



Mistletoe Leaves

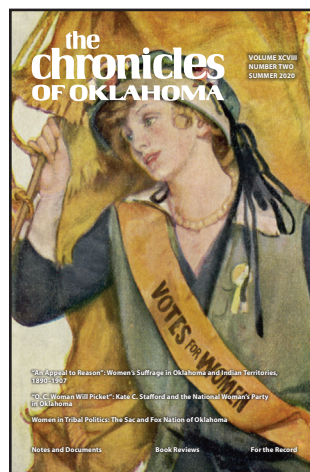


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Celebrating the centennial of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*



In January 2021, the OHS will celebrate the centennial of one of its cornerstone programs—*The Chronicles of Oklahoma*. The OHS Board of Directors established *The Chronicles* at its May 6, 1920, meeting, and appointed a committee to arrange for its publication. The committee named J. S. Buchanan and E. E. Dale of the University of Oklahoma as managing and associated editors respectively, and they began production of the first issue. That issue was released 100 years ago, in January 1921.

The OHS Publications Division has planned several ways to commemorate this momentous anniversary. Most significantly, *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* is now available on The Gateway to Oklahoma History. OHS Web and Visual Communications Manager Jennifer Towry was integral in the scanning and preparation of the journal, which was then uploaded onto The Gateway by Mark Phillips, associate dean for digital libraries at the University of North Texas, and his staff. The process is ongoing, and will be completed in the coming months. Issues currently available can be found at gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/CRNOK.

The history of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* will be featured in the “Notes and Documents” section of an upcoming issue of the journal, and editor Elizabeth Bass will be reaching out to graduate students at universities in the state to inform them of the possibilities available for research and publication. Finally, to wrap up a year of celebration, an exhibit about the importance of *The Chronicles* and its past editors will be featured at the Oklahoma History Center in the latter part of 2021.

The works published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* cover the depth and breadth of Oklahoma’s rich history, and we invite you to join the OHS in celebrating its centennial!



Trait Thompson named as new executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society

After a year-long search, the Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors has selected Trait Thompson to succeed Dr. Bob Blackburn as executive director. He will report for duty on January 4, 2021.

Dr. Deena Fisher, president of the OHS Board of Directors, thanked all the candidates who applied, but said Thompson has a unique combination of skill sets that will help the OHS complete major projects now and tackle new challenges in the future.

“Trait has a master’s degree in public administration, experience as an educator, and a proven record of managing a complex historical project with a budget

exceeding \$200 million,” said Fisher. “Plus, he clearly demonstrated to us that he has a passion for Oklahoma history.”

“I am humbled and excited by the confidence the board has placed in me,” said Thompson. “Over the past 10 years of my public service, I have had numerous opportunities to collaborate with the staff of the OHS and I have always been exceedingly impressed by the incredible professionals who work here.”

Thompson began his career with the state as policy director for former Oklahoma Senate President Pro Tempore Brian Bingman. During that four-year service, Thompson read every bill submitted to the senate, met with citizens from across the state, and learned how to work with others to achieve shared goals. For the past six years, he has been the project manager for the Oklahoma Capitol Restoration Project, shepherding the preservation and restoration of one of Oklahoma’s most important historical artifacts—the State Capitol.

Prior to his work in Oklahoma state government, Thompson established roots in Tulsa. In 1996 he moved from his small central Texas hometown to attend Oral Roberts University. As a small-town kid, he enjoyed the opportunities available to him in Tulsa—walks on the Riverside Trails along the Arkansas River, finding the Center of the Universe, studying on a blanket at Woodward Park, and enjoying the pickle bar at Goldie’s.

By the time he graduated, Tulsa felt like home. Thompson remained in the city, continuing to immerse himself in the events and experiences the city offers, such as Drillers baseball games, Philbrook Museum of Art, and historic Cain’s Ballroom. The history and music of Cain’s became such a big part of his life that he proposed to his wife, Sara, at the venue. After they married in 2005, Thompson attended graduate school at Texas A&M University, but two years later he returned to Tulsa to begin work among the Art Deco treasures in the city’s downtown.

By the time Thompson moved to Oklahoma City in 2010 to begin work in the state senate, he had honed an appreciation for Oklahoma’s unique history and culture. He is prepared to work to continue the legacy left by Dr. Bob Blackburn, who is retiring after 41 years of service to the OHS. “Dr. Blackburn has been a friend and mentor to me, and I am ready to embrace the challenge of following in his rather large footsteps,” said Thompson.

“I have watched the OHS evolve over the past 41 years,” said Blackburn, “and I have full confidence that Trait Thompson is the right person at the right time to work with a unified board, an exceptional staff, and dedicated donors and legislators to keep the OHS moving forward in its mission to collect, preserve, and share Oklahoma history.”



Director's column

By Dr. Bob L. Blackburn
Executive Director

By the time you read this, I will no longer be your executive director. After 41 years at the OHS, it is time to start a new chapter of my life that is more focused on books, consulting, and Debbie, Beau, Tori, and my grandson, Bodhi.

I did not make the decision to retire lightly. I love the OHS too much to just walk away and create a problem that others would have to solve. Three factors helped determine the timing.

One, we have a unified board of directors with leaders who have been through budget cuts, reorganizations, ambitious projects, and the art of balancing risk with rewards. They understand the importance of planning for the long haul, not just for short-term headlines.

Second, we have a strong senior leadership team on the staff who work well together and share a strong commitment to the entrepreneurial business plan we have developed over the past 30 years. In public service, where innovation is seldom rewarded and often criticized, it is tempting to duck and cover while floating to retirement. Our senior leadership is willing to take chances and continue pushing for even greater progress.

Third, before making my final decision to retire, I knew that several respected community leaders were willing to step into my office. Of the five finalists, I knew four well. All of them would have been great leaders with specific skill sets that blended well with our board and staff. The OHS Board of Directors, working with the senior staff, chose one of them. As you will read in another part of this issue, his name is Trait Thompson.

I have known Trait for 10 years, first when he was policy director for Senate Pro Tempore Brian Bingman, then as director of the Oklahoma Capitol Restoration Project. He leads by example, listens well, and prefers a collaborative approach to solving problems when possible, but is comfortable standing his ground when necessary.

Trait knows he is jumping on a fast-moving train with a bumpy track over the next horizon. We have the \$1.1 million shortfall in earned revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic, another budget cut coming at us, and critical turning points in the development of OKPOP and Will Rogers Memorial Museum.

He also knows he has a battle-hardened team around him. Our employees and volunteers have scrambled many times to pull a rabbit out of a hat. We have respect both in the legislature and on Main Street, where our donors and partners believe in our mission. I have no doubt that Trait will harness the energy of the community and push forward just as I have tried to do over the past 41 years. The OHS is in good hands.

Yes, I am no longer your executive director, but I will always do anything I can to collect, preserve, and share the history of our great state. With a heavy heart and high expectations, I give you my final goodbye.

Dr. Bob

Development News

By Larry O'Dell

It's a new year, and the beginning of a new era for the Oklahoma Historical Society. As Executive Director Trait Thompson takes the helm, the OHS is initiating a fundraising campaign to establish an endowment to honor Dr. Bob Blackburn.

A few OHS board members suggested naming an area in the Oklahoma History Center in his honor. Never one for the spotlight, Dr. Bob encouraged board members to help the OHS launch a new era of aggressive collecting. Out of that conversation came the idea for an endowment to acquire and conserve archival and artifact collections. The board voted to name it the Dr. Bob Blackburn Endowment for Collections.

Under contract with the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, the restricted endowment will pay 5 percent per year, with all proceeds used to acquire or conserve collections and fill gaps in our sharing of Oklahoma history. Since 1893, the collecting process has relied on donors' generosity, but this endowment will allow staff to pursue prized objects in a more deliberate way. It will be a new day for the OHS.

In response to this new endowment in his honor, Dr. Blackburn stated, "Whatever you can do, big or small, will not only serve the cause of history, but it also will mean a lot to me that part of my legacy is a new era of collecting." If you can help, please call me at 405-522-6676 or email lodell@okhistory.org.



The life of Minerva Ross Murrell will be central to the virtual programming of Hunter's Home in January.

"Life at Hunter's Home" continues in the new year

During the months of January and February 2021, Hunter's Home will continue digital programming through the Life at Hunter's Home Facebook group. Those interested can engage in the site's events and programs from home while keeping safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

January programs will be centered on the lady of the house, Minerva Ross Murrell, focusing on medicine, mourning practices, and birthday celebrations in the 19th century.

In February, Hunter's Home will commemorate Black History Month with programming that gives voice to enslaved residents who lived and worked at the Park Hill plantation. Research about the enslaved people of Hunter's Home is ongoing through documentation from George Murrell, family diaries, and the freedman rolls. Members of the Facebook group will learn about the lives of Susan, Ike, Nelson, Eliza, and many others who made their lives at the historic site in the years before the Civil War.

Those interested in all-access to the Life at Hunter's Home Facebook group will pay \$10 each month to participate. Call 918-456-2751 or come by the site Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to register.

Hunter's Home is currently closed to inside tours, and offers outdoor, self-guided tours at reduced rates. All activities are virtual. The site is located at 19479 East Murrell Home Road in Park Hill.

Oklahoma Historical Society
Membership Office
405-522-5242
ohsmembers@okhistory.org

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Contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Oklahoma Historical Society or the United States Department of the Interior. Mention of trade names does not constitute endorsement or recommendation by either organization.

Mistletoe Leaves is published for the members and friends of the OHS in partial fulfillment of its mission to collect, preserve, and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people.

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.

All Oklahoma Historical Society facilities are for the education and enjoyment of all. State and federal regulations prohibit unlawful discrimination in state and federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, and/or handicap.

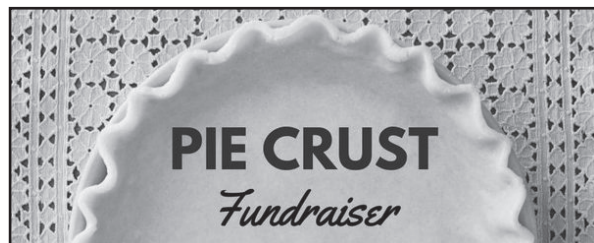
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NRHP Nomination Grants

The Oklahoma 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 2021 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) allocation from the US Department of the Interior for the program. Applications are accepted February 1 through April 30. 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 + 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 catalogue 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 an NRHP Grant application form, please visit www.okhistory.org/shpo/nrgrant. You may also contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249.



To raise money for programming and exhibits, the Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue held a pie crust fundraiser over the holidays. Friends of the Museum worked with donated materials from local businesses to make holiday meal preparation easier for Ponca City-area residents. Surely this creative idea made their fundraising easy as pie!

The Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue is located at 701 Monument Road in Ponca City.



Pamela Amburgy to lead OKPOP Foundation

The OKPOP Foundation has appointed Pamela Amburgy as executive director.

The OKPOP Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) whose purpose is to support the OKPOP Museum with private funding that will supplement programs, exhibits, and other activities. The foundation will work very closely with OKPOP's leadership team, including Executive Director Jeff Moore.

"The OKPOP Foundation is going to be a tremendous asset for our museum," said Moore. "We receive significant support from the state from being part of the Oklahoma Historical Society, and the dollars raised by this foundation will allow us to do even more to celebrate Oklahoma's rich history while also enhancing quality of life, economic impact, and education throughout Oklahoma."

The Oklahoma Legislature has provided \$25 million for OKPOP's total project budget of \$50 million. According to Moore, the museum has already received a number of private gifts, and the OKPOP Foundation will lead the effort to complete the fundraising goal through private donations.

In this role, Amburgy will be responsible for leading the strategy and operations of the OKPOP Foundation. She will work closely with Moore and other OKPOP staff, as well as the foundation's volunteer board of directors.

"We are so pleased to announce Pamela as our executive director," said OKPOP Foundation Board Chair John Hickey. "She has extensive experience working with nonprofits both in volunteer and paid staff capacities. On behalf of the board of directors, I congratulate Pamela and look forward to working with her."

"I'm very excited to take this new opportunity with the OKPOP Foundation," said Amburgy. "Jeff Moore and his team have created an inspiring vision for OKPOP, and I'm honored to support a project that will have a permanent and valuable impact on the state of Oklahoma."

Pamela has held numerous positions in commercial banking, beginning her career with seven years at Bank of Oklahoma and most recently as senior vice president for Arvest Bank in Tulsa. She focused on serving clients and developing deep customer relationships as both a private and commercial banker. Her interest in working with others led to service in community and nonprofit roles.

For more information about OKPOP, visit OKPOP.org.

SHPO announces HPRC's 2021 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 2021. 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 Ron Frantz (architect, Oklahoma City); John Hartley (prehistoric archaeologist, Norman); Shirley Ballard Nero (historian, Clearview); Jana Phillips (architectural historian, Stillwater); and Charles Wallis (historical archaeologist, Norman).

The HPRC's 2021 meetings will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 21, April 15, July 15, and October 21. The meetings are open to the public and will be held in the Musser Learning Lab at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Due to the current pandemic, the HPRC and the SHPO encourage all interested parties to attend via the virtual meeting option. Meeting agendas, log-in details, and NRHP nominations under consideration will be available at www.okhistory.org/shpo/hprc.

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 nomination; 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.

My Wish For U.S.



What is your wish for America's future? Along with our other Made By Us partners, the Oklahoma Historical Society is taking unprecedented steps to listen to your hopes and visions for the future of our country. Thanks to everyone who has submitted a wish! There's still time to submit yours at www.MyWishForUS.com.

January events

- 5 Life at Hunter's Home: The Lady of the House begins (VIRTUAL), Hunter's Home, www.facebook.com/huntershomeok
- 9 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 20 Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 27 Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 31 Life at Hunter's Home: The Lady of the House concludes (VIRTUAL), Hunter's Home, www.facebook.com/huntershomeok

February events

- 2 *World War I: Lessons and Legacies* exhibit opens, Oklahoma Territorial Museum, Guthrie
- 2 *A Place for All People: Introducing the National Museum of African American History and Culture* exhibit opens, Oklahoma Territorial Museum, Guthrie
- 3 Antique Doll exhibit opens, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 4 Life at Hunter's Home: Voices of Enslaved People begins (VIRTUAL), Hunter's Home, www.facebook.com/huntershomeok
- 6 "Blacks on the Oklahoma Frontier: Lawmen, Outlaws, Cowboys, Cowgirls, and Rodeos," Oklahoma African American Film Festival (VIRTUAL), www.okhistory.org/calendar
- 17 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 17 Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 27 Life at Hunter's Home: Voices of Enslaved People concludes (VIRTUAL), Hunter's Home, www.facebook.com/huntershomeok
- 27 Bonnet making workshop, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 28 Antique Doll exhibit closes, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy

Please visit www.okhistory.org/events for additional information about OHS events, programs, and exhibits.

Antique Doll exhibit at Drummond Home



The Fred and Addie Drummond Home in Hominy will host an exhibit of antique dolls throughout the entire month of February. The exhibit will feature a wide array of German-made dolls, including dolls by Armand Marseille, Kestner, and Koppelsdorf. There also will be a large group of china and porcelain dolls. During your visit, you are encouraged to tour the rest of the beautiful, historic Drummond Home. The three-story, Victorian-style house was built in 1905 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The antique doll exhibit is included with the regular admission fee. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors ages 62 and older, \$4 for students, and free for children ages five and under. As always, OHS members receive free admission. Regular hours of operation are Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call 918-885-2374. The Fred and Addie Drummond Home is located at 305 North Price Avenue in Hominy.

Bonnet making workshop

On February 27 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Chisholm Trail Museum will hold a bonnet making workshop. Participants will create a button crown bonnet in the style of those worn in the 1890s through the early 1900s. The class will be taught by Marna Davis. The button crown bonnet's design comes from Davis's personal collection. The bonnet is made in two pieces with the crown and skirt buttoned to the brim, allowing for easier laundering and upkeep. The cost for the class is \$50, with all materials and lunch provided. Please plan to bring your own sewing machine if possible. Registration is limited to 10 adult participants. To find out more about this workshop, please call 405-375-5176. The Chisholm Trail Museum and Horizon Hill are located at 605 Zellers Avenue in Kingfisher.

Found on the Grounds

Have you ever lost your keys and wondered where they ended up? The Atoka Museum may know where they are! Through the years, when weary travelers have left an assortment of personal items on the grounds of the museum, they have ended up in the *Found on the Grounds* exhibit. From a birdcage to sunglasses, items that would normally be thrown in a box of lost and found instead have become a unique and evolving exhibit.

Most visitors come to see the attractions relating to the area's history, including information about the Battle of Middle Boggy, the shootout between local lawmen and Clyde Barrow, homegrown rodeo talent Lane Frost, and international entertainer Reba McEntire. Some guests have visited without realizing they were contributing to the *Found on the Grounds* exhibit. So the next time you are looking for that missing shoe, it may be time to pay a visit to the Atoka Museum and Civil War Cemetery's most unique exhibit.

To learn more about the museum, please call 580-889-7192.



Dr. Blackburn receives Route 66 send-off

To honor his contributions to the preservation of the Mother Road, Lieutenant Governor Matt Pinnell and the Oklahoma Route 66 Centennial Commission presented former OHS Executive Director Dr. Bob Blackburn with a personalized prototype of the new signs that will be installed to celebrate the centennial of the route in 2026. "Together with the Oklahoma Route 66 Centennial Commission I was proud to present Dr. Blackburn with a little piece of the Mother Road," said Lieutenant Governor Pinnell. "Just as Route 66 has left a lasting mark on our state, so has Dr. Blackburn. This sign is a small token of our appreciation and admiration for his remarkable 41 years of service to the state of Oklahoma!"

The Oklahoma Route 66 Centennial Commission was created by the Oklahoma Legislature in 2019 to plan, coordinate, and implement programs and special events to celebrate the historic highway's centennial in 2026 with the support of the OHS. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) made the specially requested highway sign, and also contributed an original Route 66 brick paver from Arcadia as part of a special presentation. Transportation Secretary Tim Gatz and Transportation Interagency Liaison and Public Relations Advisor Terri Angier, representing ODOT, presented the brick with an engraved plate thanking Blackburn for his numerous efforts to preserve and share Oklahoma history throughout his career.

There are great things on the horizon to celebrate Route 66, but why wait? The Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton offers visitors a personal journey through the history of the Mother Road. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you cannot make it to Clinton to visit, you can still support the museum through its online gift shop at oklahomaroute66museum.com, or by purchasing a Historic Route 66 specialty car tag. A portion of the fee for these special license plates supports the OHS's Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton. For more information, please visit www.okhistory.org/support/lp.

Names of historic homes changed to honor women

To recognize the significant contributions of women to the history and culture of Oklahoma's communities, the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) Board of Directors has voted to change the names of two historic homes. The Fred Drummond Home in Hominy will now be known as the Fred and Addie Drummond Home, and the Henry Overholser Mansion in Oklahoma City will now be known as the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion. The names now reflect the couples who, in partnership, helped Hominy and Oklahoma City flourish in their early days.

"The OHS is proud to celebrate the centennial year of women's suffrage by taking these women out of the shadows of history," said Kathy Dickson, director of Museums and Historic Sites for the Oklahoma Historical Society. "Although the changes are long overdue, adding Addie and Anna's names to the official name of these sites reminds visitors that both women and men built communities and were central figures in creating what we now know as Oklahoma."



Fred Drummond moved to Pawhuska in 1886 as a licensed government trader. He married Addie Gentner in 1890, and by 1895 the couple had saved enough money to buy a partnership in the trading company for which he worked. In 1904, the Drummonds formed the Hominy Trading Company, and soon expanded into ranching, banking, and real estate.

The three-story, Victorian-style Fred and Addie Drummond Home in Hominy was completed in 1905. The home was deeded to the OHS in 1980, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. The Fred and Addie Drummond Home is located at 305 North Price Avenue in Hominy.



Henry Overholser arrived in Oklahoma City shortly after the Land Run of 1889, where he soon built six business buildings and was elected president of the board of trade. By 1894 he was elected to the Oklahoma County Commission, and he continued to boost civic causes and the expansion of the city. He married Anna Ione Murphy within six months of his arrival in Oklahoma City, and the two were active in Oklahoma City social circles. They built a 20-room Victorian mansion in Anton Classen's Highland Park Addition (now Heritage Hills), completing it in 1904. Anna made their home a center of society in early Oklahoma City. The Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and was acquired by the OHS in 1972. It is operated by Preservation Oklahoma, a private nonprofit dedicated to preserving Oklahoma's historic places.

The Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion is located at 405 Northwest 15th Street in Oklahoma City.

H.O.P.E. grant awarded to Tom Mix Museum



The Tom Mix Museum in Dewey received an Oklahoma H.O.P.E. Grant from Oklahoma Humanities (OH) for \$4,322.50 in September 2020 for building maintenance and staffing. The funds will go to support staff salaries, technical needs, and building improvements.

With the funds, outdated office equipment will be replaced with a new computer, printer, and accessories that will greatly enhance the administrative work of the museum. The grant also will help in efforts to refurbish the Tom Mix Theater with a new ceiling fan and to replace an outdoor storage shed.

The grant was made possible by OH and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OH has provided emergency grants for general operating support and staff retention for cultural and humanities organizations. These H.O.P.E. grants were funded by a relief package passed by the federal government in March 2020.

The Tom Mix Museum is an affiliate of the Oklahoma Historical Society, managed by Tom Mix Museum, Inc. It houses items from Mix's personal collection, as well as artifacts related to his life as a ranch hand, Wild West Show performer, and movie star. The museum is closed during the month of January, but will reopen in February with the hours of Thursday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Tom Mix Museum is located at 721 North Delaware Street in Dewey. For more information, please call 918-534-1555.

Third annual Oklahoma African American Film Festival

On Saturday, February 6, 2021, at 6 p.m. the OHS Black Heritage Committee will present "Blacks on the Oklahoma Frontier: Lawmen, Outlaws, Cowboys, Cowgirls, and Rodeos," the third Oklahoma African American Film Festival. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's festival will be held virtually. The focus of this year's festival is African American pioneers on the Oklahoma frontier. Topics will include notorious outlaws such as Crawford Goldsby, better known as Cherokee Bill, and fearless lawmen like Deputy US Marshal Bass Reeves. Art Burton, author of numerous publications including *Black, Red, and Deadly: Black and Indian Gunfighters of the Indian Territories* and *Black Gun, Silver Star: The Life and Legend of Frontier Marshal Bass Reeves*, will be a special guest.

Listed are some of the films that will be featured in this year's festival:

- *Ballad of Bass Reeves*, written and performed by OHS Board member Dr. Harold Aldridge Jr. and filmed by Bare Bones Film Works from Muskogee.
- *Who is Sara Rector*, created by Kathleen Watkins, playwright and founder of Spiritually Bold; directed by Allen Washington; performed by Teresa Daniel and Mara Gore.
- *Fort Gibson: An Outpost on the Oklahoma Frontier*, created by Omar Reed, director of the OHS's Fort Gibson Historic Site.
- *Join the Trail Ride*, produced by Carylon Ross, instructor of communications at Langston University, following the story of Luches Warrior and the Checotah Rough Riders.

Also included in the festival will be video footage of local rodeos and Round-Up Clubs. Oklahoma's western culture has been perpetuated through these events and organizations. Some of the groups and events featured will be the Boley Rough Riders, who were involved in Oklahoma's oldest rodeo established in the historically All-Black town of Boley; the Okmulgee Rodeo, which was established by Kenneth LeBlanc; and the Eastside Round-Up Club, which sponsored annual rodeos. The festival will screen footage of Black cowboys from Oklahoma who have won world championships in bareback riding, steer wrestling, calf roping, and bull riding.

Please visit www.okhistory.org/calendar for updates on how to attend this virtual film festival on February 6.



The Oklahoma Territorial Museum recognizes Black History Month with traveling poster exhibition



The Smithsonian Institution opened its newest museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) on September 24, 2016.

The celebration continues and reaches beyond Washington, DC, to Guthrie as the Oklahoma Territorial Museum presents *A Place for All People: Introducing the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. The commemorative poster exhibition will be on view from February 2, 2021, to May 31, 2021.

Organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) in collaboration with the National Museum of African American History and Culture, *A Place for All People* highlights key artifacts that tell the rich and diverse story of the African American experience. From the child-size shackles of a slave and the clothing worn by Carolotta Walls on her first day at Little Rock Central High School, to Chuck Berry's Gibson guitar he called "Maybellene" and the track shoes worn by Olympian Carl Lewis, the exhibition presents a living history that reflects challenge, triumph, faith, and hope.

The poster exhibition is an opportunity for the Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Historic Carnegie Library to showcase its work in sharing the many stories of African American and African diaspora people and their contributions to the local community and the American story. The Oklahoma Territorial Museum has a small collection of artifacts donated by African American families from the Guthrie area. The museum strives to tell an all-encompassing narrative of the Land Run of 1889 and early Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library are located at 406 East Oklahoma Avenue in Guthrie. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 405-282-1889.



African American School Records, Lincoln County

By Jan H. Richardson

Lincoln County was carved out from the lands of the Sac and Fox, Pottawatomie, and Kickapoo Tribes. Settlers from around the United States flocked to the land runs held in 1891 and 1895 in what was then County A, hoping for a chance to grab a piece of the opportunity that Oklahoma Territory offered. Voters chose the name "Lincoln County" in a plebiscite held later. As pioneers moved in, they established schools and other public institutions to serve the newly settled population. Oklahoma laws during that time required that schools be segregated, and the African American School Records, Lincoln County, 1918–1929, Collection contains records from several teachers in Lincoln County's School District 46, a segregated school district.

The teachers and administrators from Sweet Home, Avery View, and Avriett Schools retained a variety of documents, including teacher contracts, pay vouchers, and teacher/principal reports that are included in this collection. The teacher/principal reports contain student names and ages, attendance, certification information, and facility details. The seven educators whose documents are included in the collection are Aurora Boswell, Eliza Stevenson, Mamie Ealey, B. F. Smith, Rachel Mosely, Emma A. Brown, and Eula Perry. The African American School Records, Lincoln County, 1918–1929, Collection (2007.031, 9 legal folders), is available for viewing at the OHS's John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Due to COVID-19, all visitors are required to wear masks and an appointment is required. The Research Center is located inside the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. For more information or to view the collection, call 405-522-5225 or email research@okhistory.org.

Jan H. Richardson is the processing archivist in the OHS Research Division's Manuscript Archives.

Remembering the origin of the WRMM Children's Museum

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum's (WRMM) Children's Museum did not start out as a place for children to play and to get acquainted with the life of Will Rogers. In the mid-1980s, the Children's Museum was just a gleam in the eye of Joe Carter, the museum director at the time. The new construction on the east wing of the Museum had left a dirt-filled basement below its footprint, but he had an idea for the space.

"I thought Joe Carter was nuts. But he was paying, and the boys needed the work," said Larry Warren, who, along with his crew of Claremore High School graduates, started digging. Little did they know what was then a dirt-filled, dark space would become many children's favorite place to play.

The dirt reached the floor beams above, making it hard to get earth-moving equipment into the space. The work had to be done by hand. A ramp was dug to the outside and the dirt was removed shovel-by-shovel into wheelbarrows all summer long. The work eventually left an open space now occupied by the Children's Museum.

The "boys" who did the digging were Warren's son, Jim, and his friends. Once that work was complete, the team set to work building walls and defining the space. Larry and Gary Warren went on to build the south gallery alcoves by the Ray Piercey mural, work in the office area, and eventually work on the home of the Jo Moira diorama collection.

Few people know about the Warren family's contributions and how the basement area became the WRMM Children's Museum. Even Warren's own grandchildren do not understand the enormity of the influence their grandfather had on the place they later visited to play and learn more about the life of Will Rogers. It started with a wheelbarrow full of dirt.

A 3-D map of the complete WRMM Children's Museum can be viewed by visiting www.willrogers.com.

Museum of Western Prairie audio tour

For those unable to visit the Museum of the Western Prairie (MWP) in Altus in person, an online audio tour is available to take listeners on a narrated journey of the exhibits that tell the story of southwestern Oklahoma. MWP staff members offered their voices to record the complimentary audio guides using the storytelling platform izi.travel.

Most MWP exhibits are focused on the late 1800s and early 1900s and the settlement of the western prairies in Oklahoma. Virtual visitors can hear descriptions of artifacts relating to the homesteaders of the area, installations that follow the story of American Indians, as well as a description of the photography of George W. Long, and the filming of the movie *The Daughter of Dawn*. In the *Patches of Life* exhibit audio script, listeners can learn about the time-honored process of making crazy quilts by sewing asymmetrical pieces of fabric together in abstract arrangements. To experience the audio tour, visit www.okhistory.org/about/socialmedia, and click on the MWP earphone link.

A. J. Seay Mansion to be called by historic name

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) Board of Directors and the Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher have announced a change of name for the historic A. J. Seay Mansion in Kingfisher. The home once belonging to Oklahoma Territorial Governor A. J. Seay will now be known as Horizon Hill, the name originally given to the structure by the governor when it was completed in March of 1892.

"Whenever possible, the OHS wants to use the name given to a property by its original owners," said Kathy Dickson, director of Museums and Historic Sites for the OHS. "One special way to preserve and share the history of the home and its residents is by adopting their name for the mansion—Horizon Hill."

Horizon Hill was built by Abraham Jefferson "A. J." Seay, a Union army Civil War veteran who served as the third territorial governor from 1892 to 1893. The home hosted dignitaries who were present for the Cheyenne-Arapaho Land Run on April 19, 1892. Inside the mansion are a reception hall, a ballroom, seven fireplaces, and a domed-roof tower. Horizon Hill was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971.

The Chisholm Trail Museum and Horizon Hill are located at 605 Zellers Avenue in Kingfisher. For more information, please call 405-375-5176.



Maps and Mapmaking exhibit at CTM

The Chisholm Trail Museum and the Oklahoma Historical Society's John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center are proud to partner for an exhibit exploring Oklahoma through the art of cartography. *Maps and Mapmaking: Historical Maps of Oklahoma*, now on display at the Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher, features more than 20 maps of the area that is now Oklahoma. From the early 19th century through the mid-20th century, these maps provide a look at the growth of our state. In addition, the exhibit features surveying and mapmaking tools and equipment dating back to the 1840s. The exhibit will run through October 9, 2021. To learn more about the *Maps and Mapmaking* exhibit, call 405-375-5176.



Members of the Stiles family were present for the library dedication.

Stiles Memorial Library dedication

By Kathy Dickson

On Friday, November 4, 2020, the research library at the Fort Towson Historic Site was dedicated in honor of Dr. Lewis R. Stiles. The Dr. Lewis R. Stiles Memorial Library recognizes the many contributions Dr. Stiles made in the preservation of local history as well as his lifetime of public service.

Dr. Stiles became a federal veterinarian and was charged with eradicating several bovine diseases in 16 southeastern Oklahoma counties. He served on the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) Board of Directors from 1984–2018, and was president of the board from 1993–96. Lewis and his wife, Frances, were awarded the Oklahoma Heritage Award in 1984. In 2010, Dr. Stiles was inducted into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame.

Aside from his service to the OHS, Dr. Stiles also served on the Oklahoma Wildlife Commission, was president of the McCurtain County Historical Society, and was a member of the Broken Bow Masonic Lodge and the McAlester Valley of the Scottish Rite.

Dr. Stiles passed away on January 5, 2018, at the age of 87 while still serving on the OHS Board of Directors. He inspired many future historians including current OHS Board member Kenny Sivard, who spoke at the dedication.

World War I: Lessons And Legacies exhibit opening at the Oklahoma Territorial Museum



on American life. Sparked by the assassination of one man, the war eventually included the forces of the world's major industrial powers and ended with millions dead. Beyond the countries involved and people affected, World War I gave rise to significant and enduring changes in America. Wartime technologies and medical advances resulted in new industries and novel ways to fight disease and treat disability. The roles that women and minorities filled in the war led to the right to vote for women and a raised consciousness of civil rights issues throughout society. From the Great Migration to the 1918 flu pandemic and from the unionization movement to women's suffrage, World War I led to pivotal changes in America's culture, technology, economy, and role in the world. It redefined how we saw ourselves as Americans and its legacy continues today.

The Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library are located at 406 East Oklahoma Avenue in Guthrie.

Born Dry: Prohibition in Oklahoma photography exhibit opens

The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) has opened a new photography exhibit entitled *Born Dry: Prohibition in Oklahoma*. Featuring 25 black-and-white photographs taken during the decades-long fight over prohibition in Oklahoma, the exhibit explores the debate over the legality of alcohol sales through imagery.

As Oklahoma's Favorite Son Will Rogers once said, "Oklahomans will vote dry as long as they can stagger to the polls." When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, prohibition was accepted as part of the state's constitution. Despite changing national views on prohibition—first with the 18th Amendment to the US Constitution establishing national prohibition in 1919 and then the passage of the 21st Amendment repealing prohibition in 1933—the fight over liquor laws and efforts to control bootlegging remained steady in Oklahoma.

In 1958 J. Howard Edmondson was elected governor. He believed that Oklahomans should either vote to legalize the sale of liquor or should do without all illegal liquor in the state. His appointment of Joe Cannon as commissioner of public safety led to the infamous "Cannon raids" on businesses across Oklahoma. Soon, a special election for the repeal of prohibition was set. On April 7, 1959, statewide prohibition was repealed, leaving a local option provision.

Born Dry is located in the Chesapeake Event Center and Gallery in the OHC, and will be on display until November 2021. The Chesapeake Event Center and Gallery also is used to hold meetings and events, so patrons should call 405-522-0765 to check availability.

Cold War artifact donations made to OHS



Left to right: Tom Ivester, Landry Brewer, and Jeff Briley

Jeff Briley, deputy director of the Oklahoma History Center (OHC), recently drove to Elk City’s municipal airport at the invitation of Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) at Sayre history professor Landry Brewer, and Tom Ivester, Elk City’s city manager. With mutual interest in preservation, they came together at the site to revisit the past.

The airport is the site of the city’s now-defunct civil defense storage facility. The city had been making room in the space when workers stumbled upon decades-old Cold War civil defense supplies. Inside were dozens of Cold War-era items that had been in storage since after the fall of the Soviet Union and the Cold War’s end in the early 1990s.

Brewer, who is a history professor at SWOSU in Sayre, had previously toured the Civil Defense storage facility when researching Oklahoma Cold War civil defense for his book *Cold War Oklahoma*. He had incorporated pictures of and information about some of the items in the Elk City airport storage in the book. Thanks to that previous connection, and a concern for keeping these historic items intact, Ivester contacted Brewer, who reached out to Jeff Briley at the OHC. Several objects have now been transferred and will eventually become a part of the OHS’s Cold War-era collections.

“I wanted to make room in the airport storage facility, but before throwing away items of historical significance, I thought I’d enlist Landry’s help to find a worthy home for these items,” Ivester said.

According to Brewer, the federal government began supplying municipalities like Elk City with fallout shelter supplies in the early 1960s at the height of Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, when the risk of nuclear war was greatest.

“The hope was that, in the event of a nuclear war, Americans who didn’t die from a nuclear bomb blast could also survive radioactive nuclear fallout in the atmosphere by seeking refuge in fallout shelters for up to two weeks,” Brewer said.

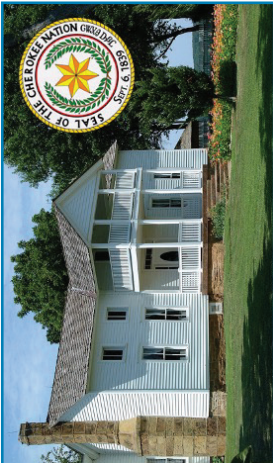
Fallout shelters that met federal criteria had a federal fallout shelter sign placed on the outside and were stocked inside with water barrels, food, medical equipment, and medicine. Elk City’s civil defense storage included all of these, plus radiation detection equipment and defunct Thunderbolt civil defense sirens.

According to Brewer, these may have been among the city’s civil defense sirens that sounded a false alarm during the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Fearing that a nuclear attack was imminent, the false alarm sent frantic parents to Elk City’s schools to pick up their children.

Briley said that Elk City’s civil defense items will eventually be prominent in an exhibit interpreting Oklahoma’s role during the Cold War.



Cherokee Nation purchases Birthplace Ranch



On November 4, 2020, the Cherokee Nation (CN) formalized the purchase of the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch in Oologah from the State of Oklahoma. The date of the signing marked the 141st birthday of Cherokee citizen, entertainer, humorist, and beloved Oklahoman Will Rogers. Situated under the shade trees of the birthplace where Rogers spent his formative years, CN Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr., CN Deputy Chief Bryan Warner, and Will Rogers Memorial Museums Executive Director Tad Jones signed a purchase agreement for the historic property.

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) has operated the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch as a museum since 2016. The birthplace was originally donated to the State of Oklahoma in 1937 by Will’s widow, Betty, and was managed by the Will Rogers Memorial Commission until 2016. The 400-acre living history ranch, named “Dog-Iron Ranch” by Rogers, has longhorn cattle, goats, donkeys, horses, and a peacock. The centerpiece of the ranch is what he dubbed “the White House on the Verdigris,” which originally overlooked the Verdigris River. The home now sits on the shores of Oologah Lake, which was built by the US Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950s. The ranch dates back to Indian Territory, providing an authentic setting for visitors to learn about 19th-century ranching practices and Rogers’s Cherokee lineage. The Cherokee Nation plans to maintain, restore, and preserve the property going forward. The OHS plans to use proceeds of the sale to renovate the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore, located 10 miles from the Birthplace Ranch, to continue to honor the life of Rogers.