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### **Pierre Author Bringing Deadwood's Past to Life at Cultural Heritage Center**

PIERRE, S.D. – A historical mystery set in the raucous town of Deadwood will be featured at the December meeting of the History and Heritage Book Club.

Bill Markley of Pierre will tell about “Deadwood Dead Men” when the book club meets at 7 p.m. CST on Tuesday, Dec. 3, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. Everyone is welcome to attend the free meeting.

“Markley has crafted a novel of true crimes and true love set in the true west of Deadwood, Dakota Territory, in 1876. Calamity Jane, Seth Bullock, Sol Star and other well-known people come to life in the book, along with fictional characters, to recreate the mining camp’s wild days,” said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society and a sponsor of the History and Heritage Book Club.

Markley works for the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources. He has previously written three books of nonfiction and numerous magazine articles. “Deadwood Dead Men” is his first book of fiction.

“Writing fiction can be difficult when there is more than one version of an event, or when a key piece of information may be hazy or missing. I wanted to try my hand at telling real stories but in a fictional manner and that’s what I have attempted with ‘Deadwood Dead Men,’” Markley said.

He chose Deadwood as the book’s setting because of its interesting history and great characters.

“I also wanted to debunk the way Deadwood was portrayed in the HBO TV series,” Markley said. “They played fast and loose with history. Even though my book is fiction, I wanted to make sure that it was historically accurate as possible. I read journals and memoirs. I read the newspapers at the time period I wrote about and tried to make sure I followed the events in the papers as close as possible.”

Deadwood in August 1876 was an international town, the author said. People came to the gold camp from Canada, Bavaria, Europe and China.

“I hope readers will enjoy how I have portrayed the people of Deadwood. There are no superheroes, only ordinary people who at times have to rise to extraordinary levels,” Markley said.

“Deadwood Dead Men” is available at the Heritage Stores at the Cultural Heritage Center and the Capitol. Book club members receive a 10 percent discount, and South Dakota State Historical Society members receive an additional 5 percent discount, when they purchase book club selections at either Heritage Store.

For more information about the book club meeting, call (605) 773-6006.

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*The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota’s history and heritage for future generations.*

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, 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](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*