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Three State Properties Listed on National Register of Historic Places

PIERRE, S.D. – Three South Dakota properties were recently added to the National Register of Historic Places, according to the South Dakota State Historical Society.

The listed properties are the Sievers School in rural Faulk County, the Nansen Store in Howard and Iron Nation's Gravesite on the Lower Brule Indian Reservation in Lyman County.

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."

Buildings, sites, structures and objects at least 50 years old 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, click on National Register of Historic Places in the right column.

Summaries for each new listing follow.

Sievers School, Faulk County

Sievers School, located between Miranda and Rockham, was listed for its local significance to the history of education and rural school construction. The one-room school, which retains its original location and materials, was built in 1886 on an acre of donated land. Remembered locally as Sievers School, the schoolhouse was also known at times as Grabinski School No. 10 and Von Ahn School. It is thought to have been called Sievers School because the Sievers family homesteaded in the township in 1884, owned land just south of the school, and boarded most of the teachers at their home. In addition to classes, Sievers School also hosted early church services and community gatherings.

Nansen Store, Howard

The Nansen Store has been listed for its significance to the history of rural commerce in Miner County. The store was built around 1903 and was in operation under the Skaar, Wall and Hegdahl families until about 1961. Country stores provided access to material goods, were a point of trade with larger markets, a post for announcements and debate, a meeting place, and a place of socialization and entertainment. The current owner has recently undertaken restorative work to uncover and rebuild historic features of the building.

Iron Nation's Gravesite, Lower Brule Indian Reservation, Lyman County

Written accounts of Iron Nation's life are scant. He was born in what is now South Dakota, west of the Missouri River, in 1805. No personal accounts of his youth exist, but he grew up at a time when the Sioux were a powerful people on the northern plains. By the 1860s, Iron Nation was a chief of the Lower Brule and signed many treaties on behalf of the tribe. With the treaties signed, Iron Nation settled into life on the Lower Brule Reservation. He died in 1894 and was buried at the cemetery adjoining Messiah Episcopal Church. In 1934, the Lower Brule erected a commemorative obelisk grave marker. This is worthy of listing because it is the first known marker for a Lakota (Sioux) chief erected by a tribe in South Dakota.

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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.