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Article Summary: The State History Museum opened and was dedicated in 1984. Kivett details the activities of each section of the Society that year: the library, archives, museums, archeology, and historic preservation. He emphasizes the urgency of planned 1985 renovation work in the headquarters building.

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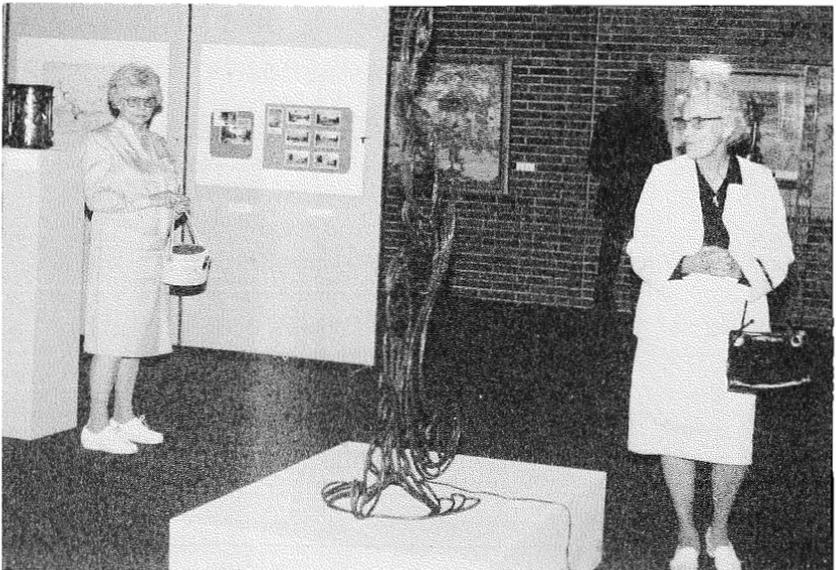
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*Participants in the September 21 opening of the Thomas B. Johnson art exhibit at the State Museum of History were Mrs. James Gunnerson (from left), UNL Professor James Gunnerson, Fay Johnson, and art critic Leonard Thiessen.... (Below) Visitors to Johnson exhibit.*



# The Nebraska State Historical Society In 1984

*By Marvin F. Kivett*

Delivered in part at the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society  
in Lincoln, September 22, 1984

This year has been much like that following the dedication of the new headquarters building in 1953. All efforts, as was the case in 1953, were devoted to the opening and dedication of a new building, with the year following devoted to "catch up" work.

The State Museum of History dedication on October 8, 1983, was a major step in the history of your Society and marks one of the few times in our history that the Society collections have not been housed in one building. Many of you have expressed regret that we were not able to carry out the original plan for the Society to construct a new building south of the Capitol. I tend to be an optimist and believe this may come about in the future.

In the meantime we have made some significant gains. At this time we have gained more than 70,000 feet of space for the Museum as compared to 30,000 vacated in the headquarters building. The new museum building, originally constructed for the Lincoln Elks Lodge, has adapted well to museum functions.

Our most pressing need at this time is to renovate the headquarters building to provide for the Library and State Archives. Although our Legislative request in 1983 received some brief attention by the Appropriations Committee, it did not result in the appropriation of any funds. The building, dedicated in 1953, is in need of more sophisticated environmental controls as well as equipment for the Library and Archives. We continue to rent inadequate outside space for the storage of records and other documents. This must be a high priority in our budget request for the 1985-1986 fiscal year.

We received good operations budget support for the present



*Volunteer assistants were recognized May 8 with certificates of appreciation at the State Museum of History.... (Below) Librarian Ann Reinert spoke at a historical workshop sponsored June 2 in Lincoln by the Society.*





*Reynold Wik, history professor emeritus at Sioux Falls (South Dakota) College, received the James L. Sellers Memorial Award for the best article in Nebraska History during 1983.... (Below) Ruth Amen accepted the Addison E. Sheldon Award for the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia for their contributions to Nebraska history.*



fiscal year from Governor Kerrey and the Legislature, and I know that many of you expressed your support to the Governor and your legislative representatives. For this we are grateful!

Perhaps the most gratifying aspect in our goal of preserving and interpreting Nebraska history is the increased support received on the local and county level. Almost without exception each county has one or more historical organizations. They are becoming involved in the full range of historical activities from genealogy to historic houses. There is a new awareness of our history and our heritage. We hope that we have had some small part in providing encouragement and assistance on the local level.

The general programs of the Society have continued throughout the year without great expansion but with a very great dedication to provide adequate service to the public. Last year it became evident that it was necessary to increase staff security at the various house museums and at other isolated structures administered by the Society. Our policy which now requires not less than two individuals at each structure has forced us to reduce hours of operations in some areas.

Each year we try to assess our relative position in terms of our responsibilities. This has been a year of evaluation. It was the year for us to seek re-accreditation from the American Association of Museums for the Lincoln Museum operations. Our original accreditation was in 1973; the need now is to evaluate the new State Museum of History. Similar evaluations are in process for the Library and State Archives programs. One of our important goals for the Archives program is to staff and fully operate branch archives at Chadron and Kearney State College. This project, approved several years ago by the State College and Society boards, cannot be successful without more staffing.

As I noted in my annual report for 1974, our interest was centered on the acquisition of land south of the Capitol for a new building. LB 704 passed, but the funds didn't. In effect it required nine years in the legislative process to achieve our goal of an expanded museum.

The sources and amount of funds increase each year, but they always seem inadequate for the growing needs. Our

General Fund appropriation for this year is \$2,061,986 an increase of 14.3% over the amount available last year. This increase is largely the result of additional maintenance staff for the new museum. The museum program with branches throughout the state receives 59.3% of the operations budget. We also received an allocation of \$364,000 from the National Park Service to fund the Historic Preservation program. We are particularly pleased to have received a grant of \$50,000 from the federal Institute of Museum Services. This in a sense results from an evaluation of the museum program by our peers. Funds can be utilized for operations that are not funded from other sources.

For example, we have a staff member as Coordinator of Volunteers for the one year period of the grant. Kathy Edwards, who serves in that position, may be contacting you for your volunteer services.

And now I would like to present an abbreviated report from each of the departments:

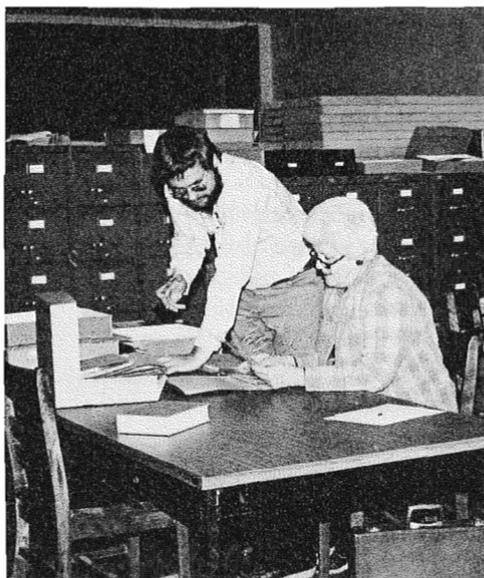
### LIBRARY

Librarian Ann Reinert reports that library public service activity remained nearly as busy as last year. The Library staff assisted patrons with over 11,000 queries for information by telephone, correspondence, and in person.

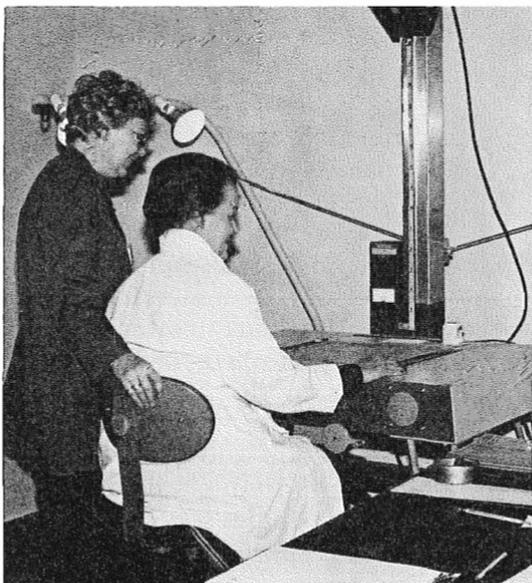
Ninety-one percent of the visitors to the Library were Nebraskans, two-thirds noting their prime interest as genealogy and family history. Other research interests were anthropology, the dime novel, radio, business in Omaha, Army posts, church history, William Jennings Bryan, and women poets.

Approximately 1,600 photographs were purchased from the Library during the year, many by persons documenting Nebraska local history. Several were textbook editors. Photographs from our collection were published in an especially fine article about Willa Cather in the *National Geographic* magazine.

With the transfer of the photograph collection into a more spacious room, patrons now have a more comfortable area in which to view historic photographs. Another popular service is the reinstated interlibrary loan of the census enumerations.



*Curator of Photographs John Carter (above left) assists patron in Photo Library.... Research Associate Betty Loudon (above right) in Society Library.... Microfilm technicians Pat Chesterman (below left) and Margaret Ballew with microfilming equipment.... Archives Clerk Dolores Ambroz (below right) makes copies from microfilmed newspapers.*



During April the Library sponsored a user survey. Its findings, which are part of an evaluative study, will assist with short-term and long-term planning for growth and development of the Library.

The Library has been grateful for the assistance of dedicated volunteers who contributed 2,500 hours of service. They helped in typing, filing, inventory work, and preservation of materials.

Fine support has been received from the public. They donated several thousand books, pamphlets, maps, photographs, and post cards. Included were histories of localities, churches, families, and organizations.

## ARCHIVES

As the Museum vacated Society headquarters and relocated in new quarters, the State Archives moved some operations into larger facilities. Only those functions which could be carried on without extensive renovation of new areas were moved. Inadequate storage for the preservation of records and manuscripts has been a major problem facing the Archives.

In May, 1984, the Archives reference activities moved from the second floor to the former west museum gallery on the first floor of the headquarters building. This doubled the amount of space available for public research in the Archives microfilm collection of Nebraska newspapers, public records, and manuscripts. In general, the working conditions for staff and patrons have greatly improved.

Following the move by the reference section, the Archives microfilming department also moved into larger quarters. That staff now has adequate space in which to prepare records for filming and to operate the Archives' two microfilm cameras. The conservation lab, formerly housed in a stack area, was moved to the basement.

Public service activity continued at a high level in 1983-1984, despite some disruption caused by the various moves. Over 6,000 persons used the archival collections in person. The staff responded to over 1,200 phone calls and 3,000 letters and produced more than 40,000 copies of newspaper articles and documents. To meet public service demands, internal activities such as processing and the preparation of find-

ing aids has sometimes been deferred. This leads to our falling behind in our ability to provide new research materials for future public use.

The microfilming department continued to film newspapers, public records, and manuscripts, producing a total of 548 rolls of microfilm. Nearly 650 rolls of microfilm were sold to the public and to libraries or historical societies. During the year the microfilm staff completed the transfer of the Society's 19,000 rolls of master negative microfilm into acid-free storage boxes. The negatives are stored in a climate-controlled vault for security.

Acquisition of public records and manuscripts continued at a low level in 1983-1984 due to the storage problem. Some 100 individuals or organizations contributed items to the manuscript division. Among the noteworthy donations were the papers of Nebraska cattleman John Bratt, 1870-1910; journals of A. L. Green, agent to the Oto; and slides and tapes created by the Nebraska Farm Project, sponsored by the Nebraska Farmers Union; Seward County probate records; attorney general's case files and opinions; and correspondence of the Department of Aeronautics.

As part of a Society-wide evaluation process, the State Archives staff began a "self-study" in the spring of 1984. This study will produce a report to be followed by a visit to the Archives by archival administrators from outside the Society. The archival evaluation program is sponsored by the Society of American Archivists.

In November, 1983, Ann Morgan Dodge joined the staff as Paper Conservation Specialist. She has continued the ongoing paper conservation program and has assisted local organizations and individuals with advice and training regarding conservation problems.

The staff continued to participate in educational and outreach activities as time allowed. A supplemental guide to the manuscript collections was published in 1983.

They presented papers at various meetings of regional or national archival and genealogical organizations. The Society exhibit at the 1983 Nebraska State Fair was coordinated by the Archives staff, and it cooperated on new exhibits for the first floor of the headquarters building. Consultation in disaster recovery was provided to the South Dakota State Archives.



*Sculptor Deborah Wagner Ashton and the bust of Indian leader Susette LaFlesche Tibbles (1854-1903), who was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame on Statehood Day, March 1.*

## EXHIBITS

July 1, 1983, saw the Exhibits Department working exclusively on the new State Museum of History. The former Museum at 1500 R Street was officially closed on June 30, and its last displays were transferred to 15th and P Streets.

Output for the year was 135 display units, the majority being for the new Museum. This is more units than for any year since 1962, the year we began keeping these figures, according to Staff Artist Herb Thomas, a 28-year veteran of the Museum. To assist in display construction, workers from other divisions were transferred to the department. In addition, staff from other Society departments furnished a good portion of the display research and writing of text. The exhibits for the new museum were a group effort.

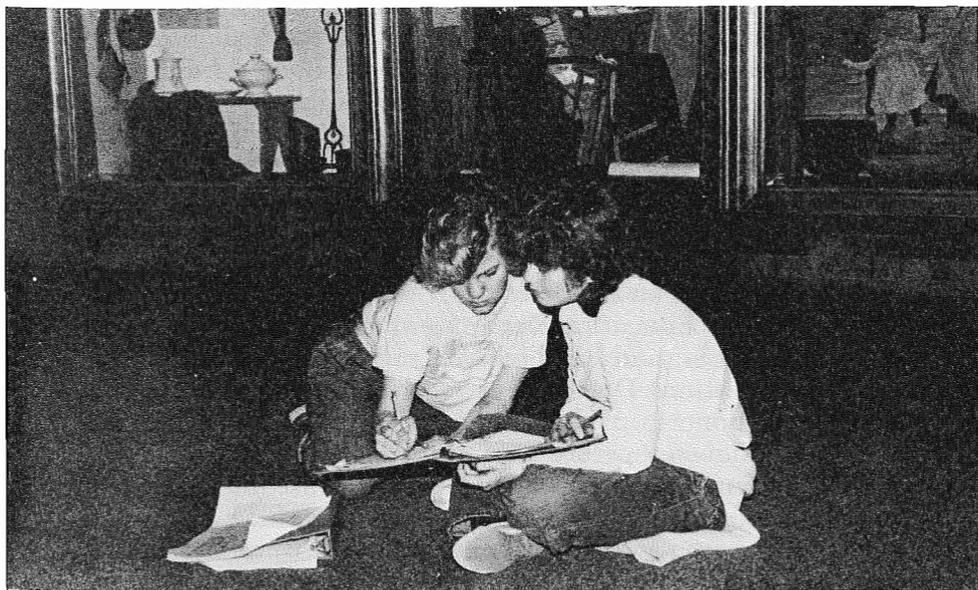
Many new display cases built by Correctional Industries were incorporated into our story line on the second floor "Nebraska History Gallery." Artists Herb Thomas and Alice Filbert worked primarily on the case displays for that floor and also for the third floor, special collections gallery. Artists Steve Ryan, Ed Bukacek, and Curt Peacock prepared the first floor, introductory displays. Peacock's other major tasks were period-room displays, such as the Pawnee earthlodge, the sod house, the Carson parlor, and the blacksmith's shop. On this he worked with Ron Kivett, Assistant Curator of Branch Museums. Bob Shaw, a cabinetmaker added to the Museum staff, did much of the woodwork necessary to give the display case arrangement its finished look.

One feature of the opening was the John Falter Art Exhibit, designed by Steve Ryan. It was located in an area devoted to special, limited-run exhibitions. In fact, the first special exhibit since the building's dedication was opened in April, 1984. Entitled "When the World Broke in Two: World War I," it told of the home front during war and spotlighted the excellent group of incentive posters in Society collections.

Since October, 1983, the Exhibits Department has had many jobs—signs, displays for the Branch Museums, furniture construction, and repair work—that had been deferred during the Museum project. New displays were installed in the first floor hallway of the Headquarters Building. In the spring of 1984, exhibit work began for the new Game and Parks Com-



*Master of ceremonies at the September 1 dedication of Rock Creek Station State Historical Park visitor center, Jefferson County, was Harold Andersen (at podium). Andersen is board chairman of the Nebraska Game and Parks Foundation and publisher of the Omaha World-Herald. . . . (Below) Students sketch displays at State Museum of History, 15th and P, Lincoln.*



mission visitor center at Rock Creek Station Historical Park in Jefferson County. One display there is a scale model of the West Ranch, a building on the Overland Trail during the days of David McCanles and Wild Bill Hickok. It is based on archeological and historical information accumulated by Society Archeologist Gayle Carlson. Society Photographer Ken Kopta prepared plates of the excavated artifacts destined for display at Rock Creek.

We were able to provide limited exhibit assistance to other historical groups. Two displays were built for the Nemaha Valley Museum in Auburn. Curator of Exhibits Eli Paul and Alice Filbert also participated in the Society Spring Workshop. Their segment of the program was "Working with Exhibits."

## MUSEUM

During the nine months of the last fiscal year, during which the State Museum of History was open, there were 55,891 visitors, an increase of more than 9,500 above last year. The Kennard House had an attendance of 11,027. The Ferguson House had only 4,426 visitors because it was closed from November to July for further remodeling and furnishing as a historic house. Fairview (home of William Jennings Bryan) attendance was 2,062.

An exhibit on World War I, "When the World Broke in Two," opened April 7 for the spring and summer. An exhibit of the work of Nebraska artist Thomas B. Johnson which opened September 22, 1984, will remain in place until the spring of 1985.

The Education Department provided 396 tours to 14,347 visitors. The continued assistance provided by seven volunteer docents has been an important part of the Museum education program. The Education Department assisted in preparation of news releases, and handled sales of Society publications.

The Collections Department received 153 new accessions from 148 donors, of which 92 were new donors to the Museum. Eleven separate loans were made of 33 artifacts. A loan of Pawnee earrings to the Joslyn Art Museum is part of a national touring exhibit, "Views of the Vanishing Frontier," which focuses on the expedition of Prince Maximilian and artist Karl Bodmer.

Responses were made to 302 letters and to over 17,000 phone calls. The staff has worked at such varied tasks as planning new tour programs related to the two floors of displays of the Museum; planning and supervising installation of a closed circuit television system which provides added security during open hours; moving artifacts from collections storage in the headquarters building to the Museum, decorating the Kenard House for its always-popular "Victorian Christmas"; and furnishing the Ferguson House in a style appropriate to ca. 1910-1915.

### BRANCH MUSEUMS

Branch Museums Curator Bill Munn, assisted by Ron Kivett, report attendance at Branch Museums totaled 130,500 for the year, a decrease of 8% from the previous year. Activities of the individual branches included:

*Neihardt Historical Center* at Bancroft—Speaker at Neihardt Day, 1983, was William Lass, author of *From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake*, a Society publication. Events included poetry competition, choir performances, and photo display. During the year the Center hosted a gem and mineral show, photo exhibits, art shows, and the Neihardt Spring Conference. Curator John Lindahl participated in panel discussions and workshops, and aired the seventh season of radio programs over WJAG, Norfolk.

*Cather Historical Center* at Red Cloud—The Center hosted two workshops during the year in cooperation with Kearney State College and the local Cather Foundation. Curator Ann Billesbach presented papers to the Nebraska Library Association and to the Omaha Corral of Westerners. We provided research material to 18 visiting researchers and responded to 50 mail requests. Major improvement projects included air conditioning the Cather childhood home and the start of a project to re-roof and repair masonry on the Episcopal Church. The Cather House will be featured in *Architectural Digest* as result of a photographic session which occurred this year.

*Neligh Mill Historic Site* at Neligh—Because of major highway construction in the area, attendance was down at the mill. Curator Tom Buecker was involved in improvement projects, including repainting the mill, and a major project to



*The Fort Robinson Museum was visited May 2 by Sidney students.... (Below) Dave Kennedy (left) and Pine Ridge Job Corps workers performed maintenance work on the fort blacksmith shop during April.*



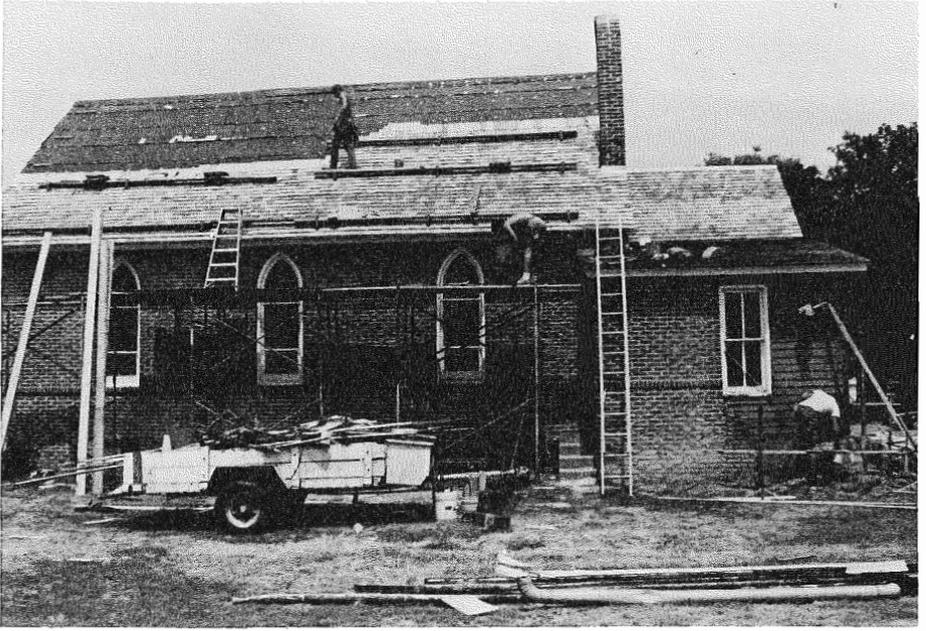
improve water drainage. Funding was provided through a Historic Preservation grant.

*Museum of Missouri River History* at Brownville—Major flooding of the Missouri River caused the *Meriwether Lewis* to be closed for a time this year but the design of the cradle and moorings proved to be adequate to float the boat back in place. Improvements in the park by the Game and Parks Commission and State Department of Roads in hard-surfaced roads and parking areas will contribute to tourist convenience and should improve attendance. We continued to install new exhibits on the boat and also featured temporary photo exhibits during the year. The annual River Rats Reunion in June was well attended despite the flood conditions. As in the past, continued restoration of the boat under the supervision of Curator Carl Jones has been aided by utilization of youth employment programs such as SYEP and CETA.

*Fort Robinson Museum* near Crawford—Continuing to be our most popular branch museum, the fort had nearly 70,000 visitors during the year. Tours were provided of our Fort Robinson buildings and of the Red Cloud Indian Agency site. The annual school Field Day attracted 1,310 visitors. Curator Vance Nelson provided 18 curatorial programs, and 136 patrons used our research facility. Our staff was supplemented by personnel on federal jobs programs and individual and group volunteers, such as the National Guard, Chadron State College Band, Job Corps, and Indian dancers. Improvement projects included window replacement at the Bandmaster's House and landscaping for drainage at the Adobe Officers' Quarters.

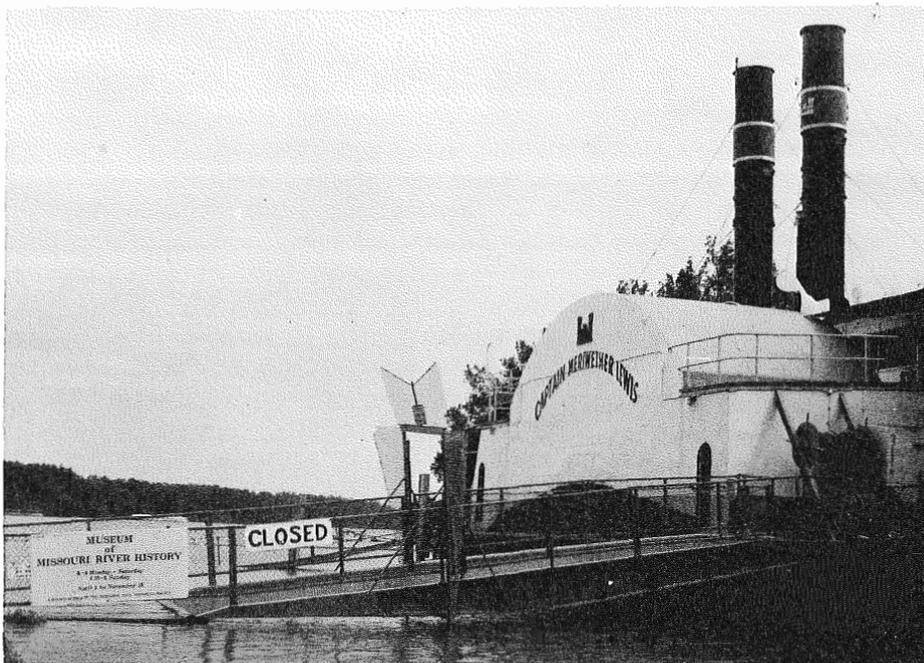
*Senator George W. Norris Home* at McCook—This year saw the start of two major projects: using a federal grant, we are installing new storm windows, as the originals were apparently discarded some years ago. Using private donations, restoration work has begun on Senator Norris' 1937 Buick.

*Mobile Museums*—During the 1984 season the decision was made to close the Mobile Museum at Courthouse Rock. This enabled us to utilize personnel at the Chimney Rock location, providing better personal safety and better service to the public.



*Restoration work on Grace Episcopal Church at the Willa Cather Historical Center, Red Cloud, continued during the summer of 1984.... (Below) A retaining wall at Neligh Mills, Neligh, has been completed.*





*The Museum of Missouri River History in the Meriwether Lewis, Brownville, was closed during June flooding, but visitation was good in late summer and fall . . . (Below) Visitors inspect a photo exhibit at the John G. Neihardt Center, Bancroft.*



## ARCHEOLOGY

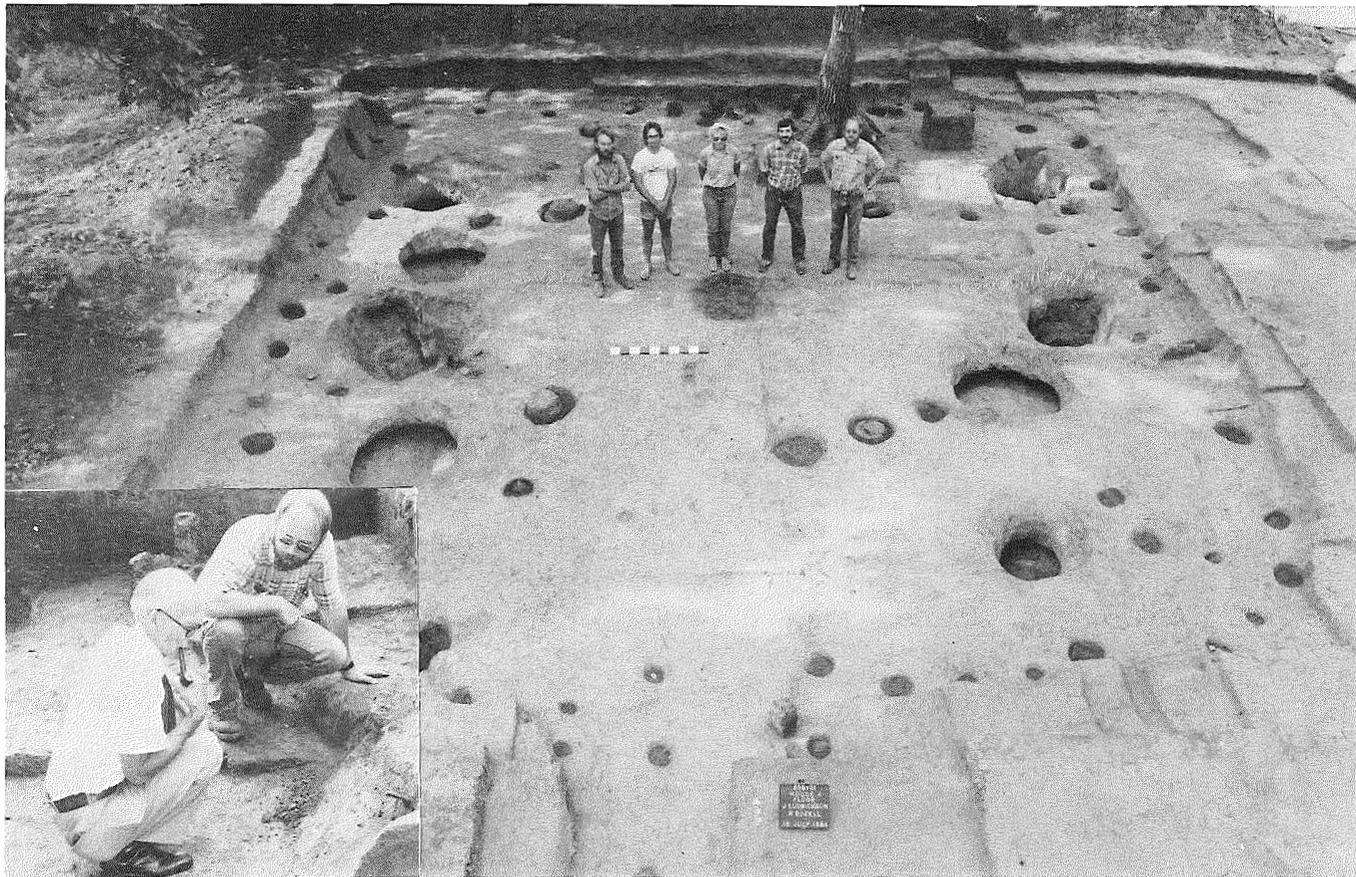
In November, 1983, Gayle Carlson surveyed an area in St. Helena, Cedar County, scheduled for grading and excavation. This project was funded by Federal Recreation funds channeled through the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. No archeological sites were discovered, although log houses (unaffected by the project) were identified. In early 1984 Carlson investigated the Homer village site (25DK5) scheduled to be damaged by construction. The Homer village is a late 18th early 19th century village of the Omaha tribe (visited by Lewis and Clark), which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Investigation indicates there will be no great loss of scientific data, although an archeologist should be on-site during construction.

Carlson made trips to Natural Resources District projects and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission facilities, especially Rock Creek Station Historical Park and Fort Atkinson Historical Park.

In 1983, Steve Holen conducted research for the Historic Preservation Division on the South Loup River and was replaced as Highway Archeologist by Dr. Kerry Lippincott. In 1984 Holen was transferred to Historic Preservation and was replaced as Highway Archeologist by Rob Bozell.

John Ludwickson, Steve Holen, and Rob Bozell surveyed or monitored construction on 60 highway projects. A total of 13 new archeological sites were discovered, several of which will require excavation. In addition, 17 borrow pits or waste disposal locations were surveyed. In 1984 excavations were conducted along Nebraska Highway 31 in Sarpy County at sites 25SY19 and 25SY31. At the latter a 1,150-square foot lodge floor was excavated.

In the laboratory specimens recovered were cataloged by Thomas McGinnis and work-study students. About 3,000 lots of specimens and about 12,000 individual specimens, have already been cataloged from 25DK5 and this task is not yet completed. About 20,000 specimens from 1979 excavations at Fort Atkinson, 25WN9, were cataloged. The collection from 25SM14, a prehistoric Loup River Phase site excavated in July, 1982, and the spring of 1983, was completely washed and cataloged, consisting of about 4,000 specimens. Another 4,000



*A 40-foot prehistoric earthlodge floor was excavated south of Gretna in Sarpy County as a part of the highway archeological survey. Larger holes were storage pits; smaller ones were post holes.... (Inset) Society Director Marvin Kivett (left) and John Ludwickson inspect a detail of the excavation.*



*The Society cooperated in ceremonies May 19 honoring Malcolm X (1925-1965), civil rights leader, near his Omaha birth site. From left are Rowena Moore, president of the Malcolm X Foundation; Ernie Chambers, Nebraska state senator; and Buddy Hogan, speaker.... (Below) the Society carried on archeological research in cooperation with the State Game and Parks Commission at the Fort Atkinson site in Washington County.*



specimens were washed and cataloged from 25SM9, a site excavated by Dr. Gordon McKenzie and donated by him to the Society. (This is an important Great Oasis Phase site.) Finally, about 500-1,000 specimens from minor surveys and miscellaneous projects were cataloged.

The Archeology Division contributed to the content and design of exhibits for the new State Museum of History.

Published in 1984 by the Society was *Nebraska Highway Archeological and Historical Salvage Investigations, 1969-1975* (Number 10 in the Society Publications in Anthropology series). Authors were Curator of Archeology Gayle Carlson and Terry Steinacher, former Society Archeologist.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In June, 1983, the Historic Preservation Office moved into new quarters in the administration building at 15th and R Streets. It had been located in the State Office Building to alleviate overcrowded conditions at 15th and R but returned after the Museum and Collections Departments moved to the new State Museum of History at 15th and P.

The preservation staff now totals seven full time and two half time employees. Richard Jensen had been serving as both Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and Staff Archeologist until February 1 when former Highway Salvage Archeologist Steve Holen was added to the staff. He resigned in May to become director of the Dawson County Historical Society. In April, William Hunt was hired as Preservation Archeologist. A PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania, he has substantial experience in Plains archeology with a special interest in the early historic period.

During fiscal 1983-1984 a survey of historic buildings was conducted in Sarpy, Red Willow, Sherman, and Howard Counties. State wide, approximately 22,000 buildings have been photographed and historical data compiled. While only a minority are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, this inventory will be invaluable to research scholars.

During the year 24 properties were enrolled on the National Register. They include such diverse properties as the Neligh Mill grain elevators in Neligh, the Malcolm X house site in Omaha, and the city auditorium in Hartington. A total of 353 Nebraska sites are now listed.

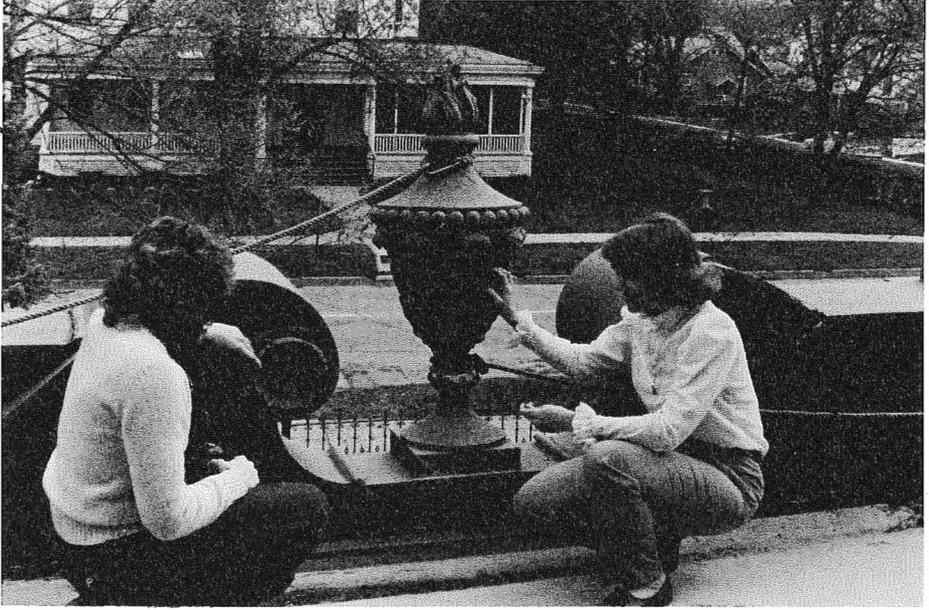
In 1983 Congress passed the Emergency Jobs Act, which provided federal funds for a wide variety of undertakings with the primary goal of reducing unemployment. Historic Preservation offices around the nation were allocated funds, including \$364,328 for Nebraska to be used on a 50-50 matching basis by National Register property owners wishing to restore or preserve historic sites. Fifty-nine National Register property owners have requested over \$1.1 million. It is indeed unfortunate that there was not enough to fund all proposals. Funds went to 25 projects based on benefit to the largest number of people in the community--properties such as the Holt County Historical Society's Kinkaid Building, the Johnson County Courthouse, and the Papillion Area Historical Society's Sauter Farmhouse.

The Historic Preservation Office continues to work closely with developers under the provisions of the Economic Recovery Tax Act. The act provides tax benefits to owners who rehabilitate historic buildings for commercial purposes. Some of these properties would have been lost but for the Tax Act. Some major undertakings include the Capitol Hotel or YMCA in Lincoln and the Monmouth Park School in Omaha.

A computer feasibility study has been initiated, and a method for transferring federal historic preservation funds to local governments was examined. A total of 866 federally licensed projects were reviewed for impact on historic sites, and 1,356 letters were answered on preservation matters.

## TOWARD TOMORROW

And now, a look toward tomorrow.... We presently have a project underway by each department to develop long-range plans for further review by the Board. What should the Society be doing in five or in 20 years? In my case I have found it particularly helpful to be able to refer throughout the years to brief reports presented in 1962 by James L. Sellers, James C. Olson, and William D. Aeschbacher, all former Directors of this Society. The report by Dr. Sellers is particularly oriented towards the goal of taking our history to individuals throughout the state by means of museums. His particular emphasis was on plans that would more fully develop a great agricultural museum. He suggested that this should be carried out in 1967 as a part of the State Centennial observance. It didn't happen then, but I believe we are now on the road.



*Historic Preservation Associate Joni Gilkerson (left) and homeowner Pam Hibbins observe balcony detail of the Historical Samuel D. Kilpatrick house, Beatrice.... (Below) Survey Assistant Stephen Pondelis (right) and Cultural Historian Janet Jeffries Spencer (third from right) confer with members of the Papillion Historical Society during the Sarpy County survey.*



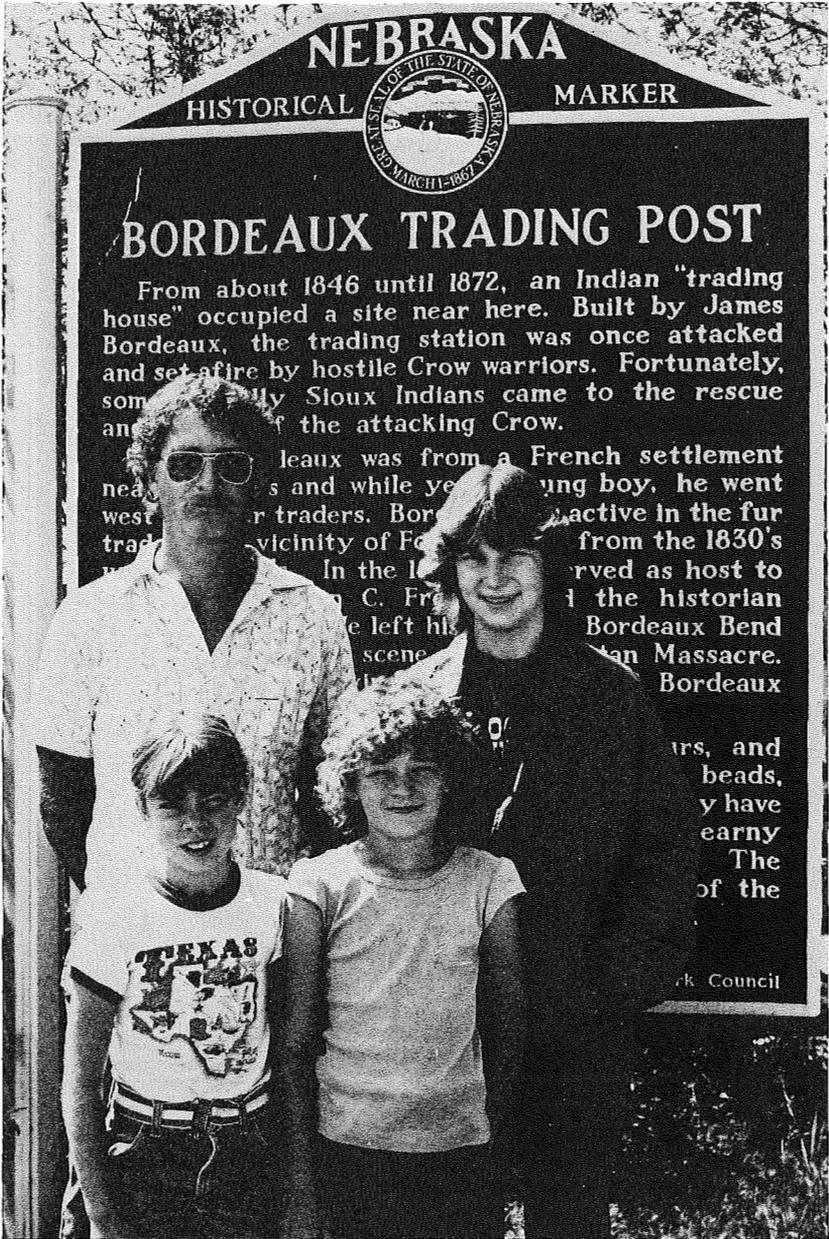
With the recent donation of the 160-acre Lageschulte-Weese Memorial Farm east of Lincoln to the Society Foundation, we can expect that future generations will have a greater appreciation of the role of agriculture in Nebraska. The farm was donated by Mrs. Evelyn B. Weese and Miss Frances Lageschulte. Plans also include a Nebraska Agricultural Museum at the site.

A grant of \$50,000 was received from the Institute for Museum Services, a federal agency. It can be used for general operating expenses and will be used in part for hiring consultants to develop a master plan for the Living History Farm, to provide extra staff to complete moving of historical collections to the State Museum of History, and to hire a volunteer coordinator for the Society.

We will need your support, not only for this project but for all our efforts to preserve and interpret our history. You and I have been fortunate to have a most dedicated and supportive Executive Board under the leadership of Mr. E. J. Faulkner. This has been a year of increased activity by the Society Foundation under the leadership of Otto Kotouc. Together they have made a difference.

P.S.—And now, as this, my last annual report, goes to press, many of you know that I have announced my retirement effective December 31, 1984. After some 35 years as a staff member, with 21 years in the position of Director, I feel that I have been extremely fortunate. Few of us can do what we like to do and still earn a living. The Society has been my interest since 1935, when as a high school student, I volunteered to work on the Society archeological crew under the direction of Society Museum Director Asa T. Hill. He was so impressed with my services that he offered me \$30 a month in 1936 to dig and cook both. The high salary was for cooking, not for digging.

Following service in the Army during World War II, I worked as an archeologist for the Smithsonian Institution River Basin Surveys. In 1949 I returned to the Society as Assistant Museum Director under the direction of Dr. James C. Olson. The staff then numbered some 12 people. Our present staff numbers 120. In 1963 I became Administrative Director.



*The Chadron Fur Trade Museum benefited from the volunteer help of the Bordeaux Trappers 4-H Club: leader Gary Letchworth (left, 2nd row), Lori Hallsted; Amy Hurley (left, 1st row), and Calico Letchworth.*

It has been my pleasure to serve under the direction of three Society directors, Addison E. Sheldon, James C. Olson, and William D. Aeschbacher, all of whom served the Society well.

Starting in 1949 it was my good fortune to assist in the plans as they related to the museum in the new building, which was dedicated in 1953. Historical museums at that time consisted largely of visual storage with many artifacts on display. Working with Dr. Olson and the limited museum staff, we developed a story line utilizing a limited number of artifacts to depict the chronological history of Nebraska people. This is a common practice today.

Another area of special interest has been the historical markers program, which has placed markers at some 285 locations. The preservation of historic buildings and sites has also been a special concern. I have enjoyed working with the ever-increasing number of local historical organizations and have tried to be of service in their goal of preserving local history. The Society Board and the Foundation trustees have provided support for the publications program both in the *Publications* series as well as *Publications in Anthropology*.

And now as I return to private life, I shall continue to do what I like best. Throughout my career as an archeologist for the Smithsonian Institution and the Society, my wife Caroline shared the fun and the hardships of field work. Now it is time to complete unfinished archeological field reports, some of which date back more than 35 years. As private citizens, Caroline and I will devote greater effort to the support of the Society and particularly to the work of the Society Foundation.

We thank you, the members, and the various Society Board members throughout the years for the opportunity to serve you. Above all we thank the staff, many of whom have become professionals with their first service to the Society.