

NEBRASKA history news

Volume 62 / Number 4 / October/November/December 2009

“Landmark Store” Set to Open in Capitol



Nebraska State Capitol, 1934. NSHS RG2183:1934-0418

The Nebraska State Historical Society is establishing a presence in Nebraska’s seat of government and best-known architectural landmark. Working with the Office of the Capitol Commission, the NSHS is putting the finishing touches on the Landmark Store inside the Nebraska State Capitol. It replaces the former Capitol Corner Gift Shop.

Nebraska’s New Deal Art on Exhibit

During the depths of the Great Depression, a public works program commissioned art that still exists today. October 2 marks the opening of a new Nebraska History Museum exhibit titled “*Out of the Despair of the Spirit*”: Nebraska’s New Deal Art.

By the early 1930s, Nebraska, like the rest of the nation, was in sorry shape. These were years of drought, dust storms, poor farm prices, and massive unemployment. In March 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt initiated a sweeping agenda of assistance programs that became known as the New Deal.

Federally-backed employment projects were an important part of New Deal policy. They were administered through an alphabet soup of agencies that included the Civil

Located on the south side across from the café on the ground level, the Landmark Store will feature items on a variety of Nebraska themes, including the state’s history and government, and the capitol’s remarkable architecture. Naturally, there will also be gift items bearing the capitol’s image.

The store’s name honors the capitol’s distinctive design. Not only is it the most prominent feature on the Lincoln skyline, but it is also the first U.S. state capitol to depart radically from traditional statehouse architecture. Its modern design gave it national significance from the day it opened in 1932. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970.

Store hours will be 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Landmark Store is expected to open in November. Call 402-471-2062. ☒



Works Administration (CWA). The first federal art project, the Public Works of Art Program (PWAP), was organized under the CWA and ran from December 1933 until June 1934.

Program administrators felt that art was beneficial to society. They encouraged PWAP artists to select subject matter from the “American Scene” that was recognizable and accessible to all people. (For an example, see “From the Collection” on the back cover.)

The project employed thirty-two Nebraskans, whose work was displayed around the state in tax-supported buildings. The art remains property of the U.S. Government; the NSHS maintains this collection on long-term loan so that it can be exhibited periodically for the benefit of all Nebraskans.

The exhibit runs through October 3, 2010. ☒

The Nebraska State Historical Society collects, preserves, and opens to all, the histories we share.

Lincoln, October 2009

Historical organizations like the Nebraska State Historical Society must be Janus-faced, gazing back at the history we are collecting and sharing with the public, and looking ahead to foresee those needs, programs, and projects that will support our mission in the future. The NSHS is addressing four of these future issues today.



The first is the renovation of our 1953 Headquarters building at 15th and R Streets in Lincoln. Thanks to the support of the Nebraska Unicameral and Governor Dave Heineman, funding was appropriated to address the building's shortcomings, including fire and life safety and handicapped accessibility. The work is underway and will bring the building up to code requirements and give the NSHS a safe and useful building that meets today's standards. Look for completion in the first half of 2010.

Nebraska is a state with a rich past, some of which is in the village sites and hunting camps of the people who lived here before the Euroamericans. Locating, understanding, and preserving the most important of these archeological sites are vital steps in retaining the full story of our place. We will be developing partnerships with landowners whose interests and preservation ethic are essential to protecting the past.

Public and private records are changing in nature. While the information is often the same, the medium in which it is recorded is new. Electronic records are fast becoming the rule. How to gather and preserve that record of official documents, e-mail communications, and similar matters of history is yet another challenge for the future. The staff of the State Archives is addressing this question.

The NSHS's Nebraska History Museum is also engaged in future planning with a task force leading an active planning process designed to envision and create the museum of the future for Nebraska's present and coming generations.

Nebraska History News and our website will have more on each of these dynamic NSHS initiatives as we move forward. Please stay tuned.

"We're looking ahead to foresee those needs, programs, and projects that will support our mission in the future."

Michael J. Smith
Director/CEO



Omaha's Northwestern Bell Regional Headquarters Building.

Omaha's Modern Historic Building

The Nebraska State Historical Society is pleased to announce that the **Northwestern Bell Regional Headquarters Building**, located at 109 S. 19th Street in Omaha, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 17, 2009. The listing of this building marks a new frontier in celebrating Nebraska's historic built environment—the recognition of modern architecture. Constructed in 1957 and 1964 by Northwestern Bell, this building is now the youngest resource in Nebraska listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Northwestern Bell Regional Headquarters Building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the modern office building. According to the National Register nomination, traditional materials, such as brick, were “simplified and appear as solid planes as opposed to decorative masses,” and the building’s design, “utilizes a well organized structural system and aluminum frame windows and spandrel panels as the only form of decoration.” The building was designed by Leo

A. Daly, an Omaha-based design firm founded in 1915 that today is one of the nation's largest.

In addition to architectural significance, the Northwestern Bell Regional Headquarters Building is also important as a monument to Omaha's corporate history, as the city transitioned from wholesaling and meatpacking to a service economy. Along with giants like Northern Natural Gas, Mutual of Omaha, and Woodmen of the World, Northwestern Bell established Omaha as a regional center for communications, utilities, and insurance in the surging post-World War II economy. These companies also had an impact on Omaha's skyline as they strove to create a modern corporate image through architecture.

Northwestern Bell offered far more than just telephone service and employment opportunities—although 1.7 million phones and over twenty thousand employees by 1953 are certainly impressive numbers. Northwestern Bell also worked with the University of Nebraska to develop a method for sending electrocardiograms (heartbeat) and electroencephalograms (brain-wave) over the company's network. Strategic Air Command (SAC), located at Offutt Air Force Base south of Omaha, was also a customer. The infamous red phone, an enduring symbol of the Cold War, was developed and serviced for SAC by Northwestern Bell.

Believe it or not, buildings constructed in 1960 will become potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 2010. That's next year. Just because artists and thinkers of the day dubbed this period and its aesthetic "modern" does not mean it can escape the passage of time. Like Main Street commercial buildings, grand mansions, and sod houses, resources from the recent past tell us something about our communities and our nation.

Resources from the "Modern" era will face an uphill battle for public appreciation. The recognition of the Northwestern Bell Regional Headquarters Building in Omaha is a good start. Vern Dollack, the building's current owner, will utilize the 20 percent Federal Income

Rehabilitation Tax Credit available for National Register properties to convert the building into ground level commercial space and upper story apartments.

Next step: Northern Natural Gas Building. A National Register of Historic Places nomination for this important mid-century building in Omaha is currently under review by the National Park Service. 🏠

—*Jessie Nunn, National Register Coordinator*

Also New to the National Register

Kearney National Guard Armory, 1600 Central Avenue, listed July 16, 2009. Built in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the armory served Kearney until it was replaced by a new building in 1996. With its curved roof, fluted pilasters, and stylized keystone at the main entrance, it stands as testament to the contributions of the WPA and the National Guard to the area. It was also a community gathering place for dances, vaccinations, sporting events, and emergency relief.

Maple Grove Sale Pavilion and Farrowing Barn, western Fillmore County between Tobias and Ohio, listed July 16, 2009. This is Nebraska's first historic sale pavilion and farrowing barn to be listed in the National Register. It represents an essential but largely undocumented aspect of Nebraska's agricultural and commercial history. Built around 1912 by William McCurdy, the barn was the center of the McCurdys' purebred swine operation and a gathering place for the rural community during auctions and dances. 🏠



An unlabeled photo contains an important clue about its origin.

Mr. Wolf's Car and the Unknown Girl

A single, unlabeled photograph provides an example of history's detective work. Last spring, NSHS staff member John Carter acquired this unidentified photograph, which then appeared on the inside back cover of *Nebraska History* (Summer 2009).

Before printing the photo, Editor David Bristow contacted me to see if we could learn more about it through the car's license plate. I've been collecting material about Nebraska license plates since 1994, when I took my family's collection of old license plates from an old shed on the family farm.

From my research, I knew that this license plate number should be listed in an old volume of the Secretary of State's Records from 1911-12. I contacted curator Gayla Koerting at our K Street Government Records Facility, and soon learned

that the car was registered July 8, 1911, to H. D. Wolf of Chappell, Nebraska. The car is a thirty-horsepower Mitchell, and its registration was renewed annually at least through 1914.

This is consistent with other clues: Lewis Miller and Noel Adams, members of the Mitchell Car Club, identified the car as a 1911 model; also, the license plate doesn't show the year, which indicates a pre-1915 date. Nebraska motorists used to make their own license plates (or hire a blacksmith to do it), and didn't have to include the year. In 1915, the State of Nebraska began distributing its own plates stamped with the year of registration.

But who was H. D. Wolf? And who was the girl in the photo?

Normally, I would have started with the Deuel County histories from our Reference Room library collection, but due to current construction it was easier to begin with census records. In the 1930 census I found Henry C. and Mary Wolf of Chappell, ages eighty-one and seventy-two at the time. From there I traced them back through the census years to 1880, when they were living in Big Springs, Cheyenne County, where Henry's occupation was listed as "Section Boss." In the process I learned he and his wife emigrated from Germany in 1870 and that they had six children.

Other sources added details: the Wolfs' granddaughter Marie McGrale Smith compiled a biography of them for the 1984 *Deuel County History*, including photos of Henry and his wife. Our library has cemetery transcriptions for the cemetery where they were buried; with their death dates I could have checked for obituaries, but our newspaper collection is inaccessible during the renovation.

Even so, the biography provided names of at least six granddaughters of Henry Wolf who were living in 1984. Might one of them be the girl in the photo? It was unlikely that any were still living, but perhaps family photos had been given to descendants.

I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Chappell Register*, and soon heard from Marie McGrale Smith's son. Though his mother is deceased, he offered to look at the photo, but so far has been

unable to identify the girl. I heard from Doris McHatton Townsend, the last surviving granddaughter, who thought the girl might be one of her older cousins, but she could not positively identify her.

Townsend did, however, write that her grandfather came to America at age twenty-one, worked on the Union Pacific Railroad, and—according to family lore—hunted bison with “Buffalo Bill” Cody. He later acquired his own farm (probably a homestead), built a house and farm buildings, planted many trees, and learned English until he could speak it without an accent. Other sources confirm that Wolf became a well-known, prosperous farmer in Deuel County.

This research is just one example of the types of material available for doing genealogical or historical research in the Library/Archives of the Nebraska State Historical Society. NSHS staff are available to advise you on a wide range of topics and the types of records available. 🌟

—Cindy S. Drake, Library Curator

Restoring Paintings in the State Capitol

The State Capitol is not only the seat of government for Nebraska, but arguably its best work of art. From the time of its completion in 1932, both the building and the work of art began the aging process, and thus a process of deterioration.

For a quarter century, paintings conservator Anne Rosenthal has worked to breathe new life into the structure’s paintings. Patiently cleaning, repairing, and re-adhering separated canvases to the walls behind them, she has not only restored their original beauty, but also assured that these treasures will endure for future generations.

Her recent undertaking was to fix decades of damage to the Elizabeth Dolan mural *Spirit of the Prairie*, which stands tall over the door in the state law library on the capitol’s third floor. This massive painting on canvas suffered not only from the grime and soot acquired from the use of the room, but also from the plaster



behind it loosening from the wall, causing bulges and bubbles in the painting’s surface.

Fixing the problem required removing the painting from the wall and laying it down like a giant pancake. Conservators removed the plaster adhered to the back of the canvas, and specialists then rebuilt the plaster wall.

Rosenthal returned to Lincoln with a group of craftspeople highly skilled in re-adhering such things as painting to walls. Using registration points designated before the painting came down, they put it back in its exact location over the door.

The last step is that of dealing with niggling details: gluing down small bubbles, repairing the remaining damage, and making sure that the work is left in a condition that will last for many years.

This is the way to do it right, and not one that is done without expense. But our state and its leadership recognize the unique value of our capitol. It belongs to all of us and we ought to take care of it. It is a matter of Nebraska heritage, and Nebraska pride. 🌟

—John E. Carter

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Nebraska History News is published quarterly for members of the Nebraska State Historical Society, 1500 R Street, P.O. Box 82554, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68501-2554. Telephone: (402) 471-3270. e-mail: nshs.publish@nebraska.gov. Annual membership in the society is \$40. www.nebraskahistory.org Opinions expressed by writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSHS.

Nebraska Rancher Wins Golden Spur Award

If you saw the documentary *Beef State* (see article below), you met longtime rancher Jack Maddux of Wauneta, whose on-screen appearance animated the story of Nebraska beef. Jack and his wife, Carol, have been strong supporters of Nebraska history. They have been very active in the Chase County Historical Society, and Carol serves as a trustee for the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation.

On October 17, Jack will receive the National Golden Spur Award from the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock, Texas. This award recognizes substantial contribution to the ranching and livestock industry and improving land and natural resources.

Jack himself is a part of that ranching legacy, the fourth generation to work a ranch established with a homestead in 1886. This is a well-deserved honor for a person long dedicated to Nebraska heritage. 📍

Just So You Know...

The Nebraska History Museum is hosting the 2009 **Nebraska Book Festival** on November 14. The daylong event is free and open to the public; only the awards luncheon requires preregistration. Nebraska poets Ted Kooser, Bill Kloefkorn, and Don Welch will share insights on reading and writing poetry; Teresa Lorensen of the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation will lead a discussion of Aldrich's *A Lantern in Her Hand*; and other readings and writers' workshops are scheduled. See nebraskabookfestival.org or contact Mary Jo Ryan at the Nebraska Library Commission, 402-471-3434.

Beef State, the documentary film that's a co-production of the NSHS and NET Television, entered national syndication in August, which means you may soon have another opportunity to see it. But why take a chance on missing it? DVDs are available for \$14.95 (\$13.45 for NSHS

members) through the NSHS Museum Store. The hour-long program weaves together historical background and human determination into a fascinating saga that takes viewers on a panoramic sweep through a century of American history.

We mis-stated the hours of our **K Street Government Records Facility** in the previous issue of *NH News*. The correct hours are Monday – Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Researchers need to make an appointment to use the K Street reference room. Call 402-471-4771 and ask for the reference staff person on duty. Or email nshs.libarch@nebraska.gov.

During Nebraska Archives Week, the Nebraska State Historical Society's Library/Archives will offer a free, two-hour **program on Native American genealogy** research and resources at the Nebraska History Museum. Virginia Hanson, government records archivist at the South Dakota State Historical Society, will discuss oral histories, Indian Agency census records, Indian Commission reports, manuscript collections, selected correspondence collected by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and tribal records. The event is Friday, October 16, 2-4 p.m. Reservations are required. Contact Andrea Faling at 402-471-4785 or andrea.faling@nebraska.gov.

You can **search a comprehensive index** of *Nebraska History* and its predecessors back to 1885 at nebraskahistory.org/databases/nebraska_history.htm. And now that *Nebraska History News* has expanded its content, we're indexing it as well. 📍



Holiday Discount at NSHS Stores

The stores at NSHS locations across the state offer a wide selection of Nebraska-related books and a variety of unique and educational merchandise. Please shop at one of our stores during the holiday season. On Thursday, December 3, 2009, NSHS members receive a one-day 25 percent discount. In addition to getting some good deals, your purchase helps to support the NSHS in its efforts to collect, preserve, and share the rich history of the state.

Our locations: Museum Store, Nebraska History Museum, 15th and P Streets, Lincoln; Landmark Store, Nebraska State Capitol, Lincoln; Chimney Rock Museum Store, near Bayard; Fort Robinson Museum Store, near Crawford; Senator George W. Norris State Historic Site in McCook; Neligh Mill State Historic Site in Neligh.

If you can't visit in person, you can shop online at nebraskahistory.org. Click the museum store button, or give us a call at 1-800-833-6747 or 402-471-3447. Happy holidays from the store staff! 📖

Fall Workshops at Museum

The Nebraska History Museum is hosting two free family Saturday workshops. They will be November 28 ("Free Family Fun with Games of the Past," with a 25 percent discount that day in the Museum Store), and December 5 ("Free Family Fun with German Christmas Customs"). Drop in 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Also, "Hour at the Museum" is a free workshop for kids of all ages, held Tuesday, October 27, 10-11 a.m.

Other workshops for grades 3-8 require preregistration and a \$10 fee (\$8.00 for NSHS members), and will be held 9:30-noon: "Native American Arts, Crafts, and Games" (October 28); "Pioneer Arts, Crafts, and Games" (October 30); "New Year Customs of Many Cultures" (December 30). 📖



Dr. Mark Awakuni-Swetland gives Nebraska Institute participants hands-on experience in learning with objects by having them put up and take down a traditional Plains Indian tipi. Participants learn not only the tipi's architecture, but also social customs, practices, and etiquette that shaped the cultures of those who occupied them.

Nebraska Institute Gets Results

It has become a summer tradition, but one that has really grown. This year more than fifty teachers came together for the Nebraska Institute, a decade-long partnership between the Nebraska State Historical Society and Nebraska Wesleyan University. This institute is now part of a full-blown masters degree program wherein teachers learn not how, but what, to teach.

The institute's goal is to bring Nebraska stories into all curricular areas from kindergarten to high school, and it has done that well. This year the cadre of participating teachers included a number from the Santee and Winnebago Reservations, sponsored under a Department of Education Teaching American History grant.

This grant, awarded to Lincoln Public Schools, builds on the previous success of Teaching American History grants in which the students of teachers trained in this program have done demonstrably better than the students of teachers who have not. Minority and students from low-income families do much better. But then, when you see yourself in history it makes better sense. This is what education ought to be. 📖

UPCOMING EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free and open to the public.



Photographer John Nelson portrayed a decorated Christmas tree with two doll carriages and a toy car. NSHS RG3542-140-1.

October 2, 2009 - October 3, 2010

**"Out of the Despair of the Spirit":
Nebraska's New Deal Art**

Exhibition

Nebraska History Museum
15th & P streets, Lincoln

402-471-4754

October 15 • 12 noon

**"Sunken Treasure: Conserving the Metal from the
Steamboat *Bertrand*"**

*Megan Griffiths, Gerald R. Ford
Conservation Center*

Brown Bag Lecture Series
Nebraska History Museum

October 16 • 2 - 4 p.m.

"Native American Genealogy and Resources"

Virginia Hanson, South Dakota State Historical Society

Nebraska History Museum

(registration required)

andrea.faling@nebraska.gov

402-471-4785

October 23 • 8:30 a.m to 5 p.m.

Nebraska Museums Association Annual Meeting

*Concurrent sessions include Nebraska Law and Your
Museum, Reinventing Old Collections, Cooperative
Marketing Roundtable, and more.*

Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer

Grand Island

(reservation required)

Renaë Hunt

nebraskamuseums.ning.com

308-385-5316

October 25 • 5:30 p.m.

Tenth Annual Neihardt Laureate's Feast

John G. Neihardt Foundation dinner and auction

Metro Community College,

Fort Omaha Campus

(registration required)

Nancy Gillis

402-648-3388

November 14

"Nebraska Writers: Cultivating Creativity"

Nebraska Book Festival

Daylong activities: book readings, writers' workshops,
poetry, awards

Nebraska History Museum

(reservation required for luncheon)

Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission

nebraskabookfestival.org

402-471-3434

November 15 • 2 p.m.

*Presentation, book signing, exhibit from Right Here
on the Ground, with Jean Miller and Susan Lawler*

Sunday at the Museum

John G. Neihardt State Historic Site

306 W. Elm Street, Bancroft

neihardt@gpcom.net

888-777-4667

November 19

**"Saving Native American Artifacts at the Nebraska
History Museum"**

*Tina Koeppel and Jessica Waite, Gerald R. Ford
Conservation Center*

Brown Bag Lecture Series

Nebraska History Museum

November 24, 2009 - January 3, 2010

**Christmas Cards from the Nebraska State Historical
Society Collection**

Holiday display

Nebraska History Museum

December 13 • 1 - 5 p.m.

Free Open Houses

Kennard House

1627 H St., Lincoln

402-471-4764

Ferguson House

700 South 16th St., Lincoln

402-471-5417

December 13 • 2 p.m.

Joe Starita, author/journalist

*Presentation, book signings of *Standing Bear* and
*The Dull Knives of Pine Ridge**

Sunday at the Museum

John G. Neihardt State Historic Site

306 W. Elm Street, Bancroft

neihardt@gpcom.net

888-777-4667

December 17 • 12 noon

"Treasures from the Collections"

NSHS Staff

Brown Bag Lecture Series

Nebraska History Museum



NSHS

foundation news

October/November/December 2009

The Time to Invest in Nebraska's History is *Now!*

In 2006, when the new state Charitable Tax Credit became effective, Nebraska became one of the few states in the U.S. to offer a tax credit to individuals and businesses for charitable giving. The tax credit not only delivers attractive tax savings for Nebraskans, it also encourages support for many of the charitable organizations that work to address community needs throughout the state.

The Nebraska Charitable Tax Credit is scheduled to "sunset" December 31, 2009, so now is the time to take advantage of this unique statewide program. By participating in this program, planned gifts from individuals and cash gifts from corporations to the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation can qualify for an immediate state tax credit of up to \$5,000 per year!

What is a planned gift? It's simply a current commitment to donate to the NSHSF at some future time, usually upon death of the giver. Essentially what the Nebraska Charitable Tax Credit allows individuals to do is take a tax credit today for an irrevocable donation they won't make for many years.

A gift to the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation will help support the Society's efforts to acquire, preserve, and exhibit Nebraska's historical treasures. Your gift becomes a gift for all time . . . your tax-saving decision now can benefit generations of Nebraskans.

For more information please contact:

Meg Klosterman Kester

Acting Executive Director
Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation
128 N 13th, #1010
Lincoln, NE 68508
Ph: 402-435-3535
Email: megk@nshsf.org

The **James L. Sellers Award** is an example of how the NSHS Foundation assists Nebraskans in supporting history. Sellers was a distinguished historian and longtime chairman of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln history department. He also filled various important roles at the NSHS, serving as acting director, board member, and Society president.

Sellers' daughter, Catherine Sellers Angle, and her late husband John Angle worked with the Foundation to establish the Sellers Award—which includes a \$1,000 cash prize. It is given annually to the author of the best article in the previous year's volume of *Nebraska History*, as determined by a panel of scholars.

This year's award goes to Todd Guenther for "The Empire Builders: An African American Odyssey in Nebraska and Wyoming" (Winter 2008). The judges—Drs. Charles King, Mark Scherer, and Michael Tate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha history department—believe the essay "makes a vitally significant contribution to an extremely important topic in Nebraska and Great Plains history." ☐



Detail of portrait of Moses Speese family, Custer County, 1888, subject of Todd Guenther's award-winning essay, "The Empire Builders." NSHS RG2608:1345

Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation

128 N 13th St. Ste 1010,
Lincoln, NE 68508

Ph: 402-435-3535

Email: info@nshsf.org



Nebraska World War I recruits at Camp Funston, Kansas. NSHS RG2963:3-2

Coming in *Nebraska History*

Fred Pickering was a farmer in Ulysses, Nebraska, when the United States entered World War I. After enlisting in June 1918, he trained at Camp Funston, Kansas, and Camp Dodge, Iowa, before going overseas with the Eighty-eighth Division. He tells his own story in the Fall 2009 issue of *Nebraska History*.

Though many Nebraskans served in the Great War, we have few war narratives written by them. Pickering didn't see combat, but he wrote a lively account of army life for the folks back home. Historian Jeff Patrick provides helpful background for the story.

A second essay looks at the controversial career of Rev. Samuel Hinman, missionary to the Santee Sioux during the years 1860-90. Though nothing was ever proved, allegations of misconduct dogged Hinman for years. Was he guilty, or did his progressive attitudes toward Native Americans make him a target for slander? Historian and author Anne Beiser Allen examines the charges.

Look for these and other features in your mailbox the week of November 9. 📧

Our Employees of the Year

This year the NSHS honored three employees for their work. Staff made nominations and a committee made the selections:

Manager of the Year: Charley McWilliams.

Facilities Maintenance Manager Charley McWilliams has accepted many new responsibilities this year. In addition to supervising employees and maintaining historic sites around the state, Charley is overseeing the current renovation at our headquarters building. He calms disgruntled staff, works with contractors, and reassures management during the headquarters building's first major renovation since it was built more than half a century ago.

Employee of the Year: Jim Potter. Senior Research Historian and Associate Editor Jim Potter has served in many capacities during his more than forty years of service. Based in Chadron, he is responsible for researching, writing, and reviewing manuscripts before publication. This past year, he and curator Tom Buecker organized the Fort Robinson History Conference, and Jim also filled in for several months as interim editor of *Nebraska History* while the NSHS was between editors.

Employee of the Year, Honorable Mention:

Alice Filbert. Alice, an artist at the Nebraska History Museum, creates designs for publications and exhibits that are part of the educational work of the NSHS. She serves the public through history-oriented activities that build awareness and support of the NSHS. 📧



News for Museum People

You know who you are. Whether you're involved with your county museum or with the NSHS or other large institutions, here's what you need to know:

What's in a Name? Nomenclature 3.0 Tells

All. Containing fourteen thousand of the exact terms used by thousands of museums and historical organizations to catalog their collections, *Nomenclature 3.0 for Museum Cataloging* is an invaluable tool for historical organization staff and volunteers. NSHS Senior Museum Curator Deb Arenz spent more than six years as chair of a national professional task force that added five thousand new terms to the eight-hundred-page reference. The updated lexicon is available November 1 through the American Association for State and Local History and Alta Mira Press—but advance copies are now available at a 25 percent discount. Visit aaslh.org or altamirapress.com.

Nebraska Museums Association Annual Meeting and Conference, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Friday, October 23, 2009, at Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island.

Join the Nebraska Museums Association for a day of learning and collaboration with museum staff, board members, volunteers, and supporters from around the state. Concurrent sessions offer lots of choices. Topics include: Nebraska Laws and Your Museum; Reinventing Old Collections; Cooperative Marketing Roundtable; Exhibit and Event Evaluations; Breathing Life into Your Museum's Board; Interpretation: How to Relate to Visitors; Fund Raising for Small Museums; Exhibits 101; Marketing for Non-Profits; and Collections Basics. Registration fee, including lunch, is \$30 for NMA members, \$35 for non-members, and \$15 for students (with school ID). Visit nebraskamuseums.ning.com or call Renae Hunt at Stuhr, 308-385-5316. ☒



Silent Film Star's Newest Fans. Fourth graders from Henderson visited Burchard, Nebraska, the hometown of silent film star Harold Lloyd (1893-1971). After reading about him in class, they contacted Lloyd's granddaughter, convinced a local theater to screen two of his movies, and are even trying to interest actor Johnny Depp in his story. It's just one of the ways in which teacher Suzanne Ratzlaff involves students in local history. The NSHS recently honored her with the James C. Olson Memorial Award.

hours

**Nebraska
History Museum**
15 & P Streets, Lincoln
402-471-4754

Tuesday–Friday, 9–4:30
Sat. & Sun., 1–4:30
Closed Monday

Museum Store
402-471-3447

Tuesday–Friday, 10–4:30
Saturday & Sunday, 1–4
Closed Monday

Library/Archives
1500 R Street, Lincoln
402-471-4751

Reference room closed
for construction

State Historic Site hours:
www.nebraskahistory.org

NEBRASKA history news

Nebraska State Historical Society

From the collection. . .

Grain Elevator, an oil-on-cardboard painting by John T. Robertson, is among the works of art currently displayed in the Nebraska History Museum's new exhibit, "Out of the Despair of the Spirit": Nebraska's New Deal Art. Born in New York City, Robertson studied at the Art Students League before moving to the Midwest. While living in Omaha he joined the Public Works of Art Program, an early New Deal employment project in 1933-34. Robertson was later involved in the Federal Art Project and executed several murals in various states during the Depression.

As *Grain Elevator* shows, the 1930s were more than years of economic depression. They were also a time of innovation, faith in the modern, and celebration of progress. With its Art Deco influence, Robertson's painting exemplifies our country's love affair with progress and modernity in an otherwise sober age. ☒

