

Readers' theatre focuses on ill-planned American Indian boarding schools

By Travis Gulbrandson

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The era of the American Indian boarding schools is one of the more shameful in United States history.

USD students and area residents had a chance to learn about it through first-hand accounts Monday night when the readers' theatre, "The Great Hurt," was presented in Farber Hall.

Readers were recruited from the community and sat on the bare stage dressed in black, while pictures and historic quotes were displayed behind them as they read from diary entries, letters and other historical documents.

"It's kind of a strange way to put on a play, but it worked out tremendously," said Carl Gawboy, who assembled the play. "I think it had a very powerful effect on everybody we took it to. It was quite an experience."

The boarding school movement was started in large part by Richard Henry Pratt, a former Union soldier whose background lay in jails, not education.

Under Pratt's direction, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School was the first of many that separated children from their families and deprived them of their names, language and culture.

Pratt was described in one passage as a Baptist because he "believes in immersing the Indians in our civilization, and when we get them under, holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked."

The results were devastating. Accounts were offered of patrols which rounded up school-age children, often roping them like cattle and stealing them from their parents.

Many of these children never returned, as they either died from illness, or their records were lost when they were transferred to different schools.

The effects of these separations continue to reverberate today, according to the testimony provided in the play.

"It was a great hurt to be told that

"I think Indians don't want to talk about anything unpleasant, and it's not so very recently that this history is starting to be (discussed). The message is to break the silence. Our play, in many locations, broke the silence. I would never have thought that was possible, but stories came out and now people are talking about it. I'm happy to say that almost everywhere we go, there's a great enthusiasm to talk about these stories."

CARL GAWBOY

Indian children would be taken from their homes to be raised by others who would fit them into a more 'modern' world," Oklahoma social worker Carolyn Attneave said in 1954.

Gawboy was one of five American Indian interns at Minneapolis' Walker Art Center in 1972 when he began assembling the play.

"We were asked to do one outside research assignment, and I chose boarding schools," he said. "Boarding schools were simply not that popular a topic in those days, and after I was happily through my paper, I realized this would be a really great readers' theatre. ...

"I wrote the script and handed it in for my assignment, but I couldn't get anyone to put it on," he said. "I wanted the interns at the Walker to present it at first. They weren't interested."

It finally was staged 39 years later, when Gawboy's wife Cynthia Donner asked if he had any material on historical trauma.

"I blew the dust off the pages, and we tweaked it a little bit and added some more material at the end," he said.

Since that time, it has been performed in many other places, he said. Many of these performances have opened a dialogue where it had not previously existed.

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in many locations, broke the silence. I would never have thought that was possible, but stories came out and now people are talking about it. I'm happy to say that almost everywhere we go, there's a great enthusiasm to talk about these stories."

Donner is coordinator of the Tribal Sites for The College of St. Scholastica's Social Work Program, a program she described as "listening with the ear of the heart."

The play also provides that opportunity, she said.

"The importance of listening with the heart to the stories of others - that's where it really starts. There's no textbook that can give you that," she said.

Gawboy is a member of the Bois Forte Band of the Minnesota Ojibwe. He received a master's degree in American Indian arts from the University of Montana, Missoula in 1972, and taught American Indian Studies for a period of 18 years at a number of universities.

The readers of the play were: Suzanne Cross, Carl Gawboy, Chris Denny, Manapé LaMere, Steve Miller, Lyle Hoelsing, Nitausha Williams, Jeff Hermesen, Ryan Myers, Richard Lundy, Jamie Fields, Kimberlee Browne and Debra Norris.

The invocation was delivered by LaMere, and the event was opened and closed by the Wasa Wakpa Oyate Drum Group, Dr. Wayne Evans, drum keeper.

The event was hosted by the USD Department of Social Work.

PLAYING IT SAFE



The warm, dry conditions being experienced in southeast South Dakota have greatly increased the chances of outdoor fires - even on the University of South Dakota campus. Late Tuesday afternoon, USD students and employees noticed that the mulch covering the flowerbeds near Old Main was smoldering. Water was fetched and the potential for fire appeared to be abated, but to be safe, the Vermillion Fire Department was called to give the area a thorough dousing. The Vermillion area was under a "red flag warning" from the National Weather Service Tuesday because strong winds combined with low humidity created "an explosive fire growth potential." Firemen who responded to the flaming flowerbeds were unable to determine the fire's cause.

(Photo by David Lias)

\$10,000 GIFT



Tom Schaack, president of First Bank & Trust, presents a \$10,000 gift to Shirley Huber, president of the Vermillion Public Library Foundation. Jerry Johnson, (right) co-chair of the \$200,000 Vermillion Public Library Foundation fundraiser and Jane Larson, (left) director of the Vermillion Public Library, look on. Not pictured is Roger Kozak, co-chair of the fundraiser. Funds will be used to raise money for the furnishings for the newly renovated Vermillion Public Library for which construction has begun.

(Photo by David Lias)

THIS WEEK IN S.D. NATIONAL GUARD HISTORY

By CW5 Duke Doering (Ret.) SDNG Historian

In recognition of the South Dakota National Guard's 150 years of service to the state and nation from 1862-2012, the SDNG will be publishing significant dates in the history of the organization all year long for the media's use in your publications or broadcasts.

For more information on these events, please contact the SDNG Historian, CW5 Duke Doering at (605) 737-6581, or e-mail duke.doering@us.army.mil.

On this date in SDNG history:

March 27, 1947

On this date in SDNG history - Service Battery, 147th Field Artillery Battalion, of Howard, was formed under the command of Capt. Warren L. Prostrom. The ninth enlisted man raised his right hand and took the oath on this date. The official federal recognition date was March 25 when Prostrom, Lt. William Quinn, Warrant Officer Stuart Bradbury, and eight enlisted men were enough to form the unit and meet the minimum requirements for federal recognition. No summer encampment was held in 1947 due to the small number of personnel that belonged to the 147th Field Artillery at that time.

Growth of the unit was slow at first, but by the time the Service Battery was called to active duty on Sept. 1, 1950, there were three officers, two warrant officers and 55 enlisted men. One of the officers, 1st Lt. Elroy (Stretch) Lemaster, eventually became the South Dakota National Guard chief of staff and served in that position for several years in the 1960s and 1970s.

March 28, 1952

On this date in SDNG history - Five officers and airmen of the South Dakota Air National Guard participated in "Operation Haylift." March 28 was the first day of the mission that lasted until April 11, 1952. Unusually, heavy amounts of drifted snow had stranded cattle in the fields in western and central South Dakota. A total of 27 emergency flight missions were flown with the unit dropping 2,412 bales of hay to starving cattle. Two additional missions were for flood duty carrying sandbags to the flood area. On the fifth day of the hay lift, the unit's home airbase at Sioux Falls became flooded by the Sioux River, which necessitated operating from the Mitchell airfield.

March 29, 1877

On this date in SDNG history

- Dakota Territory: The code of 1877 gave the National Guard one of its many "new looks." The code required Guardsmen to attend a minimum of six drills annually, plus musters, inspections, a 10-day encampment, and the enlistment period had been raised from two years to three. The citizen-Soldiers armament was also modernized. The old Enfield muskets of pre-Civil War vintage were turned in and the latest thing in Springfield's, the Model 1873, was issued. The 1873 was a single-shot, breech-loading rifle that fired a .45 caliber round using 70

grains of black powder and a 500 grain bullet. It was long barreled, known affectionately as "Long Tom." This was the rifle later taken to the Spanish-American War by the South Dakota National Guard.

March 30, 1943

On this date in SDNG history - In perhaps one of the worst accidents for South Dakota National Guard Soldiers serving in World War II, 12 men from Company A, 109th Engineer Battalion, of Madison, were killed when one of their trucks

exploded. A platoon was laying a minefield near Hadjeb-el-Aioun in Tunisia, North Africa, when a truck loaded with 450 mines exploded. A witness described the scene, "A tremendous explosion was heard and a great pillar of smoke mushroomed into the sky. It sounded like a mine, but appeared to be too far away. Sometime later we learned the terrible truth. One of our trucks...and an entire squad of 12 men from Company A were lost." The members of the squad were Sgt. Wayne Satre, Cpl. Robert Christensen, T/5 Roger Loesch, Pfc. Leland Ortmayer and eight others. According to the book

South Dakota WWII, the cause of the explosion was unknown, but what was known was that the truck was standing still and the neutralized mines were being unloaded.

March 31, 1943

On this date in SDNG history - During World War II, Sgt. Carl J. Kline was killed in action near Hazebe el Aouin in Tunisia, North Africa. Kline was one of 84 Soldiers ordered to active duty from Company D, 109th Engineer Battalion, of Hot Springs, two years earlier. He was the unit's first fatality.

Notice

The Fairview Township Board wants your input on a new maintainer. If you have comments, plan on attending an open meeting on Tuesday, April 10th, 2012 • 7 P.M. at the Burbank School.

Carolyn Carlson
624-4742
Fairview Clerk

Sanford Home Medical Equipment

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91-ACRES MARINDAHL TOWNSHIP YANKTON COUNTY LAND

AT AUCTION

The following land will be offered for sale at public auction located from Irene, SD go 3-miles west of Hwy. 46, turn south 1 1/2 miles on 449th Ave. east side of the road on:

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11TH
10:30 A.M.**

AUCTION HELD ON SITE

It is our privilege to offer this unique property found in the tightly held and picturesque Marindahl township. Flat grassland that has production history (can be broke) along with deep wooded draws full of hardwood and cedar trees that offer outstanding small and big game habitat, best describes this property. If you're a farmer looking to add additional acres, investor or hunter wanting his own piece of South Dakota Heaven please check this property out.

- 67.17 acres flat tillable land with excellent soil ratings, 6.78 acres HEL land
- 18-acres of pasture with deep wooded draws with 40% slopes
- Production index of 56.8. Predominant Soils Egan-Ethan-Trent Complex (82-rating) Egan-Wentworth loams (85-rating)
- **NEW BUYER ABLE TO OPERATE OR LEASE FOR 2012 CROP YEAR**
- Approx. 8-acres of winter wheat that will be new buyers property upon closing
- Improved acreage 6.2 acres in NW corner is excluded. Does include strip of land north of building site.
- Annual Real Estate Taxes are \$1,046.74. FSA office reports 75.5 cropland acres with no base or yields available.

LEGAL: A parcel of land 14.25 acres in the SW 1/4 of NE 1/4 and NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 and the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 except Fagerhaug Tract 1 and except 7-acres in the SE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 10, 95-54 Yankton County, South Dakota.

TO VIEW THE PROPERTY: We invite you to inspect the property at your convenience or visit www.wiemanauktion.com for a buyers packet containing additional information or contact the auctioneers at 800-251-3111 and a packet can be mailed out.

TERMS: Cash sale with 15% non-refundable down payment on auction day with the balance on or before June 11, 2012. Warranty deed to be granted. Title insurance will be split 50-50 between buyer and seller. Seller to pay all the 2011 taxes. Buyer responsible for 2012 taxes. Sold subject to owners approval, and all easements, restrictions, and reservations of record. To be offered \$ ____/acre X 91-taxable acres. Come prepared to buy!!

LTJ INVESTMENTS - OWNERS

Wieman Land & Auction Co., Inc.

Marion SD 800-251-3111
Auctioneers & Clerks
Website: www.wiemanauktion.com

Yankton County Title
Closing Agent
605-665-5775