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Picturing South Dakota's History Being Discussed At Book Club Meeting

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakotans are invited to celebrate the state's 125th anniversary by learning about a book that illustrates South Dakota's history.

People may go to sites in Pierre, Rapid City and Sioux Falls on Tuesday, Feb. 4, to participate in discussions of "South Dakota 125: A Pictorial History." The book is published by South Dakota Magazine and features one photograph to illustrate and represent each of South Dakota's first 125 years.

South Dakota Magazine Publisher Bernie Hunhoff of Yankton will speak at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre at 7 p.m. CST (6 p.m. MST), on Feb. 4. People at all three locations will be able to see, hear and talk to each other through the use of the Digital Dakota Network, a statewide interactive video communications system. People may join in the discussion at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology Classroom Building Room 109 in Rapid City and at the administration building of the South Dakota University Center, 4801 N. Career Ave, room 145 in Sioux Falls.

The event is sponsored by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation as part of its History and Heritage Book Club. Everyone is welcome to attend the free event.

"Photographs are a way of preserving South Dakota's history. We're pleased to provide a way for people throughout the state to observe the state's quasiqucentennial," said foundation President Michael Lewis. The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

Hunhoff said that he and magazine staff members wanted to observe South Dakota becoming a state on Nov. 2, 1889, but believed that several good books about South Dakota history already exist.

"We thought there was a need to illustrate the history. This book illustrates the spirit and perseverance of South Dakotans throughout these 125 years," Hunhoff said.

Those at South Dakota Magazine turned to the photo archives at local and state history associations and museums, the magazine's own files and asked photographers for submissions in their search of a photograph that would capture the essence of each year.

"I would say that 80 percent of the photographs have never been published in our magazine or anywhere," Hunhoff said. "What I learned is how trials and tribulations such as floods and fires have shaped our history and shaped our people. We've endured all these adversities."

Although he likes all the photographs in the book, his favorite is of rodeo great Casey Tibbs at his first rodeo, chosen to illustrate the year 1947.

“It reeks of confidence and cockiness. You want to laugh and applaud at the same time,” Hunhoff said.

For more information, please call (605) 773-6006.

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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 for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.