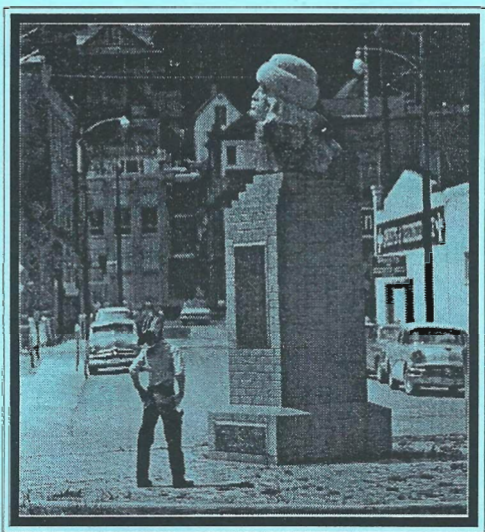


*A
Brief
History
of
Deadwood*



**Deadwood:
An Entire American City
Named a
National Historic Landmark!**

A Brief History of Deadwood, South Dakota

Deadwood was established in 1876 during the Black Hills goldrush. In 1875, a miner named John B. Pearson found gold in a narrow canyon in the Northern Black Hills. This canyon became known as "Deadwood Gulch," because of the many dead trees that lined the canyon walls at the time. The name stuck, and, over 125 years later, the U.S. 2000 Census cites Deadwood's population as 1,380; and the town sits some 4,533 feet above sea level. Given its colorful, violent, and lawless beginnings, few could have imagined that Deadwood would someday serve as the county seat for Lawrence County, as it does today.

In 1874, under the command of General George A. Custer, a government-sponsored expedition confirmed the presence of gold in the Black Hills. The US government tried to conceal the discovery from the general public in order to honor the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, which forever ceded the Black Hills to the Lakota-Sioux. The government also dispatched several military units to forts in the surrounding area to keep people from entering the Hills. However, people illegally entered the area anyway, searching for gold or adventure. Despite the efforts of the military and federal government, the American populace learned about the discovery of gold in the Black Hills. Influenced by dreams and greed, the 1876 gold rush was on in the Black Hills. Once Deadwood was established, the mining camp was soon swarming with thousands of prospectors searching for an easy way to get rich. Such luck happened to fall upon Fred and Moses Manuel, who claimed the Homestake Mine, which proved to be the most profitable in the area. Although the Manuels had been lucky, others were not so fortunate. Most of the early population was in Deadwood to mine for gold, but the lawless region naturally attracted a crowd of rough and shady characters. These particular individuals made the early days of Deadwood rough and

wild. A mostly male population eagerly patronized the many saloons, gambling establishments, dance halls, and brothels. These establishments were considered legitimate businesses and were well known throughout the area.

By 1877, Deadwood was evolving from a primitive mining camp to a community with a sense of order. The crude tents and shanties that had housed the early miners quickly gave way to wood and brick buildings. The community organized a town government that relied on Sheriff Seth Bullock to keep law and order. The gradual transition of Deadwood from a mining camp to a civilized community nearly came to an abrupt end. On Sept. 29, 1879, a fire started at a bakery on Sherman Street and rapidly spread to the business district of Deadwood. The fire damaged the business district of the town, but rather than give up, the community rebuilt itself. The fire made clear the need for regulations preventing another fire. The local government enacted laws that would permit only certain building materials for building construction. After the fire, Deadwood rebuilt itself in brick and stone rather than in lumber.

In 1891, the railroad connected the town to the outside world. The Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad helped bring the community together as a civic entity. The railroad also brought people to the area from various ethnic groups. Chinese immigrants were among those building the railroad. Hundreds of Chinese came to the Black Hills looking for work in mines or commerce. Many settled in Deadwood, where they sought work in restaurants, laundries and stores. By the end of the 1880s, Deadwood had a Chinatown, which was at the northern end of present-day Main Street. The Chinese managed to establish a district and a fire department for themselves, but struggled in nearly every part of society. Often denied equality in a dominantly Caucasian

community, the members of Chinatown strived for recognition as citizens of Deadwood. All too often they were subjected to the suspicion and hostility of whites.

Deadwood gradually evolved from a wild frontier town to a prosperous commercial center, due, in part, to the construction of the railroad. Although the community primarily focused on its gold mining industry, Deadwood became the place where people traveled in the Black Hills to conduct their business. Despite an 1883 flood, and another fire in 1894, Deadwood prevailed through many hardships. In March 1878, Paul Rewman established Western South Dakota's first telephone exchange in Deadwood. Dakota Territory became the states of North and South Dakota on November 2, 1889 (Dakota Territory also included areas that encompassed present day Montana and most of Wyoming). Deadwood moved forward into the twentieth century, but the image of the wild West town has lingered, due to past events and the individuals responsible for making the town into a legend. Figures like Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane each left their

mark. Hickok, a legendary figure even in his own life time, was shot in the back of the head by Jack McCall, while playing poker at the No. 10 Saloon on August 2, 1876. Calamity Jane was renowned for her excellent marksmanship, preference for men's clothing, and bawdy behavior. Although Deadwood had its tough individuals, others were gentler in nature, such as Rev. Henry W. Smith. Preacher Smith was the first Methodist minister to come to the Black Hills. Smith was mysteriously murdered on Sunday, August 20, 1876, while walking to Crook City to deliver a sermon. These individuals are just a few of the many notables buried in Mt. Moriah Cemetery, which was established in 1877 or 1878.

As Deadwood settled into the twentieth century, the gambling and prostitution establish-

ments were still considered legitimate businesses. The new century brought new beliefs and ideas, and the gambling and prostitution came under attack from reformers. The reformers believed that the two were partly responsible for causing social problems, such as drunkenness and poverty. These reformers also supported of the temperance movement that was sweeping the country. In 1919, the US government had passed the Prohibition Act banning the sale and distribution of alcohol. During the roaring twenties, gaming became illegal but continued to operate behind closed doors. With the repeal of the Prohibition Act in 1935, gambling once again flourished in Deadwood until 1947, when it was officially closed. Prostitution remained a business until the 1950s when the state's attorney shut down many of the brothels. The last one to close was Pam's Purple Door in 1980. While gambling and prostitution establishments closed, Deadwood became the only

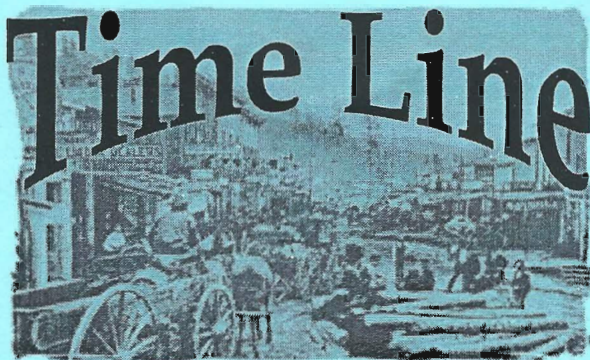
city in the United States to be named a National Historic Landmark in 1964.

During the 1980s the question of gaming resurfaced, and a

petition was introduced to reinstate gaming in Deadwood. In 1986, local business owners agreed to lobby for legalized gaming to create economic development for the community. As gaming moved through the state legislature, the Deadwood City Commission established the Historic Preservation Commission in 1987 to oversee the restoration of historic sites in the community. In 1988, the gaming issue initiative was put on the state ballot. It passed with 64% of the vote and was authorized to begin on November 1, 1989. The introduction of gaming has enabled Deadwood to preserve its historic buildings and dramatically increase tourism. The lure of gaming is not the only draw to Deadwood; people are also fascinated by its unique, colorful history.

"Deadwood has been known the world round for over half a century. It is the smallest metropolitan city in the world, with paving and public and other buildings such as are seldom found in cities less than several times its size."

John S. McClintock
Pioneer Days in the Black Hills, 1939



1740-1760 - The Lakota-Sioux appear in the Black Hills region.

1743 - French explorers, the Verendrye brothers, claim the area for France in the name of Louis XV.

1868 - US government signs the Fort Laramie Treaty with the Lakota-Sioux.

1874 - General George A. Custer leads a military expedition to the Black Hills and discovers gold.

1875 - John B. Pearson finds gold in "Deadwood Gulch."

1876 - Black Hills Gold Rush; city of Deadwood incorporated; Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane come to Deadwood.

1876, April 9 - Fred and Moses Manuel claim the Homestake Mine.

1876, August 2 - Wild Bill Hickok murdered by Jack McCall in the No. 10 Saloon.

1876, August 20 - Preacher Henry W. Smith murdered on route to Crook City, where he had planned to give a sermon.

1877, June - The Manuels sell the Homestake Mine to George Hearst (father of William Randolph Hearst).

1878 - The first telephone exchange established in Deadwood.

1879, September 29 - A fire starts at a bakery on Sherman Street and quickly spreads, destroying the business district.

1880 - Chinese immigrants come to Deadwood to work in mines or commerce.

1883, May 16 - Heavy and wet spring snowstorms cause a flood that washes away most of Deadwood.

1889, November 2 - South Dakota becomes a state.

1891 - The Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley

Railroad connects Deadwood to the outside world.

1894 - A fire starts at a boarding house and destroys the business district.

1899, August 24 - William Jennings Bryan, Nebraskan politician, delivers a speech in Deadwood.

1911, October 21 - President William Howard Taft delivers a speech from a platform on Pine Street, and dines at the Franklin Hotel.

1919 - US government passes the Prohibition Act, which bans the sale and distribution of alcohol; reformers attack the gambling and prostitution establishments in Deadwood.

1920s - Gambling operates behind closed doors but prostitution establishments still thriving illegally.

1927 Summer - President Calvin Coolidge vacations in the Black Hills and participates in Deadwood's Days of '76 celebration.

1935 - Prohibition Act is repealed, gambling flourishes once again.

1947 - Gambling officially ends in Deadwood.

1950-1960s - Most prostitution establishments closed by the state's attorney.

1964 - Deadwood becomes the first community designated a National Historic Landmark.

1980 - Pam's Purple Door, last prostitution house, closes.

1987 - Historic Preservation Commission established.

1989, November 1 - Gaming resumes in Deadwood after statewide vote in 1988.

1998, January - Homestake Mine lays off a significant number of workers.

2000 - Homestake Mine announces that it will permanently close its operations at the end of 2001.

2001 - Extensive archaeological excavation of Chinese boarding house on Main Street.

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