

BUCKSKIN BULLETIN

THE WESTERNERS GATHER IN TOMBSTONE! THE TOWN TOO TOUGH TO DIE!



The Mescal Movie Studio was on the list of visited sites, where **Tombstone**, **The Quick and the Dead** (with Sharon Stone and Leo DiCaprio), **Dirty Dingus Magee**, **the Outlaw Josey Wales** and many other movies were filmed.

Photo by Gary Smith of the Cochise County Corral.



**DeLinda King,
Secretary/
Treasurer of WI
reports on the
recent
Westerners
International
Gather in
Tombstone**

Bonney wasn't quick enough on the draw this month. I am usurping her spot to offer my whimsical travel review of the 2023 Gather. Thanks go out to Doug Hocking, Sheriff of Cochise County Corral for additional information and pictures.

I hit the trail early, a woman alone, heading from Texas to one of the most dangerous towns in the Southwest – Tombstone, Arizona. The journey was long. I would arrive in Tombstone weary and unsure of my safety; after all, this was the place of legends - Wyatt Earp, Doc Holiday, and a host of others, infamous for their nefarious ways of seeking fame and fortune or hiding from the unique justice of the American West.

From the heat and dust of the Texas Plains, I headed for the somewhat familiar landscape of the New Mexico mountains. From there it seemed I entered a landscape only experienced in my dreams – mountains of boulders piled upon boulders, unusually shaped cacti that seemed overgrown and strange. It was as if this land must prove, with each mile, its strength, vitality, and willingness to test the grit of all who dared to cross its borders. As I traveled through the Mescalero Reservation, I marveled at the extraordinary highway graffiti placed to remind travelers of a past and a people who refuse to be forgotten. The grand otherworldliness of the area around White Sands Missile Range made me feel as though I was entering a part of the country, set apart by an invisible barrier, from which I would find it difficult to leave. Though truly out of my comfort zone, I was determined to reach a town, I would soon discover, felt as though it was located just south of the middle of nowhere.

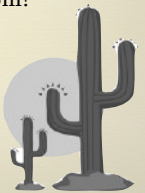
I arrived in Tombstone just before sunset. The streets are dry and dusty. Fortunately, my adorable Airbnb in the heart of the town put fears for my safety far from my thoughts. The boardwalks are occupied by people saturating themselves in history by wearing the clothing of another century. Storefronts right out of the 1800's, hawking their wares to tourists outfitted in T-shirts and shorts reminded me I had not time-traveled; however, horses, spurs, gunfights, and stagecoaches seem to instantly transport me to an era I have only experienced in books and movies.

Here, for a short time, a group of enthusiastic Westerners gathered to share their love for all things Old West and, perhaps, to secretly accumulate fuel for their dreams of cowboys and Indians. The Gather was hosted by the **Cochise County Corral** and the temporary headquarters were the historic and beautiful Shieffelin Hall, "the largest standing adobe structure still existent in the Southwest"; opera house, theater, and meeting place for citizens of Tombstone in the 1880's. The welcoming **Cochise Corral** provided maps and a full schedule of sightseeing and entertainment, along with informative talks on local history. From Shieffelin Hall, members of **Westerners International** corrals fanned out to visit the Crystal Palace Saloon, Big Nose Kate's, The Longhorn, and the Tombstone Western Heritage Museum. Corseted waitresses and polished bars reminded the Westerners of bygone occupations and entertainment, while good food and a seemingly endless variety of American West-themed merchandise sang siren songs to the wallet.

Bonney McDonald, Doug Hocking, and the notorious **Dillon brothers** from California even made the Board meeting an exciting event. And the many other members of **Westerners** who attended were a delight to meet. Walking through Boot Hill was a sobering experience as the memories of Western stories prompted me to stop and seriously think about the real heartaches and lives lost during those tumultuous times.

Primarily though, sharing tales and times with others who share a love of the American West was truly worth the time, money, and effort to get to the rendezvous point. I am greatly anticipating the next Gather. Full announcements will be coming later, but I will tell you that Sturgis is NOT the only fun place to go in South Dakota! "Bone up," as they say, on Calamity Jane, Custer, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and Buffalo Bill!

For more detailed information on the 2023 Gather, please read Sheriff Doug Hocking's review from the *Fremont St. Mail* reprinted in this issue of the **Buckskin Bulletin**.



Inside this Issue:

Greetings from DeLinda King
The Rendezvous & Gather
Home Ranch News
Corral News & Notices

pg. 2
pg. 3-4
pg. 5
pg. 6

The Mercantile
Tom Blasingame, Sr. by Jim Jennings
Book News and book review
Publications

pg. 7
pg. 8-10
pg. 11-13
pg. 13



LOTS TO SEE & DO IN TOMBSTONE!

THE GATHER by Doug Hocking

The Gather was held September 14 to 16, in Tombstone, Arizona, the Town Too Tough to Die (as opposed to Bisbee, the Town Too High to Care). We opened with a short talk on Cochise County's important place in history followed by talks on local outlaws, gunfights, gunfighters, and lawmen by Doug Hocking, Ron Woggon, and Jean Smith.

In the afternoon the Board met and discussed ideas on ways to improve communications including starting a speakers' bureau (a published list of Westerners willing to give presentations), and a mentor bureau of Westerners willing to assist corralists with planning.

We met in historic Schieffelin Hall built in 1881 as a theater with the oldest Masonic Lodge meeting rooms. Chris Douglas gave a tour of the lodge explaining what Freemasons are and showing off the jewels of the Lodge (think of the badges of office worn by British high mayors) created locally in 1881 from silver mined and refined in Tombstone. Heather Rose took us on a tour of nearby St. Paul's Episcopal Church. This adobe building dates to 1882 and is built of adobe with furnishings brought by ship around the Horn. In the evening, we repaired to historic Oriental Saloon where Doc Holiday and Wyatt Earp once ran faro games. The saloon is now a theater and its players reenacted some of the events from Tombstone's history.

On Friday many of us went on a tour of the historic Goodenough Mine descending into the depths of the earth under Allen Street continuing with the Trolley Tour of the town. In the afternoon, there was an opportunity to visit world famous Birdcage Theater and the Tombstone Rose Tree Museum as well as the Courthouse Museum, Epitaph, and the Arizona Rangers Museum. Some even made it to the Gunfighters' Museum.

In the evening we drove out to the Tombstone Monument Ranch for dinner and Bonnie MacDonald and Delinda King presented awards surprising Bob Spahle who didn't know he'd won for his poetry.

On Saturday, we drove to Mescal Movie Studio where the movies Tombstone, Outlaw Josie Wales, Judge Roy Bean, Dirty Dingus Magee, the Quick and the Dead, and many others were filmed. We were having so much fun that the one-hour tour became a three-hour-tour.



Photos this page by Ross Dillon.





Brian Dervin Dillon of the Los Angeles Corral receives his 10th Coke Wood Award (2nd Place) for Cherokee Miners on the Kern River, (2022).



Doug Hocking of the Tombstone Corral receives the Coke Wood Award (1st Place) for The High Five Gang and the Death of Shoot 'em up Dick (2022).



Bob Spahle of the Cochise County Corral receives his Fred Olds Award for Cowboy Poetry (2nd Place) for Christmas Wish (2022).

Ellen Rosher receives a gift basket assembled by Karen Peitsmeyer of Cochise County Corral.



Ed Bathke of the Jedediah Smith Corral receives the Heads Up Award for the Best Program, 3rd place. (2022).

Brian Dervin Dillon for the Garden of the Sun Corral (Fresno) receives his Phillip A. Danielson award (2nd Place) for Best Presentation: Old West Shooting Irons, 1542-1923 (2022).



Gary Turner of the Los Angeles Corral receives his 1st Place Co-Founders Best Book Award for Brand Book

Calvin Larive of the Jedediah Smith Corral receives the award for Best Small Corral (2022).



All award photos are by Gary Smith of the Cochise County Corral. Presenters are DeLinda King and Dr. Bonney McDonald.

MORE NEWS FROM THE **HOME RANCH**

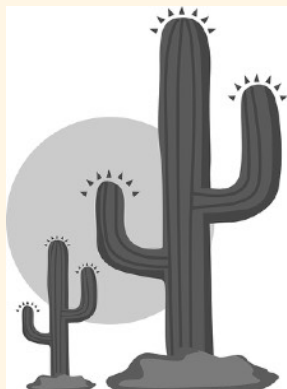


The Dillon Gang with the Home Ranch Girls, Tombstone, AZ, day one. L-R: Dave Dillon, Ross Dillon, Brian Dillon, Bonney MacDonald, DeLinda King.



Movie Set Interior: Brian Dillon: "A shot for me and a saucer of milk for my furry friend, Bartender. . . " or, "any bar with a black cat can't be all bad. . ."

Photo by Ross Dillon



to the **Cochise County Corral**

Much Obligated!

from **Westerners International**

for the fine job in hosting the 2023 Gather

REMINDER TO ALL SHERIFFS AND MEMBERS!

Sheriffs: Please remember to forward the Buckskin Bulletin to all of your corral or posse members. And please keep us up to date on your contact information – we want to stay in touch and we always appreciate all of your updates, newsletters, and publications!

All Members: Please be sure that your corral and posse sheriffs have your current email address so they can forward the Buckskin Bulletin to you! We want to be sure you're in the loop!

The Buckskin Bulletin comes out four times a year. It's emailed to all sheriffs so that they can email it to their posse or corral members. The current Bulletin is also always available on the front page of the Westerners website; back issues are accessible on the website through the Buckskin Bulletin link.



CORRAL NEWS



CALL FOR CORRAL AND POSSE UPDATES

Please send us your notices and announcements on upcoming or past corral and posse programs and events. We love to spread the good news to other corrals and posses about the activities of their fellow Westerners!

CORRAL HIGHLIGHTS

On Thursday, October 5, at 7 p.m., The **Cochise County Corral** hosted renowned local historian, George Whitehead, regarding the History of the Fulton's FF Ranch in Texas Canyon. The wealthy Fultons amassed a fantastic collection of Native American art now housed in the Amerind Museum and Conference Center. Amerind is located in Cochise County, Arizona, one-mile south of I-10, an hour east of Tucson, between Benson and Willcox.

The Home Ranch has recently communicated with our British friends at the **British Westerners Association**. This large and busy group has an active Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/146739075368670>. Under the guidance of **Mark Firth**, the Facebook page has meeting times and places posted along with great photos of activities.





Western Authors Wanted



Tombstone Festival of Western Books

Friday, March 8, 2024

At Historic 1881 Schieffelin Hall

on Fremont Street in Tombstone

Interested Western authors please contact Doug Hocking at InkSlinger@CochiseCountyCorral.org or visit www.CochiseCountyCorral.org for details. Authors are invited to meet their public, sign & sell their books. Major authors and celebrities will be there!



TOMBSTONE FESTIVAL OF WESTERN BOOKS

FRIDAY MARCH 8, 2024



SCHIEFFELIN HALL

from the Westerner International Mercantile



Look what's new!

New items, left

- Five Panel Twill Cap, adjustable.....\$25.00
- 7x9" Rawhide Portfolio with stamped logo.....\$38.00
- Notepads w/Western logo..... \$4.00

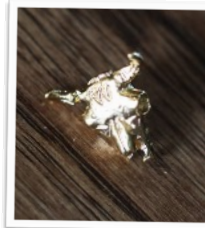
Items, right & below

- Lapel pin with pin clasp \$13.00
- "Past Sheriff" lapel pin \$13.00
- Bolo Tie with leather band \$25.00
- Lucite paper weight \$17.00
- T-Shirts/round or v-neck \$25.00
- Polo Shirt \$45.00
- Bandanas \$7.00
- Decal 3" \$4.00
- Cap -adjustable size..... \$30.00

(Price includes free shipping!)
shirt sizes available in small,
medium, large and extra large

If you would like to place an order or send payment, contact:
Delinda King, WI Secretary,
Westerners International, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum,
2503 4th Ave., Canyon, TX 79015

You can also email her at
dlking1@buffs.wtamu.edu or call the office at
806-651-5247



lapel pin



past sheriff's pin pin



bolo tie



lucite paper weight



tee shirt



white v-neck



3" Decals



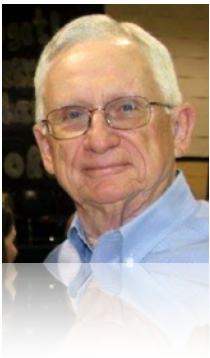
Westerner cap



Polo shirt

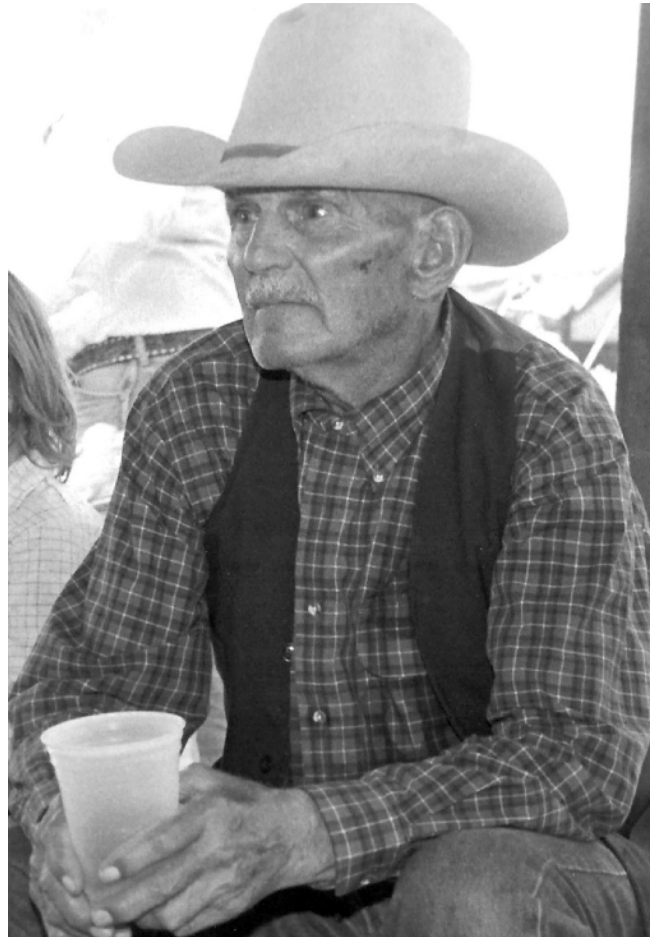


white bandana



Jim Jennings grew up in Sweetwater, Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University. Jim and his wife Mavis reside in Amarillo, Texas. He is a member of the Palo Duro Corral and serves the Corral as Keeper of the Chips. Jim is a renowned western writer and a long-time western historian. Jim is retired as Executive Director of Publications for the American Quarter Horse Association and continues to write and is currently writing the scripts for Red Steagall's television show "Somewhere West of Wall Street."

Thomas Everett Blasingame Sr. was a cowboy



Thomas Everett Blasingame Sr. was a cowboy. Unlike many of the subjects I've written about in this column, Tom was never involved in a gunfight with cattle rustlers, and he never fought Indians, but he was a part of the West that we only read about now. Tom was born February 12, 1898, in Ellis County, Texas, near Waxahachie. However, when he was about three years old, his family moved to Mangum, Oklahoma, which was still Indian Territory and all open country. All the ranchers, including the Blasingames, ran their cattle together, and, like had been done for the last 50 years, each ranch made sure their calves were branded correctly at the annual roundup.

Tom helped his dad from the time he could sit a horse, but in an interview back in 1983, Tom said that he was about seven or eight when he got his first job working for someone other than his father. During the summers, for two or three years, he went with a cow trader who traveled through the country horseback buying cattle here and there until he got 30 to 40

head put together. Then, he and Tom would drive them into the closest town with a railroad and ship them to Kansas City. When those were shipped, they would make another drive and do the same thing until summer was over.

Tom said that he went to a country school two or three winters during this time, but he quit because he just couldn't study. He would look out the window and see people going by in covered wagons, or someone moving some cattle, and he wanted to be out there. The teacher would walk by his desk and tell him to get to studying, but he just wasn't interested. He knew the importance of an education; he just couldn't pay attention. However, if a cowboy riding a

continued on next page

good horse came by, he would watch him like a hawk, listening to every word the cowboy said, watching everything he did.

Tom stayed in school long enough to learn how to read and write, but then he was gone.

After he quit school, he helped some of the neighbors move cattle, and he worked putting up hay and building fences, just whatever needed doing. He also started some colts. He wanted to become a bronc rider so he could get a job on one of the big ranches.

Tom left home when he was 18 and went to the JA Ranch, down in the bottom of Palo Duro Canyon, southeast of Amarillo. At that time, the JA ran 25,000 mother cows and had five chuckwagons out – four for the cowboys, with about 10 men at each wagon, and one for the fencing gang. They put all the new hands on the fencing wagon in the beginning, so the boss could see what kind of workers they were, and that's

where Tom went first. But after about six months, he was able to move to the wagon with the cowboys.

The JA's raised all their horses and would break about 40 4-year-olds every spring. Tom said that one time he rode eight 4-year-old broncs out of the round pen in one day, one right after another, and never got thrown, even though some of the other cowboys would throw their hat or a tow sack under Tom's horse just to get him to buck.

After a couple of years, Tom left the JA and headed west to Arizona. He said he just wanted to see some wilder country. He landed first at the Double Circles, which ran 50,000 mother cows. There were 18 cowboys on that ranch, and they worked year-round, camped out on the range. The country was so rough they couldn't get a chuckwagon in so they packed in the food and cooking outfit, and slept on the ground in their tepees, winter and summer.

continued on next page



Tom said that during the winter, it was cold in the tepees at night, but after you had crawled into your bedroll and gotten it warm, that it was okay.

When they were headed to one of the remote areas of the ranch, they would take six mules to pack what they called the kitchen on, and each of the cowboys would take six horses out of their string of 18, plus a bed mule to pack their tepee and bedroll on. He said that they would ride those first six horses for 30 days. By the end of that first month, the horses' shoes would be worn really thin from all the rocks, and their legs and feet would be so skinned up that they would turn them out and get six more. After another 30 days, they would turn those six out and get the last six. Thirty days later, they would get the first bunch up again. He said that by that time, the first bunch would be healed up and ready to go.

Tom spent about 10 years in Arizona. In addition to the Double Circles, he also worked for the Cross S's and the 5 L's, and he said that probably the most important thing he learned out there was how to handle wild cattle. A lot of them were big Longhorn-type cattle and they were always on the fight, looking for something to hook. He said that when they were roping them, they tied hard and fast, and that those big steers would turn on you and try to kill your horse.

The Double Circles would make two roundups a day, and change horses four or five times a day. When they would start to the railroad with a big herd, they would have to guard the cattle for about five nights, and everyone took turns standing guard. There was no such thing as two crews.

Although the cowboys worked year-round, the Double Circles would let them off two or three days on the Fourth of July and about the same number of days for Christmas. Christmas was looked forward to because somebody would always have a big dance that went on for several days. People would come from a hundred miles on horseback – women, children and all. They would stay about a week, dancing all night and sleeping or playing games during the day.

Tom left the Double Circles after a couple of years, and worked on some of the other Arizona ranches as well as some in New Mexico and in California. He wanted to work for a lot of different places because that was the only way a poor man could see the country. He said that back then, cowpunchers were always pretty restless and that you could just throw your saddle over the fence and go to work for the next outfit.

Tom came back to Texas in 1927, and went to work for what was called the Lower Matadors, which was the division of the Matador Ranch that was

located in Motley County near Roaring Springs, Texas.

After about a year, they sent Tom to the Upper Matadors, which was near Channing, in the Texas Panhandle, to run the wagon. To run the wagon, or become wagon boss, meant that you would be foreman of the ranch. Tom ran the wagon there for several years, but in 1933, he got married and there was no place for a cowboy to keep a wife on the ranch, so he left and went back to work for the JA.

Tom met his wife, Eleanor, in 1932, at a Fourth of July dance that the JA Ranch had put on. He was working for the Matador, but had gone to that dance. Eleanor's family had a ranch next to the JA, and they, like everyone else in the area, came to the dance. After he and Eleanor married, they lived at what was called the Cherokee Camp on the JA. Tom and Eleanor had two kids, and after they started school, Eleanor moved into Claude, the nearest town, so the kids could attend school there. However, during the summers, the whole family moved back to the ranch. During the winter, the family would come to the ranch on weekends, or Tom would go into town.

The Cherokee Camp had no electricity nor telephone, but Tom read in the evenings with the light from a coal oil lamp. He read books on frontier history, and he enjoyed the paperback westerns, but he also read the Bible a lot too, with the Book of Proverbs being the most interesting to him because there was so much good advice in it. He decided that if he had concentrated on that when he was young, he might have been a lot better off, but in those days, he didn't pay much attention to the Bible.

He also had a battery-operated transistor radio at his cabin at Cherokee and he listened to the Texas Rangers baseball games as often as he could.

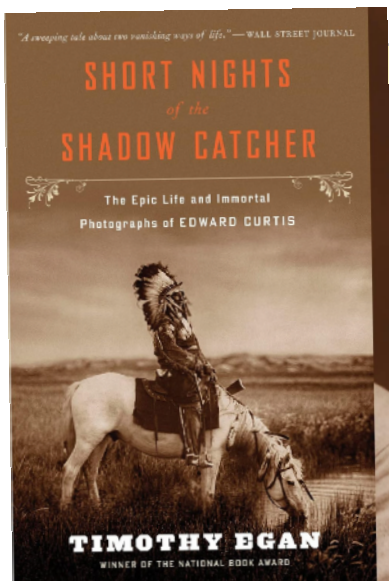
Tom died December 27, 1989. He was 91 years old. Until his death, Tom continued to work eight to 10 hours a day there on the ranch. Just the week before, he had been out in near-zero temperatures, chopping ice so the cattle could drink.

Tom was all alone the day he died, out in the middle of one of the big JA pastures. He probably realized he was in trouble, so he dismounted and laid down on the grass alongside his horse. He placed his hat over his face, crossed his arms over his chest and died. Tom cowboied for 73 years and had a wonderful life.



BOOK NEWS

TO WESTERNERS OF INTEREST



Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher: The Epic Life and Immortal Photographs of Edward Curtis by Timothy Egan paperback \$11.59 Amazon

Edward Curtis was charismatic, handsome, a passionate mountaineer, and a famous portrait photographer, the Annie Leibovitz of his time. He moved in rarefied circles, a friend to presidents, vaudeville stars, leading thinkers. But when he was thirty-two years old, in 1900, he gave it all up to pursue his Great Idea: to capture on film the continent's original inhabitants before the old ways disappeared.

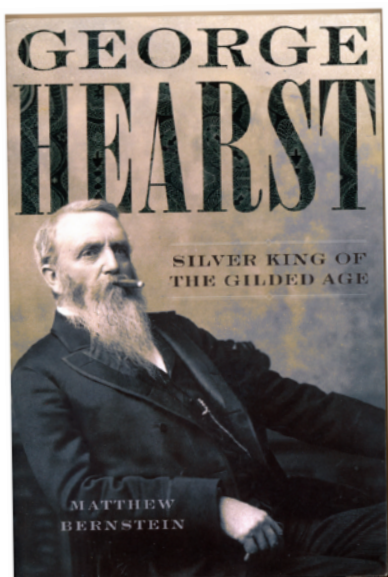
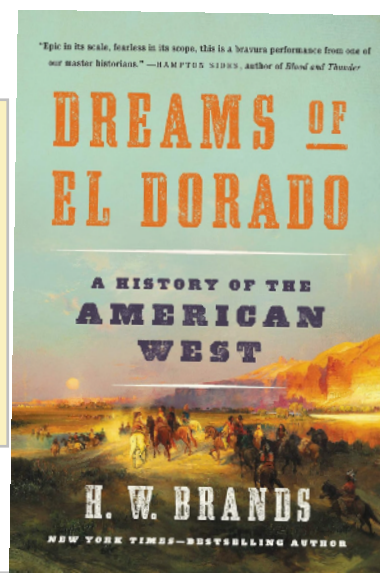
Curtis spent the next three decades documenting the stories and rituals of more than eighty North American tribes.

Thanks to **Lindsey Reed Dominguez** of the **Santa Barbara Corral** for the recommendation.

Dreams of El Dorado: A History of the American West

by H. W. Brands (Author) price \$12.00 hardcover, Amazon

"Epic in its scale, fearless in its scope" (Hampton Sides), this masterfully told account of the American West from a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist sets a new standard as it sweeps from the California Gold Rush and beyond. In *Dreams of El Dorado*, H. W. Brands tells the thrilling, panoramic story of the settling of the American West. He takes us from John Jacob Astor's fur trading outpost in Oregon to the Texas Revolution, from the California gold rush to the Oklahoma land rush.



George Hearst, Silver King of the Gilded Age,

by Matthew Bernstein

258 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, University of Oklahoma Press, 2021. Hardcover: \$55.00, Softbound: \$23.74.

Author **Matthew Bernstein** is a member of the **Los Angeles Corral**.

Check out the book review by **Dr. Brian Dillon** on the next page.

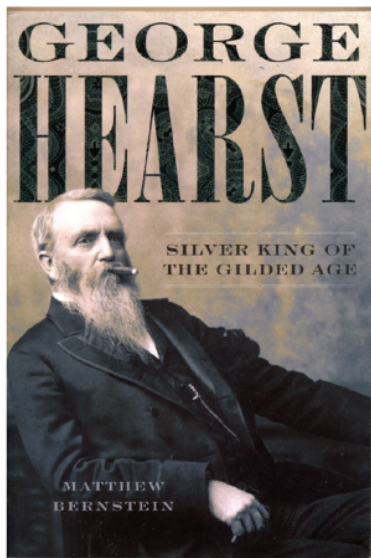
If you've read a particularly fascinating book that you think might be of interest to other Westerners, please share it with your Buckskin Bulletin inkslinger at: kenneth.pirtle@me.com so I can add it to the Book News section of the next BB.

George Hearst, Silver King of the Gilded Age, by Matthew Bernstein.

258 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, University of

Oklahoma Press, 2021.

Hardcover: \$55.00, Softbound: \$23.74.



George Hearst (1820-1891), once upon a time amongst the most famous of all Californians, has faded into obscurity over the past century. This is not because present-day Americans now consider him unimportant, but simply because he has been overshadowed by his larger-than-life offspring, William Randolph (W.R. or "Willie") Hearst (1863-1951). Willie persuaded Americans to go to war with Spain in 1898 not for altruistic reasons, but simply to boost circulation of his rabble-rousing newspapers. George was even, to a lesser extent,

over-shadowed by his much-younger widow Phoebe Apperson Hearst (1842-1919) who out-lived him by almost three decades. Phoebe became more famous for *spending* the Hearst millions than George was for *earning* them. Beloved by feminist her-storyans as a benefactress of worthy causes, including women's rights, many male academics (myself included) consider Phoebe the *Fairy Godmother* of California higher education. Matthew Bernstein's new biography of Willie Hearst's *father* and Phoebe's *husband* restores George Hearst to his rightful place amongst the most important movers and shakers of 19th Century California. It will be the standard by which all other biographies of Hearst's peers will be judged for years to come. George Hearst comes alive, warts and all, as a three-dimensional human being who operated in many different social, economic, political, and even scientific circles. Even those intimately familiar with the Hearst dynasty, or who think there is nothing new that could be written about George Hearst, will learn a great many new things from Matthew Bernstein's outstanding book. The new biography reveals just how much of a polymath Hearst was. He derived great wealth not just from gold, but from silver, lead, and copper. This was almost always through his trademark "hands on" approach as an active participant wherever mineral wealth might come out of the ground, instead of simply investing in the work of others like so many bloodless bankers back East. Like the blind men and the elephant, George Hearst was many different things to many different people over his long and unique life. As Matthew Bernstein makes abundantly clear, first and foremost Hearst was essentially self-taught in all of his diverse specializations. not in fact a genius geologist, he nevertheless had the very rare ability of "reading" the landscape, and visualizing in his mind's eye what lay under it. He also was an immensely talented self-taught engineer, who could imagine and more often than not plan the best and most economical way of getting the ore out of the ground, determine or design the most efficient machinery needed to process it, how to get that machinery from the nearest outpost of civilization to the back of beyond where the mineral wealth lay, even extending to laying out access roads when necessary. Where George Hearst was indisputably a genius was in

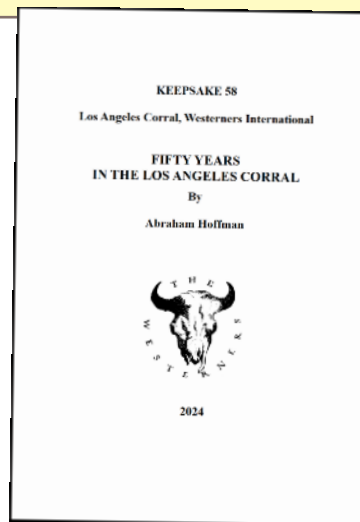
mining finance. He was willing to take chances few others were, and often went where others feared to tread, taking his seed money with him, both underground and above. Hearst's business acumen was driven by his fascination with mining and with mineral extraction. Politics for George Hearst was an after-thought, late in life, as if he and his old prospector buddies had drawn straws to determine what they should do when they got too old and too tired to stand in freezing water up to their knees panning gold. If some drew the ranching straw, and others the farming one, most simply went "back East" to wherever they had come from, and were content to rock on the porch and tell the less adventurous younger generation what they had done so long ago way out west in California. No rocking chair for George Hearst. He may have drawn the political straw by accident, but welcomed it as a useful distraction from his ongoing development of mines, mining, and support industries not just in the California he now represented in the U.S. Senate, but all over his beloved West. From start to finish I was captivated by the results of Bernstein's scrupulous research and his lively writing style. I must also confess that I opened the new George Hearst biography predisposed to like and admire its protagonist, for very personal reasons. My own great-great-grandfather came to California as a miner in 1850, the same year George Hearst did. The two may have crossed paths in the Mother Lode while "seeing the elephant" (*aka* seeking gold). Neither one "struck it rich" in California despite trying their luck in a great many different river drainages during the next six or seven years. Both eventually had to admit that that they had "been skunked" and went back East to the families they had left behind. And here George Hearst and my great-great-granddad once again serendipitously charted parallel paths through life. After a short exile back home Hearst realized that he would never be content as a farmer, and that his future would always lie with mines and mining way out west. He was proved right when he rode the crest of the wave of the Comstock Silver Strike in Utah Territory's westernmost region, Nevada, beginning in 1859. All of the luck that had previously eluded him in the California gold fields now came his way with Nevada silver. Hearst married his much younger cousin Phoebe after convincing her that the West was more attractive than their native Missouri. Meanwhile, George Hearst's contemporary, my own great-great-granddad, had also wooed and won a bride in the American midwest. From his earliest days in the mother lode he had kept in the front right pocket of his Levi bluejeans his "poke," his good luck talisman, a small buckskin bag filled with California placer gold. When he got married, he had it melted down and his wedding ring was cast from that same gold that he had panned in the Mother Lode. Like George Hearst, he took his bride back to California, and again like George, started a California family. Hearst stayed in the mining business, following the newest excitement wherever it might take him, not just in California and Nevada, but also in Arizona, the Dakotas, anywhere in the Western states and territories that mineral wealth beckoned. My own family stayed put in Sausalito, California, where my grandmother eventually played her violin at dances hosted by George's son Willie, who lived just up the hill. Five generations after the Gold Rush, the Hearst family retains many millions of dollars whose seed money was great-great-grandfather George's 1859 silver bonanza riches. But I have my great-great-granddad's wedding ring made of 1850s California placer gold, and wouldn't trade it for all the Hearst treasure. In addition to the parallel paths my earliest California ancestor and George Hearst took 173 years ago, my family subsequently owed quite a bit to old George. In 1941 my father was on the U.C. Berkeley rifle team (yes, Berkeley used to sponsor small bore rifle competitions) and Dad's practice range was on the ground floor of *Hearst Gym*, next to Bancroft Avenue. Thirty-one years later, in 1972, when I took my one and only U.C. Berkeley P.E. class, I practiced fencing in the

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room upstairs from the old, now-disused rifle range in that self-same *Hearst Gym*. If Phoebe donated the money for the building, it must be remembered that she didn't earn one red cent of it: it was all George's. Across campus was the Hearst School of Mines, a bequest quite a bit closer to George Hearst's heart, where generations of geologists specializing in hard-rock mining, and then later those looking for black gold, petroleum, learned the tricks of the trade. Some of its graduates were friends of mine, both in California and farther afield. My own Ph.D. degree in Anthropology at Berkeley, 7 years after I fenced in Hearst Gym, was the result of yet another tangible product of George Hearst's wealth and his widow's munificence. In 1901, a decade after husband George's death, Phoebe not only set the brand-new field of anthropology on its unique path, but bankrolled it as well. The University of California Anthropology Department, under its resident genius A.L. Kroeber, was financially supported almost exclusively by Phoebe Apperson ("Moneybags") Hearst, who had a soft spot not only for California Indians, but especially for Kroeber. U.C. Anthropology was the second such department ever founded in America. Kroeber was a product of the first department (at Columbia University) and its founder Franz Boas' very first Ph.D student. So, had not George Hearst left all of his money to Phoebe, and had not Phoebe been committed to California Anthropology, I might never have become an archaeologist. Most of the thousands of

people who annually visit Hearst Castle, that monument to W.R. Hearst's ostentation, seldom stop to wonder where he got the money for such an orgy of excess. They know (or at least suspect) that Willie didn't earn it all himself. Tour guides relate that most of the lucre came to him via his mother, as if by magic. But lurking just below the conceptual horizon at San Simeon, at least up until now, was Phoebe's husband, a shadowy, unknowable, yet all-powerful Oz-like figure. George's financial accomplishments were obscured by metaphorical curtains drawn closed as early as 1891, long before his son Willie embarked upon the megalomaniacal building, buying, and collecting spree so obvious at San Simeon. But now Matthew Bernstein's very readable biography of George Hearst pulls back those curtains, and Hearst the elder regains his rightful place in California's pantheon of historically significant people. Compared to some of his contemporaries like Leland Stanford, and to his own son Willie, George Hearst, thanks to Matthew Bernstein, comes across as a likable, sympathetic, and absolutely unique character. His remarkable success was entirely the product of his own energy and intelligence, and many of us still benefit from both. We are grateful to George Hearst, and thank Matthew Bernstein for his excellent new book. Highly recommended. Review by Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.

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the next L.A. Corral Keepsake, due out on January 1, 2024



the next Los Angeles Corral Branding Iron, with a lead article by Brian Dillon. Due out on December 1, 2023.



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