

Oklahoma Historical Society



FY 2026
Annual Report



The Oklahoma Historical Society

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) was founded in May 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association to collect newspapers.

Today, the OHS continues the important work of chronicling the state’s history. We strive to collect and preserve key materials that reflect the past: artifacts, photographs, documents, newspapers, audio recordings, oral histories, film, and video. Our museums, historic homes, forts, battlefields, research facilities, and website share Oklahoma’s story. Through historic preservation efforts, we identify, evaluate, and protect architectural and archaeological resources. We support educators and reach learners of all ages through programming, online collections, events, and digital offerings.

In FY 2026, the nation marked major milestones with the 100th anniversary of Route 66 and the US semiquincentennial. We embraced this national moment of reflection with

exhibits and programming that highlighted Oklahoma’s place in these stories and the importance of protecting our heritage for future generations.

We experienced our own milestones as we celebrated the Oklahoma History Center’s 20th year. The retrospective exhibit *Collect. Preserve. Share. 20 Years of the Oklahoma History Center* traced accomplishments of the last two decades, highlighting artifacts and collections acquired since 2005 and our expanded efforts in research, digitization, and collections care. Another milestone came in the journey to share Oklahoma’s impact on popular culture, as the OKPOP Museum in Tulsa met an ambitious fundraising goal, unlocking crucial matching funds from the State of Oklahoma.

We look ahead and plan for the future, while continuing to collect, preserve, and share.

Our mission is to collect, preserve, and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people.



Agency Leadership



Trait Thompson
Executive Director



Karen Whitecotton
Deputy Executive Director

- Trait Thompson** Executive Director
- Karen Whitecotton** Deputy Executive Director
- Chantry Banks** Director of Museums and Historic Sites
- Jessica Brogdon** Director of Communications
- Nicole Harvey** Director of the Oklahoma History Center Museum
- Amanda Storck** Chief Financial Officer
- Tad Jones** Director of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum
- Jacob Krumwiede** Director of OKPOP
- Lynda Ozan** Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
- Dr. Matthew Pearce** State Historian
- Angela Spindle** Director of Strategic Initiatives
- Chad Williams** Director of Research

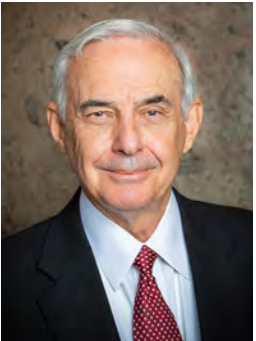
Board of Directors



Karen Keith
President



Weldon Watson
Vice President



David Sigmon
Treasurer

The Oklahoma Historical Society is both an agency of the State of Oklahoma and a private membership organization governed by a 25-member Board of Directors. Twelve are appointed by the governor, and thirteen are elected by Oklahoma Historical Society members.

- T. S. Akers, Oklahoma City
- Jack D. Baker, Oklahoma City
- Randy Beutler, Canute
- Michael Birdsong, Choctaw*
- Ken Fergeson, Altus*
- Deena Fisher, Woodward
- Billie Fogarty, Oklahoma City
- Karen Keith, Tulsa
- Duke R. Ligon, Oklahoma City
- Patricia Loughlin, Stillwater
- W. Carlisle Mabrey III, Tulsa*
- Jonita Mullins, Muskogee
- Shirley Ann Ballard Nero, Clearview*

- Lindsay Robertson, Norman
- Donna Sharpe, Checotah
- David Sigmon, Bartlesville*
- Kenneth Sivard, Valliant
- Gregory R. Stidham, Checotah*
- Jeffrey Tanenhaus, Tulsa
- Barbara Thompson, Oklahoma City
- James R. Waldo, Oklahoma City*
- Weldon Watson, Broken Arrow*
- Kaitlyn Weldon, Jones*
- G. Harold Wright, Weatherford*
- Vacant*

*appointed



reaching and serving

Oklahomans

In FY 2026, we reached more than 599,000 visitors, learners, and educators through classes, events, educational activities, and online offerings. Each year, the Oklahoma Historical Society serves thousands of Oklahomans statewide, with an operating appropriation of just 0.125% of the state’s appropriated annual budget.



Our Members Matter

Oklahoma Historical Society members help make it possible to achieve our goals of collecting, preserving, and sharing. Members contribute financial support that furthers our mission, and create a vital community of families, educators, students, scholars, history lovers, and friends.

Our members enjoy free admission to more than 20 Oklahoma Historical Society museums and historic sites. They keep up to date on OHS activities and offerings through the *Mistletoe Leaves* bimonthly newsletter and learn about the many facets of Oklahoma history in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* quarterly journal.

Support and Dedication

Our volunteers are there—at field trips, tours, public and private events, reenactments, demonstrations, Oklahoma National History Day, and day-to-day in our museums, historic sites, and research facilities. Their dedication is reflected in the faces of excited students and delighted visitors.

Behind the scenes, our volunteers contribute to collections care, special projects, and genealogical and research requests. We thank those who volunteer for supporting our staff and sharing their knowledge and love of Oklahoma history.



\$3,132,112
contributed in donations, grants,
memberships, and friends group support

\$1,469,863
generated in earned revenue

6,560
members supported the
Oklahoma Historical Society

510
volunteers helped
to further our mission

21,984
volunteer hours contributed;
a monetary value of \$794,500

preserving the past through

Collections



Early Oklahoma Artists

In FY 2026, more than 300 pieces of art by sisters Nellie, Nettie, and Leona Shepherd were donated by First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City.

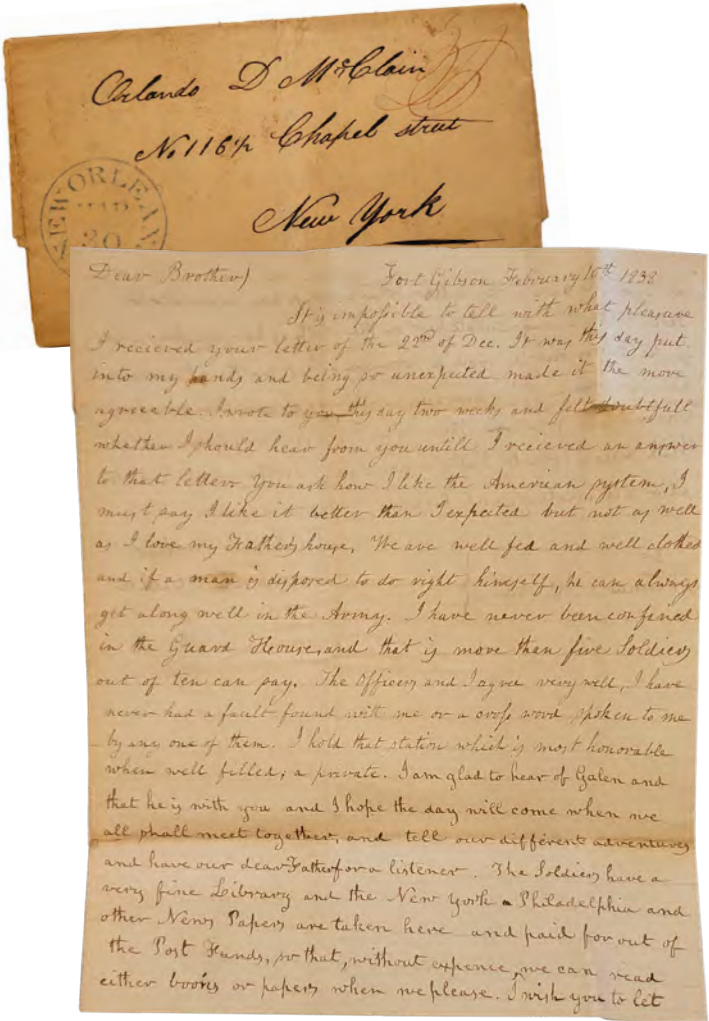
Nellie, an early Oklahoma artist, received an honorable mention at the 1910 Paris Salon for a painting of her sister Lottie, and her portrait of Chickasaw storyteller Te Ata is featured at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

The Shepherd family homesteaded following the Land Run of 1889, and their name lives on through the Shepherd Historic District and Shepherd Mall.

The Oklahoma Historical Society now holds the largest collection of the sisters' art, in the form of paintings, pastels, sketches, and drawings (2025.109.018, Shepherd Family Collection).

Operatic Mastery

Enid native Leona Mitchell is an internationally acclaimed performer who spent 18 seasons as a leading lyric soprano at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Mitchell donated one of her performance gowns, sharing a piece of her remarkable career with the OKPOP Museum (2026.066.001, Leona Mitchell Collection).



News from Fort Gibson

Eight letters from Private Talman McClain illustrate frontier life at 1830s Fort Gibson. McClain writes to his father and brothers, expressing gratitude for his good health amid disease, describing Independence Day celebrations, and depicting the distant outpost as “surrounded by nothing but woods and prairie.” An 1839 letter mentions the death of Cherokee leader Major Ridge and a potential threat to the fort by his followers.

Today, thanks to the dedication of Fort Gibson Historic Site staff and the Bennington Museum in Vermont, these letters are preserved, ensuring that McClain’s voice and Fort Gibson’s history endure.

Personal Perspectives

A new donation offers a thought-provoking look into the town of Colony and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes. It includes materials from the Seger Indian Training School, which opened in 1893 as part of the forced assimilation of Native Americans.

Photographs reflect the shifting reality of an Arapaho man named Watan. We first see him in 1875, before attending the school; later, holding a wooden checkerboard he crafted during the short time he was enrolled; and finally, with his family outside their home, which included his carpentry work. Photographs, artifacts, and Watan’s inlaid checkerboard are part of the collection (2025.130, Dr. Boyd and Linda Lester Collection).



200,480
artifacts preserved

669
new collections
received in FY 2026

88,731
bound volumes

6,992
manuscript collections

12 million
photographs



Take Me Back to Tulsa

At the OKPOP Museum in Tulsa, a restored 1948 Flxible Clipper tour bus celebrates the enduring legacy of Bob Wills. This style of motorcoach would have transported “the King of Western Swing” and his band. Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys traveled from Tulsa’s historic Cain’s Ballroom to dance halls along Route 66, entertaining audiences along the way.

This symbol of music heritage rolled into the museum in October 2025 and is waiting to greet future visitors when the museum opens its doors.



Golden Notes

In 1954, Leo Fender presented an early custom Stratocaster to one of his favorite guitarists, Weatherford’s Eldon Shamblin. Although Shamblin had not embraced earlier Fender guitars, he grew to cherish the gold Stratocaster, playing it for decades. A legendary rhythm guitarist, Shamblin was key in shaping the signature sound of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys, and performed with them for years. He later recorded with country music greats Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson, Leon McAuliffe, and Asleep at the Wheel.

This storied guitar inspired the gold, silver, black, and maple wood elements on the exterior of the OKPOP Museum, where the instrument is now preserved (2026.082.001, Eldon Shamblin Collection).



Up and Away

This small prop from the 1996 blockbuster *Twister* captures a memorable piece of motion picture history. In the film, the experimental “Dorothy” device releases sensors that swirl into a tornado’s funnel. Partly filmed in Oklahoma, *Twister* vividly portrays the state’s intense and unpredictable weather (2026.019.009).



What’s the Big Idea?

In 1934, Clarence Nash of Watonga created the raspy, sputtering sound of Disney’s most famous duck. For decades, Nash voiced the temperamental (but lovable) Donald Duck, nephews Huey, Dewey, and Louie, and girlfriend Daisy.

The Nash and Galbreath families generously gifted this rare vintage Donald Duck puppet and other memorabilia, which are now preserved by the OHS at the OKPOP Museum (2026.064.001, Clarence Nash Collection).



Making Basketball History

Now part of the OHS collections is this player-issued backup jersey for Thunder combo guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander. A two-time NBA MVP, Gilgeous-Alexander helped lead the Oklahoma City Thunder to their first NBA National Championship in 2025 (2026.049.006, Oklahoma City Thunder Collection).



Oklahoma's Prodigy

Musician and entertainer Cora Youngblood Corson formed her first band in Anadarko at age 16. She rose to vaudeville stardom, leading all-women brass bands, singing, and playing the euphonium. Hailed as “Oklahoma’s Prodigy,” Corson and her bands traveled the US, entertained overseas troops during World War I, and performed at two presidential inaugurations. An outspoken pro-union activist, she protested the powerful vaudeville trusts and was eventually blacklisted.

A generous donation from James P. Gregory Jr., a descendant of Youngblood, includes photographs, scrapbooks, journals, ephemera, and the band’s original steamer trunk (2026.060, James P. Gregory Jr. Collection).

Voices of Those Who Served

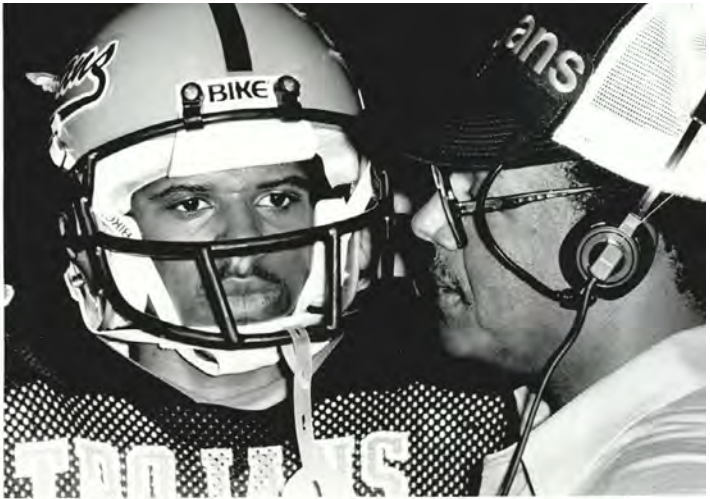
For more than 40 years, historian and author Joe L. Todd has preserved the stories of thousands of veterans and their descendants through oral histories. A Bartlesville native and decorated veteran who served in Vietnam, Kuwait, Iraq, and Haiti, Todd understands the importance of recording this history.

Now, more than 230 oral histories from the Joe L. Todd Collection (1983.243) are available on the OHS Audio Archives YouTube channel. Listen to the experiences of Oklahomans who served, in their own words, online at youtube.com/OHSAudioArchives.

Coaching Legacy

The Coach Stanford White Collection (F2024.123.112) features Douglass High School football games, practices, commencements, and news clips, with most footage from the 1980s to early 2000s and some dating back to the 1970s. Stanford was the winningest coach in the school’s history, shaping young athletes for more than two decades. In 2010, the football field at Douglass’s Moses F. Miller Stadium was named in his honor.

Thanks to Coach White’s family, these memories are preserved on the OHS Film and Video Archives YouTube channel at youtube.com/OHSfilm.



grants provide community Support

Grant programs support Oklahoma organizations, empowering them to protect and share our history.

Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program

Since 2020, the OHS’s Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program has supported historical and genealogical societies, tribal and local governments, not-for-profit historical organizations, museums, libraries, and historic sites. Grants provide key funding focused on collections, exhibits, educational programming, and capacity building.

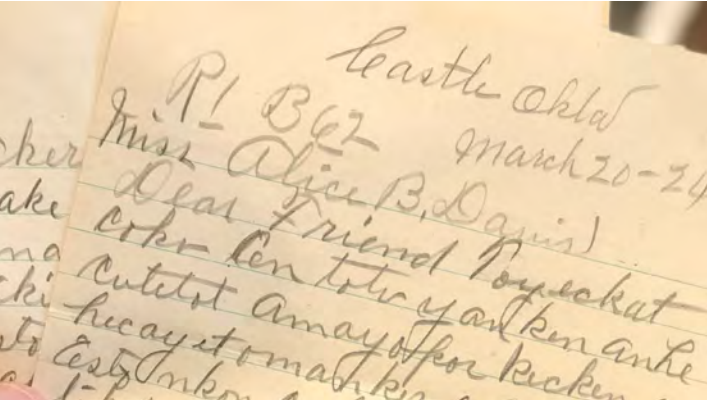
Right, top: Grant funds supported the Freedom Museum’s exhibit interpreting the 1878 Battle of Turkey Springs.

Right, middle: With grant funding, the Seminole Nation Museum archived and digitized cultural materials and documents relating to the formation of the modern Seminole Nation of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Civil Rights Trail Grant Program

An appropriation from the Oklahoma Legislature provided a one-time funding opportunity for eligible municipal, county, and tribal governments and not-for-profit organizations. This grant program supported exhibits, historical markers, oral history initiatives, public programs, and preservation efforts designed to enhance public understanding and engagement with Oklahoma’s civil rights history. The grant program was administered by the OHS.

Right, bottom: A grant awarded to the Town of Grayson funded a historical marker honoring Oklahoma civil rights pioneer, community leader, and educator Clara Luper. The marker stands near the stone remains of the historic Grayson School that Luper once attended.



4,143 newspaper titles

1,100 film collections and over 22,000 videos at youtube.com/OHSFilm

12,500 oral histories and over 2,500 videos at youtube.com/OHSAudioArchives

\$509,439 FY 2026 heritage grants awarded to 30 organizations

\$3.5 million and more than 260 heritage grants awarded since 2020

\$1 million in civil rights grants awarded to 28 organizations



celebrating 20 years of the

Oklahoma History Center

The 2005 opening of the OHS’s flagship location in Oklahoma City was a turning point in our capacity to collect, preserve, and share. Since that time, we’ve continued to develop new programs, exhibits, activities, and resources to engage and inspire Oklahomans.

Learning and Engagement

The Oklahoma History Center Museum connects learners of all ages with Oklahoma’s story. Through field trips, traveling trunks, outreach programs, Oklahoma National History Day, and online resources, the museum reaches students and empowers educators. Festivals, lectures, performances, and film screenings invite Oklahomans to discover our state’s rich heritage.

America250 Living History

The Oklahoma History Center Museum brought a special guest to Oklahoma in March. Thomas Jefferson (portrayed by Kurt Smith) gave multiple presentations at the museum for school groups and visitors. He also made stops at schools in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, reaching thousands of Oklahomans. This program was funded in part by Oklahoma Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities. In January, the museum welcomed another Founding Father: James Madison. These living history programs offer audiences a fascinating view of the past.

Hands-on Colonial History

Thanks to a grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, the Oklahoma History Center Museum updated and expanded six traveling trunks focused on the colonial era. These trunks offer learning opportunities related to colonial life, music, games, soldiers, and agriculture.

Traveling trunks cover 27 topics and include hands-on objects, activities, and guides aligned to academic standards. Trunks are free to teachers, librarians, homeschool co-ops, and pre-service teachers. This program is made possible by support from BancFirst.

One educator shared, “I love that it helped the students better understand what life would have been like in the colonial era. We’ve been reading and learning about it, but having the hands-on items really helped them understand!”



3 million

Oklahoma History Center
visitors welcomed since 2005

only 1

facility in the world affiliated with
both the Smithsonian and National
Archives and accredited by the AAM

101,704

served through Learning
and Engagement Programs

9,337

served through Oklahoma
National History Day

47,194

served through the
Traveling Trunk Program



discover collections on The Gateway to Oklahoma History

The Gateway to Oklahoma History is a portal to the past, offering historic images, newspapers, documents, and maps. Enjoy free access to more than 1.3 million files online at gateway.okhistory.org.

Partners in Sharing

The Gateway to Oklahoma History includes more than OHS materials. Our partner collections are also growing, with 38 total partners. In FY 2026, we welcomed:

- 95th Division Association and Foundation
- The Coleman Theatre Beautiful
- Dobson Museum & Home - Ottawa County Historical Society
- Midwest City High School History Center and Vietnam Memorial
- Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office
- Stillwater Public Library



Historic Structures

Photographs from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office are now available on The Gateway. Drum-right native and New York editor Fred Wiemer captured architectural subjects across the state, including court-houses, rural barns, churches, and commercial buildings. Wiemer's 1990s photographs offer a fascinating visual record of the state's built environment.

The collection includes more than 800 images, such as Pawhuska's Triangle Building (above, left) and the Hooker Woodframe Grain Elevator (above) (Wiemer2277 and Wiemer2780, Fred Wiemer Slide Collection).

In the News

Additions to The Gateway include *Mistletoe Leaves*, the membership newsletter of the Oklahoma Historical Society, and *Preservation News*, which followed the activities of the statewide preservation community.

Newspapers have long been a cornerstone of the OHS archives. We continue to digitize these rich resources, making them available online. Issues added to The Gateway in FY 2026 include:

- *The Big Pasture News*
- *Bishinik* (Durant)
- *The Black Dispatch* (Oklahoma City)
- *The Bluejacket Gazette*
- *The Chickasaw Democrat*
- *The Chickasha Record*
- *Craig County Democrat*
- *Crimson Quarterly* (University of Oklahoma, Norman)
- *The Daily O'Collegian* (Oklahoma State University, Stillwater)
- *Deutscher Anzeiger* (Okeene)
- *Durocher's Oklahoma City Business*
- *The Edmond Sun*
- *Elk Citian*
- *Farmer's Union Advocate* (Shawnee)
- *Guymon Daily Herald*
- *Hello Choctaw* (Durant)
- *Labor World* (Shawnee)
- *Muskogee Daily Phoenix and Times-Democrat*
- *The Okeene Eagle*
- *Oklahoma Staats-Zeitung* (Enid)
- *OU Daily* (University of Oklahoma, Norman)
- *Our Nation's News* (Durant)
- *The Ponca City Daily Courier*
- *The Ruff Draft* (Edmond)
- *Tulsa Daily Register*
- *The Weleetka American*



History through the Lens

The Oklahoma Journal Photography Collection contains more than 85,000 photographs from the Oklahoma City newspaper. Founded by W. P. "Bill" Atkinson as "the paper that tells both sides," the *Oklahoma Journal* published local and national news from 1964 to 1980. Now, images chronicling events, newsmakers, politicians, celebrities, and staffers are available on The Gateway.

Pictured: State Senator E. Melvin Porter, Clara Luper, State Representative Archibald Hill, Father Ed Kelley, and John B. White, 1967; and two Shrike Commanders move through Oklahoma City to an Aero Commander distributor meeting, 1969 (2010.011.B102.0480 and 2010.011.B002.0167, Oklahoma Journal Photography Collection).

1,347,874
items available online
at gateway.okhistory.org

91,075
items added to The Gateway
to Oklahoma History in FY 2026



Fred and Addie Drummond Home
Hammered Aluminum Ware

Exhibits transport visitors into the past, exploring Route 66, historic diners, pageant traditions and evolution, vibrant art, Freedmen history, and the legacy of Will Rogers. In the past year, we featured more than 20 exhibits.



Oklahoma History Center Museum
Collect. Preserve. Share.
20 Years at the Oklahoma History Center

sharing stories through Exhibits

Cherokee Strip Museum and Rose Hill School
100 Years of Kumbback Lunch
World War I: Lessons and Legacies

Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center
Art of the Wish
Brushes in the Heartland
Resilience: A Sansei Sense of Legacy
The Rhapsody Project

The Chisholm
Abandoned Oklahoma: Red Carpet Country
Through the Lens

Fort Gibson Historic Site
Dawes Commission in Indian Territory:
Cherokee Freedmen

Fred and Addie Drummond Home
Antique Handkerchiefs
Drummond Heirlooms
Hammered Aluminum Ware

Museum of the Western Prairie
Tour de Quartz

Oklahoma History Center Museum
Beyond the Sash: Reflections on Oklahoma
Pageants
Collect. Preserve. Share. 20 Years at the
Oklahoma History Center
The Longest Stretch: Route 66 in Oklahoma
Moments That Made US
Spirit of '76

**Oklahoma Territorial Museum
and Carnegie Library**
Artfully Local: Creations by Dr. Bob Palmer
and Holly Hughes

Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum
The Autobiographical Drawings of Chief
White Bull and Art as a Historical Source

Will Rogers Memorial Museum
Aces and Actors: Will Rogers's Famous Friends
Rogers and the Republic
Will Rogers Highway: Route 66



**Cherokee Strip Museum
and Rose Hill School**
100 Years of Kumbback Lunch



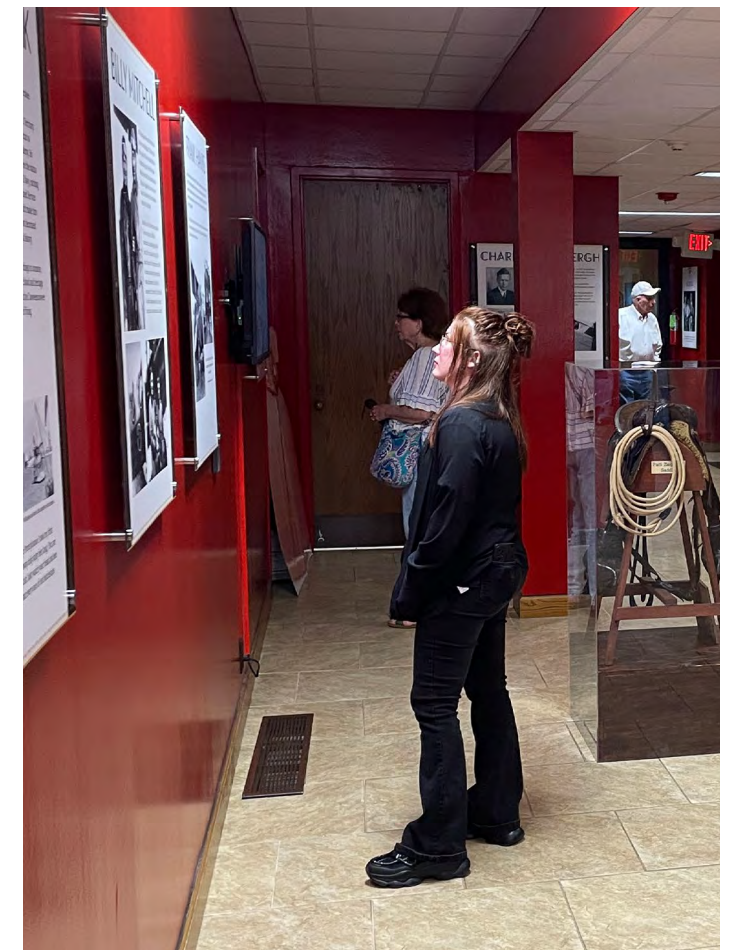
**Cherokee Strip
Regional Heritage Center**
Brushes in the Heartland



The Chisholm
Abandoned Oklahoma: Red Carpet
Country Through the Lens



Oklahoma History Center Museum
Beyond the Sash: Reflections on Oklahoma Pageants

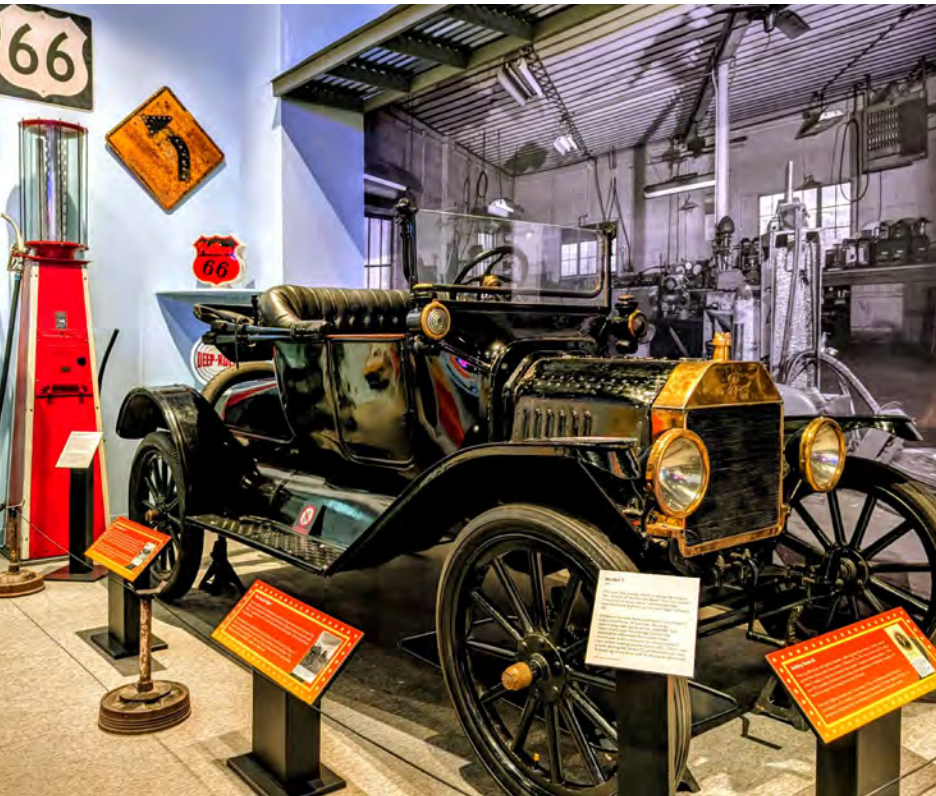


Will Rogers Memorial Museum
Aces and Actors: Will Rogers's Famous Friends

a century of adventure on

Route 66

In 2026, the Oklahoma Historical Society joined the nation in celebrating 100 years of the Mother Road. Through exhibits, events, interviews, and film, the OHS looked back at the iconic highway and how it changed travel, captured our imagination, and inspired multiple generations.



The Longest Stretch

In May 2026, the Oklahoma History Center Museum opened *The Longest Stretch: Route 66 in Oklahoma*, highlighting the state's 400-plus miles of the historic highway. The exhibition traces the road's journey from its rise and glory days to its gradual decline and its celebrated revival.

Striking artifacts help tell the story of communities along the historic route. The nostalgic glow of neon brings the era to life, including a restored Western Trail Motel sign, now preserved by the Oklahoma Historical Society. A 1915 Model T Roadster and a 1961 Corvette (on loan from the National Corvette Museum) illustrate the evolution of car culture.

Oklahoma Route 66 Museum

The centennial fueled a wave of excitement, drawing a record number of visitors to the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton. The museum celebrated an anniversary of its own in September 2025, marking 30 years of sharing the highway's legacy.

Anchoring the museum's front display during the centennial year, a gleaming black 1967 Pontiac GTO made a powerful first impression on guests. This classic American muscle car was on loan from Amy McCord in memory of her father, David McCord.

History in Neon

Also in Clinton, the Glancy Motor Hotel sign is finding new life, thanks to a grant from the Route 66 Revitalization Grant Program to the Friends of the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum. Opened in 1950, the Glancy Motor Hotel was a welcome stop for thousands traveling the historic route. The hotel closed in the 1970s, and the building no longer stands. Once restored and installed on the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum grounds, this classic piece of Americana will once again shine for travelers.



On the Big Screen

The documentary *Crossroads of America: Oklahoma's Route 66* weaves together the rich history of America's most iconic highway with the inspiring stories of the people who continue to live, dream, and shape Route 66's next 100 years. In production during FY 2026, it was produced by the Oklahoma Historical Society in collaboration with director Bryan Beasley, producers Jon and Jaime Roman, and with support from the Inasmuch Foundation. The documentary will be screened around the state free of charge.





A Very OK Podcast

In 2026, each episode of *A Very OK Podcast* featured a Route 66 connection. Podcast hosts OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson and Dr. Bob Blackburn, and guests discussed the highway's origins, architecture, restaurants, and Oklahoma greats such as Roger Miller, Sheb Wooley, and Mickey Mantle.

A special live episode was recorded at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in February, featuring Memorial Director Tad Jones and Jennifer Rogers, the great-granddaughter of Will Rogers.



16,060
podcast downloads

Traveling the Will Rogers Highway

An exhibition at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore explores Route 66's ties to Oklahoma's Favorite Son. Officially named the Will Rogers Highway after his death in 1935, the route linked Rogers's birth state to his later home and career in California. *Will Rogers Highway: Route 66* highlights the highway's dedications from the 1930s to the 1950s and its lasting impact on popular culture.

In June, the Will Rogers Memorial Museum was a must-see for major Route 66 centennial road trips. The museum was a stop on the Hemmings Great Race, a nine-day, 2,300-mile journey from Illinois to California featuring 128 antique and classic automobiles.

Additionally, the Route 66 Main Street of America Centennial Caravan cruised in during its June west-to-east trek. The caravan invited drivers to join for any stretch of the trip while spotlighting local preservation efforts.

The Extra Mile

The Oklahoma Historical Society's Route 66 landing page at okhistory.org/66 offers further resources about the Mother Road with historical markers, research guides, architectural and thematic surveys, educational materials, historic sites, exhibits, and events.

connecting with history Online

Start your journey at okhistory.org to explore the encyclopedia, find educational resources, trace your family tree, or plan your trip to an OHS destination or historical marker.

The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture

With more than 2,600 entries, *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* is a robust source of information about our state. Search by keyword or browse by topic or time period. History is waiting to be uncovered at okhistory.org/enc.

Our most-read entries about Oklahoma's people and places in FY 2026 included:

Markwayne Mullin	Drummond Ranch
Geronimo	Tulsa
S. E. Hinton	Greenwood District
Jim Thorpe	Picher
Bass Reeves	Indian Territory
John Ross	Doan's Crossing
"Pretty Boy" Floyd	No Man's Land
Dalton Gang	Boley
Belle Starr	Chilocco Indian Agricultural School
Selmon Brothers	Spiro Mounds
Clara Luper	Oklahoma City
Bill Pickett	Fort Sill

Follow and Subscribe

The OHS shares history, collections, and news on social media and through our weekly e-newsletter, *EXTRA!* Visit okhistory.org/social for our full list of accounts and channels, and subscribe at okhistory.org/extra.



Historical Markers

Markers offer a tangible connection to our shared past, allowing us to stand where history unfolded. Through our ongoing marker survey, our database continues to grow. Updated entries include historical insights, sponsors, photos, and GPS coordinates for travelers. Start searching at okhistory.org/markers.

Above: A replacement for the California Road historical marker was installed in Roger Mills County in FY 2026.

154,627
followed @okhistory on
Facebook, X, and Instagram

7,742,848
pageviews on okhistory.org

17,288
subscribers to *EXTRA!*
weekly e-newsletter



experience the past at OHS

Museums and Historic Sites

OHS Museums and Historic Sites illuminate territorial life, Native heritage, early agriculture, Route 66, military traditions, prehistoric people, and so much more. Plan your visit at okhistory.org/sites.

- Atoka Museum and Civil War Cemetery, Atoka*
- Cabin Creek Battlefield, Big Cabin
- Cherokee Strip Museum and Rose Hill School, Perry*
- Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- The Chisholm, Kingfisher*
- Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
- Fort Supply Historic Site, Fort Supply*
- Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson
- Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City*
- Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
- Hunter's Home, Park Hill
- Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus
- Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, Clinton
- Oklahoma State Capitol Museum, Oklahoma City*
- Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library, Guthrie
- OKPOP Museum, Tulsa (under development)
- Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue, Ponca City
- Sod House Museum, Aline
- Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- Tom Mix Museum, Dewey*
- White Hair Memorial, Hominy
- Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore

*affiliate



Oklahoma's Heart & Soul

In November 2025, the OKPOP Museum and OKPOP Foundation in Tulsa announced the successful completion of the \$18 million Heart & Soul Campaign. Donations and pledges helped secure crucial matching funds from the State of Oklahoma to finalize exhibit designs, launch exhibit construction, and open the museum. Honorary campaign chair Blake Shelton, state legislators,

the OKPOP Foundation, community leaders, and partners came together to support arts, education, and humanities by completing the museum's final fundraising phase. The OKPOP Museum moves closer to opening its doors, inspiring future generations, and showcasing the global impact of Oklahoma's music, film, and pop culture.



Fort Gibson Historic Site Restoration

In May, ambitious preservation efforts began at Fort Gibson Historic Site, breathing new life into the outpost. Restoration of the two-story sandstone barracks is underway, as windows, doors, patio stones, and the slate roof are carefully removed. These materials will be cataloged, cleaned, and prepared for re-installation. The structure's large porch and stairs will be removed and replaced. This work is made possible by funding from the National Park Service's Save America's Treasures Grant and OHS matching funds. Future plans include upgrades to the adjutant's office to add a kitchen and a restroom, and construction of a porch. The commissary will also see restoration, and a new paved parking lot is planned.

Look for ongoing improvements at Oklahoma Historical Society museums and historic sites around the state.



The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is a catalog of the buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects significant in our past. Listing in the National Register provides recognition, limited protection, and, in some cases, financial incentives for these important properties. The SHPO identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for this special designation.

The Spann House (right, top) in Norman was built in 1959 and 1960. Named Acorn Knoll by original owners Jerry and Alice Spann, the dwelling was designed by Robert Thomas, who studied under Bruce Goff. An example of mid-century modern architecture, the home's concrete textile blocks create angular texture on the stark white exterior.

Built in 1916, the First Presbyterian Church of Henryretta (right, middle) is a limestone and brick structure recognized for its Gothic Revival style. The church was designed by Oklahoma City architect J. O. Parr.

Elias Kerr and his sons constructed this dugout (right, bottom) in present-day Noble County following the opening of the Cherokee Outlet. The 1893 sandstone Kerr Homestead Dugout is a classic example of homesteaders utilizing available materials to create much-needed shelter.

Oklahoma City's National Foundation Life Center (on the previous page), now known as the Landmark Towers, was constructed between 1967 and 1971. It is significant as part of post-World War II suburban commercial development. Designed by Alan Lower & Associates, the towers exemplify the modern movement's New Formalist subtype.



stewarding historic Preservation

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) partners with individuals and organizations statewide to identify, assess, and preserve Oklahoma's rich array of historic, architectural, and archaeological resources.

OKSHPO Share

In February, the State Historic Preservation Office launched a new website, making it easier than ever to learn about Oklahoma's historic properties and sites. OKSHPO Share offers free access to searchable databases and an interactive map including the National Register of Historic Places, the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory, and bridges.

With more than 74,000 records, the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory is the state's most comprehensive collection of information about historic buildings, districts, structures, sites, and objects.

Learn more at okshpo-share.com.

3,462
properties evaluated for the presence of significant archaeological and/or historic resources in FY 2026

1,951
consultations and technical assistance requests answered

1,453
Oklahoma listings in the National Register of Historic Places

Oklahoma Centennial Farm & Ranch Program

The Oklahoma Centennial Farm & Ranch Program has recognized more than 1,900 properties owned by Oklahoma families who have continuously occupied their land for at least 100 years and carry out farming or ranching operations. This program emphasizes the importance of Oklahoma's rich farming heritage.

Properties with at least four buildings more than 50 years old remaining on the land are eligible for the historic structures award.

In FY 2026, 38 additions to the program included Twin Rivers Grain & Cattle, located in Miami. A historic rock water tower still stands on the property.



Tax Credits

State and federal tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings encourage revitalization of historic districts and individual structures. The State Historic Preservation Office is the initial point of contact for applicants and participates in the review of proposed rehabilitation projects.

The 1928 Hotel Cushing (pictured above) is a seven-story Art Deco high-rise in downtown Cushing. In FY 2026, it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Now known as the Cimarron Towers, the structure is being converted into modern housing with historic tax credits through the National Park Service and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

Section 106

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act stipulates that federal agencies must consider the effects of their undertakings on properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The SHPO assists federal agencies or their recipients of funding, licenses, or permits to determine if significant archaeological or historic resources are located within the project area and, if so, whether the undertaking will impact those properties.

Certified Local Governments

Certified Local Governments that enforce historic preservation ordinances and meet SHPO requirements are delegated certain responsibilities. These communities receive federal matching funds for the development of their local preservation program and participate in the National Register of Historic Places nomination process.

recognizing contributions

Honors and Awards

Each year, the Oklahoma Historical Society honors the outstanding efforts and contributions of Oklahoma educators, students, legislators, organizations, and individuals.

Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame Inductees

Donald L. Fixico (Shawnee, Sac and Fox, Muscogee, and Seminole) is an expert in ethnohistory and federal Indian policy, and the author or editor of 20 books on Indigenous peoples and the West. A leading historian of Native Americans, he is currently a professor at Arizona State University.

David W. Levy was an educator and author who taught at the University of Oklahoma for over forty years. His later works chronicled the university's history, notably George McLaurin's fight for desegregation and the experiences of students and faculty during World War I.

Linda D. Wilson, a historian and author, served as associate editor of *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, writing over 250 entries and editing hundreds more. Retired from the OHS since 2010, she continues to write, focusing on Oklahoma women's history.

Timothy A. Zwink is a historian, educator, and administrator who worked in academia before joining the OHS as associate director of development. In 2016, he retired from the OHS as deputy executive director and continues to work as an editorial consultant.

Guardians of History Honorees

Senator Dana Prieto
Speaker Kyle Hilbert

E. E. Dale Award

Outstanding Book on Oklahoma History

Black Moses: A Saga of Ambition and the Fight for a Black State
Caleb Gayle

Bruce T. Fisher Award

Outstanding Oklahoma History Project

"How the Complex History of Indigenous Sovereignty Shapes Oklahoma Lands"
Sarah Liese, KOSU

Muriel H. Wright Award

Outstanding Article Published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*

"Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Mexicans in the Wild West Shows,"
(Spring 2025)
Gary Moreno

William D. Pennington Award

Outstanding Social Studies Teacher

Becky Lockler
El Reno High School

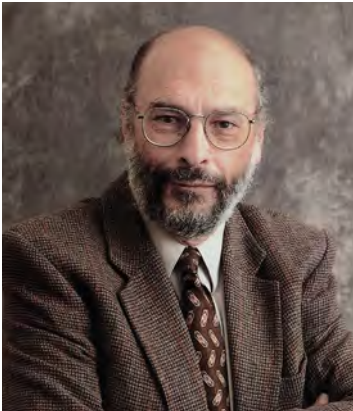
Joseph B. Thoburn Award

Outstanding Student Historian

Taleah Williams
Morrison Public Schools



Donald L. Fixico



David W. Levy (posthumous)



Linda D. Wilson



Timothy A. Zwink

1,957
total Oklahoma Centennial Farm & Ranch properties

52
Historic Tax Credit projects reviewed

2,422
Section 106 projects reviewed

This year, our visitors enjoyed historic grounds by candlelight, fresh-baked bread from an 1850s bakehouse, a dish served from a chuck wagon, a winter solstice walk at a prehistoric site, live music on the lawn of an 1892 mansion, and living history demonstrations that bring the past within reach.

With hundreds of events across the state, the OHS offers something for everyone. Learn more at okhistory.org/events.

find your next

Experience

Mother Road Summit,
Oklahoma History Center

“Soldier Entertainments
and Pastimes” living history
program, Fort Gibson
Historic Site

OKPOP-IN: Scavenger Hunt,
OKPOP

Living History Education
Day, Fort Towson Historic
Site

Spring Equinox and Summer
Solstice Walks, Spiro
Mounds Archaeological
Center

Saving the Sacred webinar
series, State Historic
Preservation Office

Oklahoma Farm-to-Table
Festival, Oklahoma History
Center

Reenactment and Education
Day, Honey Springs
Battlefield

Archaeology Day, Spiro
Mounds Archaeological
Center

Bob Wills Day, Oklahoma
State Capitol

“Statehood From the
Ground Up,” Oklahoma
Territorial Museum and
Carnegie Library

24th Missouri Volunteer
Infantry reenactments, Fort
Towson Historic Site

AANHPI Collective History
Day, Oklahoma History
Center

“Sabers and Shotguns:
Civil War Cavalry in Indian
Territory,” Honey Springs
Battlefield

Will’s Wild West Kids Camp,
Will Rogers Memorial
Museum

Spring Bake Day, Fort
Gibson Historic Site

Treat and Greet: A Teacher
Open House, Cherokee Strip
Regional Heritage Center

Country Classics Concert,
Museum of the Western
Prairie

Candlelight Tours,
Doaksville Archaeological
Site

Family Farm Day, Cherokee
Strip Regional Heritage
Center

Annual Chuck Wagon
Gathering, The Chisholm
Center

History and Haunts, Henry
and Anna Overholser
Mansion

Spring on the Farm, Hunter’s
Home

“The Ghosts of Christmas
Past: Tales and Traditions of
Death in the Victorian Era”
program, Pioneer Woman
Museum and Statue

Lunch and Learn: “The
Battle of Turkey Springs,”
State Historic Preservation
Office

Western Heritage Roundup,
Tom Mix Museum

Ice Cream Social, Fred and
Addie Drummond Home

Milestones in Oklahoma
History: The Oklahoma
History Symposium,
Oklahoma History Center

Pawnee Bill’s Original Wild
West Show, Pawnee Bill
Ranch and Museum

A Rural Heritage Festival,
Cherokee Strip Museum
and Rose Hill School

Summer Sounds Concert
Series, The Chisholm

A Very OK Podcast LIVE,
Will Rogers Memorial
Museum



337
events across Oklahoma
opened doors to the past

35,000
reached through events at
OHS museums and historic sites

meet the OHS at

Community Events

Oklahoma's history belongs to everyone. That's why you'll see us at festivals, conferences, and other events around the state, bringing the Oklahoma Historical Society directly to Oklahomans. Look for OHS booths and tents to find free resources, learn about our programs and collections, and maybe pick up a souvenir or two.



The Oklahoma Historical Society hosted a booth, tent, or table at more than 50 events statewide, including:

Beavers Bend Folk Festival and Craft Show, Broken Bow

Blackberry Festival, McLoud

Canadian County Fair, El Reno

Chisholm Trail Festival, Yukon

Comanche Homecoming Celebration, Walters

Czech Festival, Yukon

Dust Bowl Days Farm & Ranch Festival, Sayre

El Reno Fried Onion Burger Day Festival, El Reno

Elk City Route 66 Centennial Festival, Elk City

Fort Washita Rendezvous, Durant

Heard on Hurd, Edmond

Kickin' It on Route 66: OKC Centennial Celebration, Oklahoma City

Made in Oklahoma Festival & Car Show, Seminole

Main Street Now Conference, Oklahoma City

Mustang Western Days, Mustang

Covered in Color, Midwest City

Oklahoma Library Association Conference, Tulsa

Oklahoma Museums Association Conference, Weatherford

Oklahoma State Fair, Oklahoma City

Original Fall Festival at Robbers Cave State Park, Wilburton

Prague Kolache Festival, Prague

Red Fern Festival, Tahlequah

Rush Springs Watermelon Fest, Rush Springs

Stilwell Strawberry Festival, Stilwell

Tulsa Route 66 Fest, Tulsa

Tulsa State Fair, Tulsa

Wewoka Sorghum Festival, Wewoka

50+ events
attended statewide, reaching
thousands of Oklahomans

thank you to our

Supporters

\$50,000+

Cherokee Nation Cultural and Economic Development, LLC
Inasmuch Foundation
National Park Service

\$10,000+

Bruce and Sheryl Benbrook
James C. Day
Steven Kamm
BancFirst Charitable Foundation
Chickasaw Nation
Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield Park, Inc.
Kimray, Inc.
Kirkpatrick Family Fund
Kirkpatrick Foundation
Oklahoma City Community Foundation
Robert Glenn Rapp Foundation

\$5,000+

Bob Blackburn
John and Jane Crain
Ann Felton Gilliland
Thomas Hill
Barbara Klein
Linda and Duke R. Ligon
George Records
Judge Ralph G. and Barbara Thompson
Jim Waldo
International Paper
Lawton Community Foundation

\$2,500+

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Samonia Byford
Ken Fergeson
Charles and Sharon Johnson
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Kathy L. Taylor
Beck Design
Clyde J. Albright Fund
Manhattan Construction
Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives
Oklahoma Westerners Indian Territory Posse

\$1,000+

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Western Trail Historical Society, Museum of the Western Prairie



okhistory.org



Oklahoma Historical Society

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Oklahoma City, OK 73105

On the cover

Front: Neon glows in *The Longest Stretch: Route 66 in Oklahoma* exhibit at the Oklahoma History Center Museum.

Above: Installed in FY 2026, the Edwards's Post historical marker is located in present-day Hughes County. The post was established c. 1835 and was a key stop for Native American and white traders, military expeditions, and nearby inhabitants.