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Country School search page added to State Historical Society website

PIERRE, S.D. -- A recent addition to the South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives website is the South Dakota Country School search page.

The website is located at
<http://history.sd.gov/schools/HistoricalSchoolsSearch.aspx>

“The project was made a reality thanks to support from the Minnehaha County Rural School Project, which funded the design and implementation of the website,” stated Chelle Somsen, State Archivist.

The Minnehaha County Rural School Project began in 2005 by gathering information on rural schools in Minnehaha County and it culminated in the publication of the book *Rural Schools of Minnehaha County, 1871-1971* in 2008.

Somsen said the State Historical Society-Archives got involved when she was contacted about adding rural schools to the state website by Celia J. Benson of Sioux Falls, project coordinator for the Minnehaha County project and author of the book.

“We thought it would be a great resource for researchers,” Somsen said.

The website search function allows researchers to select a county or school name to search and the results will bring up the name of the school, a photograph of the school, the dates of the school’s existence, and its Global Positioning System coordinates. By clicking on the GPS coordinates, researchers will be able to locate the school on a map.

“Currently, the search function only includes rural schools for Minnehaha County, but we are hoping that other counties will want to participate in this website,” Somsen said.

Organizations that want to contribute content for the rural schools website should contact the State Historical Society-Archives, located at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre, for instructions. See <http://history.sd.gov/archives> or call (605)773-3804.

Arts Council, and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.