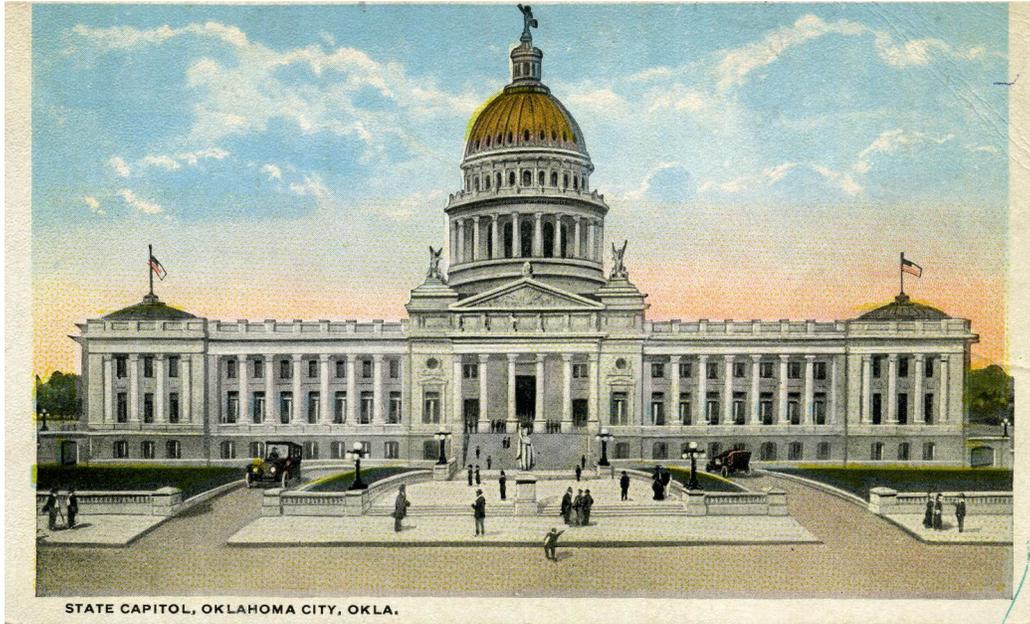


The Story of the Capitol

OKLAHOMA HISTORY CENTER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Architectural rendering of the State Capitol (19687.TO.0030.55.9.60, Chester R. Cowen Collection, OHS).

The Oklahoma **Capitol** is a beautiful building located in the eastern part of Oklahoma City. It serves as the site of the legislature as well as a physical representation of the Oklahoma state motto *Labor omnia vincit* or “Work conquers all.” It is also the site for community events such as the Oklahoma Memorial Marathon, the television show *American Ninja Warrior*, and many others.



The newly renovated Capitol, May 19, 2021 (image courtesy Trait Thompson).

Location

Believe it or not, the capital was not always in Oklahoma City. Guthrie was the capital of Oklahoma before statehood.

Guthrie

Guthrie started as many other towns in Oklahoma, with the **Land Run of 1889**. This land run allowed participants to stake their claim for land in the Unassigned Lands. The land run also set how much land townsites would be given, making town plots highly sought after. There were so many people who wanted to live in the area that four towns were established: Guthrie, East Guthrie, West Guthrie, and Capital Hill. Each had their own mayors and ordinances. It stayed this way until 1890 when the **Organic Act** was passed. This resulted in the consolidation of the four towns into one and made it the Oklahoma Territory capital, Guthrie.



Location of Guthrie compared to Oklahoma City.

Years later, Theodore Roosevelt signed the **Oklahoma Enabling Act of 1906**, which made the creation of the state of Oklahoma possible. Since Guthrie was the territorial capital it became the state capital until 1910. Then it moved to Oklahoma City.



“Guthrie: Oklahoma Capital and Largest City,” (CTP.GUTHRIE.0001, Frederick S. Barde Collection, OHS).

Oklahoma City



Oklahoma City in 1924 (2012.201.OVZ001.9079, OPUBCO Collection, OHS).

When Oklahoma became a state it became sovereign, and was no longer bound by the Oklahoma Enabling Act of 1906, which stated the new state capital needed to be Guthrie. With this in mind, cities, such as Shawnee and Oklahoma City, wanted to be the capital in order to increase their power and visibility. In order to remedy this, a vote was held to determine the state's capital on June 11, 1910. After the election, Oklahoma City was declared the winner with 50,000 votes over Guthrie. When the governor, Charles Haskell, saw this, he moved the seal of Oklahoma to Oklahoma City, which caused a controversy because Guthrie still claimed to be the capital.

It might seem strange that the state government just picked up and moved to Oklahoma City, but that is an example of **federalism**.

When Guthrie officials heard about this, they were angry, so the Oklahoma Legislature stepped in and established the capital on the present NE 23rd street in Oklahoma City.

As this unfolded, a presidential election was held in 1912. The election was one of the most notable elections in US history because there were three serious candidates: William Howard Taft (Republican), Woodrow Wilson (Democrat), and Theodore Roosevelt (Progressive). Wilson won the election. In Oklahoma, the same election saw State Question 40 on the ballot, which was an attempt to move the state capital back to Guthrie. This **initiative** was defeated with 54 percent of the **electorate** voting “no.”

Construction

When the capital of Oklahoma was confirmed by the legislature, plans began for the Capitol building. On July 20, 1914, at 10 a.m., Governor Lee Cruce ceremoniously turned the Oklahoma earth, breaking ground for the Oklahoma State Capitol. With the ground broken, it was now time to construct the building.



Main Street, Oklahoma City, 1908 (22194.3899.10, Bob Duncan Negative Collection, OHS).



Oklahomans come out to celebrate the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Oklahoma Capitol building, July 20, 1914 (21381, Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce Collection, OHS).



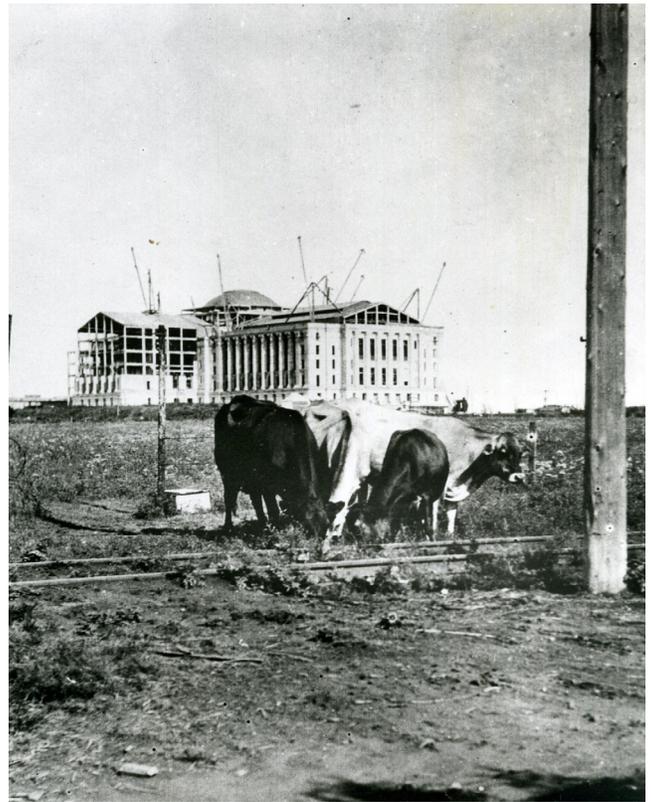
Threshing crew of John Long working in front of the Capitol building under construction in 1916 (13041, W. P. Campbell Collection, OHS).

After a search for an architect, the Oklahoma City architecture firm Layton and Smith were selected as designers and the James Stewart Company was selected to be builders. By 1914, the architect firm's description of the building was submitted to the State Capitol Commission.

The State Capitol Commission was created to make sure Oklahoma was not losing money on the building due to bad planning. A federal construction engineer, Edward Boyd, led the commission in order to avoid local political pressure.

When the building was completed, it was a beauty to behold. It was a six-story structure in the grand **Beaux Arts** style. It had a concrete foundation with pink and gray granite **quarried** from Johnston County, Oklahoma, which is directly south of Oklahoma City.

The walls were Bedford limestone from Indiana and formed a t-shape with the northern and southern wings shortened with grand **porticoes**. In the middle is a square **rotunda**. The interior and exterior are highly decorated with a copper roof and stone eagles.



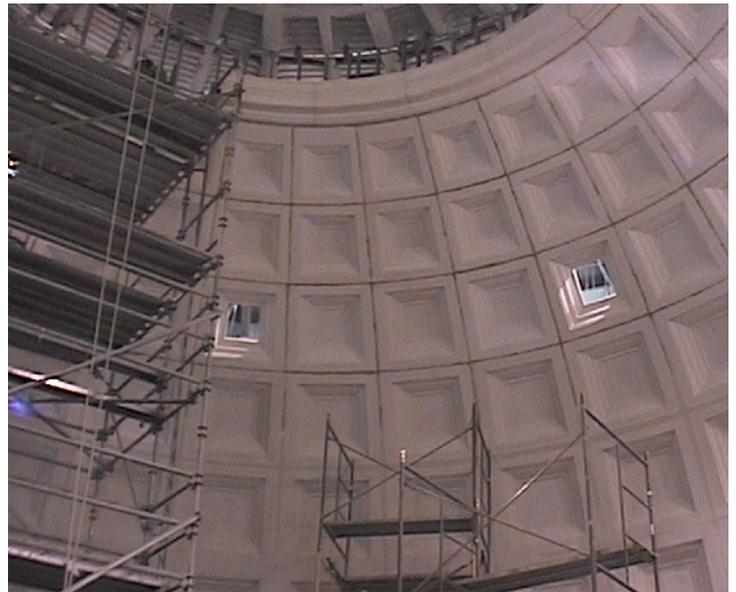
View from the Yellow Mule streetcar line owned by William Harn near the construction of the Oklahoma Capitol, 1916 (19442, Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS).



Ongoing construction of the Oklahoma Capitol, July 1, 1916 (18770.1.58, State Board of Public Affairs Collection, OHS).



Metal shell and base of the dome (OHS).



Inside of the dome with windows and tiling (OHS).

Dome

The original architectural plans included a dome but when presented to the State Capitol Commission, it did not include a dome. However, the building was built to sustain a dome on the central, square rotunda. Years later, in 1998, the Oklahoma Centennial Act, created the Oklahoma Capitol Complex and the Centennial Commemoration Commission. This commission began to raise funds immediately for the \$20.8 million dome.

The dome was started in 2001 and was dedicated in November 2002 with a special **ornament**. Instead of a symbol of freedom as the dome topper, such as an eagle, the builders of the dome choose something more specifically Oklahoman. The crowning element is called *The Guardian* and was designed by artist and State Senator Enoch Kelly Haney of Seminole. The statute itself is a combination of spiritual, material, and cultural characteristics of the thirty-nine tribes in Oklahoma. Oklahoma is the first state to have a Capitol building featuring an American Indian sculpture on its dome. When it was installed on June 8, 2002, there were traditional tribal blessings and dances from American Indian chiefs from the Cheyenne-Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes.



Setting *The Guardian* sculpture in place atop the Oklahoma Capitol (photo by D. Everett, Oklahoma Historical Society Publications Division, OHS).



Most of the limestone facade at the State Capitol building in Oklahoma City was cracking and water-stained and is needing repair. Photo by Paul Hellstern, 2015 (image courtesy the *Oklaboman*).

Renovations

The Oklahoma Capitol has served as part office building, part public space, and part museum for nearly one hundred years. Over that time, the Oklahoma weather chipped away at it making it weaken and crumble. Just because the Capitol is old does not mean it will go into retirement. Instead, Governor Mary Fallin suggested the Capitol **renovation** project to the legislature in 2014 to create a modern building in a 1917 shell.

Who renovated it?

With the passing of the renovation bill, the next step was to hire **contractors** to restore the Capitol. Manhattan Construction and FSB were selected to develop and update the interior while JE Dunn Construction, ADG, and TreanorHL developed and updated the exterior. There was also a State Capitol Repair Expenditure Oversight Committee and the Capitol Restoration Project Leadership Team.

What needed to be renovated?

Almost everything in the Capitol building needed to be renovated. Chunks of the outside were crumbling and falling off, the windows needed restoration, and a new roof needed to be installed. The interior received a complete renovation including updates to its plumbing, electrical, HVAC systems. The plaster was redone and all of it needed repainted, the life safety modernized, and the underground tunnel connecting the Capitol to parking lots desperately needed to be waterproofed. The building is now ADA compliant.

How did they do it?

The renovation of the State Capitol took five years to complete, multiple contractors and workers, and millions of dollars in financial contributions from the Oklahoma people. First, the Capitol Restoration Project Leadership Team talked about how they were going to start so they built a *Building Information Model (BIM) 3D model* to track what needed to be fixed. After that, the project was broken into phases for better organization.

The preliminary phase was core elements which encompassed public areas, utilities and security. The next phase was phase one which aimed at updating the first and third floors, or the legislative staff spaces. The next phase, phase two, improved the basement for agency space and the public. Phase three followed with major program elements including facility access, parking, and more agency space. Next was phase four which was focused on agency and **tenant** space throughout the building including the Capitol tunnel. Finally, phase five updated the exterior security and the House and Senate chambers.



3D Image of the State Capitol building (image courtesy of Arrival 3D).

How does this impact me?

Renovating an old stone building requires special training, technology, and lots of human interaction. Workers need to be certain they do not further damage the building, but must be sure they have sealed and updated everything to ensure the Capitol will stand for another 100 years. Here are some jobs that were needed to renovate the Capitol.

Electrician: Many electricians were used to tear out and replace the Capitol's electric system. They were needed to help power the Capitol so it could be used as a public space.

Plumber: Plumbers were also necessary in the Capitol renovation, as they replaced all the pipes in the Capitol to ensure it would have water and sewage services.

Carpenters: Lots of carpenters were used as well. They moved, carved, and sealed stone. They made sure the Capitol was strong and waterproof, from the dome to the underground tunnel. One of these carvers, named Jarek Sienkiewicz used traditional stone carving techniques to work on hundreds of pieces including the Capitol's stone eagles.

Office Administrators: Administrators were also important because they made sure the workers were paid and housed, and they kept the whole project on schedule.

To find more about these careers visit the Guthrie Job Corps Center website.

<https://guthrie.jobcorps.gov/>



The workers who renovated the Capitol (image courtesy Oklahoma Capitol Restoration).

State Capitol Art Collection

The State Capitol houses an impressive art collection including murals, paintings, and sculpture. The pieces reflect the rich and diverse history of Oklahoma. Highly respected artists created these pieces of artwork to share with everyone who visits the State Capitol.

Outside, a large sculpture entitled *As Long as the Waters Flow* reminds visitor that the land upon which the Capitol is built is land originally owned by tribal nations. This is represented in the form of an American Indian woman. The artist of this piece is Allan Houser (Chiricahua Apache). Other pieces of his work can be seen at the Oklahoma History Center, the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History, the United Nations, and the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC.

Inside the Capitol are several murals painted by Charles Banks Wilson. These murals create a timeline of Oklahoma history. The first shows the Coronado expedition exploring the land that will become Oklahoma. The second depicts trade between different fur traders and American Indian hunters while a fort, showing the presence of the military, can be seen in the background. The third mural presents the Indian removals that occurred in the nineteenth century when this land was Indian Territory. The final mural shows the settlement of non-Indians through a depiction of the Land Run of 1889.

Other murals celebrate the cultural impact of the Five Moons, a group of indigenous ballerinas from Oklahoma; the oil and gas industry; and farming and ranching. The first hundred years of Oklahoma's history is celebrated in Carlos Tello's *Beyond the Centennial*, dedicated in 2010.



As Long as the Waters Flow by Allan Houser (image courtesy Oklahoma Arts Council).



Beyond the Centennial by Carlos Tello (image courtesy Oklahoma Arts Council).

The people who helped make Oklahoma what it is today are also featured in pieces of art at the State Capitol. Artists captured numerous well-known Oklahomans in portraits and sculptures throughout the building.

These are some of the individuals represented:

[Carl Albert](#)

[Dr. Angie Debo](#)

[A. C. Hamlin](#)

[Alice Robertson](#)

[Woody Guthrie](#)

[Edward P. McCabe](#)

[Wiley Post](#)

[Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher](#)

[Roscoe Dunjee](#)

[Kate Barnard](#)

Click on the name to learn more about each Oklahoman.



Benjamin Harris Hill, by Simmie Knox. Benjamin Harris Hill, originally from Canada, was a pastor, teacher, journalist, and civil leader in Tulsa (image courtesy Oklahoma Arts Council).

Fun Facts about the State Capitol

Did you know?

The architectural style of the building is Greek Revival.

The land upon which the Capitol was built was donated by William F. Harn and John J. Culbertson.

The granite used for the Capitol was quarried in Johnston County, Oklahoma.

The first band to play in the Capitol was in 1917. They were named the Cottonwood Band.

The first piece of art displayed at the State Capitol was in 1928.

Oklahoma's Capitol is the only capitol grounds to have had active oil rigs. Oil production on the grounds ended in 1986.

In 1942, State Capitol well #1 (Petunia) was completed.

The capitol was originally planned with a dome.

The Oklahoma State Capitol is one of two state capitols on Route 66.

Both Wiley Post and Clara Luper laid in repose at the Capitol.

In 1952, an earthquake near El Reno damaged the walls and ceilings inside the capitol. One crack caused by the earthquake measured 15 meters—nearly 50 feet!

The State Capitol was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

The murals were added in 1976.

The dome on the Capitol was dedicated in 2002.

During the restoration, 477 windows were restored.

In 1990, the Capitol began using geothermal energy; the first state capitol to do so.

In 2016 and 2019, NBC filmed episodes of *American Ninja Warrior* at the Oklahoma State Capitol.



Panoramic photo of Oklahoma State Capitol with oil derricks, 1930s (20699.1, State Museum/Sam Flood Collection, OHS).

State Capitol Timeline

June 11, 1910 – Citizens vote to move Oklahoma’s capital from Guthrie to Oklahoma City. The new capitol is established in the Lee-Huckins Hotel.

August 4, 1910 – A temporary capitol is located at the former Irving High School building at 4th and Walnut in Oklahoma City. Various state agencies are headquartered in other buildings around the city.

August 24, 1910 – A site northeast of Putnam City (in present day Warr Acres) on land donated by I. M. Putnam is selected to be the location of the permanent state Capitol.

November 15, 1910 – The Oklahoma Supreme Court voided the 1910 election to move the capital to Oklahoma City based on faulty technical language in the initiative. The court also ruled the clause in the Enabling Act establishing the capital at Guthrie was not binding.

December 29, 1910 – The legislature, convened in special session, passed a bill to locate the capital in Oklahoma City. A contract is signed with State Capitol Building Company to locate the capitol in the northeast part of the city. The company agrees to provide 650 acres to be platted and sold, which would provide funds for construction.

May 29, 1911 – US Supreme Court rules in *Coyle v. Smith* that the clause in the Enabling Act establishing Guthrie as the state’s capital is unconstitutional.

February 12, 1912 – Oklahoma City passes \$100,000 bond issue to provide funds for the construction of the Capitol.

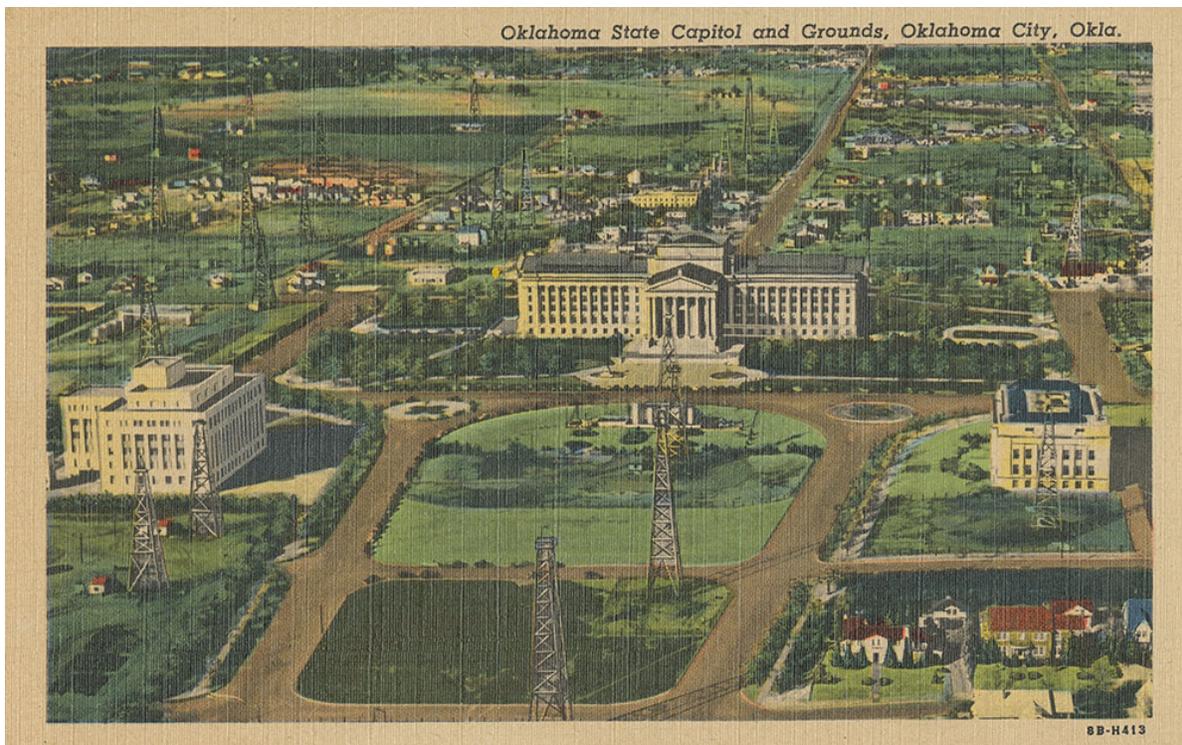
April 18, 1912 – An initiative petition (State Question 40) providing for the removal of the capital from Oklahoma City and placing it permanently in Guthrie is filed with the Secretary of State.

November 5, 1912 – Citizens vote to retain Oklahoma’s capital in Oklahoma City.

July 8, 1914 – Edward P. Boyd is chosen as superintendent of construction for the capitol project by the State Capitol Building Commission.

July 20, 1914 – The Capitol groundbreaking ceremony takes place. Five thousand people are present for the ceremony.

October 27, 1914 – The State Capitol Building Commission formally accepted the plans and specifications for the building presented by architects Layton and Smith. The dome for the Capitol will be omitted due to cost.



Postcard of State Capitol and Grounds, 1948 (image courtesy Metropolitan Library System).

State Capitol Timeline

August 13, 1915 – James Stewart and Company's bond for \$1,353,000 is signed by the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of New York, making them the general contractor on the Oklahoma State Capitol construction.

November 16, 1915 – The cornerstone is laid at the Capitol in a ceremony attended by thousands of people.

January 2, 1917 – The Sixth Legislature convenes in the unfinished Capitol.

June 18, 1917 – State agencies begin moving into the Capitol.

June 30, 1917 – The state Capitol is officially completed ahead of schedule. The contract with James Stewart and Company stipulated the building was to be completed by August 1, 1917.

July 10, 1917 – The first wedding in the Capitol takes place in the Supreme Court chamber.

August 22, 1917 – The Cottonwood Band of the Farmers' Union is the first band to play in the Capitol.

September 24, 1917 – A fire started in a trash pile near the west entrance to the south wing causing several hundred dollars in damage.

September 26-28, 1923 – Governor Walton stations National Guard troops at the Capitol to prevent the legislature from convening in special session to begin impeachment proceedings. Walton would be impeached later that year.

July 3, 1924 – A wedding ceremony is performed in the Blue Room for the first time.

December 12, 1927 – Governor Henry S. Johnston stations National Guard troops in the Capitol to prevent the legislature from convening in special session to begin impeachment proceedings. Governor Johnston would be impeached in 1929.

November 11, 1928 – The *Pro Patria* murals by Thomas Gilbert White are dedicated. The murals, commissioned by Frank Phillips, honor soldiers from Oklahoma who fought and died in World War I. This is the first permanent art installation in the Capitol.

1928 – The Governor's Mansion is completed.

1928 – Oil is discovered on land adjoining the Capitol.

1930 – The Oklahoma Historical Society building (later renamed the Wiley Post Building) is completed.

1930 – The *Tribute to the Romantic Riders of the Range* statue is installed in front of the Capitol. This was the first piece of exterior art to be placed on the Capitol grounds. Despite the inscription on the statue's plaque, it was officially dedicated in 1957.

July 7, 1933 – Oklahoma's first governor, Charles N. Haskell, laid in state in the Blue Room.

August 22, 1935 – Wiley Post lay in repose at the Capitol. Ten thousand people walked past the bier to pay their respects. Another 10,000 people were denied entry to the building.

1936 – Governor Marland opened state property to drilling and called out the National Guard to prevent the City of Oklahoma City from stopping drilling activity.



Snowy scene at the Oklahoma State Capitol, c. 1930
(21412.M20.35, Z. P. Meyers/Barney Hillerman Photographic Collection, OHS).

State Capitol Timeline

1938 – The Capitol Office Building (later renamed the Jim Thorpe Building) is completed. A subsequent appropriation would be needed to install partitions and fixtures. Tenants would occupy the building four years later.

1938 – The armory building for the headquarters of the Oklahoma National Guard is completed.

1938 – The armory building for the headquarters of the Oklahoma National Guard is completed.

1940 – The walls and ceiling in Blue Room are refurbished. New furnishings are also purchased.

June 6, 1942 – State Capitol Well Number 1 (Petunia No. 1) was completed.

May 7, 1947 – Senator Tom Anglin was shot on the Senate floor by Representative Jimmie Scott.



Oklahoma State Capitol during restoration (image courtesy *Oklahoma Living*).

October 10, 1956 – Former governor William H. “Alfalfa Bill” Murray lay in state at the Capitol.

January 9, 1957 – Governor Raymond Gary kicked off the Oklahoma semi-centennial year with a “jubi-light” ceremony that included the lighting of a Christmas tree bonfire. The slogan for the semi-centennial was “Arrows to Atoms.”

1961 – The Capitol Office Building is renamed the Jim Thorpe Memorial Building. The Oklahoma Historical Society Building is renamed the Wiley Post Building.

1962 – The Will Rogers and Sequoyah Buildings are completed north of the Capitol.

January 3, 1963 – Former Oklahoma governor and sitting US Senator Robert S. Kerr lay in state in the Capitol’s second-floor rotunda.

1963 – The Will Rogers portrait by Charles Banks Wilson is installed in the fourth-floor floor rotunda.

1963 – The civil defense underground headquarters and bomb shelter is completed. It is situated 20 feet below ground between the Will Rogers and Sequoyah office buildings.

1964 – The Will Rogers portrait by Charles Banks Wilson is installed in the fourth-floor rotunda.

1965 – The Sequoyah and Robert S. Kerr portraits by Charles Banks Wilson are installed in the fourth-floor rotunda.

October 2, 1966 – The 14 Flags Plaza at the south entrance to the Capitol is dedicated by Governor Henry Bellmon. The plaza displayed flags from a 1964 World’s Fair exhibit that showcased the nations whose flag flew over the state from 1541 to 1925.

State Capitol Timeline

1966 – The Jim Thorpe portrait by Charles Banks Wilson is installed in the fourth-floor rotunda.

1966 – A large Oklahoma state seal, comprised of terrazzo, is installed in the floor of the first-floor rotunda.

1966 – The Blue Room is renovated. New furniture is purchased for the room.

1966 – The Governor’s Large Conference Room is created.

1968 – The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Building is completed.

1970 – The Senate chamber undergoes extensive renovation. Ornamental plaster scrolls are removed from walls and wood paneling is added. A glassed-in press gallery added.

January 29, 1971 – African American high school students from Classen, Northeast, and Douglass High Schools stage a sit-in to protest discrimination at their schools.

1972 – The 23rd Street underpass is completed between the Capitol and Will Rogers and Sequoyah Buildings linking the Capitol complex buildings by two bridges.

1972 – The south parking lot is constructed.

1972 – The motion picture, *Thirty Dangerous Seconds*, is filmed in Oklahoma City with some scenes filmed at the Capitol.

1973 – A wheelchair ramp is added to the south entrance of the Capitol.

1974 – The Oliver Hodge and M. C. Connors office buildings are completed to the north of the Will Rogers and Sequoyah office buildings.

1974 – A tunnel linking the Capitol to a parking lot east of Lincoln Boulevard is constructed. Tunnels connecting the Will Rogers, Sequoyah, Connors, and Hodge Buildings are also completed.



An interior view of the dome (image courtesy TravelOK).

State Capitol Timeline

1974 – A permanent office for the lieutenant governor is opened on the second floor of the Capitol.

1974 – The Allen Wright Memorial Library Building is completed.

1975 – The Department of Transportation Building is completed.

1975 – The Department of Veterans Affairs moves from the Wiley Post Building to a building near the armory, west of the Capitol.

November 16, 1976 – Four murals by Charles Banks Wilson depicting the history of Oklahoma from 1541 to 1900 were dedicated. The four murals are *Discovery and Exploration*, *Frontier Trade*, *Indian Immigration*, and *Non-Indian Settlement*.

1976 – Committee rooms flanking the Grand Staircase on the fourth floor are added.

1976 – The Capitol is added to the National Register of Historic Places.

February 28, 1978 to March 2, 1978 – Approximately 100 Langston University students occupied the Capitol overnight to protest the lack of funding for their university. Lawmakers and Capitol employees were “held hostage” within the House chambers until House leadership agreed to pursue “the best possible funding” for the university.

September 1, 1978 – The grounds around the Capitol are designated State Park Number 1.

1979 – The Governor’s Art Gallery is created in the room adjacent to the Blue Room.

March 16, 1982 – President Ronald Reagan addresses a joint session of the Oklahoma Legislature in the House of Representatives chamber. As of 2022, Reagan is the first and only sitting president to visit the Capitol.

1982 – Bronze busts of 21 former governors are placed in the second-floor rotunda as a part of the state’s Diamond Jubilee celebration. The busts were sculpted by Leonard McMurry.

February 7, 1984 – Portraits of four prominent African American Oklahomans are dedicated.

1984 – The Department of Agriculture Building is completed.

1985 – The Denver Davidson Building is completed. It is used by Workers’ Compensation Court and Court of Appeals.

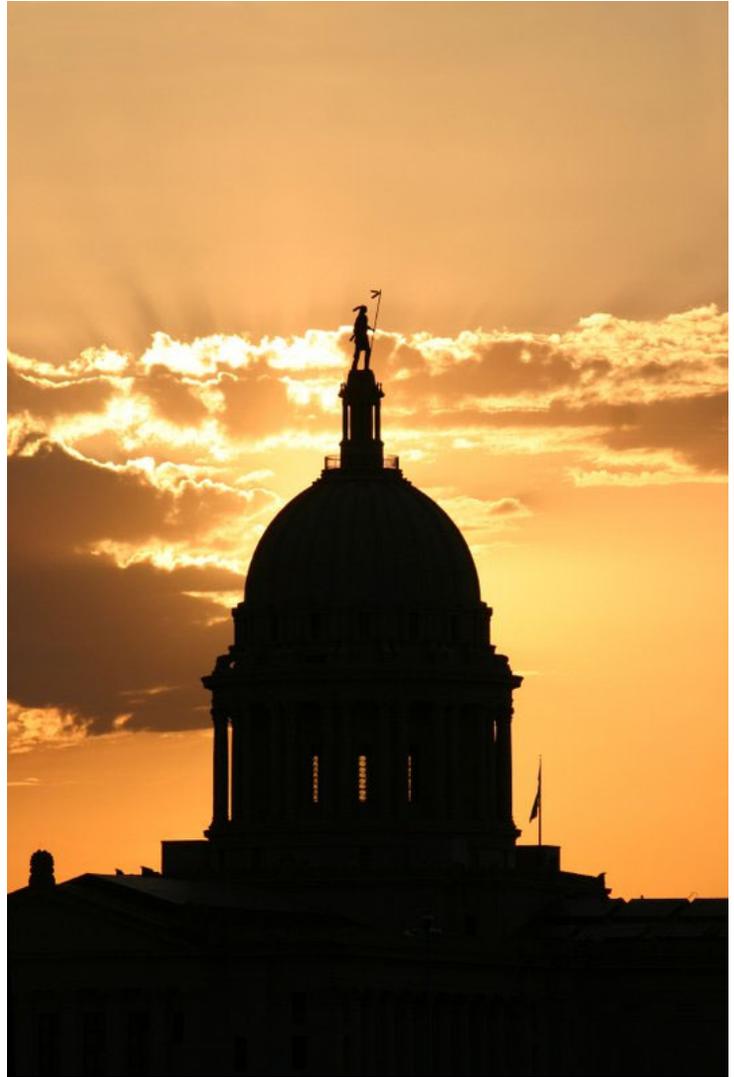
November 11, 1986 – The Veterans Memorial on the north side of the Wiley Post building (now the Oklahoma Judicial Center) is dedicated.

1986 – State Capitol Well No. 1 (Petunia No. 1) is plugged.

June 4, 1989 – *As Long as the Waters Flow* statue unveiled on the south plaza on the grounds of the Capitol.

1990 – A geothermal heating and cooling system for the Capitol is completed.

1990 – Thousands of teachers rally for three days at the Capitol in support of HB1017, a landmark education reform bill.



The dome at sunset (image courtesy TravelOK).

State Capitol Timeline

November 17, 1991 – The *Flight of the Spirit* mural is dedicated.

1991 – The Travis Harris Building, a library for people who are blind or have a disability, is completed.

1991 – New paint colors are applied to the building's interior. The colors chosen were Mozart melon, gold leaf, opal basil, and powder blue.

December 7, 1994 – The bronze busts of Oklahoma governors are relocated to the south wing of the second floor. The corridor is renamed the Hall of Governors.

1994 – The restoration of the Senate chamber is completed.

November 19, 1995 – A memorial grove of trees gifted by the citizens of Iowa to honor victims of the Oklahoma City Bombing is dedicated on the north end of the Capitol Complex, between the Hodge and Connors office buildings.

1995 – The Indian Flag Plaza is completed on the grounds north of the Capitol.

1996 – The *Oklahoma Black Gold* mural is dedicated.

1997 – Restoration of the Court of Criminal Appeals courtroom on the second floor is completed.

September 17, 1998 – Gold-plated replica Olympic medals awarded to Jim Thorpe for his performances at the 1912 Olympic Games are stolen from the fourth-floor rotunda. The thief surrendered and returned the medals a few days later.

1998 – The Oklahoma State Senate Historical Preservation Fund founded by Senator Charles Ford placed its first painting in the capitol. The painting depicted Washington Irving's trip near Tulsa in 1832.

March 16, 1999 – The *We Belong to the Land* mural is dedicated.

1999 – The Jan Eric Cartwright Law Library Law Library moves from the first floor of the Capitol to the basement.

February 16, 2000 – 15,000 teachers and education supporters rally at the Capitol in support of a teacher pay raise.

July 25, 2000 – Governor Frank Keating announces plans to erect a dome on the Capitol. Keating intends to raise most of the money to construct the dome privately.

October 19, 2000 – The State Capitol Preservation Commission selects *The Guardian* by Enoch Kelly Haney to be the finial sculpture on the dome.

2000 – The House of Representatives chamber is restored.

2001 – A sculpture of Kate Barnard is installed in the Capitol.

2001 – Areas around Capitol Well Site No. 1 and the Francis No. 1 Well Site are landscaped and improved.

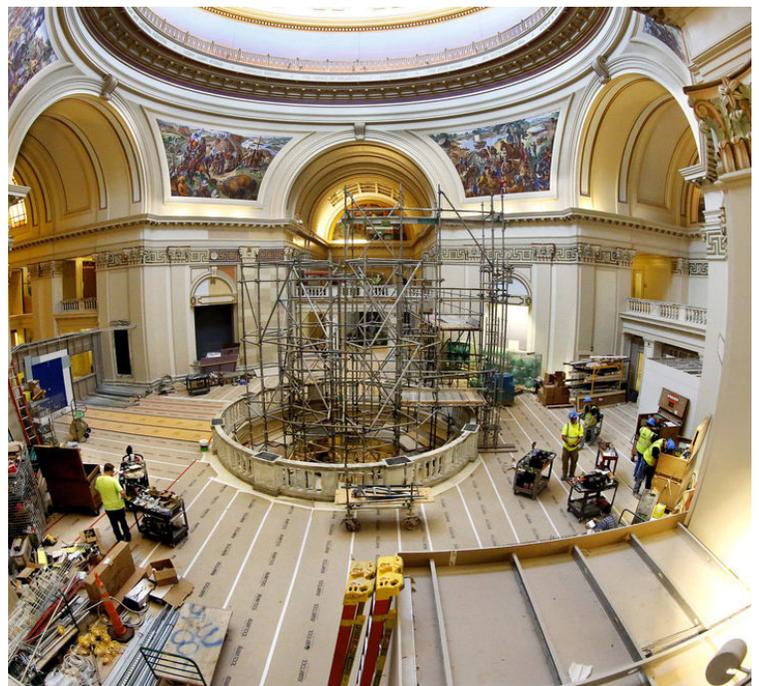
June 7, 2002 – *The Guardian* statue is placed atop the Capitol's dome.

November 16, 2002 – The new dome on the Capitol is completed and dedicated.

2002 – The Centennial Memorial Plaza is completed.

2004 – X-ray machines and metal detectors are added at Capitol entrances. The historic south entrance is no longer a public entrance.

2006 – The Oklahoma History Center building is completed.



The interior of the Capitol during restoration (image courtesy *The Oklahoman*).

State Capitol Timeline

2006 – A new building for the Attorney General’s office is completed west of the Capitol.

November 16, 2007 – The Betty Price Art Gallery opens on the first floor of the Capitol.

2010 – The *Beyond the Centennial* mural is installed in the Hall of Governors. This is the first work of art by a Hispanic artist to be featured in the Capitol.

June 16, 2011 – Clara Luper lay in repose in the first-floor rotunda of the Capitol.

2011 – Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals move their offices from the Capitol to the Wiley Post Building. The Supreme Court retains its historic courtroom in the Capitol.

2012 – A granite monument with an inscription of the Ten Commandments is installed on the north side of the Capitol. The monument was later removed in 2015 after the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled the monument’s placement on state property to be unconstitutional.

2013 – The Senate Assembly Room is completed on the fifth floor.

2013 – Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. listed the Capitol on its list of Oklahoma’s most endangered places.

July 20, 2014 – The State Capitol Restoration Project commences, 100 years after the groundbreaking for the building.

2014 – A \$120 million bond issue for the “renovation, repair, and remodeling” of the Capitol is signed into law.

November 16, 2015 – Cornerstone centennial ceremony is held. [View a copy of the program here!](#)

May 13–14, 2016 – The popular NBC television show *American Ninja Warrior* films for two nights in front of the Capitol. The show would return in 2019 for another two nights of filming.

2016 - A \$125 million bond issue for the “renovation, repair, and remodeling” of the Capitol is signed into law.

April 2018 – According to reports, approximately 30,000 teachers and citizens rally at the Capitol over a period of two weeks for better teacher pay and more funding for education.

2019 – Reconstruction of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Building is completed.

May 31, 2020 – Black Lives Matter protest takes place at the Capitol.

2020 – The new visitor entrance on the southeast side of the Capitol is completed.

2020 – The lieutenant governor’s office moves to the 1st floor.

2020 – After five years, the exterior restoration of the Capitol is complete. Over 21 miles of mortar joints are repointed, over 4,600 stone repairs are completed, and all 477 original windows are restored. A new copper roof is installed.

2021 – The new ground-floor rotunda completed. The rotunda contains a bronze state seal 14 feet in diameter, replacing the terrazzo state seal that was removed from the 1st floor when a hole was cut in the floor to connect the ground floor (originally sub-basement and most recently the basement) to the remainder of the building.

2022 – The State Capitol Museum is installed on the ground floor.

2022 – The Betty Price Art Gallery is relocated to the second floor in the former Hall of Governors. The Hall of Governors is relocated to the second-floor monumental corridor formerly occupied by the lieutenant governor’s office.

2022 – The legislative chambers for the House of Representatives and Senate are restored.

2022 – The State Capitol Restoration Project is completed.

Activities

The Guardian Symbols

Symbols are objects that stand for something else such as the golden arches for McDonalds or the American flag for the United States. Symbols hold the same meaning as what they represent but convey that meaning more quickly.

This use of symbols is also present in the Oklahoma State Capitol dome's crowning element, *The Guardian*.

Follow this link to the Oklahoma Historical Society website for more information on *The Guardian*.

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=GU008>

Here is a picture of *The Guardian*. Using your knowledge on symbols and *The Guardian*, identify and describe the symbols on the statue.



Artist Enoch Kelly Haney and *The Guardian* (OHS).

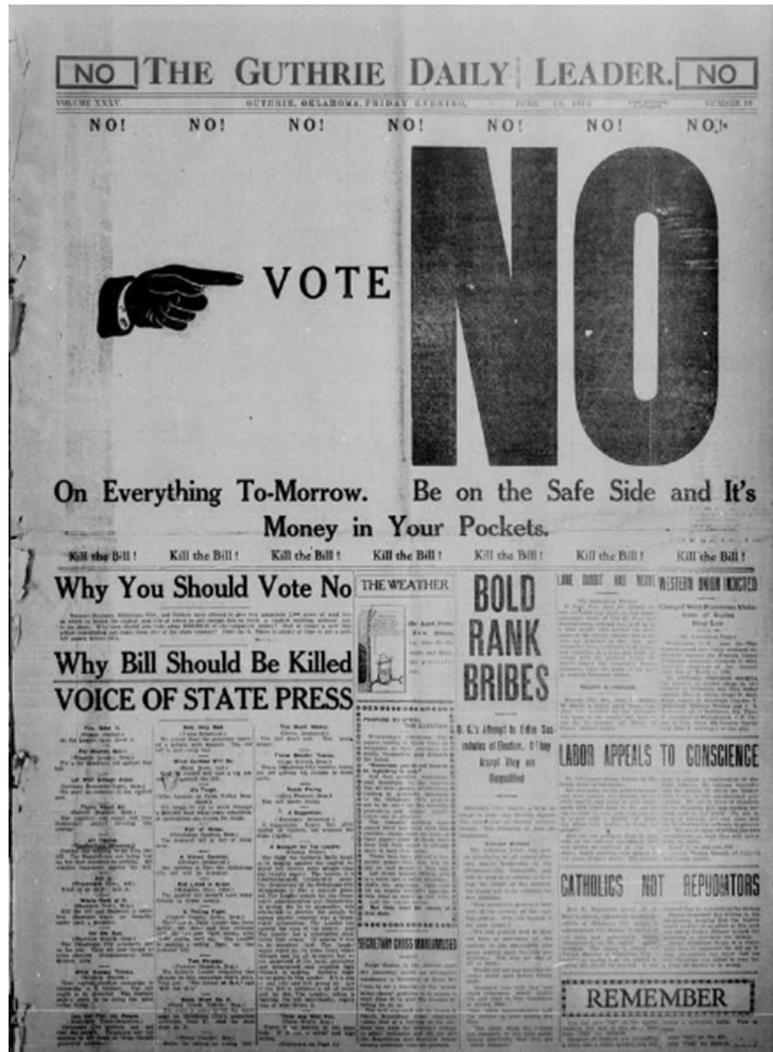
Here is a video of the artist, Enoch Kelly Haney, being interviewed about his work. (1:28-2:57)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bylcZ-khPuw&t=1s>

Persuasive Writing: What Town Should be the Capital of Oklahoma?

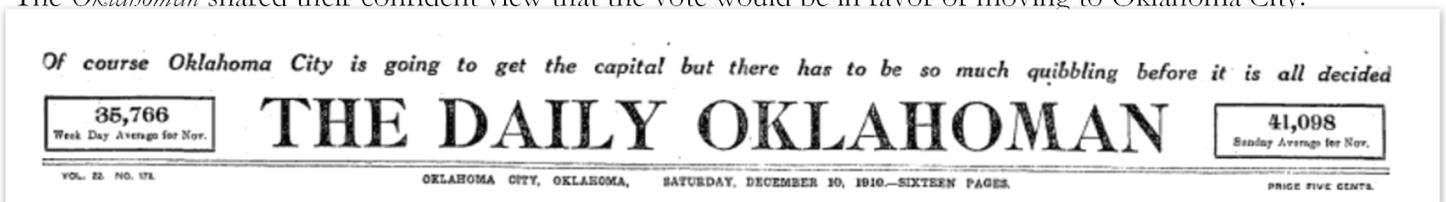
When you have a strong opinion about something, you have a **bias**. In the 1910s, Oklahomans were biased in favor of a particular location becoming the capital. Before the vote on June 10, 1910, to determine where the state capital should be, communities worked hard to promote their towns and to offer plenty of reasons why another town should not get it. They used persuasion to convince others.

For example, this Guthrie newspaper wanted the state capital to stay in Guthrie:



June 10, 1901, issue of the *Guthrie Daily Leader*

The *Oklahoman* shared their confident view that the vote would be in favor of moving to Oklahoma City:



June 10, 1901, issue of the *Daily Oklahoman*

Where would you place the capital of Oklahoma? Create a poster announcing your position. Try to convince the person reading your poster to share your view. Be as persuasive as possible.

Working with Data: Numbers and Spreadsheets

A primary source is a piece of information about a historical event or period created by an actual participant in or a firsthand witness to the event. Primary sources are the basic pieces of evidence that help a historian understand what happened in the past. These materials include letters, speeches, diaries or newspaper articles from the time. Sometimes, important primary sources may not be included because the historian has a limited view of what counts as evidence. Instructional manuals, text message conversation, and or even textiles like quilts can be primary sources. Increasingly, data recorded in spreadsheets are available to historians. Spreadsheets can often assist historians in understanding very specific questions.

Take a look at this spreadsheet for the Capitol Restoration project:

Financial Report (January 2020)

Answer these questions for the first tab “FY20 Cash Balance”:

1. What time period does this document cover?
2. What do you think a “vendor” is?
3. What is a “deposit”?
4. How do the numbers in columns C and D change the cash balance? (You can change or delete the items in the spreadsheet to test the effect)
5. How do the numbers in column G change the cash balance?
6. Based on information, what do you conclude this part of the spreadsheet shows?
7. How could a historian telling the story of the Capitol restoration use this piece of evidence?

Research Strategies: Note Taking

Historians examine a large amount of information, and they only use part of the information they learn. One of the ways people highlight the important information they want to learn or use later is by taking notes on what they are examining. People record their information using a variety of methods, but the goals for all the methods is creating a shorter record that is well-organized so that the historian can refer back to the information without going over the original source again.

Pick one of the videos from the Oklahoma State Capitol Restoration YouTube playlist. Listen to the video. You can turn on the closed captions if that helps, or slow the speed down a little if the presenter in the video speaks too quickly. Write down the important information from the story the presenter is sharing. Then, take your notes and give it to another person. Their job is to tell the story again. They can say it or write a paragraph. Are you happy with how closely they matched the original? If you are, you are a good note-taker! You can practice with other videos if you are not happy with the first attempt.

You can find the Oklahoma Capitol Restoration Project YouTube playlist here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLorkiIqdWX3llCGAf97bSX3VaXxyg2XnV>

Glossary

Beaux Arts: An ornate style of architecture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that is associated with the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

bias: A preference for or against something.

capitol: A building where the legislature meets.

contractors: A person or company that agrees to do a specific set of tasks.

electorate: The people eligible to vote in an election.

federalism: A system of government that includes different levels of government that perform different functions

initiative: A citizen-nominated ballot measure.

Land Run of 1889: The first land run which divided the Unassigned Lands of Indian Territory.

Oklahoma Enabling Act of 1906: An act that allowed the people of Oklahoma and Indian Territories to elect representatives to a state constitutional convention and bid for statehood.

Organic Act of 1890: An act that created Oklahoma and Indian Territories, outlined how their governments would be set up, and set aside land for public schools.

ornament: A decoration used to make something fancy, especially a building.

portico: A porch leading to the entrance of a building with a roof overhead and supported by columns.

quarry: To cut into ground to obtain stone.

renovation: The action of improving a broken or outdated structure.

rotunda: A large central area.

tenant: A person who occupies a property owned by another person

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