Saddlebag Newsletter

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A supplement to the WWHA *Journal*
Available On-Line via www.wildwesthistory.org

Welcome to the "New" *Saddlebag* Newsletter. Rather than the previous twice-per-year publication of the newsletter, Spring and Fall, we will now be adding news and other information to this on-line publication as it becomes available. This means you will have something to look forward to most every week, month, or on a frequent basis. We hope this provides our members and readers with more current, up-to-date information, especially in regard to coming events or important notices, such as the death of a WWHA member.

New information will be headed by the date of posting. Previously posted information will simply be moved further down in the newsletter. All information will be retained for reference.

If you have Wild West news, please contact the editor at the e-mail address shown at the top of the *Saddlebag* page. We reserve the right to include or not include any materials submitted to us.

October 28, 2021

WWHA *Journal*, December 2021

The next issue of the WWHA *Journal* will be December 2021. It is scheduled for mailing the first week of December. We are hoping we won't have the same problems with the USPS as we did last December with the extended delays of delivery; some members did not receive their copies until the middle of January. We cannot publish the December issue early as each issue of the *Journal* is a project taking over three months to reach completion. So, once again, we ask your patience in awaiting delivery of the *Journal*. Mail delivery is simply out of our hands.

WWHA 2022 Roundup:

All things in regard to the 2022 WWHA Roundup in Rapid City and Deadwood, South Dakota are progressing nicely. The dates are: July 20-23. The host hotel is: Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center, 2111 N. La Crosse St., Rapid City, SD 57701. Guest room reservations may be made starting January 1, 2022. Request rates for "Wild West History Association" meeting.

Call for Papers: Rapid City/ Deadwood Roundup 2022

The Wild West History Association is extending an invitation to all historians of the Wild West to submit proposals for papers to be presented at the next annual Roundup. Proposals should contain author contact information and a brief (250 word maximum) abstract of the topic to be presented - with emphasis on new topics or new information on old topics. Additionally, provide a short presentation of your background and work in Wild West history. Proposal submission deadline is December 20, 2021. Send proposals via e-mail to Roundup chair Roy B. Young: royyoung@pldi.net. Determinations of selected speakers and topics will be made by January 15, 2022 with contact of all proposal submitters to be made by January 30, 2022.

Among the many possible topics are papers on "Wild Bill" Hickok, Seth Bullock, "Calamity Jane," "Potato Creek" Johnny, "Preacher" Smith, "Colorado Charlie" Utter, Al Swearengen, L.W. Stilwell, various outlaws and lawmen of the Dakotas, as well as gold rush and mining, railroads and end-of-track

towns, Fetterman Massacre, Wounded Knee, Custer in the Black Hills, and much, much more. New ideas and topics are welcome. Additionally, ideas for panel discussions are invited.

WWHA Awards and Honors for 2020:

We very much regret that the awards that were to be presented at the 2021 Fort Smith Roundup could not be presented in front of the usual enthusiastic audience. Distribution of the plaques and cash awards have been made in various ways, including in person and via mail delivery. "Congratulations" to each award winner and honoree! "Thank You" to the awards/honors committee: Pam Potter, Jim Dunham, and Carroll Moore for their untiring work, as well as to the official readers/voters of the books and articles submitted for consideration.

WWHA Awards for works published in 2020:

Best Book, *Ride the Devil's Herd,* by John Boessenecker (Hanover Square Press);
Best WWHA *Journal* Article, "Ben Sippy, Tombstone City Marshal/Career Criminal," by Peter Brand, two part series, Sept./Dec. 2020 issues;
Best Scholarly Article, "Cody and Summit Springs," by Jeff Broome, *Denver Westerner's,* Sept. 2020;
Best General Article, "They Shoot Cowboys Don't They?" by John Boessenecker, *Wild West*, October 2020.

WWHA Special Honors Awards:

Lifetime Achievement Award to Kurt House for his many years of work in the field of Wild West history, his books, articles, and service on the WWHA Board of Directors.
President's Silver Star Award to Alan Blanchette for dedicated service to WWHA in his work as membership chair and many years on the WWHA Board of Directors.

Death of WWHA Member Frank Younger

We regret to announce the death of WWHA member and renowned poet Frank Younger (November 18, 1940 – August 28, 2021). Frank passed away suddenly at age 80 as a result of an accident in his home. Frank was predeceased by his parents, Paul and Margaret (and stepmother Irene). He is survived by his wife, Sharon and their three children, Pauline (and husband Mike), Matt (and wife Zoe), and Tom (and wife Tamara) and one grandson, Paul. Frank loved his family and always enjoyed sharing his encouragement, wisdom, and inimitable sense of humor with them.

Frank's contributions to the lives of many include his commitment to his career as an astronomer at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics), his ongoing participation in local classical orchestras (including the occasional odd instrument repair, such as that of the Jim Younger fiddle), and mentoring of many friends in any way he could. Frank's recent endeavors included attending and helping run the James Younger Gang club, attending and reciting poetry at the WWHA Roundup in Cheyenne, Wyoming, as well as writing and reading his poetry on many occasions.

Frank has often enjoyed and been seen as having contrasting traits including riding his Harley motorcycle to a string quartet practice or cleaning his antique gun collection prior to reading his latest poetry writings to gangster club members. His unique character and compassion for all of his friends and family will be missed.

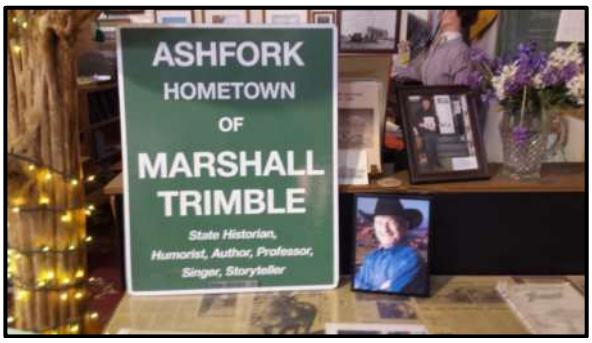
Book Signing

A book signing for WWHA member David Grasse's new book, *The True Story of Notorious Arizona Outlaw Augustine Chacón,* will take place on November 11, 2021 at the Palace of Art & Theater, 116 N.

Railroad Avenue, Willcox, Arizona. A review of this book will appear in the December issue of the WWHA *Journal.* David's previous book, *The Bisbee Massacre* (McFarland) was published in 2017.

Congratulations to Marshall Trimble

WWHA member Marshall Trimble, who serves as 2nd Vice-President on the WWHA Board of Directors, has recently been recognized in his home town of Ash Fork, Arizona, with a "History Walk Monument" and a display at the town's historical society. WWHA is proud to have among our many illustrious members Arizona's "Official State Historian." *Congrats Marsh!*



WWHA's "Fireside Videos" Series

Pam Potter's "Fireside Stories" video, "Growing Up As A McLaury Relative, The Winner Writes The History," was released Friday, October 1, 2021. The video was filmed in Three Rivers, Texas, at Kurt House's Mission Sin Caja. To view, go to: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z98xjl8bq4Y, or simply use your search engine to locate all the "Fireside Videos" at Wild West History Association on YouTube.

Being a relative of a Wild West character has its challenges no matter if you are related to a "good guy" or a "bad guy." As a McLaury, Pam had to overcome the challenge of family bias. She stated, "Proper methodology and historiography are essential when researching and writing about the Wild West, regardless of whether or not your bias comes from family, Hollywood, or agenda driven books. My goal has been to give people an understanding of who really were the McLaury brothers, apart from the Earps and the Clantons."

The next video in the "Fireside Videos" series is: *A Gunfighter's Weapon of Choice. My name is John Wesley Hardin,* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0FnSxwFKHg. This episode is an informal interview with WWHA member, Texas historian David George. It deals with a gunfighter's weapon of choice and the 1873 murder of DeWitt County, Texas, sheriff "Captain" Jack Helm in Albuquerque, Texas. Additionally, George addressed the involvement of shootists John Wesley Hardin and Jim "Creed" Taylor, taking place during the Sutton-Taylor Feud.

"Bugs on the Windshield" Series

The latest episode of the "Bugs on the Windshield" series is "TEXAS, by God!" The Genesis of a Fighting Man, Texas Ranger John B. Armstrong." The "Bugs" series is the work of WWHA members Eddie Lanham and Pam Potter. To view: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8qqklo-i9c.

Texas Ranger John B. Armstrong was the man who captured "the man-killer" John Wesley Hardin. “Texas, by God!” cried Hardin when he saw a Colt .45 pointed at him on a train in Florida. At the other end of the pistol stood Texas Ranger Armstrong. The *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail,* August 28, 1877, noted: “Armstrong wore a goatee at this time. As the court adjourned, Hardin’s wife, who had been in court, hastened up to him and grabbed him by the goatee and denounced him for having captured her husband. She showered him with abuse and said she was going to raise her son to kill him. Armstrong

said that that was one of the most painful experiences he ever had. Curiously, Jane Hardin's temper received some attention in the Montgomery Advertiser and Mail after the arrest which corroborates Armstrong's recollection of her pulling his goatee. Jane was interviewed holding her six-week-old baby, Callie Jane, in her arms. Mrs. Hardin has the bearing and converses like a person of much more than ordinary nerve and courage. She boasts of being able to shoot and manage a horse as well as most men, and says things will be made extremely lively for Armstrong and Duncan, the detective, and also for some others who had a hand in the capture of Hardin."

A New Docu-Drama on Billy the Kid

WWHA has received the following press release from Michael Anthony Giudicissi, Mankind Productions, www.mankindpro.com. We share it with our members and readers for their own inspection and resulting opinions of the new program. When the *Saddlebag* editor queried the writer/director, Giudicissi, he would not give any indication as to whether or not the docu-drama, as he calls it, will confirm all that is true and well known about Pat Garrett killing Billy the Kid, or if the production will endeavor to show "Brushy Bill" Roberts to have been William H. Bonney. For most historians the case has long since been settled and there is no "mystery" remaining to be unlocked, but Roberts keeps raising his head from beyond the grave and tries to say, "I was Billy the Kid!"

ALBUQUERQUE, NM: Storied Billy the Kid claimants "Brushy" Bill Roberts of Hico, TX and John Miller of Prescott, AZ will finally get their day in court to prove their claim to being legendary outlaw Billy the Kid. The trial, part of the upcoming docu-drama "The Final Trial of Billy the Kid" was filmed in the old federal courthouse inside of Amy Biehl High School in downtown Albuquerque next week. Based upon surviving historical evidence for the claims of Miller and Roberts, along with the generally accepted version of Bonney's death by Pat Garrett, the trial will once and for all determine which story stands up to a dispassionate examination of the facts. In an attempt to prove his identity, John Miller's remains were disinterred from the Arizona Pioneer's Rest Home in Prescott in the early 2000's. DNA analysis was inconclusive and many still believe Miller could have been The Kid, after escaping Garrett's bullets on 14, July 1881. The town of Hico, TX maintains that "Brushy" Bill Roberts was The Kid, and he in fact went in front of New Mexico Governor Thomas Mabry in 1950 asking for the pardon he says he was promised by Territorial Governor Lew Wallace in 1878. In a wild press attended show, Roberts was dismissed by Mabry who did not believe he was The Kid. Roberts died in Hico of a heart attack some 3 weeks later. Hico maintains its own Billy the Kid museum and Roberts sports not one, but two graves in the nearby county seat of Hamilton, TX for tourists to flock to.

The film, a project of writer/director Michael Anthony Giudicissi, began as a documentary in late 2020 featuring interviews with former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Billy the Kid historian and TV personality Steve Sederwall, various law enforcement officers, authors, and politicians. With the truth of whether Bonney was killed that fateful night in 1881 so shrouded in mystery, Giudicissi expanded the project to include a dramatized version of a real trial to examine which evidence remains for each of the 3 potential outcomes for Billy the Kid. Both Fort Sumner, NM and Hico, TX have significant stakes in the outcome of the trial as each of their versions of Billy the Kid (and his final resting place) draw tourists from all over the world. The film offers the promise of final, irrefutable evidence to prove once and for all what became of the legendary gunslinger. "The Final Trial of Billy the Kid" stars Thomas Fears (*Reaper, Sirona*) as Brushy Billy Roberts, Kelly Kidd (*Billy the Kid and the Lincoln County War, The Wilderness Road*) as Sheriff Pat Garrett, and Ryan Knudsen (*30 Seconds in Hell, The Book of Revelation*) as attorney Carvin Aldine.

The film, set for release in early 2022 on all major streaming platforms, is a joint production of Mankind Productions (*30 Seconds in Hell, Back to Billy*) and Dyor Productions. Giudicissi helms the project as writer and director while Royd McCargish steps in as Executive Producer. The project employs

some twenty five New Mexico cast and crew members. The film's first look theatrical trailer is available for viewing at: https://youtu.be/LP2sjNmBvvk.

Jose Chavez y Chavez Grave to be Marked

WWHA has received the following press release:

Albuquerque, NM: Billy the Kid's pal, Jose Chavez y Chavez, immortalized on screen in the *Young Guns* movie franchise by actor Lou Diamond Phillips, will finally get a marker on his lonely and desolate grave in remote Milagro, NM. Joshua Slatten, president of Billy the Kid's Historical Coalition, in conjunction with Cold West Detective Agency (Capitan, NM) have teamed up to locate the long-lost grave and provide a proper headstone and ceremony marking its placement.

Chavez, who acted as both an outlaw and a lawman at various times throughout his long and storied life, rode with William H. Bonney as part of the Lincoln County Regulators in 1878, during the infamous Lincoln County War. Chavez escaped a number of deadly situations, side by side with the Kid. Although sentenced to death for the murder of Gabriel Sandoval in 1893, that sentence was later commuted to life in prison. During a prison riot, Chavez saved a guard and, in return, was pardoned in 1909 by then Governor George Curry.

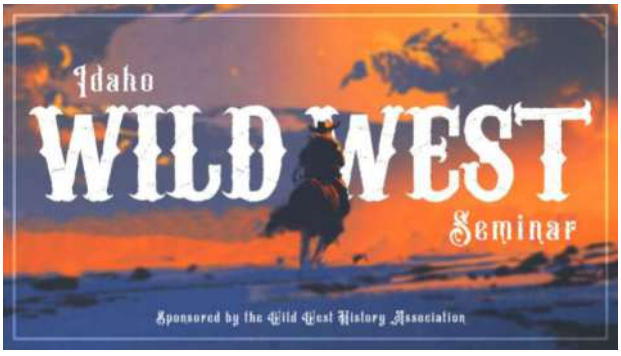
Chavez lived out the remainder of his life quietly in the small farming community of Milagro, where he died on July 17, 1923. He was interred in the village's modest cemetery. Over time, the property has changed hands, and the cemetery now sits on private property. Due to exhaustive research by Slatten, Chavez's grave has been located and with funds provided by the nonprofit Coalition, as well as numerous private donations, a headstone has been designed and will be set in place during a ceremony on a soon to be announced date.

The headstone is part of a larger effort to document and memorialize a number of sites of importance relating to the life of William H. Bonney, better known as Billy the Kid, before they are lost to history. Unmarked graves of a number of key participants in the Kid's life and of the Lincoln County War have been discovered and will get treatment similar to that of Chavez.

The ceremony will be private and the public will not be allowed to attend; however, video will be available on the Coalition's website at: https://billythekidshistoricalcoalition.com.

For further information, contact: Joshua Slatten at: so2jws@yahoo.com

Idaho's WWHA Regional Roundup is Scheduled



Idaho Wild West will hold a WWHA Regional Roundup on Saturday, March 12, 2022, at the museum in Murphy, Idaho starting at 9:00 a.m.

Those appearing on the program will include:

- Joe Hickey - Old West Weapons Display
- Bill Betenson - "Butch Cassidy and the Robbery of the Montpelier Bank"
- John Hendricks - "Roughing It - Arrow Wounds and Other 1800's Afflictions"
- John Hendricks - "Roughing It, Part II - Military Medicine in the 1800s"
- Mike Youngman - "Idaho Outlaws"
- Marie Clyne - "Women in the Wild West"
- Fort Boise Garrison- "Soldiering in the Old West"

Direct questions to WWHA member Bob Sobba at: rcsobba@gmail.com

WWHA Invades "The Town" By: *Louis Harrell*, WWHA Advisory Board Member

WWHA Board Member William I. "Bill" Koch invited the board of directors, some committee members, and their families to his ranch in Southern Colorado in September 2021. This ranch, appropriately named "The Town," is a large 1880s-era town containing more than 70 authentic buildings from that time period. They were acquired from many places in the western United States and are each filled with numerous historical artifacts. These artifacts include many different antiques, namely: guns, tintypes, artillery, office furnishings, clothing, and anything else to have been found in an 1880s town. Not only that, but there are many activities one can do at the ranch, such as horseback riding.

On the first day, my family and I checked-in to a two-story wooden house called "Four Gables." The house was originally purchased in Montana and contained three bedrooms and two bathrooms, all of which were decorated with contemporary furnishings, such as a large wooden stove, a claw-foot bathtub, and other homestead amenities. After catching our breath at the house, we took a walk around town. We visited many of the different buildings and enjoyed the large collection contained within each of them. Among these buildings were the gunsmith's shop, assay office, general store, and sheriff's office. At 6:00, we went to the "Dream Café" for cocktail hour and dinner, which was delicious beef, from Mr. Koch's own cattle, and superb salmon. Dessert was a root beer float. We ate at a large two-piece wooden table carved from a large tree which accommodated all 27 of us, plus a few other people, namely some of Mr. Koch's other friends and his curators. We returned to our house at 11:30 after a night of exceptional food.

The next morning, we returned to the "Dream Café" and ate breakfast made to order, although there was also a small buffet. After a short break, we began the main board meeting of the week; there we discussed the ongoing need for an advertising manager and how we could get extra revenue from advertising, as well as potentially finding further ways to publicize the WWHA *Journal*. After the meeting concluded, we had a great lunch made to order. Personally, I had a hamburger made from fresh, juicy beef originally from the ranch. We then went over to a group of small train cars, which perfectly fit our entire group. In this train, we rehearsed a short re-enactment scheduled for filming the following day. The film, which showed the arrest of John Wesley Hardin, was directed by WWHA board member Kurt House. Subsequently, we walked through the town once again and looked around the buildings we hadn't yet seen. At 6:00 p.m., we returned to the "café" once more for cocktail hour and dinner, a tasty chicken fried steak. After our dessert of chocolate bunt cake, we went to the saloon and listened to a three-piece band. During their performance, a few members of the board joined in and sang several songs themselves. In particular, Kurt House, Bill Koch, and my father, Madison Harrell, sang a few songs and performed as a chorus on others. Once again, we went home at 11:30 that night.

On the final day, we began a tour of the town personally led by Bill Koch and his chief curator, Natasha Khandekar. We were followed by a film crew Mr. Koch hired to make a documentary on "The Town." They also filmed our members giving short speeches about different subjects depending on the theme of the various buildings we visited. Archives Committeeman Bob Pulcipher gave a presentation on banks and the history of banking in the United States. Other presenters included: Roy Young and Pam Potter on the Earps and the "Gunfight at the OK Corral," Kurt House on John Wesley Hardin, Roy Young and Paul Marquez about Billy the Kid, and my mother, Donna Harrell, on the James-Younger Gang. We then went back to the train cars in full 1880s attire and filmed the reenactment of John Wesley Hardin's arrest in Florida. Bill Koch surprised us during the re-enactment by wearing John Wayne's costume that he wore in the movie *Big Jake*. We walked around town one last time and discovered a whole Chinatown

section just off to one side of the town, something we hadn't noticed before. At 6:00 p.m., we returned to the café for a final dinner, which consisted of a delectable Cornish Game Hen and Peach Cobbler. At the saloon, a five-piece band provided entertainment for the evening. During their performance, the WWHA's president, Jim Dunham, sang "Cool Water" by Marty Robbins and my father sang "Sixteen Tons" by Merle Travis. We went home at 12:20 a.m. that night after a most exciting and historic day.

Looking back on my time at Bill Koch's ranch, I believe it was an incredible place where I could finally get away from the monotony of normal, routine school days in favor of a fun place filled with history and experience the incredible amount of work done by Mr. Koch and Natasha on his massive collection. The things I noticed in his collection which I found most notable were the one and only tintype of Billy the Kid, the knife Billy carried the night of his death, the guns of many outlaws including those owned by the James-Younger Gang, the Earps, the Daltons, and John Wesley Hardin. Mr. Koch also has a howitzer, a Gatling gun, hundreds of pistols, rifles, and shotguns, hundreds of books in "The Town's" library, and the carpenter's bench on which Billy the Kid was placed following his death. The food was incredible and freshly made, the entertainment was exquisite, the collection was gigantic and awe-inspiring, and the housing was superb. All in all, I don't believe anyone will be forgetting their stay at Bill Koch's for a long time, if ever!

Congratulations to Erik Wright

WWHA member and *Journal* columnist Erik J. Wright of Paragould, Arkansas, has been awarded the Lola Homsher Research Grant funded by the Wyoming State Historical Society and an endowment from Lola Homsher. This grant will help fund Wright's on-the-ground research into the 1868 Bear River City Riot in Wyoming. *Congratulations Erik!*

An Adventure in "Ghouling" By *Chuck Parsons*

An exciting adventure allowed three WWHA members – Pam Potter, Chuck Parsons and Eddie Lanham to spend a good part of a day searching for the graves of two Wild West characters, two men who spent a good part of their life during the days of the Sutton-Taylor feud.

The trio – with Parsons at the wheel – began their adventure early Friday morning May 21, 2021 with the intent of locating, and possibly visiting, the grave of Joshua Robert "Brown" Bowen, legally hanged in 1878 for the controversial killing of Thomas Haldeman.

> Brown Bowen is charged with the murder of young Haldeman in this county some five years ago. It is reported that the young man Haldeman was drunk and asleep when Bowen shot him. He was indicted for murder, and at the February term of the District Court in 1873 his case was continued by the defense. He subsequently broke jail, and has been running at large ever since. It is expected that he will be tried at this term of court. *Galveston Daily News*, October 4, 1877 (shared by WWHA member Sharon Cunningham)

Our intent was noble, but we could not locate the final resting place of Brown Bowen, the brother-in-law of John Wesley Hardin.

Not wanting to leave the day in a mood of failure, our second endeavor was to visit the grave of Joseph Tumlinson, a member of the Sutton faction who worked against the Taylor clan. After a failed first attempt, as we drove slowly down Cornelius Lane we struck gold. Blocking our way was a white pickup as two people were examining an old tree for possible removal. We explained our purpose and fortuitously an elderly woman (in years, not ability) – Joanne Cornelius – was more than helpful in getting us to the motte of trees which surrounds Tumlinson's grave. About another mile and we were at our destination in what appeared to be a pasture; we had been warned in advance about fire ants and rattlesnakes.

Captain Joe Tumlinson (WWHA Files)

After some searching in the motte we saw it – the now leaning and partially sunken-in tombstone of Captain Joe Tumlinson. His stone is at an angle within the wire fence, partially broken, due to the possible actions of man and nature. Within the fenced-in cemetery were possibly five other stones, broken, probably all members of the Tumlinson family.

Joe Tumlinson's tombstone
(Courtesy of Eddie Lanham)

Joseph Tumlinson
Died - Nov. 23, 1874
Age 62 yrs.
9 mo's & 7 days

While searching, Ms. Cornelius had alerted the property owner who we were and our purpose. Young Lisa Von Roeder drove up to introduce herself and to visit. We discussed the possibility of cleaning a portion of the motte and erecting a Texas Ranger cross and new headstone so the cemetery will be easier to locate for future historians. The results of the day's adventures were meeting the remarkable Mrs. Cornelius and Lisa Von Roeder and locating the Tumlinson tombstone, even though we did not locate the elusive grave of Brown Bowen.

Plans for marking the grave of Joe Tumlinson are developing and an announcement of a marking ceremony will soon be made.

Tombstone Territory Rendezvous and WWHA Regional Roundup, Rousing Success

From New York to Washington State, Georgia to California, and most everywhere in between, fans of the Tombstone story, Cochise County, Southwest Arizona, and the Apache Indians, assembled in Tombstone October 20-24, 2021 for five full days of great history, fellowship, fun and food. The theme for 2021, was "Battleground Apacheria, Fierce Warriors Fight for Their Homes, Their Nations, Their Lives!" All speaking and performing events were held in historic Schieffelin Hall on Fremont Street.

This year's event was under the leadership of WWHA members Jean Smith and Ron Woggon along with historian Nancy Sosa. Some 70 people participated in the events, many of them WWHA members. A good number of new members for WWHA were recruited, paying their dues and receiving sample copies of the WWHA *Journal.* Alan Blanchette and Ron Woggon manned the registration table on behalf of WWHA and with Roy Young and Pam Potter gave a promotion of the association at the opening of Saturday's events.

Among the speakers were many WWHA members, including: Chuck Smith, Ron Woggon, Bob Palmquist, Mike Mihaljevich, Doug Hocking, Paul Johnson, Gil Storms, Garner Palenske, John Kowaleski, Garth Gould, Roy Young, and Donna Harrell. A skit, written by Pam Potter, based on the "Captain Hurst and the McLaury Mule D8 Incident" was performed by several WWHA members.

Among the highlights of WWHA's Regional Roundup Day was a commemoration of the 140th Anniversary of the "Gunfight at the OK Corral." It was chaired by Roy Young with Pam Potter and Paul Johnson answering questions pertaining to the McLaury brothers involvement in the street fight.

A terrific bus tour was conducted on Friday taking participants to Tumacacori Mission and old Tubac. On Saturday, Bill and Paula Jean Hunley hosted a wonderful luncheon at their hacienda.

Allen and Ron at Registration Table

Garner Palenske - Q&A Session

Garth Gould & Roy Young - Book Reviews Session

Bill Hunley at the annual luncheon behind Bird Cage

All TTR photos courtesy WWHA member Bob Block

Tumacacori Mission

Roy, Pam, and Paul - OK Corral Panel

Craig McEwan on C.S. Fly Photos

2020 Award Winners

Mike Mihaljevich - Most Informative Presentation

"Bird Cage Theatre: The Curtain Rises on a National Treasure"

Gary Mitrovich - Most Entertaining Presentation

"Gunfight at the Hollywood Corral"

Roy Young - Newest Discovery

"Newton Jasper Earp: Mystery Brother of the Fighting Earps

Why Did San Antonio's Most Famous Brothel Lose Its Historic Designation? Marshall Trimble Speaks....

Bri Kirkham, Texas Public Radio, Published June 10, 2021

The structure at 503 Urban Loop has boarded up windows as its future remains uncertain.

Behind a grid of downtown hotels sits a building now known as 503 Urban Loop.

It most recently served as Father Flanagan's Boys Town. Before that, it was the Carmelite Sisters Day Nursery. And before that it was Madam Fannie Porter's "female boarding house" — a brothel. [Some claim that] Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid of Wild West fame hid out there.

A photo of Fannie Porter believed to be taken in 1901 in San Antonio.

The business changed hands between other madams, too, when sex work was legally recognized by the city. It was built in 1883 for Aurelia Dashiell and has several Spanish Eclectic additions.

That was all before the two-story structure was bought [and the new owner] wants the former brothel and orphanage demolished and replaced with a residential high-rise.

In early May 2021, the structure was up for discussion in a Historic Design and Review Commission (HDRC) meeting. Several San Antonio-based organizations, including the Conservation Society and the Westside Preservation Alliance (WPA), spoke out to save the building.

"Part of the historic significance of 503 Urban Loop and the surrounding blocks is that they speak of a whole fabric of sociocultural and economic activities of working class labor, including that of Mexican American and African American women sex workers — and predominantly Euro-American madams," Donna Guerra, a member of the WPA, told TPR.

Luckily, for Guerra and other San Antonians who want to save the building, 503 Urban Loop was designated historic. And the city's Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) staff did not recommend demolition to HDRC.

But sometime between that meeting in early May and [June], the structure lost its historic designation. "After further researching the available records, we determined that the designation for 503 Urban Loop is likely an error that occurred about 30 years ago," wrote OHP Director Shanon Miller in a statement to TPR.

Documents intended to prove the property's historic worth apparently grouped it with the nearby Immaculate Heart of Mary complex. When this was brought up to OHP staffers, an ordinance tying the two properties together couldn't be found. "Given all of the information available, we did not feel it would be good practice to treat the property as a currently designated landmark," Miller said. This changes the review process, but the HDRC would still have to approve the new construction.

Advocates for the building's survival don't want new construction to completely replace the former brothel and orphanage....

Vincent Michael, executive director for the Conservation Society of San Antonio, said OHP has the evidence needed to prove 503 Urban Loop's historic impact. "It's sort of like a 30-year-old clerical error or something," he said. "But still, they have all the information that proves it's significant."

And HDRC does have the ability to request a "Finding of Historic Significance," according to Miller. Both the Westside Preservation Alliance and the Conservation Society want to see that request fulfilled.

While there are broken windows and garbage throughout the property — it appears to be structurally intact. "You're not seeing so much the 1883 body, but it's in there and, amazingly, the application from the owners to demolish it included very detailed drawings of what were the original walls," Michael said. "And to me, it's a classic, you know, half glass, half empty. They see it as 'It's almost gone.' As someone who studies historic architecture, I see a lot of it there."

There is no historic signage or marker outside the building today, and Michael thinks people don't know its story.

Fannie Porter was a sex worker who eventually became a madam at the turn of the 20th Century. "She lived in this house for four to five years," Michael said. [He continued] "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were part of the Hole in the Wall gang," he explained. "The Wild Bunch that were essentially Wild West outlaws — romanticized a little in the movies — but they famously used this (503 Urban Loop) as a hideaway, a place to gather together and before they split up. … They robbed banks, they robbed trains."

There are other details to the structure's history that are less known. There are more women — while less famous than Porter — who operated the same brothel. And Guerra with the Westside Preservation Alliance said that neighboring properties were socioeconomically connected to 503 Urban Loop.

Romana Ramos, for example, was a midwife at 315 Matamoros Street — Casa de Maternidad — during the same period. "We believe that it is no coincidence that 503 Urban Loop is just around the corner from Romana Ramos," Guerra said. "The needs of unplanned pregnancies of sex workers, and having a home for the infants and giving birth to them really starts to make sense when you look at the history of Barrio Laredito." ... Why then, has 503 Urban Loop survived for this long?

"When we think about the history of the Red-Light District, we overemphasize whiteness," Lilia Rosas, Ph.D, said.

The professor at the University of Texas at Austin's Department of Mexican American and Latina/o studies explained that people often want the history of sex workers to fit into a narrative of Wild West outlaws. "If we start to demystify it in the realm of erotica, we see people who are just making a living," Rosas said.

Similarly, Guerra said "famous people" shouldn't be the only ones included in history; ordinary people who make a difference in their communities should be included, too.

What's next?

Both Guerra and Michael said their organizations want to see the Finding of Historic Significance come to fruition.

While the current property owners said the cost to repair the entire existing structure would be too great, there was a possibility for partial demolition. Michael pointed to different opportunities that could be addressed with the additions on the original building. ... If it is saved, what could happen next? The official state historian of Arizona — who has ancestral ties to Texas — has some ideas.

"Fannie Porter was a respected, respected businesswoman. It's amazing that the building is still around. Her business should have been turned into a museum," said WWHA board member Marshall Trimble, who also writes for *True West* magazine.

The future of 503 Urban Loop is not yet known. And its history also seems to be hazy — or at least the significance of it. And that causes Rosas and others to wonder: "If Fannie Porter was historic before, why isn't she now?"

(David Martin Davies contributed to this story.)

THE GUN USED TO KILL BILLY THE KID ACHIEVES US$6 MILLION AT BONHAMS

Jessica Stanley and Kurt House

ESTABLISHES WORLD AUCTION RECORD FOR FIREARM

Pat Garrett's Colt Single Action Army Revolver used to Kill Billy the Kid
Sold for $6,030,313

Los Angeles – Lively bidding was seen on the phone, online, and in the sale room on Friday, August 27, 2021 as Bonhams sold the gun Pat Garrett used to kill Billy the Kid for $6,030,313, a world auction record for any firearm. It was estimated at $2-3 million. The firearm was the top lot in the single-owner sale *The Early West: The Collection of Jim and Theresa Earle*, which achieved a total of $12,387,124, selling 92% by lot and 99% by value.

The gun, a Colt Single Action Revolver owned by Sheriff Pat Garrett was used to kill Billy the Kid on July 14, 1881, at Pete Maxwell's Ranch. It stands as a relic of one of the most important and well-known stories of the Wild West. Now part of the American mythology, Garrett's friendship with the Kid, their mutual respect, and his subsequent hunt, capture, escape and death have become the stuff of legend.

Catherine Williamson, Bonhams Director of Books & Manuscripts, said: "This sale was a tribute to Jim and Theresa Earle and it was a tremendous privilege to bring their historic Western collection to auction. The top lot, Pat Garrett's gun that killed Billy the Kid, attracted attention from all around the world and lead to a world auction record for a firearm. This momentum continued and we saw determined bidding from clients that drove the sale as one of the most valuable private collections of Western memorabilia offered at auction."

Additional highlights:

Billy the Kid Whitney Double Barrel Hammer Shotgun taken from Deputy Bob Olinger and used to kill him during Billy the Kid's dramatic Lincoln County Courthouse escape on April 28, 1881. Sold for $978,313. John Selman's Colt Single Action Army Revolver used to shoot John Wesley Hardin at the Acme Saloon in El Paso, August 19, 1895. Sold for $858,313. John Wesley Hardin's Smith & Wesson Double Action "Frontier" Revolver carried when he was killed by John Selman. Sold for $625,313. Wild Bill Hickok's Springfield Trapdoor Rifle originally buried by his side at Deadwood, South Dakota on August 3, 1876. Sold for $475,313.

Jim and Theresa Earle:

Jim Earle (1932-2019) was born and raised in Jacksonville, TX, and attended Texas A&M University. He was a star athlete, a boxer and a track star, but also found the time to author a popular comic strip in the university paper, *Cadet Slouch*, that ran for nearly 30 years. He married Theresa Gatlin in 1957, earned a Ph.D. and returned to A&M to teach in the Engineering Design Graphics Department, later serving as Department Head. Jim and Theresa began their collection in 1973, buying heavily throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and rarely selling. Many of these guns have now been off the market for nearly 50 years, only seen in some cases on exhibition at the Texas

Ranger Museum in Waco, or other reputable institutions.

Both Jim and Theresa were early members of the Texas Gun Collectors Association, with Jim serving as president in 1984-85 and Theresa as secretary for many years. As avid collectors of Old West memorabilia, as well as historians, they realized the need for publication, or reprinting, of some western literature that was not readily available. Accordingly, the husband/wife team formed The Early West Publishing Company, that soon became Creative Publishing Co., in their home town of College Station, Texas.

As a farsighted action, the Earles deserve much credit for mentoring many young collectors and establishing rigorous standards for the authentication of artifacts of the Old West. Their beneficial influence on collectors is part of their lasting legacy and truly helpful to many of today's major collectors.

The final portion of the Earle Collection was held September 21 by Witherell's Auction Co., (witherells.com) of Sacramento, California and the online catalog features more biographical information on the Earles written by long-time friend and WWHA board member Kurt House.

The Bass Reeves Western History Conference

Submitted to WWHA *Saddlebag* Newsletter by: *Terry Alexander*

The Bass Reeves Western History Conference was held in Muskogee, Oklahoma on July 23rd and 24th 2021 at the Three Rivers Museum. Bass Reeves was a former slave who became a deputy U.S. marshal for Judge Isaac Parker in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Reeves had a reputation as a fearless lawman. He served as a federal marshal for thirty-two years out of the courts in Fort Smith, Paris, Texas, and Muskogee, Oklahoma, where he worked for the federal court under Marshal Leo Bennett. After Oklahoma became a state in 1907, he joined the Muskogee city police.

The day began with a tour of Fort Gibson; the old log fort was very impressive. Cantonment Gibson was established in 1824, At that time it was the far western expanse of the settled territory. It was named after Colonel George Gibson, who later became a General. The fort was positioned at the three forks of the Arkansas, Verdigris and Grand rivers south of the Osage Plateau.

Robert E. Lee, Zachary Taylor, and Jefferson Davis spent time at Fort Gibson, whether assigned to the post or staying over to rest before pushing on to a new assignment. Sam Houston, future President of Texas, had a trading post at the fort. His second wife, Talahina Houston, is buried in the Fort Gibson National Cemetery.

Upon returning to the museum, Pat Ragsdale gave a presentation about the Cherokee Lighthorse men and the marshal service. After the afternoon break, Winnie Cooper provided the night's entertainment at the museum while the guests dined on grilled burgers. After the meal, a trivia contest was held, and author T.C. Miller gave a presentation on the "Mustache." The final event of the evening was the viewing of the documentary "Indians, Outlaws, Marshals and The Hanging Judge."

Authors Art Burton, Wallace Moore, T.C. Miller and Vaunda Nelson were on hand to discuss the life of Bass Reeves and sell a few books. Vaunda won the Spur Award for best western storyteller in 2020, sponsored by the Western Writers of America for the book, *Let 'er Buck*.

The second day of the conference began with an interactive tour of the beat Bass Reeves walked as a Muskogee city policeman. The bus made several stops along the route and actors portraying people from Oklahoma's history told the passengers about the times in which they lived. Jonita Mullins as State Comby spoke about being the first female news reporter in Oklahoma, and Oscar Ray as Deputy Marshal Rufus Cannon spoke about the dangers in the Indian Nations. Next the Indian Territory Pistoliers provided entertainment, as they re-enacted the shootout at Prairie Grove School. In the shootout, the bad

guys lost and everyone then went to the Civic Center for a catered luncheon where Winnie Cooper again provided the entertainment.

After the meal, the keynote speaker award winning author Vaunda Micheauz Nelson spoke about Bass Reeves, the man and his time as a deputy marshal and working for Isaac Parker in Fort Smith. She also spoke about Reeves life in the Indian Nations prior to his career as a marshal. Vaunda has written several children's books. Her book *Bad News for Outlaws, The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves Deputy Marshal* was a finalist for the Spur award in 2010.

The next Bass Reeves Western History Conference is scheduled for July 22 & 23, 2022 at Muskogee's Three Rivers Museum.