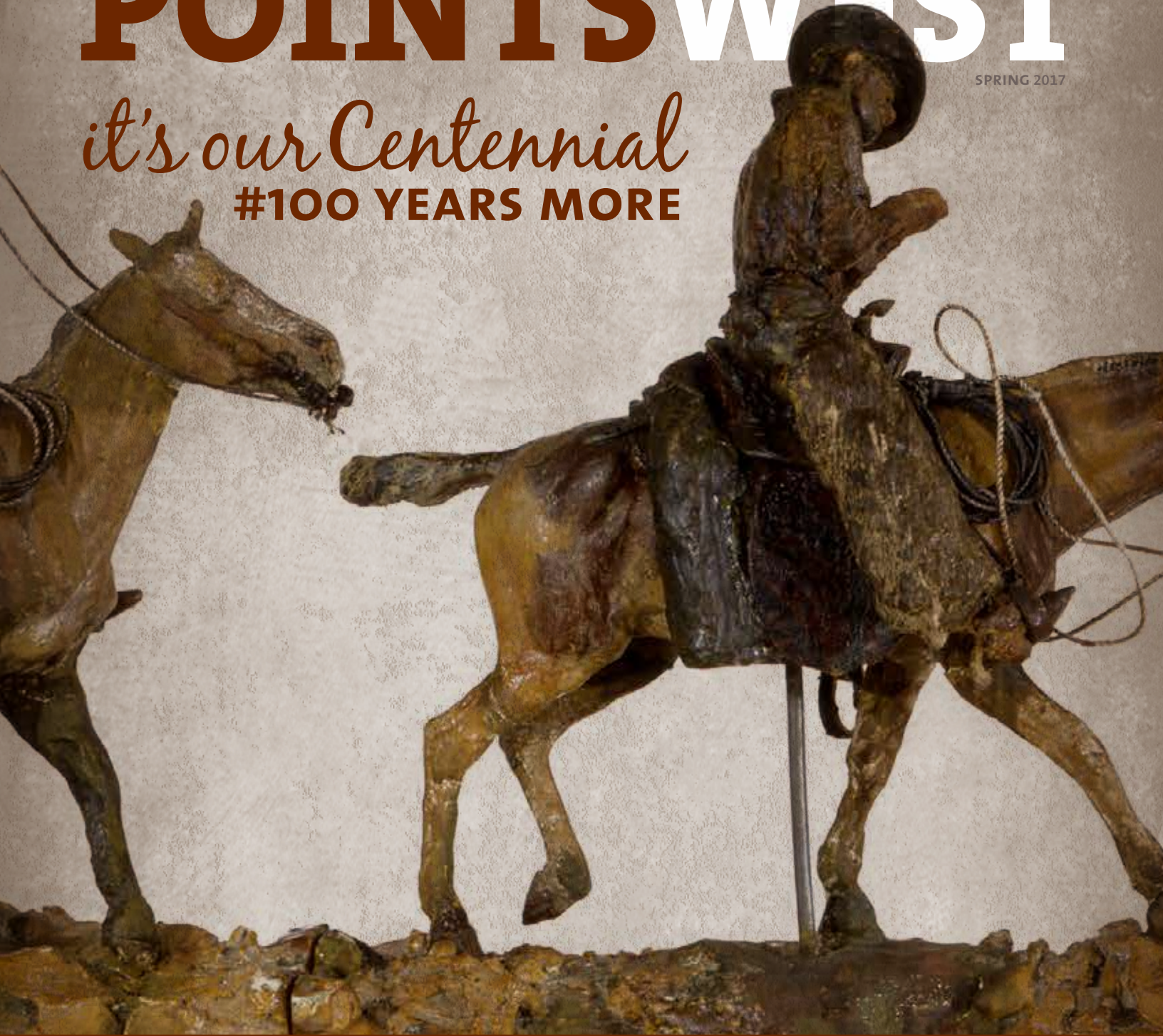


POINTS WEST

SPRING 2017

it's our Centennial
#100 YEARS MORE



- *Preserving Buffalo Bill's legacy*
- *Alaska Man*
- *The Papers of William F. Cody:
10 years later*



100

YEARS 1917-2017

BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

to the point

BY BRUCE ELDREDGE | *Executive Director*



Cody. Beck. Rumsey. Allen. Coe. Simpson. Shaw. McCracken. Goppert.

...and the list goes on and on.

As our Centennial year gets underway, you're sure to see and hear these names, and many more as the year progresses. An organization like the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association can't point to any one individual for its successes—except maybe William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody in our case. One hundred years in existence means that hundreds of supporters have shared a love for the American West and Buffalo Bill's vision. For 2017, we're putting it this way:

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody was the consummate storyteller and enthusiastic student of history. More than a century ago, as his Wild West played in arenas around the world, Buffalo Bill contemplated his legacy. He dreamed of a new arena that would “teach people by seeing history.” For more than 100 years, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West has nurtured Cody's dream, teaching and sharing the West he loved. As we enter our second century, his dream continues to shape and define how the Center celebrates the Spirit of the American West.

As a museum, we have countless objects that convey the storied past of the West. We take very seriously our charge to care for the art and artifacts we've been tasked to manage. By the same token, we're equally committed to sharing the Spirit of the American West in the present. Author Herman Melville (1818 – 1891), of *Moby Dick* fame, wrote, “We should, if possible, prove a teacher to posterity, instead of being the pupil of by-gone generations. More shall come after us than have gone before; the world is not yet middle-aged.”

Indeed, within the pages that follow, and in the issues to come, we're sharing stories of yesterday and today, and planning for our posterity in the next century. We've woven the Centennial theme throughout each narrative and are certain that you'll come to really know and appreciate those who have made our success possible. ■

About the cover:



The very first object officially accessioned into the collection of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association: Charles M. Russell (1864 – 1926). *Changing Outfits*, n.d. Wax. 12.5 x 11.75 x 8.75 inches. Gift of Dr. Armand Hammer and Charles Stone Jones. 1.58

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Points West is published three times a year for patrons and friends of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. For more information, contact the editor at the address above.

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West 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 science 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 members and friends. *Points West* uses a multi-disciplinary strategy to connect the reader to the nature and culture of the American West, and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in particular, through exceptional images and appealing, reader-friendly stories.

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HIGHLIGHTS



Alaska Man | In this ambition, [Harold] McCracken was remarkably successful as he became the “Alaska Man” to East Coast radio audiences and magazine readers in the 1920s.



The Papers of William F. Cody: 10 years later | We’ve barely scratched the surface; this [project] could go on for twenty-five years and still not be done.

VISIT US ONLINE | Stay in touch with all that’s happening at the Center of the West. Keep an eye on our website; follow us in social media; and sign up today at centerofthewest.org/e-news-signup to receive our e-newsletter *Western Wire*.

Points West is the magazine of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, Wyoming.

🌐 **Smithsonian Affiliations**

Even though the Buffalo Bill Museum opened in 1927 with a handsome collection of important relics, the process of officially accessioning art and artifacts into the Center’s collections didn’t begin until 1958. The Center added four objects that year, the first being Charlie Russell’s wax sculpture pictured on the cover, and then these three works. Surprisingly, *Buffalo Bill—the Scout* was not the first object accessioned—nor the second!



(Far left) H.H. Cross (1837 – 1918). *The Victor*, 1878. Oil on canvas. 94.25 x 70 inches. Originally hung in the Irma Hotel. Original Buffalo Bill Museum Collection. 2.58

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875 – 1942) *Buffalo Bill—the Scout*, 1924. Bronze. 149 x 84 x 138 inches. Gift of the artist. 3.58

T. Kirkbridge (unknown). *Buffalo Bill*, 1890. Oil on canvas. 30 x 25 inches. Presented to Buffalo Bill Memorial Association by Victor Weybright in 1958. 4.58



4

THREE WOMEN WHO PRESERVED BUFFALO BILL’S LEGACY

Cody to the World was a compelling account of visions, aspirations, and accomplishments that have reached well beyond local, regional, and national expectations.

It highlighted hundreds of devoted individuals and groups who helped shape the incredible story of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, from U.S. presidents and senators to extraordinary and ordinary townspeople of Cody...But of those countless contributors, three women stand out as inordinately significant.



William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, ca. 1900. P.69.1988

Unless otherwise indicated, all images are found in the Center's MS 006 William F. Cody Collection.

THREE WOMEN



WHO PRESERVED BUFFALO BILL'S LEGACY

BY PETER H. HASSRICK

At last, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West is now in its Centennial year! Throughout 2017, Points West shares many stories of notables—individuals who were instrumental to the Center's success within the last one hundred years. Here, Peter Hassrick, the Center's Director Emeritus and Senior Scholar, shares observations about three extraordinary women in particular.

In 1992, on the occasion of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association's 75th anniversary, the museum issued a book titled *From Cody to the World* authored by eminent western historian Richard A. Bartlett. Even today, at the Center's Centennial, its chapters provide a compelling account of visions, aspirations, and accomplishments that have reached well beyond local, regional, and national expectations. Bartlett highlighted hundreds of devoted individuals and groups who helped shape the incredible story of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, from U.S. presidents and senators to extraordinary and ordinary townspeople of Cody.

But of those countless contributors, three women stand out as inordinately significant: William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody's niece Mary Jester



Fig. 1: Portrait, Mary Jester Allen, early 1920s. P.69.0178

Allen who became the founding director of the Buffalo Bill Museum; philanthropist and sculptor Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney who added art and wherewithal to the equation; and newspaper woman and gracious visionary Peg Coe who with brilliance and savoir faire led the museum's board for more than two decades.

Buffalo Bill died in 1917. Some years earlier, seated on the porch of his famous TE Ranch west of the town that bears his name, he reflected on the way he might like to be remembered. Cody, among his many talents, was a committed educator. His Wild West extravaganzas were referred to as expositions rather than shows, and he truly felt they provided learning experiences for audiences from around the world. By 1916 his touring career had come to a close, but his dream of using experiential learning to foster an enduring understanding of western life in its multiple forms enabled him to think big that day.

Mary Jester Allen (1875 – 1960)

On Colonel Cody's conceptual horizon appeared what he called a "home-ranch museum" that would include, for example, opportunities for showing "people how the western pioneer lived and worked." At the same time he looked back into history, Cody pledged to consider the future. He hoped



Fig. 2: Dedication of the new Buffalo Bill Museum, Cody, Wyoming, July 4, 1927. F.J. Hiscock photo. MS 228 Buffalo Bill Museum Photographs Collection. PN.228.111

such a facility would succeed, for example, by "teaching the youth by seeing history."

Mary Jester Allen (Fig. 1) recounted this story time and again, employing it as the genesis narrative behind her early efforts to establish a museum in her uncle's name. Determined to keep Cody's chronicle alive in the town of his founding, she helped orchestrate a \$5,000 memorial

appropriation from the State of Wyoming in 1917 into a brand new \$22,000 log structure that proudly opened its doors in 1927 as the Buffalo Bill Museum (Fig. 2). No matter that much of the money was borrowed, a start was made, a dream realized, and, as the *Cody Enterprise* announced, the initiative was duly sanctified, the site being claimed "consecrated as Western and sacred."

In 1960, after nearly forty years of primary involvement, Mary Jester Allen visited the museum for the last time. Through those ensuing decades, she guided the museum, watched it grow into a multi-structured facility, shepherded it through a depression and two world wars, and helped enrich its holdings. Along with the dazzling legal acumen of the board's chairman, Ernest J. Goppert, Sr., she helped return the museum to a private venture after it had been relinquished to the City of Cody during the war years of the 1940s. She oversaw the acquisition and transport of Buffalo Bill's boyhood home from Le Claire, Iowa, to Cody in 1933 (Fig. 3). And she was, to her dying day, a stalwart defender of William F. Cody and his dream for the future promise of history through museums. Thanks to Mary Jester Allen, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West was born, nurtured, and started on its way to what would become the formidable institution it is today.



Fig. 3: Buffalo Bill's boyhood home arrives at the original Buffalo Bill Museum under the watchful eye of Curator Mary Jester Allen. P.69.1381



Fig. 4: Sculptress Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, 1920. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC 20540 USA. LC-USZ62-111853



Fig. 5: Cheyenne-Deadwood stagecoach in Wild West arena, undated. P.69.1899

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875 – 1942)

About a decade before Cody died, he featured his Wild West in New York City at Madison Square Garden. The year was 1909 and in the audience one night, in a VIP booth, was the socialite and artist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (Fig. 4). She brought two of her children to experience the event—her daughter Flora and her 10-year-old son Cornelius. To their collective amazement, Buffalo Bill had a life-changing experience in store for them. The second act on most Wild West programs was the Deadwood Stage (Fig. 5). Following Cody's traditional welcome, the stagecoach rumbled into the arena, circling it once. On the second round, Indians attacked it, and then on the third, a group of cowboys rode out to "save" the coach.

On the night the Whitney family attended the performance, the coach driver stopped in front of the Whitney booth and hollered over to Mrs. Whitney, "Would young Mr. Whitney like to ride in the coach this evening?" Of course, he would! He leapt over the barriers and climbed into the historic coach. From there he was swished around the arena, attacked by the Indians, rescued by the cowboys, and then dropped, emotionally spent, back in Mama's lap. "What a thrill!" he later wrote. He would never forget it.



Fig. 6: Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney with her *Buffalo Bill—the Scout*, ca. 1924. P.69.0517

Years would pass until the time, 1917, when Mary Jester Allen needed something special to commemorate Buffalo Bill's place in Wyoming—in Cody to be specific. That year, she and the board of the nascent Buffalo Bill Memorial Association initiated the idea that a commemorative, heroic-sized statue of the

Colonel would be in order. One of the board members—probably popular dude ranch impresario Larry Larom—suggested Mrs. Whitney. She was internationally renowned as a sculptor of monumental bronzes; she was devotedly American in her persuasions; and she held a special place in her heart for Buffalo Bill, in part at least because of his courtesy to her son.

After much hemming and hawing, Mrs. Allen worked up sufficient courage to knock on the artist's door to ask if she might consider the commission. Allen had \$5,000 to offer and the dream of playing a significant role in perpetuating Buffalo Bill's legacy. It wasn't long after she was admitted to Whitney's studio that Allen realized that she "wasn't selling Mrs. Whitney Wyoming, the Wild West, Cody, or the Colonel. She was selling me." The commission was granted (Fig. 6): Mrs. Whitney would take the job, pay all the bills, and leave Allen with a lifted heart and a purse still full of cash.

Cornelius and his mother took a trip to Yellowstone National Park in 1922. From the geysers, they drove east to Cody. "It was there," wrote Cornelius later, "that we met Buffalo Bill's niece, Mary Jester Allen." The two women were "very simpatico" as they searched for the proper site for Whitney's sculpture, the *Scout*, that was taking shape back in New York. Not only did they



Fig. 7: Very little surrounded *Buffalo Bill—the Scout* after its dedication in 1924. MS 228 Buffalo Bill Museum Photos. PN.228.167

find a location, but, Cornelius recalled, “my mother purchased forty acres of land” for the Association on which “to create a museum complex of western art” someday. When the Scout was dedicated on July 4, 1924, it was silhouetted against Rattlesnake Mountain to the north (Fig. 7) and looked back over the land on which the future Whitney Western Art Museum would eventually be built.

Mrs. Whitney passed away in 1942. Her final wishes for her children were that Flora would take over stewardship of the burgeoning Whitney Museum of American Art her mother had launched in New York a decade earlier. As for Cornelius, Mrs. Whitney beseeched him that he might support that Cody “museum complex of western art” at some point should the trustees ever commit to collecting art in a serious way.

Following the Second World War, probably in the late 1940s, Cornelius received an invitation from Mrs. Allen to visit Cody again, attend a summer rodeo, and meet some of the Buffalo Bill Museum’s board members. He responded in the affirmative and was totally enthralled by the warm welcome that was lavished on him. He met the board chairman, Ernest J. Goppert, Sr.; Buffalo Bill’s grandson, Freddy Garlow; and the museum’s future chairman, Peg Coe (Fig. 8). They spoke of Mrs. Whitney’s dream, but it was pie-in-the-sky because the museum, at that point, had very little

art—not much more than a few portraits of the Colonel. That simply would not have satisfied Mrs. Whitney’s requirements.

Margaret “Peg” Coe (1917 – 2006)

Then, about a decade later, the Coe family stepped forward to further the cause. The family patriarch, W.R. Coe, had passed away in 1955 and left a sizable trust that became the Coe Foundation. His children managed that foundation, and two of them were connected to the Buffalo Bill Museum—Henry H.R. Coe as a trustee, and the Honorable Robert Coe as an avid supporter. About 1957, the Coe Foundation purchased a remarkable group of art and artifacts, the Frederic Remington Studio Collection. Then, the foundation gave it to the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association, and that gift became the leverage that persuaded Cornelius to fund a new museum for art of the American West in his mother’s name. Thus, in 1959, the Whitney Gallery of Western Art (today’s Whitney Western Art Museum) was born (Fig. 9).

Cornelius attended the opening of the new gallery and was so impressed with the extraordinary installation of works the new director, Harold McCracken, had assembled (most on loan from the New York art dealer M. Knoedler & Co.) that Cornelius



(L – R) Henry Coe, Robert D. Coe, and Mrs. Henry “Peg” Coe, April 23 – 24, 1959, at the grand opening of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, today’s Whitney Western Art Museum. MS 089 Jack Richard Photograph Collection. PN.89.23.3890.41

offered to double his initial construction gift of \$250,000 so that the museum might purchase some of the best works. Therefore, the collection of art had increased several fold overnight (Fig. 10).

When Henry H.R. Coe died in 1966, his widow, Margaret “Peg” Coe, took his place on the Association’s Board of Trustees.

THREE WOMEN



Fig 9: Tresler & McCall's architectural renderings for the design of "the Whitney," 1958.



Fig. 10: Museum Director Harold McCracken (L) and Marylou and Cornelius Whitney in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, September 15, 1968. MS 089 Jack Richard Photograph Collection. PN.89.50.10158.11

Before that, her mother, Effie Shaw, had been a longtime board member as well. Within ten years, in 1976, given her personal charisma, social poise, managerial savvy, and clarity of vision, Peg was elected chairman, a role she would hold for the next twenty-three years before stepping down in 1999.

Cornelius had been charmed by Peg early on, and he, too, became a trustee. Together the benefactor and the chairman worked closely to further not only Mrs. Whitney's wishes through many enhancements and collection additions to the Whitney, but to spearhead the substantial growth of the larger institution, what was then called the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

Under Peg's aegis, the facility doubled in size to add the Plains Indian Museum, the Cody Firearms Museum, and the McCracken Research Library. She boldly advocated for the inclusion of Northern Plains tribal representatives as advisors in the conception and perpetuation of the Plains Indian Museum (Fig. 11). She also insisted on professionalism within the museum, and pushed successfully to have the institution officially accredited by the American Association of Museums (now the American Alliance of Museums), and formally aligned with the Association of Art Museum Directors. Like Mrs. Whitney before her, Peg was a lover of art and encouraged the museum's staff to pursue major art exhibitions and scholarship throughout her tenure as chairman.

Furthering the Whitney family's philanthropy, Peg used her considerable persuasive powers to build the museum's physical plant and its endowments. The first endowment had come from the Coe Foundation, a gift of approximately a half million dollars. Following the counsel of fellow board member William E. Weiss, Peg championed what was then known as the "60/40 rule." Any new construction would require that from every dollar raised, 60 percent would go toward the construction and 40 percent to endowment. By the time of her retirement as chairman, the Center's endowment had grown to more than \$30 million.

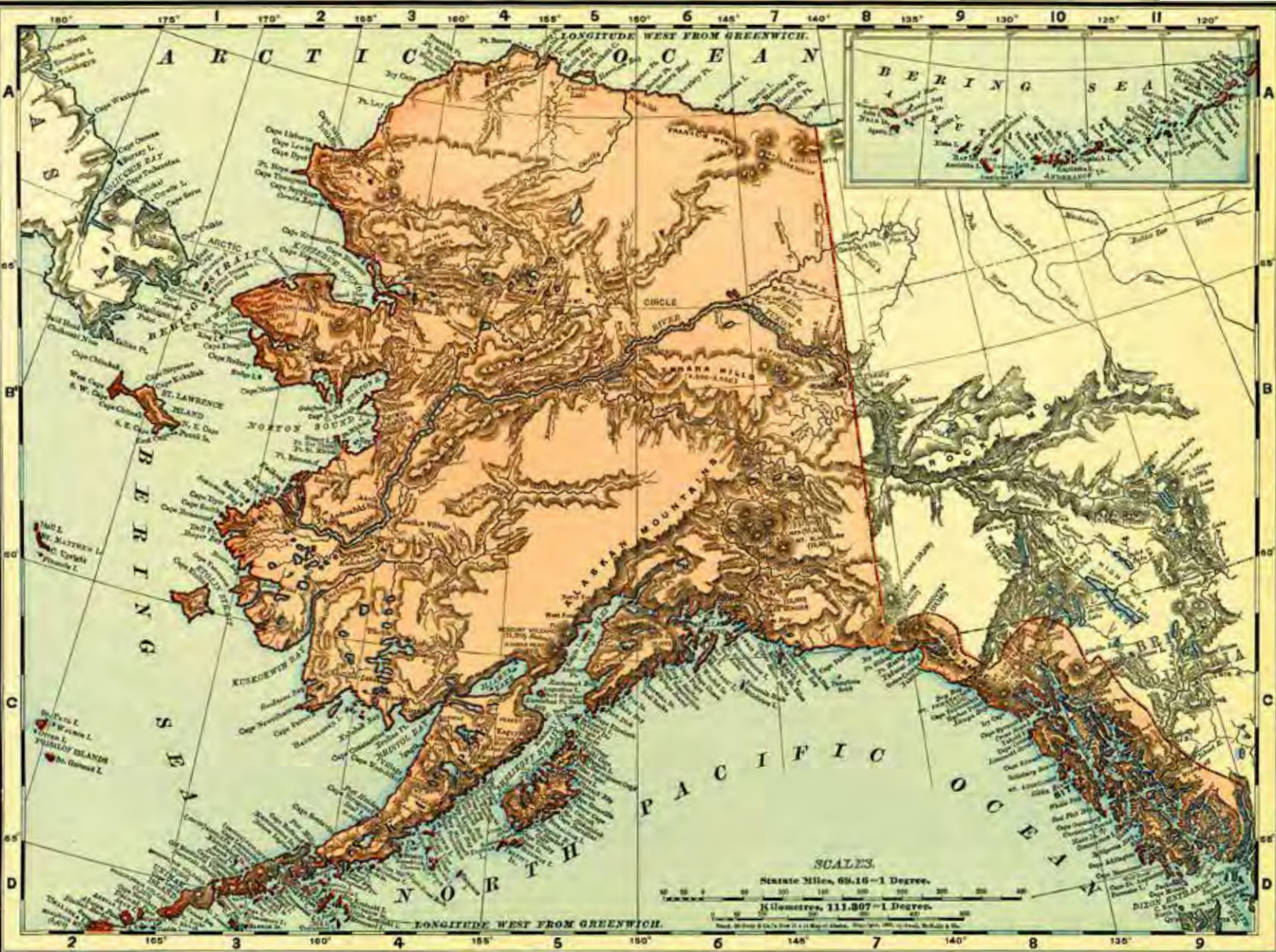
Three remarkable women—Mary Jester Allen, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, and Peg Coe—took the story of one of the nation's most masculine, heroic figures and designed plans to create an ever-growing, ever-improving museum complex with complementary programs based on his dream of teaching America about the historic West. As much as—and in most cases more than—any of the myriad players in the museum's one-hundred-year narrative, this trio is to be credited with preserving and perpetuating William F. Cody's extraordinary legacy. ■



A prolific writer and speaker, Peter Hassrick has served as guest curator of numerous exhibits nationally and internationally. He is a former twenty-year Executive Director of the Center of the West and has served tenures directing the Denver Art Museum's Petrie Institute of Western American Art, the University of Oklahoma's Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West, and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, as well as working as collections curator at the Amon Carter Museum. He is currently Director Emeritus for the Center.

Fig. 11: Plains Indian Museum groundbreaking, October 12, 1977, with Blackfeet member of the first Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board Peter Red Horn, Margaret "Peg" Coe, and Al Simpson standing behind. MS 089 Jack Richard Photograph Collection. PN.89.79.13527.12





A map of Alaska Territory in 1895. Note the coastal region, with densely identified natural features or settlements, and the relatively blank interior.

Unless otherwise noted, all images are from MS 305 Harold McCracken Photograph Collection.



**MCCRACKEN
RESEARCH LIBRARY**

ALASKA MAN

BY MARY ROBINSON

"You'd take him for a schoolmaster, precisely like a schoolmaster, or maybe a scientist. Bald-headed, spectacled, and so skinny you'd think the frost would finish him off the first cold night."

Such was one journalist's impression of Harold McCracken (Fig. 1), the young man who would become Buffalo Bill Center of the West's first director. But frost didn't "finish him off" in Alaska, and for many years, McCracken carried all that Renaissance Man gusto between Alaska and Manhattan—and numerous points in between, including the American West. As part of its Centennial celebration this spring, the Center of the West opens an exhibition to share McCracken's remarkable story, and how he ultimately found himself in Cody, Wyoming. Mary Robinson gives us a sneak peek...



Fig. 1: Young McCracken.
MS 305.02.015

Where the North begins

We don't know who captured this photograph (Fig. 2) of Harold McCracken or exactly where or when it was taken. Dressed for the North Country, McCracken poses for the camera against a blank background that effectively suspends him in time and space. He wears a skin parka, fur hat, and decorated gauntlet mittens. The delicate embroidery on the mittens reflects the sensibility of a native artist. The expressive and rather delicate features of this man suggest something harder to define—an unusual blend, perhaps, of sensitivity and resolve.

Harold McCracken was born in 1894 in Colorado, the son of a journalist father and an artist mother. As a boy, he fell under the spell of Jack London's stories. He dreamed of the Klondike, of gold strikes and giant grizzly bears, and the untamed North. While still in his teens, he left school and spent a season in the Canadian Rockies where he met the native Crees and learned how to handle himself in the wilderness. He shot and killed his first bear, and developed a passion for tracking and hunting big game. While his family relocated to the East,

Fig. 2: Harold McCracken,
ca. 1918. MS 305.05.010



eventually settling in Columbus, Ohio, the young McCracken turned his eyes to the North—and to adventure.

McCracken traveled to the Alaska Territory for the first time in 1916 when he was 21 years old. He remained through the winter of 1918 when Fig. 2 was probably taken. Then, like many of his generation, he joined America's military effort in World War I. He never saw combat, but he got his first taste of New York City while engaged in war-related work at Columbia University. After the war and through 1928, he made several extended trips to Alaska but never lived there permanently.

Men in the hood

The widely published photograph (Fig. 2), would have automatically associated McCracken in the public mind with the most famous of polar explorers, a special breed of men who had achieved unique celebrity. Articles of northern clothing, especially fur-trimmed hoods, were their signature brand. These men were the Gilded Age superheroes of Arctic fame like Robert Peary (Fig. 3) and Roald Amundsen, discoverers of the North Pole and the fabled Northwest Passage, and Captain Bob Bartlett (Fig. 4).

"Men in the hood" knew ice and snow, and the bleak landscapes of the Polar Regions. They had met the native peoples there and just as importantly, their adventures were acted out on a national stage and disseminated through mass media—the newspapers and magazines of the day. They were romantic heroes who offered average Americans an escape from the humdrum and the everyday. Readers followed their trials in the newspapers and lived vicariously through stories of hardship and daring. Many intrepid men in the hood never returned from the North.

With a capital S

By 1916, Americans fully embraced not only the heroism of northern adventurers, but also their contributions in the name of Science. Men in the hood were breaking new ground, observing and recording important information about geography and climate, and flora and fauna. They captured the unique animal species of the North for zoos, or hunted and preserved them for natural history museums. Museum



Fig. 3: Explorer Robert Peary, ca. 1909.



Fig. 4: Arctic navigator Captain Bob Bartlett, who accompanied Peary in 1909 on his North Pole expedition.

dioramas, which benefited from advances in taxidermy, featured "habitat groups" in the most life-like re-creations. They underscored a new scientific awareness: Humans could not understand wild creatures apart from their environment.

McCracken cast himself in this adventurous mode and explored in the name of Science. The announced goal of his first trip to Alaska in 1916 was to collect specimens of northern big game for a museum at Ohio State University (Fig. 5). He organized the expedition, raised money,

and managed to get into the Columbus newspapers. But as Fig. 2 suggests, McCracken went farther than the role of big game hunter: He strikes a self-dramatizing and romantic pose in his parka and beautiful mittens. He dresses like a native of the country and makes clear that, from this time forward, he is a new man. In the most basic ways, McCracken wanted to know the world of Alaska, its landscapes, native peoples, and wild creatures. He hoped to represent it—as in re-create it for others—and to embody it himself.

Alaska Man

He [the bear] was then about 200 yards off—but he looked more like a load of hay than a mere bear.

In this ambition, McCracken was remarkably successful as he became the "Alaska Man" to East Coast radio audiences and magazine readers in the 1920s. Drawing upon real adventures—and in particular on the notoriety of a hunt in 1916 that brought down one of the largest Alaskan grizzlies on record—he lectured and posed for the world in this guise (Fig. 6 & 7). He operated from New York City, which was fast becoming the epicenter of the Roaring Twenties. Soon Broadway furnished one pole of his existence and wild Alaska the other; McCracken possessed the rare, nimble temperament that could navigate both worlds.

McCracken kept himself in the public eye through his association with the northern wilderness, a place of great fascination in the 1920s. He made a remarkable trek that included winter travel by dogsled in 1922 to film Alaska brown bears as they emerged from hibernation in the spring. He talked about Alaska's native peoples and wildlife on the radio, and he published numerous articles about his hunting exploits in *Field and Stream* and other outdoor magazines (Fig. 8). By 1924, he was considered a leading authority on the Alaskan grizzly, and in 1925, he was inducted into the Explorer's Club.

Our Exhibition: Out West where the North begins

This is an American tale—one of adventures, failures, successes, and the

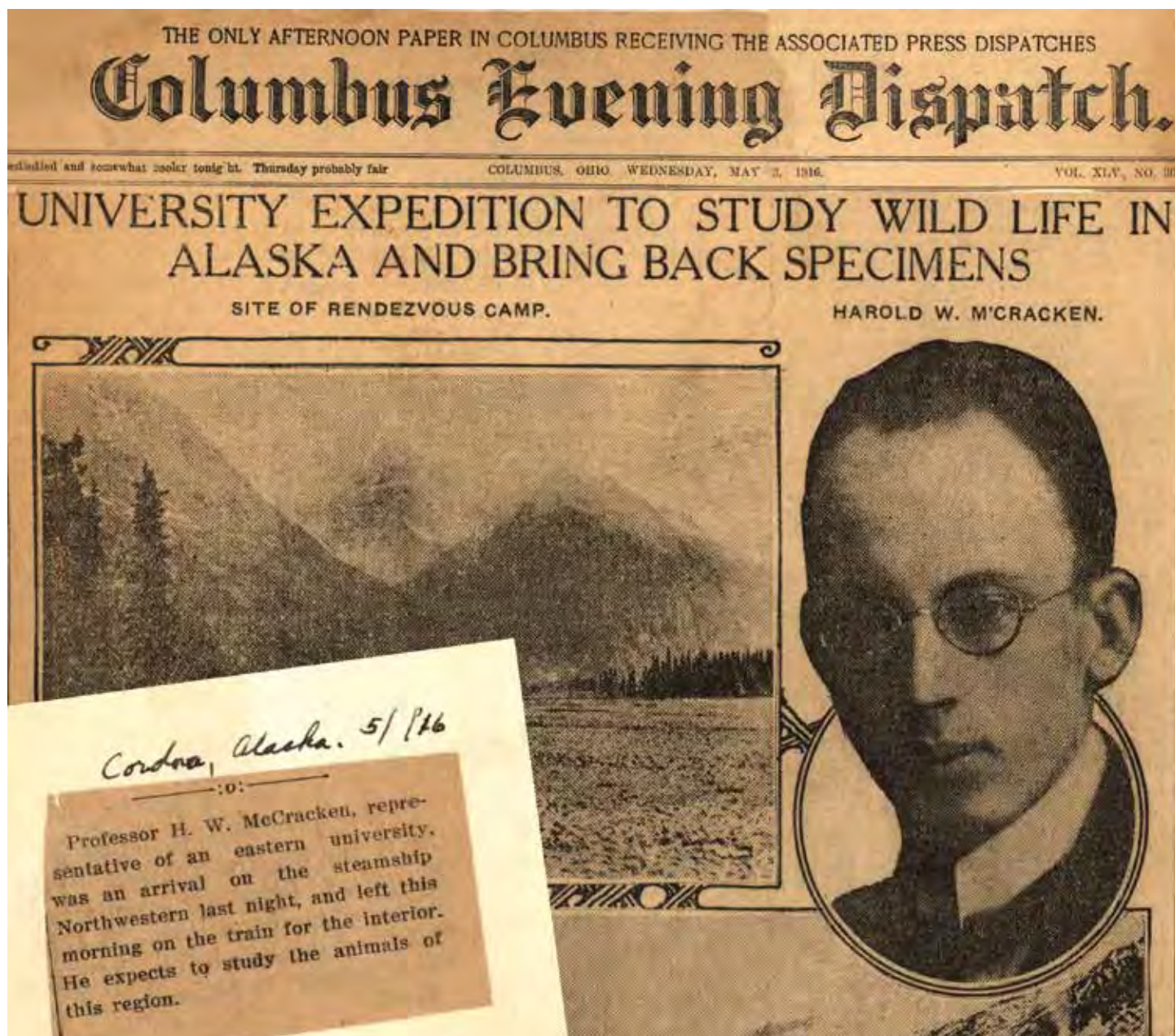


Fig. 5: *The Columbus Evening Dispatch* announces Ohio State's Alaskan expedition. MS305.01.003

forging of a heroic identity based on frontier experiences. It invites comparison to the story our museum tells of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

Today, Harold McCracken's Alaska books are mostly out of print, his films largely lost, and his northern accomplishments obscured by the passing decades. The films he made in the 1920s were silent, and his radio talks vanished into the ether. These days, scholars remember McCracken for his contributions to western art, which

launched him into a second career as a museum director rather late in life.

But the story the Center exhibition tells has as its focus the formative Alaska years. It makes clear how a man of no personal wealth and few connections relied on his native talents to craft a public identity. Harold McCracken became a figure so familiar to East Coast audiences that when he was caricatured in his fur hat, he was often not even named (Fig. 9). Along with his fellow explorers, he was genially mocked

for his peculiar costume—but he was also widely admired. So successful was he that on the eve of the stock market crash in October 1929, Harold McCracken had achieved what we would call "name recognition" on a national scale. How did this happen?

Deliverables

Simply put, Roaring Twenties audiences sought novelty—and Harold McCracken delivered. This was the era,



Fig. 6 & 7: P517 and P516.



after all, of wing-walkers, flappers, and speakeasies—of risky business in an Art Deco city overflowing with money and champagne. This was the decade when the tomb of Tutankhamen, with all its golden riches, was revealed to the world. This was a time of fascination with the strange and exotic, when a young black performer named Josephine Baker from St. Louis danced for all of Paris in *La Revue Nègre*. The public appetite for novelty

drove the wild aerial stunts and goofy fads that we associate with the period. That appetite was only whetted by the proliferation of new media: radio (Fig. 10), motion pictures, newsreels, and popular magazines.

In this maelstrom of cultural change, McCracken found his niche. He mastered his craft—that of action filmmaking—to reveal the exotic to his audiences, in this case Alaska wildlife and peoples. If the



Fig. 10: The last word in 1920s cool! Three fashionably dressed flappers listen to a state-of-the-art home radio. Station WJZ out of Newark, New Jersey, broadcast Harold McCracken's talks about Alaska via clunky home sets like this. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-DIG-ggbain-37038

subject matter seems in odd contrast with sleek, daring fashions; nightclubs; and jazz music, McCracken's audiences appeared not to notice. In his book *The War, the West and the Wilderness*, Kevin Brownlow discusses this trend among silent movie-makers to forsake the studio

for dangerous and exotic places like Africa and the South Sea Islands. They fanned out across the globe during this period, and no corner of the world was safe from these bold, enterprising people and their cameras.

But McCracken was no studio man.

Always a maverick, he was essentially a free spirit who had earned his credentials in the Alaskan bush. However, in 1922, when a wealthy patron from Columbus hired him to be a hunting guide and bought him a state-of-the-art film camera, the young adventurer quickly conceived his own plans for filming in Alaska. In time, he became a self-taught, wildlife documentarian. As such, he joins the elite company of Lowell Thomas, Martin and Osa Johnson, and others who lugged their hand-cranked cameras to the unexplored regions of the world.

The “Go-Pro” of the 1920s

McCracken filmed the gigantic bears and moose of Alaska using an Akeley camera, the brilliant invention of taxidermist and filmmaker Carl Akeley. The “pancake,” as it was called (Fig. 11), was specially designed to capture motion, and McCracken exploited his camera's full potential in the field. He toted the heavy Akeley and tripod through winter snow and across wind-swept, bug-infested tundra to snatch his footage. With one companion, the soon-to-be famous hunting



Fig. 9: MS 305.04.030a

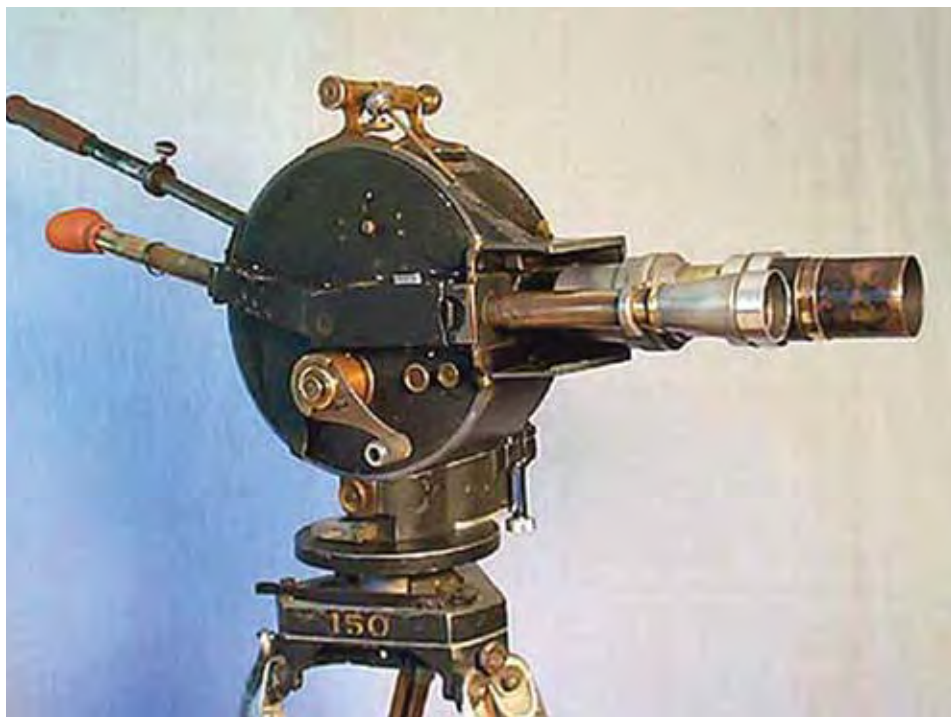


Fig. 11: The Akeley “pancake” camera. Chapman University Digital Commons. Frank Mt. Pleasant Library of Special Collections and Archives. Jonathan Silent Film Collection. MPE-P-003-36



Fig. 12: McCracken's bear family as depicted by the illustrator Paul Bransom in *The Biggest Bear on Earth* (Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1943).

guide Andy Simons, McCracken filmed Kenai moose and even more remarkably, the famous Alaska brown bears in their native habitat.

To accomplish this, the two men ventured into places that today are still wild and inhospitable. Over time, they learned to mimic the animals' habit of sleeping in the middle of the long Alaska day. Filming only began at dusk when the bears left their daybeds and gathered at the streams to gorge on salmon. They greeted each other, jostled for position, and settled in for a night of good eating, a scene inexpressibly marvelous for two young adventurers.

For weeks McCracken and Simons tried to find good angles for shooting film, but the flat coastal lagoon country with its high sea grasses often obscured their hulking subjects, who, after all, were not interested in making good movies. After many trials and failures, the pair discovered a special place they called "Nursery Valley," which was the haunt of a sow grizzly and her two cubs (Fig. 12). Here the terrain offered McCracken an advantage: He could film from the relative safety of a high bank that overlooked both the hillside opposite and the salmon-choked stream. Day after day, the bear family returned to this movie set, earning names like "Rough-neck" and "Apron-strings," and becoming film stars in the process.

Rough living

Given the primitive remoteness of Alaska in 1922, it is almost impossible to exaggerate McCracken's achievement in making these films. Facing down bad

weather, tough terrain, and unpredictable—not to say dangerous—subjects, McCracken endured eight months of rough living on the Bering Coast of the Alaska Peninsula to attain his ends (Fig. 13). He and Simons enjoyed only the crude shelter of partially underground native trapping dwellings known as barabaras (Fig. 14). At night and



Fig. 13 & 14: Roughing it: McCracken with his backpack (Fig. 13), N222numF1263V, and his home away from home (Fig. 14), N222#F1263V.

a simple folding canvas canoe for travel by day. Their clothing was soaked in the rains that swept over the Peninsula, and their feet stayed wet for weeks.

The story, recounted in McCracken's *Alaska Bear Trails*, describes more than a few hair-raising moments when the cameraman abandoned his expensive equipment, and the two explorers took to their heels. High-powered rifles were part of their outfit, but they never found it necessary to shoot one of these bears except with the Akeley.

The result was something never before

seen by most Americans: Alaskan grizzlies going about their daily lives; bear families feasting on the bounty of salmon; and cubs learning the hard lessons of survival. McCracken offered perhaps the first glimpse of a running grizzly bear, and his panning camera caught the power and agility of these animals as they charged through the alders. The men began to recognize marked personality traits in their subjects and named them accordingly. That bears were unique individuals was a fresh notion that Science and the public had not fully appreciated at the time.

The sheer concentration of these bears in coastal Alaska was a revelation. McCracken and Simons observed 190 individuals in a single season, a fact noted by Olaus Murie in his 1959 study of the species. They spotted as many as twenty-eight bears in one day, and twelve on the same salmon stream in full view of one another—a memorable occasion to be sure. McCracken wasn't able to successfully capture all these scenes on film, but in *Alaska Bear Trails*, he detailed rarely seen social interactions among Alaskan grizzlies. He recalled that wondrous summer as "the greatest of all my wilderness experiences."

McCracken deserves much credit for helping to popularize wildlife films when the genre was in its infancy. Today "nature programs" are ubiquitous, and the best filmmakers pursue their craft with a technical sophistication beyond anything imaginable in the 1920s. But one secret of success still

applies today, and McCracken, with his excellent instincts, grasped it from the start: Nature films must entertain as well as inform. McCracken's Alaska films appear to have struck that balance, and when he showed them at New York City's Capitol Theatre in 1923, he scored a hit with the public. Soon such films became his stock-in-trade.

In lecture halls and on the radio, McCracken also enlightened audiences about Alaska's native peoples, particularly the Aleuts with whom he lived and traveled, and the Inupiat on Little Diomed Island. He observed their customs, listened to their stories, and photographed and filmed them in ceremonies and dances. Fragments of these films have survived, but McCracken's lecture notes have not. His interviews with reporters, however, reveal his penchant for yarn-spinning and offering the colorful detail that engages an audience.

A modest chap

In an interview in the *Boston Evening Globe* (1932), for example, the journalist introduces McCracken as "a very modest chap, whose easy voice and manner give no hint of his career into frozen places." To this McCracken replies, "Freezing to death is very easy. I know for I've been on the verge of it." In discussing the short growing season in the North, he observes that, "The largest

strawberry patches in the world are in Alaska. The berry is small but sweetly toothsome." McCracken had a way of surprising people with facts about Alaska that contradicted their assumptions. "McCracken jolts us on many matters," the reporter admits, "wherein our information was apparently all wrong." The savvy explorer knew how to play on his public's lack of knowledge to dramatic effect.

Reporters seemed much amused by the contrast between McCracken's appearance and his outsized accomplishments. By his own description a tall, rangy fellow, McCracken was far from a typical outdoorsman, and he was visibly balding in his twenties. "You'd take him for a schoolmaster," one baffled writer observed, "precisely like a schoolmaster, or maybe a scientist. Bald-headed, spectacled, and so skinny you'd think the frost would finish him off the first cold night."

But while he could entertain reporters with light commentary, McCracken could also fascinate more learned and experienced people. His growing reputation as an authority on wildlife drew the attention of the National Geographic Society (Fig. 15 & 16), the Campfire Club of America, and other outdoor organizations. His films of grizzly bears on the salmon streams of

Alaska were entirely new and absolutely thrilling to sportsmen. This success attests to McCracken's talents, his versatility, and his ability to adjust his subject matter to an audience. Family scrapbooks reveal a lively schedule of talks to groups up and down the East Coast. Unfortunately, the lecture circuit did not provide a living in the 1920s, and to earn his daily bread, McCracken sought other sources of income. Soon he discovered other novel—not to say sensational—uses for his Akeley camera.

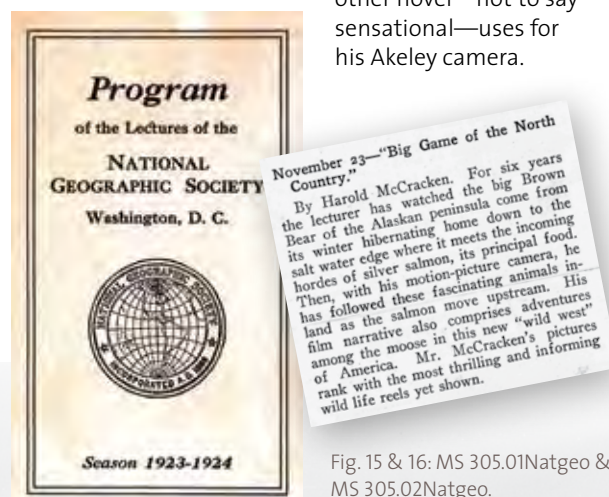


Fig. 15 & 16: MS 305.01Natgeo & MS 305.02Natgeo.

In the summer 2017 issue of Points West, the Alaska story continues as Alaska Man shares more about McCracken's exploits there, his writings, and his legacy at the Center of the West. ■

Mary Robinson has been an active professional in the Wyoming library community since 1993. She holds an MLS degree from Emporia State University in Kansas and a Special Collections Certification from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois. She became the Housel Director of the Center's McCracken Research Library on April 1, 2010.





Throughout the coastal region, salmon provide the principal “nutrient engine” for the species that prey on them. McCracken captured films of Alaska brown bears feeding on salmon in creeks like this one. The terrain was not always conducive to safety or good film-making.



The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, where McCracken filmed and explored, is considered ecologically unique. Note the typically treeless landscape covered with alders that leads to high mountain peaks.



Frosty Peak in the background was the scene of McCracken’s famous bear hunt in 1916 along a creek fed by hot springs. Because of the warm, open water, the bear did not go into hibernation, but lingered after the first snowfall to feed on salmon. McCracken and his cohorts tracked him in the fresh snow.

Still Wild



The Pavlov Unit of the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, where McCracken hunted bears, covers 1.45 million acres of protected wilderness. The volcanic Mount Pavlov on the right “blew its top” when McCracken was filming bears in the field in 1922.



The rough seas of Cape Glazenap suggest how treacherous the waters of the coastline in this region can be. The volcanic peaks of Unimak Island appear in the background.

BY MARY ROBINSON

Harold McCracken was at home in what he called the “far away ragged edges of the Northern frontier.”

Today, much of the McCracken country, from Wrangell-St. Elias National Park to the Alaska Peninsula and the eastern Aleutians, is still wild (see map detail above). Biologists now recognize that the Alaska Peninsula provides critical habitat and resting areas for migrating waterfowl on their way to breeding grounds in the Arctic. Consequently, large tracts of the southwest coast of Alaska have been set aside and remain some of the largest wildlife preserves in America.

Few roads and sparse human settlement characterize this country, which is actively

volcanic along the Aleutian Trench, a subduction zone where tectonic plates collide, and slide over and under each other beneath the ocean floor. Due to warm ocean currents and migration corridors, it remains one of the most productive marine environments on the planet. Even today, bear ecologist and filmmaker Chris Morgan calls the Alaska Peninsula his favorite place on earth. It is like stepping back in time to 10,000 years ago, he says, one of the last truly wild places we have in the world.

It was—and is—remote, unforgiving country. McCracken survived earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and ash falls, to say nothing of disastrous escapades in boats along the infamous Alaska coastlines, with their dangerous tides and unpredictable

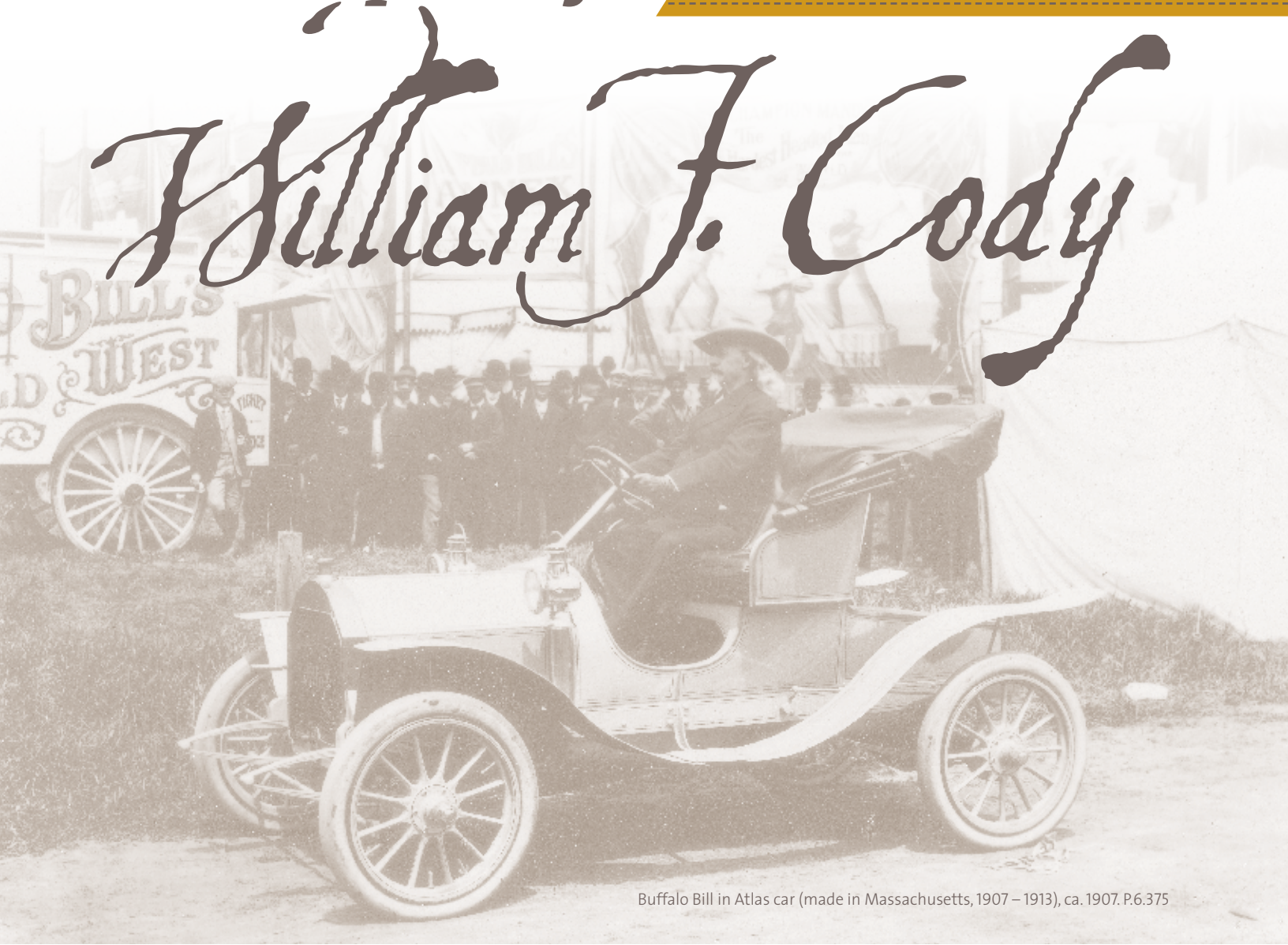
weather. Many of his friends and traveling companions simply disappeared without a trace. Shipwreck, frostbite, charging grizzlies—McCracken faced them all, as well as physical hardships and death, when a simple slip or infected cut might have signaled the end. Help or medical care was thousands of miles away.

But the coastal country was also home to the Alaska brown bears, the largest grizzlies on earth, and an abundant variety of wildlife that enchanted Harold McCracken as a writer and filmmaker. He recognized that most Americans had no idea of the rich natural heritage that the Alaska Territory represented—and he wished to share his experiences of this paradoxical land with the world. ■

The Papers of

10 YEARS LATER

William F. Cody



Buffalo Bill in Atlas car (made in Massachusetts, 1907 – 1913), ca. 1907. P.6.375

BY MICHAELA G. JONES

Ten years ago, Wyoming lawmakers passed legislation titled “Buffalo Bill Cody historical papers,” a measure providing \$300,000 for the “collection, editing, and publishing of archival documents” of the Great Showman himself, William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody. The Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources chose grant recipients with the caveat that the successful group(s) provide matching funds. The Buffalo Bill Center of the West received that initial funding and has since matched the grant several times over.

Last summer, Public Relations Intern Michaela Jones asked the Papers of William F. Cody staff to reflect on the project’s accomplishments to date—just in time for the Center’s Centennial.

All images are from the Center’s McCracken Research Library, MS 006 William F. Cody Collection, unless otherwise noted.

At the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming, the *Papers of William F. Cody*—an archive of the life and times of the iconic figure of the American West—provides audiences with an opportunity to be transported back in time to learn about a life on the frontier. As one of the most prominent figures of the West, Cody’s colorful history as a scout, bison hunter, and showman led him to celebrity status at the turn of the twentieth century. Those who have the opportunity to delve into the papers of William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody gain a richer understanding of the political, economic, and environmental factors that influenced the United States during Cody’s lifetime, as well as a chance to discover his lesser-known roles as a community founder, businessman, investor, and rancher.

Through studying this archive—a vast collection including business and personal correspondence, business records, published and

unpublished writings, memoirs and autobiographies, recordings and videos, photographs and print media—the staff has been able to further explore Cody's life. From the complex logistics of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, to his closest friends, as well as his involvement in the Pony Express, the *Papers* staff shares some of their most recent insights, discoveries, and surprises throughout the following interview.

What have you discovered that you didn't know regarding the life and times of Buffalo Bill?

The *Papers* staff—including Jeremy Johnston, Managing editor; Linda Clark, Assistant Managing Editor; Deb Adams, Researcher; and Sam Hanna, Researcher—revealed that they are discovering just how much they still have to learn about the life of Cody. Clark explained that many people originally thought that the project would be concluded in three or four years.

"We've barely scratched the surface," noted Clark. "This [project] could go on for twenty-five years and still not be done," she added.

In fact, when the staff began studying the materials, they initially thought there were about a half million photographs relating to Cody. As they delved deeper into this complex project, they discovered there are actually more than two million photographs. The *Papers of William F. Cody* project differs hugely when compared to other projects because most generally focus on a shorter time period. For instance, many projects are focused on a specific president, and usually those individuals had a secretary to keep track of correspondence materials. The *Papers of William F. Cody* is particularly challenging because Cody traveled often and wrote to many people with whom he came in contact, and unlike other individuals, he did not have someone to keep track of his correspondence records.

There are thousands of Cody's letters, and not only is it difficult to track them all down, it is challenging to fit those letters into an exact timeline. The staff works closely with several institutions to acquire scans of their archival collections, including Denver Public Library,

One of the thousands of letters that Buffalo Bill wrote to family, friends, colleagues, and associates, this one is from the Wild West Camp at Earl's Court in London, May 23, 1892: "My Dear Cousins [most likely J. Frank and Nellie Cody] This will introduce Mrs. General Crook — A Lovely Lady. Whom I wish you to know. She will tell you all about your tough cousin. Love to you both—Cousin. Will. Cody" MS006.0069



William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, ca. 1900. P.69.1985

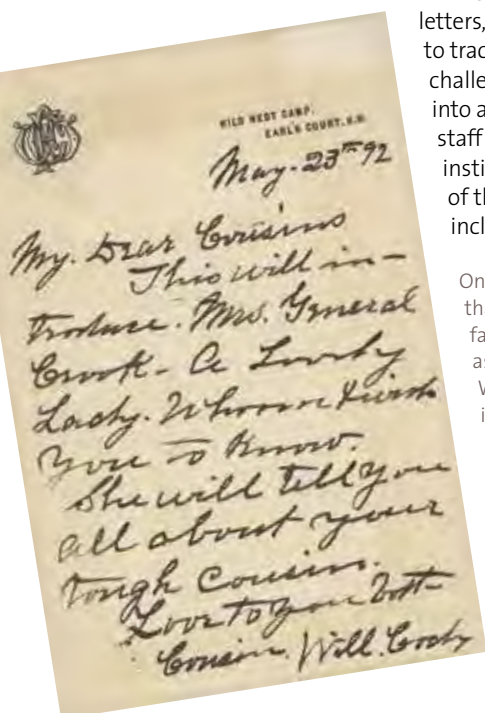
University of Wyoming American Heritage Center, Wyoming State Archives, and Harvard University.

"It's been a great collaboration," Johnston stated. Recently, the staff studied a large collection of letters from the American Heritage Center. However, there was one small problem: Cody did not always write the year on his letters, but he did make note of the location, month, and day of the month. Fortunately, from the information provided, the staff was able to analyze Cody's Wild West travel schedule and pinpoint the year in which Cody wrote the letters.

Interestingly enough, Adams explained, they have come across several fake letters. However, the staff has become so familiar and accustomed to Cody's handwriting, they are able to tell if the letters are truly authentic. Luckily, with these techniques, the correspondence materials can then be put into a timeline with a firm date.

What has been the biggest surprise, so far, in this project?

The staff agreed that there are new surprises every day when working with Cody's correspondence records and materials. Recently, they acquired six letters from Johnny Baker, who was like a son to Cody and an accomplished sharpshooter, too. Clark



AS PRESENTED BY *CUSTER'S LAST STAND* BUFFALO BILL'S WILD WEST.



Four-color lithograph poster *Custer's Last Stand* as presented by *Buffalo Bill's Wild West*, 1904. Courier, Buffalo, New York. Museum purchase. 1.69.2165

explained that when the donors brought the letters to the Center, they said, "These belong here."

According to Johnston, one of his greatest surprises is "Cody's tremendous ability to reach out to specific audiences." After continuing to study the newspaper coverage of the Wild West show, it has been proven that Cody tailored the performances based on audience preferences.



Johnnie Baker, ca. 1900.
P.69.1280

"Cody didn't just have one standard template that he took from one community to another; he and his team had a really deep appreciation of the cultures of people that they were performing before, so he would alter the show," Johnston explained.

For example, when the Wild West performed in Spain, Cody chose not to reenact a bison hunt because the audience was accustomed to bull fighting. In Germany, the people did not tend to care for the reenactment of historical events, so those acts were often not performed. And shockingly enough, in Scotland, there was a large demand to see lynching reenactments—so Cody and his team

actually re-created a hanging. Given Cody's team's success with the act in Scotland, the Wild West attempted the same performance in England; however, the crowd there was not pleased.

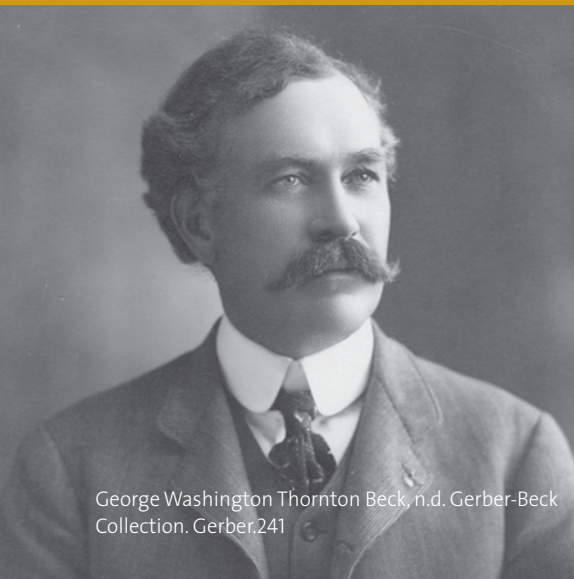
In the northern and Midwestern United States, the reenactment of the Battle of Little Horn was quite popular, and the newspapers reported on it heavily. However, in the southern states, there was no newspaper coverage on the act, so the Papers staff inferred the performance of the reenactment seemingly disappeared from the show.

Who was Buffalo Bill's BFF?

The *Papers* staff revealed that Cody had numerous friends he made while traveling, which speaks highly of his character. According to Johnston, Cody was friends with everyone from "the guys he rode with on the Plains, to wealthy aristocrats in New York City, to royalty in Great Britain."

For instance, one of Cody's good friends was a man named Major John Burke. This man was a great facilitator for Cody, a very astute businessman, accomplished speaker, and quite intelligent. Additionally, it appears that Cody had a good friendship with a man named Charles Trego, a buyer and manager of Cody's horses for Buffalo Bill's Wild West. For any given season, the extravaganza needed 300 – 400 horses.

PAPERS OF WILLIAM F. CODY



George Washington Thornton Beck, n.d. Gerber-Beck Collection. Gerber.241



Chief Iron Tail, 1902. P.69.1256



Major John M. Burke, "Col Cody's Press Agent—The King of Good Fellows," undated. P.69.0093

Cody was also friends with George T. Beck. At first glance, their relationship could appear adversarial based on their letters; however, much of what some may interpret to be snide is actually teasing. The two men were always pulling jokes on each other, but in a goodhearted way. "The letters disguise a real warmth," Clark noted.

Could you summarize Buffalo Bill in only three or four sentences?

Johnston explained that because Cody was such a complex man, it would be a challenge to summarize him in just a few sentences; however, he described Cody as cosmopolitan, a traveler, progressive, generous, and astute when it came to performing.

"He was adamant and absolutely dedicated to representing history as it was," Clark said. Many people do not realize that Cody traveled with Buffalo Bill's Wild West for more than thirty years, and he performed up until his last few months of life. Although there was considerable drama in the performances, there was also a great deal of authenticity. In fact, many of the performers actually witnessed the events they reenacted, such as the Battle of Little Bighorn.

Johnston commented that the iconic images of the American West—Buffalo Bill's Wild West, the famous images of the American Frontier, the attack on the stagecoach, the homesteader cabin, cowboys fighting Indians, and the Pony Express—left a lasting legacy that continues to have an impact on present-day views of the West.



There are still many people who are skeptical of Buffalo Bill's character. What would your response be to those who question whether or not Cody played a role in the decline of the bison or engaged in questionable treatment of Native Americans?

"Read his autobiography," Johnston stated. In Cody's last autobiography, he ends with a very strong defense of Native Americans. In fact, one of his good friends was Iron Tail—Oglala Lakota Chief of the Great Sioux Nation and star performer in the Wild West, 1889 – 1913.

Interestingly enough, the staff has spoken with many descendants of Buffalo Bill's Wild West performers, and no one has mentioned a negative experience with the performance or Cody.

In addition, Johnston mentioned, "The number of bison he killed was really a drop in the bucket." There were many other factors involved in the decline of this species, such as the fur trade and disease. Johnston noted that the bison population was declining before Cody arrived, and he was hunting bison for meat to feed railroad crews.

Oftentimes, young scholars come to the Center of the West to study the life of Cody, and they are initially skeptical. Yet Johnston explained that by the end of their research, they gain a greater appreciation of Cody and the legacy he left behind.

Did Buffalo Bill ride with the Pony Express?

The *Papers* staff agreed that it was possible, but if he was involved in the Pony Express, he most likely did not have any longevity there.

"We're happy to say we don't know," noted Clark. "And we'll probably never know," continued Johnston. The actual Pony Express only lasted eighteen months; however, when Buffalo Bill's Wild West started reenacting the failed endeavor, it became a popular icon of the American frontier.

Johnston explained that this concept is particularly interesting because in America, society tends to celebrate successes, and yet, the Pony Express was such a failed idea. Nevertheless, it remains a major icon of the West.



William F. Cody chasing buffalo in Wild West arena, 1905. P.69.1002

HIGH LIGHTS OF HISTORY

Dangers of the Trail.

By J. Carroll Mansfield



RIDING THE "PONY EXPRESS" IN THE SUMMER OF 1860 WAS A HAZARDOUS BUSINESS. "ROAD AGENTS", AS THE DESPERATE OUTLAWS WHO INFESTED THE TRAILS WERE CALLED, LAY IN WAIT TO ROB THE MESSENGERS OF THE VALUABLE MAIL THEY CARRIED, AND THERE WAS THE EVER-PRESENT DANGER OF HOSTILE INDIANS.



BILLY CODY'S "RIDE" EXTENDED FROM RED BUTTES TO SWEETWATER IN WYOMING. THIS PART OF THE TRAIL LAY THROUGH DANGEROUS COUNTRY, AND THE YOUTHFUL MESSENGER HAD MANY HAIRBREADTH ESCAPES.



ONE DAY BILLY WAS PURSUED FOR MANY MILES BY A BAND OF FIFTEEN BRAVES. HE OUTRAN HIS PURSUERS, AND REACHED THE NEXT STATION, ONLY TO FIND THAT IN THE NIGHT INDIANS HAD KILLED THE KEEPER AND DRIVEN OFF THE PONIES.



THE BOY WAS FORCED TO PUSH ON AND FINALLY, AFTER A WILD RIDE, ARRIVED AT A WAYSIDE POST, UNHURT BUT EXHAUSTED, HAVING COVERED TWENTY-FOUR MILES ON ONE MOUNT ON A DEAD RUN.

TOMORROW—A PUNITIVE EXPEDITION.

What could the Papers of William F. Cody do if more resources were available?

According to the staff, there is still a great deal to accomplish. It is a constant challenge to keep up with all of Cody's letters, especially because at any given moment, an individual could bring in more letters they have in their possession.

"There are some aspects of Buffalo Bill's life about which we probably have too much information," Johnston stated. "There is a great deal of testimony from the divorce proceedings that really shape the way people perceive Cody and Louisa's marriage."

On the other hand, interviews with Cody that the staff has studied reveal a great deal about Cody's naturally progressive character. For instance, Cody was not concerned with gender or ethnicity when it came to performing—individuals were paid based on their abilities. He also had progressive insight to women's suffrage, the right for women to vote. Additionally, he even advocated for the protection of the bison herds in Yellowstone National Park.

The staff also elaborated on some of Cody's seemingly more concerning personality traits. Clark discussed that there continues to be a lot of "hype" regarding Cody's drinking tendencies in his early years; these habits are not in question. Due to the complexity of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, it is clear Cody could not have been severely impaired, or the show would not have been the great success that it was.

"He was a product of his times," Johnston said. When studying Cody's life, one has to put his drinking into context; in this aspect of his life he fits into the norm.

What is the progress on the virtual Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, and the other projects Papers staff are tackling?

Johnston said that he hopes to implement a dome-shaped immersion feature in the Buffalo Bill Museum at the Center of the West. With this technology, a visitor would be able to walk into the dome-shaped screen, select a button, and a virtual tour guide would take the visitor on a tour of the Wild West showgrounds. However, these tour guides would not be random characters—they would most likely be real people who have been influential on the town of Cody and the Center of the West.

For example, Center Trustee Naoma Tate's grandfather ran away from home when he was just a child to see Buffalo Bill's Wild West. In fact, Tate's grandfather definitely was not the only child who would hope to experience the show, so Cody would help the children by lifting up a corner of the tent for them. As a result, they could watch the show without paying the admission fee. Johnston hopes to have Tate's grandfather as one of the virtual tour guides, taking visitors through the showgrounds from a kid's perspective.

The staff explained that they are currently working on an interactive map of Buffalo Bill's European and United States tours, instead of portraying his tours on the current map with pins in the Buffalo Bill Museum.

Additionally, they are creating reality software, so visitors will

have another way to experience the Wild West: by hovering a smartphone over a Wild West diorama, allowing the software to bring the show to life. The visitors then see three-dimensional aspects such as people and horses; as a bonus, they can even tap their screen to lure the horses toward them.



codyarchive.org

In closing, the staff all agreed that they are always looking for letters or writings related to Cody, and they encourage those who have such materials to share a scan of the document. Owners receive acknowledgement; however, the Center is typically unable to purchase or acquire these materials. For the staff of the *Papers of William F. Cody*, though, the value is in the history. Read more about the *Papers* project at codyarchive.org and codystudies.org. ■

Michaela Jones, a Cody, Wyoming, native, was the public relations intern at the Center of the West in summer 2016. She is currently in her senior year at the University of Wyoming, where she majors in English with minors in professional writing and psychology. After graduation, she plans to earn a master's degree in English, and then hopes to pursue a career in editing and writing for a non-profit organization.



Colt Model 1862 Police Revolver, 36 caliber. Embellished in 1999 by famed craftsman Raymond Wielgus (1920 – 2010) using gold, ivory, and steel. Gift of Raymond J. Wielgus. 2010.17.12

guns as art

BY GENE BALL

To celebrate Buffalo Bill Center of the West's Centennial, Points West plans to share numerous noteworthy stories from our first one hundred years. Gene Ball, the Center's former education coordinator, penned this article in 1984.

As with his other possessions, man has always regarded his weapons as extensions of himself and his unique personality. Nowhere can this be seen more clearly than in the embellishments found on firearms. The desire for elegance, design, balance, and decoration—far beyond that demanded to achieve optimum function—is abundantly evident. A maker of guns, or any other product for that matter, who has no eye for aesthetics will be the last to succeed or be remembered.

Personalizing firearms can take many forms. American Indians hammered brass tacks into the wooden stocks to make pleasing designs. Sixteenth-century German craftsmen inlaid intricately carved pieces of stag-horn. Today, engravers create hunting scenes in the hardest of metal surfaces.

The name of the first man to decorate a firearm is as lost to history as the name of the first man to fire one. It is certain, however, that not many years separated the two occurrences. Cannons, the first of the new projectile arms, appeared in the early 1300s. The first handheld firearms followed about fifty years later, and engraving as an embellishment dates to this period, too.

For hundreds of years, handsomely embellished guns were standard gifts to exchange between sovereigns and noblemen. This work called for the finest craftsmen of the day. Yet, much of what they produced is impossible to credit. These early, anonymous artisans combined imagination and ability to transform prosaic metal and wood surfaces into diminutive areas of artistic beauty. Elaborately engraved stag-horn was inlaid in gunstocks. Flint cocks were fashioned into mythical monsters, allegorical dragons, or ornate pecking fowls. Hunting scenes were carved in the wood and engraved on the metal.

To impress the recipient with the lavish gift, function was often secondary to decoration. Perhaps, that was fitting, though. For, in any case, the firearm spent more time in a display rack than in the field.

Like other arts and crafts, styles varied and even the popularity of ornamentation in general rose and fell in different periods. However, when it was popular, there was a demand for new ideas much like the modern demand for new models of nearly any product in the marketplace. As early as the sixteenth century, pattern books existed in Germany, which featured a supply of ornamental designs on printed sheets.

Aside from its aesthetic quality, ornamentation has become useful as a method of dating early firearms. Though some patterns were used for a century or more, others came into and went out of favor rather quickly, thus providing an important clue to the time of manufacture.



Winchester Model 1866 lever-action carbine decorated with brass tacks, 1878. The Paul Dyck Plains Indian Buffalo Culture Collection, acquired through the generosity of the Dyck family and additional gifts of the Nielson Family and the Estate of Margaret S. Coe. 2007.14.32



Seven-foot-long gold Miquelet lock musket given to President Thomas Jefferson in 1805 by the Bey of Tunisia after the Tripolitan Wars. Made in 1789 by maker Muhammad of Montenegro, it is currently on view in the Cody Firearms Museum. Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center. L.373.2012.11



Model 1866 Winchester, ca. 1873. Engraved by master artisan Conrad F. Ulrich featuring an unusual decorative border at the wrist using a Grecian key pattern, and a rare depiction of Diana, goddess of the hunt. Other panels depict elk, deer, bear, buffalo, and rabbit. Exhibited at the Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1876. Gift of Olin Corporation, Winchester Arms Collection. 1988.8.3283

The decorative work also provides strong evidence to determine the gun's place of origin. However, when it comes to identifying the artists or craftsmen who created the embellishment, anonymity is the rule. Initials and signatures often appear, especially on guns dating from the late seventeenth century, but these usually refer to the gunmaker rather than an artist-employee. The decorators were not necessarily the gunmakers themselves. In the eighteenth century, a richly embellished arm might exhibit the work of as many as a half dozen artists, from wood carver to goldsmith to engraver—too many to identify.

The long years of training and apprenticeship necessary to master their art or craft apparently brought these craftsmen little, if any, special notice or artistic recognition. It was as though they were simply shophands doing a day's labor. Others failed to see them as possessors of the talent and imagination to do masterful work in miniature on irregularly shaped, difficult-to-work surfaces which had the hardness of wood, horn, iron, and steel.

A good, recent example of this situation on the American scene is the Ulrich family who came to the United States in 1852 from Germany. For almost a century, the Ulrich sons and grandsons reigned supreme in the realm of arms engraving, both in terms of quality and quantity. Six of the seven engraving members of the family were employed by Winchester and were largely responsible for the fine work found on special rifles produced by the company. Yet, in many cases, there are no signatures, and the work must be "attributed" based on comparison to known works.

Conrad F. Ulrich (1844 – 1925) gets the credit for beginning the family tradition of superb engraving. His son, George, was the last. Despite their masterful technique and aesthetic sense of design and balance, none in the Ulrich family received any public acknowledgement or acclaim during their lifetimes. George was the first to receive widespread publicity and identification as master of his medium. In 1950, *Outdoor Life* magazine published a detailed, thoroughly illustrated article about his work. Unfortunately, Ulrich died in 1949.

Today, the work of these often-nameless artists and craftsmen of the past is prized, studied, sought after, and highly valued. So, too, is the work of their twentieth-century counterparts whose artistic embellishments help bring distinction to individual guns that would otherwise be carbon copies of the thousands produced on the same assembly line.

Quality engravers might now be labeled an endangered species. To be an engraver of firearms requires one to be a sculptor in a most difficult medium—modern steel. There are easier roads to take for those with an artistic bent. ■

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Gene Ball served as the Center's education coordinator in the 1980s. He was instrumental in organizing both the first Plains Indian Museum Powwow in 1981 and the first Cowboy Songs & Range Ballads event at the Center in 1982. He penned numerous articles for the Center's newsletters of that time.

FINDING TRUE WEST

Each year, interns from all over the country arrive in Cody with bright eyes and open minds to explore the Center's rich history. From the vast collection of remarkable firearms to the fast-paced world of public relations and digital marketing, students gain invaluable experience to carry them through their education and future careers.

Here we highlight the stories of just a few of our many past interns.

Rebecca Hoback

Cody Firearms Museum and Records Office



Originally from Tennessee, Rebecca has always longed to learn more about the American West. Her internship at the Center allowed her to expand on this curiosity by spending hands-on time working on collections, archives, exhibits, and educational programming.

Rebecca's fascination with history stems from her belief that studying the past is key in understanding who we are today. "I believe it is our job to teach younger generations how history has impacted us and how important it truly is."

Her research highlighted Rebecca's time at the Center. "I really connect with the firearms and the stories they tell. If I can connect with the story, I can connect with the artifact." On the importance of museums, Rebecca feels that...

“They [museums] tell stories with their artifacts so that others can easily see the connection between collections and our heritage.”

Hunter Old Elk

Plains Indian Museum

A recent graduate of Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Maryland, Hunter built her degree around a concentration in Native American studies. An internship at the Center not only allowed her to study Plains Indian cultures and cultural preservation, it also gave her the opportunity to explore her ancestral lands.



“History and culture define the American West. I think it is important to paint an honest and thought-provoking view of the dynamics that surround the American West.”

Hunter's internship also helped her realize the importance of relationships within the Center. Projects like the exhibition *Invisible Boundaries* gave Hunter the opportunity to work with conservation, curatorial, art, ethnography, and collections departments. "Patrons and visitors of this museum come to understand the West through art, ethnography, science, and education." Full cooperation and collaboration between the Center's departments is key in developing exhibits that accomplish these goals.

Elenita Nichols

Whitney Western Art Museum

Diversity originally drew Elenita to the Center. “I was excited about the possibility of being around so many interns in various departments as I knew that would offer me the chance to learn bits of their experiences.”



This internship surpassed every expectation Elenita had, pushing her to accomplish projects and develop new skill sets in everything from digital media interpretation to gallery installation. The interdisciplinary interpretation of exhibits at the museum helped Elenita to develop “a more authentic representation of the West.”

Elenita holds a degree in cultural anthropology, and she places great value on culture and history, and their representation in museum spaces.

“Culture is what allows us, as humans, to identify with one another’s experience.”

Michaela Jones

Public Relations and Marketing



“I gained more knowledge and hands-on experience than I ever could have in a classroom.”

A Cody native, Michaela jumped at the opportunity to intern with an organization so close to her roots.

“The collection at the Center is such an extension of the town of Cody—its evolution throughout the past one hundred years and its people.” Through blogging, writing news releases, and personal interviews, Michaela was able to learn about Cody’s past. “The work I’ve done has sparked my interest to find out more about Cody’s history and its influential individuals.” Read about one of her projects starting on page 19 of this issue.

Beyond developing new skill sets, Michaela also explored a variety of writing styles, solidifying her career path and future graduate school studies in English and professional writing. She is currently a senior at the University of Wyoming.

FUNDING FUTURE MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West initiated the internship program in 1995 to support students during the summer as they fulfill requirements for undergraduate or graduate study. Since 1997, the intern program has been supported by the Summerfield K. Johnston, Jr. family, through both The Tucker Foundation and the S.K. Johnston, Jr. Family Fund of the Wyoming Community Foundation.

The program fulfills the Center’s mission to educate global audiences about the American West, and applicants come from all over the United States and Europe. The program is designed to give participants hands-on knowledge in their field and the opportunity to learn from museum professionals. The real strength of this program is that the impact is effectively doubled, aiding the Center as well as the student.

For more information regarding internships and to find the applications for 2017, please visit centerofthewest.org/learn/internships. Applications for 2017 are due March 17, 2017. ■



DONOR IMPACT



A: Assistant Registrar Anna Goss and Collections Intern Kyle Bjornsson carefully move an object in one of our storage vaults. **B:** Visitors enjoy a special artist lecture on the tile map in the Draper Natural History Museum. **C:** Plains Indian interactive map now on display in the Plains Indian Museum.

UNRESTRICTED GIVING = MEETING GREATEST NEEDS

To make ends meet, most museums and other cultural institutions rely on the generosity of supporters. Even museums located in major cities—with year-round tourism and millions of residents like New York and Chicago—do not generate enough income through earned revenue like admissions, museum store sales, and food services to balance the budget.

Imagine the challenge at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, where most of our visitors arrive in the summer months; the population of Cody is just ten thousand; and the entire state of Wyoming has fewer than 600,000 residents! In short, our donors truly are essential.

Typically, donors designate their gifts in

one of three ways: for a specific project or area, such as an educational program or a building project; for the Center's endowment; or with no restrictions at all.

We here at the Center highly value unrestricted gifts because they allow us to apply the funds where most needed. Often, they go to general operations—those mundane things like paying the utility bill or repainting the lines in the parking lot. Or, the monies can offset a shortfall in ongoing programs, such as our program to provide free admission for area student field trips. They're all necessary expenses, and unrestricted donations are essential to our ability to meet all of them.

Another critical area for any institution is its endowment, a kind of savings account. Outside financial professionals invest

endowment funds, and the Center's Board of Trustees oversees the process. A designated amount, in the range of 4–5 percent, is withdrawn each year to help balance the budget. The goal with endowment management is to withdraw less than the investments earn each year. That way, the fund grows over time, and the amount that can be withdrawn grows commensurately.

Sometimes, a donor making a large gift creates an endowment for a specific purpose; some of our curatorial positions are endowed, for example. This guarantees funding for that position in perpetuity.

Your support truly makes a difference! For a hundred years, our donors have been keys to the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's success. We appreciate your trust in us to spend your unrestricted dollars responsibly and to get

PATRONS BALL

■ **435 Attendees**
■ **\$467,727 Raised**

Thank you to our generous sponsors of the 40th Annual Patrons Ball!

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Patrons Ball sponsors receive many marketing benefits as part of their sponsorship package. Become a sponsor for the Buffalo Bill Centennial Ball, celebrating a hundred years of the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association, Saturday, September 23, 2017.

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Rebecca Taggart, Special Events Coordinator, at rebeccat@centerofthewest.org or 307-578-4025.

View and purchase Patrons Ball 2016 photos online at kathysingerphotography.com/store.

Patrons Ball is the grand finale of Rendezvous Royale, a weeklong celebration of western arts held each September in Cody, Wyoming. Other events include a nationally-recognized art show, a spirited auction of the best contemporary western art, a captivating quick draw, an exhibition of works by the best western furniture artisans and craftsmen, educational seminars and studio tours. Immerse yourself in the arts this year! rendezvousroyale.org



The Silver Arrow Band keeps patrons on the dance floor in 2016.

the most “bang” for your philanthropic buck. There’s an envelope in the center of this issue for your convenience.

BROWN FOUNDATION FUNDS PLAINS INDIAN INTERACTIVE MAP

Visitors to the Plains Indian Museum are sure to be intrigued by a new interactive map generously funded by the Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston. A fusion of scholarship and educational interpretation, the electronic map allows visitors to manipulate time lines and content layers to learn more about Plains Indians. The map shows the movements of forty-five different Indian cultures

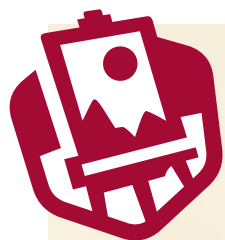
and groups throughout the last 230 years—including seasonal movements—as they followed the buffalo and other food sources, and how they moved in response to Euro-American migration, military conflict, treaties, and reservation boundaries. Territorial, treaty, reservation, and state boundaries flow in an animated timeline using the latest high-resolution technology. ■

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West relies on the generous support of people like you. Thank you to all our donors, large and small; every gift makes a difference. You truly personify the Spirit of the American West!



treasures

FROM OUR WEST



James Bama (b. 1926). *Buffalo Bill*, 1996. Oil on panel, 18 x 18 inches. Gift of Donald W. Griffin in memory of his wife, Kriss Griffin. 4.16.1. Image courtesy the Greenwich Workshop, Inc.

JAMES BAMA'S *BUFFALO BILL*

James Bama's portrait of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody is a gift to the Center of the West by Trustee Emeritus Donald W. Griffin. The painting is an exciting addition to the Center's collection which includes Bama's archives, photographs, and many important drawings and paintings by the renowned artist. The Center also holds the most important collection of art depicting Buffalo Bill, its namesake. Bama's sensitive rendition complements the wide variety of depictions of the celebrated frontier hero by artists ranging from Frederic Remington and Rosa Bonheur to Thom Ross and Michael Scott.

This iconic portrait was reproduced as a commemorative poster in 2003 to celebrate Bama's designation as Honored Artist of that year's Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale in Cody. The subject of the painting is a Colorado rancher (and Cody look-alike) who toured with reenactments of Buffalo Bill's Wild West in the 1990s. Bama photographed the actor as he paraded through downtown Cody, and one of his photographs inspired this painting—a frame which captured the actor stopped along the parade route to speak with a group of children. With a warm downward glance and patient smile, Bama's subject invokes the legendary showman who is said to have offered needy children free admission to performances of his Wild West show. ■



WINCHESTER MODEL 1887 LEVER-ACTION SHOTGUN

This Winchester Model 1887 lever-action shotgun, designed by John Browning, is serial number 1. The Winchester Repeating Arms Co. had made their reputation with their 1873 lever-action rifle—often called the “Gun that Won the West”—and hoped to capitalize on their resulting name recognition with the lever-action shotgun. This model, a 12-gauge, was one of the first truly successful repeating shotguns on the market.

Although created as an exhibition piece, Winchester instead sold it to a man by the name of Henry Ford, then a 24-year-old engineer in Detroit. The future automobile industry giant in turn presented the shotgun to Harvey Firestone, who would found the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in 1900.

Through its early histories, automobile technology has frequently followed or paralleled advancements in firearms technology. This Model 1887 lever-action shotgun, in pairing an innovative design in a firearm with ownership by two innovators in the automobile industry, makes for a unique and significant piece in our firearms collection. ■



JADE, THE BALD EAGLE

A sub-adult, male bald eagle, Jade was named after Wyoming’s state gemstone, with a subtle nod to Joan Donner (JD), Center of the West Trustee and valued advisor to the Draper Natural History Museum and Draper Museum Raptor Experience. Jade came to the Raptor Experience from the Raptor Education Group, Inc. in Antigo, Wisconsin, which cared for him after the bird suffered a fractured wing, likely sustained in a collision with a vehicle. The wing never recovered well enough for Jade to regain sufficient flight to live in the wild. He now resides in a year-round enclosure, visible to visitors, in the Center’s Braun Garden.

Between three and four years old, Jade has not yet developed the fully white head and tail feathers, or the yellow beak, of adult bald eagles; that transition will happen between the ages of about five and seven.

Raptors in captivity are usually relatively sedentary animals, typically perching in their favorite spots throughout the day. Jade, however, often moves from perch to perch and has even been observed “dancing” in a rain shower. He truly seems to enjoy watching the other birds as well as the many cottontail rabbits that reside in the garden. Jade is often found at the front of his exhibit, where guests are thrilled to see his unique appearance. ■

Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

bits & bytes

NEWS, ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Center's firearms curator earns major shooting sports award

Cody Firearms Museum Curator Ashley Hlebinsky has been awarded the Professional Outdoor Media Association's (POMA) and the National Shooting Sports Foundation's (NSSF) annual Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award for 2017. The prestigious honor recognizes extraordinary achievements in communications in the areas of responsible firearms use, the shooting sports, and hunting. Hlebinsky accepted the award Tuesday, January 17 during the 2017 Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade Show (SHOT Show®) State of the Industry Dinner in Las Vegas.

"From Ashley's first stint as a Research

Fellow here at the Center of the West, we knew we had the ideal representative for our Cody Firearms Museum," Bruce Eldredge, the Center's Executive Director and CEO explained. "Now, as curator, her knowledge of firearms and the firearms industry is extraordinary, as well as her command of the delicate issues surrounding firearms use in our country. Ashley continues to foster relationships throughout the museum world, the Cody area, and the firearms industry. We heartily congratulate Ashley on this award and the POMA for recognizing her remarkable contribution."

In January 2015, the Center of the West appointed Hlebinsky the Robert W. Woodruff Curator of the Cody Firearms Museum where she manages the Center's collection of 7,000 historic firearms and 30,000 firearms-related objects. In addition, she writes and lectures around the country and in Canada for both the firearms industry and the academic community, and has appeared on national and international television networks.

prweb.com/releases/2017/01/prweb13991192.htm



Wyoming's Governor Matt Mead (left) and State Senate President Eli Bebout congratulate Ashley Hlebinsky on her award.

Center of the West hosts western sculpture symposium

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West's Centennial represents a hundred years of research, collecting, exhibitions, and programs. As part of the festivities, the Center's Whitney Western Art Museum hosts a special symposium on Saturday, June 17 that brings together top art historians and trailblazing contemporary artists to examine topics related to western American sculpture.

Titled *Forged and Founded—Western American Sculpture, a Centennial Symposium*, the day-long meeting takes place from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Costs are \$25 for students, \$55 for Center members, and \$65



Alexander Phimister Proctor (1860 – 1950). *Indian Warrior*, 1896 – 1899. Bronze. Gift of A. Phimister Proctor Museum with special thanks to Sandy and Sally Church. 4.08.2

for non-members; the fee includes lunch.

Forged and Founded features four enlightening lectures in a morning session, a lively Lunch & Lecture, and a menu of optional tours, open houses around the community, and artist demonstrations during an afternoon session.

The symposium also coincides with the publication of *The Best of Proctor's West*, the latest book by the Center's Director Emeritus and Senior Scholar Peter H. Hassrick.

Pre-registration is encouraged and online registration is available. Contact Nicole Harrison at NicoleH@centerofthewest.org or 307-578-4051 for questions or to register, or visit the symposium webpage:

centerofthewest.org/event/symposium-western-american-sculpture

HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR *POINTS WEST* READER SURVEY?
Time is running out! Go online today: surveymonkey.com/r/PW_Reader2016



Center kicks off 2017 with four awards from True West

Once again, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West has garnered a number of *True West* magazine's "Best of the West" awards. Through an annual survey, magazine editors and readers pick their favorites of all things western from apparel and firearms to historic forts and cemeteries. A compilation of all the votes determines the Editor's Choice Award and the Reader's Choice Award in each category.

For 2017, the Center has earned the Reader's Choice Awards for Best Western Museum, Best Western Art Gallery (Whitney Western Art Museum), and Editor's Choice Award for Best American Indian Collection (Plains Indian Museum). In addition, the Center's Centennial Winchester 1873, currently being crafted by Navy Arms, was selected as both the Editor's Choice and the Reader's Choice Awards for Best Commemorative Rifle.

True West is the world's oldest, continuously-published western American magazine. With its simple mission to "preserve the American West," the publication launched in 1953 and is headquartered in Cave Creek, Arizona.

truewestmagazine.com/?s=2017+best+of+the+west

Center opens James Prosek exhibition

The special exhibition *Yellowstone: Wilderness in a Box* showcases the work of internationally-renowned artist James Prosek. A major contributor to the Center's 2016 exhibition *Invisible Boundaries: Exploring Yellowstone's Great Animal Migrations*, Prosek's pieces from that exhibition—regrouped and reinterpreted—now appear in a stand-alone exhibit at the Center through June 4, 2017.

Yellowstone National Park's nearly rectangular boundary was originally drawn to encompass geological and scenic wonders. The region's biological wonders—especially



James Prosek (b. 1975). *Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout and Indian Paintbrush*, 2015. Watercolor, graphite, and gouache on paper. L.486.20106.4 [Art Scanning: Donald Sigovich, Westport, Connecticut]

its unique animals—are more difficult to confine. Some insects, birds, and mammals that call Yellowstone home for part of the year regularly migrate well beyond the park's perimeter. Prosek tackles Yellowstone, its wildlife, and its man-made boundaries in a recent body of work.

The new exhibition pairs Prosek's paintings with several prints of naturalist artist John James Audubon's (1785 – 1851) work. Like Audubon, Prosek's artistic process is fundamentally informed by close, attentive observations of nature. His desire to study his subjects in person has taken him on journeys to remote and sometimes dangerous places across the globe and, for these paintings, to the Yellowstone backcountry.

centerofthewest.org/2017/01/23/prosek-yellowstone-wilderness-box



K-12 Curriculum and Digital Learning Specialist Megan Smith takes a class on a virtual field trip through the Draper Museum.

Skype in the classroom numbers soaring

In 2016, the Center's interactive, online Skype in the Classroom program delivered 624 lessons to 19,564 students worldwide, located

in forty-six states and twelve foreign countries (Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Mexico, India, Honduras, France, Cyprus, Costa Rica, Brazil, Australia, and Argentina).

Lessons include "Do You See Me Like I See Me?: Cultural Perspectives In Western American Art"; "Amazing Animal Adaptations"; "Stories and Culture of Plains Indians and Buffalo"; and "Trappers, Traders, Trailblazers: Mountain Men of the Rocky Mountain West."

Skype in the Classroom is an online community that enables thousands of teachers to inspire the next generation of global citizens through transformative learning through the Web using the Skype platform. Microsoft in Education's Skype in the Classroom also named the Center as a master partner.



Former Research Fellow John Clayton authored "Understanding the 1988 Yellowstone Fires" in the 2016 spring and summer issues of *Points West*.

Apply now for Research Fellowships

The Center invites proposals for its 2017 – 2018 Resident Fellowship Program. Fellows receive a stipend of \$5,000 that helps fund research to advance knowledge, understanding, and passion about the cultural and natural heritage of the American West. Application deadline in April 14, 2017, with fellowships awarded by May 1, 2017.

centerofthewest.org/research/fellowship-program

Buffalo Bill's birthday kicks off Center's 100th

In honor of Buffalo Bill's 171st birthday in this its Centennial year, the Center of the West extends free admission all day Friday, February 24. Join the celebration! Monitor the Center's website and its Facebook page for upcoming details. ■

SPRING | CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Center hours:

- Through February 28: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Thursday – Sunday
- March 1 – April 30: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily
- May 1 – September 15: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily

Draper Museum Raptor Experience: *Included in regular admission.*

- Relaxing with Raptors, informal Q & A with our birds and their handlers, every day the Center is open, 1 – 1:30 p.m.

Family Fun Days: *Member families free, non-members \$10 per family*

3 – 7 p.m., with a family-friendly meal available to the first 200 participants from 5 – 6:30 p.m. Made possible through a grant from the R. Harold Burton Foundation.

- March 17: Celebrate the Center's first 100 years at *Back to the Future*, where we look back at our history and imagine the future with activities designed to transport us through time and engage our imaginations.

Draper Natural History Museum Lunchtime Expeditions: 12:15 p.m., free

SUPPORTED IN PART BY SAGE CREEK RANCH

- April 6, and May 4. Speakers to be announced.

Buffalo Bill's Birthday Events: *Free.*

- February 24: Free admission all day long! Celebrate William F. Cody's 171st birthday at the Center of the West with fun, friends, and birthday cake!
- February 27: Join the Cody High School FFA at The Scout statue north of the Center of the West for the annual wreath-laying ceremony, 11 a.m.

Cody Firearms Records Office special gun show coverage:

- February 11 – 12: Attending Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association Show in Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- March 4: In office for coverage of National Gun Day, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. MST
- March 11: In office for coverage of Big Reno Show and Ohio Gun Collectors Association Show, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. MST

Cody Firearms Records Office special gun show coverage *continued:*

- March 18 – 19: Attending Maryland Arms Collectors Association Show in Baltimore, Maryland
- April 1 – 2: Attending Wanenmacher's Tulsa Gun Show in Tulsa, Oklahoma.
- April 29: In office for Texas Gun Collectors Association Show, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. MDT
- May 20 – 21: Attending Colorado Gun Collectors Association show in Denver, Colorado

Cody Culture Club

The Cody Culture Club celebrates the unique culture of Cody, Wyoming, and offers insightful community programs inspired by the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's world-class collections. The program is generously sponsored by Carlene Lebous & Harris Haston, BHHS Brokerage West, Inc., and Way West Management Company—Ryan & Erynne Selk.

Ticket packages available; visit centerofthewest.org/codycultureclub or call Rachel Lee at 307-578-4009 for more information and to purchase. Appetizers and cash bar at every program.

- March 16, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Cody Firearms Experience. *Evolution of the Firearm and the Hunter* with Ashley Hlebinsky, the Robert W. Woodruff Curator of the Cody Firearms Museum at the Center; and Paul Brock, General Manager at the Cody Firearms Experience.
- April 21, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Old Trail Town. *The West as it Was* with Clay Gibbons, historian and storyteller.

a THOUSAND words



**MCCRACKEN
RESEARCH LIBRARY**

Seven years after the death of William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody in 1917, the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association coordinated an iconic sculpture in his honor, *Buffalo Bill—The Scout* by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. In 1926, they were poised to build a museum nearby to pay homage to their namesake, which would open on July 4, 1927. The first delivery of logs for the building definitely boosted excitement for the project. Indeed, photo ops were the order of the day for the museum’s first curator and Buffalo Bill’s niece, Mary Jester Allen; Buffalo Bill’s grandchildren, the Garlow kids; and a host of other workers and dignitaries. For more photographs like this one, see MS 228 Buffalo Bill Museum Photographs Collection at centerofthewest.org/research/mccracken-research-library/digital-collections.

One picture is worth a thousand words.

The McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West 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 library.centerofthewest.org.



(L–R) Mary Jester Allen (1875 – 1960); Jane Garlow (1909 – 1987); George Walliker, the Garlow children’s cousin; Bill Garlow (1913 – 1992); Geneva Garlow Walliker, Fred Garlow’s sister and the Garlow children’s aunt and caretaker; and Fred Garlow Jr. (1911 – 1985) sitting on logs at the construction site of the original Buffalo Bill Museum in downtown Cody, Wyoming. PN.228.146

The Earth is Weeping:

The Epic Story of the Indian Wars

October 2016. Knopf
Doubleday Publishing
Group | 576 pages
ISBN-13: 9780307958044
knopfdoubleday.com

BY PETER COZZENS

Reviewed by Douglas Brinkley

For the *New York Times*, November 8, 2016
Penguin Random House, New York

Seldom does a nonfiction book pack the cultural wallop that Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* did in 1970. Just months before its publication, a group of Native American activists calling themselves "Indians of All Tribes" had occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, demanding that the former prison outpost be deeded back to them by the United States government. So when Brown—a white novelist and historian from Arkansas with a degree in library science—published his searing account of westward expansion, accusing the Army of annihilating Indians between 1860 and 1890, his timing was explosive. While Brown's book contained factual errors, it dramatically succeeded in changing the attitudes of the Vietnam War generation about how the West was really won.

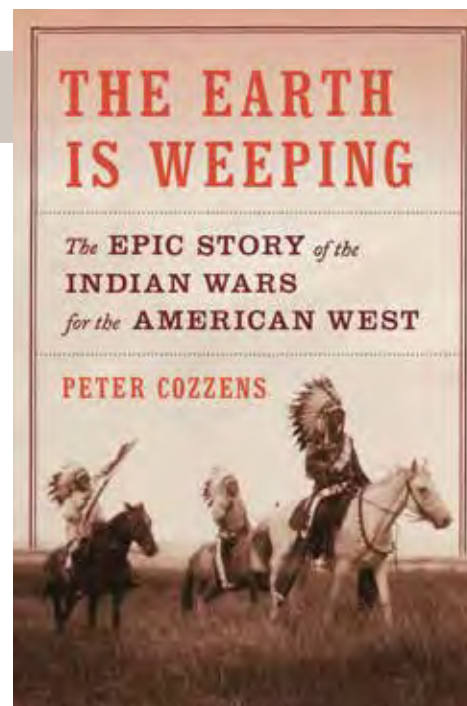
Now, forty-six years later, the military historian Peter Cozzens counters Brown with *The Earth Is Weeping*—a largely chronological march with an Army viewpoint of the same era, a work reminiscent in scope and approach to James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* about the Civil War. Cozzens is determined to debunk the main thrust of Brown's one-sided book—that the government's response to the so-called "Indian problem" was genocide. He documents a string of gratuitous massacres of Native Americans, much to be deeply regretted, but insists that

official Washington never contemplated genocide. "It is at once ironic and unique," Cozzens declares, contra Brown, "that so crucial a period of our history remains largely defined by a work that made no attempt at historical balance."

Balance is what Cozzens is seeking in this detailed recounting of random carnage, bodies burned, treaties broken, and treachery let loose across the land. Although the book is not a seamless narrative, and its writing is sometimes stodgy, Cozzens admirably succeeds in framing the Indian Wars with acute historical accuracy. Whether discussing the chaotic Battle of Washita in present-day Oklahoma, or Custer's skirmishes with Sitting Bull's Lakota coalition, or the surrender of Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé, Cozzens demonstrates vast knowledge of American military history.

His picture is disheartening. During Reconstruction, numerous Native Americans from the East were assigned to western reservations under the watch of the Army. Inebriated rank-and-file soldiers routinely disobeyed orders and sometimes burned Indian villages. The Civil War generals William T. Sherman and Philip Sheridan, tasked with overseeing Indian affairs, come off as fierce conquer-at-all-cost leaders, morality be damned, as their troops ferociously battled against recalcitrant Arapaho, Comanche, Cheyenne, and Kiowa tribes.

Cozzens excels at showcasing how rogue officers like [Colonel John] Chivington [Sand Creek Massacre commander] often disregarded orders from Washington in pursuit of glory. At the same time, he is



very clear that many Army officers behaved honorably. Gen. George Crook—nicknamed Gray Wolf Chief by the Apache—was consumed by "outrage" over the Army's mistreatment of native peoples. "That a general would offer such a candid and forceful public defense of the Indians seems implausible," Cozzens explains, "because it contradicts an enduring myth: that the regular Army was the implacable foe of the Indian."

For every Indian triumph like Little Big Horn (1876), there was a drubbing like Wounded Knee (1890); for every surprise Indian victory there were huge retaliations by the Army. By 1909, a bloody era of American history was at last over. Still, I have a feeling the academic fight for the true legacy of the Indian Wars—Brown versus Cozzens—has just begun. ■

.....

Douglas Brinkley is a professor of history at Rice University and the author of Rightful Heritage: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Land of America.

Peter Cozzens has authored some sixteen critically acclaimed books on the American Civil War and the American West, and contributes routinely to a number of history periodicals. He recently retired from the U.S. State Department where he served as Special Assistant to the Historian of the Department of State.





BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

Celebrate the Center's Centennial in 2017!

CENTENNIAL RIFLE

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West presents the Winchester "Centennial Model" 1873 lever-action rifle. Produced using Winchester factory records and original firearms housed at the Center, Navy Arms created two outstanding, limited-edition replica models to commemorate the Center's first 100 years:

- Presentation model, hand-engraved, just 200 produced
- Exhibition model, machine-engraved, 1,000 produced

Visit codygun.com for details and to reserve your rifle.

All the profits from the sale of these exclusive, limited-edition rifles support the mission of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West and the Cody Firearms Museum.



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Limited edition Centennial Coin – Celebrating the Buffalo Bill Center of the West as well as our museums and research library.

Available separately:

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Newly published in honor of our Centennial, this stunning volume tells the story of the five museums and research library of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West with essays and amazing imagery.

- Hardcover
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