



Around the turn of the Century - 1900 - when horses were the major means of transportation, cities and town had water troughs to refresh horses. Photo from 1906.



Des Moines received two troughs from the National Human Society in 1906. They were given “in the interest of humanity by Herman Lee Ensign, a friend of the horse, of the dog and of humanity.” were made of Maine granite, were twelve feet high and six feet in diameter, weighing over a ton. Dogs and cats drank at the small basins provided for smaller animals at the base of the troughs. Brass plaques were placed on the fountains to give credit to Mr. Ensign who died before this project was finished. He left his estate to continue his mission.



At SE 10th and Scott today.



At John Lynde Rd and Lincoln Place Dr. Placed there about 2008.

The

National Alliance approved two locations for placement in Des Moines, one at Ninth and Cherry streets, the other at Pennsylvania and Grand streets. The former, after its original placement, has been at a few locations around the city. In 2008 it was placed at John Lynde Road and Lincoln Place Dr. The other now is at Southeast 10th and Scott streets in Cohen Park. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976 based on its Social History.

There were other horse troughs throughout Des Moines, paid for by the city, a total of 8 to 10, were once in the city, depending on the source. One was established by parents as a memorial to their son who died young. Attachments were placed on some of them so that area residents, many of whom lived in homes with no indoor plumbing, could draw water to use.

. These two by the National Humane Alliance remain today as a symbol of earlier times.