


THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME FIVE | NUMBER ONE | FEB 2013

Elevator Project Progress Southwest Elevator Completed

Capitol staff are once again using the southwest elevator to reach their offices. The first elevator renovated as part of the Capitol Tower Elevator Renovation Project has been back in service for over a month. Now that the first elevator upgrade has been completed, contractors have moved on to the second of the four elevators involved in the project. The northeast elevator was taken out of service in December and is scheduled to return to service in May.

One of the first things staff notice as they take the southwest elevator to their offices is the smooth and quiet ride. Staff and visitors are also seeing the return of the original design for the floor indicator dials. As part of the project, the original dials were replicated and Office of the Capitol Commission staff have been working to make the necessary repairs to the stone and help install the mechanics which operate the dials. The Office of the Capitol Commission and the elevator project contractors, Kingery Construction/O'Keefe Elevator, are pleased with the progress made so far and look forward to the completion of the project in early 2014. 



The third floor southwest elevator vestibule with dial installed.

Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

Dave Heineman
Governor
Chairman

Greg Adams
Speaker of the Legislature
Vice-Chairman

Michael Heavican
Chief Justice Supreme Court

Kim Wilson
Dean
College of Architecture, UNL

Michael Smith
Executive Director & CEO
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 the Capitol Commission
Secretary



The People of the OCC Office of the Capitol Commission

OCC AT WORK Experience and Service

ADMINISTRATION

Bob Ripley, *Administrator*
Tom Kaspar, *Architect*
Matt Hansen, *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*
Kent Bonebright,
Sheet Metal Fabricator
Tahir Karimi, *Electrician*
John MacKichan, *Plumber*
John Steele,
Maintenance Technician

TOURS

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

Four Office of the Capitol Commission staff were recognized in 2012 for their years of service to the State of Nebraska. Each OCC team member performs an important role in maintaining,

interpreting and preserving the Capitol for future generations. We are pleased to recognize the dedication of these Nebraska state employees. 



JOHN STEELE 15 YEARS
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN



KAREN WAGNER 15 YEARS
CAPITOL ARCHIVIST



RON DULAS 20 YEARS
FURNITURE CONSERVATOR



TOM KASPAR 35 YEARS
PRESERVATION ARCHITECT

Capitol Commission 2013 Schedule

The Nebraska Capitol Commission has set its schedule for 2013. The Commission meets quarterly in the Capitol to oversee and review maintenance and preservation of the capitol, discuss and approve the upcoming budget and projects for the Office of the Capitol Commission and set administrative rules for the use of the capitol. The meetings will be held in Hearing Room #1507 on ground floor of the Capitol. The last

meeting date of the year includes a joint Capitol Commission/Capitol Environs Commission meeting.

- February 19, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.
- June 13, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.
- August 13, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.
- Joint Meeting -- November 14, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.
- November 14, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

The meetings are open to the public. 

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Elevator Dial Installation

The current tower elevator renovation project is the third to upgrade the Capitol's elevators since the building's completion in 1932. During the 1950's renovation, the original elevator floor indicator dials were removed and replaced with a lighted number bar. The installation of the indicator bars required cutting slots in the Indiana Limestone above the elevator doors. Fortunately when the changes were made two of the original elevator dials were saved and stored in the Nebraska Capitol collection. As part of the current elevator renovation project and the ongoing restoration mission of the Office of the Capitol Commission, reproductions of the original dials are being reinstalled.

Because of the constant flow of air moving dust through the elevator shafts, the first step in the restoration and reinstallation process is cleaning the limestone walls around the elevator cabs. Using the same technique as in the West Chamber Restoration, Capitol mason Phil Lagoni, cleaned the stone. Then Lagoni began filling in the slots where the bar indicators had been. Through a series of shallow mortar layers the desired level flush with the existing limestone was achieved. The final layer of mortar was color matched to limestone, then final matching and coloring was done by Mike Marshall, OCC's cabinet maker, once the mortar was dry. After dials are mounted, elevator contractors install the motors controlling the pointers.

The process of restoring the limestone will be repeated twelve times during the renovation as the circular bronze indicator dials are returned to all four elevator vestibules on the first, second and third floor levels of the tower's base. On the tower floors the replicated dials will be returned to plaster walls, requiring much less extensive restoration work. On 14th floor level slots were cut into large Kasota Stone panels. The process of restoring the dials in this material will require a different approach. 



Behind the lighted bar floor indicator, installed in the 1950's, the shadow of the original circular elevator floor indicator dial is visible, left.



Once the non-original bar light was removed, OCC staff filled the slots cut into the limestone. It took a series of fills or lifts to bring the level back up to the surface of the stone. The final layer of mortar was color matched to the limestone.



Once the mortar patch was dry, OCC staff blended the edges and created mortar joint lines in the patched area.



Elevator Upgrades


ADA Friendly



Going up...
floor two...

Built in the early 20th century, Bertram Goodhue’s Nebraska State Capitol was well appointed to meet the needs of the occupants and users at that time. The building’s design has allowed for improvements in technology to meet the needs of a computerized government. The building has also been modified to meet the changing needs of the people using the Capitol. Ten years prior to the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act in 1990, Capitol architects created a ramp at the north entrance to allow for wheelchair access and created wheelchair accessible stalls in the first and second floor perimeter restrooms. At that same time, office space in the outer base of the Capitol was taken and an elevator installed to provide ADA access to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floor offices. This elevator was designed to accommodate wheelchairs, providing more access to the Governor’s Office, the Legislative Chamber and the Supreme Court.

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides that all public accommodations comply with the provisions of Title III of the ADA, and historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places must comply to the “maximum extent feasible” but if following the usual standards would “threaten to destroy the historic significance of a feature of the building” then alternative standards may be used. In the case of the elevators in the Capitol, not only would meeting the requirements to enlarge the elevators change the historical character of the Capitol, it would be structurally impossible. The

elevator shafts fit snugly within the steel and masonry frame of the tower with no room to spare. Despite the inability to meet ADA elevator size code in the tower, the current renovation project has made the elevators much more ‘ADA friendly’. The elevator’s control panels are now equipped with braille for visually impaired users, and feature audible indications of cab direction and floor level. 



New elevator panel with braille added.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Inside of the elevator shaft photos



The 1980 era elevator equipment fills a machine room, left. New more efficient and compact elevator controls take up much less room, below.



Access to 14th floor elevator equipment has been improved. The ladder above has been supplemented with stairs and a walkway, right.



Capitol staff and visitors use the elevators every day and are carried up and down in beautiful walnut paneled cabs. The current elevator renovation projects provides the opportunity to look behind the scenes.



Looking into the elevator shaft at basement level reveals the new buffers, below, which would slow and stop the elevator in a fall. Above, the elevator shaft open to the 14th floor level.



Above, a single computerized control panel has replaced two large mechanical switch panels, left, to control elevator movement.



WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

Parts and Pieces

Preservation of historic buildings and their interiors is a relatively new phenomenon. During the middle of the last century much was lost to modernization. That was nearly the case with the elevators in the Nebraska State Capitol. While saving original components wasn't on the minds of those upgrading the elevators in the 1950's project, they did value Capitol architect Bertram Goodhue's attention to ornamental detail. In the upgrade they replicated the interior cab design with beautiful walnut paneling. They also copied the size and decorative design of the original control panels for the upgrade to rider operated button controls. Fortunately, when the elevators were upgraded in the 1950's, one elevator was left out of the project.

When the 1980 elevator mechanical system upgrade occurred, retention and preservation of historic elevator components was part of the project. The one remaining original elevator and it's component parts were preserved and placed in the Nebraska Capitol Collections. These few remaining pieces of original elevator equipment enabled Office of the Capitol Commission staff to replicate and return to service Bertram Goodhue's ornamental elevator components. 



Finish details from, left to right, the original panel, the 1980's panel, and the new panel reveal the importance of having historic materials as examples.

Original elevator panel is preserved in the Nebraska Capitol Collection. Originally, trained elevator personnel were required to operate each tower elevator.

CAPITOL EVENTS

Statehood Day

March 1, 2013

Nebraska celebrates the 146th anniversary of its admittance as the 37th state in the United States.

Music Education Week

March 4-8, 2013

The Nebraska Music Educators sponsor a series of noon concerts in the 2nd floor Rotunda featuring bands and choirs from across the state.

Youth Art Month Display

March 4-16, 2013

The Nebraska Art Teachers Association will showcase artwork by students from across Nebraska in this annual 1st floor Rotunda display.

Youth Art Month Awards Ceremony

March 16, 2013

The Nebraska Art Teachers Association will honor winners of the youth art contest in the 2nd Floor Rotunda of the Capitol at 2:00 p.m.

Problem Gambling Awareness Display

March 18 - 22, 2013

This first floor rotunda display is in conjunction with the Governor's Proclamation of March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

Capitol Forum

March 25, 2013

Students from across Nebraska will display posters addressing international issues as part of a day long program sponsored by the Secretary of State's office.

Social Work Month Display

April 1-5, 2013

The Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers will sponsor a 1st floor Rotunda display.

Nebraska Holocaust Commemoration

April 7, 2013

The Nebraska Holocaust Commemoration Committee sponsors this annual remembrance in the in the 2nd Floor Rotunda of the Capitol at 3:00 p.m.

April is STEM Month Display

April 8-12, 2013

The Nebraska Children and Families Foundation will have a 1st floor Rotunda display with examples of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math projects undertaken by students in after school clubs and programs.

Week of the Young Child Display

April 15 - 19, 2013

The Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children are sponsoring this first floor rotunda display.

National Crime Victims Rights Week

April 22 - 29, 2013

The Nebraska Crime Commission sponsors this annual 1st floor rotunda display.

National Peace Officer Week

May 13-17, 2013

The Nebraska State Patrol honors Nebraska's fallen officers in a 1st floor rotunda display.

Girls State

June 6, 2013


The American Legion Auxiliary brings Nebraska high school students to the Capitol for their 2:00 p.m. 2nd floor Rotunda government inauguration ceremony.

Boys State


June 7, 2013

The American Legion's annual program brings high school students to the Capitol at 1:00 p.m. for visits with state agencies.

The Governor will sign Proclamations at 10:30 a.m. in the Warner Chamber on **January 23, February 21, March 13, April 10, May 15, June 12, July 17, August 14, September 18, October 16, November 13 and December 11.** 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 am to 5:00 pm, except at noon. Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, except at noon and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit www.capitol.org for more information. 



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*Capitol Architect
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924*

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Capitol Hosts Special Exhibit



The Capitol Sower, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available on line at 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.

Journey Stories, a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit, brought visitors to the Capitol to learn more about migration and immigration. As part of the exhibit, sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council, a children's program was held on January 12, 2013. Over 100 students and parents enjoyed the display's interactive features. 