

TRI-STATE EXCURSION

MONTANA - SOUTH DAKOTA - WYOMING

APRIL 13-15, 2018

Students are urged to visit the [Crazy Horse Memorial](#) to enhance the total learning opportunity for the excursion. In the wake of Gutzon Borglum's masterful work on Mount Rushmore, Sioux leaders invited sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski to carve the likeness of Crazy Horse atop Thunderhead Mountain, a relatively short distance from Mount Rushmore. Work commenced in 1948. No verifiable photographs exist of Crazy Horse—he refused to allow his spirit to be captured by the white man's strange device—so Ziolkowski created a composite image of Crazy Horse from “word pictures” provided by Indians who knew the Sioux warrior during his life.

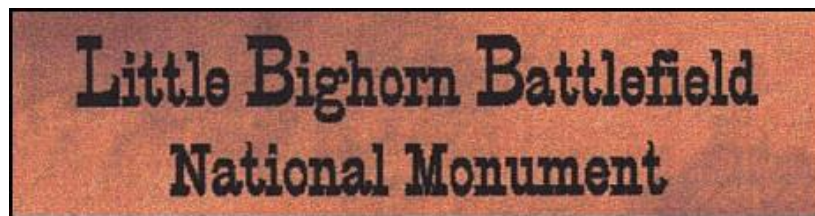
Today, Crazy Horse is certainly recognizable on the mountain, but much rock remains to be shaped. According to ambition, the three-dimensional carving will depict Crazy Horse bare-chested, mounted on a rambunctious horse, with an outstretched arm pointing to the East from where the white men came to occupy the land inhabited by the Sioux. The target date for completion is unspecified due to an irregular rate of work left to the mercy of random funding.

Thunderhead Mountain is approached via the broad Avenue of Chiefs (off U.S. Highway 16/385 between Hill City and Custer, South Dakota), leading directly to an elaborate Visitor Complex. The Crazy Horse carving, one mile from the Visitor Complex, is plainly visible from the Viewing Veranda (outdoors) and the Wall of Windows (indoors). There is a modest admission fee, which students must pay out-of-pocket.

Although strongly encouraged as an academically supportive precursor to the APUSH trip, this day's activity as described above is fully student-interest optional and not part of the actual three-day travel itinerary.



Students are required to view *Son of the Morning Star* as part of the total learning package for the excursion. The film is based on Evan S. Connell's book of the same title. Connell is regarded as one of the leading authorities on the **Battle of the Little Bighorn** and collateral data. Although the movie is artistically limited, it nevertheless presents a useful rendition of Connell's definitive work. The film will be shown at the Elks Theatre—located at 512 6th Street in downtown Rapid City—within a week or so before the excursion. The movie runs about three hours. Viewing the film several days prior to the actual trip allows class days for special lecture and targeted discussion using the movie as scholarly reference. At certain times, parking in metro Rapid City can be problematic; students should be sure to obey posted regulations.

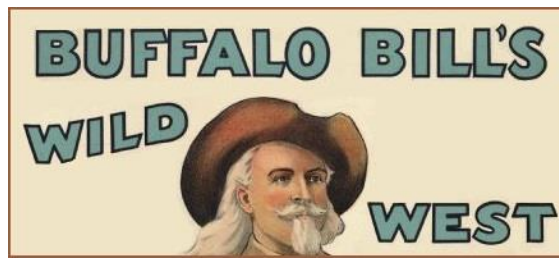


The excursion itself is a three-day affair involving overnight stays. Departure is early morning (exact time TBA) for the bus trip to the **Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument**. We'll stop for 30 minutes during our four-hour journey for a picnic-style lunch at the city park in Broadus, Montana.

In June of 1876, a huge Indian alliance, led by **Crazy Horse**, the preeminent Sioux warrior chief, and **Sitting Bull**, spiritual emissary of the Sioux, obliterated 7th Cavalry forces under the command of Lieutenant Colonel **George Armstrong Custer** in southeastern Montana. More than 250 soldiers, including Custer himself, were killed in the fight. Custer's "Last Stand" was the most decisive defeat of the U.S. Army during the Plains Indian Wars period.

All students will attend a brief National Park Service presentation (film/lecture), after which ample time remains for smaller groups of students to walk the Battlefield & Cemetery and browse the Museum & Bookstore. We'll spend about three hours here.

Then it's on to the **Holiday Inn** in Sheridan, Wyoming, for some relaxation and a good night's rest in preparation for tomorrow's full schedule. Plenty of pizza will be delivered for supper. The hotel's spacious commons is ideal for students who might wish to collaborate on the excursion study guide (or other academic studies) before curfew.



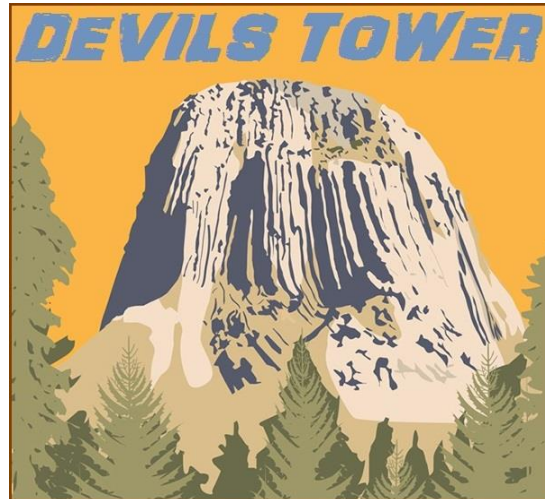
Rise and shine today to experience more of the historic Old West! A hardy breakfast for everyone is buffet-style at the hotel restaurant. The day's first stop will be **Fort Phil Kearny**, located about 25 miles south of Sheridan. It was the largest of three garrisons built along the **Bozeman Trail** to administer control over the Powder River region. The fort became the focal point of two bloody battles between Plains Indian tribes and the U.S. Army—the **Fetterman Massacre** (December 21, 1866) and the **Wagon Box Fight** (August 2, 1867)—during **Red Cloud's War**, the successful campaign waged by area Sioux and their Arapaho and Cheyenne allies to obstruct white traffic through the Powder River country. The resulting **Treaty of Fort Laramie** (1868) was a proud moment for the Plains Indians. It called for abandonment of all three Bozeman Trail posts, but more broadly, the treaty represented a clear victory by tribes of the Northern Plains over the U.S. government. Thus, **Red Cloud** is forever distinguished by some historians as the only Indian leader to win a war against the United States.

The next destination is downtown Sheridan where students can enjoy lunch at one of several quaint restaurants and coffee shops, then visit the famous **King's Saddlery & Western Museum**. Students may also have time to see other sites of interest (the town's entire Main Street is listed on the National Register of Historic Places) before the bus returns to the hotel for a pit stop so that everyone can have a few moments to refresh before resuming the day's busy agenda.

Students will board the bus again to partake in a guided tour of **Trail End**, the lavish turn-of-the-century estate conceived by **John B. Kendrick**, a one-time Texas cowboy and Montana cattle rancher who became Wyoming's governor and U.S. senator. The mansion has been wondrously restored, including most of its original furniture, lights, draperies, and rugs. The ornate grounds are said to contain at least one of every tree indigenous to Wyoming, planted amidst an array of other species which Kendrick had shipped to Sheridan via railroad from tree farms and nurseries in the East.

The final stop today will be the fabulous **Sheridan Inn**, which once served as home for **William "Buffalo Bill" Cody**. The Inn opened in May of 1893, and shortly afterward Cody leased the building interior. He often held auditions for his **Wild West Show** on the massive front porch, evaluating talent as he sat in one of the old green rocking chairs (currently on display in the lobby). The Inn's original bar is still used today (the story goes that Cody almost always perched on the third stool from the left). Many notables have stayed at the Sheridan Inn over the years, including President Herbert Hoover, General John J. Pershing, and author Ernest Hemingway. In 1964, the Inn was classified as a National Historic Landmark. While no sleeping accommodations are presently available, renovation plans mandate 20-plus rooms for overnight guests.

After supper at **Sanford's** in the former **Helvey Hotel** and **Cady Opera House**, it's back to the hotel where a good chunk of study time is available for those who desire it. Before retiring for the night, students should organize their gear and tidy their rooms in order to expedite check-out tomorrow morning.



The trip's third and final day will be a little hectic at first; students should eat breakfast, check out of their rooms, and board the bus in a prompt and orderly manner. (The exact departure time will be announced the night before.) The one and only stop today, heading east on I-90, is **Devils Tower National Monument**. Rising abruptly over 1,250 feet above its base, the stunning vertical monolith was christened the country's first official national monument in 1906 by President **Theodore Roosevelt**. For the surrounding Indians, it holds sacred meaning. Here, students will have time to enjoy one of the moderate walking trails, lined with gorgeous flora, within a stone's throw from the steep incline of the spectacular rock formation.

Mother Nature permitting, everyone will assemble for a light lunch at one of the site's picnic table areas prior to departing for Rapid City. Perhaps this would be a choice opportunity for a group photo. (If the weather isn't favorable, lunch will be on-the-road at McDonald's restaurant in Spearfish, South Dakota.)

No two trips are identical. For example, the group has on occasion enjoyed dinner on Saturday evening at Remington's Restaurant at the Sheridan Country Club. Almost all trip activities are, in some manner, at the mercy of uncompromising variables such as weather conditions and availability of facilities/personnel. One of the instructor's prime objectives is maximizing overall quality of the excursion—in terms of accommodations and academics alike—from departure to return, while keeping total cost per participant at the barest minimum.