



“Preserving Our Falconry Heritage”

# Heritage

e-Newsletter

Winter 2009 • No. 8

## Spring Rendezvous Features Artist Hans Peeters

### – Message from John Swift, Curator

The Third Annual Spring Rendezvous will be held at The Archives of Falconry and feature a special exhibit of the art work of Hans Peeters. Hans will be in attendance as host of the exhibit of his original art. This is a unique opportunity to view in one place, and for one time only, such a large number of works by this well-known falconer/artist.

Any falconer who will be attending and who owns some of Hans' work is invited to bring the paintings for public display. The main event will be held on Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the evening get-together held at a local restaurant.

Eight falconers will be remembered this year during the Rendezvous, with their plaques mounted on the Wall of Remembrance. The lives to be remembered are:

Michael L. Cox (1954-2009)

Chris Garber (1962-1996)

Gordon Grenfell (1949-2009)

J.H.M. “Hans” Pieters (1893-1971)

William J. “Bill” Shinnars (1933-2007)

Dana R. Struthers (1923-2000)

Lou Woyce (1928-2009)

Jack C. Young (1919-1990).

Friends and family are invited to attend the official “Remembrance” to be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday. You may help us publicize this event among the falconry community. Please extend this invitation to any friends or family of the eight falconers who you feel would be appropriate for them to attend.

Plan to attend this special event and renew acquaintances after the hawking season. Please let us know if you will be coming and especially if you wish to reserve a seat at dinner. 🦅

## Recent Acquisitions

Eric Tabb recently donated his copy of Harry McElroy's *Desert Hawking ...with a Little Help from My Friends*. Over a ten-year period Eric collected the signature of the author and many of the contributors. In 1999 he flew with the book to Miami, drove to Willcox, AZ to get McElroy's signature, then drove back to Boise. In 2005 he drove the book to Vernal, UT and back. In 2009 the copy then went by mail to Louisiana, then on to New York, and finally back to Boise. Eric then presented it to the Archives. We suppose this is the most widely traveled, single-owner copy in the world. 🦅





Award” was presented to winners for the past three years: Dick Thorsett, 2007; Dan Pearson, 2008, and Bob Turner, 2009. According to APLIC, the recipient “must demonstrate a long-term commitment to natural resources, a consistent history of investigating or managing the natural resource issues faced by the electric utility industry, and success in developing innovative solutions.” As honorees spoke from the podium, it was clear to this observer that the award was highly prized and several speakers were quite emotional about receiving that peer recognition. 🦅

Tyler Nelson at the Morley Nelson Awards luncheon

## Morley Nelson Awards

Recently, the Idaho Power Company and the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) held a luncheon and awards ceremony in The Archives of Falconry. In attendance were professionals from a variety of utility, agency and protection manufacturer backgrounds who focus on best management practices to protect raptors and, specifically, to address the problem of raptor electrocutions. A pioneer in this field was Boise’s Morley Nelson who, as consultant for Idaho Power, conducted numerous photographic and technical studies and made drawings which guided power companies

all over the West. These studies as well as many other materials belonging to Nelson, including 45 original film reels, are housed at The Archives of Falconry. In the spring of 2009, President Obama signed legislation renaming the nearby Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in his honor.

The luncheon included a Morley Nelson film collage presented by his son, Tyler Nelson, followed by a special awards ceremony. This event recognized the exceptional contributions of several professionals around the nation. A special award, The “Morley Nelson



## Guess Who? (8th in a series...) Can you identify this falconer?

For answer, see below:

Either John Craighead or twin Frank Craighead — even John himself could not say which. Chevy Chase, MD ca. 1934-35, with a 1928 Chevy made famous in their book *Hawks in the Hand*, 1939. Also, *Spike the dog, Bad Boy the Kestrel*, and a *tiercel Peregrine (Ulysses?)*.

Previous issues of Heritage newsletters are available online:  
[www.peregrinefund.org/american\\_falconry.asp#heritage](http://www.peregrinefund.org/american_falconry.asp#heritage)



Robin Radcliffe and Kent Carnie, Curator Emeritus  
— photo by Julia Fellippe

## The Archives of Falconry: A North American Falconer's Experience

— by Robin W. Radcliffe and  
M. Julia B. Fellippe

“This is your archives,” Col. Kent Carnie said to Julia and me upon our first meeting. It was our official introduction to The Archives of Falconry. The Archives is an integral part of The Peregrine Fund’s World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, Idaho. The Center and the Archives overlook the city of Boise and an assortment of wild raptors soar above the hilltop site even as California Quail and Chukars skitter about underfoot. As falconers, we were drawn to this amazing place to undertake basic research for a book we are working on about Frank Lyman Beebe, one of the pioneers of American falconry.

We came to read Frank’s diaries. There are journals here too from the likes of John and Frank Craighead, Morley Nelson and Gilbert Blaine. The Archives started as North American only, but is now international in scope given the diverse cultures and long history the sport represents. Kent believes that each country should preserve their own falconry past wherever possible, but the Archives in Boise is there to help safeguard what others cannot. Whenever materials are donated to the Archives, they are carefully cataloged, labeled, and placed in archival storage boxes, ensuring their preservation for future falconers, scholars, historians and the interested public. Other items of historic significance are on display for visitors to view and experience.

Upon entering the simple back room where the journals are housed inside a long line of metal storage cabinets, you immediate-

ly feel at home and a part of the past. Ornate falconry bags adorn the walls and atop the cabinets sit an assortment of historic falconry equipment. A unique spherical bal-chatri has nooses all the way around. Kent tells me the early design was supposed to eliminate the age-old fault of the trap landing upside down (there is no up and down on this one!), but it has its own fault – the nooses on the bottom catch on the weeds and brush. Next to the trap is a chicken wire frame meant to be stuffed with marsh grass in the shape of a helmet. It is the original beach camouflage of pioneer Peregrine falcon biologist and trapper, Heinz Meng. Dr. Meng used this same head set to pull migrating Peregrine falcons out of the sky as he lay buried up to his neck in the sand. Alongside these fascinating pieces is a long line of primitive telemetry units marking the transition in technology through the years of this uniquely American falconry heritage.

The first tall cabinet, as you enter the main storage area, holds twelve archival boxes that contain nearly the entire collection of Frank Lyman Beebe’s falconry diaries dating from 1932. Frank and his family donated the journal notes to the Archives in 2003 in order to help preserve an important legacy of American falconry. After a brief tour, we set to work inside a small office at the center of the Archives. Julia copies the notes monotonously page-by-page on a scanner donated by falconer, Bill Murrin. I read through correspondence and research old falconry texts. Near the end of our 4-day visit, I had a number of questions for the Archives team. Kent Carnie and David Wells are always there to lend a helping hand. Kent is an absolute wealth of knowledge and

wisdom. He knows the history of American falconry like no other, and he is busy writing a book about it too. David has been cataloging the entire collection of books, periodicals and references in order to make access to these materials a user-friendly process for falconers and researchers alike.

After turning up a half-dozen obscure publications in my search for information about a specific event in Frank's life, I had a challenge for Kent. I showed him a reference to an article published in *The Condor* (I thought there was only one of these journals). Together Kent and I walked a few doors down to The Peregrine Fund's Research Library, housed adjacent to the Archives in the same building. This special library holds one of the largest and most complete ornithological book collections in the nation.

We located the volume and year. Kent pulled the issue from the shelf and instantly recognized a problem with the citation. "Robin, look, this is not right," said Kent as he pointed a finger at the journal. The volume did not match the dates.

"You know, there is another publication," he said. "I think you want *The California Condor*!" I rechecked the citation. Kent was right. We walked back to the Archives and in a matter of minutes, Kent had located the single archival box that held the obscure journal, *The California Condor*, and there was the article I was looking for!



Kent Carnie and Robin Radcliffe  
in front of a Beebe panorama  
— photo by Julia Fellippe

We were honored to spend an evening at dinner with Kent and his friend, Kellie, as well as The Peregrine Fund founder and falconer, Tom Cade and his wife, Renetta. We enjoyed a fine time with reminiscences of falconry, Peregrine biology and conservation. The next morning Kent brought in his latest passion, a beautiful black gyr x merlin hybrid that goes by the name of "Sport." He was just 64 days old and ready for his first free flight, so Kent was busy organizing his telemetry.

As we parted on the last day, Kent offered me a final bit of wisdom. There are falconry book collectors and there are falconers that collect books. The two are quite different. The book collector is interested in the book as a prize or part of a valuable collection, while the falconer collects books to read and in the process opens many

doors and expands his own horizons immeasurably; he adds to his understanding and his own practice of falconry. There is an amazing falconry heritage in America and the Archives is there for all to use and enjoy; in fact, Kent reminded us that this is not *his* archives, not that of The Peregrine Fund, nor of the North American Falconers Association (NAFA), but in fact an archives held in trust for *all* falconers, pertaining to *all* types of falconry.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The authors would like to thank Kent Carnie and David Wells for their kind guidance and support in our research endeavor and for encouraging us to write about our experience at The Archives of Falconry. 🦅