

Exploring The Murie Ranch

A VISITOR'S GUIDE



Early Days at the Ranch



The Murie cabin in winter. Candles in brown paper bags light the way to the front door.

It was the end of World War I and Buster Estes, a cowboy from Colorado, decided to settle in a remote part of northern Teton County, Wyoming. With just one cow and \$30 to his name, Buster purchased a 76-acre plot, and settled the land with his wife, Frances, and their daughter, to try his hand at farming. Due to the rocky and infertile soil, Buster made the lucrative choice to switch from farming to dude ranching, naming the place the STS Ranch. He constructed

the first building, now known as the Homestead Cabin. In time, a lighting system of 50 storage batteries charged by running an old car engine was established to supply power to the main buildings. Water was pumped from the main well into the homestead building and bath house. A young boy was hired to carry buckets of water to each cabin daily.



Mardy and Olaus with son, Martin, in Alaska, 1926. Martin sits atop a Mammoth Tusk.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the STS Ranch expanded as an influx of east coast tourists arrived in Jackson Hole, keen to experience the "wild west." Buster built multiple cabins and a system of buckrail fencing around the property and helped other struggling

ranchers to do the same. There was no denying that dude ranching was hard work, and by 1945 Buster and his family decided to sell the ranch to their longtime friends in the valley, the Muries.

OLAUS MURIE was born on March 1, 1889 in Moorehead, Minnesota. Growing up in wild, midwestern country, Olaus developed an affinity for the outdoors at an early age. He attended Pacific University in Oregon, where he graduated in 1912 with degrees in zoology and wildlife biology. With a taste for adventure, Olaus decided to become a field biologist. In 1920, he began working for the U.S. Biological Survey (now called the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and was sent to Alaska to study the caribou herds. He focused his research there for six years and married Margaret "Mardy" Thomas in 1924. It's no surprise that Olaus and Mardy spent their honeymoon tracking caribou through hundreds of miles of the Koyukuk River region of the Arctic! In 1927, Olaus was asked to move his family to Jackson Hole, Wyoming to study and report on the struggling elk herds. After a renowned career as a biologist, Olaus retired and became a leading figure in the conservation movement as president of the Wilderness Society. An American visionary, Olaus is remembered as the person who best personified wilderness in our country.

MARGARET THOMAS MURIE was born on August 18, 1902 in Seattle, Washington. She moved with her family to Fairbanks, Alaska, when she was five years old. Mardy attended Reed College and Simmons College before transferring to the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where she studied administration and became the first female graduate. She met her husband Olaus in Fairbanks and traveled with him on his biological expeditions throughout Alaska working as his field assistant and secretary. Together they raised their three children at the base of the Teton mountains. Mardy is remembered fondly as the grandmother of the conservation movement, dedicating her life to protecting vast stretches of wilderness across the United States. Mardy led by example and inspired a nation to save millions and millions of acres in Alaska and elsewhere.

ADOLPH MURIE (ADE) was born in Moorehead, Minnesota, on September 6, 1899. He attended Concordia College and then earned his doctorate from the University of Michigan. Like his half brother Olaus who was 10 years his senior, Ade worked as a career biologist for the National Park Service, and accompanied Olaus on his pioneer caribou study in the Brooks Range of Alaska. He married Louise Gillette in 1932. After the Muries purchased the STS Ranch, Ade and Louise split their time between the Murie Ranch and McKinley National Park. Ade was a champion of preserving public lands and protecting large predators from eradication. He published many landmark writings, including several books, and was one of the first biologists to study wolves and grizzlies in their natural habitat.

LOUISE GILLETE (WEEZY MURIE MACLEOD) was born on March 16, 1912, in Fairbanks, Alaska. The half sister of Mardy Murie, Weezy attended Reed College and the University of Michigan where she studied botany. In 1932, she married Adolph Murie at the home of Mardy and Olaus in Jackson Hole. Together, she and Ade raised two children. Weezy traveled with Adolph on his biological surveys, working as his field assistant in McKinley National Park and was a trained botanist herself. Like Mardy, Weezy led by example and was an early proponent of education that got students outside to study science.

Who were the Muries?

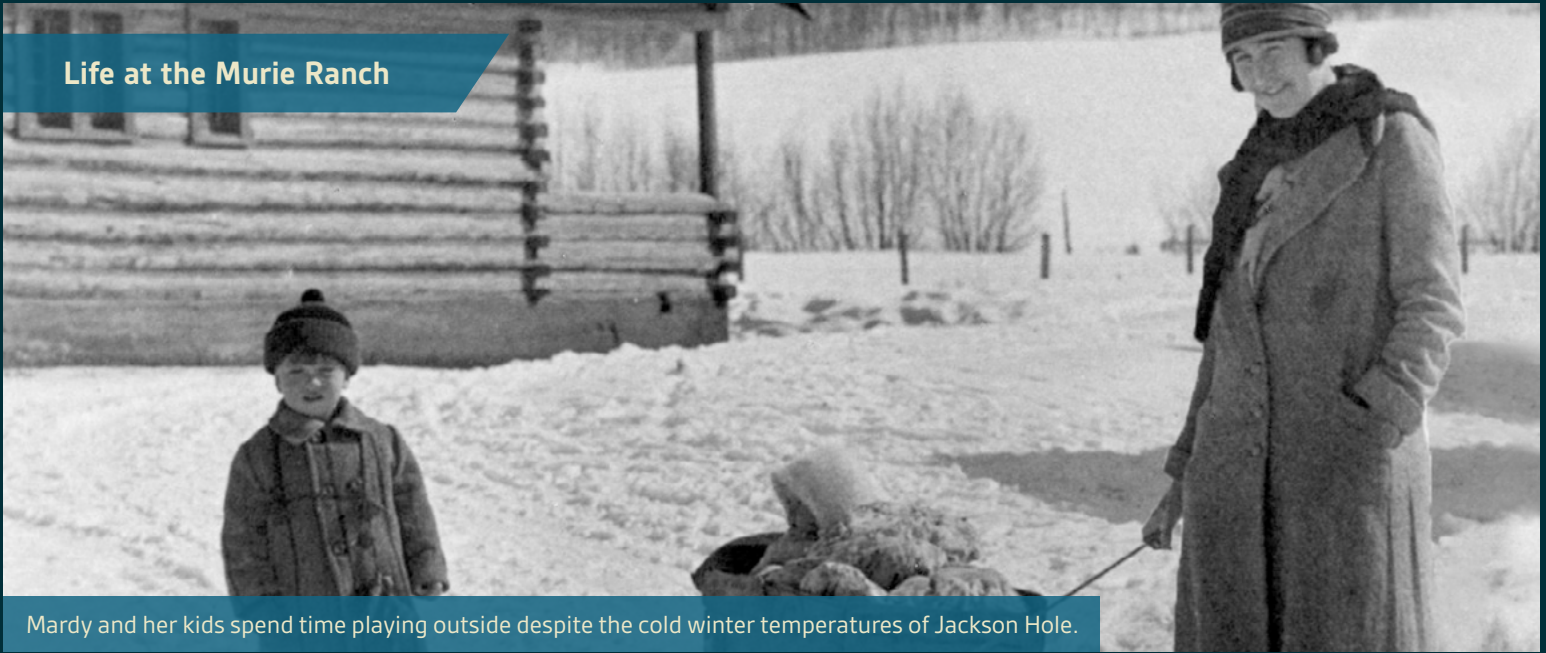


Bottom Left: Olaus was a talented naturalist and artist and drew the wildlife and landscapes that he studied.

Top left: Mardy and Olaus Murie on their honeymoon in Alaska, 1924.

Top right: Weezy and Ade take a moment to pose for the camera in their snowshoes.

Life at the Murie Ranch



Mardy and her kids spend time playing outside despite the cold winter temperatures of Jackson Hole.

Olaus, Mardy, Adolph and Weezy officially moved to the ranch during the summer of 1945, six months after purchasing it from the Estes Family. Living at the ranch continued to be hard work, but the Murie family always had many projects to keep them busy and good company to keep their spirits high. During their first year, Olaus and Mardy lived in a double room cabin called Alatna. They ultimately purchased the

Woodbury Cabin at the northeast corner of the property and moved into what became known as the Murie Residence. Adolph and Louise lived in the original Homestead building. The Muries chose names for all the cabins that conjured memories and connected to significant events in their lives: Chena, Alatna, Belvedere, Capron, Polaris, Wild Lone, Montana, Robin's Nest and Frame.

THE MURIE RANCH
HAS BEEN DESIGNATED A
NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

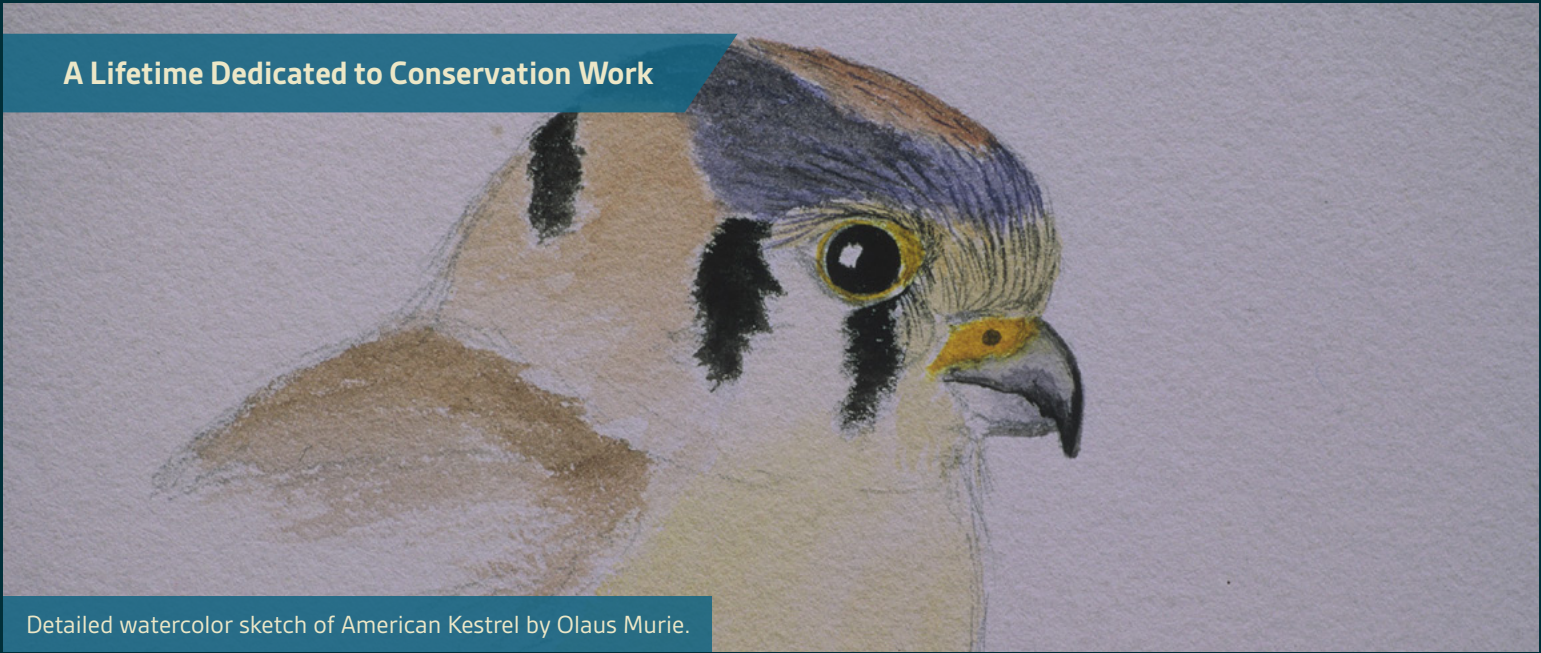
FOR ITS ASSOCIATION WITH OLAUS MURIE, HIS WIFE MARY
(MARTY) MURIE, HIS SISTER ANNE MURIE, AND HIS DAUGHTER
IRVING LOUISE MURIE JACKSON, AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION
TO WILDLIFE AND WILDERNESS CONSERVATION IN THE MOUNTAINS
OF THE WEST. THIS SITE POSSESSES NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE
IN THE HISTORY OF THE

Olaus and Mardy Murie stand in front of their house on the ranch.

The Muries took pride in keeping the ranch unfenced and wild so that the only footpaths were those created by wildlife. Olaus became president of the Wilderness Society in 1945, prompting many notable people to visit the Murie Ranch to meet and consult with the Muries about wilderness and nature. It was here where all of Olaus' lobbying and scientific work came to fruition and played a major role in the creation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the expansion of Grand Teton National Park, and the passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964. One year before the bill was signed into law, Olaus passed away. Ade followed 11 years later. In 1968, the Muries sold the Ranch to Grand Teton National Park. Weezy continued to live on the Ranch until 1977 and Mardy until her death in 2003.



A Lifetime Dedicated to Conservation Work



Detailed watercolor sketch of American Kestrel by Olaus Murie.

Olaus received many honors and awards both during his life and posthumously, the most notable being the Audubon Medal in 1959 and the Sierra Club John Muir Award in 1962. He is considered one of the primary architects and campaigners for the Wilderness Act, the

expansion of Grand Teton National Park, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the enlargement of Olympic National Park. He wrote many classic works, including "The Elk of North America", "Journeys to the Far North", "Alaska Yukon Caribou" and "Wapiti Wilderness."



Mardy shaking the hand of Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th President of United States, at the signing of the Wilderness Act in Washington, D.C.

After her husband's death, Mardy established her own career as a conservationist by writing papers, lobbying for public land issues and attending meetings across the country and the world to speak about wildlife and landscape preservation. Like her husband before her, she received every major conservation award, including the Presidential

Medal of Freedom in 1998 — the highest civilian honor awarded in the United States. Mardy wrote many works, including "Two in the Far North," "Island Between" and "Wapiti Wilderness," which she co-authored with her husband Olaus and published after his death.



The Murie Legacy & the Next Generation

“If all is right within you; if you have enthusiasm; if you have curiosity; if you take it all as a great adventure, just see what you can do about it while you are here.”
Mardy Murie

Throughout their lives, the Muries were tireless and gracious in their efforts. The Muries lived their work. People came from all over seeking the advice of Mardy and Olaus. Mardy particularly loved young people, believing that the education of youth was critical to developing future generations of conservation leaders. In 1967, Mardy and Weezy became founding board members of Teton Science Schools, then a

fledgling education nonprofit that aimed to teach students about natural science by getting them out into nature. Mardy remained connected to Teton Science Schools for the rest of her life.

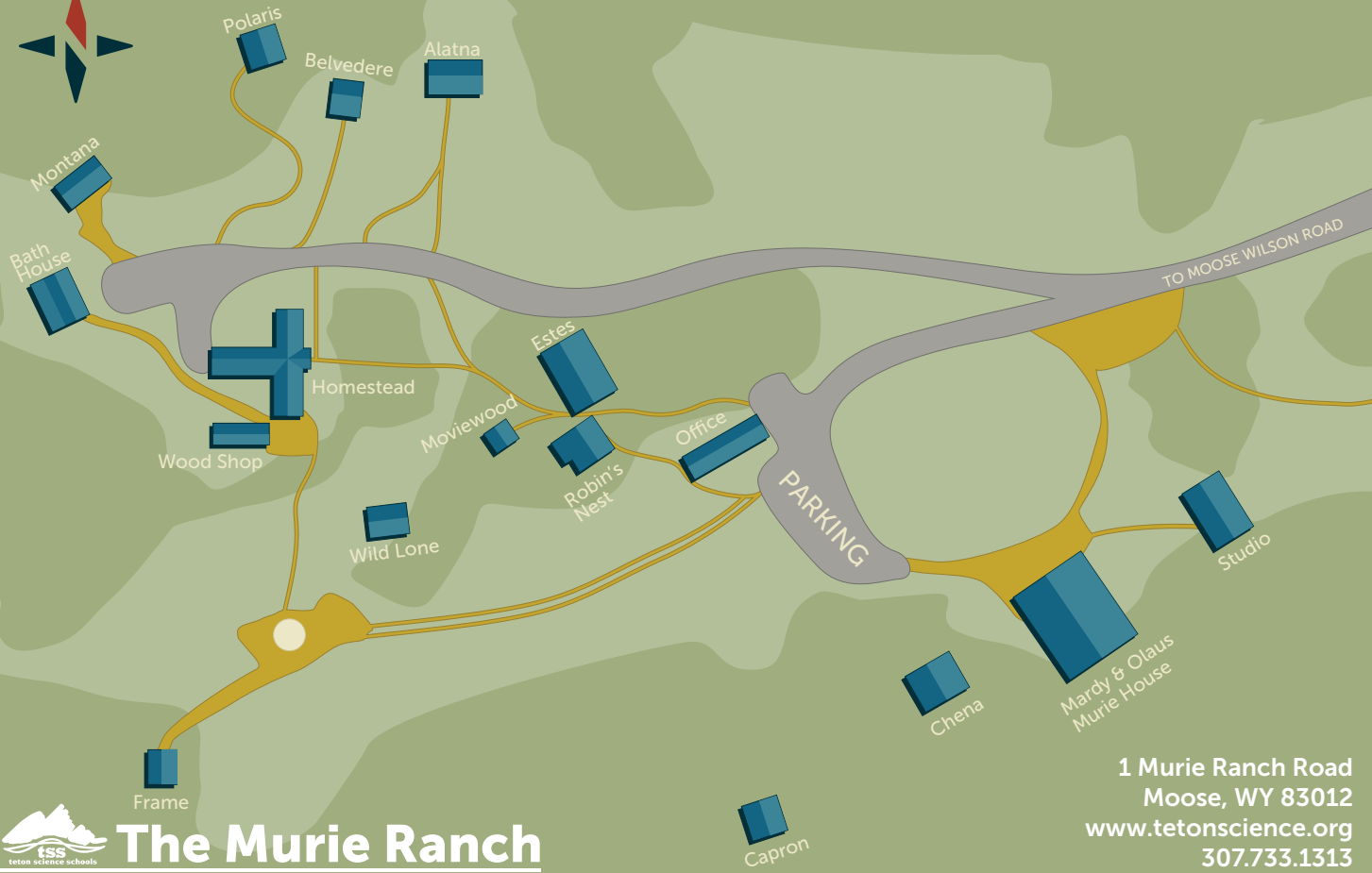


Visitors from all over the world come to The Murie Ranch each year to hear about the Muries and their lifetime of dedication to conservation work.

In 2015, The Murie Ranch became a part of Teton Science Schools. Teton Science Schools' mission to inspire curiosity, engagement and leadership through transformative place-based education emphasizes learning in, and caring for, your place. This idea was at the forefront of the American conservation movement that the Muries helped to spearhead. Teton Science Schools, in partnership with Grand Teton National Park, will continue to honor the Murie legacy for years to

come. Visitors who arrive at the ranch are greeted by an interpretive docent, whose daily tours take visitors on an engaging journey through Murie history and bring the ranch to life with anecdotes and stories. Throughout the summer, Front Porch Conversations at the Murie Residence provide an opportunity to discuss themes of conservation under the shadows of the Tetons.

Grand Teton National Park



The Murie Ranch

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