

DEADWOOD WALL OF FAME 2014

Lars Peter “Pete” Shostrom

Born: January 25, 1864

at Pangforsdamen Bolinas Soken Katrenaberg Jeflaborgs Sweden.

Died: December 16, 1941

in Deadwood. (Buried at Mount Moriah Cemetery.)

Lars Peter Shostrom contributed a great deal to Deadwood's heritage, not with money, but with his hands. He was a master craftsman with rock and concrete. Stone retaining walls, building foundations and sidewalks all around Deadwood owe their longevity to the craftsmanship and care of “Pete” Shostrom.

Lars Peter Sjostrom was 19 years old in 1883 when he emigrated from his native Sweden with his mother Karin and younger siblings Karl, George and Matilda. Their father stayed behind in Sweden. (He later Americanized the spelling to Shostrom.)

The family first settled near Des Moines, Iowa. Lars went to work in an Iowa coal mine, but the rest of the family moved on to Leadville, Colorado, where Karl was killed in a mine accident and George died after being crushed between two rail cars. Karin and Matilda moved to California and spent the rest of their lives in Oakland.

While in Des Moines, he met Clara Charlotte Johnson at the Swedish Lutheran Church. In about 1889, he moved to the Black Hills, working in Cambria, Wyoming, Lead, and finally Deadwood. In 1891, he returned to Des Moines, married Clara and brought her to Deadwood, where they raised their family — daughters Ruth Rineveld and Ethel Wells and son Alexis Harold Shostrom.

In Deadwood, Shostrom learned the masonry trade at Golden Reward Mining Company's Deadwood smelter. In the mid 1890s, he went into business for himself, operating three rock quarries above Burnham Avenue. Stone was skidded on sleds down Burnham Avenue, then hauled by wagon to the construction site. He also had a forge behind his house where he made, sharpened and tempered his tools.

Pete poured concrete sidewalks, built stone retaining walls and laid stone foundations for residential and commercial buildings all over the area -- without backhoes, ready-mix trucks, jackhammers or other modern tools. He usually mixed concrete in a mortar box or wheel barrow. He and a helper broke up old concrete with a chisel and 16-pound sledge hammer.

The retaining wall at Deadwood Elementary School, stone foundations beneath many Main Street businesses and the masonry at Mount Moriah and St. Ambrose cemeteries are all testaments to his skill. When Deadwood Dick, a well-known local character, died, Pete built his concrete grave and stone monument on the hilltop just north of town.

Pete was active in the community, serving on the Deadwood City Council and the Deadwood Board of Education. As a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Deadwood Lodge No. 47, he rose to the level of Patriarch of the Grand Encampment of South Dakota.



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