

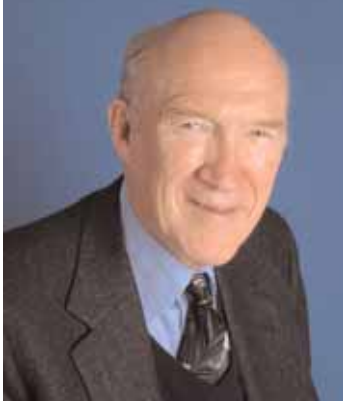
POINTS WEST

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER ■ CODY, WYOMING ■ SUMMER 2006



2005 ANNUAL REPORT

Chairman's Report



Alan K. Simpson

The Honorable Alan K. Simpson, Chairman, Board of Trustees

Every now and then, I think it's beneficial to take a good look at our mission statement. I'm not talking about the unattainable ones that leave you scratching your head. No, I speak of a sensible mission statement: one that gives direction, tells us where we are, where we need to go, and what to do when we get there. Whether we're a successful corporation, a prestigious university, an individual with a cause, or our beloved Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC), it surely doesn't hurt a bit to look at our mission . . . to be sure we're on the right track. Here is ours:

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center is a museum that educates the public by advancing knowledge about the American West through acquiring, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting collections.

Keeping that mission in mind, we see that within each segment of the report that follows—in the text, the lists, and the numbers—there's always a story. The list of acquisitions and other gifts tells us the story of generous donors and describes one-of-a-kind objects—all the essence of the “acquiring” part of our mission. As we read of Buffalo Bill's Boyhood Home, we learn about its preservation and the deep pride the BBHC staff has as they care for these marvelous collections, preserving them for our audiences for years to come.

Our mission of exhibiting and interpreting was nicely accomplished through a very well done story in 2005: Yellowstone National Park. First, we were privileged to host the exhibition *Drawn to Yellowstone: Artists in America's First National Park*, a story told of this nearby national treasure through the paintbrush strokes of the Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington and so many others.

On the border of Yellowstone is a Wyoming hunter's paradise: The Thorofare. The story of this “most remote region of the lower 48 United States” was interpreted through a cooperative venture with our respected Wyoming Game and Fish Department—and a finer story in photographs one does not often see. It brought back many personal memories for me as Dad, Mom, Brother Pete and I spent two weeks in there when I was 16 years of age.

Finally, through our collaboration with some very fine new partners, Xanterra Parks and Resorts, we placed several kiosks in various Yellowstone Park visitor centers, presenting the inspiring story of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center to the Park's nearly three million visitors.

From our vantage point now, it would appear that in 2005 we did know where we were going and what to do when we did get there. In the embracing of our mission, we must never forget the impact and the power of our namesake, “The Colonel,” the old trooper himself: William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody. He loved the West, and he showed it across the World to everyone . . . from kids to kings. How grateful we are that the staff, the volunteers, the Board of Trustees, and the Advisory Board members of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center so loyally continue to share the West with thousands of our appreciative guests each year.

So now, looking back at 2005, I can confidently say, “Mission accomplished.” ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan K. Simpson'.



Contents

Volunteer Kathie Noblette leads children through 2005's *Drawn to Yellowstone: Artists in America's First National Park*, stopping to view Thomas Moran's *Golden Gate, Yellowstone National Park, 1893*, oil on canvas. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. 4.75

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Jordan Abeyta, Shoshone-Arapaho, from Fort Washakie, Wyoming in the Men's Fancy Dance competition. 2005 Plains Indian Museum Powwow, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming.

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

Message from the Director



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

As you thumb through the stories that follow, you'll quickly notice two things common to last year's activities: people and smiles. From staff to visitors, trustees and donors to volunteers and interns, our annual report is one about people.

As with the Powwow dancer on this year's cover, 2005 was engaging, energizing, and exciting. Last year was a terrific one for the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC), and these few pages can hardly do justice to the breadth and scope of accomplishment.

Certainly, by definition, the BBHC has outstanding collections. After all, that's what makes us a museum. But those objects would indeed languish in our vaults were it not for the remarkable expertise of the nearly 100 staff members (200 in the summer months). I think I can safely say, the expertise found with these fine people rivals that of any museum in any urban setting.

As you read their reports, you will discover experts in American history, western art, natural history, education, Native American history and culture, library and archives, ornithology, collections care, museum registration, exhibitions, business, management, accounting, construction,



Pictured, left to right, in front of the former Allen Street Medical Building, the headquarters for the Cody Institute of Western American Studies, are Jack Caldwell, John Sullivan, Bob Pickering, Sam Webb, Barron Collier II, and Kurt Graham.

horticulture, building maintenance, photography, graphic arts, public relations, and information technology, to name a few. Indeed, it's an impressive list! These individuals are bright, creative, compassionate, and highly motivated—and it is my distinct pleasure to work with each one.

New to our management team in 2005, were Steve Greaves, Development, Kurt Graham, McCracken Research Library and Cody Institute for Western American Studies (CIWAS), and Lee Haines, Public Relations. Within Steve's report that follows, you will note new directions in fundraising and a commitment to add new value to BBHC memberships. Kurt Graham comes on board as the first combination curator and assistant director and has a wealth of ideas to enhance our educational programming.

Lee Haines joined us as our new Director of Public Relations, leaving a similar position at the Brookfield Zoo in Illinois. As a matter of fact, 2005 found the public relations department with an entirely new staff. Marguerite House moved from database duties in the development office to editor of *Points West*, our membership publication, and writes all BBHC press releases. Ashley McCarten, most recently from a stint with an advertising agency in Boulder, Colorado, is the P.R. assistant.

With Lee on board, our marketing plan headed in new directions in 2005. Due to rising fuel prices, one of our advertising approaches is to target efforts within our region including strategically placed billboards around Yellowstone Park's perimeter. We



Top: Public Relations Director Lee Haines.

Below: Pictured at the opening reception for the photography exhibition *A Place Called Thorofare*, are, left to right, Mark Bruscano, Wyoming Game and Fish (G&F) bear biologist, Tim Fagan, Wyoming G&F warden, Sean Campbell, BBHC photographer, and Nathan Bender, exhibition curator.

engaged a new

marketing agency—Roberts Emmitt Agency of Salt Lake City, Utah—to create ads and handle all advertising placement beginning with our 2006 marketing campaign. Since visitor surveys would indicate our missing some of the travelers in our area, the BBHC was made more visible with new signage along the street in front of us and in our parking lots.

Of course, the only way to really know what appeals to visitors is to ask them. Dr. Ross Loomis of Colorado State University headed a major visitor survey program at the BBHC last summer. Our survey team—including some marvelous interns—was at work all hours of the day and every day of the week, and gleaned a variety of information. Our Visitation Task Force and Public Relations Department continue to analyze the data, ultimately to determine how best to meet the needs of our visitors.

We discovered our guests were usually older folks, traveling by car, typically not traveling with children, and with high levels of education. It was interesting to note the increased usage of the Internet in vacation planning. We have certainly seen that percentage increase over the years. While our survey helps us determine strategies to meet the needs of our onsite visitors, it also suggests the importance of our outreach efforts through the World Wide Web.

As reported by Wally Reber, our Web site is an integral part of our business enterprise activities. Individuals can now purchase Museum Selection books, prints, music

CDs, DVDs, jewelry, clothing, gifts, and so many other unique gifts.

Indeed, as I reported last year, our BBHC Web site has become more and more important not only as a vacation planning service, but as a vehicle to carry our mission to those outside our walls. In 2005, we saw the addition of the Plains Indian Museum online collection by which Internet users can see and read about the remarkable objects in this collection. As you may have guessed, we hope to add other online collections in the coming years. Our popular photography exhibition, *A Place Called Thorofare*, is also available online, complete with panoramic experiences and comparisons between historic images and the same vistas 50 years later. Finally, the online album "Explore Yellowstone in Winter" documents the sights and sounds of Yellowstone in its "quiet" season and includes images taken by BBHC web content developer, Anne Marie Shriver.

Our Web site will certainly play an important role in the continued development of our Cody Institute of Western American Studies. Online collections will become tools for researchers, scholars, teachers, and students. The various stories and articles, in addition to syllabi, historic photographs, and resource materials at www.bbhc.org, are certain to assist educators and provide innumerable opportunities for discussion of issues related to the American West.

With donations from four generous benefactors, we were able in 2005 to purchase the Allen Street medical building, immediately south of the BBHC, to house CIWAS. This is an exciting development toward making CIWAS "a rich new layer of interaction and outreach." As noted by Bob Pickering in his report, the coming years will find more and more researchers and scholars taking advantage of our one-of-a-kind collections, the variety of our programming, and the expertise of our staff.



Last year's very successful raffle of a 1940 Ford convertible was made possible through the generosity of Sonja and Jerry Wenger, right, pictured here enjoying the Patrons Ball with Executive Director, Bob Shimp and wife Lyn, left.



The BBHC grounds crew, headed by Bryan Frank and pictured here installing tipis for the summer season, is part of the nearly 200 employees who contribute to the mission of the BBHC.



Interns provide a valuable service with their work at BBHC. From left to right, Miles Mathews, Jordan Amonette, Tawni Schuler, Alison Dinstel, Jacob Amend, Yasuyo Hata, and Jordan Rader.



And that brings us back full circle to where we started: people. Each program, exhibition, initiative, and activity would simply not be possible without them. Our staff, volunteers, and interns serve a constituency both within and without our walls—and if 2005 is any indication, that constituency will continue to grow. We hope that you will take advantage of our 4th Fridays, Holiday Open House, Spring Open House, Lunchtime Expeditions, and the myriad of other exciting programs here at the BBHC for you and your family. If you aren't a resident of this area, you can easily stay in touch through *Points West* and our Web site.

Oh, and the smiles? They come with the territory. ■



Top: Kids could use their artistic talents at this special stop made just for them in the *Drawn to Yellowstone* exhibition.

Below: Artist Michael Poulsen teaches his popular "Learning from the Western Masters" series, pictured here with Debra Elwood, left, and Robin Berry, right.



Top: Visitors enjoy the BBHC's holiday and spring open houses as well as the winter months' 4th Fridays, such as this one when Curatorial Assistant Rebecca West shared the stories from the Plains Indian Museum.

Below: Volunteer Cynthia Conner demonstrates the finer points of quilting with kids at Buffalo Bill's Birthday Museum Adventure.



Steven Greaves, Vice President/Deputy Director for Development

It wasn't hard for Steven Greaves to name his biggest surprise in 2005. "Being in Cody—and what a terrific surprise it was," he said. "I couldn't believe I found myself in a place I love, doing a job I love." An avid

enthusiast of all things western, Greaves enjoys western history and art, outdoors, wildlife, antique firearms, and Native American culture. "Quite literally, every museum here at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) touches on something that interests me," he said.

Greaves, most recently of Oakland, Maine, was named BBHC Vice President/Deputy Director for Development after a search that garnered 45 well-qualified candidates for the position. His first day on the job was November 5, 2005.

"My strategy in 2006 is to begin by acquainting myself with the board of trustees and advisory boards of the BBHC," Greaves explained. "I suppose you might say I plan to start with those close to us here at BBHC and then work out from there."

Greaves takes the reins as BBHC chief fundraiser, another chapter in his long career of fundraising. Before coming to Cody, he served as Senior Director of Planned Giving at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. Before that, Greaves was Director of Development at Allentown Osteopathic Medical Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania after a stint as Director of Planned Giving at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He is a graduate of Colgate University in Hamilton, New York.

When asked what word he'd use to describe the successes of the development office in 2005, Greaves answered, "Definitely 'teamwork.'"

As 2005 ended, the development staff had worked together—pulling out all the stops, you might say—to raise an additional \$100,000 in contributions over last year's total."

The success of fundraisers such as the Rest of the Best auction, the 1940 Ford car raffle, and the annual Patrons Ball were a considerable boon to BBHC's general operating budget. "That's what keeps us running," explained Greaves. "It allows us to acquire, preserve, and take care of our collections; to bring in busloads of school children each year; and to provide a quality experience for our visitors. Yes, the BBHC does much more than merely 'house great stuff.'"

With a "to do" list in his head, Greaves shares what's on his plate in 2006. "We hope to increase our donor base in our annual fund as well as review our membership categories and strategies," he explained. "We may decide to create new membership categories given some of the 'natural affinity groups' that are related to the BBHC." The membership department began an initiative in 2005 to add value to memberships beyond free admission to BBHC. Exclusive members-only events, VIP seating, discounts, and a more consumer-oriented look to the membership magazine *Points West*, top the list.

Greaves is especially interested in the planned giving component of BBHC fundraising. "We're talking charitable estate planning, building endowments—contributions whose yearly interest funds a particular position or program—and the like. We need to assist donors in reconciling their personal goals with their philanthropic

goals," he said. "Thanks to some very generous folks, the BBHC is currently a beneficiary in a number of estate plans that allow the donor to see the fruits of his or her generosity right here and now."

To that end, 2005 found Greaves beginning the process of building relationships. "Major gift work has to be done face-to-face. If a prospective donor can look us

When folks realize that our collections are here because of donor generosity, we know it will inspire them to give.

in the eyes, I think he or she will know they can trust us,” he remarked. “Besides, it’s more practical in a lot of cases. In conversation, I can answer far more questions and explore more avenues than I could possibly explain by phone or email.”

The BBHC development office also pursues grant funding which typically provides for projects or events. The search for appropriate donors requires identifying areas of philanthropy to target, which is not always easy. According to Greaves, however, some “grand ol’” foundations are becoming more proactive than in the past. “They will sometimes create a project and then find someone to do it,” Greaves added. “And many grant funding entities are family foundations that serve as the distributors of their family’s philanthropy. Family members also serve as board of directors, and once



Chase and Caroline Epstein enjoy a BBHC art class, one of many activities made possible with donated funds.

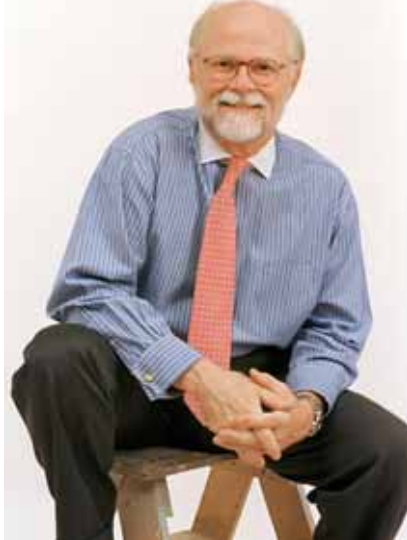
again it’s clear: It’s time to build a relationship. We use the same tactic when looking for new large corporate members or donors.”

So did the natural disasters of 2005, such as Hurricane Katrina, affect philanthropic giving? “Well, the giving was still there; it simply shifted toward hurricane relief. This is fairly predictable,” Greaves explained.

Greaves has no doubt the coming years will see an increase in the number of memberships and increased giving at the BBHC. As he put it, “When folks realize that our collections are here because of donor generosity, we know it will inspire them to give. Plus, the development office staff has the potential to be one of the top development offices within the museum world. Consequently, our 2006 can’t possibly be anything but a resounding success.” ■



The Patrons Ball, the “Northern Rockies premiere social event,” is the Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s largest fund-raising event of the year and will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2006. Courtesy of Russell Pickering.



Wally Reber, Associate Director/Chief Operating Officer

Eugene Wallace “Wally” Reber, Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s (BBHC) Associate Director and Chief Operating Officer, needed only one word to describe the successes of the BBHC in 2005: luck. “For once we had a summer without any fires or road

closures,” Reber said. “Now that’s pure luck.”

Granted, this was good news for the BBHC. Mudslides, forest and range fires, road closures, and generally all-around bad weather can play havoc with any traveler’s plan to come to Cody, Wyoming and pay a visit to the BBHC. But the more he talked, the more it appeared Reber had another word in mind that he’d ascribe to 2005: visitor.

Yes, even though the BBHC “lucked out” in 2005 as far as unforeseen circumstances were concerned, BBHC managers determined the time had come to create a visitation philosophy and strategy that would sustain BBHC admissions in spite of sliding mud, burning brush, and closed highways.

“During 2004, many of us came to understand that the difference between making budget and missing budget represented less than 100 visitors per day,” Reber remarked. As a result, August of that year saw the formation of a Visitation Task Force (VTF), headed by Reber.

“As we looked toward 2005 and beyond, our charge then was to develop programs that would attract more people to our front door, Reber explained. “It extend-

ed also to the examination of opportunities for revenue enhancement and product development. In short, we fashioned the VTF to examine the product (our institution) and the ways in which it can be promoted and sold to the broadest possible audience.”

Its first order of business for 2005 was a reversal of a planned admissions increase. “We looked at results of our visitor survey,” Reber said, “along with the admission prices of comparable institutions—even some not so comparable, but who might compete with us for the visitor dollar. Consequently, we decided to forego the planned rate increase.”

Not only was the proposed admissions rate increase rescinded, the BBHC adopted a new family rate on the advice of the VTF. “For only \$40, the entire family can experience the BBHC. As a result, I think we’re seeing more and more families paying us a visit,” Reber observed.

As it happens, visitors have been on the mind of



The visitor experience is the main concern of the BBHC Visitation Task Force.

Reber for a number of years. Before coming to Cody, Wyoming in 1981, he served as head of the North Dakota Travel Division where his department won the national travel marketing award for tourism advertising in 1977. Reber joined the BBHC in 1981 as its first public relations and development director. Later, he became the center’s business manager and in 1986 was named Associate Director, a position that now includes the title of Chief Operating Officer.

“With the VTF, we had to ask ourselves ‘what can we do better for the visitor?’” Reber said. “How do we build those relationships that will bring more and more visitors our way?” One relationship the BBHC is hoping to boost is the one

***With the Visitor Task Force,
we had to ask ourselves,
‘what can we do better
for the visitor?’***

it has with group sales. “Bus tours appear to be popular again; every year we have more and more bus tours pulling up to our doors. We want to strengthen that segment by analyzing what attracts them to the BBHC and how best to accommodate them once they’re here.”

With the visitor in mind, Reber has begun planning to renovate the orientation gallery—that area where the visitor first meets the BBHC. “From the signage to the arrangement of furniture to staffing, we want to be sure this space does what it’s intended to: orient the visitor to the BBHC,” Reber said. “It’s been on my proverbial ‘to do’ list for awhile, but in 2005 it came to me: connections. The orientation gallery must make connections for the visitor: connections from gallery to gallery and between the visitors and what they see displayed before them.”

It’s not that much of a stretch for Reber to redesign the orientation gallery since through the years, he’s designed many of the BBHC’s special exhibitions. Along with his responsibilities for BBHC operations, including finance, personnel, facilities and business enterprise, Reber found himself on the creation side of last year’s summer special exhibition *Drawn to Yellowstone: Artists in America’s First National Park*. Again putting the needs of the visitor first, Reber suggests that special exhibitions must have “vitality, energy, and represent new thinking.”

When Reber dons his “business enterprise” hat, he turns his attention to the BBHC’s museum store, eatery, coffee bar, and catering endeavors. “In 2005, we saw more and more people paying more and more

attention to the business enterprise of our operation,” Reber said. “Just a few years ago, the revenue generated by this segment of our income statement represented roughly a third of the BBHC budget; these days, it’s more like 50 percent.” Business enterprise income was further strengthened by online purchases, and as he looked toward the future, Reber suggested the possibility of opening a satellite museum store in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Finally, as he reflected on 2005, Reber noted, “I think with size comes responsibilities. We have a responsibility to the community of Cody, to those who shop with us, to those who study with us, and to our visitors. All of us here at BBHC take that responsibility very seriously. With our fantastic collections and facility, I can’t help but think 2006 will find us forging an even greater number of valuable relationships. I, for one, can’t wait.” ■



The BBHC museum store, Museum Selections, is the heart of the BBHC business enterprise effort.



Robert B. Pickering, Ph.D., Deputy Director for Collections & Education and Director of Cody Institute for Western American Studies

*Audience:
a reading,
viewing, or
listening
public.*

That's how the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "audience." It's no wonder, then, that for Dr. Robert B. Pickering, it's all about the audience.

Pickering, the Deputy Director for Collections and Education at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC), was recently asked how his division evaluates success. "The easiest way is participation," he said. "When you're successful, everyone wants to either see what's going on or take advantage of what you have to offer. If what the audience reads, sees, or hears from us resonates with them, the audience grows or input increases. Sometimes it's as easy as counting the numbers."

For "counting the numbers," the BBHC turned to Dr. Ross Loomis of Colorado State University who directed a major visitor survey throughout the 2005 summer at the BBHC. "Loomis designed a comprehensive survey based on our input," Pickering said. "He trained those involved in everything from the questions asked to how to approach visitors and how to handle rejection. While we've conducted visitor surveys for a number of years, the time had come to really hone that skill. We wanted a clearer picture of our audience: where they live, their likes and dislikes, their interests, whether they travel with children, and so on—in short, their demographics. The information we gather will be used for programming, visitor services, and psychographics."

Since coming to the BBHC in 1999, Pickering has been an advocate for the audience. "Very often we do things that make us feel proud, but may not inter-

est our audience," he explained. "For example, we may have a great special exhibition on view or a terrific program, but according to our surveys, they are not necessarily what draws an audience."

One way in which the BBHC will reach distant audiences is through its Cody Institute of Western American Studies (CIWAS). Launched at the BBHC in 1999, CIWAS is designed to augment the knowledge and perspective of researchers and educators in the field. It builds on the traditional museum programs and exhibitions; it doesn't replace them.

"Until now, individuals had to come to Cody to participate in our educational programs," explained Pickering. "With CIWAS, we can serve a national and international audience more fully without their attendance here at the BBHC. We like to say that CIWAS will add a rich new layer of interaction and outreach." According to Pickering, the so-called products of CIWAS include seminars, symposia, research initiatives, credit-course syllabi, teaching references and resource materials, publications, etc. which can be made available on site or through the Internet, publications, or remote broadcast.

The study of the American West is being undertaken by a number of institutions which provide a model for CIWAS. "For example, we're looking toward the School for American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Institute for the Study of the American West at the Autry National Center in Los Angeles, and the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian History in Chicago—along with Western Studies Departments in various colleges throughout the U.S.," Pickering remarked. "We're all asking the same questions: What is the 'West'? Is it geography? Is its boundary California or Texas? Is it the sum total of environment, culture, or occupation? Is it some kind of romanticized notion? Whatever it is, there's no doubt the interest in the West has never been greater."

According to Pickering, there was renewed enthusiasm in CIWAS in 2005. Under its auspices, a group of 14 undergraduate professors traveled to Cody in June for the *Teaching the*

It's all about the audience.

Continued on p. 13 after Annual Report insert . . .

Continued from p. 12 . . .

West conference, a meeting to assist the BBHC with strategies to better impact the teaching of Western studies at the undergraduate level.

There were many other highlights related to CIWAS in 2005. In October, Senator Bill Bradley joined nearly 20 other notables in a symposium that discussed *Culture of Water—Watering the West: the Evolution of Ownership, Control, and Conflict in the West*.

Besides the teaching conference and symposium, the third of three books resulting from a previous CIWAS symposium, *One West: Two Myths*—a meeting comparing the American West with the Canadian West—was accepted for publication by the University of Calgary Press. With funds donated specifically for the purpose, the BBHC purchased a nearby office building to house CIWAS-related offices and activities, early in 2005. Finally, Barron Collier II pledged \$1 million over the next three years to support CIWAS programs.

“Last year was one of great strides for CIWAS. Clearly it gained increased definition and enthusiasm,” Pickering explained. “Plus, more and more of its activity will center on our library. Thankfully, Kurt Graham has joined us as the Housel Curator of the McCracken Research Library and the Assistant Director of CIWAS.”

Pickering noted that CIWAS wasn’t the only significant highlight of 2005. “Conservation is a great concern for every museum,” he said. “Because collections are perishable in most cases, caring for them is of monumental importance. We were very fortunate in 2005 to receive an endowment of \$300,000 from Laurene and Harrison Thompson for conservation, and late that year, an additional \$500,000 was pledged from the Joe Jones estate.”

Other ongoing projects in 2005 included the collection of oral histories from individuals in the area, providing valuable educational experiences for interns, and a project to organize and catalog the work of noted

artist, Jim Bama—including an oral history. In addition, special attention was given to the BBHC flagship programs (Cowboy Songs and Range Ballads, Larom Summer Institute, and Plains Indian Museum Seminar) for revitalization and renewed commitment. Finally, long range planning began for the reinstallations of the Buffalo Bill Museum, the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, and the Cody Firearms Museum, all to be undertaken over the next decade.

“How would I describe 2005? I’d say ‘high level of activity within collections and education,’” Pickering said. “It makes us realize how many things related to the West we have right here under one roof. I can’t imagine that anyone couldn’t find something that would interest them here. Of course, that implies we’ve been responsive to our audience, i.e. that we know what interests them. That is the biggest task before us.”

And so there it is: coming full circle back to the start where, for Bob Pickering, it’s all about the audience. ■



Culture of Water symposium audience at the BBHC’s Coe Auditorium included attorneys, professors, public policy employees, and academics.

Buffalo Bill Museum



*Juti A. Winchester, Ph.D., Ernest J. Goppert Curator
of Western American History, Buffalo Bill Museum*

will more than likely have the answer. After all, William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody was the subject of her dissertation titled *All the West’s a Stage: Buffalo Bill, Cody, and Western Heritage Presentation, 1846–1997*.

On a daily basis, Buffalo Bill Museum (BBM) staff fields a variety of questions about Buffalo Bill’s life and legacy. In addition, researchers continue to spend time with Buffalo Bill materials in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s McCracken Research Library, and contacts are made daily with individuals who believe at least one of their ancestors was among the more than 8,000 individuals associated with Buffalo Bill’s Wild West.

“Buffalo Bill continues to be an inspiration for writers, artists, and historians,” Winchester said. “In 2005, we saw two new books added to the cadre: Louis Warren’s *Buffalo Bill’s America: William Cody and the Wild West Show*, and Rydell and Kroes’ *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869–1922*. We’re inundated with letters, calls, and emails each time there’s ‘new news’ about Cody.”

The completion of the Boyhood Home exterior restoration is one of the 2005 highlights for the BBM. The roof has been repaired, and in 2005, the carpentry crew installed new windows, carefully patterning them after the originals. Finally, the crew replaced the structure’s siding. Winchester now looks forward to developing an interior for the building

Ask Dr. Juti Winchester nearly any question about Buffalo Bill, and she that will allow for a variety of educational programs and interpretive opportunities.

Planning also began in 2005 for the BBM reinstatement, to be completed within the next five years. “In May, we hosted a second consultant meeting about the project, and from that we prepared a mid-development conceptual outline,” Winchester noted.

The BBM was last remodeled 20 years ago. Because of its age, the reinstatement must include asbestos abatement, infrastructure work, and installation of a new air handling system—“none of which are glamorous or interesting, but are essential for the comfort of our visitors and the safety of our priceless collections,” according to Winchester.

In addition, the current BBM layout leaves many questions unanswered, and some of the original story lines have become obscured. “Over the years, we’ve loaned or removed objects for various reasons, which creates gaps in the chronology,” Winchester explained. “We’ve also learned more about Buffalo Bill because of ongoing research, so our reinstatement will definitely contain ‘new knowledge.’ Finally, we want visitors to leave the new Buffalo Bill Museum excited about history—and maybe catching a glimpse of themselves, too.”

As one of the few who knows him best, Winchester has a fair idea about how she wants others to view the museum’s namesake. “He was an interesting, complex nineteenth-century businessman, authentic in every way. He was the ‘real deal’ as a frontier scout, hunter, actor, and entrepreneur,” she said. “In short, we want our visitors to know the man as well as the legend.” ■



Commemorative poster of Buffalo Bill and Cyrano de Bergerac toasting each other on horseback. Jean-Pierre Got (b. 1951), *Le Coup d'Etrier [The Stirrup Toast]*, 2005, lithograph on paper, 1/500. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Buffalo Bill Museum Purchase. 1.69.6126

***Buffalo Bill
continues to be an
inspiration for writers,
artists, and historians.***

*Sarah E. Boehme, Ph.D., John S. Bugas Curator,
Whitney Gallery of Western Art*

No sooner had the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) installed last summer's extraordinary exhibition *Drawn to Yellowstone: Artists in America's First National Park*, when Dr. Sarah Boehme had moved on to another project: the next year's special summer exhibition *Forging an American Identity: The Art of William Ranney*. It's no wonder, then, that when asked about the one word describing the successes of 2005, Boehme's answer was, "Exhibitions."

Visitors to the BBHC last summer were treated to a rare exhibition of artwork, each piece portraying Yellowstone National Park through the eyes of such artists as Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, and Frank Tenney Johnson, among others. "By all accounts, *Drawn to Yellowstone* was extremely popular with our visitors," Boehme observed.

Indeed, for the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, 2005 was replete with activity. Not only were two exhibitions in the works—nearly simultaneously—but it was also a year of important acquisitions. "After all, collections are the very thing on which the museum is based," Boehme said. "For example, in 2005, we received a group of bronzes associated with Charles M. Russell. *Enemy Tracks* is an important bronze that was cast in Russell's or his wife's lifetime. The other five are bronzes after Russell models that are late, posthumous casts, but they have significance for their rarity or for research reasons."

Without a doubt, acquisitions were a highlight of 2005—as they are every year—according to Boehme. A key acquisition was William Herbert Dunton's *Timberline*, which has been on loan since 1987. One of his most important works, it provides an important example of artistic style. Docents use it extensively for teaching.



William Herbert Dunton (1878–1936), *Timberline*, 1932, oil on canvas. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Museum Purchase with Donation in Memory of Hal Tate from Naoma Tate and the Family of Hal Tate; and Donations from Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Fenn, Janis and Wiley Buchanan III, Nancy Petry, the William E. Weiss Fund, and others. 9.05

***[Visitors] can actually view
incredible art they're not
likely to see anywhere else.***

In addition, the Whitney Gallery has an ongoing strategy to seek more works by contemporary artists. In 2005, eight contemporary acquisitions were added to the collection, including two large sculptures for outdoors placement, R.V. Greeves' *Bird Woman* and Charles Ringer's *Prickly Pear*.



Sarah Boehme with R.V. Greeves' *Bird Woman* (Sacajawea).

Among many joint projects between curatorial and education staff, the Whitney Gallery resource room provided educational experiences for visitors. The museum audience, especially families, enjoyed the video, computer programs, books, puzzles and other activities.

As she looked toward 2006 and beyond, Boehme saw two endeavors that were certain to be high on the priority list for the Whitney Gallery. First, the Ranney exhibition—the first of its kind in over 40 years—would be on view from May 13 to August 14, 2006. "Special exhibitions are great opportunities for our visitors," Boehme explained. "They can actually view incredible art they're not likely to see anywhere else."

Next on the Whitney Gallery of Western Art's list is reinstallation of the gallery planned for 2010. Planning began several years ago and included a strategic meeting with scholars and advisory board members in 2005. But, as Boehme put it, "We have plenty on our plate these days. So, for the time being, remodeling the gallery will remain in its planning stages." ■

Plains Indian Museum



Emma I. Hansen, Curator, Plains Indian Museum

Among the choruses of “beautiful place,” “overwhelming in a great way,” “outstanding exhibits,” “a treasure,” and everything in between, a family visiting from Germany last summer had

this to say about the Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s (BBHC) Plains Indian Museum (PIM), “Just wonderful—above all, the section about the Plains Indians—presented by Native Americans—in order to preserve their culture, art, and wisdom. It was so moving.”

Since its reinterpretation was completed in June of 2000, the PIM continues to draw enthusiastic audiences. “The exhibitions produced through the reinterpretation have brought a deeper appreciation of the collections to our visitors,” explained Curator of the Plains Indian Museum, Emma I. Hansen. “Additionally, museum professionals continue to visit and inquire about this innovative interpretation, demonstrating our leadership in the representation of Native arts and cultures.”

Soon, the University of Washington Press will publish a book of the PIM collections titled *Memory and Vision: the Art, Cultures, and Lives of Plains Indian People*. Ready for publication, with its more than 250 images of objects and approximately 50 historical and contemporary photographs, was the PIM’s major focus in 2005. Hansen is the primary author and editor of the book which also features essays written by Plains Indian artists and scholars Arthur Amiotte, Gerard Baker, Beatrice Medicine, Joe Medicine Crow, and Bently Spang. “We are indebted to Margo Grant Walsh, whose generosity made *Memory and Vision* possible,” Hansen said. “The book has already received considerable attention and interest.”

To make its collections more accessible, the PIM and information technology staffs completed an online database project in 2005. Funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, the three year project involved digitally photographing the PIM collections, and then placing the images and related information on the BBHC Web site. In the year since its addition to www.bbhc.org, the site has registered approximately 46,000 searches, an average of more than 121 per day. Hansen noted, “This project not only has contributed to the Museum’s educational mission, but also has brought increased recognition to the Historical Center.”

In 2005, the PIM staff and Advisory Board worked to more clearly define and plan a new educational program—the Lloyd New Art Membership Program. This program, established in memory of former advisory board member Lloyd New, will be an arts residency program for promising Plains Indian artists in college and high school.

Two longstanding educational programs, the Plains Indian Museum Seminar and the Plains Indian Museum Powwow also attracted strong audiences and continuing interest in 2005. The PIM staff has begun planning the 2006 programs with the Seminar’s theme related to Plains Indian art and the Powwow

celebrating its 25th anniversary, June 17–18, 2006. “In recognition of the anniversary, we will produce a video about the history of powwows with footage from the upcoming and previous events, and historic photographs,” Hansen noted.

Clearly, the interest in the Native people of the Plains spans the spectrum from interested public to scholars. “As the only major museum focusing on Plains Indian arts and cultures,” Hansen remarked, “we are the first place to which individuals turn for information.” ■



Child's tipi, Northern Cheyenne, ca. 1895-1898. Tanned hide, glass beads, dyed porcupine quills, wool cloth, pigment. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. From the Collection of Richard Larremore Livermore given by his granddaughter Ann Livermore Houston. NA.507.123

The book, Memory and Vision . . . has already received considerable attention and interest.

*David Kennedy, Robert W. Woodruff Curator,
Cody Firearms Museum*

David Kennedy, the Robert W. Woodruff Curator, Cody Firearms Museum (CFM), first met Tom Knapp at the Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade (SHOT) show in Las Vegas in 2004. Traveling on behalf of Benelli Arms Company and Federal Ammunition, Knapp is arguably the most famous of today's exhibition shooters.

What happened after that would prove to be one of the highlights of 2005 for the CFM, according to Kennedy. Knapp contacted Kennedy and offered to present his record-setting firearms to the CFM—in person. “Not only that,” said Kennedy. “Tom offered to present two free shooting exhibitions for the general public here in Cody.” So, on Memorial Day weekend, Knapp amazed standing room only crowds with his incredible shooting skills and then presented his collection in a ceremony at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). “The acquisition adds considerably to an exhibit that includes many of the guns used by Herb Parsons, Tom Knapp's idol in the sport of exhibition shooting,” Kennedy noted.

With that, Kennedy described 2005 as “dynamic” for the CFM. “Dynamic and diverse,” Kennedy said. “Those are two words to describe the past year. We had a variety of acquisitions along with a variety of activities in professional services. It was the best year ever for our records department, and our new CFM Records Specialist, Greg Ditzler, came on board just in time to help make it happen.”

A collector of antique firearms from Jefferson City, Missouri provided Kennedy with his biggest surprise in 2005. “Joe Derque, a retired attorney and administrative law judge for the state of Missouri, contacted us last fall,” Kennedy explained. “It seems he had seven Smith & Wesson Schofield Model revolvers for which he was looking for a permanent

home. Three of the guns were marked with the stamp ‘WF&Co.’ for the Wells Fargo & Company—very rare.”

“The rest of these guns are nothing to ignore either,” Kennedy said. “One revolver is believed to have been a part of a small group of Schofields acquired from the U.S. Army by an early San Francisco vigilance committee, which later became the San Francisco Police Department. The remaining guns have signs of martial markings, indicating use by the military. While we have several martial Schofields, we had no Wells Fargo or San Francisco Police Schofields in our collection.”

According to Kennedy, a number of ongoing activities in which the CFM is involved also contributed to the year's busy pace. First, the total number of phone calls, emails, and letters seeking information far exceed those of any other BBHC museum. Because the CFM is one of a handful of firearms museums in the country, it is often called on for advice by all kinds of museums and collectors. Next, through donated funds, the firearms in the CFM collection are being digitally photographed, and research is underway toward scanning firearms records for digital storage. Finally, the CFM began some very preliminary planning for a possible reinstatement within the next 10 years.

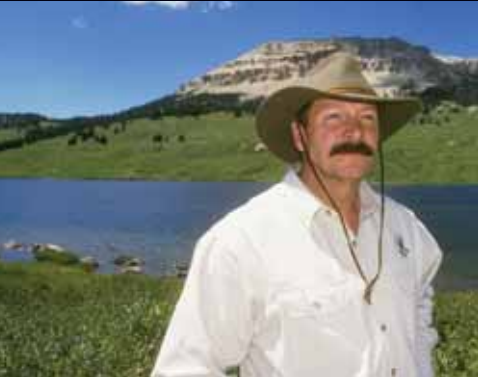
“We want visitors to know we're accessible,” Kennedy said. “Yes, the CFM has the ‘most comprehensive assemblage of American firearms in the world.’ This satisfies the ‘Gun Guys,’ but equally important are the other visitors who are learning the stories behind the guns—stories we plan to tell for many years to come.” ■



Collection of seven Smith & Wesson Schofield revolvers, including three “Wells Fargo” revolvers and one San Francisco Police Department revolver. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Gift of Joseph A. and Nancy L. Derque. 2005.12.1—7

***We want visitors to
know we're accessible***

Draper Museum of Natural History



Courtesy of Penny Preston

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

Increasingly, national media and the public are seeking us out as a critical source of information and perspective on the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA).

When Dr. Charles R. Preston joined the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) staff in 1998, it was to plan, open, and operate the first natural history museum of the new millennium: the Draper Museum of Natural History (DMNH). Since its opening in 2002, “the Draper” has proved to be a “do not miss” for BBHC visitors and an important center for informal education about nature and science. However, ask Preston about his biggest surprise in 2005 and he has an unexpected reply: “Audience Response.”

“You always hope for it,” Preston said, “but it continues to amaze me the response our exhibits and programs have received from visitors all around the globe. I sometimes climb up on the catwalk above the DMNH to watch how much the folks below are engaged in what they experience in our exhibits and gallery programs.

“The Greater Yellowstone Area, with Yellowstone National Park in our backyard, is a mecca for those interested in nature and science. Increasingly, national media and the public are seeking us out as a critical source of information and perspective about the GYA.”

In conveying the GYA story, Preston is quick to point out a word he uses to describe 2005: partnerships. “To address such a wide diversity of topics with so small a staff, we seek out working partnerships with a variety of organizations, institutions, and agencies, and are aggressively recruiting and training a corps of dedicated volunteers, interns, and research associates”, he said.

It was the partnership with the Wyoming Game and Fish

Department that led to the creation of one of the most popular BBHC temporary exhibitions to date, *A Place Called Thorofare: People, Wilderness, and Wildlife Management*. “Not only was our collaboration with the Game and Fish folks incredibly successful, so too was the teamwork throughout the BBHC,” Preston said. “For everyone concerned, it was a great effort and we had fun putting it together — seeing how popular it was with our visitors made it all the more rewarding.”

The DMNH co-sponsored the *8th Biennial Conference on Science in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem* in Yellowstone National Park, an international gathering that focused on broad-based natural resource management in the twenty-first century. The DMNH itself broadened research efforts in 2005 to explore human attitudes about large predator management in the GYA. “We’re examining human dimensions of wildlife issues along with more traditional field-based wildlife research,” Preston said. “We collected more than 400 questionnaires last summer to help understand the influence of education, experience, and cultural background on people’s attitudes about large predators and their management. We’ve also received great feedback on both our scholarly and popular publications in 2005.”

The DMNH, working with the BBHC education department, continued to “expand the walls” of the museum in 2005. Outreach programs reached more people than ever before with some 15,500 adults and children attending nature and science programs, presentations, field trips, and seminars. “Our Lunchtime Expedition series is nearly always filled to capacity and our field trips typically have waiting lists,” Preston said. “So, with regard to our ambitious vision for the Draper, I am pleased to report that the successes of 2005 surpassed even our expectations on all fronts and helped position us as one of the premier centers for informal nature and science education in the Intermountain West.” ■

Increasingly, national media and the public are seeking us out as a critical source of information and perspective on the Greater Yellowstone Area.

Kurt Graham, Ph.D., Housel Curator, McCracken Research Library and Deputy Director, Cody Institute for Western American Studies

Dr. Kurt Graham may have had some difficulty discussing with ease the year in review for the McCracken Research Library (MRL) at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). Simply put, he wasn't at the MRL in 2005.

Clearly, with its 25th anniversary activities and recognition, and its work with the photography exhibition, *A Place Called Thorofare: People, Wilderness and Wildlife Management*, there was considerable attention paid to the MRL in 2005. However, Graham did

not come on board with the BBHC until 2006, which left him with little "on-site experience." This does not mean he hadn't begun working with the MRL in 2005. In fact, he began working with BBHC Deputy Director Robert Pickering several weeks before his arrival in Cody.

"I am so pleased to join the staff of the BBHC," Graham said. "I grew up in Big Horn County, Wyoming, which means I've been familiar with the BBHC for many years."

A veritable checklist details the activities of the MRL in 2005. First was the yearlong celebration of the MRL's 25th anniversary, culminating with a visit and lecture from Dr. Robert S. Martin, Director

of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in Washington, D.C.

Next, the MRL's collection of historic photographs by Jack Richard was used to help create the *Thorofare* photography exhibition. Collaborating with the Draper Museum of Natural History and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the MRL sent a team via horseback to capture the very same images contained in Richard's historic photographs of the Thorofare region. Subsequently,

the historic and the present-day photographs were displayed side-by-side in the exhibition.

And finally, four cataloguers from the University of Wyoming assisted the MRL in reducing its backlog of uncatalogued material.

One of the MRL's ongoing projects is capturing oral histories of the Big Horn Basin region. "We are turning a great amount of attention to oral history," Graham explained. "Each year the MRL has moved steadily toward this goal. Simply put, we want to be a major contributor to the history of this area."

Graham listed several projects he sees in the MRL's future. "We're planning a series of rare book auctions for collectors," he said, "which will help position the MRL as a great venue for book-related events. We also want to make our historic photograph collections user-friendly. There are simply no equals to the collections we have. However, it is often difficult to find exactly what a researcher may need. Those collections definitely need to be digitized. In addition, we can't forget the MRL is a major repository for firearms records — again easier to use if they were digitized."

One of the most exciting projects on the horizon for the MRL is the William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody Papers Project, which will involve the collecting, editing, and publishing of Buffalo Bill's correspondence and writings. "Cody merits this kind of attention," Graham stated, "and this project will put him (and us) on the map in an even more significant way."

While Graham is still learning about the BBHC in general and the MRL in particular, there is one thing he's clear about: "Our goal is to be the last word on the West . . . and we are well on our way." ■



Book, *The Iris: An Illuminated Souvenir for MDCCCLII*, John S. Hart, Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, 1852. Featuring 12 full-page chromolithographic plates after Seth Eastman. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming. Library purchase in honor of the McCracken Research Library's 25th Anniversary.

Our goal is to be the last word on the West.

Education Department



*Maryanne Andrus, Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston
Curator of Education*

From public programs to school groups, tours to interpretive services, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) education department is a very busy place. In fact, each person in

the education department is a proficient multi-tasker — the popular jargon for jugglers. “The success of our programs is simply phenomenal,” said Maryanne Andrus, BBHC Curator of Education. “The number of programs and activities we offer has increased significantly within the last three to four years, and so has the number of participants.”

Thankfully, the education department staff has a wealth of expertise. “We use everyone’s know-how to provide the full cadre of interpretive services,” Andrus explained. “For instance, with last summer’s *Drawn to Yellowstone* and *A Place Called Thorofare* exhibitions, our entire staff worked together to create learning activities for young and old alike, interpretive programs, and written materials such as family guides for each exhibition.”

In any given year, the education department’s collective “to do” list represents a hybrid of learning and fun. It’s responsible for the oversight of the BBHC’s “flagship programs:” Larom Summer Institute in Western American Studies, Plains Indian Museum Seminar, and Cowboy Songs and Range Ballads. Its summer and winter workshops now offer from 15 to 20 classes each session, a result of a 50 percent increase in enrollment since the winter program was introduced five years ago.

The Museum Discovery program, in cooperation with Cody High

School, now has two classes of students every day during the school year. Presenters abound all summer long and the artist-in-residence program has grown to include historians and scientists “in residence.” Any exhibit planning has an educational component, and the department has taken the lead with the iScout® program, an automated tour of BBHC highlights. Lectures from individuals in a wide range of disciplines are scheduled throughout the year as well as a variety of educational tours — especially those that take advantage of the sights and sounds of the Greater Yellowstone Area.

Andrus is also quick to acknowledge the contribution of BBHC volunteers and docents. “These are some of my most rewarding relationships. It humbles me to think how much they give — and not for a monetary reward,” she said. “We couldn’t do our work without them. In 2005, this group of more than 180 individuals contributed a total of 9,309 combined hours of volunteer work to the BBHC. That’s truly remarkable!”

Andrus called 2005 a year of dynamic transition. “We had a record number of programs and activities in 2005,” she observed, “and several of our crew departed to other opportunities last year, which brought some great new folks to our number.”

In the coming year, Andrus has two main goals. “We want to strengthen our role as interpreters, i.e. helping our visitors to understand and appreciate the relevance of what they see before them on a wall or in a case,” she explained. “Secondly, we want to strengthen the opportunities for families. To that end, we’re doing a serious study of what we have to offer them.”

Clearly, the BBHC education department may still have to do some juggling in 2006 — but by now, they’re very good at it. ■



The BBHC’s many programs, such as this presentation by MacNeil Lyons of the Yellowstone Association Institute, are part and parcel of the education department’s activities.

***The number of
programs and activities
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significantly within the last
three to four years, and
so has the number of
participants.***

And how are we doing?

“Really helped complete our Yellowstone visit.”

—David, Corsicana, TX



“So much work; so much joy. Thank you for entertaining and educating us (Europeans) in your culture.”

—Christian, Germany

“Couldn’t get the kids to keep moving—they’re in awe!”

—Chris, Oceano, CA



“Cleanliness allows a thorough observation of items! Excellent! I liked the choices of involvement—the touch screens, the saddle, etc. . . . Oh well, just great!”

—Viktoras, Lithuania

“Wonderful place! Filled with history, lots of beautiful things! We’ll come back again and again. Thanks!”

—Brice, Brighton, CO

“Such a wonderful group of museums under one roof. Thanks for the super exhibits, friendly staff, and hard work. It shows!”

—Joann, Rochester, NY

“We will tell about this wonderful museum . . . and we’ll be back!”

—Nancy, Portland, OR

“I will never tire of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Thank you for sharing these wonderful displays and keeping legends and history alive.”

—James, Roswell, NM

“Wonderful! Just visited Yellowstone Park and appreciated it so much more.”

—Hugh, Hampton, VA



Former Wyomingite to take helm of BBHC library

Dr. Kurt Graham, most recently of California State University at San Bernardino, has joined the staff of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) as the Housel Curator of the McCracken Research Library (MRL) and the Deputy Director of the Cody Institute of Western American Studies (CIWAS).

Raised in the Big Horn County of Wyoming, Graham is a graduate of Brigham Young University with a BA in English as well as an MA in American Studies. He received his MA and PhD in History from Brown University at Providence, Rhode Island, where his area of research was the role of lower federal courts in the early history of America.

Graham feels his various teaching assignments have taught him to relate to groups of all ages, both in and out of academia. As he puts it, “As public historians, we need to be able to interact with various ‘publics,’ including busloads of students, local history ‘buffs,’ graduate students, prominent scholars, wealthy donors, and pliable politicians.”

Of current interest to Graham is environmental history. “I plan on continuing my research in this area, based on the construction of the Sidon Canal in northern Big Horn County, which — oddly enough — was originally promoted by Buffalo Bill himself.”



Kurt Graham, Ph.D.

BBHC to offer VIP seating to members at Plains Indian Museum Powwow

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) has announced limited special VIP seating for its members at the 25th annual Plains Indian Museum Powwow, June 17–18. “For the first time ever, BBHC patrons can enjoy arena-side, VIP seating at the Plains Indian Museum Powwow,” Jan Jones, BBHC director of membership, said. “In addition, the first 50 members attending the event on both Saturday and Sunday will receive a complimentary Powwow poster.”

Grand entries for the Powwow are scheduled for noon and 6 p.m. on Saturday and noon on Sunday. Admission prices for spectators are \$6 for adults (18 & older), \$3 for youths (7 –17), and children 6 and under are admitted free of charge. BBHC members receive a \$1 discount with their membership cards. Tickets are available at the gate only.



Shota Runs Close to Lodge, Oglala Lakota dancer from Ethete, Wyoming, Plains Indian Museum Powwow, 2005.

CFM managing recoil from Winchester closing announcement

In January 2006, the Winchester Arms Company announced the closure of its firearms factory in New Haven, Connecticut, the end of an era that began there over 140 years ago. And coincidentally, it was 30 years ago that the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC) became a chapter in Winchester history.

In 1976, the Winchester Arms Museum and Study Collections—consisting of more than 5,000 firearms (some 2500 of which were Winchesters) and seen by many as the heart of the Cody Firearms Museum (CFM)—were placed on loan to the BBHC and transported from New Haven, Connecticut, to Cody, Wyoming. The collections were officially donated to the BBHC in 1988.

Once the actual collection was received, over three million Winchester factory records followed. Then, the CFM instituted a records office to handle requests for factory letters. With the recent announcement of Winchester's New Haven closure, the records office has been inundated with calls, letters, and emails from Winchester owners regarding these records.

"It's similar to the death of an artist," CFM Curator David Kennedy explained. "Artists pass on and suddenly interest in their work increases, as does the value. Now with the New Haven closure, it appears that gun owners want to know more about their particular Winchesters." Kennedy reports the records office's processing time for a factory letter has changed from no more than three weeks to six weeks or more. Simply put: The office is fielding records numbers of requests.

The factory records are in the original ledger books given to the museum by Winchester. "Keep in mind these records are all handwritten in penmanship of the late 1800s," Kennedy said. "The handwriting of that period is generally a cursive script that can be difficult to read. If the record contains acronyms or shorthand—depending on the individual making the ledger entry—the difficulty of transcribing the record increases." Currently, the records are reproduced on micro film, but in the future, the CFM is hoping to capture the ledger pages as digital images in order to decrease research time.

"By the end of the year, we hope to receive additional Winchester records. We expect this will double the size of our holdings, increasing what we can currently provide in the way of records research," Kennedy remarked. "We expect the new records will represent more recent firearms." Currently, the CFM handles records for antique Winchester firearms, as well as records for Marlin rifles and L.C. Smith shotguns. Altogether, the CFM has almost 4 million factory records.

The firearms records research is a fee-based service. For more information about the CFM, including the various costs for firearms records research, go to the BBHC Web site at www.bbhc.org/FIREARMS/index.cfm.



The Cody Firearms Museum finds itself with a record number of records inquiries since the announcement of the Winchester Factory closing.

Brian Lebel's Cody Old West Auction joins with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center to present a special western evening!

Selected items to be auctioned to benefit the educational programs of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

**The Rest of the Best
Dinner & Auction
Friday, June 23, 2006**

Viewing, Cocktails & Dinner:
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Auction: 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.



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WITH A CATALOGUE OF HIS WORKS



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The Art of William Ranney
with a Complete Catalogue of His Works

Published by the museum in conjunction with the exhibition, this work features comprehensive information on all of the artist's presently known and documented works. Written by Linda Bantel and Peter H. Hassrick it is an up-to-date catalogue of over 150 William Ranney works, a number of which are recent discoveries. The paintings are fully illustrated in color and, along with the contextual essays on each painting, there are essays on the life and work of the artist in general by Linda Bantel; on his paintings of the American West by Sarah E. Boehme; and a discussion of the materials he used and the conservation of his work by Mark Bockrath.

Regular Price—\$59.95

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