

FALL/WINTER 2018

# POINTS WEST

## *indigenous* MEDICINE

» NATE SALSBUY'S BLACK AMERICA » MONTANA BILL  
» WESTERN OPERA » 42ND ANNUAL PATRONS BALL



BUFFALO BILL  
**CENTER**  
OF THE WEST

# to the point

BY BRUCE ELDREDGE

*Executive Director and CEO*



*"How lucky I am to have known somebody, something, that saying goodbye to is so damned awful.\*"*

Today, I know exactly how the author felt. Ten years ago, I addressed you, our readers, for the first time in *Points West*, and with this issue, I bid you a fond farewell. I cannot begin to adequately share what these last ten years have meant to me as Executive Director of this extraordinary institution. I have indeed been lucky "to have known somebody, something"—actually a host of them—who make it difficult to say goodbye.

In 2008, I wrote, "With your help and support, we will continue to move forward in telling the story of the American West following in the spirit of Buffalo Bill Cody...and so many others who have come before us."

And oh, how we've been storytelling! We had a "new" Whitney Western Art Museum in 2009 and a "new" Buffalo Bill Museum in 2012. After that, on February 8, 2013, we changed our 50-year-old name to the "Buffalo Bill Center of the West," complete with a total rebranding. We built the Kuyper Dining Pavilion in 2016 to better accommodate groups, events, and meetings. Now, we're looking forward to the total renovation of the Cody Firearms Museum in summer 2019.

In ten years, the Center has created a raptor experience with eleven birds of prey, hosted more than two hundred interns, created programs for thousands of school kids through Skype in the Classroom, gained 56,455 fans on Facebook, and created a brand-new website that now boasts 646,000 users and 2.2 million pageviews—whew!

As Jan and I retire to the Seattle area to be closer to family, we ask you to join us in welcoming the Center's new Executive Director and CEO Peter S. Seibert from Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia (see page 35). We're confident that he'll discover exactly what we did: dedicated volunteers, committed donors, a whole community of supporters, and an incomparable staff—all devoted to the story of the American West.

We will miss you all. Long live the Wild West! ■

*\*The Other Side of the Mountain, 1975, screenplay by David Seltzer*

## About the cover:

Takes Five unloads a pack horse at a temporary camp in the Wolf Mountains of Montana to gather sarvis berries. Read more about Native food and medicine on page 22 with Hunter Old Elk's and Liz Bowers's collaboration, *A living tradition: Plains Indian food and medicine*. (Lantern slide, MS 095 Petzoldt Collection. LS.95.073)



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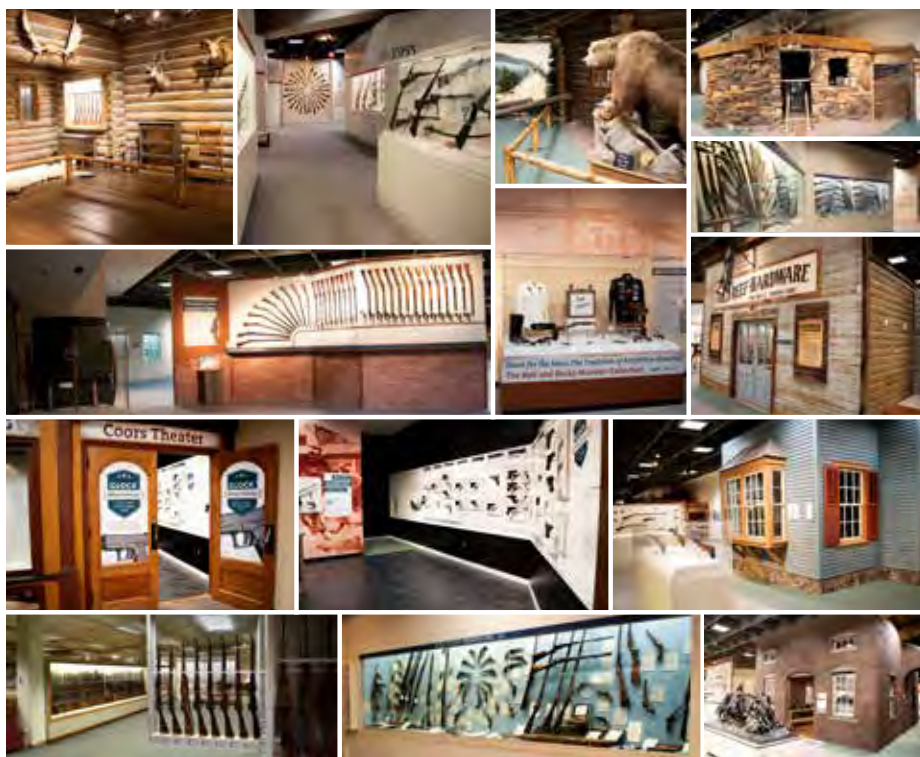
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The Buffalo Bill Center of the West is a private, non-profit, educational institution dedicated to preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the American West. Founded in 1917, its collections include: Buffalo Bill and the West 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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During the renovation of the Cody Firearms Museum (CFM), more than 500 guns are on display throughout the Center, including in the Anne & Charles Duncan Special Exhibition Gallery where some of the CFM's most popular and most important firearms are on exhibit. the "new" CFM opens in summer 2019. In the meantime, take a fond look back at the "old" CFM; thanks for the memories!

## Nate Salsbury's Black America: Its origins and programs



Just as the Wild West depicted a rapidly disappearing frontier, *Black America* would represent the bygone antebellum era.

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**VISIT US ONLINE** | Stay in touch with all that's happening at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West; visit [centerofthewest.org](http://centerofthewest.org).

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

# lies AND LEGENDS OF MONTANA BILL

## PART 2

Unless otherwise noted, all images are courtesy Tom F. Cunningham at [snbba.co.uk](http://snbba.co.uk) (Scottish National Buffalo Bill Archive) and all locations mentioned are in Scotland.



### BY TOM F. CUNNINGHAM

Characters abound in the West, and in the last issue of *Points West*, author and historian Tom F. Cunningham introduced one Montana Bill. A contemporary of William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, he claimed to have been part of Cody’s Wild West extravaganza, even calling himself Buffalo Bill’s “right hand man” in numerous adventures. However, as Cunningham learned, there appears to be no supporting record to indicate that he was ever in the show. (At one time, he even had his own little Wild West show.)

But that’s not the only glib fib in the saga of Montana Bill, as Cunningham discovered when he attempted to sort thru the multitude of tall tales and a gnarled family tree. Hang on to your hats!

### Mom and Dad

A further element of truth [in the Robeson family drama] not to be neglected emerges from the revelation that Robert Bailey Robeson’s, i.e. Montana Bill’s, father, Charles A. Robeson, was indeed a minor frontier figure. Congressional papers place him in California, in the vicinity of Humboldt Bay, in the wake of the 1849 gold rush. Official correspondence dated September 9, 1851, complete with the vernacular of the day, states:

Mr. Charles A. Robeson, with his squaw wife, visited camp to-day at the request of the agent. This gentleman has recently settled upon, and is now opening up, a portion of land in this neighborhood, and to preserve friendly relations with the Indians, has married (Indian fashion) the daughter of a chief of one of the tribes. Through his squaw he has obtained a slight knowledge of the languages spoken on this river.



Montana Bill's father, Charles A. Robeson, was apparently in California when gold was discovered there. Pictured here, a gold miners' camp during the California Gold Rush, ca. 1848 – 1853. SSF – Gold Rush in California – Mining, Prospecting, and Panning for Gold, El Dorado, California. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-DIG-ds-04487



Charles therefore considerably assisted the federal government in the role of interpreter and cultural intermediary. A further aspect of his duties can be described as that of land surveyor. Certain key elements of the legend, including his union with the daughter of an Indian chief, were authentic, though transposed by the younger Robeson from California to Montana. For the patriarch of an obscure Californian rancheria, he substituted Rain-in-the-Face of the Sioux.

In a subsequent and less creditable chapter of Charles's career, he hit the headlines from coast to coast during the early 1870s for fraudulently selling shares in an Idaho gold mine (recall that on son Robert's 1870 birth certificate, Charles was a miner) as imaginary as was his son's subsequent close association with Buffalo Bill.

## Montana Bill in Scotland

Montana Bill was twice married in Scotland, and he had his particulars listed as father on the birth certificates of twelve children by three different women. It's probably safe to say that he therefore made a sizeable impression upon the Registers of Birth, Death, and Marriage.

When Robert Bailey Robeson, traveling showman (bachelor), married Agnes Wilson in Glasgow on October 4, 1897, both parties gave their usual residence as the Show

Ground, Bonnybridge. He correctly gave his age as 27 years and identified his parents as Charles Robeson, government surveyor (deceased) and Fanny Robeson Bailey. He gave

no intimation of his mother's alleged Native American origins.

Robert and Agnes then had two children—a daughter, Fanny Bailey Robeson, born 1897, and a son, Robert Edward Robeson, born 1899, who survived for only a matter of hours.

Agnes and little Fanny quickly faded from the picture, although almost certainly Robert and Agnes never divorced. By 1900 at the latest, Robert had taken up with Alice Ann Harrold (1880 – 1935), born to Irish parents in Glossop, Derbyshire [UK]. She was his leading lady for many years, bearing him nine or possibly ten children.



Sioux Rain-in-the-Face (ca. 1835 – 1905). Frank Bennett Fiske, photographer, ca. 1906. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-USZ62-104681

Robert is also known from the 1911 census, in which he gave his age as 56 and his place of birth as Canada. Both particulars match with the manuscript version of his life.

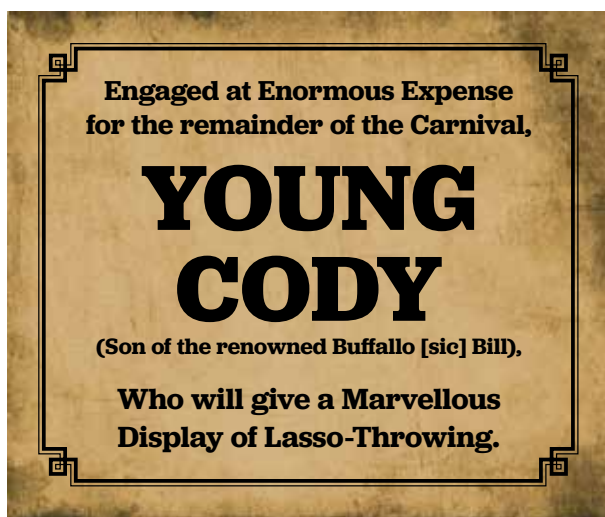
## Glory days of Montana

Montana Bill's glory days came around the middle of the second decade of the 1900s. By this time, the fantasy version of his life was in full swing, and sons Andrew, born 1912, and George, born 1915, were both given the middle name of Montana. The same accolade was bestowed on granddaughter Edna Montana Rennie, born 1935.

During those years, Montana Bill mostly supported his ever-growing brood by doing the rounds of the fairgrounds, theatres, and music halls with his ever-popular trick-shooting act.

The *Perthshire Advertiser* was entirely typical in its uncritical acceptance of Montana Bill's claim to have been "the noted Buffalo Bill's right hand man in many wild adventures."

On one occasion, Montana Bill shared the bill at the Dalkeith Carnival from December 23 to January 6 (year unknown), as:

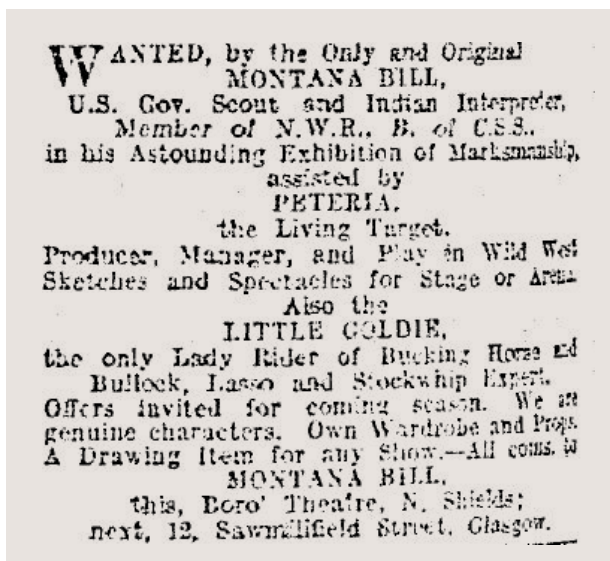


It must certainly have made for an interesting family reunion!

## Showdown in Blackpool

During this time, Montana Bill's star had never shone brighter, but it was about to be extinguished as the truth followed on his trail like a nemesis. On July 3, 1916, he and a confederate were fined six shillings apiece by the magistrates in the Lancashire seaside resort of Blackpool [on the northwest coast of England] for causing an obstruction on Central Parade [i.e. promenade]. It was hardly a disaster in itself but proved to be the prelude to catastrophe.

The veteran showman had appeared in a Legion of Frontiersman uniform complete with medal ribbons which attracted considerable suspicion. When interviewed, Montana Bill reeled off a tissue of lies, of honours won in military campaigns over four different continents:



Montana Bill seeking participants for his exhibition, ad dated January 23, 1913, "Wanted by the Only and Original MONTANA BILL, U.S. Gov. Scout and Indian Interpreter...in his Astounding Exhibition of Marksmanship...Sawmillfield Street, Glasgow."

Captain Moffat, Assistant Provost Marshall, said prisoner told him he was entitled to wear the seven medal ribbons produced. One of these was for the Canadian rebellion in 1866; one was for another Canadian rebellion; a third was a D.S.O., which should have been first; the fourth the Queen's South African Medal; the fifth a yeomanry long-service medal; the sixth a French medal for life-saving; and a seventh the Antarctic medal.

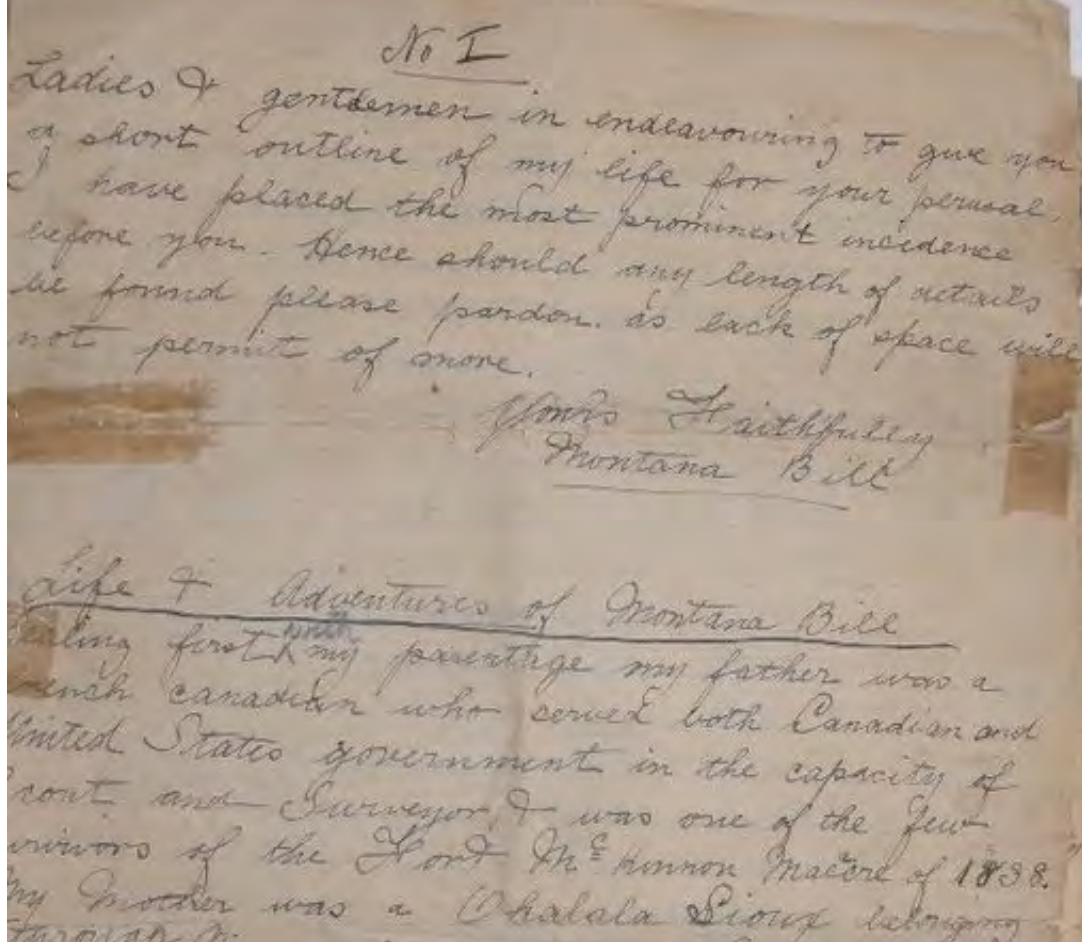
The accused told him they were Canadian awards, and that the D.S.O. ribbon was the Canadian D.C.M. The facts had been submitted to the War Office, who declared that prisoner's statements were untrue.

The prisoner forlornly confessed that "he wore the ribbons more for show than anything else." On Friday, November 3, 1916, he was committed to three months' imprisonment and collapsed on hearing the sentence.

Probably the oddest aspect of the whole affair is that he appears to have been charged under the name of Montana Bill and that the papers described him as "an elderly man," aged 62. He was in fact 46.

Montana Bill was quoted as lamenting that "the prosecution would ruin him if it became known" and this melancholy prognosis proved to be correct. The pages of his engagement book are distinctly bare thereafter.





Detail of Montana Bill's handwritten autobiography, beginning with, "Ladies & gentlemen in endeavouring to give you a short outline of my life for your perusal, I have placed the most prominent incidence[s] before you. Hence should any length of details be found please pardon as lack of space will not permit of more. Yours Faithfully, Montana Bill

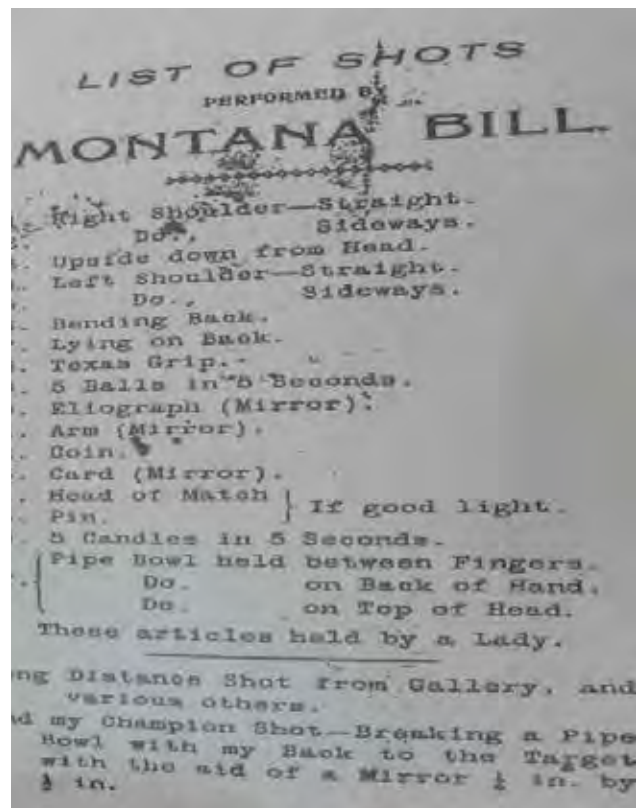
## Till death us do part

Trouble was also brewing on the domestic front. Montana Bill had reverted to previous patterns of misconduct and was again maintaining a parallel relationship, as an extraordinary metamorphosis got underway. Robert Bailey, the third of his sons to bear that Christian name, was born on February 27, 1917, in Glasgow. The child's parents were entered as Robert Bailey, a variety artist, and Sarah Phillips Bailey, and, somewhat implausibly, indicated they had been married on June 26, 1915, at Windsor, Canada.

The lady in question was in fact Glasgow-born Sarah McKillop (of which "Phillips" is the anglicised form) (1889 – 1936), otherwise known as Peteria, Montana Bill's lovely stage assistant. A further son, Edward, was born on February 2, 1919, in Birmingham.

Then, reversing the normal sequence of events, Robert finally and inexplicably married Alice on September 3, 1919, in Glasgow. His age on this occasion was entered as 48 (actually 49), again making him roughly fifteen years the junior of his "Montana Bill" alter ego. His mother's name was entered as "\_\_\_\_ Robeson, Noeskleta, (deceased)," so that, in effect, we have a hybrid version of the story. He was entered as a "music hall artiste (widower)," but this latter detail is inaccurate since upon her death, the following was recorded: Agnes Johnson, formerly Robeson, widow of Robert Bailey Robeson, died in 1963, aged 85.

Bill also attended daughter Marion's wedding on the



A list of Montana Bill's trick shots



Montana Bill performing live in Broncho Tom's Wild West Show, Vinegarhill (Gallowgate) Fairground, Glasgow, 1915.

26th of the same month, but shortly thereafter deserted Alice as abruptly as he had abandoned Agnes.

One of his daughters, Maggie Wade Robeson (1907 – 1977), suffered from a serious but unspecified disability and was left destitute by her father's disappearance. Elder sister Marion, by now Mrs. Walker, made an application for Poor Relief on Maggie's behalf, dated May 21, 1921. This gave their father's age as 64, just two years short of his manuscript age, and their grandmother was identified as Neoskeleata. This tends to indicate that Montana Bill raised his children to accept his extraordinary legend as fact. In all probability, he had come to believe it himself.

### The Essex Years

So, in the time-honoured tradition of the western bad man, Robert Bailey Robeson concocted an alias, reinventing himself as William Montana Bailey. He and Sarah settled in

Essex, where they resumed their previous activities. In later years, he pursued a career as a theatrical agent. The couple eventually retired to Southend-on-Sea, where Sarah died in 1936.

William Montana Bailey finally bit the dust on August 19, 1942. His death certificate designated him "formerly a Music Hall Artist" and gave his age as 68, representing an absolute departure from the manuscript version of his life and implying a birth year of ca. 1874.

This embarrassing detail was quickly contradicted by the local paper, which carried a fitting obituary:

#### DEATH OF A VETERAN "Montana Bill's" Career

Mr. William Montana Bailey ("Montana Bill") who lived in a bungalow in Feeches Road, Eastwood, died at Southend General Hospital



Montana Bill,  
date and place  
unknown. Included  
in the WikiTree  
info about him.

on Thursday. His age was indefinite, but it is stated to have been about 80. His son, a member of the R.A.M.C. [Royal Army Medical Corps], visited him one day last week and found him in a state of collapse, and he was immediately removed to hospital, where he died a few days later.

Documents in the house reveal that Mr. Bailey was in the 17th Canadian Rangers and describe him as being a Chief Scout and Indian fighter. After his discharge from the Rangers he joined the 4th U.S. Infantry where he met William Cody ("Buffalo Bill") the famous U.S. Scout. They left the regiment together and when Cody started a "Wild West" show in 1886, Mr. Bailey joined as a sharp shooter. He later married Peteria, his assistant in the act, who died two years ago.

During the last war, Mr. Bailey was a munition worker at Birmingham. He came to this district 10 years ago, starting a poultry farm at Wickford.

The bit about the poultry farm is probably true.

The obituary reunited the two sundered halves of the Robeson/Bailey dynasty when a Scottish relation, who was based at the army barracks at nearby Shoeburyness as a dispatch rider, chanced to read it and presented himself at the front door of the family home.

Persistent rumours of Indians who came to Glasgow with Buffalo Bill and stayed there continue to haunt the city's East End folklore, and no doubt a large part of the explanation for this engaging urban myth lies in the calculated deceptions of the man who called himself "Montana Bill."

Today, Montana Bill has living descendants in Glasgow, and Burntisland, Fife, in Scotland, as well as Liverpool, England, and Syracuse, New York. Several are actively engaged in attempting to piece together the truth about the life of their extraordinary forbear.

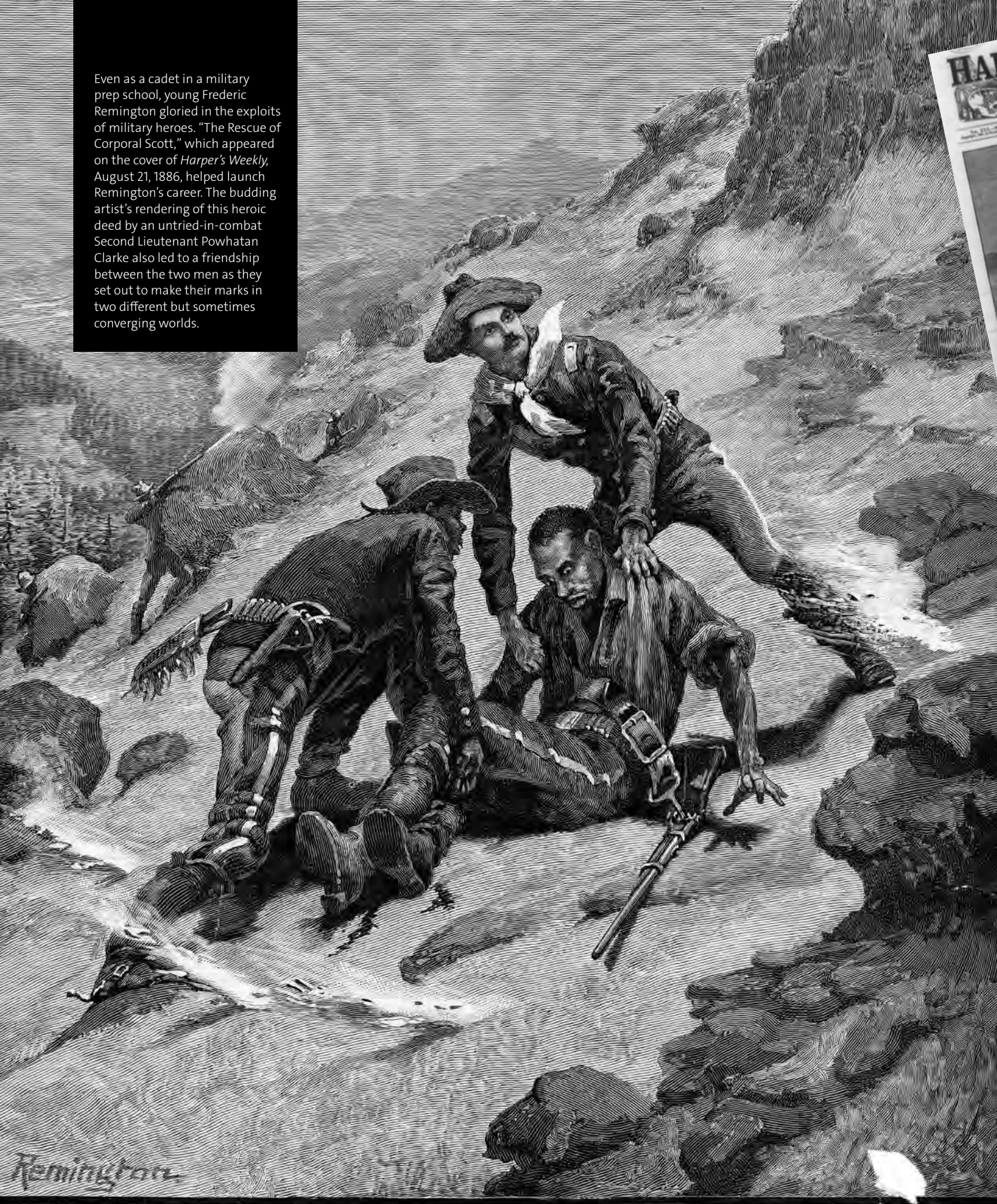
.....

*For the last two decades and more, Tom F. Cunningham has pursued an intensive study of Native American history with particular emphasis on connections with Scotland. He is the author of The Diamond's Ace—Scotland and the Native Americans, and Your Fathers the Ghosts—Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Scotland, with much of his research conducted at the Center of the West. In true Cunningham fashion, he encountered Montana Bill as he ventured through the West—and simply had to learn more.*





Even as a cadet in a military prep school, young Frederic Remington gloried in the exploits of military heroes. "The Rescue of Corporal Scott," which appeared on the cover of *Harper's Weekly*, August 21, 1886, helped launch Remington's career. The budding artist's rendering of this heroic deed by an untried-in-combat Second Lieutenant Powhatan Clarke also led to a friendship between the two men as they set out to make their marks in two different but sometimes converging worlds.







LEFT: "The Apache War—Indian Scouts on Geronimo's Trail," *Harper's Weekly*, January 9, 1886. Drawing by Frederic Remington. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. LC-USZ62-97958

BELOW: "Marching in the Desert," *Century Magazine*, April 1889.

Unless otherwise noted, all images are from the collection of Dr. John Langellier, used by permission.



# BLACKS IN ARMY BLUE

Early depictions by Frederic Remington and William F. Cody



## BY DR. JOHN LANGELLIER

John Langellier knows a thing or two about military history: He has a doctorate in the subject and spent twelve years in the United States Army. In his research on buffalo soldiers, he discovered that contemporaries William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and artist Frederic Remington both had specific connections to this band of soldiers...and each to his beloved American West.

### Sketching the Buffalo-Soldiers

Writing as a cadet from Highland Military Academy in Worcester, Massachusetts, young Frederic Remington revealed to a pen pal that while images of "Indians, cowboys, villains, and toughs" thrilled him, his favorites were "soldiers." Appropriately, the first published image

bearing the artist's signature appeared in the January 9, 1886, edition of the popular *Harper's Weekly* over the caption "Apache War—Indian Scouts on Geronimo's Trail." With that modest effort, Remington



Frederic Remington (1861–1909), Wikipedia.

commenced his rapid rise in western art. It all began during 1886 while following the bugle along Arizona's border with Mexico. Remington was raised on stories of his Union cavalryman father. Then, with the death of the family's head, Fred abandoned playing college football at Yale to try his hand at raising sheep in Kansas. This rather unorthodox endeavor did one thing: With funds from subsequently selling his spread

in 1884, the transplanted Easterner set out on a path that would change his world. In the process, the artist carved out his place alongside a select cadre of others who shaped the West of legends.

Remington's grubstake allowed him to head to the Southwest to try his hand at art. So it was that this Eastern dude packed his paints, brushes, pens, camera, and other supplies, along with a small volume of blank pages that became his *Journal of a trip across the continent through Arizona and Sonora Old Mexico*.

The stout greenhorn had gained a golden opportunity to experience a whole new world first hand and portray it under his own name. He filled his pocket journal with brief, memory-jogging notes such as a passing reference where he simply noted a "batch of negro cavalrymen" traveling westward by train. He pronounced them "good style men."



"A Scout with the Buffalo-Soldiers—A Study of Action," *Century Magazine*, Vol. 37, Issue 6, 1889.

## Embedding with the Tenth

By June 10, 1886, the novice roving reporter-illustrator would have the opportunity to take a closer look at these African-American horse soldiers, writing once more in his journal, "Got up late after a good night rest at Palace Hotel [Tucson], took camera went to the detachment of 10th Colored Cavalry—took a whole set of photographs." Second Lieutenant Powhatan Clarke, the white commanding officer of the detachment, instructed Troop K's First Sergeant William H. Givens "to do anything that Remington required."

Born in Kentucky, Givens had enlisted in 1869 as a private in the Tenth. He rose through the ranks to First Sergeant, served on the border against the Apache chief Victorio, and demonstrated administrative capabilities that eventually led to his taking examinations for various non-commissioned staff positions. Remington could not have asked for a better introduction to the men of the Tenth; in Givens, he now had the top soldier at his disposal. When he asked for "a horse" to be "saddled by the diletanters [sic] of army regulations," Givens saw to it that one of his troopers carried out the request. This allowed Remington to produce an accurate image of the equine field pack. Accordingly, he began to sketch, surrounded by an audience of Mexican and black soldiers who looked on intently. In his journal, the artist made a note about a possible title for the picture. Would it be "saddle up?"

Some have argued that Remington's emergence as "one of the most celebrated American-born artists can be traced to his first rough renderings of black soldiers in Arizona Territory..." As proof, between 1886 and 1897, Remington created nearly 2,300 works of art—270 of which represented the frontier army with some fifty or more portraying black soldiers. Before Remington set his sights on the subject, only two known post-Civil War depictions of African American soldiers in the West had been published. Consequently, Remington's numerous images,

coupled with his own quickly growing prominence, were influential in making the reading public aware of their presence. In the process, perhaps Remington became the father of the buffalo soldier legend as it has come down to us today.

## Meanwhile...

Even as these black soldiers played a part in Remington's ascent to fame, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody was well along in reinventing himself from a frontier scout into a famous showman. With the creation of his storied Buffalo Bill's Wild West just a few years before Remington's travels to the Southwest, he squarely rode in the front ranks of western legend makers. Unlike Remington, who observed history, Cody made history.

Drawing on his own past, Cody staged action-packed shows that took some lessons from the circus, but went far beyond with elements of rodeo, spectacle, drama, and much more. His unique blend thrilled audiences in North America and Europe who flocked by the thousands to relive those exciting "days of yesteryear"—at least according to Cody's take on those bygone times.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West evolved as the canny entertainer and educator strove to keep the program fresh, timely and offer a degree of authenticity. Somewhat by serendipity, as the May 13, 1894, edition of the *New York World* reported, the United States Army lent Cody "a double troop of United States Cavalry from the famous Ninth Regiment Fort Riley. As this was a genuine showing of regular soldiers, the interest in it was unbounded...." During that summer, both buffalo soldiers of the Ninth and white troopers from the Seventh delighted Cody's crowds with their amazing equestrian skills.

Cody was no stranger to black cavalymen. During 1868, he briefly hunted and scouted for Troop I, Tenth U.S. Cavalry under Captain George Armes. In his *Ups and Downs of an Army Officer*, this sometimes cantankerous—but always ready for action—officer recorded "Buffalo Bill," (as he had been dubbed by this time) as "one of our scouts and one of the best shots on the plains...He gets \$60 per month and a splendid mule to ride, and is one of the most contented and happy men I ever met."

Consequently, with many factors in play, Cody added African Americans to his Congress of Rough Riders of the World—albeit not as active duty enlisted men. Instead, the troops would be portrayed by veterans from the four black regiments. Indeed, by 1899, when Cody added a large-scale recreation of the Battle of San Juan Hill to the Wild West, the cast included representations of the Twenty-fourth U.S. Infantry along with the Ninth and Tenth U.S. Cavalry regiments. The following year, Cody continued the epic mock fight replete with Gatling guns and a make-believe Theodore Roosevelt storming the Spanish bastions. The simulated battle continued as part of the Wild West from 1902 through 1904. In fact, during several seasons, African American cast members represented buffalo soldiers as part of the heroic American and Cuban force, winning the day at a recreated San Juan assault and thereby reflecting historical fact.

Even three dime novels (among the scores of these inexpensive escapist pulps with the character of Cody as the hero) featured "The Tenth Cavalry of Colored Troops." In one of these fanciful adventures, published in 1901 as the first known fictional portrayal of black frontier troops, "Buffalo Bill, appointed for a special purpose, Chief of Scouts of the Tenth United States Cavalry, a regiment of black troopers, was off on one of his lone and daring trails...."





Lithograph, 1899: *Charge of the 24th and 25th Colored Infantry and Rescue of Rough Riders at San Juan Hill, July 2, 1898.* Copyrighted 1899 by Kunz & Allison, 267-269 Wabash Ave., Chicago. 1.69.5750

To perform his mission, Cody enlists a few dozen soldiers whom he believes would “make good scouts...” The fictional stand-in for Buffalo Bill tells one of the officers, “While the Indians are as scared of the black soldiers as the latter are of them—they just don’t understand their being black and call them ‘Heap Black Paleface Braves.’”

Indeed, the trio of stories, while using some dialect, favorably depicts Cody’s African American recruits, particularly Sergeant Mobile Buck. In some ways, this positive brave black character foreshadows images of NCOs (non-commissioned officers) found in later novels, films, and television portrayals.

Regrettably, nearly three quarters of a century passed before authors, television producers, and filmmakers rediscovered frontier blacks who wore Army blue. When they finally did, they failed to realize that they only were following a trail blazed by Remington, Cody, and so many others. ■



EDITORS NOTE: Russian short story writer Anton Chekhov wrote in his *The Witch and Other Stories*, “The past,’ he thought, ‘is linked with the present by an unbroken chain of events flowing one out of another.’ And it seemed to him that he had just seen both ends of that chain; that when he touched one end the other quivered.”

Dr. Langellier’s article characterizes the nature of history where, in any given age, innumerable connections are linked by names, places, and circumstances—like Remington and Cody. And, thus is the nature of historians like Langellier—an observant lot, always on the lookout for ties that bind the past to the present.

*John P. Langellier, a 2018 Buffalo Bill Center of the West Resident Fellow, has written scores of articles and dozens of books including his most recent titles, Fighting for Uncle Sam:*



*Buffalo Soldiers in the Frontier Army and The “Trapdoor” Springfield. Growing up in Tucson, Arizona, Langellier spent four decades in public history after graduating from the University of San Diego, and then Kansas State University, where he earned a PhD in military history. He spent a dozen years with the U.S. Army, and then served tenures at Autry Museum of the American West, Wyoming State Museum,*

*Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Sharlot Hall Museum, and Arizona Historical Society’s Central Division. Now retired, he spends his time writing, consulting, and producing about the West including serving as film consultant to the 2010 PBS documentary, For Love of Liberty: The Story of America’s Black Patriots, hosted by Halle Berry.*



Buffalo soldiers of the 25th Infantry, Ft. Keogh, Montana, 1890. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC 20540 USA. LC-DIG-ppmsca-11406

# The Irma Hotel CHERRYWOOD BAR: IN LA SCALA OPERA?

BY WALTER RUDOLPH

*Metropolitan Opera Live in HD (also known as The Met: Live in HD) is a series of live opera performances transmitted in high-definition video via satellite from the Metropolitan Opera in New York City to select venues—primarily movie theaters—in the United States and other parts of the world. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Rudolph had occasion to view one such production, an event that becomes just the first of a series of quintessentially ‘serendipitous’ moments for Rudolph.*

On May 13, 2018, my wife, Marilyn, and I attended the Metropolitan Opera HD Movie Theatre transmission of *Der Rosenkavalier* (“The Rose Bearer”) by Richard Strauss—the upshot of which will become apparent shortly.

The following Tuesday I was researching for operatic connections in Utah for an upcoming lecture. One link I encountered was titled *The Opera Critic Reviews: Teatro alla Scala* [a Milan, Italy, opera house] / *La Fanciulla del West* (“Girl of the Golden West”), an opera by Giacomo Puccini. I knew it had no connection to my work and was ready to move on when that ‘prompt’ appeared telling me to click on it anyway. A quick scan revealed the following: “in Buffalo Bill’s Irma Hotel at Cody...and a

sunburned view of Monument Valley.”

“How could this be?” I wondered.

*Fanciulla* takes place in a mining camp at the foot of the Cloudy Mountains in 1849 – 1850 California. I was intrigued and wrote Michael Sinclair of New Zealand, the editor of the website who had selected the review.

Sinclair put me in touch with the production’s Director and Co-Designer, Robert Carsen, who just happened to be the Director of the Met’s *Rosenkavalier* we had just seen! Within hours, I read Carsen’s initial reply, which began:

Walter B. Rudolph is absolutely correct: I based the Act One bar design, which I did myself, on Cody’s bar in the Irma Hotel, which I visited years ago when I was preparing to write and direct Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show for the opening of Euro Disney in Paris.

In the meantime, I had found a trailer for this production on YouTube ([youtube.com/watch?v=2silfSSazd4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2silfSSazd4)). Ten seconds into this video, I stopped: There was a full stage representation of the cherrywood bar found in the Irma Grill!

In additional correspondence with

Carsen, I learned more of his ideas for this production. He noted:

Our entire production was a homage to the genre of western cinema and explores different styles of films. The score of *La Fanciulla del West* is like a film score—before western film scores were invented! Our production starts with some men in a cinema watching the end of a western, *My Darling Clementine*.

When the film ends, moviegoers are still “in” the movie, and in a fantasy; they turn the cinema into a bar by moving the seats and bringing in some tables. The front of the cinema screen comes forward to create a version of the famous bar at the Irma. Then, when the Girl herself appears, the bar disappears, and we are in the middle of a cinemascope film with a wrap-around view of Monument Valley in Utah.



## THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OPERA SET



The Irma Bar backdrop to the opera.



Assembling components to the Irma Bar replica.



Laying out the massive set.



Sculpting the buffalo head for the bar.



The replica buffalo head is complete.



Getting the bar in place.

Carsen described the Second Act as influenced by the Lillian Gish black and white film, *The Wind*. The third act included “live” cinema with the singers projected, again in black and white, on the screen. At the end, the miners bid the Girl goodbye as she leaves with her movie star boyfriend for California, and then the miners return for another watch of the movie they’ve just been viewing.

I was elated to have had such a serendipitous experience. Carsen, who hails from Toronto, Canada, is one of today’s most successful opera companies in the world. But this *Fanciulla* had yet another connection for me.

In 1976, I was a member of the chorus at Lyric Opera of Chicago. The production was *Rigoletto* by Giuseppe Verdi, and the conductor—making his American debut at age 23—was Riccardo Chailly who is now the Principal Conductor of Teatro alla Scala in Milan, one of the three or four most prestigious opera companies in the world. And yes, it was Chailly who conducted this new production of *Fanciulla*!

Odd as it may seem, though, my own love of opera all began in Cody. I owe so much to people like Frank Lanaghen, Helen Ogston, and Paul Hanselmann. I am also

indebted to those who have seen to the continuance of the local Community Concert series, which enabled me to attend recitals by some of the finest vocalists—including Maureen Forrester, Igor Gorin, Jon Crain, and Edwin Steffe—and many equally great instrumentalists.

There’s still more to this little tale, however. In the July 1981 issue of *National Geographic* (page 81), there is an article about William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody. A photo caption mentions that “[Buffalo Bill] even convinced Milan’s La Scala Opera to perform in the little prairie town [North Platte, Nebraska].” Serendipitous, indeed!

In all, Carsen shared a dozen photographs of his *Fanciulla* production. Obviously, he has great love for the American West and especially for Cody and Buffalo Bill. ■

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*Walter B. Rudolph, the oldest son of Walter A. and Delora B. Rudolph, graduated from Cody High School in 1964. He was general manager of Classical 89, KBYU-FM radio for thirty-three years, where he was deeply involved in classical music. Today, he lectures regularly on opera, is a past-president of the Jussi Björling Society-USA, and loves traveling to Cody to visit his brother, sculptor Jeff Rudolph.*

## THE BAR TODAY



Irma cherrywood bar today.



Irma cherrywood bar. Flickr photo, general permission.

William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and Nate Salsbury, ca. 1900. P.69.1024 | Unless noted otherwise, all images are from the Center's MS006 William F. Cody Collection.



# Nate Salsbury's **BLACK AMERICA** Its Origins and Programs

BY SANDRA K. SAGALA

In spring 1895, Nate Salsbury (1846 – 1902) and William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody (1846 – 1917), partners in the Wild West extravaganza, masterminded an extraordinary new entertainment featuring hundreds of theatrical and musical performers, imaginative scenery, and educational historic programming that rivaled the western exhibition.

Salsbury applied his experience—gained from molding the Wild West into one of the era’s most popular outdoor attractions—to showcase pre-Civil War lives of negroes. He called the new program *Black America*. Just as the Wild West depicted a rapidly disappearing frontier, *Black America* would represent the bygone antebellum era. Northerners were acquainted with the period only through published accounts of slavery and plantation life they read, or by hearing “garbled stories” of life south of the Mason-Dixon line.

How then, did Salsbury, a white soldier-turned-actor, become a purveyor of negro culture, history, and music?

## Who was Nate Salsbury?



A young Nate Salsbury, ca. 1880. P.6.1722

Born in Freeport, Illinois, in 1846, Salsbury joined the Union Army at the outbreak of the Civil War. His youthful singing and dancing relieved the tedium of army life and, together with his vibrant personality, made him renowned beyond his unit. One day after his commanding officer heard him sing, he allegedly remarked: “If I had a regiment of 1,000 men like Salsbury, I could lick 3,000 rebels.” How music, even coming from the talented Salsbury, could overcome enemy fire was evidently not questioned.



Salsbury served in Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas; was captured at Andersonville; and was thrice wounded but reenlisted as soon as he was fit. When he was mustered out with \$20,000 won from fellow soldiers in poker games, he started business college. He later withdrew when he ran out of money, and then became interested in amateur theatrics.

Having no stage experience, Salsbury nevertheless applied for a place in a dramatic company. In his first performance with a Grand Rapids, Michigan, stock company, he had one line in John Brougham's *Pocahontas*. In 1869, he entered the Boston Museum Company; four years later, he joined Hooley's Comedy Company in Chicago, where he became popular as an eccentric comedian. Not content with simply performing, Salsbury hatched a plan to make a business out of his interest. He convinced fellow actor John Webster that they should pool their salaries to start their own stock company. Salsbury's Troubadours, as the troupe was named, toured the United States and Europe for more than ten years, performing farce comedies that Salsbury wrote, including *Patchwork*; *On the Trail, or, Money and Misery*; and *The Brook*, "and made a very great deal of money."

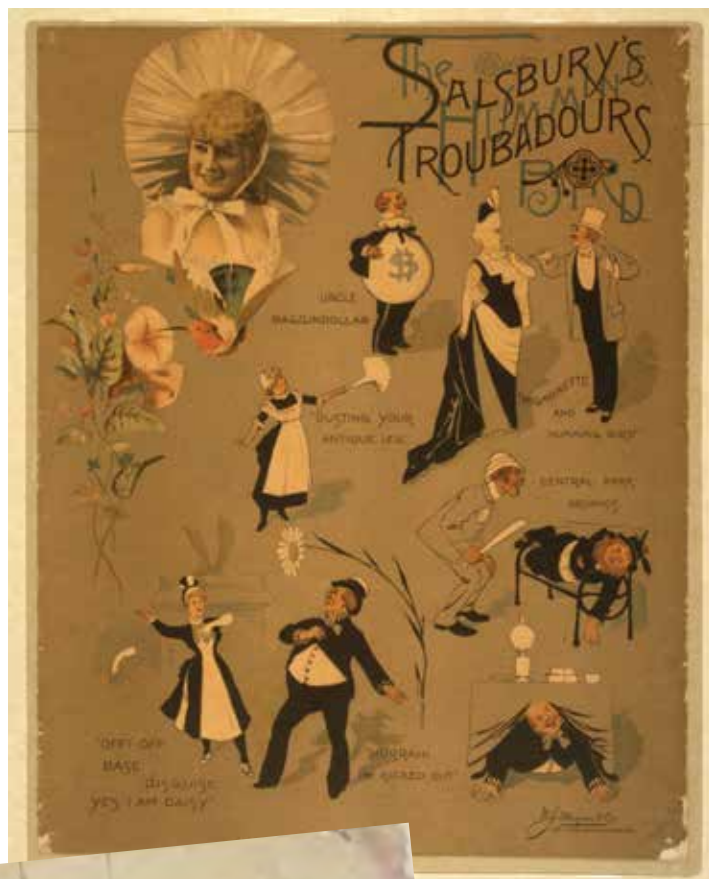
## Partnering with Cody in the Wild West

By 1882, Cody had also been touring the country for ten years. He acted onstage in frontier melodramas in his own Buffalo Bill Combination when Salsbury contacted him with a business proposition. They met in Brooklyn, New York, while Cody's dramatic troupe was performing at the Grand Opera House, and Salsbury's company was performing at the Park Theater. Introduced to Australian horse races while touring with the Troubadours, Salsbury had been inspired to develop a horsemanship show. He envisioned Cody as the central figure and proposed the concept to him:

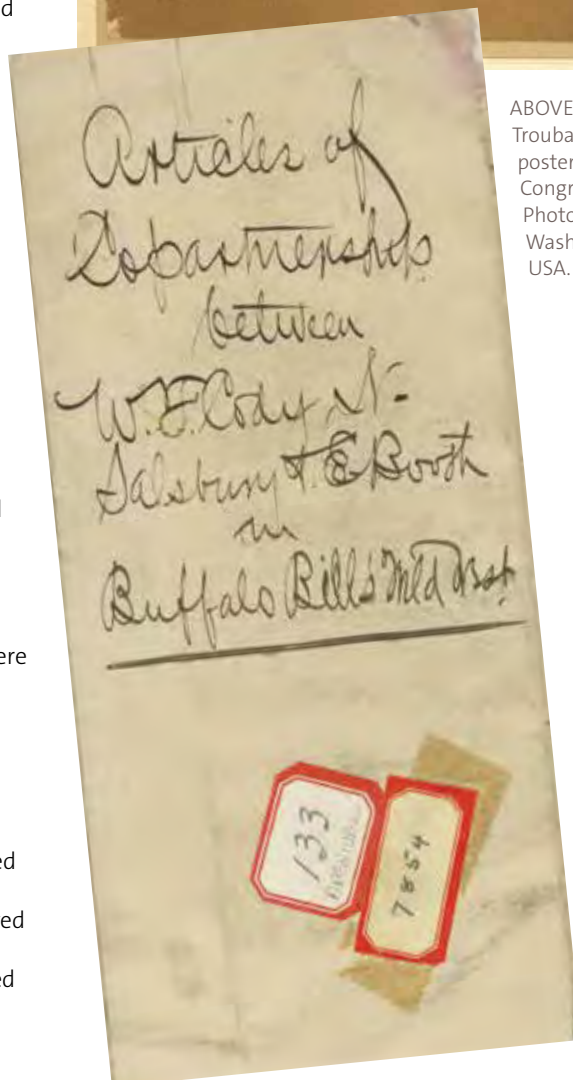
Nobody's ever done it before. It's the greatest show idea yet. We'll tell the story of the West with cowboys, Indians, buffalo, and bucking horses, not on the stage of a theater but in the outdoors. It will be like a circus yet not a circus. It will be lifelike and true in every detail.

Cody thought it a good idea. His melodramas had outgrown the constraints of a stage with an ever-expanding cast that included real Indians and live animals. When Salsbury predicted there was a million dollars to be made if he managed the show and Cody headed the bill, the two struck a deal. Their scheme didn't get off the ground immediately, however. Salsbury's plan included eventually taking the new program to Europe, so that summer he toured the continent to get a feel for a country "where all [the show's] elements would be absolutely novel."

Salsbury concluded that neither he nor Cody had enough money to do the grand show properly, so they agreed to wait a year; besides, the Troubadours still had bookings to fulfill. Cody nevertheless took Salsbury's idea of moving his performances to outdoor venues and partnered with William "Doc" Carver, a dentist-turned-shooter, to make it happen. When Salsbury learned of Cody's betrayal and his choice of partner—Salsbury despised Carver—he predicted the pair's venture would fail, but still believed the idea could be profitable if it were properly handled. After one contentious season, Cody and Carver split, and Salsbury reinstated his partnership with Cody, creating Buffalo Bill's Wild West.



ABOVE — Salsbury's Troubadours color lithograph poster, 1889. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. 2014635937



LEFT — Handwritten co-partnership agreement between Cody and Salsbury—with one Evelyn Booth who contributed \$30,000—for the Wild West venture, January 8, 1886. MS6.0464.01





Buffalo's Bill Wild West poster, Congress of Rough Riders of the World, ca. 1895. Gift of the Coe Foundation. 1.69.170

Too soon, Salsbury discovered problematic tendencies of his business partner. Once, after he found Cody "boiling drunk," he considered bailing out of their agreement. He admitted years later, "If I had done so, I would not have had as much money as I made out of the Show afterwards, but I would have had infinite peace of mind, which I have never had since." Despite reservations, Salsbury remained convinced they had a winner on their hands and so began a sixteen-year affiliation. With Cody vowing to remain sober, and Salsbury providing watchful guidance, the next Wild West seasons proved successful.

## Enter the Rough Riders

By 1891, to broaden the scope of the Wild West and to encourage return audiences, Salsbury introduced a new feature titled "Congress of Rough Riders of the World." The exhibit featured skilled horsemen from Europe and South America; Sioux Indians; U.S. soldiers, including black "buffalo soldiers" so named for their hair thought to resemble buffalo hide; and cowboys. Ads promised the audience "all kinds, all colors, all tongues, all men fraternally mixing in the picturesque racial camp."

In his book *Slavery on Stage: Black Stereotypes and Opportunities*

in Nate Salsbury's "Black America" Show, biographer David Fiske observes that it seemed Salsbury believed that understanding "diverse cultures would lead to a better brotherhood of mankind." Whether the disparate troupe contributed to the dispelling of racial prejudices is unknown, but, as Fiske notes, it "suggest[s] that Salsbury believed in the marketability if not the actuality, of such sentiments."

The Wild West earned both Cody and Salsbury a nice salary, especially after a highly successful 1893 season in Chicago which took advantage of audiences swelled by the World's Columbian Exposition. But their finances were far from stable. Planning on a stationary season at Brooklyn's Ambrose Park for the 1894 summer, they erected a covered grandstand with 20,000 seats. Despite the Park's accessibility by ferry, attendance was sparse. Cody's penchant for indulging in dubious business enterprises and the public's capriciousness toward frontier-themed entertainment also caused the Wild West to bleed money. In a letter to his sister, Cody wrote, "I am too worried just now to think of anything...my expenses are \$4000 aday [sic], and I can't reduce them, without closeing [sic] entirely...this is the tightest squeeze of my life."

Salsbury attempted to redress the losses by recommending that the Wild West return to its original itinerant arrangement, moving



to a different city with an untapped audience every day. Because the Park's forty acres was an excellent showground, it was unreasonable to allow it to remain idle when the show was on tour. Accordingly, Salsbury began arranging for an Italian industrial exhibit to take its place, but he had to abandon the project when he became ill and unable to attend to details. Heedless of Salsbury's poor health, Cody entreated him in a letter of January 1895:

Dear Nate,

Its [sic] wrong to trouble you. But I am in a tight place. And if I had a little time to go on I am sure that I could pull through and make a loan on my property...I can tide over with \$5,000 do you think the bank of the Metropolis would loan me \$5,000 for four months...Nate this is to keep my credit good that I ask this...give me your advice, and tell me how to pull out of this hole. Bill



Buffalo Bill's Wild West poster, "All Roads Lead To Buffalo Bill's Wild West," Ambrose Park, Brooklyn, New York, 1894. 1.69.20

## Staging Black America

Theories abound as to how or why *Black America* came to be. Cody's plea for funds may have enticed Salsbury off his sickbed to develop an exhibit that would generate badly needed income. Wild West audiences had displayed an appetite for demonstrations of other cultures; for this reason, Salsbury and Cody toured the show in eastern and southern states, far from its western roots.

Two years previously, ethnic villages displayed the customs, dress, and talents of various countries at the World's Fair. This may have prompted Salsbury to consider featuring the American South which, for metropolitan Easterners, would be as culturally exotic as foreign lands or the Frontier West. When a reporter asked how he envisioned a show in which five hundred negroes would sing, dance, and perform in tableaux inspired by the pre-Civil War South, Salsbury said he had two motives: to give a performance of ethnological value, and because "I wanted something that should be purely national in color and a novelty."

Another report had Salsbury mingling with other showmen in



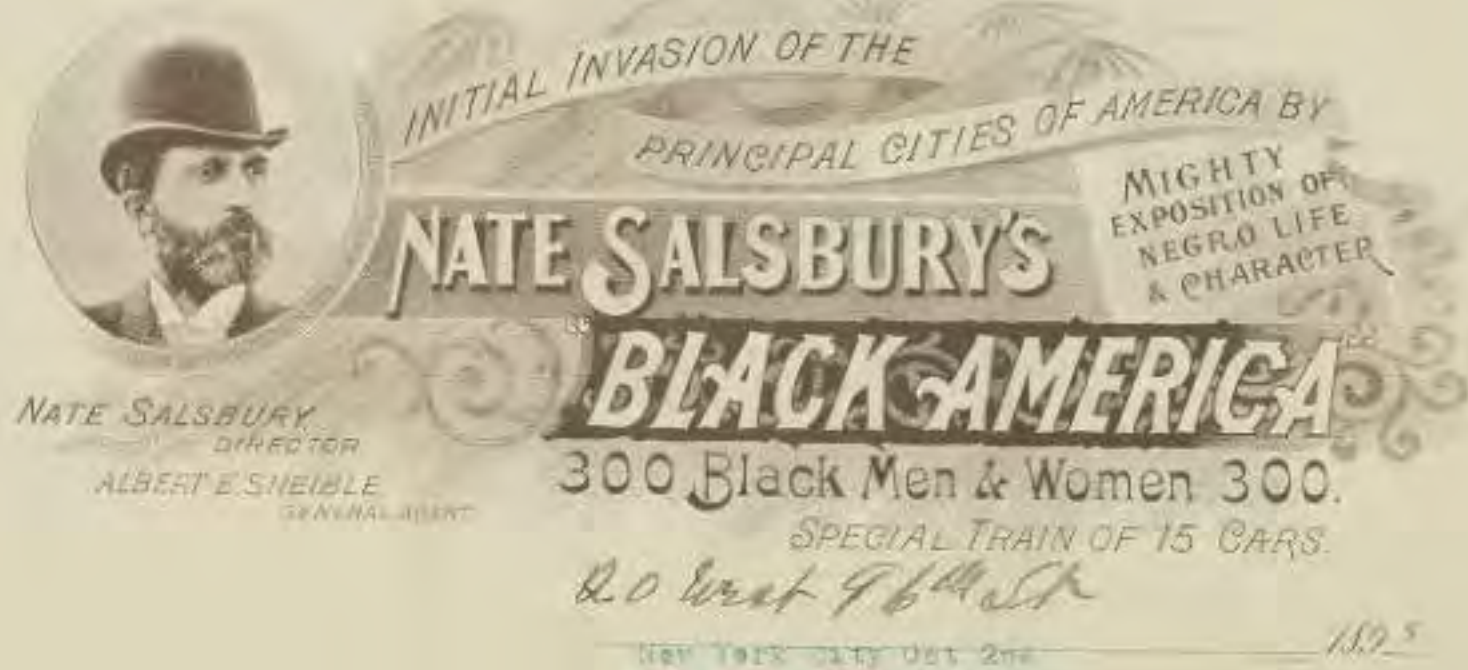
*Black America* poster, Brooklyn, New York, 1895. Wikipedia, Public Domain.

New York's Actors' Club and mentioning his idea for an all-colored musical program. According to Harry Tarleton, who would become the show's stage manager, "[t]he other men said it could not be done, and Nate Salsbury said, 'I will show you fellows it can.'" To a journalist, Salsbury later related:

The idea came to him some years ago when he was making a tour of the southern states. Having familiarized himself during the war with the colored race, he saw, during this journey, that a certain phase in American life was rapidly disappearing, and then came to him the thought that to present an entertainment showing this life in its many phases before it had become eradicated would be an instructive creation and one in which northern people would take great interest.

In his book *100 Years of the Negro in Show Business* (1954), veteran showman Tom Fletcher attributed the show's genesis not to Salsbury at all, but to Billy McClain, a black comedian and musician.

# Nate Salsbury's BLACK AMERICA



Letterhead of Nate Salsbury's *Black America*, October 2, 1895. University of Wyoming American Heritage Center. Beck Family Papers. ah10386\_0023

The previous year, McClain had produced a theatrical program titled *The South Before the War*, and he initially contacted Salsbury to find employment for his company during the summer. Salsbury recognized McClain's superior connections and rapport with well-known names in minstrelsy. Possibly due to his illness, Salsbury considered producing and financing the show, leaving McClain to direct and manage the program.

Historically, negro minstrel shows focused on themes of plantation life in bondage, but Salsbury often reiterated that *Black America* would not be a minstrel show. "It is not a 'show' at all; it is an exhibition." It would differ from minstrelsy in that the cast was composed, not of whites in "burnt-cork caricatures," but solely of black performers considered to be portraying their everyday lives. Salsbury said, "My purpose in gathering together the very best I could possibly obtain from amongst the black race of America was to show the people of the North the better side of the colored man and woman of the South."

Salsbury cannily understood that the depravity and torturous treatment of slaves needed to be downplayed to appeal to an audience. In this, Salsbury replicated the Wild West's intentional exclusion of similar negative depictions of white's poor treatment of Indians. Instead of addressing issues of slavery, the performances were "indicative of the untrammelled outdoor life that they have lived" and the "easy-going methods of enjoying life that, prior to the war, under kind masters, it was the fortune of slaves to enjoy."

While Salsbury's name is most associated with *Black America*, Cody was a relatively silent, but very invested, partner. In March 1895, the *Kearney (Nebraska) Hub* reported:

Not content...with his laurels, won with his great exhibition and delineation of the old frontier life, Mr. Cody has planned another great original enterprise of as great, if not greater, magnitude than the first...a grand exposition of the history of American slavery.



Billy McClain, between February 1901 and December 1903. C.M. Bell Studio Collection. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-B5- 51215B [P&P]



Mr. Cody said[,] “Negro humor and melody will in this show reach the acme of perfection, as we have engaged a large company of the most celebrated colored opera and jubilee singers and each and every member of the aggregation will possess musical talents, so that the grand chorus of one thousand voices will be a thrilling performance.”

His comments indicate that Cody expected *Black America* to consist of the colossal number of a thousand performers. His wish for a program bigger and better than even the Wild West meant that Salsbury, nearly an invalid, would be managing four hundred more people than were eventually numbered among the cast.

Cody's brother-in-law Hugh Wetmore, editor of the *Duluth Press*, also expounded on the innovative idea:

[A]nother strictly ‘American institution’ [is] passing into oblivion and the same creative mind that placed the wild western life in the midst of civilization aided by his partner, Mr. Nate Salsbury, also determined that ‘Plantation Days in Dixie’ in the antebellum era should be seen as it really was by the present generation, before the last of those who lived in ‘Slavery Days’ should pass away to be seen no more.

*Black America* opened on May 25, 1895, and played in Brooklyn's Ambrose Park arena twice daily for seven weeks. Advance publicity in the New York newspapers promised a:

Typical Plantation Village of 150 Cabins, 500 Southern Colored People, presenting Home Life, Folk Lore, Pastimes of Dixie; More Music, Mirth, Merriment for the Masses; More Fun, Jollity, Humor, and Character presented in Marvelously Massive Lyric Magnitude for the Millions than since the days of Cleopatra.

[See] the Afro-American in all his phases from the simplicity of the Southern field hand to his evolution as the Northern aspirant for professional honors and his martial ambition as a soldier, a profession in which he has acquired an enviable record.

According to one publicity poster, *Black America* would display:

- The Negro as a soldier (Best drilled Cavalry company in the US)
- The Negro as a Musician (Capitol Band of Washington)
- The Negro as a Vocalist (250 Negro voices in concert)
- The Negro as a Dancer (100 Buck and Wing dancers)
- The Negro as an Athlete (75 Athletic marvels)
- The Negro as a Horseman (the whirlwind Hurdle Races)
- The Negro as an Actor (reproduction of Life in Africa)

In the next issue of *Points West*, learn about the staging, music, specialty acts, and all the performances of Nate Salsbury's *Black America*. ■

*Sandy Sagala is currently a member of the Papers of William F. Cody Editorial Consultative Board and has contributed several stories to Points West. She has also authored four books on William F. Cody, including Buffalo Bill on Stage and Buffalo Bill on the Silver Screen. In spring 2019, University of Kansas Press publishes Buffalo Bill Cody, A Man of the West, written by Prentiss Ingraham and edited and introduced by Sandra Sagala.*



William F. Cody,  
1909. P.69.1079



Nathan "Nate"  
Salsbury, ca. 1889.  
P.69.20371



# A living tradition

## PLAINS INDIAN FOOD AND MEDICINE

BY HUNTER OLD ELK AND LIZ BOWERS

*"Whatever type of healer you become, remember this truth: There can be no healing without heartfelt love and compassion for the person to be healed."*

— ALMA SNELL, Crow Nation, Montana

**W**hen one hears the phrase "Plains Indian," it is very likely that he or she immediately thinks of brightly colored adornment such as clothing, bonnets, and horse decoration, or cultural activities such as buffalo hunts, warfare, and nomadic tipi camps. While these are certainly a part of the tribal history and culture of many Plains Indian tribes, there is a much lesser known culture: the agrarian or gardening culture of tribes such as the Hidatsa, Mandan, and Arikara (the Three Affiliated Tribes), and the foraging activities of other nomadic groups.

The Three Affiliated Tribes cultivated intricate gardens to provide food for their families alongside hunting buffalo and other game, but they were not nomadic as one might expect. They lived in great earth lodges, rarely moving their villages. The

Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara settled along the Knife River, in what is present-day North Dakota, until about 1839 when white traders brought a smallpox epidemic that wiped out more than half of each tribe.

Banding together, the tribes eventually moved closer to the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota where the United States government attempted to enforce the individual allotment of land instead of the communal agrarian style they traditionally held. In those days, researchers studying Native cultures were convinced that the Native way of life was becoming extinct as the tribes assimilated into white culture. For this reason, they gathered immense amounts of anthropological and material culture data to preserve the Native knowledge for future generations.

### BUFFALO BIRD WOMAN

In 1906, the anthropologist Dr. Gilbert L. Wilson (1868 – 1930) met with the Hidatsa *Maxi'diwiac*, otherwise known as Buffalo Bird Woman (ca. 1839 – 1932), and her son Edward Goodbird who served as translator. From their village along the Knife River to Like-a-Fishhook village, she described in intricate detail how her family prepared, planted, cared for, and harvested their garden.

Crow people working in a garden in Montana. MS 095 Petzoldt Collection, 1903 – 1925. LS.95.127







Native agricultural tools belonging to Buffalo Bird Woman, ca. 1870. Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, Montana. "Fair use" 6825. Digital Public Library of America.



Seth Eastman (1808 – 1875). *Guarding the Cornfield*. VM0001

Watching the change of the seasons, the gardeners knew exactly when it was time to begin their planting. Starting with sunflowers in April, the women would later plant corn, squash, and beans from May to mid-June. The women of Buffalo Bird Woman's village guarded their gardens zealously, building a watcher's stage at one end of the garden where they would watch over the field, scaring away birds, other animals, and boys who would try to steal the corn. The women sang love songs teasing the boys who came to their fields, but they did not speak to the boys unless they were family.

In August, when the time came to harvest the ripe corn, the family would organize a corn-husking feast, taking a meal of buffalo meat to the field for the young men who came to help them. Young men would especially come out to help in the gardens of their sweethearts. Whether sunflower seeds, corn, squash, or beans, every plant was harvested with love and preserved to last the family through the winter.

## NOMADIC TRIBES: LIVING WITH THE LAND

Nomadic tribes, like the Flathead (Montana) and Crow (Yellowstone River Valley), also used plants as a great source of food and medicine. However, unlike the Hidatsa, Mandan, and Arikara tribes, the nomadic cultures did not rely on permanent gardens. Instead, they would gather what the earth provided in each season. The women, midwives, herbalists, and healers of the tribes gathered berries, nuts, roots, and herbs as the plants were ready to harvest.

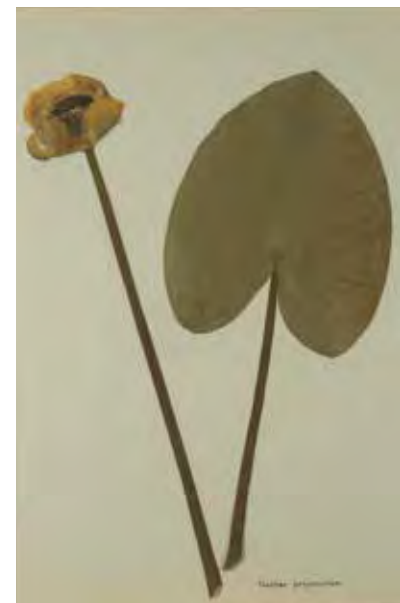
Some of these plants were more sacred than others, and each had to be gathered in its own specific way. The gatherers would also have to know which part of the plant was useful to them and which varieties were unsafe to consume.

Common plants gathered by these tribes include yarrow, bear root, echinacea, arrow leaf balsamroot, and wild berries such as chokecherries, buffalo berries, and wild plums. Over time, the gatherers also adapted to what was available around them. For example, they began gathering dandelions to use in salads and medicine poultices in the same way they used yarrow. Dandelions were not native to the plains but were brought



Probably August Friedrich Albrecht Schenck (1828 – 1901). *Indian Corn Harvest*. VM0009. Both copies of undated illustrations in MS 071 Vincent Mercaldo Collection.







to the area by white traders and settlers.

The Plains Indians adapted to their changing environment and found what was useful in it. Where Buffalo Bird Woman's people exchanged bone hoes for those made of iron, the nomadic tribes learned to gather new food and medicine resources.

In the mid-twentieth century, these practices and adaptations continued to thrive. Alma Snell (1923 – 2008) of the Crow Nation in Montana dictated in detail the cultural heritage of how she was taught to use the plants all around her for food and medicine in her daily life. As a healer, she continued to gather the natural remedies that others had shown her. For instance, yarrow is used externally to ease the pain of bites and stings, heal wounds, soothe burns, and stop bleeding. Used internally it supports urinary tract health, is good for the liver, calms the stomach, and cleanses the kidney and prostate. Bear root helps with birthing and menstrual flow and pain, and alleviates toothaches, arthritis, sore throats, respiratory problems, and spider bites.

Sometimes, one person or another would call Snell after seeing the doctor. They disliked what the doctor suggested they do to get better, and hoped that Snell would have a better solution. Instead, however, she taught them to obey, saying, "Most of the time doctors know what they are doing, and besides, there is power in obedience. When your doctor or nurse advises you about what to do and what not to do, stick to it. Be obedient. Obedience is power. It will make you healthy. It will make you happy. Maybe it will make you better. Listen. Be obedient."

The twenty-first century has found a new trend in searching for natural remedies and foods. This makes it all the more important that we understand and honor the traditional history and culture of food and medicine of the Plains Nations.

## A LIVING TRADITION

Still today, landscape and food are concepts synonymous with Indigenous identity for First Nation groups of Canada, Alaska Natives, and Native Americans. Individuals in these groups maintain cultural knowledge of their food systems and medicinal needs. For thousands of years, tribes of the Great Plains and the Northwest Plateau depended on hunting, fishing, and foraging of tribal territories. These cultural activities provided nourishment and spiritual health.

In contemporary culture, groups in the Plains such as the Lakota, Nakota, Dakota, Crow, Cheyenne, Blackfeet, Arapaho, and Shoshones rely on their protected rights to hunt and fish in their tribal homelands. With the seasons, these groups also forage for flora such as wild turnips, bitterroot, onions, and berries, as well as plants used in ceremonies like sacred tobacco, sweetgrass, bear root, cedar, sage, and mint. Southern Plains groups, such as the Omaha and the Cherokee, cultivate and collect Native seeds to garden corn, squash, lentils, and wild flowers. Plateau tribes — Yakama, Cayuse, Salish, Kootenai, Nez Perce, and the Warm Springs bands, etc. — depend on hunting, foraging, and salmon and steelhead fishing to ensure sustainability.



Hoe with wooden handle and metal head wrapped together with hide strips, ca. 1885. Gift of Mr. Irving H. "Larry" Larom. NA.105.1



Alma Hogan Snell, July 23, 2007. Carol Schmidt, MSU Billings News with permission to re-publish.

## HEALTH DISPARITIES IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Currently, tribes in the United States and Canada combat “food deserts” and poverty in their communities by enforcing their food sovereignty efforts. Food deserts are low-income communities which lack access to healthy and affordable foods because of distance and lack of transportation. Indigenous food sovereignty is the process by which communities address health issues and access to nourishment through culturally responsive action and the reintroduction to traditional food systems.

Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Canada First Nations people are twice as likely as non-Natives to develop diabetes and kidney failure from diet. Other alarming issues in these communities are the associated factors of obesity and mental health. The reasoning points to a lack of access to whole foods and other food insecurities in Native communities. Often, poverty is the underlying issue for citizens who reside on reservations and reserves. Recognizing a call to action, government agencies and non-profit groups seek to alleviate many of the factors that result in food insecurity. The government puts aside monies for food distribution programs and childhood intervention programs on reservations. Non-profit programs and activists also have a call to action which directly supports Indigenous food sovereignty.

Using traditional knowledge, environmentalism, and conservation efforts, groups such as Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA), Native Food Systems Resource



2016 USDA map. According to the *Medley [Florida] Food Desert Project*, Florida International University Department of Biological Sciences, nearly 24 million Americans live in food deserts...The map presents percentages of people without cars living in areas with no supermarket within a mile.

Center of Canada, and Intertribal Agriculture Council supports and develops Indigenous food practices and policies to combat food insecurities. Their strategies support cultural identity through health, spirituality, economics, and connections to the natural world as a means of sustainable tribal growth.

## FROM THE ROOTS OF THE PEOPLE

Today, there are many individuals working tirelessly to maintain tribal culture as they pursue sustainability in providing for the health and well-being of their citizens. As examples, we highlight the work of four people, each with a story that demonstrates their commitment to the very roots of their Native culture.

### Winona LaDuke

■ **Winona's Hemp and Heritage.** Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe, White Earth Ojibwe) received her BA in economics from Harvard University in 1982, followed by an MA in community economic development from Antioch University. LaDuke has a long career in environmentalism and policy making. She is the Program Director of *Honor the Earth*, a Native environmental advocacy organization focusing on climate change, renewable energy, sustainable development, food systems, and environmental justice.



Winona LaDuke, Hemp and Heritage.

■ LaDuke is currently pursuing a personal project called Winona's Hemp and Heritage to grow hemp in the state of Minnesota. Her goal is to use hemp fibers in commercial clothing production to reduce synthetic materials and synthetic waste. [winonashemp.com](http://winonashemp.com)

### Dr. Rosalyn LaPier

■ **Plants That Purify.** Dr. Rosalyn LaPier (Blackfeet) is an award-winning Indigenous writer and ethnobotanist (one who studies how people of a particular culture and region make use of native plants) with a BA in physics and a PhD in environmental history. She is an associate professor of environmental studies at the University of Montana. LaPier studies the intersection of traditional ecological knowledge learned from elders, with the academic study of environmental history.



Dr. Rosalyn La Pier, University of Montana.

■ She gained her ethnobotany education from her maternal grandmother, Annie Mad Plume Wall, and her aunt Theresa



Still Smoking. LaPier is the author of several books on Blackfeet history and is currently working on a new book, *Plants that Purify: The Natural and Supernatural History of Smudging*. The volume is a study of traditional Blackfeet women and their use of plants in ceremony. [rosalynlapier.com](http://rosalynlapier.com)

are also intentional about purchasing from Indigenous food producers and other sustainable partners in their catering business and food educator efforts—and soon in their new restaurant. Their cookbook, *The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen*, is available online at [Sioux-chef.com](http://Sioux-chef.com).

These are but a few examples of the many who preserve the living tradition of hunting, gathering, and gardening cultural methods for food and medicine—all of which continue to be an important part of Indigenous life today. ■



*The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen* cookbook by Sean Sherman.

## Sean Sherman

■ **The Sioux Chef.** Sean Sherman (Oglala Lakota) is the Founder and CEO Chef of The Sioux Chef based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His goal is to revitalize Native American Cuisine through a modern Indigenous lens. Sherman has an extensive career of more than thirty years cooking across the United States. His culinary passion is the revitalization and awareness of Native food systems. In his practice, he uses traditional Native knowledge, regional and seasonal access to foods, land stewardships through hunting and fishing, foraging, natural salt and sugar making, and food preservation to create meals decolonized of global influence.

■ The Sioux Chef is a team of indigenous chefs from the Anishinaabe, Dakota, Navajo, Northern Cheyenne, Oglala Lakota, and Dakota tribes. They

## Taylor Keen

■ **Sacred Seed.** Taylor Keen (Omaha/ Cherokee) is the founder of Sacred Seed and is a business instructor at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. He is also an active member of the Plains Indian Museum Advisory Board at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. His work combines traditional knowledge and ceremonial practices of the biological cultures of the Omaha and Cherokee with modern conservation efforts.

■ Sacred Seed is a non-profit organization based in Omaha whose aim is to collect, grow, and preserve ancestral seeds native to the Plains. Keen's group grows genetically diverse seeds of corn, squash, beans, and sunflowers, also known as the "four sisters." Keen envisions an Indian Country planting in traditional ways and using the biological knowledge to achieve sustainability and cultural preservation.



Taylor Keen, Sacred Seed.

Hunter Old Elk (Crow/Yakama) of the Plains Indian Museum at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West holds a bachelor's degree in art (with a focus on Native



American history) from Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg, Maryland. Old Elk assists Curator Rebecca West in object curation and exhibition development.

She uses museum engagement through research and social media to explore the complexities of historic and contemporary Indigenous cultures.



Elizabeth Bowers, Social Media Specialist at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, is a senior at the University of Wyoming with a focus in communications. Bowers studies the interactions of audiences and the content they engage with online. Through the Public Relations Department, she presents this content to Center of the West audiences, inviting them to engage with museum collections and the cultures they represent.

# A Hair-Raising Tale

## THE BELL FAMILY COLLECTION

BY JUTI A. WINCHESTER, PHD

**D**r. Juti A. Winchester is the former Buffalo Bill Museum Curator at the Center of the West. She currently serves as Assistant Professor of History at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. Here she shares the tale of her discovery of a collection that had once belonged to William A. Bell—a friend of William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody—and his son, Leonard. This story appeared in the Spring 2006 issue of *Points West*.

Named after his father’s friend, Leonard Cody Bell (known as Cody to his friends and “Code” among his sisters) had also been a favorite of Buffalo Bill. He even traveled with the Wild West in 1912 and, along with the letters, a pile of photographs, and a scrapbook, the collection included the silver cornet Cody Bell played while with the show.

Despite all the materials in this fine collection, we are still not sure how William Bell and William Cody first met. Born in Scotland in 1855, Bell immigrated to the United States with his family in 1861. By the 1870s, he had a patent office in San Francisco and worked at this trade for some years. Bell eventually settled near his parents in Iowa, where he started his own family and operated a show printing business. Somewhere along the line, Bell came to personally know some of the famous figures in western lore, including Jack Crawford the “Poet Scout” and W.F. Cody.

Among the usual snippets of poetry and family photographs that one would expect to find in a nineteenth-century man’s scrapbook, Bell kept newspaper articles about the Poet Scout and Buffalo Bill. He clipped a number of American patriotic essays and poems interspersed with articles of interest about Scotland. While there isn’t much about Mrs. Bell, there are some clippings about his daughters, May and June. Much of the scrapbook is related to the Bells’ son Cody, who had a knack

for attracting attention by virtue of his beautiful hair.

You probably have pictures like these in your own family collections—photographs of your grandfather or another relative wearing short pants and hair arranged in long curls. Around 1885, the velvet and lace suits and sausage curls of the “Fauntleroy” style became popular with the parents of young boys and remained fashionable into the early twentieth century. A handsome child born in 1894, Cody Bell wore the Fauntleroy suit and curls and carried them off charmingly.

At some point, William F. Cody made a deal with William Bell. Placing a large sum of money in the bank, Buffalo Bill challenged him to keep his son’s hair uncut until he was eighteen years old, and if he did, Cody Bell could claim the money. Mrs. Frances Guilbert, who donated the Bell Family Collection to the [then] Buffalo Bill Historical Center in 2004, remembered that the amount of money promised to her “Uncle Code” was \$10,000.

Cody Bell kept his end of the bargain, despite complications presented by his unusual looks. When he was a teenager, a friend measured Code’s hair at fifty-eight inches long! By all accounts, Code was unhampered by his ponytail and even went on to do well in military school, winding his locks into a large bun pinned under his hat to get into uniform.

On his way to participate in a series of National Guard encampments in 1910, Cody Bell was arrested three different times by police, who mistook him for a girl in boy’s clothing. Each time, they released him when he demonstrated that he really was a boy, and no further questions were asked when Cody explained that Buffalo Bill had asked him to grow his hair long. “Bell likes soldier life,” the newspaper observed. “Among the soldiers he is called ‘The Daughter of the Regiment.’”

One journalist described the scene when Cody Bell let his hair down to show

someone how long it was. “In five minutes the store was packed with a curious, admiring crowd and they had to lock the door to keep the crowd, back from the sidewalk. It required the services of two police officers to clear the sidewalk.” The writer went on to note that Cody had “captured a score of hearts of the young ladies as well as the older ones.”

Most of the photographs in the collection show Cody Bell as a young man with a winning smile, and he seemed to be popular with everyone whom he met. At one point, he and his sisters sat for a portrait session with an unknown photographer, and for one picture Cody borrowed his mother’s elaborate hat and muff. We can only guess how much of a prankster he must have been.

Did Buffalo Bill keep his end of the bargain? We don’t know for sure, since no written record of a large withdrawal of money came with the collection, but the families remained friendly for years beyond the end of the agreement. When Cody Bell was 17 years old and had just graduated from high school, Buffalo Bill invited him to realize his lifelong ambition to join the Wild West and to bring his cornet. Proudly, William Bell printed stationery for his son’s use proclaiming “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West, 1912 Season.” Cody’s hair became an attraction in itself as he played in the sideshow band.

Time marched on, and the world changed for everyone. The United States entered World War I, and in 1918, Cody Bell finally cut his hair and joined the Army. Sergeant Bell served honorably with a medical detachment in France, and later in the band. After the war, Cody returned to his home in Sigourney, Iowa, for a few years before moving to Baltimore, Maryland, to pursue business interests. He died only a few months after his father’s passing in 1934, but thanks to the Bell family’s generosity, their collection records this “hair-raising” tale. ■



In exchange for a handsome sum from Buffalo Bill, Cody Bell agreed to leave his hair uncut until he was at least age 18. Complete with his flowing locks, he performed as a Wild West show performer with his cornet in 1912. P.294.0026



All images are from the MS 294 William A. Bell Family Collection. Along with the cornet, they are gifts in loving memory of William A. Bell and Leonard Cody Bell by Mrs. Frances Slattery Guilbert.



Leonard Cody Bell, about 1903 (age 9), wearing the popular Fauntleroy suit and charming curls. P.294.0023



Hamming it up for his sisters, Cody Bell dons his mother's hat and muff. P.294.0024



Cody Bell's cornet, Chicago Music Company, 1902. 1.69.6106



Mr. Leonard Cody Bell the businessman, undated.



Cody Bell stuffs his hair under his military school hat. P.294.0028



Burden basket, Nueta (Mandan), ca. 1860. Chandler-Pohrt Collection, Gift of Mr. William D. Weiss. NA.106.183

# treasures

FROM  
OUR  
WEST

## Mandan Burden Basket

Last summer, Plains Indian Museum staff had the opportunity to engage in some unexpected fieldwork with unanticipated connections. While not our specialty, ethnobotany, the study of how human cultures use plants for food and medicinal purposes, is of great interest.

Our collections include a largely unstudied set of finely preserved, mounted, and framed specimens of plants from the Northern Plains region, many of which have known use in historic and contemporary Native cultures. Among the specimens, Curator Rebecca West and Curatorial Assistant Hunter Old Elk found examples of *Allium brevistylum* (wild onion, known as an important food source), *Balsamorhiza sagittata* (balsamroot or

arrowleaf, used for wound poultices or made into a tea for whooping cough), *Artemisia ludoviciana* (sagebrush or prairie sage, most known for its cleansing smoke when burned for ceremonial purposes).

Old Elk and West share an interest in the role of botanicals in historic Plains Indian cultures (see article by Old Elk and Liz Bowers beginning on page 22) because of the connections between modern uses and generationally held knowledge. Old Elk brought back sage and mint, both plants gathered for purification and their invigorating scents, from a visit to her Crow family in Montana. In the Big Horn Mountains, West discovered late-ripening but plentiful chokecherries, serviceberries, buffalo berries, and wild plums.

She thought of the Native women who used to gather these berries and plums as part of their summer work—likely using a burden basket akin to this Mandan example from about 1860—while gathering backpacks full of fragrant wild plums.

The gatherings went to good use: The sage blesses the Plains Indian Museum vaults by each entry; West made wild plum jelly; and Old Elk made traditional wild plum pudding and ghost bread (a soft, pan fried bread made at night when the dough rises well, and spirits are active). Perhaps not the usual means of research, but Plains Indian Museum staff use this type of sensory and scholarly experience to fuel their inspiration for future educational programs. ■







Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) eggs.  
DRA304.416 and .417



**DRAPER  
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

## Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) Eggs

Golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) in the Bighorn Basin of Wyoming find perfect habitat for nests which they construct on ledges carved out of sandstone. Eggs incubated in the spring hatch in mid-April, and by early July, surviving nestlings fledge to leave the nest.

All bird eggs are made of calcium carbonate, and up to 10 percent of the calcium required to form the eggshell is sourced from the female's bones. Because egg production is resource intensive, a golden eagle clutch typically ranges between one and three eggs with larger clutches corresponding to years of abundant prey. Many factors including weather, food availability, competition, and disturbance all contribute to whether a breeding pair of golden eagles succeed.

These cream-colored eggs with small brown splotches belong to golden eagle Kateri, one of eleven educational avian ambassadors of the Draper Museum Raptor Experience. The immersive program uses live raptors to promote education and awareness—and provides purpose to birds no longer suited for reintroduction to the wild. Kateri, who has been with us since 2013, is the only bird of the Raptor Experience to lay eggs; she has done so every year since 2014.

Kateri can be seen at our daily Raptor Experience programs. Her eggs can be found in the new permanent exhibition *Monarch of the Skies: The Golden Eagle in Greater Yellowstone and the American West*, found on the lower level of the Draper Natural History Museum. Golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; possession of eagles or eagle parts is prohibited by state and federal authorities. However, the Draper's display of these eggs is permitted under the authority of the State of Wyoming and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. ■



Thomas Moran (1837 – 1926). *Zoroaster Peak (Grand Canyon, Arizona)*, 1918. Oil on canvas, 9 x 12 inches. Purchased by the Board of Trustees in honor of Peter H. Hassrick. 11.96



**WHITNEY  
WESTERN ART MUSEUM**

## Thomas Moran's *Zoroaster Peak*

The trajectory of Thomas Moran's career would change dramatically in 1871. That year, the painter traveled to Wyoming Territory on a government-sponsored survey expedition led by Ferdinand V. Hayden. Moran was invited to visually record the geological wonders of the region. He thus became the first professional artist to depict the area's breathtaking sites, and his jewel-toned paintings helped inspire Congress to preserve Yellowstone as the world's first national park.

Moran was so moved by his experience that he adopted "Yellowstone" into his signature. He began signing paintings "TYM" for Thomas "Yellowstone" Moran, laying claim to the region as his artistic domain. For further verification, Moran sometimes added his own thumbprint in paint. In *Zoroaster Peak*, the artist incorporates the "TYM" monogram and a slender thumbprint at lower right.

Moran's early expedition to Yellowstone inspired subsequent trips to the American West, including a visit to the Grand Canyon with John Wesley Powell. Moran once remarked that the Grand Canyon "was by far the most awfully grand and impressive scene that I have ever yet seen." Paintings like *Zoroaster Peak* evidence Moran's lifelong affection for the dramatic gorge; at age eighty-one, he crafted this small yet stunning canvas nearly forty-five years after his first visit!

*Zoroaster Peak* is now known as Zoroaster Temple. From Moran's vantage point, its pyramidal summit rises higher than its surroundings, and the Colorado River in the foreground reflects the canyon walls' kaleidoscopic colors. ■





On Saturday, September 22, people from near and far gathered for the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's 42nd Annual Patrons Ball, the culminating event of Rendezvous Royale.

The Ball has become one of the signature social events of the year in Wyoming, and our special guests congregated in Cody to renew acquaintances, see old friends, make new ones, and network with leaders of industry and government—all within a setting like no other—immersed in the artwork and extraordinary collections within the Center's galleries.

We celebrated this year's ball in style by dancing the night away to the Silver Arrow Band from New York City. We also drew the names of the lucky winners for the *Sleeping Lion* bronze and the Pontiac GTO! Patrons Ball is an important fundraising event at the Center, and our guests also had the opportunity to bid on a variety of silent auction items.

For those who have yet to experience it, Patrons Ball is the party of a lifetime. Known for great music, great company, and great fun, it truly is the place to be in late September. We invite you to join us for the 43rd Annual Patrons Ball on Saturday, September 21, 2019.

Rendezvous Royale is a week-long celebration of the arts in Cody, Wyoming, and offers something for everyone with an interest in the art, culture, history, and society of the West: By Western Hands, a series of woodworking workshops, lectures, and a showcase of western furniture and leather craftsmanship; the Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale live auction, Quick Draw, workshops, and lectures; and the Center of the West's annual Patrons Ball.





**SAVE THE DATE | 43rd Annual Patrons Ball | Saturday, September 21, 2019**





# Sponsors & Donors

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West would like to thank this year's Sponsors and Donors. For their generosity, we are grateful.

## THE SHOWMAN

- Naoma Tate & the Family of Hal Tate

## SCOUT

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## BUFFALO BILL

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- Larry & Susan Patrick and Big Horn Radio Network
- St. Vincent Healthcare | SCL Health – Cody Family Medicine Multispecialty Outreach

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## CASH DONATIONS

- Frederick & Lucy Moreton
- John & Meredith Sullivan



**Thank you to our Silent Auction Donors. Your donations made our event a great success!**

See this year's candid photos by Renaegade Photography by going to [renaegadephotography.shootproof.com/patronsball2018](http://renaegadephotography.shootproof.com/patronsball2018).





# bits&bytes

## Calendar of Events NOVEMBER — MARCH

### CENTER HOURS

- November 1–30: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. daily
- December 1–February 28: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Thursday–Sunday; closed Monday–Wednesday
- Holiday closures: Every year, the Center is closed to the public on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

### FREE DAYS

#### Holiday Open House, December 1

- Our annual free celebration of the holiday season! Enjoy entertainment from a variety of community and school groups, homemade Christmas cookies, and visits with Santa! 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

#### Buffalo Bill's Birthday Celebration, February 24

- Celebrate our namesake's 173rd birthday with a free day at the Center. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
- And don't miss the Cody High School FFA's annual wreath-laying ceremony on Buffalo Bill's actual birthdate, February 26. *The Scout* monument, 11 a.m.

### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AND TALKS

#### Draper Museum Raptor Experience

- *Relaxing with Raptors*, 1–1:30 p.m. each day the Center is open to the public. Included with admission.

#### Family Fun Days

Supported in part by a generous grant from the R. Harold Burton Foundation. Free for Center members; \$10 per family for non-members.

- **November 16, 3–7 p.m.** *FallFest*: Enjoy the harvest season with food, fun, and autumn activities throughout the museums.
- **January 18, 3–7 p.m.** *WinterFest*: Instead of hibernating, venture to the Center for games, crafts, and wintery activities throughout the museums.

#### Lunchtime Expeditions

Organized and hosted by the Draper Natural History Museum, and supported in part by Sage Creek Ranch and the Nancy-Carroll Draper Foundation. Free.

- **December 6, 12:15 p.m.** *Beyond Borders: Bird Migrations to, from, and through the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem* by Bryan Bedrosian.

- After a short hiatus for January, Lunchtime Expeditions resume on **February 7** and take place on the first Thursday of each month.

### MEMBERS DOUBLE-DISCOUNT SHOPPING DAYS

- **November 17–18, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.** Members receive a special 20 percent discount in our store—on site and online at [store.centeroftthewest.org](http://store.centeroftthewest.org).

### CATCH THE CODY FIREARMS RECORDS STAFF AT THE FOLLOWING GUN SHOWS:

- **November 10.** In the office for Wanenmacher's Tulsa Show, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- **January 22–23.** SHOT Show in Las Vegas, Nevada
- **January 24–27.** Las Vegas Antique Arms Show, Las Vegas, Nevada
- **February 9–10.** Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Show in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

(Records Office regular hours are Monday–Thursday 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.–3 p.m.)

### CODY CULTURE CLUB

If you love Cody, you're part of the Club!

Enjoy appetizers and a cash bar at every program, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Each program is \$20 per person at the door; visit [centeroftthewest.org/codycultureclub](http://centeroftthewest.org/codycultureclub) for package deals that may be purchased online.

- **January 10.** Yellowstone: Stories of Survival
- **February 7.** By Western Hands
- **March 14.** Celebrities in Cody, Part 1
- **April 11.** 100th Anniversary of the Cody Stampede



### BREAKING NEWS Center of the West picks new CEO

Peter S. Seibert—former Executive Director of the Education, Research, and Historical Interpretation Division of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation—is headed to Cody, Wyoming, to become the Center's new Executive Director/CEO.

"The Buffalo Bill Center is truly a national treasure," Seibert says. "It has superb collections, world-class staff, and an abiding commitment to telling the story of the American West. For these reasons, and many more, I am thrilled to become the Center's next Executive Director."

Seibert was chosen after a lengthy, comprehensive, and far-reaching nationwide search. He replaces the retiring Bruce Eldredge who has served as the Center's executive director since January 2008.

Prior to his tenure in Virginia, Seibert held posts in New Mexico and Pennsylvania (his home state). He has both a bachelor's and a master's degree in American Studies from Penn State University. A prolific writer and speaker, Seibert has tackled many diverse topics in the fields of material culture, folklore, and popular culture.

"I believe it is vital to blend passion for what you do with great content knowledge," Seibert observes. "You must also have the ability to not only manage, but to be a visionary for an organization."

Seibert is married to Kim, and has two daughters: Mary, age 10, and Jane, age 19. They arrive in Cody just in time for the Center's annual Holiday Open House on December 1. Read more about the Center's new Executive Director/CEO at [centeroftthewest.org/new-ceo](http://centeroftthewest.org/new-ceo).



Bill and Karen Hayes

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: *Bill and Karen Hayes*

Bill and Karen Hayes knew they wanted to get involved at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West from their first visit in 1980 with Bill's cousin and Center Trustee and Advisor, Gordon Barrows. "We really fell in love with the place," Bill recounts. That love took its form in decades of faithful membership support from their home in Texas where Bill worked as a financial advisor. Since recently retiring to Shell, Wyoming, their dedication to the Center has only increased.

Bill drives more than ninety miles each week to volunteer in the McCracken Research Library. He's taking inventory and handling delicate historical documents, photographs, and books as he helps digitize the collection to make it more accessible for scholars, historians, and enthusiasts. Before that, Bill and Karen joined the "Eagle Posse" in response to a plea for volunteers from the Draper Natural History Museum's

Golden Eagle Research Program because "it seemed like it would be fun to get outside and be part of it." They spent mornings in the field watching nests, documenting eagle sightings, and noting the presence of young eaglets.

The hours spent behind-the-scenes have provided valuable insight to the needs of the Center and further shaped the Hayes' desire to meet those needs through their donations. "As a volunteer in the McCracken, I see the need for archival supplies such as file folders, bank boxes, and the day-to-day nuts and bolts supplies," Bill explains. "These folders and cases are the backbone of the Center and allow us to preserve and understand the history and people behind the thousands and thousands of 'things' the visitor can see. The work is not as visible and doesn't get the fanfare like someone giving

money to purchase art or underwriting an exhibit—but it's very important."

Bill and Karen understand the impact individuals can have on the day-to-day operations of the Center, and they're planning for theirs to extend beyond their lifetimes. Bill says, "We decided to support the Center, through our estate plan because we know it will be well used. It's our way of helping preserve the collections and to make sure it's available for generations to come."

The staff and board members of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West have the tremendous honor and responsibility of fulfilling the mission of the Center with all gifts received. We are thankful for Bill and Karen Hayes, and others like them, whose generosity furthers the values of the American West during their lifetimes and beyond.



## GIVING ON A BUDGET

Oftentimes we'd like to give more to an organization, but writing one large check can really impact our budget. Here are two ways to give more—and have it hurt less:



### 1. Monthly giving

*Are you a trailblazer?*

Trailblazers have defined the American West, one generation after another, finding opportunity amongst great hardship, settling down where no one had before, and leading the way to create the vibrant communities we enjoy today.

The Center of the West is looking for three hundred Trailblazers to lead the way with monthly giving. Are you willing to tap into your resources and increase your impact on the Center? When you give \$50 each month, along with your fellow Trailblazers, you power the Center for the entire year.

Be the reason the wonders of the West light up in the eyes of visitors from across the globe! It's easy to sign up online at [centerofthewest.org/trailblazer](http://centerofthewest.org/trailblazer) or by phone at 307-578-4009. Join us on the trail!

### 2. Pledges

Do you have a favorite program or museum at the Center of the West you'd like to support with a special gift? Perhaps you'd like to contribute to the renovation of the Cody Firearms Museum, but you need to spread out your gift over time. You can make a pledge and pay it across three years. Once again, we can charge your credit card monthly or quarterly if you prefer, or you can make one payment each year. In other words, a one-time \$15,000 gift might be too



much, but \$5,000 each year for three years may be doable.

Rachel Lee in our Development Office is happy to set up monthly giving plans for you. Call her at 307-578-4009. If you'd like to set up a pledge, contact Carolyn Williams at 307-578-4013.

## DON'T FORGET

This time of year, your gifts have a big impact! On average, half of the year's donations arrive during the last quarter! Please consider making your additional gift now, before year-end, at [centerofthewest.org/donate](http://centerofthewest.org/donate). We've also included a remittance envelope in this issue if you'd rather mail your contribution.

"There are great ways to maximize the tax laws and different giving structures. You can do simple things such as include the Center in your will or name the Center as a beneficiary

of an insurance policy. It's also possible to set up a trust with a lump sum of money or a piece of real estate that gives you a deduction, pays you a guaranteed rate of return until your death, and leaves a gift to the Center. People should talk with their financial advisors and the Development Department at the Center for more information."

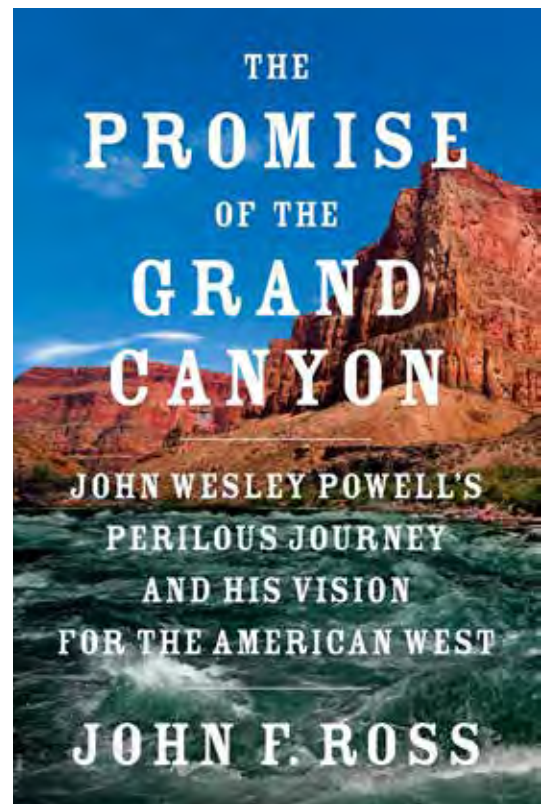
— BILL HAYES, retired financial advisor, Center volunteer, and longtime member



*Thank you for  
your support!*

# Between the Bookends

## *A Book Review*



BY JOHN F. ROSS | REVIEW BY STUART ROSEBROOK, *TRUE WEST MAGAZINE*, SEPTEMBER 2018

Geologists, conservationists, and environmentalists have been anticipating the 150th anniversary of John Wesley Powell's extraordinary first expedition down the Green and Colorado rivers in 1869 as the perfect opportunity to debate the climactic sustainability of the American West. The former editor of *American Heritage* magazine, John F. Ross, has written a dynamic biography/environmental history, *The Promise of the Grand Canyon: John Wesley Powell's Perilous Journey and His Vision for the American West*, that will definitely find itself in the middle of the dialogue and debate.

"This is the story of the most practical of American visionaries..." writes Ross, "...[who] would launch a new vision for America, a bold challenge to the status quo."

And just as others who have journeyed down the research path of one of America's greatest explorers and conservationists, Ross cannot resist the opportunity to add his opinion to the debate on Powell's legacy and its relevance to the very present national and international climate-change debate. Ross writes in his introduction:

This one-armed scientist-explorer threw down a gauntlet that remains essential and important for the time we live in. Not only for the drought and water shortage now afflicting the West, but for the larger world of climate change. While cautionary, it also offers a clear way forward.

Ross, a highly regarded and award-winning author, is also an adventurer who has led or participated in expeditions from

Greenland to the Galapagos. His skills as a researcher and historian, as well as his personal passion for conservation and environmentalism, are combined in a life-pursuing adventure in every climate and continent. The author's firsthand knowledge of the Grand Canyon and Colorado River—including running its length by dory—as well as his active outdoor pursuits across the West, allow him the perspective to both summarize and share his opinions on the prophetic nature of Powell's conclusions on western land use, water reclamation, and the absolutism of aridity:

This battler and risk taker, this scientist and visionary, ultimately asked Americans to temper their desires with a practical understanding of what the land and its climate was capable of...[Powell] did not ask for reverence for the land, but rather—more significantly—he asked for humility when regarding it. It was not then, and not today, an easy message for Americans to hear.

*Stuart Rosebrook, PhD, grew up in Los Angeles, California, but spent most of the summers of his youth at the Orme's Quarter Circle V-Bar Ranch Camp in northern Arizona. Those years formed Rosebrook's writing style and interest in western history. The prolific writer, editor, blogger, and historian is currently the Senior Editor at True West magazine.* ■

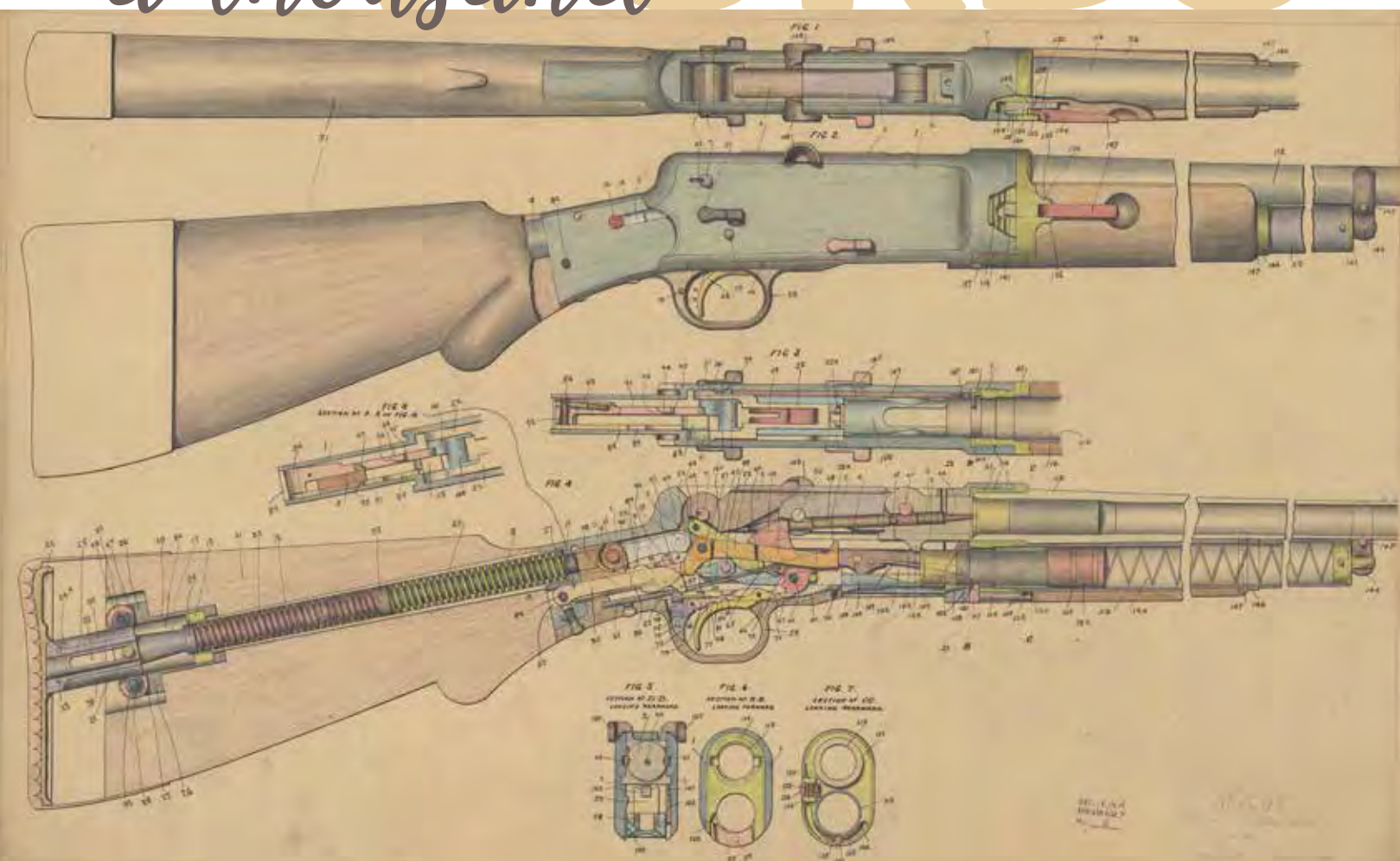
July 3, 2018. Viking: An Imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC | New York, New York | 400 pages | illustrated | ISBN: 9780525429876

*The Promise of the Grand Canyon: John Wesley Powell's Perilous Journey and His Vision for the American West* is available through the Center's Museum Store, [store.centrofthewest.org](http://store.centrofthewest.org).



# WORDS

## a thousand



Design drawing, 16 ga. repeating shotgun, right view and cutaway, showing all parts. 8-16-1900. MS 063 Winchester Repeating Arms Company Collection. Olin Corporation Charitable Trust. MS63.119.053

A quick glance through each of the Center's five museums, and one is sure to agree that art is everywhere: masterworks in the Whitney Western Art Museum, colorful Wild West posters in the Buffalo Bill Museum, masterful taxidermy in the Draper Natural History Museum, embellished guns in the Cody Firearms Museum, and expressive ledger drawings in the Plains Indian Museum. But equally impressive are the factory drawings of firearms in the McCracken Research Library.

When the Center of the West acquired the Winchester Collection, it also obtained an enormous collection of factory drawings—nearly 10,000 of which are available online. Yes, many drawings are unquestionably artwork in their own right—such as

this one of a 16-gauge repeating shotgun, dated August 16, 1900. With its intricate detail, this multi-colored drawing is a marvel of shapes, hues, and composition. Check out the McCracken Library's firearms collection at [centerofthewest.org/research/mccracken-research-library/digital-collections/firearms](http://centerofthewest.org/research/mccracken-research-library/digital-collections/firearms).

*The Cody Firearms Museum is currently undergoing a two-story, complete renovation. While the space is inaccessible for the time-being, visitors can still find nearly five hundred of the museum's most important and most popular firearms throughout the Center, with the largest collection in the Anne & Charles Duncan Special Exhibition Gallery. The "new" firearms museum opens in summer 2019.*

### *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, maps, and other documents for research and publication, thanks in part to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). To learn more, contact the library at 307-578-4063, or visit [library.centerofthewest.org](http://library.centerofthewest.org).

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