

HISTORICAL Connections

NEWS FROM THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION

Director's Corner

BY LESLIE FATTIG

Hello! 2016 included many substantial accomplishments for the Foundation and I thank you for helping to make each and every one of them happen. Whatever your role has been in our success—stuffing envelopes or sending a gift, participating in an event or serving as a committee member, updating the website or attending the Annual Meeting—I want you to know how much we appreciate your support.

I'd like to share with you a few accomplishments of which I am particularly proud.

Our Development Director, Tony Dworak, has initiated several exciting and successful new fundraising programs.

And our Operations are continually being refined and improved, thanks to our Business Manager, Lori Heaton.

Outreach and engagement have increased immeasurably, thanks to our President OJ Nelson. You will recall that last summer, President OJ announced our call to action to help the Society fix over 100 markers around the state. This program has proved to be a rousing success! We have made new friends around the world!

As we continue to improve and grow the Foundation, another significant program which we will be working on in 2017 is building an annual giving program. We look forward to working with the Society and our Trustees for insights and ideas for this program.

MARKER PROGRAM

The Marker Campaign kickoff gave the Foundation substantial statewide media coverage through several radio, newspaper and television interviews. We received an unexpected surprise in December—an unsolicited editorial in the Omaha World-Herald. More info about the marker program is on pages 2, 3 and 10.

150 FUND

Development Director Tony Dworak's 150 Fund concept has brought in over \$300,000 in pledges just since September. Nebraska history-loving individuals, families, and organizations are stepping up to become 150 Fund members, and in so doing, making some Nebraska history of their own.

Our goal for 2017 is to add at least 30 more names to the 150 Fund. You can read more about this on page 14.

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

The Oldfield Brigade is a salute to our benefactors, Barney and Vada Kinman-Oldfield. Our office condo was donated by this interesting couple, whose lives are revealed by our history-covered office walls. The Oldfield Brigade is another new program developed by Mr. Dworak. Is the NSHSF in your estate plan? Read more on page 11.

LEGACY GIFTS—NAME THAT PROPERTY!

The first such “renaming” was the Research and Publications Suite at the Nebraska State Historical Society headquarters, which is now the Harl A. and Kay Dalstrom Research and Publications Suite! Two similar “properties” will soon be announced.



Leslie Fattig



GAINING MOMENTUM!

Follow the progress of the Nebraska Marker Project on our Facebook page. And please consider donating by visiting the Nebraska Marker Project webpage at nshsf.org/the-nebraska-marker-project/

Historical Connections

Continued from page 1

This program focuses on bringing names of individuals and their families, organizations and businesses into the limelight for a great Nebraska cause. More about this interesting program is on page 17.

2017 is both the 150th birthday of the State of Nebraska and the 75th birthday of the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation. We hope that you will join us in celebrating these milestones by redoubling your efforts on behalf of the cause of history. Please remember that you may participate in many different ways and always at a level that is comfortable for you. 🇺🇸



Nebraska Marker Project Presented with Industry Honor

The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation received an Award of Merit for the Nebraska Marker Project at the 2016 PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) Nebraska Chapter's Paper Anvil Awards Gala.

The awareness and fundraising campaign won in the Integrated Communications Campaign category. The program must demonstrate the clear leadership of public relations, along with its integration with other PR disciplines. The Nebraska Marker Project created and utilized more than twenty communication

elements—the brochure, direct mail pieces, Facebook videos, and both TV and radio interviews.

This award is special in two ways! It's the first statewide award won by a PRSA Community Service project and the first award received by the Foundation for our marketing efforts.

The accomplishment was made possible by a collaboration of members of the Foundation team, the Nebraska State Historical Society team, the PRSA Nebraska Community Service committee, Canary & Coal, Redstone, and others. 🇺🇸



From Left to Right: Jeff Barnes, NSHS Trustee; Leslie Fattig, Executive Director; Katherine Endacott, NSHS President, Board of Trustees; Randa Zalman, President, Canary & Coal

Nebraska Marker Project Update

As of January 15, 2017, more than \$40,000 had been raised for marker repair and replacement. As donations from generous Nebraskans continue to roll in, we will turn these donations over to the Nebraska State Historical Society for the actual repair, repainting or replacement of the markers in need. We have more money to raise, but this is an excellent start.

Of the 256 donations received to date, 119 have been from new donors, which increases our database for future marketing and development communications. The Project received many donations outside of Nebraska, and even outside of the United States—some from as far away as Alaska and Ankara, Turkey. The Foundation's Facebook presence has added another channel for donations—more than 36 donations have been received through Facebook.

On November 16, 2016, the Foundation issued the first donation check from the Nebraska Marker Project fundraiser to repair a state historical marker commemorating a former Indian wars fort near Ravenna. Foundation President Michael Nelson and Executive Director Leslie Fattig presented Trevor Jones, Executive Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society, and NSHS President Katherine Endacott with a check for \$1,800 for the marker's restoration.

The Post South Loup Fork "Fort Banishment" marker is featured on materials promoting the Nebraska Marker Project. "We thought it was appropriate that our first restoration go to the marker that helped to start this fantastic, statewide engagement project," said Fattig. "Getting this marker



From Left to Right: Trevor Jones, Director & CEO, Nebraska State Historical Society; Katherine Endacott, President, Board of Trustees, Nebraska State Historical Society; Michael Nelson, President, Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation; Leslie Fattig, Executive Director, Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation

restored helps tell our history to future generations."

Though the markers are designed to be permanent, they are gradually worn down by weather, or damaged by vehicles and vandals. Repairs can vary from paint touch-up to complete replacement. The Nebraska Marker Project was created to raise funds to repair and preserve the more than 100 Nebraska historical markers in need of restoration. The original goal was to raise \$80,000.

However, at the January 2017 meeting of the NSHSF Board of Directors, the Marker Project was approved as a living campaign—there will always be markers in need of repair, and there will always be a need to underwrite the repair. State funding is not appropriated for the marker program—either for the cost

of new markers or the repair of those needing it. State statute established the program in 1957 but general fund support for new markers and repairs has not been available for decades.

AWARENESS

Public relations efforts have resulted in substantial exposure via local, regional and national press coverage. In addition to the many newspaper articles and radio interviews, Fattig appeared with NSHS Historian Jim Potter on 1011 Now's *Pure Nebraska* and with NSHS Trustee Jeff Barnes on KMTV's *The Morning Blend*.

The Nebraska Marker Project has also increased social media engagement—response has grown exponentially over the last year. In July of 2016, over 200,000 Facebook



users viewed one marker project post. In addition, the Foundation engaged a new outreach strategy to help increase its visibility on Facebook. Each month, a new video vignette was featured on the page to highlight the activity and updates associated with the Nebraska Marker Project. With more than 47,000 views, these videos have proven to be an effective outreach tool. The use of sight, sound and motion has helped build a strong following and appealed to a new audience. In the last six months, close to 600 NSHSF posts have been shared to other Facebook profiles.

In 2017, we will continue our successful social media outreach, including more video vignettes. WE MAY BE CALLING ON YOU TO RECORD A VIDEO IN YOUR AREA!

Donations can be made via mail, phone or the NSHSF website. All donations received go towards the restoration of damaged markers.

Project Website: nshsf.org/the-nebraska-marker-project/

NSHSF Facebook Page:
www.facebook.com/NebraskaStateHistoricalSocietyFoundation/

Foundation Trustee's Photo Chosen for Bridges Sesquicentennial Traveling Photo Exhibit

Richard Callaway, a Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation Trustee, has had his photograph chosen for Bridges: Sharing Our Past to Enrich the Future! Sponsored by the Hildegard Center for the Arts of Lincoln along with the Nebraska Tourism Commission and the Nebraska State Historical Society. Early last year, Bridges issued a call for photo entries of historic sites or "hidden treasures" located throughout the state. The judges then selected one photograph to represent each of Nebraska's 93 counties, from amongst over 800 entries.



Cherrie Beam-Callaway, NSHS Trustee

Callaway's photo, selected to represent Garden County, depicts an early Nebraska settler around the time of statehood in 1867. The structure behind her is a sod house at the Ash Hollow State Historical Park near Lewellen. Ash Hollow, a major stopover for wagons going westward, is of historical significance, having been written about in numerous diaries and journals of pioneers traveling through the Nebraska Territory. Wagon ruts from thousands of wagons that made their journey through Ash Hollow can still be seen today.

The woman portraying the pioneer is Cherrie Beam-Callaway, Richard's wife, a fifth-generation Nebraskan who had twelve sets of ancestors and their families homestead in Garden County. Many of her family members still reside in the state. This is how much of Nebraska was populated. Through perseverance and hard work, the early settlers helped develop the agricultural base that is important to the state today.



The Bridges Sesquicentennial Traveling Photo Exhibit premiered Friday, January 6th, at the Great Plains Art Museum in Lincoln, where it will be through March 25th. The 2017 tour schedule includes exhibitions at Seward, North Platte, Norfolk, Alliance, and Omaha. All 800+ entries can be seen online at the Hildegard Center's website: hildegardcenter.org.

Celebrating our past, changing with the times

BY MICHAEL NELSON

Quickly we recall dates of world-shaking events: Pearl Harbor. JFK's death. Man lands on the moon.

The dates loom large for those who lived through them.

And as for people who later came of age, they were educated and reminded through public commemorations.

Nevertheless, time has its way with things. Our grandparents knew the dates of the Battle of Gettysburg; today college students are uncertain about D-Day.

As Nebraska celebrates its 150th year of statehood, it's interesting to examine how our forebears marked the occasion through the first hundred years, review the emphases they brought, and seek what lessons may lie there for us today.

In the beginning...

Largely forgotten now, Territorial Day, was once the red-letter date in Nebraska.

Observances on May 30—parades and dinners mostly, it would appear—celebrated our pioneer past and commemorated Congressional approval in 1854 of territorial status, a first step to statehood.

As late as 1929—the 75th year—that celebration was on the calendar, and news reports forecast a Big Deal for that spring.

And then it seems to have fallen away. Why?

Seventy-five years would do that, especially in a time when life was harder and shorter. And maybe it was the times themselves, or perhaps the success of Statehood anniversary observances. It's hard to say.

Certainly the 1920s was a watershed era. It saw a new generation, one that



President Wilson and his wife, Edith, standing on a platform in front of the Douglas County Courthouse for a celebration of Nebraska's 50th Anniversary in 1916. The anniversary observation began in the autumn before the official date.

slogged through the trenches to win The War to End All Wars.

By '29 it was a modern age, a time of motor cars, jazz bands and radios. The hard territorial years of the 1850s and '60s were light years away.

Meanwhile the Statehood Day celebrations had set deeper roots.

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

As early as 1892, the 25th anniversary, organizers must have figured it was time to frame the statehood celebration not so much as a specific day but rather as a year of festivities. After all, March 1 would never do for a party on the prairie.

The "official" date was still highlighted by school pageants, history lectures and celebratory dinners. But the broad public

events—parades (several were reported to be grand ones) plus band concerts, town baseball games and covered-dish suppers—all migrated to summer months.

NEBRASKA TURNS 50: 1916-17

Twenty-five years later Nebraska's 50th anniversary would span almost a year, beginning in the autumn of 1916.



Michael Nelson is president of the Foundation.

It was indeed a golden anniversary:

- Large historical pageants, the earliest in Omaha, set the stage.
- Two presidents—Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt—separately took part.

Wilson, who was seeking re-election, spent a day in Omaha on October 5 as part of the pageant there. He was escorted by his wife.

It was a triumphal entry. Women rushed his mid-day motorcade, hoping Wilson would kiss their children, according to news reports.

His speech that night addressed the war in Europe.

“There is as much fight in America as in any nation in the world,” Wilson said, adding, “But she must know what she is fighting for.”

A morning headline proclaimed “President’s Every Mention of Peace Greeted With Tumultuous Applause.”

Teddy spoke in Lincoln on June 14 at the University of Nebraska commencement, a component of the second large celebration.

Apart from a quick nod to the anniversary, Nebraska cropped up but once in TR’s 20-minute address:

“Nebraska, like Kansas, was born of the Civil War,” he said, “It was the struggle over the admission to statehood of Kansas and Nebraska which marked the real opening of the contest that culminated at Appomattox.”

And then he was off to the races, praising the virtues of peace but the higher virtue of righteous war and asserted that the national unity had always followed a conflict.

- The State Historical Society recruited a committee of 100 Nebraskans to organize and oversee the festivities. Civic groups were encouraged to play major roles. Notably, Ak-Sar-Ben



President Woodrow Wilson waves his hat to a large and enthusiastic crowd gathered outside the old Woodmen of the World building at 14th and Farnam Streets on Oct. 5, 1916. Wilson made a one-day stop in Omaha to attend a pageant marking the 50th anniversary of Nebraska statehood.

assumed responsibility for much of the Omaha event.

- Religious services, civic programs and school pageants were coordinated statewide on specified dates, either Sunday, Feb. 12, or Thursday, March 1.

A DARK 75TH: 1942

Had fate—in the form of the Empire of Japan—not intervened, the 75th birthday might have been memorable.

But the statehood anniversary fell mere months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, in the darkest days of that time.

There were schoolhouse exercises and salutes to the anniversary in the newspapers of the day, but otherwise little else.

Perusing old pages we see articles with historic bits and pieces (“did you

know Nebraska means ‘flat water’?”).

But across the newspapers ran stories about the siege of Bataan with other articles discussing the strategic importance of the Dutch East Indies and places with names like Ambon and Dutch Timor.

The celebrations would have to wait.

HAPPY 100TH: 1967

Consider this: the Denver Broncos would play the Oakland Raiders. Big deal? Nah.

How about them playing in North Platte? At the high school?

That’s what happened on Sunday, Aug. 27th, 1967. The Broncos and Raiders met in an exhibition game. Broncos won, 21-17.

Logically, the game was dubbed the Nebraska Centennial Bowl. One of those

crazy-dreams—and this one worked, thanks to Max Anderson, a local sports fan and promoter.

Tickets? \$10. Stadium? Sold out.

That's the way the Centennial seemed to roll.

More than five years in the making, it included a wide array of activities, among them a Pony Express run re-enacted from St. Joseph, Mo.; a voyage down the Missouri by Nebraska's one-raft "Navy," and a statewide beauty contest to choose a Golden Girl.

Thousands showed up for a massive pioneer pageant at Ash Hollow, hundreds of trees were planted in honor of Arbor Day's founding, dozens of celebrities and duffers teed up at a Celebrity Golf Tournament in Hastings.

It bred pioneer beards and renewed interest in Western history, and bolstered a nascent movement in support of historic preservation and restoration. It encouraged tourism, beef consumption and civic undertakings, especially the Centennial Mall in Lincoln.

Nearly every community joined in somehow, through parties, fireworks or projects.

ROCKIN' AT 125: 1992

To many of us who lived it—and almost all of us did—five words summed up the 125th celebration: Party on the Capitol lawn!

The operative word was "lawn," especially for a generation of free spirits who had to be taught by officers of the law that while the statehouse bluegrass might belong to the people, "the people" weren't your direct relatives.

The grounds seemed awash in historic displays, vendors and birthday cakes.

That evening Seacrest Field filled up for a laser light show and entertainment—Bill Cosby (then known only as a beloved comedian) and

Billy Ray Cyrus (then of "Achy-Breaky Heart" fame, rather than fatherhood). Admittance: \$2 a head.

Other happenings were far and wide. In fact, more than 1,200 sanctioned events took place in '92.

Unique among them was the christening and commissioning of the missile submarine USS Nebraska in Groton, Conn. (Side note: the sub was the 14th ship of its class, as was the battleship of the same name when it was launched in 1904.)

LOOKING TO 150

Engagement, both broad and individual, characterizes several initiatives as the 150th anniversary dawns.

Notable will be a series of citizen-produced, amateur videos. Anyone can participate (For information, see www.iamnebraska.com and while you're there, view Gov. Pete Ricketts' contribution.)

History moves to the fore—as it should at this special time—through what are described as lively video shorts featuring notable stories from Nebraska's past.

Engagement is part of a volunteer initiative as well that will increase civic and charitable activity. And a get-off-the-couch program hopes to do the same for exercise.

There will be much more rolling out as the year moves on, including specifics about plans for major public celebrations.

For information on all of this, go to ne150.org

AND SO...

What might we learn from more than a century of celebrations?

I'd suggest that as Foundation trustees we might think about these points:

- Depth of feeling has run like an underground stream through Nebraskans for more than 100 years.

Whether it is a time of trouble or a moment of pride, the friends of Nebraska history stand ready to work hard, create solutions, write checks.

We can count on it.

- The importance of an organized, willing band of volunteers.

Two of the observances that were particularly successful—the 50th of 1917 and the 100th—were each built on the cornerstone of proven volunteers, organized several years in advance.

- Past celebrations respected Nebraska's traditions, but bent the rules.

Sometimes our forebears dreamed big. Pro football in North Platte? A cast of hundreds at Ash Hollow? Two presidents joining in the observance?

(Imagine, if you can, the sitting President and Mr. Obama as sesquicentennial celebrators. The political animosities are not completely different from those of 100 years ago.)

In serving the cause of history we should not hesitate to do the "different," so long as we do it well.

CHANGE WITH THE TIMES.


These days outreach and participation can be done far more by keyboard.

The online initiatives that will characterize the 2017 celebration are responses to our era and the Internet tools available. Such individual engagement would have been difficult and almost impossible 15 years ago.

Meanwhile, society itself is changing.

Modern Nebraska has seen a rise in immigration. Also elementary and high school education emphasizes less the teaching of history, favoring science, technology and math.

Our response and obligations must change as a result.

Finding the right answers will be a complex undertaking. 

Trustee Spotlight: Micah Laaker

Did you know that in the last quarter, 3,106 people searching on Google for nebraska history (or similar terms) found the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation? And, in just the past month, 867 people on Facebook liked, shared or commented on a NSHSF post?

Like many nonprofit organizations, the Foundation's online presences (its website, Facebook page, Google search listing, LinkedIn profile, etc.) in mid-2015 were in various states of upkeep. Worse, the website (the Foundation's online brand) had become mired in out-of-date software that made any update to the site require hours of time with little ability to customize the display. Further, the site wouldn't display or function properly on smartphones where an increasing number of visitors were looking for the Foundation.

Coming to assist bringing both the Foundation's online presences up to date and move some of the software from the office to the cloud, Micah Laaker joined the Board of Trustees late in 2015. One of only three out-of-state Trustees, Micah was recruited by former coworker Mary Ann May-Pumphrey, whom he'd met in his first month after moving to California in 2004 (thanks to her wall-sized Nebraska state map above her desk).

Currently Director of User Experience (UX) for Google in Mountain View where he lives with his wife and two young sons, Micah grew up in Omaha where his parents (a Lutheran minister and a health field care manager) and sisters still live. His great grandfather homesteaded on the panhandle near Sidney, where Micah's father grew up on the family farm that still remains. He regularly returns to his home state, but is often seen

representing the state (and its football program) on the West coast with his red Cornhuskers cap.

In the past year, some of Micah's specific efforts to support the Foundation have been to:

- Move the website from cumbersome hard-to-update software to industry-standard WordPress (which increased the ability to quickly post new content as well as ensure new generations of Foundation volunteers would be able to maintain and upgrade easily over time): www.nshsf.org
- Set up and verify the Foundation's listing on Google Maps and Search, to ensure up-to-date information and insights like those at the beginning of this article: goo.gl/3DB1Nu
- Established the Foundation in Benevity's corporate giving program, allowing donors to increase their giving through simple corporate matching (as well as increase awareness of the Foundation in Benevity's organization listings)
- Set up Amazon Smile for the Foundation to allow friends of the Foundation to generate revenue through their future Amazon purchases: smile.amazon.com/ch/47-6000332
- Added the ability to donate to the Foundation directly from its Facebook page
- Developed a direct donation portal using PayPal: paypal.me/nshsf
- Customized the organization's presence on LinkedIn to ensure staff



and Trustee attribution showcased the Foundation's brand: goo.gl/l8KtFv

- Updated the Foundation's GuideStar profile to correct out-of-date information and ensure donors get an accurate view of the organization's financial management: goo.gl/hzURdB
- Enrolled the Foundation in Google for Nonprofits and Salesforce for free software to reduce update costs over time

Micah continues to maintain and support these and other efforts for the Foundation from California, working to ensure a growing number of people (whether in—or out-of-state) are able to learn about the great programs and efforts of both the Society and the Foundation working to sustain its mission. You can find out more about Micah at his personal website: laaker.com/micah. 🇺🇸

Trustee Spotlight: Dr. Joel Johnson

The military has played a large role in the life of NSHSF Trustee Joel Johnson. His family had at least one member who served in every major war the U. S. entered during the 20th century. His father, August Julius Johnson, an immigrant from Sweden, was in the Army during World War I, stationed in New England. The oldest of Dr. Johnson's eight siblings—Anne—was an Army nurse who followed the invasion troops across Europe after D-Day. The second sibling—Pauline—was a Navy nurse at a hospital in Virginia during World War II. And sibling #3—Alan—was drafted into the Army in the early 1940s and sent to the Pacific theater where he was part of the force that liberated the Philippines. Years later, the seventh Johnson sibling—David—was drafted into the army and sent to Korea.

Dr. Joel Johnson was the youngest in his family. While serving his medical residency in Omaha in the late '60s, he joined a Navy unit at what used to be Fort Omaha. Near the end of his residency, his first assignment came through—the Oakland Naval Hospital.

After serving a year there, he was sent to Vietnam for another year in 1967-1968. He served on the hospital ship U.S.S. *Repose*, where almost all of the patients had been brought in by helicopter. A highlight of his year was accompanying General Jimmy Doolittle (famed leader of the Doolittle Raid on the Japan Islands in 1942) as he passed out medals to various patients on the *Repose*.

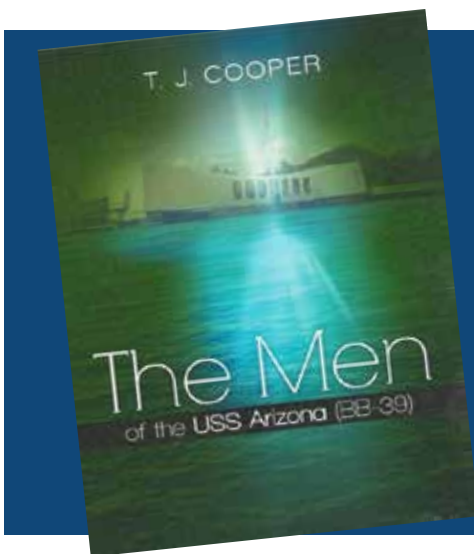
Dr. Johnson has been a big admirer of John McCain's for decades, as the result of another incident from his year aboard the *Repose*. In July 1967, the *Repose* was called to aid the many wounded survivors of the explosion and fire aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Forrestal*. John McCain, one of the survivors, quickly agreed to transfer to the USS *Oriskany*. Just three months later, his plane was shot down, leading to his many years as a POW of the North Vietnamese.

Another vivid memory for Dr. Johnson was accompanying a wounded Marine on a plane full of wounded Vietnam War soldiers traveling from Danang back home to Washington D.C. for further treatment. The sealant in the Marine's



breathing tube broke while the plane was readying for take-off, forcing Dr. Johnson to replace the breathing tube while still on the airplane!

Although he saw his share of horrors during his Navy years, Dr. Johnson states unequivocally that he couldn't have had a better training experience in emergency medicine than what he gained through his service during the Vietnam War.



WWII Book Project Update

As part of our Veterans Day 2016 commemoration, we completed the last phase of our World War II Book Project! Copies of *The Men of the USS Arizona* and *The Men of the USS Utah* were sent to every high school in the 18 Nebraska towns and cities that were once home to those Nebraskans entombed aboard these two ships at Pearl Harbor. Seniors at these high schools are eligible to submit an essay to apply for a Nebraskans of World War II Scholarship. It is our fondest hope that these books and the scholarship program will help Nebraska's youngest generation to NEVER FORGET, this Veterans Day and always! =



Marker Project featured in NEBRASKALand Magazine!

Check out the January/February issue of NEBRASKALand for “Riding Through History,” an article by Kylie Kinley of the Nebraska State Historical Society. This fascinating article chronicles Nebraskan Butch Springgate’s quest to visit every Nebraska Marker in the state, via his motorcycle! So far, he’s seen 500 of them and is readying his motorcycle to see even more this summer. In exchange for the article, NEBRASKALand provided two free ads, one promoting NSHS books and the other the Nebraska Marker Project! 📖

Meet this issue’s featured Oldfield Brigade member

BY TONY DWORAK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Jim and Gail Potter spent their entire careers working in the field of American history, Jim at the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) in Lincoln, and Gail at the NSHS and at the private, nonprofit Museum of the Fur Trade (MFT) in Chadron. They established an expendable fund at the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation to support the ongoing work of the several divisions of the NSHS.

James E. Potter grew up on a Franklin County, Nebraska, farm and graduated from Wilcox High School. After his graduation from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) in 1967, he began working at the NSHS as assistant state archivist, later serving as state archivist, and then as director of publications and editor of *Nebraska History*. At the time of his passing on August 6th, 2016, Jim was the senior research historian in the NSHS Publications Division.

Gail DeBuse Potter was born in



Jim and Gail Potter, 2016

Omaha and graduated from Burke High School and UNL. In 1973, she joined the NSHS museum collections department as registrar. She was the museum collections manager and National Graves Protection and Repatriation Act coordinator for the NSHS at the time of her appointment as director of the MFT in 1997. Gail retired from the latter position in 2014.

Both of the Potters have authored or edited several books and numerous journal articles published by their respective institutions or other publishers. Having gained their livelihood and much enjoyment from “doing history,” they decided it was appropriate to support the NSHS, Nebraska’s flagship historical organization, which has been central to their careers. 📖

Is the NSHS Foundation in your will?

BY TONY DWORAK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Remembering the NSHS Foundation as part of your estate plan is a great way to support a great cause. In honor of the vision and generosity of the Oldfields, the Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation has established the Oldfield Brigade planned-giving club. This serves to both thank all of our donors who are remembering the Foundation in the charitable giving portion of their estate plans, and to encourage others to consider doing the same.

As our numbers grow, we plan on making “membership” in the Brigade even more notable and fun through special forms of thanks, recognition, and celebration. If a planned charitable

gift might make sense for you, we hope you’ll consider joining the Oldfield Brigade to support Nebraska history for generations to come.

The Foundation has been blessed over the years with many generous estate gifts. As long-time fundraisers, we can tell you that the only downside of receiving an estate gift is that we often did not have the opportunity to thank and celebrate the donors while they were alive. The Oldfield Brigade will allow us to do just that!

To join the Oldfield Brigade, or to share your questions, comments, or ideas regarding our mission, please contact me at 402-435-3535 or tdworak@nshsf.org. 

CURRENT MEMBERS

Barney (1909-2003) and Vada (1910-1999) Oldfield – Lincoln

Jack & Sally Campbell – Lincoln

Harl & Kay Dalstrom – Omaha

Tony & Tam Dworak – Lincoln

Leslie & Marty Fattig – Auburn

Mary Ann & Ron H.

May-Pumphrey – San Jose, CA


Jim McKee & Linda Hillegass – Lincoln

Charles (1927-1998) & Diane Oldfather – Lincoln

Jim (1945-2016) and Gail DeBuse Potter – Lincoln

SAVE THE DATE

NSHSF Annual Meeting April 1, 2017

Our 2017 annual meeting will be held at the historic Magnolia Hotel in Omaha. Trustees will meet from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. followed by a reception celebrating the Foundation’s 75th anniversary! Refreshments and hors d’oeuvres will be served from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. Please join us as we celebrate our past and look toward our future! 

Magnolia Hotel, Omaha



Legislative Reception in January

Governor Ricketts and one hundred of his new best friends attended the 2017 legislative reception on January 5! This year, Foundation and Society staff initiated a new addition to the reception—a photo booth. Members of the legislature, as well as our governor, joined in the fun.

Laura Mooney, Senior Museum Curator, provided attendees with significant objects to use for the photographs. All of the objects were from the Society's collections.

AMONG THE OBJECTS WERE:

- A Nebraska Centennial Colt Revolver. Colt Firearms produced 7,000 of this replica of the Colt 45 to commemorate the Nebraska Centennial in 1967.
- The First Recorded Brand. 7H L was recorded when Nebraska began registering brands in 1899. The brand is still used by the Milldale Ranch Company headquartered in North Platte. The ranch originated in the mid-1880s when Charles and J. T. Stewart of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Riley and Dan Haskell of Nebraska began grazing cattle in Logan, Arthur, and McPherson Counties.
- The First Unicameral Gavel. This gavel opened the first unicameral legislative session on January 5, 1937. In the early 1930s, Nebraska U.S. Senator George Norris promoted the concept of the non-partisan, one-house legislature or unicameral. In 1934, Nebraska voters enthusiastically endorsed the idea, and in 1937, Nebraska became the first and only state to have a unicameral legislature.
- A Football Signed by the 1971 Championship Nebraska Team. Nebraska played Alabama in the Orange Bowl to clinch the national title in 1971, but the season is best remembered for the Thanksgiving Day game when No. 1-ranked Nebraska battled No. 2 Oklahoma. The Huskers emerged victorious, winning 35 to 31. This game is often called the Game of the Century.



Charley McWilliams NSHS Facilities Maintenance with Senator and Mrs. Steve Halloran (Ann)

- A Terri Lee Doll. The doll company was founded in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1946 by artist Maxine Runci and her aunt, Violet Gradwohl. Terri Lee was called the best dressed doll in the world because of her elaborate wardrobe. Many local women worked in the Terri Lee factory or worked from home, making wigs and sewing doll clothing. After a fire destroyed the Lincoln factory in 1951, the company moved production to California.



Governor Pete Ricketts



Senator Dan Quick



Senator Jim Scheer



Senator John Lowe, Sr.



Senator Lou Anne Linehan



Trustees Nancy Davis, Robert Davis, Cynthia Olson



Richard Endacott, NSHS Trustee and former Senator John Nelson, NSHS President Katherine Endacott, Senator John Lowe



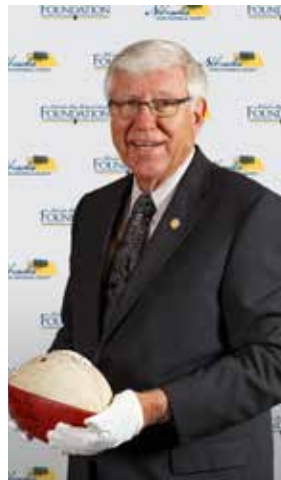
Far left: NSHS Trustees Kim Elder and Spencer Davis



Senator Steve Halloram



Senator John and Rita Stinner



Senator Robert Hilkemann

Since 1986, NSHSF has hosted the legislative reception at the beginning of each year for the benefit of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The reception both welcomes and creates connections with the Senators as well as giving them exposure to the Nebraska History Museum and what the NSHS does throughout Nebraska.

It's important to note that this year's reception was held back at its original location—the Nebraska History Museum. You will remember the Museum was closed for the last two years because of renovations courtesy of LB 198! 🇺🇸

The 150 Fund - Making History FOR History

BY TONY DWORAK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Butch & Dobey Haws, newest members of the 150 Fund for Nebraska History

I'd like to share with you an exciting new way to support the mission of the NSHS!

Perhaps now is the time for you to consider becoming a member of the NSHS Foundation's 150 Fund for Nebraska History. Members of the 150 Fund are providing, in a very historic way, needed charitable dollars to finance physical improvements to the Society's exhibits and facilities.

As many of our readers know, in 2013, the Nebraska Legislature made a historic investment in our state museum building with a special multi-million-dollar appropriation. These dollars were desperately needed to upgrade the infrastructure of the Nebraska History Museum building, which sits on Lincoln's Centennial Mall, about halfway between the Capitol to the south and the NSHS headquarters to the north. The Mall itself is nearing the end of a major facelift, just in time for the state's sesquicentennial celebration, which will be really ramping up beginning this spring.

Now that our museum building is in state-of-the-art condition, it's time to underwrite the exhibits and programs

that will tell Nebraska's story. And this is where the 150 Fund comes into play. In response to our Legislature's vision and leadership, Nebraska history-loving individuals, families, and organizations are stepping up to become 150 Fund members, and in so doing, make some Nebraska history of their own.

Individual or Family memberships in the 150 Fund require a minimum commitment of \$15,000 as a charitable gift to the NSHS Foundation, which may be pledged over five years. These dollars will be used to ensure that our state's newly-remodeled museum will contain the finest exhibits possible for the education and enjoyment of all, and to help further the NSHS mission. Money from the 150 Fund may also be directed to other NSHS facilities and sites in need of upgrading. For example, the Abbott Visitor Center at Chimney Rock is poised for an expansion which will enhance the visitor experience tremendously, and potentially double its current annual attendance. We always encourage and appreciate dialogue with our generous donors about supporting their favorite NSHS exhibits, sites, facilities, and programs.

Most exciting to me is how we are planning to recognize our 150 Fund members. The Nebraska History Museum is a building with a unique history of its own, dating back to its days as the Elks Club of Lincoln. Proposals for the remodeled museum include an exhibit that tells this story. With that, we foresee recognition of the 150 Fund members.

If you are interested in becoming a 150 Fund member, or if you are interested in supporting this cause in any other

manner, please contact us. Please remember that all gifts to the NSHS Foundation, of all dollar amounts, are welcomed, appreciated, and celebrated.

It's my pleasure to share with you that the 150 Fund is already nearing 20 members, which means over \$300,000 of charitable gifts being pledged to a great Nebraska cause! Just think how great would it be to reach 150 members of the 150 Fund for Nebraska History during this 150th year of our statehood? Now that would be the kind of math that even a history student could enjoy doing! 📊

150 FUND MEMBERS AS OF JANUARY 23, 2017

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Harl and Kay Dalstrom, Omaha
Nancy and Bob Davis, Omaha
Allen Dayton, Lincoln
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Jim and Gail Potter, Lincoln
Dave and Trixie Schmidt, Lincoln
L. Joe Stehlik, Pawnee City



Society Director Meets the West in Landmark Trip

BY JEFF BARNES, NSHS TRUSTEE

The West of Nebraska was opened up to new NSHS Director Trevor Jones in a whirlwind trip to some of our better-known landmarks from September 30-October 1.

Guided by NSHSF Executive Director Leslie Fattig—and accompanied by Jones's wife Kate McDougall and NSHS Trustee Jeff Barnes—the group attended a reception at the Chimney Rock National Historic Site Visitor Center, coinciding with a visit to the NSHS site by a tour group of national travel writers.

The following day, the four met with staff and visited the Scotts Bluff National Monument and also toured the newly reopened and renovated Legacy of the Plains Museum in Gering.

The return trip included lunch in Arthur and a drive through the Nebraska Sand Hills. Jones and Barnes also used the trip as an opportunity to film several Nebraska Marker Project promotional spots at Ash Hollow State Historical Park, Oshkosh, and Ravenna. 📺



Wyuka Reception Welcomes Trevor Jones to NSHS

On October 14, 2016, the Foundation held a welcome reception for the new NSHS Executive Director, Trevor Jones, and his wife, Kate McDougall, at the historic Wyuka Stables in Lincoln. Over 80 people joined us for the celebration which included a talk on the history of Wyuka by Ed Zimmer, historic preservation planner for the City of Lincoln. His presentation was both informative and interesting. Our thanks to all event patrons who supported this fun event:

*Margaret Allington
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Birgit Young*



President Michael (OJ) Nelson welcomes the group.



Our guest and speaker, historian Ed Zimmer, and Leslie Fattig set up for the presentation.



Trevor Jones speaking at Wyuka during the welcome reception.



Wyuka Stables is the result of a one million dollar restoration project, completed in April 2015. Originally built in 1909, and now on the National Register of Historic Places along with the cemetery, the stables formerly housed the horses that transported caskets to the cemetery. Once automobiles replaced horses, the stables were used primarily for storage.

Noted Scholars Have Suite Dedicated in Their Honor

BY TONY DWORAK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

The Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) dedicated a prominent room at the organization's Lincoln headquarters as the Harl A. and Kay Dalstrom Research and Publications Suite during a reception at the Nebraska State Historical Society's offices on December 16th, 2016.

The Harl A. and Kay Dalstrom Research and Publications Suite houses the NSHS editorial office, which produces historical content for both scholarly and popular audiences. The group helps publicize the work of NSHS through a quarterly journal, *Nebraska History*, a quarterly newsletter, *Nebraska History News*, NSHS books, the NSHS blog, and other social media communications. Publication services also extend to other NSHS divisions and include producing and editing various manuscripts, historical markers, exhibit scripts and informational graphics. In addition to housing the full-time staff which includes editors, a historian, and a research architect, this Suite serves as a work area for volunteers and work-study students from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

The Dalstroms are noted for their many contributions to the preservation and advancement of Nebraska history throughout their combined careers, which include the authorship and co-authorship of numerous books and scholarly articles. Professor Harl Dalstrom, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, where he retired in 2003 after 40 years, including chairing its History Department from 1971-1975. He is the author of an article included in one of the most popular *Nebraska History* issues of all time, a special edition from 2002 devoted to the notorious winter of 1948-49.*

Kay Dalstrom earned her B.A. in 1964 from Municipal University of Omaha (now UNO), where she also undertook extensive graduate work in French and English. From there, Mrs. Dalstrom went on to a 30-year career at UNO's Department of Foreign Languages. Her research and writing has focused largely on Plains history, and in particular the history and culture of the Midwestern dance band era.

"Preserving our past is essential to understanding the social, political, economic, and agricultural heritage of Nebraska and the surrounding areas. The Nebraska State Historical Society excels in this, and with support, will continue to do so for future generations of Nebraskans," the Dalstroms wrote in their prepared remarks.



Kay and Harl Dalstrom

Harl and Kay provide a great example of the difference individuals can make to the great cause of preserving our history," said the NSHS Foundation's Executive Director Leslie Fattig. "Their lifelong work in the field of Nebraska history, and now their generosity toward the cause of Nebraska history, will serve as an inspiration to all Nebraskans for generations to come." 🇺🇸

Editor's Note:

The article written by Harl Dalstrom, noted above.

"I'm Never Going To Be Snowbound Again': The Winter of 1948-1949 in Nebraska" <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/2002-Snowbound.pdf>

Save the Date for 2017 Meet and Greet Events!

MARCH 1: STATEHOOD DAY – University Towers residents are invited for punch and cookies at the NSHSF Office. **Trustees are welcome to stop by.**

APRIL 1: NSHSF ANNUAL MEETING & 75th Anniversary Celebration at Omaha's Magnolia Hotel.

APRIL 23: WEBSTER COUNTY VOLUNTEER DIG at NSHSF property Pike Pawnee site east of Red Cloud.

JUNE (DATE TBD): VOLUNTEER DIG at Sandhills ranches.

JUNE 2 AND JUNE 3: CATTLEMEN'S BALL in Anselmo at the Johnson's Lonesome River Ranch.

JUNE 10: DESHLER MEET AND GREET celebrating the 50th anniversary of 1967 National Scripps Spelling Bee winner Jennifer Reinke.

AUGUST 21: SOLAR ECLIPSE PARTY at University Towers, 11th Floor (tentative).

SEPTEMBER 22-23: NEBRASKA 150 Centennial Mall Celebration.

Showing Your Love for OUR Nebraska History

BY JOHN STROPE, BROWN BAG COORDINATOR AND NSHSF TRUSTEE

For the last 18 months, I have had the privilege and fun of serving as the volunteer coordinator for the NSHS Brown Bag History Lecture Series. As I write this, I just finished welcoming 97 folks to our January lecture. Wow! What great attendance and what great enthusiasm for the talk.

I have to admit that in my decade of coming to 120+ Brown Bags, my old memory says the largest audience was about 50 folks. Now, as the coordinator, I don't worry too much about the live audience size because in this modern world, the "full audience" comes from the broadcasts on public access channels around the State (Lincoln, Omaha, South Sioux City, Bellevue, Papillion, Hastings, Grand Island, North Platte, and Hastings, and the now-joining Blair, Bassett, Sidney, and Chadron). In addition, all the Brown Bags back into 2004 are on YouTube.

Now for some serious numbers. The production cost for each Brown Bag is \$600. Thus, a year costs \$7,200. A decade costs \$72,000 (at today's prices). The Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation pays these costs. What a wonderful commitment to sharing Nebraska history!

How about showing your love for our Nebraska history? Do what Lincolnite Jeff Searcy is doing. Donate today and sponsor a Brown Bag (or two or five). Here's how Jeff got on board.

On August 18, 2016, Jeff Searcy was the presenter for the Brown Bag History Lecture. His title was "The History and Future of Nebraska's Centennial Mall." In my introduction I said: "Jeff Searcy loves Nebraska, our great State Capitol, and the areas surrounding Capitol Square, especially Centennial Mall."

After the talk, Jeff agreed to sponsor a future Brown Bag. The March 2017 ("Beautiful Nebraska—Images of Our Land and Peoples") will be sponsored by Jeff Searcy & the Searcy Team of HOME Real Estate. And, given the talk's title, what a perfect fit!

I met Searcy in May, 2012. I quickly learned he says "Yes" enthusiastically when it comes to our Nebraska and the local community. He says his parents (and real estate mentors), Don and Gwen Searcy, instilled in him his love and passion for this state and its history.

As Nebraska celebrates its 150th Year of Statehood, it would be hard to find anyone who plays more of a role in its planning. Jeff is Chair of the Nebraska 150 Foundation, the fundraising partner of the Sesquicentennial Commission.

Additionally, Jeff serves as Chair of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission, a body responsible for maintaining the beauty around the Capitol. Searcy tells us that "the grand finale of the Sesquicentennial Celebration is 'Salute to the Good Life,' scheduled for Centennial Mall on September 22-23." 🇺🇸

Join Jeff Searcy and others who feel as we do about our beloved Nebraska. Make these Brown Bags available (live, public access channels, and YouTube) for another 30+ years. Sponsor a Brown Bag. Contact the Foundation at www.NSHSF.org or 402-435-3535. DO IT TODAY.

2017 Brown Bag Presentation Schedule

JANUARY 19 - Nebraska Fossils and People Before Written History (completed available on YouTube.com)

Rob Bozell, state archeologist, Nebraska State Historical Society, and Shane Tucker, highway paleontologist, U. of Nebraska State Museum

We began the sesquicentennial celebration with a glimpse of the land, people and extinct animals from ancient Nebraska.

FEBRUARY 16 - The African-American Experience in Nebraska: Artifacts from the Great Plains Black History Museum (completed available on YouTube.com)

Patrick Jones, NU professor

With major reliance on artifacts from the Great Plains Black History Museum, the presenter will highlight the historical experiences of African-Americans across Nebraska, including those of homesteaders and cowboys.

MARCH 16 - Beautiful Nebraska—Images of Our Land and Peoples

Todd A. Williams, artist

The artist will explain the history within the frames of many of the paintings he has made of all 93 Nebraska counties.

APRIL 20 - Serving in the Nebraska National Guard

Gerald Meyer, NE National Guard historian

In serving Nebraska, members of the Nebraska National Guard serve America. This presentation will highlight the military service of select Nebraskans who have served in the Nebraska National Guard since 1854.

MAY 18 - Peopling the Prairie: 19th Century Immigration to Nebraska

John Schleicher, historian

How did many folks get to Nebraska in the latter half of the 19th century? How did the Homestead Act, the transcontinental railroad acts, and national immigration policies work together to bring tens of thousands of people to Nebraska?

JUNE 15 - Take All to Nebraska—How They Came

Gail Blankenau, genealogist

We will explore the peoples who undertook a great migration into the heart of America, from Nebraska's opening of settlement in the 1850's, into the 20th century. These migration stories from a diverse group of families will bring new perspectives to our understanding of Nebraska life.

JULY 20 - Struggles and Survival in the Sandhills

Kelly Garcia, teacher, and students from Mullen High School

Topics include the blizzard of 1949, Halsey Forest, Crazy Horse, and Then and Now to name a few. Through their videos, students will show how people lived in the Sandhills many years ago, and, perhaps, reenact a few scenes.

AUGUST 17 - Creative Nebraskans

Panel of Presenters

Nebraskans have shown their creativity in myriad ways—music, art, cooking, philosophy, writing, hoarding, etc. Meet them through our stories.

SEPTEMBER 21 - A Few Noted Nebraskans You May Never Have Heard Of

Jim McKee, historian

It's easy to know about many Nebraskans who made our State so wonderful. Here we will learn about Nebraskans who are famous outside Nebraska, but not so famous in Nebraska.

OCTOBER 19 - Nebraskeños: How Latino Generations Continue Building Belonging in “the Good Life” State

Lisette Aliaga-Linares, professor, UNO and

Thomas Sanchez, professor, UNO

This presentation will combine demography and history to analyze the different scenarios for community building among the Hispanic/Latino population in Nebraska. It will focus on two time periods: 1940-1980 and 2000-2015, and will discuss the different social contexts that are giving rise to a new momentum for the Hispanic/Latino second generation.

NOVEMBER 16 - The Homestead Act and the Plains Tribes

Nancy Gillis, historian

Opening the Great Plains to settlement had far-reaching impacts on the Native tribes, both positive and negative. This program explores the changes in political and economic structures, gender roles, spiritual ways, and other cultural components in the years before and following pivotal pieces of legislation in 1862—the Homestead Act, transcontinental railroad acts, and the Morrill Land Grant Act.

DECEMBER 21 - Meet Selected Members of the Nebraska Hall of Fame

NSHS Staff Presenters

There are 25 members of the Nebraska Hall of Fame. Each of these folks is honored with a bust in the Capitol. Here is the opportunity to learn about these people. 🍷

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Kimman-Oldfield Suite
128 N. 13th Street #1010
Lincoln, NE 68508

