

Building on the Past Looking to the Future



Nebraska State Historical Society
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



Letter from your Foundation President



MICHAEL NELSON

Milestone birthdays call for celebrations, and this year we are doubly blessed.

As Nebraskans, we share a civic pride in the 150th anniversary of statehood. As friends and trustees we commemorate the founding of your Foundation 75 years ago.

Such landmark anniversaries prompt reflection on the Foundation's passing year (so far as Nebraska's year is concerned, that's best left to the editorial page editors).

The numbers, stories and anecdotes tell a story of progress in fundraising, outreach and management practices.

These success stories were written by you, our Foundation trustees and supporters. They were written through your gifts, your dedication, your ideas, your service on boards and committees and dozens of other undertakings, large and small.

We thank you.

The Staff

Executive director Leslie Fattig continues to move this Foundation forward.

Now in her fourth year, Leslie has grown in mastery of the many and varied tasks associated with her position. Her drive and enthusiasm continue to pay dividends. Her two associates, Lori Heaton and Tony Dworak, are performing at a high level.

Lori is now two years into her job as business manager and has played the key role in changes in business practices. She has clarified records and worked hand-in-hand with new accountants and auditors to insure accurate, complete and understandable records.

Tony was relatively new to his job as development director when we convened last spring. His efforts strengthen relations with trustees and outside donors. Notable fundraising initiatives have been launched. More details are later in this report.

The successes chronicled throughout this report are built on the energy and abilities of these three people.

FACING PAGE: (FROM TOP) TRUSTEES **VALARIE** AND **NATE GEISERT** OF OGALLALA WITH THE OLDEST TRACTOR ON THEIR FARM, A 1919 WATERLOO BOY, THE FIRST TRACTOR MANUFACTURED BY THE JOHN DEERE COMPANY. TRUSTEES **ROD** AND **ROBIN BATES** OF LINCOLN. BOTH THE BATESES AND THE GEISERTS ARE FIRST YEAR TRUSTEES. NEW TRUSTEES **ED** AND **SUE TRICKER**, THE FOUNDATION'S TREASURER. **TREVOR JONES**, NSHS CEO AND DIRECTOR, SPEAKING AT THE JOSLYN CASTLE RECEPTION IN OMAHA. (AT LOWER RIGHT) **KAY** AND **HARL DALSTROM**, FOR WHOM THE PUBLICATIONS SUITE AT THE SOCIETY HEADQUARTERS HAS BEEN NAMED.

ON THE COVER: STATE CAPITOL UNDER CONSTRUCTION, SEPTEMBER 27, 1928. AFTER TWO POORLY BUILT, LACKLUSTER CAPITOLS ON THIS SITE, NEBRASKA CHOSE A SKYSCRAPER DESIGN. BUILT IN FOUR PHASES OVER TEN YEARS (1922-1932), THE BUILDING CAME IN JUST UNDER ITS \$10 MILLION BUDGET AND WAS PAID FOR COMPLETELY WHEN FINISHED. **NSHS RG1234-40-6**

The Board of Trustees

As the Foundation prepares to welcome its Trustees of '17, it is worth recalling three guiding principles offered to newcomers in past years:

- *We are united in the cause of history.*
- *As a Trustee, you can be as active as you wish, and as your time allows.*
- *Your service can take the form of time, talent or treasure.*

Membership is the backbone of this Foundation.

The Board of Trustees grew by 15 members, or 10 percent, from 150 members in calendar year 2015 to 165 members in '16.

We are grateful for your willingness to donate. In calendar year 2015 almost three out of four Trustees donated to the Foundation and its undertakings. In 2016 that proportion remained about the same.

The projects you chose to support are discussed in the Fundraising segment.

As the Foundation welcomes new Trustees we thank those who have left since our last annual meeting.

They include Lance Bristol of Ansley; Mary Kay Peck of Columbus; Jane Johnson of Fremont; Joan Malk and Ann Stebbins Sidles, both of Lincoln; Jan and Van Korell of McCook; George Woods Haecker and John Steinheider, both of Omaha, and Bart Schaneman of Scottsbluff.

This group was notable for its years of service and range of donations.

Meanwhile several Trustees have joined the Board of Directors:

- Sue Tricker of Lincoln has joined the board in her inaugural year as Foundation Treasurer,
- Ryan Sailer, also of Lincoln, comes to the board as the new chair of the Investment and Audit Committee, and
- Robert McFarland of Grand Island is the new representative to the Foundation board from the Hall County Historical Society.

At this writing no directors have announced plans to leave the board.

Two noted Trustees have died since we last met:

- Charles M. Godwin, PhD, died in May at age 84. He was a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the Teachers College. He also taught



FORMER STATE SENATOR **LEROY LOUDEN** OF ELLSWORTH
AND **BOB DAVIS** OF OMAHA. BOTH ARE TRUSTEES.

several years in Spain, and was active in People to People. He served 14 summers as director of the Cheley Camps in Estes Park, and was honored for his efforts to bring underprivileged children there. He graciously provided a gift annuity of nearly \$4,000 for the Foundation.

- Dean L. Petersen of Lincoln died in August. He was 89. A retired U.S. Navy captain and a skillful pilot, he became a trucking executive known widely for volunteer work. He served on the boards of Doane College and the Lower South Platte NRD. He was a past president of the Cornhusker Boy Scout Council, and a leader in many civic and philanthropic groups.

We are grateful for their lives and support, and those of other Trustees whose passing has not been made known to the Foundation.

Bequests and endowments

Many donors turn to this Foundation because they are seeking a way to serve the future by honoring the past. We provide management of bequests and strive to meet the wishes of the donors.

In the last year the Foundation learned more about one previously announced bequest and news of another.

Shortly before the annual meeting last spring, we were notified of a bequest from Jack and Patricia Glass of Margate, Florida. The couple had Nebraska roots and specified that the gift should underwrite children's educational materials and programs.

It is still not fully settled, but \$130,000 has come in, and the estate attorney reckons another \$25,000 or so should be expected.

Mrs. Glass died in 2002; Mr. Glass in 2015. Occasional donors to the Foundation over the years, the Glasses dedicated the fund to the memory of Louis and Sarah Glass, the family of Willis M. and Idalyn Gwyer Yates and Frank L. Capps.

With her death last year, Marilyn Paul passed to the Foundation just over \$11,000. We are grateful for it.

Mrs. Paul was six months short of her 100th birthday when she died in January 2016. She grew up in Papillion, attended Midland College in Fremont, and had worked as a secretary in Lincoln. She was devoted to her church, St. Theresa's, and was active in many Catholic organizations. She was a member of the Lincoln Symphony Guild, the American Legion Auxiliary and several other cultural groups. She was the widow of Marvin S. Paul.

Her gift was a surprise. Mrs. Paul was neither a past donor nor an associate of the Foundation.

Also, her unexpected donation took the form of certificates of deposit upon which the Foundation had been listed as co-owner. It is an easy alternative to redrafting a will, allows for flexibility and illustrates a simple way through which this Foundation can be remembered in a bequest.

A Year of Fundraising

Since the last annual meeting our fundraising has ramped up.

It seems that many people—whether Trustees or not—see your Foundation as a way to say "Happy Birthday, Nebraska!"

And we're glad they do.

Tony Dworak is now leading two important efforts, and playing a role in several others:

- The Oldfield Brigade has been formed to honor those who have included, or intend to include, the Foundation in their estate plan.

This initiative is named for Vada and Barney Oldfield, a colorful couple who moved from Nebraska to California in the '30s. There they came to know fame, fortune and filmdom—and became special friends of a young actor named Ronald Reagan. Their many charitable gifts to Nebraska included their Lincoln condo, which serves now as World Headquarters for your Foundation.

Teasing aside, that bequest—and that of a fund to pay the condo fees—have made the Foundation one of the most cost-efficient charities in the state, if not the Midwest.

- The 150 Fund for Nebraska History celebrates our sesquicentennial. A new project for this special year, it's sort of a thank-you note to the past.

One hundred and fifty donors are sought. Each donor—be it a couple, family or individual—pledges \$15,000 to be paid over five years. The rules are flexible. So far 18 donors have made this commitment in a significant year.

Two recent gifts merit special attention:

- In December the Historical Society dedicated the Harl A. and Kay Dalstrom Research and Publications Suite at the Society's headquarters building at 1500 R Street in Lincoln.

The Dalstroms are widely respected figures who have built careers in research and writing, much of it about Nebraska and, notably, Omaha. They have been willing to put their money where their interests lie as donors to your Foundation over many years.

- In the last few weeks a longtime donor pledged \$150,000 to launch a unique partnership to further history education for Nebraska elementary students. The donation will underwrite programs in conjunction with the Kearney Archway Foundation. Being brand new, this worthwhile project still has some unanswered questions. More information will be forthcoming as this undertaking moves ahead.

The Marker Project

Outreach sometimes holds hands with fundraising. Such was the case in the Foundation's marquee project this year, The Nebraska Marker Project.

Led by Trustee volunteers, heavily supported by a volunteer public relations organization, and using social media as well as traditional media, the Marker Project is moving toward its dual goals:

- To raise money to repair 100 or so damaged and deteriorating markers statewide, and
- To identify through the donations a corps of unknown allies, people statewide who will support your Foundation and its activities on behalf of the cause of history.

Results so far are good.

As noted last year, the seeds of the Marker Project were planted through conversations at the 2015 Cattlemen's Ball, the popular cancer fundraising event.

People who stopped to see the Foundation's booth wanted to talk about history and the Society's activities. When the topic of historical markers came up, they jumped on it, mentioning the importance of markers, how they tell the stories of their communities, and often mentioning those in need of repair.

Soon thereafter Foundation Trustees banded together to organize and guide the effort.

Playing important roles were these Trustees: Dee Adams of Merna, former state Sen. LeRoy and SharonAnn Loudon of Ellsworth, and Jim Hewitt and John Strope of Lincoln.

Joining them was Jeff Barnes of Omaha, who serves on the board of the Historical Society.

It was an early Facebook post concerning the coming campaign that caught the eye of the president of the Nebraska chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. Randa Zalman offered to take on the Marker campaign gratis as a pro bono project of the chapter.

Its results, in large part, are due to that effort.

Credit is also due Trustee Kirk Jamison, who on his own initiative (and before the Marker Committee's coffee grew cold), landed a \$5,000 donation from Nebraska Farm Bureau Services, thus providing needed seed money for the project.

Since the launch, more than \$34,000 has been raised, or nearly \$40,000 with the Farm Bureau contribution. The original goal was \$80,000.

But, as has been said many times: The money is but part of the goal.

Breakouts show we are faring well on the path toward identifying new contributors.

Of more than 300 gifts, almost half have come from first-time donors with no connection to the Foundation. Two county historical societies (Frontier and Hooker) and one local society, Brownville, pitched in. International contributions have come from Toronto and Ankara.

The campaign strengthened our presence through some news coverage, but especially through social media outreach.

Facebook "likes" rose from 250 in January 2016 to about 1,700 in recent weeks. By last January, 600 Facebook posts had been shared to personal pages. Foundation videos have scored about 47,000 views.

And, by the way, the first marker has been chosen for repair. It is the Fort



FROM LEFT: **NANCY DAVIS, BOB DAVIS, CYNTHIA OLSON.**
ALL ARE TRUSTEES AND NANCY IS A DIRECTOR.

Banishment marker near Ravenna, the "poster child" for the campaign.

In addition, Randa's efforts on behalf of your Foundation were recognized recently by the Nebraska public relations group with an Award of Merit for integrated use of communications in fundraising. The Marker Project is to be included in a textbook as a study in integrated communications.

Earlier this year the Foundation Board of Directors voted to make the Marker Project an ongoing campaign.

Do not underestimate the benefits made possible through this project:

- The dollars are important, yes, but more important are the relationships built with communities large and small across Nebraska.
- Some first-time donors, and perhaps many, are looking for a way to show support in the cause of Nebraska history. They may not have known where to turn.
- This campaign can show concrete results from donor dollars.

And speaking of marking things



Last year we mentioned the plaque honoring Nebraska statehood. It will be placed soon on the capital's Centennial Mall. They're waiting on the weather to warm up fully.

The perpetual marker commemorates the roles of the Historical Society and this Foundation.

It cost \$25,000, and was bought with your generous contributions in response to the Nebraska birthday campaign appeal.

The capstone gift of \$7,000 came in the life annuity of Beulah Bedke of Lincoln. Ms. Bedke died in January 2016 at age 95. She was a lover of history, a strong supporter of The CEDARS Home for Children and a past president of Beta Sigma Phi, the professional women's association.

Our outreach mission

"State" is our middle name, and the Foundation strives to live up to it through regular communication and informational meetings statewide.

Known as "meet and greet" sessions, these gatherings offer a chance to build relationships in communities across Nebraska:

- Once again we were at the Cattlemen's Ball in June, this time near Princeton, a Lancaster County village between Beatrice and Lincoln.

The 2016 version was a stronger presence, benefitting from lessons learned at our initial participation in 2015 in Boyd County in Niobrara country.

Bolder banners decorated our space, and a photo booth offered visitors free "vintage photo" opportunities. More than 100 portraits were taken of visitors in western attire.

Key to the success was Kylie Kinley and Jeff and Sue Barnes, all of the Society, and Trustees John and Gloria Strobe.

- July saw a "welcome to Nebraska" reception at Omaha's Joslyn Castle for Trevor Jones, the newly installed director of the State Historical Society. More than 70 people attended. The success of this event was due in large part to the efforts of Bryan Zimmer, a trustee of the Society, and more than two dozen Foundation and corporate underwriters.
- In late September another Meet Trevor reception was held at what is arguably the state's most important historic site, Chimney Rock. Trevor, his wife Kate McDougall, and Society Trustee Jeff Barnes accompanied executive director Leslie Fattig on a multi-site tour. The four visited Scotts Bluff National Monument, and the impressive Legacy of the Plains Museum in Gering, which has been recently renovated. Videos promoting the Marker Project were shot at Oshkosh, Ravenna and Ash Hollow State Historical Park.
- Capping the Autumn of Receptions was the October gathering at the historic stable building at Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln.

A strong turnout—80 people—met Trevor and Kate, and heard Ed Zimmer talk about the history of the cemetery. Zimmer is historic preservation planner for the City of Lincoln and works closely with the Historical Society.

The cost of the event was defrayed by 22 sponsoring couples and individuals.

Outreach through the airwaves

More Nebraskans will be able to get a regular dose of history as the result of the efforts of your Foundation and one of its Trustees, John Strope. It all has to do with broadcasting.

The State Historical Society has long sponsored a series of informal talks. Held once a month in Lincoln and always at noon, they're nicknamed "the Brown Bag lectures."

Since 2004 your Foundation has helped pay for videotaping so the lectures could be shared on YouTube. Anyone with computer access could see them.

Then the Lincoln cable TV franchise agreed to broadcast them locally.

Now, through John's efforts, major cable systems across the state have already or will join in.

First to sign on were Omaha, South Sioux City, Beatrice, Papillion, Hastings, North Platte, Grand Island and Bellevue. Recently those cities were joined by Blair, Bassett, Chadron and Sidney.

Going forward

Great strides have been taken since the Foundation convened in Lincoln last year.

So what opportunities does the future hold?

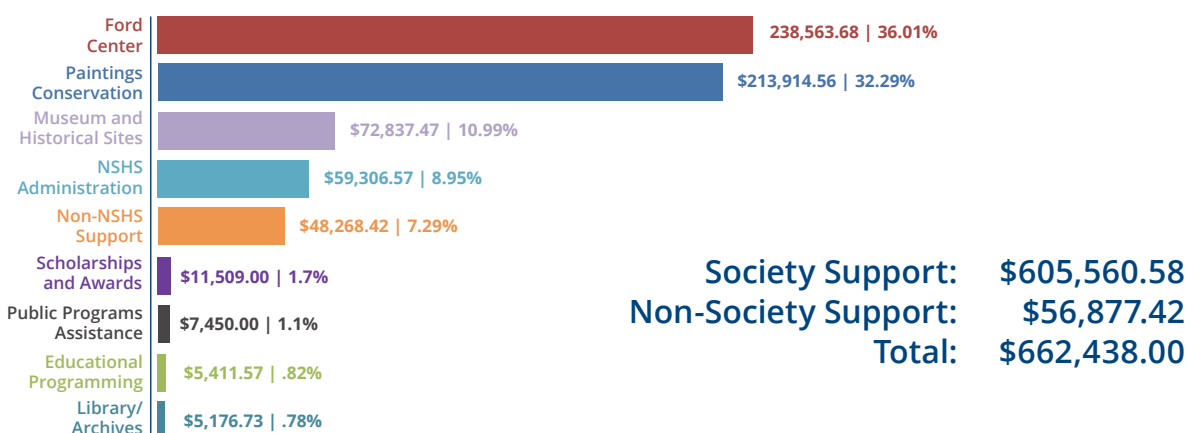
Heck, we don't know. If we did, our offices would overlook Wall Street, not P Street.

But certainly the appointment of Trevor Jones and the new directions that inevitably will arise from that, as well as those initiated by the Nebraska State Historical Society Board of Trustees, will cause this Foundation to evaluate new ways to be of assistance.

No matter what they might be, your Foundation will be ready—ready to serve the future by honoring the past.

Foundation Funds Released 2015-2016

The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation supports a range of activities whose aim is to increase knowledge and appreciation for Nebraska's unique heritage. Support is provided to, but is not limited to, the projects and programs of the Nebraska State Historical Society.



Areas of Support:

The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation has the privilege of supporting Nebraska history in a variety of ways: resources made possible by endowed and invested funds, direct donor gifts, unrestricted funds, and absorbing into our operating budget those items and events that would not otherwise be possible without private support.

The **GERALD R. FORD CONSERVATION CENTER** received funding for the completion of the much needed new HVAC system, as well as other building repairs.

Funds for **PAINTINGS CONSERVATION** provide for full-time staffing, the purchase of lab equipment and supplies for the Paintings Conservation Laboratory.

The **MUSEUM/HISTORIC SITES DIVISION** received funding to advance and promote museums and historic landmarks across the state. Funds were used to support the Nebraska History Museum renovation, reopening and repairs to the Kennard House.

NSHS ADMINISTRATION funding makes possible the advancement of Nebraska history that restricted budgets are unable to support. The Foundation was able to support a portion of the NSHS Awards with grants to individuals who have championed Nebraska history in their own way, as well as covering expenses for history-related conferences and retreats, and contributing to the Society's historical marker program.

NON-NSHS SUPPORT includes funds dedicated to the Foundation property expenses, including the historic Furnas House in Brownville, those non-NSHS organizations that have endowments managed by the Foundation.

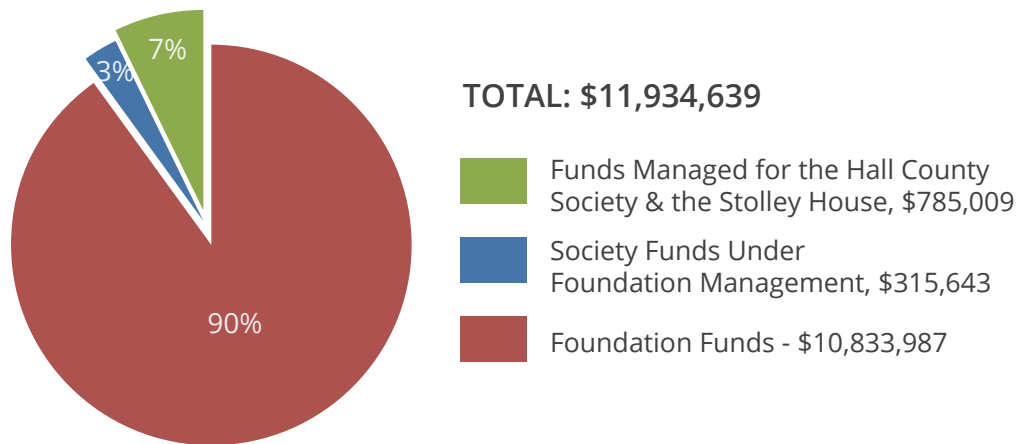
SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS represent the Foundation's WWII scholarship program and Pearl Harbor Remembrance Awards, as well as NSHS research grants and their annual Seller's Award and Asa T. Hill Memorial Award.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS ASSISTANCE provides funds for the filming of the monthly Brown Bag Lecture series.

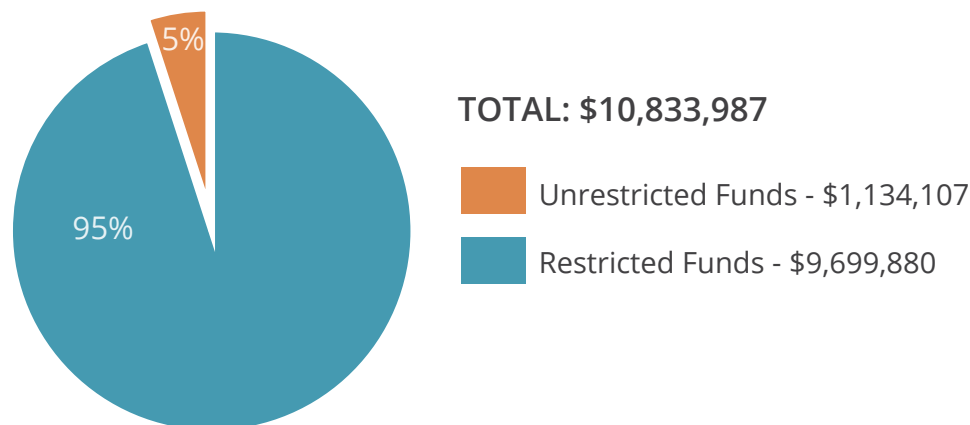
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING includes funds provided for the "Museum On The Move" program and the Nebraska Trailblazer.

THE LIBRARY/ARCHIVES DIVISION received assistance from the Foundation for a variety of projects, ranging from rebinding books and periodicals to purchasing items for the Library/Archives collection.

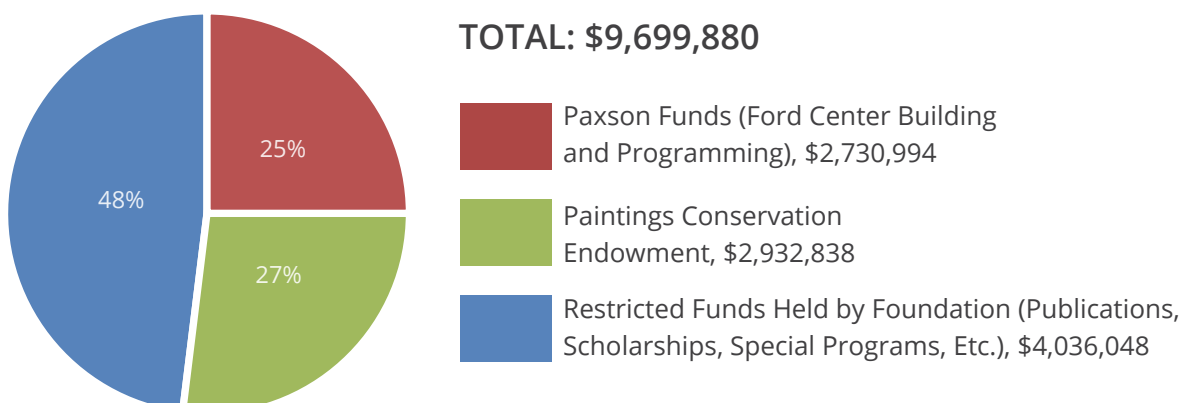
Total Funds Held by NSHSF as of December 31, 2016



Breakout of Foundation Funds (Restricted vs. Unrestricted)



Foundation Restricted Funds



Acknowledging Long-time Donors

Stewards of Nebraska History

Perpetually recognizes individuals and organizations for generous gift leadership totaling \$50,000 or more, including contributions of cash and property made during or after lifetime or a commitment for future support at this level.

Ethel S. Abbott Charitable Foundation
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Marjorie L. Barstow Estate
 Given in memory of Lt. Adrian DePutron
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Ronald D. Yost Estate

Guardians of Nebraska History

Perpetually recognizes individuals and organizations for generous gift leadership totaling \$10,000 to \$49,999, including contributions of cash and property made during or after lifetime or a commitment for future support at this level.

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Beatrice "Mike"* and Joe R. Seacrest

continued

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Guardians of Nebraska continued

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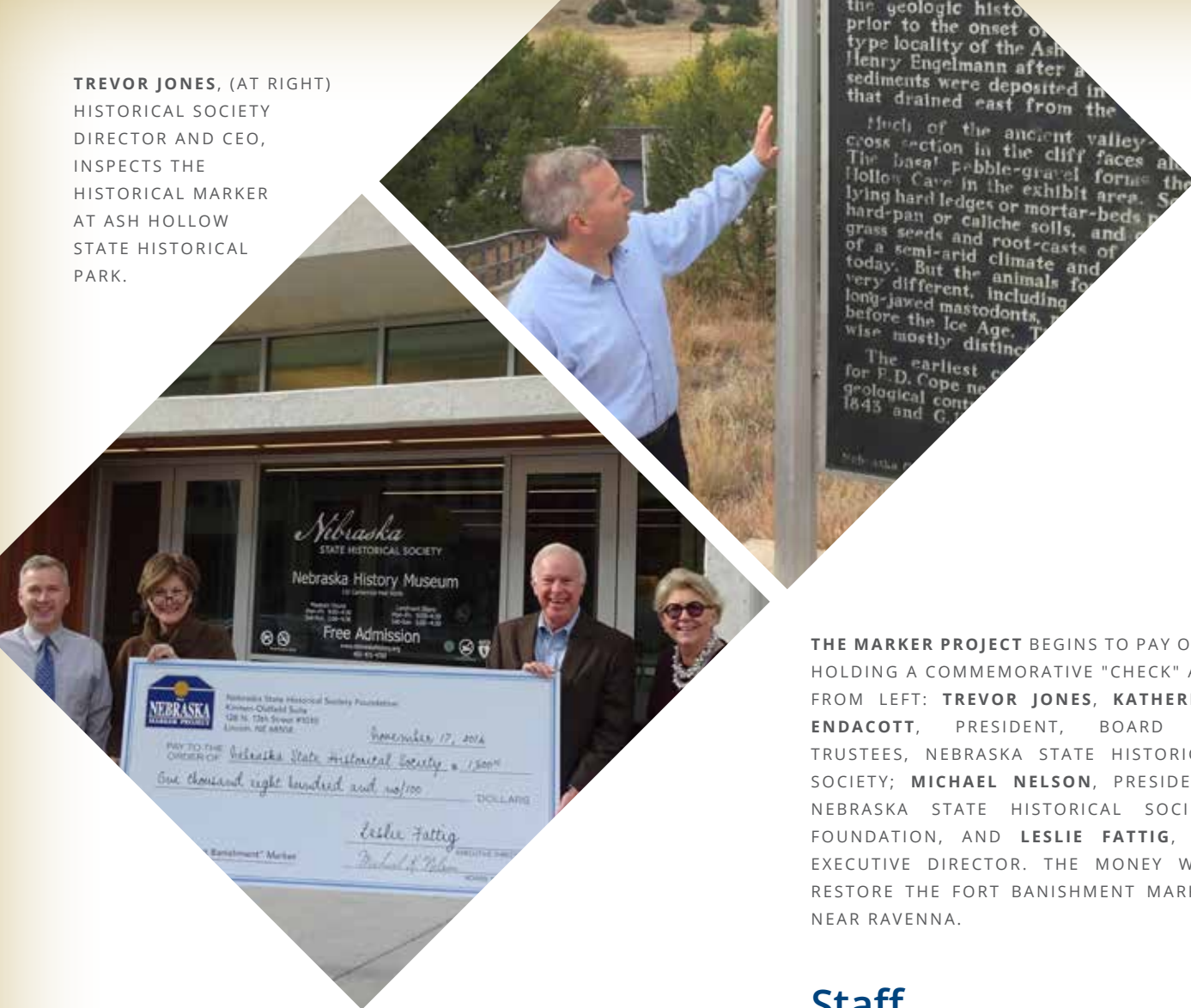
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- Foundation website:

www.nshsf.org

- Links to specific projects:

nshsf.org/2017-brown-bag-recordings-project/

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- Links to Society sites

Society on Facebook:

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www.nebraskahistory.org

JIM POTTER (RIGHT) A LONGTIME SOCIETY EMPLOYEE DIED UNEXPECTEDLY IN AUGUST. HIS WIFE, **GAIL DEBUSE POTTER**, DECIDED MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD GO TO THIS FOUNDATION.

TRUSTEES **CYNTHIA** AND **BOB MILLIGAN** JOINED THE THROG AT JOSLYN CASTLE RECEPTION IN OMAHA IN JULY.



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The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation raises money in support of the cause of history, including projects of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The Foundation solicits funds and support from individuals and organizations, across the state and beyond, who value Nebraska's unique heritage and wish to play a personal role in assuring that Nebraska's history will be accessible to future generations. The Foundation is a 501(C3) not-for-profit corporation.

PHOTO BOOTHS WERE USED TO ADD FUN TO EVENTS SPONSORED BY YOUR FOUNDATION. THE FOUNDATION HOSTED ONE BOOTH IN JUNE AT THE CATTLEMEN'S BALL. IT WAS OUR SECOND YEAR AT THE HIGHLY REGARDED EVENT. VISITORS POSED FOR PICTURES WHILE DRESSED AS PIONEERS, COWBOYS AND SALOON GIRLS. AT RIGHT, **KYLIE KINLEY** SHARES NEWLY SNAPPED PHOTOS WITH BOOTH ATTENDEES.

THE FOUNDATION'S POPULAR RECEPTION FOR LEGISLATORS DREW A LARGE CROWD IN JANUARY INCLUDING **SPENCER DAVIS**, TRUSTEE (CENTER). AMONG SENATORS ATTENDING WAS **STEVE ERDMAN** OF BAYARD, WHO CHOSE TO POSE AT THE PHOTO BOOTH WITH A BRANDING IRON. OTHER OBJECTS AVAILABLE INCLUDED THE ORIGINAL LEGISLATIVE GAVEL, A HISTORIC RIFLE AND AN ANTIQUE DOLL.



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