

PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION OF LINCOLN

Newsletter of the Preservation Association of Lincoln ♦ Lincoln ♦ Nebraska ♦ Winter 2004
Volume XII Issue 4

WYUKA MOURNS

By Colleen Kenney / Lincoln Journal Star

A microburst hit the old cemetery off O Street on Wednesday, September 15th. It toppled scores of gravestones. It destroyed about 100 trees, sheering the tops off many, uprooting others. It changed the character of the park for a long time.

A lifetime.

"It's going to be a major order just to replant," cemetery horticulturalist Dianne Bolhken said Wednesday afternoon, driving an all-terrain Gator through the tornado-like damage covering much of the interior of the park - about one-fourth of the park's 169 acres.

"Sure, we can replant," says Bolhken, who's 48. "But we're never going to see it like it was."

She drives by swans in the pond on the southwest side and then over a bridge. This is where the wind hit first, she says. A green ash is uprooted. A fir is uprooted, its top sheered off. A maple is missing several big limbs, which the wind blew clear across the creek.

Look down that way, she says, stopping the Gator to face the northeast. "You can see where it went through. It's clear as a map. Funny thing is, on the edges of it over there, only a few little branches were down. People coming in on Vine didn't know why we had to close down a day and a half."



The microburst - a strong downdraft that includes an outburst of potentially damaging winds near the ground - toppled trees up to 3 feet in diameter to expose root systems. It pulled one Colorado blue spruce like a weed. The spruce fell on a row of stones dating from the late 1800s. And because the blue spruce grew close beside a granite stone from 1922, the stone was uprooted with the tree.

"I can't make it out," Bolhken says, trying to wipe away enough dirt to read the name. The tree left a hole 3 feet deep and 11 feet across.

Nearby, a black wrought-iron cross with an inscription in German - one of the stops for people touring the cemetery - was toppled off its brick base.



The microburst hit about 3:30 a.m. Sept. 15, says Mike Heflebower, a Wyuka Cemetery co-director. He says a man who rents a house Wyuka owns just to the west told him it sounded like a freight train coming through.

Only a few stones have to be replaced, he says. Most just need to be pushed back upright and reset on foundations. The brick streets should be cleared of limbs by today.

But the trees -

"It's a tough day for this old place," Heflebower says. "We're talking about a 135-year-old cemetery taking a hit that awful. It's difficult and kind of sad to see the destruction of such grand old trees."

Families planted many of the trees near stones.

Franckie E. Jennings died in 1891 at 5 years, 4 months. The wind knocked his marble stone over. It's shaped like a tree, one that's been cut off at the top - a style popular in the late 19th century.

"A cut tree symbolized a short life," Heflebower says.

Bolhken's Gator crunches over limbs, their leaves now dead. She drives by the 1997 state champion Scotch pine, now missing limbs. She drives by Soldier's Circle, the white marble stones of soldiers that stand at attention, the place where a service is held each Memorial Day. A green ash, broken like a toothpick, now lies over a platoon of stones.



"Here it is," she says, a little bit to the west.

A photo of a little girl is on this stone. She died in 1891. The stone is a popular stop on cemetery tours, she says. People say the little girl's eyes seem to follow you around.



"She's one a lot of people know from the tours here - the little girl, the 'Morning Glory.' I'm glad her stone didn't get damaged."

A tree-service truck rumbles by on the brick road. Bolhken takes a drink from her water bottle. It's about time to call it a day, she says, her muscles sore enough to take pain pills.

Her heart aches, too.

The afternoon sun shines down, hitting grass and stones that used to be under a comforting shade.

WYUKA CEMETERY'S HISTORY

By Ed Zimmer

Swans and owls, squirrels and memories all find tranquil residence in the center of Lincoln, behind the dark green cast-iron fence of Wyuka Cemetery. In 1869, two years after Lincoln was founded to be the capital of the new state of Nebraska's state capital, the Legislature order the creation of a cemetery near the new city. The appointed trustees envisioned a "rural cemetery" of trees and lawns and curving drives, and selected hilly land a mile east of the city as the site for the cemetery they named Wyuka. Like Wyuka Cemetery in the older town of Nebraska City, they adapted the Lakota "wanka," meaning "he lies down," into Wyuka—A Place of Rest.

NOTE: Costs for replacement of trees will top \$100,000. Donations may be sent to the Wyuka Foundation at 3600 O Street, Lincoln, NE 68510

Surveyor Augustus Harvey demonstrated his versatility in the cemetery's plan, departing from the grid of Lincoln's Original Plat, which he had drawn in 1867, to lay out curving avenues that followed the topography. The oldest part of Wyuka, in the southwest corner, set the pattern for the rest of the cemetery as it grew in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to more than 150 acres. The original plan also set the pattern of offered a "Potter's Field" for the burial of the community's indigents, and an open "Lawn" for visitors to enjoy as a park. Over the years, special sections were added for orphans, Civil War and other veterans, Jews, and others.

Wyuka's highly visible O Street frontage was enhanced in the 1920s with a beautiful iron fence, relocated from University of Nebraska's city campus. John Seaton of Atchinson, Kansas was the original maker of the fence, which encircled the downtown campus from the 1890s to the 1910s.

Wyuka Cemetery has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since the 1970s, even though cemeteries are not typically eligible for that honor. Wyuka's landscape design, carrying out the big-city ideal of a "rural cemetery" when Lincoln barely a town, was deemed worthy of National Register recognition.

In its 135 years of service, Wyuka has received nearly 60,000 burials—larger than Lincoln's living population in 1920. Six Nebraska governors are buried at Wyuka, including Albinus Nance, whose portrait bust and granite canopy at the center of Section 13 contrasts sharply with nearby, simple granite tablet for Charles W. Bryan, brother of William Jennings Bryan. Charles' remarkable public career included two terms as Lincoln mayor, twenty years apart (1915-7 and 1935-7) and split terms as Nebraska's Governor (1923-5 and 1931-5). Governor Sam McKelvie is interred in Section 6 beneath a gleaming marble angel and Governor Thayer's marker is granite obelisk with a bas relief portrait in bronze, in the G.A.R. (Civil War) Circle. Throughout Wyuka nearly 1,000 Civil War veterans are buried—mostly Union soldiers and sailors, but including at least a pair of Confederates. Over a dozen African-American Civil War veterans are buried among their comrades at Wyuka, along with three of the European-American officers who served with those troops, according to the conventions of the day.

The oldest building on the grounds is the picturesque Receiving Vault, a tiny Romanesque Revival structure of the 1880s designed by John H. W. Hawkins. Rudge Chapel is a Gothic Revival gem in limestone, the work of Davis & Wilson in 1935. The Service Barn west of the chapel is over 90 years old but in recent years has found new life as a tiny theater, especially for Shakespearean productions. Wyuka is continually renewed, while continuing to serve its original mission.

Calendar

Dates in the upcoming months for events sponsored by PAL and other related organizations are listed as follows:

PAL Brown Bag Lecture Series: Free programs open to the public are held on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning at noon, at the Museum of Nebraska History, 15th & P Streets. Bring your lunch. PAL Brown Bag Lectures are aired on Time Warner Cable's Government Channel 5 during the month following the live presentation on the following days: Monday 10pm; Tuesday 8pm & 12am; Wednesday 10am & 9:30pm; Thursday 5pm & 2am; Friday 11:30pm; Saturday 11pm; and Sunday 9pm and 11:30pm.. (See *PAL* below.)

Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) Brown Bag Lectures: Free programs open to the public are held at noon on the third Thursday of each month at the Museum of Nebraska History, 15th & P Streets. NSHS Brown Bags are aired on Channel 5 Wednesday at noon and 8:30pm, Friday at 5pm and Saturday at 6pm. (See NSHS below).

November 9 - PAL: Old City Hall and the Park on Government Square, Ed Zimmer, City of Lincoln Preservation Planner and Lynn Johnson, Director of Parks & Recreation Dept.

November 18 - NSHS: Nebraska Quilts, Carolyn Ducey, Curator, International Quilt Studies Center

December 14 - PAL: John Schleicher, History of University of Nebraska Medical Center

December 16 - NSHS: From the Vault, Deb Arenz, Senior Museum Curator Nebraska State Historical Society

January 11 - PAL: Frank Lloyd Wright houses in Nebraska, Randy Stramel

January 20 - NSHS: Nebraska Lawyers

February 8 - PAL: Grant Hall, Dr. Peter M. Lefferts

March 2 - Annual Meeting

May 2005 - Historic Preservation Month

May 2-8, 2005 - Historic Preservation Week "Restore America: Communities at a Crossroads"



NOTES FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Congratulations to all of you who voted on and worked for Amendment One. Finally, we have a way to make historic preservation less financially burdensome on those of us who own and love old homes and buildings. Many PAL members explained the amendment to their fellow citizens and many preservationists throughout the state worked hard for this amendment to pass. In our friend and fellow PAL member, Peter Bleed's, words "This was clearly and truly a people's victory. There was no big money, no news recognition, but a clear win." Peter also suggested and many others of us agree that it is time to restart a statewide advocacy preservation group. PAL will begin work on doing so once we recover and celebrate the accomplishment of Amendment One passage—it will be soon however! We will also need your help to do this. As we move forward on this idea we will keep you posted.

The next step in the process is to draft a legislative bill that will enable us to put this new constitutional amendment into working order. It is imperative that those of you who were on the ground working for passage take an active part in the drafting of this legislation. Please email PAL or write to your State Legislator to take part in the next phase of this project. Your help would be greatly appreciated. We must not leave this to the bureaucracy to put into action. Those of us who need to update our homes or businesses, or communities who want to preserve their heritage, must have a law that is truly useful to them.

FARMERS MARKET

By Bob Kuzelka

PAL Board members had a booth at the Lincoln Farmer's Market on August 28th, September 18th and October 30th. The thrust of the booth was to promote membership in PAL and the vote for Amendment One to the Nebraska Constitution. Literature for both purposes was distributed.

Persons who stopped at the booth were able to register for a drawing for a free PAL membership or a PAL shopping bag. Two or three dozen persons registered on each Saturday.

Thanks to the board members who helped with this effort.



PAL Board Members at Farmers Market on September 18

NATIONAL PRESERVATION MONTH 2005 ANNOUNCED

The National Trust has formally designated the month of May as Preservation Month. Due to its overwhelming popularity, the Trust has expanded Preservation Week into Preservation Month to provide an extended opportunity for local communities to honor and celebrate the diverse and unique heritage of the country's cities and states. This change will enable more Americans to become involved in the growing preservation movement by participating in events ranging from architectural and historic tours and award ceremonies, to fund raising events, educational programs and heritage travel opportunities.

PAL BROWN BAG SERIES

December 14 – University of Nebraska Medical College History – By John Schleicher

January 11 – Frank Lloyd Wright Houses in Nebraska
By Randy Stramel



The presentation will trace the relationship between Frank Lloyd Wright and two clients in McCook, Nebraska during the first decade of the twentieth century. Based on correspondence, drawings and other historical documents the story sheds light on Wright's relationships with his clients and his studio organization.

February 8 – Grant Hall – Music at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, Omaha, 1898: The Checkered Career of Willard Kimball and the UNL Alumni Organ
By Peter Lefferts



Willard Kimball, founder of the School of Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, kept a personal scrapbook of clippings that document his turbulent career as director of the Bureau of Music at Omaha's great 1898 fair. Forced out of that office in July 1898, his role at the fair and the program of music that he devised were virtually written out of the public historical record by his enemies. Salvaging both his dignity and his salary, however, Kimball was the prime mover a few months

later in a successful scheme to purchase the Exposition organ for the university in Lincoln with donations from alumni and establish it in a new building on campus.

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BROWN BAG SERIES

November 18 – Carolyn Ducey, guest curator for the Museum of Nebraska History's quilt show, and, of course, she will talk about quilts. She is curator at UNL's International Quilt Study Center.

December 16 – Deb Arenz, Nebraska State Historical Society, Senior Museum Curator. Her lecture is titled "From the Vault", and will feature the "weird and wonderful" from the Society's museum collections.

January 20 – "Nebraska Lawyers"

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PAL MEMBER.....By Matt Hansen

PALs:

For those who were in attendance at tonight's PAL board meeting (and for those who weren't), I, for one, was really challenged by Bob Kuzelka's comments at the end of the meeting to think about what our purpose is as a preservation organization. To paraphrase the general idea: "Why do we do the things we do?", "What do we hope to achieve by doing it?", "What are our goals", and "Why do we bother putting forth the effort?"

Although I can't speak for the entire organization in response to those questions, I can speak for myself, and it got me started thinking a little bit about why I'm doing what I'm doing as a member of the PAL board. I thought I should share some of those thoughts that I wrote down in a little "brain-dump" exercise as soon as I got home. Bear with me, this is a bit of a rough draft, kind of like a computerized version of scribbling on scratch paper:

Why am I an advocate for Historic Preservation? or "Why do I do what I do?"

I am an advocate for Historic Preservation.....

....because I believe that a community's heritage, sense of place, and understanding of itself is deeply rooted in its architectural past. Ultimately, we are remembered by what we leave behind, and buildings can be multi-generational communicators of what it is that we value as a community and as individuals.

...because I cannot stand idly by as the historic heritage and architectural fabric of my community is carelessly swept into the dumpster.

...because all buildings, whether publicly owned or privately held, need someone who will speak for them. Dr. Seuss's character the Lorax said "I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues." Buildings need an advocate like that. They have a story to tell, and can speak to us if we are willing to listen to them and understand their language. They can't vocalize that story, so someone has to speak for them, and it might as well be me.

...because there must be someone willing to present a reasonable alternative to destruction.

...because sometimes it only takes a gentle nudge in the right direction to convert a "building owner" into "building steward."

...because fifty years from now, I don't want to have to look my grandchildren in the eye and say "I don't know" when they ask me why I didn't do more when I had the chance to save some of the past for their future enjoyment.

...because I believe that a building without a use is destined for destruction.

...because I believe that we preserve the things that we value. That which we do not value we label as "garbage" and throw it away.

...because if I can help even one person gain an understanding and appreciation of historic buildings, then I have accomplished more than I will ever full know.

...because while not all buildings deserve to be preserved, some of them certainly do, and I believe that they are worth fighting for.

...because I believe that buildings, like many other things, don't really belong to us. We are but caretakers and custodians of them for a time, and it is our responsibility to help each other care for them until it is time to entrust them to others.

...because Education is the key to Understanding; Understanding is the key to Appreciation; Appreciation is the key to Preservation; and Preservation is the key to our Future as a Community.

I can only speak for myself, but those are a few reasons why I make the effort to be an advocate for Historic Preservation here in this community. It takes a commitment of time and money, but we invest those things in the causes that are important to us.

The Newsletter of the Preservation Association of Lincoln is published quarterly by the Preservation Association of Lincoln, % Rogers House, 2145 B Street, Lincoln, NE 68502. For further information contact Kay Davis at 477-5712 or by email (see Board list).

Preservation Association of Lincoln Financial Summary for September 2004

Checking Account:

Beginning Balance		\$2,225.75
Income:		
Donations/United Way	\$27.53	27.53
Expenses:		
Farmers Market	\$90.00	
Bulk mail deposit	400.00	<u>\$490.00</u>

Ending Balance **\$1,763.28**

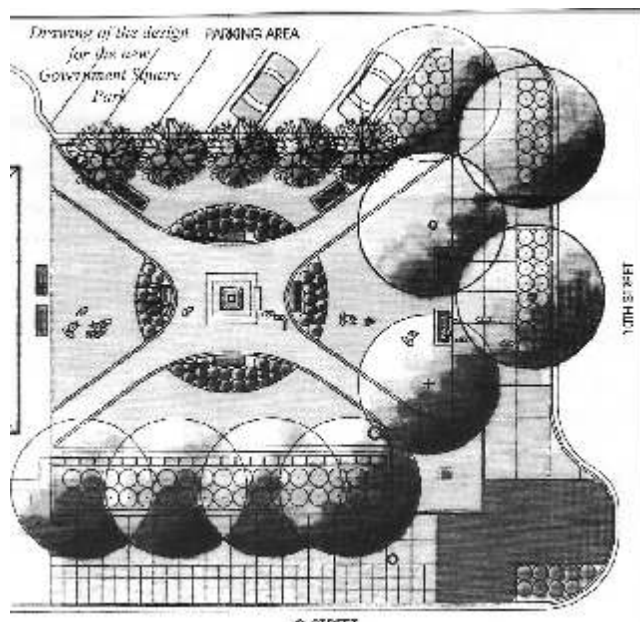
St. Francis Chapel Foundation Educational Fund:

Savings account		\$192.38
6 mo. CD		500.00
12 mo. CD		502.13
12 mo. CD		1,010.45
12 mo. CD		<u>1,010.45</u>

Ending Balance **\$3,215.41**

OLD CITY HALL 125TH ANNIVERSARY

On October 9th, the City celebrated the 125th Anniversary of Old City Hall. At this celebration, they unveiled plans for a new Park on Government Square. The Preservation Association of Lincoln served refreshments for the event.





Ed Zimmer's group tour of Old City Hall



Old City Hall in all its Glory



Mayors Helen Boosalis and Colleen Seng

Matt's Postcard from Lincoln

by Matt Hansen



"Printed in Germany and distributed by local merchant Frank DuTeil, this early undivided back postcard shows the view of Government Square looking to the southeast. From the time of its completion in 1879 until the construction of the new post office building in 1905, Lincoln's U.S. Post Office and Federal Court House (later City Hall) stood alone on the block. The north half of the block was maintained as a public park with angled walks leading to a fountain whose source was an artesian well that had been sunk in 1875."

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Preservation Association of Lincoln Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

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Clip this form and mail it to:

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c/o Rogers House
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Lincoln, NE 68502

Membership Categories (Please Check One)

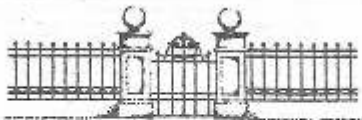
- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$1,000 | Spire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$500 | Keystone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$200 | Pediment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$100 | Pillar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$50 | Pedestal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$25 | Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$20 | Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | \$5 | Student or
Senior Citizen |

Please check you volunteer interests:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Bag Speaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance/Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Building & Site Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Recruitment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Contributor | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Do You Have Questions

Any questions on membership, activities or general questions on preservation in Lincoln and Lancaster County? Please contact us at preservationassociationoflincoln@msn.com



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