Have a Centennial Year Holiday Season at OHS sites and museums

Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum’s Christmas Open House will be on December 6. Come and visit the museum and enjoy refreshments while visiting with Santa, who will be making a special appearance. Then view Pawnee Bill’s 1910 mansion, decorated for the Holiday Season during the entire month of December. If you are unable to attend the Open House, come out anytime in December for a free guided tour of the mansion. Contact Historical Interpreter Brandon W. Reid at 918/762-2513 for more information.

In Enid on Saturday, December 8, beginning at 1 p.m. the Cherokee Strip Heritage Center will be passing out Victorian Holiday tree ornaments to visitors at the center’s satellite museum, located at the east end of Oakwood Mall. The ornaments were specially created by Heritage Center volunteers, and each ornament will hold a small surprise for the recipient. The Heritage Center’s mall installation is situated next to J. C. Penney. For further information call Glen McIntyre at 580/237-1907.

On December 9 the George M. Murrell Historic Home in Park Hill will host its annual Holiday Open House from 1 to 5 p.m. Telephone 918/456-2751 for details. Father Christmas will make an appearance.

On December 9 from 2 to 5 p.m. the Cherokee Strip Museum in Perry will hold its annual Christmas Tea and Open House. The museum will be decorated from December 4 through December 29 in its specialty craft, “scherenschnitte,” paper cut into fanciful designs. Call 580/336-2405 for additional information.

Tour Fort Gibson Historic Site by candlelight in December. The site staff is presently taking reservations for the 2007 edition of the ever-popular Candlelight Tour, scheduled for Friday, December 14 and Saturday, December 15. This year’s presentation is “Complaints, Many and Various.” It examines the concerns voiced by people living at and around Fort Gibson in the 1840s. The complaints ranged in nature from silly and frivolous to serious and very much justified. Tours will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on December 14 and from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on December 15. Groups will start approximately every fifteen minutes. Admission is $8.50, and reservations are required. For reservations or more information phone the site’s staff at 918/478-4088 or send them an e-mail at <fortgibson@okhistory.org>.

The Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher will offer Christmas tours of the Andrew J. Seay Mansion Historic Home and the Pioneer Village from December 1 through December 24. Both venues will be decorated for the Holiday Season. Call 580/228-2860 for information.

OHS to end Centennial Year with second annual New Year’s Eve Ball

Dance in the History Center Atrium with the Capitol Building illuminated in the background! The Oklahoma Historical Society will host a New Year’s Eve Dress Ball on Monday, December 31, 2007. The event will commence at 8 p.m. and conclude at 1:30 a.m. on New Year’s Day, 2008. Formal attire, or 1907 period dress, is requested.

Dance lessons will be offered at 7 p.m., dancing will begin at 8, and a full-course dinner will be served at 10. A seventeen-piece brass band will provide the music, a traditional cake walk will take place during the evening, and a cash bar will be available.

Tickets are $100 per person, and a table of 8 may be reserved for $850. RSVP by December 15, 2007, by calling Kelsey Arnold at 405/522-0692 or by e-mailing <karnold@okhistory.org>.

Phone Whit Edwards, the OHS Special Events Coordinator, at 405/522-5235 or call Arnold for additional details and advice on obtaining appropriate period attire.
Director’s Column

By Bob L. Blackburn
Executive Director

As the New Year approaches, it is time for me to admit to an addiction. I am addicted to history.

My wife recently bought a book for me written by one of my favorite authors, Joseph Ellis. The book is about the formative years of our country from 1775 to 1803. At first, when she gave me the book, I thought out loud that I had recently read his work on Jefferson, the “founding brothers,” and Washington, along with books on Adams, Franklin, and Hamilton by other authors. How could he offer anything new? I should not have doubted either my wife or Joseph Ellis.

In his new book Ellis leads the reader through familiar territory, but he offers his story in a unique light, with new angles and new points to consider. With each descriptive metaphor and perceptive passage, my understanding of our founding fathers and their momentous times grew page by page.

For those of you who are interested in a gift that will commemorate your family history, I encourage you to consider a leaf for the Oklahoma Family Tree in the Oklahoma History Center. This would make a truly exceptional gift for the family.

What we need are more historians and writers to tackle subjects. We need new minds to take their material and weave it into stories that open doors to a greater understanding of who we are and where we have been. We need a Joseph Ellis to offer our story in a unique light, with new angles and new points to consider.

Yes, I am addicted to history. And I cannot wait to turn that next page of the story.

Development News

By Tim Zwink

With the Holiday Season upon us and the close of our state’s exciting centennial year near, I would like to suggest a few unique gift ideas for upcoming special occasions.

For those of you who are interested in a gift that will commemorate your family history, I encourage you to consider a leaf for the Oklahoma Family Tree in the Oklahoma History Center. You can create a family legacy with this special gift. Your family name will be placed on one of the tree’s gold or silver replica redbud leaves, and your family history will be recorded in the Oklahoma Family History Book at the base of the Oklahoma Family Tree. This would make a truly exceptional gift for the family.

The Oklahoma Past-Times Calendar for 2008 is another special gift idea. This calendar is the Second Centennial Edition, featuring significant people and events from Oklahoma’s fascinating history. The calendar is custom-made and highlights numerous historic photographs from the Oklahoma Historical Society collections. It also includes interesting dates from Oklahoma history as well as notable festivals and events throughout the state in 2008. For your friend or family member who loves history, this captivating calendar will be of great interest and entertainment.

Finally, the Oklahoma Centennial Coin will make a perfect present to commemorate our state’s 100th birthday. This beautiful, collectible coin has two of Oklahoma’s most important symbols engraved on its sides. One is the impressive Osage war shield from the state flag. The other is the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma. The coins are available in three finishes: antique bronze, 24K gold plate, and .999 fine silver. Collectors and history buffs alike will enjoy these attractive coins.

Perhaps one or all of these ideas will suit your gift-giving needs. If you need any additional information or an order form for an Oklahoma Family Tree leaf, please contact me at 405/522-5217 or tzwink@okhistory.org. Calendars and coins may be ordered from the Oklahoma History Center Gift Shop at 405/522-5214.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season!
Meetings

In Oklahoma City the Oklahoma Genealogical Society’s monthly meeting will be held on Monday, December 3, 2007, at 6 p.m. in the Chesapeake Events Center at the Oklahoma History Center, 2401 North Luard Ave. Due to a scheduling conflict resulting in the cancellation of the November meeting that month’s planned program will be presented on December 3. Janelle Lee Miller, a long-time genealogical researcher and coordinator of the OGS Centennial Project, will present a program entitled “Locating Oklahoma Public School Census Records.” As leader of the society’s centennial project Lee will provide general information about various Oklahoma public school records before and after statehood but will primarily focus on each county’s school censuses, where they are located, the years covered, and whether they are microfilmed. The OHS Research Center will be staffed and remain open until 7:45 p.m. that evening. (Special to ML)

Events

Take a trip to see a new exhibit at Stillwater’s Shearer Museum, located at 702 South Duncan. The Aggie Foods exhibit highlights the contributions that Oklahoma A&M College/Oklahoma State University graduates, with careers in agricultural research, have made to a variety of vegetables, fruits, wines, and convenience foods that we consume. Admission to the museum is free, and it is open Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. For information call Barbara Dunn at 405/377-0359. (Special to ML)

Oklahoma City’s National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. 1700 North-east 63rd St., will offer “A Night Before Christmas” open house on December 11 from 6 to 9 p.m. The turn-of-the-century Western town, known as Prosperity Junction, will come alive with historical characters, a schoolhouse cakewalk, and choirs singing traditional Christmas music. An evening buffet at Dining on Persimmon Hill restaurant will be offered from 5 to 8 p.m. (Special to ML)

Communities all around Oklahoma are offering Christmas parades in December. Enjoy the Holiday Season with the family in Davis on December 4 from 5 to 8:30 p.m. with lighted floats and a chili cookoff. Be in Pryor on December 6 when the Christmas parade of lights begins at 7 p.m. Beginning at 6:30 p.m. on December 7 in Tahlequah the parade will make its way down Muskogee Avenue. Frederick’s parade is scheduled for Saturday, December 8, from 11 to 1:45 a.m. In Antlers local merchants will remain open on the evening of December 8, when their parade of lights begins at 6 p.m. Tulsa’s event takes place along Cincinnati, Fourth, and Boulder Streets on Saturday, December 8 from 6 to 7 p.m. (Special to ML)

Cimarron Heritage Center Museum will hold their annual Christmas party on December 11 beginning at 6 p.m. Everyone is invited to bring finger food and celebrate the season as well as the center’s past successful year. Also, the museum’s gift shop has items for holiday gift giving. (Cimarron Heritage Center Museum Newsletter, Fall 2007)

Oklahoma City’s Oklahoma Railway Museum, 3400 Northeast Grand Blvd., will be offering rides on the ORM Christmas Train on Saturday, December 15. The museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Phone 405/424-8222 or visit their web site at <oklahomarailwaymuseum.org> for ticket information. (Oklahoma Railway Museum Newsletter, October 2007)

Happenings

Colcord’s Talbot Library and Museum is selling paving bricks that will be used in a walkway that will connect the museum with the recently renovated Springtown Schoolhouse. The bricks can be engraved with three or four lines of text to honor family members, friends, events, or businesses. During Oklahoma’s centennial year of 2007, each paver will cost $85. Thereafter, the price will be $75. Send orders to the Talbot Library and Museum, P.O. Box 349, Colcord, OK 74338. For more information call 918/326-4532 or e-mail <talbotlibrary@earthlink.net>. (Special to ML)

Kingfisher native Marjorie Ellen Bennett Scott has gathered information about Harmony community and Methodist Church in The Harmony Epic, 1889–1970. Printed in 2007, it costs $11.50 plus 82.50 for shipping (no credit cards). Contact Chisholm Trail Museum, 605 Zellers Ave., Kingfisher, OK 73750-4228 or telephone 405/375-5176. (Special to ML)

Family

Jacqueline A. Bercs, Edmond
Marsons Jane Austin, Edmond
Jerry & Linda Barnett, Oklahoma City
Mr. & Mrs. William L. Berry, Sapulpa
John & Lillian Boland, Oklahoma City
James & Connie Jackson, Oklahoma City
Delma Loftis, Cape Girardeau, MO
Ronald & Ellenmarie Howland, Oklahoma City
Cindy Downes, Broken Arrow
Dell South, Weatherford
Dr. Ray Plant, Oklahoma City
Edward L. Johnson, Oklahoma City
Margaret E. Lee, Oklahoma City
Barbara Nathman, Vian
Joy Palmer, Clinton
Nellie Perry, Hobart
Dr. Ray Plant, Oklahoma City
Richard Ruhl, Kingfisher
Norma Savage, Roswell, NM
Suzanne K. Sellers, Dallas, TX
Peggy Sidders, Midwest City
Atisine Slipp, Tulsa
Donna Smith, Elk City
Dell South, Weatherford
Sam Stubak, Oklahoma City
Nadine Stephens, Shawnee
James Terwil, Porter
Kathy Van Ness, Los Angeles, CA
Herman L. Weiland, Bossier City, LA
Charles S. Werner, Stillwater
Carroll Wilson, Longview, TX
Anne Winn, Hollister, CA
Carol Wright, Midwest City
Dr. Gary Zellar, Saskatchewan, SK, Canada

Institutional

Skinvin Hilton Hotel, Oklahoma City
Phillips University Legacy Foundation, Enid
Hidden Collections . . .

The OHS Map Collection

By Larry O’Dell

The Research Division of the Oklahoma Historical Society has been collecting maps from its 1893 inception and now owns nearly ten thousand. Since moving to the new Oklahoma History Center the archival staff has taken on the task of rearranging them in a new, logical order. Part of this new goal is to digitize the maps, allowing storage of the originals and prolonging the life of many of these fragile documents. A generous grant from the Chickasaw Nation has helped purchase the special equipment needed for the project.

Once the maps are scanned at a high quality, researchers can digitally “zoom in” and retrieve the information that they need. OHS is also providing a lower-resolution image in the online database, which can be accessed by users at home.

The staff first scanned the maps associated with the Indian Archive, and most of these can be viewed through the Indian Archive Collection in the online catalog. If a higher resolution map is needed, a researcher may purchase one online or through e-mail or may view the maps in person in the John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center at the OHC. This is an ongoing project, and other maps will eventually be processed by subject, for example, railroad maps or highway maps.

Find a preview of the map collection online on the OHS web site at <www.okhistory.org/research/index.html>.

The OHS Research Division has also mass-produced reproductions of some of the more popular maps in its collection. These include Indian Territory, early bird’s-eye views of Tulsa (1918), Oklahoma City (1890), and Guthrie (1891), the proposed State of Sequoyah, and the new State of Oklahoma in 1907. These can be purchased online or at the Research Library for $10. Any map in the collection can be reproduced for a researcher on demand.

OHS’s fall activities included a stickball game at Sequoyah’s Cabin’s Cherokee Heritage Day on October 12, left (OHS photo), attended by 350 students. Bobbing for apples took place at the Cherokee Strip Museum’s Halloween Event on October 31, bottom left (OHS photo). OHS participated in the October 14 Centennial Parade in downtown Oklahoma City. Below, Pawnee Bill (Wayne Spears) rode his strikingly beautiful steed in the parade (T. Zinn photo).
OHS Places . . .

Black Kettle Museum

P.O. Box 252
Cheyenne, OK 73628-0252
Phone: 580/497-3929
Hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sat.-Sun., 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Admission: Free; donations are accepted.
Directions: Take I-40 West to U.S. 283, turn north, travel approximately 25 miles north to Cheyenne. The museum is on the east edge of Cheyenne's business district.

In the far west-central Oklahoma county of Roger Mills, the Black Kettle Museum is located at Cheyenne, the county seat. The museum offers a glimpse into the life of Southern Cheyenne Chief Black Kettle, or Moke-tavato, who was killed on the morning of November 27, 1868, during a predawn attack by U.S. Army Seventh Cavalry troops led by General George A. Custer. In addition to the artifacts from the battle site, the facility features a diorama of the action in the Battle of the Washita.

The exhibits also include other artifacts that illustrate the various Plains Indian cultures in the 1800s. Emphasis is on the Cheyenne.

After visiting the museum, go two miles west and tour the Washita Battlefield, which was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1965 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. A pathway invites visitors to take a walking tour of some or all of the site.


It Takes More than Money . . .

... to create collections and exhibits that can fulfill the Oklahoma Historical Society’s goals of educating the public and providing research opportunities. It takes the donation of an artifact, an art work, a book, a document, or a whole collection of those things that help us tell Oklahoma’s story. It also takes volunteers who put their time where others put their money or their artifacts.

Here are the contributions of some of your friends and associates who understand those needs:

In September the Central Oklahoma Quilters Guild presented the Oklahoma History Center with a check for $2,096.94 to assist in continuing research and preservation of Oklahoma quilts. The check’s amount represented a portion of the proceeds received from the Centennial Celebration of Quilts 2007 Quilt Show raffle and quilt sales.

Also in September the Oklahoma Society, National Society Colonial Dames Seventeenth Century donated genealogical books on seventeenth-century colonial America to the OHS Research Division’s library. The purchase of the books was enabled through support and monetary donations by members of Oklahoma’s five state chapters. Marilyn Spence, the project’s chair, and her committee of one member from each chapter selected the books. The collection includes 43 books and 7 CDs. Some of the titles include: 1671 Census of the Swedes on the Delaware, Marriage Returns of Lincoln County, Maine, to 1866, and Tidewater Virginia Families: Generations Beyond.

Celebrate the Winter Solstice December 22 at Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center

Today’s rushed and hectic pace sometimes makes us forget about the natural rhythms of the Sun, Moon, and stars. Native American farmers understood these rhythms. In the rhythm of the Sun the Winter Solstice is a period of rest, preparation, and celebration. Come to the Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center on December 22, 2007, and enjoy a guided walk to learn more about the Winter Solstice and how Native Americans dealt with changes in the seasons.

Archaeologist and manager Dennis Peterson will lead guided tours starting at 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m. Each walk will take about two hours and require a mile of easy walking. Peterson will tell about this unique prehistoric Native American mound site, the types of mounds, why they were created, and why some of the mounds are aligned for the sunsets of the Solstices and Equinoxes. He will also explain the history of the excavations, Native American ceremonies, and tales of the unusual happenings associated with the mounds. For those wishing to see the sun go down, the 2 p.m. walk will end just about sunset, which is when the alignment will take place. Come out to experience one of the most unique historical sites in the United States as seen through the eyes of an archaeologist.

There is a small fee for this series of tours: $3 for adults and $2 for children. No reservations are required unless you are bringing a big group. Be certain to dress for the sometimes chilly autumn weather. Call 918/962-2062 for more information and see page 7 for directions.
The Oklahoma War Memorial Collection 1944–1946 [2004.01] contains files on Oklahoma military personnel who died in service since the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The files represent individuals who have their names on the Memorial Plaza on Lincoln Boulevard in Oklahoma City. Each file contains some biographical information, usually a questionnaire sent by the Historical Society and any additional information offered by the family. After the end of World War I the Oklahoma House of Representatives introduced House Bill 240, which was endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce and passed in 1925, in order to appropriate funds for the construction of the Oklahoma Memorial Home for veterans of the Civil War, the Spanish American War, and World War I. The collection also contains ledgers from the Grand Army of the Republic posts in Oklahoma and Ladies’ Auxiliary groups.

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**OHS HOLIDAY GIFT TIME**

Give the gift of Oklahoma history this Holiday Season! Consider giving your friends, relatives, colleagues, teachers, and students a gift membership in the Oklahoma Historical Society. Share your enjoyment of OHS's publications, free admission to all OHS sites and museums, and the many other benefits of membership. Just fill out the form below and return it with your payment. In mid-December we will send personalized gift membership announcements.

With every five new or renewal gifts, you will receive an OHS tote bag that features the logo of our new Oklahoma History Center. For every ten new or renewal gifts, you will receive an autographed copy of *Images of History: The Oklahoman Collection* by Jim Argo and Bob Blackburn. This beautiful book includes essays and images that chronicle the birth and growth of Oklahoma. Please attach a separate list for additional orders.

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________
City/St/Zip _________________________
Type of membership __________________
Amount __________________________
Sign Gift Card ______________________

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________
City/St/Zip _________________________
Type of membership __________________
Amount __________________________
Sign Gift Card ______________________

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________
City/St/Zip _________________________
Type of membership __________________
Amount __________________________
Sign Gift Card ______________________

Donor Name _______________________
City/St/Zip _________________________

______VISA ______ MasterCard _______Check or Money Order
Card # ____________________________ Exp. Date _______________ TOTAL $__________

Membership Categories:
Individual $35 - Family $50 - Friend $100 - Associate $8250
Fellow $8500 - Director's Circle $1000 - Benefactor $5000

Return entire form to: Oklahoma Historical Society, Membership Office,
2401 N. Laird Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7914.

**Fort Washita living history presentations set for December weekends**

Reenactor troops will drill and practice their maneuvers at Fort Washita Historic Site on the first three weekends in December. This year the participating units will represent the Confederate States of America during the War of the Rebellion (elsewhere known as the Civil War).

On Saturday, December 1, the 19th Texas Infantry, CSA, will drill and provide informal lessons and information on Confederate soldiering, camp life, and battle.

On Saturday, December 8, the 7th Texas Cavalry, CSA, will drill. This horse unit will illustrate the methods of cavalry training and combat operation during the War of the Rebellion.

On Saturday, December 15, the 36th Texas Cavalry, CSA, will drill with horses, equipment, and appropriate battle gear used during the war.

Fort Washita will be open to the public during the drills, and anyone present may observe the activities. The site is located at 3348 State Road 199 near Durant. Telephone 580/924-6502 for further details and directions.
Just in time for Holiday gift giving!

Oklahoma's 2008 Commemorative Calendar is now available from the OHS History Center Gift Shop. The price is $9.95 plus shipping and handling. Reserve your copy by calling 405/522-5214.

Fort Gibson certified Trail of Tears site by National Park Service

The National Park Service has designated Fort Gibson Historic Site an official site of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, which commemorates places of significance in the history of the Cherokee removal. Aaron Mahrs of the National Trail System Office of the National Park Service presented Fort Gibson's official certification plaque to OHS Executive Director Bob Blackburn on October 13 during the fort's twentieth annual Fall Encampment. Cherokee Nation officials present included Principal Chief Chad Smith, Deputy Principal Chief Joe Grayson, Jr., Councilman Don Garvin of (Three Rivers) District 4 of the Cherokee Nation, and Cara Cowan-Watts of (Will Rogers) District 7. Also participating was Councilman-at-Large Jack D. Baker, who is also president of the National Trail of Tears Association and is a member of the OHS Board of Directors.

Also featured at the event were hymns sung in Cherokee by the Cherokee Adult Choir and a talk by Dr. Brad Agnew of Northeastern State University on Fort Gibson and the Cherokee removal. Official guests included Mayor Steven Hill and several municipal officials of the Town of Fort Gibson, State Representative George Faught, and Senator Earl Garrison's personal representative. Also present were Derald Glover, Superintendent of the Fort Gibson Schools, and Assistant Superintendent Linda Clinkenbeard. After the presentation of gifts to the speakers and the choir, participants and spectators were invited to a hog fry provided by the Cherokee Nation and the Oklahoma Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association. Attendance was estimated at approximately two hundred.

In memoriam

Dr. William D. Pennington, member of the OHS Board of Directors, tragically died in a traffic accident on October 13, 2007. Born November 15, 1943, in Anadarko, he was raised in Duncan. A history and secondary education major, he received a bachelor's degree from the University of Tulsa. He earned a master's in history at the University of Tulsa and the Ph.D. in history at the University of Oklahoma. His major fields were the American West and Indian history. He was a teacher and administrator at the secondary, community college, and university levels for more than thirty-five years, primarily in Oklahoma. After being Dean of Northwestern Oklahoma State University's Enid campus, since 2004 he had been president of Murray State College, Tishomingo. He was active in many organizations, including the Johnston County Chamber of Commerce (president), Greater Southwest Historical Museum in Ardmore (vice president), Johnston County Industrial Authority (president), Johnston County Historical Society, Ardmore Rotary Club, and Tishomingo Lions Club. Elected to the OHS Board in 2001, he chaired the Research Division Committee. He is survived by a son, David; two daughters, Martha Link and Mallory Roarck; and his wife, Dr. Marty Pedersen Pennington. Pennington was interred in Duncan Cemetery, Duncan, Oklahoma.