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Mistletoe Leaves

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Enid's US Land Office 1893–2023 - 130 years in existence



A US Land Office still stands on the grounds of the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center (CSRHC) in Enid.

The Enid US Land Office was one of four similar structures built in the summer preceding the opening of the Cherokee Outlet on September 16, 1893, Oklahoma's fourth and largest land run. First built before the town had been named, the structure served its purpose as the location where thousands of claims were filed in three short months 130 years ago.

John Brickner of Guthrie was awarded a contract by the government in August 1892 to build four land offices in Perry, Alva, Woodward, and Enid. Lumber was shipped by train to each location to build the land offices. Construction of the buildings had to be done in the area sealed off by the government many months prior to the opening of the Cherokee Outlet. Brickner ordered all of the lumber to be shipped from Darlington Miller Lumber Company in Guthrie and to be marked "for the U.S. Land Office."

On the day of the opening of the Cherokee Outlet, the town that would become Enid had an estimated 10,000 residents overnight, and there was a rowdy, steady line of homesteaders waiting outside the newly built land office, eager to have their claims

registered. Four government-appointed registrars and clerks worked long hours with long lines for weeks. Although people making claims had up to three months to file, the crush of claimants was unprecedented in the early going.

Accounts of the *Guthrie Leader* newspaper shared that the Department of the Interior's Inspector General A. P. Swineford went to Enid in early October 1893 to "inspect the workings of the land office and to view the work of filing." He reported on the chaotic scene unfolding, describing that "unprincipled wretches are still doing crooked work in the land office line."

As one of the first completed structures in the town, other Enid papers use the US Land Office as a point of reference to orient readers in finding newly established tent businesses, stores, and attorneys. By December 5, 1893, the *Westside Democrat* reported, "Since the opening at noon on the 16th, there have been acted on there, 6,589 applications. Of

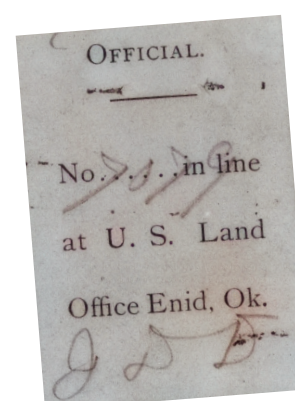
these 5,142 homestead entries have been made, 1,168 rejected and suspended applicants, 227 declaratory statements, 34 applications to make second entries, and 18 applications to amend." There were 10 days remaining to make an application for land at the time.

The humble structure located on the southeast corner of the developing square added an "L" addition in the late 1890s. In 1902 it was sold at auction and moved to 319 W. Market (today Owen K. Garriott Rd.). The land office that held such importance in the settlement of the town eventually "disappeared" from anyone's attention until 1986, when the Heritage League of Enid found it hiding in plain sight as a house through a check of Garfield County abstract records.

With the permission of the homeowner, historians tore off some of the exterior shingles to reveal the old wooden clapboards of the land office built by Brickner. It was during that period that the Heritage League worked to include Enid's land office as a part of their vision for the Humphrey Heritage Village. The structure was moved on March 31, 1991, and dedicated on September 7, 1991, in the village then being developed at Government Springs Park.


Today, the original structure can be found in the Humphrey Heritage Village at the CSRHC where, 130 years later, the folks filing claims do so in a more civil manner, to learn more about the history of the area.

Paper line tickets were given by number to homesteaders waiting their turn in line at the US Land Office.



2023
Oklahoma Historical Society
**AWARDS
BANQUET**

Join us in honoring the Oklahoma Historical Society's Annual Awards recipients on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at the Oklahoma History Center. Cocktail hour will begin at 6 p.m. followed by dinner and a reception at 6:30 p.m. Ticket information will soon be available at okhistory.org/awardsbanquet or by contacting Larry O'Dell at 405-522-6676. All proceeds from this event will go toward the George Nigh Internship Endowment Fund.



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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



By Trait Thompson

Believe it or not, it is that time of the year when our attention turns to the legislature and the upcoming legislative session. Every year, the legislature convenes on the first Monday in February and must adjourn no later than the last Friday in May.

Before I go too much further, I should note that our work to build relationships with legislators and educate them on the needs of our agency never really ceases. Throughout the interim, we host legislators for tours and events at our sites across the state, participate in meetings, and engage with them in their communities. I believe the OHS must foster strong partnerships with our lawmakers. The more they understand our mission and importance to Oklahoma, the more they will be willing to help us in the halls of the Capitol.

The Oklahoma Historical Society has a robust legislative agenda for 2023. One of our agency goals is to bring all employee salaries to within 15 percent of the industry median standard. After forming a project team to compare the salaries of our staff members with those in similar fields throughout our region, we have concluded that 69 percent of OHS employees make below 15 percent of the industry median in their field. Approximately half of OHS employees make below \$45,000 per year and, of that group, 85 percent make below 15 percent of the median industry standard. Consequently, we will be asking the legisla-

ture to appropriate \$1,250,000 to help bring all employees making below \$45,000 within 15 percent of the median standard.

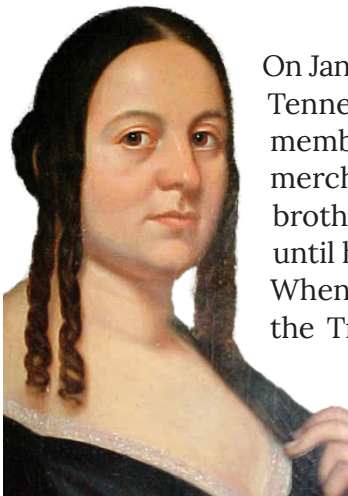
Like other agencies and businesses in Oklahoma, the OHS is also dealing with the effects of inflation. With the average inflation rate at 8 percent, everything from toilet paper to computers has risen in price. Additionally, we have seen our property insurance rates double within the last year and have borne the costs of unfunded mandates passed by the legislature. To help alleviate the burden of rising costs, this year we are asking for an additional \$1,092,000 in our baseline budget. We also will be asking for an increase in funding of \$204,000 for our affiliate sites.

We continue to have productive conversations with our legislative leaders about the Oklahoma Museum of Popular Culture (OKPOP) in Tulsa. Phase 1 of the building construction was completed last year and our staff at the site continues to develop plans for the exhibits at the museum. Earlier this year, the OHS requested \$20 million in ARPA funding to complete the museum, but our request was not granted. We are seeking \$20 million in a one-time appropriation from the legislature this session.

Finally, we are seeking to enact legislation on two policy items. The first is to form a commission to plan activities in conjunction with America's semiquincentennial in 2026. The second is to allow our agency to purchase light-duty trucks for use at our sites. We are currently only able to purchase heavy-duty trucks, which are not always necessary for lighter tasks.

I encourage you to reach out to your legislators in the Oklahoma Senate and House of Representatives and ask them to support our 2023 legislative agenda. We appreciate your passion for the OHS and your willingness to engage with your lawmakers on our behalf.

She doesn't look a day over 204



On January 25, 1819, Minerva Ross was born near present-day Chattanooga, Tennessee. Minerva was the eldest daughter of Lewis and Frances Ross, members of a wealthy and influential Cherokee family. Lewis was a merchant, planter, and national treasurer of the Cherokee Nation. His brother, John Ross, was principal chief of the Cherokee Nation from 1828 until his death in 1866. In 1834 Minerva met and married George Murrell. When the Cherokees were forced to leave their homes in the East on the Trail of Tears in 1838-39, the Murrells moved to Park Hill, Indian Territory, where the Murrells established a plantation and built a large frame home like those they remembered from back East. You can visit their Greek Revival-style house, Hunter's Home, in Park Hill Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit okhistory.org/huntershome.

A new aviation exhibit begins to take flight

Walk through the doors of the Oklahoma History Center (OHC) and you may notice some color changes to the walls of the first floor. This is being done as a part of the new aviation-themed exhibit devoted to the many Oklahomans who were, and are, pioneers of flight.

The exhibit *Taking Flight: Oklahomans Explore the Skies* has been in the planning stages for several years with a team of museum staff and consultants. It is designed to provide a visual bookend to the *Launch to Landing: Oklahomans and Space* exhibit featured in and around the Gaylord Special Exhibit Gallery. Large-scale graphics and custom artifact exhibit cases will be employed to maximize guests' participatory experience. Various artifacts with the theme of air travel will be installed, with everything from airplane nose art to uniforms worn by pilots. Along with OHC staff, Cameron Eagle of Ink Ranch Inc. has contributed greatly to the exhibit's visual concept sketches, artwork, and technical drawings for the project.

The creation of a backdrop for the exhibit has started, with colorful wall accents and a large-scale mural in the Vose Atrium Gallery. One wall panel will become a mural of a 1900s-period balloon. Artist Manuel Cruz III painted the 14 feet wide and 28 feet tall mural to represent the dawn of the exploration of the skies. Walls were primed the week of Thanksgiving 2022, and Cruz began painting the mural in the first week of December. The hot air balloon design will also have a ground floor walk-in component to invite visitors to take selfies that give the illusion of "riding" in the balloon. The interactive mural also will serve as a multipart vehicle for hands-on education programs and a conversation piece specially designed for the OHC.

"Basically, this wing of the Oklahoma History Center will be dedicated to Oklahomans' contribution to aviation and space travel," said Dan Provo, director of the OHC.

Visitors can begin a linear journey through time with the replica of the Winnie



Airplane nose art above depicting a stylized pinup girl and the inscription "My 'Oklahoma' Gal," with a mechanic replacing an aircraft panel with bomb figures denoting successful raids, 1944 (2012.201.OVZ001.0684, OPUBCO Collection, OHS).

Mae airplane suspended in the Devon Great Hall, studying the exploits of Oklahoma's famed test pilot Wiley Post who, in many ways, paved the way for other test pilots and astronauts.

The timeline of *Taking Flight* features the first steps toward air travel, as well as the remarkable ways that Oklahomans contributed to all aspects of aviation. From artifacts like a reproduction of Post's pressurized suit developed for him by the B. F. Goodrich Company to items worn and used by US pilots in the early days of flight, both military applications and the development of commercial flight will be highlighted.

The exhibit provides a wonderful introduction to *Launch to Landing*, which has as its centerpiece the Skylab 4 Apollo Command Module (CM-118) on loan from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. The exhibit also will be the inspiration for interactive educational programming, currently under development by OHC staff as the exhibit is being installed. The opening date for *Taking Flight: Oklahomans Explore the Skies* will be announced in a future issue of *Mistletoe Leaves*.

A closer look at World War II trench art

One Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) artifact that will be included in the upcoming aviation exhibit began its life as an aerial bomb and ended up as an ashtray.

Cecil I. Wilcox, a US Air Force pilot who served in World War II, created this object to pass the time and possibly to relieve his war stresses while serving as a squadron flight officer. It was among the items his widow, Dorothy M. Wilcox, donated to the OHS in 2013.

Considered "trench art" dating from the 1943-1947 era, Wilcox immortalized the discarded metal fins of an inert practice aerial bomb emblazoned with the insignia of the 559th Bomb Squadron group of the US Air Force with whom he served. The decorative item was designed so that the 559th frog cartoon character holding a lighted bomb would be a central focus of

the unique and functional ashtray.

Consequently, by repurposing the aerial bomb he defused its utility, creating a one-of-a-kind war souvenir, now eight decades old. Stay tuned for more details to come about the Oklahoma History Center's aviation-themed exhibit set to open in 2023. It will include a focus on military artwork, especially nose art and jacket art created and worn by military pilots.



ABOUT THE MURAL ARTIST

Manuel Cruz III

Muralist Manuel Cruz III specializes in *Trompe L'oeil* style painting. *Trompe L'oeil* is French for "to deceive the eye." Cruz's artwork creates photorealistic subjects that are so true to life that they can be mistaken for the genuine article. His works adorn the walls of a number of homes and businesses.

He employs several painting styles, from photorealism to impressionism. He has a talent for portraiture, decorative faux finishes, and also is skilled in interior design and graphic art.

In 1988 Cruz moved from Oklahoma City to the Bay Area in California. He has returned to his hometown to create the custom mural for the OHC's upcoming exhibit *Taking Flight*.

2023 Oklahoma History Symposium

Mark your calendars for Perspectives in History: The 2023 Oklahoma History Symposium, which will be held this year on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. This one-day symposium offers scholars, historians, authors, and museum professionals from across the state and country a forum to share their work with history enthusiasts. Professional development sessions will be offered for museum professionals, volunteers, and students. Topics and presenters will be announced in the coming weeks.

Please visit okhistory.org/symposium to learn more as details become available.



OHS Calendar of Events

January

- 7 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 7 "Architecture of the Capitol" discussion by Trait Thompson, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 14 "Researching Legal Documents" presentation with Dr. Le'Shawn Turner, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 14 Modern Wall Hangings workshop, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 19 Oklahoma Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 21 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 27 Museum After Dark: Village Sounds, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 28 Introduction to Botanical Embroidery workshop, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 28 "On A Great Battlefield: The History of Gettysburg National Military Park, 1863—2022" presentation with Dr. Jennifer Murray, Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
- 28 *Imprinting the West: Manifest Destiny* exhibit opens, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid

February

- 1 Antique Doll exhibit opens, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 4 Block-Printed Valentine's Day Cards workshop, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 4 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 10 Museum After Dark: Date Night at the Museum, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 11 Hammered Moon and Star Earrings workshop, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 18 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 25 Retro Clay Earrings workshop, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 26 Antique Doll exhibit closes, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 27 Kilgen Organ performance and silent film *The Mark of Zorro*, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City

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

Historic Preservation Review Committee's 2023 meetings

The Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), is pleased to announce the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Review Committee's (HPRC) meeting schedule for 2023. 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 (pre-historic archaeologist, Norman); Shirley Ballard Nero (historian, Clearview); Jana Phillips (architectural historian, Stillwater); and, Charles Wallis (historical archaeologist, Norman). The HPRC's 2023 meetings will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 19, April 20, July 20, and October 19.

The meetings will be held in the Oklahoma Historical Society's LeRoy H. Fischer Boardroom, located on the third floor of the Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Additionally, the meetings also will be held via Teams (virtual option). The meetings are open to the public. The HPRC and SHPO encourage all interested parties to attend. The meeting agendas and NRHP nominations under consideration will be available at okhistory.org/shpo/hprc.

For information about any of the SHPO's programs, call 405-521-6249 or visit the website listed above.

Museum OKademy 2023 volunteer training course

The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center (CSRHC) will host a six-session Museum OKademy course from January to April. The six-part lecture/workshop series will be led by CSRHC Director Jake Krumwiede, Director of Education Neal Matherne, and other CSRHC staff members. These classes are aimed at both prospective volunteers and other adult learners who wish to broaden their knowledge base about the history of the area and gain access to useful educational materials.

Email neal.matherne@history.ok.gov for more information, or register at csrhc.org/museumokademy. Classes are free with



regular museum admission. CSRHC and OHS members always visit free. For more information call 580-237-1907.



Dreaming of a team of horses

If you have followed the story of the Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum (PBR) this year, you know that some sad

news came to the ranch last summer when JR, one of the beloved Clydesdales, lost his battle with cancer. He came to the ranch in 2006 and lived a long and happy life on Blue Hawk Peak. For 16 years he provided countless stagecoach and wagon rides to the guests of the ranch without complaint.

Then, unexpectedly in September after 30 years of living with a heart condition, PBR's Clydesdale Spirit also passed from congestive heart failure. Laddie is now the sole Clydesdale on the Pawnee Bill property, but cannot pull the surrey with the fringe on top all by his lonesome!

Please consider donating to the cause of finding a new team of Clydesdales for the property by visiting the Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum online store at okhistory.org/pbstore.



Kilgen performance to feature *The Mark of Zorro*

On Monday, February 27, the Oklahoma History Center will host another

performance in the Kilgen Organ series, featuring organist Christian Elliott. He will provide the accompanying music and sound effects to the American Western silent film *The Mark of Zorro* (1920) starring Douglas Fairbanks. Doors will open at 6 p.m., and the performance will take place from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets are \$10 for OHS members and \$20 for nonmembers, and may be reserved by calling 405-522-0765 or online at store.okhistory.org (click Event Tickets).

Christian Elliott is a prominent concert organist, equally at home performing literature of the church and theater. Elliott has had a major career accompanying silent film at venues including the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the Stanford Theatre, and UCLA. Elliott was privileged to be mentored by several world-renowned organists, including the dean of silent film accompaniment, Gaylord Carter.



Rendering of “Reba’s Place” to be located in Atoka’s Masonic Lodge, downtown Atoka.

It turns out you can go home again

In Atoka, most know the Masonic Lodge, a three-story cornerstone, brick building at the corner of Court Street and North Pennsylvania. It is one of eight buildings on the National Register of Historic Places in the town that are still standing. The staff at the Atoka Museum and Civil War Cemetery have been providing the history of the Masonic Lodge to a new group of developers after the downtown business district building was purchased by Atoka County native Reba McEntire for repurposing and renovation.

Some may remember McEntire was rescued from a second-story window in the historic building in 2021 after the staircase collapsed. At that time, she was surveying properties in her old hometown, and has recently partnered with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to renovate the Masonic Lodge into a restaurant, entertainment venue, and merchandise shop to be called

“Reba’s Place.” As a tribute to her mother, the late Jacqueline Smith McEntire, a personal touch will be added with a reading nook to house her mother’s collection of books.

Atoka is the seat of Atoka County, situated on US Highway 69 halfway between Tulsa and Dallas. Like many towns peppered across southeastern Oklahoma, it was established before statehood and has a rich history, with several historic buildings.

In July 1869, thirteen members of the Oklahoma Masonic Lodge No. 4 rode across the country to Fort Smith, Arkansas to apply for their charter, which was granted four months later. The lodge had several temporary locations due to fires, losing leases, and relocation closer to railroad routes.

In 1915 the lodge settled in Atoka and built the three-story brick building downtown for \$24,000. That included a \$5,000 payment to the Methodist Church for the corner lot where the building is situated today. After it was built, the lower floor was rented to businesses, the second floor was rented office space, and the third floor was devoted to Masonic functions.

Folks in Atoka will remember that, for many years, the Public Service Company of Oklahoma rented the first-floor space which people still refer to it as the “PSO building.” In 1980 the structure was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the town’s “Masonic Temple,” and now, after standing vacant for many years, Reba McEntire and her team are restoring the structure for a new purpose in the heart of Atoka. As bright as the country music legend’s star shines, she keeps returning to her roots in Atoka County, disproving the adage that “you can’t go home again.”



CTM Chuck Wagon Gathering earns national award

Each year, the staff members of the Chisholm Trail Museum (CTM) travels the state to provide living history programs at schools, participate in community events, and help with chuck wagon gatherings across Oklahoma and the region. In March the museum hosts its annual Chuck Wagon Gathering which is becoming one of the largest events of its kind in the state. Thousands of visitors come to Kingfisher for demonstrations of historical cooking, cowboy culture, live music, and living history demonstrations, providing them with a chance to step back in time. Chuck wagons for the event travel from across the region and provide a variety of food samples for visitors, from beans and biscuits to hot pies and cobbler.

At this year’s American Chuck Wagon Association’s (ACWA) annual meeting. Jason Harris accepted the ACWA Best Event of the Year Award for the gathering. This is especially gratifying because the award is nominated by participating wagons.

The Harris family, including son Jonathan and daughter Maggie, have grown up traveling the state, becoming accomplished cooks and learning the way of wagon life. Both have actively participated in historical events since they were toddlers. Jonathan and Maggie Harris (pictured above) were both awarded the ACWA’s Young Coosie Award this year.

If you would like to learn more about chuck wagon cooking and the role of this skill in the American West, make plans now to attend the museum’s annual Chuck Wagon Gathering on March 25, 2023. The event is free and runs from 10 a.m.–3p.m.

If you are interested in helping support the museum’s extensive outreach of living history programs to schools across the state, please contact Jason Harris. The Chisholm Trail Museum is located at 605 Zellers Ave. in Kingfisher. The museum’s regular hours of operation are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 405-375-5176 or visit www.ctokmuseum.org.



Found in Collections

You can find all sorts of treasures in the collections of the OHS, dating back to its earliest days of collecting in the late 1800s. One of the best examples of reusing, repurposing, and upcycling in this collection is a man’s quilted smoking jacket that was made between 1885 and 1910.

The garment’s artful design incorporates silk ribbons imprinted with the names of cigar manufacturers, alternating in a warm color palette from light yellow to deep orange ribbons. With names like “Grand Master,” “Vesper,” and “Bohemian Club” among others, the jacket gives clues to the various advertising approaches of the era, as well as the ingenuity of its maker.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, cigar manufacturers bundled their cigars in batches of 25 or 50 and tied the bundles with silk ribbons. The silk

ribbons were imprinted with the company name. These ribbons were used to make quilts, table runners, and even clothing, such as the smoking jacket seen at top left.

This is just one example of the items from the OHS collections available to view online. To see more, visit okhistory.org/collections.



Deena Fisher recognized for her dedication to the state

This year, Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) Board President Deena Fisher was recognized in the first chapter of the 55 Over 55 award recognition program.

The 55 Over 55 Inspiring Oklahomans program was founded by Donald B. Swift. This flagship year, a group of judges finalized the 55 Over 55 list of Oklahomans who they felt were leading the way toward improving the lifestyles of all Oklahomans. Honorees include Oklahomans who are investing in the future growth of Oklahoma, shaping the future of their business communities, and providing a more innovative and inclusive financial future for the talented entrepreneur community and nonprofit organizations that serve thousands of Oklahomans.

Fisher is being recognized for her dedication to the OHS's mission to collect, preserve, and share the history and culture of the state and its people. She currently serves as president of the OHS Board and is a dean/professor emeritus at Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

Along with many other degrees and accolades, Fisher graduated from the Institute for Management and Leadership in Higher Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2006. Fisher is an active member of the National Association of Branch Campus Administrators, serving as a mentor, coach, and guest lecturer.

She coauthored *Woodward: Past and Present* (Arcadia Publishing, 2021), *The 1947 Woodward Tornado* (Arcadia Publishing, 2022), and wrote all teacher's materials for the Oklahoma history textbook *Oklahoma: Land of Contrasts* (Clairmont Press, 2006).

Fisher currently serves as the Rotary 5750 district governor and has served on several boards of civic organizations and on the Citizens Advisory Board for William S. Key, the Hope Center Food Bank, Plains Indians and Pioneers Museum, and Friends of Fort Supply. She also proudly serves on the boards of the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma African American Educators Hall of Fame.

Deena Fisher, seated at the center in a white jacket, among the members of the OHS Board of Directors at its October meeting, which was held at Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum (OHS staff photo).

NRHP Nomination Grants available from the SHPO

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 2023 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) allocation from the US Department of the Interior for the program. Applications are accepted from February 1 through April 30. Each grant is limited to \$2,100, and the applicant must provide a nonfederal, cash match of at least \$1,400. 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 \$3,500 (federal grant + nonfederal match) is only an estimate of the cost for such projects and that more than the minimum \$1,400 nonfederal match may be necessary to cover the consultant fee. Consultants must consider the nature of the property proposed for nomination.

The NRHP is the catalog of our nation's significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, and landscapes important in our past. While the 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 application form go to okhistory.org/shpo/nrgrant. You may also contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249.

Fort Towson hires David Reed as historical interpreter

For the first time in 15 years, the Fort Towson Historic Site has a historical interpreter on staff. David C. Reed joins the team with an enthusiasm to build educational resources and outreach programs. He enjoys historical research and looks forward to planning living history and reenactment events at the site.

Reed is a lifelong resident of Oklahoma and grew up visiting historic sites and museums across the state and country. After observing people in period clothing at historic sites at a young age, he was inspired to become a hands-on educator. In his career, Reed has researched and created programs covering the 1830s and 1840s



United States military, American Civil War, and the American West. Reed also hopes to have a hand in developing on-site resources at Fort Towson Historic Site, including a research library.

"We are very excited to have this military historian on our team," said Calista Stephens, site director at Fort Towson. "We are looking forward to building on the foundation left for us by previous directors William Vandiver and John Davis."

Reed received a bachelor's degree in history and communications from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in 2008. He received a master's degree in public history from Oklahoma State University in 2013. Reed previously worked at Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma State University, and the Museum of the Red River. For more information about Fort Towson programs, call 580-873-2634.

ABOUT FORT TOWSON

Fort Towson was established in 1824 to quell conflicts between lawless elements, American Indian peoples, and settlers claiming the area as part of Arkansas Territory. The fort also served as an outpost on the border between the United States and Texas, which at that time was part of Mexico. Connected to the East by road, Fort Towson served as a gateway for settlers bound for Texas during the 1830s. When the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations were forcibly removed from their lands in the southeastern United States, the fort served as a point of dispersal upon their arrival in the West. The fort was also an important staging area for US forces during the Mexican-American War of 1846.



Meg Charron, farthest right, speaking on a panel at the Tulsa Music Cities Convention.

OKPOP ready for 2023!

In these last few months, OKPOP has hired several new friendly faces who have been a great addition to its team, strengthening and rounding out a variety of departments. A massive move of the museum's collections took place in the fall, and the storytelling team has been collaborating with exhibit consultants Art Processors, who have been making major headway on the plans for OKPOP installations.

Additionally, the OKPOP Foundation, OKPOP's fundraising friends group, named D. Scott Petty as its new chairperson. Petty will guide the foundation through OKPOP's future fundraising efforts.

The team is also gaining inspiration, insight, and learning current museum trends from conferences and contact with fellow museums.

Director Jeff Moore and Deputy Director Meg Charron have presented and participated in several panels, including the Mountain-Plains Museums Association's Annual Conference and the Tulsa Music Cities Convention (TMCC). OKPOP held the opening reception for TMCC. At the Born & Raised Festival, OKPOP broadened its network of Oklahoma Creatives, meeting the Oologah artist Zach Bryan.

Getting a word in edgewise



OKPOP's podcast, *The OKPOP Radio Hour*, has had a number of notable guests lately. Listeners can tell you that previous owner of the legendary Cain's Ballroom, Larry Shaeffer, was a recent guest and shared his favorite memories from hosting some of the most iconic shows in the country at that venue. The *Radio Hour*'s previous guest list includes Sterlin Harjo, director of the series *Reservation Dogs*; Joy Harjo (Muscogee), the nation's 23rd poet laureate; Chef Nico Albert, a contestant on Hulu's *Chefs vs. Wild*; and Larry White, a local music mogul.

The podcast is a great way to get to know OKPOP. To hear these guests' interviews and more, make sure to tune into *The OKPOP Radio Hour* every week! Find it wherever you get your podcasts.

Researching Legal Documents with Dr. Le'Shawn Turner

On Saturday, January 14, from noon to 2 p.m., Dr. Le'Shawn Turner, the reference librarian for the Oklahoma City University School of Law, will guide nonlawyers on the process of researching legal sources effectively. This class will be beneficial to college students, genealogists, and people with specific research interests. This is a specialized area of research that will help people understand and locate court records, wills and probates, and legal documents regarding land records.

The Oklahoma Historical Society's Archival Collections Manager Mallory Covington will take part in the class to share the various legal materials available through the OHS. She recommends visiting the OHS website to see several resources online. For those interested in learning more about the subject matter, a finding aid referring to legal and judicial collections is available at okhistory.org/research/manuscripts.

The class will take place in the John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center in the Oklahoma History Center. This class is free with registration. Call 405-522-0765 for more information.



Colonial Day at the Capitol

Educators from the Oklahoma History Center staff will participate in person at Colonial Day at the Capitol on Friday, January 27, from 9:15 a.m. to 1:40 p.m. This year the event will be held in person for the first time in two years.

Colonial Day at the Capitol is an engaging and action-packed day of learning that brings early American history to life for fifth-grade students. Participants dress in colonial-period clothing, meet with historical character interpreters, and participate in teacher-led interactive sessions.

The OHC Education team helps students from across the state experience the annual event. The following day, our intrepid educators will travel to Tulsa and share history with students there.

Since 2002 the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has cosponsored the event, which is coordinated by alumni of the Colonial Williamsburg and George Washington Teacher Institutes.



The Battle of Honey Springs featured at film festivals

In the past year, *The Battle of Honey Springs* documentary has been shown in a number of regional and national film screenings. This summer, it was selected to be shown at the popular deadCenter Film Festival, the docOKC Film Festival (both in OKC), and, in October, it was a feature of the Bass & Belle Wild West Film Fest in Muskogee. It was also nominated in the category of Best Documentary Short at the US Fly Film Festival. In December, *The Battle of Honey Springs* documentary was selected as a Best Picture Award Finalist at the Oregon Documentary Film Festival and will make its way to Canada to be shown at the Montreal Independent Film Festival!

The documentary can be viewed with the interactive exhibit at the Honey Springs Battlefield Visitor Center. For more information contact honeysprings@history.ok.gov, call 918-617-7125, or visit okhistory.org/honeysprings.

Quilting group going strong

In 2008, when the Sod House Museum set out to establish a series of quilt-making workshops, the staff could not have envisioned that the program would extend into its 15th year. It celebrates just that milestone in 2023! The program started small and grew by word of mouth. The community of quilters grew, enthusiastic about learning the craft older than the historic venue where the group meets.

The Sod House Museum first invited Martha Ray to give a program on the history of quilting in 2008 when only a few people attended. Over time, women of all quilting skill levels have joined the group in growing numbers, sharing over 300 hundred quilt tops since the monthly program began. A happy exchange of shared skills, fun and camaraderie, door prizes, refreshments, discussions, and quilt patterns, along with old-fashioned bed turnings are just some of the meetings' regular highlights.

Look for the next meeting of the Quilting workshop with Martha Ray from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Sod House Museum the second Saturday of each month in 2023. Proceeds directly fund Sod House renovations. Call 580-463-2441 for more information.

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PERIODICALS

Mistletoe Leaves

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“Together We Will” sets goals for the improvement of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum

A new campaign, “Together We Will,” dedicated to the expansion and renovation of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum (WRMM) in Claremore was announced in November 2022 during the Will Rogers Days festivities.

The fundraising effort was launched with the goal of creating new visitor experiences and interest in the life of Will Rogers and the Claremore museum dedicated to his memory. Once the funds are raised, they will go toward an ambitious \$18 million expansion and renovation (pictured above) that will feature a new entrance, a three-story event center, a new vault with modern preservation standards, and construction conforming to Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Last year, the WRMM received \$7 million toward that goal from the Oklahoma Legislature, which provided the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) with \$46 million in bond funds for improvements to many of its museums and historic sites. OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson said, “The Claremore museum was tapped for the largest part of the state funds to not only introduce new technology to create an engaging experience, but also to protect the Will Rogers’s collections.”

“Together We Will” seeks to raise the additional \$11 million needed for the project, hoping to raise the additional monies before the centennial of Route 66 in 2026.

Will Rogers Memorial Foundation President Bill Baird, former Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, and former Oklahoma Senate President Pro Tempore Stratton Taylor launched the fundraising effort. They serve as campaign cochairs with former NASA Director Jim Bridenstine and former OHS Executive Director Dr. Bob Blackburn. Blackburn, one of Oklahoma’s preeminent historians, has roots in Claremore and emphasized the need to “create a world citizen experience based on Will’s character traits of integrity, learning, exploring, humility, compassion, and work.”

Many notable Western figures came out to honor Will Rogers and support the new fundraising campaign, including actor Barry Corbin, who said, “Will’s idea, basically, was a simple one—cooperation, not division, and he was the perfect representation for this idea.” Corbin serves as an honorary chair with Jennifer Rogers-Etcheverry, Will Rogers’s great-granddaughter; Robert Henry, Oklahoma’s former attorney general and a Will Rogers scholar; and former Oklahoma Governor George Nigh.



A closer look at *The Oklahoma State Capitol*

A new book written by OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson is available through Arcadia Publishing. As a member and chairman of the Oklahoma State Capitol Preservation Commission from 2012 to 2015, Thompson became a passionate advocate for the building’s restoration. This interest was elevated when he served as the project manager for the restoration of the State Capitol from 2014–2020, becoming an authority on its history. With the opening of the Oklahoma State Capitol Museum exhibits earlier this year, his book was soon to follow. In this book, Thompson offers wonderful anecdotes along with a full understanding of the rich architectural history of the building. Through the use of more than 200 images, captions, and insights about the building’s history, the story of *The Oklahoma State Capitol* unfolds—wild and unpredictable as the story of the state itself. The book reveals that in the early going, there were five long years of jockeying between the cities of Guthrie and Oklahoma City, each attempting to lay claim to the capital city. Finally, seven years after statehood, the ground was broken on the capitol where it stands today. The history of the building’s dome is another fascinating tale. It was Oklahoma’s third governor, Robert Williams, seeking to keep costs low, who put himself in charge of the Oklahoma State Capitol Building Commission and made the controversial decision to forgo the structure’s planned ornamental dome. This omission was debated for decades afterward. The dome was finally installed 85 years later.

The book is available for sale in the Oklahoma History Center Museum Store, at local booksellers, and online at arcadiapublishing.com. All royalties benefit the OHS.

