

Creative Living

Corinne Abatt editor/844-1100

classified real estate and homes



Thursday, August 10, 1984 O&F

(P)1E

Buffalo Bill—fresh look

"This Old Bill" by Loren D. Estleman, Doubleday Western, \$11.95

By Pearl Ahnen
special writer

"This Old Bill" is best described as a historical novel about William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and the events leading up to his careers as scout, buffalo hunter, showman, writer and incorrigible liar.

The author, Loren D. Estleman of Whitmore Lake, Mich., divides his time writing westerns and detective thrillers. Both genres are marked by close attention to detail, but in his westerns, and especially in "This Old Bill," Estleman delves deeply and thoroughly into Cody's past, pouring into exhaustive research.

The book is engagingly written, but it's Estleman's way with words that lifts his story out of the mundane. His characters are all the more intriguing for being real.

Striding through the pages of this western are Wild Bill Hickok, Frank Butler, Annie Oakley, Sitting Bull and Custer, not to mention Queen Victoria and Russian royalty.

SOME OF THE BEST scenes are the vivid descriptions of a buffalo hunt pitting Billy Comstock against Bill Cody (both used the name Buffalo Bill), the meeting with New York journalist and dime novelist Ned Buntline and the partnership that evolved, Sitting Bull's entry into show business and Annie Oakley's sharp shooting, which mesmerized all who saw her act.

Estleman, as he did in his award-winning novel "Aces & Eights," the Wild Bill Hickok story, recreates a realistic and caring figure of one of the most outrageous men of the Old West, Buffalo Bill Cody. (The author won the Golden Spur Award for his "Aces & Eights" novel.)

And "This Old Bill" is certainly not without humor, for although Buffalo Bill was an incorrigible liar, his life was more fantastic and unbelievable than any fabrication he invented.

In one segment, before the onset of

Custer's Last Stand and his encounter with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse and the many tribes of the Plains Indians, Cody received an urgent telegram from Gen. Sheridan's headquarters while he (Cody) was on stage.

Taking no time to change from his elaborate black and velvet Mexican costume, made by his wife, Louisa, he rushed to the front to carry out his scouting duties.

En route he was the talk of railroad conductors and passengers, attired as he was in his flashy outfit, topped with a plumed black hat. He not only received surprised glances when he reported to camp for duty but also a few whistles.

"How come he's dressed like that?"

"He's in the show business."

And show business it is, throughout the book, keeping the reader amused, entertained and at times in tune to the realities and deep hardships of the Wild West.

ACCORDING TO the author, the book is a "fabulous distillation from fact and legend, based on the life of William Frederick 'Buffalo Bill' Cody."

"Because of Cody's love for tall tales and his shrewd sense of self aggrandizement, and because many who knew him were only too glad to promote their own interests by going along with the joke and at times bettering it, the researcher's task as regards this remarkable American is doubly difficult."

But somehow Estleman met the challenge and waded through the fables and tall tales to come up with a new, fresh, daring and original story. The characters were there already, but only names in history until Estleman gave them flesh and blood, and they became real people.

The young and prolific author (his first novel, "Oklahoma Punk," was published in 1978 when he was 24) has written 15 novels. He had written several westerns and in 1980 he decided to break from that genre and tackle his first detective story.

Currently he is nominated for two Shamus awards offered by the Private Investigators Writers of America. They are for a short story and a novel, "Glass Highway."

He recently received the Stirrup Award presented by Round-Up Magazine for a three-part series, "The Water Trace," about the classic western novel. The Round-Up is a western writers' technical publication.

Estleman's novels are known for their crisp, lifelike dialogue, but he believes the background detail is just as important and a good counterbalance to dialogue. And he proves it in "This Old Bill."

THE VIVID DESCRIPTIONS of scouting on the trails, hunting buffalo and going from town to town in the Wild West show provide a personal dimension that a straight biography of Buffalo Bill Cody would lack. Just as intriguing as Cody are the characters (real people) who surround him.

As the jacket blurb reveals, "Cody was perfect raw material for New York journalist and dime novelist Ned Buntline." And he also was perfect material for Estleman. The book records the life of Buffalo Bill from the time he

Please turn to Page 8



Model house in Evergreen Village, a cluster development of 16 unattached residences, has rough sawn cedar siding and brick styled to blend with the natural beauty of the location.

Clusters come to Beverly

Evergreen Village, the first cluster home development in Beverly Hills, is now a reality.

Developer/builder William S. Lorimer spent more than three years working with village officials until the plan met with everyone's approval.

The sites for the 16 unattached residences, on nine acres of rolling terrain, are bounded on two sides by 16 acres of unplatted, permanent natural park decided to the village of Beverly Hills.

Lorimer, a naturalist by inclination, designed his homes to fit with this idyllic location, and created the look of "a natural Michigan landscape."

Not only is each elevation distinct, but the exterior brick or stone and rough sawn cedar in natural tones blends with the terrain and completed landscaping.

Where there were no trees exactly where he wanted them, Lorimer brought in or relocated beautiful specimen hardwoods and evergreens.

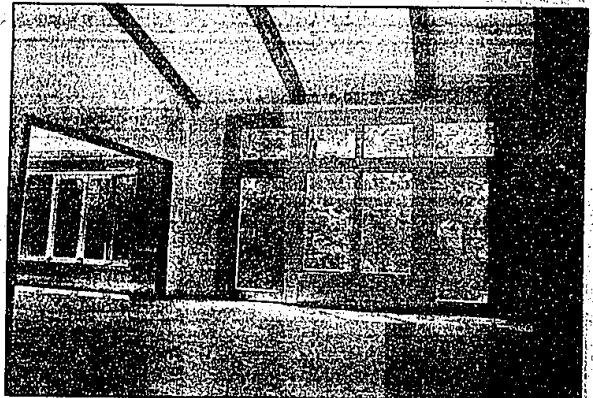
When he thought the surrounding woods could use some more specimen wildlife, Lorimer brought in more to populate the stream bed and woodlands — quail, wild turkeys and chukar partridge.

The model with 2,800 square feet of living space, with a base price of \$250,000 is open daily 1-6 p.m.

Two other homes, already sold, are well underway. Because Lorimer, who has been building in Birmingham, Franklin, Bingham Farms and Bloomfield Hills for 26 years, is essentially a custom builder, these residences will be tailored to meet each buyer's needs.

The first floor plan for the model includes an 18-by-21 great room with open ceiling and floor to ceiling fireplace, 13-by-11 dining room, kitchen, dinette, library, foyer, laundry room plus back hall leading to the two car garage.

The master bedroom with connecting master



View of great room looking toward the dining room gives a hint of the privacy of the backyard and the use of natural wood.

particularly solid oak throughout the house.

Staff photos by Camille McCoy

Evergreen Village is on the "natural beauty" stretch of Evergreen Road between 13 and 14 Mile roads, Beverly Hills.

bath faces the back of the house and thus has a lovely, private view of the trees and woods beyond.

There are two bedrooms and bath on the second floor plus a gallery which overlooks the great room and a winter storage area as well as other storage.

Tour members develop special camaraderie



Jennifer Walsh and Neil Weisman, both of Southfield, along with the rest of the Chorus members, enjoyed a visit to the Lustig-Holmberg home in Salzburg.

This is the second of three stories on the Michigan Festival Chorus's European tour last month.

By Mary Jane Doerr
special writer

On the morning of their first concert, Conductor Eugene Branstrom rehearsed the Michigan Festival Chorus on the lawn of the Hotel Zistel Alm in front of the swimming pool.

Behind him the faint outline of the Alps was coming into view in the morning sun.

Nino milles down the winding road that brought us up to this mountain lodge was the city of Salzburg. The hotel was as music director for the chorus. Dr. John Dovers, had said, "Only a slice's throw away from downtown Salzburg."

Six months of rehearsing last winter

and spring had left only small matters of expression and the balance of sound to concentrate on. Branstrom had the singers make certain movements to promote a richer, deeper tone.

DOVARAS listened off to one side. From time to time he made suggestions.

"This is the first time John and I have worked together," said Branstrom, later on that day at the famous Glockenspiel Cafe in the old part of Salzburg.

"I have been at Seaborn High School for 16 years. Several years ago I took the Seaborn High School Choir to Rome and Czechoslovakia, and I have toured Europe with choir other times. Last year about this time we decided to form our own organization."

Under the name of Festivals Abroad, the two have already booked a choir tour of the British Isles and are considering tours of Northern Europe, East Germany, and France in the following summers.

Under the name of Festivals Abroad, the two have already booked a choir tour of the British Isles and are considering tours of Northern Europe, East Germany and France in the following summers.

"I think too often in our school curriculum we forget to teach people how to live, to feel good about themselves, to find where we came from. I think an experience like this teaches people to relate to life through an art form," Branstrom said.

He and Dovers are concerned about how the chorus performs at their concerts but both are also interested in giving the choir members time to explore the cities on their own — to go shopping and to eat in a variety of restaurants.

In each city, an organized tour of the

higher was given during part of one day. "I think it's good for us to do what they want," Dovers said. "I think it's good for us to see the way they live and think."

"It seems like it's a little bit like a time to realize what they have done, but maybe on later they realize and come back comparing it with what they know in America."

There were 25 members of the Michigan Festival Chorus. Branstrom and Dovers accompanied about 25 people.

Please turn to Page 4

Photo by Mary Jane Doerr