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State Historical Society notes Black History Month

PIERRE, S.D. -- February is celebrated nationally as Black History Month, and the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre is noting items in its collections that document the involvement and achievements of African Americans in South Dakota history.

The State Historical Society-Archives is displaying items from the collections that pertain to African Americans in South Dakota's history on a website. Items on the page include images of Oscar Micheaux, a noted South Dakota homesteader, writer and filmmaker; Thelma Hawkins, former Pierre resident who was active in the Girl Scouts of America and the American Association of University Women; and Buffalo Soldiers stationed at Fort Randall in 1882. The page can be found at <http://history.sd.gov/Archives/exhibits/bhm/default.aspx>

The society's museum department has a silver plated communion flagon and paten from the historically significant Allen Chapel of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church in Yankton. The A.M.E. Church dates back to Nov. 25, 1883, while the Allen Chapel itself was constructed in 1885. There is no longer a congregation, but the Allen Chapel stands to this day and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The communion set is currently on display in the Changing Times gallery at the Cultural Heritage Center.

To donate items relating to the history of South Dakota, please contact Matthew Reitzel at (605) 773-3615 or Dan Brosz at (605) 773-6013.

Editor's Note: This photo from the collection of the South Dakota State Historical Society-Archives is of Nat Love, better known as Deadwood Dick, who worked as a cowboy in the west from around 1869-1890. He participated in rodeo events in Deadwood on July 4, 1876.

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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 history.sd.gov for more

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