

Wyoming History News

Published for the Members of the Wyoming Historical Society

November / December 2023

www.wyshs.org

Volume 70, Number 10

WHS CELEBRATES 70 YEARS

The Wyoming Historical Society officially celebrated its 70th year on October 18th.

Mr. Marble, who was elected Chairman at the 1953 initial meeting, opened with a short address of welcome. He then introduced Mr. F. H. Sinclair of Sheridan who spoke briefly on the needs and purposes of a state historical society.

This first meeting was devoted almost exclusively to the discussion and adoption of a constitution and bylaws for the new society. A mimeographed copy of a sample draft was presented to each person in attendance. A thorough study of the suggestions was made and spirited discussions took place during the four-hour meeting, with successful results.

Visit our Facebook page for the full article and a link to the original Constitution and Bylaws that were adopted.



The Women's Club House in Casper, WY where starting at 1:15 pm on October 18, 1953 the first Wyoming (State) Historical Society meeting took place.

PROTECTING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

It was the legendary Bob Dylan that sang “For the times, they are a-changin’.”

The Wyoming Historical Society Executive Committee is excited to announce that there are several upcoming enhancements to your membership experience and benefits to your local Chapters.

Some of the new additions coming soon will be a new membership database, and an online store to shop for WHS gear, as well as the books, calendars, and prints that are also available through the office.

One of the three main missions of the Wyoming Historical Society is to “prepare for the future,” and that has been the focus of our Executive

Committee these past few months.

With that mission, the bylaws are under review to align with actual practices and updates if needed. Any proposed changes will go through the established process.

There has been a detailed look at where we are financially and where we want to be in the future. We are blessed with help from the Wyoming Historical Foundation in securing our financial future with investments through the Wyoming Community Foundation. The FY 2023 Annual Report and the budget for FY 2024 is available on pages 6 & 7. Please contact the WHS Office at 307.322.3014 with questions or comments.



The original seal of the Wyoming State Historical Society. A rebrand and rename took place at the Annual Meeting in 2022.

WYOMING HISTORY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

9: "The POWs of Camp Douglas"

Wyoming State Museum Classroom
2301 Central Ave, Cheyenne, 7 pm
307.777.8691

Jenna Thornburn and Tione Wilcox in
collaboration with Wyoming State Parks.
Presentation with Q & A to follow.

12: "History & Handicrafts"

Homesteader Museum - 12 noon - 4:00 pm
324 E 1st St, Powell

13: "Bones and Bullets: an 1880s U.S. Cavalry training camp in the western Powder River Basin"

6:30 pm at the Johnson County Library, Buffalo
Archaeologist Cody Newton will present.

18: "Why we make Gingerbread Houses"

10:00 am - \$3.00 per person

Dubois Museum, 909 West Rams Horn Street
Advanced registration is required for materials.
Call 307.455.2284 for more information.

DECEMBER

2: "I Heart Art"

Wyoming State Museum Classroom
2301 Central Ave, Cheyenne
10:00 am - 2:00 pm, 307.777.8691

2: Dubois Museum Open House

11:00 am - 2:00 pm

2: Candlelight Christmas at Ft. Caspar

5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

9: Annual Open House & Free Museum Day

Riverton Museum
10:00 pm - 4:00 pm

For details call 307.332.3339

9: "Old Time Christmas" Open House

Lander Pioneer Museum
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

For details call 307.332.3339

10: "History & Handicrafts"

Homesteader Museum - 12 noon - 4:00 pm
324 E 1st St, Powell

14: 1955 United Plane Crash, speaker Rick Ewig

Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne
7:00 - 8:00 pm

JANUARY 2024

11: "Firearms as Art"

presentation by Evan Green
Wyoming State Museum Classroom
2301 Central Ave, Cheyenne
7:00 pm, 307.777.8691

*Please send Events for this calendar list
by the 15th of each month to
info@wyshs.org.*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Friends,

Fall is definitely upon us. I hope you are enjoying the colors and the cool crisp weather. With the Society's fiscal year concluding at the end of September, the Executive Committee met on October 21 in Douglas and online to review the Society's revenue and expenses and to vote on a proposed 2023-2024 budget. A copy of the budget is included in the newsletter for the membership to review. As you review the budget, note a few additional details that I have shared in this column.

Due to several planned and unplanned expenses, such as insurance, membership database, increase of the director's salary and benefit package, and rent, the budget is in the red this year, as projected. However, a strategy is in place to cover the deficit for up to three years. Additionally, Executive Director Aley Philp's marketing plans and membership drives initiative will supplement the budget over time.

The Society's membership database may become unusable in as little as a couple of months due to technological issues. As a result, the Executive Committee included funding to support an online membership system. It has the capabilities of the old system with additional functionality that enables members to join the Society and pay dues online in addition to our traditional methods. The system will also include tools to help with marketing, planning, and

grant tracking. It's hoped that it will help the Chapters hosting the Treks and Annual Meetings with registrations and much more.

The Executive Committee discussed the committee structure per recommendation. At the meeting in October, Aley presented a proposed restructuring. Aley will continue refining this new restructuring and collaborate with the Bylaws Committee to draft revised bylaws that will be presented to the Executive Committee at its next meeting on January 13th. Since it will be in the middle of winter, this public meeting will be held via Zoom. If you are interested in attending and are not an Executive Committee Member, other Committee Member, or a Chapter President, please contact Aley by email, executivedirector@wyshs.org, or phone, (307) 322-3014, to receive a link.

Thanks for all your patience as we work through the transition in staff. I am happy to have Aley onboard, and she is eager to get to know you, and the Chapters, and see how the Wyoming Historical Society can provide additional help and support.



Cindy

WHS President

WE NEED YOUR HELP

As we are moving over to our new Membership Database, we want to make sure your contact information remains accurate.

To get the full benefit of the new membership database, we need email addresses and phone numbers.

Please send them to info@wyshs.org or call us at 307.322.3014.



HELP FROM THE PAST

Need financial aid to help complete your history project? Did you know that the WHS offers cash grants to people involved in research activities based on various aspects of the state's history?

The grants, ranging from \$100.00 up to \$1500.00 are awarded yearly each Spring. The Lola Homsher Grant Program, the Lola Homsher History Day Scholarship, the Henryetta Berry Memorial Award and the

Judge and Mrs. Percy W. Metz Memorial Award are made possible through an endowment to the Wyoming Historical Society made by Lola Homsher before her death in 1986.

Applications and more information are available under "Programs" on the wyshs.org website. All Homer Grant applications must be submitted no later than the February 29, 2024.

Miss Homsher, originally from Basin, Wyoming was a well-known historian and author. Lola Homsher was the first practicing Archivist for the Wyoming State Archives. During her tenure she wrote many articles for the newspapers in her own column called "From the Archives." She also wrote items for presentation on radio and for various historical entities.

She was the director of what is now the Cultural Resources Division of State Parks and Cultural Resources from 1951 to 1965. In this capacity she served as Editor of the Annals of Wyoming and was instrumental in the founding of the Wyoming Historical Society.

Miss Homsher and her associate, Henryetta Berry, were prime movers in establishing records management and document preservation programs in Wyoming. She was always interested in educating the young people of the state and enjoyed a long and fruitful career in the history profession in Wyoming.

In 1961 the Western Writers of America awarded Miss Homsher the Best Nonfiction Spur Award for the book, SOUTH PASS, 1868: James Chisolm's Journal of the Wyoming Gold Rush. The Spur Awards, given annually for distinguished writing about the American West, are among the oldest and most prestigious in American literature.



Lola Homsher, Henryetta Berry, Dorothy K Taylor, Reta Redings & Lillian Stratton, near Cody, WY, in 1957. Photo courtesy of the Wyoming State Archives.

WYOMING DAY - DECEMBER 10

by Kylie McCormick
WyoHistory.org

In 1869 the new territory of Wyoming became the first in the nation to recognize women's citizenship rights, including the right to vote, hold office, own property, parental rights, and even equal pay for teachers. Governor John A. Campbell signed the bill recognizing women's right to vote into law on December 10th, 1869, celebrated now as Wyoming Day. Yet, we must remember that we wouldn't be able to celebrate today, if it weren't for the men and women who stood up for suffrage again two years later.

In 1871, Ben Sheeks—the main opponent to the suffrage law in 1869—served as the Speaker of the House. During the 1872 session, Rep. C.E. Castle from Uinta County introduced a bill to repeal woman suffrage that passed in the house with nine votes to three, and one absentee. One newspaper claimed that Rep. M.C. Brown's powerful speech on behalf of woman suffrage even convinced his opponents who, regardless of principle, still voted in favor of the repeal. Brown went on to serve as President of Wyoming's Constitutional Convention and helped to draft the world's first written constitution to explicitly protect the civil and political rights of all citizens regardless of race or sex.

Before the Council's committee considering the repeal could bring the measure back to the Council for a vote, Governor Campbell issued his veto. In his defense of suffrage Campbell wrote that the repeal said "too much if she is, as no one will deny, the equal of man in heart and mind, for in that case we cannot afford to dispense with



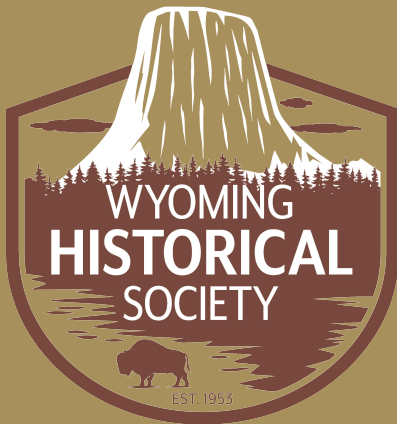
Woman suffrage in Wyoming Territory. Scene at the polls in Cheyenne. Photo by Kirkland. Illustration In: Frank Leslie's illustrated newspaper, 1888 Nov. 24, p. 229. Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

her counsel and assistance in the government of the territory."

The Council Journal also records a petition from Eliza Stewart Boyd with 29 signatures asking the Legislature to maintain suffrage. The year before Boyd served on the nation's first mixed jury. While still reviewing the bill, Councilman Stephen Downey spoke for an hour on the

floor, "to a large number of spectators, among whom were a number of ladies." Downey's vote along with three others would uphold the governor's veto and preserve woman suffrage. The men and women who defended woman suffrage in 1872 helped to establish equality as a foundational ideal in Wyoming's identity.

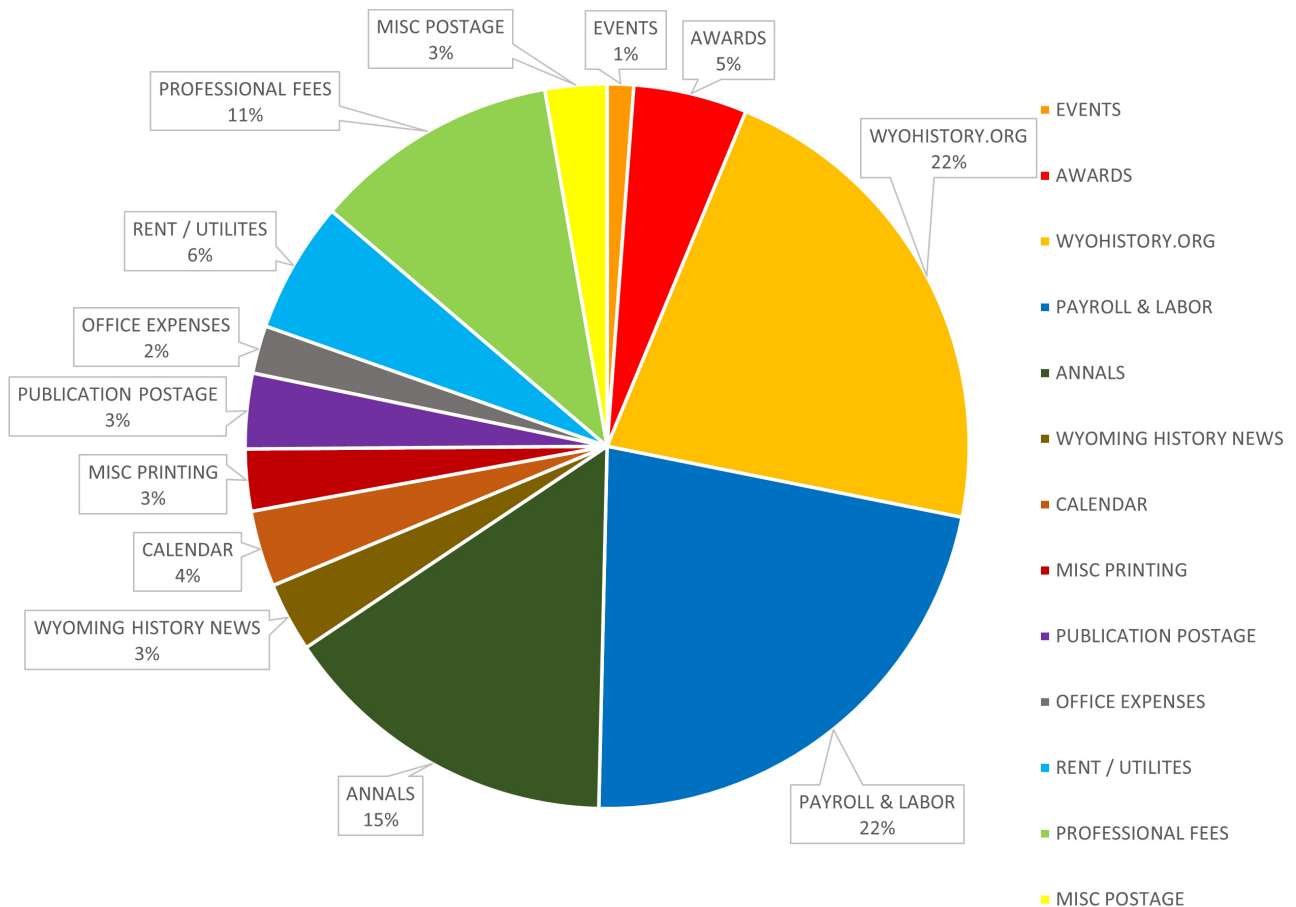
ANNUAL REPORT FY 2023



APPROVED BUDGET WYOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY FISCAL YEAR 23-24

	BUDGET FY 2023	RECEIVED FY 2023	APPROVED FY 2024
INCOME:			
SPCR PASS THROUGH GRANT			
ANNALS	\$ 31,500.00	\$ 31,500.00	\$ 31,500.00
HISTORY DAY SALARY	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
HOMSHER GRANT	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
DONATIONS - Foundation		\$ 1,290.00	
MAURINE CARLEY TRANSFER	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
DONATIONS			
WY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 17,553.00	\$ 10,000.00
HISTORY DAY ENDOWMENT	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,000.00
DONATIONS - Foundation		\$ 2,660.00	
AWARDS (payment from AHC/HD)			\$ 3,750.00
WYOHIST.ORG	\$ 26,400.00		\$ 10,000.00
DONATIONS - Foundation		\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,500.00
ADDITIONAL FUNDING - Misc		\$ 51,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
PRODUCT SALES	\$ 25,000.00		
CALENDARS		\$ 25,970.40	\$ 30,000.00
BOOKS		\$ 2,306.55	\$ 500.00
PRINTS			\$ 500.00
POSTAGE			\$ 2,000.00
SWAG / MERCHANDISE			\$ 2,500.00
BANKING / INTEREST ACCURED CHKG			\$ 500.00
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$ 52,970.00	\$ 44,382.00	\$ 56,000.00
Over & Above Dues		\$ 2,705.00	\$ 5,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 163,370.00	\$ 205,416.95	\$ 213,250.00

FY 2023 (OCT 2022 - SEPT 2023) EXPENSES BY CATEGORY AMOUNT



**APPROVED BUDGET
WYOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FISCAL YEAR 23-24**

	BUDGET FY 2023	SPENT FY 2023	APPROVED FY 2024
EXPENSE:			
ANNUAL MEETING	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,917.37	\$ 2,000.00
ANNUAL TREK	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
AWARDS			
HOMSHER	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 7,000.00
WHS	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,728.35	\$ 2,000.00
HISTORY DAY	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,350.00	\$ 2,000.00
CONTRACT LABOR			
OTHER HELP	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,460.00	
BOOKEEPER		\$ 2,600.00	
WYOHISTORY.ORG	\$ 26,400.00	\$ 54,160.39	\$ 47,500.00
MISCELLANEOUS			
PAYROLL			
EXEC SECRETARY	\$ 33,280.00	\$ 27,372.09	
EXEC DIRECTOR		\$ 3,272.52	\$ 42,500.00
PAYROLL TAXES	\$ 2,870.00	\$ 8,358.90	\$ 10,500.00
HISTORY DAY			
SALARY	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 8,950.00	\$ 11,500.00
MARKETING*			\$ 5,500.00
PRINTED MATERIALS			
OTHER ADVERTISING			
PRINTING AND REPRODUCTION			
ANNALS*	\$ 31,500.00	\$ 37,760.68	\$ 22,000.00
NEWSLETTER	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 7,664.22	\$ 7,660.00
CALENDAR	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 8,414.71	\$ 6,300.00
MISC. PRINTING	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 6,831.33	\$ 1,500.00
PUBLICATION POSTAGE		\$ 8,319.88	
ANNALS*			\$ 3,500.00
NEWSLETTER*			\$ 5,000.00
PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$ 13,500.00		
ACCOUNTING		\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
WEBSITE		\$ 9,761.11	\$ 3,000.00
GRAPHIC DESIGN		\$ 4,460.00	\$ 1,500.00
CONSULTING / STRATEGIC PLAN		\$ 500.00	
OFFICE EXPENSES	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 3,324.62	
POSTAGE			
PRODUCT SALES			\$ 1,500.00
ADDITIONAL POSTAGE		\$ 6,831.33	\$ 1,500.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 390.00	
OFFICE SUPPLIES			\$ 1,250.00
EQUIPMENT PURCHASE OR RENTAL			\$ 4,000.00
SOFTWARE			
MEMBERSHIP DATABASE			\$ 5,400.00
QUICKBOOKS			\$ 840.00
BANK FEES			\$ 300.00
INSURANCE			
BUSINESS LIABILITY			\$ 1,750.00
RENTERS			\$ 750.00
TRAVEL		\$ 1,580.22	
MEETINGS - MEALS			\$ 1,000.00
REIMBURSEMENT / MILEAGE			\$ 4,000.00
RENT/UTILITIES		\$ 6,451.38	
RENT		\$ 2,591.91	\$ 9,000.00
PHONE		\$ 1,113.30	\$ 500.00
INTERNET		\$ 492.69	\$ 500.00
GAS			\$ 1,250.00
UTILITIES		\$ 3,859.47	\$ 1,250.00
TOTAL	\$ 160,250.00	\$ 247,516.47	\$ 230,250.00
Difference	\$ 3,120.00	\$ (42,099.52)	\$ (17,000.00)

**BY THE
NUMBERS**

1262
CURRENT
MEMBERSHIP

18
CHAPTERS
ACROSS WYOMING

\$12,578
AWARDS & GRANTS
GIVEN FY 2023

**OVER
1 MILLION**
VISITS TO OUR
WEBSITES IN FY 2023



Heard Along the Historic Trail:

Your Place for Chapter News

October kicked off with Governor Gordon proclaiming National Archives Month. Many of our partners, friends, and members were in Cheyenne at the Capitol Building to help celebrate! (pictured below)

Our leadership team was out in full force this fall. Members of the **Platte County Historical Society** enjoyed a presentation from **Lucas Keeler** on Whoop-up Canyon Petroglyphs, while **Aley Philp** shared the importance of Wyoming Historical Society Membership to members and public alike at the **Hot Springs County Historical Society's** monthly meeting.



Cheryl O'Brien was on the road sharing her book and research, ***World War II POW Camps of Wyoming***. She visited the Wyoming Veterans Memorial Museum in Casper on October 5, the **Fremont County Historical Society** in Lander on October 21, and will be at the **Hot Springs County Historical Society** meeting on November 11 in Thermopolis.

The Wyoming Historical Foundation, fundraising and investment arm of the Wyoming Historical Society, recently sent out the fall fundraising brochure, ***Help History Thrive Through 2025!*** Anyone who sends in a donation from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31 will be entered in a drawing to receive a surprise gift! Thank you for helping history thrive! Donations should be sent to:

Wyoming Historical Foundation,
PMB 249, 301 Thelma Drive, Casper, WY 82609



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND THANK YOU DONORS

At Large

David Cullers, Blebbrook, OH

Hot Springs County

Arapahoe Ranch Field Station

Ellen Galyan

Lincoln County

Rita Haws

Natrona County

Levan Parker

Park County

Patty E. and Greg Brooks

Above and Beyond*

Geoffrey Dobson, St. Augustine, FL

Colin & Deborah Simpson, Cody

Frederick & Joann Reckling,

Ft. Collins, CO

Tad & Ann Herz, Denver, CO

Clint Gilchrist, Pinedale

Anne Willson Whitehead, Manville

**Above and Beyond Dues
contributions go directly to the
Society's operating fund
unless specified for the Foundation.*

In Memoriam



V.J. (Velma Jean) Reckling Bales, a journalist at the Laramie Daily Boomerang for nearly 40 years, died July 6, 2023 surrounded by her family. She was 95.

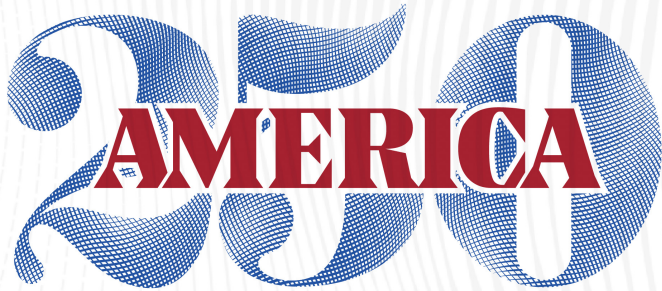
V.J. was born in Quinter, Kansas on September 10, 1927 to Dr. Walter E. and Daisy Jean Reckling. She moved to Lusk, Wyoming, with her family when she was four years old and graduated Lusk High School. She attended Colorado Women's College and the University of Wyoming where, in 1949, she graduated with a B.A. in journalism and history.

V.J. was devoted to journalism and enjoyed a groundbreaking career at several Wyoming newspapers. She worked for the Cheyenne Tribune as a reporter in the mid-1950s as one of the

few women on staff. In 1960 the family moved to Laramie, where V.J. worked at the Boomerang in a variety of positions for the next 40 years. In 1999, she retired from there after serving as the Lifestyle Editor for 20 years.

An avid reader, V.J. loved historical research, particularly when it was focused on her beloved Wyoming. She used her research as background for numerous award-winning stories and poems. V.J. also loved animals and believed every animal deserves a home; numerous rescue animals were always part of her family.

THE JOURNEY TO 250



On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. The journey toward this historic milestone is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look ahead toward the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond.

Governor Mark Gordon has announced the members of the Wyoming Semiquincentennial Planning Task Force. Created by Executive Order, the task force will make recommendations on the planning of projects, events and activities to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the United States.

"I want to thank all those who expressed an interest in the planning to commemorate this important anniversary," Governor Gordon said.

"Wyoming is a patriotic state. This celebration is certain to reflect our enthusiasm for the fundamental values our country was founded on."

The Task Force will prepare propo-

sals for projects, events and activities that will occur as part of the celebration in 2026. There will be opportunities for the public to engage with the task force and provide suggestions as they develop their recommendations. The Executive Order does not authorize the Task Force to expend or obligate funds, unless those funds are specifically appropriated by the Legislature in a future session.

More information can be found at america250.org or by scanning the QR Code here:

SCAN ME



The Governor has named the following individuals to the Task Force:

Senator Wendy Schuler and Representative Sandy Newsome, *Co-Chairmen of the Travel, Recreation, Wildlife and Cultural Resources Committee*

Justice Kari Gray, *Wyoming Supreme Court*

Megan Degenfelder (or designee) *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

Councilwoman Teresa His Chase, *Northern Arapaho Business Council*

Designee from *Eastern Shoshone Business Council*

Nick Neylon, *Deputy Director, Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources*

Diane Shober, *Director, Wyoming Office of Tourism*

Dr. Paul Flesher, *Director, University of Wyoming American Heritage Center*

Greg Blikre, *Wyoming Community College Commission*

Cindy Brown, *President, Wyoming Historical Society*

Kevin Voyles, *Wyoming Arts Council Board of Directors*

Joanna Kail, *Chief Executive Officer, Wyoming PBS*

Shawn Reese, *Executive Director and CEO, Wyoming Humanities Council*

Rebecca West, *Executive Director, Buffalo Bill Center of the West*

SAVE THE DATE!

2024
STATE TREK:
June 21 - 23, 2024
hosted by
Hot Springs County
Historical Society,
Thermopolis

REGISTRATION
COMING SOON!

2024
ANNUAL MEETING:
September 6-8, 2024
hosted by
Weston County
Historical Society,
Newcastle

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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and questions should be addressed,
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executivedirector@wyhs.org

or

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PO Box 247
Wheatland, WY 82201

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Wheatland, WY 82201

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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Cheyenne, Wyoming
82009
Permit No. 71

Address Service Requested

AVAILABLE NOW! 2024 CALENDAR OF WYOMING HISTORY

Big Piney
Casper

Cheyenne
Chugwater
Cody

Cowley
Douglas
Encampment
Fort Bridger
Gillette

Guernsey
Hanna
Jackson

Lander

Green River Valley Museum
Wind City Books
Natrona County Historical Society
Wyoming State Museum
Tri-County Mercantile
The Thistle, Legends
Park County Historical Society
Cowley Heritage Center
Converse County Historical Society
Grand Encampment Museum
Fort Bridger Historical Association
The Rockpile Museum
Campbell County Historical Society
Guernsey Super Foods
Hanna Basin Historical Society
Jackson Hole Historical Society
and Museum
Pioneer Museum
Fremont County Historical Society

Laramie

Lusk
Newcastle
Point of Rocks
Rawlins
Rock Springs
Sheridan
Sundance
Sunrise
Thermopolis
Torrington

Wheatland

Second Story Books, UW Bookstore
Laramie Plains Museum
The Curiosity Shoppe
Stagecoach Museum
Weston County Historical Society
Conoco, Mile Post 130 on I-80
Carbon County Museum
Rock Springs Historical Museum
Sheridan Stationary
Crook County Museum
Sunrise Trading Co.
Hot Springs County Museum
Main Street Market, Vandals Drug
Goshen County Historical Society
The Wanderer on Gilchrist
Platte County Library
The Wandering Hermit Used Books
The Print Shop

WYOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY - BULK ORDERS