

Collections Report

Campbell County Rockpile Museum – May 2021

1. Items that belonged to Dixie Reece (See attached list)

Source: Barbara Anderson – Gillette, WY

Square footage of storage space required: 2.26 ft²

Recommendation: See Attached List for Recommendations

The items recommended for the permanent collection would contribute to the selection of Dixie Reece artwork already present at the museum, as well as contribute to any exhibit that shows the progression of Dixie Reece's artwork over time. A few items that document Richard Reece's artistic abilities as a young boy are also recommended for the collection.

Several items are recommended to decline because they cannot be confirmed as works of Dixie Reece as they are unsigned, or they would not contribute to the overall collection or an exhibit about Dixie Reece.

2. 3 Banners from Teacher's Corner Kid's Mart

Source: Dale and Jane Burbank – Gillette, WY

Square footage of storage space required: 9.91 ft²

Recommendation: Add to the Permanent Collection

The first banner was made for the 150th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage, in cooperation with Gillette Main Street.

The second banner is titled "GILLETTE PIONEERS" and was created for the 125th Anniversary of Gillette, Wyoming. Edward Gillette is featured at the center above the date August 27, 2016. A sticker is attached to the lower end with the printed text "TEACHER'S CORNER KID'S MART *Since 1989.*" An image of the Daly store is blurred but visible in the background.

The third banner was created for the Community Dinner, held on August 27, 2018. The Gillette Main Street Logo is printed on the banner, below a sketch of Gillette Avenue buildings and a steam locomotive. "TEACHER'S CORNER/KID'S MART SINCE 1989" is printed on the lower end.

These banners not only document a local business, but they were specifically made to advertise that business during local anniversary events. There is a small collection of banners in the Permanent Collection, six of which mark similar anniversaries in Gillette, Campbell County, or Wyoming. One of those six banners was made for the 125th Anniversary of Gillette, but it is not the same as the one being offered. Likewise, the collection of women's suffrage documentary objects is very small; there are only two items in the main artifact collections that relate to women's suffrage.

All three banners were made when the donors owned the store. It has recently transferred ownership.

3. 2 German Maps

Photocopies – 1924-1926 School District documents and 1907-1922 General Journal – copied from the Wyoming State Archives

Source: Maxine Kaul – Gillette, WY

Square footage of storage space required: 0.38 ft²

Recommendation: Add both maps to the Props Collection. Add the photocopies of the Wyoming State Archives documents to the Vertical Files.

The maps are in good condition and could be used for educational programming or exhibits related to post-WWI Europe. The larger map is a post-WWI map of neutral and occupied areas of the Rhineland and Westphalia and surrounding countries. The red line marks the safety zone, indicating it was prior to the 1920s. The name “Andernach” at the top of the map is referring to the name of the town and the text refers to a beautification and traffic club or organization. The smaller map is a non-military map, but does have numbers for orientation like a clock which is more typical of a military map. This map is most likely post-WWI.

The archival documents are copies of Crook County school district documents from the Wyoming State Archives that were collected by the donor during her research for a book not yet published. The Journal contains lists of districts, clerks, and treasurers, the years they were elected, and the schools they were at; the schools include Gillette and Moorcroft, as well as other towns. Since these are not original documents, and the originals belong to the State Archives, these photocopies should not be accepted into either of the artifact collections but would be useful as a research tool in the Vertical Files.

4. 3 Quilts

Source: Jocelyn Meyer – Gillette, WY

Square footage of storage space required: 3.96 ft²

Recommendation: Add to Props Collection

These quilts have little to no provenance but are in good condition and could be useful for display or programming purposes, such as switching out the quilts in the Archibald Homestead Shack. The first quilt has a “Light in the Cabin” pattern and was made using feedsack material of many different colors and patterns; it was purchased at an antique store called “The Attic” that was owned by a local woman (the donor referred to it also as “Annette’s Attic.” The donor said the store was possibly located on or near Warren Avenue, possibly between Warren Avenue and Highway 59 close to where Lasting Legacy is now located). The second quilt is a “Nine Patch” pattern. The third has a floral design; the donor is unsure if this one came from a trade show or The Attic antique store.

5. Digital Colorized Photograph of Jesse Dale Ruby in US Army uniform, 1945 Digital Photograph of Jesse Dale Ruby working in water well drilling, 1980 De Luxe Scintillator (Precision Model IIIB) with Original Leather Case Electric Blacklight Box

Source: Marjorie Ruby – Gillette, WY

Square footage of storage space required: 1.85 ft²

Recommendation: Add all items to the Permanent Collection.

Deaccession 2010.001.0004 De Luxe Scintillator for transfer to the **Props Collection**.

There are currently two identical models of the De Luxe Scintillator in the permanent collection, neither of which have the leather case included. The first (2006.022.0001) was used in Uranium discovery in 1953. It has a known donor, but museum records do not state whether he was involved in the uranium mining himself. The second device (2010.001.0004) was Found in Collection and has no Deed of Gift on file. The only provenance that it has is a note in the PastPerfect record that says an old exhibit label identified it as having been used by the Powder River Minerals Corporation in Campbell County. There is no other evidence in PastPerfect or the paper accession file that authenticates this statement. Therefore, it is recommended to **Deaccession 2010.001.0004** to the **Props Collection** and add the incoming scintillator to the Permanent Collection as it has excellent provenance.

This uranium mining equipment belonged to Jesse Dale Ruby. According to the donor, Ruby loved drilling. He eventually co-owned and operated Ruby Drilling with his brother Max L. Ruby, who fought in the Korean War and was stationed near the area that became the DMZ in 1953. Jesse Dale Ruby was a WWII Veteran who entered the service in 1945. According to the donor, Dale was stationed in Japan and ended up in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although he was U.S. Army, he was placed with the Marine Corps and tasked with going into caves and destroying machinery and ammunition stockpiled by the Japanese during the war. He returned from service in December 1946. Later, when his brother was in the Korean War, Dale ended up spending most of his time at home and eventually started in seismographic work.

He started uranium drilling around 1953 and worked in that for about 10 years, working independently around the Pumpkin Buttes area (along HWY 50). Before the uranium rush in 1955, Ruby did some survey work for the government. During the rush in 1955, this area became very crowded and one of the claims people pulled a gun on Jesse Dale Ruby. By the next Spring, according to the donor, the area had calmed down. Ruby would take the scintillator out into the field with him when he was working on his claims, but the blacklight was left at home to be used indoors. Ruby and his wife moved to town in 1964; the donor said he quit uranium mining around 1963, then Ruby began water well drilling after their move to town and he did that for about 50-60 years. The photograph being donated shows Ruby when he was in water well drilling in 1980; it was taken by an unknown newspaper photographer, printed in the paper, and the photo was given to the donor.

6. Digital Scan of a 35mm Slide of the Gillette Depot

Source: Staff Collected

Square footage of storage space required: 0

Recommendation: Add to the Permanent Collection

Director Henning bid on this slide but did not win the auction. The owner was gracious enough to sell us a scan of the image for a few dollars. It is one of the later images of the depot we have in our collection dating to November 1973. The depot sign that we have

borrowed from Jeff Wandler and is in our railroad exhibit is either the sign seen in the image or the sign on the other end of the building.

Items on Hold from March 2021 Board Meeting:

1. Belt Buckle – Page Engineering

Belt Buckle – AMAX, Leahy Mine

Belt Buckle – Castle Gate

Sticker – Castle Gate

Source: Mary Kelley – Gillette, WY

Recommendation: Decline

Upon further conversation with the donor, it was discovered that these items originally belonged to a friend named Steve Sears, a man who was from the Indiana or Illinois region according to the donor. Mr. Sears worked at several mine locations, and he was the Mine Accountant at Leahy mine in Illinois. He did not work at Castle Gate, which is an underground coal mine (owned by Amax) in Utah. The mine would've been acquired by Amax post-1987.

The Page Engineering buckle has a dragline image on the front. The donor believes that the Page Engineering Company was a manufacturer of draglines for the Midwest.

These items do not have a connection to the Powder River Basin. They would not contribute to the collection of mining items that is currently at the museum or to any potential exhibits that focus specifically on the PRB. Their previous owner, Mr. Sears, also never worked in the Powder River Basin and did not live here. Therefore, the recommendation is to decline all items.