

Introduction

Our Distinctiveness Most universities have special collections. Few have special collections as extensive and significant as the American Heritage Center. Major areas of the manuscript collections include Wyoming and the American West, the mining and petroleum industries, U.S. politics and world affairs, conservation, journalism, transportation, and 20th century entertainment such as popular music, radio, television, and film. Information on the holdings of the Toppan Library—the University of Wyoming’s rare book center—will be found later in this brochure.

We are distinctive, too, for our extensive service to the University’s undergraduate curriculum and for actively welcoming members of the public as well as scholars to do research in our collections.

Students, researchers from around the world, and the general public frequent the building to do hands-on, primary research with these materials, with the personalized assistance of the AHC’s expert reference archivists and rare book curators.

We are a public facility and welcome visitors and researchers without appointment (except in the case of groups—we require appointments for groups to ensure that we can properly accommodate them).

Our business hours are: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; closed Sunday. (Summer hours: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; closed Sunday.)

What You Don’t See While the AHC is a library and research center rather than a museum, we are fortunate to have important western art available for public viewing, as well as small exhibits. The art and exhibits you will see as you take your tour represent a very small fraction of the total collections of the AHC. To learn more about the collections, please ask for one of our general brochures, ask to speak to someone on our faculty or staff, visit the Rare Books Library or Reading Room, or browse our web site (www.uwyo.edu/ahc).

The Building The AHC occupies 60% of the 127,000 square foot Centennial Complex. Designed by the well-known architect, Antoine Predock, the building is an abstract representation of the surrounding Wyoming landscape. The cone that houses the AHC represents a mountain; the UW Art Museum resembles a village at the foot of the mountain; and the Sculpture Court represents the Laramie Plains. Groundbreaking for the Centennial Complex took place on October 6, 1990, and the facility opened on September 11, 1993.

Level 2 (main entrance)

Mary Storer Loggia

This area represents an early forest with columns that resemble giant trees surrounding a welcoming fire. Surrounding the forest, and interspersed among the “trees” are paintings by famous Western artist Alfred Jacob Miller and several exhibits explaining the mission of the AHC, highlighting the scope and diversity of its collections, displaying the variety of their contents, and promoting their availability for viewing or research.

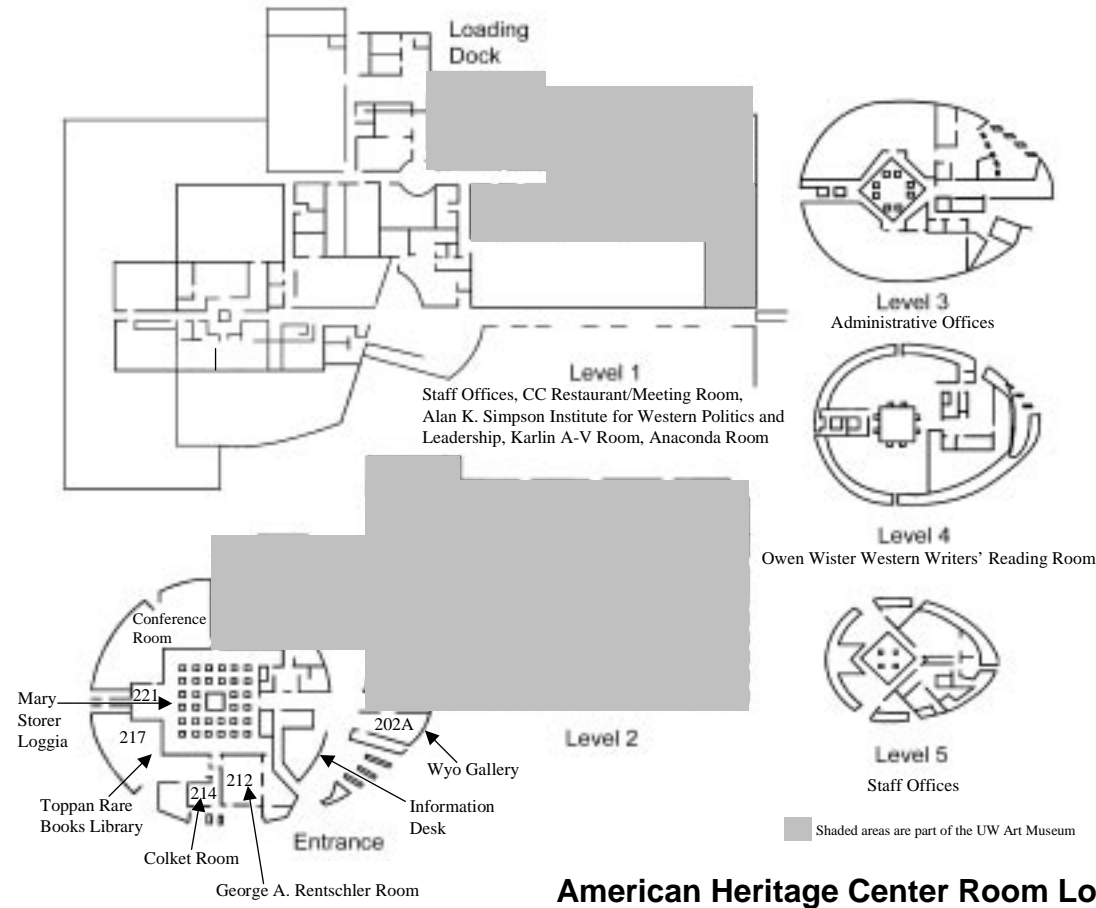


Looking up to fifth floor from Mary Storer Loggia.

George A. Rentschler Room This room is an exact replica of the library of George A. Rentschler, a New York industrialist and collector of Western art. The collection of paintings displayed includes works by Frederick Remington and Henry Farney, and were donated to the AHC by the Rentschler family. A brochure about the George A. Rentschler Room is avail-



George A. Rentschler Room.



able at the Information Desk or in the Rentschler Room. *Note: This room is open to the public but contains a state of the art fiber optic lighting system that reduces harmful effects to the paintings--all other light sources have been subdued or eliminated.*



Toppan Rare Books Library.

Toppan Rare Books Library This is home to the University of Wyoming's rare and special books, consisting of more than 40,000 items. The library is named after Clara and Fred Toppan who donated a large collection of books and the financial support to run the library in perpetuity. The majority of the materials are printed books from the 1400s to the present, although there are also hand-illuminated manuscripts. Areas of specialty include the history and literature of America (particularly the West), the British Isles, and Europe; world-wide travel and exploration; fishing, hunting, and natural history; books written by women authors (especially before 1900); various religions; and examples of the book arts (illustration, paper, and binding).

Colket Room This room is located inside the entrance to the Toppan Library. C. Howard Colket (1859-1924) traveled the world beginning in 1879 when he journeyed by horseback from Beirut to Bagdad. Some of the artifacts acquired during these travels, as well as those from trips with his wife, Almira, are on display in colorful Egyptian-style cases. Everything was donated to the University of Wyoming by the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Colket, II, who had originally brought the items from the family home in Philadelphia when they moved to Sheridan, Wyoming.



Owen Wister Western Writer's Reading Room.

If you wish to research any of the AHC collections, you can visit the **Owen Wister Western Writer's Reading Room** on the fourth floor. Our professional staff will assist you in locating and using any of our materials for discovering family history, writing a school paper, book, article, or for general inquiry.

CONTACT INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING American Heritage Center

Mailing Address:

Dept. 3924 / 1000 E. University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071

Location:

2111 Willett Drive (Centennial Complex)
307-766-4114 / 307-766-5511 (FAX)

ahc@uwyo.edu (General)

ahcref@uwyo.edu (Reference Dept.)

www.uwyo.edu/ahc

Director

Mark Greene - 307-766-2474

Associate Director

Rick Ewig - 307-766-6385

Room Reservations

307-766-5066


Business Hours

September-May

M-F: 8:00 am-5:00 pm; Sat.: 11:00 am-5:00 pm
Closed Sunday

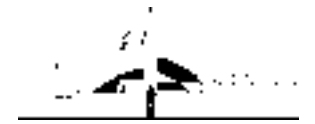
June-August

M-F: 7:30 am-4:30 pm; Sat.: 11:00 am-5:00 pm
Closed Sunday


For questions not relating to donations of collections or room reservations, contact our Reference Desk -- 307-766-3756

Rev. 06-03

American Heritage Center



UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Self-Guided Tour

The American Heritage Center (AHC) is the University of Wyoming's repository of manuscript and special collections, rare books, and university archives. The AHC was officially established in 1945. In the decades that followed, nearly 90,000 cubic feet of historically important documents and over 40,000 rare books were acquired, mostly by donation. The AHC is now among the largest and most important non-governmental archives in the nation.

AHC collections go well beyond Wyoming and the region's borders and support a wide range of research and teaching activities in the humanities, sciences, arts, business, and education. The AHC serves the students of the University and other citizens of Wyoming, and researchers from across the country and around the world—over 6,000 research contacts each year. The archivists and curators of the AHC are leaders in their fields, speaking and publishing on historical, archival, and library topics. The AHC also sponsors many scholarly and popular programs including lectures, concerts, symposia, and exhibits.

Access is free and open to all.

We invite you to fully explore the AHC!