

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 6, 2016

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

May is Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota is celebrating Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month in May.

This year's theme is "Celebrating 50 Years of the National Historic Preservation Act: Our Legacy, Our Future."

"South Dakota's cultural heritage is rich and diverse as represented by thousands of archaeological and historical sites, historic buildings and landscapes that have been discovered and recorded throughout the state," said Jay D. Vogt, director of the South Dakota State Historical Society at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. "Public appreciation and understanding is the foundation of preserving South Dakota's past for future generations."

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was signed into law Oct. 15, 1966. Through the NHPA, the country officially recognized the value of historic preservation and created the federal framework supporting the preservation and protection of the irreplaceable buildings, landscapes and archaeology in communities across the United States.

"This annual celebration serves as a showcase for local communities to honor their past and help build their future," said Vogt. "It brings historic preservation to the forefront of our daily lives by emphasizing the vital importance of protecting our nation's history and pre-history. Public awareness is heightened regarding the destruction of historical sites due to neglect and demolition and of archaeological sites due to looters, vandals and forces of nature."

The State Historical Society's Historic Preservation Office has encouraged local communities to plan activities for Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month in celebration of their locally significant historic places.

Activities across South Dakota are listed on the State Historical Society's online calendar of events at history.sd.gov. This calendar highlights educational programs in the areas of archaeology, preservation and history across the state and beyond throughout the year. If you would like to submit an event to be posted on the calendar, a form is available on the website calendar page.

Once again, as an Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month activity, the State Historic Preservation Office will be hosting a three-day hands-on Archaeology Camp for students going into grades 4 through 6. This will be held June 7-9.

For more information on this annual celebration 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, e-mail shpo@state.sd.us, or website history.sd.gov/preservation.

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