

Welcome to the historic William Ferguson House. It is a special privilege to share this exquisitely designed and preserved home with you and we hope that you will enjoy your experience here while helping us maintain the beauty and quality of the home.

The Ferguson Family

William Henry Ferguson from Illinois came to Nebraska in 1879 by covered wagon. He helped introduce winter wheat and alfalfa to Nebraska as cash crops. He owned 85-90 grain elevators and several farms with over 6,000 acres. He was also Vice-President of the Tri-State Land Company, which owned 30,000 acres in Scotts Bluff County. The company set a precedent in Nebraska by constructing a 56 mile long irrigation ditch for its farms. William was President of Beatrice Cremery (became Beatrice Foods), owner of Lincoln Traction, Yankee Hill Brick Company and Capital Beach Amusement Park (which was converted to Capital Beach housing subdivision in the early 1960's by the Copple Family).

Between 1909 and 1911, the Fergusons built their home in downtown Lincoln across from the Nebraska State Capitol. The cost of construction was approximately \$38,000. At that time an average two-story, 3 bedroom house cost \$3,000-\$4,000.

Mr Ferguson died in November 1937. The State of Nebraska became the owner of the house in 1961, though Mrs Ferguson resided there until her death in January 1972 at the age of 103. Today, the Nebraska Environmental Trust office occupies and manages the Ferguson House, which can be rented for meetings and events.

The Ferguson House may be reserved for private parties, receptions and meetings.

For more information, contact, Events Coordinator at (402) 471-5417.

Contributions to support the restoration and preservation of the Ferguson House are gratefully appreciated.

**The Ferguson House
700 South 16th St
Lincoln, Nebraska**

402-471-5409

The Historic Ferguson House



Self-Guided Tour



The Ferguson House



Entrance Foyer & Dining Room



Entrance foyer with the original furnishings. Photo provided by the Ferguson family.

Note to visitors: as you begin your tour, remember that the Ferguson House is a working office for the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The Trust staff is pleased to share their office with the public, but ask that visitors refrain from moving personal items, opening closets or entering private areas. Thank you for your cooperation.

- Popular styles of the day included late Victorian, Georgian Revival and Mission or Craftsman. The house was built and decorated in Georgian Revival style, very elegant with clean lines in contrast to the heavily decorated Victorian style. The basement game room and one of the second floor bedrooms were designed in the Mission style.
- The entry vestibule is covered in Grueby Faience tile with a barrel vault ceiling.
- Also note the ceiling, covered with hand-stenciled canvas. The wall scones in the foyer and flanking the living room windows are believed to be original to the home.
- Woodwork in the foyer and around the staircase is finished true to original design; painted surfaces were specified to have seven coats of paint
- The dining room was originally upholstered with a blue-green silk. The cost of the silk before installation was \$3000 in 1910. The attached breakfast room has been converted to a bathroom to accommodate the public in the building.
- Proceeding through the butler's pantry from the dining room, be sure to note the original nickel sink and birch cabinetry.

Second Floor & Basement



Master bedroom with original furnishings. Photo provided by the Ferguson family.

- The second floor contains four bedrooms and three bathrooms. Currently these rooms are used as offices for the staff of the Nebraska Environmental Trust.
- The master bedroom is located at the top of the grand staircase on the left. Note that it has two closets, both with built-in cupboards and drawers - most unusual for the period. The bedroom also has two fully equipped bathrooms and a sleeping porch which was used year-round. The fireplace and window sills are constructed from Vermont Marble. All light fixtures are replacements of the originals. Master baths and second bath fixtures are original. Note the servant intercom in the master bath. The ceiling in the master bedroom was stippled and glazed in 1915, a treatment enjoying renewed popularity.
- The basement game room is furnished in a modified Craftsman or Mission style. The walls are paneled in Cyprus and the floor is solid maple. The massive fireplace, built-in benches and the bottle-bottom windows give the room the feel of an old English pub.
- The laundry room is located off the basement game room. Note the "state of the art" central vacuum and 6-burner natural gas mangle (iron) in the laundry room. A cistern and pump supplied the house with running water. An internal guttering system was built into the exterior walls to collect rainwater.

Kitchen, Study and Living Room



Living room with original furnishings. Photo provided by the Ferguson family.

- The kitchen was furnished with every modern convenience to make for efficiency of the household staff. Note the flour bin, with the marble pastry board built in the cabinet below. The linen drawers were designed so that tablecloths need never be folded. The original icebox remains a favorite curiosity.
- The house was powered by both gas and electricity with many original dual-powered fixtures. Note the pride of ownership apparent in the glass-encased breaker box at the back stair landing and also the nearby faucet for the fire department.
- The study/library off the rear of the entrance foyer contains built-in mahogany shelves along two walls. The study is currently rented to a private tenant and is not available for tours.
- The first floor rooms are paneled in Mexican mahogany. The floors were originally a dark-stained oak, but wall to wall carpeting was installed in 1915. The carpet was woven without seams for the entire first floor at a cost of \$3,037. The carpet was replaced in August 2009.
- The entrance foyer and living room were originally upholstered with golden silk damask imported from the orient. The draperies were made from the same fabric, swagged and trimmed with fringe.
- The third floor has maple flooring and houses two maids' bedrooms, a bathroom, off-season clothing storage room and a very large ballroom.