



“Good Ol’ Binder Twine: The Rest of the Story” presentation at the Sod House Museum

On Saturday, January 21, at 10 a.m. Dr. Sterling Evans will give a free presentation at the Sod House Museum. “Good Ol’ Binder Twine: The Rest of the Story” will teach attendees about the history of binder twine—a story with more twists and turns than anyone could imagine! Dr. Evans, professor of history at the University of Oklahoma, will share about the importance of this seemingly common farmyard commodity. Wheat farmers in the Great Plains came to depend on this product from about 1880 through 1950. Its discovery and development contributed to binder twine’s unique role in history.

The Sod House Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and is located southeast of Aline on State Highway 8. For more information please contact Director Renee Trindle at 580-463-2441 or sodhouse@okhistory.org.

Did You See That? exhibit opening at Museum of the Western Prairie



On Thursday, February 2, at 7 p.m. the Museum of the Western Prairie in Altus will host a special program for the opening of its newest exhibit entitled *Did You See That?*

Did You See That? is a photography exhibit showcasing the work of Jim Jordan, a lifelong resident of the Texas Panhandle and an avocational photographer for the past forty-five years. Jordan specializes in the landscape and architecture of Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Jordan’s work

is held in many private collections and the permanent collections of the Amarillo Museum of Art and the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.

“Many alert road trip fans looking from the edge of the highway see brightly-colored, quirky examples of signage, sculpture, and architecture, and reflexively classify these objects as kitsch. A closer look will often reveal heartfelt expressions of patriotism, loss and memory, spirituality, or just sheer expressions of individuality,” explained Jordan. “For creators of road art, no museum can possibly provide a venue like a busy highway where these efforts can be seen by countless motorists and passengers. Though no road warrior, I make frequent trips to Oklahoma, New Mexico, and through the Texas Panhandle with a camera and color film and continue to mine a rich source of images.”

The premiere program on February 2 is free, open to the public, and will feature an interview with Jordan and explore the subjects, locations, and creators of the images Jordan has captured on film. *Did You See That?* will remain on exhibition in the First Gallery of the museum through the end of March. The Museum of the Western Prairie is located at 1100 Memorial Drive in Altus. For more information please contact Director Jennie Buchanan at 580-482-1044.

The Kilgen theater organ at the Oklahoma History Center

This year the Oklahoma History Center will reintroduce the sound of the eighty-five-year-old Kilgen theater organ to Oklahoma City. This voice that has not been heard since September 11, 1977, will ring out again for a series of four concerts in 2017.

Early silent movie theaters used the organs to generate background music and sound effects. The expression “all the bells and whistles” is said to have come from a theater organ salesman claiming his product had all the sound effects needed for any movie. Despite the introduction of motion pictures with sound, or “talkies,” in the late 1920s, theater organs enjoyed great popularity in the 1930s. The performance history of this Kilgen organ dates back to April 13, 1936, when it premiered to the radio audience of WKY, broadcasting from the Skirvin Tower in downtown Oklahoma City. Beginning just a week later, WKY presented Ken Wright on the Kilgen for one hour every night at 10:45. On Wright’s second night he played favorites of the time such as “Open My Blue Eyes,” “Across the Breakfast Table,” “Valse Bluette,” and “Dinner at Eight.”

When WKY moved to its new location on East Britton Road, the Kilgen did not make the move to the new studio. Instead, the Kilgen was sold to the City of Oklahoma City and moved to the Municipal Auditorium (now the Civic Center Music Hall). For the next twenty-six years the organ remained in the Civic Center and was used for a variety of programs and concerts. Renovations to the Civic Center in the summer of 1998 did not include a place for the Kilgen organ, leaving the City of Oklahoma City to consider its fate. Dr. Bob Blackburn, then deputy executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society, made a plea to keep the organ in Oklahoma. His intention was to make the Kilgen theater organ a featured part of the new Oklahoma History Center to open in November 2005. The city council agreed to donate the organ to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

After months of repair and restoration by the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma, one of Oklahoma’s most interesting and complex musical instruments is now preserved for years to come. Four public performances will be held at the Oklahoma History Center during 2017. Tickets will be \$10 for OHS members and \$20 for nonmembers. Please call 405-522-0765 for information about purchasing tickets. The Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City, is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, National Archives, and is an accredited member of the American Alliance of Museums.



Paul Haggard inspecting the Kilgen organ at the Civic Center Music Hall in 1976 (2012.201.B0985.0416, OPUBCO Photography Collection, OHS).



Director's column

By Dr. Bob L. Blackburn
Executive Director

Leon Russell, who now resides “in a place where there’s no space and time,” was proud of Oklahoma.

He wrote and sang about “home sweet Oklahoma” and “goin’ on back to Tulsa just one more time.” He never forgot the place where he grew up or the people he considered part of his extended family. Now it is our turn to be proud of Leon and honor his life and accomplishments in the Oklahoma Museum of Popular Culture, better known as the OKPOP.

Fortunately for all of us, the critical building blocks for this monumental project are coming together.

For the past year we have had legislative authorization for a \$25 million bond issue to build the structure. We have \$2.6 million in City of Tulsa funds for a parking garage. And we have planning money from the private sector, world class architects ready to start work, and a growing collection of objects and archives that span the spectrum from Bob Wills and Will Rogers to Patti Page and Garth Brooks. The last piece of the puzzle has been the land.

When we started this long-range effort in 2008, we had a generous offer of land from Bank of Oklahoma. Then we looked at land owned by the Tulsa Development

Authority near ONEOK Field, home of the Tulsa Drillers baseball team. Both sites would have worked well, and both sites represented the spirit of cooperation and generosity we have found in Tulsa. Both had drawbacks.

We have always wanted a site with good visibility, enough room for parking, and good neighbors. We needed a donation so our resources could go into collections, exhibits, and more space. Most of all, we needed a site that captures the magic of Oklahoma’s creative spirit. We found it.

As you can read on the cover of this issue of *Mistletoe Leaves*, we now have the perfect location across the street from the iconic Cain’s Ballroom, holy ground in the world of music. This ideal location has been made possible by the generosity of David Sharp, a Tulsa businessman who recognizes what this museum will do for his city and state.

David, I want to thank you for this timely act of generosity.

Now that we have a site, initial funding, and a planning crew led by Jeff Moore and Larry O’Dell, we can put all of our energy into collections, building design, and expanding the circle of friends who will make OKPOP not only spectacular, but also sustainable at a high level.

Momentum is important in any endeavor, and we have momentum. Now it is time to honor all of you who have believed in this project, and it is time to honor the creatives in music, film, television, literature, illustration, and other professions in which Oklahomans have made a living through their art.

Yes, Leon was proud of Oklahoma. Now it is our turn to show our pride in Leon and the other Oklahomans who have changed the world of popular culture.

Dr. Bob

Development News

By Larry O’Dell

It’s a new year, and OHS members should plan to attend the 2017 Oklahoma History Conference scheduled for April 26–28. This year the Cherokee Nation has invited the OHS to the Hard Rock Hotel in Catoosa. The meeting’s theme is “Tall Tales and Blue Whales: The Cultural Influence of Northeastern Oklahoma.” The OHS will be celebrating the significance of the people and places of northeastern Oklahoma, such as Will Rogers, Bob Wills, Woody Guthrie, Cain’s Ballroom, Route 66, the Will Rogers Memorial, the Tulsa Driller, and many others. It will be a full and interesting schedule.

The Oklahoma Historical Society has several projects that make this conference timely. The development of the OKPOP Museum in the Brady District is progressing. There are a number of great happenings with the recent integration of the Will Rogers Memorial Museums into the OHS family. The Murrell Home in Tahlequah is expanding with its growing historical agriculture endeavors. Make time to join us in Catoosa to learn more and celebrate our state’s unique history and culture. More details about the conference sessions, speakers, tours, and events will be available at www.okhistory.org, on social media, and in future issues of *OHS EXTRA!* and *Mistletoe Leaves*. If you have any questions please contact me at 405-522-6676 or lodell@okhistory.org.



OHS offers new digital publication entitled *Crossroads*

The OHS is pleased to offer a new digital publication entitled *Crossroads*. Utilizing photos, videos, audio recordings, oral histories, artifacts, and manuscripts, *Crossroads* educates the public by sharing archival collections and never-before-seen content. Published on the first of every month, each issue explores a new topic in Oklahoma’s unique history. This innovative educational tool is offered for free online and remains continuously available to audiences worldwide. The online platform also provides teachers an opportunity to share this publication with students. *Crossroads* encourages further learning by connecting users to more resources at the end of each issue. Experience this new kind of storytelling from the OHS by visiting www.okhistory.org/crossroads.

An interdepartmental effort, *Crossroads* is researched, written, and developed by OHS staff. High-quality video production and web design are a result of skilled and dedicated employees who continue to do more with less. As the OHS adapts to changing times and limited resources, this digital offering reaches large audiences and is both engaging and educational. The first issue of *Crossroads* was published on September 1, 2016. *Crossroads* is released monthly, with the following issues available to explore now:

- No. 1—“Seeds of History: Heritage Farming at the Murrell Home”
- No. 2—“16 Tons: The Story of Coal in Oklahoma”
- No. 3—“Home on the Range: Pawnee Bill and Preservation of Bison”
- No. 4—“True West: Cowboy Culture and ‘Pistol Pete’ Frank Eaton”

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Mistletoe Leaves is published for the members and friends of the Oklahoma Historical Society in partial fulfillment of the Society’s purpose to “preserve and perpetuate the history of Oklahoma and its people, to stimulate popular interest in historical study and research, and to promote and disseminate historical knowledge.”

The public and OHS members are encouraged to submit heritage-related items for publication. Students and teachers are invited to share studies and programs and to duplicate contents as desired. Editors are welcome to reprint materials with credit.

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AROUND OKLAHOMA

Events

Visit the Plains Indians and Pioneers Museum in **Woodward** for its annual community Gingerbread Contest. Prizes will be awarded during the closing reception on Saturday, January 7, from 2 to 4 p.m. The Plains Indians and Pioneers Museum is located at 2009 Williams Avenue in Woodward. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission is free. Please contact Director Robert Roberson at 580-256-6136 or pipm@swbell.net for more information.

Head to the thirty-eighth annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in **Tulsa** on Monday, January 16, at 11 a.m. Join the Tulsa community as it honors a legend and celebrates freedom. This event grows each year and now includes hundreds of participants with impressive music and parade floats. The parade is organized by the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Society of Tulsa, which has been organizing events to honor Dr. King since it formed in 1979. The parade will begin at North Detroit Avenue and John Hope Franklin Boulevard, proceed east on John Hope Franklin to Greenwood, south through the Greenwood Business District to Archer Street, then west on Archer to Elgin Avenue. Please call 918-492-9495 for more information.

Experience a historic battle as it comes to life on Friday, February 17, through Sunday, February 19, in **Yale**. The Battle of Round Mountain reenactment will recreate a Civil War era winter encampment. This event takes place over three days, with living history soldiers setting up opposing camps on Friday and hosting a day of educational demonstrations for schoolchildren. Sutlers' row will be set up for business, with vendors in period attire selling their wares. The battle itself begins Saturday afternoon at 1 p.m. and visitors are invited to witness as Union and Confederate soldiers slowly advance toward one another on the battlefield. See smoke fill the air as the soldiers fire cannons and guns. This living history event also features a Civil War era ball on Saturday. Costumed attendees will swirl around the dance floor as traditional fiddle music is performed on stage. On Sunday a period church service will be held at 10 a.m. All events will take place at a site west of Yale, just north of the junction of Highway 51 and Highway 18. For more information please call 918-519-7071 or visit the "Battle of Round Mountain Reenactment" Facebook page.

Meetings

Join the Oklahoma Genealogical Society (OGS) for its monthly meeting on Monday, January 9, at the Oklahoma History Center in **Oklahoma City**. Kelly Baker will be the speaker and the presentation is entitled "OK2Explore—Birth/Death Records of Oklahoma." The meeting and program will take place from 6 to 7:45 p.m., and experienced researchers will be available prior to the meeting at 5 p.m. to answer research questions. OGS meetings are free to attend and held the first Monday of each month at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in the State Capitol Complex. Please call 405-637-1907 for more information.

Announcements

The Woody Guthrie Center and Archives in **Tulsa** is pleased to announce its continued partnership with the BMI Foundation to encourage and support academic research in its archives. Applications are now being accepted for the twelfth annual BMI Woody Guthrie Fellowship. The filing period for proposals is open until Wednesday, February 1. The BMI Foundation, in cooperation with the Woody Guthrie Center, will award up to \$5,000 for scholarly research at the extensive Woody Guthrie Archives, a paper-based research repository located in Tulsa. Scholars pursuing research related to Guthrie's life, historical context, creative works, and musical legacy, as well as his philosophical, political, or humanistic ideals, are encouraged to apply for this prestigious fellowship. Again this year, applications for the Woody Guthrie Fellowship may be completed entirely online, no later than February 1 at 11:59 p.m. Competition rules and applications are available at www.woodyguthriecenter.org/archives/bmi-fellowship. For more information please email archives@woodyguthriecenter.org.

Travel back in time with a visit to the W. T. Foreman Prairie House in **Duncan**. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the home was built in 1918. It is the former residence of W. T. Foreman, a banker and pharmacist who was one of Duncan's earliest and most prominent citizens. The home is architecturally significant as an early example of the Prairie School architectural style. All are welcome for tours of the home with knowledgeable docents on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m. The home is

also available for private events, so please call for additional details. The W. T. Foreman Prairie House is located at 814 West Oak Avenue in Duncan. For more information please call 580-251-0027.

A researcher from Canada is currently seeking information from individuals throughout **Oklahoma**. Timothy Epp, associate professor of sociology at Redeemer University College, is currently studying the social history of interaction between Mennonites and African Americans in Oklahoma. At this point, he is aware of the following: African Americans were at times served by Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren mission schools (Darlington, Post Oak, and Cantonment). Mennonites in the Cordell and Bessie areas during the early twentieth century at times hired African Americans (including children) to work on their farms. This work often included picking cotton. Epp would be most grateful if readers would contact him with any information they may have on this topic. Please contact him at tepp@redeemer.ca or 905-648-2139 x4247. Epp's mailing address is Timothy Epp, associate professor of sociology, Redeemer University College, 777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario, Canada, L9K 1J4.

The Love County Historical Society's 2017 calendars are available for sale from its offices in **Marietta**. Featured in the calendars are historic photographs from across Love County. The calendars cost \$5 each and may be purchased by visiting the Pioneer Museum in Marietta. Several Love County businesses will sell the calendars, with a list available by calling the Love County Historical Society at 580-276-9020. Orders also may be placed by mailing a check to the society at PO Box 134, Marietta, OK 73448, or by calling Laquitta Ladner at 580-276-3477. Please note that \$1.75 postage and handling will be added to all orders that are mailed.

Do you want your organization's meeting, event, exhibit, or announcement included in the "Around Oklahoma" section of *Mistletoe Leaves*? The "Around Oklahoma" section features Oklahoma history and heritage-related activities or programs sponsored by entities other than the Oklahoma Historical Society. To submit news items, please contact Evelyn Moxley, assistant editor, by email at emoxley@okhistory.org or by mail at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73105. If you wish a news item to appear in the March/April 2017 issue, you must submit it by Monday, February 6.

Oklahoma National Register listings added in September 2016

The State Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce eight National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listings in Oklahoma, added in September 2016. The National Register of Historic Places is our nation's official list of properties significant in our past.

The Central Fire Station is located in Lawton, Comanche County. Constructed in 1930 with a 1957 expansion, the fire station is significant for its association with community planning and development. It provided a vital community service that reflects community development. It is also significant for its distinctive Commercial style of architecture. The nomination was partially funded through a grant from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.



Central Fire Station

Klingensmith Park Amphitheater in Bristow, Creek County, is significant for its role in entertainment/recreation and economics in the community of Bristow. The amphitheater was funded in part through the New Deal's Works Progress Administration and was on the state-wide tour of Oklahoma New Deal projects reviewed by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. The amphitheater continues as an entertainment and recreation venue in Bristow. The nomination was funded through a grant from Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.



Klingensmith Park Amphitheater

Located at the Oklahoma City Zoo, the Lincoln Park Bathhouse is significant for its association with social history, specifically Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work in Oklahoma City. Built in 1935 as a recreational facility associated with Northeast Lake, the bathhouse best represents the work completed as part of the CCC's work at Lincoln Park.



Lincoln Park Bathhouse

The Mutual Savings and Loan Association Building, constructed in 1948 on Northwest Twenty-Third Street in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, is significant in the area of architecture. The Mutual Savings and Loan Association Building is notable and unique in the area as a free-standing, stylized Modern Movement financial institution. It retains integrity and evokes its era of construction. The building clearly communicates its historic function as a financial institution with the Modern Movement aesthetic popular at the time of its 1959 renovation.



Mutual Savings and Loan Association Building

As is described in the National Register nomination produced by a student from the Oklahoma State University Geography Department, the Pruett House in Stillwater, Payne County, is significant for its Moderne style of architecture. Designed by Professor Haskell "Doc" Pruett in 1939, the house retains excellent integrity and is designed in a style that is underrepresented in the state of Oklahoma.



Pruett House

The Downtown Claremore Historic District, Rogers County, nomination was prepared in conjunction with the Claremore Main Street program and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. The historic district is significant for its role in commerce in Claremore from 1890 to 1955. This area has been the center of commercial development in Claremore from shortly after its founding in the 1880s to the present. The vast majority of the buildings were completed by the 1930s, with most commercial construction activity after this time being renovations. The buildings in the Downtown Claremore Historic District reflect the commercial growth of this community, growth spurred by transportation routes, transportation related activities, and the bathhouse industry.



Downtown Claremore Historic District

Finally, Tulsa County added two new National Register locations to their ever-increasing inventory. The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma Building, located at 1215 South Boulder Avenue, is significant in the areas of community planning and development and architecture. Built in 1954 with a 1969 addition, the building represents the culmination of Blue Cross Blue Shields's move into Oklahoma with a new and innovative healthcare system for the state. It is also significant for its Moderne style of architecture.



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma Building

National Register listings (cont'd.)

The Downtown Tulsa YMCA, located at 515 South Denver Avenue, is significant in the area of social history and architecture. Completed in 1953, the YMCA is associated with the YMCA movement that spread throughout the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the mission to improve the spiritual, mental, social, and physical condition of the whole man. The Downtown Tulsa YMCA, designed in 1953 by Leon Bishop Senter, is also significant as an excellent example of the International style of architecture.



Downtown Tulsa YMCA

Listing in the National Register is an honorific designation that provides recognition, limited protection, and, in some cases, financial incentives for these important properties. The State Historic Preservation Office identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for this special designation. These nominations are made on a quarterly basis. If you believe a property in your area is eligible, please fill out the Historic Preservation Resource Identification Form located at www.okhistory.org/shpo/nrprelim.htm. Please contact Lynda Ozan at 405-522-4478 or lozan@okhistory.org for more information about the National Register of Historic Places.

Chisholm Trail Museum announces new Instagram account



The Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher is proud to announce the launch of its new Instagram account. This free offering is available to the public at www.instagram.com/ok_chisholm_trail_museum or on the Instagram app by searching:

[@ok_chisholm_trail_museum](https://www.instagram.com/ok_chisholm_trail_museum)

For more information please call 405-375-5176 or visit www.ctokmuseum.org. The Chisholm Trail Museum and A. J. Seay Mansion are located at 605 Zellers Avenue in Kingfisher.

January events

- 7 Volunteer Recruiting Drive, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 7 First Saturday Hands-On History program, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 14 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 18 "Germans from Russia" Brown Bag Lunch and Learn by Dr. Eric J. Schmaltz, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 19 Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 21 "Good Ol' Binder Twine: The Rest of the Story" presentation by Dr. Sterling Evans, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 21 Third Saturday Living History program, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 21 Tatting workshop, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 28 Textile Preservation class, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City



Please visit www.okhistory.org/calendar for a complete list of OHS events, programs, and exhibits.

February events

- 2 *Did You See That?* exhibit opening and program, Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus
- 2 An Evening with Benedict Arnold, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 4 First Saturday Hands-On History program, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 8 "African Americans in the West" Brown Bag Lunch and Learn by Dr. Roger D. Hardaway, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 11 Make and Take Valentines, Oklahoma Territorial Museum, Guthrie
- 11 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 16 Mysteries of the Mansion tour, Henry Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 18 Third Saturday Living History program, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 18 Tatting workshop, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 25 Cultural Lecture Series for African American History Month, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 25 *Trappings of the Cherokee Strip* exhibit opening, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid

Sequoyah's Cabin transferred to the Cherokee Nation

On November 9, 2016, Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Bill John Baker and OHS Executive Director Dr. Bob Blackburn signed a historic document transferring title and operations of Sequoyah's Cabin Historic Site from the OHS to the Cherokee Nation. Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee syllabary, settled near present-day Sallisaw, Oklahoma, and the cabin was built in 1829.

A large crowd gathered at the site to celebrate the new partnership, including several Cherokee Nation Tribal Council members and OHS Board of Directors members Bill Corbett, Jack Baker, and Jim Waldo. The transfer of ownership was authorized by legislation approved this past session and action taken by the OHS Board of Directors in July 2016.



OHC Education Department receives awards

The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) Education Department was recently presented two separate awards recognizing its contributions to academic excellence in Oklahoma.

The OHC Education Department earned the EDCOM Award for Excellence in Programming from the Mountain-Plains Museums Association at its annual conference in Oklahoma City. It was given in response to the department's popular Traveling Trunks program. This program was developed with the goal of bringing the museum to the classroom.

The Education Department was further honored as Newspapers in Education's (NIE) Partner of the Year for working side by side with NIE in providing hands-on learning through the Traveling Trunks program. NIE is a division of *The Oklahoman* that provides reading materials, supplemental curriculum, and hands-on learning experiences at no charge to program benefactors.

Please contact Director of Education Sarah Dumas at sdumas@okhistory.org or 405-522-0785 with questions about the department's other programs. For information about the Traveling Trunks program, please visit www.okhistory.org/historycenter/trunks.

Curators' Corner exhibit at OHC

Curators' Corner is a new exhibit area at the Oklahoma History Center (OHC), which highlights recent museum donations and artifacts specially chosen by the curators for the interesting stories they tell. Among the recent acquisitions on display are quilts, military accessories, Caddo women's dance regalia, and trade goods from a store near Rainy Mountain. The recently conserved mural *Trail of Tears*, painted by Elizabeth Janes in 1939, will be a long-term feature. Also included is information about the profession of art and artifact conservation, and examples of objects from the museum's collections that could benefit from the work of a conservator.

Curators' Corner also features artifacts from the Merci Train. The Merci Train was a train of goods sent to the United States from citizens of France following World War II. It was a way of expressing thanks for the assistance provided by Americans during and after the war.

The artifacts in *Curators' Corner* will rotate approximately every six months. You can visit this exhibit in the Noble Foundation Gallery on the third floor of the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Please call 405-522-0765 for more information.

New admission prices at Spiro Mounds

Beginning January 1, 2017, the admission prices at Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center will increase. This increase has been necessitated by the continuing budget cuts to the OHS. This price increase also will go into effect for many of the OHS's museums, historic sites, and affiliates throughout the state.

In January, the admission prices at Spiro Mounds will increase to \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$4 for children (ages six through eighteen), and free for children (under six). Families (up to six people) can purchase a family admission for \$18. Groups of ten or more individuals (with reservation) cost \$5 each. Veterans and active military (with ID) are free. Current members of the OHS and the Spiro Mounds Development Association are free.

Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center is located three miles east of Spiro on Highway 9/271 and four miles north on Lock and Dam Road. It is the only prehistoric American Indian site open to the public in Oklahoma. For more information please contact Director Dennis Peterson at 918-962-2062 or spiro@okhistory.org.

Museum and mansion in Kingfisher seeking volunteers

The Chisholm Trail Museum and A. J. Seay Mansion in Kingfisher recently announced renewal efforts for its volunteer program. This is a great way for anyone interested in history to get involved with the local community. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities, including greeters, tour guides, gift shop, graphic arts, data entry, janitorial assistance, photography, educational programs, and special events. Learn more about how to get involved at www.ctokmuseum.org/volunteer-application.html. Please call 405-375-5176 for more information. The Chisholm Trail Museum and A. J. Seay Mansion are located at 605 Zellers Avenue in Kingfisher.

Will Rogers Days and Will's Country Christmas brought large crowds

The Will Rogers Memorial Museums in Claremore and Oologah recently hosted exciting, multi-day events in November and December 2016.

To commemorate the November 4, 1879, birth of Will Rogers, the Will Rogers Days celebration was held November 3–6, 2016, throughout Rogers County.



World Champion Trick Roper Kowboy Kal (pictured at left) performed for area schoolchildren during the 2016 Will Rogers Days celebration.

Will's Country Christmas, held December 2–3, 2016, was reminiscent of the days of Will's youth and experiences with the Rogers family during holidays. Families enjoyed storytelling, music, food, and visits with Santa!

Santa Claus, portrayed by Neil Theilen (right), greeted children in the log-walled room where Will Rogers was born.

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum is located at 1720 West Will Rogers Boulevard in Claremore. The Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch is located at 9501 East 380 Road in Oologah. Plan to attend upcoming events at these two sites! A spring schedule will be released in late January. Please email wrinfo@willrogers.com or call 800-324-9455 for more information.



Brown Bag Lunch and Learn programs at CSRHC

The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center (CSRHC) in Enid will host free Brown Bag Lunch and Learn programs at noon in the Village Church. On January 18 Dr. Eric J. Schmaltz will present "Germans from Russia." On February 8 Dr. Roger D. Hardaway will present "African Americans in the West." For more information please call 580-237-1907. The CSRHC is located at 507 South Fourth Street in Enid.

OHC utilizing advanced beacon technology

The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) joins museums around the world, including the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a handful of others in using Bluetooth technology and smartphones to create a different kind of visitor experience.

The OHC has become one of the few museums in the United States to use beacon technology, an adaptation of a mobile marketing tool that, up to this point, was only used by retailers. Beacon technology was launched for public use in 2013 with the intent of tracking retail shoppers, their preferences, and their shopping patterns. Digital Design Services of Green Bay, Wisconsin, has modified this technology to accommodate patrons visiting the Oklahoma History Center. By placing sensors at or near a particular exhibit, visitors now have the capability to pull up exhibit information on their cell phone, tablet, or other personal mobile device. Currently there are sixty sensors placed both inside and outside the OHC.

To connect with the beacons, visitors can download the Oklahoma History Center App "Explore History" for free from the App Store, enable Bluetooth on their devices, and the beacons located in the galleries will unlock a fun, new way to interact with the exhibits. The staff at the Oklahoma History Center is dedicated to providing positive visitor experiences and strives to engage all types of learners within its exhibits. Using this latest technology, the History Center invites visitors young and old to interact with exhibits while using smartphone technology that has become important to so many people.

The beacons and the app are in the early stages of development. The Oklahoma History Center will continue to add new content and further develop the app to suit visitors' needs. The OHC is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Please call 405-522-0754 for more information.

OHC to host Volunteer Recruiting Drive

The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) will host a Volunteer Recruiting Drive on Saturday, January 7, from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Chesapeake Events Center. Staff members of the OHC Education Department, OHC Director of Marketing Steve Hawkins, and current OHC volunteers will be available to answer questions and describe the opportunities available to interested participants. Prospective volunteers are encouraged to attend and fill out an application. OHC volunteers serve as tour guides, gallery hosts, living historians, special events hosts, and behind-the-scenes assistants. New OHC volunteers will receive training, can take advantage of exciting benefits, and, best of all, will be given a schedule designed to fit each individual. For details about the OHC Volunteer Program please call 405-522-0754 or visit www.okhistory.org/historycenter/volunteers.

Murrell Home receives new artifacts

Staff at the George M. Murrell Home in Park Hill are pleased to announce the arrival of exciting new artifacts, including the parlor set that once belonged to the Murrell family while they lived in Indian Territory.

The Murrell Home is a house museum and living history site that was once home to Minerva Ross Murrell, niece of Cherokee Chief John Ross and wife of wealthy merchant George Murrell. George and Minerva Murrell established a plantation in Park Hill, Indian Territory, in the early 1840s. It was here that Murrell built his wife a Greek Revival-style mansion and filled it with furnishings of walnut, mahogany, and marble. These were well-constructed pieces built to withstand the test of time.

Upon the death of Minerva in 1855, George Murrell wed her youngest sister, Amanda. It was at this time that Murrell also inherited a Louisiana sugar plantation near Bayou Goula. He and his new bride began spending winters, which is cane season, in Louisiana and summers in Indian Territory. At the outbreak of the American Civil War, George moved to Virginia to support the war from his home state. Amanda followed some months later and the two never returned to Indian Territory to live. The bulk of their furniture remained in their Indian Territory home until their deaths in the 1890s, at which time relatives divided the furniture among their families in Virginia, Louisiana, and Fort Gibson. Lula Ross Henderson received the allotment of the Murrell property and she sold it out of the family in 1912.

Save the date

The annual Oklahoma History Conference, sponsored by the OHS, will be held on April 26, 27, and 28, 2017, at the Hard Rock Hotel in Catoosa. A total of fourteen presentation sessions will take place on Thursday morning, April 27, and Friday morning, April 28. The theme for the conference is "Tall Tales and Blue Whales: The Cultural Influence of Northeastern Oklahoma." Museums and landmarks in northeastern Oklahoma celebrate three of the state's icons: Will Rogers at the Will Rogers Memorial Museums, Bob Wills at Cain's Ballroom, and Woody Guthrie at the Woody Guthrie Center. The area's legendary Route 66 destinations include Catoosa's Blue Whale and Foyil's Totem Pole Park. Additional information for the 2017 conference will be published in the March/April 2017 issue of *Mistletoe Leaves* (vol. 48, no. 2). For more information please contact Larry O'Dell at 405-522-6676 or lodell@okhistory.org.

In 1948, the State of Oklahoma purchased the house and began the process of turning it into a museum. Jennie Ross Cobb, sister of Lula Henderson, became the first curator of the Murrell Home museum. Cobb was able to bring back much of the Murrell furniture during her tenure and subsequent curators continued the work of restoring the home to its former glory. In June of this year, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Butler contacted the site with the intention of donating some of the furniture that had passed down through their line. Brothers Murrell and Patrick Butler inherited the parlor set that once graced the Murrell Home. Upon the deaths of the Murrells, the parlor set went to Tally Ho, the Louisiana sugar plantation George Murrell inherited. It stayed with the family of George Ross Murrell, the second born child of George and Amanda. The furniture eventually passed to the Butler brothers from their mother, Gwin Ross Murrell Butler, daughter of George Ross Murrell. Patrick and Murrell Butler are the great-grandsons of George and Amanda Murrell and they have sent their great grandfather's furniture back to his home.

If you would like to see the furniture or are interested in learning more of the fascinating history of Park Hill, Indian Territory, please plan a visit! The Murrell Home is a National Historic Landmark and is located at 19479 East Murrell Home Road in Park Hill, just a few miles outside of Tahlequah. Regular hours of operation are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information please call 918-456-2751.

NRHP Nomination Grant applications available February 1

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) announces its annual matching grants to state, local, and tribal governments and nonprofit organizations for the preparation of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations. The SHPO has reserved \$10,000 of its FY 2017 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) allocation from the US Department of the Interior for the program. The funds will be equally divided in two grant rounds with any funds remaining from round one carried over for round two.

Applications and detailed instructions will be available from the SHPO on February 1. The deadline for round one applications is 5 p.m. on April 3, and the deadline for round two applications is 5 p.m. on June 5. Each grant is limited to \$1,000, and the applicant must provide a nonfederal, cash match of at least \$700. Grant recipients will use the grant funds and nonfederal match to retain an appropriately qualified professional to prepare a complete individual property nomination package for the NRHP. Applicants must be aware that \$1,700 (federal grant plus nonfederal match) is only an estimate of the cost for such projects and that more than the minimum \$700 nonfederal match may be necessary to cover the consultant fee. Consultants must consider the nature of the property proposed for nomination and many other factors as they develop their fee proposals.

The NRHP is the list of our nation's significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, and landscapes important in our past. While listing is not a guarantee of preservation or of financial assistance, the NRHP status of a property is often critical to the strategy for its preservation. The NRHP provides increased public awareness of these irreplaceable resources, provides limited protection for them, qualifies property owners for federal and state tax credits under certain circumstances, and may qualify the property owner for grant assistance when such programs are funded.

To obtain or submit a NRHP Nomination Grant application form, please visit www.okhistory.org/shpo/nrgrant.htm beginning February 1. You may also contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249. Information about the SHPO and its programs, including the NRHP, is available at www.okhistory.org/shpo.



Tulsa site announced for OKPOP Museum

On December 15, 2016, the OHS announced that the Oklahoma Museum of Popular Culture (OKPOP) will be located at 422 North Main Street in Tulsa, across the street from the historic Cain’s Ballroom, home of Bob Wills. Tulsan David Sharp and Interak Corporation donated the quarter block of land for the OKPOP. OHS Executive Director Dr. Bob Blackburn said, “This is the perfect location for the museum because of the significance of Cain’s to Oklahoma’s popular culture history.” The OKPOP also has entered into a long-term partnership with the Rodgers family, the owners and operators of Cain’s Ballroom.

Jeff Moore, director of the OKPOP, also shared that the new museum has acquired the personal collection of Leon Russell. This collection includes many of the audio masters from Shelter Records. Russell and Denny Cordell established Shelter Records in 1969 and soon relocated the company from Los Angeles to Tulsa. “This collection is of major importance to the museum as it keeps this Oklahoman’s great work in Tulsa, instead of it being housed in Nashville or on the coasts,” said Moore. The Leon Russell Collection will join other donated collections from Oklahomans such as Bob Wills, Ernie Fields, Patti Page, Jamie Oldaker, Cathy O’Donnell, Haskell Boggs, Tom Mix, and Mason Williams.

In 1934 Bob Wills began playing at Cain’s Ballroom and broadcasting his afternoon show live on KVOO radio. The venue continued to host musical artists throughout the twentieth century. After World War II the ballroom served as the home to Johnnie Lee Wills. In the 1970s, under the guidance of Larry Shaeffer, Cain’s Ballroom held performances that featured some of the biggest national and international musical performers of the time, including one of the few concerts that the Sex Pistols played in the United States. In 2003 the Rodgers family acquired the building and revitalized it to again attract notable names in the entertainment industry. The OKPOP Museum is proud that it will be associated with this historic venue.



Leon Russell, Freddie King, and Don Nix
(Steve Todoroff Collection, OHS).



Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys
(Bob Wills Estate Collection, OHS).



Smithsonian Affiliations
Membership Program

SHPO announces HPRC’S 2017 meeting schedule

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Review Committee’s (HPRC) meeting schedule for calendar year 2017. The governor appoints the members of the HPRC to advise the SHPO about nominations to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and other preservation issues. Current HPRC members include William P. Corbett (historian, Tahlequah); Ron Frantz (architect, Oklahoma City); John D. Hartley (prehistoric archaeologist, Norman); Arn Henderson (architectural historian, Norman); and Charles S. Wallis (historical archaeologist, Norman).

The HPRC’s 2017 meetings will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 19, April 20, July 20, and October 19. The meetings are open to the public and will be held in the LeRoy H. Fischer Boardroom at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. The HPRC and the SHPO encourage all interested parties to attend. Meeting agendas and NRHP nominations under consideration will be available at www.okhistory.org/shpo/spevents.htm.

The National Park Service regulations governing the SHPO’s programs require that a qualified state review board participate in the NRHP and other SHPO programs. During each meeting, the HPRC hears presentations on NRHP nominations from SHPO staff and consultants; receives comments from owners of properties proposed for nominations; listens to public comments and concerns; and formulates recommendations to the SHPO about whether or not a property should be nominated. The HPRC and SHPO staff invite concerned citizens and preservation professionals to participate in this important component of Oklahoma’s preservation program. For information about any of the SHPO’s programs, please call 405-521-6249 or visit www.okhistory.org/shpo.