

FOR RELEASE: Oct. 14, 2014

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Cultural Heritage Center Museum in Pierre to Observe South Dakota's Quasiquicentennial with Free Admission Nov. 1-2

PIERRE, S.D. -- To commemorate the quasiquicentennial, better known to most as the 125th anniversary of statehood, the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre will provide the public with free admission to the museum on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 1-2.

"We celebrate South Dakota's history every day, but on special days like the upcoming first weekend in November, the Cultural Heritage Center extends the anniversary celebration," said Jay D. Vogt, director of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

"Our hope is that the citizens of South Dakota will take this opportunity to visit the Cultural Heritage Center with friends and family and join with us in celebrating the history and heritage of our wonderful state," commented Vogt. "By making the first weekend of November a free weekend, we hope to shine a light on our remarkable history."

In addition to the free admission, museum staff will be on hand on Sunday the 2nd to provide additional interpretation about objects related to statehood such as the pen President Benjamin Harrison used to make South Dakota and North Dakota states. Speculation over the last 125 years as to which state was admitted ahead of the other is the source of some debate as well as good natured bragging.

"We know that South Dakota was first, we're just waiting for the consolation letter to be delivered from our friends to the north," Vogt joked.

Also on Sunday, refreshments will be served from 1-4 p.m., and a special holiday "Make-n-Take" activity will take place. Visitors will be able to make ornaments to decorate a tree for the Cultural Heritage Center as well as ornaments to take home for their own trees. All supplies are provided and all ages are welcome. Young children should be accompanied by an adult.

The ornaments made for the Cultural Heritage Center will adorn a special tree on display during the annual Holiday Open House at the center on Friday, Nov. 28.

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