

# THE CAPITOL SOWER

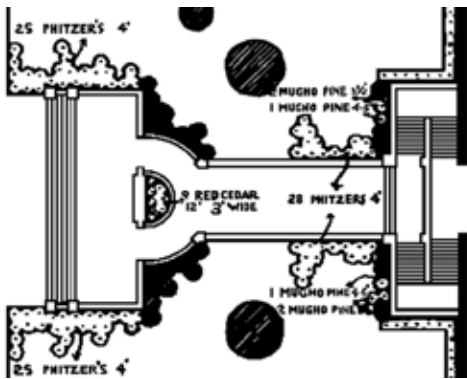


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME THREE | NUMBER TWO | JUNE 2011

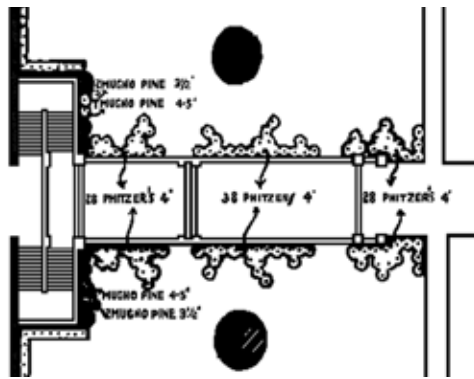
## Return to Service

Work is underway to repair the Nebraska State Capitol's grounds to Landscape Architect Ernst Herminghaus' original plan. Since the completion of the Exterior Masonry and Re-roof Project in December 2010 and the removal of the east construction yard this spring, work has begun to prepare for planting the shrub beds specified for the east,

west and south entrance walkways. Using original design documents and period photographs Consultant and Landscape Architect Richard Sutton, a Herminghaus scholar, is guiding the restoration of the National Historic Landmark designated landscape. Capitol staff and visitors will see the work progress through the summer and fall of 2011. ■



*Herminghaus' West Entrance, detail*



*Herminghaus' East Entrance, detail*



*In this early view of the south entrance, Herminghaus' original shrub beds can be seen between the sidewalks leading to the Capitol.*

## Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

**Dave Heineman**

*Governor  
Chairman*

**Mike Flood**

*Speaker of the Legislature  
Vice-Chairman*

**Janice Walker**

*Court Administrator*

**Wayne Drummond**

*Dean  
College of Architecture, UNL*

**Michael Smith**

*Executive Director  
Nebraska State Historical Society*

**Bryce Neidig**

*Congressional District 1*

**Stan Meradith**

*Congressional District 2*

**Jim Cudaback**

*Congressional District 3*

**Robert C. Ripley**

*Administrator  
Office of Capitol Commission  
Secretary*



The People of the  
**OCC**  
Office of the Capitol  
Commission

**ADMINISTRATION**

Bob Ripley, *Administrator*  
Tom Kaspar, *Architect*  
Mark Tonjes, *Capitol Manager*  
Tammy Honnor, *Facilities  
Construction Coordinator*  
Cecilia Curtis-Beard,  
*Administrative Assistant*

**ARCHIVE**

Karen Wagner, *Archivist*

**CARPENTRY**

Brett Daugherty, *Shop Supervisor*  
Ron Dulas, *Furniture Conservator*  
Roger Frink,  
*Hardware Conservator*  
Steve Janssen, *Furniture Finisher*  
Phil Lagoni, *Mason*  
Mike Marshall, *Cabinet Maker*  
Bill McClurg,  
*Furniture Conservator*

**CUSTODIAL**

Perry Shuman,  
*Capitol Conservation Supervisor*  
Richard Mallam, *Custodial Leader*  
Rich Naber, *Custodial Leader*

**GROUNDS**

Mike Hoppmann,  
*Arborist/Groundskeeper*  
Don Pracheil, *Mechanic*

**MAINTENANCE**

Michael Jordan, *Shop Supervisor*  
Jerry Allen, *Plumber*  
Kent Bonebright,  
*Sheet Metal Fabricator*  
Tahir Karimi, *Electrician*  
John Steele,  
*Maintenance Technician*

**TOURS**

Roxanne Smith,  
*Tourism Supervisor/  
Special Events Coordinator*  
Gloria Witherspoon,  
*Tourism Aide*  
Jamison Wyatt,  
*Tourism Aide*

# OCC AT WORK Experience and Service

The Office of the Capitol Commission benefits from having experienced staff. Michael Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor, has demonstrated a commitment to maintaining and preserving the Capitol for future generations with his return to service. Employed as a Maintenance Specialist at the Capitol from 1994 through 1998, Michael left the Capitol to take a supervisory position at the Nebraska State Office Building. When the Maintenance Supervisor position at the Capitol opened, Michael applied and returned to service at the Capitol in 2008. Michael, a native of Gretna, has always loved the Capitol and finds his work challenging and rewarding.

Michael was trained as an electrician; he has an electrician's license and an electronics degree. Before coming to the Capitol he worked for 15 years at Nebraska Welding. There he fine tuned his skills maintaining the business' cranes and welding equipment. He also participated in the development of auto-welding technology created by the company. The experience he gained adapting equipment and creating new welding technology serves as a solid foundation for work in the Capitol. The special work OCC does maintaining, repairing and retrofitting the electronics and



*Michael Jordan, Maintenance Supervisor, checks an alarm on the tower's domestic cold water booster pumps.*

pneumatics which run the Capitol's heating and air conditioning system requires special skills. To help maintain original equipment and to help adapt existing equipment to accommodate new systems Michael relies on the four Maintenance Specialists on his team. His staff are highly skilled in their fields of plumbing, electrical, electronics, and heating and air-conditioning. Together they tackle the challenges the Capitol presents. Michael also assists with the work of the Carpenter shop as they create custom components for use by the three branches of government. Challenging work, and a love for the Capitol, inspires Maintenance Supervisor Michael Jordan with a desire to be here for many years to come. ■

## Nebraska Capitol Commission

The Nebraska Capitol Commission discussed the current status of Capitol Projects and the upcoming Fiscal Year 2011/13 Capital Construction Budget at their June 2, 2011 meeting. The Office of the Capitol Commission reported the multi-phased, multi-year Exterior Masonry Restoration and Roof Project was completed in December of 2010 and site restoration is underway. Additional status reports were presented on: the 2010 Office

Interior Renovation Project in the Law Library Reading Room and Stack Rooms; the South and East/West Entrance Landscape Repair; a Capitol Original Furniture Restoration Project; and the Capitol Tower Elevator Renovation Project. Following the 9:00 a.m. meeting, OCC staff was available to show Commission members the newly renovated office space in the Law Library. ■

# CONSERVATION PROJECTS

## Small Details Make a Difference

Conservation projects at the Nebraska State Capitol come in many different shapes and sizes. Hardware Conservator Roger Frink is often involved with the smallest details of the largest projects. The installation of these small details in design and decoration often signify the success of a restoration or conservation project. Roger's experience in metal fabrication provides the Office of the Capitol Commission the ability to reproduce hardware details missing or removed from service. When called upon, Roger makes custom parts which enhance the capabilities of the Capitol's original components.

When the East (Warner) and West (Norris) Legislative Chambers were restored visitors and staff noticed the big improvements, the clean walls and ceilings. Often overlooked, the small details made the projects a preservation success. The Warner Chamber restoration in the mid 1990's included the addition of a new multimedia audio/video system. The chamber was upgraded to



*The Warner Chamber with new technology. Inset, the new microphone fitted to use existing holes and hardware.*

accommodate video conferences and interactive programs. The goal of the project was to add the system in the least invasive manner. The large box holding the projection equipment, while made the same color as the limestone, is intrusive. The boundary microphones on the desks, however, are easy to miss. In a video conference or panel discussion the audience comments are important. Audience microphones were added without visual or physical impact on the room. Roger developed a small metal platform for the microphones which used the same routing as the electrical wires feeding the desk lamps. The microphones were added without the need to drill new holes in the original desks. About that same time the senators of Nebraska's Unicameral Legislature were provided with lap top computers to take the place of

the bill books on their desks. Roger fabricated a slotted plate which was placed immediately under the original bronze desk lamp bases. Computer cables were routed through the existing holes in the desks and out the slot in the new plates. The senator's desks and lamps were left in original condition and the new technology was made available.

The Office of the Capitol Commission faced a similar challenge in the Supreme Court. The original built-in lights on the Justices' Bench weren't meeting current needs. Small supplemental desk lamps had been brought in for additional light. As part of on-going Capitol restoration work a design was developed to utilize the original lamps in a new way. Roger created a new lamp base to elevate the original lamps for re-use. The non-original desk lamps were removed and the original lamps returned to service.



*In the foreground a lamp as originally mounted to the Supreme Court bench. Beyond, new lamp bases elevate the original lamps to provide more light to the bench.*

The Office of the Capitol Commission is able to keep the Capitol current with modern office technology in part due to the ability of the Capitol's Hardware Conservator. Capitol Commission Preservation Architects also rely on the skilled craft of Roger Frink to restore missing components of the Capitol's original fixtures. During the Warner Chamber upgrade and restoration, Roger recreated the ornamental bronze caps which originally covered the bolts securing the cast bronze railings to the floors. The restoration projects in the two legislative chambers included the recovering of the interior doors with pigskin. Many of the small decorative bronze tacks which originally held the leather in place were missing. Using an original tack as a guide, Roger created new tack heads from bronze stock. This attention to detail, and the ability of in-house staff, are one of many reasons the Nebraska Capitol Commission was recognized in 2009 by the National Parks Service for preservation excellence in restoration and rehabilitation.



# Surplus Property Returns

*Special furniture for a special building.*

Starting in 1919, the first Nebraska Capitol Commission constructed a building and furnished it with an expectation of service to many generations of Nebraskans. An investment was made in the highest quality materials for the structure and it's contents. When completed in 1932, the Nebraska State Capitol housed all agencies of state government. Through the years, as the state and its government grew, agencies were moved out of the Capitol and into other office space. Agencies which left the Capitol often took original Capitol furniture with them. Then as office space and styles changed, the "old" furniture was often taken to state surplus.

In 1976 with the completion of the Nebraska State Office Building a mass migration of agencies and Capitol furniture occurred. It was this migration and removal of Capitol original furniture which brought about passage of LB885 in 1980. This legislation recognized the Capitol original furniture as a significant component of the Capitol and provided a mechanism to return the furniture to service in the Capitol. Upon receiving the mandate to find, retrieve, inventory, repair and return to service original Capitol furniture, staff began to routinely visit the surplus property warehouse. Through the years, the Administrative Services Material Division has become an active partner in returning Capitol original pieces to the building. Surplus property staff notify the Office of the Capitol Commission when a Capitol original

piece comes into the warehouse.

Prior to 1980 the Capitol furniture agencies sent to surplus was sold at the state's public auctions. Hundreds of pieces were lost through these sales. In some instances, those in possession of the surplus

Capitol furniture have found inventory tags or other identifiers on the pieces and contacted OCC about returning the furniture to service. Furniture for the Capitol

was often made from American walnut and is very high quality. Pieces were purchased from the best manufacturers; chairs came from the Marble and Colonial Chair Companies. Stowe-Davis, Macey and Leopold provided desks and tables. Stacking bookcases came from Globe-Wernicke.

Lesser but still important items such as waste baskets, typing stands and costumers were also lost

to surplus. In some cases the pieces can be recognized by the inventory tags still attached. Those individuals who return furniture to the Capitol provide a great pubic service and are helping to maintain the Capitol for future generations.



*Above, original labels on Capitol original furniture. Below, original inventory tags help identify original Capitol pieces.*

# BEHIND THE SCENES

## Repair and Return

### Plumbing Parts and Pieces

While the Capitol's art and architecture impresses visitors and staff, it is the behind the scenes work of the Office of the Capitol Commission maintenance and conservation staff which keeps the building working for citizens and the three branches of government. Those who use the building today, like those who came to the Capitol upon completion in 1932, expect water will be available. Over 50 pumps and miles of pipe provide water service in the Capitol. These pumps and pipes were installed during construction; some route domestic hot and cold water, while others pipe waste from the Capitol. Additional plumbing was added in the 1960's when chilled water was brought into the Capitol for air conditioning. Maintaining these pumps and pipes is the responsibility of Jerry Allen, Plumber. For support, Jerry relies on Hardware Conservator Roger Frink, a skilled machinist.

As the working parts in the pumps wear out, Jerry rebuilds the pumps, placing new parts in the existing housings. When a commercially available sleeve bearing does not exactly fit, Roger is often able to modify the part. This custom fitting allows the new part to extend the life of the original equipment, saving the expense of replacing the whole pump.

Jerry is also responsible for maintaining the Capitol's 50 rest rooms. The public and private rest rooms contain a mixture of original and replacement fixtures. When Americans with Disability Act space requirements reduced the number of fixtures in service, excess original fixtures and hardware removed during renovations were cleaned and stored for future reuse. These pieces are then used for repairs or replacements in the rest rooms with original fixtures.

Many office suites in the Capitol were designed with wardrobes equipped with lavatories for staff convenience. During the 1950's and 60's as offices configurations were changed; wardrobes and lavatories were

removed. The walnut wardrobe panels, doors and lavatories were retained and stored for future reuse. During the 1989 renovation project, offices suites were created and wardrobes re-installed. OCC used the stored inventory to create wardrobes in the new spaces. As Jerry maintains these lavatories and those still in their original location, he is able to reuse hardware retained during past rest room and office suite modifications. ■



*Jerry Allen, Office of the Capitol Commission Maintenance staff plumber rebuilds a section of pipe before returning it to service.*



*Original components of Capitol fixtures in storage and available for replacement and repairs.*

# WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

## The Collections

The Office of the Capitol Commission/ Nebraska Capitol Collections (OCC/ NCC) consists of the Capitol Archive Collection, the Permanent Collection, and the Circulating Collection. The Capitol Archive Collection includes more than 8,000 architectural drawings and blueprints, 2,500 photographs and more than 250,000 pieces of correspondence and related records. The Permanent and Circulating Collections contain thousands of three-dimensional items, such as furniture and light fixtures. The Permanent Collection preserves the most pristine original objects. Once retired from service these items are then used for research and reference, to document original finishes and construction techniques, or as one of a kind examples of missing building components.

The Circulating Collection contains the original desks, chairs, tables, bookcases, and other items purchased to furnish Capitol offices which are still in continuous daily use. The Nebraska Capitol Commission purchased very high quality solid walnut furniture with the goal of long term service from each piece. Hundreds and hundreds of items were purchased from major manufacturers: chairs came from the Marble Chair Company, the Colonial Chair Company and Gunlocke; Stowe-Davis, Macey and Leopold companies provided desks and tables; bookcases were purchased from the Globe-Wernicke Company.

While office environments have changed through the years, this very high quality furniture continues to be in service. The Office of the Capitol

Commission works with the three branches of government housed in the Capitol and makes every effort to provide Capitol staff with original furniture if they desire. In 1932 when the building was completed, furniture was tagged and assigned to the three branches. The Office of the Capitol Commission works with their administrative staff to maintain an inventory of all Capitol original pieces.



*An arm chair, left, was retired to the Permanent Collection because its original leather upholstery was intact. It is used by Capitol staff as a reference for the restoration and return to service of similar office chairs. A restored office chair, below, with original detail is part of the Circulating Collection of furniture made available to staff wishing to use Capitol original's. Notice the replicated bumper detail on the seat corners which protect the chair and desk in daily use.*



# CAPITOL EVENTS

## **Stitching Ceremony**

**June 2, 2011**

The New York Says Thank You Foundation will hold a ceremony to stitch a Nebraska State patch onto the National 9/11 Flag from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Rotunda.

## **Cornhusker Girls State**

**June 9, 2011**

The American Legion Auxiliary will hold the Girls State Gubernatorial Swearing In Ceremony in the 2nd floor Rotunda of the Capitol at 2:00 p.m.

## **Cornhusker Boys State**

**June 10, 2011**

The American Legion Boys State government office visits will begin with a brief orientation in the 2nd floor Rotunda at 1:00 p.m.

## **Girl Scouts Awards Ceremony**

**June 12, 2011**

The Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Council will hold its Bronze, Silver and Gold awards ceremonies in the 2nd floor Rotunda at 1:30 and 3:00 p.m.

## **Friendship Display**

**June 20-24, 2011**

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services will display Canvasses of Friendship in the first floor rotunda to celebrate Minority Mental Health Month.

## **Nebraska Binational Migrant Education Teacher Recognition**

**June 20, 2011**

The Nebraska Department of Education and Latino American Commission will honor visiting teachers from Mexico in the 10:00 a.m. ceremony in the 2nd Floor Rotunda.

## **Independence Day**

**July 4, 2011**

The Nebraska State Capitol will be open for hourly guided tours between 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## **Hispanic Heritage Month Commemoration**

**September 16, 2011**

The Latino American Commission celebrates Nebraska's Hispanic Heritage at 11:45 a.m. in the 2nd Floor Rotunda.

## **Jr. Duck Stamp Exhibit**

**September 19 - October 3, 2011**

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service will showcase 36 pieces of art to recognize the winners of the 2011 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest.

## **Swearing In Ceremony for Attorneys**

**September 20, 2011**

The Nebraska Supreme Court will hold the ceremony to swear in newly admitted members of the Nebraska State Bar Association at 10:00 a.m. in the 2nd floor Rotunda.

## **World Alzheimer's Day Display**

**September 19-26, 2011**

The Great Plains Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association will hold a news conference on September 21st and the Capitol will be lit red and blue to promote Alzheimer's awareness.

## **Annual Awards Ceremony**

**September 29, 2011**

The Nebraska Department of Corrections will recognize staff excellence in service in the 2nd Floor Rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

## **Nebraska Council for Social Studies**

**October 15, 2011**

The State Council will have a display in the 1st Floor Rotunda as part of their state convention.

## **Prematurity Awareness Week**

**November 14-21, 2011**

The March of Dimes will have a 1st Floor Rotunda display to coincide with the red/blue lighting of the Capitol on November 17.

## **Commissioner's Recognition for Excellence in Career Education**

**November 21, 2011**

The 3:00 p.m. ceremony will honor Nebraska students who were top winners in national competitions.

**The Governor will sign Proclamations in the Warner Chamber on June 7, July 13, August 17, September 13, October 19, November 16 and December 14.**

**For proclamation information please contact Sarah in the Governor's Office at (402)471-2256.**

**All events at the Nebraska State Capitol are free and open to the public.**

## **Nebraska State Capitol**

**Guided Tours** are offered Monday-Friday hourly from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., except at noon. Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., except at noon and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit [www.capitol.org](http://www.capitol.org) for more information.



# THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | JUNE 2011

## Nebraska Capitol Commission

Nebraska State Capitol  
Seventh Floor  
1445 K Street  
P.O. Box 94696  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
68509-4696  
www.capitol.org  
402.471.6691



Capitol Architect  
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924

## In this issue:

- LAMPS..... 3
- LIGHTING ..... 4
- LIGHT BULBS ..... 5
- ARCHIVE NEWS..... 6
- CAPITOL EVENTS..... 7

## Spring at the Capitol



Photo: Clark Springman



Capitol Architect Bertram Goodhue chose New Yorkers Hildreth Meiere, mosaicist, and Lee Lawrie, sculptor, to decorate the Nebraska State Capitol. Hartley Burr Alexander, a native Nebraskan, provided the thematic program for the Capitol's decoration. The theme of the Vestibule is "Gifts of Nature to Man on the Plains." In the dome, above, agricultural products of Nebraska circle mosaics representing the seasons of nature. Left, Spring is represented by Meiere in ceramic tile wearing a garland of flowers, standing in a bed of tulips.

*The Capitol Sower*, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available on line at [www.capitol.org](http://www.capitol.org). Contact the Tourism Supervisor at <[roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov](mailto:roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov)> for more information.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about the content. All images property of the Office of the Capitol Commission.