

The Park Bench

AEPNA Newsletter

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President's Letter Truth or Legend?

I heard that Saddle Creek got its name from one Mr. Poppleton, a Union Pacific Railroad surveyor and lawyer, who carried his saddle in the back of the wagon. When he wanted to survey hard-to-reach spots, he'd unhitch the horse from the wagon, saddle it up and ride. Once, the saddle fell off the wagon and he didn't discover it until he was ready to switch to the horse. He went looking for the saddle and found it in a creek.

Oral histories are valuable, but it takes a lot of work to find documentary evidence to support the stories. We've all played "Telephone" and seen how a story can change with repetition. But we've also seen how some unbelievable stories prove true. After the May meeting, neighbors came forward with stories of the neighborhood that we hope will spur you to do a little sleuthing on your own. (See story on pages 3.)

Friday, September 5 is the official ribbon cutting of the new playground at S/V Park. AEPNA is planning a celebration with help from the City of Omaha, the Parks Department and neighbors. Please put this on your calendars now. Invite friends, neighbors, local businesses and family to come out and make it a celebration worthy of the work that went into raising \$50,000 for our match! Do you want to help in making this a celebration for the history books? Contact Eileen Slane at 402-553-5988.

Lt. Jerry Siedlik from the Southwest Precinct will join us at the July meeting to discuss Neighborhood Watch and address the recent rash of break-ins. And word on the street is that there may be samples from thegourmetgranola.com at the meeting, too. You don't want to miss it. See you there!

Avery Schwer

Next Meeting
Thursday, July 17
6:30 – 8:30 PM
St. Matthew's

Speakers & Topics:
Sustainability in the City
Glenn & Nicole
Wigodsky - neighbors,
gardeners, and owners of
thegourmetgranola.com

Neighborhood Watch
Lt. Jerry Siedlik

Please join us!

Abstract Thinking

Richard and Constance Hollenbeck have the original abstract of their home which shows that it was granted to a soldier who got it for service in the War of 1812 by order of President Buchanan (a year before the actual Homestead Act passed). The abstract documents the claims, counter-claims, quitclaims, liens and lawsuits on the property (and even include Byron Reed's Last Will and Testament!). A longtime area resident told them the home was once a dairy. Research in The City Directory of Omaha (main library downtown) would verify that and give a view of prior owners. If you have your original abstract, dig it out and read it to see how many famous Omahans played a part in your home's history!



your neighborhood bank  more

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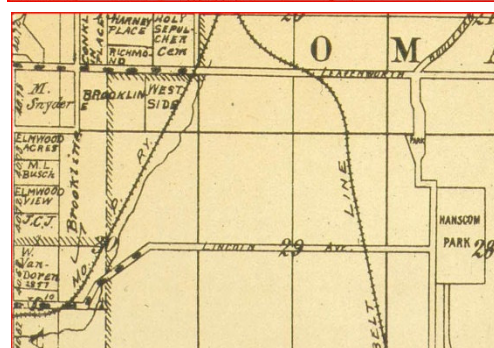
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When Midtown was West Omaha



Old maps of the area show surprising changes in our city and landmarks that we take for granted. The maps below are roughly of the same area in 1899 and 1913.

Familiar landmarks are Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, County Hospital and Hanscom Park.

Lincoln Avenue (now Center Street) was once the city limit with odd jogs near 60th Street. Rogene Foy explained that was an accommodation for a prominent citizen who lived on the south side of the street, but wanted to be in the city limits so his child could take advantage of city services.

(Taken from Atlas & Plat Book of Douglas & Sarpy Counties, Nebraska, published by C.H. Scoville in 1899 & 1913)

These maps and many other rich historical artifacts are available at the Omaha Public Library (OPL) on the 3rd floor of the main library downtown along with old copies of the City Directory which is organized both alphabetically and by street, so you can find out who lived at your address or where someone you know used to live. Many of the resources are available online, and are helpful for doing genealogical research. Some of the digital archives require an OPL card, but others are available to the public in general. The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps are an amazing resource. Once you start browsing, you'll find it hard to stop!

Check out the resources available at:

<http://guides.omahalibrary.org/>

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AEPNA Membership Form

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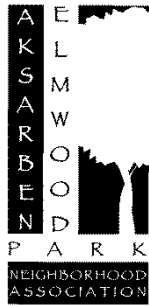
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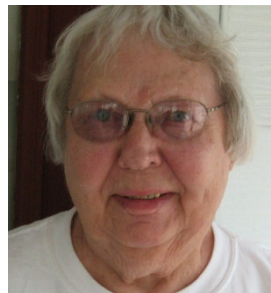
Omaha, NE

Permit 1638

“Hopefully, ghost stories and anecdotes get passed along to new owners by the neighbors. We have quite a few interesting anecdotes from our older neighbors. Our house certainly has character.

The two foot addition to our garage front? Built because Earl owned a series of Cadillacs and one just didn't quite fit.” Trina Westman

Remember the Airmail Landing Strip at Aksarben Field?



“My father worked for the postal service. When a night airmail flight was expected, he and other workers would line up their cars – facing each other on either side of the landing strip at Aksarben to illuminate the runway.”

Reminiscence of Rogene Foy

AEPNA member and longtime neighbor

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- * Elmwood Tower * Godfather's Pizza/Aksarben Village * Hertz Equipment Rental * Hy-Vee *
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