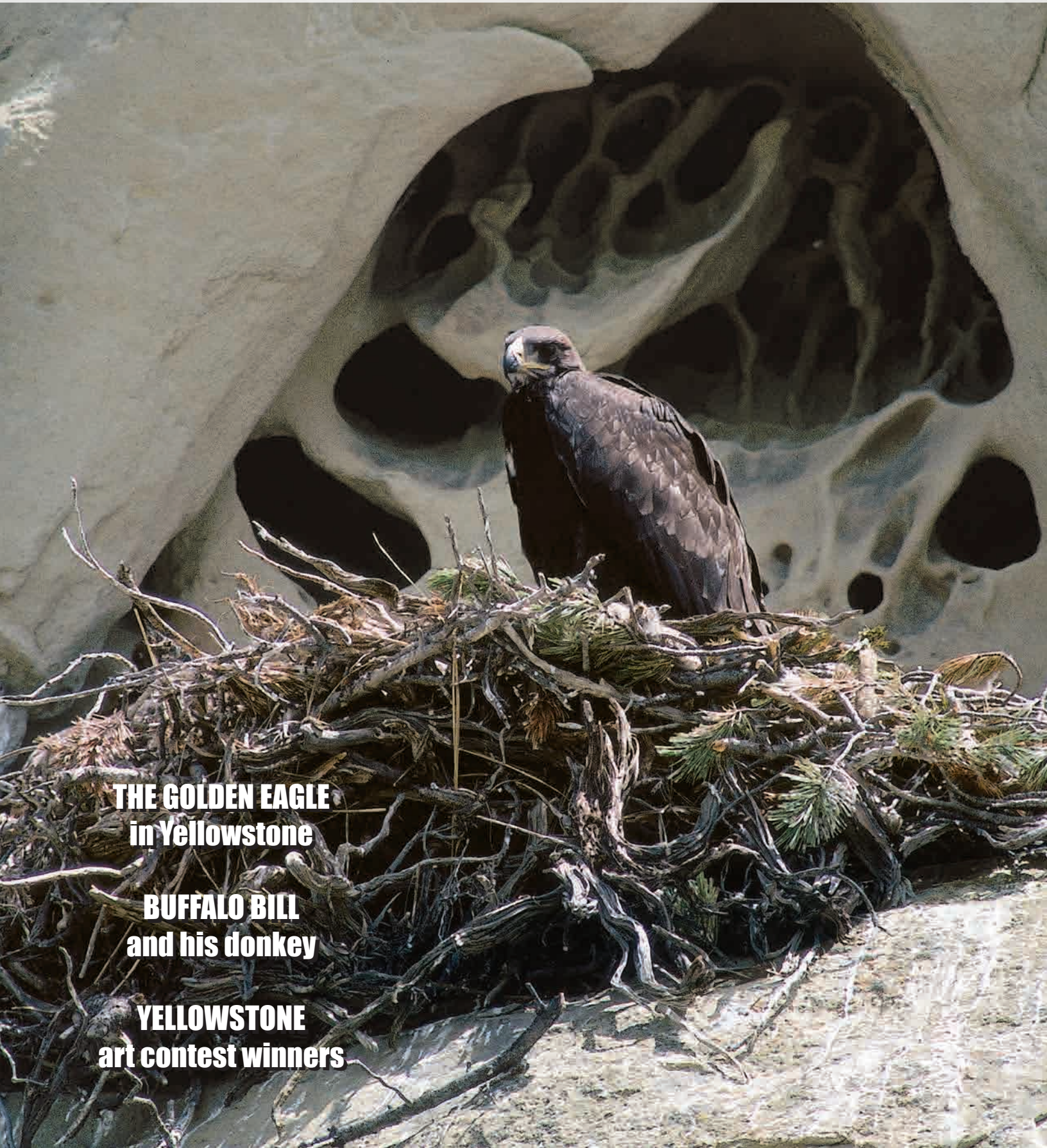
# POINTS WEST

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER CODY, WYOMING FALL 2009



THE GOLDEN EAGLE
in Yellowstone

BUFFALO BILL
and his donkey

YELLOWSTONE
art contest winners

# To the point

By Bruce Eldredge
Executive Director

Each year, about the fourth week of September—even when the leaves get crunchy and the nights are frosty—we here in Cody, Wyoming, have a unique philosophy: It ain't winter yet.

That said, the whole town gears up for A Celebration of Arts: Rendezvous Royale, September 21 – 26. The Cody Country Chamber of Commerce's Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale, now in its twenty-eighth year, fills our John Bunker Sands Photography Gallery with the very best in western art from more than a hundred artists. We love having the show here to enhance our visitor experience and are so grateful to share in its proceeds.

Our very own Cody High Style: Designing the West moves into year three and is well on its way to becoming the benchmark for the western design genre—so much so, that it has spurred the creation of an exciting, new division of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center called Creative Arts West.

An element of the Cody Institute for Western American Studies, Creative Arts West links western furniture design, the study of historic and contemporary clothing, folk and occupational arts, studio craft, theatre and regional music and dance with scholarly research on western American life. Its purpose is to advance our understanding of western traditions for the enjoyment of our visitors as well as for the preservation of the region's artistic and cultural resources. Best of all, the Wyoming Cultural Trust has provided us with an initial $25,000 endowment grant to get the project underway.

And, of course, September means Patrons Ball time. You'll read in Development Director Wendy Schneider's column about the hard-working volunteers who are indispensable in making it all happen. Now in its thirty-third year, Patrons Ball is not only a great time, but all its proceeds contribute to the operations of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

So, are you all dressed up with nowhere to go? We say, "Scoot your boots to Cody." After all: It ain't winter yet ... n

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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, McCracken Research Library, and Cody Institute for Western American Studies.

The mission of Points West is to deliver an engaging educational magazine primarily to the patrons of the 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:

The golden eagle is plentiful in the Bighorn Basin of Wyoming. Read about this raptor and the golden eagle "posse" in Dr. Charles Preston's story beginning on page 4. Photo by Gabby Barrus, ca. 1925. Gabby Barrus Collection. Gift of the Barrus Family, Marj, Mick, Jim and Page Barrus. SL.301.16.64

# Contents

Now in its third year, Cody High Style continues to "raise the bar" in western design; witness Scott Armstrong's award-winning 2008 entry. Read more about this genre on page 12.

Scott Armstrong. Rockabilly sideboard. Switchback Ranch Purchase Award, Cody High Style, 2008. 1.69.6170

## FEATURES



## DEPARTMENTS



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# On the trail of the

Bighorn Basin landscapes define the "Western" experience for many people.

By Charles R. Preston, PhD
All photos by Dr. Charles Preston unless otherwise noted.

## Field of dreams . . . for researchers

Watch out — Rattlesnake! I could clearly hear the staccato rattling of the annoyed reptile as I crested the sandstone outcrop and looked out over the vast ocean of sagebrush, bunchgrasses, and wildflowers far below. Draper Museum research assistant Richard Jones had sounded the alarm and was pointing to a spot on the ground only about three feet from where he was standing. He had surprised the yard-long prairie rattlesnake as it basked in the early morning sun.

Before I could retrieve the camera from my backpack, the snake disappeared in the shadows under a rock ledge. "That's only the fourth rattlesnake we've seen so far this season," I said as I worked my way over to Richard and the third member of our party, Bureau of Land Management wildlife biologist Destin Harrell. It was early June, and the cool, wet weather of spring 2009 had put a damper on rattlesnake and other reptile activity in Wyoming's Bighorn Basin. We could not remember when we'd seen the vegetation so lush and green in the basin in late spring.

Richard, Destin, and I had been hiking up to this rocky ledge for about thirty minutes so we could get into position to observe and photograph an active golden eagle nest without spooking the birds. This nest, identified on our data sheets as 3A, held two fluffy, down-covered eagle chicks and a doting parent less than one hundred meters from our position behind a broad limber pine tree. After watching the birds through spotting scopes for about thirty minutes, and making some notes in our field journals, we packed up and headed back down the rugged outcrop to the basin floor.

Our mission on this day was to verify the position and status of several of the more than thirty-five golden eagle nests that Richard had initially identified from his fixed-wing aerial survey flights in the weeks before. The surveys and on-the-ground fieldwork are key components of a five-year scientific study conducted by the Draper Museum of Natural History to better understand the complex relationships among climate, human land use, and wildlife in the sagebrush-steppe environment of the Bighorn Basin.

Field research is a hallmark and lifeblood of all great natural history museums, allowing us to involve the public in the excitement of new discoveries and to showcase both the product and process of exploration to the general public. Field research and exploration is to a museum what adrenaline is to a well-trained athlete: It provides the spark that drives us to achieve new heights as well as inspire interest and excitement in others.

Our current exploration is funded in part through grants by the Bureau of Land Management, among others, and focuses on the golden eagle as an umbrella species in the Bighorn Basin. A critical aspect of the research is the creation of a volunteer corps of "citizen-scientists" we refer to as our "Golden Eagle Posse." This posse "rides the range" to keep tabs on golden eagle nests and returns with detailed information to help us piece together a complete ecological jigsaw puzzle of the Bighorn Basin, with people included as an integral piece of the puzzle.

## The Bighorn Basin of Wyoming

The Bighorn Basin, located at the eastern edge of the

# golden eagle

## summer fieldwork with the Golden Eagle Posse

A golden eagle parent departs the nest (upper right hand corner) after delivering food to two chicks.

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, includes approximately 4,000 square miles of sagebrush shrublands, mixed grasslands, deserts, and badlands. It epitomizes the landscapes that generally conjure up images of the American West in fine art, literature, movies, and television. Due to extensive residential sprawl and development in other western states, the Bighorn Basin supports one of the last large, virtually intact native sagebrush-steppe tracts left in the intermountain West.

Land ownership in the Bighorn Basin is divided among private and public hands, with the majority of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Land use includes urban and exurban residential development, significant energy development, livestock grazing, and extensive motorized and non-motorized recreation. It is also an increasingly popular area for hunting and other outdoor recreation.

Our posse spied several sets of pronghorn twins this spring.

Eagles share the basin's sagebrush country with many other species, including these free-ranging horses.

As burrowing owls might attest, eagles aren't the only birds of prey occupying sagebrush-steppe in the Bighorn Basin!

### The basin's golden resident

The golden eagle is an apex predator (i.e., not preyed on as healthy adults in the wild) in the Bighorn Basin. The species is present and commonly observed throughout the year, nesting on sandstone cliff faces and occasionally in large trees along riparian corridors or in irrigated fields. As one of North America's largest and most charismatic predatory birds, the golden eagle always inspires special public interest. It is also especially responsive to environmental change. By virtue of their position at the top of the food chain, widespread occurrence, and relatively conspicuous nesting habits in the Bighorn Basin, golden eagles and other large raptors are excellent vehicles with which to explore the widespread effects of environmental change and human activity on wildlife in sagebrush-steppe ecosystems.

Although desert cottontail and white-tailed jackrabbit are presumably the most frequently occurring prey species in the golden eagle diet in the Bighorn Basin during breeding season, eagles also prey on the greater sage grouse. The impact of golden eagles on the grouse is of great interest. The latter is a species of special concern throughout its range and is a likely candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. If populations and

distribution continue to decline, this is a real possibility. Because of its current status as a game species, the grouse carries significant economic importance in Wyoming.

The impact of eagles and other large raptors on sage grouse populations in the Bighorn Basin is unknown, but is expected to vary with habitat characteristics and availability of alternative prey. These factors may be affected, in turn, by human activities and climate change. Similarly, the impact of predation by golden eagles on livestock operations in the Bighorn Basin is unknown, but of interest to livestock producers and wildlife managers.

## Here comes the posse

Our study is designed to determine the distribution, success, and productivity of golden eagle nests in selected areas of the Bighorn Basin as they relate to weather, habitat and landscape characteristics, and human activities. We also document the golden eagle diet during the nesting season and will explore other aspects of eagle biology—such as movements and population genetics—as the study progresses. We are able to identify and map active eagle nests with a combination of aerial and ground surveys early in the nesting season. We then follow up later in the year to see which nests have been successful in producing at least one chick and rearing it to independence and how many chicks each of these nests has produced.

Posse members Richard Gruber and Don Chaffey (red shirt and hat) keep a close eye on their adopted nest.

Posse members Dale (foreground) and Bud Schrickling keep cool while monitoring their adopted nest.

We also collect prey remains where possible from around nest sites after the nests have been abandoned. When all these data are collected, we use Geographic Information Systems mapping to calculate and record more than twenty landscape and habitat characteristics surrounding each nest. Finally, we use a series of diverse statistical techniques to relate nesting success, productivity, and diet to landscape, habitat, and other factors measured.

## The posse to the rescue

Our Golden Eagle Posse of volunteer citizen-scientists helps with all aspects of the project, but the main task for posse members is to intensively monitor individual nests. In 2009, four two-person posse teams and one lone rider participated in the project. Each team "adopted" one nest to monitor for at least eight hours per week until the nest failed or chicks successfully fledged (left the nest independently).

Each team records eagle behavior at fifteen-minute intervals throughout the observation period and keeps a field journal with information about prey delivery and other action around their nest site. Here's a sample of a recent note I received from one of our posse members, Rosemarie Hughes, when she visited a nest the day after her "adopted" chick successfully fledged:

> When I drove around to the nest and our usual viewing spot, something was missing—our eaglet. It wasn't there, and after canvassing the area, I didn't see it anywhere. I did see, as I was driving to the nest, an eagle flying around the basin. At first, I thought it was the eaglet because its wings didn't seem to be fully-developed, but after talking with you, it must have been a molting adult. I'll tell you, I was very disappointed when I didn't see our chick there; it was a very sad time for me.
>
> After talking with you, I did make my way up to the nest. As I was just at the level of the lower nest (or the twigs that had been pushed out of the nest), I heard something that scared the holy bajebees out of me: It was the eaglet! I didn't see it, but it must have seen me and didn't like what it saw, so it took off. That was a good thing in a way; at least it could fly. I went over to where it was and saw what looked like part of a cottontail. I just left it and walked a little more over to the east, and there were some other bits and pieces, which I left there also. Since it appeared that it was eating off the bunny, I didn't want to take its food source. It was a sad day, but a happy day too, because I did actually see the eaglet fly away—a success!"

## What's next

Collecting and recording observations like this is a great learning and recreational experience for posse members and builds a treasure trove of information for science. A corps of well-trained volunteers can contribute an enormous amount of new information to studies like this one, and many of

their observations will find their way into scientific journals. Some organizations, such as EarthWatch Institute, even help fund museum and university programs that include volunteers in field research.

This year, every one of our monitored nests was successful, and the pilot project has been so successful that we plan to expand the posse to at least ten teams in 2010. We also plan to create some exciting hands-on learning experiences in the field for youth, family, and student groups beginning next year.

We are still gathering data as I write this article, so we won't have the results of our analyses for several weeks. In general, however, we have discovered that our study area contains a much higher density of nesting golden eagles than expected: It could be one of the highest concentrations of nesting golden eagles in North America. We have also confirmed that rabbits dominate the diet of golden eagles in the Bighorn Basin, followed by ground squirrels and other rodents, and snakes. In the future, we will be able to determine how yearly variations in weather, prey availability, and other factors influence golden eagle nesting occurrence, distribution, success, and diet, and how apex predators like eagles influence other species and the environment that supports them.

Yes, we're already looking forward to next year's field season. We will attempt to place remote cameras at some nest sites to record behavior and food delivery every hour of the day for our Greater Yellowstone Sights and Sounds Archive and explore opportunities to feed live video from the field to our exhibit galleries and Web site. We also plan to install a small, interactive kiosk in the Draper Museum to keep our visitors updated on annual fieldwork and discoveries. Finally, we will post weekly field note blogs on our Web site during next summer's fieldwork. So stay tuned as we continue to bring the "nature of the West" to you and all of our audiences through a variety of traditional and innovative vehicles! n

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Dr. Charles R. Preston is Founding Curator of the Draper Museum of Natural History. He was previously Zoology Department Chair at the Denver Museum of Natural History, and before that, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. He holds or has held adjunct faculty appointments in biology and environmental science at the University of Colorado (Boulder and Denver campuses), environmental policy and management at the University of Denver, and biological sciences at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

The author examines the site where a golden eagle parent captured a small prairie rattlesnake. Photo by Richard Jones.

A zoologist and wildlife ecologist by training, Preston currently focuses on human dimensions of wildlife management and conservation in North America, especially the Greater Yellowstone region and the American West. Much of his field research concentrates on raptors and predator-prey dynamics in changing environments. A strong advocate for the role of scientists as public educators, he is interested in the evolving role of informal science education in society. A prolific writer, Preston has authored four books and more than sixty scholarly and popular articles.

For more information about the Golden Eagle Posse, contact Preston at cpreston@bbhc.org, or 307.578.4078.

At times, sagebrush landscapes can take on a magical, almost otherworldly appearance.

# Painting the park

## YELLOWSTONE ART CONTEST WINNERS

Grand Prize

Keziah Plowman, grade 6. Freedom. Spring in Yellowstone. Acrylic. Grand prize winner.

Just as Yellowstone has inspired artists for ages, we asked Wyoming students in grades kindergarten through twelve to depict how Yellowstone National Park has inspired them in 2009. More than 1,300 students answered the call with works illustrating everything from buffalo to geysers—all to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art.

Pictured here is only a small portion of the extraordinary artwork (51 pieces in all) now on display through the fall in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Kriendler Gallery of Western Art. See the exhibit in person or view itonlineatwww.bbhc.org/YellowstoneContest/index.cfm. Congratulations, students!

*All hometowns listed are Wyoming locations.

## First Place

McCora Lynne Wolfley, grade 1. Smoot. Yellowstone "Paint Pot." Chalk, crayon, paint, sand. First prize, K – 2.

Kaden Michael Moore, grade 5. Powell. Buffalo Snow. Watercolor, gouache. First prize, grades 3 – 5.

Kadin Allred, grade 6. Thayne. Steam Bath. Oil. First prize, grades 6 – 8.

Evelyn Pickering, grade 12. Cody. Geyser Study, #2. First prize, grades 9 – 12.

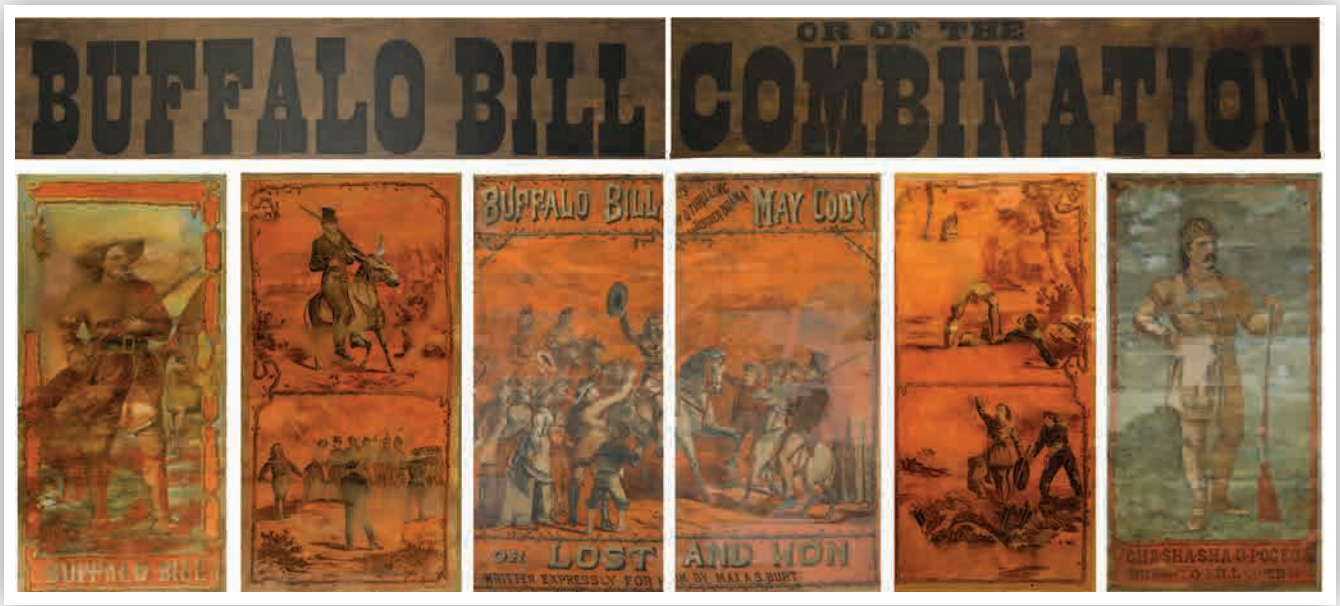
## Second Place

Second place winners, left to right: Taryn Paradis, grade 2. Alta. Hot Pot Valley. Watercolor, marker. Second prize, K – 2. Bailey Schupp, grade 3. Pinedale. Rising Buffalo. Watercolor. Second prize, grades 3 – 5. Ashley Dern, grade 8. Basin. Buffalo Running. Scratchboard. Second prize, grades 6 – 8. Bottom left: Matthew Alexander, grade 12. Powell. Visions of the Faithful. Colored pencil. Second prize, grades 9 – 12.

Third place winners (not pictured): K – 2: Dacotah Morgan. Hartville. Grades 3 – 5: Jordan Moore. Powell. Grades 6 – 8: Logan Burningham. Ten Sleep. Grades 9 – 12: Kristen Wells. Cody.

# Buffalo Bill v His Donkey

By Sandra K. Sagala




The 1878 Buffalo Bill Combination—a precursor to the Wild West—is featured on this 10 feet high x 24 feet-long billboard. The fragile advertisement was discovered in 2002 behind a brick wall in a Jamestown, New York, building and took five years to painstakingly restore. The second panel from the left depicts Jerry the donkey. Photo by Bob Knobloch. Image courtesy the Reg Lenna Civic Center, Jamestown, New York, with special thanks to *True West* magazine. ©Reg Lenna Civic Center. Reproduction of this image is forbidden without the consent of the Reg Lenna Civic Center.

From Cleveland to Louisville to New York, critics seemed always ready to comment on Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Sandy Sagala has studied numerous accounts of the show, and for this story, discovered a star, of sorts: Jerry the Donkey.

Before he organized his Wild West show, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody traveled the country as an actor playing in frontier melodramas. After only a few years, he adopted the role of educator, as well as actor. As such, he realized the artificiality of the plays and began to incorporate increasingly realistic western effects. Because animals were an integral aspect of the West, Cody's decision to feature them in his dramas was significant.

Fellow scouts of the plains and later professional acting troupes accompanied him, playing secondary roles. For the most part, critics wrote flattering reviews. However, the occasional negative assessment should surprise no one as Cody was still learning the craft, and once in a while, his performance was less than sterling. The plays, too, particularly the early ones by Ned Buntline, were over-the-top melodramas. Ignorant of theatrical techniques, Cody affected a natural posture and, despite the criticisms a bad play might invoke, his presence was a showstopper.

For several months, Cody partnered with Jack Crawford, a military guide and "poet scout." The two fought over many things, not the least of which was a plan to bring horses onstage. When they performed in San Francisco, the June 9, 1877, edition of the Chronicle reported that Cody and Crawford introduced "two very frightened horses" on stage which eventually settled down and performed admirably. Later, in an August 7, 1877, letter to Crawford (after he'd previously incurred Crawford's wrath over a shooting accident), Cody insisted "it was not my fault as I never wanted to put the horses on stage."

Horses may not have worked out for various reasons, but in September 1877, in a play by Andrew S. Burt titled May Cody, or Lost and Won, Cody introduced a "wise little donkey." Donkeys better served the purpose because, though they were generally more stubborn, once trained, they were more able to climb the steep stairs leading to the stage.

Before the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, performance, Cody had unfortunately imbibed rather freely and his usually sober act was not quite so. A critic with the local Record of the Times wrote on March 27, 1878, that he hoped Cody would

take better care of himself and not spoil any more evenings. In this instance, the donkey received one of his own first positive reviews when the critic added, "The donkey's acting was a redeeming feature of the play–and he was sober, too."

The next year, Cody's play was a Prentiss Ingraham work titled Knight of the Plains, or Buffalo Bill's Best Trail. The little gray animal was again in evidence, this time with Buttermilk, an African American servant character. Buttermilk played scenes with an Indian and with a Jew, but those with the donkey drew the most applause according to the Fort Wayne, Indiana, Sentinel of October 16, 1879.

For the 1879 season, Knight of the Plains predominated with an occasional performance of May Cody. Harry Irving played Buttermilk and cavorted with the donkey while Charles Wilson took his turn as Darby McCune. One critic in Cleveland thought both men created "considerable amusement, and they are continually getting out of one scrape only to fall into another." In Louisville, a reviewer judged Knight of the Plains "nothing particular" as drama, adding that the acting, "although some of it is very effective, with the spectators, is not noteworthy." Nevertheless, "the intelligent-looking and handsome donkey" (named "Jerry" in the program) "acted his part capitally, making a deserved hit."

Cody's last, most expensive, and longest-playing drama was Prairie Waif: A Story of the Far West. John A. Stevens wrote it especially for the 1880 season, and it continued the tradition of including a stock humorous character. German comedians Jule Keen and Bonnie Runnels alternated in the role of Hans. Jerry took the role of Jack Cass, the donkey. Although the Prairie Waif continued throughout the 1881 season, the cast listing excluded the donkey. Jerry was along, though, and causing trouble, as the following story from the Chicago Tribune, dated September 5, 1881, illustrates:

> While Cody checked in at the Tremont Hotel, Jerry was to room in a basement stall at Beardsley's livery stable. Around 10 p.m., the "gray-haired and demure-looking specimen of the long-eared tribe," despite his supper of oats and fresh water, refused to settle down for the night. Instead, he tore up the stairs "with the speed of a locomotive," ears thrown back and eyes glaring. The stablemen at first thought the sight great fun. One bet that if his halter had not slipped off, Jerry would have "dragged the basement up-stairs with him."
>
> A boy jumped on his back, but the donkey dashed back down the stairs and brushed off his passenger by rubbing against a post. The stablemen rushed after him, so Jerry kicked up his heels, knocked over two of them, then "waltzed" back up. Jim Killoan and another man managed to drive him down and hold his head, but the animal bit Killoan's left arm and held it. He screamed "bloody murder" and grabbed with his right hand to pull the donkey's ears, to no avail.
>
> At this, every other man armed himself with a club and beat the animal, but Jerry's kicks precluded any proximity. He suddenly opened his mouth, letting loose Killoan's arm, and jumped for Pat Houlihan, the night-watchman. Jerry dragged him "in the most violent manner" across the floor. The men seized heavier clubs and a rope with a slip noose. Observing the furious activity, Jerry "inadvertently opened his mouth to smile," and Houlihan removed his arm. Someone was finally able to slip the noose over Jerry's head and pulled it so tightly that the poor animal's tongue protruded. Dr. C.S. Eldridge ascertained that Killoan's and Houlihan's arms were critically lacerated. Between the loss of blood and the shock, the two men were barely able to stand.

The Tribune reporter did not mention what, if any, damages the stable owner required Cody to pay; neither did the calamity seem to interfere with Jerry's future acting career. He—or perhaps a docile, more obedient understudy—remained a sensation even a year later while Cody and the others came in for censure. A Canton, Ohio, critic thought the production of 20 Days or Buffalo Bill's Pledge, "not worthy of any favorable mention" and wondered in print "[w]hy people hunger for this class of amusement . . . The only good feature of the show was 'Jerry,' the trick donkey, but as he would fail to appreciate a good notice we forbear."

The incidents with Jerry were good learning experiences for Cody. In only a few years, he would travel with many hundreds of animals in his Wild West show. Their contributions were almost always satisfactory too. ■

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Sandra K. Sagala has written Buffalo Bill, Actor: A Chronicle of Cody's Theatrical Career and has co-authored Alias Smith and Jones: The Story of Two Pretty Good Bad Men (Bear Manor Media 2005). In May 2008, the University of New Mexico Press published her latest book, Buffalo Bill On Stage. She did much of her research about Buffalo Bill through a Garlow Fellowship at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, as well as a 2008 research fellowship from the center's Cody Institute for Western American Studies. Her article comparing Buffalo Bill with Mark Twain was serialized in these pages, the winter 2005 through fall 2006 issues, and in the spring 2008 issue, she wrote about firearms mishaps in Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Sagala lives in Erie, Pennsylvania. ■


Wyoming loves Molesworth. On display June 20 – October 24, 2009, at the Wyoming State Museum in Cheyenne is Molesworth: Selections from the Permanent Collection. Photo courtesy the Wyoming State Museum.

# The Depression "done" it

## (FROM THE DUDE RANCHER MAGAZINE, 1933)

The Dude Ranchers Association was organized on September 27–28, 1926. They produced an annual magazine titled The Dude Rancher from 1926–1971. The excerpt below is believed to be from 1933* and speculates about how the Great Depression affected the work of one man: Thomas Molesworth.

When the Depression hit, a furniture dealer in Cody, Wyoming, sat at the desk in his store, staring at a crooked piece of wood carrying a lantern. He was thinking that one thing was certain, he was having a tougher time finding a furniture customer than Diogenes had finding an honest man. Checking up on this Greek philosopher, we find he lived to be 111 years old, and, evidently, they had depressions back in 300 B.C., because his biography says he took up his abode in a tub.

One thing certain, people were not buying furniture; they did not have the money. Tom Molesworth knew he would have to take his lantern and go out to find a way to make some money to feed his family, pay store expenses, and keep up his end in community affairs. Tom did not desire to live to be 111 years old with the furniture business as rotten as it was. Unless he found something, he would—like Diogenes—have to give up his home and move into a tub. Tom always was a resourceful cuss, so it is no surprise when we learned he reversed the old, old custom: the idea of making something, then going out to hunt a market. He took his lantern and went out to find a market, and when he found the market, he started to manufacture something to fit that market.

Tom sat for days at his desk in the little western town of Cody, Wyoming. "Let's see," he says to himself, "who in this state of Wyoming has money and what could I make they would buy? This is a dude ranch country, and dudes and the ranches they visit are the only ones that buy what they want and have the money to buy with." For the next couple of weeks, Tom wandered around in a trance. One day the idea clicked. He had his market. All the dudes of past years had come into his store and raved about the homemade furniture on the ranch where they were staying.

Why not make furniture of our native knotted logs, upholstered in leather and of a quality equal to the finest of factory furniture?

Tom did not eat or sleep for several days, just talked to himself. "These dudes like our western homemade

dude ranch furniture; these dudes own summer homes in the east—or they have dens in their city homes, or they are building their summer homes here in the west." Tom now had his market and his product. Now to bring them together.

Maybe you do not know how long it takes to make a good piece of furniture. Tom set to work to make one set: He went to the hills and got some trees with big knots in them, others with crooks or curves. He sent east for the finest upholstery springs money could buy. He went to the large tannery for the finest upholstery leather on the market. Finally, he hired a top-notch custom-furniture man and set about to make this set before the dude season opened. To produce it in the short time allotted was barely short of a miracle. Molesworth did it.

On the opening of the season, Tom rebuilt his large show window into a cabin interior and placed his furniture, and then went back to his desk. Only two days passed, a customer came in and said "how much." Tom just stuttered. The prospect went on to say that he was spending over a half million in a summer home in Wyoming. Tom said, "Yes, yes, go ahead." The customer unfolded his plans. Tom just dreamed along until the prospect said, "I am sending all the plans for the building over to you and want you to give me the total cost of furnishing the building complete—furniture, rugs, lights, draperies and decorations." Then the customer left the store with the remark, "Young man, no doubt you have dreamed of how you would furnish and decorate a cabin if you had all the money in the world to spend on it. If so, go the limit; forget the cost."

In due time, Tom got the plans. He sketched, figured, and planned days and nights, and finally, he had them on paper and sent the cost to his customer, now in Miami, Florida. Tom received a wire to go ahead. Tom was the schoolboy with his first pair of long pants. It took him four days to come to earth from his castle in the clouds and go to work—and work he did, day and night. Wood came in from the hills, leather from the tannery, and springs, nails, etc., from the factory.

Tom went to Arizona and New Mexico for the Navajo rugs, silver, and pottery decorations; to the Crow and Shoshone Indian reservations for beadwork to decorate the cream-colored leather draperies; to the Black Hills for historic pieces of the early West; to western studios for paintings and pictures. Months rolled by and trucks rolled over Wyoming hills to deliver the order. Then again, for a few days, Tom's mind was a flutter: Would his customer like his completely furnished cabin? Would he give a check promptly for the yard-long invoice Tom had in his pocket? All these things entered Tom's mind because he was on a shoestring. He had used all his money and all he could borrow to finish this job.

The day of acceptance came. The new owner was speechless; Tom's heart was in his throat and kind of choked up when he tried to say, "If there are any changes you want or any pieces you do not like, I will take them back." The buyer was just going around and around from room to room followed by his wife and two grown children. Tom did not think he heard his remark and was about to repeat it when the rounds of the building were made. But, the owner turned to his secretary and said, "Give this man a check in full before he takes a rug from the floor, a picture from the wall, or even a nail out of the furniture."

While this order was being filled, the original display remained in the Cody show windows. Dudes from every state in the union stopped to look and ask questions—even to place orders, which Tom has made and shipped to states in the east and summer homes in the west.

Tom continued to broaden his field; he found out his dream things, if built, would sell. He had found his market and planned an article for the market, but never took into consideration the size of his market. Like the rat trap manufacturers, the market made a trail to his door—not a trail either, it had widened to a road. As his fame spread, the orders piled up, and he had work for months in


Molesworth stereo cabinet complete with his "man-and-lantern" label, ca. 1933. Buffalo Bill Historical Center Permanent Collection. 1.69.49.29

advance, in fact, some for years-ahead delivery.

New Year's Day of this year, Molesworth delivered the new furniture for the lobby of the Plains Hotel,* Cheyenne, Wyoming. Not even Tom had any idea that his furniture could create such comment and excitement. He had in mind a rest and vacation for a few days after the job was installed. Rest and sleep? Not a chance as word spread like wildfire, far and wide.

People going through Cheyenne stopped to look at the furniture in the Plains. The telephones rang, and newspapers wanted interviews. Tom got disgusted since all he wanted was rest. So he got in his car and started for Cody and the work shop with two more nice orders in his pocket. He also had a letter from the management, which said in part, "I wish to express to you our sincere thanks for your wonderful work with this furniture as it is furniture that is as luxurious as anything in any home in the country, as well as useful for service in the hotel. The reaction of the general public to the furniture has been indeed gratifying. They are both pleased and amazed to think that something of this nature is being manufactured here on their own doorstep. In fact, it is hard to believe that our state produces something of this nature."

In November of last year, during the Dude Ranchers Convention, over 300 people wore a trail to this little Cody factory where they placed orders. Over in this western factory the other day, some 350 pieces of this furniture for another order were being crated ready for shipment. At the same time, work was being started on five other orders, which have to be completed and installed by July 1 of this year.

And so the crooked little wooden man carrying the lantern became the trademark and mascot of the man who went out and found a market and then made something to supply that market.

The depression is over. n

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*From its history, Cheyenne's Plains Hotel makes this notation about Molesworth:

> Appearing on scene in the mid-1930s was a furniture maker in Cody, Wyoming, named Thomas Molesworth. He used polished native woods with American rugs, and motifs were also used to create handsome chairs and couches. He designed bars incised with tomahawks and chandeliers of wrought iron with silhouettes suggesting Indian villages. The lampshades were stretched hide, colored with Indian designs.
>
> In 1933, Mrs. Hynds (Nellie, wife of manager Harry Hynds) redecorated the old hotel using a full complement of Molesworth's finest creations . . .


Catch the spirit of
MOLESWORTH
at Cody High Style,
*September 21 – 26, 2009.*

Meet the artisans; learn a craft; scoot-your-boots to the fashion show!

CODY HIGH STYLE
designing the west

**SEPTEMBER 21 – 22**
- Two-day workshop: Molesworth-style keyhole chair, John Gallis.$

**SEPTEMBER 22**
- All-day workshop: Traditional beading techniques, Lynda Covert and LoRheda Fry.$

**SEPTEMBER 23**
- Cody High Style exhibition, *8 a.m. – 5 p.m.*
- Western couture runway fashion show, *5:30 and 7:30 p.m.*$
- Kick-off party, *7 p.m. - midnight.*

**SEPTEMBER 24**
- Cody High Style exhibition, *8 a.m. – 5 p.m.*
- All-day style tour to historic Shell, Wyoming.
- Seminar: Innovative Trends in Rustic Design, Ralph Kylloe, PhD, *10 a.m.*
- Style West fashion and interiors market, *noon– 6 p.m.*, Cody Auditorium.$
- Wood-carving demonstration, Al Hone, *1 – 3 p.m.*
- Seminar: How the Cowboy Become a Fashion Icon, Pate Stetson and Anne Beard, *2 p.m.*

**SEPTEMBER 25**
- Cody High Style exhibition, *8 a.m. – 5 p.m.*
- Seminar: Marketing Without a Budget, Thea Marx, *10 a.m.*
- Style West fashion and interiors market, *noon – 6 p.m.*, Cody Auditorium.$
- Wood-carving demonstration, Al Hone, *1 – 3 p.m.*

**SEPTEMBER 26**
- Cody High Style exhibition, *8 a.m. – 5 p.m.*
- Style West fashion and interiors market, *10 a.m. – 6 p.m.*, Cody Auditorium.$
- Roundtable: The Progression of Design, *1 p.m.*

($Denotes Fee)

See the full schedule at *www.rendezvousroyale.org*.

# Patrons Post

It pays to be a patron!

The Patrons Ball committee is all dressed up and ready to go dancing! Seated: Char McCue, committee chair, and Paul Brock, facilities manager. Back row, L – R: Shirley Stephens; Deborah Culver; Jan Jones, membership director; Jamie Parsons; Shauna Roberts, Patrons Ball coordinator; Erin Selk, Melissa Cunningham, and Mary Crow.

## Rockin' and rollin' with Remington, Russell, and friends

It's finally here; the party of the year: Patrons Ball! On September 26, enjoy a "Night of R & R," that is, "Remington, Russell, and Friends," a fitting tribute to the Whitney Gallery of Western Art's 50th Anniversary. Dine in the galleries with a gourmet meal from Bravo Catering of Missoula, Montana, and dance to the ever-popular Craig Olsen Orchestra.

Now in its thirty-third year, this black-tie event is billed as the "premiere social event in the northern Rocky Mountains" and is the largest special event of the year benefiting the operations and programming at Buffalo Bill Historical Center. It's the perfect finale to the week-long Celebration of Arts, Rendezvous Royale. Make your reservations today by calling 1.888.598.8119 or 307.587.5002, or register online at www.rendezvousroyale.org. Patrons Ball puts the "fun" in fundraising!

## It's October: That means Buffalo Gals!

Ladies: It's time for Buffalo Gals! Join Buffalo Bill Museum Curator Dr. John Rumm on October 20 as he presents Backstage with the Women of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. The luncheon is for women members only and takes place noon – 1:30 p.m. in the John Bunker Sands Photography Gallery. The cost is $18 per person, and reservations are required as the seating is limited. Register today by contacting Membership Director Jan Jones at membership@bbhc.org or 307.578.4032. You can also register online at www.bbhc.org.


Phoebe Ann Moses, a.k.a. Annie Oakley, was one of the most popular women in the Wild West show. Original Buffalo Bill Museum Collection, ca. 1885. P.69.961

## Honored tribal scholar Curly Bear Wagner dies of cancer


Curly Bear Wagner (1944 – 2009)

Clarence "Curly Bear" Wagner, 64, a Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board member and American Indian historian, died of cancer July 16, at Browning, Montana.

A tribal scholar for the Blackfeet Tribe, Wagner shared his culture via his travels all over the world. Still, he always considered the Blackfeet Reservation his home. Wagner was an active member of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board, 1993 – 2009. Community members recognize Wagner as a participant in the many educational programs for the Plains Indian Museum including the fall seminar and June's Plains Indian Museum Powwow.

"Curly Bear had a long and difficult struggle with cancer beginning over a year ago and had been in treatment in Great Falls, Montana, and Salt Lake City," said Plains Indian Museum Curator Emma Hansen. "I know that

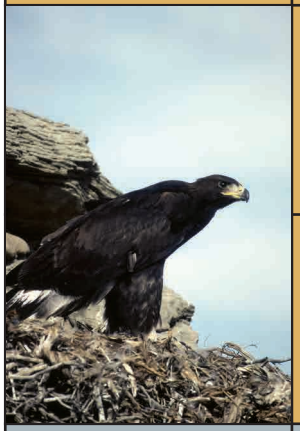
»»(continued on page 18)

# 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:<br>SEPTEMBER 16 - OCTOBER 31:<br>8 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily<br>NOVEMBER 1 - MARCH 31:<br>10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Thursday - Sunday | | | | **OCTOBER**<br>Natural History Lunchtime Expedition<br>*Wolves*, Doug Smith<br>12:15 p.m. (free)<br>1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | | 6 | 7 | 8 |  | CFM Records Office open for Winchester Arms Collectors Association Annual Eastern Show Springfield, Massachusetts<br>10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | Storytelling with Jim Garry<br>2 - 2:45 p.m.<br>(free with admission)<br>17 |
| 18 |  | Buffalo Gals Luncheon<br>*Backstage with the Women of Buffalo Bill's Wild West*<br>Dr. John Rumm<br>Noon - 1:30 p.m.<br>(members only/registration/fee)<br>20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | Storytelling with Jim Garry<br>2 - 2:45 p.m.<br>(free with admission)<br>24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| **NOVEMBER**<br>1 | 2 |  | | Natural History Lunchtime Expedition<br>*Grizzly Bears*<br>Mark Bruscino<br>12:15 p.m. (free)<br>5 | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | | | CFM Records Office open for shows in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Reno, Nevada |

For up-to-date information on educational programs, please visit our Web site at *www.bbhc.org* and click on "calendar"

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 9 | | | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| CFM Records Office open for shows in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Reno, Nevada<br>15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
|  | 23 | 24 | 25 | **Thanksgiving Day Center Closed**<br>26 | 27 | 28 |
| | 30 | **DECEMBER**<br>1 | 2 | Natural History Lunchtime Expedition Speaker TBA 12:15 p.m. (free)<br>3 |  | Holiday Open House 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free)<br>5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | CFM Records Office open for National Gun Day, Louisville, Kentucky<br>12 |
| 13 |  | | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | | | 23 | 24 | **Christmas Day Center Closed**<br>25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

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

**PHOTO CREDITS:**

- Collared wolf from the Druid pack, 2000. NPS photo by Doug Smith.
- Women Wild West performers Annie Oakley and Della Ferrell with four other Wild West performers on backlot of show, 1889. Buffalo Bill Online Archive. P.69.2041.2
- Grizzly bear in Yellowstone National Park, 2005. NPS photo by Jim Peaco.
- Golden eagle. Gabby Barrus Collection. SL.301.10.422
- Santa visiting with child, Holiday Open House, 2008.
- Cashman Greever Garden in the fall. Photo by Jaime Penuel.

## »» Curly Bear (continued from page 15)

many members of the staff have gotten to know Curly Bear over the many years he has traveled to Cody, and he will be greatly missed by all of us."

Wagner was highly sought after as a speaker on Native issues and culture, and worked extensively for the center on oral history projects with tribal elders. He also worked to preserve sites considered sacred by the Blackfeet.

He was born Oct. 31, 1944, to Clarence Wagner and Edna Maude Gobert Wagner in Seattle, Washington. Wagner was the great-grandson of the famous Blackfeet warrior Red Crow and the great-nephew of one of the principal chiefs of the Blood Nation, Seen From Afar. His mother died when he was five, and he was raised by his older sister Mary Jean.

In 1994, he founded the Going-to-the-Sun Institute to share Blackfeet culture with Natives and non-Natives alike. He is survived by two sons and two daughters.

## "Add" it up: Art + Dance + Design = Rendezvous Royale!

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Cody High Style exhibition and Patrons Ball provide the "dance and the design" in the equation, and the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale adds the "art." The 28th annual event features the very best in western art from more than a hundred artists such as Clyde Aspevig, Buckeye Blake, William Matthews, Dave McGary, and Thom Ross. All proceeds benefit local art classes, art scholarships, the historical center, and the Cody Country Chamber of Commerce, which coordinates the show.

The show is on view in the center's John Bunker Sands Photography Gallery beginning August 27 when the public was invited to a 6 p.m. reception—complete with refreshments and music—to see the latest creations. New this year at the opening event was a live miniature auction of both sculpture and paintings by several of the artists who participate in the Buffalo Bill Art Show.

Popular western artist T.D. Kelsey is this year's Honored Artist for the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale. His Fly Fishin' sculpture/fountain will be available for bid at the live auction, September 25.

With seminars, gallery showings, workshops, and tours, A Celebration of Arts: Rendezvous Royale in Cody, Wyoming, is the place to be September 21 - 26 to enjoy the arts as well as to support them—a win/win deal for everyone.

Soak up the West in Cody!

## Medicine Crow awarded Medal of Freedom

Crow historian, author, speaker, and long-time Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board Member Joe Medicine Crow received the 2009 Presidential Medal of Freedom on August 12 in Washington, DC. President Obama presented the nation's highest civilian honor to Medicine Crow and fifteen other recipients. A White House press release called Medicine Crow's contributions to the preservation of the culture and history of the First Americans "matched only by his importance as a role model to young Native Americans across the country."

Born in 1913 on the Crow reservation in Montana, Medicine Crow's step-grandfather, White Man Runs Him, was a scout for George Armstrong Custer and an eyewitness to the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Medicine Crow grew up hearing stories of the battle and has written and lectured extensively on the subject. He earned a master's degree in anthropology from the University of Southern California in 1939.

Medicine Crow was nominated in March 2008 for the award by Buffalo Bill Historical Center Chairman of the Board and retired United States Senator from Wyoming, Alan K. Simpson, and Senator Jon Tester from Montana.

## Still time to "catch the Moran"

One of the star attractions this summer in the "new" Whitney Gallery of Western Art has been Thomas Moran's The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone 1893-1901, on loan from the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Thousand of visitors have enjoyed this extraordinary painting that is more than fourteen feet long and eight feet high. It's on view through the end of October, so make plans to see it before it heads back to Washington, D.C.

# Ways of Giving

By Wendy Schneider, Director of Development

Wendy Schneider

Summertime brings a flurry of activity to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. I have enjoyed observing our visitors as they interact with our exhibits, programming, and staff. One of my favorite interactions, though, is between our visitors and our volunteers. On more than one occasion, I have witnessed our volunteers sharing their passion for the center with our guests—it is infectious!

Volunteers are integral to the landscape here—unsung heroes who always lend a hand to work toward our mission. Since early this year, I have personally seen the work they do every day in our office. For instance, they lend a hand with fundraising by making calls to verify and correct e-mail addresses for electronic announcements and membership renewals. Yes, volunteers spend long hours helping with no pay, but their passion and dedication to our efforts keeps them coming back!

One very important and hard-working volunteer group through the years is the committee for Patrons Ball, a "flagship" event for the historical center. This year's dinner and dance on September 26 marks thirty-three years of this celebration. Imagine more than three decades of dedication and commitment from volunteers in the community to make this event happen here at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center!

Former U.S. Senator from Wyoming, Al Simpson, with his parents Milward and Lorna Simpson. 1980 Patrons Ball.

Naturally, I wanted to understand the history of this event and the volunteers who made Patrons Ball a reality year after year. I began by surveying people who had long been engaged in the event, but I also found historical documents in our McCracken Research Library. I discovered the ball was authorized at the November 12, 1976, Board of Trustees meeting as the "first fundraising dinner and dance." Bill and Robin Weiss were the first chairpersons of the September 24, 1977, occasion, and attendees danced to the Peter Duchen Orchestra.

Melanie Lovelace with dance pal Joe Maniscalco.

Since then, committed and passionate volunteer chairpersons have spent long hours planning, coordinating, managing, and executing the event. And then there are the volunteers who serve on the committees for the Patron Ball, too. Many of these chairpersons and volunteers have served for consecutive years.

If you are interested in volunteering at the historical center, contact Chris Searles chriss@bbhc.org or 307.578.4089. You can also find a volunteer application on our Web site at: www.bbhc.org/edu/volunteering.cfm.

All the volunteers at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center are very important, and we so appreciate the "gift" of their time—a very valued "way of giving"! n

Dana and Steve Cranfill.

**VOLUNTEER CHAIRPERSONS**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1977 | Bill & Robin Weiss |
| 1978 | Rose Marie Julien |
| 1979 | Ilene Dibble |
| 1980 | Lee Peralta-Ramos |
| 1981-82 | Marty Coe |
| 1983 | Pamela Stockton |
| 1984 | Anne Hayes |
| 1985 | Shirley Lehman & Sylvia Wasmuth |
| 1986 | Sheila Patterson |
| 1987-88 | K.T. Roes |
| 1989 | Vicki Davis |
| 1990 | Vicki Davis & Karen Sparks |
| 1991 | K.T. Roes |
| 1992 -93 | Dana Cranfill |
| 1994 | Dana Cranfill & Carol Linton |
| 1995 | Carol Linton |
| 1996-97 | Betsy Taggart |
| 1998-99 | Kathy Taggart |
| 2000 | Kathy & Jim Taggart |
| 2001-02 | Debbie Oakley Simpson |
| 2003 | Jodie Thompson |
| 2004 | Marcy Mongon |
| 2005-06 | Dana Cranfill, Melanie Lovelace, & Naoma Tate (Honorary Chair) |
| 2007–08 | Jeanne Nelson & Naoma Tate (Honorary Chair) |
| 2009 | Jeanne Nelson, Char McCue, & Naoma Tate (Honorary Chair) |

# Seeing the West in a whole

By Laurel Eatherly

I'll be the first to admit, with some embarrassment, that I have never been familiar with art of the American West until very recently.

Why am I embarrassed? It's like this: I've lived most of my life here in Cody, Wyoming, home to the Whitney Gallery of Western Art and the most comprehensive collection of western art in the world. I had visited the gallery countless times growing up, while accompanying out-of-town guests, enjoying the holiday open house, or attending class field trips. Even after all those years and all those visits, however, I never developed much knowledge or interest in the art I saw.

That all changed in May when I began my summer internship in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's public relations department. From the first hour I spent on the job, I knew it was an exciting time to be here at the historical center. The Whitney Gallery—closed for reinstallation back in October 2008—would re-open to the public in a few short weeks in celebration of its 50th anniversary, and a sense of anticipation filled the building. As June 21 neared, I found it impossible not to be just as excited and curious as everyone else. I still knew close to nothing about the art itself; but, like some crazed game show contestant, I simply had to see what was behind those doors.

Finally, a couple of weeks before the public opening, I had the chance to take a sneak-peek inside. As I wandered through, I tried hard to remember the "old Whitney" and compare it with the new: What painting used to hang in that spot? What color were those walls? Where had that sculpture been? I quickly realized I could no longer remember many details of the former space. Still, even if I couldn't recall the nuances of how the gallery had once looked, I couldn't help but notice a difference in how the gallery now felt.

What had changed? Nothing much, really—except the whole atmosphere of the place. The ceilings were higher. The lights were softer. The floors were carpeted. The walls were colorful. While the gallery definitely felt more spacious, somehow it also felt intimate, even cozy. With walls painted in shades of red, blue, green, and yellow, each distinctively themed area drew me in to spend some quality time with its subjects. I was immersed in rugged landscapes one minute, surrounded with portraits of western heroes the next. Despite standing in a room with 275 masterpieces, I never had to think too hard about what to gaze upon next, for one space seemed to lead naturally to another.

While the gallery definitely felt more spacious, somehow it also felt intimate, even cozy ... each distinctively themed area drew me in to spend some quality time with its subjects.

I've been to my share of art museums, but as much as I may have enjoyed my time in each of them, I've often had a nagging feeling that maybe I wasn't quite qualified to be there. After all, I've never taken a course in art history, and the last time I can remember painting or sculpting anything of my own was in the seventh grade. Sometimes, as I stand before a piece of artwork, I wonder if I'm failing to notice something important, or if I understand the art the way I'm supposed to. I have a hunch I'm not the only person who's ever felt this way, either. Like me, plenty of people find art downright intimidating; the Whitney Gallery is the perfect place for us.

That's because, thanks to the gallery's thematic layout,

# new way: The Whitney Gallery reopens

On opening day, visitors try their hands at assembling a model of Alexander Phimister Proctor's monumental sculpture of Teddy Roosevelt, Rough Rider.

it's easy to put the art into context. The horses are with the horses, and the cowboys are with the cowboys. Even with no previous knowledge of artistic techniques, I can see how various artists chose vastly different approaches to depicting the same aspect of the West. The juxtaposition of two paintings, Custer's Last Stand, by Edgar S. Paxson, and The Battle of Greasy Grass, by Allan Mardon, is especially memorable. When situated across from one another, it's easy to see two contrasting perspectives on the same historic event. Both paintings are rich in detail, and a touch-screen kiosk for each painting helps me study some of the individuals the artists portrayed.

The opportunities for interactive learning don't end with these two works, however. A three-dimensional puzzle in the Alexander Phimister Proctor studio helps to understand how the pieces of the monumental sculpture Rough Rider fit together, and the "create-a-postcard" and "create-your-West" stations encourage a little creativity from visitors of any age or level of expertise. The seating area in the back of the Whitney, stocked with books and simple art supplies, is the perfect place to read, relax, and draw while enjoying the stunning view of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's Buffalo Bill - The Scout.

My favorite interpretive addition has to be the three label-writing stations found. While I may not be an art expert, these stations give me the chance to reflect on a particular piece, put those reflections in writing, and leave my completed label behind to share with others. The experience of writing one's own label is a reminder that it's not important to find the right or wrong answers when examining artwork, but rather discover a personal connection to it: Do I love a piece? Do I hate it? Does it remind me of a place I've been before? Does it stir an emotion? Does it make me want to learn more about a time in history? Will it be the one piece I still remember a year from now?

Since the Whitney Gallery re-opened to the public June 21, I've enjoyed chatting with visitors as they explore the gallery and contemplate the answers to these questions and many more. From my hours spent there, I've found that almost everyone who enters the gallery is in awe. Some, like one preschooler I saw staring up with wonder at Thomas Moran's painting, The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, take the time to sit and contemplate a single piece for a while. "Wow, Grandma," I overheard him say. "That's really big! That must be a really big piece of paper. I bet that took lots of days to make. It probably came in a big truck." I'd say art can evoke a sense of wonder in many different ways.

Others simply marvel at the gallery as a whole,

The author with her own "sense of wonder" at Thomas Moran's (1837 – 1926) The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, 1893 – 1901, an eight feet high and fourteen feet long masterpiece, on display through the end of October at the historical center. Oil on canvas, 96.5 x 168.375 inches. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Gift of George D. Pratt. 1928.7.1

pleasantly surprised to find such an impressive collection. "This museum is so spectacular," said John Zumpano of Livingston, Montana, who visited the day of the public opening. "It's hard to imagine, in a town of this size, a museum that would not be out of place in New York or Los Angeles." Ann Lanoue of St. Paul, Minnesota, visiting with her husband Bill, echoed Zumpano's sentiments, saying, "We've been to galleries in Germany, France, Chicago, and New York, and this is world class."

The Lanoues, who attended the grand opening celebration, arranged their vacation itinerary to ensure they would not miss seeing the Whitney Gallery. "Initially, we planned to visit the day before it opened," Ann said. "We rearranged our visit so we would be able to be here for the opening." For others, like Christine Arab of Neptune Beach, Florida, and her family, stopping at the historical center just in time to attend the grand opening was pure happenstance. "We just felt like it was serendipity," she said.

The visitors with whom I've spoken, particularly those who had visited the Whitney Gallery before the reinstallation, all seemed to agree that the many changes have made it a truly user-friendly space. "I like having it more open," said George Bumann of Gardiner, Montana. "Some paintings have a lot more strength when you can see them across the room. The old Whitney seemed boxed in."

Peggy and Kevin Kellett of Saratoga Springs, New York, said they, too, appreciated the gallery's layout, and felt it was conducive to enjoying the work of familiar artists as well as discovering new favorites. "I think it's set up nicely because you're really supposed to be exposed to things you wouldn't gravitate toward otherwise," Peggy said. "I've always loved Remington, but I'm being introduced to all these artists I wasn't aware of."

I've spoken with many visitors since the gallery opened, but something that Susie Phillips from Cincinnati, Ohio, said was especially memorable to me. "You're very, very fortunate to spend your days in here with all this beauty," she told me. She's right. Even though most of my days are actually spent in the public relations office, a short walk from the Whitney, I do feel fortunate for all the time I've been able to spend there. I never drove a nail or hung a single painting during the nine-month reinstallation process, but simply being here at the historical center for

The popular Frederic Remington Studio was opened up and interactive elements added for visitor enjoyment.

such a momentous occasion has left me with a certain sense of pride and ownership in the Whitney Gallery.

It's difficult to believe I once hardly cared about the marvelous collection of art on display right here in my own hometown. Now, I find myself bragging about the gallery to my friends and insisting they come see it for themselves. As my summer comes to a close and I reflect on my internship at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, I realize there's one thing I gained that I never expected: an appreciation for western art that surely will keep me coming back to the Whitney Gallery long after my days as an intern are over. n

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Laurel Eatherly, a junior majoring in English and communications at Lake Forest College in Illinois, was one of a dozen interns this past summer at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. A graduate of Cody High School, her long-term plans are still somewhat undecided. In the immediate future, however, she'll set sail with the University of Virginia's 100th Anniversary Semester at Sea. Students leave port on August 28 from Nova Scotia for an around-the world voyage that includes eleven countries in 109 days. She'll dock in San Diego on December 14.

# LETTERS FROM THE WEST:

## a New-Yorker in Wyoming, 1874 – 1878, part 1


Wyoming, 1882. McCracken Research Library Archives. Note Miner's Delight, Lander City, and Camp Brown. (Marked in red)

Historic cabins at Miner's Delight, Fremont County, Wyoming, 1990.

By Karling Clymer Abernathy

"What if you were given information that implied deadly consequences," asks Karling Abernathy, Cataloging Librarian at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's McCracken Research Library, "but perhaps did not recognize the import of the knowledge or to whom the message should be reported?"

This is just one of the questions that occurred to Abernathy as she began to carefully transcribe the letters of Charles Rapp, a New Yorker come to the South Pass area in central Wyoming to mine gold in the mid-1870s. His letters, like so many from that era, give readers a sense of the culture, the disposition, and the thinking of those who lived at the time.

"In a series of letters (dated April 1874 to March 1878) to two young women in his home state, Rapp describes his life as a miner and some relations with American Indians," Abernathy explains. "He refers to them as Snake Indians, or what we now know to be the ShoshoneTribe."

From her research and transcriptions of the letters, complete with Rapp's own grammar and spelling, Abernathy shares his story along with her own observations, starting with Rapp's search for gold:

APRIL 19, 1874, LANDER CITY, WYO. TER.,

## to Libbia [Shepard?]

Only one of the letters I studied is addressed to Libbia. I speculate as to her last name, as it is not given. However, advice given to his other, main correspondent, Eva Shepard, indicates that Libbia and Eva might be related, perhaps sisters or cousins:

> I am well as usual and in good spirets over the way this country is comeing out. we have quite A town here now, and men coming in by the hundreds. thay have struck new Gold fields about eighty miles from here but thay are very Limited, not covering very much ground, so consequently very few men were luckey enough to get any ground.
>
> But those that did get ground are doing very well some of them makeing as high as Twenty Dollars per day, and with A prospect of makeing more. I am one of the unlucky ones, getting thare to late, but still I have hopes that thare will be new fields found before long.

APRIL 14, 1875, CAMP BROWN,

## to Eva Shepard

Camp Brown was renamed Fort Washakie, Wyoming Territory, in 1878. In this letter, Rapp recounts a little more about his mining life and his encounters with some Native Americans.

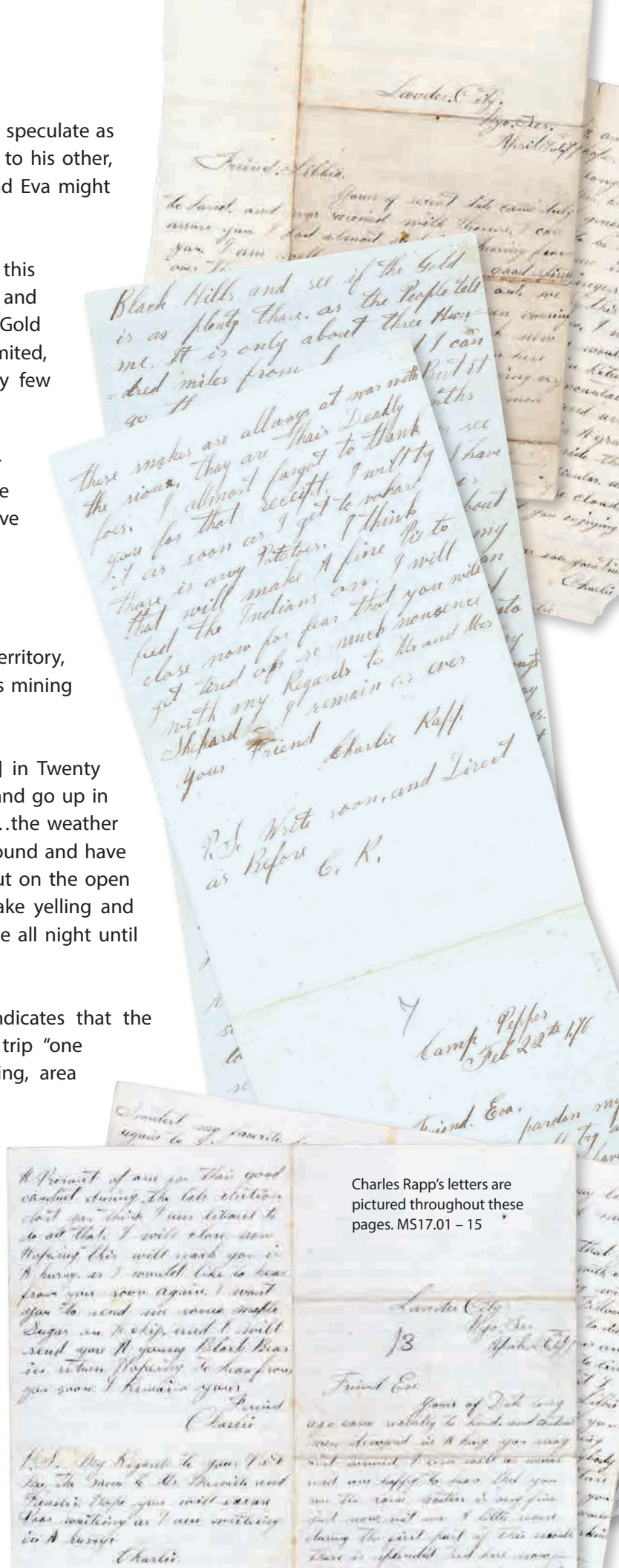
> … I Shall look for an answer [a reply to this letter] in Twenty days I think I shall leve [leave] here in about that time and go up in the Gold mines about A Hundred miles south of here …the weather is very fine here and I am well now so that I can run around and have lots of fun with the Indians thay are dancing tonight out on the open ground and such A noise you never heard as thay make yelling and Screaming It is now about Twelfe o'clock but thay Dance all night until tomarrow noon

Rapp does not identify the tribe, but his location indicates that the dancing Native Americans are probably Shoshone. His trip "one hundred miles south" might be the Green River, Wyoming, area since he ends up there later.

MAY 15, 1875, LANDER CITY,

## to Eva

> there is such Delightful weather here evry thing green. the frowers [flowers] in bloom, but the Indians are bad at this time of the year thay run in here the other day and run of [off] all our Horses and we gave Chase and overtook them but we could not get our Horses Back we got two of our men wounded and three Horses killed but I got out of it all right and so intend to move my camp up to the mines and Hunt for gold this summer
>
> So when you Direct your next, Please Direct



Charles Rapp's letters are pictured throughout these pages. MS17.01 – 15

the same as before only change the town to Miners Delight That will be my camping ground for Awhile at least

Mae Urbanek, in Wyoming Place Names, describes Miners Delight in Fremont County, Wyoming, as "a nest of gold camps near South Pass City; so named [in 1868] because miners expected the 'diggin' to be rich in gold."

FEBRUARY 22, 1876, CAMP PEPPER,
## to Eva

By early 1876, Charlie, as he calls himself, has moved to a "Camp Pepper," according to this letter sent to Eva. However, I can find no reference to Camp Pepper, military or otherwise:

Times have been very dull here this winter, so I went out on A little trip to see the country. have been gone about two monthes and have got back this far and here I shall camp untill the snow leaves the Mountains so that I can cross them, and go to Miners Delight. from thare I think I shall go to the Black Hills and see if the Gold is as plenty thare as the People tell me. It is only about three Hundred miles from here, and I can go thare in two weeks. But it will be two or three months before I can start. I never see as fine weather before as I have seen this winter. the grass is coming up nicely it is about two inches in lenth, and my little Pony is as fat as he can be. thare is A large band of the Snake Indians came into the Valley this morning. they gave us A big scare we thought thay were Sioux untill thay got within A half mile of us . . .

I am writeing this on my saddle spred out on the ground, some of the Indians Standing around looking on. thare is one of the chiefs called Norcalk talks good English he ask me who I was writeing to. I told him. he then told me that the whole Sioux nation was going on the war path this coming Spring and said that the white mans Big Chief (meaning [U.S. President] Grant) had better send out more soldiars these snakes are allways at war with the sioux. thay are thair Deadly foes.

Norcalk is, most probably, Norkuk, described by Virginia Trenholm in The Shoshonis: Sentinels of the Rockies as "the half-blood Norkuk in the Green River area." Norkuk's range is in keeping with Rapp's location and the fact that Rapp describes him as "talking good English" might be explained by a white parent with whom he would have conversed. Additionally, Grace Raymond Hebard lists twenty-seven alternate spellings for Chief Washakie and eight different spellings for Norkuk in Washakie: Chief of the Shoshones. Most importantly, though, is the fact that Norkuk warned Rapp about a Sioux uprising coming in the spring of 1876.

MAY 1, 1876, SOME WHERE,
## to Eva

Rapp sends yet another letter to Eva in the spring of 1876, one in which he draws attention to discord with the natives, some natural elements, and the continuing flux of population in his area. That he places himself "Somewhere" indicates that he must have been in a camp with others but not any established settlement:

I have no news this time except that the weather is very fine, and the Indians are getting troubelsom down below us. thay have not Bothered us as yet, and I dont think we will give them the chance if we can help it. . .

I went out to day and caught A nice mess of Trout. I had one that weighed three pound or more. he was A fine fellow. I have three young Badgers that I found in A hole in the ground the other day. one of them is laying at my feet knawing [gnawing] my Boot and some of the Boys have tied the other two together to make them fight but I dont think thay will. thare, one of them has bit Big Ben the yank from Maine. thare is six of us here now. one goes away to morrow to the Black Hills, and two more goes to Montana in about two weeks, and I shall stay with the other two untill

> "oneofthem[badger]islayingatmyfeet knawing [gnawing] my Boot."

Badger, 1964. Bryan Harry. National Park Service photo.

the snow has left the mountains so that I can cross and take my Ponys with me. I have not made up my mind yet wether [whether] to go to the B. Hills or not. if I go I will let you know before starting.

. . . and it was only eight weeks until the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

And what of that "information that implied deadly consequences," referred to in the beginning? Apparently, Rapp had such information, but, as Abernathy puts it, "related it in letters to friends back in New York, but apparently not to any military entity—at least he gives no indication that he did." Read more in the winter issue of Points West. ■

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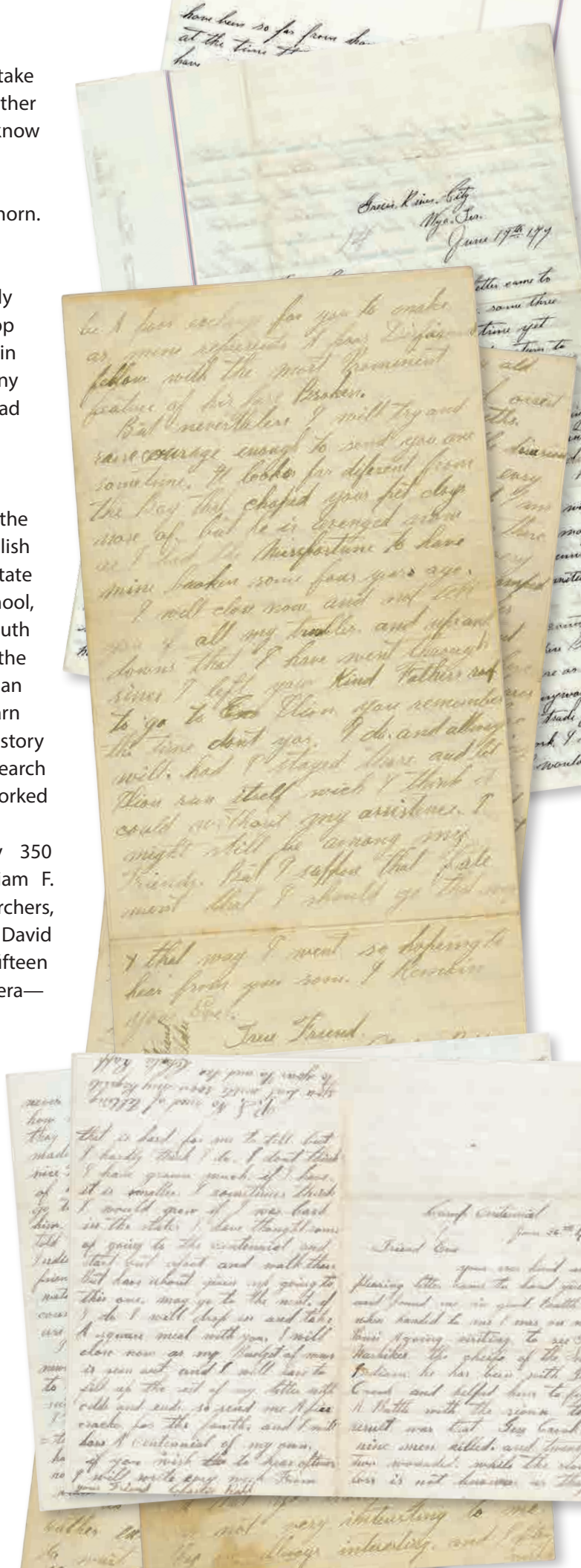
Karling Abernathy is a Wyoming native who attended the University of Wyoming for her bachelor's degree in English education; her master's degree in library science is from the State University of New York at Albany. She has worked in public, school, and special libraries all over Wyoming, and in Kansas and South Dakota, and taught school in New Mexico. A member of the Atlantic City [Wyoming] Historical Society, she has worked on an oral-history project of the South Pass area and continues to learn its importance to the development of the West. She "absorbs history by osmosis" as she catalogs books at the McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, where she has worked for the past five years.

The McCracken Research Library houses approximately 350 manuscript collections, chief among them—MS 6, the William F. Cody Collection—and about 30,000 books, available to researchers, staff, and patrons of the historical center. We are grateful to Mr. David B. Laird Jr. for his gift of the Charles Rapp Collection. These fifteen historical letters—like so many other "letters to home" of that era—give new insight into living in the West.

For the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, little is known about Charles Rapp except the stories in his letters. One respondent told us that there are a number of Charles Rapps who lived in New York state, one in particular who resided in Albany, New York, in 1880 with wife Mary and two children born there in 1869 and 1875.

The letters here transcribed were sent 1874 – 1877, and then Rapp left Wyoming in mid-1878. Our e-mail contact wrote, "Could your Charles make his wife pregnant, go West for several years, never write to his wife, and be home in time for the 1880 census? I find a very slight possibility, but a high unprobability that the Wyoming adventurer and the Albany Charles are one in the same."

If you think this Charles Rapp might be a part of your family tree, let us know by contacting the editor.



## BUFFALO BILL MUSEUM: Billy Howell's boots

These black leather, Justin cowboy boots—complete with Howell's brand, the "Crossed Sabres"—belonged to J.W. "Billy" Howell, an early Cody pioneer and dude rancher.

What makes these boots so special is not only their design, but that they were owned by Howell. He came to Cody in 1900, worked on the Cody Canal irrigation project for seven years, and then became a guide for Holm Transportation Company for dudes and tourists headed to Yellowstone National Park. In 1914, he bought Holm Lodge from its founder and owner, Tex Holm.

Two years later, Miss Mary Shawver became Howell's business partner. Together, they operated the lodge, located just outside Yellowstone, for close to 35 years. In 1947, the new owners changed the name of the lodge to Crossed Sabres Ranch in honor of Howell's brand, but continued to provide the same touring opportunities for their visitors. Billy Howell died in 1952 and Mary Shawver died in 1958; however, their legacy lives on since Crossed Sabres Ranch still operates today. n

Billy Howell's boots, ca. 1935. 14 inches high, 10.875 inches long, and 4 inches at their widest part. Gift of Betty Waldron. 1.69.971

## DRAPER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY: Wolf skull

Collections serve different purposes in different types of museums. Biological and paleontological specimens in natural history museums provide us with the record of life on earth. This record reveals changes in the presence, distribution, and relative abundance of plants and animals through time. It also allows us to explore how individuals of a species vary from one another given their geographic location.

Gray wolf skull. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. DRA305.71

This "geographic variation" has generated much national interest in recent years, especially with the gray wolves (Canis lupus), captured in Canada and released in Yellowstone National Park in the mid-1990s. Were they representative of the population of gray wolves that historically inhabited the Greater Yellowstone region? One way to find out is to measure and compare physical traits of gray wolves currently living in the Yellowstone region to those that were collected from this area prior to the Canadian introductions.

Wolf specimens provide the critical information needed to explore this question. The Draper Museum of Natural History is one repository for modern gray wolf specimens from the Yellowstone region. The pictured specimen is one of several received after the wolves were killed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for preying on livestock. Our volunteers prepared it in our open laboratory so that visitors could get a behind-the-scenes glimpse. In fact, the laboratory has become one of the most popular "exhibits" in the Draper!

As the availability of research specimens of Yellowstone area wolves increases, we will be better able to answer questions—such as the one raised here—and explore new ones about gray wolf biology and ecology. n

## PLAINS INDIAN MUSEUM: Ghost dance shirt

In March 2007, the first Plains Indian Museum "treasure" in Points West was a Ghost Dance dress. As the story went, Plains Indian people faced poverty, disease, and death on reservations by the

Ghost Dance shirt, Arapaho, ca. 1890. Chandler-Pohrt Collection. Gift of Searle Family Trust and the Paul Stock Foundation. NA.204.5

late nineteenth century. Led by the Paiute visionary Wovoka, the Ghost Dance religion brought hope to many tribes that they could bring about the renewal of the world by working hard, living peacefully, and doing the Ghost Dance.

The Arapaho were instrumental in spreading the doctrines of the dance to other tribes. Hide dresses, shirts, and leggings with painted symbols of the sky, such as the stars and moon, were made for the dance. Designs for the clothing often came to individuals in visions that occurred during the ceremonies. The turtle, seen on this shirt, was symbolic to the Arapaho of the spirit world. Eagles, crows, and magpies were considered messengers to the heavens. n

## WHITNEY GALLERY OF WESTERN ART: Berliner

In the "new" Whitney Gallery of Western Art, visitors can see Deborah Butterfield's bronze horse sculpture Berliner. This Montana artist creates sculptures of horses using non-traditional materials such as weathered wood cast in bronze. Even so, her horses are filled with lifelike personalities, individuals free from the constraints of riders.

Berliner looks like wood, but it is actually bronze. Butterfield uses a unique casting process to create one-of-a-kind sculptures. First, a foundry makes molds of individual wooden sticks and casts them into bronze. She then bends, cuts, and welds the bronze sticks into an armature or skeleton for a horse sculpture. When the armature is finished, Butterfield adds more wood sticks to fill out the horse form.

Then, the foundry casts additional wood sticks, and Butterfield assembles the final bronze sculpture. After that, she carefully applies a patina, heats the bronze surface, and adds several coats of pigment and chemicals. This process creates a specific color that makes the finished bronze look like real wood.

See Berliner, on display in the Whitney Gallery with other historic and contemporary works depicting horses and animals of the West. n

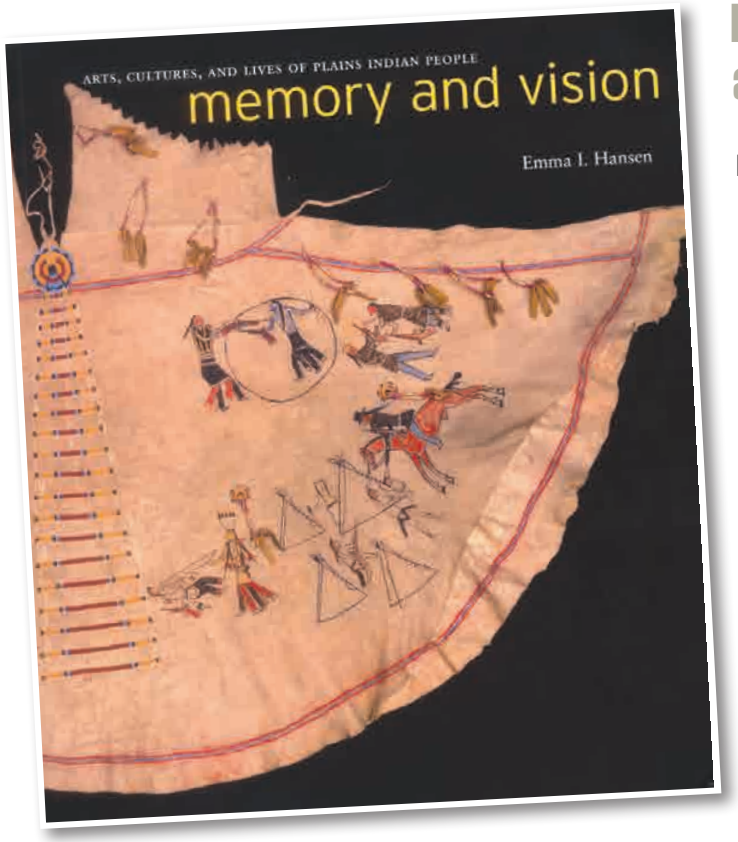
Deborah Butterfield (b. 1949). Berliner, 1989. Bronze. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. W.D. Weiss. 17.98

## CODY FIREARMS MUSEUM: American air pistol

Air guns fire projectiles by means of compressed air or other gas, unlike a firearm which burns a propellant. In the days of muzzle-loaders, air guns could be fired in any weather and much faster. Moreover, they were quieter, had no muzzle flash, and were completely smokeless, thus keeping the shooter's position secret—all big advantages.

Air guns appear throughout many periods of history. Widely marketed after the Civil War, low-cost air pistols, such as the one pictured by E.H. Hawley, were intended for indoor use. Target shooting with air pistols was a popular and inexpensive form of entertainment. n


American air pistol, ca. 1869 – 1872.
.25 caliber. 10.25 inches long. Gift of Olin Corporation, Winchester Arms Collection. 1988.8.1008




# Memory and Vision: Arts, Cultures, and Lives of Plains Indian Peoples

By Emma I. Hansen, with contributions by Beatrice Medicine, Gerard Baker, Joseph Medicine Crow, Arthur Amiotte, and Bently Spang

"This welcome and long-awaited volume will be an important addition to every library concerned with art and culture on the Great Plains,"
—observes South Dakota magazine.

"Readers looking for a general introduction to Plains Indian culture will find this book attractive and useful ... Recommended."
—Australia's consumer magazine, CHOICE

"Stunning photographs of people, artwork and everyday objects such as drums, dresses and dolls make reading Memory and Vision a rewarding experience."
—Alaska Airlines Magazine

... and so goes the praise for Emma Hansen and her co-contributors for this popular book. Ever since its publication last year, readers have weighed in on this definitive work. Here are a two more:

"Each of the chapters contains a wealth of quotations that brings a living voice to the text. Color-enhanced historic photographs further add to the reader's ability to connect the remarkable pieces featured in the book with the women and men who made and used them. The true beneficiaries of the work that Hansen and the others invested in this book are Indian peoples today and their children to come. The elders, after all, have much to teach us about beauty, honor, and strength."
—New Mexico Historical Review

"Memory and Vision is the story of the Native American Indians of the Great Plains including such tribes as the Cheyenne, Lakota, Shoshone, Blackfeet, Comanche, Hidatsa, Crow, and other Plains tribes. It describes the fundamental traditions of these cultures in brilliantly-colored photographs and [has] beautifully detailed descriptions of spiritual, cultural and economic life."
—Dr. Terri Maggio, Public Library Association, 2008

*Memory and Vision* is available in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's Museum Store. 320 pages, 300 illustrations. Buffalo Bill Historical Center in collaboration with University of Washington Press; Seattle, Washington, February 2008. $45 paperback ISBN 978-0-29598-580-0; $75 hardcover ISBN 978-0-29598-579-4

Emma I. Hansen serves as a Senior Curator of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, and Curator of the Plains Indian Museum. She has master's degrees in sociology and anthropology from the University of Oklahoma and is an enrolled member of the Pawnee Nation. Hansen was co-curator of the center's Powerful Images: Portrayals of Native America, which traveled to eight museums in the United States and Canada in 1998 – 2000, and coordinated the reinterpretation of the Plains Indian Museum in 2000. She is a prolific writer, and her expertise in the field of Plains Indian research is highly respected. n

Red-headed duck and Gabby Barrus (below). Gabby Barrus Collection. Gift of the Barrus Family, Marj, Mick, Jim and Page Barrus. SL.301.11.74 and SL.301.16.93

For wildlife aficionados in northwest Wyoming, the name Gabby Barrus is synonymous with outdoor photos. In March 2005, his family generously donated his photographic collection to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. It consists of more than 3,000 color slides and features images of most of the wildlife species of northwest Wyoming, as well as hunting and outfitting parties near the region. Barrus was a gifted amateur who devoted a great deal of free time and his retired years to capturing images of our state's spectacular trophy animals.

In 2007, the McCracken Research Library received a federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). With this funding, five archival photography collections, including the Gabby Barrus collection, are being digitized. Eventually, the digital images will be available for worldwide use through the center's Web site.

IMLS is an independent grant-making agency of the federal government, whose mission is to lead the effort to create and sustain a "nation of learners." This is the only Museums for America grant awarded in the state of Wyoming in 2007. n

See thousands of historic photos on the Buffalo Bill Historical Center Web site at www.bbhc.org/hmrl/collection.cfm.

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