



**BUFFALO BILL  
HISTORICAL  
CENTER**

**NEWS**

**WINTER 1993**



## DECEMBER

5 Annual Holiday Open  
House and Museum  
Selections Sale.

14 December 14, 1993 - February 13, 1994  
*Frontier America: Art and Treasures of  
the Old West.* The traveling expedition  
of the Old West from the Buffalo Bill  
Historical Center will be on view at  
The J.B. Speed Museum, Louisville,  
Kentucky.





by Peter H. Hassrick, Director

## NO WANING FAD, THIS WEST

The world is brimming with negative ions these days, it seems. They spin off in countless directions and in sufficient quantity to reach even the remotest of corners. When they bang up against us out here in Wyoming and accumulate in any depth at our feet, we generally know what to do with the shovel. We're an optimistic lot for the most part, unwilling to give much quarter to bad vibes, be they chemical or otherwise.

But lately the ions had piled up pretty deeply, the result of a chemistry report from "students" of public opinion who grace our institutional threshold from time to time. They had concocted a formula of despair, in which the prime forecast saw interest in the American West severely diminishing. Younger generations, according to the gurus, couldn't care less about the West, its history, art or culture. Enthusiasms wane as audiences age. In order that the Buffalo Bill Historical Center might survive, major course corrections were called for . . . maybe Disneyfication, a theme park or concentration on ecotourism to salvage the situation, redirecting our perilous course of impending demise.

The home team was about to give up when a couple of things happened to shake us from our despondency.

The first surprise resulted from our own hard work. In late September we had a remarkable week (most weeks in September are remarkable in Cody, but this was extra special). It began with an elaborate four-day symposium and workshop on contemporary western design, organized by the Master Artisans Guild and hosted in part by the Historical Center. Within an hour of the conference commencement, we could all tell it was a no-doubt-about-it roaring success. And just when we were beginning to feel giddily over the extraordinary public enthusiasm generated for decorative arts with a cowboy twist, our Buckeye Blake exhibition opened. Again, enthusiasm was overwhelming. Sarah Boehme, the curator, and Buckeye Blake, the artist, could have walked on clouds . . . the mist of accolades was that thick.

Nonetheless, we were still not fully delivered from our gloom until a few weeks later, when across our desk came an article by Jack Carver titled "The Western Phenomenon." It had been published in May by the magazine *Western English World* and, for unknown reasons, had escaped our gaze until now. Its message and timing were felicitous. Here is what it had to say.

A senior consumer research group, Yankelovich Partners of New York, was commissioned to undertake a market survey for a proposed new magazine, *Western Styles*. The main question was whether there existed sufficient general interest in the West to justify the expense of launching such a publication. The answers were such that *Western Styles* is now in production, with a circulation of 160,000 after only two issues. Rather than declining, as our doomsday prognosticators had posited, the Yankelovich study revealed a strong increase in interest, pointing out that "31 percent of the adult population of the United States can be classified as Western Enthusiasts. One out of every three Americans. That's 57.4 million of us."

These enthusiasts have an average annual income of \$30,000 and a combined buying power of \$1.5 trillion. While that may not be enough to make us hopeful of a booming increase in upper level memberships, it does bode well for travel trends. And Cody is the heart of the West.

Another remarkable finding of the Yankelovich study was the number of Americans who own western paintings, prints or other artwork (34 percent), Native American artifacts (39 percent), western artifacts (16 percent) and western clothing (60 percent).

Most significantly, the Yankelovich study claimed that this burgeoning western enthusiasm could be classified not as a fad, but as a trend "and a strong one with real staying power."

And one final sigh of relief . . . the once proclaimed generational ennui is roundly demurred by this report. Western enthusiasm is governed by a need that transcends ages—"a need for things that are real and true. The 1980s, with all their glitz and glamour and the mystique of the high pressure lifestyle, are over. Americans in the 1990s, and beyond, are searching for a new set of values, and their interest in the West seems to be an expression of that need."

Oh yes, and by the way, history and art top the survey's list of the respondent's collective interests.

So, with thanks to Yankelovich partners and Mr. Carver, we are girded to press forward with our efforts to celebrate the West, its history and art. The discouraging words have blown away, at least for a while, transported on the latest chinook. And good luck to that new magazine, *Western Styles*.



## VICTOR ALEXANDER, SADDLEMAKER

by Rodric J. Coslet  
Intern, Buffalo Bill Museum

In 1992, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center received a rare and valuable gift from Victor Alexander, Jr.—a collection saddlemaking tools, patterns and accessories which his father, Victor Alexander, Sr., had used in his saddlemaking businesses. The initial donation, totalling some 3,000 items, has recently been augmented by an additional gift of 70 tools and 98 archival materials. In its entirety, the collection is remarkable for its intrinsic historic worth, for its size and breadth, and because of Victor Alexander, Sr.'s stature as a saddlemaker.

The senior Alexander was born in Gallup/Ft. Wingate, New Mexico in 1906, and spent his early years working on dude ranches and competing in rodeos. He worked the rodeo circuit across the United States throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s. A rodeo injury in Miles City, Montana, ended his competitive career and gave him the impetus to seek another in saddlemaking.

In 1935 Alexander married Harriet Newell Evans in Cody, Wyoming, and moved to California. There he worked for the Visalia Stock Saddle Company under the direction of Leland Bergen in San Francisco. In 1940, he started the Victor Alexander Company in Hayward, California, in partnership with Harry Rowell, a local rodeo producer. Several other Visalia employees went with him, including a group of silversmiths who started the Diablo Silver Company in the same plant. The silver saddle displayed with the tools in the Orientation Gallery was made by the Victor Alexander Company, using Diablo silver.

Between 1942 and 1949, Alexander moved around quite a bit, working for several saddle companies in California and Texas. In 1949, he moved to the Bona Allen Saddle Company in Buford, Georgia, near Atlanta, where he became saddle designer and production manager. He used his own tools to design prototype saddles, and then set up the production line to manufacture them. He also designed the company catalogue and arranged for advertising in western magazines. Beginning in 1950, he completely redesigned the Bona Allen line of western saddles, which were produced by the thousands and sold by catalog and through Sears, Roebuck & Company. Alexander retired from Bona Allen in 1970, just after Tandy Leather purchased the company and closed the plant. He made one more move to Ocala,



Victor Alexander at the California Saddle Shop, ca. 1936-39. Gift of Audrey Alexander Sommer.

Florida, where he passed away in 1973.

The tools exhibited with the Historical Center's recent gifts are just a few of the thousands in the collection, which includes a stitching horse to hold the leather while hand-stitching, a variety of punches, a rosette cutter, a selection of rubsticks for burnishing the edges, some stamping tools, an engraver's stylus, a compass for measuring, a scratch compass for making a groove for stitching, some knives, a box of hammers and mallets, hand tools, edgers, bissonnettes, French edgers and awls.

A man of boundless energy, Alexander was always looking for better, more efficient ways to do things. Though he could make saddles entirely by hand, he was fascinated with the idea of mass production. The collection includes patterns for dies used to cut out leather more quickly, and stamping patterns which would be turned into metal plates to stamp his tooling onto hundreds of saddles. In this respect, he was probably one of the most prolific saddlemakers in the country in his day. Since he was a saddle designer working for large saddle companies, however, only saddles made by the Victor Alexander Company between 1940 and 1942 bear his name.



## CONSERVATION OF RUSSELL WAXES REVEALS WORKS' ORIGINAL APPEARANCE

by Sarah E. Boehme  
John S. Bugas Curator  
Whitney Gallery of Western Art

A second grant of \$10,000 from the Charlie Russell Riders Foundation is supporting conservation of a group of rare Charles M. Russell wax sculptures. The project not only conserves the works of art, but also reveals new information about the original appearance of Russell's works of art.

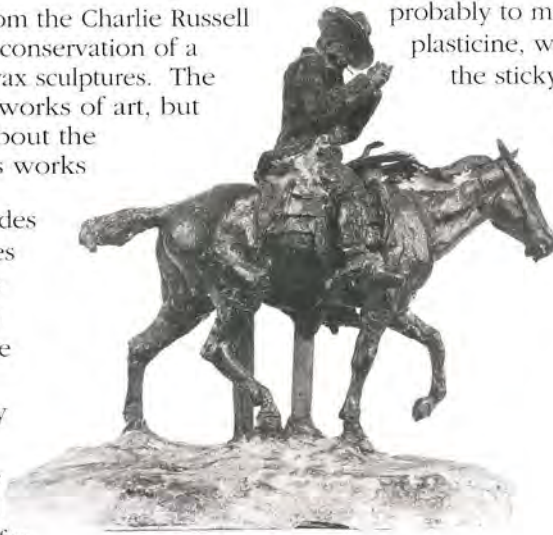
The Whitney collection includes over 60 wax and plaster sculptures by Russell. Most of these were removed from exhibition in 1986 because of their condition. Some of the waxes appeared to be deteriorating, developing a sticky brown liquid on their surfaces which made them appear to be melting. Consequently, the Russell waxes were identified as priorities for conservation treatment.

Research has revealed that much of the deterioration is caused by alterations to the sculptures after C.M. Russell's death. Most of these wax sculptures can be traced to the estate of Nancy Russell, the wife of the artist. Rick Stewart, Amon Carter Museum curator, has identified photographs documenting the appearance of the waxes when Nancy Russell's estate was settled. In many cases, waxes were altered by the collectors who cast them into bronze after acquiring them from Nancy Russell's collection.

C. M. Russell used grasses, wood, fabric and other materials to create these figures; he also painted the surfaces. The artist probably never intended to cast these pieces in bronze; they were conceived as unique pieces, drawn from his imagination and made as gifts for family and friends.

The conservation treatment of *Lunch Hour*, a wax and wood sculpture, illustrates the extent of this project. Russell made this sculpture using a piece of wood for the tree and beeswax to model the bear family. The photograph of *Lunch Hour* taken for the Nancy Russell estate shows that Russell had made the large bear's claws from pieces of tin and that the wood stump had deep hollow areas. These details are not evident in the bronze casts.

Examination of *Lunch Hour* showed that material had been added to Russell's original sculpture. Plasticine, a modeling clay, was used to fill in parts of the sculpture,



Charles M. Russell, 1864-1926. *On Neenab*, undated. Wax. Gift of Dr. Armand Hammer and Charles Stone Jones.

probably to make it easier to cast. Deterioration of the plasticine, which is less stable than beeswax, caused the sticky brown liquid to form on the surface.

For the Russell project the Historical Center has commissioned a sculpture conservator, Glenn Wharton of Santa Barbara, California, who, in consultation with former staff conservator Beverly Perkins and myself as curator, cleaned *Lunch Hour* by hand and with solvents where appropriate. The plasticine was removed, revealing the tin claws, the shape of the wood, and Russell's delicate coloring. The work of art was restored as closely as possible to Russell's original conception and its condition was stabilized to preserve it.

Grants from the Charlie Russell Riders Foundation and Armand Hammer funded the treatment of 12 sculptures and partial completion of five others. This second grant from the Russell Riders will complete the treatment in progress and will initiate conservation on eight more sculptures.

The Russell Riders are a philanthropic group from across the United States, who, like their namesake, seek to preserve the West through art and education programs. The organization was founded in 1985 and in its first years supported the C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls. In 1989, their mission expanded to consider other



Mr. Robert J. Dellenback, chairman of the Charlie Russell Riders Foundation, and Sarah E. Boehme, curator of the Whitney Gallery, examine *Lunch Hour*, one of C.M. Russell's waxes which has undergone conservation.



## ACQUISITIONS

## WHITNEY GALLERY OF WESTERN ART

Donna Howell-Sickles (b. 1949).

*A Matter of Choice*, 1993.

Mixed media on paper; 44-1/4 x 30-1/16 inches.

William E. Weiss Purchase Award -- 1993 Buffalo Bill Art Show.

Charles Ringer (b. 1948).

*Hunting Around*, 1993.

Painted steel; 32-1/2 x 29 x 16 inches.

Gift of Howard and Lili Ann Camden.

Timothy Jones (b. 1952).

*The Red Stock Truck*, 1990.

Oil on board; 9 x 12 inches.

Gift of the artist.

Seth Eastman (1808-1875).

*Valley of the St. Peters, Minnesota*, 1854.

Engraving on paper; 5-1/4 x 8 inches.

Gift of Gloria S. Duffy and Family.

J.J. Young (1830-1879).

*Rio Colorado near the Mojave Villages*.

*View No. 1, from the left bank looking W.N.W.*, 1856.

Lithograph on paper; 5-3/16 x 8-5/8 inches.

Gift of Gloria S. Duffy and Family.

Buckeye Blake (b. 1946).

*Stars 'n' Cowgirls Scarf*, 1990.

Silk scarf; 33 x 33 inches.

Gift of Cattle Kate.

Buckeye Blake (b. 1946).

*Saddle and Rope Scarf*, 1990.

Silk scarf; 33 x 33 inches.

Gift of Cattle Kate.



C.M. Russell (1864-1926).

*When Wagons Meant Plunder*, 1900.

Oil on board; 17-3/4 x 23-3/4 inches.

Bequest of Lewis B. Maytag, Jr.

## PLAINS INDIAN MUSEUM

Painted buffalo calf robe, Pawnee, ca. 1870. Museum purchase and gift of Margot Grant.

Otter trailer, Ojibwa, ca. 1920. Gift of Mr. John F. Eulich.

## BUFFALO BILL MUSEUM

Seventy saddle-making tools and 98 archival materials supplementing the Victor Alexander Collection given in 1992. Gift of Victor Alexander, Jr.

Leather split riding skirt, ca. 1930. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. W. Robert Gaines.

U. S. Forest Service advertising placard. Gift of Dave Barkan.

Sign, "Ernest J. Goppert/Attorney at Law," ca. 1920. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John Housel.

The Historical Center has received a significant research collection from the family of the late Don Russell, historian and biographer of Buffalo Bill. Mr. Russell's papers include the original manuscript for *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*. In the next issue of NEWS, we will describe the gift and discuss Don Russell's life and work.

## CODY FIREARMS MUSEUM

Winchester Salesman's Sample Kit, boxed window shotgun shells in original box.

Gift of John L. Mutersbaugh, Halifax, Pennsylvania.

Stevens Ideal English Model Rifle No. 44 1/2.

Gift of Mr. George Dixon.

Colt Lightning Slide Action Rifle.

Gift of Mr. Art Gums.

Springfield U.S. Model 1903 National Match Target Rifle.

Gift of Mr. Judge E. Anderson.

Ohio Valley Long Rifle.

Gift of Mr. Stephen Flesher.

Winchester Carpet Sweeper.

Gift of Gloria S. Duffy.

## LOANS

Stereoview to *Imagining the Seminoles* at the Southeast Museum of Photography, May 1993 through September 15, 1994.

*The Lost Greenhorn* by Alfred Jacob Miller; *The Lower Falls of the Yellowstone* by W.R. Leigh; *Estes Park Colorado*, *Whyte's Lake* by Albert Bierstadt; and *The Wicked Pony*, or *The Fallen Rider* by Frederic S. Remington, loaned from the collection of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art; and a pair of beaded Northern Plains cuffs, ca. 1905; a Blackfeet gun case, ca. 1910; and a Sioux cradle, ca. 1895, loaned from the Plains Indian Museum to the exhibition *The American West: L'Arte della Frontiera Americana* at the Palace of Exhibitions, in Rome, Italy, December 1, 1993 through February 21, 1994.

A saddle, a pair of gauntlets, a pair of moccasins, a cradle, and a belt pouch loaned from the Crow collection of the Plains Indian Museum to the exhibition *Fred E. Miller; Photographer of the Crows* at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, October 9, 1993 through January 9, 1994.

A Colt revolver, jacket, and Remington carbine from the Buffalo Bill Museum to the Museum of the Moving Image, London, England.

*Renegade Apaches* by H.W. Hansen; *Morning Ma'am* by W.H.D. Koerner; *An Overland Station: Indians Coming in With the Stage* by Frederic S. Remington; *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, after Albert Bierstadt by an anonymous artist loaned from the collection of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art to the United States Embassy, Vienna, Austria.

## CHANGE IN TAX LAW FAVORS DONORS

by Jay Wright  
Director of Development

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 permanently repealed the Alternative Minimum Tax for charitable gifts of appreciated property. For gifts of tangible personal property, such as works of art, the repeal was made retroactive after June 30, 1992.

This change means that a donor in the higher tax brackets may now deduct the full market value of works of art and articles of historical and cultural importance, not just the purchase price. Since the law was enacted the Center has received a major gift, a collection of 108 air guns from one of the Cody Firearms Museum Advisory Board members, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson.

The collection will be displayed in the Mezzanine Gallery at the beginning of the 1994 season.

This tax law change clearly benefits museums in general. When the Alternative Minimum Tax Law was passed in 1986, gifts to museums dropped off considerably. When the provision was suspended temporarily for the year 1991, gifts increased. When the extension was not reviewed after June 30, 1992, giving decreased again.

If you have questions, please call the Development Department office at 307/587-4771.



Three of the 108 air guns donated to the collection of the Cody Firearms Museum by Mr. Thomas Hutchinson.

## FAUX BOOKS GOING FAST

For a donation ranging from \$100 to \$500, you can help finance the McCracken Library Expansion by purchasing a faux book.

The books come in five colors, representing the four museums and the library. You may choose the color that corresponds to your favorite area, and add a truly distinctive touch by coming up with your own title for an extra \$100.

Your contribution is 100 percent tax deductible and will help to make the resources of the research library much more accessible. This is particularly important as interest in the West grows and the Historical Center is called on to share its holdings.

For more information and/or an order form, contact Suzi Johnson in the Development Department office at 307/587-4771.

## ANNUAL FUND

Once again it is Annual Fund time, when the Historical Center turns to generous donors for support of ongoing programs. The Annual Fund Drive will be more important than usual this year, since revenues from admissions are behind last year. Attendance has been down because of the floods in the Midwest and the recession in California.

This year's goal is \$250,000. To date we have raised over \$50,000. We want to thank those who have already given. We hope that the rest of the Historical Center's friends will consider contributing.

The dollars which you give make possible the very things for which the Historical Center is most renowned. Many museums have had to cut exhibitions and educational programs because of shortages of funds. Because of your support, we have not had to do that. Please consider helping us again this year.



## HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE HELD DECEMBER 3RD



Jed Heath of Cody visits with Santa at Holiday Open House 1992.

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center will host the annual Christmas Open House on Friday, December 3. Patrons of the museum will be admitted at 6 pm, one hour earlier than the general public, so that they might enjoy special entertainment, an early audience with Santa and "first dibs" in the gift shop with many items discounted 45 percent.

The doors will be open to the community from 7 till 9 pm. Admittance is free. "Our Christmas Open House provides us an opportunity to thank all our friends throughout the Bighorn Basin," said Historical Center Director Peter Hassrick, "to show how much we appreciate you bringing your family and friends to see the Center this year. You have our gratitude for encouraging other visitors. The staff of the Historical Center is grateful for your participation in our many events, for we've never been busier."

According to Hassrick, this year's program will feature a display of holiday artwork by Bighorn Basin school children, musical entertainment showcasing area talent, visits with Santa Claus, a special sale in Museum Selections, Christmas movies, and over 400 dozen cookies baked by volunteers and staff.

## HISTORICAL CENTER OFFERS WINTER TOURS

In support of a community-wide effort to increase winter visitation to the Cody area, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center will experiment with limited tours. "This trial effort will be tested this winter," says Peter H. Hassrick, director. "Over the past several years we have gradually increased our hours to meet the needs of the Bighorn Basin and the traveling public. We are excited to do our part in this promotional campaign."

Currently the Historical Center is open to the public almost 3,000 hours annually, 1,000 more than the national museum average. While the Historical Center must remain closed from December through February for maintenance and care of the collections, the board of trustees has agreed to limited guided tours.

On Monday through Saturday, from 10 am till noon, groups limited to 15 visitors daily will be guided through areas not restricted by cleaning or gallery reinstatement. Regular admission will be charged and priority admittance will be by reservation and then on a first-come basis. The Museum Selections gift shop will be open from noon until 1 pm following the tour.

"One of the challenges of a seasonal operation is the tremendous stress it places on the facility," says Roy

Bruce, Historical Center custodial supervisor. "We must be the only museum in The Country that's open every day from 7 am to 10 pm during the summer, with a graveyard shift to do the cleaning. Each winter it's a race to put the last mop and paintbrush away before the first visitor arrives on February 26. We literally work around the clock for 90 days. The next time you strip the wax off your kitchen floor, imagine doing that to a floor of 250,000 square feet, applying new wax and then polishing it again."

It costs approximately \$1,465 per hour to operate the museum complex for visitors, according to Hassrick. Admission and shop revenues account for approximately 60 percent of the funds required to pay general operating expenses and provide services and programming.

"At our present income level," says Hassrick, "every visitor is subsidized by approximately 40 percent, almost \$2.80 per person, money that the museum must generate from its endowment or from outside the institution. Expanding our hours during the winter for this experiment is our contribution to building off-season traffic. We hope that other businesses and community leaders will match these efforts creatively."



# FALL PHOTO ALBUM

The end of the season at the Historical Center was lively indeed. We danced in the garden with the Prince of Monaco; we welcomed more than 130 participants to the Plains Indian Seminar; we opened *Buckeye Blake: Art on the Western Front*, our first exhibition of contemporary western art in nearly a decade, and *Artistry in Arms: The Guns of Smith & Wesson*, a stellar exhibition of engraved and decorated firearms. We topped it off by dancing in the galleries at the Patrons Ball.



Counterclockwise, beginning at the top: H.S.H. Prince Albert of Monaco accepts flowers from a Cody area child as Chairman Peg Coe, Director Peter Hassrick, and William C. Garlow, great-grandson of William F. Cody, look on.

Before performing at Wynonna Thompson Auditorium, the western music trio Riders in the Sky attended the openings of *Buckeye Blake: Art on the Western Front* and *Artistry in Arms: The Guns of Smith & Wesson*. Here they pose with Buckeye Blake in front of the poster he designed for them.

This was the best-attended Patrons Ball ever. Among those who turned out to support the Historical Center were (right to left) Jim Taggart, Pam Taylor, Lynda Covert, Anna and Bo Polk. Bottom left: Quin Blair, Governor and Mrs. Mike Sullivan and Ruth Blair smile for the camera.

More than 130 people attended the 1993 Plains Indian Seminar in mid-September. The presenters (left to right, standing) were: Winfield Coleman, Margot Liberty, Hugh Dempsey, Colin Taylor, Morgan Baillargeon; (sitting) John Ewers, David W. Penney, Carole Barrett, Barbara Feezor-Stewart, Benson Lanford, Dennis Lessard, Allen Chronister and Bill Mercer.



## HISTORICAL CENTER PHOTOGRAPHER AWARDED WYOMING ARTS COUNCIL FELLOWSHIP

The Wyoming Arts Council has awarded a fellowship for excellence in the visual arts to Devendra Shrikhande, head photographer at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Shrikhande received the fellowship, which is one of only four awarded to visual artists residing in the state, on the basis of photographs submitted to a jury.

Shrikhande's photographs, made in a socio-documentary style, are black-and-white sepiatones of a traditional East Indian wrestling gymnasium. Shrikhande took the photographs in Pune, India which lies approximately 100 miles southeast of Bombay, while he was visiting his family there on an extended holiday last February.

In addition to cash awards which recipients may use at their discretion, the four winners of 1993 visual arts fellowships will participate in a group exhibition organized by the Nicolaysen Art Museum in Casper, Wyoming, in the spring of 1995. The exhibition will include works besides those for which the fellowships were awarded. Prior to the opening of the exhibition, Bill Fagaley, who

acted as a juror in the competition and who will curate the exhibition, will conduct a studio visit with Shrikhande in the spring of 1994.

A second exhibition of the four fellowship winners will be held at the University of Wyoming Art Museum in Laramie. Organized by the Wyoming Arts Council, the show will open in 1995.

Shrikhande's work will also be published in *Visions of Wyoming*, a 152-page full-color book of the photographic interpretations of life in Wyoming by 15 artists. The book is being produced by the Star-Tribune Publishing Company in Casper.



## TERRI SCHINDEL APPOINTED CONSERVATOR

Terri Schindel has been appointed conservator at the Historical Center. In this position, she will be responsible for the conservation of all the Historical Center's collections, including preventative treatments, storage and transportation.



"The Historical Center is dedicated to the care and preservation of its collections," commented Peter Hassrick,

director. "Ms. Schindel, as a consummate professional in the field of conservation, will assure our future dedication to such goals."

Schindel holds a B.F.A. and M.A. in Historic Costume from Colorado State University. In addition, she holds a Conservation Diploma from the Courtauld Institute of Art from the University of London, with a specialty in textile conservation.

Previous employment includes position of conservator for the South Pass City State Historic Site in South Pass City, Wyoming, chief conservator for the National Museum of the U.S. Army, and head of the Textiles Conservation Department for the RMRCC in Denver, Colorado. Most recently she operated a private conservation practice at the Estes Park Artifact Conservation Center in Estes Park, Colorado.



## FORMER CURATOR RICHARD FROST DIES AT 76



Charcoal drawing of Richard Frost by his brother, Jesse Frost.

**R**ichard I. Frost, trustee emeritus and former curator, died on August 2 in Cody. He was born on May 18, 1917, one of three sons of Cody Country pioneers Nedward and Mary Hughes Frost. After earning a bachelor's degree in history in 1939 from the University of Wyoming (where he was a classmate of Board Chairman Peg

Coe and Vice-Chairman Mac Taggart) he worked for U.S. Senator E.V. Robertson for a year and then joined the Army. In September 1941 Dick and Elizabeth Freeman of Cody were married.

In 1946 Dick returned from occupied Japan a lieutenant colonel and resigned from the Army to manage the family business, Frost Curio. At the same time he launched into a career of public service which would include leadership on the city council and in the Park County Historical Society, Cody Club, Lions, Elks, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion. Two governors appointed him to state boards, and he chaired the Wyoming Travel Commission and later the Wyoming Archives, Museums, and Historical Board.

The Frost family had been instrumental in the survival and growth of the Buffalo Bill Museum, and in 1952 Dick was appointed to the Memorial Association's Board of Trustees. He was the third member of his family to serve on the board. Because of his expertise in Plains Indian art and his knowledge of history, he was asked by Dr. Harold McCracken to resign from the board in 1961 to assume the curatorship left vacant at the death of

founder Mary Jester Allen. Milward Simpson wrote, in urging him to accept, "You are ideally equipped for this work," and for the next 20 years Frost guided the growth of the Buffalo Bill Museum.

Dick was a member of the board that built the Whitney Gallery and hired Harold McCracken to direct it. In 1966 he and McCracken persuaded the board to close the old log museum and build a modern fireproof addition on to the Whitney Gallery across the street. Then in 1969 they installed the new Buffalo Bill and Plains Indian Museums, and in 1976 Dick incorporated the Winchester Arms Collection into the Buffalo Bill wing while helping to direct fund drives to expand the Historical Center. He researched and wrote the proposal which resulted in the listing of Buffalo Bill's Boyhood Home on the National Register of Historic Places and oversaw the installation of the house on the Center's grounds. He also was acting director after McCracken's retirement and the resignation of Don Hedgpeth.

When Dick retired in 1981, the board awarded him the Trustees' Gold Medal of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association in recognition of his stewardship of the collections, his leadership in the organization, and his wit, warmth, and generosity that seemed in him to embody the western spirit of the association's namesake, Buffalo Bill. In 1984 he was named trustee emeritus. That fall the Center threw an autograph party to celebrate the publication of Dick's book of stories and memoirs, *Tracks, Trails, and Tales*.

Dick is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and his daughter and son-in-law Ann and Jack Way of Cody; son and daughter-in-law, Chris and Pat Frost of Mesa, Arizona; daughter and son-in-law Kathy and Clancy Panchison of Warsaw, Indiana; brother and sister-in-law, Jesse and Polly Frost of Cody; and five grandchildren.

## HISTORICAL CENTER HONORS GOPPERT, SR.

**T**he Buffalo Bill Memorial Association has named the curatorial chair of the Buffalo Bill Museum in honor of Ernest J. Goppert, Sr. (1893-1987). The Memorial Association is the governing board of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

At the September meeting of the board of trustees, Chairman Peg Coe presented an inscribed plaque in honor of Ernest J. Goppert, Sr. to his son, Ernest J. Goppert, Jr., who also is a board member. "We wouldn't be here," said Coe, "if it weren't for 'Gop' and his nurturing, caring and love for the Buffalo Bill Museum." Referring to the curatorial chair, she said, "We wanted to do something at the Center that would carry 'Gop's' name forever and ever."

Ernest Goppert, Sr. was born in Stockton, Kansas, in

1893. He moved to Wyoming in 1918, one year after the death of William F. Cody. Goppert served the Board of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association for three terms totalling 33 years. He was a member of the organization for over 45 years.



Ernest J. Goppert, Sr. Photograph by Jack Richard.

"From the first," said Dr. Paul Fees, senior curator and curator of the Buffalo Bill Museum, "Mr. Goppert had a vision of what the Historical Center could become. He was involved to the end; he identified himself intimately with the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association. The result is that the Association is indelibly and forever identified with Ernest J. Goppert." As curator of the Buffalo Bill Museum, Fees is the first to fill the curatorial chair named for

Ernest J. Goppert, Sr.





# MUSEUM SELECTIONS

## FOR CHRISTMAS

### Buffalo Bill—The Scout.

A Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney limited edition bronze replica by Vic Larsen. 7½" high. #810002. \$485.

### Sioux Quillwork Bracelets.

Blue or red. #645034. \$34.

White. #645068. \$68.

One-of-a-kind. For personal shopper, please call 1-800-533-3838.

### Treasures From Our West.

This 60-page, softcover book provides a lavishly illustrated overview of all the collections of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. #21705. \$9.95.

For color catalogue write:  
P.O. Box 2630, Cody, WY 82414  
or call: (307) 587-3243  
Outside of Wyoming call:  
1-800-533-3838

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NON-PROFIT ORG.  
BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BUFFALO BILL  
HISTORICAL CENTER