



Nomination to AIA Nebraska  
for the  
Harry F. Cunningham, FAIA, Gold Medal

GEORGE W. HAECKER, AIA

August 1, 2006



## Harry F. Cunningham, FAIA, Gold Medal

Nomination Form: **It is the responsibility of the nominator to inform nominee of consideration for this honor.**

**Nominator:**

Paul Jeffrey, AIA		Omaha	
Member Name	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chapter Affiliation	
Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects		(402) 345-3060	
Firm		Phone	
1425 Jones Street	Omaha	NE	68102
Address	City	State	Zip
pjjeffrey@bvh.com			
E-Mail			
July 31, 2006			
Date			


**Nominee:**

George W. Haecker, AIA		(402) 345-3060	
Name		Phone	
1425 Jones Street		ghaecker@bvh.com	
Address		E-Mail	
Omaha		NE	68102
City		State	Zip
Architect			
Profession / Business			

Nomination is a resubmission

**Supporting Information:** Prepared in a uniform 8 1/2" x 11" format (6 copies required)

- Nominator's Letter: Describe nominee's qualifications. Not to exceed 1 page.
- Biographical Data: Not to exceed 4 pages.
- Statement on contributions, specific in nature: Not to exceed 3 pages.
  - Service to Profession
  - Service to the community/state
  - Significant works (if applicable)
- Miscellaneous Material: photos, clippings, articles, etc. Not to exceed 3 pages.


8.1-2006  
 Signature of Nominator Date

Return this form and supporting materials by Friday, August 4, 2006 to:

**AIA Nebraska: P.O. Box 80045 • Lincoln, NE 68501-0045**

# BAHR VERMEER HAECKER

Architects

**PRINCIPALS**  
GEORGE HAECKER AIA  
GARY BOWEN FAIA  
DAN M. WORTH AIA  
PAUL JEFFREY AIA  
DANIEL A. SPIRY AIA  
ROBERT G. LEZOTTE AIA  
JOHN SINOVIC AIA  
JAMES B. BERG AIA  
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GILL PEACE AIA

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KELLEY ROSBURG  
STAN D. PETERSON  
CLEVELAND REEVES AIA

22 July 2006

► NOMINATION LETTER – The Harry F. Cunningham, FAIA, Gold Medal

AIA Nebraska  
Post Office Box 80045  
Lincoln, NE 68501-0045

RE: George Haecker, AIA

Dear Committee Members;

George Haecker, AIA is the quintessential "Nebraska Architect." Born and raised in Lincoln, his passions in architecture and its heritage have been demonstrated through his designs and preservation actions over the past 40 years. Coupled with endless integrity for doing 'the right thing' to promote and preserve great architecture – locally and nationally – this passion has resulted in a legacy of inspiration and quality in the architecture of Nebraska.

George's truly exceptional career as an award-winning designer, a civic leader in urban revitalization and especially as a national leader in Historic Preservation is demonstrated in the enclosed nomination data. As his contributions and activities clearly demonstrate, George Woods Haecker AIA serves as a model and inspiration for all that Harry Cunningham stood for, and what this award exemplifies – integrity, quality, and passion in architecture.

We proudly nominate fellow architect, fellow principal and friend, George Haecker AIA, to be recognized for this great honor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Jeffrey AIA

Gary Bowen FAIA

John Sinovic AIA

1425 JONES STREET  
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22 July 2006

► **BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Name: George W. Haecker, AIA  
716 North 57 Avenue Omaha, NE 68132

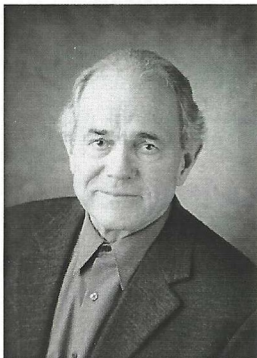
Date of Birth: October 28, 1939

Place of Birth: Lincoln, Nebraska

Education: Lake Forest Academy 1959 High School Diploma  
University of Nebraska 1963 Bachelor of Architecture

Registration: Licensed to practice architecture in the states of: Nebraska,  
California, Virginia, Missouri, Maryland, and Wisconsin  
NCARB certificate

Architectural Practice:



1971 – Present

Principal, Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects, Omaha, NE, with additional offices in Lincoln, NE; Colorado Springs, CO; affiliate offices in St. Paul, MN and Alexandria, VA.

1968 – 1971

Project Designer - Dana Larson Roubal & Associates Omaha, NE

1963 – 1968

Designer - Sargent Webster Crenshaw & Folley, Architects  
New York and Puerto Rico

1960 – 1961

Draftsman - Vladimir Ossipoff & Associates, Architects Hawaii

A Nebraska architect whose design influence is reflected in projects throughout the United States, George Haecker's professional career reveals a comprehensive and deep respect for the historic architecture of the past coupled with a fresh, lively design attitude to enhance today's world.

George has been practicing architecture since 1963, and is a Managing Principal with Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects.

Married to wife Judy for 46 years, they have 2 sons and a daughter, as well as 4 grandchildren.

A graduate of Lake Forest Academy, George went on to graduate from the University of Nebraska College of Architecture with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. For the next 7 years he worked for architectural firms in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, New York and Nebraska.

In 1971, George opened the Omaha office of Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects.



Eight years later George moved the office into the historically-designated 1880 "Yellow Building" that the company purchased in the Old Market National Register Historic District.

George designed the building's renovation, and for the next 25 years the offices were a visible demonstration of the opportunities and benefits of extending the use of existing architecture – a personal passion of George's that heavily influenced the work of the firm.

In 2005 the continued growth of the firm required expanded offices - and BVH's renovation and move to The Joseph Building in downtown is a confirmation of the sustainable and responsible design philosophies George's leadership and influence has instilled in the firm.

George's contribution to the future of the architectural profession is demonstrated by his founding of the *Bahr Vermeer Haecker Leadership Program for Young Architects* which receive the AIA Practitioner in Education Award. He regularly devotes time to students as a lecturer, juror and conference participant at college and universities.

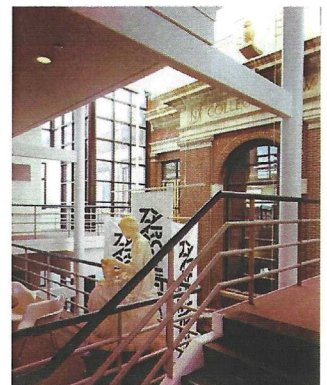
Perhaps most widely recognized beyond the profession is his dedicated involvement in historic preservation. He is Advisor Emeritus to the national Trust and has served on the AIA's Historic Resource Committee. His time has been generously contributed to preservation advocacy including formation and development of *Landmarks, Inc., Omaha*, the Nebraska Preservation Council, service on the Nebraska State Capitol Foundation and the Nebraska Historic Preservation Board.

His writings include co-authorship of the area's first documentary of its kind, *Omaha City Architecture*. In 1989 he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Nebraska.

An active member of the American Institute of Architects, George has served on the AIA Urban Design and Planning Committee and the Historic Resources Committee.

George's passion for articulate design of buildings that relate to and enhance the environment in which they exist has been rewarded with numerous design recognitions, as follow:

- Architecture Hall, University of Nebraska Lincoln  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*  
*Progressive Architecture Nat'l Honor Award Citation*
- Bemis Company Manufacturing / Office Facility, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*  
*AIA Central States Region Award of Excellence*
- Central Park [Gene Leahy] Mall, Omaha, NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*  
*AIA Central States Region Award of Excellence*
- Diagnostic & Evaluation Center, NE Department of Corrections  
*AIA Exhibition of Architecture for Justice*
- Keene Residence, Crested Butte, CO  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*  
*AIA Central States Region Award of Excellence*
- Madeline Island Music Camp, LaPointe, WI  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*



- OmahaPark Two, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*
- OmahaPark Four, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*
- Platte River Whooping Crane Trust Hdqtrs. , Hall County NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*
- Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District Office  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*
- Redick Hotel Restoration, Omaha, NE  
*Landmarks Preservation Award, Landmarks, Inc.*
- Union Pacific Railroad Harriman Dispatch Center, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Award*
- Western Historic Trails Center, Council Bluffs IA  
*AIA Nebraska Design Award*  
*AIA Central States Region Award of Excellence*
- Westroads Racquet Club, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Award*
- Whitcomb Conservatory, Doane College, Crete NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Award*
- Yellow Building, Omaha NE  
*AIA Nebraska Design Honor Award*  
*Landmarks Preservation Award, Landmarks, Inc.*



The 'student of the world' that George has always enjoyed being sometimes moves into the role of 'teacher' – and through the power of words he shares observations, opinions and critiques. Books and articles that George has authored include:

Omaha City Architecture; Co-author (1977)

Buildings Through the Ages: Epilogue Author

Encyclopedia of the Great Plains; Chapter Author (2004)

"Plodding Backward" - Author of an article first published in the Omaha World Herald, and subsequently in Preservation News, May 1988. Concern over demolition of the Jobber's Canyon Historic District in Omaha.

"What is a Landmark?" – Author of an article published in the Impact, a publication of the Junior League of Omaha, Winter 1989.

"Preservation Works" – Author of article published in Dimensions (Journal for Architecture and Planning), July 1981.

In 2004 George served as the co-chairman of Amendment One to LB66 in the Nebraska Legislature. Its successful passing provides for historic preservation tax credits to preservation projects.

Last year George received the 2005 Preservation Award from the Nebraska State Historical Society.



## ► STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

A list of George Haecker's professional and personal contributions demonstrates his willingness to become involved in the profession and the community in which he lives. For more than 40 years, he has been lending his time and talent to efforts to improve the business of architecture and to educate clients on the valuable role of architects in their design process.

This list also reveals an individual with a passion for doing 'what is right'. His integrity and deep personal convictions on such issues as historic preservation have brought him into local and national spotlights, defending architecture worth saving – not doing the easy or popular thing – but always the right thing - sometimes opposing those who seem to be interested in progress at any cost.

In addition to the time George has spent building a successful architectural practice, he has invested countless hours of time in the following organizations and activities – efforts that contribute to the overall good of the profession and the community.

### **Service to the Profession**

- American Institute of Architects - Member 1970-Present
  - Urban Design and Planning Committee Member (1977-1979)
  - Historic Resources Committee Member (1980 -1983)
  - State Preservation Coordinator (1980-1986)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Awards Program – Jury Member
- AIA/House & Home "Homes for Better Living" – Jury Member (1976)
- Architectural Foundation of Nebraska – Member (since 1981)

### **Service to Professional Education**

- University of Nebraska College of Architecture Accreditation Review Board
- University of Nebraska College of Architecture Professional Advisory Committee
- University of Nebraska College of Architecture - Critic/Lecturer
- Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS - Critic/Lecturer
- St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia - Critic/Lecturer
- University of Nebraska Alumni Association – Board of Directors

George was the 1989 recipient of the University of Nebraska Distinguished Alumni Award.

### **Service to the Community/State**

#### International

- St. Petersburg (Russia) Citizens Democracy Corps – Member (1994)

#### National

- National Trust for Historic Preservation
  - Board of Advisors - Vice Chairman
  - Advisor Emeritus



## Service to the Community/State

### State/ Local

- Nebraska Arts Council Board – Member (since 1979)
  - *Artist in Residence* Selection Committee (1981 – 1984)
- Nebraska Capital Foundation – Founding Board Member (since 1985)
- Nebraska Historic Preservation Board - Served as Board Chair; Member since 1979
- Nebraska Preservation Council – Founding Board member 1987; President 1991
- Nebraska State Building Commission – Member (since 1986)
- Omaha Landmarks Commission – Founder, Member (since 1984)
- Omaha Metropolitan Arts Council – Past President, Member
- Omaha Public Art Commission – Member
- Opera/Omaha – Board Member
- United Arts of Omaha – Planning & Advisory Committee (1988 – 1990)

## ► SIGNIFICANT WORKS

George's 'significant works' are best summarized by their design quality and civic importance. His body of professional work includes design leadership on a wide variety of project types. Small, intriguing projects receive the same high level of design thought as the large, notable projects – and a significant number of both have been recognized with design awards, listed earlier.

Other key projects that reflect the range of George's work nationally include work for the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC and New York City.

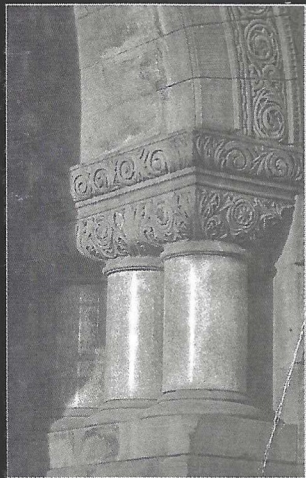
Significant projects also include current work. These show the variety of projects and design challenges George is serving as today:

- Hole in the Hills Camp , Iowa
  - A 100 acre camp to serve the therapeutic and recreational needs of children with chronic diseases in the central United States.
- Southwest Iowa Performing Arts Center, Red Oak IA
  - A new performing arts facility to serve communities in the region
- Thorpe Opera House Restoration, David City, NE
  - Restoration of an 1800's opera house for continued use as a theater and meeting facility to serve the community

In addition to the honor awards many of George's projects have received, some have also been recognized in publications internationally. These include:

- Architecture Hall, University of Nebraska  
*Feature article – Architectural Journal (of Architects Society of China) 1982*
- Bemis Company Building, Omaha, NE  
*Article – Architectural Record July 1978*
- Central Park Mall, Omaha, NE  
*Feature article – Process Architecture (Japan) 1978*  
*Article – Engineering News Record April 1984*  
*Article – Northwest Orient Magazine July 1983*  
*Article – Urban Design Spring 1977*
- Keene Residence, Crested Butte, CO  
*Feature article – Ville Giardini (Italy), Nov 1986*  
*Feature article - Architectural Record March 1985*  
*Article – Iowa Architect (Jan/Fed 1985)*
- Red Cloud Opera House, Red Cloud, NE  
*Illustrated Dictionary of Architectural Preservation; Ernest Burden 2004*
- Redick Tower Hotel, Omaha, NE  
*Illustrated Dictionary of Architectural Preservation; Ernest Burden 2004*
- Union Pacific Harriman Center, Omaha, NE  
*Illustrated Dictionary of Architectural Preservation; Ernest Burden 2004*
- The Woods Cottage, Madeline Island, WI  
*Feature Article – Coastal Living Magazine April 2004*
- The Yellow Building, Omaha, NE  
*Illustrated Dictionary of Architectural Preservation; Ernest Burden 2004*

## ARCHITECTURE



## Preface

*This book documents a concern—a concern about the future of Omaha. Omaha's future is dependent on many factors: economic, social, educational, and, most important, the pride of its citizens. For this pride to develop it is necessary that our physical environment manifest both the depth of our history and potential of our future. Omaha should not limit itself to a visual mantle of mid-twentieth-century architecture; our stock is deeper than that, and we should use it. From a frontier town of mud streets and river traffic to the urban complex we know today, our growth has been evolutionary. This history of our growth, as evidenced by our architecture, provides a rich tapestry of who we are and what we can become as a city. It is an asset that, if kept, can help create that ingredient of character instantly evident in the best of our cities.*

*Our purpose is not to preserve all old structures, just the best of them. Unfortunately, however, because of the strategic commercial location of many of these buildings, they are the ones most often threatened. We must weigh the end result of our decisions to demolish, to judge if our pride in Omaha would be greater or less without the structures represented in this book. Indeed, some are already lost; and we believe that Omaha, as an urban environment both to live in and visit, will be richer if those remaining are preserved as an active part of our business, religious, and domestic life. They are a challenge to our future, not to emulate in form, but in conviction and quality, to assure that Omaha will be a city of character, not mediocrity.*

*The buildings included in this volume were, of necessity by space limitations, somewhat arbitrarily selected from an initial list of over 300 buildings. We trust that those excluded will be no less valued than those included. Our objective was to present a broad background of geographical areas and types of use. We are as concerned with the humblest home as with the stone mansion; and gas stations as well as banks comprise our visual community. With few exceptions, we have used 1926 as a cut-off date, omitting structures within the past 50 years. Our guide for styles and nomenclature is Marcus Whiffen's *American Architecture*, but errors of research and terminology are our own. We have attempted throughout to keep the language of the book as direct as possible. We are striving to provide not an academic tome, nor an exhaustive research catalog, but a record of the visual resource we have in our architecture. Hopefully, our effort will stimulate an appreciation of this resource from all of our citizens.*

*This book is sponsored jointly by the Junior League of Omaha with Landmarks, Inc.; and, although specific credits are listed elsewhere, I must extend a broad thank you to those many volunteers who spent literally thousands of hours researching, photographing, editing, and producing these pages. Without this energy, devotion, and interest freely expended, this book would not have been possible.*

George Haecker

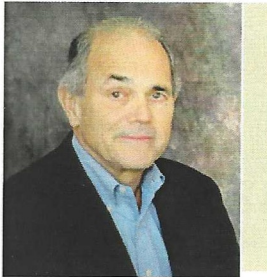


► MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS

News

*George Haecker, AIA, Principal, Wins Award*

10 15 05



George Haecker, AIA, BVH Principal was presented with the Nebraska Preservation Award.

He with two other men who pushed for passage of state incentives to preserve historic buildings in Nebraska will be honored by the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The incentive pushed for Amendment 1, which was approved by Nebraska voters last year. It provides a state tax break for historic preservation projects.



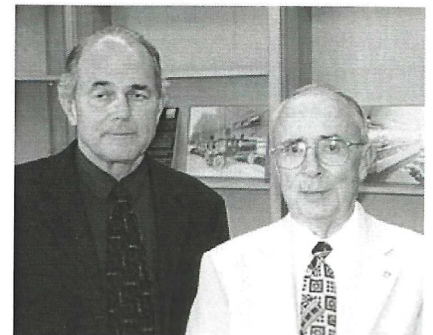
November / December 2005

**EXEMPLARY EFFORTS HONORED AT ANNUAL MEETING**

On October 14 the Nebraska State Historical Society recognized the important contributions to Nebraska history made by the following organizations and individuals. The awards were presented during the Society's 127th annual meeting in Lincoln:

Keith Blackledge and Senator Don Pederson, North Platte, and **George Haecker**, Omaha, are recipients of the 2005 Nebraska Preservation Award. Their significant and successful efforts resulted in a Nebraska state constitutional amendment so that owners of historic buildings could receive tax incentives for rehabilitation work on their properties. Amendment One was approved by Nebraska voters in 2004, and subsequently LB66, under the leadership of Senator Pederson, was passed in 2005. The amendment and bill allow economic encouragement for owners financing historic preservation projects.

**George Haecker, Omaha, and Keith Blackledge, North Platte, received the Nebraska Preservation Award for their efforts to pass Amendment One, which amended the Nebraska constitution to make economic incentives for historic preservation possible. Senator Don Pederson of North Platte was also presented the award in absentia**



George W. Haecker, AIA

# HISTORICAL • newsletter •

September / October 2004

## ***Amendment One and Historic Preservation***

**Amendment One is a proposed constitutional amendment** that will go before Nebraska voters in the November general election. The intent of this amendment is to clear the way for the Nebraska Legislature to enact future legislation allowing a temporary hold to be placed on the property tax assessment of historic properties. As it will appear on the ballot, the measure does not allow a historic property to be taken off the tax rolls—only the increased assessment attributed to improvements made by a property's renovation or restoration would be placed on hold, and only for a limited time. Legislation to place Amendment One on the ballot was introduced in the last session of the Nebraska Legislature by Senator Don Pederson of North Platte.

**Amendment One resulted from extensive public input.** As early as 1995, the Nebraska Legislature's Task Force on Historic Preservation recommended policy to address historic preservation. The drafting of Amendment One followed a series of legislative studies to analyze effective ways to encourage preservation. The findings recognized that Nebraska was the only state that did not have some kind of legislation to assist owners in the preservation of historic properties. Some thirty-seven states have adopted similar policies, finding that this type of property tax relief is an effective way to encourage investment in historic buildings, older neighborhoods, and commercial areas, both rural and urban. An additional finding is that this type of legislation is revenue-neutral and not reliant on state funding sources.

**Friends of Amendment One, a group supporting the ballot initiative,** can provide additional information. The steering committee includes George Haecker of Omaha and Keith Blackledge of North Platte, co-chairs; Helen Boosalis and Jim Seacrest of Lincoln, co-treasurers; and Maxine Moul of Lincoln, secretary. Friends of Amendment One can be reached at P.O. Box 83107, Lincoln, NE 68501-3107 or by telephone at 402-475-0727.