

## Buffalo Bill: The Conservationist You Never Knew

By Meghan M. Vickers

When hearing the name Buffalo Bill, most people don't think of the word conservation. Many actually probably think of the term "buffalo killer." In reality, Buffalo Bill was a conservationist, and he actually helped save the buffalo and other species from extinction.

Before learning about Buffalo Bill and how he was a conservationist, it's important to understand conservation, particularly during Buffalo Bill's lifetime. Modern conservation as we know it began to take form in the 1870s. Not only was Yellowstone formed as the world's first national park, but photography was beginning to show people the grandeur of what this nation had to offer. People were starting to care about the wild spaces that they had never been able to experience before.

There were two camps when it came to conservation: the conservationists and the preservationists. Conservationists understood the value the land had not just for its beauty but also for its resources. They believed that the resources were being exhausted too quickly to be replenished, and therefore, the land needed to be



protected in order to save the resources. Preservationists believed that the land should be preserved for its intrinsic value alone; its beauty was its value.

Now, back to Buffalo Bill. William F. Cody was born in 1846 in Iowa Territory. His father died when he was only 11, leaving him to find a job to help support his family. By the

age of 14 he was a rider for the Pony Express and by 17 he had enlisted in the Army. After his 1865 discharge, Cody was hired as an Army scout; he also was contracted to provide food for both the Army and Kansas Pacific Railroad workers. Responsible for providing food on the plains to a large amount of men, Cody turned to hunting the buffalo; this role forever changed people's perceptions of Cody, in fact, leading to his nickname of Buffalo Bill. During one 18-month stretch between 1867-1868, he was purported to have killed over 4,200 buffalo.

*Buffalo Bill article continued on page 6.*

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# REFLECTIONS: President's Pen

By Elaine Hayden

At this writing, the spring equinox is behind us, and our first spring snow is upon us and I can only hope for more moisture for our very dry mountain area in the form of April showers to bring May flowers!

As I reflect upon the JCHS accomplishments thus far in 2017, I am reminded of the many projects and programs that were made possible largely through the efforts of our volunteers. I am very pleased to announce that our volunteers have logged over 500 hours in the first three months of 2017! This impressive statistic accounts for volunteer hours expended by tour guides, history educators and event volunteers that points to the importance of presenting our history as much as pointing to the commitment of our volunteers.

My last letter was published before our annual participation in the Alternative Gift Fair in November and our Holiday Tea in December. Both events were astounding success stories complimenting our fundraising efforts with the highest amount of proceeds recorded from the book sales at the gift fair and full participation at the tea. We anticipate both of these 2016 events to repeat in 2017.

Susan Grannell and her devoted helpers hosted two teas in January at the museum for members of History Colorado. Volunteers supplied food preparation, serving and cleanup for the two teas that welcomed a total of 50 guests. It was a delight to see many new faces and satisfying to

offer tours that showcase our historic house museum and relate the story of its inhabitants.

February brought Lynda Teller Pete to Hiwan to demonstrate the art of spinning wool on the Navajo lap spindle. This well attended event engendered an appreciation for the techniques that produce beautiful handspun yarn that Lynda uses in her weaving. Those in attendance tried their hand at spinning and a few even met with success. We are fortunate to have artists such as Lynda visit Hiwan Museum.

JCHS hosted the membership in early March at the annual Winter Gala, held at Hiwan Museum. Member, JoAnn Dunn, presented the history and use of the Medlen School outlining the restoration of the JCHS owned schoolhouse with a review of the popular summer programs for children. We appreciate JoAnn's dedication to the Medlen School history education programs.

In acknowledgement of March's designation as Women in History Month, we were pleased to invite Teri Johnson in her portrayal of Mary Elitch, 'The Gracious Lady of the Gardens'. Teri's presentation revealed the life of the tenacious Mrs. Elitch as she strived to preserve Denver's Elitch Gardens as a welcoming family gathering park and zoo as well as the Trocadero Ballroom and the Elitch Theater venues.

In an effort to present monthly programs of historic interest, JCHS is happy to announce events slated for

spring and summer. The April event featuring Jeff Norman in his portrayal of Buffalo Bill Cody will coincide with the current museum exhibit, 'Buffalo Bill: The Conservationist You Never Knew'. We welcome May with our appreciation luncheon to acknowledge our wonderful volunteers and on May 13th Hiwan Museum will host the Jefferson County Historic Commission's Symposium, "Landscape Shapes History". This opportunity will afford great visibility for JCHS to showcase the museum, our preservation efforts, and our collections.

June will see the opening of the museum exhibit highlighting our Navajo rug collection that will present the beauty and technique of this art form. In July we will welcome Dan Blegen in a special concert featuring the music of Woody Guthrie and photos from the Dust Bowl era. See more events in the Upcoming Events notice in this newsletter. As always, we encourage participation on JCHS committees and attendance at events that are presented for the benefit of JCHS members and the community at large.

Progress continues on projects important to our mission of preserving, presenting and promoting history in our mountain area including Bud O'Leary's Oral History Project and updates necessary to keep our web site current with Diane Fuchs chairing the committee in cooperation with Clarence Low, our web master.

*Reflections article continued on page 3.*

## MEMORIAL GIFTS



Sioux Pony Bridle

JCHS is pleased to report that through the generosity of many friends of Dave Hoover (husband of Josie Hoover) and Joan Davis, items were purchased in honor of these two friends of JCHS and Hiwan Museum. Meghan Vickers, Joan Ball and Dale Devine comprised the team that selected appropriate memorial gifts. On Josie's suggestion, a memorial gift of books was purchased with donations made in Dave's name to honor his interest in the written word. Titles include:

*Southwestern Pottery: Anasazi to Zuni* by Hayes and Blom

*Indian Silver Jewelry of the Southwest 1868 to 1930* by Frank and Holbrook

*Southwest Indian Painting: A Changing Art* by Tanner

*The North American Indians in Early Photographs* by Fleming and Luskey

*The Living Tradition of Maria Martinez* by Peterson

Additionally, memorial gifts purchased in Joan Davis' name include a Sioux Pony Bridle and a Game Hoop. As shown below, the pony bridle is an excellent example of quillwork and beading in the traditional manner that will serve as a teaching aid for our Pueblo to Plains school program. The game hoop serves as a resource in presenting our students with an example of a youthful pastime of the Plains tribes.

We are delighted to add these resources to the JCHS collection and appreciate the Hoover and Davis families for designating JCHS as a recipient for honorariums.

*Reflections article continued from page 2.*

The link from the JCHS web site that directs a web visitor to interviews of historical interest that have been generously offered by Linda Kirkpatrick and her Just Around Here web site is nearing completion. These fascinating interviews can be accessed from the JCHS web site by clicking on the 'Collections' tab on the menu then clicking on the justaroundhere tab. You will be delighted and informed as you read the reminiscences of people who have contributed to our community's history.

JCHS renewal membership forms are included in this newsletter or forms are available at Hiwan Museum or online at [jchscolorado.org](http://jchscolorado.org). New members are always welcomed! As we all commit and support the efforts of JCHS, remember that preservation and presentation of history is both our pursuit and our reward.

### Jefferson County Historical Society 2016-2017 Officers

President	Elaine Hayden
Secretary	Juanita Weare
Treasurer	Jerry Grannell
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### DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Director	JoAnn Dunn
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Director	Bud O'Leary
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### NON-BOARD POSITIONS

Book Sales	Carl Jurgen
Webmaster	Clarence Low
Newsletter Editor	Laurie Romberg



# Navajo Weavings

*By Jennee Hancock*

This summer's exhibit at the Hiwan Museum, "Interwoven: Art, History and Nature of Hiwan's Navajo Weavings" will feature the JCHS collection of rugs and blankets, some last displayed 10 years ago, while exploring their relationship with natural resources and local history.

Many weavings in the collection date from 1900-1930. This is concurrent with the Douglas family's travels in the American Southwest, including Canon Douglas's work as an agent for the Fred Harvey Company. This was also the midst of the Rug Period of Navajo weavings, dating circa 1880/1890 to

1950. During this time, regional styles identified by trading post names and influenced by the traders developed. Weavers were moving away from "pound rugs" which were sometimes weighed down with sand and not of the best quality. Encouraged by traders, individuals like Mary Cabot Wheelwright, the Fred Harvey Company and better-educated rug-buying tourists, Navajo weavings saw a renaissance of style and quality and an increase in popularity as collectible art.

The JCHS collection includes some rugs that are unusual in style, purchased by the Douglas family and given to

relatives or to the Sisters of St. Mary at St. Raphael's House. A revival chief-style blanket and a throw or saddle blanket also date from the early 20th Century. More recent additions include Contemporary Period rugs with traditional and pictorial designs. Some have the recognizable Ganado red designs, and one features the storm pattern of mysterious origins.

Throughout history, Navajo weavers have variably used natural vegetal dyes and commercial aniline dyes, sometimes using both within one weaving depending on the colors. Wool has been the fabric of choice for

## *JCHS Collection*





*JCHS Collection*

over 200 years, but use of commercial yarns, re-spun materials and hand-spun wool has varied over time. The colors, designs and materials used in each weaving speak to the culture, history and resources of a weaver in her time, but can be difficult to discern with confidence.

Canon Douglas experienced the artistry of Navajo weavings first-hand on his expeditions into New Mexico and Arizona. He began collecting rugs and blankets on a six-month visit to the area in 1903. He shared this interest with friends who also hoped to preserve Native southwestern art by educating others, and he loaned some of his weavings for exhibits. His son Eric joined his travels in 1913, which provided the teenager an immersive experience in Navajo and Hopi culture. Eric went on to become a preeminent expert on native arts and continued to collect for the purpose of preservation and education.

Today, the collection's weavings still invite us to seek their stories: of beauty, art, people, places and materials woven together by history. The exhibit is presented jointly by the Jefferson County Historical Society and Jefferson County Open Space. It will open with a special reception on Tuesday, June 27, and will run through November 12. Do not miss your chance to see these weavings and learn some of the stories they tell.



*Buffalo Bill continued from page 1*

Eventually Buffalo Bill moved on from this job, starting his famous Wild West touring shows. He married Louisa Frederici, had children and settled a ranch in Nebraska. In 1895, Buffalo Bill founded the town of Cody, Wyoming, near Yellowstone National Park. Cody led many hunting expeditions out of his ranch. In fact, he started the Cody Club, a hunting club that would meet for two weeks every year, with a prize going to the hunter with the best record for that two-week period. It was during this phase of Cody's life that he noticed the decline of big-game species. He quickly realized that overhunting, in addition to the encroachment of man, was decimating these large species.

This realization changed Buffalo Bill's attitude completely about hunting, especially for sport. He began to write prolifically, calling for the conservation of land in addition to limits on hunting. He also began to publicly praise conservationists such as Theodore Roosevelt (who was also a big-game hunter who had actually hunted with Buffalo Bill) and Gifford Pinchot. Cody wrote articles about how ashamed he was for his part in decimating the buffalo herd; in the 1870s-1880s, millions of buffalo had been killed, leaving the species near extinction.

Cody took action in addition to writing about his concerns. He allowed his own private herd of 18 buffalo to be used as part of a breeding program that helped to save the species. He also tried to raise funds and support to turn the Grand Canyon into a large game preserve. He took a group of British and American investors there to show them how wonderful it was,



and how it could successfully help save large game. Obviously this idea never came to fruition, but a man of Buffalo Bill Cody's stature showing such strong support for conservation went a long way toward shaping attitudes.

So the next time you drive by the Genesee buffalo herd, ask yourself if Buffalo Bill Cody was a conservationist. Think about how that herd exists in part because he changed from a notorious "buffalo killer" to someone who thought that the buffalo and other large game were worth saving. And spread the word that Buffalo Bill cared enough about the environment to do something about saving it!

## BOOK SHELF

By Elaine Hayden

The long awaited product of Hank Alderfer's years of gathering family histories and his passion for preservation has come to Hiwan Museum's bookshelves. *Yesteryear*, is a compilation of Alderfer's years of writing articles under the same title for the Canyon Courier and is now available in book form. The people and sites that have contributed to the historic fabric design of our mountain area are richly described through the lens of heartfelt reflection and extensive research. *Yesteryear* chronicles early settlers and their connection and contributions to the mountain community throughout the Bear Creek Basin and beyond. Hank takes the reader on a journey through time and place that reflects Hank's propensity for historic preservation, stewardship of the land and his abiding pleasure in just listening to a good story. Despite the generous help Hank received in getting this book into many anxious reader's hands, this book is Hank Alderfer, a true community treasure. Congratulations and many, many thanks to Hank for providing this gift to a very appreciative community. Pick up your copy of *Yesteryear* at Hiwan Museum. Available for purchase for \$30.

We anticipate book-signing events at Hiwan Museum featuring Hank Alderfer's *Yesteryear* and the much anticipated release of John Steinle's book on the evolution of the Evergreen community. Watch for notification.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**April 22:** Jeff Norman presents the Buffalo Bill Experience in his portrayal of Bill Cody. Timbervale Barn on Saturday April 22nd at 1:00 pm. \$10 JCHS members and \$12 for non-members.

**May 13:** Jefferson County Historical Commission Symposium 'Landscape Shapes History'. Featuring speakers and a panel discussion, followed by lunch and tours of Hiwan Museum. 9 am to 2 pm. Registration required for this ticketed event at [eventbrite.com](https://eventbrite.com)

**May 30 to June 15:** Medlen School Days offers three sessions during these dates for children who have completed grades 1-5. Attendees participate in a 1920s one-room school experience through games, crafts and activities. The school is located near Hwy 285 and So. Turkey Creek Rd. and owned by JCHS. Information and registration at [jchscolorado.org](http://jchscolorado.org)

**June 6-9 and June 13-16:** Discovery Days at Hiwan Museum. History-based day camp for children ages 7-12. Experience the past through games, crafts, presentations, food and more. More information and registration at [jchscolorado.org](http://jchscolorado.org)

**June 11:** Annual membership brunch includes election of Board officers for the 2017-18 year. Location and time TBA.

**June 27:** Hiwan Museum Navajo rug collection exhibit opening. 5 to 7 pm at Hiwan Museum.

**July 22:** *Hard Travelin'* presented by Dan Blegen. A one-man performance showcasing the life and music of Woody Guthrie. Timbervale Barn at 6 pm. Ticketed event that is sure to please.

**August:** Annual Western Slope Peach Sale. Watch for ordering notification soon.

**August 19:** Movie in the Grove. Silent film (title TBA) accompanied by Hank Troy on piano. Enjoy this free event under the stars in Heritage Grove. Popcorn and light snacks available for purchase. Show at dusk.

**August 26 and 27:** Evergreen Fine Arts Festival. Juried show featuring artwork from our local community and across the country

**September 23:** 13th Annual Outdoor Quilt Festival at Hiwan Museum. Featuring colorful quilts and coverlets in our beautiful outdoor setting with Heritage Grove as a backdrop.

**October 14:** Erika Walker, great-granddaughter of John Brisben Walker (Mt. Falcon and Red Rocks) will present a program highlighting the life and times of J.B. Walker and her extensive research of her high-profile ancestor. Time TBA.

**October 27:** Annual Halloween at Hiwan party. Open to the public. Enjoy family-friendly activities, decorations and snacks. 5 to 7 pm at Hiwan Museum.



## Hiwan Book Club

We meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month except for November and December. We gather at Eric's House at 12:30 pm. Reading selections are by suggestion and consideration from within our membership. All are welcome to join us. Upcoming selections:

**April 26:** 'America's First Daughter' by S. Dray and L. Kamoie

**May 24:** 'Dead Wake-Last Crossing of the Lusitania' by E. Larson

**June 28:** 'Hidden Figures' by M. Shetterly

**July 26:** 'The Underground Railroad' by C. Whitehead

**August 23:** 'A Gentleman in Moscow' by A. Towles



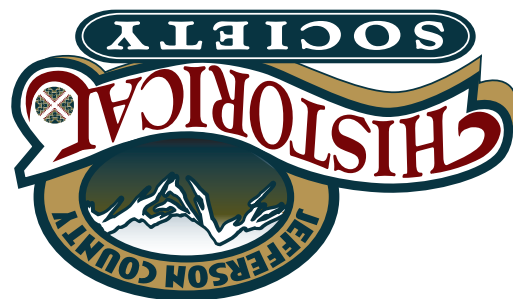
## For More Information

For more information about the  
Jefferson County Historical Society  
or Events happening at Hiwan  
Museum go to

**[www.jchscolorado.org](http://www.jchscolorado.org)**



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