

THE QUILL

CHERRY CREEK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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THIS ISSUE OF THE QUILL IS BEING MAILED BY POSTAL DELIVERY DUE TO COMPUTER PROBLEMS, WHICH SHOULD BE FIXED SOON

The time, place, and program of our next meeting has yet to be determined.
You will receive more information on this in the next *Quill* or in a separate message.

About 25 of you attended our annual meeting on February 4th, and we thank you all. At this meeting we held elections for president and vice-president. Garry O'Hara was reelected president and we welcome Charles Kastens who was elected vice-president. (See Charles' **Meet the VP!** below.) We had no confirmed candidates for assistant secretary-treasurer at this time.

Our secretary remains Vonnie C'deBaca and our treasurer remains Ruth Fountain. Special gratitude goes to Peter Faris for serving as our vice-president and Will Sear for his service as assistant secretary-treasurer (and *Quill* layout editor) for the past two years.

MEET THE VP!

Charles Kastens, the new vice-president of CCVHS, has roots deep in Colorado history. His grandfather, I.J. Noe, traveled to Colorado in 1877 on a covered wagon from Indiana. He helped establish the Greenland Cattle Ranch, and eventually homesteaded his own land in Greenland in 1890, which is now part of the Spruce Mountain Open Space area south of Larkspur. When I.J.'s son Charles Fred married Jeannie Higby, it brought together two influential cattle families in that area. Charles grew up with his mother, Shirley Kastens, and his grandparents, Bud and Helen Arfsten.

Charles is married to his lovely wife Christine, and they have three children: Paige (14), Emily (13), and Jackson (11). Christine does volunteer work on the Society's website, and the children can often be found volunteering at the 17 Mile House. He teaches 4th grade at Independence Elementary (Cherry Creek School District) in Aurora and has participated in a variety of social studies committees and programs at school, district, and state levels. His favorite subject is, of course, Colorado history.

Charles is excited about this opportunity to serve in this capacity! His two main goals are to spread the word about the great things at CCVHS and add to the number of educational experiences the Society offers.

OUR LOSS OF ANNE DALE

We regret to report the passing of Anne Dale, wife of John Dale, on December 14, 2016 at the age of 85. She was a longtime educator and worker for the Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA). Our condolences go out to John on the loss of Anne and also the death of their son in September. Contributions in memory of Anne may be sent to the Cowan-Dale Scholarship, Aurora Schools Federal Credit Union, 751 Chambers Road, Aurora 80011.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Larry Schlupp presented an outstanding program on *The Goodnight Legacies* at this meeting at the Smoky Hill Library. Larry is president of the Larkspur Historical Society and a founding member of Historic Douglas County, Inc.

Charles Goodnight was probably the most prominent man in the cattle industry in the American west in the mid-to-late 1800s. With his partner Oliver Loving he blazed the Goodnight-Loving cattle trail from Texas to New Mexico (and eventually through Colorado and Wyoming) in 1866. This trail started in northern Texas, headed west to enter New Mexico, and then traveled due north to Denver and finally to the rail connection at Cheyenne. Although the trail lasted into the 1890s, at first it had to brave a scarcity of good water, hostile Indians, a difficult crossing of the Pecos River, and a slowdown at Dick Wootton's tollgate at Raton Pass. It would become one of the most heavily used cattle trails in the west. Goodnight and partner John Adair established what would become the JA Ranch, amassing over a million acres and 100,000 head of cattle at one point and becoming the oldest ranch in the Texas panhandle. Today's JA Ranch south of Castle Rock is the Colorado branch of this operation ("JA" is for John Adair). Charles Goodnight was a shrewd and successful entrepreneur who pioneered new methods of cattle breeding and who is given credit for inventing the chuck wagon.

For a while Goodnight also operated a ranch near Pueblo, Colorado, called the Rock Canyon Ranch. Two women from Pueblo are currently raising money to restore Goodnight's stone barn on this property (goodnightbarnpueblo.org).

MEMBER NEWS

Member **Jan Herman** is recuperating from 8-hour neck-fusion surgery on February 2nd. She has been at various hospitals for the past six weeks and finally got home on March 17th. She'll be wearing a collar for a few more weeks but is doing well and appreciates all the concern everyone has shown.

CCVHS members **Ruth Race Dolan** and **Lee Whiteley** gave excellent presentations at the 18th Annual Cherry Creek Watershed Conference, which was held last November at the Wildlife Experience in Parker. Karen Sear and Garry O'Hara also attended the conference. Ruth spoke on "17 Mile House Farm storytelling: Tales of life along our beloved Cherry Creek and the role of history in promoting stewardship of our natural resources." Lee's topic was "How past and present trail systems encourage stewardship and engage communities: A celebrated author's musings on trail connectivity and their impact on protecting and enhancing our natural resources." Many of the conference attendees picked up copies of Ruth's book *Tales of the 17 Mile House by Prairie Chicken* and Lee's book *The Cherokee Trail: Bent's Old Fort to Fort Bridger*. These outstanding books are available for \$10 each at our CCVHS meetings or by calling Garry at 303-751-3140.

DON'T MISS THIS SATURDAY'S ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM!

Sorry for the late notice, but a great program on local archeology is being given this Saturday!

Dr. Gordon Tucker will present the program "Ancient Douglas County: 10,000 Years of Culture History" at 1:00pm on Saturday March 25. This free program will take place in the Philip S. Miller Library in Castle Rock and is presented by the Larkspur Historical Society.

Dr. Tucker is one of the preeminent archeologists in this area. He writes, "The history of Douglas County, Colorado is as spectacular as its setting. The first occupants in this county arrived more than 10,000 years ago and their descendants inhabited the land until the appearance of the Europeans and Americans in the last two centuries. Evidence of this occupation is often subtle, sometimes grand, but rarely dull. This presentation will briefly summarize this long history of human settlement in Douglas County and focus on the reasons why people chose this area to settle. I will augment this general summary with a description of three major sites or site clusters in Douglas County: the Hess Village and Oeskeso Site in Newlin Gulch near Parker, Franktown Cave southwest of Franktown, and Blackfoot Cave near the headwaters of Cherry Creek in southeastern Douglas County."

MELVIN SCHOOL NEWS

The next time you're in Melvin School take a look at the two windows in the back room. These window sills, particularly the one on the left, were rotting badly and in need of replacement. We are glad to report that Bob Hawbaker, the Facilities Operations Manager for the Cherry Creek School District, and his expert maintenance personnel have repaired the window sills. Thank you, Mr. Hawbaker and staff, for fixing this problem and making the new wood historically match the originals (even the new blue paint matches the original color).

17 MILE HOUSE NEWS

by Karen Sear

Be sure to stop by 17 Mile House this spring to see the flowers in bloom and enjoy nature's beauty at the farm and along the Cherry Creek trail! Upcoming events include school group visits in April and May and open houses on March 11th, April 8th, and May 6th. If you are interested in joining the 17 Mile House Volunteers by helping interpret the history of the property or sharing your talents, please contact Karen Sear at seark@msn.com or 303-514-2094.

The 17 Mile House Volunteers were honored by the Denver Posse of Westerners with the 2016 Fred A. Rosenstock Award for Outstanding Contributions to Colorado History. A plaque and a \$1,000 award were accepted by Karen Sear, Garry O'Hara, and Bill Bauer at the Westerners' annual holiday banquet in December. This award will allow us to continue educating the public about the history of the 17 Mile House Farm Park and increasing public awareness of its significance to our agricultural heritage. Congratulations to all the 17 Mile House Volunteers!

Also, we are delighted to announce that Arapahoe County Open Spaces has confirmed Saturday, October 14th, 10am-4pm for the annual Fall Festival at 17 Mile House Farm Park again this year! Mark your calendars and watch for news later about the event and volunteer opportunities.

RESTORE YOUR OLD PHOTOS IN PHOTOSHOP

by Kirsten Canfield

Did you know you can repair old, damaged photographs using Photoshop software? At Smoky Hill and Southglenn Libraries, you can begin by making high-quality scans of your old photographs, negatives and 35mm slides. The library also has Photoshop available, which you can use to restore the colors of your faded or discolored color photographs. For instance, if you have a slide that has turned red over time, you can restore it to its original colors. You can also adjust the light and dark values of your black and white photographs.

With Photoshop, you can also remove dust, scratches and blemishes. And, if you have a torn photo and some patience, you can digitally merge its pieces back together. Photoshop offers many ways of repairing and enhancing your old photos, so give it a try!

Kirsten Canfield, a Multimedia Librarian, is delighted to teach you how to scan your old photos and use the library's Photoshop software. For more information or to book an appointment, call Arapahoe Libraries at 303-LIBRARY (303-542-7279) or fill out a Book-a-Librarian form online at arapahoelibraries.org/book-a-librarian.

BUFFALO BILL and the "GREAT BURIAL CONTROVERSY"

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the death of William Frederick Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill. He died at the age of 70 on January 10, 1917 but was not buried until the ground thawed in June 1917. His "Wild West" show and the myth surrounding him made him the most famous American in the world, the most recognized and photographed man on earth.

He was born in Iowa on February 23, 1846 and moved with his family to Kansas in 1858. He was only 12 years old when he left home to drive a team of horses on a wagon train between

Kansas and Wyoming, crossing the plains several times. He participated in the 1859 Colorado Gold Rush, unsuccessfully prospecting in the Black Hawk area for a couple months. On his way back to Kansas he stopped in Julesburg, Colorado, where he signed up for the Pony Express (at age 14!). Riding mostly in Kansas, this lasted only a few months. In 1864 he enlisted in the Union Army's 7th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, in which he served until the end of the Civil War.

After the Civil War he married Louisa with whom he had four children. In 1867 he hired on with the Kansas Pacific railroad as a buffalo hunter to supply meat to the railroad employees. It was here that he acquired the nickname Buffalo Bill, for in the span of 18 months he killed between 4000 and 5000 buffaloes (sources vary). A year later he was employed as a civilian scout and guide for the U.S. 5th Cavalry, which was engaged in fighting Native Americans. For his gallantry in the Indian Wars he was awarded a Medal of Honor in 1872. (This medal was revoked in 1916 because he was not a member of the military at the time, but it was reinstated posthumously in 1989.)

General Philip Sheridan started arranging for Bill to lead hunting expeditions for visiting dignitaries, most notably Grand Duke Alexis of Russia. The purpose of these hunting parties was to promote the military, but they also glamorized Buffalo Bill as a

Wild West hero. Ned Buntline, the writer of popular “dime novels” in the late 1800s, began using Buffalo Bill as the hero of many of his stories. His first Cody story was “Buffalo Bill, the King of the Border Men,” which was serialized in the *New York Weekly*. These fictionalized western tales were heavy on exaggeration and light on facts, but easterners loved them. Other authors picked up on the Buffalo Bill theme to sell “dime novels.” The myth of Buffalo Bill as a “legend in his own time” had begun.

Cody was just 26 years old when Buntline encouraged him to portray himself in performances of the play “Scouts of the Prairie.” Buffalo Bill quickly realized he was a poor actor but a great showman who was loved by his audiences. He appeared in plays until 1882, when he got the idea of forming his Wild West show. For this show he managed to get the likes of lawman “Wild Bill” Hickok, sharpshooter Annie Oakley, many actual cowboys and frontiersmen, and some Native Americans (including Sitting Bull for a season). The show and its reenactments were authentic to audiences: a buffalo hunt with real buffaloes, an Indian attack on a stagecoach, a speeding Pony Express ride, and many examples of stunt riding and roping. The climax of his show was a reenactment of either Custer’s Last Stand or the 1869 Battle of Summit Springs, which took place south of present-day Sterling, Colorado, and which featured Buffalo Bill leading the charge of U.S. cavalry against Tall Bull and his Cheyennes (Cody was actually chief of scouts in this encounter and fought admirably).

“Buffalo Bill’s Wild West” was to last 30 years in one form or another, entertaining audiences in over 1400 venues across the United States and Europe from 1886 to 1916. Queen Victoria was the guest of honor at one of its performances.

No one disputes that William Cody died 100 years ago at his sister’s house at 2932 Lafayette Street in Denver. However, to this day there are two controversies between Lookout Mountain west of Denver and the town of Cody in northwest Wyoming: 1) Is Buffalo Bill buried on Lookout Mountain or near Cody? and 2) If he is buried on Lookout Mountain, did he instead want to be buried near Cody (a town he founded and home of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center)?

In a 1906 will Bill said he wanted his grave to be at Cody, but in a later will he left this matter up to his wife. His wife and several others at Bill’s deathbed swore that, shortly before his death, he stated that he wanted his grave to be on Lookout Mountain near Denver. (Louisa was buried on Lookout Mountain next to him in 1921.) On the other hand, Wyoming conspiracy theorists say that after Bill died, and while his body was awaiting burial in a Denver funeral home, his embalmed remains were switched with those of a look-alike vagrant and his real body taken to Cedar Mountain near Cody for burial without a gravestone.

Steve Friesen, who is the Director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave on Lookout Mountain, is adamant that Bill wanted to be buried on Lookout Mountain and that his remains have rested here since 1917 (under 12 feet of concrete). Mr. Friesen also strongly takes issue with the Wyoming people who concede that Buffalo Bill is buried in Colorado but who want his remains moved to Cody. According to a Lookout Mountain gift shop worker, “People come in here and say, ‘I stopped up in Cody, and boy are they upset. They want their body back.’” To which Mr. Friesen simply says, “People in Cody have too much time on their hands.”

The Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave are located at 987 Lookout Mountain Road in Golden 80401 (take Exit 256 off I-70 and follow the signs). Hours are 9am to 5pm May thru October (7 days a week) and 9am to 5pm November thru April (closed Mondays and Christmas). Phone 303-526-0747.

Used in this article were Steve Friesen’s “Buffalo Bill in Colorado” in *Colorado Life*, January/February 2017, and his “Buffalo Bill: Saint of the Mythical West” in the September-October 2011 Denver *Westerners Roundup*; also John M. Glionna’s “Buffalo Bill’s remains lie in Colorado. But Wyoming begs to differ.” in the *Los Angeles Times* of July 16, 2015.

By the way, last year the U.S. Congress officially designated the American bison (buffalo) as the national mammal in recognition of its being North America’s largest land animal and “the embodiment of American strength, resilience and the nation’s pioneer spirit “ (*The Denver Post* November 3, 2016, p. 17A).