

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 5, 1952

Tour of Buffalo Bill Country

The Peninsula Diary today and for the next couple of weeks should have a change in name, for we are motoring through the northern and eastern states on our way to Boston and New York. We reached Nevada by way of Donner Pass and Colfax and traveled through the great, flat cattle country where most everyone we saw, except our fellow tourists, were in western clothes making ready for the annual fair. Elko was the wild and woolly West and thronged with a gay, picturesque crowd.

In Salt Lake City we were impressed with a hospitable gesture which Monterey could well adopt. All historical places and the American Automobile Association offices were marked: "Reserved for Out of State Cars," and 30-minute parking was permitted.

We cut through a corner of Idaho, beautiful and green with much running water. Wyoming we found a land of plains and some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the country. Our destination was of course, Yellowstone National Park. This great park, which was established March 1, 1872, is now the largest and best known of all the national parks.

The first white man known to enter Wyoming was John Custer, a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. In 1807 he entered the northwestern corner of the state now occupied by the park. Wyoming was included in one of the greatest real estate transactions in the history of the world, the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The state's name is derived from an Indian word meaning big plains. Organized as a territory in 1869, Wyoming was admitted to the Union as the 44th state in 1890. Wyoming, when still a territory, granted equal suffrage to women in 1869, the first act of its kind in American history.

It was a pleasant experience to spend a night in the hunting lodge said to have been built by Buffalo Bill Cody near the eastern entrance to Yellowstone National Park.

Leaving the lodge on Sunday morning we motored through Shoshone Canyon where the river has cut a deep, narrow gorge separating the Rattlesnake and Cedar mountains and saw Buffalo Bill Dam, one of the highest in the world. Then on to Cody, the town

founded by Buffalo Bill himself. Here the Buffalo Bill Museum is located. On a hill opposite the replica of Cody's TE ranch home is the Buffalo Bill statue. This famous man delighted children and adults alike with his wild west shows in the early years of this century and the latter part of the 1800's. One statue, showing Cody on horseback, attired in his famous western trappings, is the work of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, distinguished American sculptor, who presented it and a large tract of land to the Buffalo Bill Memorial Association in 1938.

It is interesting to note that this memorial association is incorporated as a non-profit charitable trust, and the only chartered Buffalo Bill memorial in the United States. It was founded by Cody's daughter, and his granddaughter acts as one of the hostesses in the seven large rooms where hundreds of personal relics and pictures of Col. William F. Cody, Indian collections, paintings and historical items of the period are on display. Cody's boyhood home, built in 1840, was brought from Le Claire, Iowa, by the Burlington Railroad and presented to the association by the president, Mr. Ralph Budd, in 1933. It now stands on the grounds of the museum.

From Cody the highway leads over the Big Horn mountains through the Powder River pass which rises to 9,686 feet, the highest mountain pass in Wyoming open to year-round travel. It snowed a bit as we passed through – just a welcome note we hope – but tonight it is raining in Buffalo, Wyo.