



“Come along, boys, and listen to my tale, and I’ll tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm Trail”



Celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Chisholm Trail with the OHS and its partners. Cattle drives along the Chisholm Trail lasted only about twenty years, but even before the last longhorns headed north, the Chisholm Trail already was becoming legend. The cattle drive is credited with saving Texas from economic ruin and infusing new opportunity and

wealth into the entire country following the Civil War. During the war, Texas ranches were unmanaged, leaving the southern prairies teeming with cattle. Too many cattle depressed prices, while in the northeast markets were in great need of beef. Cattle worth \$3 per head in Texas would bring \$40 to \$60 in Chicago and New York. The problem was that no railroads yet reached the Texas Plains. The solution was the great American cattle trail.

Running from south Texas north to Abilene, Kansas, the Chisholm Trail witnessed the movement of millions of longhorns from 1867 to 1889, though the drives had diminished by 1881. The four-month journey pushed cattle quickly from Texas into Indian Territory, where the pace was slowed to fatten the cattle before pushing on to Kansas railheads.

Known by a variety of labels including the Kansas Cattle Trail, Abilene Cattle Trail, McCoy Trail, Black Beaver Trail, and Chisholm’s Wagon Road, the Chisholm Trail took its name from Cherokee trader Jesse Chisholm. Chisholm died in 1868 without knowing of the great cattle trail that would come to bear his name.

Despite the name, in many ways the Chisholm Trail was launched by Joseph McCoy. In 1867 he built stockyards on the Kansas-Pacific Railroad in Abilene, Kansas, and sent men south to encourage the Texas cattlemen to bring their herds to Abilene and east to lure cattle buyers with the promise of large herds.

Eventually, cultivated farmlands, fencing, and the extension of the railroads sealed the fate of the Chisholm Trail, though it continues to live on in the many cowboy tales, songs, books, and movies that have endured.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the trail, and communities along the route, which State Highway 81 roughly follows, are planning events, exhibits, and festivals to commemorate the anniversary. The official celebration kick-off is Saturday, April 1, but the Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher got a jump on the activities and opened a new trail exhibit on February 11. On April 1 the City of Kingfisher will dedicate a map of the Chisholm Trail set in the sidewalk in front of the Jesse Chisholm sculpture on Main Street, and the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid is planning a Chisholm Trail Festival. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Center in Duncan is opening a new exhibit in June on the *Technology of the West*. While you are in Duncan, do not forget to check out the experiential theater at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center for a one-of-a-kind trail experience. In addition, the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center is opening a new Chisholm Trail exhibit on May 5. To find out more about activities along the trail, please visit www.chisholmtrail150.org.

Though it is located off the trail along US Highway 281 north of Geary, you might want to stop by and visit Jesse Chisholm’s grave. The granite historical marker at the grave was showing signs of wear when Mark Fletcher contacted the OHS to request permission to refurbish the marker. He learned the necessary skills from his father, Ray Fletcher, who set the original marker. Ray Fletcher worked at Willis Granite Works from about 1959 to 1968 before leaving to run a gas station on Route 66. He returned to Willis Granite in the mid-1970s when he set the Chisholm marker.

You cannot mention the Chisholm Trail without talking about Bob Klemme of Enid. It took seven years, but Klemme made and placed a marker on every section line the Chisholm Trail crossed in Oklahoma—more than four hundred of them. He also placed one at the start of the trail in Kingston, Texas, and one at the end in Abilene, Kansas. To find the locations, Klemme studied the 1871 government survey map. Surveyors’ notes located the crossing of the trail at the section line. The concrete markers are seven feet high by six inches square and weigh two hundred pounds.

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, along with Visit Enid, the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, and the OHS worked as the trail bosses to round up this celebration. The OHS designed the celebration logo and, working through the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center organizations and communities along the trail, jointly printed and distributed promotional rack cards. The rack cards have been among the most requested literature from www.travelok.com, and the Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation distributed them overseas. We want to make sure everyone knows about the Chisholm Trail’s birthday. Of course, this is not just an Oklahoma celebration. The trail started in Texas and ended in Kansas, and organizations in those states also are participating in the celebration.

So get out there on the trail in 2017 and earn your badge. Seven institutions from Texas to Abilene, Kansas, are participating in a Chisholm Trail badge program. Each institution you visit will provide a patch. When you earn all seven patches you complete your seven-pointed star badge, and earn your 150th pin for the center of the star. There is a lot happening in 2017, but no celebration would be complete without a cattle drive. A drive will be starting in Pond Creek on Tuesday, September 12, and ending on the south side of Wichita, Kansas, on Saturday, September 23. Learn more about this and other events at www.chisholmtrail150.org. Let’s ride!



(8685, Claude E. Hensley Collection, OHS)



Director's column

By Dr. Bob L. Blackburn
Executive Director

I often talk about connecting the dots of history, whether those dots span time and topics or link people who make history by working together for a common goal.

A new book just released by the University of Oklahoma (OU) Press is a good example of connecting the dots through people.

In graduate school in the 1970s, I recognized the importance of transportation and mobility in Oklahoma history. A little out-of-print booklet documenting the corporate history of every rail line in the state from 1871 to 1944 became a valuable point of reference.

The coauthor was Preston George, an engineer who was already famous as a railroad photographer specializing in images of steam locomotives belching smoke over Oklahoma landscapes in the 1930s and 1940s.

In the late 1970s I met Jim Argo, a photographer and journalist who would become a friend, colleague, and coauthor of several books. His father-in-law was Preston George.

Preston and his daughter, Burnis Argo, would eventually donate his extensive collection to the OHS. Jim scanned

and organized more than one thousand original negatives of Preston's railroad photographs.

Meanwhile, I had met Augustus Veenendaal, a historian from the Netherlands who discovered a diary in The Hague that described Dutch investment in Oklahoma railroads. Another new associate and friend was Kent Calder, the director of the Texas State Historical Commission. With the passage of time, Guus wrote several best-selling books on railroad history and Kent joined OU Press as an acquisitions editor.

All of these dots of history came together two years ago to fulfill a promise I made to Preston and Burnis to someday publish a book featuring his railroad photograph collection.

Guus agreed to write extended captions for each photograph and an essay about the importance of railroads in Oklahoma. Burnis agreed to write a biographical piece on her father. Tim Zwink, former OHS deputy director, offered to edit and coordinate the project.

Kent Calder said he wanted to review the manuscript. He read it, shared it with his colleagues, and OU Press agreed to design and print the book. I wrote the foreword.

On April 10, 2017, we will celebrate the work of Preston George and the historical importance of railroads with a special program at the History Center. Guus and Burnis will speak and we will open a photograph exhibit as a companion to the book.

Yes, I often talk about connecting the dots of history. The book, *Smoke Over Oklahoma: The Railroad Photographs of Preston George*, is proof that people, working together, make history.

Dr. Bob

New issues of *Crossroads* available on the OHS website

The OHS is pleased to continue offering its digital publication entitled *Crossroads*. Published on the first of every month, each issue explores a new topic in Oklahoma's unique history. This innovative educational tool is offered for free online and remains continuously available to audiences worldwide. The online platform provides teachers an opportunity to share this publication in their classrooms. *Crossroads* also encourages further learning by connecting users to more resources at the end of each issue. Experience this new kind of storytelling from the OHS by visiting www.okhistory.org/crossroads.

Issue number five of *Crossroads*, "Uncover Your Roots," was published on January 1, and explores the fascinating, rewarding, though often challenging endeavor of genealogy. Since 1893 the OHS has been collecting and preserving resources that can help piece together your family tree. With free access to Ancestry.com, Fold3, Dawes Rolls, US Census records, newspapers, books and periodicals, photos, film and video collections, oral histories, and more, the OHS Research Center is happy to help as you search for your ancestors.

Issue number six of *Crossroads*, "The Good Fight," was published on February 1, and tells the story of segregation and the Oklahoma City sit-in movement. It features historic photos and videos, an account of the events by Clara Luper—in her own words, and interviews with sit-in participants Ayanna Najuma and Joyce Jackson.

Visit www.okhistory.org/crossroads each month for a new issue of *Crossroads*!

Development News

By Larry O'Dell

This April is not only when we have our Annual Conference, but it is also when the OHS swears in its newly elected board members. The ballots are mailed to members the first of March and due by Friday, April 21, at noon. The OHS membership elects thirteen board members, with the other twelve appointed by the governor, all for three-year terms. In this particular election, the membership will select one board member each to represent Districts Five and Six, and three At-Large board members. Prospective board members are chosen by the Nominating Committee of the OHS Board of Directors. To run for a board position or to be appointed the nominee must be an OHS member for two continuous years. This year's nominees are all well qualified and capable.

The above OHS civics lesson conveys how important it is to vet and choose our board members. The OHS Board of Directors oversees the direction that the organization takes in its mission to collect, preserve, and share Oklahoma's history. With the membership electing a majority of the board, it is important to pay attention and support nominees that reflect core values of the OHS. I encourage all members to read the biographies carefully and cast a vote. Also, come and enjoy the Annual History Conference on April 26, 27, and 28 in Tulsa, Catoosa, and Claremore. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at lodell@okhistory.org or 405-522-6676.



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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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AROUND OKLAHOMA

Events

Head to **Miami** on Saturday, March 4, for the annual Peoria Stomp Dance. The stomp dance will take place from 7 p.m. to midnight. This cultural dance event of the Peoria tribe is an exciting display of slow, stomping steps set to rhythm. The traditional stomp dance ceremony contains both religious and social meaning. Experience American Indian heritage in a festival atmosphere complete with old-fashioned cake walks and raffles. Visitors are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and admission is free. The event will take place at the Ottawa-Peoria Cultural Center, located at 114 South Eight Tribes Trail in Miami. Please call 918-540-2535 for more information.

Celebrate the birthday of Bob Wills at Cain's Ballroom in **Tulsa** on Saturday, March 4. Bob Wills, known as "the King of Western Swing," was born on March 6, 1905. By 1935 Wills and his band were playing shows at Cain's Ballroom, making it the perfect setting to honor this legendary musician. Join the celebration and enjoy live music and dancing. Cain's Ballroom is located at 423 North Main Street in Tulsa. Please call 918-584-2306 for more information.

Celebrate the Land Run of 1889 at the fourteenth annual Choctaw Frontier Days (formerly known as the Land Run Festival) on Thursday, April 20, and Friday, April 21. This educational event will be held at Choctaw Creek Park in **Choctaw**. Bring the entire family to learn something new and enjoy American Indian fancy dancers, traditional cowboy camps, and gunfights. Choctaw Creek Park is located at 2001 North Harper Street in Choctaw. For more information please call 405-390-8198.

Tulsa Foundation for Architecture (TFA) presents the "Architecture & Design Film Festival: Tulsa" at Circle Cinema on Thursday, April 20, through Sunday, April 23. This festival celebrates the creative spirit behind the world's most remarkable architecture and design, and TFA is excited to bring it to **Tulsa**. Panel discussions, Q&A, and social events with internationally-known guests are all part of this entertaining and informative event. All are invited to enjoy four days of film and conversation. Tickets are available for purchase at www.circlecinema.com. Circle Cinema is located at 10 South Lewis Avenue in Tulsa. For more information please email outreach@tulsaarchitecture.org.

Meetings

Join the Oklahoma Genealogical Society (OGS) for its monthly meeting on Monday, March 6, at the Oklahoma History Center in **Oklahoma City**. Dr. Erin Taylor will be the speaker and the presentation is entitled "Researching Ancestors Who Were Institutionalized Due to Illness or Disability." The meeting and program will take place from 6 to 7:45 p.m., and experienced researchers will be available prior to the meeting at 5 p.m. to answer research questions. OGS meetings are free to attend and held the first Monday of each month at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in the State Capitol Complex. Please call 405-637-1907 for more information.

Join the Oklahoma Postal History Society for its upcoming monthly meetings at Saint Luke's United Methodist Church in **Oklahoma City**. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and the general public is encouraged to attend. On Tuesday, March 14, Joe Crosby will give a presentation on the post offices of Cleveland County. All members are encouraged to bring any Cleveland County postal markings, especially before statehood. On Tuesday, April 11, the members will bring their Oklahoma auxiliary postal markings to begin the study of this broad subject, including forwarded, returned to sender, no such address, lost in abandoned mail chute, and more. The Oklahoma Postal History Society holds regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month in Room 207 at Saint Luke's United Methodist Church. It is located at Northwest Fifteenth Street and Harvey Avenue in Oklahoma City. Visitors are always welcome. For more information please contact Joe Crosby at jocrosby@cox.net or 405-990-2389.

Announcements

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

man Prairie House is located at 814 West Oak Avenue in Duncan. For more information please call 580-251-0027.

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

Save the date for the 150th anniversary celebration of the historic Choate Cabin in **Indianola**. The celebration will take place on Saturday, May 27, with more information to come. The property can be visited by making an appointment. For more information please call 773-844-1804.

Exhibits

Experience American Indian culture at the Seminole Nation Museum in **Wewoka** with its newest exhibit, *Return from Exile: Contemporary Southeastern Indian Art*. This national traveling exhibition of American Indian art is on display now through Saturday, April 29. Regular hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Seminole Nation Museum is located at 524 South Wewoka Avenue in Wewoka. For more information please call 405-257-5580 or visit www.seminolenationmuseum.org.



Do you want your organization's meeting, event, exhibit, or announcement included in the "Around Oklahoma" section of *Mistletoe Leaves*? The "Around Oklahoma" section features Oklahoma history and heritage-related activities or programs sponsored by entities other than the Oklahoma Historical Society. To submit news items, please contact Evelyn Moxley, assistant editor, by email at emoxley@okhistory.org or by mail at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73105. If you wish a news item to appear in the May/June 2017 issue, you must submit it by Monday, April 3.

March events

- 1–25 Fifth annual *Trappings of the Cherokee Strip* exhibit of fine Western art and custom cowboy gear, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 1–31 *Did You See That?* exhibit, Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus
- 1–31 *Bridging the Chisholm Trail through Indian Territory* exhibit, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 2 Living History Education Day, Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson
- 2–3 Bessie Coleman living history performances, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 4 T. B. Ferguson Home presents “History of Feed Sacks” lecture by Renee Trindle, Watonga Public Library, Watonga
- 4 “Women’s History Month” First Saturday Hands-On History program, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 8 Brown Bag Lunch and Learn program by *Trappings* artist Barbara Jacques, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 10 Preserving Your Family Heirlooms class, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 11 Draft Horse program, Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson
- 11 “Save Our Stuff: Silver and Glass” lecture, Pawnee Bill Ranch, Pawnee
- 11 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 13–17 Spring Break activities, Will Rogers Memorial Museum and Birthplace Ranch, Claremore and Oologah
- 16 Mysteries of the Mansion tour, Henry Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 17 T. B. Ferguson Home’s annual Chicken Noodle Dinner, Blaine County Fairgrounds, Watonga
- 18 Thirtieth annual Family Kite Flite Day, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- 18 “Native Plants and Pollinators of Oklahoma” lecture, Pawnee Bill Ranch, Pawnee
- 18 Seventh annual Cowboy Round-Up, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 18 “Making and Playing with Toys” Family Saturday program, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 18 Third Saturday Living History program, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 18 Tatting workshop, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 20 Vernal Equinox Walks, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- 21 Lunch and Learn DNA Kit Discovery: Session One, Rose State College, Midwest City
- 25 Spring Bake Day, Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
- 28 Tracing Your Roots class, Rose State College, Midwest City
- 29–31 Fur Trade Rendezvous, Fort Washita Historic Site, Durant

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

April events

- 1–30 *Bridging the Chisholm Trail through Indian Territory* exhibit, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 1–2 Fur Trade Rendezvous, Fort Washita Historic Site, Durant
- 1 Chisholm Trail 150 Festival, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 1 Family Day at the Ranch, Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah
- 1 “Pioneers in Oklahoma” First Saturday Hands-On History program, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 4–15 *Red Dirt Student Art Show* exhibit, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Tracing Your Roots class, Rose State College, Midwest City
- 6 “Myth and Reality of the Chisholm Trail” presentation by Kathy Dickson, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 8 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 8–9 Chisholm Trail field trip with Friends of the Murrell Home, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 10 *Smoke Over Oklahoma: The Railroad Photographs of Preston George* exhibit opening and program, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 10 Tom Mix Museum annual membership meeting, Tom Mix Museum, Dewey
- 12 “Rowdy Town” Brown Bag Lunch and Learn program by Karen Sturm, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 14–15 Chuck Wagon Festival, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 15 Optimist Club Easter Egg Hunt, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 15 Annual Easter Egg Hunt—cosponsored by the Pawnee Lion’s Club and Pawnee Chamber of Commerce, Pawnee Bill Ranch, Pawnee
- 15 Annual Easter Egg Hunt, T. B. Ferguson Home, Watonga
- 15 Third Saturday Living History program, George M. Murrell Home, Park Hill
- 15 Tatting workshop, Chisholm Trail Museum, Kingfisher
- 16 Easter Sunrise Service and Friends of the Pawnee Bill Ranch Association Easter Breakfast Fundraiser, Pawnee Bill Ranch, Pawnee
- 17 “The Oklahomans: The Story of Oklahoma and Its People” lecture by John Dwyer, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 20 Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 20 Mysteries of the Mansion tour, Henry Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 21 *Pieces of a Collection* quilt exhibit opening reception, Pioneer Woman Museum, Ponca City
- 22–30 *Pieces of a Collection* quilt exhibit on display through September 16, Pioneer Woman Museum, Ponca City
- 26–28 Oklahoma History Conference, Hard Rock Hotel, Catoosa
- 29 Dutch Oven Cooking class, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City

Pieces of a Collection quilt exhibit at Pioneer Woman Museum

The Pioneer Woman Museum in Ponca City is pleased to announce the opening of a new exhibit entitled *Pieces of a Collection: Selected Quilts of the Pioneer Woman Museum*. On Friday, April 21, from 5 to 7 p.m. the Friends of Pioneer Woman Statue and Museum will host a special opening event. To make a reservation, please call 580-765-6108. *Pieces of a Collection* will highlight historically significant quilts and sewing implements from the museum’s permanent collection. The Pioneer Woman Museum is located at 701 Monument Road in Ponca City.



SHPO to host workshops

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will host four workshops at the Oklahoma History Center. Each workshop is devoted to one of the SHPO’s federal preservation programs and is designed for preservation professionals, government agency representatives, and concerned citizens. The sessions will be held Wednesday, May 10, through Friday, May 12. All workshops are free and open to the public, but the SHPO requests that participants register by Wednesday, May 3, at 5 p.m. Space is limited for all sessions and will be reserved on a first-come basis.

- Wednesday, May 10, 10:30 a.m. to noon—Certified Local Governments Program: The SHPO and Municipalities Preserving Community Heritage

- Wednesday, May 10, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.—Introduction to Section 106 and Determination of Eligibility for the National Register

- Thursday, May 11, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.—Working with the National Register of Historic Places

- Friday, May 12, 10:30 a.m. to noon—Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

- Friday, May 12, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.—The Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

All sessions will be held in the classroom at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. For more information or to register, please contact Jesse Matthews at jmatthews@okhistory.org or 405-521-6249. You also may register online at www.okhistory.org/shpo/workshops.

New collection received at the History Center

The Oklahoma History Center museum recently received a donation of twenty-seven artifacts from the professional lives of Yvonne Chouteau and Miguel Terekhov, founders of the School of Dance at the University of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma City Civic Ballet. The collection includes shoes from both Chouteau and Terekhov, a leather belt with “Miguel” tooled into it, and several dance costumes worn by Chouteau from childhood through adulthood, representing significant roles from her career. The Oklahoma Historical Society would like to thank their daughters Christina T. Conway and Elizabeth A. Impallomeni who donated these invaluable items.

The Oklahoma History Center is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Regular hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call 405-522-0765 for more information.



Bridging the Chisholm Trail through Indian Territory exhibit

The Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher is proud to announce its newest exhibit, *Bridging the Chisholm Trail through Indian Territory*—now on display! The more than 1,300-square-foot exhibit celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Chisholm Trail, showcases its history, and illustrates the impact of the Chisholm Trail in Indian Territory and the area that is now north-central Oklahoma. Features of the exhibit include a mural of the Cimarron River, large maps of the trail, a re-creation of the Red Fork Ranch, Cheyenne and Arapaho artifacts, the stories of outlaws along the trail, and a collection of barbed wire.

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

Oklahoma History Conference to be held in Catoosa

You are cordially invited to make a reservation to attend all or part of the OHS's annual Oklahoma History Conference scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, through Friday, April 28, at the Hard Rock Hotel in Catoosa. The theme for this year will be “Tall Tales and Blue Whales: The Cultural Influence of Northeastern Oklahoma.”

The 2017 conference will feature the following activities:

- A Wednesday evening concert at the historic Cain's Ballroom featuring Oklahoma native Ernie Fields, who has put bands together for *The Voice*, *American Idol*, and a number of national awards shows
- Sixteen presentation sessions on a wide range of topics pertaining to the theme
- The Annual Conference Luncheon on Thursday with Cherokee Chief Bill John Baker, Chickasaw Governor Bill Anoatubby, and Creek Chief James Floyd invited to speak
- A choice of two bus tours, one to the Port of Catoosa and the other tour including Route 66 stops at the Blue Whale, the Foyil Totem Pole Park, the Claremore Historical Society Museum, and the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch
- A dinner and program at the Will Rogers Memorial on Thursday evening
- The Annual Awards Luncheon on Friday, including the induction of new members into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame and the presentation of other awards

- A plenary session featuring Nora Guthrie and Carolyn Wills, the daughters of Woody Guthrie and Bob Wills

The Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, located at 777 West Cherokee Street in Catoosa, is the host hotel for this year's conference. To reserve a room, please call 1-800-760-6700 or reserve online at www.HardRockCasinoTulsa.com. Click the “Start Your Reservation” button, then click “Group Code.” Our group code is OKHISTORYAPRIL2017 and the rate for a standard room is the state rate of \$91. Be sure to call and make your reservation by Wednesday, April 5, to get the special rate. The special rates are good for the nights of April 26 and 27.

Registration forms and a detailed schedule will be mailed to OHS members, and this information also can be found at www.okhistory.org/conference. We will hold your name tag, event admissions, and other materials in a packet at our registration table. The deadline for registration is Friday, April 21.

If you have any questions about the Oklahoma History Conference events, please contact Larry O'Dell at lodell@okhistory.org or 405-522-6676 or Shelly Crynes at scrynes@okhistory.org or 405-522-0317.

The OHS wishes to give a special thank you to the Cherokee Nation as a conference sponsor for the 2017 Oklahoma History Conference.



Doris “Coke” Lane Meyer 1919–2017

Doris “Coke” Lane Meyer, the great-niece and perhaps the last of Will Rogers's relatives who personally knew him, died on Sunday, January 29, 2017. She was ninety-seven.

Born November 12, 1919, in Chelsea, she spent a great deal of her childhood in Chelsea with her paternal grandmother, Maud Ethel Rogers Lane, Will's sister. Among her fondest memories of her great-uncle were the things he did to make his sister more comfortable when she was ill and before her death in 1925, when Coke was just six years old and living with her grandparents.

She said when Will came to visit while she lived in Bartlesville he “ate with us, but stayed at Woolaroc in the main lodge [Will was a great friend of the Phillips family]. His room was on the mezzanine.”

She shared her love and her stories of her uncle with many, rarely missing any activities at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum, even during the past year. She was a member of the Museum Ropers docent program.

She was often the spokesperson for the family and was responsible, along with former museum directors Joe and Michelle Carter, with putting together a 125th anniversary celebration of Will's November 4, 1879, birth in 2004.



Candidates for election to the OHS Board of Directors announced

OHS members will receive election ballots, candidate biographies, and related materials by mail. We hope that members will take time to consider the candidates and participate in the 2017 election. To facilitate that process, the candidate names are printed below. Members will be asked to vote for one candidate from District Five, one candidate from District Six, and three of the State At-Large candidates. Please return your ballots to the address listed on the form by April 21.

District Five

Jack Baker, Oklahoma City
R. Eugene Earsom, Oklahoma City
Joyce Jackson, Oklahoma City

District Six

Deena Fisher, Woodward
Dallas Mayer, Hooker

State At-Large

T. S. Akers, Oklahoma City
Harold Aldridge, Tahlequah
Teresa Black Bradway, Clayton
Billie Fogarty, Oklahoma City
Leonard Logan, Vinita
Kenny Sivard, Idabel

Spring Bake Day at Fort Gibson

Fort Gibson Historic Site and the Friends of Fort Gibson will host Spring Bake Day on Saturday, March 25, beginning at 10 a.m. Bake Day is a fundraiser and educational event that depicts one aspect of army life during and after the Civil War. The aroma of fresh baked bread will fill the air on Garrison Hill as Fort Gibson staff and volunteers bring a bake house to life. This living history presentation details the bread making process, with Rory Montgomery explaining how to bake bread in an old wood-fired stone oven. Guests can enjoy bread baking demonstrations and sample the finished product. Visitors also may bring their own bread to bake in the oven at Fort Gibson, then spend the day viewing a reconstruction of the early log fort as well as original buildings from the 1840s through 1870s. Exhibits detailing the history of the fort are located in the Commissary Visitor Center on Garrison Hill. For more information please contact Omar Reed at 918-478-4088 or oreed@okhistory.org. Fort Gibson is a National Historic Landmark and is located at 907 North Garrison in Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.

Kite Flight Day and Vernal Equinox Walks at Spiro Mounds

Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center will celebrate the beginning of spring with the thirtieth annual Family Kite Flite Day on Saturday, March 18, and a series of guided Vernal Equinox Walks on Monday, March 20.

Family Kite Flite Day will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on March 18. This will be a free admission day, although donations are appreciated. It will be a great day for families and folks of all ages. Each year since 1987, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center has hosted a day of spring fun and learning. Guests are welcome to bring lawn chairs, blankets, picnics, and kites to this free event. Kite flying demonstrations, arts and crafts vendors, a children's area, bubble making, a sandbox where visitors can dig for treasures, and kite giveaways are just a few of the activities that will take place. Members of the Spiro Boy Scouts also will help people make their own free sled kite. The OHS, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, and the Spiro Mounds Development Association sponsor this event.

On March 20 there will be three guided Vernal Equinox Walks at 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m., led by archaeologist and manager Dennis Peterson. Each walk will take approximately two hours and require one mile of easy walking. Attendees will learn about the importance of spring to American Indians. Peterson will tell about this unique, prehistoric American Indian mound site, the types of mounds, why they were created, and why some of the mounds are lined up for the sunsets of the solstices and equinoxes. He will discuss the history of the excavations, American Indian ceremonies and stories, tales of the unusual happenings associated with the mounds, and answer your questions.

There is a small fee for this series of tours of \$5 for adults and \$3 for children in addition to the regular entrance fee of \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors, and \$4 for children. Payment may be made by cash or check, but credit cards are not accepted. Members of the OHS and the Spiro Mounds Development Association pay no entrance fee. No reservations are required except for large groups.

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

2017 Statewide Preservation Conference

Save the dates June 7–9, 2017, for Oklahoma's Twenty-Ninth Annual Statewide Preservation Conference to be held in Oklahoma City. The conference will feature plenary sessions, workshops, concurrent tracks of sessions, SHPO's annual awards banquet, and special events. More information will be published in the May/June 2017 issue of *Mistletoe Leaves* (vol. 48, no. 3).

Bessie Coleman to visit the History Center

The Oklahoma History Center is proud to announce multiple performances by Dr. Daisy Century portraying Bessie Coleman, America's first licensed African American female pilot. Dr. Century's presentations will be Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m. and Friday, March 3, at 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. for school groups and 2 p.m. for the general public. Cost for tickets will be \$5 for OHS members, \$10 for the general public and no charge for school groups. A special price for family memberships of \$25 will be offered at this performance to receive the discounted price for future living history programs. Tickets may be purchased at the History Center or by calling 405-522-0765. Seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis.

Bessie grew up in a family of thirteen children in Texas, leaving there for a short time to complete one term at Oklahoma Colored Agricultural and Normal University (now Langston University) in Langston, Oklahoma. Learn more about the fascinating life of Bessie Coleman at this living history performance by Dr. Daisy Century.

Dr. Century of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is well known as an educator, writer, and historical interpreter. Appearing previously at the History Center as Sojourner Truth—a former slave, preacher, and crusader for women's rights—Dr. Century provided guests with an impressive and moving historical reenactment of Truth's famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman." Among Dr. Century's other interpretations are Harriet Tubman, Phillis Wheatley, and Madam C. J. Walker. She has taught in the Philadelphia School System for twenty years and is an award-winning science teacher.

Funding for this program is provided in part by a grant from Oklahoma Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Oklahoma History Center is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City.

Call for nominations for the twenty-fourth annual Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame

The Oklahoma Higher Education Heritage Society (OHEHS) is now accepting nominations for its twenty-fourth annual Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame induction. Nominations must be submitted by Friday, March 17. A nomination form can be downloaded from the OHEHS website or requested by calling 405-522-0779. The OHEHS, established in 1991 as a nonprofit to support awareness of higher education's vital role in Oklahoma history, has inducted more than two hundred individuals into the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame since its establishment in 1994.

The Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame was established to recognize and honor individuals, living and deceased, for outstanding, meritorious service to higher education in Oklahoma. This year, 2017, represents the twenty-fourth year that OHEHS will honor higher education educators and administrators, as well as those who support higher education with distinguished contributions.

To be eligible for induction, an individual must have been employed by one or more institutions of public or private higher education in Oklahoma on a full-time basis for a minimum of ten years. Individuals not so employed, but who have performed outstanding service to higher education in the state, or organizations or institutions that have performed such service, also are eligible for consideration, such service to be above and beyond financial contributions. Individuals employed by an institution of higher education in Oklahoma in an area of infrastructure and support services on a full-time basis for a minimum of ten years also may be considered for induction.

The twenty-fourth annual formal induction ceremony and banquet will be held on October 17, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Biographical sketches and photos of past hall of fame inductees are available on the Oklahoma Higher Education Heritage Society website, www.ohehs.org, as well as the Higher Education kiosk in the Education exhibit at the Oklahoma History Center. For more information about the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame or the Oklahoma Higher Education Heritage Society, visit www.ohehs.org or call 405-522-0779.



Fort Washita to host Fur Trade Rendezvous

Fort Washita in Durant will host a Fur Trade Rendezvous from Wednesday, March 29, through Sunday, April 2. This is a living history event reminiscent of a fur trade rendezvous that was the center of commerce on the early western frontier. Visitors can expect to see trappers representing the far northwest mountain areas to the desert southwest, as well as traders with French and Spanish influence. Visit Fort Washita and experience the sights, sounds, and smells of history. Due to the recent transfer of ownership and new partnership with the Chickasaw Nation, this Fur Trade Rendezvous will be free to attend.

The rendezvous will include instructive programs in customs, survival skills, and lifestyles of the period. Education programs for school children will be held on Thursday, March 30, and Friday, March 31. Students will travel through the camps where reenactors will explain life on the frontier in the early nineteenth century. There also will be short educational programs for the public on Saturday, April 1.

Please call 580-924-6502 for more information. Fort Washita was established in 1842 in Indian Territory as the southwestern-most military post of the United States. A National Historic Landmark, Fort Washita is located at 3348 State Road 199 in Durant.

NRHP Nomination Grant applications available

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

Applications and detailed instructions are available from the SHPO. The deadline for round one applications is 5 p.m. on April 3, and the deadline for round two applications is 5 p.m. on June 5. To obtain or submit a NRHP Nomination Grant application form, please visit www.okhistory.org/shpo/nrgrant.htm. You also may contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249. Information about the SHPO and its programs, including the NRHP, is available at www.okhistory.org/shpo.

Friends of the Murrell Home to celebrate Chisholm Trail 150th

The Friends of the Murrell Home will host a presentation entitled "Myth and Reality of the Chisholm Trail" on Thursday, April 6, and the fourteenth annual Friends field trip along the old Chisholm Trail on Saturday and Sunday, April 8–9.

Celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Chisholm Trail and learn something new during a presentation on April 6, at 6:30 p.m. The Friends of the Murrell Home Historic Site in Park Hill will host Kathy Dickson, OHS director of museums and historic sites, as she discusses the "Myth and Reality of the Chisholm Trail" that was named for Cherokee trader Jesse Chisholm. A question and answer session will follow. The presentation is free and open to the public. From 1867 to 1885, millions of Texas longhorns made their way from Texas to Kansas along the Chisholm Trail. The cattle trail and its cowboys were already becoming legend as the spectacle of the Chisholm Trail was still unfolding. For the past three years, Dickson has been working with a self-organized group called the Chisholm Trail 150th Coalition. She will provide details of 150th celebration events and the Chisholm Trail badge program, which encourages travel up and down the trail. The coalition created the badge program, the www.chisholmtrail150.org website, and has printed rack cards that have been widely distributed.

Continue the journey and join the Friends of the Murrell Home on a two-day field trip along the old Chisholm Trail—from the Red River to the Cherokee Strip. The bus will depart from the Murrell Home on April 8 at 7:30 a.m. and will return on April 9 at 7:30 p.m. This field trip is open to OHS members, and will focus on Cherokees who went west after the Civil War to seek their fortunes outside the Cherokee Nation. Travelers will experience the trail through ghost towns, trading posts, watering holes, trail ruts, cow camps, Tom Latimer, Jesse Chisholm and Pat Hennessey gravesites, Chisholm Trail museums in Enid and Duncan, scrumptious food, presentations, storytellers, story sharing, music, movies, and more.

The cost for the trip varies based on your lodging choice and double occupancy. Option A is \$159, Option B is \$179, and Option C is \$219. For more information or to reserve your seat, please contact the Murrell Home at 918-456-2751 or murrellhome@okhistory.org. The Murrell Home, a National Historic Landmark, is located three miles south of Tahlequah at 19479 East Murrell Home Road in Park Hill.

Fort Towson to host Living History Education Day

Fort Towson Historic Site will host Living History Education Day on Thursday, March 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Educational stations will include reenactors portraying time periods from the fort's beginning through the 1860s. Participants can expect to see soldiers in full gear and civilians who dealt with the soldiers at the fort. The reenactors will tell students about the uniforms, weapons, and lifestyles of soldiers, trappers, storekeepers, and other people around the region who were connected to the fort. Visitors will move from station to station to see demonstrations about military life.

There is no charge for this opportunity to learn about our state's history, but reservations are required for Living History Education Day. To schedule a school field trip, please make reservations by contacting John Davis at jdavis@okhistory.org or 580-873-2634. Teachers must accompany each group, and a ratio of one adult for every eight students is recommended. Individuals who make a reservation will be met upon their arrival and instructed to proceed to the many educational stations.

The fort was established in 1824 as Cantonment Towson, named for War of 1812 hero General Nathan Towson. It was located on the boundary with Mexico (present-day Texas) and served as a buffer area between the Choctaws and western Plains tribes. After the signing of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, the renamed Fort Towson was expanded to include several buildings and was an endpoint for Choctaw removal. It was a staging area during the Mexican War, but was then largely abandoned until the Civil War.

In the 1820s Josiah Doak established a trading post nearby that would become the town of Doakville. As roads were created to bring supplies to Fort Towson from places like Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Fort Jessup, Louisiana, commerce flourished in Doakville. Steamboats carried goods to and from the town. The prosperous town was the capital of the Choctaw Nation for a brief period in the mid-1800s before the tribe moved the capital farther west in Indian Territory. After Fort Towson was abandoned, the town declined until it was bypassed by the railroad in 1870. Doakville is now an interpreted archaeological site with a walking trail that passes the remains of town structures.

Fort Towson Historic Site is located one mile east of the town of Fort Towson and three-quarters of a mile north on Highway 70E.



Smithsonian Affiliations
Membership Program

Spring Break activities at Will Rogers Memorial Museum and Birthplace Ranch

Parents, give your children the opportunity to experience childhood as Will Rogers would have on his Indian Territory Ranch this March! Spring Break activities will be held Monday, March 13, through Friday, March 17, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum and the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch. There will be new activities each day focusing on different aspects of Will's life, including sports, horses and riding, aviation, writing, and entertainment. The programs will take place at the museum on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and at the ranch on Tuesday and Thursday. This year's Spring Break activities will be free for ages seventeen and under thanks to a generous education sponsorship from Win and Kay Ingersoll of Ingersoll Ranch.

A few of the activities that will take place throughout the week include creating movie posters, newspaper writing with a writer from the *Claremore Progress*, behind-the-scenes tours for parents, a paper airplane flying contest, cattle brand making, horseshoes, roping, and the Mid-Afternoon Frolic Talent Show on Friday. More information and entry forms for the talent show can be found at www.willrogers.com/spring-break. The Will Rogers Memorial Museum is located at 1720 West Will Rogers Boulevard in Claremore. The Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch is located at 9501 East 380 Road in Oologah. Please email wrinfo@willrogers.com or call 800-324-9455 for more information.

