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Article Summary: Society achievements in 1983 included the dedication of the new State Museum of History on P Street and the expansion of the archives and research library spaces in the R Street building. Kivett mentions a significant recent increase in the public's research into family and local history at the library.

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Photographs / Images: October 8 ribbon-cutting and dedication of the new State Museum of History; visitors at the Museum after the opening; Senators Roman L Hruska and Carl T Curtis with UNL Professor Thomas B Thorson at the annual meeting; Society officers at the annual business meeting; Nellie Snyder Yost with quilt made by her mother, Grace Snyder, now displayed in the new Museum; Dorothy Jackson with Mrs Yost at the annual meeting; Foundation Trustee Wayne C Lee; Museum exhibit of a reconstructed general store; Governor Robert Kerrey signing proclamation designating an annual Pawnee Day; Lost Creek School third-graders tracing information from tombstones; Senator Curtis examining his papers in the State Archives; library employees; Waverly High School history club, winner of the state History Day competition; visitors from Loneman School, Oglala, South Dakota; partially excavated earthlodge floor; partial remains of a small circular structure and associated pits being excavated; Society artists preparing figures for prehistory displays at the Museum; Museum earthlodge exhibit; Robert Johnson, Wayne State College, at John G Neihardt Day; Old Mill Days at Neligh; pipeline pontoons being moved into position for the *Meriwether Lewis* at Brownville; the Society's mobile museum at Chimney Rock; living history demonstration at Fort Robinson depicting mail delivery; re-roofing the Veterinary Hospital Annex, Fort Robinson; work on surveys in Sherman, Kimball and Fillmore Counties



At the October 8 ribbon-cutting and dedication of the new State Museum of History are Society Treasurer Arthur Carmody (left), Society President E. J. Faulkner, Curator of Education Dick Spencer (behind Faulkner), Governor Robert Kerrey, Executive Board Member M. S. Hevelone, and Mrs. Hevelone. . . . (Below) Visitors crowded the Museum after its official opening.



The Nebraska State Historical Society in 1983

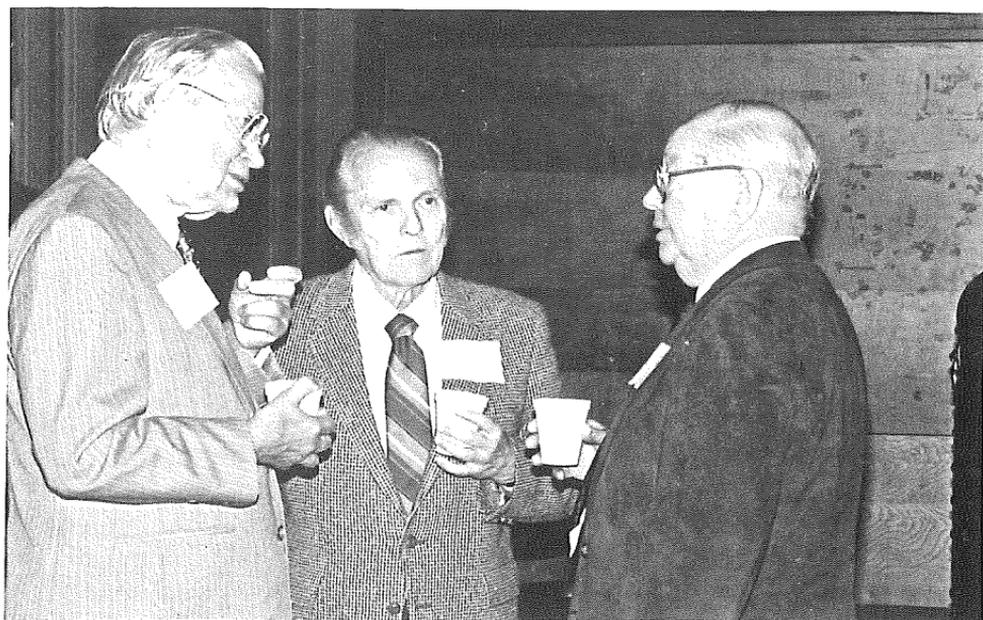
By Marvin F. Kivett

Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society
in Lincoln, October 8, 1983

“This has been a year of great activity for the museum . . . for several months, the museum has not functioned in its normal fashion and has not been open to the public. It has been a year of research and preparation for the new building.” So said Society Director James C. Olson in his 1953 annual report to the membership on the occasion of the opening of the new Historical Society building at 15th and R Streets. Adding to the festivities then was recognition of the 75th anniversary of the Society, founded in 1878.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Olson’s comments in 1953 accurately describe what has once again been a year of great activity for the Museum. Thirty years after the dedication of the first Society-designed building, I am pleased to report on some additional milestones in the history of the Nebraska State Historical Society. Today we will dedicate a new Museum, a goal for which we have worked diligently since 1974. The year 1983 also marks the 100th anniversary of the Society as an independent agency of state government, reflecting a century of public support for the preservation of Nebraska’s rich history.

The new State Museum of History being dedicated today provides more than twice the square footage formerly occupied by the Museum in the R Street building and should serve the Museum’s needs for the immediate future. Certainly the future may require more space. The new Museum allows for a greatly expanded exhibits program and makes it possible for us to more fully interpret the history of the state. A great deal of credit is due to Nebraska’s governors; to the Legislature, and particularly to Senator Jerome Warner; to the Society Executive Board and the Foundation Board; and to you, the members of the Society, for the ongoing support



Attending the Annual Meeting were Senator Roman L. Hruska (left), UNL Professor Thomas B. Thorson, and Senator Carl T. Curtis. . . . (Below) Society Treasurer Arthur Carmody (left), Director Marvin F. Kivett, and Executive Board President E. J. Faulkner at the Society Business Meeting, held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

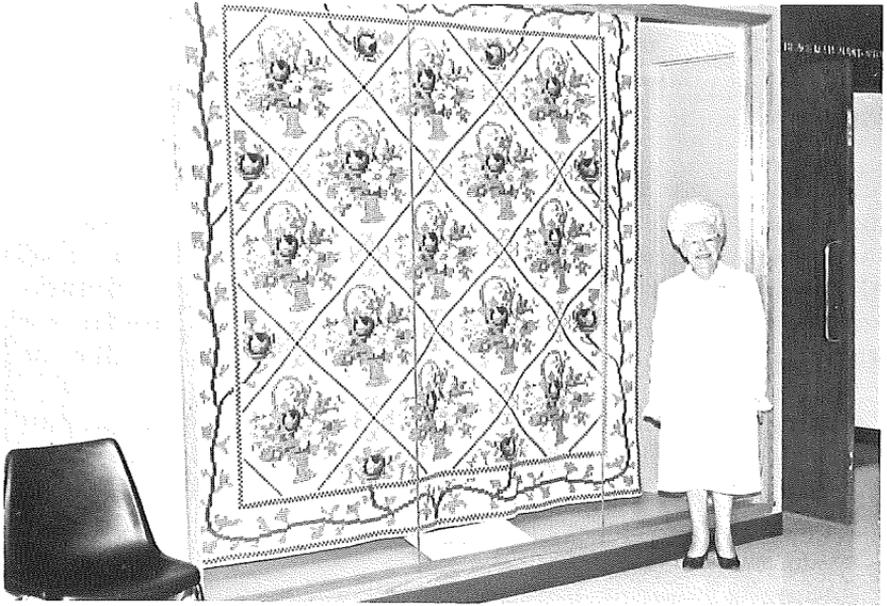


which has enabled us to realize the goal of expanding the Museum facilities.

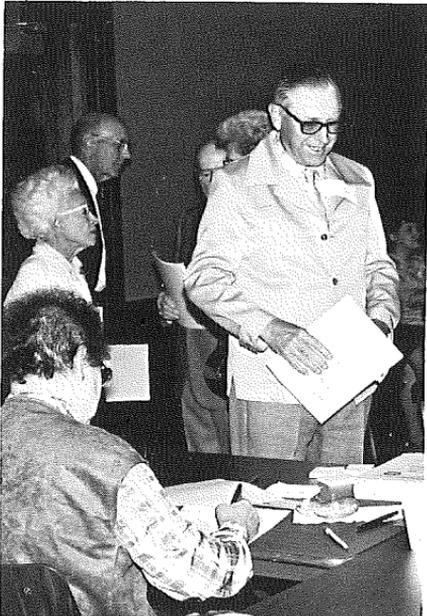
Despite the many parallels between today's events and those of 30 years ago when the R Street building was dedicated, I feel I must emphasize one important difference. In 1953 we were dedicating a building designed to meet the needs of *all* the Society departments—Administration, Museum, Library, and State Archives. Today, however, we must consider our task of providing proper facilities for all Society functions to be only partially complete.

Those of you who have supported our efforts in the past know that one of our greatest needs is for expanded space for the State Archives and the Research Library. From the beginning we have regarded the expansion of these functions into 30,000 square feet vacated by the Museum in the R Street building as equal in importance to the Museum's expansion. This second phase of our expansion program cannot occur, however, without extensive renovation of the Society headquarters building to make former Museum storage areas suitable for library and archival purposes. For example, the Museum storage areas have no shelving, and the environmental control system is not adequate for the preservation of records and documents. While the R Street building is generally in excellent condition, the fact remains that it is 30 years old, and it needs to be brought up to the standards required in modern historical repositories. Our greatest challenge in the months ahead will be to convince state government that this work must be carried out at an estimated cost of some \$600,000. While we can take pride in the acquisition of a proper home for the Museum collections, our overall goals will not be met until the new Library and Archives space in the R Street building is renovated and occupied.

In his 1953 report Dr. Olson also noted, "While much of our attention has been centered upon the new building, the regular work of the Society has been carried forward." Indeed this has been true in 1982-1983. Requests for the many services provided by the Society have not decreased just because we were in the midst of a major building project. Although the staff has certainly grown during the last 30 years, the Society's responsibilities and the variety of ways in which we serve the historical needs of Nebraska have also grown tremendously.



Executive Board Member Nellie Snyder Yost with national prize-winning quilt made by her mother, Grace Snyder. The quilt is displayed in the new Museum. . . . (Below left) Society Secretary Dorothy Jackson (lower left) at Annual Meeting with Mrs. Yost (left); Foundation Trustee Wayne C. Lee. . . . (Below right) Museum exhibits include a reconstructed general store.



For example, we now operate eight Branch Museums across the state, while in 1953 there were none. Following legislative authorization for an historical markers program in 1957, some 283 uniform markers have been erected in cooperation with local organizations in all parts of Nebraska. The Hall of Fame Commission, for which I serve as secretary, has inducted 16 noted Nebraskans and our Congressional Medal of Honor winners since creation of the commission in 1961. In 1959 legislation provided for the establishment of a highway salvage archeology program in cooperation with the Department of Roads. Laws passed in 1961 and 1969 gave the State Archives new legal responsibilities over historical records created by state and local government. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 has had a major impact on the Society and on the state by providing staffing and funding to support the inventory and preservation of many of Nebraska's most valuable historical and archeological sites and structures. These are just a few Society functions which did not exist when our headquarters building was opened in 1953.

In general, one of the most obvious contrasts between the work of the Society then and today is the tremendous increase in research activity in the areas of family and local history. While it often seems that we may be overwhelmed by this surge in historical interest, it is convincing evidence that now more than ever Nebraskans value their heritage.

A summary of each department's activity during the last year will illustrate more fully the diverse responsibilities of the Nebraska State Historical Society as it enters its second century of service as an agency of state government.

ARCHIVES

According to State Archivist Jim Potter, the Archives department finds itself in much the same situation as the youngest sibling in a large family. Archival facilities, like that child's britches, have long since been outgrown. Yet, the Archives is waiting anxiously for the "hand-me-down" space which the Museum will vacate as it moves to new quarters.

Although the Archives has had to limit accessioning due to the space problem, the collections have continued to grow. Additions in 1982-1983 have included the records of the now-



Governor Robert Kerrey signs proclamation designating an annual Pawnee Day. Others are Society Historian L. G. DeLay (left); Theodore Morgan, Pawnee, Oklahoma, who represented the tribe; Mr. and Mrs. Junior Sramek, Trenton. . . (Below) At the Columbus Cemetery Jeff Heese (left) and Matt Busse, Lost Creek School third graders, trace information from tombstones. The State Historical Society is interested in all activities expanding historical knowledge. Columbus Telegram photo by Phil Prorok.



closed University of Mid-America, 1974-1982; the Charles Thone gubernatorial files, 1979-1983; Lancaster County school census records, 1875-1972; and the papers of illustrator John Falter.

The primary reason that records, manuscripts, and newspapers are preserved by the Archives is for research use. In 1982-1983, over 11,000 persons used one or more of the archival resources. More than 6,000 people came to the Society in person to read microfilm or examine records. Visitors to the Library-Archives in 1954 numbered 1,701. Some 1,200 phone calls were processed and 597 archival collections were retrieved for the use of researchers. Phone calls to the Library-Archives in 1954 numbered 135.

A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes to preserve and make archival collections available. Microfilming continues to be a major preservation tool with the production last year of 517 rolls containing county records, church records, and newspapers. The filmed reference collection now contains nearly 26,000 rolls. With the construction of a microfilm storage vault in the new State Museum of History, the archives can now store its own master negatives in secure facilities and has assumed administration over sales of duplicate microfilm to the public.

Special projects during the year have included continuing work to index and microfilm records of the Union Pacific Railroad. A micro-computer is being used to assist in the indexing. The Nebraska Historical Records Needs Assessment and Reporting project was completed in December, 1982, and the final report was issued. Much staff time in early 1983 was involved with research and design of selected exhibits for the State Museum of History. Archival staff have been assisting Senator Carl T. Curtis, who is researching his senatorial papers for his book about his 40 years of service in Congress.

The cause of paper conservation in Nebraska has experienced both gains and losses. A major loss was the resignation of Society paper conservator Judith Fortson-Jones. Under her direction the Archives had developed an ongoing paper conservation program and had provided education and training to a variety of individuals and institutions around the state. On the positive side a Nebraska Chapter of the Western Conservation Congress was formed. This group is composed of persons from



*Senator Carl T. Curtis (left) examines his papers in the State Archives with State Archivist Jim Potter while researching his forthcoming autobiography *Forty Years Against the Tide*. . . . (Below) Librarian Ann Reinert (left), Assistant Librarian Cindy Steinhoff-Drake (second from left), and Library Clerk Doris Jenkins (right) with Lela Rickerson.*



around the state who share an interest in the preservation of library and archival collections. The chapter has started a newsletter and plans to sponsor periodic programs related to the subject of conservation.

Archival education and outreach programs continue to be an important activity. In 1982-1983, the Archives and the Nebraska Records Management Division cooperated to present a micrographics seminar and to produce a slide-tape program designed to help county officials learn more about the use of microfilm. A disaster-planning workshop was presented for librarians and local historical society personnel in the Panhandle. Archival staff visited Boystown and the Franklin County Historical Society to consult on matters involving the preservation of historical materials. Speeches to civic organizations, tours of the Archives for school groups, and professional activities at the regional and national level also occupied the staff. Special programs on the care and interpretation of historical photographs were presented at Kearney State and Chadron State colleges in cooperation with the Centers for Archives and History there.

LIBRARY

The Library has experienced a very productive year. Librarian Ann Reinert reports that reference activity in the Library has increased by 11%. This reflects a considerable increase in requests by telephone and correspondence, since the count of daily visitors to the Library has increased by only one percentage point. Help given to patrons interested in researching their family histories accounted for nearly two-thirds of the reference assistance provided by Library staff. Good use was also made of the Library materials in our Branch Museums.

Our photo collections are recognized throughout the world. During the past year requests were received from Finland, West Germany, England and Switzerland. The number of daily visitors to the Photo Room decreased slightly, but its reference activity increased. Nearly 35 percent more copies of photographs were produced, due to the introduction of 35mm slides for sale to our patrons at a greatly reduced price.

As the result of a program presented at the annual convention of the Nebraska Library Association, an article, "Historic

Maps of Nebraska," by Ann Reinert was published in the Spring, 1983, issue of the *Nebraska Library Association Quarterly*. Mrs. Reinert was liaison representing the Society on the Nebraska State Genealogical Society Board. She held committee offices in both the Nebraska Library Association and the American Library Association.

Members of the staff have represented the Society in various capacities. Research Associate Betty Loudon was a member of the Women's History Week Planning Committee. Curator of Photographs John Carter served as treasurer of the Friends of Loren Eisley and coordinated the development of a special exhibit dealing with the 50th anniversary of the Nebraska State Capitol.

Other public service activities by the Library staff included 38 special presentations to various groups throughout the state. A wide variety of topics provided information about the special collections of historical and genealogical materials, maps, and photographs.

Support of the Library's programs at the Society through both donations and volunteer assistance is exceptional. Over 300 donors contributed approximately 700 books, pamphlets, and maps, as well as 7,000 photographs. One outstanding collection of photographs was obtained through a collaborative project with the Omaha tribe of Nebraska. Other unusual photographs of rare quality were also acquired. Volunteers donated over 1,600 hours by assisting with indexing, filing, and the preservation of our materials.

The interest and support given by the public is evidence of the value of our remarkable collections.

LINCOLN MUSEUM

Not surprisingly, Curator Wendell Frantz reports that the major project involving virtually all of the Museum staff this year was the completion of the renovation work on the State Museum of History and the beginning of the move by Museum staff into the new quarters. Most effort during the year went into planning and preparation for new exhibits. At present all Museum staff have moved, but the bulk of the Museum's collection of historical artifacts remains to be moved.

The old Museum exhibits in the headquarters building remained open through June 30, 1983. Attendance was 45,145.



Society Curator of Education Dick Spencer (right) with Waverly High School's Viking History Club: advisor Jim Norsworthy (left); and students Brian McIntyre, Bill Munn, Sean Newman. The club won the Nebraska National History Day competition. . . . (Below) Society Curator of Photographs John Carter (standing in center) with visitors from Loneman School of Oglala, South Dakota, September 7.



Staff members received 265 letters and 16,934 phone calls. The Education division provided 248 tours to 8,782 people.

The docent training sessions were held in 1982. Docent coordinator from the fall of 1982 until January was Lois Weyand. Seven volunteer docents worked on an on-call basis and provided tours for many groups. The Community Women's Club of Lincoln provided docents for the governor's mansion. Four public service spots and seven news releases for print were distributed during 1982-1983. Air time, valued at \$2,300, was donated by broadcasters for these public service announcements. The student historian program had three chapters with 45 students participating.

The Collections department received 172 accessions from 137 donors. Artifacts cataloged in 1982-1983 numbered 3,539. Of these, 1,237 items were part of the John Falter collection donated by Mrs. Falter Jones. This outstanding donation consists of paintings, drawings, prints, posters, studies, and other works by the artist, as well as the furnishings from his studio.

Attendance at the Ferguson House for the year was 16,259. Visitors were able to enjoy an extended showing of "The Doll Show," an exhibit based on the Society's doll collections which opened in April, 1982. The Junior League of Lincoln, which provided partial funding for the exhibit, also organized volunteers to serve as hostesses for the exhibit during the summer months. Although the "Doll Show" replaced the usual Christmas exhibit, the Ferguson House was decorated in early 1900s fashion with the assistance of the Allied Florists of Lincoln. A photograph of the Christmas tree covered in hand-made period ornaments served as the frontispiece for the December issue of *Nebraskaland Magazine*. Over 2,000 visitors came to see the holiday greenery during the month of December.

Restoration work on the Ferguson House has continued with the installation of additional alarm sensors to provide more complete security, and the installation of a central air conditioning system for optimum preservation of artifacts on exhibit.

The Society, through its Center for Nebraska Folklife, contributed substantially to the Nebraska Educational Television production entitled "Hand-Me-Downs." This three-program series about the folk arts of the Northern Plains featured folk

artists and craftspersons first identified by the Society's 1980-1981 folklife survey, as well as artifacts and photographs from the Society collections. The series was seen by viewers across Nebraska, in Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, Iowa, and South Dakota, and may be more widely distributed in 1984.

The Kennard House had an attendance of 16,237. Painting of the exterior took place over the summer and fall. The house was also decorated for Christmas, courtesy of the Allied Florists of Lincoln. Kennard House staff collaborated with the Deborah Avery Chapter of the DAR for an Arbor Day observance at the house. The chapter generously donated funds to purchase a ginkgo tree. In April the Herbal Society donated some plant material to be included in the Kennard plantings.

ARCHEOLOGY

During the past fiscal year the major projects conducted by the staff of the Archeology department are as follows: Archeological excavations carried out at Site 25SM14 in western Sherman County northwest of Litchfield; archeological excavations in the town of Brownville, Nebraska; archeological excavations at Site 25DK5 north of Homer in Dakota County; and archeological testing and survey in Custer and Buffalo counties in central Nebraska.

Excavations at 25SM14 were carried out in July, 1982, and May, 1983, for a total of about four weeks. This was a salvage project to recover as much as possible from a prehistoric site being destroyed by landleveling. The site is of Central Plains Tradition cultural affiliation, and was occupied sometime during the period ca. 1100-1300 AD. The remains of an earth-ledge were excavated as well as the remains of a small oval structure of unidentified function, an oval sunshade, and a portion of a fourth unidentified structure. Several pits were also excavated.

The Brownville excavations, which were necessary because of planned highway construction within the city limits, were carried out during the period August-October, 1982. Evidence for several early building remains dating back to the 1860s, as well as much early historic artifactual material, was uncovered. Underlying this early territorial town were the remains of a prehistoric Indian village.

Imminent new construction along US Highway 77 in

Dakota County, Nebraska, led to extensive testing of a narrow corridor through the site of the "Big Village" of the Omaha Indians (ca. 1775-1819, 1834-1840, 1843-1844) during the spring of 1983. This research was a result of an agreement of cooperation between the Nebraska Department of Roads and this Society.

The bottoms of seven storage/trash disposal pits were excavated. The upper portions of these pits, and any remnants of such features as earthlodges, had been graded away during original highway construction during the 1930s. Stone, bone and antler tools, and a variety of European-derived trade goods were recovered as well as abundant floral and faunal remains. The outstanding category of artifact recovered, however, is a sample of several hundred body sherds and rim sherds from two ceramic vessels in good association with European-derived trade goods.

Several storage pits from the Omaha Indian village, occupied from the 1770s to 1819 and again intermittently from 1834 to 1844, were excavated. Among the artifacts recovered were a number of pottery sherds, which are the first to be discovered that are attributable to the Omaha. This is the village of Chief Blackbird visited by Lewis and Clark in 1804.

The archeological testing and excavation conducted in Buffalo and Custer counties was performed in July, 1983. This was done mainly to determine the archeological potential of the South Loup River valley, particularly in reference to early archeological remains.

Most of the remainder of the period was spent in archeological survey of highway projects and other miscellaneous cultural resource surveys, and in the preparation of archeological reports. Also during this period the Archeology department was involved in moving from the headquarters building to the new Museum, and in the preparation of new exhibits.

EXHIBITS

The Exhibits division under the direction of Eli Paul is responsible for the design and production of all Museum exhibits for the Society including Branch Museums. A total of 92 display units were produced in 1982-1983. The bulk of this work involved displays and other artwork for the new State Museum of History.



Partially excavated earthlodge floor at Site 25SM14 in western Sherman County near Litchfield. Observing are Dean Kohls, volunteer crew member from Litchfield, and Gordon McKenzie, Society crew member. . . . (Below) Partial remains of a small circular structure and associated pits being excavated by State Historical Society crew at Site 25SM14. Crew members are Steve Holen and Gordon McKenzie.





Society Artists Alice Filbert (left), Herbert Thomas, and Curt Peacock prepare figures for prehistory displays in the new Museum. . . . (Below) Curt Peacock works on Museum earthlodge exhibit.



As renovation work continued on the new building, numerous meetings were held with the project contractors and architects. Inspection of work in progress in the exhibits galleries and work areas was also required.

The Exhibits department moved to the new Museum in November, 1982, and set up shop. It immediately came to appreciate the considerable increase in work space. New photography darkroom and studio facilities were occupied in May of this year.

Display construction for the new Museum began in earnest in January and has continued without interruption since then. The new Museum has provided for a considerable increase in exhibit space compared to our old buildings, with exhibit space on portions of three floors. The first floor provides an introduction to Nebraska's history and to our Museum collections. The second floor contains case exhibits which tell the story of Nebraska development, including many of the displays from our former Museum galleries. The third floor spotlights the Museum collections and has a group of period settings and a gallery for temporary art exhibits.

The planning, research, and construction of these displays have involved contributions from many staff members from all departments. Over the course of the project, temporary help has been made available by reassigning staff from other offices. Work continued after the end of the fiscal year in the preparation of displays for the new Museum.

BRANCH MUSEUMS

Attendance at the Branch Museums totaled 142,000 for the year, an increase of nearly 3 percent reports Curator Bill Munn. A variety of activities was carried on at each of the individual branches.

Neihardt Historical Center at Bancroft—Special events and exhibits at the Center included "Of Dust Bowl Descent," a photo exhibit of the depression period; Myron Heise's paintings; the "Panhandle Folklife" photo exhibit; "Distaff Dreams," an exhibit of traditional crafts; an area art show featuring paintings from the West Point, Oakland, and Lyons Art Clubs, and others. The Annual John G. Neihardt Day, co-sponsored with the Neihardt Foundation, was dedicated to



Professor Robert Johnson, Wayne State College, spoke to more than 250 persons on John G. Neihardt Day, August 7, at the Neihardt Center in Bancroft. Principal speaker was Professor William Lass, Mankato (Minnesota) State University. . . . (Below) Old Mill Days at Neligh, honoring Neligh Mills, included a July 4 ice cream social.



Mona Neihardt, wife of the poet and a talented sculptor and musician. Hilda N. Petri, a daughter of the Neihardts, was featured speaker. "The River and I" was the theme of the John G. Neihardt Conference held at the Center. Featured speakers included Helen Stauffer, Kearney State College, and Professor W. Raymond Wood, University of Missouri/Columbia.

The Neihardt Library continues to grow with the addition of books donated by the Neihardt Fellows Program, the Neihardt Trust of Columbia, Missouri and several individuals. Curator John Lindahl has continued his Branch Museum programs which are aired on station WJAG in Norfolk. A probable exhibit on John Neihardt has been provided to public and college libraries, shopping centers, and other public buildings.

Willa Cather Historical Center at Red Cloud—A total of 11,471 visitors toured the Willa Cather Historical Center in 1982-1983, a 22 percent increase. Publicity for the year was enhanced by a feature article on Willa Cather which appeared in the July issue of *National Geographic*. No major building restoration took place this year, but the staff with the assistance and guidance of Society horticulturist Ed Dreier, continued the landscaping project at the Cather Center sites.

The Cather Center archives experienced rapid growth this year due to an active program of collecting scholarly articles about Cather and her writing. Mail requests and research visits to use the archival facilities grew by 50 percent and 100 percent respectively.

Curator Ann Billesbach presented a paper, "Preservation in Catherland" at the annual Missouri Valley Historical Conference and at the second National Cather Seminar. The seminar was one of two major conferences on Cather which involved the Center. The Cather Spring Conference featured a presentation by Ching (Jean) Tsien of the People's Republic of China who spoke on British and American literature in China.

The Second National Cather Seminar, "Willa Cather Today," was sponsored in part by the Society and attracted attendance from around the world. Sessions in Red Cloud featured lectures by Society staff and tours of Cather properties.

Neligh Mill Historical Site at Neligh—Attendance for 1982-1983 was 5,760. Six hundred people attended the annual



Pipeline pontoons are moved into position for the Meriwether Lewis (Museum of Missouri River History) at Brownville. . . . (Below) The Society's mobile museum at Chimney Rock is accessible to handicapped persons.



Old Mill Days Ice Cream Social at the Mill on July 4. The major project for the year was the restoration of a 40 ft. single-sheathed boxcar donated to the Society by the Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company. The car was built in 1922 and was typical of those used by the mill to ship flour and other products 50 years ago. The car is now exhibited on the mill sidetrack.

Research on mills continues and a booklet on water-powered flour mills in Nebraska was compiled by Curator Tom Buecker and published with funding from the American Association of Cereal Chemists and the General Mills Foundation.

Museum of Missouri River History at Brownville—The Museum, housed in the *Dredge Meriwether Lewis*, hosted 22,681 visitors during the past year. Staff, provided in part by CETA and the Summer Youth Employment Program, have been working on restoration of the boat, including painting, re-glazing windows, and restoring doors in the engine room. A gift of 128 gallons of paint from the Rust-Oleum Corporation through the National Trust for Historic Preservation is being used for part of this work.

Special exhibits during the year included photographs on Nebraska farming and illustrations from 1880s garden catalogs. For two weeks in June, river scenes from the studio of Dorothy Broady were exhibited.

Special events included night lighting of the boat's exterior during the Brownville Christmas Tour of Homes and on July 4; and the June 18 River Rats Reunion for people who worked on the *Lewis* or other river projects. Reunion events included a tour of the Coast Guard boat *Gasconade* and a barbecue picnic.

Fort Robinson Museum near Crawford—The visitor count at all Fort Robinson Museum facilities was 74,683. Review of these statistics indicates a significant increase in organized group visitation.

A variety of special interpretive programs continues to be presented, including film programs, lantern light tours, "living history" interpretive tours, interpretive flag-raising and retreat ceremonies, and programs on major holidays. The Annual School Field Day, October 4, 1982, saw 62 school groups represented with an attendance of 1,807. Curator Vance

Nelson has continued to provide programs to school groups, civic clubs, and historical organizations.

The Fort Robinson Museum has been the recipient of staffing provided by the Summer Youth Employment Program and by CETA and Project Green Thumb. Volunteer help has been beneficial for special projects such as the National Salute on July 4, and the Annual School Field Day.

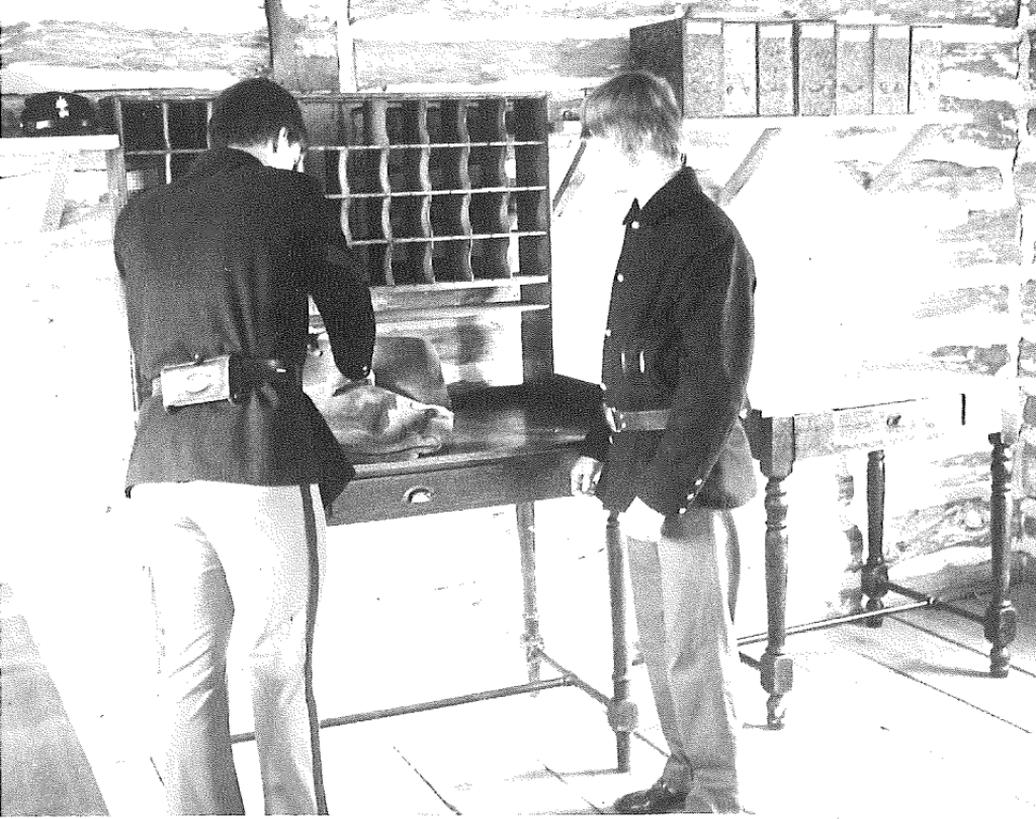
Major work projects during the year have included painting of garages, porch decks, and the fire-escape of the main museum. Contractors completed brick tuckpointing at the blacksmith, harness repair, and quartermaster shop buildings. Furnace replacement at the museum and adobe officers quarters was completed.

Senator George W. Norris Home at McCook—There was a 16 percent increase in visitation. Contributing to the increase were visitors who attended a 50th anniversary celebration in honor of the Tennessee Valley Authority. No major work was done on the house except for the restoration of a small porch. The Curator was assisted by a CETA employee during the summer months.

Mobile Museums—The Mobile Museum at Chimney Rock continues to be one of our most popular attractions, drawing 17,000 visitors, second only to Fort Robinson and the Dredge *Lewis*. The Museum at neighboring Courthouse Rock had 5,000 recorded visitors during the same period. Both of these sites receive favorable comment from visitors, many of whom are from out-of-state and foreign countries.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 became effective January 1, 1982, and the review of resulting tax incentive projects is the fastest growing component of the Preservation office. The rehabilitation of 14 buildings was initiated during the year at an estimated project cost of over \$13 million. A great deal of rehabilitation activity has been generated in the downtowns of Omaha, Lincoln, Tecumseh, and Seward by the Economic Recovery Tax Act. The rehabilitation of Lincoln's Haymarket Landmark District is a good example of how an entire district may be revitalized through the impetus of the tax incentives.



Living history demonstration at Fort Robinson depicts mail delivery to the adjutant's office. . . . (Below) Re-roofing the Veterinary Hospital Annex, Fort Robinson.





In Loup City during the Sherman County survey are Survey Assistant Steve Pondelis (left), Preservation Associate Joni Gilkerson, Survey Assistant John Kay, and Survey Architect David Murphy. . . . (Below) Cultural Historian Janet Jeffries Spencer (left) talks with Violet Blodgett during the Kimball County survey.



In order to devote the appropriate amount of time to the growing number of Tax Act projects, a new preservation architect, Michael Rindone, AIA, began work May 2. A native of Hastings, Mike Rindone is a Registered Professional Architect, a member of the American Institute of Architects, and holds a B.S. in Architectural Studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

An intensive one-day seminar on the tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic buildings was presented on September 14 to about 50 developers, architects, accountants, and property owners. The seminar was co-sponsored by the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and the Nebraska Preservation office. Presentations were given by representatives of Preservation Associates, Inc. of Hagerstown, Maryland, and Touche Ross Company, Omaha office.

Full survey activity on a county basis resumed in FY 1983 for Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey members David Murphy, Survey Architect; Janet Jeffries Spencer, Cultural Historian; and Joni Gilkerson, Preservation Associate. In July and August, 1982, Kimball, Banner, and Scotts Bluff counties were surveyed with the assistance of Jim Fagler and Steve Pondelis, summer surveyors. Saline and Fillmore counties were surveyed in May and June, 1983, with Steve Pondelis and John Kay as summer surveyors. Eighteen hundred sites were added to the building survey files during the year. The survey data is used to record the history of the state's built environment and to assess the National Register potential.

Survey activity on a smaller scale occurred in Pischelville, Thurston County, in the recording and researching of buildings associated with Czech immigrants. At the Pike-Pawnee Archeological Site, Webster County, a magnetic survey was done in August, 1982, to determine the western boundary of the Pawnee village. Dr. John W. Weymouth of the Nebraska Center for Archeophysical Research, UNL, undertook the survey using a proton magnetometer, a high technology device capable of measuring slight changes in soil conditions which might indicate human activity such as fired areas, storage pits, or house floors.

The nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places is a major program element and 49 nomina-

tions were listed in the 1982-1983 fiscal year, the largest number in any one year since the program began in 1969. Three of these nominations listed multiple properties: the Seward County Courthouse Square Historic District in Seward; the College Hill Historic District in Crete; and the Willa Cather Thematic Group in Webster County. One of the most ambitious nominations undertaken by the Society was the "Willa Cather Thematic Group: Sites and Districts in Webster County." Twenty-six individual sites and four historic districts related to the life and writings of Willa Cather were nominated to the National Register. The number of sites included in these historic districts and thematic nominations brings the total number of properties listed this year to 269.

The State Historic Preservation Review Board reviews and approves all National Register nominations on the state level before they are submitted to the National Park Service for final determination. The board met four times last year and approved 35 nominations. The members are James H. Gunner-son, George Haecker, J. M. Hart, Frank N. Latenser, James A. Rawley, H. Keith Sawyers, S. N. Wolbach, and Marvin F. Kivett. They deserve special recognition for their service for which they receive no compensation.

The Emergency Jobs Act of 1983, passed by Congress in March, provided \$364,328 to Nebraska for preservation projects on properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This was part of \$25 million appropriated to the states for historic preservation development grants, which had not received funding for two years. Owners of National Register properties were eligible to apply for 50 percent matching grants for "bricks and mortar" work to maintain, rehabilitate, or restore their sites.

The response in Nebraska was overwhelming; 59 applications were submitted requesting over \$1.1 million in federal funding. Applications were due the end of June, 1983, and grants were awarded in July. The preservation program was included in the Jobs Bill funds because of its track record as a labor intensive program and because of its ability to identify appropriate projects.

On-going programs of public education, newsletter, and conferences occupied staff to a lesser degree during the year.



*Survey Architect David Murphy at a rural Sherman County site. . . .
(Below) Survey Assistant John Kay (left) talks with Bill Svec near
Milligan during the Fillmore County Survey in June.*



All staff participated in speaking engagements about preservation to local and state groups. The office newsletter, *The Cornerstone: Historic Preservation in Nebraska*, has a circulation of 2,500 copies.

TOWARD TOMORROW

And now, it is appropriate that we look toward tomorrow and our goals that have not yet been met. Our ambitions for the Society and the preservation of Nebraska history always exceed available funding. With the dedication of the new State Museum of History, we have progressed toward a goal that has been the subject of attention by your dedicated Executive Board for the last 20 years. Problems remain at this time in the operation of the new Museum and other museum sites. Although the Appropriations Committee recognized the need for expanded staff for the 70,000-square foot building, the funds necessary were vetoed from the final appropriations bill. We are limping and will continue to do so until funds become available to properly maintain the new space. Our second area of concern, in terms of the renovation program, is to secure funds for equipment and renovation of the space vacated in the headquarters building for utilization by the Library and Archives. Whereas the Museum program perhaps has more public recognition, it is in a sense only the tip of the iceberg that makes this Society a unique research center. It is therefore essential that we push for full support to renovate space for the Archives and Library as we have for the Museum. The Legislature and the Governor will make the final decision as to such support. We must seek every means to better inform the public and elected officials on the importance of our research collection and the need for support.

We have other goals that should be accomplished. It is obvious to all that whereas the new Museum is housed in an excellent building, there is little parking space in the immediate vicinity. The Foundation Executive Committee has taken an important step as a partial solution to this problem. They have signed a purchase agreement to acquire two buildings on lots measuring 75 x 140 feet, located immediately to the south of the Museum and fronting on "O" Street. With this agreement the Foundation has assumed a heavy financial burden but one which your Executive Board feels is essential for the new

Museum. Such items as custodial service and parking lots do not usually attract donors. It is the goal of the Foundation Trustees, however, to seek any donation that may be available to help on the purchase of land immediately adjacent to the new Museum.

As indicated in my report to the Foundation Trustees, some 300 individuals, largely from the Society membership, contributed a total of \$44,000 to the exhibits in the new Museum. I was particularly impressed by the high percentage of members living outside Nebraska who were generous in their contributions. The goal of the Foundation must be to seek wider support not only from membership, but from all people who are interested in Nebraska and its history. It is essential that the endowment for the Foundation be increased.

An increasing number of individuals are placing the Society Foundation in their wills. The largest bequest during the past year came from the estate of the late Professor Annadora Gregory of Crete, who willed farm land in the value of \$84,503.48. The Society lost one of its most dedicated supporters recently with the death of Miss Ruth Sheldon, daughter of long-term Society Director Addison E. Sheldon. We have been advised by the representative of her estate of a bequest from her representing a half-interest in an 80 acre farm of undetermined value.

The progress reported today would not be possible without the dedicated support of the Society membership, your Society Executive Board, the Foundation Trustees, and all people interested in Nebraska history. We are grateful for this support.