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**Contact** John M. Goodell, Executive Director  
**Phone** 208 362 8255  
**Email** [john.goodell@falconry.org](mailto:john.goodell@falconry.org)  
**Web** <https://falconry.org/>  
**Mail** 5668 W. Flying Hawk Ln, Boise, ID 83709

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**The Archives of Falconry acquires *The Karl-Heinz Gersmann Library*:  
The most complete private falconry library in the world**

**BOISE, Idaho** – The Archives of Falconry is pleased to announce the acquisition of the *Bibliotheca Falconaria Karl-Heinz Gersmann*. Over many decades, the German falconer and historian Karl-Heinz Gersmann diligently built the most extensive private falconry library in the world, including over 1,500 titles and nearly 2,000 volumes - all in exceptional condition.

With this acquisition, The Archives of Falconry has become the steward of the most complete falconry-related library in the world. Before this momentous addition, The Archive's library (over 4,000 books, manuscripts, and periodicals) was primarily rooted in the western tradition, including the most significant library of falconry works in the English language.

Gersmann's *Bibliotheca Falconaria*, however, spans the cultural and geographic reach of both ancient and contemporary falconry. More importantly, this unique collection includes scores of early, rare works, some of which remain the only known copy.

75% of falconry's history preceded the printing press. Like most ancient arts, falconry knowledge was passed from master to apprentice across millennia. The emergence of falconry literature in the Middle Ages was fueled by a movement to capture ancient knowledge on paper before it was lost to a changing world, and to rediscover and translate much earlier treatises from Arabia, Persia, the Indian subcontinent, and East Asia.

Beyond the art of falconry itself, many early falconry books and manuscripts address a breadth of subjects pertaining to the natural world including early insights into environmental ethics, traditional ecological knowledge, the first ornithological treatises, and much more. Secular observational science itself emerged from this early falconry canon. The Gersmann Library offers a treasure-trove of source material for a wide range of scholarship.

The 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries saw the loss of the great falconry libraries as they were broken apart and scattered across the world into smaller private holdings. This trend left falconers and academics with little access until now.

Mr. Gersmann's firm commitment to keep his collection intact and globally accessible brought him to The Archives of Falconry. Located in Boise, Idaho, The Archives is a hybrid museum/archives that shares a campus with The Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey.

In partnership with Karl-Heinz Gersmann, The Archives is committed to expanding awareness of, and accessibility to, this vast falconry library among academics, falconers, journalists, and others, both online and within The Archives itself.

To search portions of the Karl-Heinz Gersmann Catalog, go to our [Collections Portal](https://falconry.org/collection_access/) at [https://falconry.org/collection\\_access/](https://falconry.org/collection_access/). We expect to be finished with the cataloging and photography of this collection by late summer 2023.



Karl-Heinz Gersmann (left) providing a tour of his library to The Archive's Board President, Carter Montgomery. Photo Credit: The Archives of Falconry

### *About The Archives of Falconry*

The Archives of Falconry was founded in 1986 by several visionary falconers who were also leaders of the renowned raptor conservation organization, The Peregrine Fund. We have since grown into the leading repository of falconry material culture and historical records. The Archives collects and preserves falconry heritage and the legacy of notable falconers, including their correspondence, memorabilia, art, literature, crafts, and life stories. The Archives also interprets significant events in falconry history and celebrates the role of falconers in the birth of raptor conservation.

The Archives of also home to the Sheikh Zayed Falconry Heritage Wing, an exhibit interpreting Bedouin falconry heritage and the legacy of His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, falconer, leader, and conservationist.

We are a destination for falconers, sportsmen and women, scholars, journalists, and other interested public - to visit, support, learn, and explore this ancient connection between humans and birds of prey.

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Additional Photographs for Use:



Carter Montgomery, The Archives' Board President; Kent Carnie, Curator Emeritus; and Karl-Heinz Gersmann examine an ancient falconry manuscript.

Photo Credit: The Archives of Falconry



Artwork of a falconer with two birds on his glove from the rare *Die Deutsche Habichtslehre* published in 1497. Photo Credit: The Archives of Falconry