

Useful Websites for North Dakota Travelers

Passport to ND Historic Sites
www.DiscoverND.com/hist/passport

Tourism Guide, ND Map, Cultural Heritage Guide,
Hunting and Fishing Guide – www.ndtourism.com

County and Local Museums – www.nd.gov/hist

North Dakota Books, Publications
www.nd.gov/hist/museumstore

USDA Forest Service – www.fs.fed.us/r1/dakotaprairie

State Historical Society of North Dakota
www.nd.gov/hist or www.DiscoverND.com/hist

State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation
www.statehistoricalfoundation.com



History's
Foundation
State Historical Society
of North Dakota Foundation

PO Box 1976 Bismarck, ND 58502 701-222-1966
Located in the North Dakota Heritage Center
State Capitol Grounds

Passport to *North Dakota* History



A traveler's guide



STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
OF NORTH DAKOTA



Denbigh Experimental Forest and Historic Site

USDA Forest Service



During the 1930s, the entire Great Plains region from Texas to North Dakota was experiencing lower than average precipitation, higher than normal temperatures and strong winds. McHenry County, with its many thousands of acres of sandy soil, was extremely susceptible to these worsening climatic conditions. The environment in McHenry County was in many ways, very similar to the forested areas of western Nebraska. Local people thought it might be possible to establish a similar forest here. If successful, the forested areas would help stabilize the sandy soil, and add to the county's long-term economic growth by establishing a fledgling timber industry.

The oldest USDA Forest Service facility in North Dakota, the Denbigh Experimental Forest was established in the early-1930s, in part, to determine the feasibility of such a forest. Other purposes were to determine what type of trees, largely for shelterbelts, would grow well in

North Dakota, which seed sources were adaptable to the Great Plains, and the best methods of soil preparation. Experimental work was carried on until the facility was closed at the beginning of WWII. Today this unique forest environment is found nowhere else in the state. Denbigh's 40-acres contains 43 species of trees from Europe, Asia and the U.S. It is a continuing wellspring of genetic, woodland resource materials and seed source for the nearby state operated Towner Nursery. The historic arboretum is named in honor of forester and long time director Joseph Stoeckeler, PhD. It holds valuable educational/scientific information and is a major site for bird watching. The circa 1930s buildings have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Forest Service is developing Denbigh as an education center and interpretive site.

To visit Denbigh, take Highway 2 east from Minot for 30 miles and turn right at the sign. All roads are paved. A trail winds through the forest and outdoor restroom facilities are available. For more information please contact the Sheyenne National Grasslands, Ranger Station, 701-683-4342, or the Dakota Prairie Grasslands, Supervisors Office, 701-250-4443, 240 W Century Avenue, Bismarck, North Dakota 58503.

Date Visited: _____

Birnt Hills Overlook

USDA Forest Service



On their way upstream after leaving Fort Mandan in the spring of 1805, the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery passed through what Clark named “the birnt hills” on April 17. The party then entered what was essentially uncharted territory, with only a few sketches and stories to guide them. On the return trip the party split with Lewis continuing down the Missouri while Clark descended the Yellowstone. Clark’s party passed Birnt Hills on August 10, Lewis’s party arrived there on the 11th. It was while elk hunting there, at Tobacco Gardens Creek, that Lewis was mistakenly shot by one of the party. After treating Lewis, the party continued to Reunion Bay in what is now Mountrail County, where they rejoined Clark’s party. The site is located about 30 miles north of Watford City

on Highway 1806 to Tobacco Garden Bay Resort, then McKenzie County Road 50 east 2 miles to the site entrance.

Date Visited: _____

Buffalo Gap Campground

USDA Forest Service



Relaxation, reflection and repose in the heart of the Great Plains; an evening meal cooked over a campfire, sleeping under the same stars as Teddy Roosevelt, describes a typical stay at Buffalo Gap Campground. This 37-unit primitive campground in the Little Missouri National Grassland of western North Dakota, a great destination, a great value, plus it provides primitive sites with picnic tables, fire rings, flush toilets, showers, drinking water, and ample shade. Managed by the US Forest Service, and conveniently located 7 miles west of Medora, ND, adjacent to the scenic and rugged badlands. Campsites are available for \$6.00 each. The Buffalo Gap Trail is accessed from this campground; not far away is the Maah Daah Hey Trail junction. Originally constructed in the 1960s, Buffalo

Gap Campground was renovated in 2002. Volunteer campground hosts are onsite to welcome you and help you enjoy your stay. From the first blush of morning sun, to the star-spangled finale of nightfall, Buffalo Gap Campground is an ideal place to enjoy the landscape and scenery of the Old West. For more information contact: US Forest Service, Dickinson office, at 701-227-7800 or www.fs.fed.us/r1/dakotaprairie.

Date Visited: _____

Initial Rock Interpretive Site

US Forest Service / Dakota Prairie Grasslands



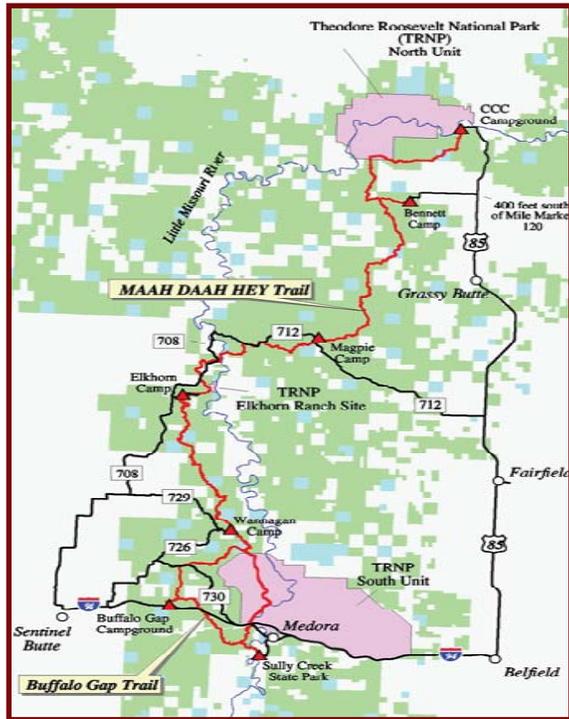
The 7th Cavalry under Lt. Col. George A. Custer enroute to the Little Bighorn from Ft. Abraham Lincoln south of Bismarck, with wagon and pack train, spare horses, a beef herd and a heavy weapons platoon of Gatling guns entered the badlands on May 27, 1876, near Easy Hill and continued a tortuous route down Davis Creek. Trail building and multiple bridges for the wagons slowed progress to only about seven and a half miles that first day. Two of the soldiers of the 7th Cavalry, privates Frank Neely and William C. Williams, carved their names on a sandstone rock, now called Initial Rock or Signature Rock. Their names are still visible today. From the Fryburg I-24 exit, head south past town to a gravel road, turn right, and take the first left 5 ½ miles to Easy Hill. Continue west 3 miles past the military campsite to direction sign,

then right on gravel road 2.2 miles through Davis Creek to Initial Rock Interpretive Site. For more information, please contact the Medora Ranger District, Dakota Prairie Grasslands, Little Missouri National Grasslands, 99 23rd Ave. West, Suite B, Dickinson, ND 58854, 701-227-7800.

Date Visited: _____

Maah Daah Hey Trail National Grasslands Trail

USDA Forest Service



A 96 mile hiking, horseback riding, walking and bicycling non-motorized trail through the beautiful badlands from near Medora to 15 miles south of Watford City. It crosses Forest Service, National Park Service, state, and private lands. Maah Daah Hey is a phrase from the Mandan Indian language used to describe an area that has been and will be around for a long time.

Date Visited: _____

Bagg Bonanza Farm



One of the last bonanza farms in the U.S., the centerpiece of this 15-acre site is a fully restored 21-bedroom main house. The earliest bonanza farms were established by investors and officers of the Northern Pacific Railroad, generally near its main right-of-way in the Red River Valley. Some of the farms encompassed thousands of acres of rich Valley land and employed hundreds of workers and teams of horses and mules. The Bagg Farm is located one mile off I-29 at exit 23.

Date Visited: _____

Bismarck-Deadwood
Stage Trail Historic Marker



Stage coaches on the Bismarck-Deadwood Trail

From 1877 to 1880 during the Black Hills Gold Rush, Northwestern Express and Transportation Company operated stagecoaches to Deadwood. Initially coaches left three times per week but were soon scheduled daily. Bismarck was a major supply point for the northern Hills but when a railroad reached Pierre the stage and freight line moved there, as it was much closer to Deadwood. The marker is .25 miles east of Flasher on North Dakota Highway 21.

Date Visited: _____

Bonanzaville USA



Take a “Stroll Through History” at 1351 West Main Avenue in West Fargo. This museum and complex features historic sod homes and log homes, a prairie church, general store, fire station and school house arranged in a village setting. Also featured are automobiles from model T Fords to Mustangs, Studebakers to Rolls Royces; vintage tractors, railroad locomotives and airplanes. It is truly a stroll through history of the Northern Plains.

Date Visited: _____

Camp Hancock
State Historic Site

All that remains of the 1872 infantry post is the former post surgeon's and later the executive officer's quarters, now the oldest standing building in Bismarck. After the post was decommissioned in 1894, the buildings were used by the Bismarck Weather Bureau until 1940. The current camp property was deeded to the state in 1951. It is located at 101 East Main Avenue, Bismarck. Exhibits illustrate the military and weather bureau operations.

Date Visited: _____

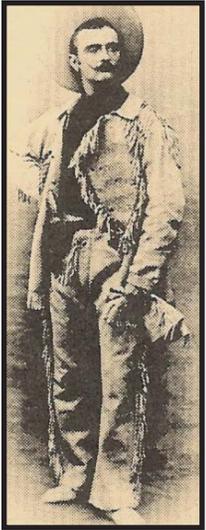
Cannonball Stage Station

State Historic Site

This was the fifth stop after Bismarck on the Bismarck-Deadwood Trail. It was built overlooking the Cannonball River in 1877. Tired horse teams were replaced with fresh, and travelers could stretch their legs and have a meal of sorts at this stop. The site is 15 miles east of Carson in Grant County and has a quiet park with water, picnic tables and restrooms.

Date Visited: _____

Chateau DeMores
State Historic Site, Interpretive Center

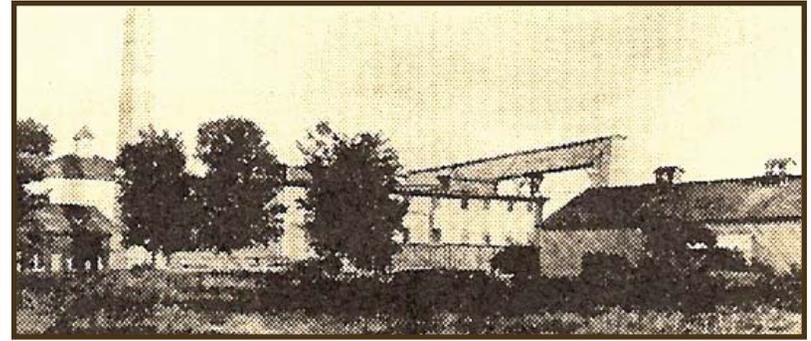


In 1883 a French nobleman, Antoine de Vallombrosa, the Marquis de Mores, arrived in the North Dakota badlands determined to found a fortune in the cattle industry. He envisioned a packing plant on the range that would ship finished meat to eastern markets. With financial help from his father-in-law and much of his own



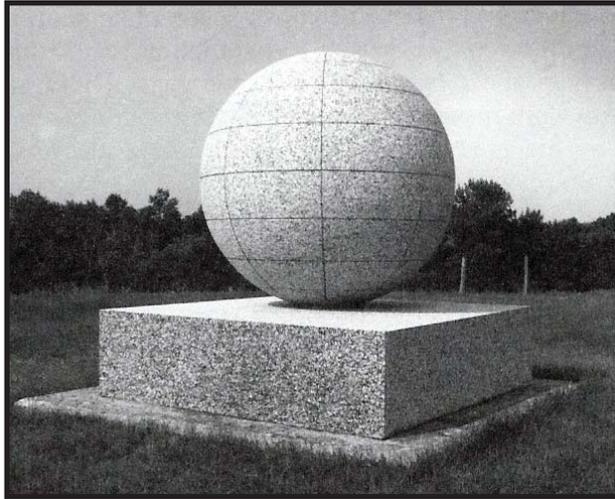
fortune, he made good on his dream, only to have the whole operation collapse three years later. He built a big house for his wife, Medora for whom he named the new town he established, and his family. He also established a short-lived stagecoach line to the Black Hills. His home, the “Chateau” and the home he built for his in-laws still stand in the town of Medora, located on I-94, in the N.D. badlands.

Date Visited: _____



DeMores Packing Plant 1885

David Thompson
State Historic Site



The land and monument for this site were donated by the Great Northern Railroad to honor David Thompson, “the greatest geographer of his day in British America.” He passed this spot in 1797 and 1798 while on a scientific and trading expedition for the Northwest Company, a Hudson’s Bay Company competitor. Thompson made the first reliable map of the region between what is now North Dakota and Lake Superior. Lewis and Clark on their 1804-1806 expedition used a Thompson map. The site is 2 miles north and 5 miles west of Karlsruhe in McHenry County.

Date Visited: _____

Double Ditch Indian Village

State Historic Site



This spectacular Mandan Earthlodge village overlooks the Missouri River and its valley, 7.25 miles north of Bismarck on Highway 1804. It was originally thought to have been occupied from about 1675 to 1781, when a smallpox epidemic resulted in its abandonment. Recent archaeological excavations indicate the Mandans occupied this site as early as AD 1490. Its name is from the two fortifications ditches surrounding the village, but two more outer ditches have since been discovered. First excavated in 1905 by a group from Harvard University, no further excavation occurred at the site until the summer of 2002 when field work revealed the presence of two additional fortification systems beyond the previously known ones.

Date Visited: _____

Former Governors' Mansion
State Historic Site



Asa Fisher built the mansion in 1884, and it was sold to the state in 1893 for \$5,000. It served the governors from Eli Shortridge in 1893 through John Davis who then moved into the new governors' residence on its completion in 1960. Through the years many changes were made. In 1975 the house was transferred to the State Historical Society. It was carefully researched and returned, externally, to its original appearance. The interior was preserved to reflect the changes in both appearance and furnishing over the years it was occupied. The renovated 1903 carriage house exhibit features the time of transition from the horse and buggy to the automobile. Now an architectural and historic landmark,

it is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The mansion is located at 320 East Avenue B in Bismarck.

Date Visited: _____

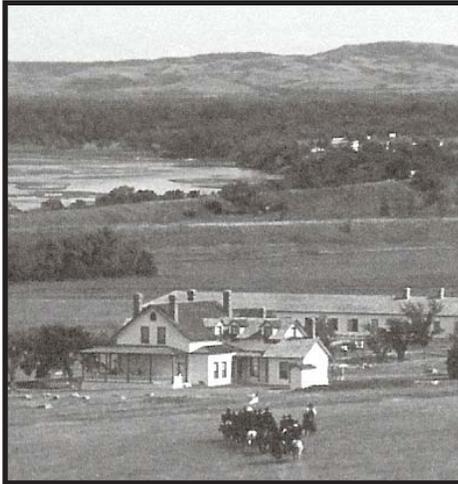
Fort Abercrombie
State Historic Site - Interpretive Center



Established in 1858 on the banks of the Red River, the fort was moved to its present location in 1860 due to flooding problems at the original location. It was the first military establishment in what was to become North Dakota, and the only post besieged by Sioux warriors for over six weeks during the 1862 Dakota Conflict. During the siege there were no blockhouses or palisades, but they were constructed soon after. The fort served to guard wagon train and steamboat traffic on the Red River and was a supply base for wagon trains headed for Montana. It was abandoned in 1877. It is located on the east edge of the town of Abercrombie.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Abraham Lincoln
State Park

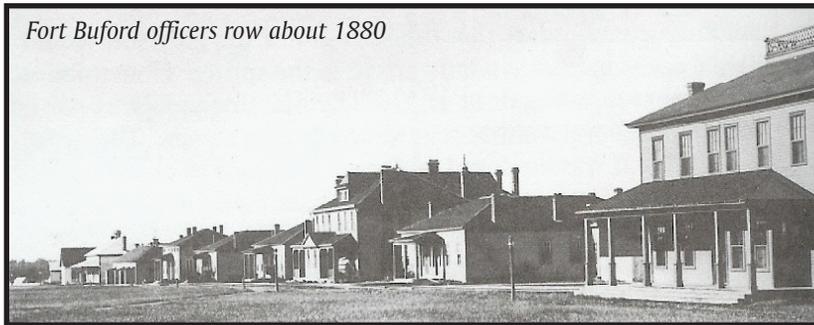


Seven miles south of Mandan on Highway 1806 is the site of the military post where the 7th Cavalry was stationed during the Sioux Indian wars. It was from Ft. Abraham Lincoln that Custer set forth to the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The Custer home, the commissary, granary, and an enlisted men's barracks, and the blockhouses overlooking the fort have been reconstructed, and are open to the public, as are several reconstructed earthlodges of the On-A-Slant Mandan Indian village and the visitors' center and museum in season. There are campgrounds, hiking and walking trails and a trolley line that runs to the park from Mandan. For details, contact North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, 1600 E. Century Ave., Suite 3, Bismarck, ND 58503; phone 701-328-5357.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Buford

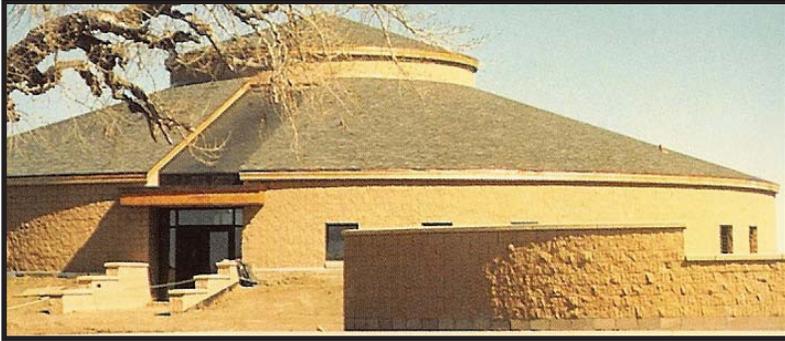
State Historic Site - Interpretive Center



Fort Buford, at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers, was established in 1866 to provide escorts for wagon trains, steamboats, for international boundary patrols, and later to protect railway construction crews. It is perhaps best known as the fort where Sitting Bull surrendered in 1881. Three original buildings (a stone powder magazine, wood-frame officers quarters and wood-frame officer-of-the-guard building) and a reconstructed enlisted men's barracks stand on the site.

Date Visited: _____

Missouri Yellowstone Confluence Center
State Historic Site/Interpretive Center at Fort Buford



Adjacent to Fort Buford is the Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center, with rest rooms, exhibit galleries, a theater, store, offices, and a patio overlooking the confluence of the two mighty rivers. The site is located 23 miles west of Williston on Highway 1804.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Clark Trading Post
State Historic Site



Mandan Indians built an earthlodge village here in 1822. American Fur Company employee, James Kipp built Fort Clark Trading Post just south of the Mandan village in 1830-31. In 1837 passengers on the steamboat St. Peters were infected with smallpox, causing an epidemic that swept the village killing 90% of its inhabitants. Francis A. Chardon, while chief trader, recorded the history of the site. His journal provides exquisite details of daily life. It is located 1.25 miles west of the town of Ft. Clark.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Dilts
State Historic Site

Here, about 8 miles west and north of Rhame, in 1864 a real-life “circling the wagons” took place when a wagon train headed for Montana was attacked by the Sioux. A detachment returned to Ft. Rice for help, but the train was besieged for 16 days before help arrived. Several died and were buried in the earthwork embankment built for protection during the siege.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Mandan Lewis and Clark

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center



The center is located just off US Highway 83 at Washburn. The North Dakota segment of the Corps of Discovery's journey is featured in the exhibits. A short distance away is the reconstructed Fort Mandan, a replica of the place where the expedition spent the winter of 1804-1805. The center and the fort represent the work of the North Dakota Lewis and Clark Fort Mandan Foundation.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Ransom
State Historic Site



The fort was established in 1867 to protect overland travel from Minnesota to Montana. Built of oak logs from the Sheyenne River Valley, the structures were arranged within an earthen breastworks. It was dismantled in 1872 and the materials were used to build Ft. Seward at Jamestown. Located .6 miles southwest of the town of Fort Ransom.

Date Visited: _____

Fort Totten - Totten Trail Inn
State Historic Site - Interpretive Center



This site, 14 miles southwest of Devils Lake on ND Highway 57, on the southeast edge of the town of Fort Totten, is one of the best preserved frontier military posts in the country. Constructed from 1867 to 1873 and used as a military outpost until 1890, when it was converted to a boarding school for Dakota Indian children from the nearby Spirit Lake Nation Reservation and Chippewa children from the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation. It closed in 1959. A boardwalk guides visitors on a tour of the buildings, with exhibits beginning at the Fort Totten Interpretive Center in the restored commissary storehouse. These exhibits describe the military, Indian school, and historic preservation activities at Fort Totten. Several other buildings around the parade grounds are open to the public or have window exhibits showing the functions of the building. Buildings painted gray with red trim are the original military color scheme; those white with green trim are of the post-1904 Indian school colors. The historic Totten Trail Inn is available on site for overnight and meeting accommodations.

Date Visited: _____

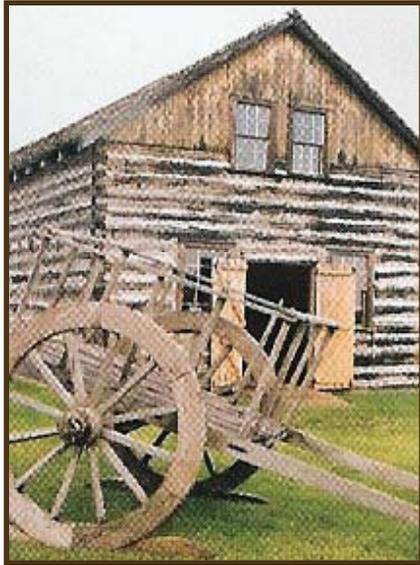
Fort Union Trading Post
National Historic Site



John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company established Fort Union at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers in 1829. It dominated the Upper Missouri region fur trade for many years. With the change in gentlemen's fashion from beaver to silk hats, the fur trade declined rapidly in the 1830s, but the demand for buffalo hides increased until the peak year of 1850. The fort was acquired by the U.S. Army in 1867. Much of the wood was used to build Ft. Buford. The National Park Service established this national site by 1958. Located about 2.5 miles west of Ft. Buford.

Date Visited: _____

Gingras Trading Post
State Historic Site

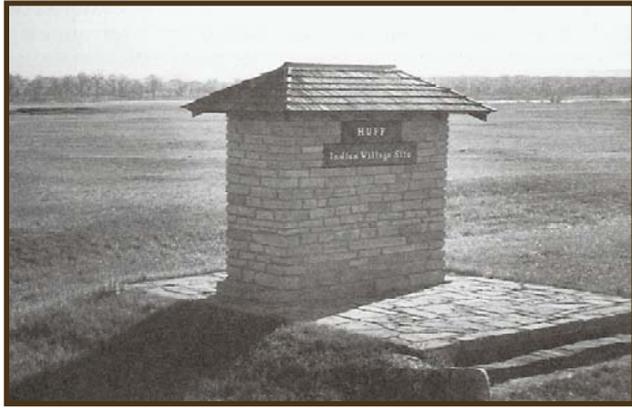


From 1843 to 1873 Antoine B. Gingras's house and store served the Métis of the northern Red River Valley. It is one of the oldest standing Euro-American buildings in North Dakota. Gingras also served in the Minnesota Territorial Legislature, and his store was a political center when Dakota Territory was organized. Gingras supported the Metis separatist movement in Canada, and when that failed, the movement's leader Riel sought Gingras's protection. The site is located 1.25 miles north and east of Walhalla.

Date Visited: _____

Huff Indian Village

State Historic Site

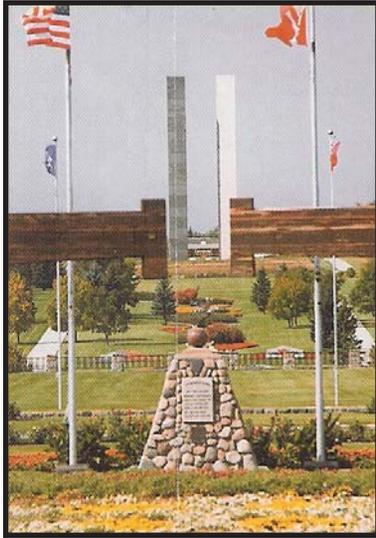


*Huff Indian
Village
Historic Site
Marker*

This site has been designated a National Historic Landmark. Of great archaeological interest due to its large size and distinctive fortification system, the village had at least 103 mostly rectangular, probably multi-family houses, and a population of approximately 1,000 people in about A.D. 1450. It was protected by a ditch that was 15 feet wide, two to five feet deep, that had a line of outward pointing stakes on the inner edge. Soil from the ditch was thrown inwards to form a ridge topped by a palisade of posts. The side facing the river was protected by a steep bank. The site is 20 miles south of Mandan, .5 miles south of the town of Huff, Morton County.

Date Visited: _____

The International Peace Garden

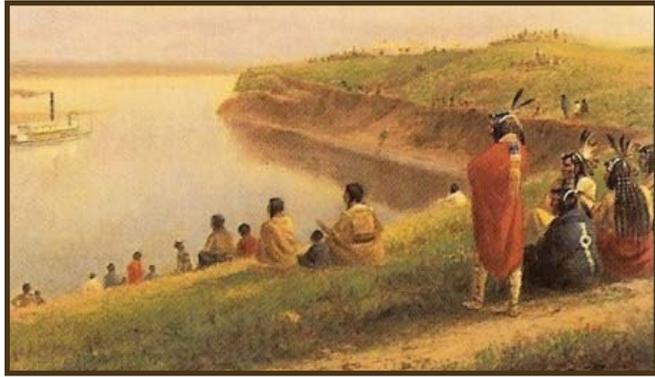


On July 14, 1932, the International Peace Garden on the North Dakota-Manitoba border was dedicated with a cairn which has the inscription: "To God in his Glory we two nations dedicate this garden and pledge ourselves that as long as men shall live we will not take up arms against one another." The garden was the dream of Dr. Henry T. Moore, who said it would be "not merely a memorial to the long period of peace which has been enjoyed by both countries, but as an example to the warring nations of the world that there is a better way to settle international differences than through the recourse of bloody war, and as a memorial to international friendship that shall endure to all time." Located 13 miles north of Dunseith on US Highway 281.

Date Visited: _____

Knife River Indian Villages

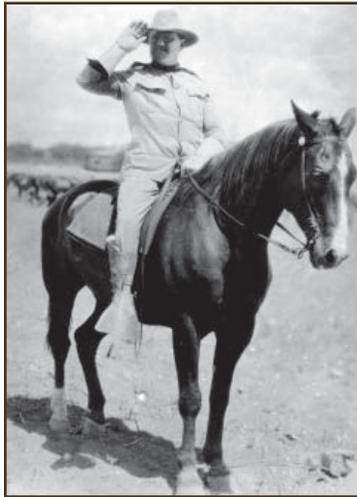
National Historic Site



The Knife River Indian Villages had become an important trading site by the early 1800s. It was in one of these villages that Sakakawea lived with the Hidatsa. It was when her husband, Toussaint Charbonneau, was hired as their interpreter, that Sakakawea became part of the Lewis and Clark expedition. A visitor center with exhibits and a book store is located at the site as well as a reconstructed earthlodge. The site is .5 miles north of Stanton on County Road 37.

Date Visited: _____

Medora – Legendary Destination
ND Cowboy Hall of Fame Interpretive Center



In the spring of 1883 a French nobleman, the Marquis de Mores, visited the Little Missouri crossing of the Northern Pacific Railway. He established a town site which he named for his wife Medora, a New York socialite, and a packing plant, and built a summer home for his wife and family. It was here a year later that Teddy Roosevelt began ranching near Medora and he earned the grudging respect of the cowboys. The North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame is the interpretive center for history of Native Americans, ranching, rodeo, and the western lifestyle of the plains and badlands located in rustic Medora. Enjoy the Medora Musical, golf the Bully Pulpit Golf Course, seven museums, historical presentations, hiking, biking, shopping, playgrounds and so much more.

Date Visited: _____

Menoken Indian Village

State Historic Site

Once believed to have been the village visited by the Verendrye party in 1738, later studies have shown it to be of much earlier occupancy, dating to AD 1200, based on radiocarbon dating that was unavailable to earlier archaeologists. Menoken was a small village of perhaps 25-30 oval lodges. The site contains important information about the transition from an exclusively hunting-gathering lifeway to one including corn horticulture on the Northern Plains. The site has been designated as a National Historic Landmark. Located just north and one mile east of the I-94 interchange at Menoken.

Date Visited: _____

North Dakota Heritage Center

*The State Museum - State Historical Society of ND
and the State Historic Preservation Offices*



Located on the state capitol grounds in Bismarck, this is North Dakota's largest museum and is accredited by the American Association of Museums. It is the headquarters of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, its Foundation, the State Archives, Historical Research Library and the State Historic Preservation Offices. In addition to the historical society collections, it houses the North Dakota Geological Survey's State Fossil Collection. As the official state archive, it acquires and preserves manuscript collections, books, periodicals, maps, audio-video materials, photographs, and news-papers for research by both scholars and the public. It has been especially valuable to those doing genealogical research. The galleries feature both permanent exhibits

that explore the state from prehistory to the present, and temporary exhibits featuring stories and collections of our history and culture. Free Admission to the public.

Date Visited: _____

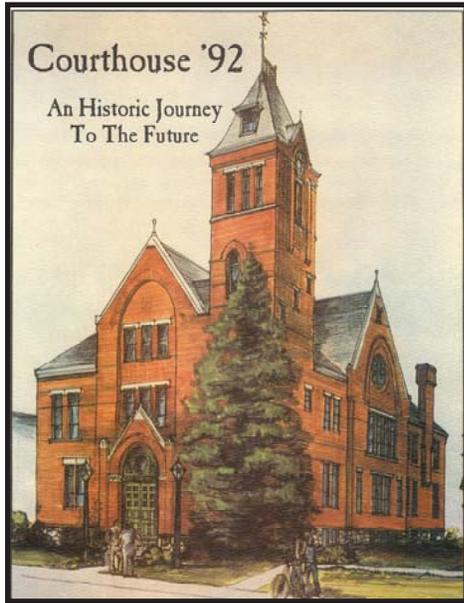
Pembina State Museum
State Historic Site - Interpretive Center



A regional museum of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, it is located near exit 215 on I-29. It is open all year and features two exhibit galleries, interpretive programs and activities, a travel information center, and a 7-story-high observation tower with a great view of the Red River Valley.

Date Visited: _____

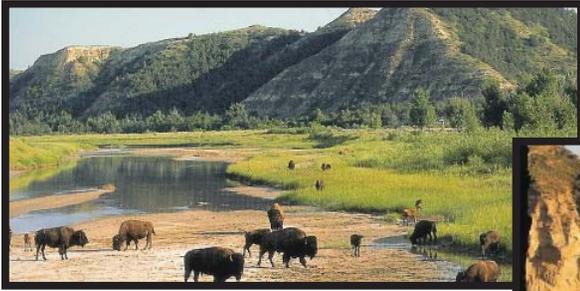
Stutsman County Courthouse
State Historic Site



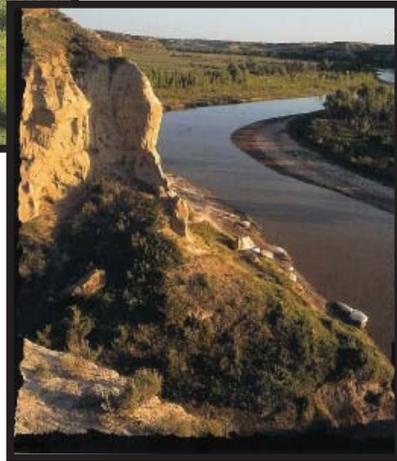
Completed in 1883, this is North Dakota's oldest surviving courthouse and is on the National Register of Historic Places. In territorial days, meetings were held here in preparation for statehood. It is a superb example of Gothic Revival style architecture. The interior, (not open to the public), is outstanding for its stamped metal ornamentation from circa 1905. The building is located at 504 3rd Ave. SE in Jamestown.

Date Visited: _____

Theodore Roosevelt
National Park



*South unit at Medora,
north unit 15 miles south
of Watford City*



The park was originally established as Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park on April 25, 1947, to honor our 26th president for his conservation work. During his term in office he founded the U.S. Forest Service and established the first federal game preserve. His efforts led to the establishment of the National Park Service. It was here that Roosevelt rebuilt his health and life after a series of personal losses. He remarked that without his time ranching in the badlands he never would have become president. On November 10, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed the bill that gave full National Park status to the area.

Date Visited: _____

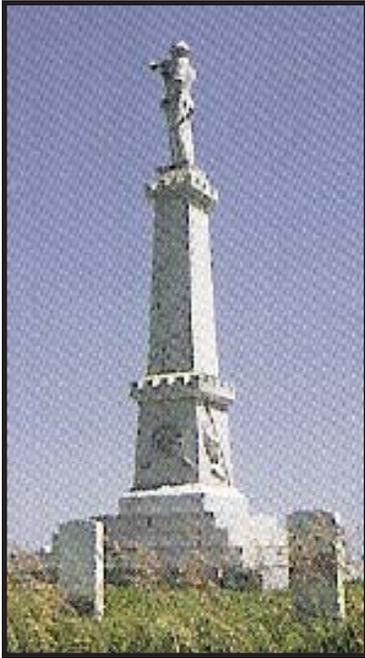
Walhalla
State Historic Site

Norman Kittson was sent to Pembina in 1842 to replace Joseph Rolette, Jr., as head trader in the Red River Valley. Kittson arrived in 1843 and established three posts, including one near present day Walhalla. Rolette organized Red River oxcart trains to haul furs and hides to St. Paul. This drew many Métis families to the area and Kittson built a store and warehouse in 1852. Father Belcourt built a chapel dedicated to St. Joseph, and the community was so named. Following the Riel Rebellion, opening of a U.S. Land Office, and decline in the buffalo trade, there was a huge influx of Europeans, especially Scandinavians. By 1877 only a few Métis remained and the town was rechristened Walhalla. The Kittson store was moved here in 1904.

Date Visited: _____

Whitestone Hill Battlefield

State Historic Site



One of North Dakota's first historic sites, this commemorates both the soldiers under General Sully and the bands of Sioux Indians who fought at the battle in September of 1863. Twenty soldiers died at the battle, 38 were wounded; of the Sioux, 100 to 300 men, women and children were killed, another 156 captured and all of their food and equipment destroyed.

Date Visited: _____

Writing Rock
State Historic Site

There are two granite boulders with thunderbird figures inscribed on them 11.5 miles north and 2 miles east of Grenora in Williams County. They are protected by a shelter at the site which also has restrooms, picnic tables and other amenities for visitors.

Date Visited: _____