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May is Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed May as Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month in South Dakota.

The month “was created to acquaint the public with the disciplines and benefits of archaeology and historic preservation and to strengthen the enduring bond between the past and the present,” Gov. Daugaard said in the proclamation.

Historic Preservation Month has been celebrated in South Dakota since it was established at the national level in 1973. The state added archaeology in 2005 to recognize it as a partner in historic preservation.

“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 2017 theme for the month is “Uncover the Past.” Vogt encourages South Dakotans to do this by reading about their community’s history and reviewing the web pages of state and local historic preservation organizations.

Vogt says individuals can also observe this month by:

- Taking part in a community event in honor of the occasion.
- Talking to local preservationists and learning more about their ideas for the community.
- Taking a walk around a historic residential and/or commercial district or tour a historic cemetery.

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. Those interested in submitting an event to be posted on the calendar can find a form on the website calendar page.

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.

Editor's Note: Photo caption – People gather for a walking tour of historic downtown Pierre during a past Archaeology & Historic Preservation Month event. (Photo courtesy of the South Dakota State Historical Society)

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.