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The Quarter Circle A Ranch house at the Brinton Museum, one of the Sheridan County properties on the National Register of Historic Places, sits beneath the clouds Thursday, May 12, 2022.

SERVING, PRESERVING

How to celebrate National Preservation Month

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SHERIDAN — May is National Preservation Month, and history hounds across the U.S. — including many in Sheridan County — are uniting to preserve local, state and national history by volunteering and learning all month long.

Every year, National Preservation Month encourages local businesses, preservation organizations, state historical societies and governments to partner in promoting historic places with the goal of reminding folks of local history and demonstrating the benefits of historic preservation, according to the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

Locally, Sheridan Community Land Trust Historical Program Manager Carrie Edinger said the celebratory month is intended to bring awareness to historic preservation in Sheridan County, whether that means spending time in Sheridan's historic downtown district, touring local sites of military history or visiting museums.

"There are lots of opportunities in Sheridan County to either get involved in Sheridan history or just become more aware," Edinger said.

There are 27 historic sites in the county — ranging from historic houses to still-in-use shops, bridges to churches — listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Several local historic sites and organizations are hosting events to remind residents of Sheridan County history this month.

For instance, the Museum at the Bighorns will host a community day Saturday in honor of National Preservation Month with free admission all day, said Jessica Salzman, museum collections manager. Salzman said the Museum at the Bighorns will also highlight historic buildings throughout Sheridan County through online blog posts.

Kenneth Schuster, director and chief curator of The Brinton Museum, said the



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The Monarch Lutheran Cemetery off Acme Road sits empty Wednesday, May 11, 2022. The Sheridan Community Land Trust is hosting a cleanup at Monarch Lutheran Cemetery Saturday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in honor of National Preservation Month this May.

museum's collection of art, artifacts and preserved historic buildings offer glimpses into the local and national history while exemplifying the mythic imagery of American West that draws and has drawn so many people to the Sheridan area.

The best way to celebrate National Preservation Month, Schuster said, is to visit a preserved place like the Quarter Circle A Ranch house and outbuildings at The Brinton. Luckily for eager museumgoers, the Brinton Museum's peak season hours and Quarter Circle A Ranch tours also begin in May. Starting May 31, The Brinton Museum will be open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with free admission. Ranch house tours begin May 19 at 10 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. while ranch house and ground tours begin May 28 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

"The Brinton is a great example of somebody — and that somebody being Helen Brinton — having the vision to preserve the ranch that her brother brought," Schuster said. That vision, Schuster

explained, allows modern-day visitors to learn how a local gentleman's ranch operated during the 1920s and 1930s.

SCLT is hosting a cleanup at Monarch Lutheran Cemetery Saturday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. In addition to mending cemetery fences, cleaning headstones and removing weeds and trash, Edinger said SCLT plans to work with The Wyoming Room at the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library to gather cemetery information, double-check names and create a map of Monarch Lutheran Cemetery.

"The bigger picture of this cleanup...is we are going to document the cemetery," Edinger said.

This way, Edinger said, information about the cemetery, which is on private property, will be publicly available.

Edinger said she hopes the spirit of National Preservation Month this May and the events local organizations have planned will remind residents of history's role in creating Sheridan County culture and shaping the future.