

From The Collection

The museum reopened on February 28 with the opening party for our spring exhibit, *From the Collection*. This display features a wide variety of architectural artifacts that have been salvaged by or donated to the museum since its beginning in 1974. The museum board and staff decided that there were items that hadn't seen the light of day for years, and it was high time to dig up some of these objects and show them to the public.

The display is divided into several areas. There are sections on glass, stone, wood, hardware, metal and blueprints. Some of the significant demolished buildings and homes that have items on display include Doerr's Opera House (J.C. Penney) at 6th and Maine, First United Presbyterian Church at 8th and Broadway, Notre Dame High School at 8th and Vermont, and homes in the 4th and Kentucky neighborhood.

Be sure to make time to visit this exciting exhibit. Hopefully, looking at some of these articles will bring back some great memories from the past, and help everyone remember several of the architectural gems that are lost forever.

What a Hole!

At the end of February, a large sinkhole appeared at the base of the Mussleman arch in the Gardner Museum sculpture garden. Initial thoughts were that the hole was the remains of an old cistern, a steam tunnel from the Newcomb Hotel, or settling rubble from an old livery stable demolished on the site.

Investigation of the sinkhole walls did not reveal organized courses of bricks, ruling out the cistern and the tunnel. This leads us to believe that the hole was created by settling debris from the livery stable demolition.

After discussion of the hole's contents of fragmented bricks, broken wire glass, and pieces of ceramic, it was decided to preserve the site for possible future excavations. The hole was filled with sand to allow prospective access to the site while removing any danger to museum patrons. What remains of the sinkhole will be covered by the planned improvements for the garden area scheduled for this spring.

Making Our Garden Grow

Speaking of the sculpture garden, plans are moving right along to begin working on this area again. Last fall a paver brick sidewalk and patio were installed, the arborvitae were outlined in trap rock, and some landscaping was completed. This year even more visible improvements will be finished.

The first project to get underway will be installing historic lighting. The museum is trying to coordinate our lighting with the type already surrounding Washington Park. After this, a sprinkler system will be put in to keep the lawn weed-free and green throughout the hot, dry summer. New grass will be planted and concrete pedestals will be placed around the site. To complete this second phase of the garden, stone fragments will be set on the pedestals.

Future work will include purchasing benches for the area and possibly placing decorative fencing around the 4th Street boundary. The museum's board and staff are very excited to see all of these improvements. It is definitely going to be a marvelous area for openings and programs when all of the work is completed.