

Historic Pithole City is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission in partnership with Friends of Drake Well, Inc.




Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

Drake Well Museum and Park
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217 Elm Street • Oil City, PA 16301
 814-677-3152 • www.oilregion.org

Managed by  **HISTORIC PITHOLE CITY**
 Oil's Vanished Boomtown 1865-1877



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In January 1865, the wildcat Frazier Well struck oil along Pennsylvania's Pithole Creek, launching an oil frenzy.

Four months later, Colone A.P. Duncan and George C. Prather purchased land on Holmden Farm and laid out 500 lots for lease, founding Pithole City.

By September, 15,000 people lived in Pithole and the city boasted 57 hotels, 3 theaters, an infamous "red light district," a daily newspaper, the third busiest post office in the state and more.

But, Pithole City declined almost as rapidly as it grew. The oil ran dry, major fires decimated wells and the city's hastily constructed wooden buildings and new oil discoveries in other locales pulled people away. By December 1866, Pithole's population was less than 2,000. The city charter was annulled in 1877.

Today, all that remains of Pithole City are cellar holes in the hillside meadow, but the legend lives on.

Hours of Operation

The grounds at Historic Pithole City are open dawn to dusk year-round. The Pithole Visitor Center is open Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June through August and features a scale model of the city, exhibits and an informational film. Come walk the former streets of this vanished boomtown and explore the captivating stories of its diverse population.



Tour Options

For information on group and guided tours, please contact us at Drake Well Museum and Park by calling 814-827-2797 or visiting www.drakewell.org.

Individuals with disabilities who need special assistance or accommodation should call in advance to discuss their needs. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired who wish to contact a hearing person via Text Telephone can use the PA Relay Center at 800-654-5984.

Hours and rates are subject to change. Please contact us for additional event information.



(above) Volunteer reenactors lead ghostly tours by lantern light biennially in October.

(right top) Visitors can sled down Third Street at the annual Cabin Fever Party in February.

(right bottom) Wildcatter Day at Pithole opens the season in June.



Site Events

FEBRUARY Cabin Fever Party
JUNE Wildcatter Day
OCTOBER* Lantern Tours

*Event held every other year.

Where We Are Located

Historic Pithole City is located at 14118 Pithole Road in Pleasantville, PA, just off Route 227 south of Titusville.

