

STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter, June 2022, Vol. 7, Issue 1



THE RECORD

Photo Courtesy of Bob Davis

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HISTORY DAYS THEME TO BE "HISTORY: LOST AND FOUND" ON JUNE 17 AND 18

History Day has become History Days, with two days of planned events on June 17 and 18, 2022.

The Historical Society Board of Directors has chosen the theme, "History: Lost and Found" which focuses on researching, preserving and sharing history.

Edited by
Logan Lamphere

History Days returns, scheduled for June 17-18 ... *Kris Hubbard*

The sixth annual History Days, sponsored by the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society, will be held Friday and Saturday, June 17-18, at Sturgis City Auditorium. "History: Lost and Found" is the theme of the event which focuses on researching, preserving and sharing history.

History Days kick off Friday with a reception and cash bar from 4-7 p.m. at Sturgis City Auditorium. Booths displaying a variety of historical artifacts, pictures and other information and memorabilia will be open during the Friday evening reception and also on Saturday from 9 a.m.-noon.

Booths include information and displays about Bear Butte Creek preservation, Sturgis and Meade County Historical Society, Silver City, genealogy, USS General S.D. Sturgis-a transport ship during World War II, photo preservation, West River History Conference, and Society of the Black Hills Pioneers. Also on display will be items from the Old Fort Meade Museum and the former Faith Museum, and photos from the Bob Lee Collection. Ruby Gabriel, a local Meade County author, will also have a booth about a book she recently wrote about Meade County.

For those who want to learn more about the Sturgis and Meade County Historical Society, a booth with information about the Society and membership will be available. There are five levels of membership in the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society, as follows: individual membership, \$25 per year; family membership, \$35 per year; student membership, \$15 per year; life membership, one-time payment of \$5,000; and business sponsorship, \$250 per year.



The Sturgis and Meade County Historical Society will hold History Days again on June 17 and 18 with activities at the City Auditorium and Sturgis Public Library. Pictured at the 2019 History Day is a presentation booth on Clough & Fairpoint (Photo by Kris Hubbard)

Archaeologists Complete Study of Fort Meade Rifle Range ... *David Super*

Mark by mark - 660 in all - a team of archaeologists has recorded all the inscriptions on the stones that make up Fort Meade's old rifle range target wall.

The project, coordinated by the Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Council and funded by a grant from Deadwood Historic Preservation, is part of a multi-year effort to research and bring to life the stories of the Fort's tar-



The target range at Fort Meade was called a "Known Distance Range" in Army parlance. Soldiers fired their bolt-action rifles while standing, kneeling, sitting and from a prone position, each time moving farther back from the targets. Targets were mounted on large wooden frames that could be raised or lowered by soldiers positioned safely behind the masonry wall where many carved their initials or names.

History Days returns *continued from Page 1*

Two programs, both held at the Sturgis Public Library, will be offered on Saturday, June 18, as follows: 11 a.m.: "Basics of Scanning and Preserving Photos" by Dustin White, owner of White's Canvas Art Company of Sturgis; 1 p.m.: "Family History: Also Known as Genealogy - Getting Started" by Cathy Druckrey, Rapid City Society for Genealogical Research.

History Day is possible due, in part, to the support from the City of Sturgis, HomeSlice Group, KBHB Radio, Meade County, and Sturgis Photo & Gifts.

For more information, call (605)381-5395 or email mark@sturgishistory.org.

get range, nearby Soap Suds Row and other Native American and natural features found within the 180-acre site located east of Sturgis along Highway 34-79, across from the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

The inscriptions were left over the course of three decades on the north side of the range wall, the earliest in 1922. Fort Meade troopers scratched or in some cases artistically carved marks in the limestone and sandstone blocks that make up the 500 ft. masonry structure that was constructed in stages starting in the late 19th century.

The thick wall protected soldiers who worked the target frames while their fellow cavalymen sharpened shooting skills from set distances on the other side. Initials, names, dates, unit identifications, even a small but fully carved silhouette of a man's face comprise the "I was here," record of soldiers.

Most of the rifle marksmen were members of the 4th Cavalry Regiment, the post's longest-serving unit - 1927 until 1943 when the organization left for combat duty in the European Theater of World War



Retired University of Montana professor Dr. Tim Urbaniak led a team of six archaeologists who photographed and studied 660 marks left on Fort Meade's long-closed target range wall. This photo is typical of one of the 14 firing positions. The image on the left is a photo taken by a team member, while the image on the right shows how digital clarification can enhance the picture.



This carved silhouette is one of the more artistic elements left behind on the target range wall by soldiers stationed at Fort Meade. Most of the hundreds of markings are initials, names and unit identifications.

Archaeologists Complete Study of Fort Meade Rifle Range *continued from Page 2*

II.

Dr. Tim Urbaniak, a retired University of Montana archaeology professor, led the team of six history experts who conducted a detailed, on-site inspection of the wall last September. They took 1,470 digital photographs of the inscriptions, made careful notes of their location and completed measured



James Busse, left, and Garry Worthington were part of a six-member archaeological team who carefully inspected and photographed virtually every inch of the 500 ft. target range wall. Their findings became part of a recently completed study that will be used by the Bear Butte Creek Historical Preservation Council to understand more about the people and events at Fort Meade when it was an active duty U.S. Army post.

drawings of the protective wall plus an adjacent storage space and latrine.

Professor Urbaniak recently submitted his formal report of the team's effort that adds to the Council's growing understanding of the historic area. His research colleagues included field assistants James Busse, Garry Worthington, Robin Mutchler and Dr. Glen Fredlund; plus Brenda Shierts, an archaeologist with the Belle Fourche BLM office; and Dr. Linea Sundstrom, a contract historian with extensive Black Hills historical research experience.

In early June of this year, a team of archaeologists and students from the University of South Dakota will visit the site to make a field survey of the nearby ground where local historians believe early Fort Meade maintained its "Soap Suds Row," a small neighborhood of tents and structures where civilian laundresses worked to wash the soldiers' uniforms. Then in early September, a second team of archaeologists will return to conduct a more extensive study to create a more accurate map of

the laundry area and search for artifacts.

Support for these efforts will come from a second Deadwood Historic Preservation grant plus local volunteers.

"The financial support we have received from Deadwood Historic Preservation and other sources is critical to our success," states Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation co-founder Ross Lamphere. "Our volunteers bring enthusiasm and energy. The grants permit us to engage skilled professional assistance in conducting the research."

Members of the Preservation Council have a long range goal of

turning the creekside area into an interpretive park that will more fully tell the story of prehistory, the centuries of influence by Native Americans, followed by the decades when Fort Meade was an active Army installation. As an example of the group's efforts, a plan is being developed to involve high school history students from Sturgis and surrounding schools to more fully research the life stories



The red, digitally painted parts of this photo show one of many techniques used by archaeologists to enhance images for a more precise interpretation. Historians hope to learn more about the lives of 244 Fort Meade soldiers who left all or parts of their names and home locations on the north side of the rifle range target wall.



Little remains of the wooden frames that were used to raise and lower targets for soldiers who practiced their marksmanship skills at Fort Meade until 1943 when the 4th Cavalry Regiment left for fighting in World War II.

USD Archeology team surveys Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Area ... Logan Lamphere

On June 7, a team of students from the University of South Dakota visited the Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Area and conducted a field survey. Led by archeology Associate Professor Tony Krus, ten students spent a week preparing the site for a larger dig to take place this September.

Dr. Linea Sundstrom of Custer spoke to the group describing some of the history of the area and an overview of the type of archeology to be done at the Soap Suds Row area, just north of SD Highway 34.

Ross Lamphere used a backhoe to dig out part of the embankment, or terrace, on which Soap Suds Row sits. The cut in the embankment exposed a stratigraphic soil profile for the students to document, which will provide a reference for this September's dig. Sundstrom's husband, Dr. Glen Fredlund explained the soil geomorphology exposed in the cut.



Dr. Linea Sundstrom gives an overview to USD archeology students on June 7, prior to their first survey of the Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Area (Photo by Logan Lamphere)

Archaeologists Complete Study of Fort Meade Rifle Range *continued from Page 3*

of the 244 soldiers who left their names or other identifying information on the wall.

Several local entities make up the Council. Additional support has come from the a Black Hills Area Community Foundation grant and individuals interested in the study of local history. The Council's board members and the organizations they represent include:

- ◇ Sturgis City Council - Kevin Forrester and Aaron Jordan
- ◇ Meade County School District 46-1 - Pete Wilson
- ◇ Black Hills Trails - Kevin Forrester
- ◇ Sturgis Meade County Historical Society - Ross Lamphere (Council co-founder) and Mark Rambow
- ◇ Meade County - Kevin Forrester
- ◇ Fort Meade Museum - Mark Rambow
- ◇ Fort Meade Veterans Administration - Justin Whitehead
- ◇ Black Hills State University - Jace DeCory and Victoria (Rosie) Sprague
- ◇ Citizen representative - Dr. Tom Hermann
- ◇ South Dakota National Guard - Aaron Jordan

Other non-voting partners include: Bureau of Land Management - Lori Kimball and Brenda Shierts; Council co-founder Mike Elliot; Dr. Linea Sundstrom, Logan Lamphere and David Super.

Three soil "horizons," labeled A, B and C were exposed, with the current soil layer on top, a second layer that is about 1000 to 1200 years old, and a possible third layer that is around 4000 years old.

According to Sundstrom, the horizon layers that were stable long enough to form soil are more likely to have had human activity, and will therefore be the main targets of future digs. Between the horizons are other layers of gravel, which would

USD Archeology team surveys Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Area *continued from Page 4*

have presumably been deposited by past floods of Bear Butte Creek.

Coincidentally, the dig took place exactly 50 years after the great 1972 flood, and the group experienced their own thunderstorm deluge during the week they were here. The '72



Soil expert Dr. Glen Fredlund shows USD archeology students a soil profile area on the edge of the Soap Suds Row terrace (Photo by Logan Lamphere)

flood did not touch the terrace on which Soap Suds Row sits, as evidenced by the some of the depressions in the ground where some of the 13 or so laundress houses stood.



Soap Suds Row, a general term used at other Western frontier forts, was a small neighborhood of tents and structures where civilian laundresses worked to wash the soldiers' uniforms.

Dr. Tony Krus (right), archeology associate professor from USD, observes students who are looking into the soil profile



Explosives expert Jim Laverick, Dr. Linea Sundstrom and Dr. Glen Fredlund speak to students on their first survey of the Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Area (Photo by Logan Lamphere)



USD archeology students explore the inscription-laden firing range (Photo by Logan Lamphere)

Logan Lamphere led the students on a tour of the preservation area, pointing out where the petroglyph rock in the Fort Meade Museum was found. The students examined the firing range and observed the inscriptions on the stone wall of the range.

Students also heard from explosives expert Jim Laverick, also from Custer. Laverick, a retired FBI agent, talked about the grenade court that was depicted on a 1913 map of the area near Soap Suds Row, and what to do should a grenade be found.

In September, a second team led by Dr. Sundstrom will excavate, conduct a more extensive study, and create a more accurate map of the laundry area while they search for artifacts.

The Story of Bear Butte Cemetery

... John C. Daum

(This article was originally written in 1978 by John Daum, the longtime manager of Bear Butte Cemetery. It has been updated by his daughter, Joan Bachmeier.)

The history of the Bear Butte Cemetery goes back to 1886 when Olive Branch Lodge No 47 A. F. & A. M., the Odd Fellows Lodge, and the Modern Woodmen of America Lodge, all of Sturgis, combined their efforts to provide ground for a cemetery. The land, McMillan's Eastern Addition, originally belonged to John K. and Emily Mizuer. On April 2, 1883, the land was deeded to J. J. Davenport for one dollar.

The minutes of Olive Branch Lodge reveal that on August 2, 1884, the members instructed the Worshipful Master to appoint a committee to confer with the Odd Fellows about a cemetery. It wasn't until almost two years later, however, on June 2, 1886, that the Lodge voted to acquire half interest in Block 28 of the McMillan Addition and have it fenced for a cemetery.



Article documenting the ceremony to turn management of the cemetery over to the city of Sturgis.

On April 19, 1900, J. J. Davenport sold this cemetery land for \$200.00 to Edward Galvin, John McClung, Walter Scott and their successors in office in Olive Branch Lodge No. 47 A.F. & A.M.

The first recorded burial at the Bear Butte Cemetery was that of Mary Knepper, a two-year-old child who died on August 3, 1886 and was buried three days later. She was buried in section four, lot 20. Her closest relative was listed as G. H. Knepper.

It is thought, however, that the first burials occurred earlier in 1886 when several graves were moved from the town's first cemetery located southwest of the city. Some bones from this original cemetery were uncovered during the construction of Interstate 90.

Other early graves include that of Lula Schell who died September 17, 1891, at the age of 26; Andrew E. Elorh, who was born in Awrich Province, Hanover, Germany, and died October 29, 1901, at the age of 72; Edwin C. Lane who died November 4, 1899, and Mrs. Mary E. McLefresh who was born in 1833 and died March 1, 1899, and her husband Francis M. McLefresh who was born in 1836 and died June 9, 1905.

Charles Nolin, the mail carrier who was killed by Indians on Deadman Creek, was buried in the cemetery on June 7, 1889, and Warren F. Tubbs, one of the husbands of Poker Alice was buried there January 11, 1910.

It wasn't until 1912 that the Cemetery Association was incorporated. The trustees were M.M. Brown, president of the Commercial Bank, A.T. Marshall; A. L Bodley; Mike Lilleberg; H. J. Peterson, a druggist; and Ed Hufendick. In 1915 the association was reorganized. Fred Hampton, who was mayor of Sturgis at one time, served as president of the association for many years, and Peterson was the association secretary for 30 years. It seems L. B. Urton inherited the position of secretary when he purchased the local drug store from Peterson. He held the position from 1941 to 1953.

Over the years, however, the association trustees died or moved away, and it was no longer possible for the association to operate the cemetery. In 1953 the City of Sturgis agreed to take over, and subsequently added more acre-

The Story of Bear Butte Cemetery

Continued from Page 6

age. On September 8, 1976, the association was dissolved, and the central area owned by it was deeded to the city by the remaining trustees. W. E. Hufendick was



Early 1890s funeral at Bear Butte Cemetery.
(Photographer unknown)

presented corporate seal of the association in recognition of his father's long-time role in the cemetery's history.

Operation of the cemetery is now supervised by a Cemetery Board consisting of City Council representatives, local morticians, an attorney, and the City Treasurer, who serves as secretary of the Board.

Records show that 3,453 adults and 112 infants have been buried in the cemetery by August of 1978. A few of these, however, have been moved to the Black Hills National Cemetery. The greatest number of persons to be buried in any one year was 70. In 1977 there were 47 burials at the Bear Butte Cemetery.

As cemetery manager, I can report that there are approximately 500 lots that have been sold but are not in use, and another 430 lots that have been surveyed and are ready for sale. In addition, when the areas now being prepared for graves are completed, another 2000 lots will be available. An additional area just inside the gates on the side hill could be used to 1200 lots available at a future date.

Update to the Bear Butte Cemetery History

... Written by Joan Bachmeier, daughter of John Daum

John Daum mentioned there was an area that was to be added to the cemetery which would add approximately 1200 lots. This was added to the west of the cemetery on the hillside just below. According to John Rausch, the present cemetery manager, while there were that many lots plotted, the top part of the hill was determined to be unusable as a cemetery as there are too many large boulders and the slope was too steep to get machinery in there to dig graves, especially in the winter.

This area on the map is located as sections 25, 18, 19, and 20. The lower part, designated as sections 21, 22, 23, and 24, added 654 lots. These were added for use in 1993 or 1994 and as of this date most of those lots are sold, however not all of those have burials in them yet.

At that same time, 1993 or 1994, sections D and E were added which produced another 266 lots. These lots are



Cemetery manager, John Daum, burying remnants of the Fruth Hotel during the 1977 cemetery expansion.

The Story of the Bear Butte Cemetery

Continued from Page 7

located to the south end of the cemetery where the road circles around the large boulder. Most of those lots are sold also.

The infant lots designated as I-A, I-B, I-C, and I-D is where the infant part of the cemetery is with 193 lots, of which all are sold and 42 have no burials in them. This is an original part of the cemetery.

In September 1977, the Fruth Hotel on Main Street was torn down. It was at the present location of the First Interstate Bank. As it was torn down the remnants were taken to the Bear Butte Cemetery. There was a large draw to the east of the main cemetery and that is where the



Demolition of the Fruth Hotel on Main Street. (Photo by John Daum)

remains were dumped. It helped fill in the draw so it could eventually be used for graves. As he used the bulldozer to push the debris in the draw, John Daum, former cemetery manager, stated the hotel would not take up as much space as it did on Main Street. He also said it seemed a fitting place to bury the hotel as many of its patrons were lying buried beside it. As projects of the city were done and there was extra dirt it was also added and eventually leveled.

In 2021, that area was designated as sections 27, 28, and 29 and added 585 more plots. In 2021 section 30 was created between sections 4A and section 8. This section has 120 plots for cremains only. Two of those sites are used and eight more have cremains that are scattered.

There have been 5561 memorials in the cemetery from beginning through 2021 and 63 of those were in the year of 2021.

Scoop of History presents Chuck Rambow's KKK lecture

The March 2022 Scoop of History presented to a large crowd at the Sturgis Community Center was "The KKK of the Black Hills in the 1920s" presented by local historian Charles Rambow. The Historical Society held a brief Annual Meeting for membership following the presentation.

You can watch the recorded presentation on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/e5rSjn8t TI>.



Members attend webinars

Several Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society members have been attending free online seminars from the Texas Historic Commission.

One session was entitled "Beyond the Bake Sale: Fundraising for Local History Organizations." Participants learned about Ten Fundraising To-do's for Small Museums & Nonprofits.

Another session was "Starting a Museum." Take-aways included the idea that a building is not necessary at first; a museum can start as a digital collection. Micro-museums, which are basically display cases in public spaces, can also help increase access to the stories told by a history organization.

STURGIS HISTORY DAYS 2022

HISTORY: LOST & FOUND

WHEN

June 17 & 18, 2022

WHERE

Sturgis City Auditorium
1019 Main St, Sturgis SD

FEATURING • Sturgis & Meade County Hist Soc • Fort Meade Museum • Silver City Historical Society • RC Society for Genealogical Research • Bear Butte Creek Historic Preservation Council • and much more!!

**PRESENTED BY:
THE STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

FREE EVENT FOR ALL AGES

FRIDAY THE 17TH

Reception 4 to 7 pm

- Historical Booths
- On-going Projects
- Research Experts
- Conversation
- Cash Bar

SATURDAY THE 18TH

**Historic Booths 9 to Noon
Programs at 11 and 1**

PROGRAMS

(at Sturgis Public Library)

11am—"Basics of Scanning and Preserving Your Old Photographs" presented by Dustin White, owner of White's Canvas

1pm—"Family History aka Genealogy - Getting Started" presented by Cathy Druckrey, Rapid City Society for Genealogical Research

FOR MORE INFO:

Call: (605) 381-5395

Email:

mark@sturgishistory.org

Message from the President's desk...*Mark Rambow*

The Historical Society has returned to public activity in 2022 with a head of steam! We are excited to bring a lot of programming and activity in the coming months.

As reported, we held a well-attended "Scoop of History" event in March, with historian Charles Rambow. (More Scoop of History events are in the works and will be announced soon.)

Our focus this year, including our theme for History Days, is History: Lost and Found. We are celebrating the people, families and organizations who have preserved, or are in the process of preserving, our history and culture. To that end, we will be focusing on their stories and providing guidance and support for people just getting started.

We have also been hard at work building our historic collections. We recently received a collection of aerial photos of Meade County farms and ranches from the 1970s. We hope to have a place to do displays of these and our other collections at some point. We really are in need of a storage site that is climate-controlled to properly store and manage our collection. Any ideas would be greatly appreciated!

Lastly, we have expanded our board size to allow a couple more people who would like to get involved to do so. If you are interested in applying for a board position, please let us know!

Thanks for your ongoing support!

Mark



Photo credit -

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/pixagraphics/3414730395>

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Tuesday, June 14, 6:30 p.m. — MONTHLY BOARD MEETING, Chamber/Zoom

Friday & Saturday, June 17 & 18 — 6TH ANNUAL HISTORY DAYS:

Friday, 4-7 p.m. — Reception and cash bar

Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon — Booths displaying a variety of historical artifacts, pictures and other information and memorabilia

Saturday, 11 a.m. — "Basics of Scanning and Preserving Photos" by Dustin White, Sturgis Public Library

Saturday, 1 p.m. — "Family History: Also Known as Genealogy—Getting Started" by Cathy Druckrey, Sturgis Public Library

Tuesday, July 19, 6:30 p.m. — MONTHLY BOARD MEETING, Chamber/Zoom

Tuesday, September 20, 6:30 p.m. — MONTHLY BOARD MEETING, Chamber/Zoom

We Rely on You for Your Membership Dues

Remember, membership is due annually according to the month in which you joined. Options for paying your dues include:

- a) fill out the membership form below and drop it off at the membership table in the City Auditorium during History Days. We will accept your check or credit card;
- b) fill out the membership form below and mail it with your check to the address listed on the form; or
- c) go online to the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society website at SturgisHistory.org, and click on *Membership and Donations*—> *Membership*, fill out the membership form (renewing members must also fill out a new form), and make your payment through PayPal using your credit card.



If you have any questions, please contact Membership Chair Richard Moeller at running2win@gmail.com or (605) 939-3789.

We appreciate all your support and contributions to the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society, and we hope you are enjoying your membership!

STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Our goal is to preserve, protect and promote the history of Sturgis and Meade County. We cannot do this alone ... this is done through memberships, sponsorships and donations. The Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Therefore, sponsorships and donations are tax-deductible; membership dues are not tax deductible. New membership year starts June 15.

Registration Information

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership Level Desired

_____ Individual: \$25.00 _____ Family: \$35.00 _____ Student: \$15.00
_____ Business Sponsorship: \$250.00 _____ Life Membership: \$5,000.00

Please send this form, accompanied by a check for your membership, to:

Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society
P.O. Box 221
Sturgis, SD 57785

You may also register, pay dues, and donate online with a credit card or PayPal at: www.SturgisHistory.org

STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 221, Sturgis, SD 57785

Board Officers

Mark Rambow, President, mark@sturgishistory.org

Ross Lamphere, Vice President

Kris Hubbard, Secretary

Janice Lundgren, Treasurer

On Line

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The HomeSlice Group
The Knuckle Saloon
The Local
The Oasis Bar
Uncle Louie's Diner

Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society

P. O. Box 221

Sturgis, SD 57785

"History is who we are and why we are the way we are."

—David McCullough