

Boot Hill Museum

Teacher's Guide

Thank you for choosing Boot Hill Museum for your school trip. Dodge City's history is exciting and colorful. We hope your experience here will be a positive and memorable one. Please feel free to stop a staff member at any time if you have any questions about the Museum or about the Dodge City area.

Please take your students to the number you are assigned to start with and go through the Museum in numerical order. Doing so will enable your students and other groups to have the best experience. If your group starts out in any number other than "1," please proceed in numerical order to number 32, then go to number 1 and finish at the point where you started.

Please Remember!

NO RUNNING!

NO LOUD VOICES!

PAY ATTENTION!

Thank you.

Start out at the exhibit entrance which is on your left as you enter.

1. American Indian

The Native people of this area were proud and very spiritual. Their life was based on following the great herds buffalo which were their "Wal-Mart" as they used almost every part of the buffalo. The herds were a source of food, clothing, bedding, tipis, saddles, tools, weapons, ornamentation. They only killed what they could use. Following the buffalo, they were nomadic and had no concept of land ownership. The men hunted and the women processed the meat and hides. Plains Indian women also made clothes, collected wood and water daily, prepared meals. Women existed as equals to their men and not as inferiors as the Europeans misinterpreted. The early Great Plains tribes had no written language. However, they cherished their spoken language and used it as a means to pass on their customs, traditions and history. Each tribe had its unique language. When spoken language could not be used, tribes utilized sign language to communicate. They also

used drawings to depict everyday life and important events.

2. Time of Many Flags

The area in and around Dodge City has existed under the "flag" of at least seven nations and territories. The first to live in this area had no "flag" because the American Indians had no political jurisdictions. In 1540 and 1541 Francisco Vasquez de Coronado explored this region and claimed it for Spain. They were the second "nation" to assert ownership of the region. For almost three centuries, the only Europeans in the area were expeditions including the French who claimed a large wedge of central North America for France making them country number three. However, the part of Kansas south of the Arkansas River and west of the 100th meridian was still in New Spain. But, most of today's Dodge City would have been in French territory. In 1803 the United States was the fourth nation to own this area when they purchased France's claim in the Louisiana Purchase. This made today's Dodge City part of the U.S. with exception of the New Spain holding in southwest Dodge. In 1821 Mexico won its independence from Spain. Which put New Spain in Mexico - flag number five. In 1836 Texas won its independence from Mexico in the Mexican War, so present-day southwestern Dodge became part of the Republic of Texas. Technically that

made them number six. However, the Republic never truly held this land. In 1845, Texas was annexed into the United States placing all of southwest Kansas firmly and unambiguously within the United States. Late this same year Texas became a state and, in 1850, the State dropped its claims to territories in today's Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico. On May 30, 1854 the Kansas Territory, flag number seven, became organized and, on Jan. 29, 1861, Kansas achieved U.S. statehood.

A wagon train led by William Becknell was the first to make the trip from settlements in Missouri to Santa Fe. This led to an influx of traders who hung around in this region. Unlike the "one-way" Oregon or California Trails used by settlers to migrate west, traders from the U.S and Mexico traveled both ways on the Trail. They made huge profits selling goods in New Mexico, and bringing back silver and turquoise to sell in the east. Unfortunately, the Trail and the people traveling it disrupted the buffalo migration. As a result, the Indians raided traders using the Trail. In response to this threat, the U.S. Army built forts along the Trail. Built in 1847, Fort Mann was the first fort in our area. Situated west of current Dodge City, it was abandoned in 1850. The Army replaced it with Fort Atkinson which was the only military post between Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and Fort Union, New Mexico.

This fort stood only four years. Another bastion, Fort Mackey, was either abandoned or renamed Fort Atkinson soon after its construction. In 1865, the U.S. Army founded Fort Dodge five miles east of Dodge City. It is the oldest permanent settlement in our area.

3. Raisin' A Ruckus

In 1872, Fort Dodge's commandant had stopped the sale of alcohol on the post to all except Army officers. To satisfy the thirst of the other men, George M. Hoover went to Kansas City, purchased a wagonload of whiskey and brought it to the Fort Dodge area. But he couldn't sell the whiskey on U.S. government property. At the time Fort Dodge sat on a larger military reservation. The western border of the reservation was five miles from the Fort itself. Hoover marked-off the five miles from the Fort by tying a rag to a wheel on his wagon. On June 17, 1872, he and business partner, Jack McConnell, set up a sod and wood plank bar just outside those five miles, south of the future site of the A.T. & S.F. railroad tracks. Soon other businesses followed and Hoover was among the group of men that christened the fledgling town as Buffalo City - At this time the buffalo was a mainstay of the town's economy. However, he name was changed to Dodge City when the founders applied for a U.S. Post Office As there was already a Buffalo, Kansas. The combination of money,

alcohol, gambling and women was volatile and Dodge City began to gain its wild reputation.

4. Rumble on the Prairie

In 1872, Dodge City was at the railhead making this the perfect place to ship out buffalo hides and to bring in supplies. In the first three months of 1872, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway shipped over 43,000 hides and almost 1.5 million pounds of buffalo meat. Unlike the Indians, these hunters from the East with their advanced weaponry brought the buffalo to near extinction during the early 1870's. By 1877 the buffalo that had supported Dodge City were gone and longhorn cattle replaced them as the town's main shipment.

5. Iron Rails

The Railway shipped out thousands of Texas longhorns every season. Hauling goods and passengers was also a vital function of the railroad. It turned out to be a more efficient form of travel for people than the stagecoach. After all, a train could haul more people and cargo with better efficiency than a stagecoach.

Trains were much faster than stagecoaches. For the railroad to be successful, the A.T. & S.F. needed the Kansas territory to be settled. The company appointed land agents, however grasshopper plagues and droughts in the 1870's made promoting settlement of the Plains problematic. In response, A.T. & S.F. cut its rates and its land prices, and hauled building materials

for free. They even brought in Europeans via ocean liners. To keep settlers on the Plains during years of drought, the railroad hauled thousands of bushels of seed grain for free.

6. Up the Trail 6-0

Around 1875 the cattle drives started through this area. Cattle known as the Texas Longhorns roamed Southern Texas and were free for the taking. Cowboys brought them north to ship them, by railroad, to the east. Unfortunately, these cattle carried a tick-borne disease called Texas fever. The longhorns were immune to it, but it killed local ranch cattle. For this reason, officials placed a quarantine line just east of Dodge City, making this an easternmost point for shipment of cattle by rail to the east. Dodge City continued its wild reputation, as the cowboys had similar tastes as the buffalo hunters. Again, they had gambling and women to liven things up. The cattle trade did well and helped Dodge City's economy until 1885 when the quarantine line moved west to the Colorado border shutting the entire state of Kansas off from the longhorn cattle trade.

7. Heyday

In the early frontier days, many people in the west often sewed clothes by hand out of whatever they could find. However, as the west prospered, pioneer women made clothes for their family from fabric bought at general or dry goods stores employing paper

patterns, which they reused many times. To save money, women often took apart older dresses and suits to use as patterns. The well-to-do had a dressmaker make their clothing as well as hats, gloves and other accessories. Ready-made clothing became more accessible as railroads moved west. General stores and dry goods stores carried the latest fashions from large eastern cities. People could also purchase stylish, ready-made clothing, from catalogs such as Sears-Roebuck and Montgomery Ward. The clothing in this exhibit is what the wealthy of Dodge City wore or where the one set of nice clothes which were reserved for special occasions. Fashionable clothes were worn by townfolk rather than by rural people. Most Dodge City men opted for three-piece, wool suits with collarless shirts. A paper collar was attached around the neck and discarded when dirty, allowing the shirts to be washed less often. No adult was seen outside without a hat. Women wore dresses at all times when in public. Fashionable ladies wore long dresses with a high neck and long sleeves. Women decorated their clothing with lace, bows and ribbons. The many undergarments gave dresses shape. Girls started wearing corsets at 7 or 8 and they kept them tight into adulthood. This made it hard to breathe and moved around internal organs in unnatural ways. Even after they were removed for

comfort or when a woman got pregnant, the body was deformed which complicated childbirth and gave society the impression that women were frail.

8. Festive Cowboy

Gambling was not legal in early Dodge City, but it was prevalent. Lawmen levied fines against establishments that allowed gambling and other forms of "entertainment," but these fines were not prohibitive. They were considered a cost of doing business and helped pay the salaries of Dodge City's lawmen. In fact, lawmen themselves were often gamblers. Bat Masterson, Wyatt Earp, and Doc Holliday were all professional gamblers. As long as the games were "square" - not scams - gambling was not only tolerated but respectful. The powers that be knew Texas cowboys expected alcohol, women and gambling - these vices brought a lot of money into the City. The Long Branch saloon, which was Dodge City's most sophisticated drinking establishment and had a five-piece orchestra, was popular with gamblers. If someone wanted to be entertained with singing, dancing and women they head to head south of railroad tracks, or the deadline, where these things were tolerated.

9. Spirit of Dodge City

This exhibit literally speaks for itself as four of Dodge City founders will discuss with you, and each other, happenings in early Dodge City.

After exiting the building, turn left and either go up the stairs or ramp.

10. Top of Hill

You are standing on the original Boot Hill Cemetery. When it was in use, it stretched from Casey's General Store on the west to Applebee's on the east, and north from the Church south to Wyatt Earp Boulevard.

11. Fort Dodge Jail

The jail was built in the late 1860's at Fort Dodge. Notice the hole in the floor - that was the restroom. Soldiers were housed here for as long as several weeks. It was not a pleasant place!

12. Boot Hill Cemetery

Often drifters with no friends, family or funds to give them a proper burial at Fort Dodge. Rather than just leave them in the streets, people began burying them on this hill. Most did not die in bed; they died with their "boots on," which is why they called it "Boot Hill." As the City grew out to this area in 1879, bodies that could be found were buried at Prairie Grove Cemetery. Later, the town expanded in that direction and they were moved to Dodge City's current cemetery, Maple Grove west of town. Two schools, a

swimming hole and the yellow brick City Hall to the east, have been built on the site, as well as much of Boot Hill Museum.

Please enter the front door of the Boot Hill building.

13. Raymond House and Hollywood in Dodge City and Sod House.

This exhibit contains items used by the last City Marshal, Ramon House. After retiring as City Marshal, he became a Deputy U.S. Marshal. House appeared as a guest star in an episode of the famous TV series, "Gunsmoke." He was a member of a group of professional men known as the "Posse," which rode in President John F. Kennedy's inaugural parade in 1961. In 1939, the Movie "Dodge City" was one of the first movies to premiere outside Hollywood here in Dodge City. Many movies about Dodge City have been made since then.

Most of the area's first settlers lived in sod houses or "soddies." Wood was scarce and brick factories were yet to be built in the region. These houses were well insulated being cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

Please exit the building, follow the sidewalk and take the stairs or ramp to Front Street.

14. Front Street

The wood buildings here are a replica of the original Front Street built 1870's. It was a couple blocks east of here and closer to the railroad tracks. In 1885 and 1886 Front Street was destroyed by a series of fires and was replaced with brick buildings which were torn down in 1970 during Urban Renewal. In the meantime, this replica was built in stages from 1958 to 1970.

Please enter the first door on the boardwalk.

15. Rath General Store

This was one of the first Dodge City businesses and was located at the corner of Front Street and Second Avenue. Charles Rath with Robert Wright and A.J. Anthony shipped out over 200,000 buffalo during the Store's first year. It was called a general store because they sold everything in general including food, dry goods, house wares, hardware and ammo.

Please exit to the boardwalk and enter the next doorway.

16. Long Branch Saloon

The Long Branch was a gentlemen's saloon. There were no women, singing or dancing allowed. For those things one had to go south of the railroad tracks. Chalkley Beeson and William Harris were original owners. This front room was for drinking and some gambling, and had a small orchestra. The room behind was for private gambling and the room in the very back was for storage and to "sleep it off" if one had too much to drink. The Long Branch served milk, lemonade, tea and sarsaparilla as well as alcohol. Just like today, Anheuser Busch was served in the Long Branch. During the fires of the 1880's everything in the Long Branch was destroyed except the painting on the wall across from the bar, the clock to the left of the bar, and a safe that's in the Saratoga exhibit. The cherry wood, two-piece bar is an 1881 Brunswick bar from a hotel in Walsh, Colorado. Chalkley Beeson owned the golden eagles which are over 100 years old. Two men have been shot and killed in the Long Branch, U.S. Deputy Marshal H.T. McCarty in 1878 by drunk cattle camp cook, and Levi Richardson in 1879 by gambler Frank Loving.

Please stay inside and
go into the next
exhibit.

17. Hoover's Cigar Shop.

George Hoover had the first business in Dodge City - a bar. He also ran a cigar shop. The wooden Indian in here would be outside on the boardwalk indicating this was a tobacco shop. Indians were the first to use tobacco. Many cowboys couldn't read and symbols like this helped them find the shops they wanted.

Cigars cost 5 cents. One week in 1877 George Hoover ordered 5,000.

18. Collar's Dry Goods

This shop sold ready-made clothing, linens, fabric, sewing notions, shoes and toys. Women could have dresses made here.

19. Tonsorial Parlor

Tonsorial covers anything from the neck up. This was the first stop for a cowboy coming to town. He could take a bath, get a haircut, be shaved and even have teeth pulled here! The personalized shaving mugs are for regular customers.

20. Guns that won the West

Winchester guns were a basic tool of the cavalry and favorites of the Indians. The bullet board on the right displays Winchester shells and is a very rare item.

The frontiersman used flintlock muskets and pistols.

The buffalo hunter used rifles that were long and heavy. They have a large bore, or caliber, and are powerful. Many of these are Sharps rifles. The rifle in the front belonged to Prairie Dog Dave Morrow known to have killed a rare white buffalo.

The gambler used small easy to conceal weapons such as pocket pistols, derringers and belly guns.

The lawman often used custom-made guns. The etched silver gun is believed to have belonged to Bill Tilghman and another gun in the exhibit belonged to Bat Masterson.

Colt firearms are referred to as "the gun that won the west." Colts were very accurate making them good for self-defense.

The gun owned by Ben Thompson in the center of the exhibit was used by his brother Billy to shoot the Sheriff of Ellsworth County, Kansas.

The outlaw carried weapons from the Civil War which were cheap and easy to get. A rifle believed to have belonged to the Dalton Gang is with these.

Continue through the
door and go to the
next exhibit which is
on the right.

21. Rice Brothers Saddlery & Zimmermann's Hardware

The Rice Brothers Saddlery was located in the rear of Zimmermann's Hardware Store. The brothers were well-known saddle makers in the west. See the tassels the horse is wearing - they jiggle when the horse moves to repel flies. It is called a fly blanket.

Frederick Zimmermann was the only gunsmith in Dodge City in the 1870's and 1880's. He learned his trade in Paris before coming to the United States. He supplied firearms, ammunition, lumber, stoves, agricultural implements, tools and hardware.

**Please go back
through the saddlery,
go right twice into
the next exhibit.**

22. City Drug Store & Dr's Office

Dr. Thomas McCarty, the first doctor in Dodge City, was also the pharmacist. The Drug Store sold patent medicines, perfumes, paint, music and Coca-Cola. Most drug stores had to mix their own medicines from bottled chemicals. Pills were formed by cutting them from rolled out dough. The colored water in front told those who could not read that this was a drug store. Doctors were the most important people in western towns. They did not have x-ray machines, so they referred to skeletons received in medical school to help find out which bone was broken or what part of the

body had a problem. This one is an 18-year old woman from India.

23. Jail

These bars came from City Hall located south of the tracks, which is the ornate building on the left wall just inside. During its first year, there was no law enforcement in Dodge City. The first sheriff came in 1873.

24. Saratoga Saloon

The Saratoga Saloon was owned by Chalkley Beeson and William Harris from 1876 to 1878. The gambling devices were used in the old west. The faro card game was played on the green felt board and the abacus was used to keep track of cards played. The wooden keno game is similar to bingo played today. The cage with dice is a chuck-a-luck game. The safe by the window survived the fire in the Long Branch, and the piano belonged to Chalkley Beeson.

25. Print Shop

Newspapers recorded the early history of Dodge City. The first newspaper, the Dodge City Messenger, was established in 1874. Other papers were the Dodge City Times, the Dodge City Globe (now the Dodge City Daily Globe), the City Democrat, Journal-Democrat and the Dodge City Journal, which is now the High Plains Journal, a regional agricultural publication.

26. The Undertaker

These coffins are smaller than modern coffins. People were smaller, but a lot more children died. The glass lids

allowed viewing with the lid closed which kept the embalming smell down and was thought to prevent people from catching contagious diseases. The large wicker coffin was used only to take the body from the place of death to the undertakers.

27. Mueller's Boot Shop

John Mueller owned the Boot Shop from 1874 to 1880. In addition to ready-made boots and shoes, he employed six boot makers. Cowboy boots cost between \$8 and \$18. People only owned one pair of shoes. John Mueller lived in the Home of Stone in Dodge City.

28. Bank

The Bank of Dodge City, founded in 1882, was the first bank in Dodge City. The fancy decor in banks gave them a sense of stability. The stones and bricks in the exhibit came from the Bank erected in 1885 and the teller front came from a bank in Ness City. The horn and leopard skin chair has 22 cattle horns and was made in San Antonio, Texas. The safe is from P.H. Young jeweler.

29. Post Office

The Post Office was in many locations, including stores and shops, in Dodge City until it moved to its current location on Spruce and Central in 1931.

30. Photo Studio

In the early days of Dodge City, having your picture taken was a solemn affair. Due to long exposure times, one had to sit still for at least a minute or

the picture would be blurred. You see people with few smiles and dressed in their Sunday best.

Please exit out the door ahead, walk past the end of the boardwalk and enter the Hardesty House.

31. Hardesty House

This house is typical for a wealthy family. It is a gothic revival home designed by Richard Upjohn. The parts were shipped in from a lumberyard. Built by Alonzo Webster in 1879, it was purchased by Richard "Jack" Hardesty, where he lived with his wife, Margaret and daughter, Sallie. It originally stood near where Arby's is today. The front parlor was Mr. Hardesty's home office. The clock in the dining room; footstool in the parlor; and frog and chick painting, painted by Sallie, in the music room; were originally in the house. The niche in the stairway is a "coffin corner." People usually died upstairs at home, and stairways were often too narrow to turn the corner with a casket, so this niche solved the problem.

Please exit the house
and go left to the
very end.

32. Blacksmith Shop

After the doctor, the blacksmith was the second most important person in town. They made iron tools, equipment and wheels needed to sustain life on the prairie.

Please walk back to
the brick walkway
and enter the church
at the front.

33. Union Church

The Union Church, built north of downtown in 1874 or 1875, was the first church built in Dodge City. It held about 100 people and was used by a variety of churches and for a number of functions. Circuit preachers were used until Rev. Ormond Wright arrived in Dodge City in 1877. Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson were deacons of this new church.

If you did not start
your tour at #1,
please go to #1 now
and continue on in
numerical order
ending at the point
where you started.

Before you board your
bus to return to your
school, please visit the
train engine and depot.
Located in the
museum's parking lot.

34. Santa Fe Depot, In 1868, the tracks for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad began heading towards Dodge City. The track builders reached this area in 1872 shortly after the founding of our town. This made this an ideal place to ship buffalo hides, and later, longhorn cattle back east and to bring in supplies. The A.T. & S.F. Railroad built this depot in Sitka, Kansas in 1930. In 1961, Samuel Cravens, a long time Santa Fe employee, bought the building and moved it to Ashland, Kansas, where he converted it into a Railroad Museum. Boot Hill Museum acquired the building and many of its contents in 1977.

Steam Engine #1139, the Boot Hill Special, was built in 1903 by Baldwin Locomotive Works and

has traveled approximately 1,000,000 miles. In 1954, the A.T. & S. F. donated the engine with the coal car and tender to Boot Hill Museum, and it was moved to the where the Great Western Hotel now stands. It has been moved twice since that date.

Thank you for
visiting the
Museum.

We hope you had
a happy and
informative visit.

Please come
again!