

# 'The Revenant' recounts Mountain Man legend

By **Jim Cornelius**  
News Editor

Hugh Glass was one tough hombre.

Even among Mountain Men, the legendary fur trappers and explorers who blazed America's trail across the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, Glass's adventures were extraordinary. "The Revenant," which premieres at Sisters Movie House on Friday, January 8, was inspired by his incredible story of survival in the face of deadly attacks by man and beast.

The era of the Mountain Men spanned scarcely two decades, from about 1820 to 1840. It was only a brief moment in the centuries-spanning saga of the fur trade in North America. From the very first European ventures into the continent, men had traded for furs, especially prime beaver pelts. Then, as now, beaver fur made the finest felt for hats. (As Sisters' custom hatmaker Gene Baldwin can tell you, a 100-percent beaver-felt hat is light, durable, and water resistant — the class of the field).

Through most of the fur trade, the business relied on the native peoples to trap and kill the beaver, trading pelts for firearms, blankets, kettles, paint and beads, and — ruinously — whiskey or rum.

In the early 1820s, William Ashley and Andrew Henry introduced an innovation: Instead of relying on trade, they would lead American trappers into the beaver

streams to trap the beaver directly. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company would supply them out of remote trading posts and by caravans that would trek to a designated destination in the mountains for a trade fair that would become the storied Mountain Man Rendezvous.

Hugh Glass was one of the men who answered Ashley's call in 1822, and headed up the Missouri River by keelboat, while Henry led another party overland. He was older than most of his companions — perhaps 40 — and hired on primarily as a meat hunter.

Ashley got word that Henry's party needed horses — theirs having been run off and stolen by Assiniboin. So Ashley's party stopped at a major Arikara village along the Missouri River in what is now South Dakota. The Arikara lived by a mix of buffalo hunting and agriculture, and their position along the river gave them a significant advantage in trade. Unfortunately for Ashley's men, the Arikara were angered by killings of their people by another American trading enterprise. Though Ashley assured them that his party was unrelated to the perpetrators, it seems that the Arikara were not much in the mood for making distinctions.

After a trading session on June 1, 1823, which seemed successful, the Arikara attacked Ashley's party encamped on the sandy shores of the Missouri. In a 15-minute flurry of arrow-and-musket fire, 14 trappers were killed and another 11 were wounded. One of them was Hugh Glass.

After recovering from the leg wound he suffered in the Arikara attack, Glass resumed his hunting duties, as he accompanied Andrew Henry's men overland in August 1823. He was some distance in front of his party, hunting in heavy cover along Grand River when he surprised a sow grizzly with a pair of cubs. As any back-packer knows, this is about as dangerous a situation as a person can encounter in the wild.

The grizzly charged Glass and subjected him to a mauling that his companions — who responded to his screams, burst through the brush, and killed the bear — immediately assessed as fatal.

But Glass didn't die right away. Carrying him on a litter proved too slow, and a slow pace could endanger the whole party, who were under constant threat from Indian attack. Two men — John Fitzgerald and a young Jim

Bridger — agreed to stay put and wait for Glass' inevitable demise. They received an \$80 bonus for stepping up.

They waited. Five days. And Glass did not die. Fearing being left impossibly far behind their trapping party, Fitzgerald and Bridger gathered Glass' rifle, knife and firemaking tools, and left him to breathe out his last on the prairie.

But Glass did not die. Incredibly, he survived his wounds, roused himself, and began to crawl. He would crawl and stagger more than 200 miles south and east to the trading outpost of Fort Kiowa on the Missouri, living on insects, somewhat-edible plants, a rattlesnake he managed to crush with a rock, and the carcasses of buffalo found on the prairie.

Glass was fired with the desire for revenge against the men who had abandoned him. But when he healed up

enough to track Bridger down, he felt sorry for the kid, who had been influenced by his older, more experienced companion. So he headed downriver looking for Fitzgerald. He found him, too, but the man had enlisted in the army, and Glass couldn't touch him without hanging for it. So he gave up on revenge. He did get his rifle back, though, and he eventually went back to hunting for a living.

He went south for a spell, and got into a run-in with Shoshone Indians in Colorado. Took an arrow in the back. A fellow trapper sliced the arrowhead out of his back muscles with a straight razor and he spent some time in Taos, New Mexico, recuperating from that latest insult to his ravaged and battered body.

By 1830, he was operating out of Fort Union, an

See **THE REVENANT** on page 19

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*Sisters*  
**MOVIE HOUSE**

**STARTS FRIDAY**  
FRI., JAN. 8 - THURS., JAN. 14

**The Revenant (R)**  
Fri 3:45, 6:45  
Sat 12:45, 3:45, 6:45  
Sun 12:00, 3:00, 6:00  
Mon-Thurs 3:00, 6:00

**Brooklyn (PG-13)**  
Fri 4:45 • Sat 2:00  
Sun 1:30  
Mon-Thurs 4:00

**Joy (PG-13)**  
Fri 7:15 • Sat 4:30, 7:15  
Sun 3:45, 6:30  
Mon-Thurs 6:30

**The Big Short (R)**  
Fri 4:00, 6:30  
Sat 1:15, 4:00, 6:30  
Sun 12:45, 3:30, 6:15  
Mon-Thurs 3:30, 6:15

**Star Wars (PG-13)**  
Fri 4:00, 7:00  
Sat 1:00, 4:00, 7:00  
Sun 12:30, 3:15, 6:15  
Mon-Thurs 3:15, 6:15

*Movie times and titles are subject to change. Visit website or call for latest information.*

**WWW.SISTERSMOVIEHOUSE.COM**  
**541-549-8800**

*The Belfry*

Jan. 19 / Tues. / 6 PM  
January Dinner Show  
Save the date!

Jan. 22 / Fri. / 8 PM  
Dennis McGregor and The Spoilers  
Local favorites!

Jan. 29 / Fri. / 7 PM  
The Noteables  
17-member swing band provides rousing live big band music for dancing and entertainment.

Jan. 30 / Sat. / 6 PM  
11th Annual Backcountry Film Festival  
Tickets are \$10 ~ raffle prizes, auction items and more will be up for grabs. For more info go to [backcountryfilmfestival.org](http://backcountryfilmfestival.org)

PUB OPENS ONE HOUR PRIOR TO SHOWS  
**BelfryEvents.com**  
Call for Details  
**541-815-9122**

**SISTERS**

**ENTERTAINMENT & EVENTS**

**Saturday~Jan. 9**

**Stitchin' Post Preview Party!** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Come to the celebration and check out all the class offerings for 2016! For additional information call 541-549-6061 or visit the website: [stitchinpost.com](http://stitchinpost.com).

**Faith Hope & Charity Vineyards Live Music by CinderBlue** 1 to 4 p.m. \$5 cover. Info: 541-526-5075 and [faithhopeandcharityevents.com](http://faithhopeandcharityevents.com).

**Sunday~Jan. 10**

**Sisters Library Dr. Bob Collins on "Secrets for a Healthy Brain"** 1:30 p.m. Sponsored by Friends of the Sisters Library, the first lecture in this year's Diane Jacobsen Speaker Series. 541-549-2107.

**Monday~Jan. 11**

**The Open Door Live Music with The Anvil Blasters** 7 to 9 p.m. Come enjoy the Americana, Western-folk-based music! Info: 541-549-6076 or [anvilblasters.com](http://anvilblasters.com).

**Sisters High School BINGO & Community Dinner!** 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., dinner just \$2 a plate! BINGO at 6:30 p.m., 11 games for \$15. Fundraiser for SHS athletics. Great prizes! For more information contact Tim Roth at 541-549-4050 or [tim.roth@sisters.k12.or.us](mailto:tim.roth@sisters.k12.or.us).

**Saturday~Jan. 16**

**HarmonyHouse Live Music with David Jacobs-Strain & Bob Beach** 8 p.m. (doors open at 7 p.m.) at 17505 Kent Rd. Suggested donation \$20. A special evening with David UNPLUGGED! BYOB and a favorite snack to share if desired. For additional information call 541-548-2209.

**Deadline to submit items is 5 p.m. Fridays. Email [teresa@nuggetnews.com](mailto:teresa@nuggetnews.com)**

**Sunday~Jan. 17**

**Sisters Schools Sisters Shootout Basketball Tournament** 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The annual tourney is for boys & girls grades 5-8 from all across Oregon. Presented by Sisters Park & Recreation District. For additional information call 541-549-2091 or go to [sistersshootout.com](http://sistersshootout.com).

**Friday~Jan. 22**

**Sisters Galleries & Shops Fourth Friday Art Stroll** 4 to 7 p.m. During extended hours, check out the many Sisters galleries that will feature live music, goodies and new works of art!

**The Belfry Live Music with Dennis McGregor & The Spoilers** 8 to 11 p.m. For additional information go online to [belfryevents.com](http://belfryevents.com) or call 541-815-9122.

**Tuesday~Jan. 26**

**The Belfry Sisters Science Club Lecture** 7 p.m. (doors open 6 p.m.). Dr. Scott Fisher, UofO Physics, on "How Did We Get Here? Clues from the Solar System." \$5 (free to students, teachers & club donors). For info: [sistersscienceclub.org](http://sistersscienceclub.org).

**Sisters Fire Hall Chili Feed for Veterans** noon to 2 p.m. Veterans and their families are invited to a free chili feed in their honor. An RSVP is required if attending by Wednesday, January 20. Contact Ron at 541-549-1089 or [frigulti@bendcable.com](mailto:frigulti@bendcable.com).