

# BUFFALO COUNTY COURTHOUSE



**Location:** 112 Osman Ave., Gann Valley, SD 57341

**Date:** Constructed in 1977-79.

**Architect:** Dana, Larson & Roubal.

**Description:** The Buffalo County Courthouse consists of a flat-roofed, one-story cement block building constructed in a modern style. The front facade is symmetrical with three bays, of which the center bay projects forward. On each side of the center bay, at the juncture of the center bay and the flanking bays, is an entrance crowned by a triangular hood. Each of the entrances contains a single glass door and a window into the area of the center bay. The walls are crowned by a lighter colored cornice. The courthouse was designed by Dana, Larson & Roubal and constructed by Boldt Construction of Miller, SD at a cost of \$250,000.<sup>i</sup>

**History:** Buffalo County was created by legislative action in 1864.<sup>ii</sup> Its boundaries were changed on numerous occasions. At one time Buffalo County was the largest county in the state with over five thousand square miles, but in 1872 it was reduced to its present boundaries. Although it was one of the earliest counties to be established, it was not settled until 1882. The first county commissioners were appointed by Governor Pierce in 1885, and on January 14, 1885, residents of the Gann Valley area donated 30 acres and a building for use as a courthouse. The county commissioners established the county seat there, but at the first general election in 1886, the county seat was moved to Buffalo Center and remained there until April of 1888 when it was returned to Gann Valley after another election struggle.<sup>iii</sup> In 1914, the county built a two-story frame courthouse which served until completion of the present courthouse.<sup>iv</sup> Construction was begun on the new Buffalo County Courthouse in 1977 and the building was occupied in 1979.<sup>v</sup>

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i Of Rails and Trails - A Centennial Journey 1889-1989 (12989) page 106.

ii SL 1863-1864, ch 12.

iii The Lady Helper's Society, History of Buffalo County: 1885-1985, (1985) page 3.

iv Of Rails and Trails - A Centennial Journey 1889-1989 (12989) page 106.

v The Lady Helper's Society, History of Buffalo County: 1885-1985, (1985) page 57.