

STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter, December 2022, Vol. 7, Issue 3



Photo Courtesy of Bob Davis

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HISTORY DAYS 2023 THEME:

"TRAILS OF HISTORY" ON JUNE 17

We are still working out the details, but we would like to add back the house tours with informational maps.

"Trail" ideas include hiking trails, biking trails, covered wagon trails, and the Deadwood / Bismarck Trail.

Edited by
Logan Lamphere

Sturgis Public Library - 100 Years of Service to Sturgis ... *Richard Moeller*

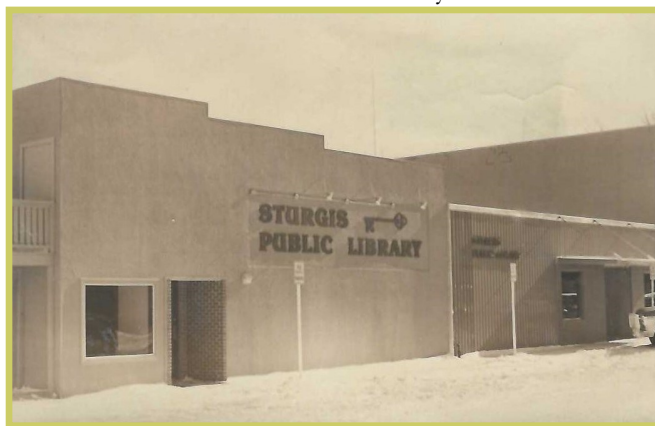
The Sturgis Public Library celebrated 100 years of service in 2022. Though there was a small library of 25 books started in a corner room of a drug store in 1886, it didn't get its official start until October 1922. A Mrs. Annie McClymonds from Chicago gave the City \$1,000 worth of books to start a public library.

For many years the city housed the library in the public high school. As years went on, the school found it difficult to continue having the library with their own. The Armory (City Auditorium) had been built in the meantime, so the library was moved there to a small

15' by 15' room in 1944. Books were piled so high that there was danger to those few who found their way to the piled high stacks.

In 1953, it was realized that something had to be done concerning proper housing for the city library. Mrs. Allen A. Lushbough led a vigorous campaign in 1954 for the purchase of a new library building, including a bond issue that failed by some 60 votes. Not giving up, Mrs. Lushbough took an option on the original 2nd Street building. Failing to get other businessmen involved, the Lushboughs purchased the building themselves after the city council stated that they would be willing to pay rent from of the library fund. After some remodeling, in January, 1955, the new library was opened for the City of Sturgis. Just three years later, the city purchased the building from Mr. and Mrs. Lushbough for the actual cost to them of \$13,736.

In the 1960s, the library saw more remodeling and an expansion. New equipment was added as well as a children's room and study areas.



The 1978 Sturgis Public Library expansion (Photo courtesy Sturgis Public Library)

Library Centennial...*Continued*



In 1953, before the library moved to the present location next to the Municipal Building, it was loaning 6,500 books out of a 15' by 15' room in the City Auditorium. Today it seems like nostalgic times that aren't necessarily wanted to be recalled. The library is overflowing with periodicals and publications of all sorts, making the job more difficult for library employee Evelyn Sheely to find a space for each new addition.

Evelyn Sheely keeps a stack of books from tumbling over at the Armory (Photo courtesy Sturgis Public Library's scrapbook)

Carol Davis became librarian in 1966 and was a fierce advocate for a long overdue remodel and expansion in 1978. During Carol's tenure, she brought in a lot of technology. They included a microfiche reader, a Xerox Telecopier (one of only two in the state), Commodore PET computers where data was kept on cassette tapes, and a new IBM computer system which was on line with the state library.

Rita Schwartz became library director in 1987, and in less than 10 years the building was again inadequate. In 1996, with an anonymous \$5,000 gift, she suggested it be the seed to start a building fund. The library became part of the South Dakota Library Network while Rita was director.

Scoop of History Recounts 140 Years of Methodist Church

...Joan Bachmeier

Mark Rambow, President of the Sturgis & Meade

County Historical Society welcomed all the guests and introduced the speakers. He also stated that the history group has been to several churches and had done a scoop of history at them and also had a program on the Ku Klux Klan.

Jenene Earl, the minister of the First United Methodist Church, said she would like to begin the afternoon with a prayer.



Jenene Earl, the current minister at the First United Methodist Church of Sturgis (Photo by Joan Bachmeier)

Ross Lamphere was the first speaker. His part of the program was to tell about the building and some of the ministers of the church. He began by saying there were many records to peruse to get this information. He said he probably had to say thank you to Dorothy Getsgo as she recorded many records.

Lamphere noted that in 1876 this land was considered Spiritual Land by Natives, and so began the beginning of the ministry in South Dakota.

Among the records was the 65th anniversary in 1947. This showed the first Methodist minister was Reverend

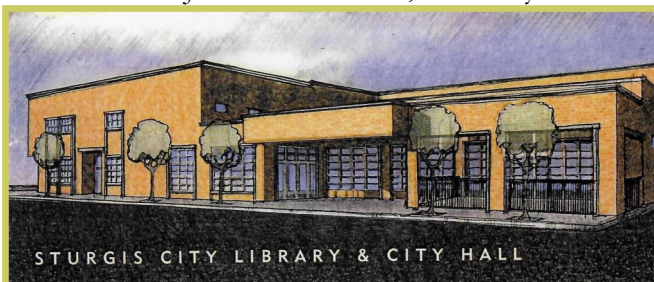
Library Centennial...*Continued*



Youngsters are having the opportunity to learn how to operate computers at a two-week course which started Monday at the Sturgis Public Library. (Staff photo by Richard Creed) *Meade County Times - 6-19-82*

Youngsters (whom may be Richard M. Williams and Brett Shewey) learning on a computer from the *Meade County Times* June 16, 1982 edition (Staff photo by Richard Creed)

Fundraising continued through 2004, when Julie Moore-Peterson became director. She continued fundraising and saw the completion of the new building in 2006. A remodel in 2019 updated the Children's Learning Center and expanded the Community Room as well as adding a kitchen. Before Julie retired in 2022, the library became



The 2006 Sturgis Public Library and City Hall renovation (Photo courtesy Sturgis Public Library)

part a consortium of libraries in the Black Hills.

Chris Hahn is now the director and he recently reported that the library has over 100,000 holdings. Using his background in music he has started a monthly program called Music Speaks. Coming in 2023, the Sturgis Public Library will be the only location West River to host the Smithsonian's "Museum on Main Street Crossroads" traveling exhibit. Who knows what might be in store for the next 100 years!

This information came from a History at High Noon program sponsored by the Sturgis Area Arts Council. The program can be watched at the Sturgis Public Library's YouTube channel at youtube.com/@sturgispubliclibrary.

Methodist Scoop of History...*Continued*

"Preacher" Smith who was killed August 20, 1876. However, there were riders who went from place to place and preached before Smith was the first minister to be a permanent minister.

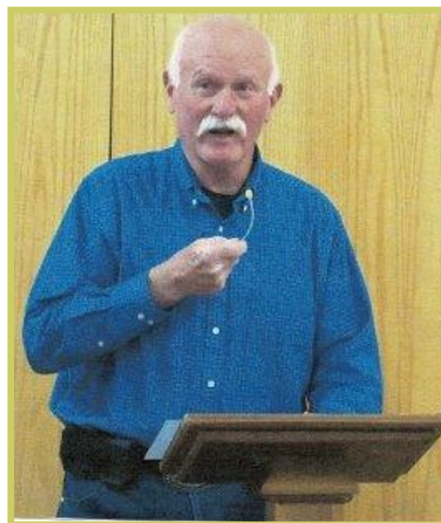
Rev. W. F. Phieffter and Rev. J. I. Bartholomew were two of the early ministers.

The first location of the Sturgis Methodist Church was in March 22, 1882, and was at the location of the old Post Office which now is the Motorcycle Museum. Before the church was there that building was used as a saloon.

In 1887, the building on Howard and Cedar streets was the

next church. On May 4, 1887, it was dedicated during a blizzard. The parsonage was built in 1903 with 71 church members.

The church celebrated several anniversaries and the 55th



Ross Lamphere, Vice President of the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society and member of the Methodist Church, gives the first part of the presentation which includes the history of the building (Photo by Joan Bachmeier)



Church and Parsonage 1907

Methodist Scoop of History...*Continued*

in 1937 was not different. Congressman Francis Case gave the address at this anniversary. The church was raised several feet and a basement was finished with a kitchen and other upgrades.

In 1953, the membership was 310, and many upgrades were done. In 1955, the new parsonage was built on Third Street. In 1960, nine lots were purchased across the street from the church where the high-rise now stands. These lots were never used and eventually sold. In 1970, the old parsonage was torn down and the annex to the church was built. The annex was finished in 1971.

In 1994 twelve acres on Ballpark Road was bought. April 15, 2002, was the first service in the new church.



The Sturgis Methodist Church on its 75th anniversary in 1957 (Photo courtesy Sturgis United Methodist Church)

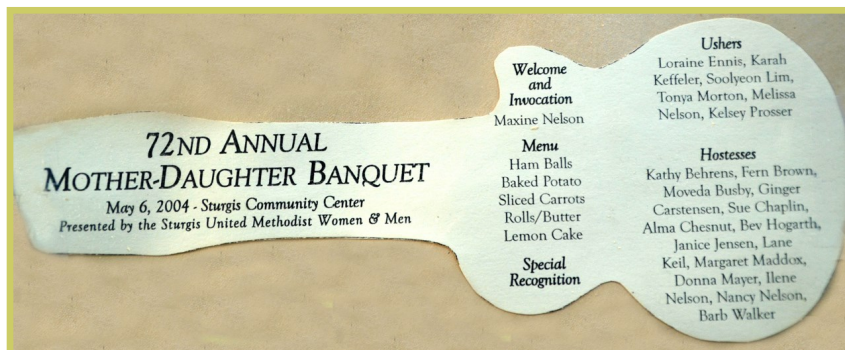
Kris Hubbard took the podium next and continued to tell about the church. Her part was telling about the Mother Daughter Banquet which was held each year from 1932 to 2017. The first Mother Daughter banquets were held in the Methodist-Episcopal-Church (as it was called). In 1934, it was no longer called that, it was just the Methodist Church.

The first Mother Daughter Banquet that was not in the Methodist Church was in 1948, and it was then held in the City Auditorium. The 20th banquet in 1955 was at the City Auditorium and had 515 people there. The 32nd one was held in 1964 and was "Star Light, Star Bright," and at that time the women in the program and advertisement were still referred by at Mrs. So-and-So by their husband's name.



In 1988, the 57th banquet and program was titled Key City Cruise. It had 12 music selections with the final one being "Itsy Bitsy Yellow Polka Dot Bikini" and several men were dressed appropriate for the song. The 80th banquet was May 3, 2012, and was held at the Community Center.

In 2017 the 85th and last banquet was held. It was a Trip Down Memory Lane. The last song was "Thanks for the Memories" with the words changed to be appropriate to the last program. Each program for all those years had a theme and a program. Most had music and some short "skits".



Myrna Hill then came to podium with her emphasis on youth and programs. Myrna is a former teacher and was very much a promoter of the youth. For the last 140 years, youth has been important including camping, Sunday school, etc. The Sunday school used to meet in the old parsonage before the new church was built.

For the last 50 years the Methodists have sent youth to the United Nations. At first it was two weeks including transportation to Washington, D.C. The youth learned about what happens in Washington and how the churches fit in. Today it is just a week as they fly instead of riding in cars.

In 1994, the Jr. League was organized. This is a youth organization. The Diamond Club was also started for 18 to 35 year-olds and mainly for young couples.

The Methodists say they started the First Sunday School in Sturgis. The Men's Club began in the 1960s and met early

Methodist Scoop of History...*Continued*

in the morning and still meet early in the morning. Women at Church organization began in 1882. Ladies Aid Society is a world wide mission and is in India. In 2022, United Women in Faith was begun. Fundraisers were common, and Coffee Fellowship is a large part of the church.

Choir was a great part of the church. Margaret Marvel Means was the organist for many years and started on a pump organ.

In 1920, the first electric organ was purchased. In 1974, a more modern, used organ was bought from Judy White. This was the organ she had at her home. It has problems today, so the next question is do we repair it or let that tradition go by the wayside. The bell choir was started in 1994. They perform at the Christmas program at the Community Center as does the choir.

Mr. A. A. Lushbough started the food cupboard in the 1960s. The United Methodist Church has a world wide mission to Alaska, Russia, Honduras, and also helps with local missions.



Myrna Hill, member of the Methodist Church, tells about the youth and organizations that were and are an important part of the church (Photo by Joan Bachmeier)

They believe the church building should be used more than once a week or just for themselves. The church has been used by many organizations and has had the Sturgis Community Preschool there, as well.

The program closed with a story about the Ku Klux Klan. One night in 1922 when the evening church services were held, the Ku Klux Klan came in dressed with their pointed hoods and long robes and asked some parishioners to move as they wanted to sit there in those pews.

People obliged and moved and let them sit there. The service continued and everyone was quiet. When it came time for the collection the KKK brought up a bag and left it and they all left the church. The service continued. When the parishioners left the church they noticed on top of Sly Hill a cross was burning. This story was told as it was noted in the welcome by Marc Rambow, so he spoke of the Ku Klux Klan as it brought back memories.

Some of the parishioners commented on their lives in the church which was very interesting. Sue (Kenley) Chaplin stated that her mother was the program person for most of the Mother Daughter banquets and always expected her to help cut out whatever she designed and put them on the programs. She said the worst one was the clown program where the clown had many little dots on its costume, so she cut out many colored circles. She always was a very active member and worked on many, many projects.

The program can be watched at the Historical Society's YouTube channel at [youtube.com/@sturgishistory](https://www.youtube.com/@sturgishistory).

Scoop of History: Polo Past & Present, February 11

The Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society will sponsor the next Scoop of History topic: "Polo, Past & Present" presented by Ross Lamphere. It will be held on February 11, 2023, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at

the Sturgis Public Library. Kurt Ketelsen and Nancy Harlan presented a paper on the topic at the 2015 West River History Conference, and the Scoop of History presentation will draw from that paper. With roots in the Ft. Meade Cavalry, polo has continued to be played in Meade County through the present.



ALKALI POLO TEAM-Marvin Aga, Mark Keffeler, Lawrence Aga, Albert Jarvis, Glen Hardy, LeRoy and Clayton Thompson
Albert Keffeler, Raymond Ketelsen, Raymond Aga.

Looking for Jumpers and Skinners

...David Super

Are there any stake jumpers out there? Or cat skinners?

If these job titles are in your past or you know people who have been involved in local road construction, amateur historian David Super wants to hear your stories.

Super, who has jumped a few stakes but never skinned a cat, is researching the construction of I-90 for a story that will become part of History Days 2023 and its theme "Trails to Sturgis."

Focus of the presentation will be on the more than decade-long project to build South Dakota's I-90, especially the stretch from Rapid City to Spearfish. Construction of other state highways through Sturgis also will be part of the story.

Newspaper accounts and records from the South Dakota Department of Transportation and elsewhere will reveal the technical details of the process to connect three Northern Hills communities with the nation's interstate highway system, a multi-billion dollar transportation program that will continue indefinitely.

"Dollars and engineering drawings and equipment descriptions are an important part of the story," says Super. "But men, and in those days a very few women, built the roads with their backs and hands and brains. That's why I'm looking for people who can tell me their experiences as stake jumpers (helpers who gave 'cut or fill' hand signals to road grader operators). Or cat skinners (bulldozer operators) who clanked up and down the gravel pits. Really, any job connected with road building."

People who are interested in telling their first-person recollections of working on Sturgis area road construction projects, or whose family members or friends had jobs like jumping or skinning are invited to call Super to share their tales at 703-795-5240. Super's email address is: david.super@verizon.net.

Christmas in the Country Schools

...Betty Jo Huff

Editor's note: the following memory of Christmas in a country school was recorded by Betty Jo Huff from her father DeWayne Eatherton, who attended the Haley School that was east of Sturgis.

In the country schools on the prairie during the winters, teachers traveled by horseback through the snow and the wind getting to the school before the students would arrive. They would make sure that the building was warmed up with either coal or wood heat.

One by one the students would arrive and huddle by the stove that was normally at the back of the school house or sometimes off to the one side or the other. The teacher would have the older boys in the class bring wood or coal in to keep the building warm.

At Christmas, parties were a very special event as the students would learn a few songs, and sometimes even a play that they would put together for their parents.

DeWayne Eatherton remembered a special time when his teacher gave them all a paper bag with some peanuts and a candy cane in it.

They made gifts for their parents that consisted of stars cut out of paper, and snowflakes as well.

If you have photos of the Haley School, please contact Betty Jo Huff at huff1227@gmail.com.



The Pleasant Valley School House's old heater (Photo by Carri Odle via [Facebook.com/100083319439357](https://www.facebook.com/100083319439357))

Help us Identify Bob Lee Photos

The Bob Lee Photo Collection, thousands of photo negatives taken by the late Bob Lee during his many years with the local paper, was generously donated by his wife, Dodi Lee. The photos range, primarily, from the late 1950s through the mid 1970s.

While this is an amazing opportunity for us to document the activities, people and events of our schools and community during that time, it has also presented us with huge challenges. The collection exists entirely of photo negatives clumped in envelopes by themes; titles such as "HS Football 1962", or "Fort Meade Horse Show 1965", are the only identification

we have for the photos.

The other challenge is the scanning and documentation of the photos themselves. They need to be individually scanned before we even know what is on the photo, after which that image needs to be entered into the database with searchable keywords and other information. This process is very time consuming, and has only allowed us to scan about 600 photos to date.

Please help us out! We would love to have any information or memories of these sample photos. We hope to share more in the coming months!

You're Welcome to a GENEALOGY WORK GROUP A project of the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society



Saturday
January 7, 2023
1 - 3 pm
Sturgis Public
Library

Researching Family History can be an exciting, fulfilling and challenging. Sharing techniques and success stories can help you on your journey to the past! We hope to provide training, resources and support.

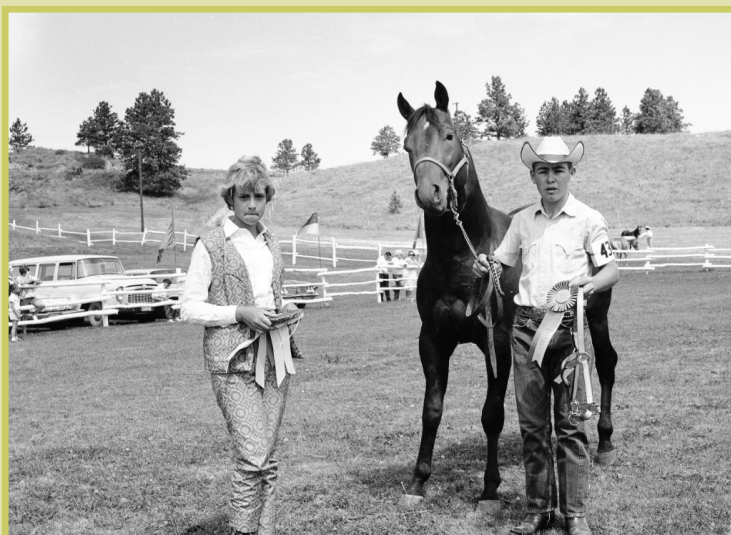
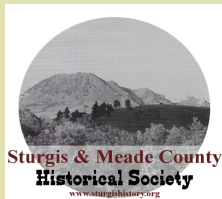
All experience levels welcome!

For more information,

Text: (605) 381-5395

or

Email: mrambow2@gmail.com



Right, top to bottom: a horse show (at Barry Stadium?), a threshing bee, Sturgis Scoopers with a young coach Larry Burditt (Photos from Bob Lee collection)



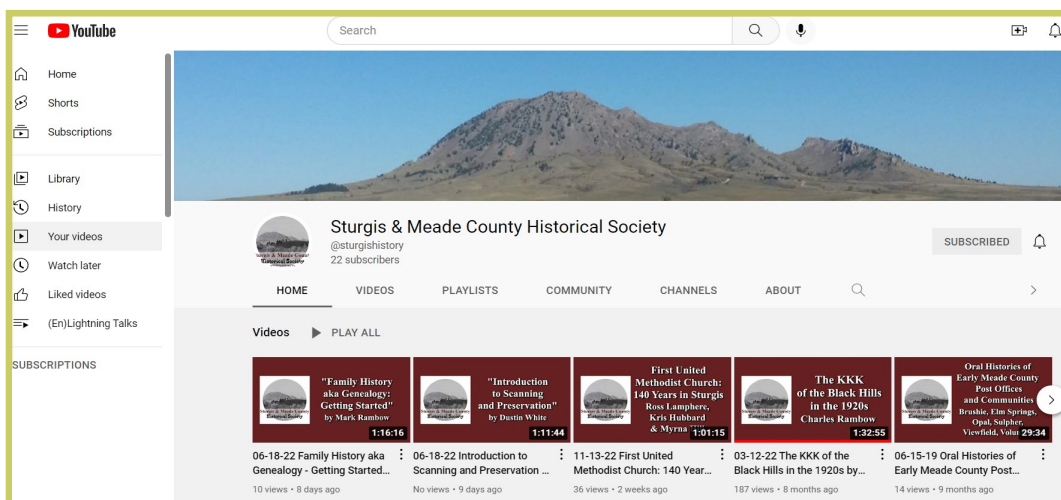
Check us out on Social Media... *Logan Lamphere*

The Sturgis and Meade County Historical Society can now be found online in FOUR places!

Our **website**, SturgisHistory.org, is like a brochure describing our organization, its mission, officers, events, sponsors, and links to becoming a member or making donations.

Richard Moeller has created a **YouTube Channel** for us at youtube.com/@sturgishistory. Make sure to click "Subscribe," so you know when new videos are posted. Recordings of our Scoops of History and other events are stored here.

Our **Facebook Community** is a great way to keep up on the latest news and events from the Historical Society. It is a public group, so you don't have to have a Facebook account to display the content! You can join at facebook.com/sturgishistory.org.

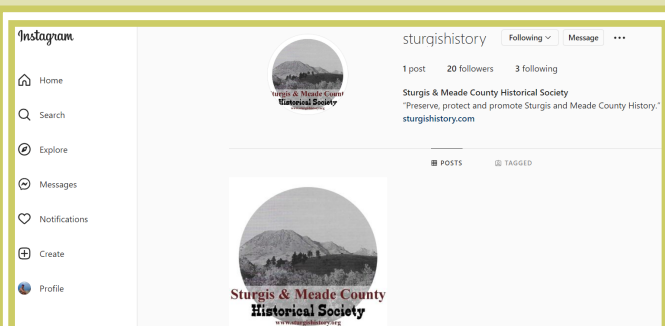


Another helpful Facebook group is History of Sturgis & Meade County, SD (facebook.com/groups/sturgishistorypage). This page sprung up spontaneously, and is especially popular with folks who grew up in Sturgis, but now live in other parts of the country. Being a public forum, it is a good place to share photos, ask questions, answer questions and be part of the growing community of folks interested in the history of Sturgis and Meade County.

When posting anything online, it's always good to credit the source of photos and documents, which not only gives credit where credit is due, but helps researchers and avoids copyright issues. Postings should only be used for educational purposes or in a non-profit manner, as some content is owned by third parties.

Finally, we're getting with the times and now have an **Instagram** account! Instagram, which is more popular with the young folks, is a fun way to share photos and video clips.

Social Media ... Continued



Our account is [instagram.com/sturgishistory](https://www.instagram.com/sturgishistory). It currently doesn't have many (OK, only one) photo, so please help us out and start posting and tagging us on "Insta!"

You can also follow and post content with the hashtag #sturgishistory. This allows anyone from anywhere to post or find content under #sturgishistory.

Next up—maybe there's an even younger person who can create TikTok videos or Snapchats for us! 😊



More of Bob Lee's photos (above) a boy scout troop, (right) a man and a boy with horses and cattle in a field (Photos from Bob Lee collection)

Sturgis Area Arts Council presents a history of Sturgis' Lutheran church at *History at High Noon* ... *Richard Moeller*

History at High Noon is a program on the third Friday of the month (October and November, January through May). We meet at noon in the Community Room of the Sturgis Public Library. It is sponsored by the Sturgis Area Arts Council.

History at High Noon

We are always looking for ideas. If you would like to tell your family history or have something history-based, please contact Bonnie at blange@rushmore.com or Richard at running2win@gmail.com.

Starting in 2023, we will have a program entitled "100 Years of Grace...The History of Grace Lutheran Church" on January 20 presented by Marlene Kotab. On February 17, our program will be "Beug Family History" done by Ken Beug.

The March and April programs will coincide with the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street Crossroads traveling exhibit at the Sturgis Public Library. To learn more, visit sturgisarts.org.



Message from the President's Desk—The March of Time ...*Mark Rambow*

Happy New Year!

With the start of 2023, we are reminded of the passage of time and the unavoidable march of History. As a Historical Society, we love to see time marching on. It allows us more stories to gather and tell.

2022 was a time of "rebirth" of sorts. Everyone crawled out of the holes they dug themselves during the last two years. Talk about History! It may not seem like it, but the time will come when we tell our children and grandchildren stories about the "Great Covid Pandemic!" When that time arrives, please do us all a favor and write it down or record it (or save it through a telepathic recording device; who knows what the future holds!). These stories will become as much our "History" as those from the Great War, the Great Depression, and other seminal events of the past.

Recording and sharing these memories and stories is what we do. We have begun to amass a collection of items, pho-

tographs, and stories, keeping them safe for the present and future. We are still looking for a home to house this collection, but that time will come as well. Meanwhile, we continue to proudly hold Scoop of History events, History Days, and a variety of other activities.

2023 holds a lot of new and old activities for the Society, and we hope you choose to be a part of it. Please watch our Facebook page and website for more information in the coming weeks and months, as we document the march of History!

Mark



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 7, 1:00-3:00 p.m. — GENEALOGY GROUP:

Held by Mark Rambow, Sturgis Public Library

Tuesday, January 17, 6:30 p.m. — MONTHLY BOARD MEETING, Chamber/Zoom

Friday, January 20 — HISTORY AT HIGH NOON:

100 Years of Grace...The History of Grace Lutheran Church, Sturgis Public Library

Saturday, February 11, 1:00-3:00 p.m. — SCOOP OF HISTORY:

Polo Past & Present presented by Ross Lamphere, Sturgis Public Library

Friday, February 17 — HISTORY AT HIGH NOON:

Beug Family History presented by Ken Beug, Sturgis Public Library

Tuesday, February 21, 6:30 p.m. — MONTHLY BOARD MEETING, Chamber/Zoom

Tuesday, March 21, 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.

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

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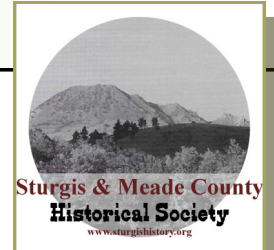
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THANK YOU!

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