

Dressed to Kill

By day, Jared Chatterley is a park ranger. By night, he's living history.

You lead evening historic tours of Cimarron's Old Town while wearing period Western regalia. How do you round up a 19th-century costume in the 21st century? I get mine from a place in Raton, and it's quite pricey. My outfit, with the hat, boots, gun, holster, and lantern, costs about \$500. The outfit has gotten better as the tours have grown. When I started the tours in 2003, I wore a pair of Old Navy carpenter pants and a regular pair of boots, no spurs.

What made you upgrade to real Western clothes? I felt better, more legit, when I was in a period costume. It was kind of hokey doing a tour of the Wild West when I wasn't dressed for the part.

Do people say things when you show up in costume to lead a tour? "Oh, here comes a real cowboy. You better watch out." Everybody has some sort of comment.

Do you have lots of weird, anachronistic moments when you're wearing your 1850s getup and you have to stop for an errand? I've returned videos in my costume, or stopped by the store and picked up a gallon of milk. Sometimes I forget I'm wearing it until somebody says something.

What is your favorite part of the tour? The stories of the big outlaws, like Black Jack Ketchum, and their nasty demises.

Cimarron was a stopover on the Santa Fe Trail in the 1800s, frequented by pioneers and soldiers as well as thugs. Why are you fascinated with the bad guys? It takes an interesting character to throw all morals to the

wind. Not that you would want to emulate them, but bad people are appealing. Everybody thinks they could have run with an outlaw, they could have been Jesse James.

Would you rather have been a saloon-frequenting hood in the 19th century? I would have liked to have been a mountain man in the 1830s—explore the West, just buckskins and black powder. I would have been a happy camper.

For information on Chatterley's 90-minute Legends by Lantern Light tours, call 376-1001, visit www.zianet.com/legendsbylantern, or e-mail chatterley@zianet.com.

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