

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 12, 2016

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

## **Historical Society Foundation receives \$1,000 grant to digitize photos**

PIERRE, S.D. – A project to make historic photographs available via the internet will continue to move forward, thanks to a donation from the Midco Foundation.



**Chelle Somsen and Michael Lewis, at left, accept a \$1,000 donation to help digitize historic photos from Midco, represented by Chad Uhrig. (Photo courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society)**

The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation received a \$1,000 donation from the Midco Foundation for the digitization of photographs from the South Dakota State Historical Society–Archives.

In the digitization process, photographs are scanned and placed within the South Dakota Digital Archives. This enables people to view the digitized images via the internet.

“The digital archives are accessed daily by users from all across South Dakota and beyond. In an average month, more than 3,000 users are accessing more than 15,000 images in the digital archives,” said State Archivist Chelle Somsen.

The online photographs can be found on the State Historical Society–Archive’s website, [www.history.sd.gov/archives](http://www.history.sd.gov/archives) and then clicking on SD Digital Archives.

The archives contains more than 1 million photographs and other images from the territorial period to the present. In the eight years of the digitization effort, more than 55,000 images have been scanned and placed within the South Dakota Digital Archives. Before the digitization program, those same images would have only been available at the State Archives at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

The work to digitize the photographs is not funded by any general funds from the state of South Dakota, according to Foundation President Michael Lewis. The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

“The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation has annually raised the necessary funds to make this project a success and continue this important and valuable work,” he said.

The Midco Foundation is the charitable arm of the Midco families of companies. Established in 1987, the Midco Foundation provides funding assistance to charitable

entities to enhance the quality of life in communities where Midco employees live and work.

Midco previously donated to the “South Dakota Experience” exhibition in the museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center.

**Suggested cutline: Chelle Somsen and Michael Lewis, at left, accept a \$1,000 donation to help digitize historic photos from Midco, represented by Chad Uhrig. (Photo courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society)**

-30-

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

***About the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation***

*The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota’s history and heritage for future generations.*