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### Yellowstone Country: The Photographs of Jack Richard by Mark Bagne and Bob Richard

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## BOOK REVIEW

**Yellowstone Country: The Photographs of Jack Richard.** 2002. Mark Bagne and Bob Richard. Roberts Rinehart Publishers, Lanham, MD, in cooperation with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. \$29.95, cloth; 152 pp. ISBN 1-57098-423-9.

The photographs in this book are a collection of 140 photos gleaned from 4000 prints and 160,000 negatives—the works of a small-town newspaperman and photographer in a community nestled against the northeast corner of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Jack Richard was born in 1909 in or near Cody, Wyoming, 14 years after Buffalo Bill dreamed up the “city” and 4 years after its legal incorporation. His parents owned and operated a guest ranch on the North Fork of the Shoshone River about 25 miles east of Yellowstone National Park. He spent most of his life in and around this gateway to the park. This gave him an appreciation for the natural world and the opportunity to get to know its widely varying manifestations of focus, mood, and scale. There he also became friends with an older cowboy photographer, Charles Belden, from the neighboring town of Meeteetse, Wyoming. The authors indicate that there is a similarity between the works of both photographers. Following graduation from college in 1931 Richard started a newspaper career as an advertising salesman for the Cody Enterprise and then became a cub reporter. After moving to another newspaper job in Sheridan, Wyoming, his photojournalism career was launched when the editor sent him to photograph a vehicle accident on the highway near town “because I could look at a deceased person

without getting sick.” Moving back to Cody in 1941, shortly after his friend Belden went to photograph bathing beauties in Florida, Richard began in earnest to photograph the world around him with an eye for the beautiful and “the ability to turn the usual into the unusual.”

The selections of the authors cover the wide variety of subjects that Richard found to photograph. The book is divided into 9 sections including scenery and people of Yellowstone National Park; the western way of life of cowboys and dude wranglers; the ways of cattle and sheep ranchers; montane landscapes from both ground and airplane; wildlife, mostly in Yellowstone; and—true to his newspaper upbringing—oil fields, dam workers, and other working pursuits of the area; significant events and people around town; scenes from the Heart Mountain relocations center northeast of Cody; and portraits and “still lifes [sic]” of some of the colorful and interesting local people. The texts introducing each section are well written and give a good sense of the history and emotion evoked by the photos.

The book will be of most interest to the people of Cody, of course, but those in the rest of the Big Horn Basin will find much to reminisce about as well. And what community neighboring the Greater Yellowstone does not have a similar past with its own scenery, ranches, and colorful characters that are reflected in the subjects of this book?

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