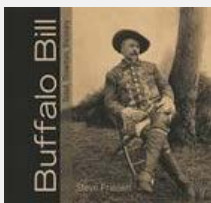


Buffalo Bill: Scout, Showman, Visionary

Submitted by jainlayconley on 1-10-2011 09:35 AM



Author: Steve Friesen

Publishing: Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, Inc., 2010. Black and white photos, index, endnotes. ix+165 pages. 8 ½" x 9". \$22.95 paperback.

Reviewer: Linda Wommack

Buffalo Bill gave the Old West more exposure than anyone who actually scouted, tracked, and advanced the West of the nineteenth century. Over the years, books about the great scout and greater showman have been rolling off modern presses like stampeding bison. Most of these volumes do manage to offer something new on the life and times of this colorful character. *Buffalo Bill: Scout, Showman, Visionary*, the latest entry from Steve Friesen, the director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave in Golden, Colorado, is a welcome addition. Friesen's book is packed with the stuff that legends are made of, based as it is on the extensive collection of personal effects, documents, correspondence, and thousands of artifacts housed at the museum.

William F. Cody was an American celebrity of the first order, and interest in him seems to be as lasting as his vision of the Wild West—the era he portrayed so vividly, if not always realistically, in his traveling show of that name; but such is show business, as well as the genius of Cody. As America's first worldwide celebrity, Cody took his Wild West all over America and to Europe, often for years at a time. The ever-changing show remained fresh for eager audiences for an amazing twenty-five years. In these 160 pages, Friesen chronicles Cody's life from his early childhood, through his years as a scout on the Great Plains, to his career as a master showman as Buffalo Bill.

As the author is the director of a museum devoted to Buffalo Bill, many of the artifacts and photographs highlighted in the book are from its collection. As expected, the book contains many photographs. And a treasury of images they are. This is where the book comes into its own. The captions and text add context to Cody's life story. For it is in Friesen's knowledge of these images and documents that the reader gains much insight into Cody. In his capacity at the museum, Friesen has worked with experts from all over the world, collecting, verifying, and documenting authentic artifacts and personal items relating to the legendary William F. Cody. Clearly William Cody made his mark as both a scout and a showman but, as the title of the book suggests, he was also a true visionary.

A fresh new perspective on the life and times of William F. Cody, Friesen's work sets this book apart from the many works on the life of Cody.

Reviewer Info:

Linda Wommack, a Colorado native, has authored six books on Colorado history. She writes for local publications as well as a monthly column in the national *Wild West* magazine, has been a contributing editor for *True West* magazine for fifteen years, and is a staff writer for Arizona's oldest continuing

newspaper, *The Tombstone Epitaph*, since 1994.

Steve Friesen is Director of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave near Denver, Colorado, and author of *Buffalo Bill: Scout, Showman, Visionary*. François Chladiuk is a collector and owner of the Western Shop in Brussels, Belgium. Walter Littlemoon (Lakota) is a son of participants in the 1935 Brussels International Exposition; his family's artifacts are featured in this volume. Start by marking "Buffalo Bill: Scout, Showman, Visionary" as Want to Read: Want to Read savingâ€¦| Want to Read. It was through those brilliant efforts that Cody the man became Buffalo Bill the celebrity and, eventually, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody was America's first celebrity. He lived during a time of great geographic and technological expansion, a time when American mass media became dominant. Cody was there at every step, the right person at the right place at the right time. It was through those brilliant efforts that Cody the man became Buffalo Bill the celebrity and, eventually, Buffalo Bill the legend. *Buffalo Bill: Scout, Showman, Visionary* stands apart from other historical tributes to Buff... Paul Frenzeny's *The Scout*, depicts a young W.F. Cody on horseback with a smoking rifle and brown hair. It was one of the images that helped to create the legend of Buffalo Bill. Lot 268: A 1908 depiction of the legendary performer by an unknown artist. A gray-haired Cody appears in *Col. W.F. Cody / "Buffalo Bill,"* a 1908 poster by an unknown artist. This classic image shows the consummate showman late in his career, but still sitting tall in his saddle and doffing his Stetson with one hand to welcome the viewer. Lot 266: A poster celebrating Cody's accomplishments promoted his 1905 visit to Fr