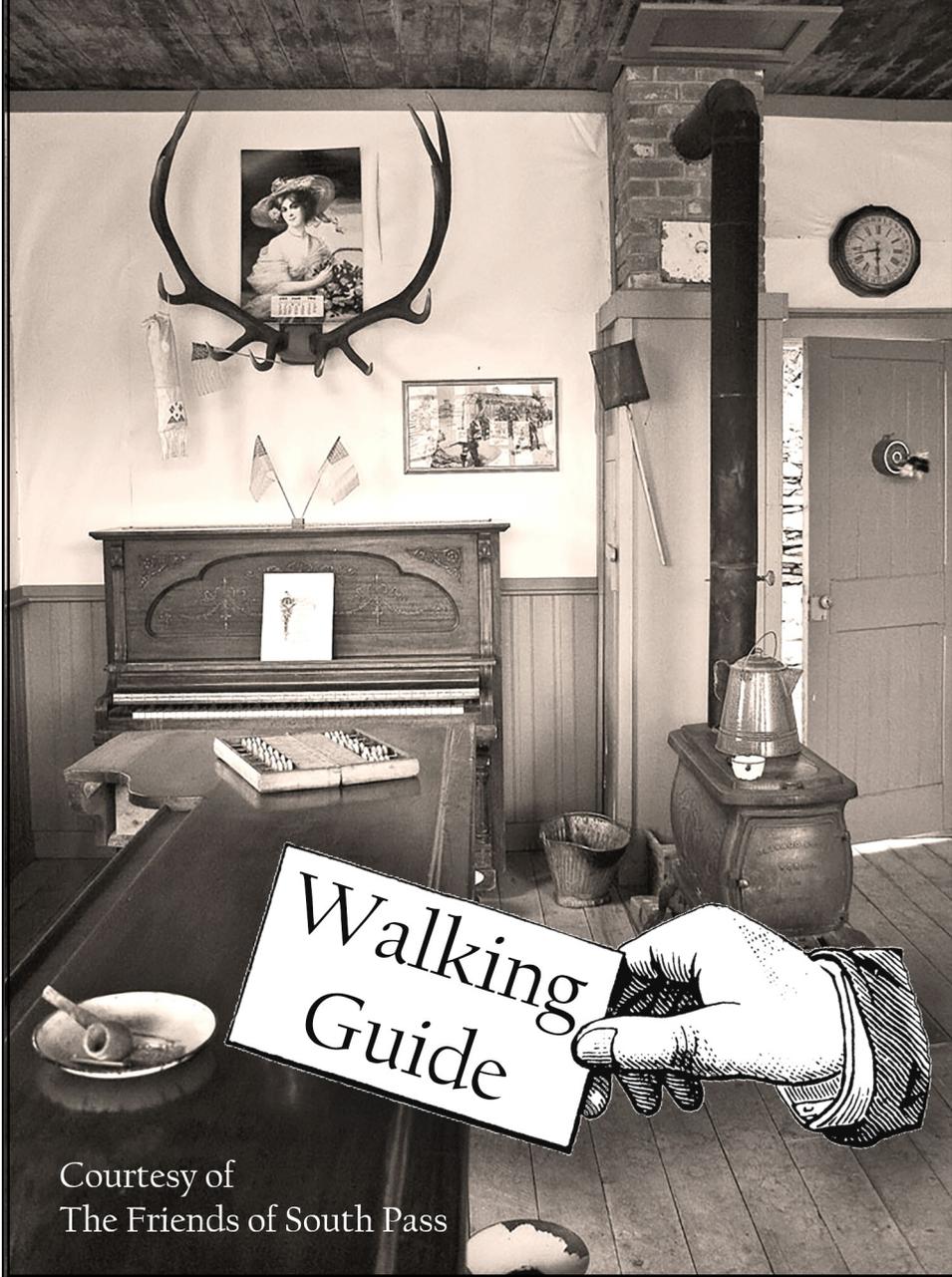


South Pass City

State Historic Site

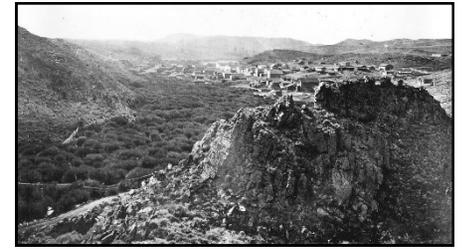


Courtesy of
The Friends of South Pass

Welcome To South Pass City

South Pass City was born in the summer of 1867. Unlike hundreds of other Western boom towns, this one endures to the present day. A rare blend of hard work, circumstance, & foresight has resulted in one of the best preserved towns & gold mills in the West.

Rumors of earlier gold discoveries along the Sweetwater River date to the 1840s, but the promise of greater reward involving less risk had led gold seekers to focus elsewhere. Beginning in the 1860s, scattered handfuls of frontier military personnel were assigned to protect telegraph lines, Pony Express stations, & emigrant trails in the South Pass area. The first sizable gold excitement in the South Pass region took place when a party of men out of Fort Bridger located the Cariso Lode (later

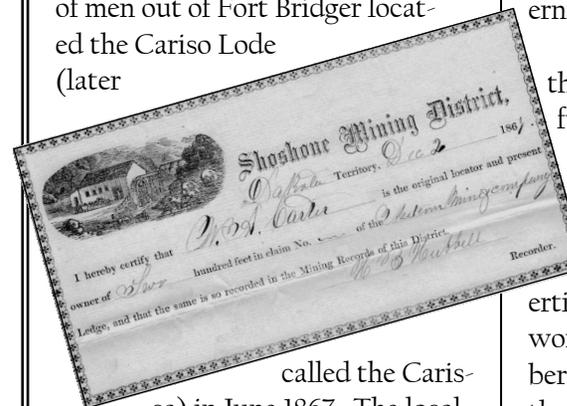


South Pass City, 1870

seasons, but helped establish mining as the foundation for Wyoming's economy.

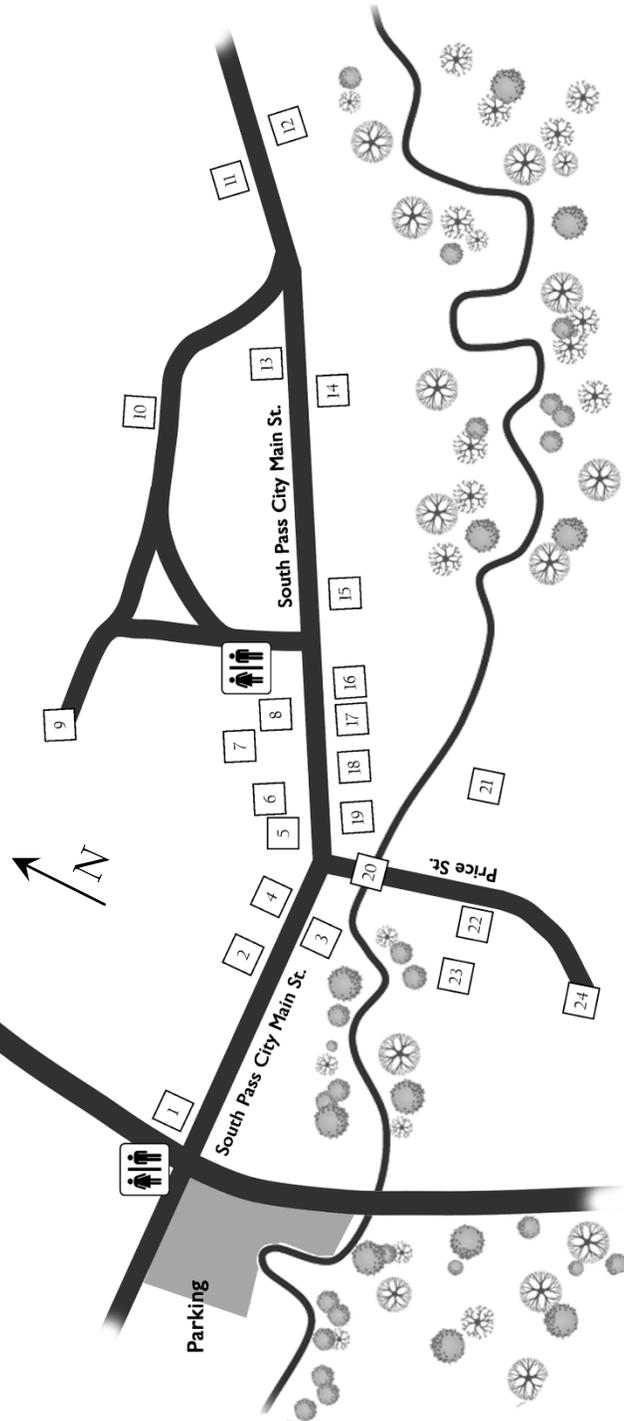
The initial gold rush was followed quickly by a prolonged bust as eager miners & investors were rudely acquainted with the realities of profitably working the Sweetwater Mines. Many early boomers instead sought their fortunes through agriculture on the tracts of nearby public land open to homesteading. Others saw opportunity as merchants, professionals, & government workers.

Always though, there were those committed to a belief in the future of the mines. Their fidelity was rewarded as cycles of national prosperity & optimism resulted in the periodic revival of dormant mine properties. Local men obtained regular work, support industries like timber cutting & freighting surged, & the anticipation of lasting good times ahead convinced even discouraged old timers to hold on a bit longer.



called the Caris-sa) in June 1867. The local region hosted the Shoshonie & the California Mining Districts. The first boom only lasted a couple of

South Pass City



Dance Hall—1

This 1890's log structure has functioned as a theater, community center, & Sunday school.

SOUTH PASS POINTS.
 St. Patrick's day has come and gone. The night was spent in a very enjoyable manner. Misses Lida Carr and Mira Billicox gave a dance in Sherlock & Johnson's hall. Messrs. Menea and Steel discoursed sweet music for the dancers to forget the world by, and John Wygall gave satisfaction as caller. Dr. and Mrs. Lovejoy served an elegant supper at their residence. Since then it has been one continual round of pleasure.

Wind River Mountaineer, 1896

The building serves as an information center for visitors, introductory videos & exhibit space.

Restrooms are across the road!



Tibbals Cabin—2

Barney Tibbals, Carissa Mine manager, lived in this cabin in the 1890's &, later, rented it to his employees. The front room dates to the 1880's, while the rear dug-out dates from the gold rush of the late 1860's. The front room & dug-out were later connected by the kitchen.

During stabilization & restoration of the cabin, workers found old newspaper & magazine fragments stuffed between logs as insulation. This was a common practice with log buildings until even fairly recently.



Tibbals Cabin, c. 1950



Carr Butcher Shop—3

During the early 1900's, William Carr operated a butcher shop here. Previously, the building was known as the Leckie House, after a local family who lived there in the 1890's. Sam Leckie had a lease on the Carissa Mine & hired local men to assist. Leckie's younger brother, Andrew, was one of those who died mining at the Carissa. Andrew fell



Sherlock boys in front of the Butcher Shop, c. 1906

some 80 feet down the main shaft & lingered for a couple of days before succumbing to his extensive injuries. Sam Leckie later helped establish sheep ranching near South Pass City. He, too, met a tragic fate as he was gunned down during a quarrel with a shepherd.



Carissa Saloon—4

James Smith constructed the Carissa Saloon around 1890. It takes its name from the area's richest gold mine. The Carissa was a simple affair, offering basic furnishings & refreshments to customers.



Butcher Shop, The Carissa Saloon & White Swan Saloon, c. 1905

In the 1940's, it was run by John "Shorty" Nichols. Nichols was known as a story-teller & the saloon enjoyed regular use by locals. To the east are the remains of the foundation of the White Swan, an earlier establishment owned by Charles Swanson. The building served as both a saloon & a brothel. Following Swanson's occupation of the White Swan, the building served briefly as a school.



Smith-Sherlock Co. Store—5

Built in 1896 of logs salvaged from the 1870 Episcopal Church, this building succeeded the earlier Smith Store standing to the east. The Sherlock family operated the business until 1948. The store's fortunes were tied to the booms at the Carissa Mine & the ebb & flow of the personnel connected to the mine. Three generations of Sherlocks served the town as entrepre-



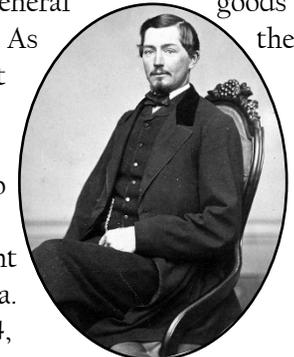
The Smith-Sherlock Co. Store, c. 1898

neurs & postmasters/mistresses. Today, the Friends of South Pass, a non-profit organization, operates the general store. The post office also still functions from May-Sept.



Houghton-Cotter Store—6

Records from the 1860's gold rush show that the first buildings on this lot were the New Orleans Saloon & the Elephant Store. Later during the first boom, Albert Lyman Houghton & Thomas Cotter erected a general goods store here. As the boom went bust, Houghton returned to Kansas & Cotter went to Montana. About 1874, James Smith built this structure which housed his mercantile business for twenty years.



Albert Houghton, c. 1868

Today, the structure exhibits the processes of gold mining & milling at the Sweetwater Mines, as well as videos on local geology.



The Cave—7

The massive interior stone wall was built in 1868 & the interior room was lined with locally-kilned bricks. The Cave protected perishable food & liquor, &, according to oral accounts, also provided shelter from raiding Indians. The Cave was also known as “Fort Bourbon” by locals who relished its most precious contents; whiskey.

In the 1930s, concrete replaced an earlier wooden front room. As South Pass City came to serve more & more automobile traffic, this new front room held fuel barrels for passing motorists.



The Cave, c. 1929



The John & Lida Sherlock House—8

This house was built in the late 1890s by the newlyweds on a lot purchased for \$1.00 by John’s mother, Janet Sherlock, from the Federal Gold Mining Company, owners of the Carissa Mine.



John & Lida Sherlock House, c. 1899

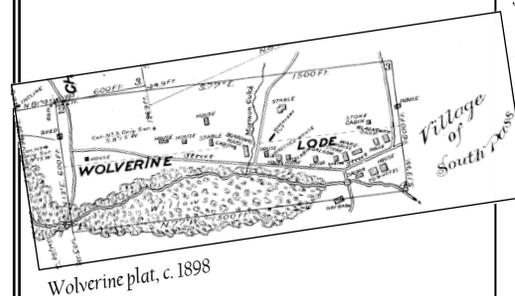
The home was later expanded by a series of additions & remodels. Interior exhibits include pieces donated by the Sherlock family descendants, including a working woodstove in the kitchen. During the 2002 restoration, archaeologists uncovered evidence of an earlier gold rush-era hotel that had burned to the ground in the 1870s.



Wolverine Mine Adit—9

This horizontal mine tunnel entrance, or adit, was driven in search of paying ore. Known as the Wolverine Mine, it never produced a substantial quantity of gold & was soon abandoned. This exhibit allows visitors to enter a short tunnel & experience the dark, enclosed atmosphere typical of a local gold mine.

Similar to the improvements required to “prove up” on a homestead, laws mandated that mining claims also benefit from a minimum amount of annual work.



Wolverine plat, c. 1898

**No other mine
should be considered
safe to enter!**



South Pass School—10

Citizens originally built this school near the present parking lot around 1911, but wet ground & flooding forced its relocation soon after to this location. Classes were held in the log building until 1947.



Students in the South Pass School House, c. 1931

William Carr, a former student, recalled a male teacher who was as quick to take up a willow switch as he was to take a nap & smoke a pipe after lunch. One day, during the teacher’s nap, Carr slipped gunpowder into the pipe. The pipe exploded when lit, & the switch was put to work overtime slashing at any student within reach.

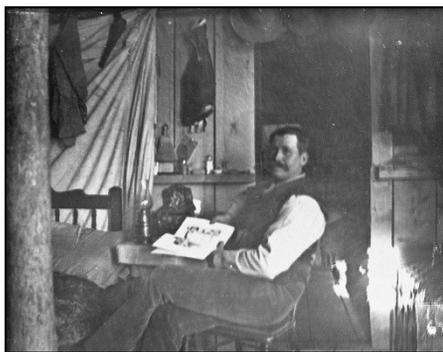


Riniker Cabin—11

Civil War veteran, William Riniker, & his son, Fred, lived in this cabin. One of Riniker's prospecting interests was a claim on Gold Creek, west of town. Little is known of the Rinikers, but they were likely typical of a restless male mining population who criss-crossed the West chasing the promise of gold.

"Guy & myself put another day at work on the Alpine. Riniker came in today from Gold Creek & went on to Atlantic. Big Chris & Fred Trosper also came in. Trosper has quit work up on Sweetwater & gone to the Valley."

-Fred Lovejoy, April 4, 1895



A single miner in his humble home.



E.A. Slack Cabin—12

The front room honors Esther Morris, first woman Justice of the Peace & William Bright, South Pass City legislator who introduced & championed suffrage legislation in the Territorial Legislature, making Wyoming the first state to give the vote to women.



The original structure on this lot was Esther Hobart Morris's son, Edward Archibald Slack's cabin. Slack published the *South Pass News* until his office burned in 1871. Slack's original Gordon Hand Press survived the 1871 fire & is displayed in the back room in a recreation of his office.

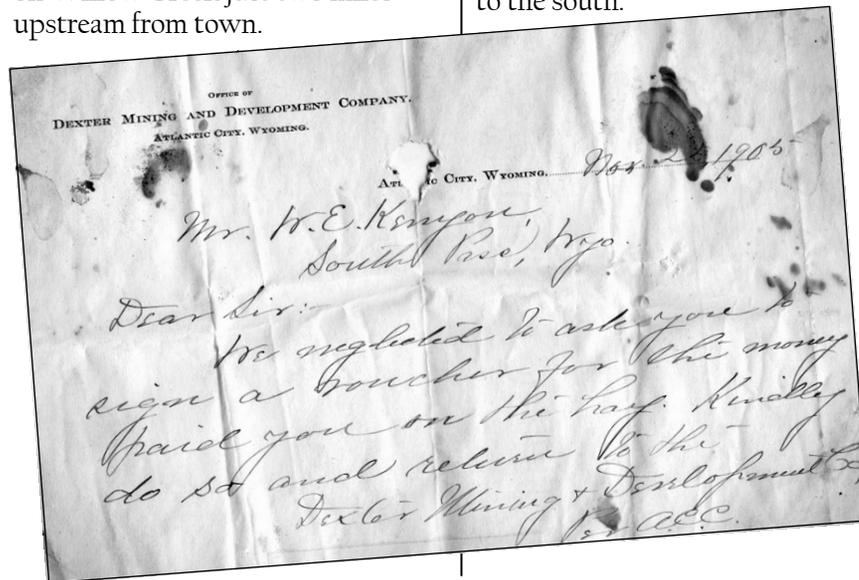
Be sure to pick up a copy of the *South Pass News*!



Cody Cabin—13

This one room cabin was owned by a "Mr. Cody" as recently as 1977. During structural work in 1994, a letter dated Nov 25, 1905 was found in the walls. From Atlantic City's Dexter Mining & Development Company to South Pass City resident, Ed Kenyon, the letter asks him to sign a voucher for money paid him for hauling hay.

The 1900 census notes that Kenyon was a renter; he may have resided in this very cabin. In later years, he homesteaded a successful ranch on Willow Creek just two miles upstream from town.



Blacksmith Shop—14

This 1915-era structure historically contained a coal-fired forge, anvil, & associated tools to make repairs on wagons & horse-drawn equipment. The shop is built of logs salvaged from the 1868 Ticknor Store, formerly situated next to the Miner's Exchange Saloon. When automobiles became common, the smith acquired new skills & equipment to make repairs on cars passing between the Lander Valley & the Union Pacific corridor to the south.



Sherlock Garage—15

This building is a good example of re-purposing useful building materials. The front half of this structure was a cabin located near the Dance Hall & the rear portion was a house located further west on South Pass Avenue. This simple garage was built to shelter Donald Sherlock's car. The structure was used by the Sherlock family until they left South Pass City in 1949.



A car parked on Main St., c. 1910

"There have been a great many people in from Rock Springs to enjoy a couple of days fishing in the streams of this locality. Fred Bates came to town to have Donald make some repairs on his auto."

-John Sherlock, May 16, 1931



Ice House—16

Richard Sherlock built this structure in the 1930's. Later, in the 1950's & 60's, John & Minnie Woodring owned this cabin, along with the core of town, & rented it out as a summer residence. Minnie wrote in letters to friends that the, "cabin is being rented right along". Archaeological excavations in 1990 revealed several layers of plank & linoleum floors, but no evidence of insulation in the walls to firmly establish its use as an icehouse.

"The day has been clear but extremely cold, max temperature 11 degrees above zero & as this was set last evening, I do not think it was that warm today. It was 25 below zero last night & as it was only 2 above at 5:30 this evening it is likely to be as cold again tonight or even colder. Donald & I put a door on the ice house today."

-John Sherlock, December 12, 1931



W.C. Ervin Store—17

Built in the 1970s, this reconstruction hosts changing exhibits from the permanent collection.

Catherine Ervin owned the neighboring South Pass Hotel until she sold it to Janet Sherlock. Catherine & William Ervin may have originally hailed from New Orleans. Having left the failing gold camp in the first bust, the Ervins wrote James Smith (Janet Sherlock's second husband), asking him to administer & dispose of their remaining holdings.



The Ervin Store, South Pass Hotel & Restaurant, c 1900



South Pass Hotel & Restaurant—18

Opened in 1868, this was the finest of several hotels in town. It was bought in 1873 by Janet Sherlock, a widowed mother of five. She was appointed postmistress in 1873 & incorporated a post office into the hotel.



The Sherlock Family, c. 1903. Janet is at bottom right.

The Sherlock family quarters are on the first floor. Guest rooms are upstairs. Janet Sherlock-Smith built the Restaurant in 1899 as an addition to her hotel. The front room became the Hotel's lobby. The Restaurant's dining room & kitchen occupied the rear of the building.



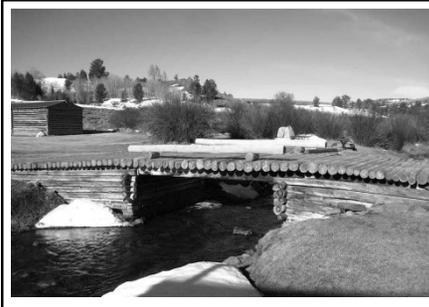
Exchange Saloon & Card Room—19

Built in 1868, the structure initially served as a bank. The name comes from the function of the bank as a means of allowing miners to exchange their gold dust & nuggets of uncertain purity for minted coins of known gold & silver content. The bank made its profit by paying significantly less for raw gold than what its actual market value was. By 1873, the building functioned as a saloon.

The Card Room was a separate business until the two spaces were connected by a passageway around 1890.



The Exchange Saloon & Card Room, c. 1900



Price St. Bridge—20

Charles Price was the South Pass City's Recorder in late 1867, the autumn before the Gold Rush of 1868. Price may have also helped plat the original town site, laying out the future city's streets & lots. Many streets were named for U.S presidents, but Price may have named this street for himself. This bridge & ford across Willow Creek were one of only two significant crossing points for miles. A century & a half later, it is still the town's major intersection.



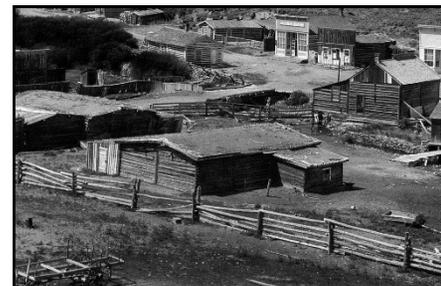
Hauling cargo from the Carissa Mine, c. 1898



Sherlock Barn—21

This barn was built in the 1890s of logs salvaged from earlier structures. This part of town was the location of several stables which catered to miners, investors, & locals who wanted to rent or buy horses, wagons, or board their own animals. At least one gun & many more whiskey bottles were buried under the flooring & later uncovered by archaeological excavations.

The Sherlock family relied on milk & fresh eggs from the stock kept here to provide for their personal use & commercial sale.



The Sherlock Barn, c. 1906



Miner's Exchange Saloon—22

John Swingle, a county commissioner, building contractor, saloon & stable owner, & undertaker, erected this log structure in 1868.



South Pass News, c. 1870

Later, the building was used as a residence. A millenary operated by two "rough" women at one time may have disguised a bordello inside. Today, the saloon is home to a restored Brunswick Brilliant Novelty billiard table. The Miners' Exchange is open many afternoons through out the season. Check in at the Dance Hall or the Smith-Sherlock General Store.



Sweetwater County Jail—23

In answer to the needs of the raucous boom town, the county built this jail in 1870 for the cost of \$2,000. South Pass City served as Sweetwater County's seat of government until county offices were removed to Green River in 1873. The jail continued to see sporadic use.

The 1880s saw the remodeling of the front room of the abandoned building into a classroom by schoolmaster, Dr. Walter Lovejoy. Pink paint remains on the walls & a hand-written alphabet is still above the door.

In later years, the building was used for storage of hay & other goods.



The Sweetwater County Jail, c. 1930



Libby Cabin—24

In 1899, turmoil at the Carissa Mine resulted in Harry Libby's loss of employee housing, so he constructed this log home. After less than a year of residence, Libby moved his family away from South Pass City, apparently to head up gold mining operations in Madera County, California.

The next known occupants were the Ralph Faler family. Faler was a local mail carrier & freighter.



Ralph Faler descendants, c. 1950

The building traded hands several times through the years & was once said to have housed an "isolation hospital" during a disease outbreak.

Suffrage at South Pass City

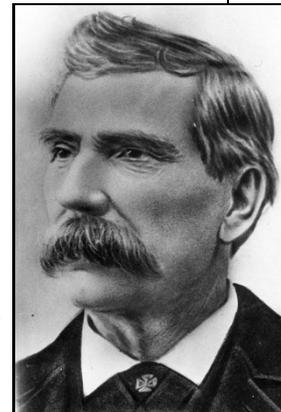
A wild and woolly mining town on the edge of a frontier seems to be a strange place for a national political debate, but South Pass City was on the forefront of the Women's Suffrage Movement of the Mid-19th century.

When Wyoming's First Territorial Legislature convened in 1869 several bills concerning women's rights were introduced. Nationally, the women's suffrage movement had been pressing for access to the ballot box for decades, with no success. William Bright, a South Pass City Saloon owner, introduced Council Bill #70, giving women the vote and the right to hold office. After heated debate, the bill passed and was signed into law by Governor John Campbell.

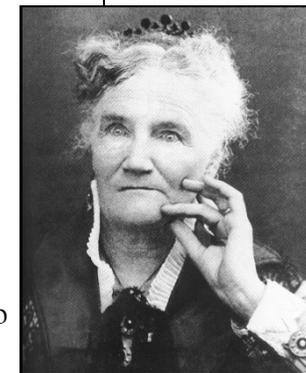
Lured by the opportunities in gold mining, Esther and John Morris arrived in South Pass City early in 1869. A few months later, an opportunity

presented itself to Esther Morris. A job! South Pass City needed a Justice-of-the-Peace. While living in the East, Esther was a supporter of suffrage and this new opportunity seemed a perfect fit. Esther submitted her name for the position and was appointed by Acting Governor Edward Lee as Justice-of-the-Peace on February 17, 1870. She was the first woman to hold public office in the United States. Esther Morris served as Justice-of-the-Peace for 9 months in 1870. Ruling on both civil and criminal cases,

Morris was by all accounts fair and efficient in her duties. By the end of her term, the bust was setting in, and she joined the thousands of disillusioned gold-rushers and left South Pass City, settling in Cheyenne, Wyoming.



William Bright



Esther Morris

2019 is the 150th Anniversary of this amazing piece of legislation and its great leaders.

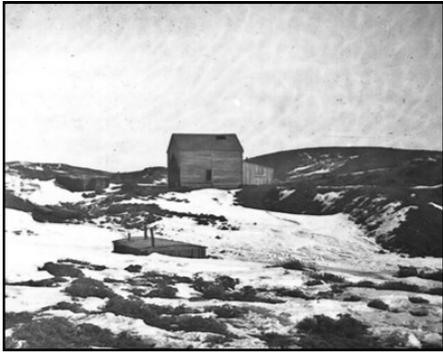
The Carissa Mine & Mill

Tour the Carissa

Thursday—Sunday at 2 pm

Inquire at the Dance Hall

In June of 1867, the Cariso Lode was legally located as the first hard rock mine in the Shoshonie Mining District. In a few short years, the “Cariso” became the Carissa & then finally, the Carissa, as locals feminized the name.



Carissa Mine, c. 1890

Combined with relatively easy pickings in local creeks, the Carissa provided for the foundation of the South Pass City economy. The 1868 gold rush was fueled by rich pockets of weathered & fractured surface ore, but the greater depths reached in the early 1870s frustrated miners with the complications of harder rock, water in the workings, & more chemically complex ores. A bust ensued for two decades.

In 1898, a revival at the Carissa was funded by the deep pockets of Chicago lumberman, John C. Spry.

His Federal Gold Mining Company consolidated over a dozen formerly independent claims. For the first time, the Carissa’s ore was processed on-site, rather than taking it to water-powered mills on nearby creeks. Spry’s dreams of fixing up the Carissa in hopes of attracting a buyer were unrealized & the mine was closed by 1906.



Carissa Mill, c. 1906

In 1929, a group of Washington State investors took over the property & immediately erected an even bigger mill; the unused Dexter Mill from nearby Atlantic City. While the main shaft was being straightened & deepened, the massive structure, still seen today, was being moved & re-erected.



The Dexter Mill in Atlantic City, c. 1904

The 1929, or Midwest Mines, era of activity at the Carissa ended by the

fall of 1931. As the Depression deepened, local creditors refused to extend leniency to a gold mine. After all, they could just send someone underground to take out some gold in order to pay the bills, couldn’t they?



Carissa Mill, c. 1931

All through the 1930s, the mine was tangled in suits & counter-suits, & while other local mines saw a resurgence, the Carissa remained shuttered. In 1941, a metallurgist from Montana, Ray Tower, received permission from the court to re-open the Carissa. Japan’s attack on the U.S. ended gold production in America until war’s end.



The Hoist & Head Frame, c. 1947

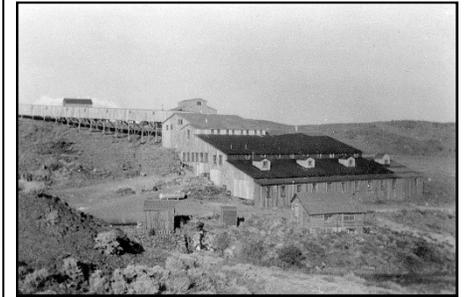
Tower re-equipped the mill building’s interior with first-rate equipment & hopes for success under Mica Mountain Mines Incorporated ran high. Unfortunately, skilled miners & trained mill men were hard to come by, & efforts to revive the Carissa once again lapsed. The final depos-

it by Mica Mountain was in January of 1949, a bar weighing 55 ounces.

A brief revival of operations was attempted after the company was again re-organized as Pioneer Carissa Gold Mines by George Colemere, one of Mica Mountain’s officers.

A final mill run ended in January of 1955. A final mill run in January 1955 produced a 200 ounce bar of nearly pure gold.

Today’s mill restoration faithfully



The Carissa Mill c. 1954

depicts the equipment & recovery systems during the late 1940s.



A tour at the Wilfley table

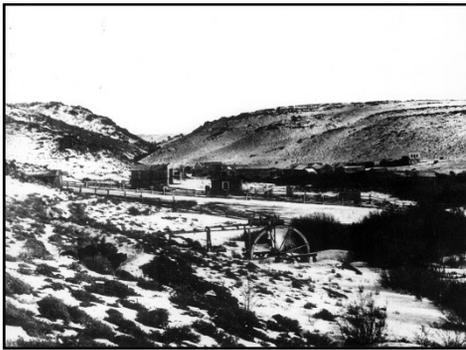
Tour the Carissa
Thursday—Sunday at 2 pm
Inquire at the Dance Hall

Interpretive Trails at SPC

From the late 1860s to the mid 1900s, the valley through which Willow Creek flows was bustling with activities. Mills crushed gold-bearing ore, kilns fired bricks, & saw mills shaped timbers for mines, structures & homes.

South Pass City showcases over 4 miles of interpretive trail. Skill Level varies from easy to strenuous. Trails feature many interpretive signs about the people who lived & labored in the Sweetwater Mines, as well as the methods & equipment they used to extract gold from the rock.

A full-size replica of the Flood &



Flood & Hindle Arrastra c. 1870

Hindle arrastra is located along The Flood & Hindle Trail immediately adjacent to the remains of the original. Once common in the area, arrastras used stone drags to pulverize ore into sand. Mercury was added to the powdered rock to collect the fine gold particles. The arrastra functions each weekend during the season.

The only remaining ten stamp



Flood & Hindle Arrastra in 2014

California quartz mill remaining in the area stands immediately next to its mid-1890s site of operation. The mighty implement had been moved to a new mill site in nearby Palmetto Gulch in the late 1920s. A model stamp mill is demonstrated every Saturday in July & August.

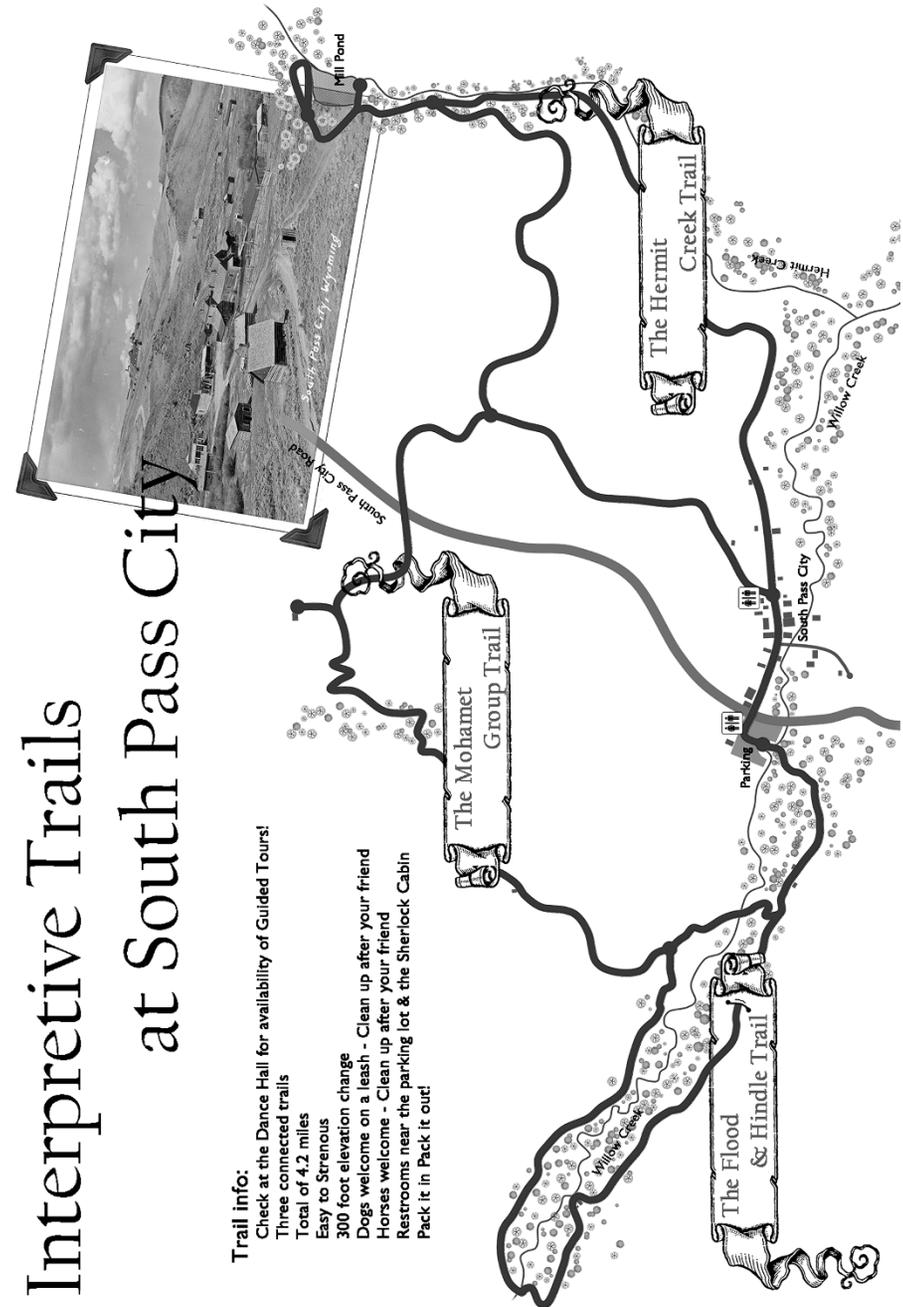
Abandoned mine workings, saw mill sites, & stacks of over-fired bricks are other unique sights along a now-tranquil hiking trail.



The J. J. Marrin Stamp Mill in 2014

Ask the Dance Hall Attendant about walking tours along the trails. Take water, a good pair of shoes & your curiosity. Bathrooms are located across from the Dance Hall & near the Sherlock House.

Interpretive Trails at South Pass City



Trail info:

Check at the Dance Hall for availability of Guided Tours!

Three connected trails

Total of 4.2 miles

Easy to Strenuous

300 foot elevation change

Dogs welcome on a leash - Clean up after your friend

Horses welcome - Clean up after your friend

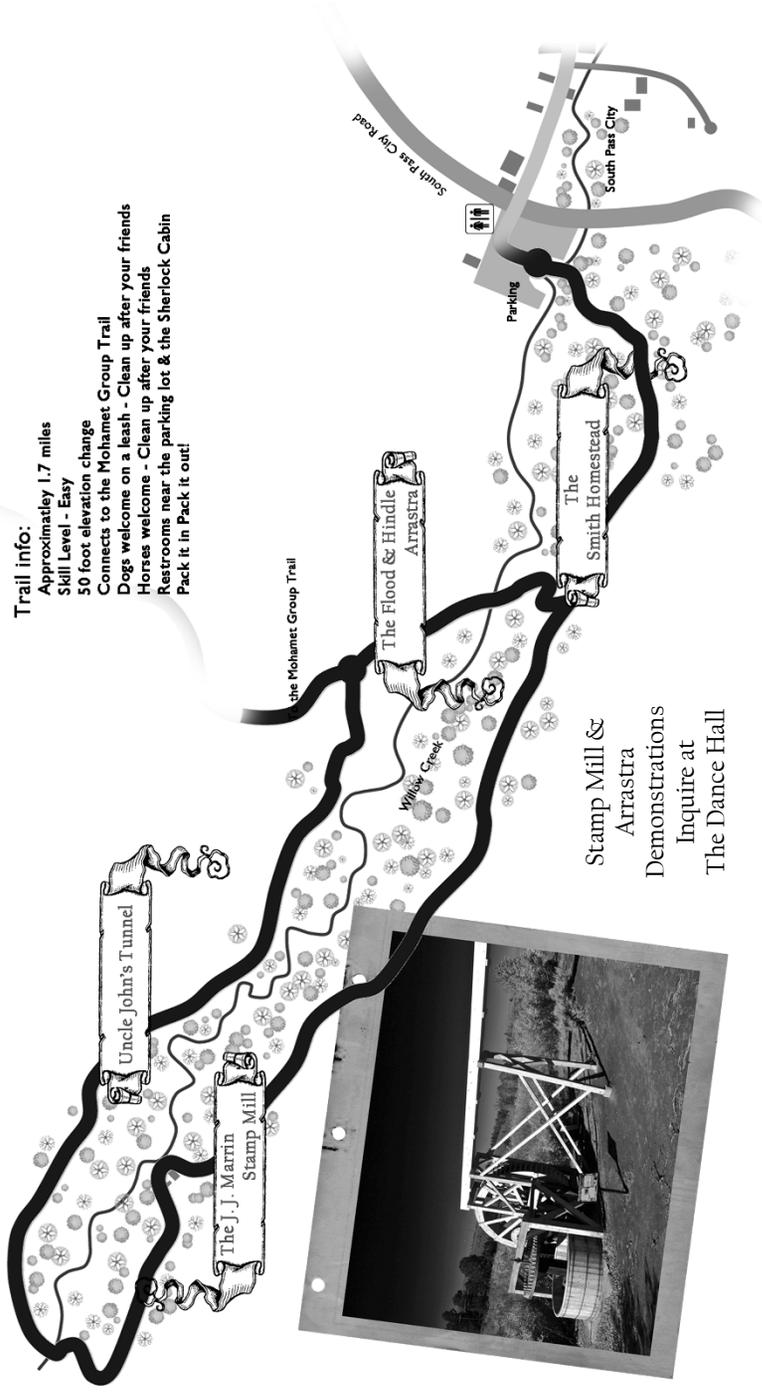
Restrooms near the parking lot & the Sherlock Cabin

Pack it in Pack it out!

The Flood & Hindle Trail

Trail info:

Approximately 1.7 miles
 Skill Level - Easy
 50 foot elevation change
 Connects to the Mohamet Group Trail
 Dogs welcome on a leash - Clean up after your friends
 Horses welcome - Clean up after your friends
 Restrooms near the parking lot & the Sherlock Cabin
 Pack it in Pack it out!

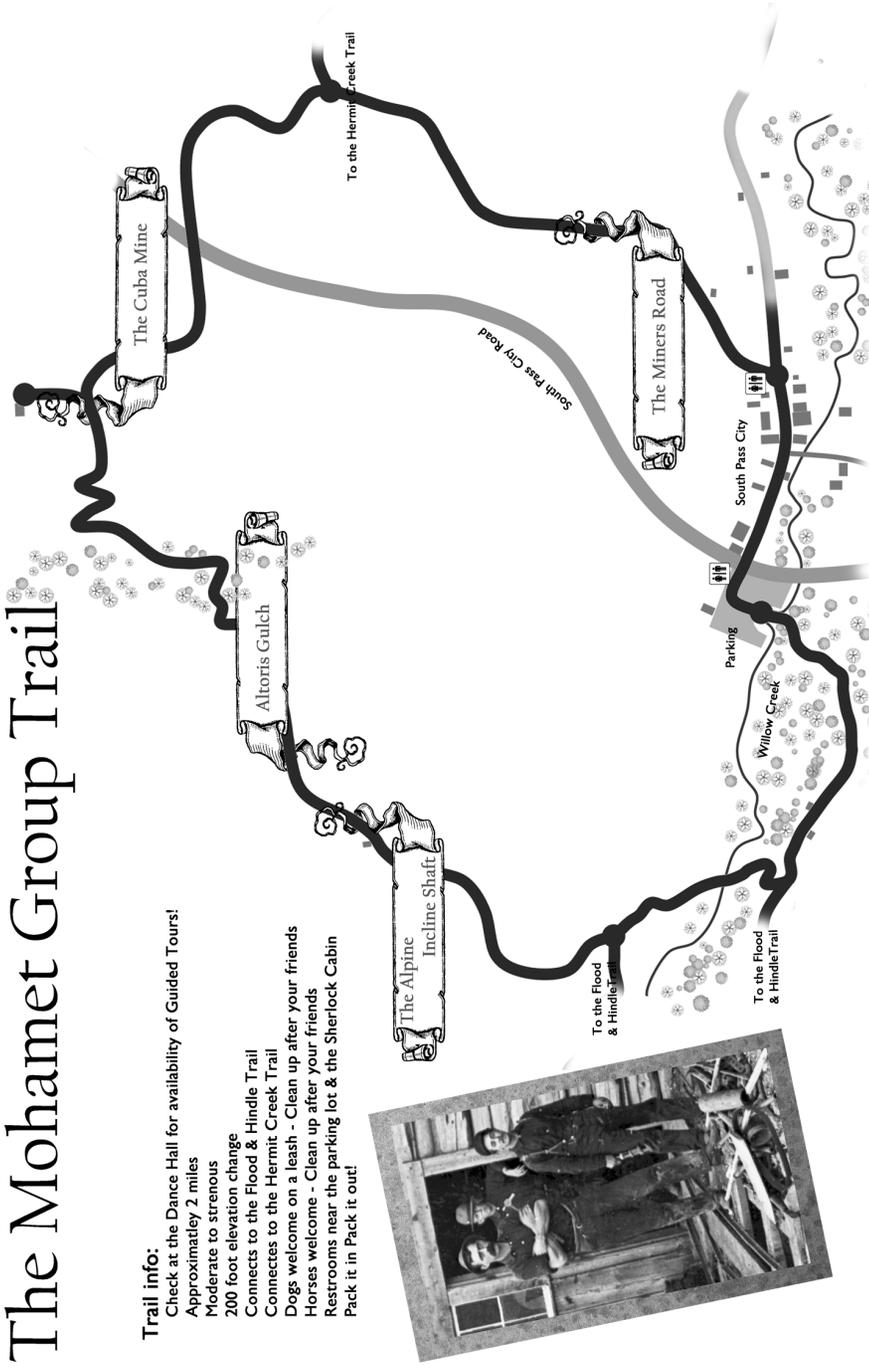


Stamp Mill &
 Arrastra
 Demonstrations
 Inquire at
 The Dance Hall

The Mohamet Group Trail

Trail info:

Check at the Dance Hall for availability of Guided Tours!
 Approximately 2 miles
 Moderate to strenuous
 200 foot elevation change
 Connects to the Flood & Hindle Trail
 Connects to the Hermit Creek Trail
 Dogs welcome on a leash - Clean up after your friends
 Horses welcome - Clean up after your friends
 Restrooms near the parking lot & the Sherlock Cabin
 Pack it in Pack it out!



The Hermit Creek Trail

Trail info:

Check at the Dance Hall for availability of Guided Tours!

Approximately 2 miles

Moderate to strenuous

200 foot elevation change

Connects to the Mohamet Group Trail

Dogs welcome on a leash - Clean up after your friends

Horses welcome - Clean up after your friends

Fishing allowed at the Mill Pond with a valid Wyoming license

Restrooms near the parking lot & the Sherlock Cabin

Pack it in Pack it out!

Tour the English Tunnel

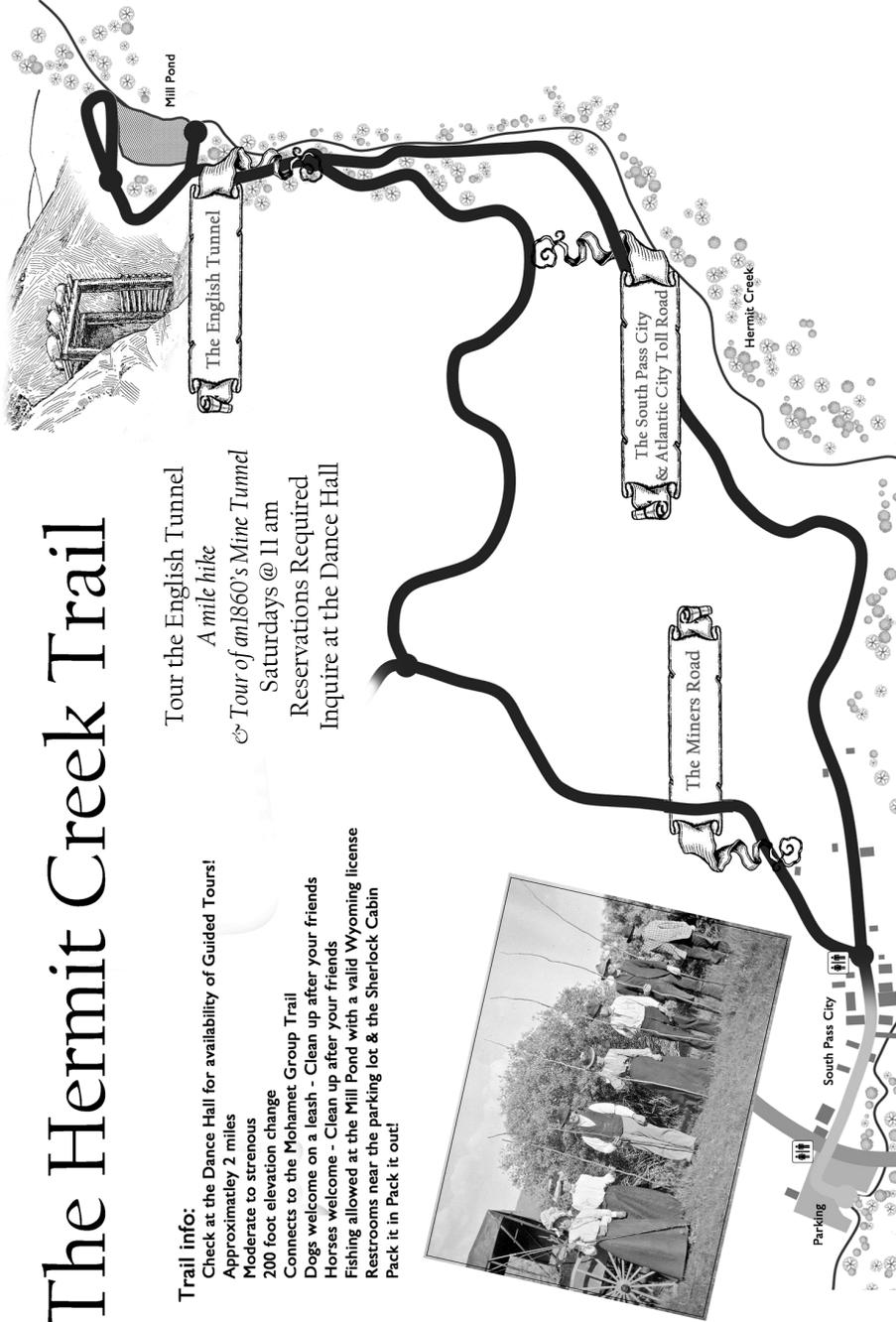
A mile hike

↳ *Tour of an 1860's Mine Tunnel*

Saturdays @ 11 am

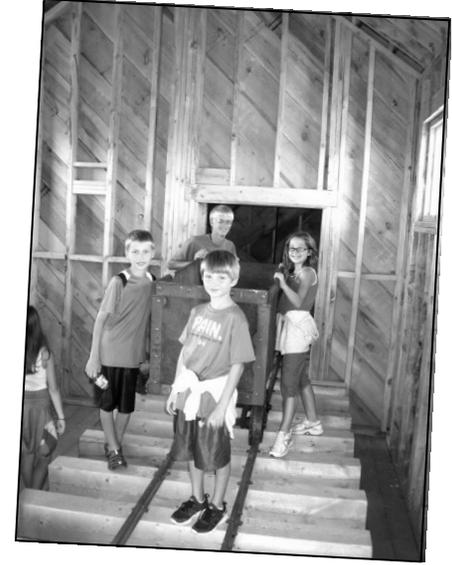
Reservations Required

Inquire at the Dance Hall



Join the Friends of South Pass

Did you enjoy your visit? Help us keep the future bright for South Pass City by joining the Friends of South Pass! The Friends of South Pass are a 501c3 not-for profit organization dedicated to preserving and interpreting South Pass City and the Carissa Mine. Through annual contributions the "Friends" have funded some of the largest restoration projects at SPC.



Membership includes:

- ◆ Swag from the Smith Sherlock General Store
- ◆ Free Admission to SPC
- ◆ Newsletter
- ◆ Acknowledgment in the Dance Hall at SPC
- ◆ Contributions are Tax Deductable
- ◆ & much more...

Scan &
Join
Online!



South Pass City

Friends of South Pass