

The home. The man. The life.  
A Restoration Project of Historic Rapid City Inc.

1015 12th St., Rapid City, SD 57701

### Thank-You Notes

We want to offer a sincere thanks to the individuals and companies that have helped us move closer to our dream of a restored McGillycuddy House. In particular:

- Kerry Conner
- Alice Knapp
- Coy & Annette Bifulco
- Brett Whaely
- Bill & Kathy Reishus
- Dave Johnson of Johnson's Tree Service
- Elf & Rusty Swan
- Conrad's Big C Electric
- Time Equipment Rental
- RCS Construction
- Craig Wattington of One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning

### Become a member of Historic Rapid City Inc.

Just tear this out, fill it out and send it in.

You can help us in a number of ways, from pulling nails to writing a check to simply letting the community know you understand and support this important historic preservation project.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
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 PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
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 CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### SEND TO:

Historic Rapid City Inc.  
1015 12th St., Rapid City, SD 57701

## Another step closer to our history

A great deal of progress has been made on the McGillycuddy House restoration. Most notably, the two small houses that flanked the historic home have been removed, creating a view of the McGillycuddy House not seen in decades.

Meanwhile, volunteers and contractors donating their time have started on renovation of the house's front entrance, a major undertaking that will return the McGillycuddy House to its original look.

"I'm very happy with the progress we've made this year," said Fred Thurston, project architect and member of the Historic Rapid City Board. "For the first time in decades, you're starting to see what the original McGillycuddy House must have looked like 100 years ago. Until now, we've only seen this view in old photos."

### Beveled Entrance

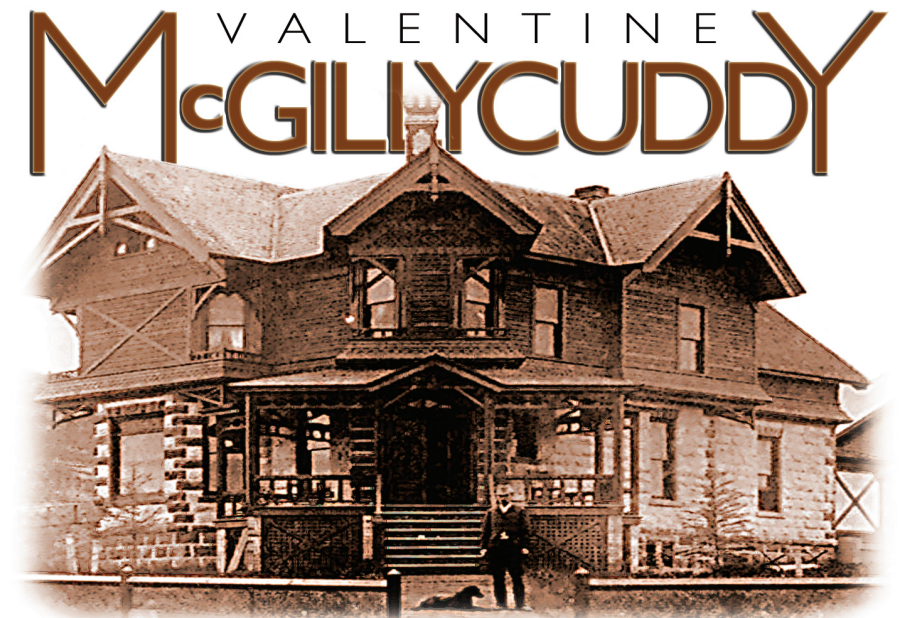
When it was built, the front entrance faced northwest, with a beveled front door and porch that offered a sweeping view of the growing city's west side. At some point, probably in the 1930s, the facade was rearranged with the door facing straight north.

In recent months, the front entrance was removed. RCS Construction has poured the foundation for the new, beveled entrance.

### There goes the neighborhood

When South Dakota Department of Transportation designers began planning for reconstruction of Mount Rushmore Road, they realized that the intersection of Mount Rushmore

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Work will soon begin to restore the house's original front entrance.

# VALENTINE McGILLYCUDDY



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## Historic Rapid City Inc.

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Board members: Fred Thurston, Sylvia Conrad, Paul Swedlund, Donovan Sprague, Bill Kessloff, Adriana Gianturco Saltonstall, Jeff Reuppel.

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The McGillicuddy House Newsletter is published by Historic Rapid City Inc. If you have questions, concerns or comments, contact Jean Kessloff at [jeank@rap.midco.net](mailto:jeank@rap.midco.net) or 605-341-5398

Historic Rapid City Inc. is a 501(c)3 corporation. Donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

## Stock donations:

If you would like to give stock or other securities to the project, contact Michelle Sterkel or Sandra Shaw at RBC Wealth Management. They can explain the best way to do that. The telephone number is 605-343-7720. Donations are tax deductible, and the capital gains are not taxable.

## Learn more online:

[historicrc.org](http://historicrc.org)

[facebook.com/  
mcgillicuddyhouse](https://www.facebook.com/mcgillicuddyhouse)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

# Our gift to the future

Our historic records help us today in more ways than just preserving our history for future generations. Climate changes, medical advances, politics and even war are some areas where the past can potentially be helpful.

Recently I was given an article about the massive destruction caused by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Schoharie County, NY, sustained damage to 1,700 boxes of court records, some dating back to 1795.

This reminded me of the first Pennington County courthouse built in Rapid City. It burned in 1897. Fortunately both situations ended positively. Although many of Schoharie County records were extremely fragile, they were salvaged and could be scanned. The Pennington County courthouse records were rescued that day by Rapid City's citizens and county officials. These events point to a common goal. Preserving our past.

At the north side of the National Archives building in Washington, DC, there are statues with bases that contain the words "What is Past is Prologue" and "Study the Past."

What is past is prologue was written by William Shakespeare in 1611 and is from his play, "The Tempest". It is as contemporary today as when it was written.

## We're going digital, and we need your email

To cut down on the cost of publishing the McGillicuddy House newsletter, we're going to start sending as many copies as possible via email.

We're putting together an email list, and we'd like to add yours. If you'd like to start getting updates on the project via email, send an email to [jeank@rap.midco.net](mailto:jeank@rap.midco.net). Please put SIGN ME UP in the subject line.

Also, we need your membership

History sets the context for the present. The National Archives holds the original Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

The Pennington County Register of Deeds office holds the county's documents. The original large, unwieldy books that contain these records are being scanned to make access to these documents easier and to protect the original documents from damage due to handling and environmental hazards.

Handwritten in beautiful cursive script, these documents can sometimes be difficult to read. The city of Rapid City is also beginning to scan its records, but unfortunately, some records, like building permits were purged sometime in the past and their records only go back to about 1946. Records such as these would have revealed much about who actually designed and built our town.

The preservation of our written history, our oral history and projects like the Rapid City Library's Rapid City Room and the V. T. McGillicuddy House, along with Minnilusa Pioneer Museum and other local museums bring the past to the present and are a gift to the future.

-- Jean Kessloff

dues to help continue our work. A lot has been accomplished, but a lot more needs to be done. Any contributions will be welcomed.

And of course, we can use all of the non financial help we can get. Painting, demolition, sanding and cleanup are jobs that don't require construction skills. Let us know if you can help, and we'll put you to work.

## Another Step

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Road and South Street required major changes.

The result: the DOT acquired both houses on either side of the McGillicuddy House. It was an equitable way to assure that the DOT could acquire land it needed and the McGillicuddy House would meet its off-street parking requirements.

DOT removed the houses this summer, and the bonus for Historic Rapid City was that the McGillicuddy House for the first time in decades was the lone structure at the corner of South Street and Mount Rushmore Road.

At some point in the history of the property, the original homesite had been carved up and sold off. It was a fairly common practice. Newer houses were built or moved in close to the original McGillicuddy House.

## Inside Jobs

Meanwhile, a great deal of work continues inside the house. One Hour Heating & Air Conditioning has installed heating and cooling equipment, and Conrad's Big C Electric is wiring the second floor. When that work is completed, the home will be ready for drywall.

Volunteers are also painting and installing new windows on the first floor of the McGillicuddy House.

## What's Next?

The next major construction will involve the section of the house's east side, which is not original to the McGillicuddy House.

The front half of the addition will be demolished, and the remaining structure will be renovated to create an entrance for visitors with disabilities.



Quality Services Inc.'s Mark Carpenter and Jana Morehouse excavate the soil above the wooden remnants of the house's original sidewalk.

## Digging into McGillicuddy's past

One of the most memorable McGillicuddy House historic photos is a black-and-white image of the house, with Valentine McGillicuddy standing with his black dog on the wooden sidewalk that ran from the house to the street.

This summer, we found that sidewalk.

The planks of the sidewalk had at some point in the last 130 years been covered over by dirt and hidden from view. Historic Rapid City President Jean Kessloff decided to do some digging. She found a remnant of the sidewalk and contacted archeologists at Quality Services Inc. in Rapid City.

Quality Services volunteered staff time to help launch a dig to begin exposing the buried planks on which Valentine McGillicuddy had once walked.

Mark Carpenter, archaeologist and historian at Quality Services Inc., said that under the right conditions, buried wood such as the sidewalk can be preserved a very long time.

"It really depends on the

conditions," he said. "If there's a lot of clay in the soil or the soil is very dry, the wood resists moisture."

South Street's clay preserved the wood beneath it.

The find is significant for a number of reasons, Carpenter said. Its location reveals the exact orientation of the property, allowing those involved in the restoration work to create a more accurate representation of the original structure. Details such as the slope of the front yard and the location of the street can only be guessed using photos alone.

Earlier, Quality Services had donated staff time to excavate the ground beneath the house's front porch. They found artifacts such as hinges, pieces of metal grates and woodwork from the original house that had been discarded.

These items reveal architectural details of the original McGillicuddy House that will allow restoration to be as accurate as possible.