

The Terrace Hill Preservation Medallion

Judith Gildner

ISSN 0003-4827

No known copyright restrictions.

Recommended Citation

Gildner, Judith. "The Terrace Hill Preservation Medallion." *The Annals of Iowa* 42 (1974), 222-226.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.11184>

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](#)

The Terrace Hill Preservation Medallion*

Judith Gildner

FUTURE RESIDENCE FOR Iowa's governors and their families, the soon-to-be restored nineteenth century mansion, Terrace Hill, has been honored by a commemorative medallion. The twenty-room Victorian home, located at 2300 Grand Avenue in Des Moines, was donated to the state in 1971 by members of the Frederick Marion Hubbell family.¹ It is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the Fall of 1971 the State Executive Council adopted a resolution calling for the Governor to form a Terrace Hill Planning Commission. Governor Robert D. Ray named thirty-five commission members and appointed George S. Mills chairman.² The Planning

*I would like to thank George Mills and Scherrie Carlberg for their assistance in preparing this account of the Terrace Hill Medallion.

¹For information on how the state acquired the Terrace Hill property see Linda K. Thomson's "Terrace Hill . . . A Magnificent Gift to the State of Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* (Spring, 1972) Vol. 41, No. 4, 889-917.

²As of January 18, 1973, Richard B. Graeme, cashier at Council Bluffs Savings Bank, has been chairman of the Commission. Other members appointed by the governor included the following: Keith Dunton, State Representative; James Schaben, State Senator; Don Alt, State Representative; Maurice Baringer, State Treasurer; Melvin Synhorst, Secretary of State; Fred Schwengel, former U. S. Representative to Congress and now Director of the National Capitol Historical Society; John D. Bloodgood, architect; Fred Moore, insurance representative and realtor; John Zickefoose, member Iowa Society for Preservation of Historical Landmarks; Charlene Conklin, State Senator; Mrs. Otha Wearin, member Iowa State Historical Society and Society for the Preservation of Historical Landmarks; Mrs. L. L. Fry, vice president Wayne County Historical Society; William Talbot, postmaster, Keokuk; Mrs. Dean B. Collins, real estate broker; Mrs. Robert D. Ray, First Lady of Iowa; Jack Musgrove, curator of the Iowa Historical Building; Scherrie Carlberg, former caretaker of Terrace Hill and presently museum guide at the Iowa

Commission's objectives involved developing recommendations for possible uses of the Terrace Hill property by the state. After subcommittee reports were received and considered, a set of recommendations was drafted. Among the proposals were the following: 1) the third floor be converted into official living quarters for the governor and his family; the original architecture of the first and second floors to remain substantially unchanged 2) funds for the restoration and preservation of the home be raised by dinners, sale of commemorative medallions, and acceptance of gifts including those from private foundations and 3) that provision be made for regular public tours through Terrace Hill with appropriate literature, tour guides and safety precautions.

On April 18, 1972, Governor Ray signed into law House File 1196 designating Terrace Hill as the future governor's mansion. He emphasized that the Terrace Hill Planning Commission would thereafter "be working to enlist broad public support for the work that needs to be done."³ Financing projects were discussed at the third Terrace Hill Planning Commission meeting, held that day at the mansion directly following the formalities of signing the bill. Richard Gilbert, press secretary to the governor, and John Ward, a Des Moines attorney, were asked by the Commission to meet with Governor Ray and discuss the possibility of distributing a commemorative coin through local banks.

On May 18, 1972, during the fourth Commission meeting, Mr.

Historical Building, Mrs. Julie McDonald, former chairman of the Iowa Arts Council; William J. Wagner, architect for Terrace Hill, Mrs. Colin Jensen, housewife, civic worker, and officer of a Sioux City chapter of the Iowa Questers; Simpson Smith, chief executive officer of the Frederic M. Hubbell estate; William E. Darrington, Sr., former State Representative and one of the early sponsors of the state's efforts to acquire Terrace Hill; A. W. Allen, automobile dealer, member of the Historical Society of Clermont; Mrs. Madge E. Corey, bookkeeper for the El Kahir Shrine Temple; John T. Ward, attorney, president of Board of Home, Inc.; Burdette Cochran, business representative, Carpenters Local 106, Des Moines; Margaret Keyes, associate professor of Home Economics, University of Iowa; John Chrystal, banker, Iowa Bankers Association President; Mrs. John Estes, Jr., librarian with the Des Moines Public Library; Robert Sullivan, florist and antique dealer; Clifton C. Lamborn, State Senator; Terence L. Elsberry, managing editor, *Apartment Life*; and Stanley McCausland, Director of General Services, State of Iowa. Mr. McCausland was added to the Commission after the initial thirty-five had been appointed, as was Richard Gilbert, press secretary to Governor Ray.

³ Thomson, "Terrace Hill . . . A Magnificent Gift to the State of Iowa," p. 917.

Gilbert reported on the progress of plans for a commemorative coin. The Franklin Mint of Philadelphia was at that time in the process of cutting the dyes and it was projected that by mid-August coins would be available. The medallion was designed to be one and a half inches in diameter, minted in 99.9 per cent fine silver and in Franklin bronze. A relief of the Terrace Hill mansion partially encircled by two trees appears on one side with the words, "Terrace Hill, Preservation—1972, Robert D. Ray, Governor," inscribed at the bottom. The Great Seal of Iowa appears on the reverse side of the medallion.

A question about the best time to begin the sale of coins was resolved by the finance committee, which reported during the fifth Commission meeting on July 20 that the sale would begin in the Fall of 1972. John Chrystal, Iowa banker and chairman of the finance committee, hoped that an initial order of 1,000 coins would be available in September. In fact, coins were not placed on sale until December.

Arthur Lundquist, who was at the time Executive Vice President and Secretary of the Iowa Bankers Association, reported on the medallion sale at the seventh Commission meeting, September 28. He said that 668 bank presidents had received a package or "kit" of medallions (two silver, twelve bronze). George Mills made a motion to have the Terrace Hill Society approve the general pattern of the medallion sale as sponsored by the Iowa Bankers Association and outlined by Mr. Lundquist. The motion was seconded by Jack Musgrove and unanimously approved.

Mr. Lundquist left his post at the Iowa Bankers Association on November 1, 1972 and was replaced on the Commission by Edward J. Lenaghan, representative of the same organization. A resolution was adopted at the November 16th meeting transferring authority to withdraw medallions from the supply at the Central National Bank to Mr. Lenaghan. He reported that 700 medallion kits had been ordered. He said December 4 was the official date for commencement of the sale.

On January 18, 1973 Mr. Lenaghan reported that 4,000 silver medallions and 24,000 bronze had been sold through the banks during the first three weeks of the sale. He urged Commission members to do everything they could to promote the medallions and noted that, in some areas, the volume of sales had lagged. By March, reports indicated that the medallion sale had lost momentum.

Promotional activities to stimulate sales included special displays in the bank lobbies and at teller windows, Terrace Hill tours, and a display at the State Fair.

In all, 100,000 medallions were minted by the Franklin Mint—25,000 silver, priced at \$15 and 75,000 bronze, priced at \$2.50. The first 5,000 medallions carried the inscription, "First Mint Edition." The Commission made \$10 on each silver medallion and \$1.79 on each bronze, after paying the Franklin Mint \$5 for each silver and 71¢ for each bronze.⁴ No complimentary medallions were given away.⁵

Proceeds from the sale of medallions will go toward the restoration and remodeling of the 105-year-old home as a historical site and governor's mansion. All funds raised for the mansion restoration will be given to the Terrace Hill Society, a non-profit corporation established to administer the funds.⁶

The Iowa Bankers Association coordinated the publicity and promotional campaign for the Terrace Hill Preservation Medallions. Publicity was handled by Thomas Wolff Associates of Des Moines, and medallions were sold at banks throughout Iowa. When the 100,000 limited edition is sold out, the original dye will be displayed at Terrace Hill. The goal is to net \$300,000 to be used for the restoration project.⁷ The medallions' fund raising potential is being realized; and the coins themselves will have a significance in future years, honoring a legacy from Iowa's past.

⁴ *Des Moines Sunday Register*, December 10, 1972, p. B5.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Des Moines Sunday Register*, December 3, 1972, p. B4; the Terrace Hill Society Board of Directors consists of Maurice Baringer, George S. Mills, John T. Ward, and John Chrystal. Article III of the Articles of Incorporation reads as follows:

Said Corporation is organized exclusively for the restoration, preservation, and public use of the building and grounds located in the City of Des Moines, County of Polk, State of Iowa, known as "Terrace Hill" and for such other charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

⁷ *Des Moines Tribune*, December 13, 1972, p. 1.



The Terrace Hill Preservation Medallion



Reverse side of Medallion

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.