

# STURGIS & MEADE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter, August 2018, Vol. 3, Issue 3



Photo Courtesy of Bob Davis

## Inside this issue:

Photo Recap of History Day and Birthday Celebration	2
History: PLAY BALL!	3-4
Nolin Monument Rededicated	4
Calendar of Events	5
August Scoop Recap	5
Membership Form	6
Our Sponsors	6

## 2018 MARTIN C. BEUG AWARD

*Kris Hubbard*

The Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society's Martin C. Beug Friend of History Award was recently presented to the Nolin Monument Revitalization Committee in recognition of its efforts to preserve the Nolin Monument. This Award is presented annually in memory of Beug, who died in 2014, and who was a motivating force behind the formation of the Historical Society.



“The Nolin Revitalization Committee has worked tirelessly to solicit funds, research material, acquire grants, hire and supervise construction companies, and arrange for a re-dedication ceremony in order to preserve, protect, and promote Sturgis and Meade County History by assuring that the historic Nolin Monument will continue to be a landmark in Sturgis for years to come,” said Leona Schroeder, who nominated the Committee for the award.

“Their hard work has truly fulfilled the spirit of the ‘preserve, protect and promote’ goals of the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society and also of the criteria for selecting annual recipients of the Martin C. Beug Friend of History Award,” Schroeder said.

Earlier this year, the Committee was named recipient of the South Dakota Governor's Award for History for an Organization because of its efforts to preserve the history of the Nolin Monument, which is located in front of Sturgis Regional Hospital and Clinic on Junction Avenue.

Members of the Nolin Monument Revitalization Committee include Terry Hermann, Clint Jolley, Dean Kinney, Ross Lamphere, Janice Lundgren, Bill McKee, Mark Schulte and Lee Stroschine.

## Our Society

### MEMBERSHIPS

- 52 individual
- 30 family
- 1 lifetime member

### SPONSORSHIPS

- 2 paid sponsors
- 14 in-kind sponsors

Your interest and monetary contributions help us move forward in preserving the history of Sturgis & Meade County.

**If you are not already a member, please consider joining us!**

You will find a membership form on page 6 of this newsletter.

*Leona Schroeder  
Membership Chairman*

*“Man is diminished if he lives without knowledge of his past ...”*



# 4th Annual History Day and Birthday Celebration Photo Recap



## Selection of Community Member Booth Exhibits



Waldman/Jolley Family



Davenport Family



Caton/Rambow Family



Chaplain and Connie Cleveland



KBHB



Meade County Senior Center



Ft. Meade



'Doc' and Shirley Massa

## Selection of Parade Entries

(See video of entire parade at <https://www.facebook.com/bob.davis.14/videos/1967027456663533/> )



Music by Belle Fourche Brass Quintet



U.S.S. Thresher  
Lost April 10, 1963  
With 129 Men



Billie Sutton for  
Governor  
Stagecoach



Shriner Fun



Parade Float



One of our tractor entries



## Ft. Meade activities offered fun for the kids







## Play Ball!

### America's Pastime comes to the Black Hills

When we imagine the settlement of the Black Hills, it is common to think that the time of early residents was consumed with mining, farming, ranching and attending to the drudgery of everyday life. We would be mistaken, however. People's lives had an abundance of leisure time, which was filled with numerous diversions!

Many sports and activities filled the time and imaginations of residents of Sturgis City and the vicinity. Activities included horse-racing, bowling clubs, glass-ball shooting matches and foot races, not to mention dances, band concerts, theater productions, and on, and on. Sturgis even participated in the roller skating craze that swept all area towns in the mid-1880's, and had a skating hall of their own.

None of the pastimes captured the spotlight, however, quite like America's pastime. Baseball seems to have already been present in the Black Hills when Fort Meade and Sturgis City were established in the late summer and fall of 1878. Teams representing Deadwood, Lead City, Central City, Rapid City, and numerous other mining camps dotted the Hills. Local newspapers went so far as to publish the practice times of their teams, so the community could show up to watch.

By May of 1879, Fort Meade had a team and was playing the other teams of the area. Games would be community events, with the visiting teams, win or lose, being treated to a huge banquet or dance following the game.

The style of play was different from what we would recognize today, with offense being predominant. On July 29, 1880, the Fort Meade team hosted the Central City nine, with the final score reported in favor of Fort Meade, 55 to 18. Central City had been vocal about their chances to beat the soldiers, but it was not meant to be. Fort Meade remained undefeated to that point in the season. The loss for Central City may have been eased some by the fact that General Sturgis ordered out the famed 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry band to play during the game, followed by a "grand complimentary ball."

While Fort Meade and Deadwood were generally the gold standard of the Hills, Sturgis began fielding a team sporadically. It finally found enough players consistently after the community began to grow significantly in 1883 and 1884. In 1885, Sturgis fielded a team that could compete, and was winning all of their games. By this point, the various communities had begun to have team nicknames. Deadwood, who fancied themselves as "the metropolis of the Black Hills," called their team the "Metropolitans" or "Mets." Fort Meade was the "Athletics." Lead City was the "Golden Stars" and Rapid City had the "Eighty Stampers." As the Sturgis team still had no nickname, the Rapid City Journal of June 19, 1885, stated, "We haven't heard the name of the Sturgis nine, but as they hail from "Scoop" and propose to "scoop" the country, we respectfully suggest "Scoopers." Apparently, their suggestion stuck!

In June of 1885, the Sturgis Record reported:

#### ***The Sportive Summer Time.***

*Along with the hot weather, and the flies, and the mad dogs, and the green grass, and the season of perspiration and other incidentals, comes the Sturgis base ball nine, an organization of late date, and high hopes. The fifty dollars that has been so long in dispute in the bank — left over from the last races — has been donated to the nine, and nobby uniforms purchased with it, consisting of white suits, with brown trimmings, and little dude summer hats. The nine is principally composed of Norwegians, Irish and muffers. The muffers can readily be determined by the Reedy tones of their voices as they refuse chromos and tings. The Norwegians are principally known by the length of their legs, and the Irish do all the playing. To-days game will be played on the Dudley addition with a nine from Elk Creek. The latter club are said to average 180 pounds apiece, with a pitcher, catcher and others from the Rapid City nine. Their uniform is red.*

*Joe Hinckel is engaged as umpire, and it is officially announced that he has provided himself with the butt end of a four-year old club, to enforce his decisions. As he is about six feet three himself, it is likely that the umpire will have his own way.*

The politics behind baseball were often as aggressive as the games themselves. Most games were played for a significant "purse." In addition to extensive side betting which occurred, the teams would contract with each other for a purse for the players of, usually, \$50 a game and up. Because of this, players, particularly pitchers, were stolen from teams, often through employment. Individuals were hired from one mine to another, simply to steal them from a certain community. Several baseball playing soldiers from Fort Meade were hired into certain mining communities as they left the service, allowing that town to add them to their roster.

Continued on page 4 ...

(Play Ball, continued from page 3)

While baseball was predominately played by adult males, for money, there were also youth teams and even an all-girl team reported in Sturgis. One day in August of 1897 seems to stand out for the development of the sport in the community.

It seems that Reverend Pyle, Pastor of the Methodist church in Sturgis, was particularly offended by the “kid baseball nine” playing baseball on Sunday. He filed a complaint and had the entire team arrested. The kids, in turn, demanded a trial and separate hearings, which was granted. The first defendant was quickly acquitted by the judge, and costs for the hearing were charged to Pastor Pyle, to the amount of \$35.80, a significant sum at that time. Doing the math, the pastor realized the cost of the separate hearings, and quickly dropped his complaint against the remaining boys.

While it took some time for organized leagues to develop in the Black Hills, it did not dampen the enthusiasm for the sport in Sturgis and surrounding communities. While a variety of other sports also flourished, baseball was the one activity which really captured the heart of the community permanently.



4th Cavalry Baseball team 1920's

## Nolin Monument Rededicated



Members of the Nolin Monument Restoration Committee joined speakers for the Ribbon Cutting Rededication Ceremony held on June 15, 2018 as part of the Annual History Day celebration.

(L-R: Lee Stroschine, Janice Lundgren, Bill McKee, Terry Hermann, Clint Jolley, and Ross Lamphere...Dean Kenney, also a member, was not present.)

Link to online video of the rededication ceremony:

<https://www.facebook.com/kbhbradio/videos/2014508188568536/?fref=mentions>



Max Thompson visited downtown Sturgis while reenacting the role of Pony Mail Carrier, Charles Nolin.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events ... *Leona Schroeder*

Tuesday, September 18, 6:30 p.m.: **MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**, Chamber Office

Friday, September 21, Noon: **HISTORY AT HIGH NOON**, Lee Strochine discussing his new book about Ft. Meade, City Library

Tuesday, October 16, 6:30 p.m.: **MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**, Chamber Office

**\*\* Watch for updates about upcoming quarterly Scoop of History events and the 4th Annual Taste of Sturgis! \*\***

## August Scoop Recap: Agriculture in Western Meade County

*Kris Hubbard*

Agriculture in Western Meade County was the topic of the Fall Scoop of History sponsored by the Sturgis & Meade County Historical Society and the Western Dakota Antique Club. The program, held in the Centennial Building on the grounds of the Black Hills Steam and Gas Threshing Bee, was attended by almost 50 people.

Event organizer William Huston said it was his intent to have people talk not only about their memories of growing up in western Meade County but also of the Threshing Bee, which celebrated its 50th year this summer.

“Many generations of families have worked the land here and have also been involved with the Antique Club and Threshing Bee,” Huston said. “That is why we are still here.”



Brothers Adam and Lucas Grubl talked about how times have changed from when their great-grandparents farmed the land they currently operate. “In the past,” said Adam, “you either farmed or ranched. But we have to be diverse and so do both.”



Ross Lamphere had many fond memories from his time as a member of 4-H. “One of my favorite activities” he said, “was playing polo.”



William Huston, secretary of the Western Dakota Antique Club and board member of the Threshing Bee, introduced the speakers during the Scoop of History. Many of the speakers are from families who have held the land for four, five or six generations, he said.



Ernie Miller recalled that every day when he'd get home from school he would jump on the tractor and run it until 9 p.m. “And that was after my father drove it all day,” he added. He also talked about his 55 years of driving school buses.



Bruce Weyrich, left, said his great-great-grandparents both emigrated from Luxemburg, but didn't meet until they were homesteading next to each other in Meade County. Pictured to the right is Bruce's son, Keith.



As the person in charge of the old tractors on the Threshing Bee grounds, Gene Williams knows where each tractor came from and who the owners were.



# 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

E-mail: info@sturgishistory.org  
 Website: www.sturgishistory.org  
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/sturgishistory.org

## OUR SPONSORS



**GROCERY MART**

2216 Junction Ave., Sturgis, SD  
 605-423-4606



Davenport Family Real Estate



Sturgis Photo & Gifts



## 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 501©3 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/year      \_\_\_\_\_ Family: \$35.00/year      \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \$15.00/year  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Business Sponsorship: \$250.00/year      \_\_\_\_\_ 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](http://www.SturgisHistory.org)