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Philip author to discuss Calamity Jane's siblings at history book club

PIERRE, S.D. – A part of Calamity Jane's life that is often overlooked will be the focus of the July meeting of the History and Heritage Book Club.

Jan Cerney of Philip will discuss her book "Calamity Jane and Her Siblings: The Saga of Lena and Elijah Canary" when the book club meets at 7 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, July 12, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The program is free, and everyone is welcome to attend.

"Calamity Jane is famed as a wild woman of the Wild West. Jan Cerney's book reveals another facet of Calamity's life," said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society and sponsors the History and Heritage Book Club.

"Calamity Jane and Her Siblings: The Saga of Lena and Elijah Canary" tells how the woman who would become known as Calamity Jane was orphaned as a child and assumed the responsibility of caring for her younger siblings. She found homes for them. She later tried to reconnect with her family. The book reveals new information about Calamity Jane's brother Elijah, about whom little had been previously known.

Cerney began writing after she retired from teaching. Her books focus on history. She has written five books and co-authored four additional books for Arcadia Publishing, which specializes in pictorial books about American life. Cerney appeared as a historian and author in the French film, "Calamity Jane, Wild West Legend."

The book will be available at the Heritage Stores at the Cultural Heritage Center and the Capitol. All five of the books Cerney has written for Arcadia Publishing and several that she co-authored are available at the Heritage Stores.

For more information about the History and Heritage Book Club, please call (605) 773-6006.

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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.

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.