

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 30, 2016

CONTACT: Jeff Mammenga, Media Coordinator, (605) 773-6000,
Jeff.Mammenga@state.sd.us

Bluff Historic District in Vermillion listed on National Register of Historic Places

PIERRE, S.D. – The Bluff Historic District in Vermillion has recently been added to the National Register of Historic Places, according to the South Dakota State Historical Society.

The National Register is the official federal list of properties identified as important in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. The State Historic Preservation Office of the State Historical Society works in conjunction with the National Park Service, which oversees the National Register program, to list the properties.

"South Dakota's history is rich in American Indian culture, pioneer life and change," said Jay D. Vogt, state historic preservation officer and director of the State Historical Society. "Properties listed on the National Register are important for their role in South Dakota's culture, heritage and history. And when properties get listed, it shows that their owners take pride in their role in preserving that culture, heritage and history."

The Bluff Historic District is a significant pocket of historic homes located south of downtown Vermillion. The architectural styles of the district vary widely. There are Queen Anne Victorian and Colonial Revival homes built in the 1890s as the university and commercial district grew rapidly. Smaller Craftsman homes were built in the 1920s and 1930s. These were followed by Ranch homes built in the late 1940s and 1950s as the university spurred additional town growth following World War II.

The Bluff Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its local architectural significance for the period from 1868 to 1957. The neighborhood has been host to Gov. Andrew Lee, who was elected to two terms, in 1896 and 1898; Charles Prentis, who was a successful businessman and Lee's business partner in Vermillion; and E.H. Willey, who was the owner of the Dakota Republican from the 1880s to 1910. The Willey house was previously listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

Buildings, sites, structures and objects at least 50 years old and possessing historical significance may qualify for the National Register, according to Vogt. Properties must also maintain their historic location, design, materials and association. Listing on the National Register does not place any limitations on private property owners by the federal government.

For more information on the National Register or other historic preservation programs, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at the Cultural Heritage Center, 900 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501-2217; telephone (605) 773-3458 or website history.sd.gov/Preservation and click on National Register of Historic Places in the right column.

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.