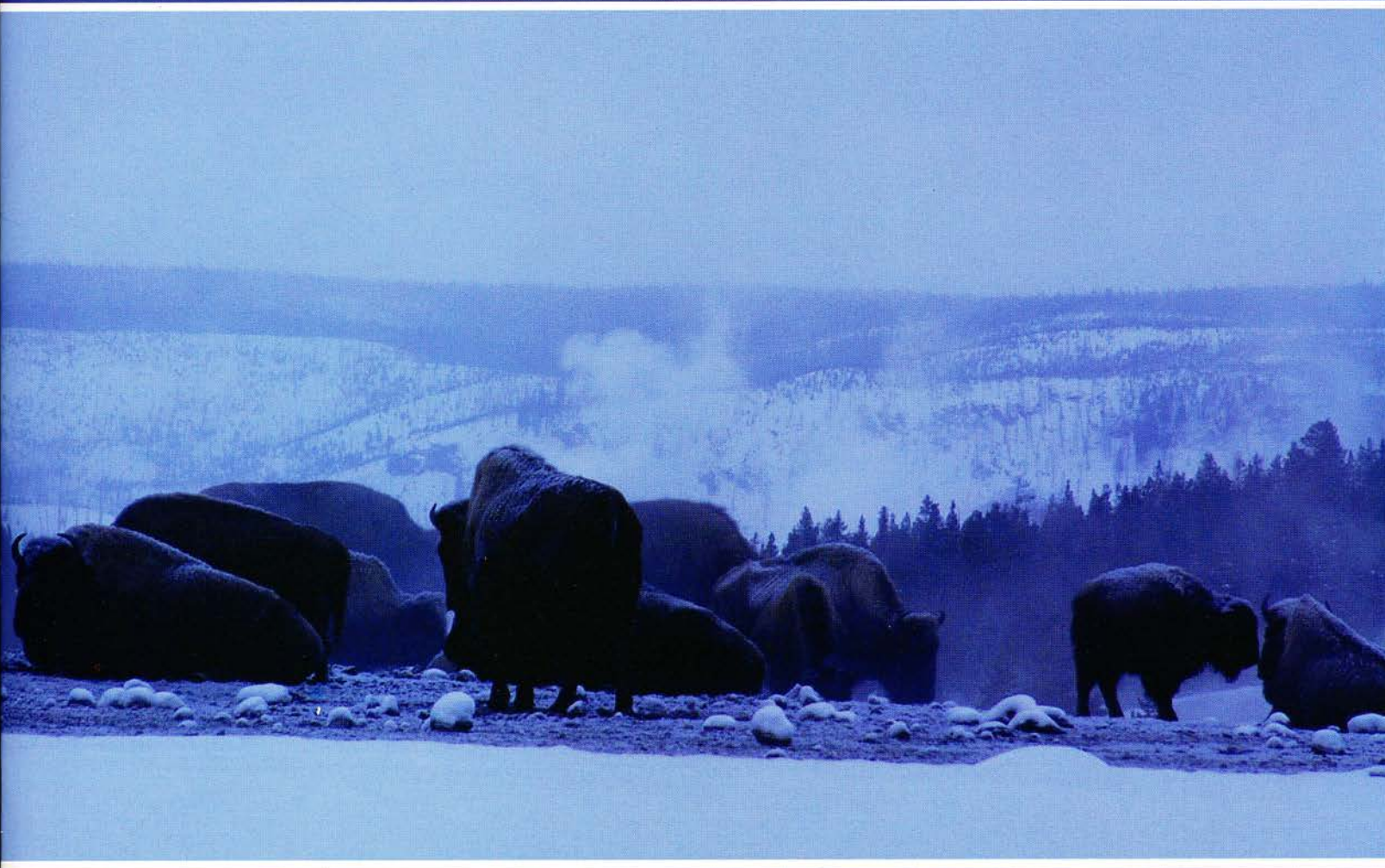
POINTS WEST

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER ■ CODY, WYOMING ■ WINTER 2007



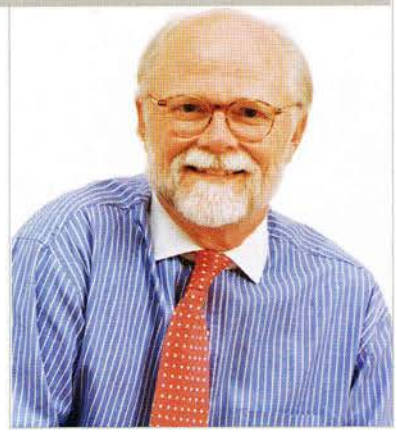
Byways, boats and buildings: the Lake area of Yellowstone National Park

Atomic culture in the American West

All new McCracken Research Library

Rendezvous Royale

Director's Desk



by Wally Reber
Interim Director

On the eve of Bob Shimp's retirement, negotiations for the purchase of the remarkable Paul Dyck Plains Indian Buffalo Culture Collection were concluded. In recent weeks, with the sale of our former chairwoman's residence, coupled with the generous donation by Jim Nielson in honor of the Nielson family, the purchase of the collection is now complete.

While the collection brings tremendous opportunity for interpretation, it also carries grave responsibility for its care and eventual exhibition. To that end, the center will hire a conservator (a position we've long needed) to deal with parts of the collection and make recommendations for its treatment and display. Funded through the generosity of Harriet and Edson Spencer, the Joe Jones estate, and Tommy and Lee Thompson, the conservator will play a critical role in the assessment, treatment, and display of our collections.

We've just finished an exhaustive planning session to address activities, commitments, and expenditures during the time between Bob's retirement and the arrival of a new executive director. Led by trustee Barron Collier, a group of trustees and staff focused on broad planning issues that face us over the next two years. Of immediate concern were operating budget issues, among them, defining the role of human resources within the center. We're studying the short-term staffing issues regarding management of the new Dyck collection and the long-term implications for both staff and trustees in the re-establishment of a queue for major reinstallations and exhibitions.

On the whole, we've been both busy and engaged during this interim period. And we look forward to new possibilities and opportunities that will inevitably come our way as new leadership comes on board for this remarkable institution. ■

Senior Editor
Mr. Lee Haines

Managing Editor
Ms. Marguerite House

Copy Editors
Ms. Lynn Pitet, Ms. Joanne Patterson, Ms. Nancy McClure

Designer
Ms. Jan Woods–Krier/Prodesign

Photography Staff
Ms. Chris Gimmeson, Mr. Sean Campbell

Book Reviews
Dr. Kurt Graham

Historical Photographs
Ms. Mary Robinson; Ms. Megan Peacock

Rights and Reproductions
Ann Marie Donoghue

Calendar of Events
Ms. Nancy McClure

Advisory Team
Lee Haines, Public Relations Director and Senior Editor

Marguerite House, Media Manager and Managing Editor

Nancy McClure, Public Relations Assistant and Calendar Coordinator

Steve Greaves, Vice-President and Deputy Director, Planning and Development

Jan Jones, Director of Membership

Dr. Charles R. Preston, Chief Curator and Founding Curator of the Draper Museum of Natural History

Megan Wasp, Public Programs Coordinator

Points West is published quarterly as a benefit of membership of the BBHC. For membership information, contact Jan Jones, Director of Membership, at membership@bbhc.org or by writing to the address above.

The BBHC 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 BBHC 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.

The mission of *Points West* is to deliver an engaging educational magazine primarily to the patrons of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). *Points West* will use a multi-disciplinary strategy to connect the reader to the nature and culture of the American West, and the BBHC in particular, through exceptional images and appealing, reader-friendly stories.

About the cover:

Yellowstone National Park bison at Old Faithful in the chill of the morning, January 22, 2006. Photo: Anne Marie Shriver.

Contents

In 1870, upon seeing Yellowstone Lake for the first time, Nathaniel Langford (who would eventually become the first superintendent of Yellowstone National Park) was moved to write eloquently and truthfully, "There lay the silvery bosom of the lake, reflecting the beams of the setting sun, and stretching away for miles, until lost in the dark foliage of the interminable wilderness of pines surrounding it." Park historian Lee Whittlesey has undertaken a project to gather the history of the Lake area of Yellowstone, and part one of the story begins on page 19. Photo: Jan Woods-Krier. Sunrise, Eagle Bay, Yellowstone Lake. August 2007.

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

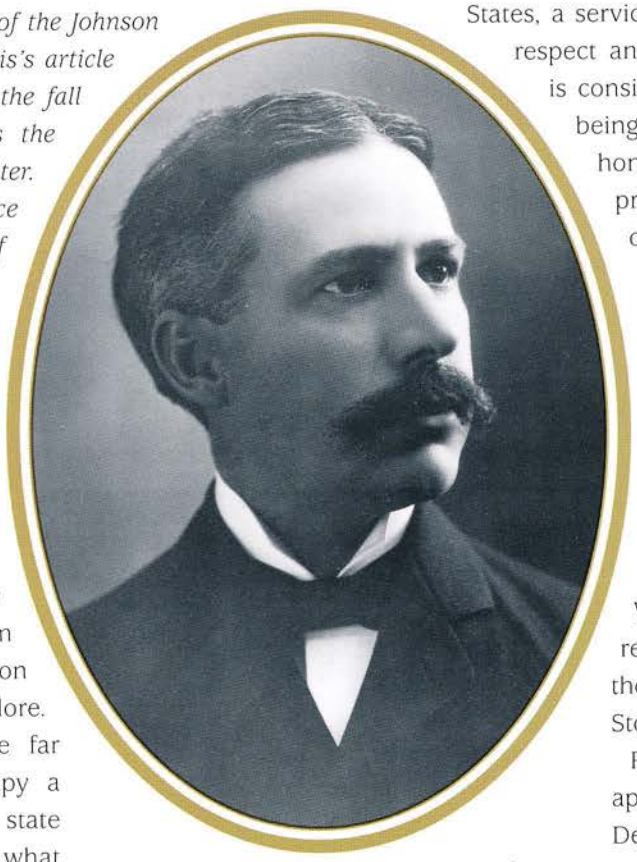
Visit us online . . .

Looking for previous issues of *Points West*? Check our Web site at *www.bbhc.org/pointsWest*.

Willis Van Devanter, Wyoming's

by Wallace Johnson

Mentioned in nearly any account of the Johnson County War—including John Davis's article about "Wyoming's Civil War" in the fall 2007 issue of Points West *—is the name of lawyer Willis Van Devanter. In this short biography, Wallace Johnson presents a snapshot of this little known Wyoming jurist.*



Willis Van Devanter, ca. 1890. Wyoming State Archives, Sub Neg 23442.

Who was Willis Van Devanter?

William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, the "Hole in the Wall" gang, Will Durant, Joe LeFors, Tom Horn, and Sheriff Malcolm Campbell dominate any discussion of Wyoming history and folklore. Many of these individuals rise far above "reality" and now occupy a place in the mythology of our state through what they did, and what others say and think they did.

Willis Van Devanter, though, is not a household name for many of us. He seems known only to the most serious students of Wyoming history and those familiar with the legal history of our nation. Van Devanter is seldom mentioned in any discussion of early Wyoming life and even then, not as the focus of the conversation. But Van Devanter may be one of the most important figures who helped shape events central to the early history of our territory and state. Indeed, Van Devanter played a key role in events beyond our boundaries at critical times in the history of our nation.

Who was this man and why should he merit such attention?

Starting out in Wyoming

Van Devanter was a lawyer who is the only Wyoming citizen to be appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States, a service that indisputably merits high respect and recognition. Obviously, there is considerable dignity associated with being chosen for this court, and great honor in being selected by the president to fill a life term for one of its nine seats.

Van Devanter was born April 17, 1859, in Marion, Indiana. He came to Wyoming Territory when but 25 years old, moving here from Cincinnati, Ohio, as he followed his deceased father's law partner and brother-in-law, John Lacey. While a member of the Wyoming Bar Association, he represented the cattle industry, the railroads, and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association.

President Benjamin Harrison appointed the 30-year-old Van Devanter Chief Justice of the Wyoming Territorial Supreme Court, a post he held from 1888–1890. Once Wyoming was granted statehood in 1890, he became the first Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, but soon after decided to return to private practice.

Willis Van Devanter, Attorney at Law

Wyoming was organized as a territory in 1868 under the auspices of the Union Pacific Railroad. The territory was heavily dependent on the boom-and-bust cattle market, the economic fluctuations of mineral extraction, and the competition for immigration. (One might observe that our economic situation is not that much different today with the immigration now coming from many attracted to the natural beauty of our state!) Some suggest that it was the railroad and the cattle interests that "ran" the state a century ago.

forgotten prominent jurist

Against this backdrop, Van Devanter opened his law practice in Wyoming. He was the attorney for those powerful interests and so was very much at the center of cultural, political, and economic Wyoming. He represented the Union Pacific and the Burlington railroads as well as the Wyoming Stockgrowers and most of the powerful and sizeable stock ranches in the state. One of his clients was the notorious cattle detective, Tom Horn. It should surprise no one, then, that he even represented the Texan "thugs" hired by the cattleman's association to intimidate the small ranchers in what has come to be known as the Johnson County War of 1892. (As mentioned before, John Davis discussed his continuing evaluation of this event in the last issue of *Points West*.)

Tom Horn outside his jail cell, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1903. Wyoming State Archives, Wagner Neg 30A.

It was not without justification that Van Devanter had such a comprehensive practice. He was by reputation thorough, well-organized, and meticulous. He was second in his law school class, so he was obviously competent in the law. From the time he arrived in Cheyenne, he was certainly politically connected. He was involved almost immediately in the political life of the territory thanks in part to Lacey's support.

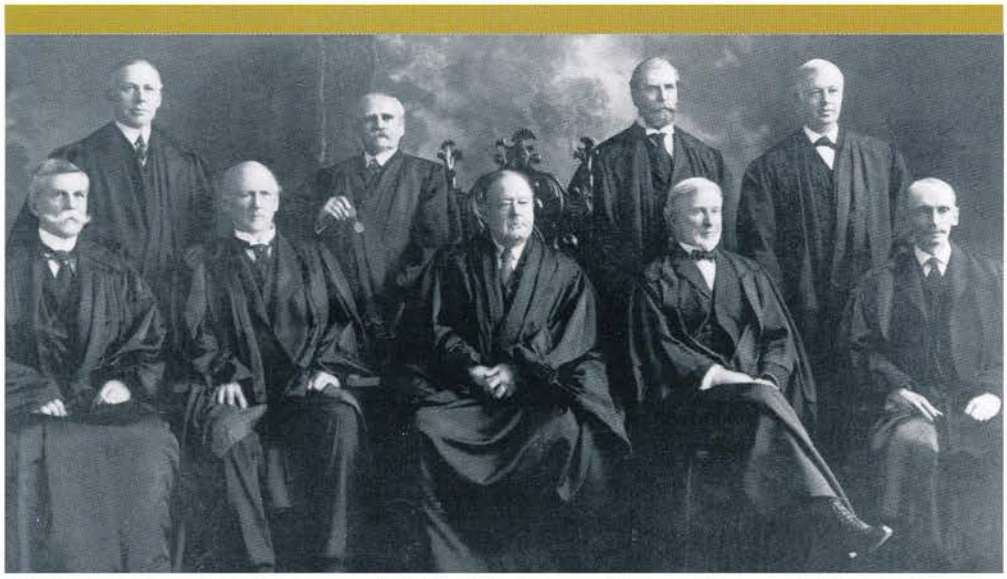
Van Devanter's first elected position was as Cheyenne city attorney, and a year later, in 1888, he became a member of the territorial legislature. He served in many key Republican Party positions including state chairman and national GOP committeeman. He connected immediately with the political machine of Governor Francis Warren — indeed Warren's loyalty to Van Devanter certainly accounts for Van Devanter's rise to national prominence at the bar association and within the judiciary.

One of the "Nine Old Men"

Van Devanter had a long national public career, first as an assistant attorney general and then as an appellate judge on the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals, appointed to that seat in 1903 by President Theodore Roosevelt. Ultimately, he was elevated to the United States Supreme Court by President William Howard Taft, a president who later served as Chief Justice on the same Court to which he appointed Van Devanter.

The period when Van Devanter served on the Supreme Court has been referred to as the "golden era" for the Court. Serving with him on the Bench were distinguished justices Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., Louis Brandeis, Benjamin Cardozo, and Taft. These names resonate within the legal history of our nation as some of our most distinguished jurists.

But Van Devanter has come under critical attack for his service on the Court and is generally not held in the same regard as many of his distinguished brethren. He has been labeled as "out of times" with his country. This reputation may not be entirely fair and can be accounted for by Van Devanter's involvement in Franklin Roosevelt's "constitutional revolution."



U.S. Supreme Court, 1911, from Curator's Office, U.S. Supreme Court. Van Devanter is in the back row, on the left. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. sits in front of him. Wyoming State Archives, Sub Neg 20873.

Van Devanter came to be known as one of the "nine old men" on the Court. As a result, he was attacked during the depression days of the 1930s by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Roosevelt's New Deal followers for resisting progress in a reactionary fashion. Because of his frustration with the adoption (or more correctly, the lack thereof) of his "New Deal" programs, Roosevelt put in motion the now-famous attempt to "pack the Court" by expanding the number of justices. Expanding the size of the Supreme Court would have allowed the president to nominate justices more in line with his Democratic policies and thus reduce the power of the conservative Court whose justices Roosevelt labeled as reactionary opponents, including Van Devanter.

Justice Van Devanter was regarded as "the philosophical leader" of the so-called Four Horsemen (also including Justices Pierce Butler, James McReynolds, and George Sutherland) who made up the Court's consistently conservative wing, voting against many of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies. Ultimately, a constitutional crisis was averted as Roosevelt backed away from his plan to expand the number of justices when support waned from his own party, and the "Nine Old Men" began to retire anyway, including Van Devanter's departure from the bench in 1937.

What history should say

So the picture of Wyoming's only Supreme Court Justice as a person who resisted progress, who was a reactionary, who was not a prolific or brilliant opinion writer (some say he was afflicted with writer's block or "pen paralysis"), and who only retired when President Roosevelt "paid him off" by increasing his pension, is somewhat misleading. That is not who Willis Van Devanter really was and certainly not the snapshot picture of Wyoming's Justice that history should retain.

A real picture of this jurist only emerges when he is considered in the context of the historic and turbulent times during territorial Wyoming and its early statehood before the turn of the last century. Van Devanter was a product of his western heritage and is a true "son of the West." ■

Wallace Johnson, a lawyer, is a member of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's McCracken Research Library Advisory Board. In the early 1970s, he was an Assistant Attorney General with the Land and Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and served as Special Assistant to the President of the United States. Johnson has written extensively and has been published on legal subjects and book collecting. Now living near Cody, Wyoming, Johnson and library curator, Dr. Kurt Graham, who also studies U.S. legal foundations, continue to research at length the career of Willis Van Devanter.

The words appearing over the door at the BBHC's newly redesigned McCracken reading room, "The Last Word on the West" encourage study of our western heritage (see article that follows). As examination of Van Devanter's life and times continues, along with similar endeavors, the research will support a better understanding of the culture that shapes the state of Wyoming and the West.

"The archival material at our research library supports examination of our western heritage, including the legal history central to understanding the life we have come to live in this modern age," says Dr. Kurt Graham, McCracken Research Library curator. "The study of Van Devanter's era and Van Devanter's career, for example, offers more than a snapshot of this person. It is a comprehensive framework to help us better know the culture of the West and ultimately, to better know ourselves in the process. The McCracken facilities, staff, and materials are a portal to that goal."

The Last Word on the West:
The McCracken Research Library

by Marguerite House

The McCracken Research Library's new reading room.

The library is not a shrine for the worship of books. It is not a temple where literary incense must be burned or where one's devotion to the bound book is expressed in ritual. A library, to modify the famous metaphor of Socrates, should be the delivery room for the birth of ideas — a place where history comes to life.

— *October 1954, Norman Cousins, long-time editor of the* Saturday Review.

The library today

With its more than 30,000 volumes, 315 manuscript collections, and approximately 500,000 photographs and negatives, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's McCracken Research Library is indeed a delivery room for the birth of ideas. Is it any wonder, then, that a sign over the library's new reading room says, "The last word on the West"?

One need only read the latest western history author, view a rare historic photograph, or peruse a fragile document at the library to see what Cousins meant when he said "history comes to life."

The library staff believes that the more avenues through which they can share library resources, the more they can make "history come to life" for many, many new researchers. From its October 2006 rare book auction proceeds to nearly $1 million of new funding in the last two years, the library has remodeled its physical space, added more staff and equipment, and enhanced processes, particularly those related to photographic digitization and preparation for online access.

Donors and grants make it all possible

Last fall, the Wyoming Community Foundation (through its Carol McMurry Library Donor Advised Endowment Fund) awarded the library a grant of $26,200 to digitally format two of the library's most popular photography collections: the works of Charles Belden and Jack Richard.

Then, early in 2007, the Wyoming State Legislature passed a bill to provide $300,000 for the "collection, editing, and publishing of archival documents" of the Great Showman himself, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Recipients of the funds are expected to match them to obtain the grants, which the library staff tirelessly set out to do. Robert and Geraldine Dellenback, whose family

foundation contributed two-thirds of the matching funds, used the opportunity to extend the foundation's first large gift of $200,000 to help the library secure the legislature's appropriated funding.

Also contributing to the match with The Dellenback Family Foundation, Inc. of Jackson, Wyoming, were the Carol McMurry Library Donor Advised Endowment Fund of the Wyoming Community Foundation, historical center trustee Naoma Tate, and the McMurry Foundation of Casper, Wyoming.

With funding in place, the library will immediately move to hire a historian/editor to lead the multi-year Cody Papers project, as well as four or five researchers to seek out materials related to Buffalo Bill from archives and private collections all over the world. When complete, the library will make the findings available to scholars and the general public through an annotated documentary edition and on the historical center Web site. Currently, the library itself houses the rough equivalent of 50 four-drawer filing cabinets of significant historical material related to William F. Cody.

In August, the library received a grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to make five archival collections available through the center's Web site, *www.bbhc.org*. The grant is one of 158 awarded by IMLS through its Museums for America grant program, which will distribute a total of $17.4 million over the next two years. The library's grant is the only Museums for America grant awarded in the state of Wyoming in 2007.

The $300,000 project, which consists of a $150,000 grant plus matching funds, enables the library to launch a two-year project to digitize 10,000 photographs from significant Native American, natural history, and western American history collections that are representative of the center's five museums. The project will do three things for the library: aid in preserving original photographic prints and negatives by reducing the need to handle them, expand accessibility of the images for an unlimited off-site audience, and give the historical center a much greater Web presence, elevating its profile among researchers as well as the general public.

In addition to the purchase of digitizing equipment, the grant makes it possible for the library to hire two additional staff members to complete the project by August 2009. The searchable, visual database that results will include interpretive information on each image, as well as allow the public to order prints of the images from the historical center Web site.

History and holdings

First dedicated in 1980, the library is named in honor of Dr. Harold McCracken (1894 – 1983), the founding director of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art and of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. A second dedication was held in 1994 to celebrate the expansion and reinstallation of the library in its present location. Additional vault space was added with the construction of the Draper Museum of Natural History in 2002, and three years later, the library celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary.

Researchers from the casual aficionado to the scholar will find the western experience clearly represented in the library's photographic collections. Included are nineteenth-century photographers such as D.F.

(from top): In the library's new reading room, Kurt Graham, curator, and Lynn Pitet, grants coordinator, discuss possible additional funding for library projects.

Megan Peacock and Mack Frost work with equipment that was provided by grant funding.

Jesi Bennett, front, firearms records specialist, reviews microfilm as Linda Clark scans documents and photos.

Heidi Kennedy works with staff, researchers, and visitors to assist with library needs

Library staff from left: Mack Frost, digital scanning technician; Linda Clark, library assistant and photo cataloger; Megan Peacock, photo archivist; Dr. Kurt Graham, curator; Mary Robinson, librarian; Shelly Yeager, photo cataloger; Heidi Kennedy, library assistant; and Bob Richard, photo consultant. Not pictured are Karling Abernathy, cataloger; Nick Manca, digital scanning technician, and Karen Prince, administrative assistant. Five staff members' positions are grant funded and one is made possible by private donations.

(from top): A Cody Institute for Western American Studies research fellowship recipient, Dr. Craig Lee, a professor at the University of Colorado in Boulder, works at one of the new research carrels in the library.

Staffers Shelly Yeager and Karling Abernathy share a find in the library's cataloging room.

Mary Robinson "in the stacks" of the library, a reminder that a library always contains books — these covering a wide range of topics about the American West.

Barry, L.A. Huffman, John C.H. Grabill, F.J. Haynes, Frank Rinehart, and Adolph F. Muhr, along with major collections of Park County photographers Charles Belden and Jack Richard and examples of the works of others such as F.J. Hiscock, "Brownie" Newton, and Stan Kershaw.

In addition, the photographic collections of western artists W.H.D. Koerner and Joseph Henry Sharp provide insight into their work methods. Also included in the library archives are historic photographs of North American Indians by twentieth-century photographers Edward S. Curtis, Thomas Marquis, Rev. W.A. Petzoldt, Roland Reed, Fred Miller, Richard Throssel, J.E. Tuell, and Fred Meyer.

The library's primary research materials contain resources on William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Annie Oakley, and other Wild West performers; western American art and artists including Frederic Remington and Joseph Henry Sharp; North American Indian culture, with emphasis on the Plains peoples; the natural history of the Greater Yellowstone region; and firearms history and technology, with primary sources on the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. — to name but a few.

A variety of materials and recordings are included in the Cowboy Songs & Range Ballads Archive, and since 2000, library staff and volunteers have been steadily adding significant oral history interviews of local and regional individuals to the collections.

And, of course, there are the books. As English novelist Jane Austen (1775 – 1817) once wrote, "I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading! How much sooner one tires of anything than of a book!"

The McCracken Research Library's shelf collection of more than 30,000 volumes represents the range of subjects on the American West. It is a non-circulating library which means materials must be used on the premises. However, access was dramatically increased in the late 1990s with the automation of the library catalog, joining the statewide Wyoming Library Database (WYLD) consortium, and the entry of all catalog records into the international Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) research database. Library holdings may be accessed through our Web site at *www.bbhc.org/hmrl*.

"Dissemination is the name of the game," says the library's Housel Curator Dr. Kurt Graham. With its new projects well underway, the McCracken Research Library looks forward to sharing its collection of books, photographs, and other materials with a wider and wider audience. "For those who cannot find their way to the McCracken," Graham adds, "we will find our way to them." ■

Uranium mines to Atlas missiles:

by Michael A. Amundson, PhD

In the 1950s, mushroom clouds were often seen in the skies near Las Vegas, Nevada. Pictured here are military personnel observing one of the tests in the Buster-Jangle Series in the fall of 1951 at the Nevada Test Site (NTS). Between 1951 and 1992, over 150 nuclear bombs were detonated at NTS. Photo courtesy of National Nuclear Security Administration / Nevada Site Office.

Editor's note: *The West is synonymous with cowboys, pioneers, horses, cattle drives, Indians, trappers and landscapes like no other. But in the 1890s, radium was discovered on the Colorado Plateau, beginning a new relationship between the West and radioactivity. From the World War II top-secret Manhattan Project to 1960s atomic testing in Nevada, images of new atomic pioneers, uranium mining cowboys and Indians, and mushroom clouds over magnificent landscapes helped usher in a new "Atomic West."*

Mike Amundson has made a career of studying the American West, including a fascination with the "Atomic West" that he writes about here. Amundson also recently received a 2007 Research Fellowship from the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Cody Institute for Western American Studies. In that project, his focus was the historic western photography of Cheyenne, Wyoming, photographer Joseph E. Stimson, a story to be featured in a future issue of Points West.

Introduction

Several years ago, I was invited to present a paper at the Eisenhower Presidential Library's conference on 1950s atomic culture. As an American West scholar with a book on uranium mining and another on atomic pop culture, I was thrilled and readily accepted. But when the program arrived, I was a bit nervous to see that I had been sandwiched between presenters named "Kruschev" and "Eisenhower." My anxiety deepened as I thought about what someone like me, not even alive in the 1950s, could say alongside former Soviet Premier Nikita Kruschev's son Sergei, or President Dwight D. Eisenhower's granddaughter Julie.

But as I thought more about my research — how everyday westerners had brought the atom into their lives — I realized I did have a story to tell, and that my own family history might help to understand the Nuclear West.

My father, Arlen, graduated from a small South Dakota high school in 1956 and then entered the Air Force where he studied electronics. Following a brief stint in San Antonio, Texas, he moved to Lowry Field in Denver, where he soon met the daughter of a Wyoming coal miner attending Colorado Women's College. He served his four years; they married; and my father began working at the Martin Marietta plant in Denver. He was employed there about two years before moving north to Loveland, Colorado, where he began a long career with Hewlett Packard.

The Atomic Energy Commission was formed on August 1, 1946.

Even the cribbage games I played with my sister as we grew up in Colorado had a curious twist related to this time and place. The old board's original pegs had been replaced with little metal pins—objects I later learned my father had scavenged from the Martin Marietta assembly line: tiny rejected parts of a Titan I Intercontinental Ballistic Missile!

Constructing and consuming atomic culture in the American West

Just as the Kruschevs and the Eisenhowers were making some of the toughest decisions of the 1950s, ordinary Americans like my father became part of the growing nuclear landscape and culture of the American West. From mine to missile, the United States vertically integrated the nuclear production line, drawing workers into occupations such as uranium mining, missile construction, and plutonium manufacturing because they offered good wages and new opportunities.

"A" is for affluence . . . and the atomic bomb

At the same time, post-war popular culture hit on the atomic theme as a sexy way to sell the country's growing affluence. Pop music, comic books, motion pictures, View-Masters, board games, defense films, and even business names joined in the nuclear frenzy resonating with the public on multiple levels. On one level, they reflected the continuing American interest in technology and science. On another, they echoed Eisenhower-era optimism and nuclear energy's tremendous potential. On still another level, these expressions were simply diversions, part of the country's developing disassociation with the devastating potential of nuclear warfare.

Atomic films of the 1950s often relied on traditional western icons like cowboys but outfitted them with Atomic West props like geiger counters shown in "Dig that Uranium." This poster is from Mike Amundson's personal collection.

As a western historian, my focus is on the trans-Mississippi Nuclear West and the two ideas of "construction" and "consumption." Americans first *constructed* nuclear landscapes across the region — from uranium mines in Colorado to Atlas Missile silos in Montana — under the premise of compartmentalization (i.e. separating resources for the sake of security). But there was another reason — a western, grassroots means to an old end: continued economic prosperity. Then, westerners joined the American public at large in *consuming* atomic popular culture, popularizing it, and making this powerful weapon seemingly benign.

The fallout shelter sign was familiar to most Americans in the "Atomic West."

Radium, uranium, plutonium

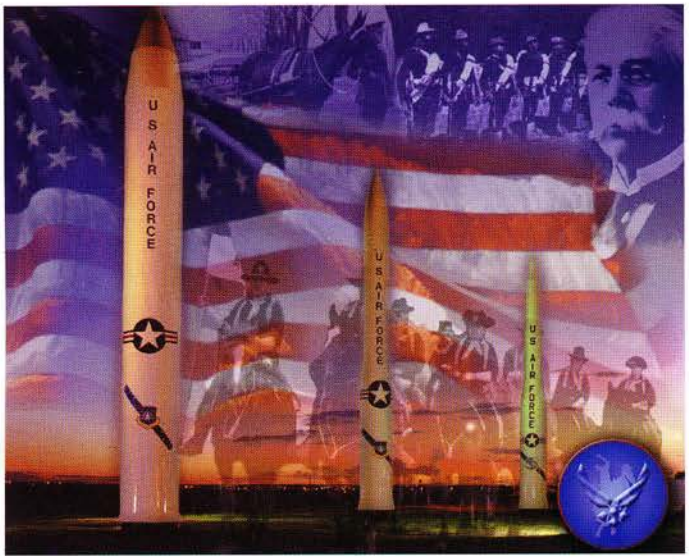
The West's affair with nuclearism goes back more than 100 years to the Colorado Plateau's radium mines. First discovered in the 1890s, radium was processed and sold as a cancer cure through World War I. Uranium followed, with its primary purpose to serve as a paint pigment. World War II's Manhattan Project, the mission to develop the first nuclear weapon, truly ushered in the region's Nuclear Age. It utilized federal lands, attractive to the project's leaders because of the sparse but patriotic and politically weak populations, and the region's wide-open spaces.

The nuclear industry procured top-secret sites to mine and mill uranium in Colorado, produce plutonium at Hanford, Washington, construct atomic bombs at Los Alamos, New Mexico, detonate one at nearby Trinity in 1945, and train its delivery crew over the salt flats of Nevada and Utah. By the time its work was known at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the West was the nucleus of America's atomic world.

With the conclusion of the war and the failure to either end nuclear development or internationalize it, the U.S. entered the Cold War. It sought to expand its nuclear facilities both for continued weapons growth and testing, and to begin the seemingly promising development of atomic energy for peaceful uses.

As with the Manhattan Project, political leaders in the new Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) sought to diversify the West's nuclear landscape. The idea was that if attacked, we would not be caught holding all of our nuclear eggs in one basket. Under the guise of national security, westerners greedily welcomed nuclear projects for patriotic and economic reasons, and any self-respecting western congressman worked hard to acquire them for his state.

NATO observers watch the Boltzmann test, part of the Plumbbob test series, on May 28, 1957, at the Nevada Testing Site. Photo courtesy National Nuclear Security Administration / Nevada Site Office. PLU-57-028



Several of America's nuclear missiles, left to right, Atlas, Minuteman, and Peacekeeper, are portrayed in this Air Force image superimposed on photos of western cavalrymen, clearly linking the Atomic West to the Old West. All three, like the cavalry, were spread across the western states. Photo courtesy F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Putting the "boom" in atomic

The nuclear production line grew across the region after the war. Uranium mining and milling expanded from Colorado into Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, Washington, Idaho, and South Dakota. Research and development increased at Hanford and Los Alamos but also spread to the Sandia Labs at Albuquerque, New Mexico, Lawrence Livermore labs in California, Rocky Flats near Denver, and Pantex near Amarillo, Texas.

After conducting tests in the Pacific until the first Soviet bomb was tested in 1949, the government moved all bomb testing to a site northwest of Las Vegas, eventually detonating over 150 bombs with fallout spreading across the Southwest. From there, scientists exploded bombs underground in Colorado, New Mexico, and Alaska as experimental engineering projects in Project Plowshare. At the Nuclear Reactor Testing Station near Idaho Falls, the AEC built 40 test reactors to power both generating stations and the nuclear navy. Key civil defense air bases were also constructed: the Strategic Air Command in Omaha and the North American Air Defense Command just west of Colorado Springs.

As part of our national deterrent, Inter-continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMS) were sown across the West. First, Atlas missiles were constructed in San Diego and then planted with their crews in California, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. After that, Titans — the same rocket that propelled our first astronauts into space, built in Denver by ordinary guys like my father — were placed in Colorado, California, Washington, Idaho, and South Dakota.

Titan IIs, bigger and more powerful, then found homes in Arizona, Kansas, California, and Arkansas. Finally, Minuteman missiles were deployed at Montana, South Dakota, Missouri, Wyoming, and North Dakota. By 1965, the year I was born, every state in the West — from Texas to Washington and from North Dakota to Arizona and Alaska — was part of our nuclear production, testing, and deployment line.

Unlike World War II's classified Manhattan Project, these Cold War nuclear sites were not top secret facilities thrust onto unknowing states. On the contrary, they were front page stories in local newspapers bragging about how boosters had secured part of the nuclear pie. A few examples: a headline in Grand Junction, Colorado, called local uranium miners "soldiers on the Cold War's front lines"; the *Denver Post* welcomed Rocky Flats with the banner: "There's Good News Today: U.S. to build $45 million A-Plant near Denver." When word came to southeastern Idaho that the AEC was going to build its nuclear reactor testing station nearby, each past as well as the current president of the Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce kicked in $100 each (matched by the Chamber) to lure the project's headquarters away from Pocatello, Idaho. The Tucson *Daily Star* showed construction photos of the local Titan II missile silos being built.

Ordinary, all-American boosterism

Ordinary westerners expanded this atomic boosterism

In 1950, Dow Chemical Company was chosen by the Atomic Energy Commission to establish the Rocky Flats Plant outside Denver as an atomic bomb trigger fabrication facility. Library of Congress American Memory Project, "Built in America." HAER Colo, 30-Gold. V, 1-12

through their everyday activities. In Las Vegas, postcards showed tourists lounging by pools watching distant mushroom clouds. An Atomic City boomed and busted in Idaho. Near Hanford, the Richland, Washington, high school football team was known as the Bombers and had mushroom clouds on their helmets. One could spend the night at the Atomic Motel in Moab, Utah; eat at Los Angeles's Atomic Café; order a drink at the Atomic Liquors in Las Vegas; or eat a uranium burger (covered in tabasco) in Grants, New Mexico. Missile crews in South Dakota could get a 10-percent discount at the famous Wall Drug.

Atomic culture thus exploded into the American West through the dissemination of nuclear facilities and the grassroots boosterism it created. Local supporters patriotically added their locality to the nuclear landscape and welcomed the pork barrel federal jobs. These projects both increased national security by distributing the process across the region and developed a grassroots nuclear partisanship where locals defended the economic security of nuclear development and looked askance at doubters. Westerners wanted to continue the economic development started during World War II and to forever end their reputation as the "plundered province" of eastern capital. In doing so, they made "devil's bargains" that the economic benefits of nuclearism would outweigh its effects.

Consuming the bomb

The construction of nuclear facilities provided a ready group of consumers for Cold War atomic culture as marketers seized on all things atomic as the sexy new phenomenon that showed power and style. Comic book heroes like Spiderman and the Atomic Rabbit used the atom to fight evil. Films like *Them!* and *The Atomic Kid* sensationalized nuclear testing's effects both melodramatically and humorously. The 1950 western *Bells of Coronado* even featured cowboy star Roy Rogers as an undercover insurance investigator following a mysterious murderer planning to sell American uranium to foreign spies.

Other forms of pop culture, including television shows, toys, board games, View-Master reels, cartoons, and even children's literature, adopted similar schemes of atomic props used to support official government positions. Walt Disney's classic children's book *Our Friend the Atom* educated American youth from an obviously pro-nuclear viewpoint. Nuclear songs included "Atomic Baby," "Atomic Boogie," and "Atomic Love Polka."

Bert the Turtle's famous *Duck and Cover* cartoon taught children of the 1950s the basics of Civil Defense. Lesser known were the atomic beauty contests that incorporated a popular theme at the time: threats to world peace and domesticity could be assuaged by atomic weapons. At the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, locals vied for the title of "Miss Atomic Bomb" clad in skimpy bathing suits covered with puffy white mushroom clouds — a contest promoters hoped would bring more tourists to the out-of-the-way desert locale to see the mushroom clouds up close and personal.

In Grand Junction, Colorado, uranium companies hosted a "Miss Atomic Energy" pageant where the winner received a truckload of uranium ore! Lucy and Desi hunted for uranium; Popeye had "Uranium on the Cranium"; and families played "Uranium Rush," in which players touched a flashlight-like "Geiger counter" to the surface of an electric board in hopes of striking it rich.

Not so benign after all

By 1963, atomic culture had dispersed throughout the West with the construction of nuclear jobs and the consumption of atomic bombs as silly props for pop culture. Both means too often dissociated the devastating potential of nuclear warfare from the realities of everyday life.

It would take another generation and its actions — the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Test Ban Treaty, Vietnam, Watergate, Three Mile Island, and New Mexico's Rio Puerco* — to get the West to examine critically its nuclear past. When it did, a whole series of problems showed the

West's true nuclear legacy: uranium miners with radon poisoning, down-winders exposed to fallout, and the Superfund environmental problems at Hanford and Rocky Flats.

The post Cold War American nostalgia for the 1950s Atomic World — witness the 1999 movie *Blast from the Past* or the cartoon *The Simpsons* — has been muddled by the real threats of 9/11. Beyond worrying about dirty bombs entering western ports, the region continues to deal with its nuclear past at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; Los Alamos, New Mexico; Moab, Utah's uranium pile; and Rocky Flats. As the price of uranium skyrockets and the call for more nuclear power plants escalates, westerners again face a nuclear future while still coming to grips with its past.

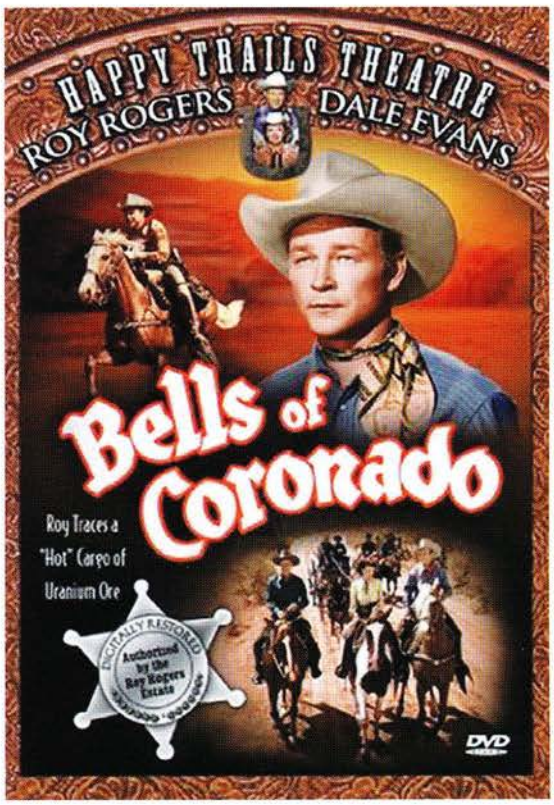
Take heed

Take heed though. Historians and other social scientists are busily unraveling our complicated nuclear history to help Americans understand past lessons. As they expand the nuclear library, they are telling stories about the West's nuclear history—stories of how uranium miners and their families came to be exposed to radioactivity, why the Miss Atomic Bomb pageant reflected 1950s Cold War domesticity, and how western icons like Roy Rogers adopted atomic themes into their films. There's even one about the son of an ICBM assembly line worker who kept count of his cribbage hands with pegs from a Titan missile and later found himself at a Presidential library, quite at home talking among the offspring of world leaders. ■

Typical beauty pageants took on a nuclear flair as in this 1957 photo, "Miss Atomic Bomb," supposedly Copa showgirl, Lee Merlin. Photo courtesy Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

Dr. Michael Amundson is an associate professor of history at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff where he teaches courses on the American West, the Southwest, and recent American history. He is author of two books, Wyoming Time and Again: Rephotographing the Scenes of J.E. Stimson *and* Yellowcake Towns: Uranium Mining Communities in the American West, *as well as the co-editor of* Atomic Culture: How We Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb.

*On July 16, 1979, one hundred million gallons of radioactive water containing uranium tailings breached from a tailing pond into the north arm of the Rio Puerco, near the small town of Church Rock, New Mexico. Even though few Americans were aware of it, some consider it the worst nuclear spill in U.S. history. Within three hours, radiation was detected as far away as Gallup, New Mexico, contaminating 250 acres of land and up to fifty miles of the Rio Puerco.



right: Even Roy Rogers' 1950 movie *Bells of Coronado* tackled an atomic theme as Roy "traced a hot cargo of uranium ore." Image courtesy Roy Rogers, Jr.

One of the paintings making a European appearance. Thomas Moran (1837 – 1926). Golden Gate, Yellowstone National Park, 1893. Oil on canvas, 36.25 x 50.25 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. 4.75

BBHC objects on European tour

Europeans who love the American West are in luck as the Buffalo Bill Historical Center recently sent over a hundred objects from its varied collections to France in an exhibition titled "The Mythology of the American West" and to Italy for "America!" The one-year traveling exhibition in France began September 28, 2007, and the six-month exhibition at the Museo di Santa Giulia in Brescia, Italy, is on view November 24, 2007 – May 4, 2008.

Joe Medicine Crow featured in PBS documentary

Historian, author, speaker, and Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board Member Joe Medicine Crow was interviewed and featured recently in film-maker Ken Burns' PBS series *The War*. Medicine Crow served in the United States Army in Europe during the war and, as part of Crow tradition, completed the four requirements of a chief while there: touch a living enemy soldier; disarm an enemy; lead a successful war party; and steal an enemy's horse. He was never awarded the title of chief, however, as it was retired after the death of the last surviving Crow chief, Plenty Coups.

Born on the Crow reservation in Montana, Medicine Crow's step-grandfather was a scout for and an eyewitness to the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Medicine Crow grew up hearing stories of the battle and throughout his life has written and lectured extensively on the subject. He attended the University of Southern California where he earned a master's degree in anthropology. His thesis, *The Effects of European Culture Contact upon the Economic, Social, and Religious Life of the Crow Indians*, is said to be one of the definitive works on Crow culture.

Now well into his 90s, Medicine Crow remains active writing and lecturing about tribal traditions. He's spoken before the United Nations and was granted an honorary doctorate from USC at the age of 90. He is a frequent guest speaker at Little Bighorn College and the Little Big Horn Battlefield Museum in Montana, and has appeared in several documentaries about the battle.

BBHC Slate in 2008

- Cowboy Songs & Range Ballads: April 10 – 13
- Spring Open House: May 3
- Plains Indian Museum Powwow: June 21 & 22
- Cowboy Collectibles Dinner & Auction: June 28
- Buffalo Bill Invitational Shootout: August 7 – 9
- Cody High Style: September 23 – 27
- Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale: September 26 – 27
- Patrons Ball: September 27
- Holiday Open House: December 6

Make sure to add bbhc.org *to your email address book. This ensures valuable information from the Buffalo Bill Historical Center reaches your inbox unhampered by spam filters and the like.*

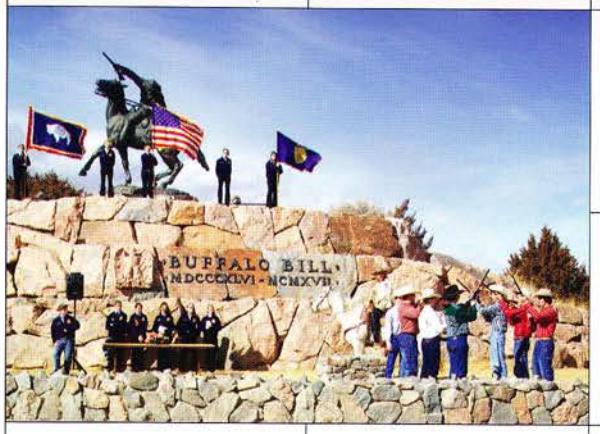
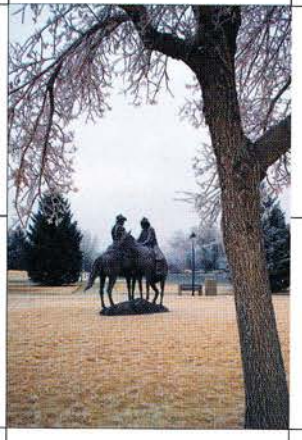
Crow tribal historian Joe Medicine Crow addresses this fall's Plains Indian Museum Seminar, *Cultural Preservation: Plains Indian People and the Maori*, where representatives of Plains peoples and the Maori of New Zealand discussed common concerns about the preservation of native traditions.

Continued on p. 18

CALENDAR *of Events*

For the latest information on BBHC programs and events, please see our Web site at **www.bbhc.org** or call 307.587.4771. Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
CENTER HOURS November 1 – March 31 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tuesday – Sunday Closed Mondays		New Year's Day Center Closed 1 **January**	2			5
6	7	8	9			Winter Eagle Watch Workshop 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. BBHC & field trip (registration required/fee) 12
13		16	17	18		CFM Records Office open for coverage of the Las Vegas Antique Arms Show 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (MST) 19
20		23	24	4th Friday, 5 – 7 p.m. (free) 25		Early Explorers Workshop Winter Wonder Workshops for children & adults Learning from the Western Masters Workshop, M.C. Poulsen (registration required/fee) 26
27	28	29	30	31	1 **February**	2
3	4	5	6		8	9
				Valentine's Day Dinner, 6 p.m. (reservations required/fee)		

10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		20	20	Buffalo Bill Museum Adventure (for school groups grades 3–5; reservations required/fee)	4th Friday, 5–7 p.m. (free)	Early Explorers Workshop Winter Wonder Workshops for children & adults Learning from the Western Masters Workshop, M.C. Poulsen (registration required/fee)
		26	27	28		1 **March**
2	3	4	5	6		8
9	10		12	13	14	CFM Records Office open for coverage of the Baltimore Antique Arms Show 7 a.m.– 3 p.m. (MDT)
16	17		19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26		4th Friday, 5–7 p.m. (free) *Final 4th Friday of 2008*	Early Explorers Workshop Winter Wonder Workshops for children & adults Learning from the Western Masters Workshop, M.C. Poulsen (registration required/fee)
30	31				28	29

Cody High School FFA Wreath-laying ceremony, Buffalo Bill's Birthday, *The Scout* statue, 11 a.m.

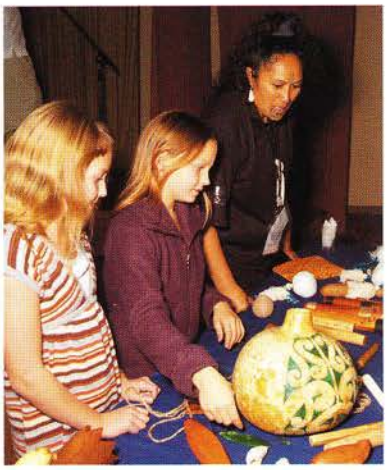
Photo Credits:

Entrance to Cody Firearms Museum, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming.
Buffalo Bill Historical Center at night, Cody, Wyoming.
Table setting, Valentine's Day Dinner, 2006.
Cody High School Future Farmers of America wreath-laying ceremony, Buffalo Bill's birthday, February 2006.
Intern Rachel Stiff with pre-schoolers, 2006.
Sculpture and trees in frost. Herb Mignery (b. 1937). *Code of the West*, 1998. Bronze, 140 x 137 x 72 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Mike Kammerer/Code of the West Foundation, 9.01
Shufflebuggy performs at January's 4th Friday in 2005.

- *Education Department Program/Workshop*
- *Free Public Event*
- *Cody Firearms Museum Affiliated Event*
- *Members-Only Event*

IT'S A DATE . . . *pullout calendar*

Continued from p. 15 . . .



Sara Hulbert (left) and Alta Clark study Maori musical instruments with Tira Taite.

Cultural exchange with Maori highlights seminar

Blowing gently across a large, dried gourd, Tira Taite created a haunting complement to husband Potaka Taite's stories and flute-like music created on a variety of hollow animal bones — one of many traditional Maori instruments. On October 11, before a large crowd in the Coe Auditorium, Maori scholar Taite, his wife Tira, and daughter Rereao, shared the music and culture of the Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand in a free, public program that was part of the annual Plains Indian Museum Seminar.

Wolf plan comments now available

Public comments on Wyoming's draft wolf plan are available on the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Web site at *http://gf.state.wy.us*. Most comments submitted don't support the Wyoming plan in which the gray wolf is classified as a trophy game animal in certain parts of the state and as a predator in others. Slightly more than 90 percent of non-resident respondents opposed the plan, while 72.3 percent of Wyoming residents opposed the plan for various reasons.

As *Points West* goes to press, the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission is poised to take final action on the draft wolf plan at its November 15–16 meeting. If the plan is approved, it is expected the gray wolf will be removed from the Endangered Species List for the northern Rocky Mountains. However, litigation is sure to follow from those who fear the plan will endanger the wolf once again.

In the Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana regions of the northern Rockies, there were 173 wolf packs, including 86 breeding pairs and 1,300 individual wolves, at the end of 2006.

A howitzer it is on Sylvan Pass—at least for this year

Over-the-snow travel in Yellowstone National Park begins December 19 with the status quo the order of the season, at least for this year — including a howitzer on Sylvan Pass to dissipate any potential avalanches. As *Points West* goes to press, the final decision on the park's winter use plan is due from National Park Service Regional Director Mike Snyder.

Opposition to snowmobiles in the park centers on noise and air pollution from the machines and distress to wildlife. Snowmobile enthusiasts counter that "clean technology" has made their sleds less polluting and considerably quieter.

The National Park Service's preferred alternative to manage the winter season in Yellowstone favors snow-coaches over individual snowmobiles, but would allocate 540 snowmobiles per day throughout the winter season in the park. Due to safety reasons, part of the plan is a provision to close Sylvan Pass at the east entrance, a move with vocal opposition in Cody, fifty miles from the east entrance.

Eighty-six members of Congress also weighed in on the matter in a recent letter to Park Service Director Mary Bomar. They support a plan that would phase out snowmobiles altogether in the park. None of the letter's signatories were from the Yellowstone region.

Yellowstone's caldera on the rise

A new study released November 9 in the journal *Science* indicates the caldera at Yellowstone National Park raised nearly three inches per year for each of the past three years, the fastest growth ever recorded.

Lead author of the study, University of Utah seismologist Bob Smith, is quick to point out an increase in the caldera's size doesn't mean a volcanic eruption is imminent. Scientists recognize that volcanic craters typically rise and fall for thousands of years without large-scale eruptions, and the Yellowstone caldera has more than likely been rising and falling for 15,000 years.

It is difficult to make any broad predictions since high-quality, measurable data has only been available for a few decades, according to the study. Even so, researchers say that knowing what's happening miles and miles below the park's surface is extremely difficult.

Watch for more information about Yellowstone's volcanic wonders in future issues of *Points West*. ■

Byways, boats, and buildings: Yellowstone Lake in history, part one

by Lee Whittlesey

One can only imagine what early trappers, prospectors, and explorers thought when they first set eyes on Yellowstone Lake. Photo: Jan Woods-Krier. Sunrise, Eagle Bay, August 2007.

Editor's note: *In the first half of 2007, Lee Whittlesey, Yellowstone National Park Historian, began a study of the history of the Lake Area of the park—particularly those facilities in place at various times throughout history along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake. The National Park Service plans to renovate the existing Lake Village and is working in cooperation with the Montana State University (MSU) Department of Architecture toward that end.*

One of the first steps in the process is to develop a comprehensive history of the area to "provide background for how the present facilities and roadways there came to be," according to the author. "The present study . . . seeks to reconstruct the cultural landscape features of the Lake Village area 1870–2007, to depict some early perceptions of Yellowstone Lake itself, and to assess the role that Yellowstone Lake played in the evolution of tourism in Yellowstone National Park." In this, the first of four parts, Whittlesey writes about the early accounts of those who saw the lake for the first time.

> [This lake] is so clear and so deep, that by looking into it you can see them making tea in China.

Second fiddle to a geyser

Yellowstone Lake and the Lake Village that grew up on its shores 1870–2007 are together a region of Yellowstone National Park that was, until 1891, a secondary spot in the park for tourism and visitation. This is surprising when one considers that Yellowstone Lake is a world-class natural feature that, were it located anywhere else, would probably have become a national park on its own.

The fact that it remained secondary until 1891 is a testimonial to the lake's location—remote until a road was completed to it from Old Faithful—and also to the fact that other places in Yellowstone Park contain the so-called "greater" wonders of the geysers at Old Faithful to the west and the canyon and large waterfalls to the north.

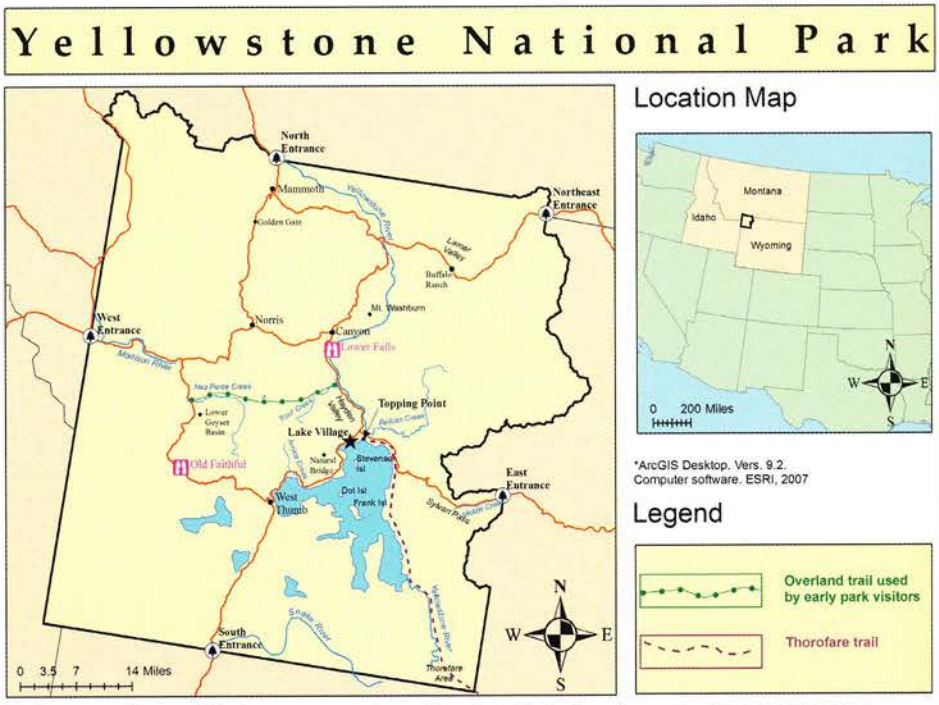
In her as yet unpublished master's thesis, "Pleasure Ground for the Future: The Evolving Cultural Landscape of Yellowstone Lake, Yellowstone National Park 1870–1966," geographer Yolanda Lucille Youngs describes the lake with details from her own research and a variety of other sources:

> The lake is 20 miles long, 14 miles wide, and expands across a total of 136 square miles. It is also a cold lake that freezes over entirely during the winter and has an average temperature of 41 degrees F. With 110 miles of shoreline, Yellowstone Lake has more than 75 miles of that shoreline beyond the reach of any major road . . . Its high winds, cold lake temperatures, heavy winter snowfall, and freeze-over are all part of the lake's mountain climate. Large waves often develop during frequent summer wind storms and contribute to erosion along the lakeshore.

Yellowstone Lake freezes over completely in the winter. Photo: National Park Service (NPS), J. Schmidt, 1977.

Early visitors to Yellowstone Lake

There is some evidence that Indians frequented the shores of the lake long before the establishment of the area as a national park in 1872, and fur trappers visited the Yellowstone country every year from 1823 to 1840 with a variety of tales about the park's natural features. Some early accounts were verified with late-in-life memoirs as individuals traveled West, but didn't record their memories until decades later.



Yellowstone National Park was a strange and breath-taking place for early visitors to the area. Map created by Spencer Smith.

Prospector A. Bart Henderson, who reached the area in 1867, had a crude map that led him and his party to the lake. This tells us that the lake was then "famous," at least to Henderson. It means that oral stories about the lake had gone with travelers to some parts of the West and had found their way into the consciousness of at least some persons by that time, even after the 20-plus years (1841 – 1862) of little or no documented visitation to the upper Yellowstone country by whites.

Jim Bridger, probably the most famous of all fur trappers, visited Yellowstone Lake in 1836, 1846, and again in 1849. He visited at least eight times with a variety of cohorts, entering the park by the time-honored southern route through the Thorofare Region in the southwest part of the park. In his 1852 book, *The Mormons or Latter-Day Saints,* Lt. J.W. Gunnison noted a "picture" that Bridger painted for him in words:

> . . . A lake sixty miles long, cold and pellucid,
> lies embosomed amid high precipitous

mountains. On the west side is a sloping plain several miles wide, with clumps of trees and groves of pine. The ground resounds to the tread of horses. Geysers spout up seventy feet high, with a terrific hissing noise, at regular intervals. Waterfalls are sparkling, leaping, and thundering down from the precipices . . . The river issues from this lake . . .

The lake appears to have hosted relatively few white men from the 1840s through the early 1860s, but prospectors and many others began to visit it again as early as 1864. And the lake stimulated stories that were "bigger than life," including ones about huge fish. In 1867, journalist Legh Freeman of southern Wyoming somehow either found his way north to the lake or else talked with men like Henderson who had been there because Freeman wrote of it in his *Frontier Index* newspaper. The next year, he wrote more about Yellowstone Lake and according to historian Aubrey L. Haines, this account was so widely read that it influenced the creating of reputations of prospectors for "indulging in flights of fancy when recounting their adventures." Said Freeman:

> This is the largest and strangest mountain lake in the world . . . surrounded by all manner of large game, including an occasional white buffalo, that is seen to rush down the perpetual snowy peaks that tower above, and plunge up to its sides into the water. It is filled with fish half as large as a man, some of which have a mouth and horns and skin like a catfish and legs like a lizard.. . [This lake] is so clear and so deep, that by looking into it you can see them making tea in China.

Nineteenth-century visitors to Yellowstone Lake told of the abundant wildlife they encountered there. Photo: Jan Woods-Krier. Mule deer on the shore of Eagle Bay, August 2007.

Long before these men hunted and fished on the shores of Yellowstone Lake, visitors were writing stories about the lake's wonders. Photo: NPS, F.J. Haynes, 1883.

Resorts a'comin'?

Fanciful tales of Yellowstone Lake that stretched the truth largely ended in 1869 and 1870 when the Folsom and Washburn parties received credit for the Euro-American discovery of the Yellowstone region and wrote more factual accounts. David Folsom described the lake as he perceived it when he arrived there in 1869, but his description reflects the problem of not being able to see

When he first saw the setting sun on Yellowstone Lake, Nathaniel Langford said, "It formed a fitting climax to all the wonders we had seen, and we gazed upon it for hours . . ." Photo: Jan Woods-Krier. Sunset, Eagle Bay, August 2007.

the entire lake from one vantage point. In *The Valley of the Upper Yellowstone: An Exploration of the Headwaters of the Upper Yellowstone River in the Year 1869*, edited by Aubrey L. Haines, Folsom's paean to the lake has great beauty and is worth quoting:

> Nestled within the forest-crowned hills which bounded our vision, lay this inland sea, its crystal waves dancing and sparkling in the sunlight as if laughing with joy for their wild freedom. It is a scene of transcendent beauty which has been viewed by but few white men and we felt glad to have looked upon it before its primeval solitude should be broken by the crowds of pleasure seekers which at no distant day will throng its shores.

"How can I sum up its wonderful attractions?" said Nathaniel Langford of the 1870 Washburn party and first superintendent of the park. In "The Wonders of Yellowstone" featured in the June 1871 issue of *Scribner's Monthly*, he wondered whether Yellowstone Lake's islands and shores would someday be home to "villas and the ornaments of civilized life." Upon seeing Yellowstone Lake for the first time, Langford was moved to write eloquently and truthfully:

> There lay the silvery bosom of the lake, reflecting the beams of the setting sun, and stretching away for miles, until lost in the dark foliage of the interminable wilderness of pines surrounding it. Secluded amid the loftiest peaks of the Rocky Mountains, [thousands of feet] above the level of the ocean, possessing strange peculiarities of form and beauty, this watery solitude is one of the most attractive natural objects in the world . . . now it lay before us calm and unruffled, save by the gentle wavelets which broke in murmurs along the shore. Water, one of the grandest elements of scenery, never seemed so beautiful before. It formed a fitting climax to all the wonders we had seen, and we gazed upon it for hours, entranced with its increasing attractions.

Yellowstone Lake's beauty enthralled dozens if not hundreds of early visitors. Dr. F.V. Hayden waxed poetic as he effervesced about it when his party arrived there on July 28, 1871, "Such a vision is worth a lifetime, and only one of such marvelous beauty will ever greet human eyes."

Lt. John G. Bourke, who wrote *On the Border with Crooke* and traveled great distances with General George Crooke, shared Hayden's delight with the lake, giving it his highest compliments:

> . . . and then, *grandest scene of my life* (emphasis added), there lay at our feet the unruffled brow of Yellowstone Lake, miles in length and breadth, guarded by giant mountains upon whose wrinkled brow rested the snows of Eternity. The only air was still in the presence of as much solemnity and amajesty: a few geysers largely emitted puffs of steam and broke the otherwise absolute quietude of this vast seclusion.

Nathaniel Langford, Yellowstone's first superintendent. Photo: NPS, ca. 1872.

Quite early, it became apparent that Yellowstone Lake, and the park in which it was located, would eventually become a successful and famous summer destination. An 1871 visitor, Calvin Clawson, thought that the "Lake and vicinity" would someday become "the most desirable summer resort for the people of the United States and no doubt will attract many visitors from other countries." He enthused about the lake by saying, "The eye must behold the glory thereof to believe, and even then, doubting, looks again."

As early as 1872, the *New York Herald* declared that the Yellowstone country was already a great place to visit, touting "a night's lodging in the virgin woods near Yellowstone Lake, where the air is fresh from heaven, and where they have a delicious frost every night in the year." In 1873, the *New York Times* proclaimed that "it is only necessary to make the Park easily accessible to make it the most popular Summer resort in the country." An 1882 visitor to Yellowstone Lake thought that "the time is not distant when this must become the Switzerland of America and the pleasure resort of the world."

These and many other accounts predicted early to the world that the new national park would become a locus of great visitation, and they saw Yellowstone Lake as a central reason for that phenomenon.■

In part two, to be included in the Spring 2008 issue, Whittlesey discusses the early byways in Yellowstone.

A prolific writer and sought-after spokesman, Lee Whittlesey is the Yellowstone National Park Historian. His thirty-five years of study about the region have made him the unequivocal expert on the park. Whittlesey has a master's degree in history from Montana State University and a law degree from the University of Oklahoma. Since 1996, he's been an adjunct professor of history at Montana State University. In 2001, he received an Honorary Doctorate of Science and Humane Letters from Idaho State University because of his extensive writings and long contributions to the park.

(A complete list of works cited is available from the editor.)

Eventually, tales from park visitors such as these campers led many to predict that Yellowstone would become "the Switzerland of America." Photo: NPS, undated.

September means a celebration

From a fashion runway to a party tent, craftsmen of western design to party-goers decked out in roaring twenties style, and a million-dollar art show in the midst of it all: It was Rendezvous Royale 2007 in Cody, Wyoming, and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center dished out the hospitality to a record number of attendees. Save the date in 2008: September 23 – 27. *All photos by Josh Boudreau unless otherwise noted.*

(Above): The exhibit floor of the Cody High Style: Designing the West exhibition.

(Left): Historical center board chairman Al Simpson, and wife, Ann, step out for the Autry National Center at the Cody High Style Fashion Show.

(Right): Reflected in a mirror by Dan MacPhail is the "Raising the Bar" desk by Andy Sanchez's Custom Furniture, both exhibits at Cody High Style.

(Below): Guests donned zoot-suits and flapper dresses along with tuxedos and gowns at this year's "Roaring 21 Club"-themed patrons ball.

# of art in Cody, Wyoming

(Above): Heather Abbe, left, and Cindy Groskopf oversee raffle entries for the Cobra replica won by the McDonald family of Tucson, Arizona. Photo: Chris Gimmeson.

(Right): In ostrich chinks by Randy Krier of Wyoming Custom Leather, Trista Neddermeyer struts down the runway before a delighted audience at the historical center.

(Below): Always a crowd favorite is Sonny Tuttle of Red Nations Art.

Tim and Kathy Mahieu, decked out 1920s-style, stop for photos before joining Patrons Ball. Photo: Sean Campbell.

(Above): *Amphitheatre*, Cody artist George D. Smith's entry in the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale, hits the auction stage. Art show photos by Sean Campbell.

(Below): Noted artist Chris Navarro creates a sculpture in an hour at the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale's Quick Draw.

Patrons Ball attendees Rob and Vicky Schoeber visit with former Wyoming governor, Mike Sullivan (right).

by Steve Greaves,
Vice President and
Deputy Director for Development

There is an added crispness in the air as I write this edition of "Developments." The leaves have turned a remarkable gold and the local mule deer herd is back behind the house driving Gus, my bird dog, to distraction once again. Yes, fall must be upon us.

It has been a great summer here at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). Despite gas prices, attendance was up, and it was terrific to see all the excited faces as newcomers and returning visitors were once again astounded by this very special place.

In the last few issues, I have written about the various and creative ways that people, like you, can support this wonderful institution — and benefit yourselves in the process. These various vehicles (gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, bequests, etc.), generically known as "planned giving," can be incredibly beneficial for both you and the BBHC when properly planned. And, throughout these discussions, I have mentioned that these gifts are especially suitable when the ultimate purpose is to support the endowment of the historical center. But, what is this thing called endowment, and why is it so important?

Simply put, endowments are funds established by the donor which are invested by the BBHC. Then, only a small portion of the fund is used each year to provide for the project or program identified by the donor. Ideally, the original principal is never touched, and income from the fund is able to support the institution in perpetuity. While this may be a rather dry and simplified description of what is an extremely powerful gift, I think it is valuable nevertheless.

Endowments can ensure that positions and programs are a permanent part of the institution. As an example, the center was recently the beneficiary of a very generous gift that caps the endowment necessary to support a conservator. Clearly, conservation is a critical function of any museum. While we haven't neglected the process, we have been without a designated staff person responsible for overseeing the conservation of all of our collections for quite some time. This new endowment will support the salary, benefits, and some expenses associated with adding a conservator to our staff. More importantly, it will guarantee this position will always be supported. Whatever else happens, the funds will always be available to sustain this position and the important work the conservator will do.

An acquisition fund from a donor made possible the 2006 purchase at auction of this William F. Cody poster, *Hon. W.F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill,"* ca. 1885. The Calhoun Printing Company, Hartford, CT. Three sheet woodblock engraved poster, 85.875 x 45.25 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Virginia Boal Hayden Acquisition Fund Purchase. 1.69.6130

In addition to endowing critical positions, it is also possible to endow ongoing projects, programs, and the day-to-day business, if you will, of the historical center. Each of our museums and the research library can benefit from additional acquisition funds, such as the money necessary to purchase that important painting for the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, a unique rifle for the Cody Firearms Museum, or a rare collection of photographs for the McCracken Research Library, to name a few.

Some funds are currently available

for this purpose for each museum. However, additional endowed acquisition funds might just allow us to cast that last bid at an auction or otherwise obtain an important artifact that we might not have been able to acquire otherwise. Endowments can also be established to support the important research conducted by our curators or to fund education programs which impact the lives of innumerable children and adults who come here to learn about our western heritage.

Establishing an endowed fund also allows you, the donor, to perpetuate your own values, too. What is important to you? Education? Collections? Research? The exhibitions themselves? Whatever the purpose, establishing an endowment ensures that a particular activity will continue long after we are all gone. With an endowment, your name will be associated with that special project forever.

That is why endowment is such a natural fit for planned gifts. In my mind, there has always been a certain "rightness" for the idea that when a planned gift becomes available, it's preferable to generate perpetual support rather than spend it in the first year just to pay the light bill, for example.

Please think about including the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in your estate planning. To talk more about endowment ideas, please feel free to contact me at steveng@bbhc.org or 307.578.4008. ■

CFM Factory Letter Pricelist Changes

On January 1, 2008, the Cody Firearms Museum Records Office will enact a new pricelist. Current firearms museum members may carryover a maximum of 20 letters from 2007 which must be purchased before December 20, 2007.

New prices are:

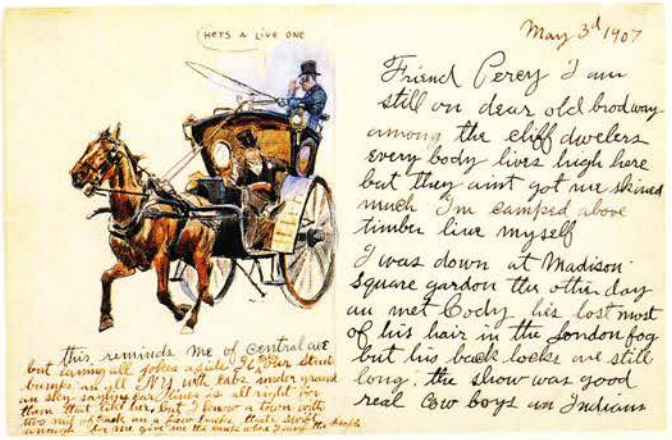
- Winchester Lever Action and Marlin letters: $60 (firearms members $35)
- Model 21 and L.C. Smith letters: $75 (firearms members $50)
- Model 21 letter with build sheet information: $100 (members $75)
- Member 5-letter package: $150
- Member 10-letter package: $250
- Additional research: $50/hour (one hour minimum)

Bob Scriver (1914–1999), *Buffalo Bill–Plainsman*, 1976. Cast by Modern Art Foundry, N.Y. Bronze, 86.5 x 62 x 50.25 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. 12.77

And don't forget our brand new, hot-off-the-presses newsletter specifically for Cody Firearms Museum members titled *CFM Record*. The first issue was mailed this fall. If you did not receive a copy, or have ideas for content, questions, or comments, contact Jesi Bennett at *jessicab@bbhc.org* or 307.578.4031.

Hats off to you!

As 2007 comes to a close, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center would like to thank all of our loyal supporters for their contributions in making 2007 an overwhelming success. With the help of our generous members, donors, volunteers, staff, and board members, we continue to remain one of the finest Western museums in the country. Thank you.



Charles M. Russell (1864–1926). *He's a Live One*, 1907. Pen and ink with watercolor on paper, 6.25 x 9.686 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of William E. Weiss. 69.60

Whitney Gallery of Western Art: C.M. Russell letter

Western American artist Charles M. Russell was known as a great storyteller. Russell's letters to his friends and family are unique because he often included small sketches in ink or watercolor, illustrating his text.

The sketches are playful and amusing yet they show the skill of a great artist. Russell usually began his letters with a drawing and then composed the narrative around the sketch. His spelling and grammar are poor, which is understandable considering he found school challenging and was more likely to spend his time sketching than studying.

In a letter to his friend Percy in May 1907, Russell wrote about seeing Buffalo Bill's Wild West, "I was down at Madison Square gardon the other day an met Cody he's lost most of his hair in the London fog but his back locks are still long. the show was good real cow boys an Indians." From one cowboy to another, this was a great compliment.

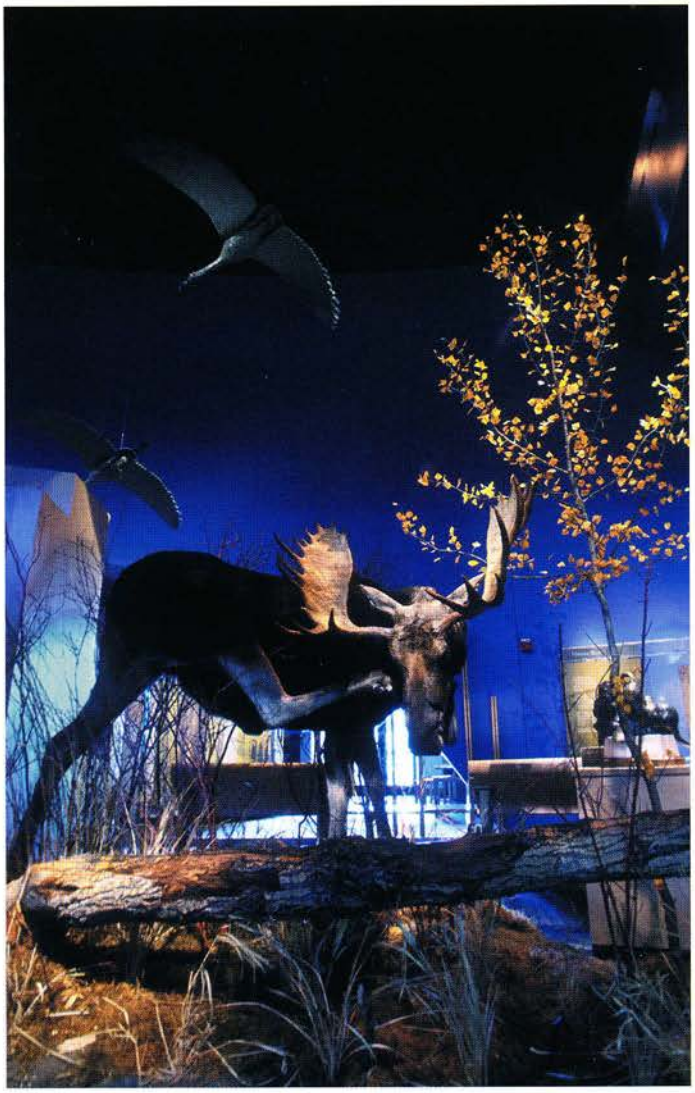
These letters are a valuable part of our collection because they give insight into the colorful character of this western artist. ■

Draper Museum of Natural History: Shiras bull moose

Our overarching goal for exhibits in the Alpine-to-Plains Trail of the Draper Museum of Natural History is to highlight some of the key landscape, wildlife, and human stories in each of four Greater Yellowstone environments: Alpine, Mountain Forest, Mountain Meadow/Wetland, and Plains/Basin.

When we began to design the Mountain Meadow/Wetland exhibits, it was immediately clear that the moose must play a focal role in our story. The Greater Yellowstone region is home to the smallest species of moose in North America known as the Shiras moose. It was named for congressman, avid outdoorsman, pioneer wildlife photographer, and long-time trustee of the National Geographic Society, George Shiras III. We wanted to present the Shiras moose in a realistic, but seldom-depicted pose — one that would engage our visitors while demonstrating the agility and biology of this magnificent animal.

In preparing for the exhibits, our staff spent many hours traveling through the Greater Yellowstone region, observing and photographing wildlife behavior. When we approached taxidermist Ray Hatfield with the idea of



Shiras bull moose. Scientific name: *Alces alces shirasi*. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. NH.305.35

mounting a bull moose scratching his ear, we got some raised eyebrows! But Ray embraced the idea and surpassed our expectations with this mount of a specimen graciously donated by hunter Jim Ross. The mount won six awards including Best of Show at the Montana Taxidermists' Association Convention and Competition, and Safari Club International Hunter's Choice Award. It remains a perennial favorite with our visitors. ■

Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. 1.69.1852 (amber); 1.69.2083 (blue cross hatch), Gift of Alex Kerr; 1.69.80 (blue).

Buffalo Bill Museum: Glass target balls

Sharpshooters in Buffalo Bill's Wild West used clay rather than glass target balls because broken glass in the arena presented a hazard. Outside the Wild West show, exhibition shooters preferred the glass balls. Consequently, organizers arranged contests in locations where the broken glass fell harmlessly into a body of water such as a pond. ■

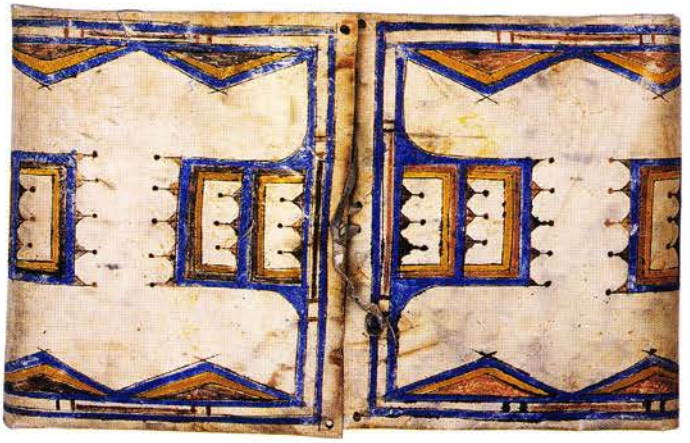
Pepperbox muzzle-loading repeater pistol with percussion lock and multiple barrel. Manufactured by Allen & Thurber, Worcester, Mass., 1847 – 1865. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Olin Corporation, Winchester Arms Collection. 1988.8.2123

Cody Firearms Museum: Pepperbox pistol

Allen & Thurber of Worcester, Massachusetts, manufactured this six-shot, double-action pepperbox pistol about 1847. Pepperbox pistols are unique in that they are revolving, repeating arms that have multiple barrels instead of a revolving cylinder and one fixed barrel that characterizes later revolver designs. Although it predates widespread use in revolver designs by decades, this muzzle-loading pepperbox is a bar-hammer double-action, which allows the pistol to be fired without having to cock the hammer manually.

Allen & Thurber was the first company to manufacture these little pistols in the United States, but they were shortly being produced by a number of competitive companies. They were popular in America from the 1830s to the 1860s because they were easily concealed, relatively inexpensive, and readily obtainable. Although designed to fire only one barrel at a time, some pepperboxes with shorter barrel lengths had a propensity to fire multiple barrels simultaneously or in quick succession. Some pepperbox owners valued this tendency because the pistol exhibited greater firepower when more than one barrel discharged.

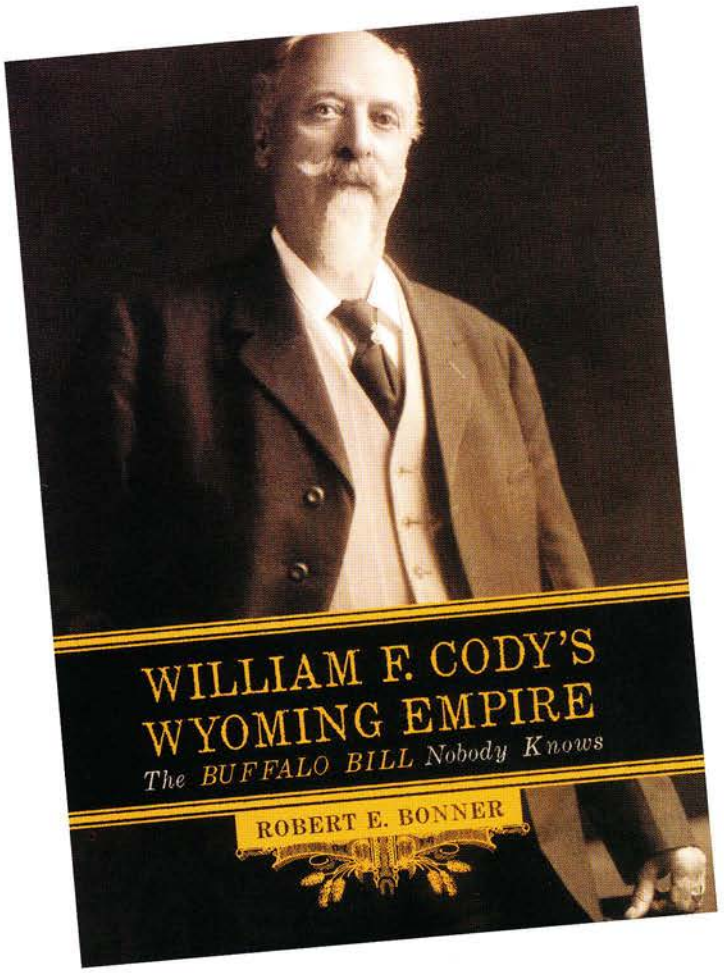
The popularity and widespread use of the pepperbox began to wane with the introduction of the Colt's revolvers during the mid-nineteenth century, but it remains a valuable object in the Cody Firearms Museum collection because it provides a fascinating example of innovation during a period of rapid change in firearms technology. ■



Leather parfleche, Cheyenne, ca. 1885. 23.5 x 14.75 inches. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Chandler-Pohrt Collection. Gift of Mr. William D. Weiss. NA.106.147

Plains Indian Museum: Parfleche

Parfleches, made of folded rawhide, were used to carry clothing, food, and other belongings when Plains Indian people traveled. Painted in geometric designs, parfleches often were made in pairs to be tied to each side of a horse. ■



William F. Cody's Wyoming Empire
The BUFFALO BILL Nobody Knows
by Robert E. Bonner

Illustrated, bibliography, index. 318p. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-8061-3829-9.

Reviewed by Lynn J. Houze

The many books written about William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody tend to concentrate on his early days of scouting and hunting along with his more than 30 years of owning Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Yet, there is barely a mention of his Wyoming years.

On the other hand, the books written about the town of Cody and the surrounding Big Horn Basin area tend to do the opposite. They focus on Buffalo Bill's role as a town founder but barely mention the rest of his life beyond his celebrity status in the world. Professor Robert Bonner's book is the first to merge these two areas in an in-depth treatment of how Buffalo Bill's life and his show business career influenced him to become one of the founders of the town.

Bonner has done a masterful job in discussing the "hows and whys" of Buffalo Bill's initial interest in the Big Horn Basin. He writes about the formation of the Shoshone Land and Irrigation Company which invested its money to build the town, and the management style of George T. Beck who was the on-site manager for the company. Bonner also covers the Chicago Burlington Railroad's involvement in the town and the conflicts between Buffalo Bill and just about everyone else involved.

Cody's charismatic personality charmed everyone and he promoted the Big Horn Basin wherever he and the Wild West went. He also tended to promote projects, such as the Cody Military College, that had no chance of success and were really "pie-in-the-sky" ideas. He was not averse to trying to pull every political string that he could in order to turn his projects into reality. Bonner details all of these events, the town's growing pains, Buffalo Bill's other Wyoming business ventures, and the conflicts that often developed as a result.

This is a well-written account that will give the reader a much better understanding of both the man and the town. ■

Lynn Houze is the Buffalo Bill Museum Curatorial Assistant at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

Ah, the cowboy life. In this black and white glass plate negative by the same name, Oli Watts shares a letter with his horse Jealousy who seems rapt with attention. Watts sits atop his saddle outside the old barn on Z-T Ranch near Meeteetse, Wyoming, ca. 1927 – 1928. This image is from the personal collection of noted western photographer, Charles J. Belden. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Belden. PN.67.31

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center's McCracken Research Library archives is steward to over 500,000 historic photographs and negatives about the West, including the Belden collection. Contact Archivist Megan Peacock at meganp@bbhc.org or 307.578.4080 for more information.