

Wyoming History News[®]

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A HISTORIC RETURN: *WHS Celebrates New Mission & Old Roots in Sheridan*

The Wyoming Historical Society (WHS) successfully concluded its 72nd Annual Meeting and 1st Annual Conference in Sheridan, Wyoming, September 12-14, 2025. The conference was a historic success, drawing over 100 attendees across the three-day event and marking the official launch of the organization's new mission statement: **Dedicated to preserving, exploring, and sharing Wyoming's history for the benefit and enjoyment of all generations.**

The energy in the room was palpable as the Society celebrated a return to its fundamental purpose. The Historic Sheridan Inn served as a powerful reminder of the WHS's deep roots, as it was the same venue for the 10th Annual Meeting in September 1963. The venue's



As part of the new mission launch, the Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce honored the WHS with a ribbon cutting on the porch of the historic Sheridan Inn. Photo A. Philp

legacy, from its beginnings as a Wild West show headquarters to its role as a social hub, provided the perfect backdrop for discussions and celebrations.

"The energy and excitement at this conference were truly inspiring. Seeing so many of our members, along with new faces from the community, embrace our new mission statement confirms that we are on the right path," said WHS President Beki Speas. "This show of support is a powerful reminder that the work of preserving and sharing Wyoming's history is a collective effort, and with your help, we are ready to build a dynamic and inclusive future for the Society."

In a move to fulfill the "exploring" and "sharing" components of the new mission, the conference agenda featured a series of immersive historical tours and events designed to connect attendees directly with Wyoming's past.

The weekend began with tours of Historic Downtown Sheridan and Don King's Ropes & Saddlery Museum, followed by a welcome reception at the newly renovated Museum at the Bighorns. Attendees were among the first to celebrate the completion of Phase I of the museum's exciting renovation project, a testament to

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A group of conference attendees listen to Carrie Edinger, Museum Director of the Museum at the Big Horns during her Friday afternoon tour of Historic Downtown Sheridan. Photo N. Tabb

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the future of historical preservation in the state.

The conference started in earnest on Saturday morning featuring an incredibly informative and dynamic panel discussion: the *Future of Heritage Tourism in Wyoming*. The conversation included esteemed experts in the field: Shari Shada of Wyoming State Parks, Shawn Parker of Sheridan County Travel and Tourism; Carrie Edinger, Museum Director for the Museum at the Bighorns; Kevin Knapp of the Sheridan Community Land Trust; Kendra Heimbuck, Executive Director of the Brinton Museum; Michael Shapira and Cassie Stone, both of the Wyoming Room at the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library, and Thomas Hebert, Executive Director of the Natural History Museum of Wyoming.

The discussion was followed by the 72nd Annual Meeting of the Wyoming Historical Society where the new mission statement and new strategic plan were unveiled.

The Annual WHS Awards Luncheon honored both nominees and award winners for 2025, whose contributions in 2024 to the Wyoming Historical record were recognized. To see a full list of nominees and award winners, see pages 7-10 in this newsletter. A. Rose Hill recited one of her original poems after her win in the Poetry category.

Saturday afternoon offered attendees choices to attend an immersive historical tour of the legendary Mint Bar, known for its iconic Western decor and rich local lore; a discussion about Sheridan Beer led by Mark Demple, local Sheridan historian and greatgrand-

Conclusions from the Panelists on Heritage Tourism:

- If Wyoming will not tell our own story, someone else will.
- Tourism is an excellent tool for historical education and advocacy.
- What is our "Why?"
 - Preservation and Education
- How? Connect the historic to the modern through interactive experiences.
- Connection, Communication, and Collaboration
- Work together across all disciplines to develop ways we can promote and advocate for all of Wyoming's history together.



[ABOVE] Signs of history remain on display at the historic Mint Bar. A tour of the Mint occurred on Saturday led by longtime manager Kat Deeds.

son of the founder of the beverage. The third option was embarking on a guided walk-through of the iconic Trail End State Historical Site, also known as the Kendrick Mansion. The Flemish Revival mansion was once home to Wyoming Governor and U.S. Senator John B. Kendrick. Attendees had the opportunity to explore the beautifully preserved property and gain a deeper understanding of early 20th-century life in Wyoming.

For those who wanted to take a small road trip, the special highlight trek was an historical tour of Fort Phil Kearny, a site of dramatic events during Red Cloud's War. The tour was expertly led by Shari Shada, Site Superintendent of the Wyoming State Parks and Historic Sites, and Nancy Tabb, Secretary of the WHS. Their deep knowledge brought the history of the fort and its surrounding battlefields to life.

At the beginning of the President's Gala, personal account on the history and preservation of the Historic Sheridan Inn was



(L-R) Shari Shada, Michael Shapira, Shawn Parker, Kendra Heimbuck, Thomas Hebert, Cassie Stone, Kevin Knapp, and WHS President Beki Speas during the panel discussion on the Future of Heritage Tourism in Wyoming.
Photos N. Tabb

shared by Edre Maier, a recipient of the Mary Humstone Lifetime Achievement Award for her work in preserving Wyoming's historic places. She told her compelling story of helping to save the Inn from ruin, a true testament to the power of preservation.

The conference culminated in a thought-provoking keynote by former Montana Senator and renowned historian Bill Yellowtail. A member of the Crow Tribe, Yellowtail emphasized the crucial importance of engaging our youth in history and welcoming all perspectives to the conversation.

The President's Gala closed with a lively private concert by Wyoming's own Jalan Crossland, a nationally acclaimed musician whose music captures the essence of rural Western life with both humor and poignancy. His performance was a joyful culmination of the evening.

The conference concluded with a final brunch at the base of the Bighorns that included a tour of the Brinton Museum, and allowed for

our members to continue their historical exploration.

The WHS has a clear, bold vision for the future, centered on making Wyoming's rich and colorful past accessible to everyone. The Society invites all history enthusiasts to join in its efforts to preserve, explore, and share the stories that define the Equality State. To learn more, please read "Strategic Plan" on pages 11-13.



Bill Yellowtail presents the keynote Saturday night.
Photo N. Tabb

BRIDGING THE PAST:

THE YATES / ROBERTS FERRY AND A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME



Jessie Yates and his ferry in 1911 crossing the Big Horn River. (Courtesy Hot Springs County Museum)

by Ray Shaffer

Though we may take today's travel and trade routes for granted, this was not always so, particularly when accessing the Big Horn Basin. Since the Basin is isolated by naturally occurring topographical features such as the Absaroka Mountain Range to the west, the Owl Creek / Bridger Mountains to the south, and the Big Horn Mountains to the east, transportation routes are few and far between. Even with modern machinery and engineering to build lanes of travel, an old cowboy finds himself traveling long distances to circumvent our rugged Wyoming mountains.

To complicate matters even more, the Bighorn River coursing from the south to the north splits the east side from the west, not to mention the other smaller, but still consequential rivers running

through the Basin, to confluence with the Bighorn. Of particular concern in early day travel, was the necessity to ford the creeks and rivers to reach your destination, especially during spring runoff or flooding events that could occur at any time or season! Local cemeteries bear witness to those unfortunate souls who were the victims of drowning as a result of mishaps or miscalculation when trying to cross a raging current.

Even ancient Native American trails were relegated to certain mountain passes and safe river crossings. Hunting was good in the Basin, but even the Native Americans didn't stay there during the winters. Their travel routes on their way to the hunting grounds or on a spiritual trek to the Medicine Wheel were determined by nature and common sense to find the easiest path to their destination.

The Bridger Trail, named after famous guide and mountain man Jim Bridger, was the first stab at opening up a route through the Big Horn Basin in an effort to provide a safer route to the gold fields of Montana during the gold rush to Virginia City. But even he had to ford the Bighorn River several times as he made his way through the Basin.

Bridges in early day Wyoming were nearly nonexistent or rudimentary at best. Rope footbridges worked somewhat as a way across swollen streams, but did nothing for wagons needing to cross. Wooden bridges were subject to washouts and often were. Stone bridges were unheard of in this part of the country and iron bridges were mainly railroad bridges.

Out of necessity and possibly in an effort to make a nickel or two, a few enterprising frontiersmen established ferry boat crossings on the Bighorn River. In what is now known as Hot Springs County, three ferry boat crossings were identified in the late 1800's near Thermopolis.

1. North of Thermopolis, near Old Town Thermopolis, Cunningham & Shafer ran one;

2. A ferry built and operated by Adams and Gregg connected Thermopolis

with the State Reserve / Big Spring east of town;

3. About 4 miles south of Thermopolis, Yates and Roberts established a ferry crossing at the beginning of Buffalo Creek Road. This ferry was used extensively for all travel going south and east out of the Big Horn Basin.

When the Good Roads Clubs of America movement was beginning to find a place in Wyoming, the big push was to build a network of roads connecting the thirteen National Parks in eleven western states. In this part of Wyoming, the impetus was to connect Rocky Mountain National Park near Denver with Yellowstone Park. Even though there was no established, improved road system in the late 1800's early 1900's, people still found ways to travel. Whether by wagon, horseback, bicycle, or even by foot, they came over Birdeye Pass from Shoshoni or down Buffalo Creek from Lost Cabin on the newly declared Yellowstone Highway and had to cross the Bighorn River at the Yates/Roberts Ferry.

In 1916, a steel bridge was constructed by local contractor Charles M. Smith to replace the ferry. This plan was integral to the successful effort to carve a road through the Wind River Canyon in 1924, thereby making an easier

way to link travel to Yellowstone Park.

In 2010 the Washakie Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, under the leadership of Thermopolis attorney Ruth Clare Johnson, desired to mark the ferry site with a brass plaque as a historical monument. A huge rock had fallen off the wall in Wind River Canyon and lay alongside the highway leading to Thermopolis. The Hot Springs County Road and Bridge Department was tasked with building a turnout and then loading and hauling said rock to the turnout spot near the site of the old ferry crossing. A brass plaque was attached to the rock and all involved were pleased at the dedication of the monument.

However, as time passed, by 2024 it was noticed by concerned citizens that the south facing plaque's finish was beginning to deteriorate from direct sun exposure. By this time the Washakie Chapter of the DAR had disbanded, so it fell to the Hot Springs County Historical Society to restore the monument. A committee was formed to study the issue and proceed with a remediation project. As luck would have it, the plaque had a 15 year warranty, so restoration of it would be doable and a crew of volunteers was dispatched to remove the plaque from the rock and send it back to the foundry to be

refurbished.

It was determined that the rock needed to be moved so that the mounted plaque would face north, thereby eliminating sun damage. Once again the County Road Department was called upon to help reposition that huge rock, which they handled most graciously.

A bone of contention through the years was that there was never any signage to draw interested travelers to the site. Jack Hoffman, WYDOT District 5 Traffic Engineer, was contacted to see if signage could be posted on US Highway 20 to direct traffic by the monument, which is on County Road 15-33, the old South Yellowstone Road. That required approval by Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources, which lead to approval by SHPO. Much credit must be given to Savannah Graham, Planner / Monuments & Markers Coordinator with State Parks, who shepherded that project without delay, and signage was soon approved and posted. The Hot Springs Road Department

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The new plaque installed on the now north facing rock near 4-mile bridge. Photo J. Philp

help secure another sign to post right at the monument and henceforth this site will appear on Wyoming State highway maps.

Drew Bott of Bott Monument of Riverton reinstalled the refurbished plaque in mid-July and the Monument was ready.

On Saturday, August 23, 2025 at 11:00 AM, a crowd gathered at the veiled monument under clear blue Wyoming skies to commemorate and rededicate the Yates / Roberts Ferry Crossing Monument.

Hot Springs County Historical Society (HSCHS) President Rick Hudson welcomed the attendees, leading in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The National Anthem was then sung, beautifully lead by HSCHS Vice President Barb Vietti.

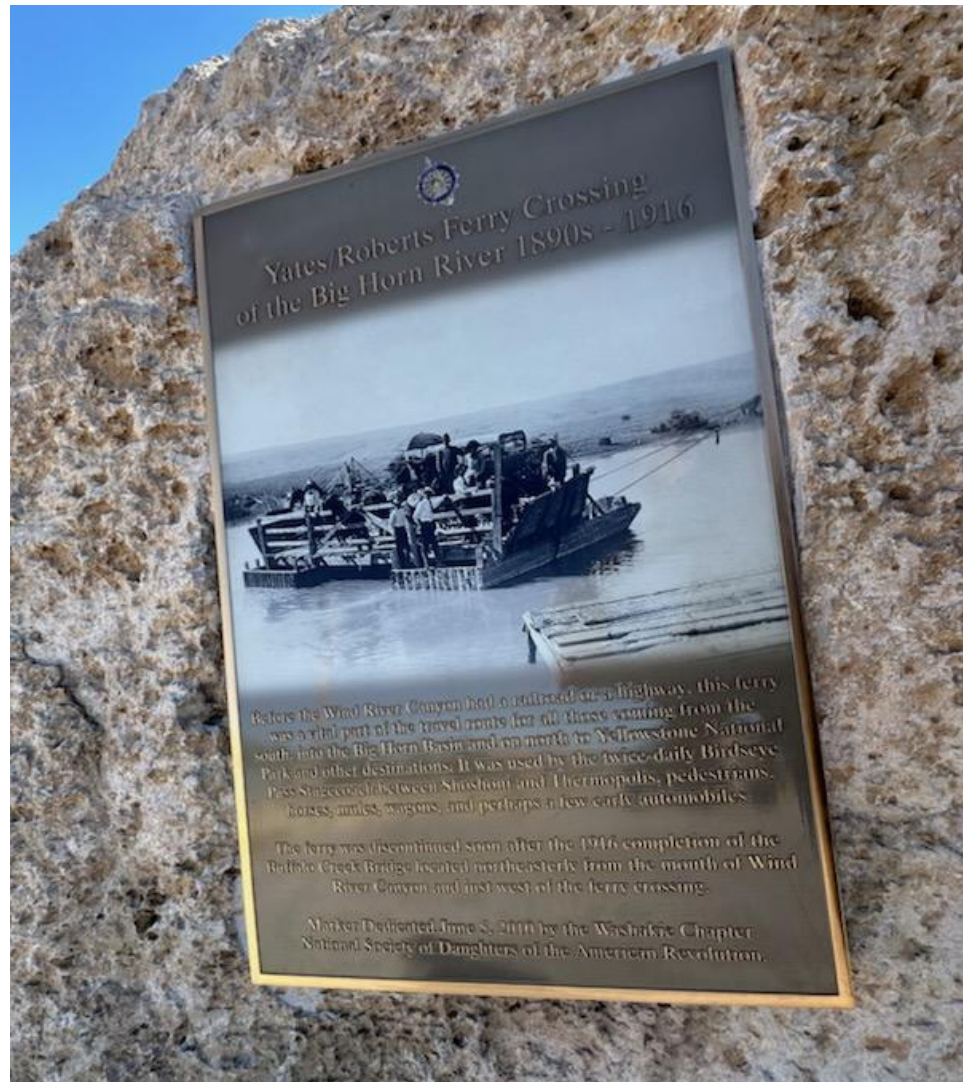
Marilyn Strausborger, former member of the Washakie DAR then gave a few remarks, relating the original efforts to establish the Monument. She was followed by Rick Hudson, long time local surveyor, who shared his testimony as to the authentication of the historic site per his survey and documentation back in 2009.

Ray Shaffer then presented a short program relating the significance of the site, and a few anecdotes pertaining to the refurbishing and restoration of

the Monument. At the count of three, the board of directors of the HSCHS along with Marilyn Strausborger, removed the shroud to reveal the new monument, to the applause and snapping of pictures by the press and others in attendance.

Turns out, this project and rededication ties in directly to the Semiquincentennial

Celebration, so proclaimed by President Trump and endorsed by Governor Mark Gordon. The local America 250 Committee has hung the moniker of "Trailblazer Days: Opening the Way Into the Last Frontier" on the 2026 celebration, this act and ceremony being the initial kick-off to that celebration. How appropriate!



The plaque reads: YATES/ROBERTS FERRY CROSSING OF THE BIG HORN RIVER 1890'S-1916

"Before the Wind River Canyon had a railroad or a highway, this ferry was a vital part of the travel route for all those coming from the south into the Big Horn Basin and on north to Yellowstone National Park and other destinations. It was used by the twice daily Birdseye Pass Stagecoach between Shoshoni and Thermopolis, pedestrians, horses, mules, wagons, and even perhaps a few early automobiles. The ferry was discontinued soon after the 1916 completion of the Buffalo Creek Bridge located northeasterly from the mouth of Wind River Canyon and just west of the ferry crossing.

Marker Dedicated June 5, 2010 by the Washakie Chapter National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution."

Photo J. Philp

WHS ANNOUNCES 2025 AWARD WINNERS

The Wyoming Historical Society successfully concluded its Annual Awards Luncheon on Saturday, September 13, during its Annual Conference in Sheridan. The event served as a profound celebration of dedication and excellence, recognizing outstanding work in preserving and sharing Wyoming's history across the state.

The 2025 awards program was outstanding in featuring a record number of nominations received from all corners of Wyoming. These submissions from the year previous (2024) highlight the passionate and diverse efforts of countless local historical societies, dedicated volunteers, and talented artists, underscoring how each project submitted truly embodies the core of the WHS mission to preserve and promote Wyoming's history.

"This year's awards program has been particularly exceptional, with submissions that highlight the passionate and diverse efforts of countless individuals across our state," stated WHS Awards Chair, Beki Speas. "A sincere thank you is extended to the Awards Committee; (Greg Luhman - Sheridan; Bob Townsend - Atlantic City; and Korina Ike - Hulette / Spearfish, SD) for their tireless work over the past several months. Their dedication to meticulously reviewing every nomination has been

instrumental in the success of this process, ensuring we recognize the truly outstanding work being done."

The WHS extends congratulations to all nominees and winners for their contributions to the Wyoming historical record.

The full list of award recipients is below:

FICTION

Seotse: A Visionary Tale – Part Three of the Green River Saga
(Book3)
by Michael W. Shurgot

NON-FICTION

1st Place:
*The Making of a Star Stud:
A History of Lumber Industry
in Afton, WY*
by Ronald W. Galloway

2nd Place:
*Murder on the Plains: The Killing
of Diamond L Slim Clifton*
by Lucas Keeler

MEMOIR

*A Sometimes Paradise:
Reflections on life in a
Wyoming Ranch Family*
by Mark E. Miller

Honorable Mention
*Jackson's Hole:
Horse & Family Adventures*
by Guy Pucci

BIOGRAPHIES and AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

1st Place:
Buffalo Bill and the Mormons
by Brent M. Rogers

2nd Place:
Life & Times of Charles J. Belden
By Brooks Rodman (Editor) &
Mark Frost (Contributor)

SELF-PUBLISHED

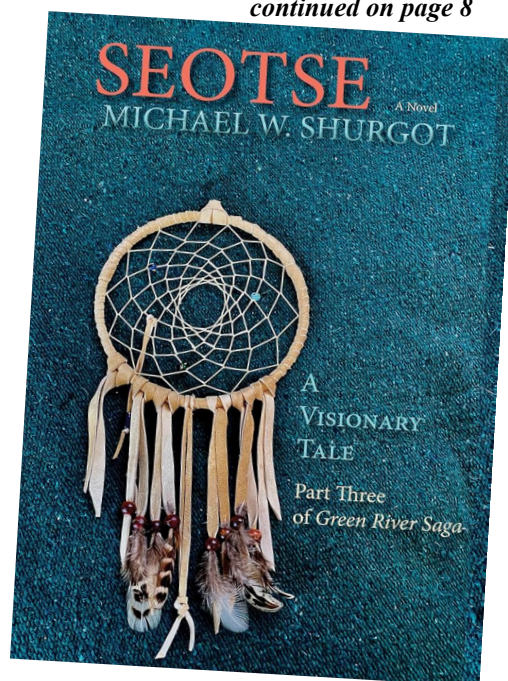
*From Behind Barbed Wire
to Washington*
by Shirley Ann Higuchi,
Ray Locker, Norman Mineta,
& Al Simpson

POETRY

Bless the Birds & Beasts
by A. Rose Hill

Honorable Mention
This: Passage Poems
by Carol L. Deering

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**REFERENCE WORK ON A
WYOMING SUBJECT OR LOCALE**

Heart Mountain Chronicles
Shikata ganai: The History of a
Japanese Relocation Center
by Bernard Murphy
& James Murphy

PAMPHLET

Western Wyoming Community
College Natural History Museum
Western Wyoming
Community College

BROCHURE

Heart Mountain
WWII Historic Landmark
Heart Mountain Interpretive Center

NEWSLETTER

The Brinton Museum Newsletter
by the Brinton Museum

CALENDAR

Crook County Calendar 2025
by Crook County Museum

INTERNET WEBSITE

Fremont County Museums
www.fremontcountymuseums.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

South Pass State Historic Site
www.facebook.com/SouthPassCity/

PODCAST SHOW

The Sweet Smell of Sagebrush
(Clay Gibbons)
<https://claygibbons.libsyn.com/>



Clay Gibbons with WHS President Beki Speas following the Awards Luncheon. Gibbons won first place in both Podcast Show and Episode categories.
Photo A. Philp

PODCAST EPISODE

Asa Mercer and
the Banditti of the Plains
released on 2/28/2024
by *The Sweet Smell of Sagebrush*
(Clay Gibbons)

Honorable Mention
The Outlaw and the Flying Saucer
released on 9/10/2024
by *The Pioneers of Outlaw Country*
(Jackie Dorothy & Dean King)
www.pioneersofoutlawcountry.com

**AUDIO OR VISUAL
DOCUMENTARY:**

PROFESSIONAL
Our Wyoming:
Cowboys of the Sky
Wyoming PBS

NON-PROFESSIONAL
Iron Riders Documentary
Sheridan Community Land Trust



(LEFT) Con Williams' "Great Expectations" bronze sculpture won one of the Fine Art Awards.

FINE ARTS AWARDS

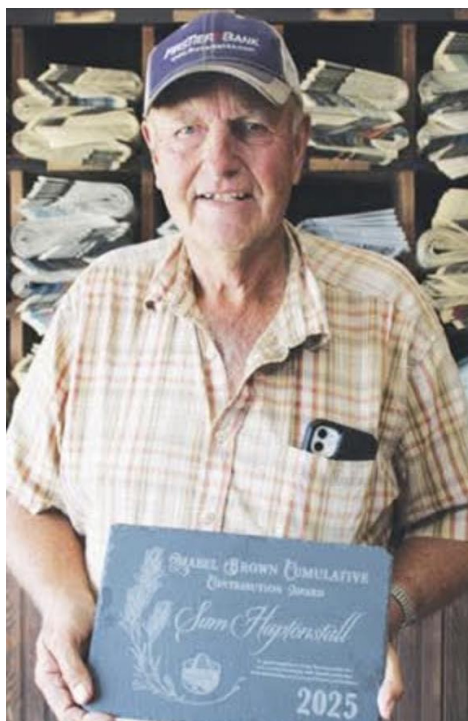
BRONZE/MARBLE
Great Expectations
by Con Williams

PHOTOGRAPHY
Big Boy No. 4014 -
Wheels of the Longest
Steam Engine in the World
by Allison Pluda

Honorable Mention
Big Horn Mountains - Elk Fires 2024
by Tim Doolin

PAINTING
Wyoming Cowpuncher
By Grant Redden (Oil)

Honorable Mention
Cheyenne to Deadwood
By Sam Iddings (Acrylic)



Sam Haptonstall holding his Mabel Brown Cumulative Contribution Award

Photo Weston County Gazette

SKETCHING/DRAWING

Down the Lonely Road
by Sam Iddings

Honorable Mention

Moon Song
by Jamie Marvel

ART PROJECTS

Honorable Mention
Wool in the Winds
(Wool Painting Fiber Art)
by Lynda German

STUDENT AWARDS

YOUNG HISTORIAN (GRADES 3-5)

- 1st: Andie Peck
- 2nd: Hailey Tracy
- 3rd: Valen Dow

YOUNG HISTORIAN (GRADES 6-8)

- 1st: Addison Williams, Wheatland
- 2nd: Grace Breyer, Ranchester
- 3rd: Lydia Lanctoct, Newcastle

STUDENT AWARDS

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES (GRADES 3-5)

Mindy Woolsey, Upton

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES (GRADES 6-8)

Ashly Mills, Newcastle

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES (GRADES 9-12)

Bailey Smith, Laramie

HISTORIC ACTIVITIES AWARD

1st Place:

NEH Educational Center
Heart Mountain
Interpretive Center

2nd Place:

100 Years of the Wind River Canyon
Jackie Dorothy
& Fremont County Museums

3rd Place:

Battle of Lightening Creek
Weston County Museum District

MABEL BROWN CUMULATIVE CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Sam Hamptonstall, Upton, WY

L.C. BISHOP AWARD

Dr. Phineas A. Kelley
University of Wyoming

HENRYETTA BERRY MEMORIAL AWARD

Heidi McCullough, Douglas, WY

JUDGE & MRS. PERCY W. METZ MEMORIAL AWARD

Listen Closely as Johnson County Speaks Vol. 1-3
Compiled by Nancy Tabb, Dolly Fraley,
& Jonette Goraj
Buffalo, WY

CLARA M. & HENRY E. JENSEN OUTSTANDING WYOMING TEACHER AWARD

Michael Thomas
Sheridan High School

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(L-R) Sheridan High School Principal Scott Cleland, WHS President Beki Speas, SHS History Teacher and Clara M. and Henry E. Jensen Outstanding Teacher Award Winner Michael Thomas, WHS Northeast Representative Greg Luhman, SHS Assistant Principal Casey O'Conner, and WHS Executive Director Alely Philp.

Photo A. Philp

'Awards' continued from page 9



Susan Bronson sits in the Yablonski Memorial Library in Hudson, WY, with her Maurine Carley Historical Preservation Award from the Wyoming Historical Society.

Photo Vince Tropea / County 10 News

**MAURINE CARLEY
MEMORIAL
PRESERVATION AWARD**
Yablonski Memorial Library
Susan Bronson, Hudson, WY

MEMBER OF THE YEAR

1ST PLACE
Ray Shaffer
Thermopolis, WY

2ND PLACE
Heidi McCullough
Douglas, WY

3RD PLACE
Kim Tait
Uinta County, WY



Rick Hudson, left, President of the Hot Springs County Historical Society, and Ray Shaffer, right, show off their awards of Historical Group of the Year and Member of the Year, respectively, in front of the Hole in the Wall Bar inside the Hot Springs County Museum in Thermopolis, WY.

Photo Jackie Dorothy

HISTORICAL GROUP AWARD

Hot Springs County
Historical Society

R.L. "Rick" Hudson
PRESIDENT

Barb Vietti
VICE PRESIDENT

Carol Shaffer
SECRETARY

Gary Olheiser
TREASURER

If you are interested in finding out more about the Wyoming Historical Society's Awards Program or would like to volunteer to help with the Awards Program, please contact Beki Speas, pres.whs@gmail.com.

A NEW PAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WYOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Letter Regarding Our Three Year Strategic Plan from A.Philp, Executive Director

Dear Fellow History Enthusiasts:

The Wyoming Historical Society has been the guardian of our state's story for decades, a responsibility we have always taken seriously. As the world evolves, so does the way we connect with history. A question has been at the forefront of our minds: How do we not only preserve the past, but make it vibrant and relevant for today and for generations yet to come?

This question led to a great deal of thoughtful discussion with our board, staff, and many of you. The result is a new, dynamic Three-Year Strategic Plan with a revised Mission that will guide us into the future.

Our new mission is: ***Dedicated to preserving, exploring, and sharing Wyoming's history for the benefit and enjoyment of all generations.***

These are more than just words on a page. This is our roadmap. It reflects a commitment to be more dynamic, more inclusive, and more accessible than ever before. To achieve this, we have set four key goals in our strategic plan:

- I. Develop and increase diversified funding streams to enable WHS to ensure its sustainability and impact the state.**
- II. Cultivate a collaborative network of partners to build long-term relationships for mutual benefit.**
- III. Create and share communications about Wyoming's stories, resources, history and events.**
- IV. Foster meaningful relationships by engaging individuals and groups through events, storytelling, and interactive opportunities to explore Wyoming history.**

On the following pages, we will address how these goals are already being put into action through three key initiatives that embody our new mission.



PRESERVING

THE POWER OF EVERYDAY HISTORIES

When we think of "preserving history," we often picture grand moments and figures - governors, pioneers, and famous battles. But what about the stories of everyday life? The memories of a ranch hand's first calf, a grandmother's recipe for sourdough, the struggles of a small business owner? These are the threads that weave the rich tapestry of our state's history.

That's why we have just launched *Everyday Histories*, a statewide effort to collect and preserve the personal, often-overlooked stories of Wyomingites. We are inviting you to help us collect and share oral histories, family photographs, personal letters, and cherished objects that tell a more complete story of our state. We will be providing workshops on how to properly record oral histories and digitize family documents. This is a chance to create a historical record that truly belongs to everyone.



EXPLORING

NEW ADVENTURES THROUGH TREKS

Our annual Treks have long been a highlight each year - and they are about to get even better. Our Executive Board is establishing a Treks Committee whose task will be revitalizing our exploration program to align with our new mission. We are not just visiting historical markers; we're going deeper. We're finding new ways to connect with the landscapes and communities that shaped our past.

This year, our treks will focus on hands-on experiences and collaboration with local experts. We are working on integrating new technologies to better document our journeys and share them with those who cannot attend. The Treks will continue to be a cornerstone of our organization, providing unique opportunities to get out on the land and connect directly with the past. As part of our Semiquincentennial celebration, we plan to have one trek in each quadrant of the state in 2026.

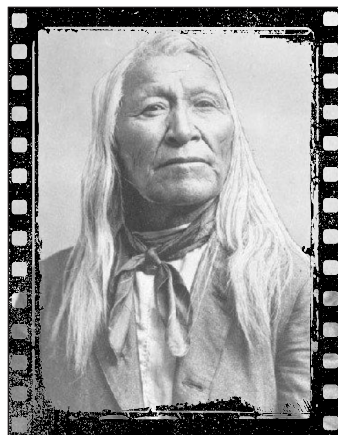


SHARING

PUBLICATIONS, BLOGS, AND AWARDS

"Sharing" is a key component of our new mission. For years, we have done this through our fantastic publications, and that will continue. But we are also expanding our digital footprint to reach a wider audience. We are thrilled to announce the launch of our new blogs by the Executive Board and me. This will help everyone get to know each of us better and allow us to share some of Wyoming's history with you. We will be seeking articles from historians, researchers, and our members, offering fresh perspectives on Wyoming's past.

Sharing is key to our mission, and a crucial component is recognizing excellence. Our annual awards celebrate the amazing work happening statewide. Moving forward, we'll use our awards to encourage and recognize new types of projects - specifically those that are creative, collaborative, and innovative. This could include vlogs / YouTube series, a virtual exhibit, or any compelling digital, physical, audio, or written project that brings history to life. We want to hear your ideas and help you share your passionate history endeavors.



YOUR ROLE

IN OUR SHARED FUTURE

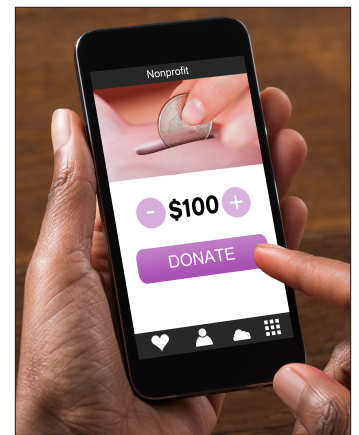
This is an exciting moment for the Wyoming Historical Society. We have a clear mission, a bold vision, and a roadmap for the future. But we can't do this alone. Our work is only possible because of your support.

To continue our projects and ensure the longevity of our organization, we need to raise \$100,000. Our yearly budget is \$250,000, thus we are launching "\$250k for the 250th" capital campaign. Your financial contributions are vital. They allow us to continue our publications, update our digital media, and build the technology that will make history accessible.

We also need your time. We need volunteers to help us with the Everyday Histories initiative, to contribute to our blogs, and to help organize our next Treks. The future of the Wyoming Historical Society isn't just about what we do; it's about what we do together.

Soon we will be mailing out donation request letters that further explain our transition to a donor-based non-profit. The mailing will include a card for you to indicate your interest in volunteering and an envelope for your donation. You can also donate online through our website, www.wyshs.org/donate.

Thank you again for your membership, your passion, and your dedication to Wyoming's incredible story. Let us work together to ensure that our state's past is not only preserved, but also explored and shared for generations to come.



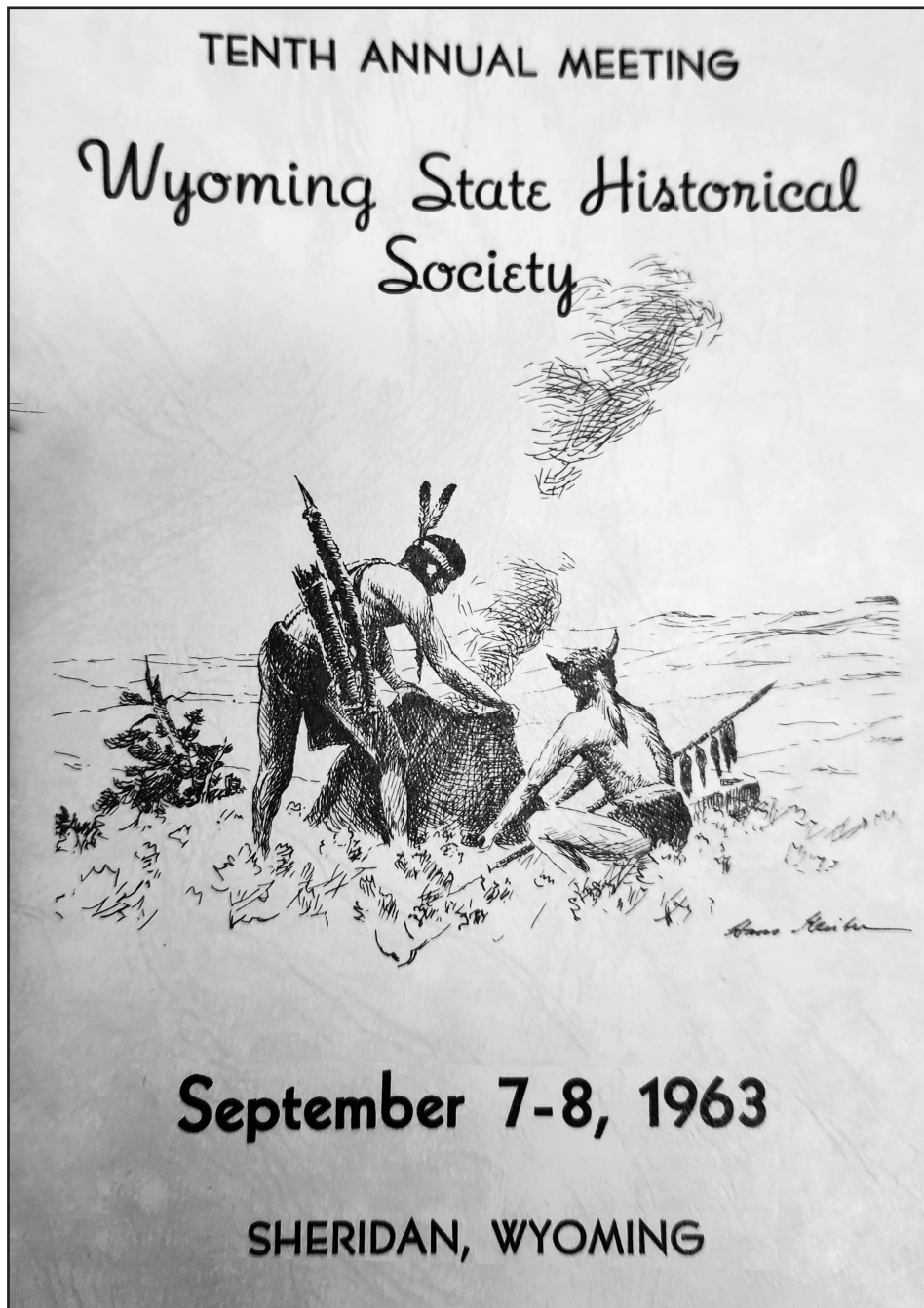
WHS BLAST FROM THE PAST

Wyoming Historical Society's Historic Homecoming: A Look Back at 1963

Sixty-two years ago, in early September 1963, the Wyoming Historical Society (WHS) held its 10th Annual Meeting at the historic Sheridan Inn. This event was a significant moment in the Society's early history,

bringing members together in one of the state's most iconic locations. A news article from the Sheridan Press, featured on the next page, captured the essence of that gathering, detailing the proceedings and the camaraderie among attendees who shared a passion for preserving Wyoming's past.

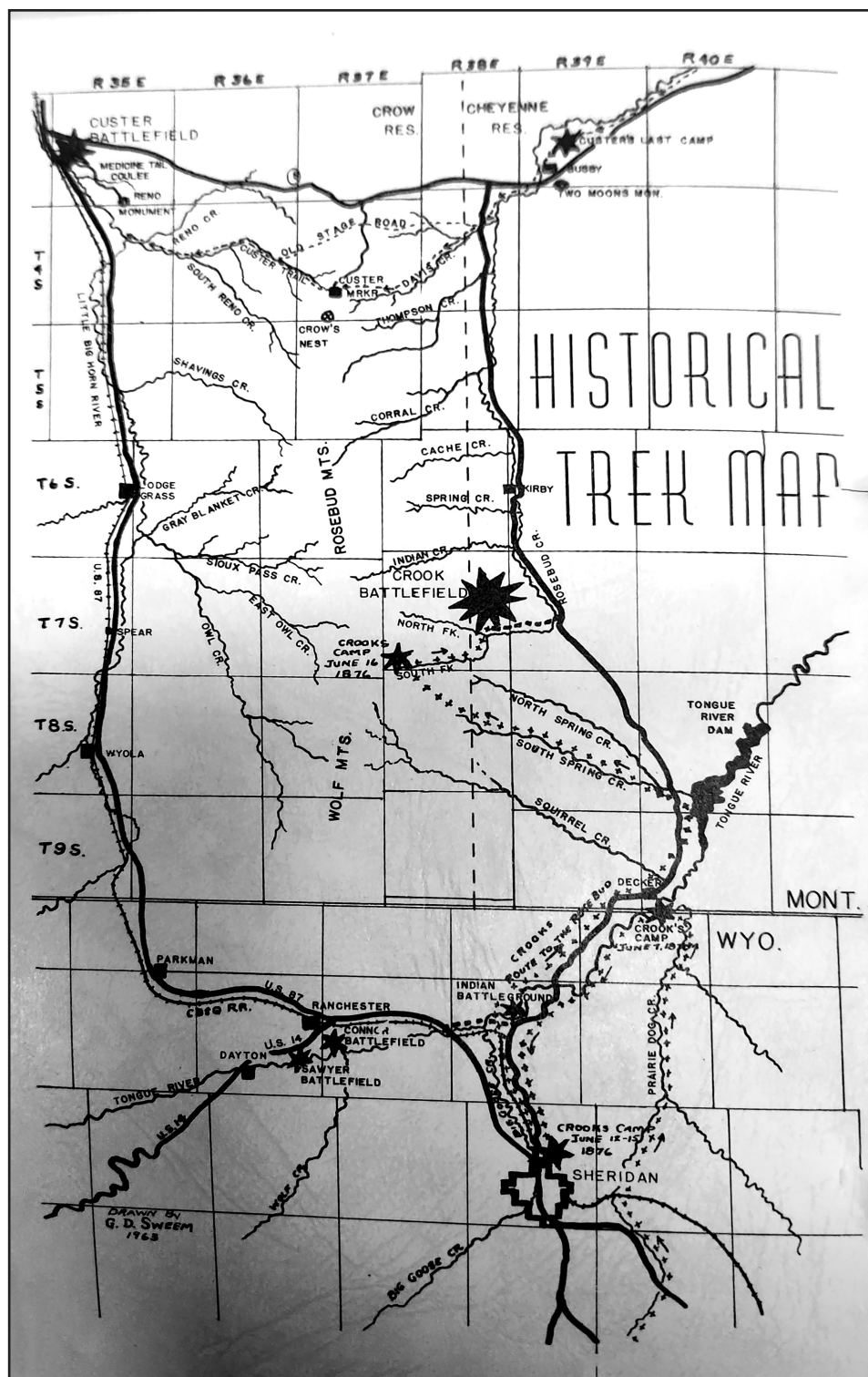
The program from that 1963 meeting offers a fascinating glimpse into the Society's activities at the time, showcasing a dedication to education and historical preservation that has remained a constant thread through the decades. It's a reminder of the foundational work done by those who came before us to build the Society into the organization it is today. They laid the groundwork for the future by fostering a community committed to the rich and complex narratives of the Equality State. Their efforts ensured that the stories of Wyoming's trailblazers, settlers, and everyday citizens would not be lost to time. These early members understood that history is not just about dates and



This scanned program from the 10th Annual Wyoming Historical Society meeting, held at the Historic Sheridan Inn in 1963, provides a remarkable look into the Society's early years.

continued on page 15

We invite you to appreciate this historic connection by looking back at the original Sheridan Press article and photos from the 1963 program on the following pages. They provide a wonderful perspective on the journey of the Wyoming Historical Society and the lasting legacy of those who helped shape it.



The middle two program pages are included on the following pages and feature the program agenda, officer names, and a brief synopsis of the weekend.

This piece of history was preserved and shared by the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library's Wyoming Room. A special thank you to Michael Shapira and Cassie Stone for putting together an amazing display and collection of archives that document the WHS annual meetings held in Sheridan throughout the years.

The Sheridan Press

Vol. 77, No 94

September 9, 1963

CARAVAN VIEWS SCENES DATING TO INDIAN WARS

History of the Sheridan area and that of surrounding communities was taught in a highly effective and enjoyable way Sunday when 33 carloads of historical trekkers traveled over the region to visit battlefields where the Indian and white man conflict raged only one generation ago.

The trek was part of the interesting program planned for conventioners here for the 10th annual convention of the Wyoming State Historical Society.

The day opened with a 7 o'clock breakfast at the Sheridan Inn with the trip northward beginning at 8. Approximately 125 persons took part, stopping to view sites of interest as the caravan wound its way over the approximate route General Crook followed in his campaign in 1876.

His different camping places were pointed out along the way as the group traveled toward the part of the community where Crook and his 1,320 men camped and the battle site where the Indians

attacked on the Rosebud.

Gregg Penson gave the historical facts at the site of the Rosebud battlefield monument, visible from the highway. He also showed the group a firing pin and shell he had picked up in the area. Turning westward, Trekkers wound over rough terrain until they came to the point on the divide where the battle had taken place. Here, the facts were given by E. E. "Slim," Kobold, who, at his own expense, has erected half a dozen or more markers in the area to show points of interest.

In preparing for the Sunday influx of visitors, Mr. Kobold had graded the winding road leading to the battle site and after they had viewed the country and heard his talk, went with them on the rest of the trek, as did Mr. Penson. His markers show where various phases of the battle took place.

The next stop of interest was at the monument of Chief Two Moons and here, Henry Tall Bull, a Cheyenne of Busby, Mont., reviewed facts about the Cheyennes and Chief Two Moons whose death occurred in the early [19]20s. The monument overlooks the town of Busby to the north.

Also to the north, one gets a good view of the chalk cliffs where Gen. George A. Custer and his soldiers spent their last night on earth.

From there on, Mr. Tall Bull went with the group, turning to the left off Highway 212 to travel the route Custer took on that fateful day in June of 1876. A

continued on page 17



[ABOVE] New officers for the Wyoming State Historical Society were elected Saturday and introduced at the evening banquet program in the Sheridan Inn dining room. In the background at left is the new president, Neal Miller of Rawlins, who succeeds Charles Ritter of Cheyenne. In the front row are Mrs. Charles Hord of Casper, first vice president; Mrs. Lola Homsher, executive secretary, Cheyenne; Glenn D. Sweem, second vice president; and Miss Maurine Carley of Cheyenne, reelected to the office of secretary-treasurer. The executive board chooses the site for next year's convention. (1963 Sheridan Press photo by Gertrude Spomer)

PROGRAM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1963

- 8:30 Registration at Historic Sheridan Inn
- Autograph Session with Mari Sandoz
- Art Exhibit of Western & Historical Art
by Kleiber, Ostrom, Ralston and Compton
- Visit of Historic Sheridan Inn
- Coffee in Stage Coach Room
- 11:00 Business Session, Stage Coach Room
- 12:00 Lunch, on your own
- 1:30 State Meeting, Stage Coach Room
Presiding, Charles Ritter, President
- 6:00 Cocktail Hour, in Small Dining Room
- 7:00 Banquet, Main Dining Room
 - Toastmaster—Ralph Hylton
 - Invocation—Henry Tall Bull
 - Program—Mrs. Bea Crane
 - Presentation of Awards—Award Chairman
 - Introduction of New State Officers
 - Speaker—Mari Sandoz, New York City

★ ★ ★

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1963

- 7:00 Breakfast, Sheridan Inn Dining Room
- Pre-Trek Briefing
- Review of General Crook's Indian Campaign
by Malcomb "Bud" Campbell
- 8:00 Historical Trek, which will include—
 - General Crook's Battle on the Rosebud
 - General Custer's Last Camp
 - Chief Two Moons Monument
 - Custer's Trail to the Battle
 - The Crows Nest
 - Custer Battlefield
 - Reno Battlefield
 - Connor Battlefield

WYOMING STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

1962 - 1963

- Mr. Charles Ritter President
- Mr. Neal Miller First Vice President
- Mr. Charles Hord Second Vice President
- Mrs. Maurine Carley Secretary-Treasurer
- Mrs. Lola Homsher Executive-Secretary

★ ★ ★

This beautiful country in which Sheridan County lies is one of the richest in Indian lore and legend. Its abundance of game, fish, and natural beauty attracted both the Indian and White man and it was merely a matter of time until disputes would arise as to its possession.

When Captain Raynold's Expedition came thru here in September, 1859 he wrote - "While returning to the train on Goose Creek, my first view of camp struck me as one of most singular beauty - the dark and varied outline of the mountains formed the background to a landscape of wild extent and attractive features. In the center, the circle of white tents and wagon covers reflected the bright rays of the sun, the smoke of camp fires, and the groups of men and the grazing animals added charm of busy life to the scene; while upon either hand the striking contrasts were mellowed down by gently sloping hills clad with verdure of all the picturesque tints of autumn. The canvas of the painter has perpetuated few finer scenes real or ideal."

'Caravan' continued from page 16

marker is placed on the hill to show where the cavalry crossed the divide, and visible to the south and west is the flat-topped knob hill which the cavalry used as a lookout.

From there the tour proceeded to Custer Battlefield where box lunches were eaten and a talk was heard on the Custer battle given by an employee of the monument staff. The museum and grounds were toured and the trekkers then took off to view sites along the ride and return to Sheridan.

Glenn Sweem, president of the Sheridan chapter; Don Grimes and M. L. Campbell were among those in charge of arrangements. Sweem served as "wagon master" to lead the caravan to the various points

which he and other committee members had twice previously visited.

The convention opened Saturday morning with registration, the first business session convening at 11 a.m followed with another at 1 30 p.m. in the Stagecoach room of the Sheridan Inn convention headquarters.

Resolutions were adopted that afternoon during the meeting, Charles Ritter presiding. These, in brief, dealt with preservation of artifacts, making it necessary for the individual who is an amateur in most cases, to contact the state society and work with them in digging where valuable artifacts are being uncovered: placing of signs, publication of historical news and a third expressing

appreciation to the Sheridan chapter for the convention.

Miss Mari Sandoz was featured speaker for the evening banquet meeting. Mrs. B. N. Crane was program chairman. Appearing on the program were Torrey Johnson and Brad Spear in guitar selections: Jack Shields in a piano composition, Ghost Town which tells of the story of a mining community, now abandoned, north of Sheridan; and Dr. Peter Schunk, who sang two of his own selections.

This excerpt, in its unedited entirety, from The Sheridan Press, is taken from the online Wyoming Digital Newspaper Collection. Find out how you can support the digital archiving of Wyoming's past by contacting the WHS.

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**For a full calendar of events,
please visit wyshs.org/events.**

For comments
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 15, 22, & 29 / Nov. 12 & 19

Women in Science Wednesdays

Women in Science, Opportunities for Women in Science, Discoveries Made by Women, Ways to Girls & Women involved in science locally, Don't miss out!! Be part of their future!

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Natural History Museum of Wyoming, Inc.
1 Whitney Way Sheridan, WY 82801

Oct. 16 - Free Museum Day & Fall Crafts

Free Admission during

Parent Teacher Conferences, 8 AM - 5 PM.

Fall Crafts: 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Rockpile Museum

900 W. Second St. Gillette, WY 82716

Oct. 17 - Rawlins Cemetery Tour

Their yearly Cemetery tour is back!

This is the same guided tour with the same stories as last year. If you've missed our previous tours or love this tour, we would love to see you!

Join us at the Gazebo and explore the Rawlins Cemetery and learn about its residents!

This tour is free, but donations are always appreciated!

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Carbon County Museum
915 3rd St., Rawlins, WY 82301

Oct. 17, 18, & 19

Wyoming State Mineral & Gem Society Show

Children's Corner-Dinosaur dig, Scavenger hunt, demonstrations, raffles, silent auctions (Tentative: Gold panning and sapphire dig)

dennis.brown@campbellcountywy.gov

Fri. & Sat.: 9 AM - 5PM, Sun 10A - 4P

Campex Energy Hall

1635 Reata Dr., Gillette, WY 82718

Oct. 24 & 25 - Nightmare at the Museum

Haunted House & Kid Scavenger Hunt

Our third annual Haunted House is coming up!

Don't miss this scary good time with your friends/family at the Douglas Railroad Museum, Too scared to go in? Join the kids for the kid scavenger hunt instead!

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Douglas Railroad Museum & Visitor Center
121 Brownfield Rd., Douglas, WY 82633

Oct. 24 - CFD Old West Museum

Interactive Ghost Tours

Presented by *Haunting Across America*

This is more than a tour—it's an experience.

Using a mix of history, storytelling, and paranormal investigation, you'll walk where spirits still roam and hear tales that will stay with you long after the night ends.

⚠️ **Tickets are extremely limited and WILL sell out quickly**—don't wait to secure your spot in this spine-tingling journey into the unknown.

Recommended ages 12+

www.oldwestmuseum.org/event-calendar

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Cheyenne Frontier Days Old West Museum
4610 Carey Ave., Cheyenne, WY 82001

Nov. 6 - Mammoth Quick Draw

Evening of Art & Music to raise funds for the Washakie Museum.

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Washakie Museum
2200 Big Horn Ave., Worland, WY 82401

Nov. 8 - Tie Hackers of Dubois by Steve Banks

Presented by Fremont County Historical Society

1:00 PM

Pioneer Museum of Lander
1443 West Main St., WY 82520

Nov. 14 - Fall into Art:

Remington's West in Black and White with Michael Grauer

5:00 PM Brinton Museum

239 Brinton Rd., Big Horn, WY 82833

Nov. 14

Wiggly West Tour for the Little Ones!

Geared to children ages 0-5 and their caregivers.

10:00 AM

Buffalo Bill Center of the West
720 Sheridan Ave, Cody, WY 82414

Nov. 20: Homesteader Museum Book Club

Moving onto their Wyoming Authors Series, each month reading a book written by a Wyoming Author.

"Chief Joseph: Guardian of the People"

by: Candy Vyvey Moulton

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Homesteader Museum
324 E 1st Street, Powell, WY 82435



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