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Author to Share Insights into the Great Sioux War with History Book Club

PIERRE, S.D. – Award-winning historian and author Paul Hedren will be the guest speaker at the November meeting of the History and Heritage Book Club.

Hedren will lead the discussion of his novel “After Custer: Loss and Transformation in Sioux Country” when the book club meets at 7 p.m. CST on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

“Hedren is the first scholar to examine the events that came to be known as the Great Sioux War,” said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. “His book chronicles what happened after the shooting stopped in the Battle of the Little Bighorn. We’re pleased that Hedren can join the book club in person to tell about this important time in history.”

The Foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society and, along with the SDSHS Press, sponsors the History and Heritage Book Club.

After the defeat of Gen. George Armstrong Custer and the 7th Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876, the U.S. Army battled the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne in a series of conflicts that came to be known as the Great Sioux War. “After Custer” tells how the Sioux and Cheyenne were stripped of their land and confined to reservations, the establishment of military posts, the building of railroads and the killing of the buffalo. Woven into the narrative are the voices of those who witnessed such events as the burial of Custer and the laying of railroad track. “After Custer” received the 2012 Wrangler Nonfiction Book Award from the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

Hedren makes his home in Omaha, Neb., and is a retired National Park Service superintendent. Among his books is “Ho! For the Black Hills: Captain Jack Crawford Reports the Gold Rush and Great Sioux War,” which was published by the SDSHS Press.

“‘After Custer’ is the product of nearly a decade of work driven both by a curiosity with northern plains history and a want to craft an epilogue to the Great Sioux War. The book reflects both,” Hedren said. “What I discovered with railroads, buffalo and cattle are connections that all tie back, one way or another, to the Great Sioux War.”

The event is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

“After Custer” is available at the Heritage Stores at the Cultural Heritage Center and the state Capitol. Book club members receive a 10 percent discount, and SDSHS members receive an additional 5 percent discount when they purchase book club selections at either Heritage Store.

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