

# Small Historic Towns across America.

As presented by Mr. Stadt's on-line Freedom Project Education U.S. History classes in the Fall and Winter of 2014. You can learn more about our classes by visiting us at: <https://www.fpeusa.org/>



## Red Lodge



By

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## A SHORT HISTORY OF RED LODGE MONTANA

The history of Red Lodge Montana began on September 1851 when the U.S government added the area of what is currently Red Lodge to the Crow Reservation. This obviously didn't last very long because in 1866 rich coal and gold deposits were found.



So by 1880 an official treaty was signed to admit the Red Lodge area back into the territory. Then in 1889 the rail road came through allowing more coal production. Mining then became the main export until the 1930's. In 1936 the Beartooth Highway was completed, making Red Lodge a prime "Gateway to Yellowstone Park" and gaining it lots of tourism. Another thing that created tourism for

Red Lodge was the creation of Red Lodge Mountain in 1960. It made sense that Red Lodge should have a ski mountain since it is just below the mountain and gets plenty of snow. So by the 1960's Red Lodge had become a "tourist town" making use of its perfect location to Yellowstone Park and its ski run.

## POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT AT THE TIME

When the city of Red Lodge was officially established December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1884, Chester A. Arthur was president. The country was currently at the end of the "Gilded Age", a period of peace and immigration that lasted from the 1870's to 1884. The economy at the time was fairly stable, the biggest issues being a fight to keep a balance between the middle class and the big corporations. The time that followed came with a great boom in mining and many other advancements.



President Chester A. Arthur

## CITY GOVERNMENT

Red Lodge is the county seat of Carbon County and is run by a Mayor-Council government. The mayor is elected by the whole population of Red Lodge and serves two year terms, while the six city councilmen are elected by three wards, two councilmen per ward and serve 4 year terms.

## OLDEST BUILDING AND BUSINESS

The oldest building in Red Lodge is the old train depot, which is now used as the Carbon County Art Guild. It was built in 1889 when the Northern Pacific Railroad came through Montana. As time went on it was abandoned, re-opened, abandoned again, and then re-opened into what it is today. The oldest business in town is The



Pollard Hotel and Restaurant. First built in 1893 by the railroad, it served as a resting place for the wealthy travelers. Later, in 1902, it was bought by Thomas Pollard,



The Pollard Hotel and Restaurant

who renamed to its current name (before it was called the Spofford). He made several additions to it and it consequently became more popular. During the mid to later half the century the Pollard changed owners many times and was later closed, re opened, closed again, and is now known as being a very fine restaurant and hotel.

## ATTRACTIONS AND EVENTS

There are several attractions and events that take place in Red Lodge every year. One of the most famous and visited is their 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and rodeo. Both the rodeo and the parade last from the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the night of the 4<sup>th</sup>, and many people from the surrounding area come to see the festivities. There are also several outdoor and recreational things to do. One could go see the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary, where animal sightings are guaranteed. There are numerous camping and hiking activities as well, in April Red Lodge hosts the Peaks to Prairie triathlon.



## WHERE TO STAY

There are a number of places to stay in Red Lodge. There is the historic Pollard Hotel, it comes with a free breakfast at the onsite restaurant, the only drawback being that there is no Wi-Fi. Another great hotel is the Rock Creek Resort. This hotel comes with free Wi-Fi, a pool and sauna, and panoramic views of the Beartooth Mountains. The Lupine Inn is also a notable hotel that comes with all the basic amenities and more.



Rock Creek Resort

## NEAREST AIRPORT

The nearest airport is Logan International Airport located in Billings Montana. Billings is only 61.7 miles from Red Lodge making it just over a one hour trip. The route is simple, just take a right on 6<sup>th</sup> avenue and a left on Division Street and just follow highway 212 until you get to your destination.

## WHY VISIT RED LODGE?

Red Lodge is a place where a person can relax and just have some plain Montana fun. There are many things to do in that town, all year round. In the winter time it's the perfect place to go skiing. In the spring, summer, and fall, it's one of the best



places to go to view wildlife and enjoy nature. Red Lodge also has a rich past that can easily be discovered. So, whether, you're on your way to Yellowstone National Park, finding a place to go skiing, or just looking for some outdoor time, Red Lodge is a great place to visit.

## WEBSITES TO VISIT

<http://www.redlodge.com/montana-arts-and-culture.asp>

<http://www.redlodgemountain.com/>

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?oe=UTF8&vpsrc=0&t=m&ie=UTF8&msa=0&mid=zdCdO9swfgTA.kIqZ1FMgXhnw>

## PICTURES

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