

GOVERNOR

RIGGS HIGH SCHOOL, PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA
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Manifest Destiny

breathes life into South Dakota

The Fate of the Nation Rode with Paul Revere

*Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the 18th of April, seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.*

The United States of America began its 200th year birthday bash April 18, as it commemorated the midnight ride of Paul Revere. The country will continue to celebrate until July 4, 1976.

A little more than 200 years ago, a Virginian, Patrick Henry urged his colleagues in the House of Burgess (the Virginia legislature) to go against the British crown and fight, along with their kinsmen from Massachusetts.

"... there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field. ... Why stand we here idle? I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."

Less than a month later, the Revolution was on, and reluctantly or not, the Virginians were into it, as were their kinsmen from Massachusetts.

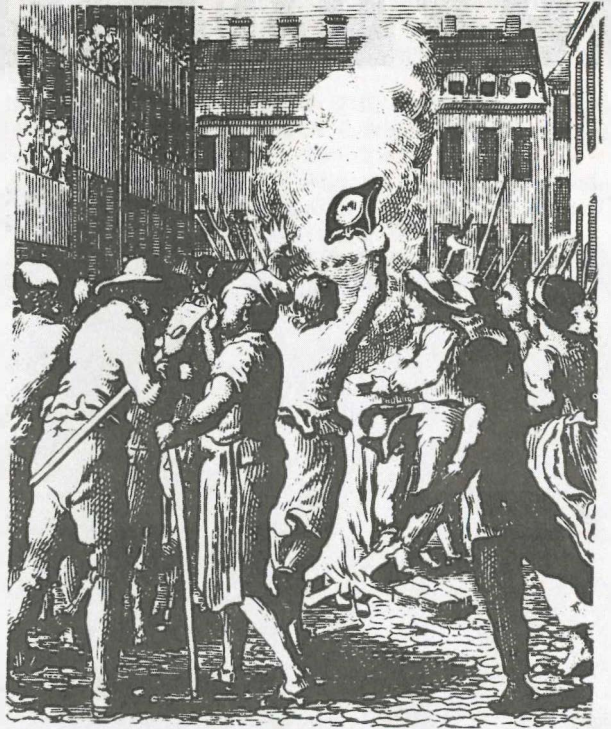
It's hard for us in retrospect to observe this great honor, as we cannot understand the risk that these men took. They were being treasonous in fighting King George VI; for in 1775 only 1/3 of the people supported the revolution.

On July 4, 1775, in the midst of the revolution, delegates from the 13 states drafted Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence breaking all ties with Great Britain. If the Americans lost this war with the most powerful nation in the world (England), it would have been the end for those who spoke defiantly against Great Britain.

Though the odds were against them, our Founding Fathers stood for what they believed; a small minority of 30%, in the beginning--survived the six years of war and established the freedom we are now accustomed to.

Five hundred years ago, not a single European lived in the land that is now the United States. Three hundred years ago only a few scattered settlements lay along the Atlantic coast.

During these last 200 years, the United States developed its unique culture, forged a government and grew to maturity.



The shot heard around the world.

The Founding Fathers had written the world's most lasting constitution--lasting because it provided for change.

The odds were against the hardy pioneers who crossed the continent of foot. The pioneers also survived the abuses of railroads and the economy, and had the faith to endure it all.

Brother fought against brother in the deadly civil war which divided the United States. This left a scar and could have had devastating effects upon the nation, but she seemed to survive.

Two World Wars and a decade of depression and drought could have hindered the nation, but she seemed to pull through even stronger. And by the middle 1900's the United States was first among countries of the world in freedom, opportunity, wealth, and power.

In recent times, one might observe that our country has even more serious problems in a scandalous government, the failing economy, and her toppling foreign policy, but the United States will survive this too.

Can the United States last forever? The Founding Fathers knew that times change when they drafted the constitution. But, were their allowances for change great enough to cope with the quick and everchanging times of today?

The United States has always had to fight to preserve the freedom which she has always boasted. But are we, in this generation, willing to strive to protect what our Founding Fathers established for us?

As the 200th year draws closer, we should celebrate this great anniversary with the spirit and enthusiasm which our Founding Fathers had.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was probably right, when he declared in his poem:

*"That was all, and through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night."*



Paul Revere at Lexington.



Sexy Seniors Show Styles Sensuously

Seven senior girls found out how much fun history can be when they met for fashion pictures at the Robinson Museum last weekend. They discovered that prom gowns have changed in the past 80 years.

With the help of the Verendrye Museum, Ft. Pierre, and Mr. Dartley, Robinson Museum, Pierre, the girls sorted through gowns ranging from the 1890's to the 1930's.

After many tries and only having the gowns go half way on or some other sizing difficulty, the girls finally found a dress that fit and that they liked.

The oldest dress was worn by Linda Bieber. It dated back to the 1890's and was white sheer over a blue cotton underdress with a lace bodice and long sleeves trimmed in lace.

A 1900 white dotted swiss dress was modeled by Adele Bellendir. It had an empire waist with a belt of pink ribbon and a scoop neckline.

The 1920's were portrayed by Lise Gray and Darleen Mitchell. These were the only short dresses in the collection. Lise wore a three piece pale blue chiffon gown with feather trim and an elegant feather trimmed scarf. Darlene was attired in a beaded pink chiffon dress with matching pink mesh hat. This was the heaviest of the prom gowns and also the most daring.

The 1930's were carried out by Kathy Doyle, Michelle Huft and Deb Bessert. Kathy was in a long pink organdy dress trimmed with embroidery flowers, blue



These girls are ready to dance their way into the hearts of their dates in high fashion prom gowns ranging from 1890's to the 1930's. The girls are: from the left Adele Bellendir, Linda Bieber, Lise Gray, Michelle Huft, Darlene Mitchell, Kathy Doyle and Deb Bessert (seated in front.) (Taken at the Robinson Museum).

ribbon belt and blue jacket. Michelle wore a pale green satin gown which was cut on the bias and fit very sexy which was the high style in the 1930's. Deb found a black lace and satin dress with a black velvet coat dating back to 1932.

Thanks to the girls who modeled, Mr. Hartley and Mr. O'Neil at the Robinson Museum, and the Verendrye Museum for helping the **Governor** produce this page of Bicentennial edition.

Proms of Yesterday Emerge Into Present, Future

As I turned the pages of yesterday, I compiled some fascinating facts about Junior/Senior proms at Pierre High School over the past 64 years.

The class of 1911 was entertained by the Junior class at a banquet held in the parlors of the Methodist Church.

The menu consisted of pressed chicken, scalloped potatoes, bouillon, deviled eggs, olives, fruit salad, wafers, ice cream, cake and coffee. This sounds much the same as today, possibly even better according to some students.

The wall decorations were comprised of pennants in the Junior class colors. On the tables, which were arranged in a large P, lay yellow roses, ferns and placecards that could be carried away as souvenirs.

The 1911 Riggs High **Gumbo** stated, "No more delightful hosts could be imagined than the Jolly Juniors and they are to be most heartily congratulated on the excellent way in which they managed such a difficult undertaking".

I moved ahead to 1924 and found that the banquet was held in the St. Charles Hotel. The members of the Senior and Junior classes met in the hotel parlor, from there they marched down to the dining room which was beautifully decorated with flowers and arches.

The waitresses were butterflies or bees and in addition to escorting the people to their seats, they provided a dance as

entertainment.

Skipping a few years, I moved up to 1955 when a "South Pacific" Prom was given at the Masonic Temple.

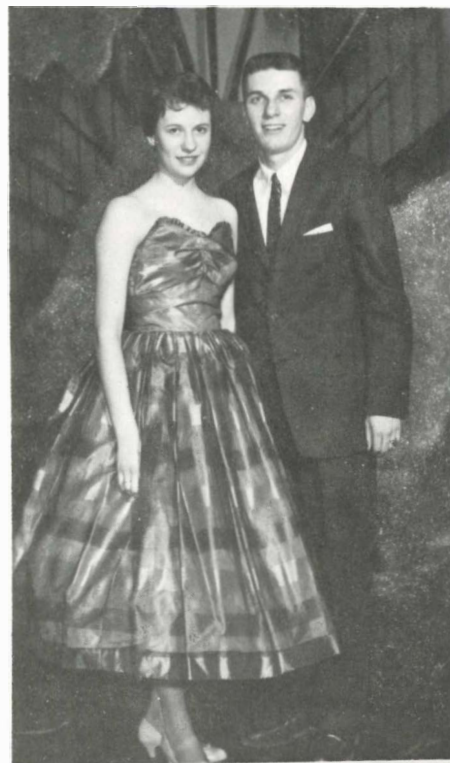
According to the May 20, 1955, issue of the **Governor**, the waitresses wore "sarongs of the islanders" and the waiters were dressed in "white duck pants and tropical sports shirts". As entertainment they provided a musical version of "Gonna Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair" and "Bali Hi".

In 1956 the theme was "An Evening in Paris", where a miniature reproduction of the Eiffel Tower and a cafe canopy set the mood.

The waiters were attired in French berets, striped t-shirts and white trousers. The waitresses wore red frilly costumes with short skirts and long black stockings. They performed two dance numbers, "The Last Time I Saw Paris" and "How're You Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm".

The class of 1957 surpassed last year's class with "Knights in White Satin". The theme was carried out effectively in every way from the entrance, consisting of a tunnel and drawbridge, to the satin costumes for the waiters and waitresses.

Proms seem to be a school tradition that will last. Who knows, maybe 50 years from now somebody will write an article about the 1975 prom for the **Governor** dated April, 2025.



Pierre High Prom trotters in 1957 were in high fashion with ballerina length strapless satin gowns, full skirts and pointed slippers. (Photo courtesy Mrs. Karen DeAntoni)

South Dakota Screwworm

by Merrilee Miller

The best discussion I find to make,
When I travel out of state,
Is to merely mention South Dakota,
And leave the rest to those I meet.

"Sout Dakoter?" New Yorkers repeat,
And Californians think I'm foreign
Simply due to two uttered words
That distinctly mark my origin.

To every question I try to answer
Truthfully, like all South Dakotans do.
So, asked if we have our own President,
I calmly state, "We tried in '72".

"What's really there?" They often inquire,
To which I more than often reply,
"Why Highmore, Avon, and White Owl, of course!"
Then, attempting to relate,
They offer cigars,
And tell of Avon ladies that visit their house.

Continuing along the same path,
They again wonder, "What else does it have?"

"Well, the Indian cultures are unique,
And the rodeos are exciting to see."

"Do the cowboys and Indians hurt each other?"

"Let's just say they're patching a knee!
There's also pheasant, buffalo, and golden wheat..."

"I can get bird in our grocery store,
And I thought those hairy cows were all extinct."

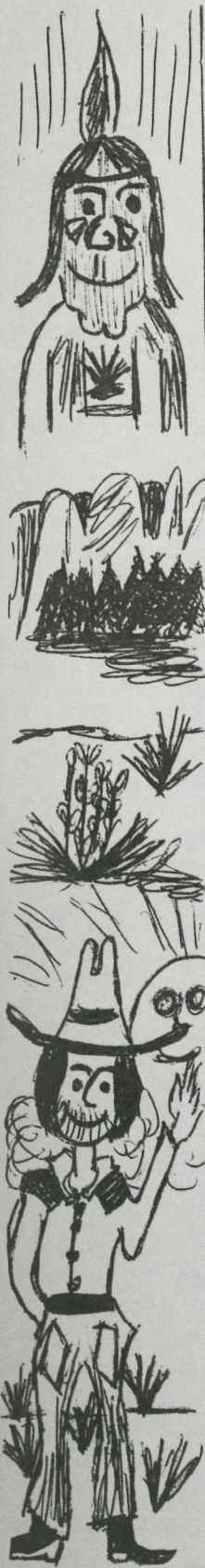
"...the plains," I interrupt, "are God's tapestry
Of oranges, golds, yellows, and browns.
Thick, green yarn, woven by Him,
Designate the emergence of the Black Hills.
And the creative beauty of man
Is displayed by Mount Rushmore and the Oahe Dam.

"And along with the crispness of the air,
And this pureness of the plains,
Is a compassion in every heart
Of the friends easily made."

"With air you can breath?
And land you can see?
Maybe old Sout Dakoter
Is the place to be."

"Can you tell us where Sout Dakoter is?"
"Below Nort Dakoter," I jokingly add.
"Thanks, but isn't it North Dakota?" they quiz.

SOUT
DAKOTER



Pierre - College Town?

Making plans for college? Planning to go to SDSU, Northern, USD, Black Hills State, Huron, Madison or Yankton College?

Ninety-two years ago if you were planning to go to college and lived in Pierre your first choice would probably be Pierre University.

True, Pierre was a college town for fifteen years, from 1883 to 1898.

The college stood on a bluff known as "Rattlesnake Hill" overlooking the muddy Missouri. They first called it the Presbyterian University of Southern Dakota, then Pierre University. The campus consisted of one building. Cost \$3,000. The building served as a dorm, as classrooms, and as the home for the college's first President, Rev. T.M. Findley and wife.

One of the things advertised in the promotional literature about the college was a very sophisticated feature, a board walk from Pierre's main street to the college.

On September 26, 1883, the college's first term, three students enrolled. But by December 5th of the same year the student body numbered twenty-four.

Pierre was caught up in the 'land boom' and was being settled very quickly. With the growth of Pierre the college also grew. Two buildings were added in 1884, a Hall and the President's home.

The Pierre U curriculum leaned toward the classical and the scientific. Required courses were three years of Latin and Greek, four years of science, ranging from geometry through physics, chemistry and geology, history, literature, and elocution, along with two years of Christianity and Morality science.

Tuition was \$36 per year, \$5 in fees, \$2.40 a week for board and \$3 a year for a furnished room. Music, books, light, fuel and washing were extra. It is reported in some accounts that "bogus" students enrolled because living was cheap.

In 1885, the first college YMCA was organized and in 1886 a college paper was published called "The Collegian".

By 1887, there were 70 students enrolled. And the same year the college honored its first graduate, Frank A. Farrar, with a Bachelors Degree in Arts. Also in this year the college YWCA was organized to complement the YMCA that had been started 2 years before.

But by 1889, the 'boom' had stopped. Pierre had reached the climax of its growth and now was decreasing. And thus with a series of disasters of prairie fires and drought, the financial support of the college dwindled. And by 1898 the college was closed down with an alumni of 13. The \$40,000 campus was sold for \$1000 and that amount was turned over to the college president for unpaid salary.

But the spirit of education on the prairie survived and in the same year, some 100 miles east of Pierre, construction of Huron College began.

Girls basketball

We've come a long way baby

Sixty-four years ago Pierre High School started women's athletics with emphasis on basketball and the program has been in the system ever since. For many years girls participating in competitive sports were limited in past years to P.E. classes and intramural games.

1911 was the first year that girls from Pierre High played competitive basketball. The sport was so new that some of them had never played basketball before. They also had the use of a new gym that year. However, there was much opposition by the faculty when the girls wanted to play against other schools.

"The girls played two games with the Indians losing both but this is no disgrace because there never was a team that started out with all new players that proved to be champions the first year. Both games were hard fought and clean, especially on the P.H.S. side." This quote is from the 1911 yearbook.

With the precedence of the 1911 team the 1975 team, sixty-four years later will probably start out slow but will become champions in their own right.

By 1916 the girls had played four games with the Indian school coming victorious in only one game. The rules in those days were different from the 1975 girls basketball rules. There were six members on the team with two forwards, two guards, and a running and a jumping center. It was more nearly a non-contact sport that the 1975 game.

"On December 13, 1919, the Pierre High girls hired cars and went down to play the Indian girls. At the end of the first half our girls were ahead by two points. They put more "pep" in the second half which ended 6 to 18 in favor of Pierre."

Scores under 20 were very common according to the records. Maybe the hoop was hard to find then.

That year the girls had a long season of eight games ranging from December through February. Besides the Indian girls, they played Ft. Pierre, Highmore, and the State House girls.

When they were unable to play other towns, the girls played the secretaries from the State House. A trip to Highmore in those days was a big event. Getting across the river to Ft. Pierre for a game involved walking on the ice or the railroad bridge.

"On the fifteenth of November in 1924, the girls began basketball practice with Miss Agnes Anderson as their coach. She inspired the girls with the idea that they could have a clean playing team, without playing a rough game, and that they could have true sportsmanship even if they didn't always win. There seemed to be created a new enthusiasm in the whole school for girls' athletics, which was shown by the splendid way in which the school backed the team all year," according to the 1929 Gumbo.

Fifty years ago, in 1925 the girls basketball team was undefeated in the four games they played against Miller and Ree Heights.

After such a thriving basketball program in the early 1900's, it is ironical that the girls at Riggs High are just beginning to have a program in 1975 similar to the one that began sixty-five years ago.



This "baby-faced" foursome represented the entire track squad for Riggs back in 1906.



These shapely gals were the 1916 varsity basketball team. Although one cannot tell from this picture whether they were shapely or not--one must just assume so.

(Gumbo 1916)



Coach Wright's "Fighting Green" in their new uniforms. A tough group in 1925. They suffered only one loss.

(Gumbo 1925)

Women Started and Preserved Pierre Library

Some male chauvinists would hate to admit that if it weren't for women there wouldn't be a beginning. But this is the case concerning the Pierre Carnegie Library.

Newcomers often wonder at the sight of the handsome pillared building on the corner of Euclid and Capitol. With its broad expanse of lawn, enormous trees and ivy clinging to its rock walls, the library indeed looks like a mini-mansion.

Existence of the library was due to the Pierre Women's Club. At the insistence of the pioneer women, their husbands accepted an offer to establish a suitable building for a library. The offer was made by Andrew Carnegie himself after he received a letter from Mrs. Jane Breeden asking for the establishment of the needed library.

Winter of 1881

Saloons supplied stimulating sociability

As I was looking around in the South Dakota room of Rawlins Library recently, I came across **Hughes County History**, a book compiled by the County Superintendent of Schools in 1937. It contains contributions from pioneers, students and teachers living in Hughes County at that time. So I discovered the fascinating history of the beginning of our city, Pierre.

Joseph Kirley had a claim to the land which is now Pierre, from 1878 to 1880. He had a thriving business ferrying wagon trains across the Missouri. Then in 1880, the Chicago Northwestern Railroad bought the claim from Kirley for \$1500 and a double-barrelled shotgun, and Pierre got started.

The settlement was originally called Mattoe. However, early in 1880, J.D. Hilger shipped some lumber to "Pierre opposite Ft. Pierre", and Pierre became its permanent name. Hilger's lumber was used to build Pierre's first frame house. The town soon had a clothing and grocery store, a bank, Hilger's lumber yard, a drug store (which later became Vilas'), a hotel, and saloons and dance halls galore.

Apparently, Pierre was quite a swinging town, with saloons, girls, poker, gunfights, and self-appointed Vigilantes who tried to keep some semblance of law and order.

In the early 1880's, Arkansas Joe, a well-known desperado, was run out of town by the Vigilantes. He returned announcing his intent to kill their leader. After being chased out of a saloon by armed men, he hid in some nearby brush, waiting for a clear shot. Instead, a Vigilante shot him--nine times in all. Later the posse took up a collection and bought Arkansas a black suit for burial and made him a coffin. His remains were found in 1904 by the men excavating the basement for the present Capitol building.

Mr. Carnegie agreed (on March 2, 1903) to furnish \$10,000 to erect a building if a suitable site was provided along with a maintenance budget of not less than \$1000 a year. The city council agreed to this but found that \$10,000 was not enough so Mr. Carnegie parted with another \$12,000 under the condition that the annual maintenance cost be raised to \$1,250. At a meeting of the council, this resolution was passed on December 7, 1903.

March 10, 1905, brought about the opening date and 800 volumes of books were received from a book shower.

Following the opening of the library, serious financial problems erupted. Once again, the Pierre Women's Club came to its rescue. Perhaps this Carnegie library was unique because the Women's Club

sold tomato plants, sponsored socials and even had a baby show to raise funds. Through the combined efforts of the Women's Club and the community the library boasted 4000 volumes by March 1911.

After 1923, the children's department was moved downstairs and the references were moved upstairs.

For 56 years the Carnegie library gave good service to the Pierre community. Its worn wooder floor boards made contact with many feet, young and old alike.

Today although the Carnegie library has been moved to the hills north of Riggs High School and named the Rawlins Municipal Library, avid readers of all ages in Pierre and some not so avid, will remember the old Carnegie Library with special thoughts, for they found solitude there.

The winter of '81 brought heavy snow, cutting Pierre almost completely off from the rest of the world from December until April. There were few mail deliveries, but no rail service. The Signal, the weekly paper, soon ran out of newsprint and quit publishing. The last edition was printed on straw paper. Pierre residents ran out of coal, meat, butter, and kerosene. The citizens lived on a supply of flour and canned goods stored in warehouses in Fort Pierre.

The only excitement that winter was in the saloons--and they did a booming business. Dancing started at 9:00 p.m. After every dance the men would spend 50c for drinks for themselves and their

girls, then dance some more.

The saloons had so much importance that the first county commissioners meeting accomplished two things: 1.) located the county seat in Pierre, and 2.) established the cost of liquor licenses at \$300 yearly.

After the winter of '81-'82 and the resultant flooding, Pierre settled down and became a thriving town. It quickly became the center of freighting and passenger service as it was the most westerly railroad point in the region. goods moving to the Black Hills came in to Pierre by rail and were ferried across the "Big Missouri" to be transported by ox team across Dakota.



The first streetcar in Dakota Territory travels east on Pierre's Capitol Avenue. This photo looks down from the present court house lawn. The Corner Drug now stands in the vacant lot shown on the right. [Photo courtesy of State Historical Society]