

OUR TOWNS

Gayville
Mission Hill
Volin

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Volin School Restoration Continues

BY JUSTIN RUST
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VOLIN — The former Volin school has been around for a century, and after some recent work, the building could be around for maybe another hundred years.

Since Doug Sharples purchased the building in 2000, a couple years after the new school in Gayville was built, a number of improvements have been made to the building, which includes a new roof two years ago.

This past month, the former school received some tuckpointing and masonry work to improve the quality of the building.

"It should be good for another 50, 60, 70 to 80 years at least," said Mike Polreis of Mid-Continental Restoration Company, which completed the masonry work. "This is a nice building. There's hardly any movement in the building, and it should stand strong for 100 years."

Polreis and his crew spent the last three weeks working on the school's exterior. The crew removed deteriorating mortar from between the bricks, and then replaced broken bricks with others they took from the interior of the building's chimney.

Hay Country Jamboree At Gayville Oct. 2

GAYVILLE — Gayville Hall presents "The Hay Country Jamboree," its monthly two-hour musical variety show, at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2, in Gayville.

John and Susan McNeill and Dan Kilbride lead the fast-paced show of old-time popular tunes, country, bluegrass, folk, and humor, according to proprietor Doug Sharples.

Guest performers will include the rising, young singer-songwriter Jami Lynn of Vermillion, who will be accompanied by multi-instrumentalist Josh Rieck of Sioux Falls.

The duo has recently recorded Lynn's second CD together, "Sod Busters," which will be released in October. It features old-time folk tunes of the upper Midwest.

The McNeills, of Springfield, have been the alcohol-and-smoke-free venue's country music hosts since 2001. Kilbride, of Sioux Falls, came on board in 2006 and plays traditional bluegrass.

Gayville Hall is located at 502 Washington Street in Gayville. Call 605-267-2859 for ticket information.

State Historical Society Seeks Preservation Input

PIERRE — Public comment on the state's preservation needs and projects is being sought through Oct. 15 by the State Historic Preservation Office of the South Dakota State Historical Society as it prepares for its federal fiscal year 2011 grant application.

The office manages the National Register of Historic Places program of the National Park Service in South Dakota. The program relates historic preservation to state economic, social and educational objectives. It surveys, inventories and registers historical properties; it also promotes public awareness and provides technical assistance on preservation of those properties.

Among the questions to consider are:

- What properties or areas need to be inventoried?
- What properties should be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places?
- What properties are at risk or endangered?
- What kinds of technical preservation assistance are beneficial?

"Public input or responses to these questions will help the historic preservation staff in preparing their annual work plan," said Jay D. Vogt, director of the State Historical Society. "Preservation promotes economic development and cultural tourism."

The SHPO Annual Work Plan Suggestion Form may be obtained online at history.sd.gov/Preservation or by contacting the SHPO office at (605) 773-2907 or shpo@state.sd.us.

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DOUG SHARPLES

The reason bricks from the chimney were used instead of replacing them with random bricks from elsewhere is because of the uniqueness of the brick, which were made in a kiln in Sioux City when the building was constructed in 1910.

However, the kiln closed before the addition to the school was built in the 1920s.

The unique bricks are part of the reason why the building is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

"The bricks were put in the kiln in such a way that there are patterns on the brick. In addition, the bricks are not placed in the same pattern, creating interesting lines in the building," Sharples said. "The bricks really

give the school a distinctive look, and they are one of the reasons we wanted to save the school."

The building was put up for an auction in 2000, but Sharples and his wife Judi didn't have the highest bid.

However, they got a second shot on the building when the first bid didn't go through. Once again the building and the four acres surrounding it, which included the old gym, went up for auction and this time, the Sharples came away as the highest bidders.

"It's an unusual, beautiful building, and we just wanted to save it," Sharples said. "The gym is a bit unusual, too, and it's not on the national register, but it

could be. There are laminated beams, and there is knotty pine, as well, to go along with a great interior."

For the Sharples, the next project in the restoration process is to replace the building's old steam heating system.

"The original system is a boiler, so we are going to try and find a more modern heating system," Sharples said. "We are looking to modernize it, so we are looking into geo-thermal heat or some other green options."

With the restoration process almost complete, Sharples must determine how to use the building.

"It needs to be something useful, and I am thinking a mixed-use facility," he said. "It's going back to an earlier concept which would be a residential facility on the second floor and a work place on the bottom floor."

"The main thing is to get it the building to the point that it will last. We want it to be around no matter what the use will be."



COURTESY PHOTO

Mike Polreis of Mid-Continental Restoration Company and Judi Sharples stand in front of the Volin School recently. Exterior restoration work is nearly complete on the 100-year-old former school building. Future plans for the historic structure could include its conversion into a multi-use facility.

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