

THE CAPITOL SOWER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITOL COMMISSION | VOLUME THREE | NUMBER ONE | FEBRUARY 2010

Exterior Masonry Update

Work on the Capitol Exterior Masonry Project stopped early due to the unusual December snow storms. In previous years the masonry contractor had been able to work well into December before shutting down. Demolition of the east entrance stairs, also planned for this winter resume once the snow melts and conditions improve. Work in 2010 will focus on completing the reconstruction of the East Entrance

and stairs, and tuck pointing in the northeast quadrant of the Capitol's base.

The roofing contractor began installing copper on the west side two years ago and completed the south roof of the Law Library this past fall. Work was progressing well on the east and when snow came. The roofing contractor will continue to work as conditions on the roof allow.



Masonry contractors continued to work on the east entrance demolition after the first snowfall in early December. The additional snowfall finally halted work.



The roofing contractor had made progress replacing the copper roof on the south and east sides. The snow has slowed progress, but the contractors continue to work when conditions allow.

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*
John Little, Jr., *Tourism Aide*
Gloria Witherspoon,
Tourism Aide

Capitol Staff Recognized *Administrative Services Awards*

Office of the Capitol Commission staff have been honored for outstanding service by Administrative Services. At a Quarterly Recognition Ceremony on January 22, 2010, the Carpentry and Grounds Shops received recognition. A Tourism Aide with OCC was honored for her public service at a ceremony in July of 2009.



Doni Peterson, Deputy Director of Administrative Services presents Brett Daugherty, OCC Facility Manager, and conservation team members Mike Marshall, left and center to right, Roger Frink, Phil Lagoni, Ron Dulas, Steve Janssen and Bill McClurg with the Award of Merit for their cost saving work on the renovation of the gift shop.



Gloria Witherspoon received the At Your Service Award in recognition of the outstanding service she provided during the busy 2009 school tour season.



Staff from OCC, State Building Division, Specialized Office Services and Detail Workers received the Helping Hand Award for exceptional service clearing snow around state facilities during December 2009. Pictured left to right; Tom Evans, Larry Simonson, Mike Hoppmann, Lee Briggs, James Roe, Fernando Gonzalez, Chris Bohlen, and Don Pracheil.

Capitol Commission's 2010 Schedule

The Nebraska State Capitol Commission has set their schedule of quarterly Commission meetings for 2010. All meetings are set to begin at 9:00 am in State Capitol Hearing Room 1507. The Joint Annual Meeting with the Capitol Environs Commission will be held at 10:00 am following the November 4, 2010 Capitol Commission Meeting.

February 2, 2010 June 3, 2010 August 3, 2010 November 4, 2010

Commissioners View Albion Planning Project

Capitol Commissioners Governor Dave Heineman, at the podium, and UNL College of Architecture Dean Wayne Drummond helped Albion Mayor Paul Hosford unveil the plans UNL Professor Martin Despang's students developed for revitalizing Albion's downtown area. Following their opening remarks, the Governor and Dean, along with students and Albion community leaders viewed the plans and models on display in the 1st floor Rotunda of the Capitol.



CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Flag Pole Restoration

It is the goal of the Office of the Capitol Commission to restore and reuse original components of the Capitol whenever possible. The removal of the original flag poles from the exterior of the two legislative chambers to accommodate tuckpointing and copper roof installation provided the opportunity for OCC staff to restore these important original features.

The restoration process was the same for both flag poles. Taking advantage of the Masonry contractor's crane, the flag poles were removed from the building and placed on a specially constructed carrier and taken to the basement for storage. Capitol staff removed the hardware and old finish; then cleaned out paint and debris from the cracks. The cracks were filled with epoxy and wood filler. Once the filler material cured, staff sanded and repainted each pole. The cleaned hardware was remounted and the flag poles were ready for reinstallation.

The west flag pole was returned to service once the west legislative chamber roof was completed. During the first 70 years, prevailing winds had caused a slight bowing of the flag poles. The west flag pole was turned 180 degrees upon reinstallation to counteract the prevailing wind. The Nebraska flag once again flies above the Legislative Chamber to indicate the Legislature is in session. The east flag pole, also restored, awaits the completion of the east chamber roof to be reinstalled. 

OCC and contract staff reattached the west flag pole just prior to the completion of the west roof and the crane's move to the south construction yard.



The 30' long flag poles were kept in the basement corridors while staff cleaned cracks to remove debris.



OCC Conservation Staff filled the cracks to stabilize the flag pole.



OCC's finishing specialist sanded and prepared the flag pole for painting. A special paint treatment was used to extend the life of the flag pole and finish.



Cleaning Limestone Masonry

Finding and Testing New Products

Staff now have another tool for cleaning and preserving the Capitol.

For years preservationists have had to rely on invasive and labor intensive techniques to clean masonry structures. With the recent restoration projects at the Nebraska State Capitol, preservation staff looked for the latest developments in masonry cleaning and tested these techniques for their effectiveness to clean and preserve the Capitol. At the beginning of the Exterior Masonry Project, architectural consultants advised using a new cleaning technique with glass bead blasting to clean the tower facade rather than sand blasting. The premise being the glass beads would shatter as they removed the algae and dirt rather than clean and etch the surface as sand blasting does. Further testing revealed the soiling and algae on the exterior facade could be successfully removed by first applying a biocide treatment and then high pressure washing. The research and testing of cleaning techniques on the exterior limestone facade resulted in the most effective and least invasive technique being used to complete the cleaning of the Capitol's base.

The soiling on the interior walls of the Capitol results from a different set of circumstances. There are three kinds of soiling to be addressed. There is discoloration of the limestone as a result of mineral staining from leaks, soiling from indoor air pollution and soiling from human contact with surfaces. Humans excrete acids and oils which are absorbed by the porous limestone surfaces when touched by hands and other parts of the body. These three types of soiling have different chemical compositions. Capitol conservation staff have used different techniques to clean the interior walls, from soap and water scrubbing to clay poulticing. Both methods require protecting the surrounding surfaces

and extensive use of water for rinsing and cleanup. During the planning of the 2008 West Chamber Restoration Project, Capitol Preservation staff and consultants looked for an interior cleaning product that would be effective and less invasive. They did not want water spray or clay dust spread throughout the highly finished legislative chamber. A new integrated latex/detergent poultice product was very successful in cleaning the stains and soiling in the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber with minimal impact. In 2009, the conservation consultant and Capitol conservation staff continued their testing of the latex/detergent product in two areas of significant mineral staining.

Once the new copper roof was installed over the southwest quadrant, conditions which allowed the staining to occur were resolved, and cleaning began in the southwest elevator vestibule on third floor. This cleaning proved very successful and work moved to the third floor



Tests revealed the latex was effective on heavy mineral staining.



The latex product is brushed on, sets up and then soiling is removed as the product is peeled off the wall in sheets.



southeast stairwell. The latex/detergent poultice has successfully cleaned both the mineral deposits and hand soiling on the limestone. Capitol preservation staff now have another tool to use in their ongoing work to clean and preserve the Nebraska State Capitol. 

Gift Shop Renovated

The Nebraska State Historical Society's Landmark Store in the Capitol opened November 20, 2009, to rave reviews. Everyone remarked at the new interior decor. Few realized that Office of the Capitol Commission staff had worked behind the scenes to create a state-of-the-art shop for the new tenant. The Historical Society's gift store team developed a concept and design for the new store which included custom cabinets, specialized lighting and multimedia components to showcase Nebraska's history.

Tom Kaspar, Capitol Preservation Architect, coordinated the renovation and infrastructure improvements. Standard renovation activity includes paint stripping, plaster repair, painting, cleaning base and door trim, restoration of the

corridor door, and carpet. Electrical and computer wiring were upgraded to accommodate the additional lighting, monitors and point of sale system. As the Maintenance Shop worked to upgrade infrastructure, the Carpentry Shop worked on the display cabinets and sales counter. Brett Daugherty, Capitol Facility Maintenance Manager, coordinated the fabrication, finishing and installation of the custom cabinets.

The Nebraska State Historical Society planned, designed and opened the Landmark Store in the Capitol with behind the scenes help from the Office of the Capitol Commission. The store offers Nebraska-made products, books about Nebraska, Capitol-related items and gifts. 



OCC staff manufactured, finished and installed the custom cabinets designed by the Historical Society's interior design consultant.



Shoppers view merchandise displayed in the custom cabinets built by OCC staff.



After the walls were painted and prior to door trim and carpet installation, OCC staff added electrical service to the sales counter. The sales counter was custom designed to reuse sections of the original copper roof removed in the exterior renovation project.



During the Grand Opening of the Landmark Store in the Capitol, Michael Smith, left, Executive Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society thanked the Office of the Capitol Commission for their high quality work in renovating the Capitol's gift shop space.

Capitol Muralist Recognized

Hildreth Meiere – Walls Speak

The Nebraska State Capitol was prominently featured in a 2009 exhibition at the Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, New York. The exhibit, *Walls Speak*, is the first major show to recognize the outstanding artistic contributions of Hildreth Meiere. Because Meiere worked primarily as a muralist curator, Catherine Coleman Brawer used photographs of Meiere's architectural commissions and the maquettes and sketches she created for her site specific installations in the exhibit. Brawer and Meiere's granddaughter Hildreth Meiere Dunn visited the Capitol in preparation for the exhibit. Meiere Dunn photographed the floor and ceiling mosaics while Brawer and Capitol Archivist Karen Wagner reviewed the Capitol Collections for suitable artifacts to include in the exhibit. While reviewing the collection, Brawer discovered artwork previously unknown to Meiere scholars.

This exhibit provided the Office of the Capitol Commission its first opportunity to contribute to a national exhibit on an artist involved in the creation of the ground-breaking Nebraska State Capitol. One of the pieces loaned to the exhibit represented a departure from Meiere's usual work in tile and glass. For Nebraska, Meiere created her first tapestry. The large (85" by 27") wool and linen study (pictured right) of a Native Nebraskan was sent to the Quick Center to be included in the exhibit. The finished tapestry, based on Amos Bad Heart Bull's late 19th Century drawing, is located above the Speaker's Niche in the East Legislative Chamber, now the Warner Memorial Chamber, which formerly housed the Nebraska Senate. 



The wool and linen maquette Hildreth Meiere created for the Native American tapestry in the Speaker's Niche of the Senate Chamber of the Nebraska State Capitol was part of a national exhibit.

WALLS SPEAK THE NARRATIVE ART OF HILDRETH MEIERE

BY CATHERINE COLEMAN BRAWER

AVAILABLE IN THE LANDMARK STORE AT THE CAPITOL

CAPITOL EVENTS

**Physical Therapy Legislative Day
February 3, 2010**

The Nebraska Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association will provide health related information and services in the first floor rotunda from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**The Heart of Nebraska
February 5-12, 2010**

The Capitol's north entrance will **Go Red for Women February 5-7** during a first floor rotunda display with tributes to Nebraskans affected by heart disease sponsored by the American Heart Association.

**Nebraska Credit Union History
February 8-12, 2010**

The Nebraska Credit Union League will have a display in the first floor rotunda.

**Abraham Lincoln Birthday Observance
February 12, 2010**

Civil War Re enactors will stand vigil at the Lincoln Memorial on the west side of the Capitol beginning at dawn.

**Big Dogs Huge Paws
February 19-26, 2010**

Display focusing attention on the need for the giant breed rescue program.

**Nebraska Statehood Day
March 1st, 2010**

Nebraska became the 37th state in the United States of America 143 years ago.

**Music Education Week at the Capitol
March 1-5, 2010**

The Nebraska Music Educators Association will present a series of noon concerts in the 2nd floor rotunda featuring Nebraska school choirs and bands.

**Design Excellence Awards
March 8-12, 2010**

The American Institute of Architects Nebraska Chapter will showcase the 2009 design project award winners in the first floor rotunda of the Capitol.

**Brain Injury Awareness
March 8-12, 2010**

The Brain Injury Association of Nebraska will have a display in the first floor rotunda.

**Problem Gambling Awareness
March 8-14, 2010**

Proclamations from across the state declaring March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month will be on display.

**Youth Art Month Celebration
March 13, 2010**

The Nebraska Art Teachers Association will have a recognition ceremony at 2:00 p.m. in the second floor rotunda of the Capitol.

**WIFE Display
March 16, 2010**

Women Involved in Farm Economics will provide information on their role in Nebraska's economy.

**CASA Display
March 29-April 9, 2010**

The Nebraska Court Appointed Special Advocates Association will have a first floor rotunda display to focus on the needs of youth in foster care to have court appointed advocates.

**Soundsational Singers
March 30, 2010**

The O'Neill Elementary Choir will perform a noon concert in the 2nd Floor Rotunda.

**Nebraska Holocaust Commemoration
April 11, 2010**

The Jewish Federation of Lincoln will honor Holocaust survivors at 2:00 p.m. in the second floor rotunda.

**Week of the Young Child
April 12-16, 2010**

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children sponsored display.

**Nebraska Peace Officer Memorial
May 9-14, 2010**

The Nebraska State Patrol will shadow boxes of Nebraska's fallen peace officers in conjunction with National Peace Officer Week in the first floor rotunda of the Capitol.

**Chief Standing Bear Commemoration
May 14, 2010**

The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs will recognize individuals who have contributed to the well being of Native people in Nebraska in a second floor rotunda program beginning at 11:45 a.m.

**Nebraska Spirit Art Contest
May 17-21, 2010**

The Secretary of State and Nebraska.gov will display the winners of the art contest in the first floor rotunda of the Capitol.

The Governor will sign Proclamations at 10:30 a.m. in the Warner Chamber on February 11, March 10, April 7 and May 12. For proclamation information please contact Kendra 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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Landmark Store at the Capitol Opens



The Capitol Sower, a quarterly newsletter published by the Office of the Capitol Commission, is available on line at www.capitol.org in the Credits and Links section. 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.

The Grand Opening Ceremony for the Landmark Store at the Capitol, one of four gift stores operated by the Nebraska State Historical Society, was held on December 15, 2009. Following remarks by Capitol Administrator Robert C. Ripley, right, and Nebraska State Historical Society Executive Director Michael Smith, left, Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy, center,

and Landmark Store staff Patti Hill, Deb McWilliams and Leah Hruska, cut the ribbon to officially open the store. The Landmark Store will be open Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm and feature books and gift items related to Nebraska's History, its people and the Nebraska State Capitol. For Landmark Store information phone 402.471.2062. 