



# Wyoming History News



Published for members of the Wyoming Historical Society

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## Heard on the Historical Trail



The **Carbon County Historical Society** recently hosted former Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal who discussed his new book titled *Wyoming: The Paradox of Plenty*. The book is a deep-dive into legislative sessions that created the severance tax system, the backbone of Wyoming's economy. Governor Freudenthal presented the program with humor and insight.

Special thanks to WREN editor Maggie York for inviting us to submit a monthly article to the magazine in an effort to highlight areas of Wyoming's history. The deadline to submit an article is the 15th of each month, and pictures can be included within the word count. To volunteer something please coordinate with WHS executive director, **Linda Fabian**, via email to [linda@wyshs.org](mailto:linda@wyshs.org). Who is going to volunteer for the April 15th deadline! No pressure.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Join Us in Star Valley for the 2023 Trek

Mark your calendars for the weekend of June 15th when members and guests will converge on Star Valley to enjoy friendship, food and tours to all things historical. Star Valley is located on Wyoming's western side of the state between the Salt River Range and the Webster Range in Idaho. Star Valley was settled in the late 1870s by Mormon pioneers.

Our trip begins with registration the afternoon of Thursday, June 15th and continuing with two full days of enjoying Afton and the surrounding area. Registration, due by May 25, is \$165 for members, and \$170 for non members. Students and children under 13 can register for \$100 per person. The fee includes bus transportation to all sites included in the tour, and four meals.

The local planning committee promises a fun-filled weekend exploring some of the area's most intriguing historic sites. Buses will take us to the Lander Cutoff Road, a shortcut for those traveling the Oregon Trail to the Pacific Northwest, and on to Convict Road, Sheep Trail and Salt Works, and into Montpelier, Idaho for a tour of the Montpelier Bank (pictured) robbed by Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch in 1896. The second day will take us to Alpine and the Grand Valley of Snake River, the Baker Cabin, and to the Historic Rock Church where the abovementioned outlaws attended dances! There will be time to enjoy several museums on your own, along with activities and demonstrations. Lodging options are listed on page 6, but you can always google accommodations in and around Afton for more choices. The registration form is enclosed, but can also be downloaded at [www.wyshs.org](http://www.wyshs.org) under the tab "What's New!" Everyone is invited — this would be a perfect weekend trip for you and your friends.

Registration due  
by May 15th



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**From the  
 President. . .**

Dear friends,  
 March turned out to be “Wyoming Historical Society Month.” We kicked it off

with a meeting of Chapter representatives to discuss issues, activities, and how things are going overall. People from ten Chapters attended. **Sara Davis**, the Wyoming State Archivist, updated us on the Roving Archivist Program which surveyed 174 groups with ties to historical work in Wyoming. Survey results will drive the program’s next steps with the Wyoming State Historic Records Advisory Board. Phase II of the program will focus on consultation with groups that have reached out for assistance. During this meeting, we also spent time discussing the Chapters’ dues structure and ways to standardize Chapter dues. Unfortunately, we couldn’t reach a consensus, but discussions were informative and helped in understanding different perspectives and issues. Also, Chapters represented provided a status update and future plans. It’s always exciting and rewarding to hear about Chapter activities.

The next Saturday, the Executive Committee held its quarterly meeting where it heard about **Mike Jording’s** work with the Wyoming Rural Electric Association’s magazine, *WREN*. Editor Maggie York will devote a page to a Wyoming history topic and has asked the Society’s help with content. Please reach out via

email to [linda@wyshs.org](mailto:linda@wyshs.org) if you would like to commit to providing an article (up to 350 words with a photo or two). Linda needs to know as soon as possible because this will be a monthly opportunity to highlight Wyoming history. **Charlene Busk** and **Mike Jording** are working on the 2024 Calendar of Wyoming History, and expressed appreciation for all the photos submitted so far. **Jane Gebhart**, chair of the Society’s Awards Committee, said nominations are starting to come in and reminds everyone of the April 28th deadline.

Many of us also spent a day at the History Confab meeting in Casper. The Wyoming Humanities Council brought together organizations with similar interests to discuss how we can work together on education, advocacy, promotion, and preservation initiatives. Represented were the Wyoming Historical Society/WyoHistory.org, UW’s American Heritage Center, the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources (including the Cultural Resources director, Wyoming State Archives and Wyoming State Museum), the Wyoming Business Council’s Main Street Wyoming program, and the Alliance for Historic Wyoming. Often groups are working on the same type of program/product and are unaware that another group is doing the same thing or has resources which can help. Those attending agreed to work towards breaking down those silos and focusing collaborative efforts towards those initiatives.

*(President’s Column continued on page 4)*

(Heard on the Historical Trail continued from page 1)

"Soldiers of the Republic: Stories of the 11th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry" exhibit at the Fort Caspar Museum tells the history of the 11th Kansas from fighting battles in the Civil War (Battle of Prairie Grove, Battle of Westport, fighting bushwhackers along the Kansas-Missouri border, etc.) to its service out west in present-day Casper, Wyoming. Discover the history of the regiment which fought alongside Lt. Caspar Collins of the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry at the Battle of Platte Bridge, and see artifacts from that battle that have not been in Casper since 1865. The exhibit also includes 22 soldier biographies to tell the stories of the men of the regiment--where they came from, and where they went home to--if they went home. This exhibit was made possible through several loans from private collectors and museums in Kansas and Wyoming. "Soldiers of the Republic" will be on exhibit through February 24, 2024. [Editor's Note: See page 5 about curator Johanna Wickman's new book about Preston B. Plumb who led the 11th Kansas Volunteer Cavalry]

The **Sheridan Community Land Trust** will share its Explore History program on April 11th in Sheridan, and April 18th in Dayton, both beginning at 10:30 a.m. The Bighorn National Forest Historical Collection contains historical documents and photographs providing insight into how the Bighorn National Forest has been used and managed over the decades. **Sylvia Bruner**, Director of the Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum and Craig Cope, Retired Bighorn National Forest Wilderness Manager will be the presenters. The Explore History program is generously funded by the Next50 Initiative. For details visit <https://sheridanclt.org/events/> or email [history@sheridanclt.org](mailto:history@sheridanclt.org).

WHS member, author and historian **Rodger McDaniel** has been the guest of several chapters to talk about his latest book *Profiles in Courage: Standing Against the Wyoming Wind*. If you want to visit with Rodger about coming to your chapter email him at [rnc81448@gmail.com](mailto:rnc81448@gmail.com). On April 13th you can find him at the Wyoming State Museum in Cheyenne. The program, part of the Wyoming State Archives speakers series, will begin at 7:00 p.m. To find out how to participate virtually call 777-7826 for details.

The **Natrona County Historical Society** will host its spring banquet on April 27th at the Casper Country Club. The Social Time is at 5:30 with a buffet dinner featuring two entrees beginning at 6 p.m. Special guest will be WHS member **Rebecca Weaver Hunt** who will talk about the history of Casper Mountain. To make a reservation call **Becky** at 307-259-3350 by April 21st.

The **Platte County Historical Society** will host a field trip to the Quebec 01 State Historic Site on Tuesday, April 25th. For information email [ThompsonGailA@outlook.com](mailto:ThompsonGailA@outlook.com). This site is significant as the only accessible Peacekeeper Missile Alert Facility left in the world that strives to preserve and interpret the Cold War history of the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries, fostering an understanding of the mission and duties of the personnel and crews assigned to work there. Quebec 01 Missile Alert Facility State Historic Site offers visitors the opportunity to see a military installation that was "hidden in plain sight" and controlled one of the most destructive nuclear weapons ever built by the United States. Delve into the daily lives of missileers, topside personnel, missile technology, the Cold War and the deactivation of this missile system.

The Wyoming Archaeological Society will host its annual spring meeting in Worland the weekend of April 28th. For additional information visit <http://www.wyomingarchaeology.org/2023-was-spring-meeting.html>.

The Sweetwater County Historical Museum recently created a YouTube video titled *A History of Bitter Creek: As Told by Ed Varley*. The video can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI8NV9aInuw&t=1260s>. **Ed and Rae Dell Varley** are long-time Point of Rocks residents. The interview (produced by museum staff and volunteers) made possible a rare, and very personal, account of life in the little hamlet from the 1930s through the 1950s. The program is part of the Smithsonian Institution's "Museum on Main Street," project, co-hosted by the Sweetwater County Historical Museum, Wyoming Humanities / ThinkWY, and the Green River Chamber of Commerce.

Friends of South Pass will host numerous summer events. Check out [www.southpasscity.org](http://www.southpasscity.org) for details or email [joe.ellis@wyo.gov](mailto:joe.ellis@wyo.gov).

## Wyoming History Calendar

**April 1-Douglas.** Annual Prohibition Party. For details email [heidiho2202@yahoo.com](mailto:heidiho2202@yahoo.com).

**April 11-Sheridan.** “Explore History: The Bighorn National Forest.” 10:30 a.m., The Hub. For details email [history@scheridancnt.org](mailto:history@scheridancnt.org).

**April 13-Cheyenne.** *Profiles in Courage: Standing Against the Wyoming Wind* by Rodger McDaniel. Wyoming State Museum at 7 p.m.

**April 18-Dayton.** “Explore History: The Bighorn National Forest.” 10:30 a.m., TRVCC. Email [history@scheridancnt.org](mailto:history@scheridancnt.org) for details.

**April 25-Wheatland.** The Platte County Historical Society will host a field trip to the Quebec 01 missile site. Email [ThompsonGailA@outlook.com](mailto:ThompsonGailA@outlook.com) for details.

**April 27-Casper.** The Natrona County Historical Society will host their annual spring banquet with a talk by Rebecca Weaver Hunt. For reservations and more details call Becky at 307-259-3350 asap.

**April 28-Worland.** Annual Spring Meeting of the Wyoming Archaeological Society. For more details email [marcia.peterson@wyo.gov](mailto:marcia.peterson@wyo.gov).

**May 1—Laramie.** State History Day competition.

**June 15-17— Star Valley.** 2023 Trek sponsored by Star Valley Historical Society. Registration form inside. Due by May 15th. See list of accommodations on page six of this issue.

**July 19-Douglas.** The Converse County Historical Society will host the annual Fort Fetterman Day from 8-5 p.m. For details email [heidiho2202@yahoo.com](mailto:heidiho2202@yahoo.com)

*(This is not an all-inclusive listing of all activities)*

Wyoming History News welcomes information about events of interest to the general membership and others. Information should be sent at least a month in advance and should reach the WHN editor by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Send items to [linda@wyshs.org](mailto:linda@wyshs.org)

*(President's Column Continued from Page 2)*

Subgroups were formed to tackle Education, Economic Development/Heritage Tourism, and Advocacy/Funding. The History Confab group plans to meet again in early May, with subgroup meetings to start their work before the next meeting and report out, and then to schedule regular meetings of the History Confab to keep the progress going. I want to thank the Wyoming Humanities Council for coordinating this and reigniting collaborative efforts amongst the cultural heritage institutions.

Another big meeting was the Society's strategic planning session held on March 25th. As you have probably heard, **Linda Fabian** is looking towards the next phase in her life and plans to retire the end of September, 2023. As a result, and also in an effort to carry on past president **Leslie Waggener's** recommendations from last year, the Society needs to recruit a new Executive Director and support for the position with a part-time office assistant. The strategic planning session included a discussion and analysis of logistics about how this can be accomplished and be sustainable. More information regarding the strategic planning work will be included in the next newsletter.

I also want to draw your attention to one of my favorite activities supported by the Society, and that is the Wyoming State History Day contest coming up on May 1st to be held in Laramie at the University of Wyoming. It's a chance to see students (grades 6-12) excited about history and using it to create amazing exhibits, documentaries, performances, and papers based on the annual theme which this year is *Frontiers In History: People, Places, Ideas*. If you are interested in being a much needed judge or other volunteer, please reach out to **Bryce Mittelstadt**, Wyoming History Day Coordinator ([whd@uwyo.edu](mailto:whd@uwyo.edu)), or Brie Blasi, AHC Public History Educator ([bblasi@uwyo.edu](mailto:bblasi@uwyo.edu)).

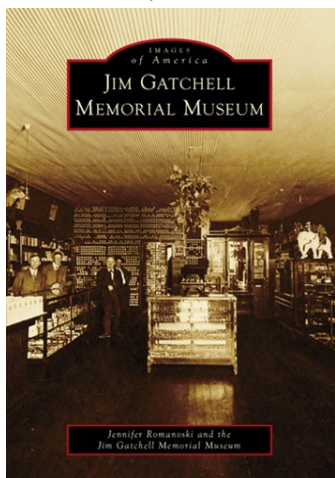
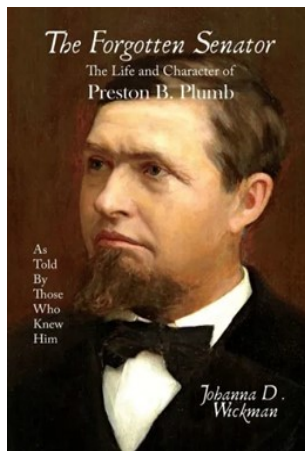
We have a lot of work to do over the next few months and look to you for ideas and support. Thank you to all our devoted members and Chapters that make our work so meaningful.

*Cindy*



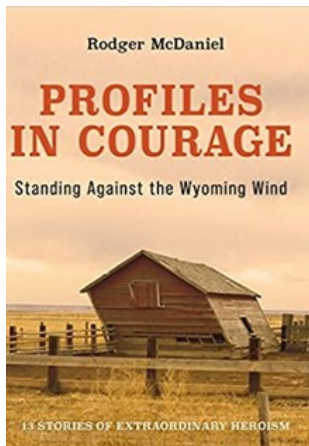
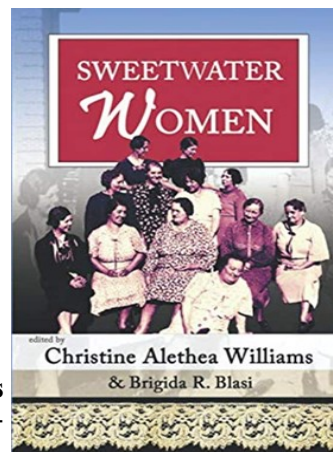
## On the book shelf...

Congratulations to WHS member, **Johanna Wickman**, on the publication of her new book *The Forgotten Senator*, a biography about Preston B. Plumb, a Kansan, Civil War Officer and U.S. Senator. Plumb became known as “The Senator of the West” because he took care of western territories (Wyoming included). The author said, “Senator Plumb was an incredible human being whose contributions have been lost to history.”



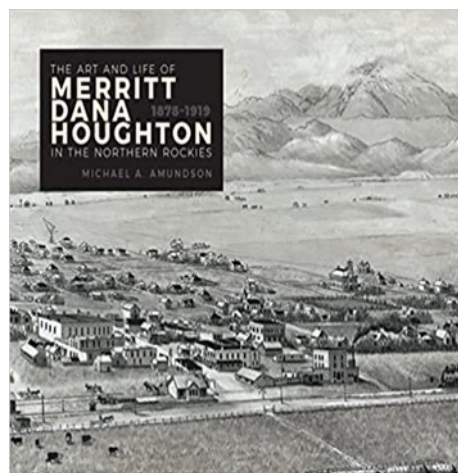
The history of Buffalo’s *Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum* is featured in a book by museum educator, Jennifer Romanoski. After Gatchell’s death in 1954, his family donated his collection to Johnson County with the provision that a museum be built to house it. The museum opened its doors in 1957 and became a nationally accredited museum in 2002.

WHS members **Christine Alethea Williams** and **Brigida Blasi** celebrate Sweetwater County Women in their book featuring the many women who arrived in Sweetwater County as immigrants and had to learn a new language and a new culture, and sacrificed in untold ways so their children could succeed.

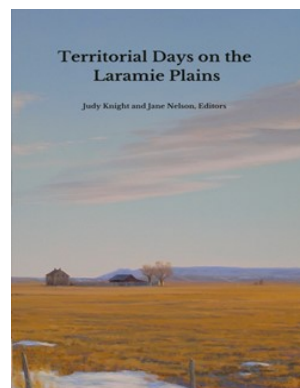


WHS member, author and historian **Rodger McDaniel’s** new book *Profiles In Courage* talks about the most admirable of human virtues – courage and grace under pressure. “These are the stories of the pressures experienced by nine Wyoming citizens and three groups of citizens, the Black 14, the people of the Wind River Indian Reservation, and the internees of Heart Mountains.”

WHS member, author, educator and historian **Michael Amundson** brings us *The Art and Life of Merritt Dana Houghton*. This illustrated biography details his life and work from his birth in Michigan in 1846 to his death in 1919. Houghton’s work depicts the infrastructure of the new settler society that was remaking the West. [Editor’s note: Can you identify which town is platted on the cover?]



*Territorial Days on the Laramie Plains* by WHS member **Jane Nelson** and Judy Knight features people who came to the Laramie Plains in the nineteenth century. As a whole, this collection of stories captures the spirit of a Western frontier community. This book is a project of the Laramie Plains Museum.



*Celebrate Independent Bookstore Day on April 29, 2023 and support your local bookseller*

## MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW FOR THE 2023 TREK HOSTED BY STAR VALLEY

The Star Valley Historical Society is hosting the 2023 Trek the weekend of June 15th. The organizers have a lot of things planned and encourage you to make reservations **NOW!**

Marriott/Fairfield Inn, Afton. \$169.00 per night. Call 307-885-4040 and mention the Star Valley Historical Society.

Kodiak Mountain Resort, Afton. \$184.00 per night if made a month ahead of the trek (no later than May 14th). Call 307-885-8800 and mention the Star Valley Historical Society.

Cabin Creek Inn, Thayne. \$155 per night. Call 307-883-3262 and mention the Star Valley Historical Society.

For more options contact the Star Valley Chamber of Commerce. 307-885-2759.

The Trek Registration form is enclosed in this issue of *Wyoming History News*. In the meantime the tentative schedule of events is registration on June 15th in the afternoon, along with some fun activities. Friday and Saturday will see us on the move to enjoy many historical features of the Valley and the area. The Trek will take us from Afton to Montpelier, Idaho and back visiting the Oregon Trail Center and the Butch Cassidy Museum. Trekkers will learn about the Montpelier Bank Robbery on August 13, 1896, and the rich history of the Crow Creek Freight Road between the two sites. Saturday will feature Star Valley History.

***Registrations are due no later than May 15th.***



# Star Valley Historical Society

### The Wyoming Historical Society Receives Even More Recognition!

"A Way with Words" is a syndicated radio show heard Sunday afternoons on Wyoming Public Radio. Listeners leave questions about expressions, words and their origins, and other linguistic oddities on an 800 number. After the hosts have thoroughly researched answers to selected inquiries, they invite the caller to be an on-air guest to hear those answers. Episode 1611 titled "By a Landslide" aired on March 12, 2023. "Anthony from Jackson Hole" asked about the source of the expression "won by a landslide" which he said townspeople claim originated because of the contest between Kelly and Jackson to become the Teton County seat. In brief, the story goes that the town of Kelly lost to Jackson because Kelly was destroyed in a flood in 1927 - hence Jackson "won by a landslide." One of the hosts, Grant Barrett, addresses the flood and not the story, which is apocryphal. He tells Anthony - and the state, the country and the world because that's how far reaching the show is - that there is "a great description of it on the Wyoming Historical Society website," which he quotes from. He tells Anthony the expression references political wins and goes back well more than one hundred years. You can listen to the segment on the website <https://exchange.prx.org/playlists> at 22.43-26.34 minutes - or why not enjoy the whole show every Sunday at 3 o'clock. Go to [www.wyomingpublicmedia.org](http://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org), click on All Streams and select Wyoming Public Radio. It's really very informative and entertaining. And while you are at it, why not find out about the flood and more at [www.wyohistory.org](http://www.wyohistory.org). [Editor's Note: Thanks to WHS member **RoseMarie Aridas** for this tidbit, and special thanks to Wyoming Public Radio.]

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND THANK YOU DONORS

### At Large

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Cowley Heritage Center, Cowley  
Julie Castleberry Nunez, Morgan Hill CA  
Shannon Brennan, Jackson

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### Star Valley Historical Society

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(continued on page 8)



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**REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2023 TREK HOSTED BY  
STAR VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Registration form inside.**

**Accommodations on Page 6. May 15th deadline.**

Address Service Requested

*(Donors continued from page 7)*

**Homsher Grant Project**

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Duane & Pam Kerr, Green River  
Lucille Dumbrell, Newcastle  
Dr. Brian DePaulitte, Pine Bluffs  
Mr & Mrs. Scott Alston, CA  
Deborah Simon, Thermopolis  
Richard Osman, Denver CO

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J. Lee Varvaro, Gillette  
Ruth Vaughn, Chugwater  
Jonita Sommers, Pinedale  
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Jackie Ellis, Casper  
Vincent Szafranko, Denver CO  
*In loving memory of his wife Frances*  
Barbara Vietti, Thermopolis  
Art Kidwell, Clark  
Cal VanHolland, Casper  
Duane & Pam Kerr, Green River  
Deborah Simon, Thermopolis  
Richard Osman, Denver CO  
Thomas Schmitt, Westport MA

**1953-2023**

**70 years of sharing Wyoming's history**

**Register by May 15th to attend the  
Annual Trek hosted by the  
Star Valley Historical Society**