

# HISTORICAL Connections

NEWS FROM THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION

## Director's Corner

BY LESLIE FATTIG

**W**e have so many great things to talk about! You will notice the newsletter has expanded to 16 pages this month. Why? There's a lot happening for the Foundation, the Society, and for the future of historic preservation in Nebraska.

As our state museum prepares for a temporary closing for renovation, your Foundation must rise to the occasion, particularly after August 31, 2014, the last day the museum will be open for approximately sixteen months. The Legislature approved LB 198, the Capital Construction Bill, providing the Nebraska State Historical Society with \$6.4 million dollars for the purpose of renovating a very tired building called the Nebraska History Museum located at 15th and P. Good news? Of course! However, once the building is renovated, the task of raising funds for new exhibits begins.

What a wonderfully unique opportunity we have been given! **WE** get to, in effect, shine a bright new light on history! Isn't that why we are all joined in some form or fashion? It's our love of history that brings us together. *It's our historical connection.*

We are excited about the events planned for this summer and fall which will take us to new places to meet new people and share our love of this beautiful (and weather-conflicted) state called Nebraska.

If you can join us, please do so. We'd love to share the experience (and opportunity) with you!

### Make Sure to Save the Date for Our Upcoming Events!

Friday, July 18th, the Foundation will host a 20th birthday celebration and reception for Chimney Rock's Ethel S. and Christopher J. Abbott Visitor Center. Please join us for refreshments and hors d'oeuvres from 7 to 9 pm at the Visitor's Center. Look for your invitation mid-June. All trustees are invited to this event under the stars to kick off the fundraising program for the Visitor's Center addition.

Saturday, July 19th, a public birthday celebration will be hosted by the Nebraska State Historical Society complete with wagon rides, children's story time,

Leslie Fattig



*One of the 2014 winners of the \$1000 Nebraskans of World War II Scholarship, Jessica Schmidt, Gothenburg High School. See page 4 for other recipients and for more highlights of our Annual Meeting.*

songs by Dan Holtz, and fun for the whole family. Presentations include: A history of Chimney Rock presented by Loren Pospisil, Tourism Facilities

*continued on page 15*



# Introducing Our “Hip Pocket” List!

BY LESLIE FATTIG

In the fall of last year, Mike Smith and I had a conversation about various needs which fall outside of the present state budget funding. At the time, I asked Mike and his staff if they could put together a list that I could use as a fundraising conversation starter.

I hope you and I will begin that conversation after your review of the following list. Please know appropriate recognition will be given to all donors and we want you know we are grateful to you for your support. We know you do it because you care about Nebraska history and believe in the mission of the State Historical Society to collect, preserve, and share the history of Nebraska. One of the bonuses of your support is that your gifts are tax deductible.

## Equipment Needs

### For Education and Interpretation:

- Fletcher 2200 Professional Mat Cutter to prepare framing mats for exhibits and presentations. *Cost estimated at \$2,100.*
- Pouch laminator and supplies to laminate hands-on items and three dimensional objects for use in exhibitions and in educational programming. *Cost estimated at \$500.*

### For Collections & Education and Interpretation:

Equipment to upgrade the existing in-house photo studio (present equipment is 10 years old) where we take pictures of artifacts for documentation including blogs and other online information. Equipment would include lighting, backdrops and a camera remote. *Cost estimated at \$1,500.*

### For Collections:

Four items for use in working with our



*First donation made toward the hip pocket! Harv Ofe, Manager of the Neligh Mill and Deb McWilliams NSHS, with the new printer/scanner made possible by the generous donation of Mary Ann May Pumphrey, NSHSF Trustee. A new flat screen TV was also donated by Mary Ann for the exhibit video used in telling the story of the Mill's history.*

film and other audio-visual collections. All four of these pieces of equipment are necessary for working on what are “out of date” film and sound technologies. Thus we have to search eBay, etc. to buy them in a used but good condition. The four items are:

- 8mm/16mm motion picture film glue splicer. *Cost is \$200.*
- 8mm motion picture film viewer. *Cost is \$200.*
- VHS/S-VHS professional grade video-tape cassette player. *Cost is \$300.*
- ¾" U-Matic videotape cassette player. *Cost is \$500.*

*Cost estimated for the four pieces is \$1,200.*

### For Publications and Other Divisions:

Digital still and motion picture camera for use in research such as recording places, people, and stories of Nebraska. Camera would need to capture both 36mp still images and high definition video. Need for short video for web

programs—high definition camera would have been great to use for Youtube video production on location which could be substituted for brown bag programs during remodeling while theater is dark. Total package would include camera body, lens, and tripod. *Cost estimated at \$5,000.*

### For the NHM Exhibits:

- Cabinet Saw by Saw Stop (fixed place saw) that features an instantaneous power-off safety feature to protect operators' hands. *Cost estimated at \$4,000.*
- Contractors Saw by Saw Stop (portable saw) that has same safety features as the Cabinet Saw above. *Cost estimated at \$2,000.*

### For the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center:

- HEPA vacuum unit used in fine cleaning of objects. *Cost estimated at \$1,700.*
- Pop-up screen to use at meetings and other events where the GRFCC has a

marketing presence. *Cost estimated at \$1,000.*

- New Halotron building fire extinguishers that leave a low residue.  
*Cost for six is \$3,000.*

### Computer Software Product

#### For Several Divisions:

Software that would enable NSHS staff to create content that can be delivered to mobile devices, allowing the public to access information on historic sites, NSHS podcasts, etc. *Cost estimated at \$2,500.*

### To Support Staff Training and Travel

#### For the Landmark Stores:

To support the attendance of the Landmark Stores Manager and the Stores Buyer at the annual meeting of the Museum Stores Association where retail management, in the context of a cultural organization, is addressed in educational sessions and exhibit halls present large numbers of suppliers (publishers, toy makers, game and activity makers, etc.) offering new existing products appropriate for our Landmark Stores. A once a year opportunity that is important. *Cost estimated for registration and travel for the three to a four day event totals about \$3,000.*

#### For the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center:

To support training of Center staff through attendance at conservation education centers such as the Campbell Center in Mount Carroll, IL. *Cost estimated at \$2,500.*

### For Services

#### For Archeology and Publications:

For the reports on the Engineer Cantonment archeology project. Funds to contract with copy editor and with layout designer. *Cost estimated at \$3,000.*

#### For Archeology:

To contract for stabilizing the Engineer Cantonment site through securing previous excavation by installing plastic sheeting and earthen back fill to provide a new security fence and gate. From flood in 2010, silt needs to be removed from geotextile fabric, needs new gate and fence, and a general cleaning. *Cost estimated at \$5,000.*

#### For Marketing:

Tourism print ads in *Nebraska Life*, *Journeys West*, etc. to promote NSHS historic sites, museum exhibitions, etc. *Cost estimated at \$5,000.*

#### For Education & Interpretation:

- Underwrite an annual speaker for a

celebration of the National Constitution Day, September 17th, the date the Constitution was ratified by the required number of states in 1788—a public program. Current movement across US spearheaded by the American Historians Bureau for 2014. \$2,200 for honorarium and travel, perhaps a local law office would be interested in sponsoring this program. *Cost is \$2,200.*


- Underwrite the film rentals and publicity for annual film series at the Nebraska History Museum each January–March. *Cost estimated at \$2,500.*

#### For a Patriotic and Historically-inclined Donor:

Two outdoor flood lights to illuminate the historic flag pole on the parade ground at Fort Robinson. *Cost of the lights is \$3,000. Cost of running electrical feed to the lights is in the range of \$1,000 to \$1,500. Total is \$4,000 to \$4,500.*

#### If You Enjoy the Brown Bag Lunch Presentations—Brown Bag History Forum Lecture Series:

*Cost is \$800 for recording and placing on the webpage.* Donors will be recognized during the program.

**Please contact the Foundation at 402-435-3535 for more information.** 

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*\*Denotes Executive Committee*

## Wisdom of the Ages

BY MICHAEL NELSON

God's honest truth that's how this story was described. "And if it isn't," a grizzled editor assured me, raising his hand as if taking an oath, "then it ought to be."

It was the high summer of the Nixon presidency, he said. Watergate was hardly a pimple on the body politic. All that Woodward and Bernstein glamour had yet to settle on America's newsrooms. Apprentice reporters "cubs" polished their craft by writing weather items, taking obits and compiling calendars of club meetings. And occasionally there would be those birthday stories. Nursing homes would alert the local newspaper when a resident was to celebrate a 100th birthday, then a fairly rare event. Birthday interviews back then could yield first-hand accounts of 19th century life, and the woman who was turning 100 told fascinating tales, the nursing supervisor said. So an intern reporter lower than a cub was dispatched. She interviewed the nursing staff for background, and sat down for an hour or so to hear stories from the birthday girl. The draft of the story went something like this:

"There are days when Agnes Anderson tells colorful stories about her childhood so rich in detail that her nurses feel like they are with her on the prairie. There are days she recalls how Indians would ride horseback to her grandfather's store. There are days she describes the thunder and choking dust of a cattle stampede or how townsfolk would gather to hear the names of men killed in the Spanish War. Yesterday was her 100th birthday. It was not one of those days."

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**"All these generous gestures help the Foundation meet its mission and its goals. Now is the time because tomorrow may be 'not one of those days.'"**

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For the record, the woman's name above is fictitious, "changed to protect the innocent" as they used to say on "Drag-net." As for the story itself, it has yet to appear on any credible internet archive. Quite possibly it was never published, or maybe the whole thing, the "God's honest truth" is apocryphal. And therein lies a truth known to history scholars and family historians alike: The yarns of our past are enriched or endangered in the retelling, recast in a more modern context, or lost in failing memory.

Through this Foundation, we Nebraskans help affirm the links between the 21st century and the story of our shared past. It is a nonstop task. History is written every day. No matter how many tax dollars are appropriated for the Society, those funds cannot alone meet the bill. Your generous donations underwrite historic scholarship, acquisitions,

displays and exhibits to promote historical understanding.

The spring fundraising letter was mailed recently, and the Foundation thanks you for your ongoing support. There are also other ways to serve. Some Foundation trustees have expressed interest in taking on projects in their communities or serving as ambassadors to help recruit prospective contacts, yet others have volunteered to host Meet & Greet events. All these generous gestures help the Foundation meet its mission and its goals. Now is the time because tomorrow may be "not one of those days." ☞

*Michael Nelson was recently elected president of the Nebraska State Historical Foundation. Nelson retired after 40 years as a journalist. He served 34 years at The Kansas City Star, most of that time in senior editing positions, and concluded his career as the editor of the Lincoln Journal Star.*



Michael Nelson



## 2014 Annual Meeting Highlights

Thanks to all 71 trustees who attended the annual meeting in March. If you were not able to attend this year—we missed you!

Carol Zink was honored by all for her four years of serving as President of the NSHSF. We thank her for her visionary leadership and hard work.

Kenneth Be' and Deb Long did a great job of presenting and had many interesting examples to show us. The tours worked well with a Q&A format during the visits to the laboratories. We also had great weather which made for a wonderful day! ☀



2014 winners of the \$1000 Nebraskans of World War II Scholarship, from left to right: Jessica Schmidt, Gothenburg High School; Madalyn Buller, Omaha Central High School; Claire Henrichsen, Pius X High School (Lincoln); Not present: Daniel Schroer, Lawrence/Nelson High School. The scholarships were presented at the March 29th Annual Meeting of the NSHSF by Scholarship Committee chair Syd Kruse of Walthill.



Kenneth Be' and friends.



A full house at the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center.



Above: Christie Nelson, NSHSF Trustee, and Tim Thietje, NSHSF Treasurer.



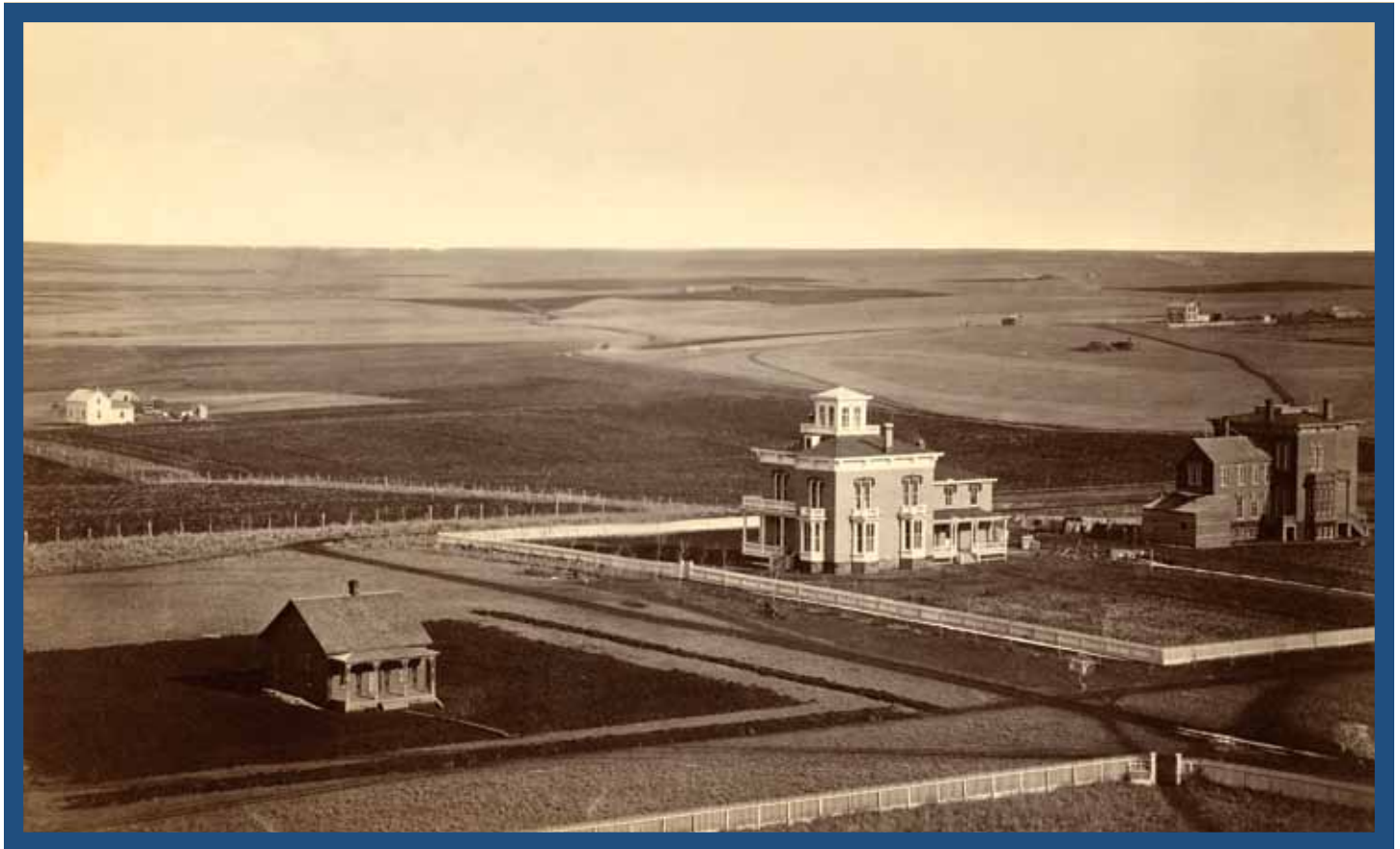
From left: John Strope, Fred Henninger, Kira Gale, Joe Stehlik, Judy Humiston, Rod Walker and Gloria Strope, NSHSF Trustees.



New president Michael Nelson with Carol Zink passing the gavel.

## The Thomas P. Kennard House

BY LESLIE FATTIG



NSHS RG2158-11

**Y**ou may have noticed the Kennard House on the cover of the summer 2014, volume 95/number 2 Nebraska History quarterly. We hope all of our trustees are members of the Society and that they receive and enjoy this wonderful magazine. If you are not a member of the Nebraska State Historical Society and are interested in becoming one, please contact Lana Hatcher with Membership Services at 402-471-3272 or use the enclosed mailer. If you are already a member, we hope you will share the brochure with someone else that is interested in Nebraska history.

The Thomas P. Kennard House Fund was established in 2006 by a gift from the estate of Ronald D. Yost, a quiet,

retiring man who had attended the University of Nebraska. During his college years, Yost developed a particular fondness for the Thomas P. Kennard House, and he wanted to see that fine structure preserved.

Built by Thomas P. Kennard, the first secretary of state of the fledgling Nebraska, in 1869, the house was a bold statement of Kennard's faith in the future. A century later Nebraska designated the house its Statehood Memorial, celebrating our accomplishments and looking toward the future.

Ronald Yost looked at that house, and he, too, saw the future. His bequest will help preserve that important

**Ronald Yost looked at that house, and he, too, saw the future. His bequest will help preserve that important structure for generations to come. And for that, we will remember Mr. Yost and his generosity for a very long time.**

structure for generations to come. And for that, we will remember Mr. Yost and his generosity for a very long time. 🏡

## NSHSF Historical Happenings

### Friday, July 18, 2014 at Bayard, NE

Your Foundation will host a cocktail party at the Rock's Ethel S. and Christopher J. Abbott Visitor Center. All trustees are invited to this fundraiser under the stars to kick off the fundraising program for the Visitor's Center addition.

### Saturday, July 19, 2014 at Bayard, NE

About a half-million people are thought to have passed by Chimney Rock in the 1840s-60s on the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails. In the last 20 years, more than half a million people have enjoyed exhibits, videos, and interactive features at the Rock's Ethel S. and Christopher J. Abbott Visitor Center near Bayard.

Count yourself among those numbers by attending the 20th birthday party for the visitor center at Chimney Rock National Historic Site, 1.5 miles south of Highway 92 on Chimney Rock Road. A day's worth of events will be open to the public free of charge, Saturday, July 19th from 9:30 am – 4:30 pm. Horse and wagon rides, first-person historical presentations, Oregon Trail talks, crafts to make and take,

music and more will be offered by the Nebraska State Historical Society with additional support from Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation.

### Sunday, July 20, 2014 at the Security State Bank of Ansley, Ansley, NE

The State Bank of Ansley in Ansley, and the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation will co-host a reception from 4 to 6 pm featuring, on-loan from MONA, Solomon Butcher & Wright Morris photographs. NSHS historian, John Carter, and NSHS Executive Director, Mike Smith will present.

### Saturday, September 13, 2014 Meet & Greet in Valentine, NE

The NSHSF is planning a Meet & Greet in Valentine for September! The Saturday event will begin with afternoon tours at two sites on the National Register of Historic Places: The 1936 Post Office and the 1901 County Courthouse. A tour of the Cherry County Historical Society exhibits will follow. All three locations are conveniently located on Valentine's Main Street.

Meet & Greet attendees will then re-convene at the main event site—Valentine's Centennial Hall—the oldest high school building in the State of Nebraska. Built in 1897, this building was saved from destruction by a group of local activists in the 1980s and now serves as a museum. A guided tour of Centennial Hall will be available.

Refreshments will be served on the grounds of Colburn Park, directly in front of Centennial Hall. Bob Puschendorf, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at the NSHS, and author of Nebraska's Post Office Murals: Born of the Depression, Fostered by the New Deal, will talk about the fascinating history of Valentine's Post Office mural. John Carter, Senior Research Folklorist and Associate Editor at the NSHS, will give a talk about the Society's current investigative work on a Custer County sod house.

Look for your invitation to the Valentine Meet & Greet sometime in early August! More details will also be provided in the NSHSF Summer 2014 newsletter.

## Board of Trustee Orientation Highlights

As our trustees are ambassadors of the Foundation, we thought it would be a good idea if we provided our new (and current) board members the opportunity to learn more about how this complex organization works. With the help of the staff at the Nebraska History Museum and the Nebraska State Historical Society, we hosted a half day of informative meetings and behind-the-scenes tours. A big thank you to NSHS, Deb McWilliams, Ann Billesbach, Deb Arenz, Laura Mooney, Tina Koeppe and Laura Mohr, David Bristow, Bob Puschendorf, Tom Mooney, and Rob Bozell who were instrumental in making the orientation a successful and informative day! 🍷



Barb L'Heureux explaining spending policy funds. From left Jim Beatty, Michael Nelson, Terri Sanders, (guest of Jim Beatty), Dianne Kennedy, Walker Kennedy, and foreground Christian Petersen.



## An Out-of-State Trustee's Perspective

BY MARY ANN MAY-PUMPHREY

**W**hat percentage of NSHS members would you guess live out of state? 25.5%!

Now, what percentage of NSHSF Trustees would you guess live out of state? Seven-tenths of one percent! You're now reading an article written by that seven-tenths of one percent!

I would guess that a large percentage of the 455 NSHS members who currently live out of state are, like me, former residents. I was born and raised in Valentine. After graduating from the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, my husband Ron (a Scottsbluff County native) and I moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, so he could attend the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine. After his graduation, we moved to Tucson where I attended graduate school in Computer Science at the University of Arizona. Finally, we moved to Silicon Valley where we have lived and worked ever since.

Despite my three decades with a California address, I've been back to Nebraska 1-3 times per year ever since leaving. I have a keen interest in Nebraska history, which began when I was working on an MA in American History at San José State University in the late 1990s. I discovered that a rather famous feminist and gifted-education academic—Leta Stetter Hollingworth—had grown up in Valentine, graduating from high school there in 1902. I wound up writing a biography of Ms. Hollingworth and her husband, fellow Nebraskan Harry L. Hollingworth, for my MA thesis. Then I signed up for a lifetime membership in the NSHS. Occasionally, I sent donations to the NSHS and/or the NSHSF. (I didn't really understand the

**“Nebraska’s history is rich and illustrious! Let’s support it in every way we can. If you know somebody who is interested in Nebraska history (maybe even yourself), a person who would make a good NSHSF Trustee, don’t worry about that person’s current address—talk to him or her, and talk to Leslie.”**

difference for several years!) In 2013, I was pleased to have an article published in the spring issue of Nebraska History: “Send a Valentine to Your Valentine from Valentine, Nebraska”: The Cachet Program.” Most recently, I was nominated as a Trustee at the NSHSF Annual Meeting held in Omaha on March 29th of this year.

In my opinion, the NSHSF over the last several years has not asked for gifts of time and/or money as often as I would expect, or as often as I think would be ideal. If one is a new Trustee, one isn't always sure what one can or should be doing to help. Serving as the only (and possibly the first ever) out-of-state Trustee only heightens the uncertainty. However, with Leslie's help and a good deal of persistence, I've managed to

identify several ways in which I can be useful:

- Posting photos and news to the NSHSF Facebook page 2-3 times per week.
- Helping organize the Valentine-area Meet & Greet planned for this fall.
- Contacting other NSHS members who live in the same part of California as me.
- Donating funds for a couple items requested by my favorite NSHS site—Neligh Mill—based on Leslie's “hip-pocket needs list.”
- Writing and editing articles for this newsletter.

Nebraska's history is rich and illustrious! Let's support it in every way we can. If you know somebody who is interested in Nebraska history (maybe even yourself), a person who would make a good NSHSF Trustee, don't worry about that person's current address—talk to him or her, and talk to Leslie. 🍷

*Mary Ann May-Pumphrey is a software QA engineer and has worked for Sun Microsystems, Yahoo! and Adobe EchoSign. Mary Ann is the first out of state NSHSF Trustee.*



Mary Ann May-Pumphrey



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## Ansley High School Pizza Party

BY LESLIE FATTIG



In March, our friends at the Society asked if we would sponsor a pizza party for the visiting Ansley Public High School students. The students were very interested in the Custer County sod house project, particularly because many had relatives who lived in sod houses when they settled in Nebraska.

No one knows exactly when it was built, but sometime between 1886 and 1902 some Custer County pioneers made their home from the earth. A partnership that includes UNL, the National Park Services, and the Nebraska State Historical Society removed one large section of a remaining wall, and it was then transported to Lincoln for examination. The Ansley kids were researching the scientific analysis of the sod and actual plant life.

**The students were very interested in the sod house project particularly because many had relatives who lived in sod houses when they settled in Nebraska.**

We were happy to supply a pizza lunch for our visitors...but we had an ulterior motive. We asked Lance Bristol, Ansley High School Principal, to join our Board of Trustees. Sam and Louie's

*Lance Bristol, NSHSF Trustee and Ansley Public School Principal. For more information visit: <http://iannews.unl.edu/century-old-sod-wall-highlight-researchers-students>*

(P Street, Lincoln, NE) contributed part of the cost of the lunch. John Carter, NSHS Senior Research Folklorist, treated us to a presentation on the history of cowboys in North America.

It was a very fun afternoon! ☺



## Trustee Spotlights

At the annual meeting on March 29, 19 new trustees were elected and in this issue we are spotlighting three of them. Please welcome them to the Foundation and look for more trustee spotlights in future newsletters.

### Jim Beatty

Originally from Chicago, Illinois, Jim became a Nebraskan by way of graduating from Doane College in Crete, Nebraska where he was a track star and the first African American at the college to major in mathematics. Jim and wife of 42 years, Earlene live in Omaha and have five children, nine grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Jim is the founder and president of NCS International in Omaha. Since 1982, Jim has conducted over 300 site selection projects representing over \$3 billion in corporate investment and providing 30,000 jobs across the United States. Jim manages the front end

negotiations with respect to economics, comparison reviews, tax implications and incentive analysis.

Former Chairman of the Urban League of Nebraska, Chairman of the Durham Western Heritage Museum, Vice Chairman of the Nebraska Economic Authority and currently Chairman of the Board and President of the Great Plains Black History Museum are among his civic affiliations.

Visiting local museums, golf, and collecting books written by or about African Americans are among Jim's favorite past

times. His book collection includes an 1853 edition of *Twelve Years A Slave*, and a three volume edition of Arthur Ashe's, *A Hard Road to Glory*. 📖



Jim Beatty

### Tina Kitt

Former managing editor of the *Wauneta Breeze*, Tina Kitt can track her family's arrival in Nebraska to the late 1880's. Born in South Dakota, Tina has lived, except for a short time in Wisconsin, most of her life in the Wauneta area.

Tina and husband Keenan have three children, Kyle, National Director of Marketing for AGCO, Ashley, in private legal practice in Benkelman, Nebraska and John, a student now living in Austin, Texas. Chair of her church council and

district lay leader of the United Methodist Church, she is also president of the Women of Wauneta Investment Club.

Currently Tina is enjoying her life and responsibilities on her family ranch. Most days she manages the office and marketing for their calving, wheat and irrigated corn operation. Tina also helps out in her daughter's law firm. 📖



Tina Kitt

*continued on page 15*



## There Will Always Be An England

BY JIM HEWITT

**Pilot Cameron Dies in Europe**

Notice of First Lieutenant Donald K. Cameron's death in the European area was received Friday by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Cameron, 1131 North St. Joseph.



Lieutenant Cameron was a pilot. A graduate of Hastings high school, he enlisted in the Royal Air Force in September, 1941, going to England in early 1942 and

Lieut. Cameron transferring later to the United States Air Force. He is survived by his parents and one brother, Captain W. F. Cameron, also stationed overseas.

HT 10-16-43 pg.1

**H**istory has the capacity to educate us, amuse us, even astonish us. And sometimes it just makes us happy. One of my most pleasant experiences in years began in January of this year, when Leslie Fattig called me about an email she had received from an English gentleman, who had been trying in vain to locate someone in Hastings, the town where I was born, grew up, met my wife, and have many relatives buried. She forwarded the email to me and it told an amazing story.

Joseph E. Barton, an 81 year old Englishman, had tried for years to locate someone in Hastings who knew of the family of Lt. Donald K. Cameron, whose plane crashed almost on top of Mr. Barton and his chums. The story is best told in Mr. Barton's words:

"I have written to numerous people in and around Hastings, without reply so you are my last hope. In October 1943 we were on our October break from school. I met up with my cousin and a couple of friends to play on the Cast Iron Shore at Garston Liverpool. This section of the River Mersey is directly behind what was then Speke Airport. This was used as an assembly airfield putting together aircraft that had been shipped in parts from the U.S. On the day in question we were larking about alongside the airport fence when out of the corner of my eye, I saw a US thunderbolt fighter flying slowly down river at approximately 250 ft. maximum. We could clearly see the pilot in the cockpit, so in our excitement we started jumping up and down, and began waving to him. At this point he was roughly 150 yards from us, when he started to make a left turn both towards us and the airport. Then his plane stalled and just fell out of the sky, landing in deep mud on the shoreline. When the water and gravel settled, we could see the aircraft had belly flopped heels up, and the fuselage had broken in two just behind the cockpit. We could clearly see the pilot, just leaning forward into the right hand corner of the cockpit, motionless. At this point all four of us decided to try and rescue him in case there was a fire, so we took our shoes and socks off and started towards the plane. But after 30 yards or so, we were up to our thighs in mud and couldn't move, so we had to return to the shore. Just then, the R.A.F. crash crew arrived and within ten minutes they had the

**"History has the capacity to educate us, amuse us, even astonish us. And sometimes it just makes us happy."**

pilot out and brought him ashore on a stretcher which they put down at the side of the road to wait for the ambulance to arrive. As I walked up the road, I stopped and stood at the foot of the stretcher. He looked to me as though he was sleeping, as there wasn't a mark on him. I was then told to clear off by the crash crew, so I went home. I didn't know if he was dead or alive. Over the years I have told my family about this poor airman. Then chance came into my story. I bought a book and in it found various email addresses of clubs who specialized in war time air crashes and very kindly gave me a lot of info on this crash. I discovered that the pilot was 1st Lt. Donald K. Cameron, whose parents lived at 1131 North St. Joseph Ave., Hastings, Nebraska. He was buried at Cambridge U.S. Military cemetery, so I got my son to take me there. I found his grave, and said my little piece. Being as I became a member of the R.A.F. myself, I feel I have a bond to this unfortunate son of Hastings. I have in my possession numerous documents I have acquired to complete this story, which I will send to you by post if you are interested. It is almost 70 years since Lt. Donald K. Cameron was killed, and he will be

remembered by me to my dying day as a brave man who found his way to the U.K. to join the R.A.F., and when your country declared war on Germany, he then joined your U.S.A.F. to help us out in our darkest hours, and sadly paid with his life, as did many others. I trust you will understand my desire to pass on this memory, as I firmly believe that no member of the armed forces who gave his life should ever be forgotten.”

-Joseph Eric Barton

I thought Mr. Barton's story was compelling and deserved to be investigated. I was very familiar with the address given for Lt. Cameron, as it was about three blocks from my former home, and I knew several families who lived in the 1100 block on North St. Joseph. I told Leslie I would see what I could find, and went to work.

My first step was to enlist the aid of a good friend in Hastings, who is a very capable historian in her own right. Marlene Mullen (Mrs. Dennis) has written extensively and capably about life in Hastings during World War II, and I thought she would be the sleuth who could turn up any information about Lt. Cameron if it existed. She enthusiastically agreed and soon furnished me with a treasure trove of information about Lt. Cameron and his family, which unfortunately no longer existed in Hastings.

Marlene sent me Lt. Cameron's death notice and photo from the Hastings Tribune, pages from his high school annual, stories relating the deaths of his father and mother, and a report of her conversation with Sally Pinney Smith, another good friend of mine, who grew up next door to Lt. Cameron's home and remembered him very well. Marlene also talked to the Adams County Historical Society (her husband is a member of the

**“Mr. Barton truly exemplified Churchill's brave words during World War II, ‘We shall never surrender.’ And Mr. Barton did not.”**

board) and reported they would be very glad to have anything Mr. Barton had about Lt. Cameron.

We began an extensive email correspondence with Mr. Barton and found him to be a thoroughly delightful gentleman, who had not let his interest in Lt. Cameron lapse. He had communicated with American military officials for years, and had obtained a voluminous file about Lt. Cameron. Lt. Cameron had joined the RAF prior to America's entrance into the war, and then transferred to the Army Air Corps. Mr. Barton had in his file copies of correspondence between Lt. Cameron's father and the Army, and even had a copy of the inventory of the Lieutenant's personal effects that were shipped to his parents after his death.

Mr. Barton visited Lt. Cameron's grave in the lovely U.S. Military Cemetery at Cambridge, and had his photo taken at Lt. Cameron's grave. He graciously sent copies of his entire file, including the photo, to me, and I forwarded them to Marlene, who put them in the hands of the Adams County Historical Society.

I have maintained email correspondence with Mr. Barton, and we have exchanged photos and family information. We are both 81 years old, and I served in the U.S. Air Force while Mr. Barton was in the R.A.F. He is a very gracious man, and we will continue to stay in touch.

Jim Hewitt

None of this would have taken place had not Mr. Barton determined that a U.S. airman, helping to protect England, should not have died in vain. He was indefatigable over a long period of years in amassing a vast amount of material about Lt. Cameron, and exerting repeated efforts to locate Cameron's family or residents of Hastings who knew something of him. His persistence was finally rewarded when he contacted Leslie Fattig. She knew the right buttons to push when she contacted me, and Marlene Mullen and Sally Smith added flesh and bone to the skeletal framework of the story.

All of us who worked on the project are grateful for the experience, and for the determination and interest of Mr. Barton. Mr. Barton truly exemplified Churchill's brave words during World War II, “We shall never surrender.” And Mr. Barton did not. 🇺🇸

*Jim Hewitt joined the NSHSF Board of Trustees in 1993 and served as president of the Foundation from 1999 to 2003. Jim received his Ph.D. in American history from the University of Nebraska and retired from Nebco in 2003, where he was vice president and legal counsel.*



# Foundation Investments

BY ROD WALKER, CHAIRMAN, INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

FOUNDATION SUPPORT			
TIME PERIOD	DIRECT	INDIRECT	TOTAL
FY 2011-2012	\$288,568.31	\$38,313.35	\$326,881.66
FY 2012-2013	\$486,050.00	\$39,852.00	\$525,902.00
FY 2013-2014 (as of 12/31/13)	\$198,542.03	\$22,927.00	\$221,469.03

At year-end 2013, the market value of Foundation Investments was \$11,928,000. There are 43 segmented accounts within this total, many of which have restrictions on their use. Currently, 40% of the total assets are totally restricted, 45% partially restricted, and only 15% are unrestricted. From another perspective, 52% of total Foundation Investment assets support the maintenance and upkeep of the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center in Omaha and the endowment for the Paintings Conservation position.

Foundation Investments are governed by the Investment Policy which is updated annually. The Funds are professionally managed by Wells Fargo with over-site by the Foundation Investment Committee. Wells Fargo has managed the portfolio for over 10 years and investment performance has been favorable and in-line with standard performance benchmarks. Investment fees are in-line with comparable sized portfolios of other foundations.

The funds have a relative conservative asset allocation: 60% equity and 40% fixed income. This asset allocation is in-line with the need to control risk (market volatility) and the requirement for steady current income. The

**“The Investment Portfolio of the Foundation is sufficient to provide support for a number of Society needs. Support for major Society projects or capital improvements would likely require fundraising by the Foundation in the future.”**

Foundation currently has a 3% annual spending policy guideline and a 2.5% administrative charge (against certain assets) to fund Foundation operation. These percentages are in-line with the expected long-term performance of the portfolio based upon its asset allocation. A spending policy rate of more than 3% would require a higher percentage of equities, but would also bring higher risk and greater market volatility to the portfolio.

Rod Walker

The table above shows Foundation support of the Nebraska State Historical Society over the past several years.

The Investment Portfolio of the Foundation is sufficient to provide support for a number of Society needs. Support for major Society projects or capital improvements would likely require fundraising by the Foundation in the future.

*Rod Walker is the current NSHSF Investment Committee Chair and joined the Foundation in 2006. Rod retired from Mutual of Omaha as Senior Vice President of Investment Management. He and his wife Vicki live in Omaha.*





## Director's Corner (continued from page 1)

Operator, Forts on the Trial by Jeff Barnes, NSHS Trustee and Emigrant Voices, and "The Courage to Continue: Changing Homesteads in Nebraska" by Cherrie Beam-Clarke, NSHS Trustee.

Sunday, July 20th, the State Bank of Ansley in Ansley and the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation will co-host a reception from 4 to 6 pm featuring, on-loan from MONA, Solomon Butcher & Wright Morris photographs. NSHS historian John Carter, Senior Research Folklorist, and NSHS Executive Director Mike Smith will present.

Saturday, September 13th in Valentine, tour highlights include two sites on the National Register of Historic Places: The 1936 Post Office and the 1901

County Courthouse. A tour of the Cherry County Historical Society exhibits will follow. Meet & Greet attendees will then re-convene at the main event site—Valentine's Centennial Hall—the oldest high school building in the State of Nebraska. Built in 1897, this building was saved from destruction by a group of local activists in the 1980s and now serves as a museum. A guided tour of Centennial Hall will be available. Refreshments will be served on the grounds of Colburn Park, directly in front of Centennial Hall. Bob Puschendorf, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at the NSHS, and author of *Nebraska's Post Office Murals: Born of the Depression, Fostered by the New Deal*, will talk about the fascinating

history of Valentine's Post Office mural. John Carter, Senior Research Folklorist and Associate Editor at the NSHS, will give a talk about the Society's current investigative work on a Custer County sod house. ☞

### Remember Omaha Gives & Give to Lincoln Day!

For more details on how to support the NSHSF on these days, please see the back of this newsletter.

continued from page 11

## Trustee Spotlight—Christian Petersen

Many Lincolniters are familiar with Christian Petersen's remarkable historic home located in the near south area where he has lived for over half of his life.

Originally from Dewitt, Nebraska, Christian purchased the home in 1984 and set about restoring it to its original glorious splendor by bringing the house to life with his interesting and imaginative use of space and design.

Years later, an adjacent frame home was purchased, dismantled and recycled, and a koi pond and sculpture gardens were added. If you'd like to see this beautiful place, the gardens will be

featured during the Wachiska Audubon Habitat Tour on Father's Day.

Christian enjoys collecting antiques and researching his home's history. Quite coincidentally, the home was built by James E. Lawrence, who along with Addison E. Sheldon and Nathan Gold, incorporated the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation on September 25, 1942. Their original vision of providing aid and assistance to the Nebraska State Historical Society continues through our efforts today. ☞

Christian Petersen



Remember NSHSF on May 21st and 29th

# HISTORICAL Connections

## Omaha Gives is Wednesday, May 21st

On May 21st, the Omaha Community Foundation is challenging you to support your favorite causes by donating during Omaha Gives! The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation and the Gerald

R. Ford Conservation Center have a chance to win matching funds and prize money for donations coming in. We are excited to be a part of our city's giving holiday—Omaha Gives!—on May 21st!

Learn more at [OmahaGives24.org](http://OmahaGives24.org) and get ready to prove how generous Omaha can be!

Save the date and get ready to give at [www.OmahaGives24.org](http://www.OmahaGives24.org).

## Give to Lincoln Day is Thursday, May 29th

On May 29th from 12:00 am to 11:59 pm, the Lincoln Community Foundation will host Give To Lincoln Day. We hope to make this a record-setting day of online giving and raise thousands of dollars to support Lincoln and Lancaster County nonprofit organizations. The need for funding has never been greater as the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation and the Nebraska

State Historical Society are stretched to meet current needs and carry out our work. Every donation we receive on Give To Lincoln Day will be increased by a proportional match from a \$300,000 challenge matching pool.

Gifts can be made online or accepted in person during regular business hours at the Lincoln Community Foundation, 215 Centennial Mall South.

Save the date for Give to Lincoln Day!

<http://GiveToLincoln.razoo.com>



[www.nshsf.org](http://www.nshsf.org) • 402-435-3535

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the NSHSF  
Connecting people with  
Nebraska History since 1942.



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