

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 24, 2015

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

State Historical Society celebrates one year with Laura Ingalls Wilder bestseller

PIERRE, S.D.—Nov. 17 marked the one-year anniversary since the South Dakota State Historical Society released Laura Ingalls Wilder’s “Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography,” edited by Pamela Smith Hill.

Skyrocketing to No. 2 on the New York Times Best Sellers List for nonfiction in February, the book has been described by the Los Angeles Times as “a crucial addition to the world of Wilder lore and scholarship.”

“The past 12 months have surpassed all of our expectations; we are ecstatic,” says Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the South Dakota Historical Society Press.

A successful national advertising campaign and widespread media attention helped to popularize Wilder’s annotated autobiography, but its design and contents have made the title a favorite among booksellers and readers across the country—in October the Historical Society Press accepted the Midwest Booksellers Choice Award for nonfiction at the annual Heartland Fall Forum in Chicago.

“Pioneer Girl” is “this huge beautiful book, and it’s so much fun to spend time with and to hold,” said Stephanie Lauer, an employee at Sundance Books and Music in Reno, Nevada, in an April interview with the Reno News and Review.

The story of the small press on the prairie and its runaway best seller, which has sold over 145,000 copies at last count, continues to gain attention. Most recently the publishing industry’s flagship magazine, Publishers Weekly, carried “Pioneer Girl” on the cover of its Nov. 2 issue, and the Nov. 23 issue features an article.

“Pioneer Girl” is the result of extensive research and study into Wilder’s original manuscript about the 16-year journey in which the Ingalls family moved from Kansas to Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, back to Minnesota and on to Dakota Territory.

“The goal was to present Wilder’s original work with supplemental information that would give the reader a better understanding of her life and times,” says Koupal. “Based on the response the Press has seen over the last year, I would say that we succeeded.”

“Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography” can be ordered for \$39.95, plus shipping and tax, by visiting www.sdhspress.com or calling (605) 773-6009. For more reviews, media reports and behind-the-scenes information about the book, visit www.pioneerproject.org.

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.