



**FOR RELEASE ON** (Immediate release)

**Contact:** Patricia Kendall, Director  
Dacotah Prairie Museum

**Phone:** 605.626.7117

**Email:** [patricia.kendall@browncounty.sd.gov](mailto:patricia.kendall@browncounty.sd.gov)

## MUSEUM WILDLIFE GALLERY SAFE FOR PUBLIC

### *Hatterscheidt Wildlife Gallery Passes the Test*

**[ABERDEEN, SD, August 2023]** — Recent concerns for a popular taxidermy exhibit in South Dakota have prompted numerous inquiries regarding the safety of the animals on display in the Dacotah Prairie Museum’s Hatterscheidt Wildlife Gallery.

Museum personnel want to reassure patrons that the collection displaying over 40 animals from North America, Africa, and Asia is safe. In the past, staff have consulted experts on how to clean, display, and to mitigate exposure to chemicals used in preserving the specimens. Taxidermy processes have changed since Aberdeen businessman Fred Hatterscheidt and his colleagues traveled on safari hunts throughout the world in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Efforts to reduce exposure include putting the animals behind tall glass barriers where no one can touch the mounts and restricting air flow from behind and over the mounts. Some animals have been tested in the past for arsenic levels and were found to be well within acceptable limits.

Which leads to the question, *why does the Dacotah Prairie Museum have a collection of non-indigenous animal species on display?* Well, it’s in the fine print. When Hatterscheidt, along with two other local businessmen, gifted the building to Brown County in 1970 for use as a museum, he stipulated that his collection of animal mounts be on display. The museum staff long struggled to make this exhibit more educational and visually appealing as a natural history exhibit of the animals and their habitats. It wasn’t until 2003 that a comprehensive exhibit remodel gave these animals an appropriate and engaging ecological placement. Fortunately, Hatterscheidt utilized highly skilled taxidermists to prepare the mounts which is reflected in the current excellent condition of the animals.

“All our artifacts are thoroughly checked for condition and safety before being on display,” assured Patricia Kendall, museum director. “As for the Hatterscheidt Wildlife Gallery, we

wanted to give the animals their best representation while honoring the request of Mr. Hatterscheidt. I think we've accomplished both."

*The Dacotah Prairie Museum celebrates over 50 years as Brown County's premier history museum. The Museum is housed in the historic Northwestern Bank building built in 1889 on Aberdeen's Main Street. Gallery & Museum Store Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10am-5pm and Sat. 11am-4pm. Closed Sundays, Mondays and major holidays. Free admission, donations appreciated. Check out the latest exhibits and events at [www.dacotahpraiiemuseum.com](http://www.dacotahpraiiemuseum.com)*

###

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Patricia Kendall at 605.626.7117, or email [patricia.kendall@browncounty.sd.gov](mailto:patricia.kendall@browncounty.sd.gov).