

# POINTS WEST

BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER ■ CODY, WYOMING ■ SPRING 2012



- Meet Teasdale & our Avian Ambassadors
- Cowboys & Aliens
- Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Pennsylvania



## To the point



By Bruce Eldredge  
Executive Director

*I am about to take the back-trail through the Old West—the West that I knew and loved. All my life it has been a pleasure to show its beauties, its marvels and its possibilities to those who, under my guidance, saw it for the first time... And our last halting-place will be at sunrise—the sunrise of the New West, with its waving grain-fields, fenced*

*flocks and splendid cities, drawing upon the mountains for the water to make it fertile, and upon the whole world for men to make it rich.*

On the way through our building to my office each day, I pass the big window through which I can see the construction crew creating the “new” Buffalo Bill Museum. As I hear the power tools, see the carpenters work, and envision the new exhibits, I’m reminded of these words from William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s autobiography.

The reinstalled gallery will definitely take visitors through the Old West that William F. Cody loved—complete with Cody’s “beauties, marvels, and possibilities.” Still, one thing that Buffalo Bill was all about was “newness.” As much as he was enamored of the Old West, he was also drawn to the New West—and the new gallery will have that, too. With the theme “Man of the West – Man of the World,” we’ll not only celebrate Cody’s life and times, but his lasting influence, as well.

The state-of-the-art components (think interactive exhibits, high-definition footage of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West—and more!) are extraordinary. These features are sure to appeal to young and old alike, and the bright and colorful space looks much bigger than it did before. Most importantly, we are on target to meet our fundraising goals, and we are so thankful to our donors for their support!

The June issue of *Points West* focuses exclusively on Buffalo Bill and on this great new gallery. So, consider this my personal invitation to visit the new Buffalo Bill gallery this spring at its “soft” opening with the Patrons Preview May 18 and the public opening on May 19. The official kickoff takes place in June with more details coming your way soon!

We look forward to seeing you! ■

©2012 Buffalo Bill Historical Center (BBHC). Written permission is required to copy, reprint, or distribute *Points West* materials in any medium or format. All photographs in *Points West* are BBHC photos unless otherwise noted. Questions about image rights and reproduction should be directed to Rights and Reproductions, [photosales@bbhc.org](mailto:photosales@bbhc.org). Bibliographies, works cited, and footnotes, etc. are purposely omitted to conserve space. However, such information is available by contacting the editor. Address correspondence to Editor, *Points West*, BBHC, 720 Sheridan Avenue, Cody, Wyoming 82414, or [editor@bbhc.org](mailto:editor@bbhc.org).

**Managing Editor:**

Ms. Marguerite House

**Assistant Editor:**

Ms. Nancy McClure

**Designer:**

Ms. Lindsay Lohrenz

**Contributing Staff Photographers:**

Ms. Chris Gimmeson, Ms. Nancy McClure

**Historic Photographs/Rights and Reproductions:**

Mr. Sean Campbell

**Credits and Permissions:**

Ms. Ann Marie Donoghue

**Advisory Team:**

**Marguerite House**, Public Relations & Managing Editor

**Nancy McClure**, Public Relations & Assistant Editor

**Lindsay Lohrenz**, Designer

**Mindy Besaw**, Curator, Whitney Gallery of Western Art

**Megan Smith**, School Services Coordinator

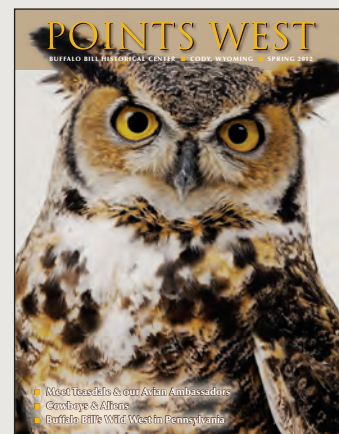
**Janet Hedrick**, Interim Director of Advancement

*Points West* is published quarterly for patrons and friends of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. For more information, contact the editor at the address above.

The BBHC is a private, non-profit, educational institution dedicated to preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the American West. Founded in 1917, its collections include: Buffalo Bill and the West he lived and loved, historic photographs and documents, firearms, natural history of the Greater Yellowstone region, Plains Indians, and masterworks of western art.

The mission of *Points West* is to deliver an engaging educational magazine primarily to our patrons and friends. *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—all in celebration of the Spirit of the American West.

### About the cover:








Teasdale, the great-horned owl, has taken up permanent residence at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, along with three other raptors. Learn more about the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience beginning on page 4.



# Contents

From his enclosure, Isham, the red-tailed hawk, "catches some rays" in the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience mews (bird housing). Read about Isham and his avian associates starting on page four.

## FEATURES:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 4 **New adventures with birds of prey.** Some youngsters are first lured into a life of science by dinosaurs, faraway planets, or volcanoes, but for me it was those magnificent birds with talons as sharp as needles, flesh-tearing beaks, and huge eyes positioned like ours in the front of the face. By Charles R. Preston, PhD
- 8 **The building of an empire...well, a new program, anyway!** We discussed the possibility of the owl coming to live in Cody, and after several e-mail exchanges, we decided he would be a perfect fit. "Teasdale," named after Teasdale, Utah, where he was found by hikers, was ours! By Melissa Hill
- 19 **Wild West poster to debut in new Buffalo Bill Museum.** What does the Buffalo Bill Historical Center do with a 28-foot long, 1888 poster of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show? It puts it on display for visitors to see in the Center's newly remodeled Buffalo Bill gallery...
- 22 **Triggering memory: American identity in Cowboys & Aliens.** Memory has a prominent role in the 2011 Universal Pictures film *Cowboys & Aliens*. As audiences watch outlaw Jake Lonergan, played by Daniel Craig, struggle to recover from extraterrestrial-induced amnesia, they experience their own form of "collective remembering." By Ashley Hlebinsky
- 26 **The Wild West in the Keystone State.** Seen through twenty-first century eyes, the Wild West tour schedule appears grueling. In 1898, Buffalo Bill's Wild West covered a total distance of 10,253 railroad miles, barnstormed through 26 states, and erected its tents in 133 different towns. In 200 days, the Wild West performed 347 shows, not including parades. By Wes Stauffer

## DEPARTMENTS:

- 14 **BE AN ADVOCATE**  
for the Buffalo Bill Historical Center
- 15 **BBHC BITS AND BYTES**  
News, activities, and events
- 16 **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**
- 20 **TREASURES FROM OUR WEST**  
A look at our collections
- 31 **A THOUSAND WORDS**



*Thank you donors!*



*Throughout this issue of Points West, there are a number of gift icons. Each one represents a donor or donors who have made the event, program, or acquisition possible.*

Visit us  
online...

Brand new videos  
uploaded regularly on  
YouTube. Check it out!



Smithsonian Institution  
Affiliations Program

Magazine of the Buffalo Bill Historical  
Center • Cody, Wyoming



# NEW ADVENTURES *with Birds of Prey*

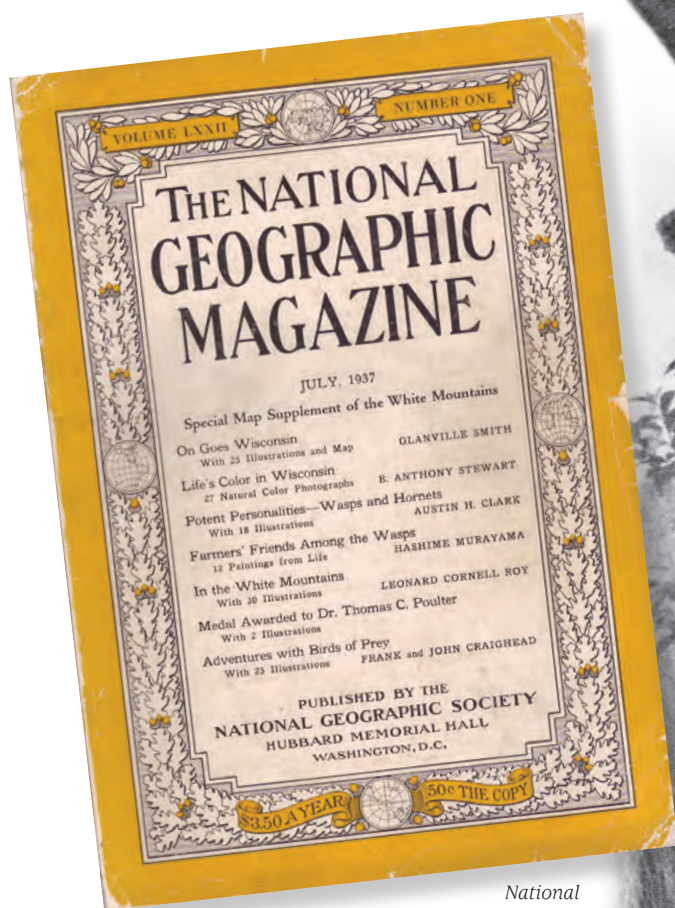
By Charles R. Preston, PhD

**N**ational Geographic magazine has played an important role in many a budding explorer's life and career. It certainly played a big role in mine. Both of my parents were stationed with the U.S. Army at Ft. Chaffee, Arkansas, and I spent a good deal of after-school and summer time doing chores for my grandmother in her old Victorian-style boarding house in nearby Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Western history buffs know

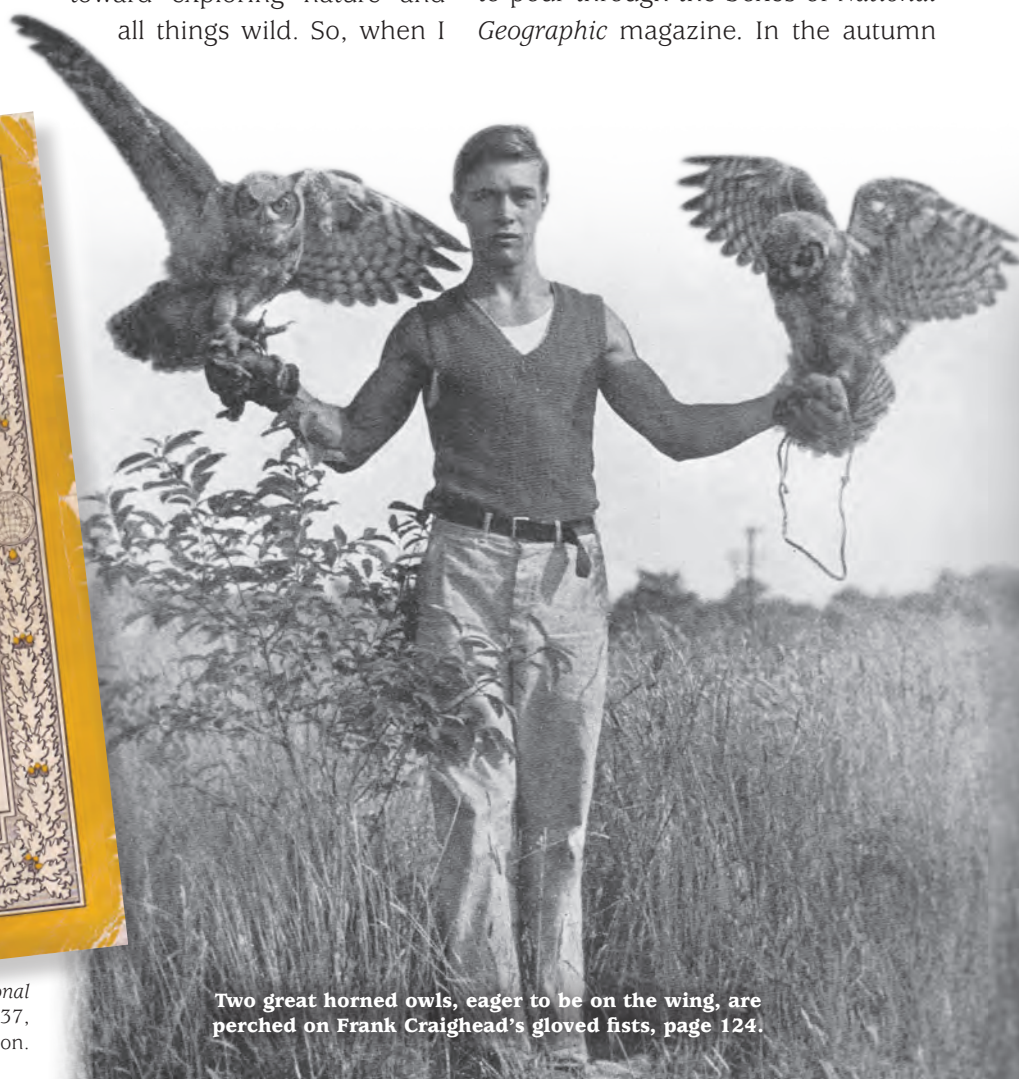
Ft. Smith as Judge Isaac Parker's "Hell on the Border" town. It was made famous in the book and movies *True Grit*, as the western seat of law and order bordering the wild and wooly Oklahoma Territory in the late nineteenth century.

It still inspired a frontier spirit in me and my childhood friends growing up in Ft. Smith in the 1950s. My particular brand of frontier spirit was directed toward exploring nature and all things wild. So, when I

discovered the great cache of *National Geographic* magazines tucked away in the attic by one of my grandmother's boarders, I was ecstatic! I felt like I had discovered a magic carpet that would take me to exotic, dangerous, and mysterious places around the world. Despite being explicitly forbidden from climbing up to the dingy, spider-filled attic, I snuck up there at every opportunity with a candle or flashlight to pour through the boxes of *National Geographic* magazine. In the autumn



*National Geographic*, July 1937, from Preston's private collection.



Two great horned owls, eager to be on the wing, are perched on Frank Craighead's gloved fists, page 124.



of my eighth year, I stumbled on an issue that has helped guide my life's work in wildlife ecology, and especially raptor biology and ecology, ever since.

The issue was published in July 1937, and contained an article and series of dramatic black-and-white photographs telling the story of two teenaged twin boys and their friends as they studied, photographed, captured, and trained birds of prey mostly in and around Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. I was especially enthralled with the photographs of powerful birds of prey perched on the boys' gloved hands. I'd never thought

of Washington, D.C. as exotic, but this article opened my eyes to the awe and mystery of nature that surrounds us everywhere. Birds of prey provide the perfect eye-openers. Some youngsters are first lured into a life of science by dinosaurs, faraway planets, or volcanoes, but for me it was those magnificent birds with talons as sharp as needles, flesh-tearing beaks, and huge eyes positioned like ours in the front of the face.

The article was titled "Adventures with Birds of Prey," and it was authored by the twin teenagers, Frank and John Craighead. This was the Craigheads'

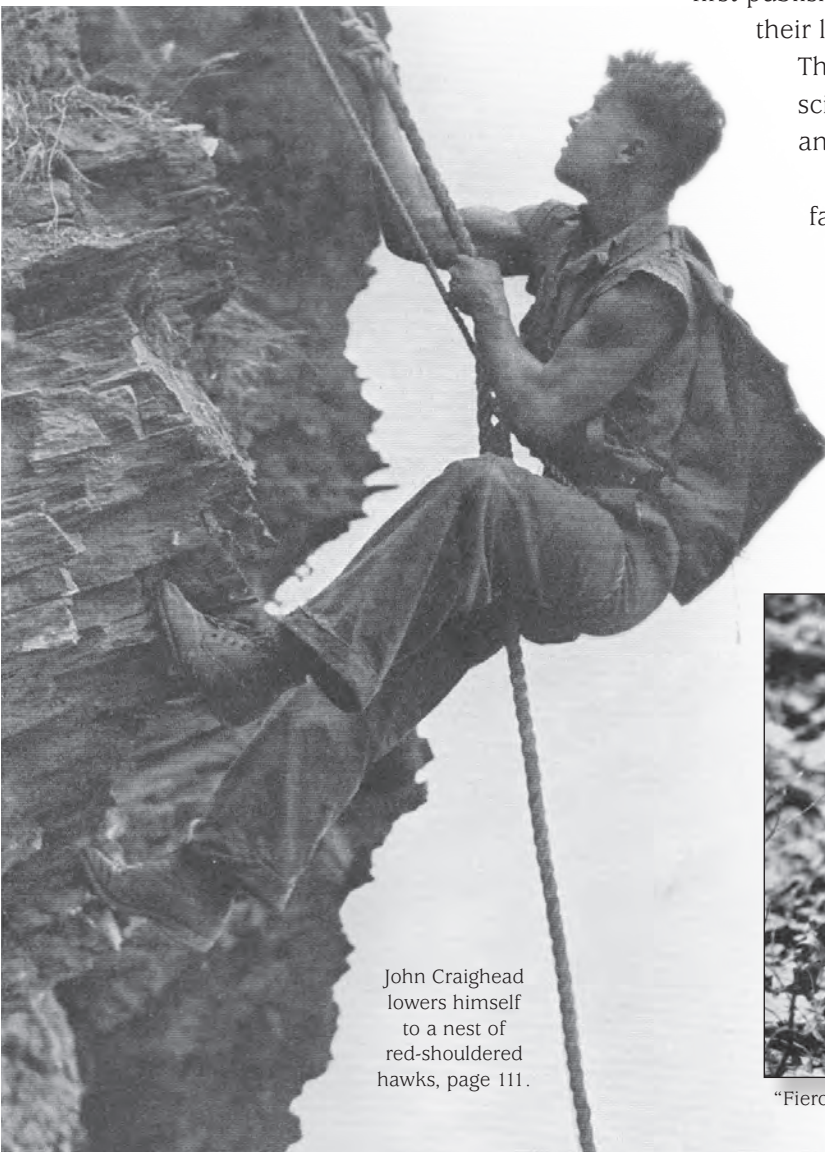
first published article, but not their last by a long shot!

These two explorers, scientists, educators, and conservationists became world famous—largely for their pioneering work on eagles and grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone region. We present an overview of the Craigheads'

careers and accomplishments in the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's new Wyoming Outdoor Hall of Fame exhibition and in our recent book *An Expedition Guide to the Nature of Yellowstone and the Draper Museum of Natural History*.

Of all the places they could have lived, John and Frank Craighead chose to live, work, and study most of their adult lives here in the Greater Yellowstone region. Frank died a few years ago, but John, now in his nineties, resides in Montana. I've been lucky enough to explore and conduct research in many of those exotic places I first saw in *National Geographic*—the Galapagos Islands, Belize, Ecuador, etc. But, like the Craigheads, I chose the Greater Yellowstone region above all others. Although I've studied a broad range of species and ecological topics, birds of prey have remained at the forefront of my scientific research program. In addition to being interesting in and of themselves, raptors are especially good barometers of environmental health and good models to explore broader ecological topics, such as predator-prey dynamics and habitat selection and use.

Birds of prey somehow connect in



John Craighead lowers himself to a nest of red-shouldered hawks, page 111.



"Fierce and alert, this young great horned owl scared the authors' dog," page 126.



## NEW ADVENTURES *with Birds of Prey*

an emotional, even spiritual way with people across cultures and age groups. The ancient Egyptians considered Horus, the falcon-headed god of the sky, as one of the most important animal-gods. In one Egyptian temple, archaeologists have discovered the mummies of more than 800,000 falcons! Raptors have played a profound role in American Indian life in both religion and art. A casual glance at the Center's Plains Indian Museum collections reveals a wide variety of garments and other materials adorned with feathers from many species of raptors. Eagle feathers, and to a lesser extent, red-tailed hawk feathers are among the most prized.

Among Plains Indian cultures, the golden eagle eclipses all other raptors as a symbol of spiritual power. Eagles and other raptors have been chosen as national symbols by many countries across the world, including the United States (American bald eagle) and Mexico (golden eagle). Sports teams and multinational corporations also use raptors to symbolize their power, speed, and proficiency, and falconry continues to be among the most popular outdoor avocations across the world. There is something magical that happens when someone, youth or adult, is introduced to a live raptor. It defies description, but it is undeniable that people are attracted to and mesmerized by an encounter with a live bird of prey. For some, it is truly a life-changing experience.

Over the last several years, we have incorporated birds of prey into the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in various ways. For example, we have been engaged in a long-term study of golden eagle nesting ecology in the

Bighorn Basin and other areas of the Greater Yellowstone region since 2009, incorporated various raptors into each of the four life zones presented in the Draper Museum of Natural History exhibits, displayed interpretations of birds of prey in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, and as noted above, showcased raptor feathers and other elements in our Plains Indian Museum galleries. Since coming to the Center, I've authored two books on raptors, along with several scientific and popular raptor articles. We're currently developing a grant proposal for the National Science Foundation to use our golden eagle research, and Plains Indian collections and expertise, as a foundation for an engaging suite of informal and formal educational experiences directed to audiences across the nation.

Following in this path, we've embarked on an exciting new initiative—a live raptor education program titled the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience.

When we were first developing the vision and exhibits for the Draper Museum of Natural History between 1998 and 2002, we envisioned that the Draper would help the Center expand our walls and move beyond traditional museum boundaries in many ways.

One concept that kept rising to the top—in part buoyed by that profound *National Geographic* moment so long ago in my grandmother's attic—was the development of a live raptor program that would help us provide our audiences with engaging and even inspirational experiences with birds of prey in the West. We could think of no better way to fulfill the Draper Museum's mission to increase understanding and appreciation for the relationships binding humans and nature

and emotionally connect people with nature.

With so much else to accomplish, however, the idea of a live raptor program was placed on a backburner until early 2008. The Center's new Executive Director and CEO, Bruce Eldredge, had only been on board for a few months when we had the chance to

talk casually about future programming initiatives. When I described a live raptor education program, Bruce was immediately enthusiastic and supportive. He knew how popular live raptor programs were in other venues and encouraged me to pursue the concept. After some additional discussions and research, we submitted grant proposals to the W.H. Donner Foundation and Donner Canadian



Sioux/Northern Plains war bonnet with eagle feathers, ca. 1890. Gift of Irving H. "Larry" Larom Estate. NA.205.35



Foundation (the latter in partnership with University of Wyoming's Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center) to establish the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience and fund operations for up to three years. Late in 2010 we received notice that our proposals were approved for funding!

Our first order of business was to recruit a dynamic, experienced, and highly skilled professional to come to Cody, Wyoming, and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center to become our first "Raptor Wrangler" and establish the new program. "Walking on water" was only left out of the job description at the insistence of Chris Searles, the Center's Human Resources Manager. We embarked on a national search, hoping to attract at least a couple of strong applicants for this highly specialized position. We advertised in several national raptor-related venues, and I contacted dozens of my colleagues in the raptor research and education field to spread the word.

To our delight, we received more than two dozen applications, including many highly-qualified candidates. One person stood out, though, when we began interviewing the top tier of candidates. She was highly personable, dedicated to quality education and the highest level of bird care, and possessed many years of experience in first-rate organizations. There was one problem, however; she was currently employed by my close and highly respected friend, master falconer Kin Quituqua. I even sit on the advisory board of the amazing organization, HawkQuest, that Kin operates in Colorado, and he has presented programs at the Center in past years, helping us test the waters for a live raptor program.

Kin brought a golden eagle to help celebrate the Draper Museum of Natural History grand opening in 2002. I knew Kin valued our top candidate highly, and she had great respect for Kin. But she was also at a point in her career when she was prepared and anxious for this new challenge, and she loved Cody. So, we offered her the job, and I put in a courtesy call to Kin to give him a heads up. Fortunately, Kin was gracious, and Melissa Hill accepted our job offer. Of course, I have to find some way to make this up to Kin, and he calls to remind me of that from time to time. From my perspective, that's fair trade!

Melissa started her job at the Center in February 2011, and has been a whirlwind since. I haven't seen her walk on water yet, but she has certainly fulfilled our grandest expectations thus far. Even Melissa couldn't have anticipated all the challenges of establishing a live raptor program from scratch—securing permits, acquiring birds, overseeing design and construction of raptor

housing, recruiting and training volunteers, and so on. I had contacted both federal and state agencies to begin the permitting process, but it was left for Melissa to follow through and work directly with these agencies. We have a team to help Melissa, but she has ably shouldered the eagle's share of the challenge and has already thrilled audiences with our new stable of raptors.

In the following article, Melissa will tell you in her own words what she has accomplished to date and what we're planning for the future. This is an exciting time for the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, and I hope we can help infuse our audiences with the spirit of exploration and the sense of awe and mystery I felt so many years ago when I was first exposed to "Adventures with Birds of Prey!" ■

*Dr. Charles R. Preston is a Senior Curator at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center and Founding Curator in Charge of the Center's Draper Museum of Natural History.*



Don Chaffey (L) and Richard Gruber, members of the Center's Golden Eagle Posse.



# *The building of an empire... well, a new program, anyway!*

---

## AUDIENCES RAPT WITH RAPTORS

---

By Melissa Hill


*T*here was a time when I wouldn't have considered myself "happy." Now, it's odd to think that just one year ago, I had become at least moderately happy with my career and life in the suburbs of Denver thanks to some birds. Yes, my outlook completely changed as I found myself working with raptors (birds of prey) again after far too long a break.

I was employed with HawkQuest, a raptor education group in Colorado that traveled to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center the previous two summers to give lectures. I still recall our first evening in Cody in 2009 when I turned to Dr. Charles Preston, natural history curator, and said, "So, are you hiring?" I didn't even care what position might be available! I wanted to leave Denver and move back to a small town where people were friendly and genuine. After spending only a few minutes in Cody and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, I knew I had found that place.

Little did I know that Dr. Preston had actually been planning a live raptor education program even before he spearheaded the opening of the Draper Museum of Natural History in 2002. Here we are, nearly two and a half years later, and I'm living my dream. It's been a lot of work, with a few minor setbacks, several headaches, and a whole lot of fun, but I'm proud to say that the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience is here!

### *Musing about the mews*

After arriving in Cody in 2011, my first task was to design the living space for the birds, called a mews. I drew up a plan to accommodate the five birds the state of Wyoming would allow for educational programs and showed the plans to the state game warden from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department; he would inspect the mews upon completion. Was that ever a good idea! After talking to the game warden, I realized we weren't on the same page. We were each using a different guideline for housing birds of prey—his for raptor rehabilitation



Melissa Hill and Isham,  
the red-tailed hawk.



and mine for non-releasable, permanent residents.

I revised the plans and armed myself with the references I needed to back up my design. I planned to show the game warden exactly why I had chosen the sizes for the enclosures we intended to build. I dropped off the design at his office, and then held my breath as I waited to hear back from him. What if he still had concerns? Had I taken this job and moved across two states only to fail before the program even got off the ground?

It's amazing the fear that can overtake you when you step completely out of your comfort zone. This was a new adventure for me. Granted, I had worked at three different raptor organizations—each an amazing learning experience for me. I knew I was great at handling raptors as well as teaching kids and adults alike about the birds that I so love, but I wasn't the one in charge before. I had never had the weight of an entire program riding on my decisions. Maybe I wasn't ready for this; I was starting to panic.

Nevertheless, I prepared to argue my case and "save the program," but it proved to be totally unnecessary. "If you build what you have on these plans, I'll approve the building," the warden said. Hooray! The first obstacle was overcome! Now it was time to start building.

### *Calling all inhabitants, er, raptors*

I forwarded my design to the mews construction project manager,

Historical Center Carpenter Matt Bree. His task was to turn my design into actual working blueprints and gain approval from the Planning & Zoning Commission. Finally, we broke ground on the mews on April 19, 2011, to very little fanfare, but much excitement for those most closely attached to the program.

With construction under way, I looked for suitable birds for our program. Dr. Preston and I agreed to showcase birds found in the Greater Yellowstone region. On the first day of my search, I learned of several birds that seemed perfect for our program: an American kestrel, a peregrine falcon, and a great horned owl. As it turned out, the kestrel and owl already had homes, but fortunately, the rehabilitator had another great horned owl that could not be released—a requirement for captive birds of prey in the United States. We discussed the possibility of the owl coming to live in Cody, and after several e-mail exchanges, we decided he would be a perfect fit. "Teasdale," named after Teasdale, Utah, where he was found by hikers, was ours!

Shortly after that, I discovered that the peregrine falcon was still available, and the rehab facility was very excited to have finally found her a home. It is very difficult to place non-flighted peregrine falcons with education programs—everyone

wants a falcon that can fly and show off his skills. We weren't concerned about all that, though, and the facility reserved "Hayabusa" (the Japanese word for peregrine falcon) for us!

As our program began, I knew I wanted either a red-tailed hawk or a rough-legged hawk. Normally, red-tails are very common, but I couldn't find any that needed a home. Finally, I stumbled upon a perfect candidate. Not only was he beautiful, but he had been in an education program for years, which meant he was already trained. Again, a few e-mails later, "Isham," named after one of Buffalo Bill's horses, was



Volunteer Rosemarie Hughes and Teasdale the great-horned owl



*The building of an empire...  
well, a new program, anyway!*

AUDIENCES RAPT  
WITH RAPTORS

set to join our program. We were off to a great start!

*Interns to the rescue*

In mid-May, our summer interns, Nate Horton and Pat Rodgers, arrived. We had a slight problem, however: The mews was barely under construction, and we had no birds for their raptor education internship. I trained them to hold raptors and tried to teach them as much as I could without actually having live birds on site. Fortunately, both interns were very handy and played a major part in the construction of the mews as well as assisting Dr. Preston in his golden eagle field research. Amazing interns, they could help with any project, and work independently when necessary. I desperately hoped that the birds would arrive before the interns headed back to the University of Wyoming at summer's end.

Finally, at the end of June the mews was complete! Within two days, the Wyoming Game & Fish warden inspected and approved the building.

Then, I handed him our application for the owl, falcon, and hawk, which he said he'd sign and send to the state office that night. In addition, I immediately mailed our application for federal permits to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

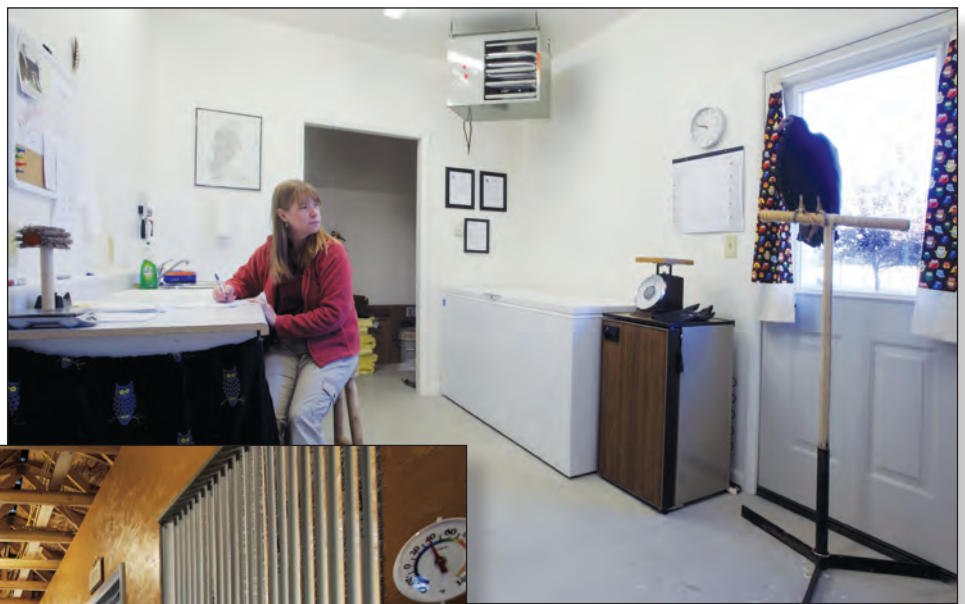
And then we waited...

A note printed very clearly on the federal permit application instructed us to allow thirty to sixty days for processing but advised that it could take even longer. We assumed we would wait quite a while since Wyoming falls within one of the busiest regions of the Fish & Wildlife Service. How shocked we were when

our approved permits arrived in just thirty days!

*Time for raptor wranglers*

While we waited for our state permits (required in conjunction with federal permits to keep captive raptors in the state of Wyoming), I received a call from a friend in Kansas who also works in wildlife rehabilitation. She had a baby turkey vulture that was imprinted on humans and would need a home in a captive program like ours. Would I want her? Of course! Turkey vultures are my favorite birds, and I was



(top) Suli the turkey vulture oversees the activities of the mews office.

(far left) The mews can accommodate up to five birds.

(left) Hayabusa the peregrine falcon.



really hoping to find one for our program. “Suli,” derived from the Cherokee word for “vulture,” would be our fourth bird.

When our state approval finally came in the middle of August, I was “chomping at the bit” to get the birds to Cody. Within a few days of receiving our permits, I put 2,200 miles on my car, and we had three birds in the mews. I spent the next few days getting acquainted with them and soon started training. It wasn’t long before all the birds were standing nicely on the glove, and we began bringing in the volunteers to learn how to hold them and care for them.

Even before I arrived in Cody, folks around town had heard about the upcoming program and were eager to volunteer to help with the birds. I had met several of them and knew we had an impressive group of volunteers lined up.

I was astonished at how well both the volunteers and the birds handled

their training. On September 5, 2011, we made our first public appearance with Isham, and within four days, all three birds had been in the public spotlight. It was all finally coming together!

In mid-September I traveled to Colorado and then to Kansas to pick up Suli. At last, we had all our birds—for the time-being anyway. Although she had been raised by humans, this turkey vulture was very timid, and I spent a large chunk of the next week getting her to trust me so that I could get close to her and eventually get her equipment on. Finally, she trusted me enough to eat dinner from my glove! Once we’d achieved that, her training proceeded by leaps and bounds.

The rest of September and October was a whirlwind of training. I suddenly had fifteen volunteers who were enthusiastic and incredibly helpful. The birds were getting out into public areas almost daily, and we received a lot of great press.

## *Time for the big test*

A huge test for the program was coming up, though—the Historical Center’s Annual Holiday Open House on December 3. The birds were scheduled to be available for viewing for three hours, and I had most of my volunteers signed up to help. It was a very big deal for us as the event typically draws several thousand visitors to the Center. Could the birds handle crowds like that? Could the volunteers?

Once again, I worried for nothing. Not only did everyone—birds and volunteers alike—do well for the three hours, they remained in the limelight for nearly five hours! An estimated three thousand people saw the birds that day and declared us a huge success.

The rest of December breezed by with most of the training focusing on getting the birds used to traveling in kennels or travel boxes for outreach programs. We were back in action for our next challenge on December 30,



The Center’s avian ambassadors meet the public.



*The building of an empire...  
well, a new program, anyway!*

---

AUDIENCES RAPT  
WITH RAPTORS

---

2011, though, as the birds traveled twenty miles east to Powell, Wyoming, for their first offsite program. Again, they were a huge success! All the hard work I had invested in the program over the last nine months was paying off—and all the worry was really for naught.

*Wrapping up the  
raptor story*

So, that's the past year of my life in a nutshell. It's been a crazy ride, but I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world, and the best is yet to come. The future is very bright for

the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience; we are ready to travel to schools, churches, assisted living centers, civic group gatherings, and other venues for fun and informative programs. When summer arrives, we'll concentrate our efforts on programs right here at the Center. I have very big plans for presentations in our beautiful gardens that showcase our amazing "avian ambassadors." Will there be flight demonstrations? Will there be excitement and adventure around every corner? Perhaps...I guess you'll just have to visit the Buffalo Bill Historical Center and see for yourself! ■

*As Assistant Curator for the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience, Melissa Hill works in the Historical Center's Draper Museum of Natural History to establish, launch, and manage the new program. She comes to the Center from HawkQuest, a nonprofit raptor education organization based in Colorado that has presented popular raptor programs at the Historical Center in recent years. She was lead lecturer there and prior to that, served as curator of birds at Reptile Gardens in South Dakota, where she conducted programs, trained birds, and taught staff and volunteers to care for and handle them. Hill's bachelor's degree is in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology and Management from the University of Wyoming.*



Rose and Suli



# MEET *the* RAPTORS



HAYABUSA: *peregrine falcon*

“Hayabusa” came to us from Northwest Wildlife Rehabilitation in Tucson, Arizona. She suffered an impact injury near the “wrist” joint on her right wing. Sadly, the damage was so severe that she never regained full extension of that wing and, to this day, has very poor flight. Because peregrine falcons are extremely acrobatic and rely on their speed and aerial maneuvering to catch prey, her injury means she can never return to the wild. Haya loves to eat and will eat anything, anytime, in front of anyone, making her a huge crowd pleaser as staffers feed her in public most days. ■



ISHAM: *red-tailed hawk*

“Isham” was struck by a car and suffered such severe damage to his right eye that it had to be completely removed. The loss means he has no depth perception, making it very difficult to catch small animals. The blindness also makes him an easy target to other predators. Because he could not be returned to the wild, he was taken to Talking Talons Youth Leadership in Tijeras, New Mexico, where his great disposition helped the staff teach the public about birds of prey for five years before coming to the Historical Center where he continues his winning ways. ■



TEASDALE: *great-horned owl*

A hiker and his dog found the injured “Teasdale,” the great horned owl, on New Year’s Eve 2010, near Teasdale, Utah. When the bird arrived at the Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Price, Utah, the staff learned the owl had fractured several bones in his right wing, which had already healed improperly. Consequently, he cannot fly well enough to survive on his own in the wild and will live in captivity for the rest of his life. ■



SULI: *turkey vulture*

A Kansas couple found “Suli” in a haystack when she was only a couple weeks old. The couple placed her in a nearby building assuming her parents would hear her and continue to care for her at the new nest site. What they didn’t know is that vultures don’t have a voicebox and can only hiss and grunt. When her parents didn’t return, the couple took her to the Milford Nature Center in Junction City, Kansas. The center did not have an adult turkey vulture to act as a foster parent, so Suli grew up with people. Because of this she did not gain the critical skills for survival that her parents would have taught her, and she can never be released back into the wild. ■





# Be an advocate for the BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER

- Tell the world how you feel about the Historical Center...
- Share the experience you and your family had on your visit to the Center...
- Encourage others to visit the Historical Center...
- Convey to potential supporters just what makes the Center worthy of their support...

*You can do all these things by writing a review on the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's GuideStar profile.*

Why write a review? If you have used Yelp, Tripadvisor, or Amazon.com reviews in the past before booking a trip or buying a product, you are like the majority of consumers online who read user-generated reviews of products and services before making buying decisions. Likewise, reviews on GuideStar are helpful to those making decisions about visiting and/or supporting the Center.

GuideStar, [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org), gathers and publicizes information about nonprofit organizations (mission, programs, leaders, goals, and accomplishments), and then combines the information with data from several other sources including tax filings with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The site connects people and organiza-

tions with information on the programs and finances of more than 1.8 million IRS-recognized nonprofits and is a valuable resource for those considering support of a nonprofit organization such as the Historical Center.

If you have firsthand experience with the Center as a visitor, a volunteer, a trustee or an advisory board member, patron, or donor—and are not a paid employee—you can write a review. This information will give the Historical Center valuable feedback on your experience. Once posted to the Center's GuideStar profile, your

positive review can also help the Center's bottom line by reaching thousands of grant-makers. At the same time, you will demonstrate to grant-makers the real-world impact of the work of the Center as it preserves and promotes the *Spirit of the American West*.

The most helpful reviews are those that speak from personal experience. Be as detailed as possible, and give concrete examples. Use these questions to help write your review:

- How did you come to know the Buffalo Bill Historical Center?
- Did your visit to the Center meet your expectations?
- Why is the Historical Center

important?

- Ask yourself, "What does the reader need to know about the Center?"
- What is the overall point you want to get across?
- Use a friendly, relaxed writing style.
- At the end of your review, summarize your experiences and thoughts.

GuideStar has templates on its Web site to help you write your review, and then spread the word using Twitter, Facebook, and/or e-mail. The Buffalo Bill Historical Center needs your feedback to continue to preserve and promote the *Spirit of the American West*. Please submit a review today! ■



## How to write a review on GuideStar

1. Use your internet browser to go to [www2.guidestar.org](http://www2.guidestar.org).
2. In the "Search Guidestar" section, type "Buffalo Bill Memorial Association."
3. Under the "Organization Name" column, click on "Write a review."
4. Fill in the form, and submit the review form.

Find out more about how you can support the  
Buffalo Bill Historical Center at [www.bbhc.org/get-involved](http://www.bbhc.org/get-involved).





## Summer at BBHC means Powwow!



(left to right) Dustina Abrahamson, Summer Baldwin, Lacey Abrahamson, and Rose Ann Abrahamson, Team Dancing Special. Photo by Ken Blackbird, 2010.

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center's longest-running public program, the Plains Indian Museum Powwow, celebrates thirty-one years this June 16 – 17. The Center's Robbie Powwow Garden fills with drumming, competitive dance, and the vibrant cultural traditions of Northern Plains tribes—including food, arts and crafts, and a learning tipi. The ever-popular event draws huge crowds as grand entries take place at noon and 6 p.m. Saturday, June 16, and noon on Sunday. Read more at [www.bbhc.org/explore/events/powwow](http://www.bbhc.org/explore/events/powwow). ■

## BBHC ranks high with group travelers

The National Tour Association (NTA) has awarded the Buffalo Bill Historical Center a bronze award in its “favorite museum for group travelers” category. The Center tied with New York City's American Museum of Natural History; the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., won the gold award, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City received the silver.

“We definitely have cause to celebrate being included in the distinguished company of the Smithsonian, the Metropolitan Museum, and the American Museum of Natural History,” Executive Director and CEO Bruce Eldredge said. “Our numbers of group tours have increased significantly in the last few years, and we couldn't be more thrilled with this award.”

Other honors recently awarded to the Center include *Cowgirl* magazine's listing of the Historical Center in its 2012 “Ten Favorite Western Art Museums” and GoNomad.com's number two pick on the list of “The Ten Best Family Destinations for Learning Vacations.” ■

## Mindy Besaw returns to Whitney

Mindy Besaw, the John S. Bugas Curator of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, has returned to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center after a two-year sabbatical at the University of Kansas at Lawrence.

“I am at the point in my studies where I am technically called a PhD candidate which means I only need to write my dissertation, which I will do from Cody,” Besaw says.

In the meantime, her short-term goals for the Whitney include rotating artwork in the gallery to keep the space dynamic; reconnecting with donors, patrons, and peers in the museum

field; and renewing “acquaintances” with the artists in the gallery.

“Scholarship will also play a prominent role in the Whitney's activities in the long term,” Besaw adds, “especially as I research and write my dissertation on ‘How contemporary artists engage with the late-nineteenth-century visual culture of the American West.’ I am happy to be back in Cody, and especially happy to be able to reconnect with the people and the art that I have missed.”

In Besaw's absence, Assistant Curator Christine Brindza directed the activities of the Center's art gallery and

has since become the Tucson Museum of Art's new James and Louise Glasser Curator of Art of the American West. ■





# CALENDAR of Events

Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. For the latest information on programs and events, please see our Web site at [www.bbhc.org](http://www.bbhc.org) or call 307.587.4771.

Find us on:



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>APRIL</b> Advanced registration for Buffalo Gals Luncheon on May 15 began March 1						CFM Records Office open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. for Big Reno Show, Reno, NV
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	<div><div><div>Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience</div><div>Live bird presentations most days</div><div></div><div><div>For up-to-date schedule information for raptor presentations and other public programming, please visit the events page of our Web site at <a href="http://www.bbhc.org/explore/events">www.bbhc.org/explore/events</a></div><div>Vulture Suli with volunteer handler Rosemarie Hughes</div></div></div></div>					
15						
22						
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8				
	Lecture and book signing Wyoming mystery writer Craig Johnson: <i>As the Crow Flies</i> 2:30 p.m.	Buffalo Gals Luncheon \$ Dr. John Rumm: <i>Backstage with Annie Oakley</i> Noon – 1:30 p.m. Advanced registration required		10	11	12
					Members-only preview of renovated Buffalo Bill gallery 5 – 7 p.m.	"First Look, Sponsored by First Bank of Wyoming" Public opening of renovated Buffalo Bill gallery 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.



13	CFM Records Office open 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. for Colorado Gun Collectors Association Annual Gun Show, Denver, CO	14	15		17	18	19
20		21	22	23	24	25	26
27		28	29	30	31	<b>JUNE</b> Chuckwagon demonstrations begin for the summer Monday – Friday, and most Saturdays 1 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	
3					7	8	9
10	Plains Indian Museum Powwow \$ Robbie Powwow Garden Grand Entry: Noon Powwow runs until 6 p.m.				14	15	16
17					21	22	23
24		25	26	27	28	29	30
						Family Fun Day 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.	

## CENTER HOURS

MARCH 1 – APRIL 30: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily

MAY 1 – SEPTEMBER 15: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily

## PHOTO CREDITS:

- Three-dimensional concept drawing of reinterpreted Buffalo Bill gallery space, reopening to the public May 19.
- Annie Oakley with shooting medals, ca. 1890s. Vincent Mercaldo Collection. P.71.363.1
- Chuckwagon cooking demonstrations on the Historical Center's grounds.
- Grand Entry, 2010 Plains Indian Museum Powwow. Photo by Historical Center volunteer Bud Schrickling.

\$ Denotes additional fee required.

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



Charles M. Russell (1864 – 1926). *Dangerous Ground*, 1902. 10.375 x 14.5 inches. Gift of William E. Weiss. 22.70

## New members join Board of Trustees

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center has announced two additions to its Board of Trustees, approved at its winter board meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, on January 27, 2012. Salt Lake City resident A. Richard “Rich” Waltje, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Power, joins the board with an “extensive background and corporate involvement...[that] makes him an ideal addition to our current board,” noted Henry H.R. “Hank” Coe, one of the board’s vice chairman. Currently living in Deerfield, Illinois, Denis Carroll, owner of ProEquine Group, which includes Stetson and Resistol Hats, has become a member of the board. Trustee Hal Ramser Jr. writes that, “[Denis’s] dedication to history and the spirit of the American West is visibly spread throughout his business, personal and philanthropic activities.”

With these additions, the Center’s

Board of Trustees, chaired by Barron Collier III, consists of forty-seven members from fourteen states including ten Cody residents. ■

## Museum Store ranked nationally

On November 30, 2011, Larry Bleiberg of *USA Today Travel* wrote, “Forget the mall this holiday season. Instead, head to a museum shop for a memorable gift. Not only will you find unique merchandise, but purchases support the host cultural institution.” With help from Beverly Barsook, executive director of the Museum Store Association in Denver, Colorado, Bleiberg listed the Top Ten Museum Stores in America. Along with the likes of the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis and the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, the list includes the Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s own Museum Store. Read the story at <http://goo.gl/B8Wa0>, and visit our store at [www.bbhcstore.com](http://www.bbhcstore.com). ■

## Beyond our walls

From the collection of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, ten watercolors by renowned western artist C.M. Russell—including *Dangerous Ground*, shown above—have made their way to the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. In their exhibition titled *Romance Maker: The Watercolors of Charles M. Russell*, the display features more than one hundred of the finest and best-preserved watercolors by cowboy artist Russell (1864 – 1926).

Russell’s advice to a fellow artist to “sinch [sic] your saddle on romance” defined his work as he took vivid experiences from his youth and fused them with artistic imagination. The results are unforgettable images of the mythic American frontier. The exhibition is on view February 11 – May 13, 2012, after which it travels to the C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls, Montana, for a June 15 – September 15, 2012, run. ■



# Wild West poster to debut in new Buffalo Bill Museum

What does the Buffalo Bill Historical Center do with a 28-foot long, 1888 poster of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show? It puts it on display for visitors to see in the Center's newly remodeled Buffalo Bill gallery, set to open May 19, 2012.

The Center recently purchased the poster, thought to be the largest surviving poster ever produced for William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West. Printed by the Calhoun Printing Company of Hartford, Connecticut, the poster consists of 32 separate sheets, measures roughly 28 feet long by 13 feet wide, and is in pristine condition.

In studying the colorful image on the floor, stretched out the length of the Center's Plains Indian gallery, the staff at the Historical Center christened this enormous advertising poster "simply extraordinary." Much like billboards today, posters pasted to the sides of buildings were used to publicize events like Cody's Wild West that ran 1883 – 1913. Generally meant to be scrapped once an event concluded, it's rare to find posters of this era still intact.

The poster was owned most recently by a private collector in Colorado who decided to dispose of it at auction. Before that, little is known about the history of this particular poster—where it originated, who owned it, and where it's been for most of the last hundred

years. It's even possible the poster was never installed.

"My own hunch is that the poster was never hung because it had some minor flaws in it, such as where the ink ran slightly," explains Dr. John Rumm, the Center's curator of western American history. "They're barely discernible and require careful inspection to see. But it would be in keeping for the reputation of both the Wild West and the Calhoun Printing Company to not post a 'factory second,' no matter how minor the flaws were."

Originally, the Center's Conservator Beverly Perkins planned a treatment of the poster including cleaning or making needed repairs.

However, once unfurled on the floor for review, Perkins pronounced the poster "in remarkably pristine condition," and Rumm said the colors were so vibrant that "the poster seems as if it were fresh off the press." Other than some very minor tears along its edges, the poster is completely intact.

With a caption across the lower left corner exclaiming, "Grandstand at London Seating 20,000 People," the

poster was created to commemorate Cody's special London performance in May 1887. Her Majesty Queen Victoria and other members of the Royal Entourage are pictured acknowledging Buffalo Bill's ceremonial bow from his white horse as show personnel salute the queen from the background.

Staffers Matt Bree and Jeffrey Rudolph have their work cut out for them as Rudolph creates a frame, and Bree builds a special case to both display and house the poster on the back wall

of the "Man of the World" alcove in the new Buffalo Bill gallery.

The purchase was made possible thanks to monies from the Center's Mary Jester Allen Acquisition Fund

(named for Buffalo Bill's niece who was also the first curator of the Buffalo Bill Museum), together with contributions from several of the Center's trustees. ■



Queen Victoria from poster "Distinguished Visitors to Buffalo Bill's Wild West, London, 1887." (detail) Gift of The Coe Foundation. 1.69.459

Visit the "new" Buffalo Bill Museum starting on opening day, May 19, 2012.

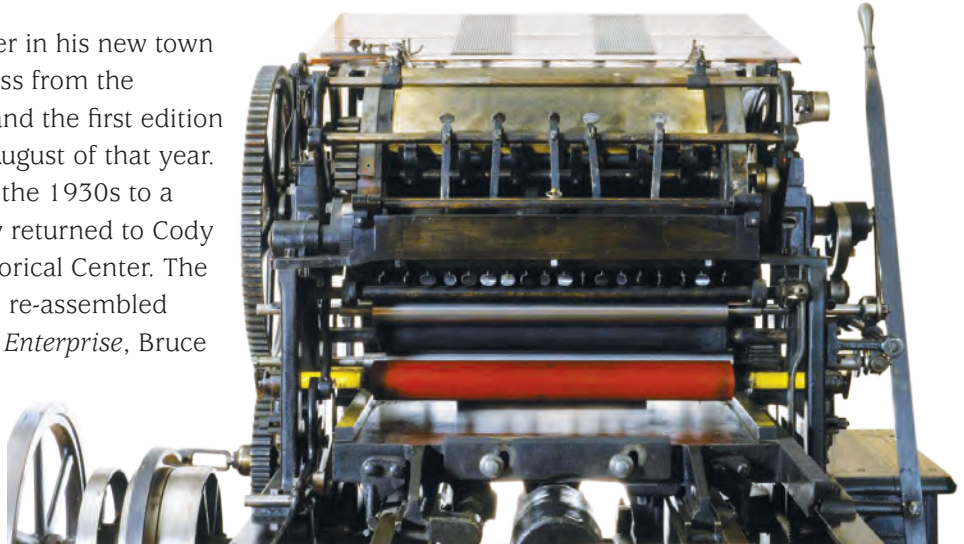




## BABCOCK PRINTING PRESS

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody is thought to be the first owner of this Babcock drum cylinder printing press. He purchased it for his sister Helen Cody Wetmore’s publishing company in Duluth, Minnesota. The press is a standard model, one revolution, hand-fed, drum cylinder built about 1895.

When Buffalo Bill founded a newspaper in his new town of Cody, Wyoming, he purchased the press from the People’s Printing Co. of Duluth in 1899 and the first edition of the *Cody Enterprise* appeared in late August of that year. The press was sold by the newspaper in the 1930s to a paper in Lodi, California. It subsequently returned to Cody in 1983 when it was donated to the Historical Center. The press arrived in pieces in crates and was re-assembled by the then-owner/publisher of the *Cody Enterprise*, Bruce Kennedy of Sage Publishing Company, and some of his staff. The press will be on exhibit when the Buffalo Bill gallery at the Historical Center reopens this spring. ■



Buffalo Bill. Babcock printing press. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Abrahamson. 1.69.1843

## COLT MODEL 1861 NAVY REVOLVER

The Colt Model 1861 Navy revolver was a favorite firearm used during and after the Civil War. Between 1861 and 1873, a total of 38,843 were manufactured. The first Model 1861 is on display at the Cody Firearms Museum.

This firearm bears both the serial number “1” and the manufacture

date April 9, 1861. It is also one of one hundred Colt Model 1861 navy revolvers designed with a fluted cylinder. The rest of the firearm resembles a standard issue Colt Navy revolver.

It was purchased, along with the original holster, by Charles T. Sleight within a month of its manufacture

date. During this time, Sleight enlisted to fight in the Civil War on behalf of the Union Army. He carried this firearm into battle—most notably at the Second Battle of Bull Run—until he was discharged in 1862 for “disability.” This firearm set the standard for Colt production from 1861 to 1873. ■



Firearms. Colt Model 1861 Navy revolver. On loan from Jim and Lisa Autry and Tim and Helen de Smet. L.362.2011.1



## STAN NATCHEZ'S *MONEY*

Western  
Art. Stan  
Natchez  
(b. 1954).  
*Money*,  
ca. 1994.  
Mixed  
media.  
Gift of  
Janis and  
Wiley T.  
Buchanan  
III. 9.02



The combination of tradition and modernity; a Los Angeles upbringing and an education in ceremonial heritage; and pop culture imagery overlaid with beadwork provide the foundation for Native American artist Stan Natchez's complex artwork. Influenced by Pop artist Andy Warhol and performance in Native American dances throughout Europe and the United States, Natchez's contemporary style of bold color and flattened space portrays traditional subjects in modern life.

His work often focuses on themes related to money. "The dollar bill is a symbol of the world we live in," explained Natchez. "In the 1700s and 1800s, Indians painted on deerskin, buffalo, or elk hides. And if you wanted something, hides were your money. So the modern day hide is the dollar bill." In *Money*, Natchez created a background of mock five dollar bills with a Native American on each bill. The figure posed in front of the money wears traditional Plains Indian regalia, with actual beadwork on the brow band of the feather headdress, the armband, and his pipe bag.

Natchez takes the "best of both worlds," the modern and the traditional, to find balance in his life and art. ■


## AMERICAN BISON (*BISON BISON*)

There is no more fitting icon to represent the Spirit of the American West or the Buffalo Bill Historical Center than the American bison, more commonly known as the American buffalo. Nearing extinction even in its western homeland by the early twentieth century, the American bison found a last place to hide in Yellowstone National Park. The current Yellowstone herd includes about three thousand animals, representing the only bison herd in the lower forty-eight states to have persisted since prehistoric times.

This impressive bull bison specimen was first introduced to Center audiences in the mid-1990s with the award-winning *Seasons of the Buffalo* exhibition. Since then, it has been part of the dramatic and popular diorama greeting visitors near the Center's front entry and more recently in the lower level of our Draper Museum of Natural History. It may soon migrate to a new location in the much-anticipated Buffalo Bill gallery reinstatement, helping to present a proper context for the adventurous life and times of William F. Cody. ■



Natural History. American bison. DRA.305.89

A movie poster for the film 'Cowboys & Aliens'. The background is a dark, dusty Western town street at night. On the left, a saloon with a sign that says 'SALOON' and 'GOLD LEAF' is visible. A man in a cowboy hat, vest, and pants, seen from behind, stands in the center of the street. He is holding a gun in his right hand. A bright blue beam of light shines down on him from above. In the bottom left corner, there is small text: 'DOLBY DIGITAL', 'DOLBY DIGITAL', 'www.cowboysandaliensmovie.com', and '© 2011 UNIVERSAL PICTURES INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.'

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF IRON MAN

**COWBOYS  
&  
ALIENS**  
SUMMER 2011

## TRIGGERING MEMORY

*American identity in **Cowboys & Aliens***

*"You know who you are, you just have to remember."*

—Ella Swenson (Olivia Wilde),  
*Cowboys & Aliens* (2011)

By Ashley Hlebinsky

Last summer's Universal Pictures movie *Cowboys & Aliens* (released on DVD in December 2011) melds outer space with 1873 Arizona, a classic western with science fiction. As the studio put it, "A stranger stumbles into the desert town of Absolution with no memory of his past and a mysterious, futuristic shackle around his wrist. With the help of mysterious beauty Ella and the iron-fisted Colonel Dolarhyde, he finds himself leading an unlikely posse of cowboys, outlaws, and Apache warriors to fight a common enemy from beyond this world in an epic showdown for survival."

Examining an audience's collective memory, Ashley Hlebinsky—a student of film, theatre, history, and firearms—writes how the classic western is still front and center in *Cowboys & Aliens*, but in a decidedly twenty-first century way.



Memory has a prominent role in the 2011 Universal Pictures film *Cowboys & Aliens*. As audiences watch outlaw Jake Lonergan, played by Daniel Craig, struggle to recover from extraterrestrial-induced amnesia, they experience their own form of “collective remembering.” Through the eyes of the present, they witness mnemonics, memory aids, of the classic western with a twist which both affirms and reshapes audience memories in relation to American identity.

*Cowboys & Aliens*, directed by Jon Favreau, explores memory as a recollection of the past that is influenced and represented by the present. It contains a complex relationship between the individual and groups. This article focuses on the role and manipulation of collective memory throughout the film.

### Collective memory helps shape identity

According to sociologist Ron Eyerman, national identity can be conceived through the “centrality of

the past and of collective memory” as a result of cultural trauma. In the wake of the Civil War, for example, Americans sought to mend their fractured identities. From this trauma, the frontiersman was born. This pioneering spirit was a way to “turn tragedy into triumph,” according to Eyerman. With the addition of time and representation, this American identity flourished. Depictions of the West through Buffalo Bill and forms of mass media such as western film brought this image of America into the mainstream.

Western movies provided a framework for Americans to remember certain aspects of national identity. Sociologists Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins write that their mass consumption throughout the twentieth century commemorates ways that “national identities... are...maintained through a variety of mnemonic sites, practices, and forms.” Historian Pierre Nora contends that collective memory also undergoes periods of forgetting and remembering. Because memory is a part of the present as well as the past, people, places, and things are

constantly remembered differently. America has experienced several cultural traumas since the inception of the western that have altered the country’s collective memory. In the 1970s, the western genre declined while science fiction became the new frontier.

### The western film recipe

*Cowboys & Aliens* is a recent revival of this memory and a restructuring of American identity through both the western and science fiction. According to Favreau in a National Public Radio (NPR) interview in 2011, this film uses ingredients from a western film recipe and allows a new generation to influence, and therefore contribute to, American collective memory. “It’s the twist you put on a confined set of characteristics” that can trigger and alter memory.

There are many mnemonics used throughout the film that resemble the classic western. First, Favreau shot the movie with the same techniques and anamorphic film (35mm) that was used in twentieth-century westerns. The film begins with a widescreen view that scans across a typical western landscape. The movie is set in the Arizona territory in 1873 near the mining town Absolution but was filmed in California and New Mexico. While early westerns were shot on the East Coast, they eventually migrated west. Favreau selected this latter setting which also reinforces a site of collective memory. After panning the landscape, the screen focuses on a confused Lonergan, and then he meets three men in dark clothing. They attempt to kill Lonergan who swiftly disarms and slays them.

Second, Favreau stated in the NPR interview that one reason he chose several of the actors for this film was because of audience familiarity. For instance, one of the men Lonergan



# TRIGGERING MEMORY

## American identity in *Cowboys & Aliens*

kills in the first scene is played by noted western actor, Buck Taylor. To audiences who are familiar with the genre, his presence automatically sets the tone for a western. Craig was chosen in part because his previous role as James Bond would instantly allow audiences to ascribe a set of traits to his character.

Another actor whose previous roles helped with audience memory was Harrison Ford. While Ford never performed in a western prior to *Cowboys & Aliens*, Favreau explained that his roles as Indiana Jones and Hans Solo made him an “analog to John Wayne.” While Craig portrays the outlaw, Ford plays Colonel Dolarhyde, the Civil War hero plagued by corruption. Many other classic western personalities, like Doc and

the Preacher, appear in this film, remaining loyal to the genre.

### The western and its firearms

From costumes to firearms, these characters embody the identities established by western film. A range of firearms that represent western style are used. Loneragan first gains possession of an early conversion Colt Model 1860 Army Revolver. Various Colt single action revolvers make an appearance in the film, along with several Winchester Model 1866 “Yellow Boy” lever action rifles and a Colt Model 1878 Double Barrel Shotgun—which is peculiar since the movie is set in 1873. While the specifics may be unknown to some audience members, the general

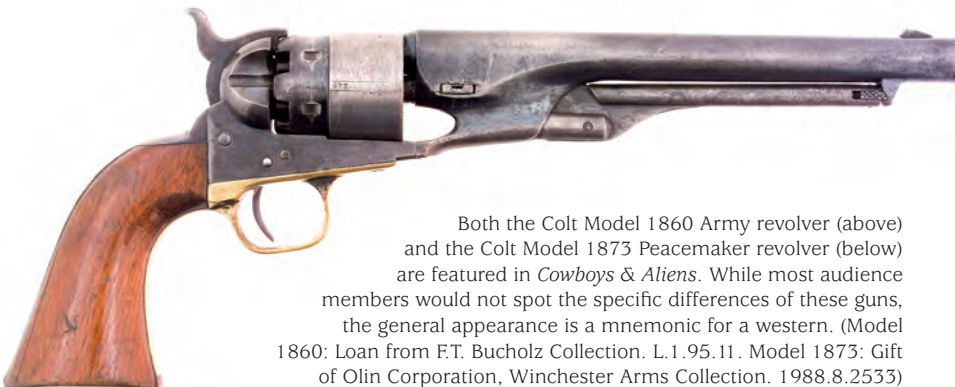
appearance of the shotgun, the revolver, and the lever action rifle all elicit the memory of a western in the collective.

In scenes involving aliens, or demons as they are called in the film, the use of firearms in a traditional shootout style adds to audience perception of a western at a time when it could morph into a sci-fi thriller. Favreau wanted people to feel like they were watching a western throughout the entire movie despite the presence of aliens. When Loneragan is attacked by his alien nemesis, he fans his revolver in an attempt to eradicate his foe with rapidly-fired bullets. The aliens also are portrayed in such a way that they could be seen as a mnemonic for a western: In this story, they are the strangers in a new land.

### Counter memory

The film’s crossover into science fiction actually restructures collective memory. Classic westerns often portray American identity through a linear narrative that revolves around the “dominators,” but excludes the experiences of those they dominate. Eyerman even suggests that popular culture has been guilty of “selectively sorting out those...texts that express the ideologies and values of the dominant culture.” The stories of the dominated add diversity to collective memory known as counter memory. *Cowboys & Aliens* re-aligns this dominant style framework to create a more inclusive storyline.

The movie creates a world where aliens become the new bearers of manifest destiny whose intent is to



Both the Colt Model 1860 Army revolver (above) and the Colt Model 1873 Peacemaker revolver (below) are featured in *Cowboys & Aliens*. While most audience members would not spot the specific differences of these guns, the general appearance is a mnemonic for a western. (Model 1860: Loan from F.T. Bucholz Collection. L.1.95.11. Model 1873: Gift of Olin Corporation, Winchester Arms Collection. 1988.8.2533)





destroy indigenous peoples for gold. This shift subjugates all humans which, ironically, unites both Indians and cowboys. The Chiricahua Apache Indians in the film have a chance to explain their perspective and fight equally alongside Lonergan and Dolarhyde's gang. This additional perspective represents a potential shift in the way audiences might remember national identity.

Lonergan's extraterrestrial arm gun is another form of counter memory in the film. Emotion operates this weapon, an allegory for advancement in technology. Its appearance, however, does not visually reflect a mnemonic for a western. There is a greater potential for a more diverse identity in American memory when audiences view contrary images (counter memory) to the western norm.

*Cowboys & Aliens*, in combination with collective memory and counter memory, revitalizes the western. The genre throughout history has seen changes, and this film is another at-

tempt to shift the way we remember our frontier narrative. Throughout the film, the audience and characters experience a parallel transformation through mnemonics—a transformation that contributes to a cognitive map of American identity, selecting what is remembered and what is forgotten. ■

*As both a curatorial assistant to Warren Newman, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's firearms curator, and a Buffalo Bill Resident Fellow, Hlebinsky previously studied the Center's Hollywood gun exhibit and visitors' reactions to it, as well as worked in the McCracken Research Library to gather information about the firearms facet of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Hlebinsky has worked for the firearms curator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and has recently been working in that capacity to help facilitate a loan of unique firearms to the Historical Center. She is currently working toward a master's degree in history and museum studies from the University of*

*Delaware and hopes to pursue a career as a museum professional and research antique firearms.*

For a complete list of references and works cited, contact the editor.

*Cowboys & Aliens* is available on Blu-ray & DVD from Universal Studios Home Entertainment.



Ashley Hlebinsky



This scene from *Cowboys & Aliens* has the appearance of a Frederick Remington painting—except for the alien space crafts in the background.



# The Wild West IN THE Keystone State



The arena of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, ca. 1886. MS6 William F. Cody Collection. P.6.177.1

*"Is the show in town?" asked the stranger of the native.*

*"Yes, just at present," was the reply, "but in an hour or two, the town will be in the show."*

—Harrisburg Patriot, September 12, 1895

By Wes Stauffer

**B**uffalo Bill's Wild West toured America and Europe 1883 – 1913, making 191 visits to Pennsylvania. Using area newspapers of the day to tell the story, Wes Stauffer writes about the Keystone State and how it affected William F. Cody, as well as the ways in which the show, in turn, affected Pennsylvanians. Starting with the passages below, Stauffer focuses on the Wild West show itself—logistics and effects—reminding us once again that Buffalo Bill's Wild West was a colossal undertaking.

••••

On Wednesday, September 11, 1895, the Harrisburg Opera House in Pennsylvania reported a slim attendance at the evening performance of *Three Jolly Old Chums*. No matter how jolly the chums on stage, earnings did not make for merry management in the opera house that evening

while Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World wowed large crowds in its open air arena elsewhere in the city.

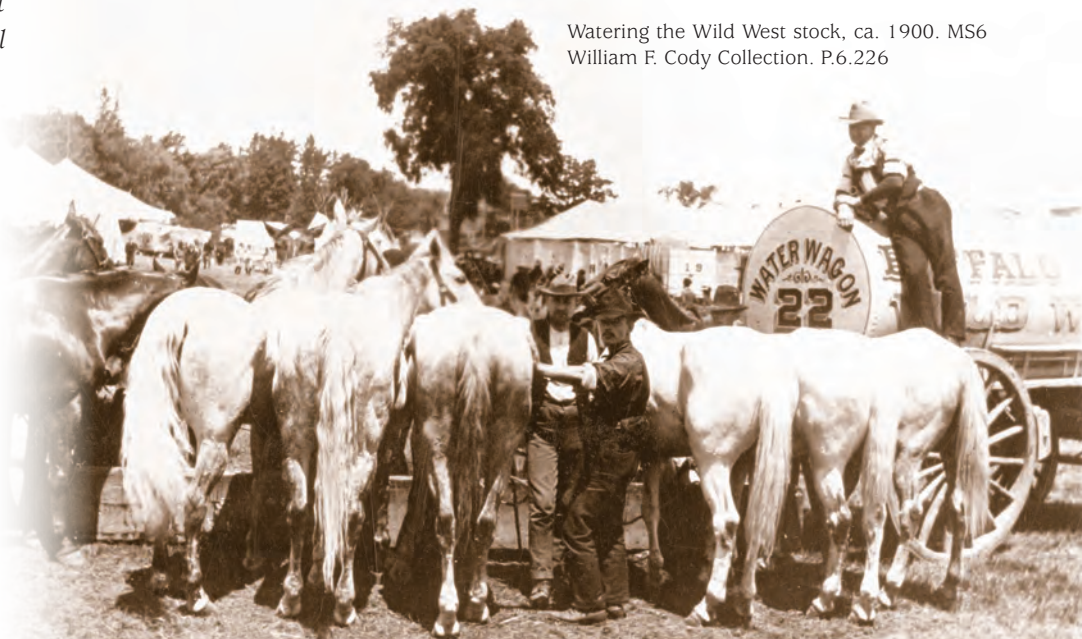
••••

In 1901, the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad recognized the futility of trying to make employees report to work at the booming Altoona railroad shops and declared

a holiday when Buffalo Bill's exposition kicked up dust in town.

••••

Marketgoers dropped their coin at Buffalo Bill's Wild West and not into York shopkeepers' pockets on Friday, May 22, 1908. The *York Gazette* reported, "When a show is in town...the city markets appear...deserted. In fact, the markets were the duller of the season..."



Watering the Wild West stock, ca. 1900. MS6 William F. Cody Collection. P.6.226



Moderately priced fish in large quantities could not lure buyers in although, "The attendance of farmers for a short time was very encouraging, but this did not last long when the band began to play at the 'Wild West' show."

••••

In March 1898, shortly before the show season opened, Buffalo Bill stirred up a buzz when he arrived in Coatesville. After rounding up his stock (six bison and a couple hundred horses) from local farms, "A large number of people gathered at the [Pennsylvania Railroad] freight station to see them loaded into the cars."

## The Wild West comes to town

A route book from Buffalo Bill's Wild West states that in 1898 the show transported 329 show horses along

with six mules for performances and an additional 118 draft horses to haul the show's tents and supplies between rail yards and show grounds. At least six bison traveled with these horses. In 1899, traveling with an equally sized herd, agents for Buffalo Bill's Wild West purchased 12 tons of hay and straw plus more than 200 bushels of feed from C.F. Finegan and Company in Chester, Pennsylvania. This fed the Wild West's stock for the one day that the show performed in Chester.

Area farmers profited from feeding contracts and stable leases, while local businesses benefited from feed sales, veterinary and farrier needs of the livestock, as well as room and board for the show's performers. On March 24, 1902, the *West Chester Daily Local News* reported:

---

**"As an aid to digestion, riding a bucking bronco may be recommended"**

---

••••

The big Wild West show of Hon. W.F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," is rehearsing at the farm where the animals are kept over winter every year...A large number of cowboys and Mr. Cody are at the place, the latter superintending the work. There

were a large number of visitors from Coatesville and other places at the farm yesterday to see the horses and the six buffaloes. Late last season a large number of horses belonging to the show were killed

in a railroad wreck and new ones have since been purchased. It is necessary to train the new animals for their various tricks and to get the entire show into shape for the road. It will start out for the season in a few weeks.

The Wild West parade brings out the crowds, ca. 1890. MS6 William F. Cody Collection. P.6.215





Busting bucking broncos also drew crowds, and Wild West press agents recognized the excitement it generated. Earlier, one wrote in 1897, “As an aid to digestion riding a bucking bronco may be recommended – It is unique in this – that there is nothing like it. As an exercise it combines the advantages of riding on an express wagon without springs and traveling up and down on a swiftly running elevator.” This sounds more like a recipe for indigestion! Tough cowboys and Indians who dared ride unbroken horses discovered, “there seems to be no fixed limit as to the number of revolutions per minute” attained

---

“an apocalypse  
of horsemanship,  
living romantic  
history”

---

by a bucking bronco. “It may stand up or lie down, or ‘just buck,’ but, whatever it does, it does thoroughly and with exceeding promptness.” Often, the riders promptly needed a doctor.

The show’s parades were popular with townsfolk, too. In the summer of 1897, Buffalo

Bill led the colorful Wild West parade through Harrisburg’s streets riding in a carriage pulled by two white horses. “The Prince of Showmen,” his hair a bit grayer than when he last visited, “was a picture in his broad slouch hat and double-breasted coat, with his long hair waving about his shoulders,” a writer for the *Harrisburg Telegraph*

observed. The writer continued, “It isn’t often our citizens can stand at their own doors and witness a cavalcade of natives, such as was presented to our wondering eyes in this morning’s parade of Buffalo Bill’s great show. So, to do honor to this red letter event the entire town forsook its usual haunts and camped on the curbstones. And it is safe to say not one of the great crowd – not even the habitual grumbler – was disappointed.”

Later that day, tickets sold out for the show’s two exhibitions when, according to the *Harrisburg Patriot*, “Perhaps never in the history of Harrisburg have two such enormous audiences witnessed any outdoor performance as assembled on the Sixth [S]treet grounds...” Enjoying a pleasant spring day with temperatures in the upper seventies, an estimated 26,000 people attended both shows including, “not a few of the German Baptist Brethren and their families...” A German Baptist conference convened the same day as Buffalo Bill’s show, and showmen mistakenly anticipated smaller crowds. Noting some of the strict churchmen at the Wild West, their presence indicated that, “either the peculiar fascination that the circus has for the average person was too strong...or they deemed the performance instructive, rather than amusing.” That day, approximately a thousand spectators watched from behind ropes in the



Entrance to Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Pawnee Bill's Far East, ca. 1911. David R. Phillips Collection. PN.47.5





standing-room-only section at each performance, and another four thousand disappointed citizens went home unable to get tickets at all.

## The Wild West show by the numbers

From a financial standpoint, Wild West management took the show where the people lived and where it could enjoy the largest crowds. Pennsylvania's economy boomed at the turn of the twentieth century (fueled by industry and natural resource extraction) and provided a rich pool of humanity from which to feed the coffers of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. Some revealing facts emerge from a quick analysis of statistics contained within the 1899 show season Route Book.

During the five years 1895 - 1899, Buffalo Bill's Wild West played to more towns than during any other time in its history, traveling 49,172 miles throughout the United States by railroad, an average of 9,834 miles per year. During that time, 10 percent of all the show's stands (each in a different town) appeared in Pennsylvania (63 out of 632). New York hosted 10.1 percent, and Massachusetts hosted 7.8 percent to round out the top three venues at this time.

Seen through twenty-first century eyes, the Wild West tour schedule appears grueling. In 1898, Buffalo Bill's Wild West covered a total distance of 10,253 railroad miles,

barnstormed through 26 states, and erected its tents in 133 different towns. In 200 days, the Wild West performed 347 shows, not including parades. Of course the show's hardy performers, all of them rough and tumble men and women, met the challenge. They faithfully delivered "an apocalypse of horsemanship, living romantic history" and "heroic, realistic action" day after day.

Buffalo Bill traveled with an entourage displaying military precision when transporting and erecting the show tents. In fact, European armies modeled their railroad movements and logistics after the Wild West's efficient operation which would later contribute to the conduct of World War I. In 1898, Colonel Cody's "army" consisted of 467 people, more

than 450 horses, 35 baggage wagons, two water tanks, two steam engines (to generate electricity), four buggies, two prairie schooners, two field pieces, two caissons, as well as the Deadwood stagecoach.

Lighting equipment included the double electric dynamos ("the largest portable ones ever made") generating 250 candlepower as well as 76 arc lamps strung around the arena. The horseshoe-shaped canvas-covered bleachers seated 20,000 spectators and encompassed a five acre arena. Show tents consisted of 23,000 square yards of canvas, needed 1,100 tent stakes, used twenty miles of rope, and required 11 acres of show grounds.

Typically, advance men arrived a day or two before the show to purchase



Workmen set up a tent at Buffalo Bill's Wild West, ca. 1895. MS6 William F. Cody Collection. P.6.228a

The entire troupe of Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Pawnee Bill's Far East, 1909. William Cody Boal Collection. P.69.1230.1



Copyright 1909  
by Stacy  
Brooklyn, NY



supplies. In 1908, while in York, Wild West agents purchased \$200 worth of hay, straw, and oats from Strayer and Brothers Company. In 1911, Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Pawnee Bill's Far East traveled with 600 head of stock (including elephants) which consumed 20 tons of hay and 300 bushels of oats during its one day stand in Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. Two years later, the *York Daily* noted the presence of Wild West purchasing agents in York the day before the "Two Bills Show" performed and noted that the show's caterer, responsible for feeding 780 people three times a day, routinely purchased all supplies from the merchants of each town where the show performed.

After the evening performance, workers disassembled everything, hauled it all to the rail yard, and loaded the show trains which traveled through the night to the next town. The mess wagon left the show grounds first so it could roll off the train early in the next town, maximizing the cooks' preparation time to feed the cast and crew. During the train ride, the company squeezed in a little sleep on the crowded, noisy, and swaying railcars.

William F. Cody spoke highly of the arena which his Wild West transported

from city to city and erected for each show. In the final analysis though, which arena did Buffalo Bill really ride into? An arena shaped like a horse-shoe, lit by double dynamo-powered lights, and seating 20,000 people? Rather, Buffalo Bill rode into the larger arena of Pennsylvania where the entire state watched his show with a unique perspective into the changes taking place in American society at the end of the nineteenth century. ■

*Plan to see the scale model of the Wild West in the "new" Buffalo Bill*

*gallery opening at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center on May 19, 2012. Read more at [www.bbhc.org](http://www.bbhc.org) and in the summer 2012 issue of Points West.*

An independent historian, Wes Stauffer earned a master's degree in American Studies from Penn State's Harrisburg campus. His thesis explored William F. Cody's Wild West connections to Pennsylvania. His resumé includes work as an archaeologist and in wildlife conservation. (For a complete list of works cited, e-mail [editor@bbhc.org](mailto:editor@bbhc.org).)



Buffalo Bill in the Wild West arena, ca. 1900. David R. Phillips Collection. PN.47.7



Wild West show grounds in Europe, ca. 1891. Gift of Thomas P. Isbell. P.69.1512





Black and white negative by Jack Richard (1909 – 1992). Immature great-horned owl in a tree at the TE Ranch on the South Fork, 1966. Jack Richard Collection. PN.89.43.9048.1

Raptors make good portrait subjects. You'll see that on our cover and in our feature story earlier in these pages introducing you to the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience, one of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center's most exciting new programs. A great-horned owl named Teasdale is one of the four photogenic birds of the Raptor Experience.

Great-horned owls are native to this area, and in fact are the most common owl of the Americas. This image of a fledgling great-horned owl (*bubo virginianus*) was taken in 1966 along the South Fork of the Shoshone River near Cody, Wyoming. Probably about six weeks old and fresh from the nest, the owl was captured on film by Jack Richard, a Cody-area journalist and professional photographer well-represented in our digital image collection. ■

■ *One picture is worth a thousand words.* ■

The McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center offers access to thousands of historic images for research and publication. To learn more, contact the library at 307.578.4063, or search the online collections at <http://library.bbhc.org/cdm/>



**BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER**

720 Sheridan Avenue  
Cody, Wyoming 82414  
[www.bbhc.org](http://www.bbhc.org)


Non-Profit Org.  
POSTAGE PAID  
Buffalo Bill  
Historical Center

## *Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience*

Since September 2011, the Greater Yellowstone Raptor Experience has engaged more than 4,500 visitors who have had the chance to see beautiful live birds up close and find out more about the fascinating animals from the staff and volunteers who present the programs. The birds and their handlers will be traveling to schools around the region in the upcoming months.

The Raptor Experience was made possible by the generosity of the William H. Donner foundation and the Donner Canadian Foundation. Private contributions provide support for many of the exhibits and programs the Center offers. If you would like to participate in “promoting and preserving the Spirit of the American West” with programs like this, we encourage you to support the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Go to [www.bbhc.org/get-involved](http://www.bbhc.org/get-involved), or call 307.578.4008 today.





# 50% OFF

*Select Native American rugs*

*Rare and out-of-print books*

Available in our store, online at [www.bbhcstore.com](http://www.bbhcstore.com), or by calling 800.533.3838

**Museum Store**

720 Sheridan Ave. | Toll Free: 800.533.3838 | Cody, WY 82414 | [www.bbhcstore.com](http://www.bbhcstore.com)