

PATH OF THE PRONGHORN



BY ANN NOBEL

Every spring, thousands of pronghorn migrate from their winter range on the high desert country in southern Wyoming north to Grand Teton National Park; then back again in the fall. It is a 170-mile journey one way. This same migration has been documented to have occurred for at least 6,000 years. It has been called the American Serengeti.



Along this ancient migration route is the town of Pinedale. Currently, the Pinedale community is rallying together to commemorate this annual event through art in a monumental sculpture project with artist Georgia Bunn. Five does and one buck pronghorn, cast in bronze, will re-enact the migration when placed on town property on the corner of US 191/Wyoming Centennial Scenic Byway and Lincoln Street, next to Pine Creek. Project director, Sofia Wakefield, also plans to include interpretive signage at the site to offer an educational opportunity about this unique animal migration.

The Pinedale community will be commemorating Wyoming's conservation victory in establishing the nation's first federally designated wildlife migration corridor – the Path of the Pronghorn. This educational project lends itself locally,



regionally, and federally as an example of the multi-use of public lands: agriculture, ranching, production, tourism, and government. The impact to the community and the historical and cultural resources involved will share Wyoming's devotion for its wildlife and celebrate publicly the unsung heroes of conservation and continue Wyoming's legacy of conservation for generations to come. The quality of the project will be ensured accuracy and authenticity by partnering with U.S. Forest Service, BLM, Wildlife Conservation Society, and U.S. Biologists, and the Town of Pinedale.

Georgia Bunn is a sculptor of western history, specializing in life-size and monument bronze. As a third generation Oregonian, Georgia has a personal family history and pride of the West. Historical accuracy is a passion, and she takes great care in her depth of research.

Georgia's artist fees have been donated by a private anonymous honorarium. The Sublette Group for Community Initiative, the local sponsoring organization for this project, is responsible for raising the foundry costs. The site location was donated by the Town of Pinedale. Numerous local organizations, including the Pinedale Travel and Tourism Commission, Sublette County Visitor Center, Sublette Chamber of Commerce, Pinedale Fine Arts Council, Museum of the Mountain Man, Sublette Economic Resource Council, the Town of Pinedale, Sublette County Commissioners, Main Street Pinedale, business, and local ranchers have given their support to make this project possible.

The ultimate goal of the project is to get people excited about history and nature through an educational and artistic experience that will instill conservation and preservation efforts for generations to come. Most importantly, this project helps create and foster an enduring sense of place for Sublette County residents.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

As a third generation Oregonian, Georgia Bunn has a personal family history and pride of the West. Her reverence for the American Indians who are neighbors, respect of the working cowboy and veneration for pioneering women makes her bronzes authentic. "Through sculpture cast in bronze, I can show my dedication and honor those who have woven the rugged tapestry that is the American West."

Historical accuracy is a passion, and she takes great care in her depth of research. Her ongoing relationship with the Smithsonian, Cody Museum, Western Heritage Center, and hours spent with careful investigation and analysis of historical photographs, allow her as an artist to truly "Immortalize the real person, capturing their heart in Bronze."

TRAINING:

Georgia had the privilege of being tutored by the truly elite in Western sculpting. Cowboy Artist of America John Coleman, Mehl Lawson, and prominent sculptor Lincoln Fox were among her most notable instructors and mentors.

"They were incredibly tough critics, but were supportive in bringing my sculpting to a level worthy of Figurative Realism. I'm deeply indebted to all of them for taking the time to teach not only the techniques of sculpting, but the importance of capturing the heart and soul of the West in Bronze."

FROM THE ARTIST:

The pride, dignity and essence of the Historical American West culture is too often sanitized in the pages of history books. With deep respect, well researched historical perspective, both from the tribal oral histories, combined with respectful examination of private archival collections, gives me the foundation to sculpt with figurative realism, both our ancestors and indigenous peoples from the past.

"We do not want riches but we want to train our children right. Riches would do us no good. We could not take them with us to the other world. We do not want riches. We want peace and love" –Red Cloud

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