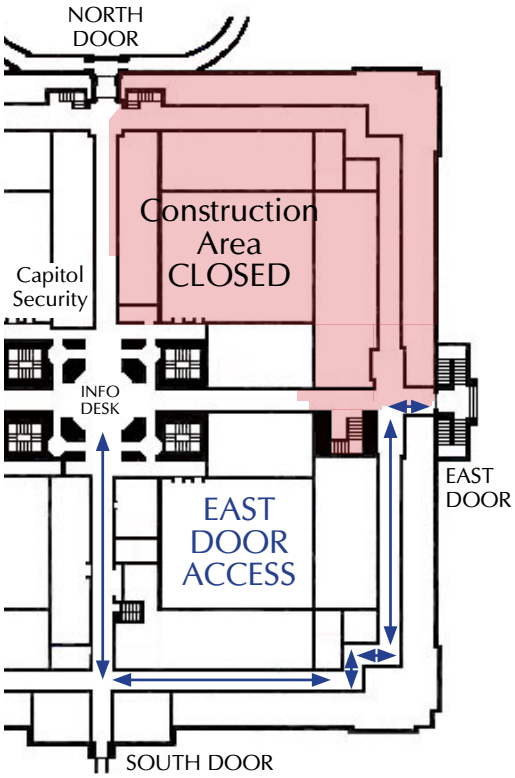
THE CAPITOL SOWER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME SIXTEEN | NUMBER TWO | JUNE 2024

HVAC Update

Even though the current Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Project's goal is to upgrade the 1960's steam and chilled water system in the Nebraska State Capitol with a more efficient ground source geothermal recirculating refrigerant system, the original steam radiator system will continue to be used in some areas. In these areas it is impractical, impossible or too expensive to run the refrigerant system. The Capitol's stairwells and entrance vestibules will retain their radiators and be supplied with steam from the state's steam generation plant one block north of the Capitol. As well, the steam radiators in the rotunda Hall of Fame galleries will continue to provide heat beneath the large courtyard windows.

During the HVAC project the most visible radiators have been cleaned and repainted. Radiators inside cabinets have been inspected and repaired as needed.The grates and decorative grills covering the radiators have had old paint removed and been repainted. While Capitol occupants will enjoy the year-round comfort the new HVAC system is providing, most will agree, stepping inside a Capitol entrance vestibule and encountering the warmth provided by a steam radiator is a welcome greeting on a cold winter day.





Steam heat supplied by the exising radiators will better meet the heating needs in open stairwells, above, such as these on third floor.

Below, the two second floor northwest exterior corner restrooms will continue to be heated with steam to keep the chill of the winter wind away.



Right, a steam radiator behind a decorative grille at the west entrance will warm outside air and staff entering the building in winter.





Left, the long open rotunda galleries are most efficiently heated with steam radiators located in the window seats beneath the large arched windows.

Nebraska Capitol Commission Membership

Jim Pillen
Governor, Chairman

John Arch
Speaker of the Legislature
Vice-Chairman

Michael Heavican
Chief Justice Supreme Court

Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg
Dean
College of Architecture, UNL

Jill Dolberg
Interim CEO
Nebraska State Historical Society

Doug Carey
Congressional District 1

Vacant
Congressional District 2

Katherine Spohn
Congressional District 3

Brett Daugherty
Acting Capitol Administrator
Secretary

EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

The People of the
OCC
Office of the Capitol Commission

ADMINISTRATION
Brett Daugherty,
Acting Administrator
Matt Hansen, Preservation Architect
Vacant, Preservation Architect
Brett Daugherty, Capitol Manager
Tammy Honnor, Facilities
Construction Coordinator
Vacant,
Administrative Assistant
Clark DeVries
HVAC Project Manager

ARCHIVE
Karen Wagner, Archivist

CARPENTRY
Vacant, Shop Supervisor
Lana Gabel,
Furniture Conservator
Dawn Snider,
Furniture Conservator
Hunter vonHolt, Carpenter
Dan Kratky, Mason
John MacKichan,
Hardware Conservator
Mike Marshall, Cabinet Maker

CUSTODIAL
David Hoelscher,
Capitol Conservation Supervisor
Richard Mallam, Custodial Leader
Dennis Roy, Custodial Leader

GROUNDS
Heather Dinslage,
Groundskeeper Leader
Aud Koch, Maintenance Technician
Lexis Funk,
Maintenance Technician

MAINTENANCE
Michael Jordan, Shop Supervisor
Jeff Gillett, Plumber
Tahir Karimi, Electrician
Chris Lahmon,
Maintenance Technician
Harry Holcome,
Maintenance Technician

TOURS
Roxanne Smith,
Public Information Officer/
Tourism Supervisor/
Special Events Coordinator
Allison Monzu, Tourism Aide
Susan Myers, Tourism Aide
Kirk Woita, Tourism Aide

OCC AT WORK

Experience and Service

Carpenter Position Filled



Hunter vonHolt joined the Office of the Capitol Commission in the role of carpenter in early 2024 and will support the team in many aspects of daily preservation work in the Capitol. vonHolt grew up in a neighborhood a few miles south of the Capitol and first visited the building in grade school. Growing up he worked alongside his father doing carpentry work around the house and helping with remodeling projects. After graduating from high school, vonHolt started working in the construction trades, first as a tile setter and then expanding his expertise to include custom carpentry, finish carpentry and cabinetry. After happening upon the advertisement for the Capitol carpenter, vonHolt decided he wanted to change his focus. Working in the Capitol will allow him to work at the highest level, repairing and restoring furnishings and finishes with a commitment to future generations of Nebraskans. He hopes to learn from those who have come before him and build upon the Capitol team's foundation of high quality preservation and restoration. When not working at his "cool" job in the Capitol, he can be found fishing, hunting or riding his motorcycle. vonHolt has already demonstrated his abilities doing restoration work in the Governor's Suite and the Office of the Capitol Commission is fortunate to have him on the team.

Tourism Supervisor Roxanne Smith was recognized by the Lincoln Council for International Visitors at their annual meeting on April 4, 2024. The Lincoln Council for International Visitors is a non-profit group affiliated with the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program. The group presented Smith with an Individual Award for Community Partnerships. For over 30 years Smith has provided special tours for visitors from across the globe brought to the United States by the State Department to learn about democracy and American government, economic and social systems. Thanks to Capitol Thematic Consultant Hartley Burr Alexander, a tour of the Nebraska State Capitol provides international visitors with the history of Nebraska as an agricultural state, as well as the history of government and law in Western Civilization leading to democracy in the United States inspiring visitors to strive for the same in their home countries.



The Nebraska Capitol Commission holds their quarterly meetings in Hearing Room #1507 on the ground floor of the Capitol. These meetings are open to the public. For a schedule of meetings with agendas, please go to:
https://capitol.nebraska.gov/about/nebraska-capitol-commission/

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Governor's Suite Restoration

Separated spatially throughout the Capitol, the three branches of Nebraska's government conduct state's business in preservation spaces. Preservation spaces are highly finished with the finest quality furnishings and contribute to the Nebraska Capitol's National Historic Landmark status and reputation as one of the most beautiful Capitols in the nation. During the current Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Upgrade Project, preservation spaces used by the Legislative Branch and the Judicial Branch have been restored. Phase IV of the project is allowing the same special treatment to occur in the Governor's Suite. The Suite was one of the first completed and occupied during the 1922-1932 construction of the building and has been in continuous use since then. The Governor's Suite contains four distinct rooms: The Reception Room, the Governor's Hearing Room, the Secretary's Office (since the 1970's used as the Chief of Staff's Office) and the Governor's Private Office.

Breaks in Legislative and Court sessions allowed the Office of the Capitol Commission to undertake restoration projects in those areas in the past. Restoration work in the Governor's Suite has been limited, and generally confined to furniture restoration. While the Governor's Suite is vacant and the furnishings removed, Office of the Capitol Commission staff have been busy doing as much as possible to clean, repair and restore the floors and walls of the Suite as time allows. Once OCC's work is complete, the Governor and his staff will return to spaces looking very much like they did over 90 years ago, shiny and brand new.



Above, Dan Kratky, OCC's mason worked to clean the limestone walls in the Governor's Hearing Room. Above right, the cleaned limestone is visibly cleaner and brighter.



Above, Lana Gabel, an OCC furniture conservator, cleaned and rejuvinated the walnut paneling in the Reception Room.

Below left, a Hearing Room wall sconce as it appeared on the wall before conservation, covered with dirt and paint residue. Below right, the restored sconce, back in place with its original patinated bronze finish awaits its glass shade.





Left, OCC maintenance staff, l. to r., Tahir Karimi, Chris Lahmon and Michael Jordan work together to reinstall one of four wall sconces in the Governor's Hearing Room. Maintenance Technician Lahmon and Maintenance Supervisor Jordan held the 60 pound bronze fixture as electrician Karimi connected the wiring.

Information about Legislative and Judicial restoration can be found at capitol.nebraska.gov/news/newsletter/.

Plaster Repair

In addition to providing an efficient Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning system for the Nebraska State Capitol, the current HVAC system was designed and is being installed to protect and preserve the architectural integrity of the National Historic Landmark building. When the first upgrade to the original heating system was installed in 1960, historic preservation was barely considered. In the early planning stages of the current project, repairing previous damage and avoiding new damage to the interior finishes was given much consideration.

In the fourth (northeast quadrant) phase of the project water pumps and steam pipes were removed from the attic space above the Governor's Suite. Pump failures and condensate issues in the attic space caused damage to the decorative plaster ceiling in the Chief of Staff's Office below. The removal of the outdated equipment allowed contractors and Office of the Capitol staff to finally repair the damaged decorative plaster and restore the beauty of the special ceiling.



Above, the Secretary's Office, now used by the Governor's Chief of Staff, is prepared for restoration. Scaffolding is in place to allow contractors and Office of the Capitol Commission staff access to the damaged decorative plaster ceiling.



Left, OCC has worked with an experienced plaster contractor during the HVAC project to repair coffered plaster corridor ceilings. The Chief of Staff's decorataive ceiling provided a new challenge. Here the contractor has removed a damaged sunflower medallion loose damaged plaster in preparation for repairs.



Above, the contractor puts finishing touches on his repairs. The new medallions are in place and the surface of the coffers have been repaired and smoothed to match the existing ceiling profile.

Using the damaged medallion removed from the ceiling, far right, as the basis, the contractor created a red silicone mold by sculpting and filling in the damaged sections. Near right, one of the several new medallions created and used to restore the ceiling.



While the plaster was drying and curing, OCC staff worked to match the original color and glazed finish. Once the plaster ceiling was ready for finishing, OCC staff painted and glazed the patched area to match the existing finish.





Above, restoration work in the Chief of Staff's Office nears completion, the ceiling repair is done and the walnut paneled wall finish is restored.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Under the Rug

When the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Project moved into the Governor's Suite, the Office of the Capitol Commission took advantage of the opportunity to repair and restore an area of the Suite not usually seen by the public. OCC staff has been working in the Secretary's Office. With the removal of all the furnishings in the Suite, the bare floors and walls could be properly inspected and repairs made as needed. Once the large area rug in the Chief of Staff's office was removed, the oak board floor was revealed to be in poor condition. The finish under the rug was especially worn and edges of the oak boards were broken with large gaps visible. As staff sanded and studied the floor they found prior repairs and used those repair techniques to inform their work. When repairs were completed, stain was applied to unify surface color and then a durable finish was applied to protect the floor. OCC's work will ensure the oak floor is in good condition and supporting Governor's staff well into the future.



Left, in the first step of floor restoration Office of the Capitol Commission carpentry staff removed the old and deteriorating floor finish. Using hand sanding equipment, staff was able to control the amount of finish removed and inspect every board in the floor. Upon inspection, staff uncovered areas where the oak planks were damaged and areas where past damage had been repaired, right.





In a section of damaged floor, OCC staff discovered a previous repair, outlined above. Such repairs served as a model for the new repairs. Working with conservation in mind, and using a wood router, staff removed the minimum amount of wood required to eliminate the splintered and broken edges of the oak planks. After fitting each infill piece, staff glued and nailed to repairs in place. Removing a minimum of wood maintained the integrety of the plank floor and allowed the patch to have a proper base.

Below, within OCC's stock of wood, staff found oak that would work well for the patches. Staff then cut the wood pieces that would repair the damaged areas to size in the carpenter's shop.



Below, restoration brought beauty and durability back to the Chief of Staff's oak floor.



Below, OCC carpenters Mike Marshall and Hunter vonHolt apply stain to unify the color in the oak flooring. Once the stain was dry, Marshall, right. applied a sealant to protect the floor.





WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

The Nebraska Capitol Collections contain a variety of materials related to the design, finishes and furnishings of the Governor's Suite in the Nebraska State Capitol. All aspects of the Suite's four rooms were meticulously planned to be showcases within the new statehouse. The Collections' resources, which include Capitol Commission meeting minutes, Architect specifications, drawings, correspondence, invoices, and purchase lists, guide Office of the Capitol Commission staff in their restoration work. When the Suite was completed in 1928, Omaha photographer Louis Bostwick created quality images of the spaces. High resolution scans of the original negatives, held by Omaha's Durham Museum in the Bostwick -Frohardt Collection, have provided the opportunity to view details that have enhanced OCC's ability to restore the Suite to its original glory.

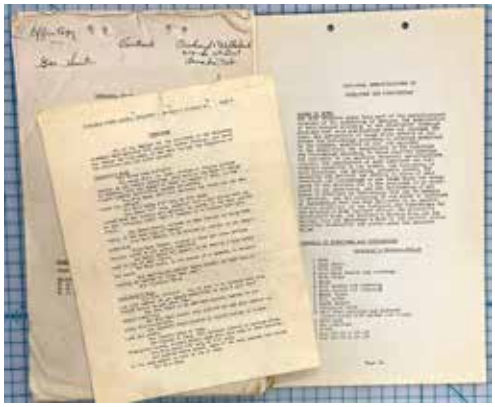

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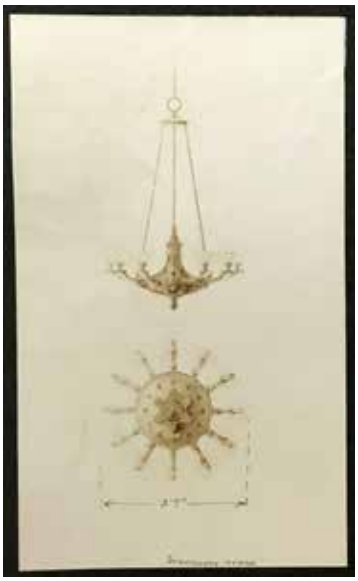
Bostwick images of the Governor's Private Office taken on March 16, 1928 provide information for OCC staff. Left, the view of the sitting area from the Governor's desk, right, looking toward the Governor's desk from the sitting area. Material in the Capitol Collections provides documentation of how the Private Office was furnished. Below is an example of the process involved in securing the chandelier above the Governor's desk. First Capitol architect Bertram Goodhue identified the chandelier on the Capitol's blueprints, detail below.


BF2824-068



Below is a page from the specifications issued by the Bertram G. Goodhue Associates requesting items to furnish the Governor's Private Office, and a page from Orchard and Wilhelm's bid document detailing their proposal to supply the requested furnishings. Right, a drawing submitted by Caldwell & Co. with their bid proposal for the chandelier above the Governor's desk. Proposals were based on the description provided with Associate's specifications





Below, an image from a scrapbook-style catalog of Caldwell & Company's work held by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum Library / Smithsonian Institution Libraries in New York features a factory photograph of the Governor's chandelier



CAPITOL EVENTS

Camp 69 Graduation
June 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
The Nebraska State Patrol will celebrate the swearing-in of new recruits in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Juneteenth Holiday
June 19, 2024
The Capitol will be open for public tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Independence Day Holiday
July 4, 2024
The Capitol will be open for public tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Warrant Officer Graduation
August 4, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.
The Nebraska Army National Guard will commission new Warrant Officers in a 2nd floor rotunda ceremony.

Purple Heart Day
August 7, 2024
The Capitol's tower will be lit purple as the Nebraska Department of Veteran's Affairs honors those wounded killed while serving in the Armed Forces

50 Mile March
August 24, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.
The 50 Mile March Foundation will assemble on the north plaza of the Capitol to prepare for the 3:00 p.m. start of the walk to Omaha to draw attention to homeless veterans.

Labor Day Holiday
September 2, 2024
The Nebraska State Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Hunger Action Month
September 13, 2024
The Food Banks of Lincoln and the Heartland will have the Capitol's tower lit orange to draw attention of food insecurity and the action needed to allieviate hunger in Nebraska.

New Attorney Swearing-In Ceremony
September 24, 2024
The Nebraska Supreme Court will swear in new Nebraska attorneys in a 10:00 a.m. ceremony in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Indigenous Peoples/Columbus Day
October 14, 2024
The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Nebraska Missing Persons Day
October 17, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
The Governor, State Senators and others will gather for the kick-off of Nebraska Missing Persons Day in an event sponsored by Gina for Missing Persons Foundation.

New Probation Officer Swearing-In
October 24, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.
The Administrative Offices of the Courts and Probation will swear in new probation officers in the 2nd floor rotunda program.

NBEA Capitol Ceremony
November 1, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.
The Nebraska Board of Engineers and Architects will license new engineers and architects in the 2nd floor rotunda Capitol.

Veterans Day Holiday
November 11, 2024
The Capitol will be open for tours from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the tower illuminated in green at dusk.

Commissioner's Recogniton
November 25, 2024, at 2:30 p.m.
The Center for Student Leadership and Expanded Learning will host a program to honor students in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Thanksgiving Holiday
November 28 - 29, 2024
The Capitol will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday and Friday. The building will reopen for tours on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Capitol Tree Lighting
December 8, 2024
The official state Christmas tree will be lit during a 1:30 p.m. ceremony in the 2nd floor rotunda. Following the ceremony guests are invited to the Governor's Residence for a family Christmas party.

National Guard Birthday Celebration
December 13, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
The Nebraska Military Department will celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the National Guard in a 2nd floor rotunda ceremony, with a cake-cutting ceremony to follow.

Capitol Concert
December 15, 2024
The Epic Vocal Ensemble will perform a holiday concert in the 2nd floor rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

Camp 70 Graduation
December 20, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
The Nebraska State Patrol will celebrate the swearing-in of new recruits in the 2nd floor rotunda.

Christmas Day
December 25, 2024
The Capitol will be closed.

New Year's Day
January 1, 2025
The Capitol will be closed.

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

Guided Tours are offered Monday-Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, except at noon; Saturday and Holidays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, except at noon; Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Please call 402.471.0448 or visit www.capitol.org for more information.

THE CAPITOL SOWER

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Capitol Architect
Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, 1869-1924

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The Capitol Sower, published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available online at www.capitol.nebraska.gov. Contact the Tourism Supervisor at <roxanne.smith@nebraska.gov> for more information.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments about the content.

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2024 Capitol Ornament



Early in the first phase of the construction of the Nebraska State Capitol period light fixtures from national manufacturers were used. The Governor's Hearing Room, completed in 1925, includes bronze wall sconces with Victorian design influences. In later phases of construction, customized light fixtures using the Art Deco style of the late 1920's were installed. The Office of the Capitol Commission's 2024 commemorative ornament features the ribboned cartouche design of the brackets which hold the lamps illuminating the Governor's Hearing Room. These cast bronze light fixtures are being restored to their original condition during Phase IV of the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Replacement Project.