

# Rimini

*Where a case of dysentery saved a life*

Rimini, Montana, which lies between Helena and McDonald Pass off Highway 12, may have been named after a city on the east coast of Italy or for the drama *Francesca Da Rimini*, which was performed by a traveling troupe here during its formative years. No matter how inaccessible the history of the origin of the town, Rimini (pronounced *Rim-in-eye*) is a physically accessible ghost town because the road leading to it was built on an old railroad right-of-way. Originally the town was named Young Ireland.

During the winter Rimini is almost a ghost town, but several cabins, many modified from half-century-old structures, are occupied during the summer. People in

Rimini, as in many places, are not adverse to "borrowing" parts of deserted structures to help improve their domiciles. The modifications give a crazy patchwork atmosphere to the town—the main street is lined with abandoned structures, and occasionally a well-preserved vintage cabin or another structure that's part old, part new. The rich mountainsides surrounding Rimini on the east slope of the Continental Divide have been extensively worked.

It's said that one night the dam above the town broke and tons of water came crashing down, miraculously bowling over only one cabin. The owner was fortunate in that he suffered the lesser of two evils. He



*A typical structure at Rimini.*



*An older section of Rimini.*

presentery and was in the outhouse at the time the waters came tumbling down. He survived.

Rimini is not on everyone's list of places to visit, since the town sits next to Ten Mile Creek, the upper portion of which is a Superfund site. The Sierra Club has this to say about the town:

*In Rimini, residents and recreational visitors risk exposure to toxic water from their wells, toxic water from*

*the creek where they swim and fish, toxic tailings when they hike and camp, and toxic dust in the air along a local road leading to recreational areas. Some residents' homes are built atop mining waste.<sup>1</sup>*

Rimini has another unfortunate claim to fame: Russell Weston, the man who tried to assassinate President Bill Clinton, made his home here.



*Though all are not architectural masterpieces, many structures of interest can be found in Rimini.*