



Can anyone use the library or is it for museum members only?

Museum visitors, researchers, and local residents may use the library, though an appointment in advance is required to view archival materials. A book catalog is searchable through the museum website, and most finding guides to manuscript collections can be browsed online as well. Exhibits in the library gallery on the lower level offer an introduction to the library collections. Contact the library director or reference desk for more information.

What is in the collections and can I check books out?

The library collections reflect the five museum collections and are closely tied in subject matter to them. There are approximately 500 manuscript collections, approximately one million photographs, and 36,000 books, including rare books. Subject strengths include the cultures of the Great Plains peoples and the exploration of the region by Anglo-Americans. While there are important collections related to western art and artists and American firearms, the largest archive is the William F. Cody Collection. Digital images for browsing and scholarship currently available number more than 70,000 items. Books and other materials are for use only in the library.

How can I find out if [person X] was in Buffalo Bill's Wild West or an acquaintance of William F. Cody?

If you have reason to believe that a family member or friend had a connection to Buffalo Bill's Wild West or to William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, you may contact the library by phone or e-mail for information. The library holds a database of all the names of people documented in the archive with a connection to Buffalo Bill, whether family, friends, employees, or star performers.

Does the McCracken library have genealogical information? How can I find out if [person X] is related to William F. Cody?

With very few exceptions, the genealogical records in the McCracken relate to the family of William F. Cody. If you have reason to believe that someone you know is related to Cody, you may make an appointment to view genealogical reference works in the library.

Does the McCracken have local history records?

There are important local history collections in the library related to the establishment of the town of Cody, to area cattle ranching and dude ranching, and to reclamation. Significant photographic collections document the activities and interests of Buffalo Bill in Cody, life on the Crow and Northern Cheyenne reservations in southern Montana, and frontier life in the West. In the main, the McCracken is not a local history library. We recommend contacting the Park County Archives for local history.

Does the library accept donations, what kinds of materials are of interest, and how do I find out the value of items?

The library accepts donations of books, manuscript materials, and photographs. We reserve the right to select materials and to retain only those items that are relevant to the collection. Arrangements to donate items should be made by contacting the staff in advance. Center employees are prevented by law from appraising objects. Patrons wishing to donate items for tax purposes will need to arrange for an independent appraisal.

What is *The Papers of William F. Cody* project?

The Papers of William F. Cody is a collaborative project with the McCracken Research Library and editors from several American and European universities. The project fosters scholarship on the life and legacy of William F. Cody through print and digital publications. *The Papers* provides open access to resources held by the McCracken Research Library, other archival institutions, and private collections. The staff of *The Papers* is housed in a separate location within the Center.

Who was Harold McCracken and why was the library named for him?

Dr. Harold McCracken was the founding director of the Whitney Western Art Museum (formerly the Whitney Gallery of Western Art) and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West (formerly the Buffalo Bill Historical Center). The library was named for him to honor his life-long search for knowledge and his devotion to research and scholarship.

What are the library hours and services offered throughout the year?

The library is open weekdays year-round, 8 a.m. to noon, and 1 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., by appointment. The library staff offer research support and provide answers to inquiries by phone and e-mail. Questions requiring more than 30 minutes of a librarian's time may incur charges.

Can I conduct firearms research in the library?

The McCracken holds important collections related to the design and manufacture of American firearms. While the original production records of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company and other important firearms companies are held in the library, serial number searches are conducted in the Cody Firearms Museum Records Office, which also issues factory letters of authentication. The library offers general and specialized resources on the history of firearms and encourages research on this subject.