

## **So you want to learn the history of your house in Vermillion, South Dakota....**

### **Great! Here are some resources that you can investigate . . . .**

1. Seek out oral histories. Talk with former owners and renters of your house. Do it now! Life is fragile. The information may be lost if the people die or move out of the area. If possible, do informal interviews of past owners and renters.
2. Read your abstract if you received one when you purchased your house. If you do not have the abstract, check with the former owner to see if he/she has the original abstract.
3. Go to the Register of Deeds Office in the Clay County Courthouse. Tell them you would like to investigate the history of your tract of land. Take along the legal description of the property.
4. Go to the Director of Equalization in the Clay County Courthouse. Look for changes to the property's valuation. Again, take along the legal description of the property.
5. Check the Sanborn Insurance Maps that are kept at the Austin–Whittemore House in Vermillion.

*If you have names, dates and events associated with the house . . . .*

6. Go to the Clerk of Courts Office in the Courthouse. Ask to see the probate records for people who may have died while owning the house.
7. Check old Vermillion newspapers. Original newspapers are on file at the Austin–Whittemore House and microfilm copies are at the I.D. Weeks Library on the University of South Dakota campus.
8. Go through the indexes of local history books available at the Vermillion Public Library: *History of Clay County, South Dakota* by Herbert Schell, *Clay County: Chapters Out of the Past* by Herbert Schell and *The Forest Avenue Historical District 1873-1980* by Judith Gudger Krueger.
9. Check other resources at the Austin-Whittemore House and the Vermillion Public Library.

*Please note that there may be retrieval fees associated with this research.*

### **Good Luck! You don't know what you will find!**

Additions and/or corrections to this list may be submitted to: Clay County Historic Preservation Commission and Clay County Historical Society, 15 Austin Street, Vermillion SD 57069