Nebraska National Guard Featured in New Exhibit

*Nebraska’s Citizen-Soldiers in the Twenty-first Century* showcasing the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the Nebraska National Guard, will open November 9 at the Nebraska State Historical Society’s Museum of Nebraska History. The museum is located at Fifteenth and P streets in Lincoln.

The exhibit’s primary focus is the mobilization and deployment of Army and Air Guard units and personnel, both at home and abroad, since September 11, 2001. Oral histories, video clips, photographs, and personal items provided by Guard members themselves will offer insight about the missions, locales, and cultures they experienced. The exhibit will also offer a look at the equipment used by today’s Nebraska National Guard, including battle dress uniforms, body armor, and military vehicles.

First as home guard militia in the territorial years of the 1850s and, after 1881, as the Nebraska National Guard, Nebraska’s citizen-soldiers have stood ready to respond when called upon by the governor of Nebraska or the President of the United States. This dual federal/state role sets the National Guard apart from other military reserve forces.

The exhibit is made possible through the support and cooperation of Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke, Nebraska Adjutant General, and the men and women of the Nebraska Army and Air National Guard.

For more information about the exhibit, the museum, and its hours of operation, call 402-471-3270 or visit the NSHS website at [www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org).
In 1900 Anders Mobråten left Norway for the United States. Seventy years later his granddaughter and I were married in Burlington, Iowa. This summer, Mary Ann and I journeyed to Norway and visited her cousins, descendents of Anders' brothers, who stayed in Norway.

We had many memorable experiences, including one, especially, that nudged me into thought: traveling from Scandinavia to Chicago in 8 hours and 20 minutes. High-speed travel can diminish our appreciation for the hope, imagination, and determination of our forebears who set out for slow journeys to a new land. Over the days at sea and later, journeying west by rail, they must have been troubled by fears and doubts, hopes and dreams.

Nebraska is both the place and the symbol for other pioneers, who loaded their families and their lives into wagons and set out for Oregon, California, Utah, or Montana. The trails that stretched across our state facilitated and witnessed the largest voluntary migration in the history of the world. Today we can walk those trails following the ruts left by thousands of wagon wheels. We can visit special places along those trails—Chimney Rock, Ash Hollow, California Hill, and Scotts Bluff, for example. We can pause at graves of pioneers who did not complete their journeys.

Emigration and pioneering were not easy physically, but more than strength and health, the journey demanded imagination, an internal computation of the cost-benefit ratio, sheer determination, and, always, hopes for the future. It is a high honor today for Nebraskans to preserve those stories and those places.

The next time the airplane is late or snow closes the Interstate, think of the trials and the triumphs of those whose journeys gave rise to our lives. Thank them for the pluck and fortitude that turned hope into reality. It is the least we can do.

Michael J. Smith
Director/CEO
furnished as it would have looked in the fall of 1880, when it housed African American “Buffalo Soldiers,” Company G, of the Ninth Infantry.

Army plans called for five stoves: a regulation “No. 1 wood heater” in the sergeant’s quarters (an original purchased some years ago would go there), two No. 2 wood heaters for the dormitory (because one end of the room would contain displays Buecker needed only one), a No. 1 wood heater for the mess room, and a six-hole range for the kitchen. Buecker scoured catalogs and the Internet, but period stoves were hard to find and reproductions too costly.

Buecker’s solution? Build the stoves—out of wood. Working from pictures, drawings, and Army specifications, Buecker and Steve Scoggan, Fort Robinson maintenance technician, first built a detailed full-scale wooden replica of a No. 1.

“It looked so cool,” said Buecker, “we decided to go into full production.” They have since built two additional stoves for the barracks and two more for other fort buildings—a No. 1 for the adjutant’s office, and a No. 2 for the post guardhouse.

“They cost less than a hundred dollars apiece,” said Buecker, “not counting labor, plus a lot of sandpaper and wood filler.” The primary material is smooth-surfaced medium density fiberboard, which, unlike plywood does not have surface grain that would give the game away. Vertical tie rods are common dowels. Painted flat black, and installed with old-fashioned blued chimney flues the replicas look like cast-iron originals.

For more about the 1874 cavalry barracks, one of the first buildings at Fort Robinson, and also known as the Cheyenne Outbreak Barracks and the Buffalo Soldiers Barracks for incidents in its colorful history, visit www.nebraskahistory.org.

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Research Grant Winners Announced

The Rudge & Guenzel department store operating in Lincoln from 1886 to 1941, and racial segregation in Nebraska’s schools, often thought never to have existed, will be the focus of research by the winners of 2007 NSHS Research Grants.

The two one-thousand-dollar grants were awarded to Vicki Howard, an assistant professor of history at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, and David Peavler, a graduate student and instructor of history at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

Howard’s project will use the Rudge & Guenzel store as a case study of “Main Street” department stores’ role in defining American middle-class culture and taste. Howard considers it a valuable example for helping to explain “the rise of mass consumption and a national consumer ethic.”

Peavler’s study of segregation in Nebraska will run counter to the opinion of scholars who have held that the state never operated schools exclusively reserved for African American students. His preliminary research indicates that school systems in both
Omaha and Nebraska City did, in fact, build and maintain such segregated schools in the nineteenth century. His research at the NSHS archives will focus on school records and newspapers to determine how and why the schools were created, and why they were abandoned in favor of integrated schools some seventy years before *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Terms of the grant require the recipient to produce an article appropriate for publication in *Nebraska History*, the quarterly journal of the Nebraska State Historical Society, within a year. Funds for the grants are provided by the Gladys Marie Lux Nebraska History Education Endowment Fund and the Tom and Marilyn Allan Fund, both administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation.

Diane Rolfsmeyer, new Executive Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation.

Rolfsmeyer came to the Foundation in May from her most recent past position as development officer for Epworth Village, a juvenile treatment center in York, Nebraska. Her experience also includes a term as director of endowment for the Madonna Foundation in Lincoln; consulting in private practice as a financial planner; co-founding an occupational health consulting and educational firm; working as an account representative for a brokerage firm; and writing a textbook on financial planning for the UNL Department of Continuing Studies.

She also brings to the NSHSF her experience in strategic planning, trusts, planned giving, fundraising, capital campaign management, grant writing, and mediation. An active participant in community affairs, she has held board positions with a variety of professional, university, city, and county organizations.

She and her husband are parents of a blended family of seven adult children and grandparents of six with another on the way. An active foster parent, she usually cared for two foster adolescents while her own children were growing up.

Always interested in the history of her home state, Diane looks forward to her work with the Foundation. Asked to comment on her vision for the future, she said, “The history of Nebraska is older than its borders and people are making history at this very moment. The story of Nebraska is rich and cries out to be heard. I am looking forward to helping citizens tell this story through investing in preservation and standing with the Society in collecting, interpreting, and providing access to the treasure of the state’s history.”

Diane Rolfsmeyer Takes Helm of NSHS Foundation

Private pilot, hiker and backpacker, ballroom dancer, Certified Financial Planner, textbook author, parent, grandparent, and foster parent—just a few of the labels that begin to characterize Diane.
NSHS Annual Meeting Features “Archives A to Z” Conference

The NSHS’s 129th Annual Meeting, to be held October 26–27 in Lincoln, will be accompanied by a special conference designed to provide an overview of all aspects of archival administration. The conference, called “Archives A to Z,” will take place in conjunction with National Archives Week.

In six hour-long presentations designed with the staff of small historical societies, libraries, and museums that manage archival collections in mind—but also of interest to students, librarians, and others who wish to acquire basic archival knowledge—“Archives A to Z” will introduce basic concepts of archive management and highlight major concepts and processes used by archivists.

Support materials such as bibliographies, web sites, and other resources will be shared, and participants will be encouraged to pose questions and participate in a concluding roundtable discussion.

Registration materials have been mailed to all NSHS members. Registration deadline is October 10. Call (402) 471-4955 or e-mail dmcwilliams@nebraskahistory.org with questions about the conference. Downloadable registration forms and additional information are available on the NSHS website at www.nebraskahistory.org.

NSHS Library Seeks Book Sponsors

The NSHS is seeking sponsors to purchase new Nebraska volumes in the series Family Maps of Land Patents books for land-grant states published by Arphax (www.arphax.com). Available now are the Loup, Sioux, and Thomas county volumes. Thank you to Pamela McGovern-Joy, a native Nebraskan now living in Pennsylvania, who donated the funds to purchase the Logan County volume.

The NSHS is also seeking a sponsor to purchase Blanche Lea Walden’s Pioneer Families of the Midwest, reprinted in one volume by the Genealogical Publishing Company. Originally published privately between 1939 and 1941 in three volumes, this work includes about 150 allied families and 7,500 Midwestern pioneers. Some Nebraska families are included.

If you wish to purchase one or more of these volumes for the NSHS Library, contact Cindy S. Drake for more information at 402-471-4786 or cdrake@nebraskahistory.org.

Hall of Fame Commission Holds Public Hearings

The Nebraska Hall of Fame Commission, a body appointed by the governor to evaluate candidates and select Hall of Fame honorees, is holding public hearings in all three legislative districts of the state to solicit comment on the current nominations. Seven prominent Nebraskans, all deceased for at least 35 years, have been
Don Cunningham
John Carter
Patricia Gaster
Lynne Ireland
James Potter
editorial staff
Debra Brownson
design & production

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nominated for the honor.
The first of three hearings, a part of the required five-year period of review and consideration, was held in Omaha on September 20.

• District I Hearing
  Wednesday, October 3, 2007, 7–9 p.m.
  Norfolk Arts Center—Gallery Room
  305 North 5th Street
  Norfolk

• District III Hearing
  Thursday, October 11, 2007, 7–9 p.m.
  Holiday Inn Express—Paiute Room
  300 Holiday Frontage Road
  North Platte

For more information about the Hall of Fame, criteria for nomination, the current nominees, and the selection process, visit www.nebraskahistory.org/admin/hall_of_fame/index.htm.

NSHS Awards Announced

The author of a Nebraska History article who re-introduced readers to a long-forgotten Nebraska writer…
A philanthropist who helped NSHS acquire equipment and funds… A group of women who spearheaded preservation of a small town’s historic parochial school building…
A teacher whose students have competed in—and won—National History Day competitions with astounding regularity…
A government commission that shepherded Nebraska to national recognition for its participation in the celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition bicentennial…

Those five individuals and organizations all have been named the winners of awards from the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The awards, given annually, will be presented at a luncheon in the recipients’ honor to be held in conjunction with the NSHS’s Annual Members Meeting the weekend of October 26–27.

AWARD WINNERS

Tom White, Lincoln—James L. Sellers
Memorial Award given for the year’s best article in Nebraska History, the quarterly journal of the NSHS. His article, “From McCook to Whispering Smith,” Winter 2006, focused on McCook, Nebraska, experiences of author Frank Spearman.

The Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission—Addison E. Sheldon Award given for outstanding contributions to the preservation and interpretation of Nebraska History. The commission organized and coordinated Nebraska’s Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebrations, including a national “signature” event.

Mary Rose Pinkelman, Violet Pinkelman, Jeanette Pinkelman, Louise Guy, and Vicky Koch of St. James—Nebraska Preservation Award recognizing significant achievement in historic preservation. They founded the St. James Marketplace in an unused historic parochial school in St. James (Cedar County.)

Diane Oldfather, Lincoln—Robert W. Furnas Memorial Award for outstanding contributions and assistance to the NSHS. Oldfather is a major contributor to, and is active in events on behalf of the NSHS including the endowment for a paintings conservator at the NSHS’s Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center in Omaha.

Moni Hourt, Crawford—First recipient, James C. Olson Memorial award for a Nebraska teacher engaging, inspiring, and guiding students to discover, enjoy, and learn from Nebraska history. Hourt mentored many students to outstanding success in local, state, and national History Day competitions.
October 14 • 2 p.m.
“Sharpie: The Life of Evelyn Sharp, Nebraska’s Aviatrix”
Diane Bartels, author

Sunday at the Museum Series
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site
306 W. Elm Street, Bancroft
neihardt@gpcom.net  888-777-4667

October 18 • 12 noon
“The Nebraska Memories Project”
Shannon Behrhorst, project director

Brown Bag Lecture Series
Museum of Nebraska History
15th & P streets, Lincoln  402-471-4754

October 26–27
NSHS Annual Meeting
In conjunction with “Archives A to Z” and Nebraska Book Festival  (see related story)

“Archives A to Z”
Nebraska Archives Week Seminar
(registration required)
www.nebraskahistory.org  402-471-4785
1-800-833-6747

Nebraska Book Festival
Museum of Nebraska History and other downtown Lincoln locations.
www.unl.edu/NCB/current_festival.html

November 9, 2007–October 17, 2008
Nebraska’s Citizen-Soldiers in the Twenty-first Century Exhibition  (see related story)

Museum of Nebraska History
15th & P streets, Lincoln  402-471-4754

November 11 • 2 p.m.
Art exhibit opening and gallery talk
Roger Gerberding, artist

Sunday at the Museum Series
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site

November 15 • 12 noon
“Nebraska’s Citizen-Soldiers in the Twenty-first Century”

Brown Bag Lecture Series
Museum of Nebraska History

Holiday Displays
Museum of Nebraska History

November 26–December 31
Victorian Holidays Past
Thomas P. Kennard House, Nebraska Statehood Memorial, 1627 H St., Lincoln
Mon.–Fri. by appt. (Admission charged; NSHS members free.)  402-471-4764

December 2 • 2 p.m.
Readings
Tim Tingle, Choctaw author & storyteller

Sunday at the Museum Series
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site

December 9 • 1–5 p.m.
Free Open Houses

Kennard House
1627 H St., Lincoln  402-471-4764

Ferguson House
700 So. 16th St., Lincoln  402-471-5417

Eastlake Manor
720 So. 16th St., Lincoln  402-613-0775

December 20 • 12 noon
“Treasures From the Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society”

Brown Bag Lecture Series
Museum of Nebraska History
In a letter dated March 8, 1875, published by the U.S. Wind Engine & Pump Co. of Batavia, Illinois, B. F. Jones of the Bennett Mill Company (now Bennet, about 15 miles southeast of Lincoln), wrote of his sixty-foot windmill, “I will say, that it exceeds my most sanguine expectations,” running three pairs of millstones “and all the machinery in a moderate wind.”

This photograph is one of thirty historic views, enlarged to sixteen by twenty inches, now on display at the NSHS headquarters building, 1500 R Street, Lincoln.