

Ten Things You Should Know about the McCracken Research Library

1. The McCracken Research Library is a resource for information on the American West, with subject strengths in the following areas: William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody and the American West; Plains Indians peoples; western art and artists; American firearms; and Greater Yellowstone natural history.
2. The McCracken is a special collections library with rare books and original materials in a variety of formats, such as sound recordings, account books, sheet music, postcards, brochures, posters, maps, scrapbooks, and historic newspapers.
3. The library facility is located on the lower level under the Buffalo Bill Museum wing and adjacent to the Duncan Special Exhibitions gallery. The facility includes a gallery where visitors can learn more about the library collections and services. Vaults and workrooms ring the gallery on three sides but are located behind secure doors. The reading room is a public space intended for research and available by appointment only.
4. The library is the repository for historic photograph collections (as distinct from collection photos of museum objects). Patrons who wish to examine original photographs need an appointment in advance to see collections. Patrons who want to request reproductions and already know what images they want should contact the Rights & Reproductions office. More than 70,000 digital images are available to browse online.
5. The library staff will answer general questions related to the subject matter of the five museums. The staff can help with specific questions about *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* show personnel, the show routes, and the show's general operation. Though the library does not have walk-in visitor hours, librarians will help answer questions via e-mail and telephone.
6. The library was dedicated in 1980 as a research center for the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. However, a reading room with books and photographs was established almost from the beginning in 1927 in the original Buffalo Bill Museum. Many of the first donations of books and photographs came from the family of William F. Cody.
7. Library holdings can be browsed through an online catalog, WYLD CAT, the Wyoming Libraries Database Catalog, which is available through the Center website, or through OCLC World Cat.
8. Rare books in the McCracken relate to the early Anglo-American exploration of the West, to government surveys, and to the native peoples and their customs and religions as recorded in government-sponsored fieldwork, such as the reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Many rare books are important because of their fine illustrations, lithographs, or woodcuts.
9. The McCracken enjoys the support of a board of advisors which meets twice a year. Museum operating funds, private funds, and grants make the library programs possible. The library employs four full-time staff, several part-time staff, and a number of interns and volunteers.
10. The library has no connection to the merchandise and books in the Museum Store and does not ordinarily sell books. Occasionally the library will offer duplicate copies of books for sale to the public. Proceeds benefit the library acquisition fund.