Register of the Bill Williams Mountain Men/Thomas Way Collection

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Way, Thomas
Collection Name: Bill Williams Mountain Men/Thomas Way,
Inclusive Dates: 1953-1985
Physical Description: 1 linear ft.
Description: Photographs, correspondence, scrape books, published articles, and organizational flyers
Collection Number: 860
Language: English.
Repository: Arizona Historical Society/Flagstaff Archives
2340 North Fort Valley Rd.
Flagstaff, AZ 86001-1200
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Biographical Note

The Bill Williams Mountain Men organization was started by a group of Williams, Arizona professionals/businessmen who wanted to recapture the spirit of the early American Southwest fur trade industry. The namesake of the organization, and the man that Williams, Arizona, as well as a nearby volcanic cone and river were named after, was a fur trapper named William Sherley Williams. Bill Williams was born January 3, 1787 in Rutherford County, North Carolina. He moved to St. Louis, Missouri as a young man where he worked in the fur trade industry and was an interpreter for army in its dealings with the Osage Indians. As the fur trade industry moved west, Williams trapped in the area north of Taos, New Mexico. He died March 14, 1849, killed by Ute Indians while camping north of Taos New Mexico. The modern day Bill Williams Mountain Men reenact the lifestyle of the original fur trappers by dressing in period clothing, taking horseback trips, and participating in modern...
day rendezvous held throughout the country.

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**Scope and Content Note**

The collection is (1) linear ft. in volume. Included are 131 photographs depicting group activities; one film reel from the KOOL Television company; (2) folders of scrape book materials; and magazines and other published materials related to the organizations activities. This collection would be of primary interest to researchers studying the activities of historical reenactment groups.

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**Organization**

3 Series. I. Photographs. II. Scrapebooks (w/written material) III. Publications.

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**Restrictions**

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None.

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**Copyright**

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**Related Material**

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**Controlled Access Terms**

**Personal Name(s)**

Way, Thomas
Williams, Bill

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**Administrative Information**

**Credit Line**
AHS.MS. 860, Arizona Historical Society/Northern Arizona Division.

Series Description/Container List

Series 1, folders 1-8; photographs, ca. 1917-1985 8 folders (5 inches)
Photographs of Bill Williams Mountain Men activities and also Thomas E. Ways 50th class reunion (1.2); including early photograph of Methodist Church in Williams, Arizona

Box-foler
1.1 Photographs (#1-32) of Bill Williams Mountain Men activities taken by Curtis M. Whitaker and Thomas E. Way, January 1961

Box-foler
1.2 Williams, Arizona 50th class reunion; Methodist Church, ca. 1919; Williams, Arizona 7th grade class photo, 1922; Williams, Arizona High School class photo and signatures (photocopy), 1927; 50th reunion in 1977 with, Miles H. Cureton, Dr. Dermont W. Melick, Edward M Hoffmeyer, Doris Duffield (Smith), Zella Hudson (Cox), and Stanton Carr, 1977

Box-foler

Box-foler
1.4 Bill Williams Mountain Men photographs (#70-92), 1954-1959

Box-foler
1.5 Bill Williams Mountain Men photographs (#93-106), ca. 1960

Box-foler
1.6 Bill Williams Mountain Men photographs (#107-119). Including: John F. Monroe, Fred Theroux, Hurley Wright, Paul Tissaw, Denton Dean, Bill Fillmore, Everett Coffee, Louis Landry, Cecil Graham, Louie Peters, Bill Nixon, Gordon McDowell and Thomas E. Way. Photographs are presumed to be from rendezvous rides, ca. 1954-1959

Box-foler
Box-
folder
1.8  Reel of 8mm film from KOOL Television, ca. 1960

Series 2, folders 1.9 and 2.1, scrapebooks, ca. 1960 2 folders
Scrapebooks of Bill Williams Mountain Men activities, including correspondence between Stewart L. Udall and Thomas E. Way

Box-
folder
1.9  Scrapebook. Approximately (12) articles written about Bill Williams Mountain Men activities (table of contents included); typed copy of essay "Early Day Medical Practice in Williams, Arizona" by Dermont W. Melick, M.D.; Dermont W. Melick obituary; letter from John F. Monroe to Tomas Way, April 13, 1959; letter from Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, February 9, 1961; handwritten notes by Thomas E. Way (?); sign-up list and signatures of participants in ride form Williams, Arizona to Washington, D.C., ca. 1960

Box-
folder
2.1  Articles regarding Bill Williams Mountain Men activities, including a typewritten essay "The Beginning of the Bill Williams Mountain Men" by Thomas E. Way, ca. 1977-1987

Series 3, folders 2.2 to 2.5, publications, ca. 1944-1992 4 folders
Publications. Bill Williams Mountain Men activities recounted in magazine and newspaper articles

Box-
folder
2.2  Magazines including: National Geographic article with photo of Bill Williams Mountain Men (p. 459), April 1961; Mountain Men, Arizona Rendezvous, 1955 (2 copies); Sante Fe Magazine, October 1960; Arizona Highways, February 1961; Town Tatler, January 14, 1961; A Summary of Travel to Brand Canyon, by Tomas E. Way, 1980; Scenic Southwest, Fall 1944; VFW, June/July 1992; , 1944-1992 (not inclusive)

Box-
folder

Box-
folder
2.4  Magazines including: Arizona Mountain Men, January 1961; Bill Williams Mountain Men, Labor Day Rodeo, 1973 program; 1956 Jaycee World's Championship Rodeo: Celebrating Phoenix' Diamond Jubilee, souvenir program; World Championship Rodeo, program, 1955; Bill Williams Mountain Men, Labor Day Rodeo, 1985 program; Bill Williams Mountain Men, Labor Day Rodeo, 1978 program; "1804-1954 Mountain Men, Arizona Rendezvous" program (2 copies, one is autographed),
1956-1985
Box-
folder
2.5 Bill Williams Mountain Men related newspaper articles, 1961-1991