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June Smithsonian Program at Cultural Heritage Center to Feature “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron

PIERRE, S.D. – Due to a scheduling issue, the Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society will move the monthly “Smithsonian Saturday” program at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre to Sunday, June 5, at 2 p.m. CDT.

The featured program is entitled, “Major League Legends: Hank Aaron” and was originally broadcast by the Smithsonian Channel. There is no fee to attend this program, but regular admission fees apply to visit the museum exhibits.

The 47-minute program focuses on baseball player Henry "Hank" Aaron, who did not aim to become Major League Baseball's home run king, nor did he intend to grow into a Civil Rights icon. But because of his remarkable strength, both in power and in character, he became both.

‘Hammerin’ Hank’ was a victim of discrimination and bigotry his whole life, from his Alabama upbringing through his days in the Negro League and notably during his quest to capture Babe Ruth’s home run crown. Through it all, he stayed focused, stood up to every challenge, and 755 big swings later, became a legend.

“For anyone interested in studying American history, or baseball, or the relationship between American sports and social issues, this is a must-see program,” said Jay Smith, museum director for the South Dakota State Historical Society. “This is a powerful program featuring an American icon, and I think people will be surprised at the backstory that unfolds as Aaron pursues the major league home run record in the early 1970s.”

“Smithsonian Saturday” will return to its first Saturday of the month schedule on Saturday, July 2. The program will feature work being conducted on historical topics in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution.

The South Dakota State Historical Society became a Smithsonian Affiliate in January 2013 and is the only affiliate in South Dakota.

For more information, call (605) 773-3458.

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About the South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. 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.

About Smithsonian Affiliations

Established in 1996, Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. The long-term goal of Smithsonian Affiliations is to facilitate a two-way relationship among Affiliate organizations and the Smithsonian Institution to increase discovery and inspire lifelong learning in communities across America. More information about the Smithsonian Affiliations program and Affiliate activity is available at <https://affiliations.si.edu>.