



HERITAGE TIMES

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 2

FALL/WINTER 2023

BIG THANKS

to ALL our Summer 2023 volunteers- We could not do this without you!!

Terry Bartlett
Joyce Boyer
Janet Bucknell
Sue Christenson
Bettie Marie Daniels
Kent Dyer
Sue Goodwin
Tami Hawkins
Geri Hockhalter
Linda Hofmann
Roy Holm
Lynn Houze
Gerry Jenson
Jan Jones
Margie Jones
Melinda Peters
Joni Ratliff
Diana Scranton
Fran Scranton
Todd Valley
Rusty Vannoy
Marge Wilder
Steve Wilder
Jenny Zink

If you are interested in getting involved, please stop in to see us, give us a call or send us an email. We love growing our team.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCH

On October 28th of this year, the Cody Heritage Museum board hosted a luncheon for our volunteers at the Ivy to show our appreciation for all the hours they gave us throughout the season. We have 19 volunteers in all, some who work a 3 or 4-hour weekly shift and some who are substitutes for when a regular can't work. Half of our volunteers have been with us since our first year, 2018!

Without these wonderful people, the museum would not be able to function. This year we were open for 17 weeks for a total of 578 hours and our volunteers put in 745 hours! Some worked more than one shift per week, or they worked in several areas, such as at both the admissions desk and/or the garden. Linda Hofmann, Todd Valley, Tami Hawkins, Gerry Jenson, Bettie Marie Daniels, Terry Bartlett, and Joni Ratliff contributed the most hours. Also, several CHM board members volunteered their time in addition to their "board" work.

Many thanks to all of you for your support. We're always looking for more volunteers, so please contact the museum for additional information.



From our President/Director

Another season has come to a close, and I'm pleased to say that it was a good one. Our attendance was up by 200 over last year, despite closing a week earlier than usual. Most of our visitors continue to be tourists from beyond Park County who enjoy both museums and history. Based upon the interactions that I hear between the visitors and our volunteers on Tuesdays when I'm there, they find Cody's history very compelling, and they've learned a lot by the time they leave!

Our Olive Fell exhibit was a big hit, as were the new artifacts that we put out, especially the Cody High School Class of '52 collage of senior photos. Locals either recognized the student or knew other members of the family. We also added several new family panels during the summer and have already added two since we closed. If you have been considering recognizing your family's Cody history with a panel – or two – let us know. We can walk you through the easy process.

With Christmas just around the corner you're undoubtedly looking for a special gift for family members. A membership to our museum or a garden paver in memory or honor of that person or family is a perfect solution. See the back page for more information or check our website.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We will open Memorial Day weekend and hope to see you in 2024!



Lynn



HISTORIC CODY FAMILIES

THOMAS CANADA MOLESWORTH [1890 — 1977]



The natural beauty and the vast open spaces of the American West have always attracted the most adventurous of souls. The American Cowboy and the Native American Indian project simple, yet strong and powerful images, both exemplifying the West. In the early to mid-1900's, cowboy furniture was simply furniture made by cowboys, mostly for ranches. The furniture was minimal, strong, and durable, yet relatively primitive. In the 1930's one man had a vision to expand on that simple furniture. His work became the best in the West, now sought after by high-end collectors. His name was Thomas Canada Molesworth. He was my granddad.

Thomas C. Molesworth (1890-1977), created a distinctly Western style of furniture and accessories, using hides, horns, antlers, burl wood (particularly fir), and Chimayo weavings, along with his signature use of brass tacks. Molesworth's furnishings drew from the Arts and Crafts Movement, and the designs of western American ranches and farms. As an interior designer, he would furnish an entire room from floor to ceiling, supplying everything from light fixtures to artwork to floor coverings. His furnishings were sometimes characterized as whimsical. He is credited with being the founding father of "Cowboy High Style". To produce his designs, Molesworth operated the Shoshone Furniture Company from 1931 to 1961 in Cody, WY, along with his wife, my grandmother, LaVerne Johnston Molesworth. LaVerne would contribute to Shoshone Furniture Company in the way of making the bedspreads and curtains for bedroom commissions, along with doing the bookwork for the company.

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Garden Updates

The Heritage Garden gets more and more beautiful each year as the perennials mature, spread out, and grow to extraordinary beauty. The different spring purples flow into the summer yellows and oranges, and become a visual treat on Sheridan Avenue.

The artifacts in the garden lend an old feeling to new planting. The bronze statue of our pioneer couple leads the eye to the antique flagpole. The feeling is peaceful.

Girl Scout Troop 1250, along with leader Melinda Peters, lent a hand with weeding this past summer, and we couldn't have been prouder to help them earn a garden badge for their efforts. Volunteer Jan Jones connected us to these girls and we thank her.

If you haven't bought a paver to honor your loved ones or a business, we are still selling them and they'd make a great Christmas gift.

When you visit next summer, be sure to take note of our welcoming half-barrel seasonal flower planters as you enter and exit the building – they are a lovely greeting to our visitors!

~Geri & Garden Team

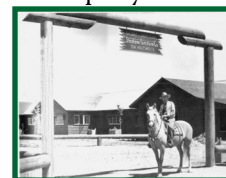


HISTORIC CODY FAMILIES

[story continued from page 2]

Tom Molesworth was born in Topeka, Kansas on 09/28/1890 and died on July 19, 1977, in Scottsdale, AZ. For a time, he attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. [see photo] Before he was able to graduate, Tom's father, Albert, told Tom to "just come home and work, as you are never going to be another Charlie Russell!" Tom married LaVerne Miller Johnston (born on 05/16/1894) on 11/29/1917 in Montana. Tom also served in World War I, as a U.S. Marine Corps corporal in France. When Tom and Laverne were living in Billings, MT, and Tom was managing the Rowe Furniture Company there, their two children (my Aunt Jean, and my dad, Lee) were born.

In January of 1931, Molesworth moved his family to Cody, WY to start his own company, Shoshone Furniture Company. The day before Tom's shop and showroom were ready to occupy, tragedy struck. His shop and showroom burned down. The entire town rallied the next day with bankers, merchants, workers, and attorneys all showing up. Those who were too old to work hired trucks and other equipment to help in the clean-up. Women and various cafes prepared lunches and refreshments. In one day, the entire mess was cleaned up and construction was able to begin again. Sam Parks, head of Shoshone National Bank, advanced the credit, and that, along with the good faith and goodwill of the people and town of Cody, enabled the re-building of Shoshone Furniture Company. Tom not only survived that tragedy but went on to create his thriving business and legacy. [see photo]



Tom belonged to several organizations, serving as an officer in most, including The Billings Rod & Gun Club, the Lions Club (both in Billings and in Cody), the American Legion, the Cody Club, the Elks Club, and the Cody Stampede Board. He was also instrumental in the concept and completion of the Youth Camp near Red Lodge.

The Shoshone Furniture Company received its first major commission in early 1933 when Tom was commissioned by publisher, Moses Annenberg, to design the interior furnishings for Annenberg's Ranch A retreat near Beulah, WY. Molesworth created 245 pieces of furniture for Ranch A, as well as lighting fixtures and accessories, including Navajo rugs and taxidermy. Many of the furnishings from Ranch A are conserved at the Wyoming State Museum. During the ensuing 30 years, Molesworth completed commissions for many of the country's prominent families and corporations. In fact, one day, when he was swamped with too much work in his shop, the phone rang, and Tom said, "I don't care who that is, even if it is J. D. Rockefeller, I can't take on any more work!" As it turns out, it **was** J. D. Rockefeller, and Tom completed that commission.

Many artists were commissioned by Tom and many more were utilized in decorating the rooms that Tom furnished. He was a trader and would frequently swap furniture in his house for an artist's admired work. Sometimes he would even agree to the sale of a certain piece of that traded art to a client. His wife, LaVerne, would comment that she would just be getting used to a certain piece of art, or some of the furnishings in her house, and then Tom would trade them or sell them to clients. Cody's Ed Grigware's work figured prominently in Tom's various commissions, along with other well-known artists, including Frank Tenney Johnson, J. H. Sharp, Winold Reiss, W. R. Leigh, Olaf Wieghorst and Olaf Seltzer. Tom's trading and his expertise extended to Navajo rugs and sand paintings, Crow beadwork, Zuni pottery and jewelry and other Plains and Southwest Indian artifacts.

When I was in college in the 70's, my granddad, Tom, would write me letters, and send me silver and turquoise jewelry. He frequently said, "don't tell your cousins I am sending you these." I later found out that he told one of my cousins who was about my age, the exact same thing. He had a way of making us feel like we were the most important grandchildren in his life. He and my grandmother are missed tremendously. . [see photo of me & granddad]

The most visible of Molesworth's work was in various hotels and Wyoming dude ranches. The hotels included (but are not limited to) The Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, WY, The Grand and The Northern in Billings, The Stockman in Elko, NV, The Pendleton in Pendleton, OR, The Wort, in Jackson, WY, and The Ferris Hotel in Rawlins, WY. Cody area dude ranchers who utilized Tom's furnishings in their lodges and cabins included (but were not limited to) Larry Larom, Simon Snyder, Bob Rumsey, and Max Wilde. Molesworth furnishings also adorned the T.E. Ranch, and Pahaska Teepee, in Cody, WY, the Rockefeller Ranch in Jackson, WY and George Summers Lodge (The Old Lodge) in Glenwood Springs, CO. Tom was particularly proud of one of his last commissions, which was the den at President Dwight D. Eisenhower's house and farm in Gettysburg, PA. I have seen it in person, and it is stunning.

One of the many remarkable things about my granddad's furnishings is that they have survived the test of time. Many of his furnishings are still in one piece and just as beautiful and functional as the day he made them — and many have been lovingly re-furnished to last yet another lifetime or two!

~ Leslie Molesworth Callahan



JOIN THE CODY HERITAGE MUSEUM TODAY!

FILL OUT THIS FORM, CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO PO BOX 701 CODY WY 82414

Name _____ Date _____

As you would like it to appear on card

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

◇ \$20/year—Senior or Student ◇ \$110/year—Business

◇ \$25/year –Individual

◇ \$200/year—Corporate

[include company name & contact/owner]

◇ \$45/year—Family

◇ \$500/year—Contributing

[adult parents & minor children]

◇ \$100/year—Friend

◇ \$1000/year—Sustaining

Membership benefits include:
FREE admission, **2 guest passes** per year [Business- 6 passes, Corporate level and above-12 passes], Bi-Annual newsletter, **10% off** in our Gift Shop, You will also receive a personalized membership card!

PayPal/credit card payment options available online or over the phone, checks payable to Cody Heritage Museum

codyheritagemuseum.org

(307) 586-4272

Looking for a great gift idea? Give the gift of history and knowledge with a membership to the museum!

Consider getting involved and become a CHM volunteer!

If you or your family have a piece of family/Cody history, please consider donating it. Please call Lynn Houze at 586-4272



Cody Heritage Museum

P.O. Box 701
 Cody, WY 82414

located at 11th St. & Sheridan Ave.

Director/Curator Lynn Johnson Houze

Phone: 307.586.4272

E-mail: info@codyheritagemuseum.org

or director@codyheritagemuseum.org

Website: codyheritagemuseum.org

*Yesterday's Cody Today . . .
 a bridge from past to present*

