

Rough & Rowdy:

CLEANING UP A DIRTY MINING HISTORY



Ridge Waters features 324,299 gallons of water throughout its attractions.



Ridge Waters

BUTTE, MT

WITH THE OPENING OF RIDGE WATERS IN BUTTE, MONTANA, THE LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS NOW HAVE A FUN, FRESH PLACE TO SPLASH AND PLAY.

BY J.P. GALLAGHER

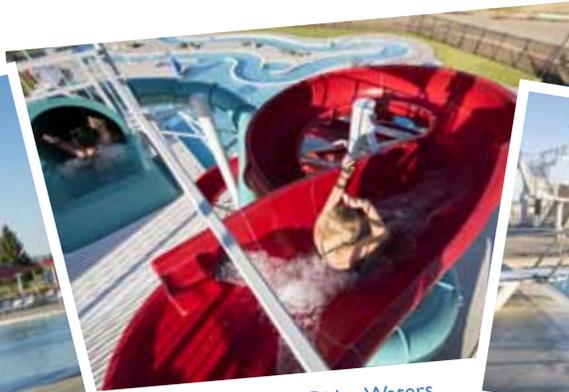


Welcome to Butte, Montana, a city with a rich, rough and rowdy mining history. Butte boomed in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Built on the demand for copper during the electric revolution, Butte saw an influx of thousands of immigrants, making it the most populous city in Montana in 1889. Due to the incredible diversity of ethnicities, and the disparity in classes, Butte was both a community of incredible riches and deprivation. In 1888 alone, underground hardrock mining amassed a staggering \$23 million of ore in one year—which is equivalent to \$626,451,852 in 2017. With its frigid winters, Montana may not be the first place you think

of for waterparks. Despite that, pools, parks and amusement are an entrenched part of Butte's past and now present. The Butte community has ensured that future generations have a place to splash and play at the new Ridge Waters Waterpark!

THE SETTING - BUTTE'S WELL-LOVED AND WELL-WORN STODDEN PARK

Built in 1899 by one of Butte's Copper Kings, the richest of Butte's industrialists, Columbia Gardens had a significant cultural and historic impact on the citizens of Butte in providing amusement from the often gloomy and dangerous reality of mining. Montana's first and only amusement park was intended



Major attractions at Ridge Waters include two 23-foot-tall waterslides.

to “provide a place where children and families could get away from the polluted air of the Butte mining industry.” The park was demolished in 1973 due to a tragic fire. Volunteers have spent decades raising money for a carousel paying tribute to the Columbia Gardens—the Spirit of Columbia Gardens. Now complete, and as a neighbor to the waterpark, this project was a key design reference for Ridge Waters’ Bathhouse.

Stodden Park has been a source of entertainment and enjoyment since the 1950s, including the original pool, the Corette Pool (named after Elsie and Jack Corette for their 1969 donation). Although the strong spirit of the original pool remains, it had deteriorated and was closed in 2005. When Columbia Gardens closed, and then later the Corette Pool, the pastimes and escape these icons had provided was missing. Six years later, community members envisioned a new waterpark. An \$8.7 million bond was passed by the people of Butte in 2016, aided by several large donations. Finally, that true Butte mining-grit had paid off once again.

To further enhance Stodden Park, Butte-Silver Bow received \$5.5 million from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. Known as the Stodden Park Central Improvement Plan, this project includes the design and construction of a commons area between the new pool and carousel facility, a playground, picnic shelters, tennis court renovations, utility improvements, additional parking and enhanced traffic flow. These improvements will ensure that Butte has a vibrant recreation locale, one that speaks of the trials and tribulations of Butte and with the addition of the waterpark, fills the gap Columbia Gardens and the Corette Pool left.

DESIGNING A POOL UNSURPASSED IN MONTANA

When conversations began to bring Butte a waterpark, having a team that understood Butte’s history and pride meant having a team that would make this a reality. The architect chosen was SMA Architects. Having both been born and raised in Butte, the principal and partner Jason M. Davis and team member Becky Lawson understood what was at stake. The design team included Pioneer Technical (civil engineering, located in Butte), and structural, mechanical, plumbing and electrical engineers living in adjacent communities in Montana. Partnering with Counsilman-Hunsaker brought incredible pool design expertise. Working closely with Butte-Silver Bow Parks and Recreation, the team strove to hear the community and incorporate features and references that would make the waterpark Butte’s pride and joy.

On opening day, a proud community and design team watched as a line formed out the door and into the park’s parking lot. Ac-

ording to the *Montana Standard* newspaper, 12,000 waterpark visitors came through the doors three weeks after opening. “That means an average of 570 people have gone to the pool and lazy river each day,” the article stated.

WATERPARK FEATURES

Throughout all stages of design, the team studied the value of each feature, offering a multitude of features that are sure to capture the interest of every age group. As users enter the waterpark, they encounter an 85-foot zero-depth beach entry. The beach entry gradually slopes to a depth of 1’-0” where patrons will find a play haven for the younger generation. This area features a carousel-themed toddler slide, ground sprays, an interactive water table, vertical dumping bucket tower and a 28-foot tall play structure which have all been meticulously crafted to match the amusement park theme. The play structure incorporates a tube slide, side-by-side racer slides, water cannons and large dumping bucket.

Moving into deeper water, features include floatable logs, water basketball, water volleyball and a 20-foot monkey rope. Deep water activities include a 15-foot-tall climbing wall and a 2/3-meter diving platform. Various social spaces, featuring underwater benches, are located throughout and offer areas to relax and unwind. Major attractions include two 23-foot-tall waterslides and Montana’s longest “lazy” river at 400 feet long!

BATHHOUSE DESIGN

The bathhouse references historic Butte in the use of red brick articulated arches above windows; white wooden arches, siding and trim subtly speak to the Columbia Gardens. Visitors can see through to the waterpark immediately upon entering the lobby. The design incorporates separate men’s and women’s showers, lockers and changing areas as well as family restrooms, configured to optimize safety and monitoring. Durable materials such as tile and solid surface shower surrounds were used in these spaces. Site and pool lighting allows the facility to be used for after-hours events such as wedding receptions, birthday parties or other private functions. The pool mechanical room has been designed with a functional and practical layout to assist operators with maintenance and day-to-day operations. Pool pumps are consolidated into a recessed pump pit complete with a ladder and a movable section of railing to assist with pump removal. Pool chemicals (muriatic acid and sodium hypochlorite) have been isolated in separate rooms with exterior access to minimize corrosion in the mechanical room. The latest technology in chemical controllers, variable

CONTINUED ON PAGE 182



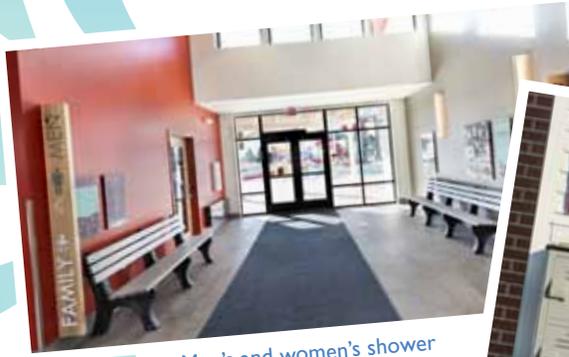
frequency drives, heating systems, filter backwash operations and ultraviolet secondary sanitation systems have been seamlessly integrated.

NAMING THE POOL

When it came time to name Ridge Waters, it was important that the community was given a voice. A committee was tasked with finding a name that would capture the spirit of the new pool and incorporate the diverse community feedback. With over 500 names submitted through mail, email, online and from schools, the committee sat down and vetted each. Through the difficult voting process, the name "Ridge Waters" came to shine. Ridge Waters references the Continental Divide (the East Ridge) that sits at the community's backdoor and the headwaters of the mighty Clark Fork of the Columbia River.

WATERPARK PROGRAMS

Ridge Waters opens daily for lap swimming and exercise walking in the "lazy" river. Swim lessons are available during the morning session, offered in partnership with the local YMCA. Midday, the pool closes for maintenance prior to opening for full operation. Every afternoon, water features are active for the public until the end of the day. In a community with recurrent



Men's and women's shower and changing areas allow for family-friendly access.



economic disparity, one of the priorities was to keep the waterpark affordable for public entry. Fees are four dollars for children ages two through eighteen and senior citizens over the age of sixty, six dollars for adults and a two dollar deck fee for non-swimmers. Although the price of the waterpark are affordable, it is often a financial challenge for many. Butte-Silver Bow Parks & Recreation created a scholarship program that allows children with financial need the ability to visit two times a week at no cost. In three short months, the program has brought in over \$10,000 in donations that have impacted the lives of over 290 children. Local businesses, individuals and organizations have invested in this program, further emphasizing how

CONTINUED ON PAGE 184



Suppliers

3103 SOUTH UTAH, BUTTE, MT 59701
[HTTPS://CO.SILVERBOW.MT.US/2092/RIDGE-WATERS-WATERPARK](https://co.silverbow.mt.us/2092/ridge-waters-waterpark)
 J.P. GALLAGHER, 406-497-6571

OWNERS: THE CITY AND COUNTY OF BUTTE-SILVER BOW
ADMISSION PRICES:
 2 YEARS OR YOUNGER ARE FREE
 \$4 FOR YOUTHS 3 TO 17 YEARS OLD
 \$6 FOR ADULTS 18 THROUGH 60 YEARS OLD
 \$4 FOR THOSE 61 YEARS AND OLDER
 \$2 DECK FEE FOR ANYONE NOT SWIMMING

DATES OPEN: MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY
 SIZE/ACRES: 324,299 GALLONS
 CAPACITY: 912

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:
 YEAR-ROUND: 1
 SEASONAL: 14 STAFF AND 30 LIFEGUARDS
 CONTRACTED FROM THE LOCAL YMCA
 CLIENTELE (PERCENT LOCAL VS. TOURIST):
 80 PERCENT LOCAL VS. 20 PERCENT TOURIST
 UNIQUE PARK PROGRAMS: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
 TO HELP LOCAL CHILDREN USE THE WATERPARK.
 STAFF RETENTION PROGRAMS OR IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS:
 DEVELOPING CURRENTLY

DEVELOPMENT/DESIGN: COUNSILMAN-HUNSAKER;
 SMA ARCHITECTS
 CONSULTANTS: COUNSILMAN-HUNSAKER; PIONEER TECHNICAL
 SERVICES, INC; DCI ENGINEERS (BOZEMAN); MKK CONSULTING
 ENGINEERS (NOW IMEG ENGINEERS); TD & H ENGINEERING
 CONSTRUCTION: MARKOVICH CONSTRUCTION, INC.;
 THE POOL COMPANY INC.
 THEMING: VINTAGE THEME PARK
 WATERSLIDES: SPLASHTACULAR
 RAFT/TUBES/MATS: ZEBEC
 CHILDREN'S INTERACTIVE PLAY STRUCTURE:
 SPLASHTACULAR
 CHILDREN'S EQUIPMENT: SPLASHTACULAR;
 AQUACLIMB; SPECTRUM; SR SMITH
 DECK FURNITURE: IN THE SWIM
 BUILDING FURNITURE: LEE'S OFFICE SUPPLY
 LOCKERS: SALSBUURY INDUSTRIES
 POOL AND/OR DECK COATINGS: THE POOL COMPANY INC.
 (DIAMOND BRITE POOL FINISH)
 FILTRATION EQUIPMENT: NEPTUNE-BENSON
 PUMPS: GRUNDFOS
 CHEMICAL CONTROLLERS: BECSYS7
 SHADE SYSTEM: SUPERIOR RECREATIONAL PRODUCTS
 ADMISSION SYSTEM: REC 1
 FOOD/EQUIPMENT: MONTANA BROOM & BRUSH
 UNIFORMS: THE COPPERT

much Ridge Waters is a valued addition to the community.

For the hungry patrons, the concessions were kept intentionally simple for the first year of operation. Currently Ridge Waters is serving cold beverages, smoothies, pizza, pretzels, hotdogs, chips and candy. In future years, the concessions will expand the menu with healthier options of food and beverage. Ridge Waters also offers five cabanas for half or full day rental with tables seating up to eight and can be rented for birthday parties or special occasions with a package deal including pizza, beverages and admission to the waterpark. Here too, it is evident that this pool serves the Butte community in providing spaces to make memories and celebrate.

Marketing the waterpark has been done exclusively through the Ridge Waters Facebook page and online at Ridgewaters.com. Attendance for the first three weeks of operation surpassed projected numbers, showing the excitement and interest throughout the area. Ridge Waters will enrich the lives of the families of Butte and the surrounding area for many years to come.

A TRUE COMMUNITY WATERPARK

Despite Butte's history of rags to riches, then riches to rags when the mines were closed, much of the community stayed and fought for Butte's well-being. Whether it was deep generational connectivity, fond memories of Butte's past or the tough, stubborn Butte pride that built the community originally, those that remained have carried that sense of purpose throughout Butte's most recent endeavor, Ridge Waters Waterpark. From a squeal when a child



The park's design references historic Butte with red brick and wooden arches.



exits the slide, to the laughter that explodes when the bucket splashes it's two-hundred gallons of water, the success of this waterpark is a tribute to a dirty mining history made clean by investing in its future. •



A BUTTE NATIVE, J.P. GALLAGHER CAME TO BUTTE-SILVER PARKS AND RECREATION JULY OF 2015 FROM THE EDUCATION FIELD. GALLAGHER SPENT 18 YEARS IN THE EDUCATION FIELD AS A TEACHER, COACH AND MOST RECENTLY AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. GALLAGHER IS THE FATHER OF TWO CHILDREN, BRYCE (AGE 20) AND KYLIE (AGE 16). IN JUST THREE SHORT YEARS AS PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR, GALLAGHER HAS REPRESENTED THE PARKS DEPARTMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BASEBALL STADIUM (3 LEGENDS STADIUM) COMPLETED IN 2017, THE NEW WATERPARK (RIDGE WATERS) COMPLETED IN JUNE 2018 AND IS CURRENTLY OVERSEEING THE \$5.5 MILLION CENTRAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AT STODDEN PARK WITH THE COMPLETION DATE SLATED FOR NOVEMBER 2018.

PHOTOS COURTESY LONGVIEWS STUDIOS, INC. IN KALISPELL, MONTANA.