting in lawsuits. These days, the Department of the Interior's (DOI) federal reclamation program has grown to be the nation's largest wholesale water supplier. In other words, the DOI administers hundreds of reservoirs and many millions of acre-feet of water in the U.S. Likewise, the BOR often remains a key player in the litigation and related settlement discussions. Much of this water is still delivered for agricultural purposes. However, as western cities like Las Vegas and Phoenix continue to grow rapidly, concerns for a long-term, guaranteed supply of water increase exponentially.

One of the key cases dealing with the legal effects of dedicating water for preservation of ecosystems



W.R. Leigh's painting illustrates just one of the many industries that lays claim to water resources. William R. Leigh (1866-1955), *Panning Gold, Wyoming*, 1949, oil on canvas, 32.25 x 40 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of the artist. 1.59

concerned the 2002 Rio Grande Silvery Minnow lawsuit. Environmental groups sued the DOI in a New Mexico federal district court claiming that federal agencies were not complying with their Endangered Species Act (ESA) obligations. They believed the ESA had the responsibility to protect this particular minnow species from the effects of federal dams being used for water storage and diversion.

The State of New Mexico and the City of Albuquerque got involved in the case on the side of the DOI. It seems the City had already paid to store water for times of drought in the BOR reservoir. In September 2002, however, the federal district judge entered an injunction on behalf of the plaintiff environmental groups. This required the BOR, when necessary, to release the stored water from its upstream reservoirs to meet flow requirements to protect the silvery minnow. The fact that the minnows' needs were in a stretch of the river below Albuquerque



# life . . . and lawsuits

meant the City's populace would have to watch its prepaid water flow south, unconsumed as the water passed through the City's boundaries on its way to the fish.

It wasn't long before the United States appealed the injunction to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver. In a 2-to-1 opinion, the Tenth Circuit upheld the injunction. It maintained that the BOR had sufficient discretion and authority to be required under the ESA to release the water to avoid jeopardy to the minnow. Never mind the fact that the BOR had entered into contracts with several cities—including Albuquerque—to store and deliver water when a need arose.

This "back and forth" continued when, in December 2003, Congress passed an appropriations rider prohibiting the DOI from expending funds to use federal water in New Mexico for the benefit of the silvery minnow. It reasoned that compliance with an earlier March 2003 biological opinion satisfied the ESA. By January 2004, with the DOI's petition for rehearing in full court pending, the Tenth Circuit, on its own initiative, dismissed the appeal as moot. It said that, on the basis of what amounted to a congressional override of the ESA in its December 2003 action, and the fact that 2003 had turned into a wet year in New Mexico, there was sufficient water for both the cities and the minnows. While the Tenth Circuit additionally vacated its June 2003 opinion, the legal issue of contractual water rights versus the ESA is bound to return to the courts with the arrival of the next drought.

The ESA has also figured prominently in cases being filed by landowners and water districts. Each suit alleges the taking of private property under the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution whenever the federal government curtails water deliveries to comply with the ESA. Essentially, landowners and water districts contend the water in question actually belongs to them like any other asset they might own. One of the most important decisions from those cases

was rendered in 2004 by a Court of Federal Claims judge in *Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District v. United States*.



Some of the biggest claimants to water are recreational users like these fishermen in Yellowstone Park. *Yellowstone River Fisherman*, William S. Keller, 1969. Courtesy of National Park Service



Species as small as this Delta Smelt wield major influence on water use. Courtesy of National Park Service





The State of California and the Chinook salmon figured prominently in the 2004 decision of *Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District v. United States*. Courtesy of National Park Service

## The Culture of Water

**T**om Sansonetti brings his wealth of experience with water issues to Cody, Wyoming, October 13–15, as he provides one of the keynote addresses at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's symposium entitled *The Culture of Water—Watering the West: the Evolution of Ownership, Control, and Conflict in the West*. The Honorable Bill Bradley, former New Jersey Senator, will also give a keynote address, and experts in history, law, environmental studies, and the like will also be on board to discuss this timely issue. The symposium is being held through the BBHC's Cody Institute for Western American Studies (CIWAS) and in cooperation with the University of Wyoming School of Law and the UW William D. Ruckelshaus Institute of Environment & Natural Resources. Registration information is available by visiting the BBHC Web site: [www.bbhc.org/edu/cultureWater\\_2005.cfm](http://www.bbhc.org/edu/cultureWater_2005.cfm) or by contacting Dr. Robert B. Pickering, Deputy Director of Collections and Education, at 307.578.4043.

In that case, the water curtailment was made by the State of California in response to biological opinions issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The judge ruled that withholding water from California farmers, in order to protect the delta smelt and Chinook salmon, constituted a physical taking of the water by the government. The judge stated in his opinion that the federal government "is free to preserve the fish [under the dictates of the ESA]; it must simply pay for the water it takes to do so."

After a trial on damages, the federal government — and the taxpayers that fund it — were ordered to pay over \$24 million, plus interest, and \$1.7 million in attorney fees. Faced with this adverse and precedent-setting decision, the United States decided to settle the case for \$16.7 million. The settlement, while significantly reducing the trial court's monetary award, specifically noted that the United States was not conceding liability in this or any other future cases.

The federal government continues to defend similar lawsuits, and the underlying conflict between the ESA and private property rights is not going away any time soon. To the contrary, we are likely to see the ESA amended in Congress by the end of this decade due in large part to the ESA's impacts on landowners.

In June 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court decided a key jurisdictional question about who can sue the U.S.



government. The case, *Orff v. United States*, arose out of the BOR's Central Valley Project in California. Due to ESA compliance issues on behalf of two species of fish, circumstances once again centered on non-delivery of water under a contract between the BOR and a water district.

The central issue was this: Could member landowners within a water district that was a party to a contract, sue the BOR on their own if the water district decided not to bring suit? This could happen if some of the members of the water district had received all of their expected water and had no reason to file suit. The U.S. Supreme Court resolved the matter in favor of the United States, stating that only the water district itself, and not the individual water users, had standing to sue.

No major river in the United States spawns more expensive, time-consuming litigation than the Colorado River. Fortunately, the news of late has been

encouraging due to two key settlements reached by some of the states along the river and the DOI. The case of the *Imperial Irrigation District v. United States* arose over California's excessive use of Colorado River water. This 2003 settlement resulted in an agreement that allows California to honor the promise it made in 1929 to live within its basic allocation of 4.4 million acre feet of water, instead of the 5.2 million acre feet it was consuming. The agreement also acknowledged the Interior Secretary's role as watermaster.

A second beneficial settlement was filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in February 2005 in the case of *Arizona v. California*. When this suit was filed in 1952, it stood as the oldest original action jurisdiction case before the Court. Parties included California water districts, the states of California and Arizona, Indian tribes, and the United States. The California side of the settlement approves transfer of water from the Metropolitan Water District to the Quechan Tribe in settlement of the Tribe's and the United States' reserved water rights claims. The Arizona side of the settlement calls for the additional transfer of water from Arizona to the Quechan Tribe in settlement of similar claims.

These settlements are representative of the positive results that can be accomplished outside the courtroom by skilled negotiators acting on behalf of the Executive Branch of government. The Legislative Branch can also resolve water disputes through acts of Congress. However, when Congress intervenes, the price tag to the American taxpayer is usually quite substantial. With scarce water resources now occurring all over the United States, and ever-increasing populations that place demands on those limited resources, the Judicial Branch will remain the focal point of conflict . . . and the wellspring of water lawsuits continues! ■



Dams and their reservoirs are invariably included in any discussion of water usage. Jack Richard, Buffalo Bill Reservoir, ca.1950. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Jack Richard Collection. P.89.3996

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*Mr. Sansonetti served as the Solicitor at the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1990-1993 and as the Assistant Attorney General for Environment and Natural Resources at the U.S. Department of Justice from 2001-2005. He recently returned to Wyoming to practice law with the firm of Holland & Hart LLP in Cheyenne, Wyoming.*





# THE WILDERNES

*By Jay Lawson, Chief Game Warden,  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department*

By 1910, much of Wyoming had been settled and its once abundant wildlife decimated by years of unregulated shooting and market hunting. Yet the wild country of the Thorofare region remained untrammelled by man. Lying outside the southeastern corner of Yellowstone National Park, this remote wilderness was spared the ravages occurring around. Its wildlife and wildland character remained virtually intact. It was in this setting that a young Max Wilde would discover a second frontier.

Some years ago, the late Jack Richard of Cody, Wyoming, showed me priceless old hunting photographs, which sparked my interest in Max Wilde. As a young game warden, I often stopped at Jack's photo studio to look at his fascinating collection of photos and listen to stories about backcountry trips that took

place in the early days. Thankfully, those wonderful photos are now part of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center collection.

When he retired and closed his studio, Jack invited game warden Dave Bragonier and me over to review his collection and select six photos each for reproduction. The first photo I selected is featured in this article; Max Wilde with Ty Cobb and other baseball greats as they finished a big hunt in the Thorofare. This adventurous scene prompted me to learn more about the famous outdoorsman.

Max Wilde was born in Indiana before the end of the nineteenth century, and as a youngster was fascinated by stories of trapping and hunting in the far north. In 1908, he made a trapping expedition to Canada, and a year later moved to Alaska to pursue his

love of hunting and the wilderness. Like many of the rugged individualists of that era, he was off exploring on his own while still a teenager.

In 1913, Wilde stopped in Cody and was so impressed with the country he went to work driving horse teams for the Tex Holm Transportation Service. This company hauled tourists from Cody to Lake in Yellowstone National Park, a two-day journey with an overnight stop at Holm's lodge. Like Buffalo Bill a



Another successful hunt in the Thorofare for Max Wilde—this time with baseball great Ty Cobb. *L to R:* Carl Downing, Ty Cobb, Max Wilde, Tris Speaker (Baseball Hall of Fame), Jack Richard, Ty Cobb Hunt, ca. late 1940s. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Jack Richard Collection. PN.89.4331



# LIFE OF MAX WILDE



few decades before, Max Wilde immediately perceived the intrinsic values this country offered — the mountains, rivers, abundant wildlife, and most of all, raw wilderness in its natural state. Wilde decided to stay, and in 1916 filed for a homestead on the South Fork of the Shoshone River, southwest of Cody. There he constructed a cabin to serve as headquarters for his hunting and trapping operation, which later became his Lazy Bar F Ranch.

Pine marten and red fox pelts were extremely valuable in those years, with marten hides fetching more than \$22.50, a tidy sum in 1917. Wilde would run his trapline throughout the winter, traveling on foot or with horses, skiing, or utilizing snowshoes — whatever the terrain and snow conditions dictated. In 1918, Max Wilde met his future trapping partner, Ed “Phonograph” Jones. The two had wrangled horses together on hunting trips and decided to plan a major adventure: They would spend the entire winter trapping in the Thorofare region, southeast of Yellowstone Park. It took 15 horses to pack in their gear, a distance of more than 20 miles. They established two base camps nearly 30 miles apart and grub caches of food and supplies were spaced in-between. Elk meat was the staple, supplemented by beans, rice, dried fruit, and coffee.

It is interesting to note that Wilde and Jones found winter weather in the high country generally tolerable. Old-timer Del Beaver, a former guide for Wilde who spent a similar winter trapping marten in the high elevations of the Absaroka Range west of Cody, also told me that many days were quite pleasant. “You could often take off your snowshoes and walk along the windblown ridges in your shirtsleeves,” he said.

When Wilde and Jones rode out of the wilderness that spring, their heavy packs contained 126 marten,

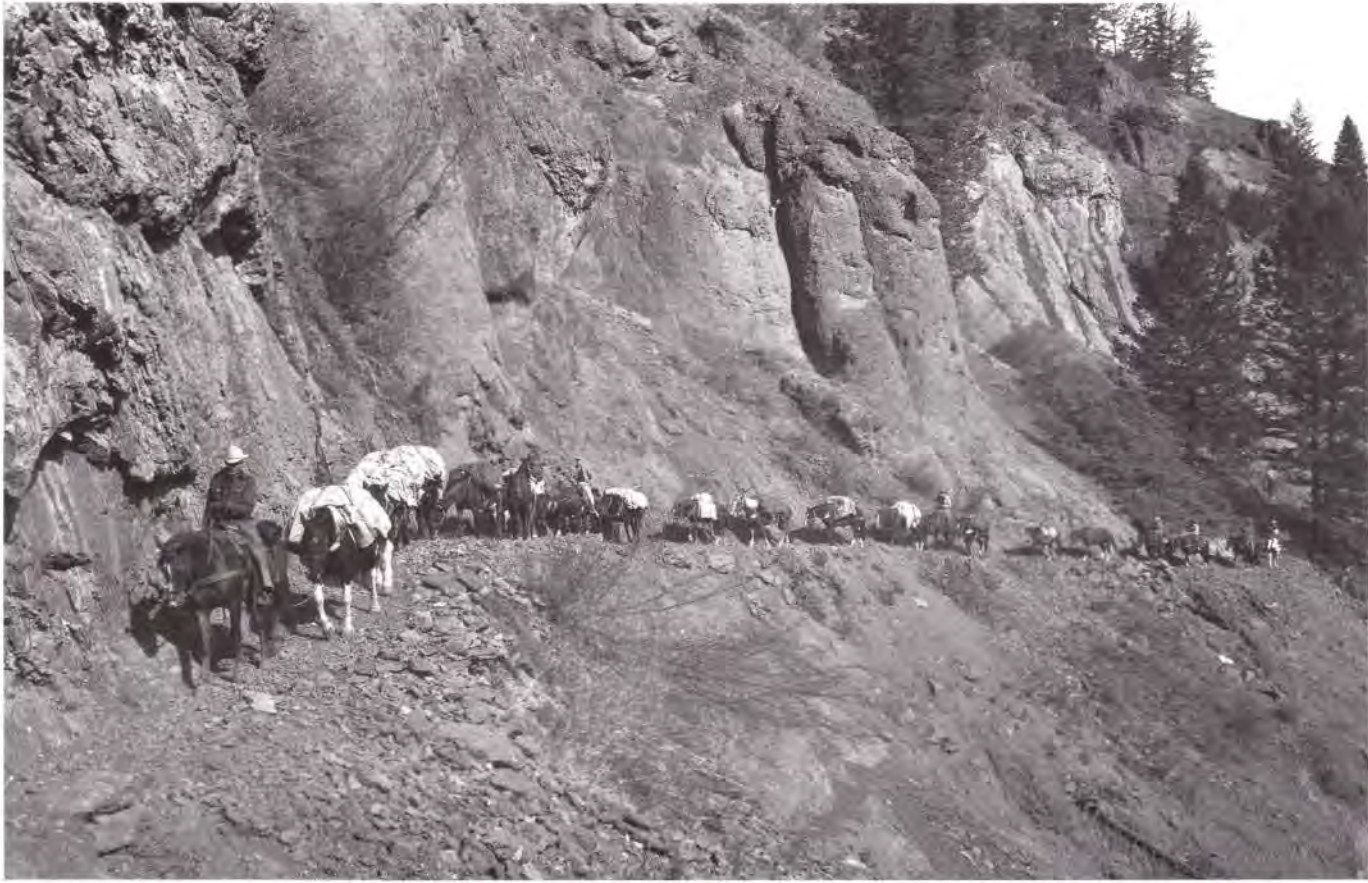
10 red fox, and 12 coyote pelts. This catch caused quite a stir when the furs were displayed in the storefront of the Cody Trading Company. The entire lot sold for \$10,000, and as Wilde put it, “Everyone turned trapper after that.” His share of the proceeds went toward the purchase of a good string of horses. And so began his career as an outfitter, basing his operation from his Lazy Bar F ranch and hunting the Thorofare.

In the early days, trips lasted a month or more, with no restrictions on campsites or areas to be hunted. Game was plentiful, and each sportsman was entitled to hunt most big game species on a single license. The result was large pack strings that roamed through the mountains with hunters seeking out elk, deer, moose, black bear, bighorn sheep, grizzly bear, and moose, with little or no competition. Those were great days to say the least.

The reputation of Max Wilde spread quickly due to the quality of his operation. As one of the old-time outfitters told me, “In those years, Max Wilde had all the top hands guiding for him.” Many baseball greats hunted with him, including Hall of Fame members Ty Cobb and Tris Speaker. Boston Red Sox owner Tom Yawkey became a personal friend, and Wilde guided him to numerous trophy elk and deer. Other notable clients included Arthur Godfrey, Bill and Dick DuPont, and Bill Rae, editor of *Outdoor Life*.

On a particularly successful hunt, renowned big game hunter Grancel Fitz took one of the greatest trophies ever taken by Wilde’s hunters. This elk was so famous, it became known as the Grancel Fitz Elk. Its antlers had seven points on one side, nine on the other, and were an incredible 64 1/4 inches wide — statistics that, to this day, still leave hunters awestruck. This and many other Wilde adventures were featured in a number of outdoor publications of that time.





The makings of a true adventure? Max Wilde, a packstring like the one pictured, and a backcountry trail. Outfitter Les Bowman leads a packstring along Ishawooa Trail in 1953. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Jack Richard Collection. P.89.1967

Max Wilde was an ardent conservationist and volunteered to serve on the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission during the late 1940s. A look at old Commission records reveals several causes that Wilde championed, including better salaries for game wardens, a retirement system for game and fish employees, the creation of mobile check stations, and the purchase of the Kearns Elk Winter Range near Sheridan, Wyoming, and the Ocean Lake Waterfowl Management Area.

Max Wilde retired in the 1960s, unable to adjust to the short hunts and crowded conditions of the new era. If everything is relative to your experience, one can see why change would have been hard for him to accept. In his later years, he remained thankful for the wonderful outdoor life Wyoming provided him, often saying he "wouldn't take a million bucks" for his experiences in the mountains. ■

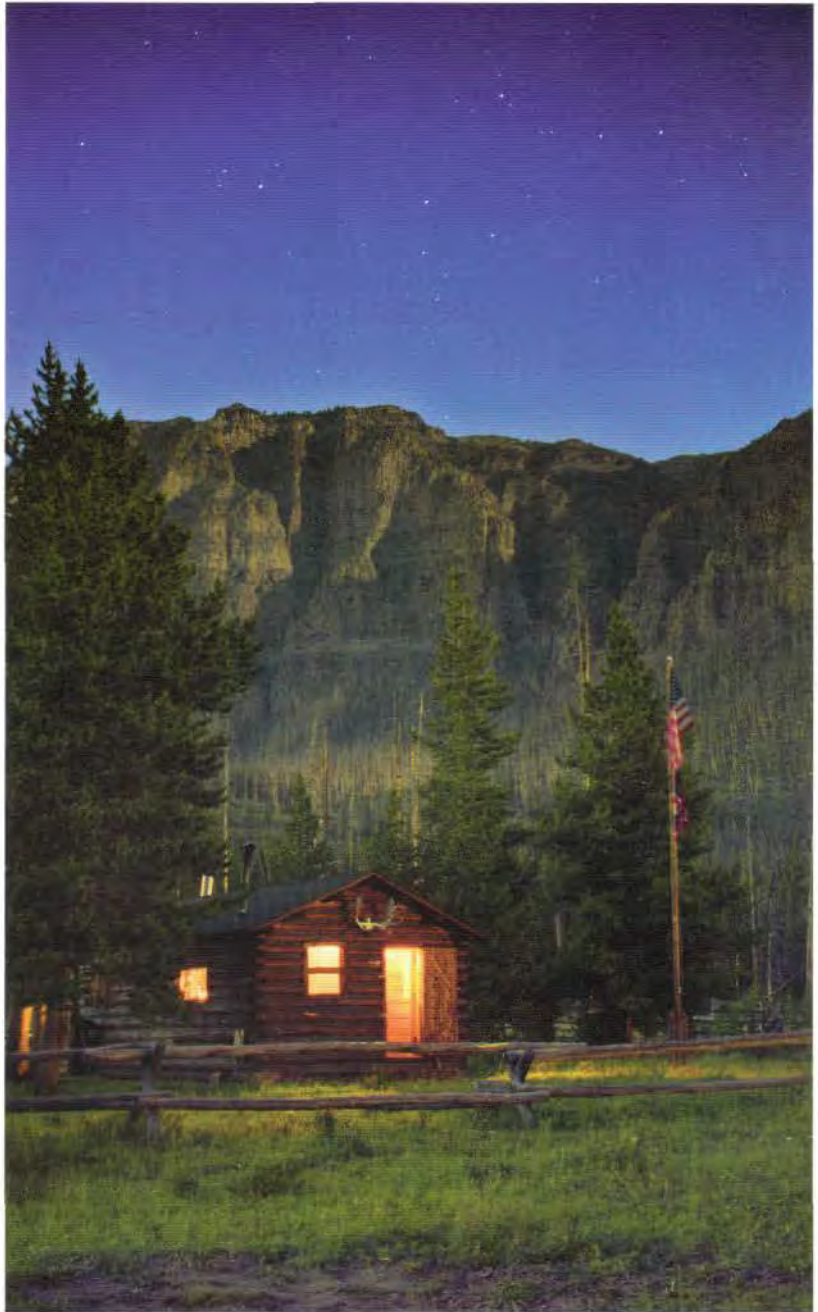
*Max Wilde was born January 16, 1888, and died on June 11, 1970. He is buried at the Riverside Cemetery in Cody, Wyoming.*

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*Jay Lawson has worked for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for more than 28 years and currently serves as Chief Game Warden and Chief of the Wildlife Division. Since childhood, he has sought out the colorful characters Wyoming produced during the early twentieth century. He recently completed a series of 25 biographical sketches of the more legendary outdoor men and women of that era titled, "Men to Match our Mountains," which is scheduled to be published within the next year.*



Jack Richard's image of Ty Cobb with Max Wilde is one of many taken from the backdrop of the Thorofare region. Richard's photographs, along with contemporary interpretation, were brought together in this summer's photography exhibition *A Place Called Thorofare*. Area hunters and outdoorsmen joined visitors from all over the country to experience this extraordinary land. The exhibition is expected to return to the photography gallery the first week of October. ■



Forest Service cabin in the Thorofare.



# Teaching the West



## Connections

by Robert Pickering, Ph.D. Deputy  
Director of Collections and Education

### The BBHC becomes an active partner in undergraduate teaching

**T**he Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) is a great place to explore the history, culture, and land of the Greater Yellowstone Area and the American West. However, as valuable as the gallery experience is, we here at the BBHC are asking some tough questions. Can we engage people who live far away? Can we have an impact on how the West is taught in colleges and universities — and even high schools and middle schools across the country?

In a July conference entitled "Teaching the West," fourteen invited scholars and BBHC curators discussed our role in teaching the American West. Each of the scholars teaches the subject of the West but with differing perspectives. Our job was to find out how to pull those perspectives together to present the West in all of its complicated history and sometimes inflated mythology.

In decades past, the myth and reality of the West was everywhere. It was a dominant theme in American popular culture whether books, movies, or television. While historians, ecologists, ethnographers, and others still study the West, the subject isn't as well known to the general public. Relatively little about the American West can be found in textbooks.

Participants shared information about methodology, resources, and student profiles of those who enrolled in their classes. Finally, they proposed numerous ways in which we can help them be more effective.

Likewise, our curators provided information about the kinds of resources we can offer the teaching community. Of course, we have great exhibits, but we also have a very significant library/archive of more than 20,000 volumes along with original documents, maps, and photographs. We have classroom facilities for on-site learning, and our curators, educators, and other staff members frequently lecture around the country bringing insight and experience to the classroom.

So what did we find out? Our guest scholars want easier access to our collections, using our photographs, maps, and images of art and artifacts in their classrooms. One way to do that is to provide more of our collections through the Internet. We'll also explore a publishing collaboration to create texts specifically for undergraduate and/or high school students. For on-site learning to explore the West "up close and personal," the BBHC will investigate a student summer program with field classes in Cody.

As I reflect on our two-day meeting, I can say I found it a joyous and energizing gathering of some very special people. By helping these professors in their important work, we're sharing our resources with more people and building audiences for the future. ■

*"Teaching the West" was funded by a grant from Alan & Cindy Horn.*



*Left to right: Top Row:* Sherry Smith, Ph.D., Southern Methodist University, TX; D. Kennedy, Curator-Cody Firearms Museum-BBHC; Robert Bonner, Ph.D., Carleton College, MN; Richard Knight, Ph.D., Colorado State University  
*Second Row:* Timothy LeCain, Ph.D., Montana State University; Judi Winchester, Ph.D., Curator-Plains Indian Museum-BBHC; Emma Hansen, Curator-Plains Indian Museum-BBHC; Ron McCoy, Ph.D., Emporia State University, KS  
*Third Row:* Brian Hosmer, Ph.D., Newberry Library, IL; Judith Antell, Ph.D., University of Wyoming; Carlos Blanton, Ph.D., Texas A and M University; William Katerberg, Ph.D., Calvin College, MI  
*Bottom Row:* Robert Pickering, Ph.D., Deputy Director for Collections & Education-BBHC; Catherine Lavender, Ph.D., The College of Staten Island, NY; Maryanne Andrus, Curator-Education Department-BBHC; Albert Broussard, Ph.D., University of Kansas; Rick Littlebear, Ph.D., President-Chief Dull Knife College, MT; Carol Higham, Ph.D., Davidson College, NC



## Plains Indian Museum meets the World Wide Web

**A**nyone and everyone interested in Native American arts and cultures can now view the extraordinary collection of the Plains Indian Museum (PIM) by going no farther than their computer keyboards. The Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) recently placed objects from its Plains Indian Museum collection online at [www.bbhc.org](http://www.bbhc.org). Internet visitors to the BBHC Web site need only go to the Plains Indian Museum page, then select "online collections" to view this array of unique objects.

The migration of artifacts from vaults and exhibitions to the Internet was made possible by a grant from The Henry Luce Foundation, headquartered in New York City. Over this multi-year project, objects were systematically photographed using digital photography. After that, the images were combined with their collection records on the Web site database. As a result, the collection is now more accessible to a wider audience. Currently, 541 objects are on view, with more being added periodically from the over 6,000 items in the PIM collection.

"This project initially developed from conversations with representatives from universities, tribal colleges, and Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board members about the Museum's long term interpretive and educational goals," said Plains Indian Museum Curator Emma Hansen. "With an ongoing interest in the Museum's collections, we decided to undertake a project that would provide greater access to the collections database, including photographs and records, for classrooms, tribal communities, researchers and interested individuals. Thankfully, with the Luce



Top: Ogalala Sioux shirt worn by Red Cloud, ca. 1870s. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Adolf Spohr Collection. Gift of Larry Sheerin. NA.202.598

Below: Northern Plains buffalo horn bonnet, ca. 1860. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Catherine Bradford McClellan Collection. Gift of The Coe Foundation. NA.203.18

Foundation grant, we were able to begin creating digital photographs of the Museum's collection and developing the components of the database."

The Plains Indian Museum houses one of the country's largest and finest collections of Plains Indian art and artifacts. "Originally, the Northern Plains clothing and accoutrements within the collections were those of the primarily Lakota and Cheyenne performers assembled during Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows," noted Hansen. "Over the years, however, the collection has been broadened with significant acquisitions from a variety of donors and now includes a host of contemporary additions. Many Plains peoples, as well as Native people from throughout North America, are now represented in superb examples of tribal artistry."

Visitors to the Web site are able to search for objects by name, category, description, and geographical/cultural areas. In addition, charts and maps identify the Native tribes inhabiting certain areas of North America. Viewers are able to select objects to create their own virtual collections. This allows them to return to the site again and again and have immediate access to chosen objects.

"The collections of the Plains Indian Museum are internationally recognized by artists and scholars for what they

convey about Native people of the Plains as well as the intrinsic artistry of individual works," Hansen added. "Through this project, the Museum is now able to provide access to the collections to a wider audience and increase the visibility of the collections and understanding of related Plains Indian Native cultures to the general public." ■



# Yellowstone Corner



Lamar Valley in Yellowstone National Park. Courtesy of National Park Service

## 2005 Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Adventure

*by Charles R. Preston, Ph.D., Chief Curator, Buffalo Bill Historical Center  
Founding Curator, Draper Museum of Natural History*

**"T**here's one . . . no two . . . wait, there are five of them!" It was about 6:30 a.m. near the turnoff to the Slough Creek campground in the northeastern corner of Yellowstone National Park. An early June drizzle had engulfed us, but nobody complained. We'd come to see wildlife, and the gray wolf was at the top of our must-see list.

Our attention was focused on a den site next to a rocky outcrop on a steep, grassy slope about a thousand meters in front of us. We knew the Slough Creek Pack had produced four litters this spring—14 individuals—in four separate dens on this hillside. Four simultaneous litters within a pack are unprecedented for Yellowstone wolves, and I've not been able to find it recorded before anywhere.

We'd been scanning the hillside for a few

minutes when one of our crew announced excitedly that five pups had emerged from behind the rock outcrop and were exploring the surrounding sagebrush flat. We took turns getting a close-up view of the pups through our powerful spotting scopes, and saw that two of the pups were black, and three were grayish-brown. As they explored the area, a large, silver-gray adult watched them carefully from the top of the rocky outcrop above them.

This was the second day of our journey through the Greater Yellowstone Area, co-hosted by the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's (BBHC's) Draper Museum of Natural History and Off The Beaten Path, LLC. Betsy Robinson, a wildlife biologist representing Off The Beaten Path, and I led the tour. Participants hailed from across the country. Each was an experienced hunter and/or



outdoorsman in his own right, and most had visited Yellowstone at least once before. They were attracted by the opportunity to visit the region at a time when wildlife are most active and tourist numbers are relatively low, and they were depending on us to make the most of the wildlife-watching opportunities.

The adventure began with a brief orientation, including a tour of the Draper *Greater Yellowstone Adventure* exhibits. The next day we traveled through the beautiful North Fork corridor and Shoshone National Forest to enter the Park at the East Gate. We explored the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, Norris Geyser Basin, and Mammoth Hot Springs before arriving in Cooke City, Montana, for the night. We spent the next two days exploring Lamar Valley, probably the best place in North America to observe wild gray wolves.



Yellowstone Park bison and calf, Spring 2005. C.R. Preston photo

On that second day, while most of us were watching the wolf pups wander and play around the Slough Creek den site, Betsy Robinson spotted a bear on the ridge behind us. At first, we thought it was a grizzly bear, but when it turned broadside to us, we could see it was an unusually marked, blonde, black bear. From that same vantage point, we saw four grizzly bears that morning, including a sow and two cubs!

As is usual in spring, Yellowstone wildlife was very visible. We saw thousands of bison, many with their little, red calves in tow, hundreds of elk, dozens of mule deer and pronghorn, two cow moose with newborn calves, a young bull moose in velvet, several bighorn sheep ewes with newborn lambs (it is mind-boggling to watch one of these hours-old lambs scramble up a rocky slope), at least a dozen wolves, five grizzly bears, seven black bears, several coyotes, nesting great horned owls,

ospreys, and a peregrine falcon with chicks. We saw a golden eagle and witnessed a spectacular series of acrobatic maneuvers by a group of four red-tailed hawks.

One of our participants summed up his experience this way: "As you know, I've had several trips into Yellowstone and Lamar Valley, but your trip was *by far* the most memorable. I still marvel at the number and variety of species of young animals we were able to observe. What a treat!" It's often through the eyes of our trip participants and museum visitors that we are reminded of what an exceptional gift we have in this Yellowstone Corner of the world. ■



Tour participant Jack Ferguson, Denver, Colorado, (foreground) lines up a photograph of a black bear sow and two cubs during the first day of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Journey.



Larry McMurtry, *The Colonel and Little Missie: Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley and the Beginnings of Superstardom in America*.

Illustrated, bibliography, index. 245p.  
New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005.  
ISBN 0-7432-7171-8 hardback \$26.00.

by Lynn Houze, Curatorial Assistant, Buffalo Bill Museum

It was with great anticipation that I sat down to read this newest book by Larry McMurtry. And, while McMurtry is known primarily for his fiction writing, this is not his first non-fiction book so I was expecting a first-class job.

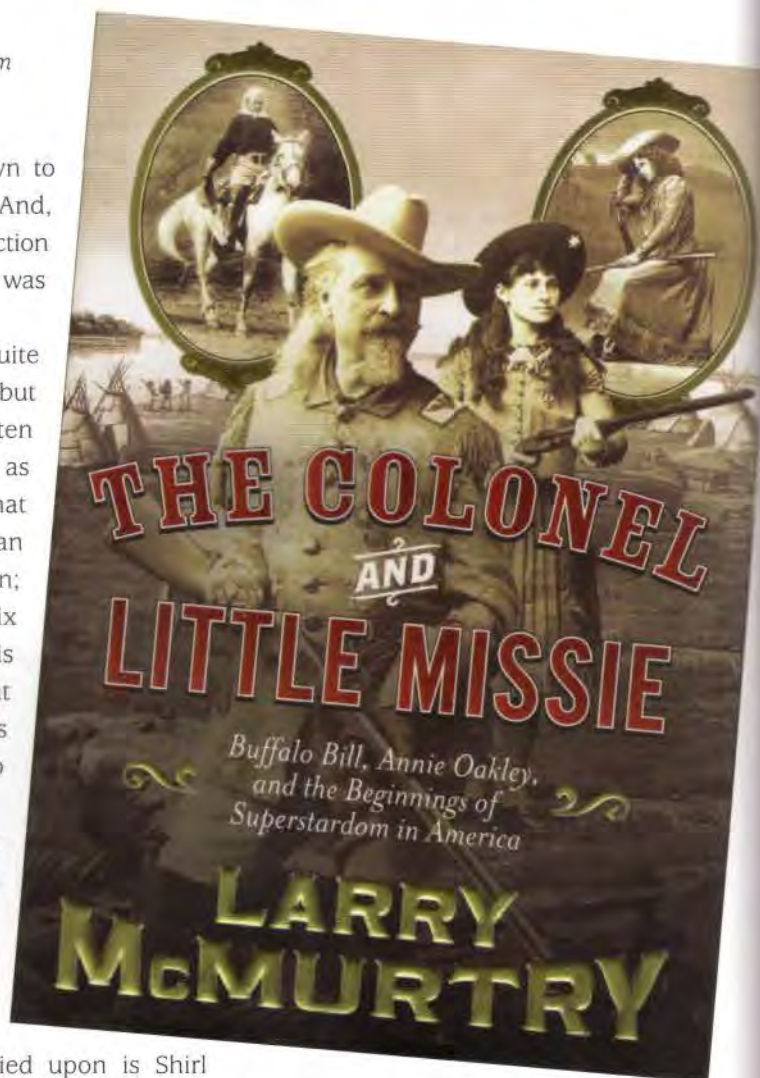
That was not to be, however, and I became quite disappointed. McMurtry did no original research but simply relied on most of the biographies written about Buffalo Bill and Annie Oakley, using them as fact. He apparently made no effort to discover what Wild West scholars said about these books. Dan Muller's *My Life with Buffalo Bill* is mostly fiction; he did not live with Buffalo Bill. The story of six female friends of Buffalo Bill's being present at his funeral on a warm June day on Lookout Mountain, and one holding an umbrella over his casket because the glass cover was beginning to steam, just did not happen.

Buffalo Bill's autobiography is riddled with inconsistencies and wrong dates due to his faulty memory and vivid imagination. He was known for his story telling and consequently facts often got in the way of a good story. Yet, McMurtry liberally quotes from *The Life of Hon.*

*William F. Cody*. One book that McMurtry relied upon is Shirl

Kasper's biography of Annie Oakley, an accurate account of Annie's life. However, he credits Kasper for research done by Isabelle Sayers, an earlier biographer of Annie's, whose book is not listed in his bibliography.

Larry McMurtry's book is well written and a quick read. It contains a lot of useful information, and he makes some good points regarding superstardom. Unfortunately, the casual reader will not be able to discern truth from fiction. ■





## Still time to register for Plains Indian Museum Seminar

**A**cademics, students, Native Americans, history buffs, and anyone else with an interest in Native American culture are invited to register for this year's Plains Indian Museum (PIM) Seminar, September 29—October 2, 2005, here at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). This year's theme is "Native Land and the People of the Great Plains."



Painted by Cadzi Cody-Shoshone Indian, November 1906. Tanned cow hide, pigments. Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Cody, Wyoming. NA.702.31

The conference will explore the relationship between Native People of the Great Plains and the land in which they have lived from generation to generation. For people of the Plains, the land and its resources are integrally connected to tribal traditions, knowledge, beliefs, economies, and other cultural elements. As such, the land has served both as inspiration for Native artists and as a source of conflict during historical struggles to protect tribal homelands. Many sites within the Great Plains have inherent and ongoing spiritual meanings to tribal members. Today, the land and its resources continue to tie the people to their cultural traditions as tribes consider new economic uses and encounter contemporary threats to its preservation and protection.

The seminar opens with a welcome reception at 6 p.m., Thursday, September 29. After that, the public is invited to a screening of the award-winning documentary, *In the Light of Reverence*, 7 p.m. in the BBHC Coe Auditorium. Narrated by Peter Coyote and Tantoo Cardinal, this film received the Best Documentary Feature Award at the American Indian Film

Festival in San Francisco. Throughout the day on both Friday and Saturday, seminar speakers and participants will enjoy dynamic exchanges with enough time allowed for touring the BBHC.

On Sunday afternoon, October 2, attendees embark on a field trip to the Weatherman Draw rock art site near Billings, Montana. Transportation is provided and participants are advised the trip involves a two-mile round trip hike. Seating is limited to 22 individuals and the cost is an additional \$15.

Those presenting research include Gerard Baker, superintendent of Mt. Rushmore National Memorial; Dr. Chuck Braithwaite, editor of the *Great Plains Quarterly*; Marilyn Hudson, administrator of the Three Affiliated Tribes Museum on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation; Timothy P. McCleary from Little Big Horn College at Crow Agency, Montana; Dr. William C. Meadows, professor of anthropology and Native American studies at Missouri State University; and Scott P. Frazier, Native Waters, Project of WET International. A complete list of speakers and topics is available on the BBHC Web site.

Seminar registration forms are also available on the BBHC Web site. Registration is limited to seating available in the Center's Coe Auditorium. The \$95 seminar fee includes the opening reception, seminar sessions, coffee breaks, and information packets. BBHC members receive a 10% discount. A limited number of partial and full scholarships are available for participants, particularly those of Native American descent. Scholarship funds cover registration fees and provide some assistance with travel and lodging expenses. Scholarship assistance is provided by the Marion and Richard A. Pohrt Indian Art Scholarship Fund. ■



## BBHC internships: a win/win opportunity

**"Y**ou can't always determine an audience's needs intuitively," remarked Jordan Rader of the Herron School of Art and Design in Indianapolis. "Surveys are a helpful tool in making final decisions about who and how to market." Rader had just completed a summer internship in public relations at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC), and was answering the question, "What was the most important thing you learned through your work at the BBHC?" University of Wyoming student and firearms intern, Miles Mathews, added, "Instead of studying history from a book, it becomes more alive and more real when you are able to work with pieces of history in a museum setting."

Rader and Mathews, along with their fellow BBHC summer interns, are proof positive that everyone wins with a BBHC internship. From projects to programs to surveys, internships are a win/win program for the Center and the intern. The BBHC provides hands-on involvement with the museum profession for students who want to gain practical museum experience or who want to develop new or expanded applications for their academic and professional interests. Conversely, interns provide valuable assistance with a variety of projects at the Center.

"There is practically no chosen field of study that can't be applied to the museum setting," said Dr. Robert B. Pickering, BBHC Deputy Director of Collections and Education. "Internships are available with all five museums as well as the McCracken Research Library, public relations, information technology, collections management, and graphics, to name a few. They're also available at virtually any time of year. Internships are so important to our mission here at the Center. The work done by these students this summer with our visitor surveys, for example, was immeasurable."

Internships are full-time positions, usually 12 weeks in length. Qualified upper-level undergraduate students and graduate students who are enrolled in colleges and universities are eligible to apply. A stipend of approximately \$6.75 per hour is provided, based on a 40-hour workweek. Housing is the responsibility of the student. Because availability of housing is somewhat limited, particularly in the summer months, students are encouraged to make housing arrangements early in the spring.

Funding for the internships has been provided by the Tucker Foundation; the Lorna Kooi Simpson Internship Program for University of Wyoming students, endowed by the Wyoming Arts Council; the GE Fund for the American Indian Internship Program; and by the Roy A. Hunt Foundation for the Natural History Internship Program.

This year's summer interns had some advice for their would-be counterparts. "Be ready to work hard, but have fun with your internship as well. The area where a person does an internship should be an area of interest to them," said Mathews. "I will tell them to attend any lectures or classes," according to Humboldt State University student, Yasu Hata. "Learning from all different kinds of subjects is very interesting." From Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming, Tawni Shuler added, "Apply early and be persistent"



Summer 2005 interns at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, from left to right: Miles Mathews - Cody Firearms Museum, Jordan Amonette-Herron Group-Survey, Tawni Shuler - Education/Survey, Alison Dinstel - Photography, Jacob Amend - Education/Survey, Yasuyo Hata-Draper Museum of Natural History, Jordan Rader, Herron Group - Survey

Complete internship information, including registration materials can be found on the BBHC Web site at [www.bbhc.org/edu/internship.cfm](http://www.bbhc.org/edu/internship.cfm). Application deadline for next summer is February 1, 2006. For more information, contact Janine Jackson at 307.578.4020 or [janinej@bbhc.org](mailto:janinej@bbhc.org). ■



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