



Wonderful opening for WWA's new Hall of Fame exhibit

By **Dusty Richards**

The day finally arrived – September 20, 2017 – to dedicate the Western Writers Hall of Fame at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming.

The WWA Homestead Foundation board of directors was there (except for James A. Crutchfield, who sent his regrets). WWA vice president Nancy Plain flew in from New Jersey. Quackgrass Sally was there. So was Paul Andrew Hutton, a past president of WWA and former executive director. Johnny D. Boggs was there to photograph the event for *Roundup Magazine*. WWA member Stan Corliss of Oregon came just to see the show. So did Spur Award winners W. Michael Gear and Kathleen O'Neal Gear from just down

the road in Thermopolis. And Western collector Robert McCubbin of the Wild West History Association drove up from Santa Fe, New Mexico.

WWA president Kirk Ellis made a fantastic speech after being introduced by Pete Simpson, a retired historian who has played Buffalo Bill Cody at this wonderful museum.

Now, you might recall from our convention in Cody back in 2006 that there ain't an easy way of getting in or out of Cody – but the museum and town are a grand part of the West.

After the dedication, the museum folks let me, and others, hold one of Zane Grey's rifles. I grew up on Zane Grey, have been to his cabin in Payson, Arizona, and Zane Grey, rightfully so,



The new Western Writers Hall of Fame exhibit, left, was dedicated in September at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, above, in Cody, Wyoming. All photos by Johnny D. Boggs

is a member of the Western Writers Hall of Fame.

For several of us, it had been a long wait to make this dream – a state-of-the-art exhibit for the Western Writers Hall of Fame, located just outside the McCracken Research Library – come true. Not only would this project showcase our past honored authors, but current WWA members and their books would be highlighted, as well.

The information booth holds the Hall of Fame inductees on one side and other Western writers on the other. Visitors can learn about Zane Grey and other Western writers now gone – Will James, Will Henry and Owen Wister. And they can also learn about Hall of Fame inductees still kicking and writing – Loren D. Estleman and Lucia St. Clair Robson. And they can learn about writers who'd like to be in the Hall of Fame one of these days.

If you are not listed up there, contact Candy Moulton for the form. We plan to redo the list of current members quarterly.

For me, this goes back a long ways – all the way to when I attended my first WWA Convention in 1985 in San Antonio. At the time, Dick House was the editor of *Roundup Magazine*, which was printed on Dick's employer's paper and ink. WWA did not have enough money to mail out the issues in the coming year so that year we passed the ten-gallon hat for the postage, and I told Dick we would hold an auction the next year in



Kirk Ellis gives the dedication speech for the new Western Writers Hall of Fame exhibit outside the McCracken Research Library.



Part of the crowd at the dedication ceremonies listen to Kirk Ellis's speech.



Retired historian Pete Simpson introduces WWA president Kirk Ellis.

setup. Members have been generous of our convention auctions and have donated money to the 501(c)(3) fund. And the great magazine mailed to you has no problem with getting postage. Homestead also funds and supports other programs for WWA.

I am looking down the road. We need stations like this in other major libraries – the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City ... the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan, Oklahoma ... and lots more.

Meanwhile, all you have to do to support is bid at the auction in Billings, Montana, during this year's convention. Or donate a little more.

And when you get up to Cody, head over to the McCracken Library and check out the brand-spanking new Western Writers Hall of Fame exhibit. The setup is professionally designed and looks sharp.



Past president Sherry Monahan chats with Robert G. McCubbin.

Fort Worth to remedy that situation.

The auction grew to become a part of the Homestead Foundation. When it started, many scoffed at the idea, but we have a nice bank account now for similar future projects such as this

Mary Robinson, the McCracken Research Library's house director, and Old West collector Robert G. McCubbin.



Spur Award-winning authors Kathleen O'Neal Gear and W. Michael Gear.



Marv Kaiser and Paul Andrew Hutton.



Chris Enss and Quackgrass Sally study the interactive exhibit.