



FASSBENDER PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION



2026 Funding Request

Prepared for: City of Deadwood, S.D.

Prepared by: Vicki Dar, Fassbender Photographic Collection Board Treasurer

June 1, 2025

Amount requested: \$21,000



FASSBENDER PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

The communities of Spearfish, Lead, and Deadwood purchased the Fassbender Photographic Collection in 2010. In addition to your funding commitment, each community appointed representatives to a board of directors to oversee organization and conservation efforts. Lawrence County joined in the conservation effort in 2016 with additional funding support.

The City of Deadwood's continued financial support for the Fassbender Photographic Collection helps preserve a historic resource of immense cultural value to our region and the greater American West. It contains an estimated 800,000 images and hundreds of photographic artifacts and archival materials.

Joseph Fassbender was a prolific photographer, recording many of the most important events in the Black Hills during the 20th century. His photographs appeared in Life Magazine, Time, Ford Magazine, and the Saturday Evening Post. Fassbender's collection also contains historic photos shot by other Black Hills area photographers, including some of the first to arrive in Dakota Territory.

For 2026, we respectfully request \$21,000 from the City of Deadwood

As one of the founding municipal owners of the Fassbender Photographic Collection, the City of Deadwood plays a crucial role in the care, preservation and promotion of this irreplaceable cultural asset.

Richard Carlson is the Fassbender Digital Specialist. His work focuses on three core areas. **1) Public access**—through events, exhibits and a newsletter. You'll find the latest newsletter edition included in this packet. **2) Digital conservation**—continuing the long-term digitization and preservation of fragile materials **3) Volunteer management**—building and guiding a team of volunteers to accelerate conservation efforts.

We embrace opportunities for education and exposure at South Dakota history conferences and our own events in the three communities. Our outreach efforts have been met enthusiastically—dozens of families have discovered ancestral photographs, creating meaningful connections across generations. In addition, we fulfill requests for stunning historical images that are used both commercially and privately. Collection photographs can be found in many locations.

For example, if you have not yet visited the Fassbender exhibit which opened at the Days of '76 Museum, we recommend you pay a visit soon. We would also encourage you to share information about the collection, and the role Deadwood has played in making it possible, in your own community and organization newsletters.

All of these efforts have been enhanced by the stewardship agreement with Deadwood History, Inc.(DHI) that commenced on January 1, 2022. The agreement formalized a more streamlined management of shared staff resources, exhibit opportunities at DHI properties, financial record-keeping, public outreach and education opportunities.

The Fassbender Collection is not simply stored in our care — it is owned by your city. Your support safeguards your investment and ensures that this photographic legacy of the Black Hills—the stories, faces, and events of our region—remain available to the public now and for generations to come.

Thank you for your continuing support. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss our 2026 goals in more detail, please contact me directly or reach out to our partners at Deadwood History, Inc.

Vicki Dar
Fassbender Photographic Collection Board Treasurer
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BYLAWS
of the
FASSBENDER PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, INC.

ARTICLE 1
NAME AND PURPOSES

Section 1.01. Name. The name of the organization is FASSBENDER PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION, INC.

Section 1.02. Purpose. The Corporation is organized for the charitable and educational purposes to preserve and conserve the historic Fassbender photographic collection for public enrichment of the Northern Black Hills history.

ARTICLE 2
MEMBERS

Section 2.01. Classes. The membership of the corporation shall consist of three members, namely the serving Mayor of the City of Lead, the City of Spearfish, and the City of Deadwood. Members may establish and provide for associate, non-voting classes of membership to individuals and corporations which support the mission and the purposes of the organization, and who provide in-kind services or other financial support to the corporation.

Section 2.02. Qualifications. The Board of Directors may establish one or more classes of associate, non-voting membership, and establish dues or other financial requirements for obtaining associate membership. Associate members shall have no voting rights. The Board may also provide for suspension or termination of associate members who become ineligible for associate membership, or whom shall be in default in the payment of dues or other financial contributions.

Section 2.03. Meetings. The annual membership meeting shall be held in March of each year, or at any other time established by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall also set the time and place of each annual meeting.

Section 2.04. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members attending in person or through teleconferencing. All decisions will be by a majority vote of those present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the members present may adjourn any meeting until a quorum be had. Notice of any adjourned meeting need not be given.

ARTICLE 3
AUTHORITY AND DUTIES OF DIRECTORS

Section 3.01. Authority of Directors. The Board of Directors is the policy-making body and may exercise all the powers and authority granted to the Corporation by law.

2026 Fassbender Collection Proposed Budget

EXPENSES	BUDGET	
Wages/Administrative/Benefits	\$48,940.00	
Storage 1 (vault)	\$10,560.00	
Storage 2 (office)	\$0.00	
Equipment	\$3,500.00	
Supplies	\$5,500.00	
Education/Conferences	\$1,000.00	
Marketing/Web	\$2,500.00	
Insurance	\$1,500.00	
Total	\$73,500.00	
REVENUE		
City of Deadwood	\$21,000.00	
City of Lead	\$21,000.00	
City of Spearfish	\$21,000.00	
County of Lawrence	\$10,500.00	
Total	\$73,500.00	

HISTORIC BLACK HILLS STUDIOS

HOME OF THE FASSBENDER PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

Recently Digitized



South Dakota Governor William J. Bulow fishing in Spearfish Creek. He was governor from 1927-1931.



This Swarm Day float from 1929 reflects an issue of the times. The Women's Christian Temperance Union promoted keeping the prohibition of alcohol.

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Photography Quote:

"Your first 10,000 photographs are your worst."

— Henri Cartier-Bresson



Road Show

Attendees once again helped identify more than a hundred portrait and wedding photos that are part of the Fassbender Photographic Collection. Collection volunteers spent a Saturday at the Snappers Club in Spearfish to help visitors go through stacks of images and make the identifications. Many of the prints formerly hung in the storefront windows of Black Hills Studio when it was still operating in Spearfish.



Above: Attendees search through the stacks of unidentified prints at the Snappers Club.

Left: Barbara (Morcom) Matson found two prints of herself.

(Cont. on pg. 2)



Recently Digitized



The "Friendly Service" Mobilgas station opened in August 1935 in Spearfish. Construction was done by Thompson Brothers Construction and was turned over to A.L. Clark, a local Second-Vacuum distributor.



This Adams Museum image is dated June 1962.



The Liberty Motel (pictured here in 1962) was located in Deadwood across from current day Twin City Hardware.

2025 Conferences

May 7-9, 2025

South Dakota State Historical Society state conference in Deadwood.

The 2025 Annual History Conference will be in Deadwood on May 8th and 9th. The theme is "Historical Mysteries: In Search of the Buried Past."

October 1-3, 2025

West River History Conference in Deadwood.

The theme for 2025 is "Historic 1876 Deadwood: LIVING the PAST!"

(www.westriverhistoryconference.org)

Road Show (cont.)



Above: Working the tables of prints looking for familiar faces.



Left: Patricia (Weber) Dias holds a portrait of her younger self.

Below: Dick King found his portrait from decades ago.

