

Sign No. 2 - (Diaries 3/22/04)

"The opening of the new gold fields meant not only fortunes in gold mining, but new opportunities in every profession and branch of trade and fortunes for those who could secure the most desirable locations. With this end in view, enterprising men began at once to reconnoiter for the most probable location of a metropolis of the Black Hills. What little geographical information of the almost unknown country was available indicated some site on Rapid Creek near the foothills as the proper location for the expected "Denver of the gold fields." This was the decision arrived at both by the agent of certain Bismarck parties having this end in view, and a party of Denver adventurers who had entered the Hills by way of Cheyenne with the same aim in migrating to the newly opened Indian Reservation. The Denver party, 30 strong, reached the field about the 20th of February, 1876, and proceeded at once to found the now famous Rapid City." Source: The Black Hills Souvenir, Rev. John I. Sanford, 1902

"A party consisting of W.J. Martin, J.W. Allen, Mark Pensinger, William Marston, John R. Brennan, Tom Ferguson, and Dick King left Palmer Gulch with a view to laying out a town someplace in the foothills. The party arrived at Rapid Creek same day and camped near Big Springs at Mouth of Canyon. Next day, the 24th, the party explored the valley for about 20 miles down.

Returning next day, the 24th, the party camped at big tree at Point of Rocks. Here the party was joined by several others who had followed the party thinking they were on a stampede [gold rush]. There was a meeting held the same evening and it was decided then and there to lay out a town site." John R. Brennan's diary, February 23, 1876.

"... a section of land was measured off with a tape line, the courses being run by myself with the aid of a pocket compass... six blocks being laid out that same day, and the lots included in them were drawn by those present, each man having the privilege of drawing five lots... The name of Rapid City was proposed by William Martin and agreed to by the remainder of the party." Samuel Scott's diary, February 25th, 1876

"As makers of the history of the West, their names will be handed down to posterity while summer clouds shall map old Harney's Brow and Black Hills waters run down to the sea."

Source: Unknown Pioneer writer (as inscribed on the bronze plaque that previously marked the site, now located at the Children's Science Center.)

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Keeper - SIGNAGE FOR FOUNDERS PARK

The rustic entryway into Founders Park will resemble the entryway into Canyon Lake Park, only narrower. It will consist of 2 wooden poles, each pole embedded into a pyramidal rock pile. Across the top is a rough-hewn plank with the words "Founders Park" (computer concept included herein). The smooth, rounded rocks of the rock pile are about 6 inches in diameter, and the rock pyramids will be built by West River Masonry at an estimated cost of \$600. The entryway will be constructed by Rosenbaum Signs at an estimated cost of _____.

Six 3-foot x 2-foot signs will be set on a series of pedestals alongside the sidewalk approaching the entryway arch into Founders Park, 3 on each side.

Interpretive signs (2): The first two signs encountered, one on each side of the approach sidewalk, will explain the purpose of Founders Park as well as give some excerpts from personal accounts of the events surrounding Rapid City's founding by pioneers, Brennan, Scott, and Rev. John Sanford.

Photographic signs (4): Each sign will show historical photographs from Rapid City's first 30 years, giving dates, and names of people and places. There will be 18 photos per sign. The background color and text will be in historical-appearing sepia tones. At the bottom of each sign will be an acknowledgment of sponsorship and other contributions by the various donors to the project. There will also be an acknowledgment of the source of the photographs and other information.

The signs are not in the floodway. They are similar to those on the pods along Main St. The signage material is of durable porcelain on steel, and produced by Enameltec, warranted against fading and weather damage for 25 years. Enameltec signage is currently in use in the historical pedestal signs in the pods on Main St., Regional Airport, and the Berlin Wall project at the Civic Center. Enameltec product information is included herein. The Enameltec signs will cost an estimated _____ each. The 6 pedestals will be constructed and erected by Rosenbaum Signs at an estimated cost of _____ each.

Sign No. 1 (left side of base of entryway)

WELCOME TO FOUNDERS PARK

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A walk through Founders Park takes the visitor back to the years 1876 through 1906, when Hay Camp was setting down roots and emerging as a town called Rapid City. The plaza of Founders Park is an artistic conception of the busiest commercial area in the center of the town. The original 1-mile-square layout is represented in yellow and red colored concrete, with the streets being a yellow sandy color, and the blocks a reddish brick color. Follow the horseshoes, and gallop up West Blvd. to the northwest corner of the Plaza, and travel eastward along Rapid Street, following the embedded icons of horses, bull trains, wagons, etc., as they proceed serpentine-wise through the streets. The brick-colored blocks contain numbered plaques and show the locations of some of the early commercial, civic, religious and private buildings. Notice that stagecoach icons are placed at those locations where stagecoach stops were situated. The layout depicts an area bordered on the north by Omaha St., the south by South St., the west by West Blvd., and the east by East Blvd. Walk through the streets, following the icons, and take a trip back into Rapid City's earliest days. To learn more about Rapid City's fascinating history, visit The Journey Museum.

Hay Camp to Rapid City

The year 1876 brought events that would forever change the Black Hills, Paha Sapa, of western Dakota Territory. The discovery of gold and the push for westward expansion and development resulted in a stampede for treasure in minerals, land and other natural resources. Miners, entrepreneurs and settlers set up camps, started towns and newspapers, and some made permanent homes. Many of those early hopeful towns have vanished with the subsidence of the Gold Rush, but some, like Rapid City, remain vital and thriving, abounding in history and mindful of a rich heritage.

Note that the plaza is skewed, not aligned with its background. This is to illustrate that the city was laid out according to the founders' compass, with orientation to magnetic north. It was not until the year ____ that the major thoroughfare, 8th Street, Mt. Rushmore Road, would have its orientation adjusted to true north, and this slight leftward correction now appears as a jog at South St., Rapid City's original southernmost limit.

Sign No.2

All photographs are identified with a brief description. Credit is given the provider of information and/or photos. Most information comes from Black Hills Hay Camp, by David Strain, and is used with his permission:

1. John Brennan on horseback (BH Hay Camp)
2. Sam Scott (BH Hay Camp)
3. Covered wagon train (inside cover BH Hay Camp)
4. Bull trains (BH Hay Camp)
5. Stage coaches (BH Hay Camp)
6. Horse and wagons (BH Hay Camp)
7. Mansfield drawing (BH Hay Camp p.98)
8. 1886 photo toward Gap (BH Hay Camp p.12)
9. American House Hotel and stagecoach (BH Hay Camp p.14)
10. Stage stop at Flormann Bldg. (BH Hay Camp p.16)
11. Freighting (BH Hay Camp p.18)

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12. Trolley (BH Hay Camp p.20)
13. Main St. (BH Hay Camp p.25)
14. Plow works (BH Hay Camp p.25)
15. First Natl Bank (BH Hay Camp p.30)
16. Mock stagecoach holdup at Harney Hotel (BH Hay Camp p.31)
17. Main St. with bulltrains: (BH Hay Camp)
18. Mrs Knutsen, bullwhackeress (BH Hay Camp)
19. School of Mines p.64

Sign No.3

1. Alice Gossage, chronicler (BH Hay Camp)
2. JL Morris Bldg. (BH Hay Camp)
3. Haines Store (BH Hay Camp p.35)
4. Sweeney (BH Hay Camp)
5. Sweeney Hardware (BH Hay Camp p.47)
6. Dakota Power Co. (BH Hay Camp p.49 &40)
7. Great Western Land, Loan & Ins. (BH Hay Camp p.49)
8. Duhamel & Ackerman float (BH Hay Camp p.50)
9. Duhamel & Ackerman saddle shop - p.52
10. Indian races (BH Hay Camp)
11. Cowboy pony race, Behrens Bldg. (BH Hay Camp p.32)
12. Saloon (BH Hay Camp p.44)
13. Saloon (BH Hay Camp p.44)
14. Draft horses (BH Hay Camp p.45)
15. Behrens Furniture & Undertaking (BH Hay Camp p.42)
16. Bangs Law Firm (BH Hay Camp p.43)
17. City hall (City Bldg.)
18. School (City Bldg.)

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Sign No. 4 - (right side of base of entryway)

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

#1 The Black Hills Souvenir, Rev. John I. Sanford, 1902

"The opening of the new gold fields meant not only fortunes in gold mining, but new opportunities in every profession and branch of trade and fortunes for those who could secure the most desirable locations. With this end in view, enterprising men began at once to reconnoiter for the most probable location of a metropolis of the Black Hills. What little geographical information of the almost unknown country was available indicated some site on Rapid Creek near the foothills as the proper location for the expected "Denver of the gold fields." This was the decision arrived at both by the agent of certain Bismarck parties having this end in view, and a party of Denver adventurers who had entered the Hills by way of Cheyenne with the same aim in migrating to the newly opened Indian Reservation. The Denver party, 30 strong, reached the field about the 20th of February, 1876, and proceeded at once to found the now famous Rapid City."

#2 John R. Brennan's diary, February 23, 1876.

"A party consisting of W.J. Martin, J.W. Allen, Mark Pensinger, William Marston, John R. Brennan, Tom Ferguson, and Dick King left Palmer Gulch with a view to laying out a town someplace in the foothills. The party arrived at Rapid Creek same day and camped near Big Springs at Mouth of Canyon. Next day, the 24th, the party explored the valley for about 20 miles down.

Returning next day... the party camped at big tree at point of rocks. Here the party was joined by several others who had followed the party thinking they were on a stampede [gold rush]. There was a meeting held the same evening and it was decided then and there to lay out a town site."

#3 Samuel Scott's diary, February 25th, 1876

"... a section of land was measured off with a tape line, the courses being run by myself with the aid of a pocket compass... six blocks being laid out that same day, and the lots included in them were drawn by those present, each man having the privilege of drawing five lots... The name of Rapid City was proposed by William Martin and agreed to by the remainder of the party."

#4 Unknown Pioneer writer

"As makers of the history of the West, their names will be handed down to posterity (BH Hay Camp) while summer clouds shall map old Harney's Brow and Black Hills waters run down to the sea."

Sign #5

1. M'Gillycuddy House (BH Hay Camp)
2. Woodcut picture (Helen Wrede)
3. Clagg Hides & Fur (BH Hay Camp p.40)
4. Sweeney Fire Hose p. 53
5. Fire bell ((BH Hay Camp)
6. Indian spectators (BH Hay Camp p.51)
7. Harney Hotel p.55
8. Covered wagons on West Blvd. p.58
9. Library Hall p.60
10. Brass Band p. 61
11. Grade & High School p.60
12. Recess p.77
13. Baseball team p. 61
14. Hose team p. 62
15. Penn. Co. jail p. 63
16. School of Mines p. 63
17. Football team p.64
18. Chlorination plant p.66
19. Night shift at chlor plant p. 66

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20. City Hall and fire bell house p.67
21. Congregational church p.12,
22. Methodist church p.12,
23. Catholic church p.67
24. City official 1909-1910 p.68
25. Beer p.71
26. Horse drinking fountain p.71

Sign #6

Photographs:

1. Wagons on 6th St. 1882 (BH Hay Camp p.100
2. Seventh and Main, bakery, Billiard Hall, Hardware, Amer.House Hotel, Internatl Hotel. BHHC p. 101
3. Franklin & Baer Liquors & Cigars, Poz, J. Morris Dry Goods 1886, RC
4. Pharmacy 102
5. Herrmann Treber & Goldberg Groceries, liquors and cigars p.103
6. Photo studio 103
7. Trolley tracks, view toward Gap, Harness Shop, Meat Mkt, Livery, Dentist,
8. Furniture, tailor, Saloon, lunchroom., millinery, Harney Hotel. from 5th p. 104-105
9. Restaurant and meat mkt. 106
10. Hardware, notary, jewelry 109
11. Book store 109
12. Trolley, Sweeney hardware, First Natl Bank (first brick 1882) p.110
13. Inside Sweeney's Hware p.111
14. Post Office p. 112
15. Schnasse Bldg. wholesalers, p. 112
16. Poz. Out in street p.113
17. RC Drug, L.Morris Dry Goods & Clothing p.114
18. Dentist p. 114
19. Behrens Furniture 116
20. Drugs, Chemical, Mrs. Knutson and ox team
21. Drugs, Chemicals, Patent Medicine p.122
22. Buell Bldg p.122
23. Stable and livery p. 120
24. Interior of livery barn, 120
25. Robbins and Scott Real Estate and Mining Agency p.121
26. Stationery p.124
27. Groceries and things, 124
28. Warren-Lamb Lumber p.128
29. Limestone quarry 1885 p.129
30. M'Gillycuddy House 1888 p.133
31. West Blvd 1885 p. 134
32. Crouch Line 139
33. Crouch Line to Mystic 140-141

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