

Foster's Bighorn

Bill Foster put together an amazing collection in the 1930s and 1940s as a trophy haven where the public could view the exotic animals of the world. Growing up in Hayward, he worked as an apprentice for a man who was one of the first African hunters to bring movies of wildlife to the U.S. in 1918.

In the 1920s, Bill developed a passion for wildlife of a different sort that included bootlegging. On the run from the law, he moved his wild enterprise up the river to Rio Vista, where he continued to do things his own way. Starting in 1928, he made eight trips to Africa and ten trips to Canada and Alaska. Old photos on the wall tell the story of a lifetime commitment to the preservation of a world no longer available to us. Bill was devoted to photography and taxidermy, which was highly prized in his time. The pictures, with labels typed by Bill, tell a story of the people he met, the lands he traveled, and the exotic animals he brought back.

Foster's Bighorn now has one of the world's most remarkable collections of wild game trophies, with over 300 wild animals, birds, and fish. The African elephant, mounted in 1952, is one of the few in existence. The trunk measures 13 ft. and the 5 ft. long tusks weigh 110 lbs. each. The mounted giraffe head is extremely rare, and the moose over the bar, with an antler spread of 76", was the largest known specimen in the world at that time. Bill Foster retired from big game hunting in 1953 and went to work in his bar, surrounded by his trophies. He passed away in 1963, leaving his collection as a monument to his lifelong passion for wild game.

Foster's is now owned by Howard Lamothe, a 4th generation Rio Vista man whi is committed to the preservation of the incredible collection. [http://www.fostersbighorn.com/FBH_Web_Site/Home.html]

