ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With the preparation of the Central Portion-Rotunda and Dome Historic Structure Report we will begin our most challenging project to date, the restoration and rehabilitation of the Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda. Although the project poses many new and difficult challenges, the knowledge and insight gained through this report will allow us to undertake the work with enthusiasm and confidence.

The preparation of this book, like all Capitol work, has been an intensive team effort with significant contributions by many individuals and firms. Initial planning was accomplished by Art Chadek, Joyce Inman, and Charles Quaglina well in advance of the first research and writing efforts.

Research was conducted by Anne Bieber and Joyce Inman. Written material was contributed by Anne Bieber, Fred Groth, Joyce Inman, Jeff Neidorfler, Jeff Parker, Charles Quaglina, Darrell Schiffman, and Kurt Strauss. Special acknowledgment is extended to Anne Bieber for the writing efforts of Chapter Three—Historical Research, which centers on dome history and the influences on the Wisconsin State Capitol. Survey and documentation work were undertaken by Anne Bieber, Julie Gran, Jeff Neidorfler, Gretchen Pfahlert, Jessica Powers and Darrell Schiffman. The cooperation and assistance of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Archives has been greatly appreciated.

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Thanks to Joyce Inman for her role as project coordinator. Coordinating all the team members efforts has been instrumental in the success of this historic structure report.

I would also like to acknowledge the continued encouragement of the State Capitol and Executive Residence Board. Their support of our work effort and its value to the preservation of the Wisconsin State Capitol is sincerely appreciated.

Charles J. Quaglina, AIA
State Capitol Project Manager and Preservation Architect
March 1997

FOREWORD

The Capitol Preservation team is commencing a fourth major restoration and rehabilitation project in the Wisconsin State Capitol. Through a wealth of "hands on" experience, we have learned that a successful historic preservation project requires a detailed knowledge of the past; a clear understanding of the spaces and objects to be preserved; and an ability to discern future needs.

These elements, not coincidentally, are the basic building blocks for the Historic Structure Report. The report, as the key element in a restoration of this magnitude, provides the ground rules and road map for design and implementation of the project. Reflecting on past Capitol remodeling projects, it is difficult to conceive that these were done without an exhaustive report as preparation. However, for decades, little if any research or documentation was done prior to the profusion of unsympathetic remodelings from the 1950s through the mid 1980s.

Capitol Historic Structure Report Preparations

With direction and interest from the State of Wisconsin Building Commission, a different approach towards historic buildings has been taken. In September 1991, the Division of Facilities Development undertook the first Historic Structure Report on a large state-owned building. The successful completion of the University of Wisconsin Armory and Gymnasium Report in July 1992 led to a second major Historic Structure Report for Lathrop Hall in June 1993. Incorporating a preservation methodology that includes comprehensive survey and documentation, research, and analysis has proven to be a beneficial procedure. As this methodology was refined, and as a result of State experimentation with the Historic Structure Report concept, the idea of a historic structure report for the Capitol was conceived.

With the experience and insight from these first two State sponsored Historic Structure Reports, the Division of Facilities Development embraced a comprehensive Historic Structure Report for the Wisconsin State Capitol. The Capitol Restoration and Rehabilitation team began working on the report in the summer of 1993. The first several months were spent studying other Historic Structure Reports, developing a format and an overall outline.

The National Park Service Guideline for Historic Structure Reports, NPS-28, was reviewed in preparation for defining the Capitol Historic Structure Report. It was determined that as currently outlined, NPS-28 provided a broad, flexible framework for preparation of Historic Structure Reports. Using the guidelines, and many quality examples of completed Historic Structure Reports, the team developed a custom historic structure report suited to the unique nature of the Capitol project, the resources available, and the anticipated audience.

The South Wing and Southeast and Southwest Pavilions Historic Structure Report was the first developed. Although the documentation and survey work and research had been completed in advance of formally beginning the book, the writing began in January 1995 and was completed in September 1995.
Purpose and Content

The primary purpose of the Wisconsin State Capitol Historic Structure Report is to assess the appropriateness of the 1987 Capitol Master Plan. The Capitol Master Plan, its related guidelines, and feasibility studies were developed without the benefit of a complete understanding of the history, significance, or condition of the Capitol. Additional purposes include: documenting and analyzing the building’s initial construction and subsequent alterations through historical, physical, and pictorial evidence; documenting and analyzing the current state of the building’s architectural materials and structural stability; and selecting appropriate historic preservation treatments; and establishing priorities for project work items.

Historic Structure Report Content

To fully evaluate the Capitol Master Plan, the team’s approach required the preparation of a comprehensive Historic Structure Report in a series of books with each book becoming a separate volume about a specific entity or component of the Capitol. The comprehensive Historic Structure Report envisioned will include eleven separate books:

I. Comprehensive Summary
II. Site
III. West Wing and Northwest Pavilion
IV. South Wing and Southeast and Southwest Pavilions (September 1995)
V. Central Portion (March 1997)
VI. East Wing and Northeast Pavilion
VII. North Wing
VIII. Exterior
IX. Furniture and Furnishings
X. Artwork and Decorative Finishes
XI. The Capitol Heat and Power Plant

Utilizing 11" x 17" format, each book will be approximately 250-600 pages in length. Each report, despite its size, will not be all-inclusive. As investigation continues, more will be learned about the Capitol and the architect who designed it. Therefore these reports will be updated by addenda as appropriate. In addition, the reports are also keyed to several appendices that contain supplemental detailed information. The Comprehensive Summary will be accompanied by detailed appendices which contain supplemental information, reference sources, a chronology, a glossary, and raw survey data.

Although all eleven books comprise the complete work, books two through eight are planned to directly address the Capitol Master Plan. Books one, nine, ten, and eleven will focus on individual yet integral issues. These will contribute greatly to the comprehensive nature of the final report.

The Capitol Historic Structure Report will include the following key components:

1. A compendium of all known information about the building.
2. An analysis of the information.
3. An assessment of the implications of the proposed action.
4. Recommendations for appropriate preservation treatments.
5. A disassembly list for all materials.

In contrast to the NPS-28 Guidelines, the Wisconsin State Capitol Historic Structure Reports will not include construction estimates or work priorities. Cost estimates are not included for two reasons. Adequate funding for this building is a priority for the State, and no project will receive higher priority for funding. Additionally, the cost of recent similar scope projects in the Capitol is well documented. Cost estimates will be generated as part of the preliminary design phase of each project.

Work priorities or phases of projects were not included since all work outlined will be accomplished in a comprehensive manner. As there is a great dependence upon Legislative, Judicial, and Executive time-tables, tight project schedules are required since occupants are residing in leased space for the duration of each project.

Definitions of Proposed Preservation Treatments

After much discussion and thought, the team reconciled the following definitions as proposed preservation treatments. Due to the complexity and the variety of conditions found in the Capitol it is necessary to utilize more than one approach. These approaches follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 1992 as closely as possible. Specific treatments or spaces include preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and renovation, whereas specific treatments for objects include replication and conservation.

Treatments for Spaces

Preservation

Preservation is an act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of the building or space. This work generally focuses upon the stabilization and repair of historic materials and features as well as ongoing maintenance. Limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make the building or space functional is appropriate.

Specific considerations include (1) using the space as it was historically; (2) retaining and preserving the space’s historic character and distinctive features; and (3) stabilizing, consolidating, and conserving existing historic materials and features to be physically and visually compatible, and documented. Examples of spaces to be preserved include the Rotunda and the inner dome space.
Rehabilitation
Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible an efficient contemporary use through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions and/or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Specific considerations include (1) adapting the space to new compatible uses or retaining architecturally and/or historically significant spaces; (2) repairing deteriorated historic features when possible; (3) replacing historic features when necessary by matching the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials; (4) substantiation of the work with documentation; (5) protecting the integrity of the space by making the new work compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion, and maintaining the hierarchy of spaces; and (6) using the gentlest means possible for chemical or physical treatments. Examples of objects to be rehabilitated and reused include light fixtures and grilles.

Restoration
Restoration is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character as they appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstructing missing features from the restoration period.

Specific considerations include (1) using the space as it was historically or giving new use that reflects the space’s restoration period; (2) preserving distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques that characterize the restoration period; and (3) repairing, rather than replacing, deteriorating features when replacement is required, the new shall match the old in design, color, texture, and materials where possible; and (4) documenting the replacement of missing features. A specific space to be restored is the Rotunda Basement.

Renovation
Renovation is the act or process of removing the original form and features, and replacing those materials and features with new fabric and materials which are contemporary in nature. Specific considerations include (1) using the space as it was historically and/or giving new use that reflects the space’s utilitarian needs; and (2) providing the space’s needs with contemporary technology to manage and facilitate the building’s systems.

Treatment for Objects and Surfaces
Replication
Replication is the creation of a duplicate of an extant artifact. The duplicate may coexist with the original. This treatment specifically occurs when the object’s condition is beyond preservation or restoration.

Specific considerations include (1) using the object and/or the duplicate as it was historically; analyzing the object’s treatment of materials, finishes, features, and construction; (3) substantiating the treatment through documentation; (4) replicating the treatment with the materials, finishes, features, and construction techniques that characterize the object; and (5) replicating the original object such that it can coexist with the original. Specific examples include the replication of decorative stencils or painting on the Rotunda drum wall, and the replication of original elements such as the lighting fixtures in the Rotunda Basement when an insufficient number of artifacts exist.

Conservation
Conservation is the process of maintaining and/or stabilizing the features or form of an object with the least amount of intervention. Some physical intervention may be required to ensure the continued integrity of the object/surface.

Specific considerations include (1) using the object/surface as it was historically; (2) analyzing the object’s treatment of materials, finishes, features, and construction; (3) maintaining and/or stabilizing the object through the gentlest means possible; and (4) substantiating the treatment through documentation. Specific examples include the cleaning and maintaining of the stone and marble and the artwork in public spaces.

As we reflect on our recent work, in particular the continued development of the historic structure report, we have witnessed a residual effect on other preservation projects in progress and/or in the planning stages. We trust that the work and accomplishments of our Capitol team have influenced others in the same positive manner that our peers have influenced us. Realizing our accomplishments are not limited to the boundaries of our team, it is our hope that we have honored our ancestors, enhanced the interest of our contemporaries, and have left a continuing legacy for our children.

Charles J. Quaglina, AIA
March 1997