

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 7, 2015

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

State Historical Society's 'Pioneer Girl' Wins Midwest Booksellers Choice Award

PIERRE, S.D.—After spending six weeks on the New York Times Best Sellers list in 2015, Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography" has been chosen by the members of the Midwest Independent Booksellers Association (MIBA) as a Midwest Booksellers Choice Award recipient for nonfiction.

The South Dakota State Historical Society published Wilder's account of her family's pioneering experience last November. Edited by Pamela Smith Hill, the book continues to be popular with readers across the country.

Members of the MIBA represent a majority of booksellers in the Midwestern region. They annually nominate and vote for their favorite books published each year. To qualify, the book must be pertinent to the region, or the author must reside in or have roots in the area. There are five award categories: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children's picture books and young adult/middle grade.

"To have the booksellers of our region select 'Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography' for this award is an honor," says Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the South Dakota Historical Society Press. "The experience of working with the real-life story of Wilder was thrilling, and we share in the excitement of these bookstore owners over the book's success."

Koupal will represent the South Dakota Historical Society Press at the Heartland Fall Forum awards banquet sponsored by the MIBA on Oct. 9, in Chicago Heights, Ill. Attendees will receive a special "Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography" broadside and have a chance to discuss the publishing of Wilder's "Pioneer Girl" with Press representatives.

In Wilder's autobiography, written before the "Little House" novels, she describes 16 years of the Ingalls family's westward journey from Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, back to Minnesota and on to Dakota Territory. The book is a result of extensive research and study over four years by the Pioneer Girl Project. The goal of the Press was to present Wilder's original work, supplementing it with additional information through annotations, maps and photographs. It is the first publication to

explore fully the pioneer life of the Ingalls family and the people they met along the way. Currently there are over 150,000 copies in print, and another printing is in progress.

“Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography” is available for \$39.95, plus shipping and tax. Visit www.pioneergirlproject.org or call (605) 773-6009. More information about the Midwest Booksellers Choice Awards can be found at www.midwestbooksellers.org.

-30-

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.