

## **Dundee-Memorial Park Association Newsletter**

"Dedicated to Preserving the Community" www.dundee-memorialpark.org

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### **Letter From the President**

John Ashford Johnnyash 5@gmail.com



### Happy Holidays Neighbor!

Dundee is special. Dundee neighbors are different. That was once again put on display at our November 14th neighborhood meeting regarding roundabouts. The roundabout issue involves homeowners losing their property without their consent, safety of our kids and a construction project in the heart of our neighborhood. People are passionate about this issue. People are personally affected. However, bucking the national trend, we had a respectful and equally fierce meeting where we were able to hear from a panel that included the DMPA, Councilmembers Festersen and Begley and local homeowner Jim Elliston. The questions were pointed, but fair. The opinions were well thought out and listened to by everyone in the room. Everyone had an opportunity to be heard and I know our panel listened and was very receptive and open minded.

We left the meeting with a better understanding of where we are at in the process. The mayor and city planners were invited, but had other obligations. We learned through Mayor Stothert's letter to the DMPA that city hall's decision to recommend roundabouts on 50th and 52nd and Farnam Streets and move forward with design and construction has been made. We learned that the city council will have two votes to stop the project. However, the city council is powerless to amend the project in any meaningful way. Therefore, the two options for the council are to build the roundabouts or do nothing and return to a Farnam Street without any additional safety improvements. These council votes are not on a 2022 agenda and will most likely be taken up early next year. We will keep you updated.

Thank you to the Dundee Merchants and their magical Lights on Dundee event. I look forward to taking our 3 year old daughter, Rosie, and experience all that Downtown Dundee has to offer.

Also, if you haven't already, please purchase a 2023 calendar from us. The proceeds go to the permanent purchase of historic photos of Dundee that we can preserve, archive and publish in the future. Special thanks to Jim McGee for all of his work on the calendar project, Ellen Shurson for design and publishing consultation and Eric Kaplan for helping sell the calendars at Lights on Dundee.

Happy Holidays from all of us at your DMPA. May your season be filled with family, food and cheer. I feel humbled and honored to have served you this year and look forward to 2023!

John Ashford, DMPA President"

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# pay it forward





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### John Harte and Dundee's Harte Block

By Jim McGee

One of Dundee's prominent early citizens was John Harte. Harte was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1854. His father, Frederick, arrived in Omaha by steamboat in 1865. Frederick, a native of Germany, was a successful contractor in Louisville. He died before carrying out his business plans in Omaha. Frederick Harte was survived by his wife, Johanna, three sons and a daughter At the age of 12, John began doing farm work to support himself. He was working in the carpenters' trade at age 16; and helped build the Sarpy Mill. He was kept on to maintain the Mill's machinery and learn the grain miller's trade.

John Harte then became a prominent contractor of brick buildings. He erected several of Omaha's most important structures, including the Mason School, Kountze Memorial Church, the Brandeis Building, the Omaha High School, the Nebraska Medical College, the Studebaker building, Rose Building, the Gordon Van and Storage Warehouse, the Northwestern freight building, the South Omaha public library, the powerhouse, the Child Saving Institute, the synagogue, the Woolworth Building, the Bellevue College gym, and many fine homes. He served as president of the Omaha Builders Exchange for two terms.

Harte married Margaret Drexel, the daughter of Omaha pioneers Mr. and Mrs. Fred Drexel. John and Margaret joined the Dundee Presbyterian Church after worshiping for many years as Lutherans.

Harte was among the group of businessmen who petitioned the county commissioners to organize Dundee as a village in 1894. He was a managing director of the Metropolitan Cable Railway Company which built a horse line to Dundee from 40th & Farnam. Metropolitan never built a cable line. He was a leader in the planning effort to build the new, 6-room, brick Dundee School in 1904.

The Underwood Avenue landmark Harte Block has been the home of the Dundee City Hall, a pantry, and the Ernest Buffet Grocery.

I n 1911, a fire destroyed the s 2-story brick building that housed five retail stores. Firemen stationed at Walnut Hill arrived and struggled to keep the blaze from spreading.

Baum & Barnes Druggist opened in 1922. Baum bought out Barnes in 1924, retired in 1933 and passed in 1934. A fire destroyed the store in 1948. It reopened a few months later.

In its early years, Baum's was famous for its ice cream. The store delivered ice cream to homes within the neighborhood; and ran ice cream out to passing cars if they signaled by honking.

John Harte was an early builder of brick buildings in Omaha. He won contracts for several major buildings and public schools before 1900. He began building the Harte Block in 1903. The building was 2-stories tall and 2-stores wide.

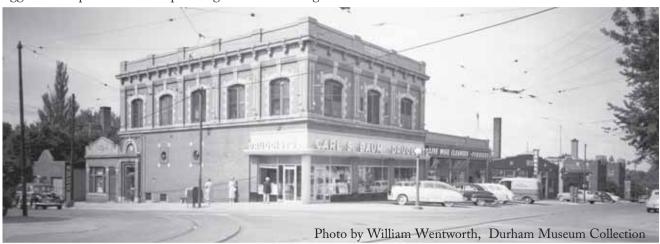
In 1893 Harte won the contract to build the \$500,000, 5-story Interstate Hotel at 15th & Harney. In 1894, Harte was among a group of men who submitted a petition to the County Board to develop Dundee as a village. Harte and Walter Selby were the managing partners of the Metropolitan Cable Railway Company Metropolitan never built a cable line but did build the Dundee horse railway line from 40th & Farnam to Dundee. Harte led the campaign to plan and build Dundee School in 1902.

In 1900, Harte obtained an injunction against the Brick Contractors Association which built most of the brick buildings in Omaha. Harte claimed they were trying to freeze out contractors who didn't belong to the group.

Harte won the contact for the 3-story Nebraska Telephone Exchange Building at 18th & Dodge in 1903.

The 2-story, electric lighted, Harte Block was built of pressed brick in 1904. The Dundee Village City Hall was located in the building until the Dundee Fire Station and City Hall was built in 1914. Church services were occasionally held in the building.

A fire of unknown origin completely destroyed John Harte's building in 1911. There were five stores in the building. Firemen struggled to keep the fire from spreading to other buildings.











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### UNMC ice rink to open Saturday, Dec. 3

The University of Nebraska Medical Center's outdoor ice-skating rink will be open this season from Dec. 3 through Feb. 5.

The rink, which is open to the public, is located just east of 42nd Street, midway between Emile Street and Dewey Avenue, on the north side of the Sorrell Center for Health Science Education.

Admission for the public is \$7, which includes skates. Only cash or credit cards are accepted — no checks or debit cards.



### Hours of operation are:

Monday: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4-8 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (campus intramurals in the evenings) Friday and Saturday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m.-8 p.m.

During winter break — Dec. 19 through Jan. 1 — open skating hours will be extended to:

Sunday through Thursday: 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday and Saturday: 11 a.m.-10 p.m.

Holiday hours are as follows: Christmas Eve: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Christmas Day: Closed

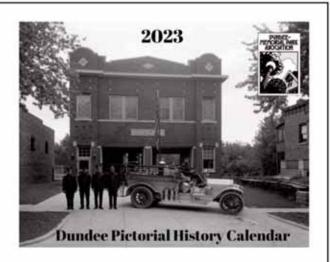
New Year's Eve: 11 a.m. – 10 p.m. New Year's Day: 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

If the air temperature (not the wind chill reading) is zero degrees or below, the rink will be closed. Check weather closures by going to Facebook or by calling (402) 559-0697.

Free parking is available in Lot 15 (surface lot on 40th Street between Dewey Avenue and Emile Street), located on the north and east sides of the UNMC Center for Healthy Living.

Both the ice rink and adjacent event building for handling admission and skate rentals are outdoors. UNMC continues to take precautions against COVID-19 and asks people who want to skate to:

Stay home if you have recently tested positive for COVID-19 or suspect you have COVID-19; Skaters may bring food and beverages. Alcohol is not allowed. For more information about the ice rink, check the UNMC calendar or contact Candace Peteler via email or (402) 559-5192.



### **Dundee History Calendar**

13 photos plus lots of historical facts by Jim McGee

Calendars will be sold at Lights on Dundee for \$15 cash, check or credit card. They will also be \$15 at AB's, the Bank, and Elmwood Pharmacy. They will be \$20 via the website and mailed.

### Spring Bulb Planting

For the past nine years or so, each spring the Dundee business district has burst into bloom with daffodils and tulips. Who makes this glorious harbinger of warm, sunny weather come to pass??? Look no further than the volunteer team from the Dundee Bank, greatly assisted by Underwood Avenue alum Kim Kneifl who had her Gardens by Kim business at 4915 Underwood for several years.

The project is funded by the Dundee Business Improvement District (DBID) to which all business district property owners contribute, but the labor is all volunteer.

Once again, this year Kim ordered the bulbs, brought them to the business district, and put each node's bulbs in a labeled container with number of bulbs of each type, for the planting crew to carry to the proper node and plant. At 2 pm on November 10, one of the week's few beautiful afternoons, the crew of bankers, led by Emily Haubenschild, arrived with shovels in hand (courtesy of the Dundee Community Garden) and began their task, filling the nodes with the 1,700 new bulbs.

Next spring, when you see the flowers nudging their way into their full glory, glance over at the bank to whisper "Thank you" from afar, or drop in to say "Thank you" to Emily and her crew.

Knowing that the bulbs are snuggled into the soil just waiting for spring, may give us a warm sense of winter's place in our seasons. The colorful display is waiting its turn with the bulbs doing what they do while waiting. For us, we can envision what it will look like when spring arrives with its abundant burst vibrant color and many lush shades of gorgeous, earth-sustaining green. Without winter would spring be so loved? Happy winter to all.

-- Molly Romero









### Scenes from Lights on Dundee 2021

### Make some memories this year December 1st

### Lights on Dundee

The Dundee Merchants Association invites you to take a stroll through Dundee and check out your local businesses at our annual Light's on Dundee, a free event on Thursday, December 1st from 4pm-8pm.

Our kickoff to the holiday season will include pictures with and letters to Santa, hayrack rides, holiday window displays, and lots of Holiday sweets!

Many businesses have teamed up with local charities and will be giving out drinks/food in return for your donations. Several school choirs, including St. Cecilia's, Omaha Central, Marian, and Brownell Talbot will treat crowds with Christmas caroling throughout the evening, And finally, the Annual gingerbread house contest, open to all ages, will be displayed throughout the area so begin your creative planning now!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @historicdundee and visit our website at www.VisitDundeeOmaha.com. We will post detailed information for Lights on Dundee with each participating business. Can't wait to see you there!









DMPA Page 8

### Letter From Molly Romero

Co-founder of Marks Bistro

Greetings to all my Dundee-Memorial Park Neighbors and other Newsletter Subscribers,

Many of you know that Marks Pantry & Bottle Shop (Marks' successor business to Marks Bistro) closed in late August. What you may not know is that, as owners of the building, my business partner, Mark Pluhacek and I had been looking for another business to rent the entire building. While we had quite a bit of interest, the tenant that would be the best fit for both us and the neighborhood did not appear. Then we began receiving inquiries from prospective purchasers, and it took very little time to find just the right fit. While we are not able to disclose the identity of the purchaser, we can say that the purchaser has the interest of the neighborhood and the well being of the business district at heart – which was of paramount importance to us and was our requirement before consenting to sell the building.

We bought the building in 2001 – yes, 20 years ago! How time flies when you are having fun. After an 18-month renovation, extensive renovation, Marks Bistro opened over the Labor Day weekend in 2003, with no interruption in service until March 2020 when covid changed everything.

Mark, I and Rachel Kolb, our third business partner, are extremely grateful for the 20 years of support and good wishes we had while being a part of the Dundee business district. We felt amazingly privileged to participate as host for many celebrations and other special occasions for our neighbors, and other customers and to get to know many new friends through being a hospitality presence in Dundee. We will never forget, on a beautiful, sunny day the wedding proposal on our patio – delivered by the groom-to-be in song as he played his guitar with the full attention of all patio diners. She said YES, with the audience applauding its enthusiastic approval.

We also feel privileged to have played a role in the recruiting, strategic planning, socializing and other activities of many Midtown and Downtown institutions – for faculty positions, speakers, and numerous other professional positions. The many institutions include arts organizations, academic institutions, philanthropic organizations, business groups and social groups.

And then there was Jambo Cat – a delightful foray into the world of jazz, which, with the help of Chuck Kilgore as artistic director, was filled with excellent music five nights a week for several years. We loved every minute of it and found others who felt the same, many of whom became loyal regulars.

With our final iteration being Marks Pantry & Bottle Shop, we worked to provide a nice variety of specialty grocery items, some of which I will deeply miss, especially some of the cookies and chocolates. I did not intend to go on so long, but the reminiscing was irresistible, so please forgive me.

The most important thing is that we have left the building in very good hands and look forward to the new owner's announcement of their plans and time line.

Being a Dundee resident for over 40 years, I will be staying in the 'hood, and am a frequent patron at Blue Line Coffee as well as other Dundee businesses. Please feel free to engage me in conversation anytime you bump into me on the street – I would love to chat and, as my late dear friend Nancy Duncan would say, hear your stories.

In deep gratitude, Molly Romero



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"\$292,000 "	109 S 68th Ave	2	3	1	R Ranch	"1,847"
"\$297,500 "	4806 Harney St	2	2	1	1.5 Story	"1,726"
"\$325,000 "	116 S 49th Ave	5	3	2	2.5 Story	"2,129"
"\$370,000 "	4921 California St	4	2	3	1.5 Story	"1,918"
"\$380,000 "	302 S 49th St	6	2	2	2 Story	"2,688"
"\$400,000 "	312 S 50 Ave	3	2	2	2 Story	"2,002"
"\$400,000 "	907 Dillon Dr	2	2	2	1.0 Story	"1,233"
"\$455,000 "	6241 Underwood	4	4	2	2 Story	"2,922"
"\$528,500 "	345 S 70 Ave	4	3	6	1.0 Story	"3,671"
"\$740,000 "	103 N 54 St	5	5	2	2.5 Story	"4,663"
"\$790,000 "	5913 Jones St	4	4	2	1.5 Story	"4,753"
"\$250,000 "	906 N 49 Street	4	2	2		"2,379"
"\$279,000 "	5014 Nicholas Stre	eet	5	2	1	"2,076"
"\$293,500 "	502 S 68th Street	4	2	1		"1,802"
"\$295,000 "	529 S 51st Avenue	2	2	0		"1,828"
"\$331,510 "	5022 Izard Street	4	2	2		"2,330"
"\$401,500 "	5152 Jones Street	3	3	1		"2,376"
"\$415,000 "	6492 Cuming Stre	et	3	2	2	"1,836"
"\$455,000 "	120 S 50 Street	4	4	2		"2,544"
"\$455,000 "	6241 Underwood	Ave	4	4	2	"2,922"
"\$467,000 "	6901 Cuming Stre	et	3	4	4	"2,095"
"\$475,000 "	5120 Izard Street	4	5	2		"2,517"
"\$545,000 "	5122 Nicholas Stre	eet	3	3	3	"2,543"
"\$550,000 "	6625 Burt Street	4	4	2		"3,059"
"\$720,000 "	6244 Glenwood R	oad	4	3	2	"3,870"

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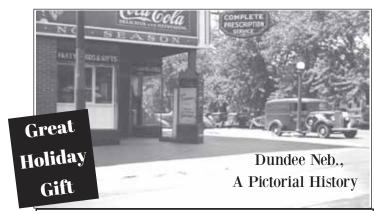
The 15th of the preceding month for all advertising and article submissions. (check for possible extension.)

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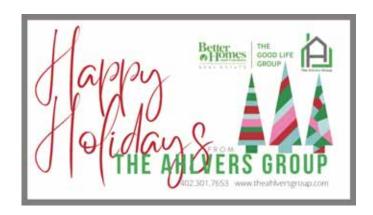
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