



Discovery Road
Presents

"Cowboy Way"

Cowboy story documented for television ranching, rodeo and the movies

The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) and *Discovery Road* announce the release of the *Cowboy Way* documentary featuring three prominent Utah ranch families.

"These three families are all incredible stories the public needs to hear about. Each family story tells an important chapter of Utah history about surviving on the land, maintaining the ranch lifestyle, and keeping the cowboy spirit alive over several generations. These cowboy stories are real and wonderful." *Discovery Road* producer James Nelson said about the new episode. In the beautiful sweeping Smith Mesa next to Zion National Park one of the most intriguing cowboy stories unfolds for the viewer. The Wright Family ranch rolls out like a picnic blanket greeting guests from around the world. Though the Wright family ranch roots date back to the 1850s and homesteading it's a much different place today.

“I think the main attraction for these tourists is the scenery but once they get here, they experience the serenity of the area which is unmatched anywhere I’ve been,” rancher Bill Wright said in an interview with *Discovery Road*.

The camping and horseback riding at the sprawling Wright Ranch offers tourists a heavenly view near the majesty of Zion National Park. The story of how the ranch came in being and survived over the decades is compelling, but the chronicle gets better when you hear the latest chapters of the Wright chronicle. Bill and Evelyn Wright are the parents of 13 children and proud to announce that they have numerous world champion rodeo stars in the family. Buckle up for this one!



HEAVENLY LUNCH- Evelyn and Bill Wright share a lunch of hamburger sandwiches inside of their modest RV trailer stationed on the Smith Mesa where their ranch operates. Fate kept Bill on the ranch, but their boys have become world rodeo champions. -Photo courtesy of *Discovery Road*

“We’re descendants of Jacob Hamblin through his brother on the Hamblin side and through his youngest sister on the Riggs side. They were cowboys. My Grandfather, was Fairy B. Hamblin. He went by *Foote*. He never had a drivers’ license he had a horse. And he was the original cowboy,” southern Utah rancher Hal Hamblin said.



ORIGINAL COWBOY—One year-old Hal Hamblin with his Grandfather *Foote* Hamblin pose for a photograph. Little Hal Hamblin would grow up to be a successful rancher in southern Utah and never forget his Grandfather *Foote* who he called the *original cowboy*. -Photo courtesy Hal Hamblin family.

Cowboy Earl Bascom grew up in Utah and Canada learning about the wild west, seeing wild horse roundups, hearing stories of bank robbers and witnessing the birth of rodeo that he would later help perfect. He attended Brigham Young University where he became known as one of the best cowboy artists ever.

“When he went to BYU in 1933 to get some art classes and instruction. The way he paid for his tuition, every summer he rodeoed. So, from his



COWBOY HISTORY-John Bascom prepares for an interview about his father Earl Bascom. Earl Bascom is renowned for inventing cowboy gear to make rodeo safer, his incredible artwork depicting ranch life in the old west and his acting roles on the silver screen in numerous classic western movies.

Photo credit-Discovery Road

winning it paid for his tuition and his living expenses at college. In fact, a lot of the students told me they were quite envious, they thought he was rich. He said, ‘You know you had to be good to win in rodeo and you had to win to keep going’ and so he was good,” John Bascom said during an interview about his father Earl Bascom.

Discovery Road also gives viewers a glimpse into how cowboys end up the movies. In some instances, they were used as extras while their ranches provided horses and the big open spaces for filming. Some of the cowboys and cowgirls from Utah became western movie stars.



LITTLE COWBOYS-A recent rodeo and horse event at the Cleone Peterson Eccles Equestrian Center and Contoy Arena attracts tomorrow’s cowboys. The power of the horse and the dream to be a cowboy or cowgirl is alive and well at this Mt. Pleasant, Utah facility. -Photo credit- *Discovery Road*

One of the overarching themes of *Cowboy Way* is seeing how each family deals with the changing landscape of the cowboy way of life. Some families adjust and adapt while others downsize and carry onward. “Yea, the past is the past and it’s never going to go back. I think the cowboy way of life is what America was built on really. The farming, ranching, all agriculture. Now it is fading. They just don’t get where their milk and meat and bread and all of that comes from. They just don’t get it. They don’t understand the work that it takes and, the effort that it takes to put those items in the grocery store,” Cynthia Hamblin says in the documentary.



BRANDING DAY ON THE RANCH-Hal Hamblin in the tan coat oversees the branding operation on the family ranch south of Kanab, Utah. Hamblin shared some of his family cowboy history and deep connections to the western lifestyle during the *Discovery Road* episode *Cowboy Way*. -Photo credit - *Discovery Road*

“Cowboys and the American West! There’s just nothing quite like it anywhere in world. It’s an amazing lifestyle. This documentary has been one remarkable, dusty sonnet, we’ll never forget.” Nelson stated about producing the *Cowboy Way* production.

Discovery Road is an award-winning ongoing documentary series broadcast each Saturday on the Utah Education Network (channel 9) at 6pm MST and on several local cable television stations in Utah and surrounding states.

The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) is a federally designated area of central and southern Utah running along the beautiful and historic U.S. Highway 89 — including the All-American Road Utah State Route 12, and Capitol Reef Scenic Byway Utah State Route 24, which both intersect with U.S. 89 and together form the MPNHA’s Boulder Loop. The area includes the counties of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield, and Kane.

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