



## The 2021 Oklahoma History Conference goes virtual

Join the Oklahoma Historical Society as we present the 2021 Oklahoma History Conference, “Perspectives in History,” April 22–23. We are excited to announce that this year’s conference will be virtual and free to the public. This is a unique opportunity for the OHS to reach new audiences and offer a diverse range of topics.

The 2021 conference theme is “Perspectives in History.” This theme was designed to encourage presentations featuring stories about underrepresented groups, lesser-known topics, and new points of view. Participants will have the opportunity to attend 22 presentations, including five professional development sessions tailored for students, educators, genealogists, archivists, and museum professionals.

The conference schedule will include 11 live sessions as well as 11 on-demand sessions. Live sessions will include a presentation, followed by an opportunity for the virtual audience to ask questions of the speakers via the online chat.

On-demand sessions are prerecorded presentations that will be available online beginning at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 22. Attendees may view these sessions at their convenience, and these also will be archived on the OHS website.

Conference activities of note include opening remarks from our new Executive Director Trait Thompson, a special musical performance by the Red Dirt Rangers in honor of the late Steve Ripley, and the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame Induction and Awards Ceremony. We are proud to announce that our keynote speaker will be celebrated poet, author, and musician Joy Harjo.

This virtual conference is free to attend, but preregistration is required. For a complete schedule and to register, please visit [www.okhistory.org/conference](http://www.okhistory.org/conference). Registration will open Monday, March 1, at 8 a.m. For conference or registration questions, please contact Angela Spindle at 405-414-8067 or [aspindle@okhistory.org](mailto:aspindle@okhistory.org).

## Joy Harjo to give keynote speech at 2021 Oklahoma History Conference



The OHS is pleased to present Joy Harjo, the 23rd poet laureate of the United States, as the keynote speaker for the 2021 Oklahoma History Conference. Harjo will speak at noon on Thursday, April 22, following the conference’s morning sessions.

Joy Harjo’s nine books of poetry include *An American Sunrise*, *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings*, *How We Became Human: New and Selected Poems*, and *She Had Some Horses*. Harjo’s memoir, *Crazy Brave*, won several awards, including the PEN USA Lit-

erary Award for Creative Non-Fiction and the American Book Award. She coedited two anthologies of contemporary Native women’s writing: *When the Light of the World was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through* and *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language: Native Women’s Writings of North America*, one of the *London Observer’s* Best Books of 1997. She is the recipient of the Ruth Lilly Prize from the Poetry Foundation for Lifetime Achievement, the 2015 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets for proven mastery in the art of poetry, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America, and the United States Artist Fellowship. In 2014 she was inducted into the Oklahoma Writers Hall of Fame. A renowned musician, Harjo performs with her saxophone nationally and internationally, solo and with her band, the Arrow Dynamics. She has five award-winning CDs of music including the album *Red Dreams, A Trail Beyond Tears* and *Winding Through the Milky Way*, which won a Native American Music Award for Best Female Artist of the Year in 2009. Harjo’s latest work is a book of poetry from Norton, *An American Sunrise*. In 2019 Joy Harjo was appointed the 23rd US Poet Laureate, the first Native American to hold the position. She lives in Tulsa.

## Inasmuch Foundation gives grant to digitize *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*

The OHS is pleased to announce that the Friends of the Oklahoma History Center recently received a grant from Inasmuch Foundation in the amount of \$35,000 to fund a project to digitize its scholarly journal, *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*. This grant also honors the work of Dr. Bob Blackburn, who began his career with the OHS as editor of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* and recently retired after 41 years of service to the state.

The OHS is currently in the process of uploading full issues of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* to The Gateway to Oklahoma History, an online repository of Oklahoma history housing historic newspapers, photographs, maps, and documents. Funds from this grant will be used to pay staff to process digitized issues of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* in such a way as to give patrons the ability to download and/or print individual articles, book reviews, meeting minutes, or other specific content from each issue. This process would make *The Chronicles* available online in a manner that resembles the online presence of other scholarly, historical journals. Browse available full issues at [bit.ly/ChroniclesOK](http://bit.ly/ChroniclesOK).

2021 marks the centennial of the publication of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*. First issued in 1921 as the official journal of the OHS, the works published in *The Chronicles* cover the depth and breadth of Oklahoma’s rich history, and we invite you to join the OHS in celebrating its centennial.

This project has been made possible through the generous support of Inasmuch Foundation. Inasmuch Foundation champions journalism, education, human services and community to improve the quality of life for Oklahomans.







## Director's Column

**By Trait Thompson**  
**Executive Director**

Since taking the reins of the Oklahoma Historical Society in January, the old Johnny Cash song, "I've Been Everywhere" has been playing in my head. I suspect if he had written an Oklahoma version of the song, the places mentioned would mirror my travel schedule over the past 30 days:

I've been to Enid, Tahlequah, Fort Gibson,  
And should I mention:  
Atoka, Pawnee, Ponca City,  
Ain't it pretty!  
Clinton, Kingfisher, Spiro  
Here we go!

As Dr. Blackburn and I were preparing for this transition of leadership, we both felt it would be beneficial to see our museums and historic sites for myself. Along the way, I had the incredible opportunity to spend hours of uninterrupted time with Dr. Blackburn learning about the backstory of our OHS sites and the people who make them successful. All told, we traveled more than 2,000 miles across Oklahoma in my first month!

At every site I visited, I was impressed by our incredible staff members. They are resourceful, knowledgeable, hard-working, and efficient. At most sites, the output produced is triple what one might expect based on our staff levels. Perhaps the thing I am most proud of is that the COVID-19 pandemic has not kept them down. In fact, they have used the pandemic as an opportunity to pivot operations and initiate new projects that will help us to better serve our visitors, both virtual and in-person, once the crisis has lifted.

At Hunter's Home in Tahlequah, David Fowler and his team have taken on a few projects that would have been difficult to execute with a full slate of on-site events. The overhead electrical wires have been moved underground to help take the property back to its 1840s appearance. They are currently clearing brush for an orchard and building a 19th-century style fence to prepare for the arrival of a herd of Merino sheep. This is another step in making Hunter's Home a living history farm.

When tourist travel on Route 66 came to a halt last year, Pat Smith, director of the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, and her staff took it upon themselves to repair the museum sign, restripe the parking lot, and paint the building's exterior. Ronny Brown and his staff at the Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum will welcome visitors back with a newly remodeled entry gallery at the museum.

In addition to physical improvements to some of our properties, our staff members have put countless hours into virtual programming. Honey Springs Battlefield hosted its annual memorial service online, and visitors from around the world have participated in the site's virtual lectures. The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid hosted a three-part virtual lecture series on women's history entitled, "This Land is Herland." Other

online programs have ranged from a children's story time led by a cowboy to an Oklahoma history book club.

Our passionate and dedicated staff members have not let a global pandemic get them down. Instead, they have set up the OHS to be back and better than ever when our visitors return.

## OHS Board of Directors election

Pursuant to the provisions of Article VII, Section 4, of the bylaws of the Oklahoma Historical Society, OHS members will receive a ballot in the mail to vote for board members for the OHS Board of Directors.

OHS members will vote for the four (4) persons whom they wish to serve on the OHS Board. Vote for one (1) person in District 2, one (1) person in District 4, and two (2) persons in the State At-Large category.

The candidates are as follows:

District 2—Leonard Logan (Vinita), Jonita Mullins (Muskogee), Jimmie White (Warner)

District 4—Neal Leader (Norman), Gerard "Jerry" Medina (Norman), Lindsay Robertson (Norman)

State At-Large—Billie Stone Fogarty (Oklahoma City), Joyce Jackson (Oklahoma City), Sunu Kodumthara (Yukon), Shirley Ann Ballard Nero (Clearview), Barbara Thompson (Oklahoma City)

Please mail the envelope, or deliver it in person, to arrive before the deadline of noon on Friday, April 16, 2021. Members may receive two ballots because of their membership category.

## Development News

By Larry O'Dell

For the first time in its existence, the Oklahoma History Conference will be held virtually. This is challenging, but creates interesting opportunities. Through this format, the conference can include significant and in-demand speakers from across the country, including US Poet Laureate Joy Harjo, Russell Cobb (University of Alberta), and Randall Hopkins (Oregon). It also allows attendees to view the sessions from any location with an internet connection. This year's sessions include a number of interesting and diverse topics and speakers on the conference theme "Perspectives in History."

With this new opportunity to expand the audience for the Oklahoma History Conference, we plan to make it free to those who would like to participate. There are still costs associated with the conference, and the OHS is soliciting sponsorships. There are five levels ranging from \$4,000 to \$250 for inclusion in the Exhibitor and Sponsor Hall webpage. Please contact me at 405-522-6676 or lodell@okhistory.org to inquire about the sponsor levels and benefits. You can find out more about the conference in this issue of *Mistletoe Leaves*.



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

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

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# OHS Calendar

## March

- 1-31 "Life at Hunter's Home: Women of Hunter's Home" (VIRTUAL), Hunter's Home, [www.facebook.com/huntershomeok](http://www.facebook.com/huntershomeok)
- 6 Civil War presentation with Dr. James Finck (VIRTUAL), Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
- 13 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 15-19 Spring Break activities, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 17 Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 19 Vernal Equinox Walks, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- 25 "History and Haunts of the Mansion," Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 26 Movie Night, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 27 *The Harvey Girls: Opportunity Bound* film screening, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City

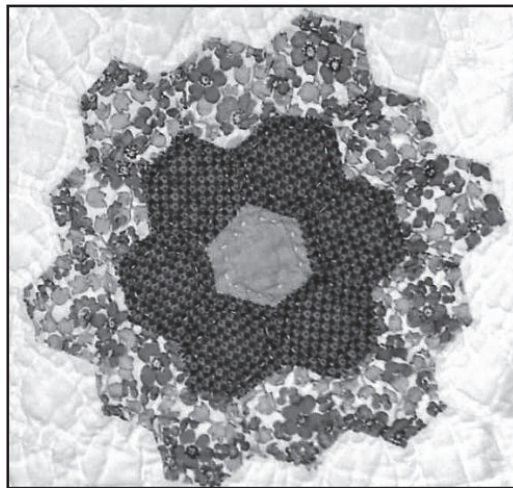
## April

- 1 *Hammered Aluminum Ware* exhibit opens, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 3 *Tying the Knot* exhibit closes, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 3 Optimist Club Easter Egg Hunt, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 4 Sunrise Service, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 10 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 10 Will's Barter Bash, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 15 Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 17 *America's National Parks at 100* film screening, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 17 Family Day at the Museum, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 21 Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 22-23 Oklahoma History Conference (VIRTUAL), [www.okhistory.org/conference](http://www.okhistory.org/conference)
- 24 Gardening 101 class, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 30 *Hammered Aluminum Ware* exhibit closes, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 30 Movie Night and The Shindig, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore

Please visit [www.okhistory.org/events](http://www.okhistory.org/events) for additional information about OHS events, programs, and exhibits.

## Quilting at the Sod House Museum

Visit the Sod House Museum southeast of Aline on Saturday, March 13, and Saturday, April 10, for its monthly quilting workshop. These workshops will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. with instructor Martha Ray, and the cost is \$5 per person. For more information, please contact Sod House Museum Director Renee Trindle at 580-463-2441 or [sodhouse@okhistory.org](mailto:sodhouse@okhistory.org). The Sod House Museum is located at 4628 State Highway 8 near Aline.



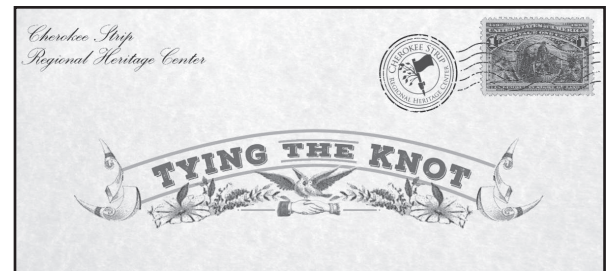
## Saturday fun at Will Rogers Memorial Museum

The first three Saturdays in April will be full of fun at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum. The festivities begin on April 3 with the annual Optimist Club Easter Egg Hunt on the hill at 11:30 a.m. Be sure to arrive early to grab a place on the starting line—this event will be over nearly as quickly as it begins!

On April 10 the museum will host Will's Barter Bash from 1 to 3 p.m. outside near the sunken garden. This trading day for kids gives them the opportunity to clear out their closets; set up a blanket on the memorial's lawn; and trade toys, games, and other fun items. No money will change hands—this is strictly a day for bartering. This event will take place monthly through October, and no registration is necessary.

These fun Saturday kids' activities at the Will Rogers Memorial Museum wrap up on April 17 with Family Day from 1 to 3 p.m. Join the staff at the memorial as they explore candy that Will might have enjoyed from the 1920s. Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory will be on-site for chocolate-making demonstrations and samples.

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum is located at 1720 West Will Rogers Boulevard in Claremore. For more information, please call 918-341-0719 or visit [www.willrogers.com](http://www.willrogers.com).



## Tying the Knot at CSRHC

On Friday, January 15, the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center (CSRHC) in Enid opened a new temporary exhibit entitled *Tying the Knot*. The exhibit examines the history of courtship and weddings in Oklahoma and beyond. Visitors will learn about traditions surrounding Victorian courtship and wedding rituals, and how those customs were adapted to the West and changed over time. For guests interested in the evolution of wedding fashion, the exhibit features 14 beautiful wedding gowns, dating from 1873 to 2010.

The exhibit, designed by CSRHC staff, is open to the public through Saturday, April 3. The CSRHC is located at 507 South Fourth Street in Enid. For more information about this exhibit, please call 580-237-1907.

## Gardening 101 at the Oklahoma History Center

Looking to hone your green thumb? The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) Education Department will host a Gardening 101 class on Saturday, April 24, from 9 a.m. to noon. Participants will learn gardening fundamentals and tips in the beautiful setting of the Red River Journey gardens at the OHC. Cost for this class is \$10 for OHS members and \$15 for non-members, and the registration deadline is Saturday, April 17. The class is limited to 30 participants, so sign up early to reserve your spot.

For more information, please contact Torie Taylor at 405-522-0793 or visit [www.okhistory.org/historycenter/classes](http://www.okhistory.org/historycenter/classes).



Root vegetables on the Red River Journey



## New Oklahoma National Register listings

The Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce eight new National Register of Historic Places listings for Oklahoma. The National Register of Historic Places is our nation's official list of properties significant in our past.

The construction of the Bridgeport Bridge, located at North US Highway 281 over the South Canadian River in Caddo County, challenged the Oklahoma State Highway Commission because of its difficult crossing and existing tensions between the commission and the Bureau of Public Roads over routing and design. During an arduous period of negotiations, with its funding at one point nearly halted, the highway agencies devised a mutually acceptable plan that could withstand the river's vagaries with an eye toward economization. The bridge is comprised of a series of 38 identical standard camel-back pony truss spans, erected over concrete piers sitting on pneumatic foundations. Completed in 1933 and spanning 3,944 feet, it was Oklahoma's longest bridge, the longest toll-free crossing on US Highway 66, and the longest example of its type in the United States. The bridge was previously listed as a contributing resource to the National Register of Historic Places as the Bridgeport Hill-Hydro Route 66 Segment (NRIS #04000129) at the local level of significance, but is now individually listed at the national level of significance with a period of significance of 1933 to 1962 for Transportation and Engineering.



**Bridgeport Bridge**

The Young Cemetery, located off Seven Sisters Hills Road near US Highway 177 in rural Carter County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for Exploration/Settlement and Ethnic Heritage: Native American. The period of significance extends from the establishment of the cemetery and its first burial in 1887 through 1933, the approximate year that the land of the Young Community was sold to Charles Goddard and incorporated into the more than 12,000-acre Goddard Ranch. The site is significant as the final resting place of those who settled in and developed the no lon-

ger extant community of Young, Indian Territory, and their descendants, and it is the only remaining evidence of this once-bustling little community. The Young family, who established the town and the cemetery, was of Chickasaw descent and many interred there are of Chickasaw heritage. The Young Cemetery is still used by their descendants today.



**Young Cemetery**

The Alcorn-Pickrel House located at 200 North 10th Street in Ponca City, Kay County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for its Prairie School architectural style. John S. Alcorn, one of the vice presidents of E. W. Marland's oil company, hired Elmer Boillot to design a modern home. Influenced by the Prairie School style that was popular in the early 20th century, especially in the Midwest, Boillot designed a two-story home on the lot. The house exhibits architectural features common to the Prairie School outside and inside. In the little over 100 years that the building has existed, very few changes have occurred to the exterior and interior of the home, thus the home retains its architectural integrity. The period of significance begins with the construction of the home in 1918 and coincides with the oil boom in the Ponca City area.



**Alcorn-Pickrel House**

The Hotel Lowrey, located at 301 Dewey Avenue in Poteau, Le Flore County, on the town's main commercial thoroughfare, is locally significant in the area of Commerce with a period of significance of 1922, when the building was built, to 1965, the date at which the hotel closed and it shifted to college housing. It was Poteau's largest commercial office and retail building, and it remains the town's largest building of the Classical Revival style. In 1931 and 1932 additional Classical Revival details were added, exterior window upgrades were made, and the interior was slightly reconfigured so that the building became a combined hotel and office building. It represents the town's business and commercial development during the 1920s and 1930s as part of a national pattern of town boosterism by typical local entrepreneurs during an era of economic expansion and population mobility.



**Hotel Lowrey**

The Schultz/Neal Stone Barn, located off US Highway 177/OK 15 in the Red Rock vicinity of rural Noble County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for Architecture with a period of significance of 1941, the year construction was completed, to 1954, when repairs following a 1951 fire are documented to have been completed. The barn was built on behalf of Richard Schultz, president of Red Rock State Bank, who was among the wealthiest individuals in Noble County. Schultz recruited as many as 30 workers to build the structure. Many of these workers were German Americans, and some had worked previously on the E. W. Marland Mansion (NRIS #73001561) in Ponca City. In 1947 John Byron "Cowboy" Neal leased the ranchland that in-



**Schultz/Neal Stone Barn**



## New National Register listings (cont.)

cluded the barn and continued to use the property until the early 1990s, utilizing the barn primarily for hay storage. By all accounts, the Schultz/Neal Stone Barn is “the largest free-standing rock barn” in Oklahoma and is a prominent local landmark in Noble County.

The McClean Family Residence, located at 141 NE 26th Street in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for Architecture. Built in 1911, the home is an outstanding local example of Prairie School architecture in what was originally the rural outskirts of northeast Oklahoma City. Members of the McClean family—including John, his wife Nellie, and their daughters Ila and Frances—occupied the home for almost 80 years. Most notably, Ila and Frances, along with Frances’s husband, Ossie Perry Estes, and their three sons, resided in the home for more than 50 years. The historic use of the building as a single-family home is unique in an area of Oklahoma City otherwise characterized by commercial warehouses, offices, oil wells, and the Oklahoma State Capitol Complex. The McClean Family Residence recalls the early, rural history of northeast Oklahoma City.



**McClean Family Residence**

The Tulsa Boys’ Home Historic District, bounded by East Eighth Street, South Quincy Avenue, East Seventh Street, and South Rockford Avenue in Tulsa, Tulsa County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for Social History. The Tulsa Boys’ Home Historic District was the first and only institutional childcare facility for adolescent boys in Tulsa and is one of the oldest continually operated institutional childcare facilities in the city. Founded in 1918, the Tulsa Boys’ Home housed homeless and troubled boys aged 10 to 16. The home began with five boys in a wood-frame house, expanding and relocating as demand for its services grew. In 1927 the Tulsa Boys’ Home purchased a former girls’ home at the listed site, increasing its capacity to 50 boys. It remained at this location for the next

50 years. The complex was designed by Tulsa architect Joseph Koberling and constructed from 1949 to 1963 to replace the outdated wood-frame buildings with five larger, more modern institutional buildings. Four of the five buildings were dormitories, and one building housed administrative and social services. The large-scale expansion of the home illustrates the importance of the Tulsa Boys’ Home in Tulsa’s institutional childcare history as the only provider of care for adolescent boys in the city. The period of significance begins in 1949 with the initial construction of the existing buildings, and ends in 1978 when the Tulsa Boys’ Home relocated to Sand Springs.



**Tulsa Boys’ Home Historic District**

The First United Methodist Church at 500 South Johnstone Avenue in Bartlesville, Washington County, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance for Architecture as an excellent example of the architectural evolution of religious facilities during the 20th century. The First United Methodist Church represents four construction phases that occurred over a 60-year period between 1927 and 1987. Each wing represents its era of construction through architectural style. Although each portion of the building was constructed during a separate phase, continuity of materials and architectural elements unify the sections and create a cohesive complex. The 1954 Modern Movement A-frame sanctuary represents the second construction phase and operates as the central functional component of the church complex. Secondary complex elements include the 1927 education wing, 1956 Sneed Chapel, and the 1987 administration and education wing addition. The 1927 education wing communicates a restrained expression of the Collegiate Gothic style. In contrast, the dramatic A-frame form of the 1954 sanctuary, with its buff brick and concrete exterior, was an early example of an architectural trend that moved away from previous revival styles in religious architecture during the mid-20th century. The 1956 Modern Movement Sneed Chapel employs the same materials to visually

and physically link the 1954 A-frame sanctuary to the 1927 wing. The 1987 administration and education wing expresses a Post-Modern aesthetic through exaggerated crenellations and pointed arch windows.



**First United Methodist Church,  
Bartlesville**

The State Historic Preservation Office identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for the special distinction of listing in the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, visit [www.okhistory.org/shpo/nationalregister](http://www.okhistory.org/shpo/nationalregister).

## ***Hammered Aluminum Ware exhibit at Drummond Home***

The Fred and Addie Drummond Home will host a *Hammered Aluminum Ware* exhibit during the month of April. Visitors can view beautiful examples of hammered aluminum metal ware, such as salad dishes, cookie trays, and pitchers with matching tumblers.

During the early 1900s up to the 1950s, when most housewives were expected to entertain, many would use cheaper, lighter hammered aluminum for their card games, birthday celebrations, church events, and monthly coffee socials with the neighbors. With many metals being in short supply due to World War I and World War II, hammered aluminum became a popular alternative and was often given as a wedding gift. Whether hand-wrought or machine produced, hammered aluminum could be shaped into innumerable designs, and never needed polishing.

The *Hammered Aluminum Ware* exhibit is included with the regular admission fee. For more information please call 918-885-2374. The Fred and Addie Drummond Home is located at 305 North Price Avenue in Hominy.







**Minerva Murrell (left) and Amanda Murrell**

## **“Life at Hunter’s Home” Facebook group celebrates Women’s History Month**

During the month of March, Hunter’s Home in Park Hill will continue its “Life at Hunter’s Home” subscription Facebook group with a focus on Women’s History Month. “Life at Hunter’s Home: Women of Hunter’s Home” will present the women of Hunter’s Home and their roles and responsibilities, including Minerva and Amanda Murrell’s duties as mistress of the plantation, the jobs and responsibilities of the enslaved women, and the daily activities described in Emily Murrell’s journal.

“Life at Hunter’s Home” is a paid subscription Facebook group. Subscribers can visit the Hunter’s Home Facebook page for a link to subscribe and more information. Each month, the group features behind-the-scenes videos, a cooking or gardening segment, and a craft demonstration or mini-workshop.

The cost for all-access to the “Life at Hunter’s Home” Facebook group for the month of March is \$10. Please call 918-456-2751 or come by the site Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. to register.



## **Pawnee Bill Ranch to host Sunrise Service**

On Sunday, April 4, the Pawnee Bill Ranch will host its annual nondenominational Sunrise Service. The service begins at approximately 7 a.m. on Blue Hawk Peak, the highest point on the ranch grounds. The service is led by the Pawnee Ministerial Alliance and is a community-wide tradition. Participants are asked to bring their own seating and dress appropriately for the outdoors. For more information, please call 918-762-2513 or visit [www.facebook.com/pawneebillranch](http://www.facebook.com/pawneebillranch).



**Will Rogers Theatre inside the WRMM**

## **Movie Nights at WRMM**

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum (WRMM) will host its monthly Movie Night in its Will Rogers Theatre on the last Friday night of March and April.

On Friday, March 26, the WRMM will feature the Will Rogers comedy *Mr. Skitch* (1933). Buster Keaton’s movies *Cops* (1922) and *One Week* (1920) will be shown on Friday, April 30. In addition to Movie Night, the WRMM will host The Shindig on April 30, a night of live music and family games on the porch from 6 to 9 p.m.

Thanks to a \$20,000 CARES Act grant administered by the Oklahoma Arts Council, the theater will receive updates. “We will be adding two cameras, and we will be able to video programs in the theater and share them live over social media or record them for posterity,” said WRMM Executive Director Tad Jones. “This upgrade will be great for any business or organization that wants to share a presentation online, as we will be able to control video output and have a professional experience for participants. This also will help us share our Will Rogers Motion Picture Festival with people from around the world.”

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the movie starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are free, but must be reserved in advance. Seating is limited to allow guests to socially distance, and masks are required. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit [www.willrogers.com/shindig](http://www.willrogers.com/shindig) or call 918-343-8113.

## **Hat-making class at OHC**

Learn the history of Edwardian milliners and create your own hat in the Oklahoma History Center’s Milliner class on Saturday, May 1, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. This class is recommended for ages 12 and up. Registration opens on March 18 and closes on April 23, so reserve a spot today!

Registration is \$50 for OHS members and \$70 for nonmembers, and all supplies are included. For more information, contact Torie Taylor at 405-522-0793 or visit [www.okhistory.org/historycenter/classes](http://www.okhistory.org/historycenter/classes).

## **WRMM to host Spring Break activities**

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum (WRMM) in Claremore will host Spring Break activities March 15–19 from 1 to 3 p.m. daily. Kids will have the opportunity to learn about the life of Will Rogers while they participate in hands-on, 19th-century activities, make paper airplanes, play a modified game of polo, and make their own movie posters, among other fun activities.

Monday’s activities will include fun, hands-on crafts and activities in which young Will Rogers might have participated, along with a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum. Tuesday will be movie day, with instruction in how to make a storyboard and movie making at the memorial. On Wednesday guests will learn about one of Will’s favorite pastimes: aviation. An Air Evac helicopter will be on-site, and the Tulsa Wind Riders kite demonstration team will give an exhibition. Guests will play polo on foot and participate in stick-horse races on Thursday.

The week of fun will wrap up on Friday with the annual Talent Show. Participants will be divided into two age groups: ages 5 to 12 and ages 13 to 18. Registration is required for the Talent Show, and the registration form can be found at [www.willrogers.com/spring-break](http://www.willrogers.com/spring-break).

All children under the age of 17 are admitted free during Spring Break thanks to a donation from Win and Kay Ingersoll. Registration is not required for the Spring Break activities, but is required for the Talent Show. Please call 918-341-0719 with any questions. Patrons can see a full list of activities and register for the Talent Show at [www.willrogers.com/spring-break](http://www.willrogers.com/spring-break).



**A young guest flies her paper airplane while learning about Will Rogers and aviation at the WRMM.**





## Dr. Bob Blackburn Collections Endowment

As Dr. Bob Blackburn enters retirement, the OHS Board of Directors wanted to find an appropriate way to honor his 41 years of leadership and service. Blackburn, known affectionately as Dr. Bob, began his career with the OHS in 1979 after he completed his PhD in history from Oklahoma State University. His first job was editor of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, the OHS's scholarly publication. Ten years later he was named deputy executive director, and in 1999 the OHS Board of Directors named Blackburn executive director.

Instead of naming an area of one of the OHS's museums after him, Dr. Blackburn suggested that the board take the opportunity of his retirement to launch a new, aggressive era of collecting Oklahoma's history. Dr. Blackburn has always said that collections are at the heart of the OHS's mission, and preserving these items for future generations is of paramount importance. From these conversations came the idea for the Dr. Bob Blackburn Collections Endowment, a restricted endowment at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation that will be used to acquire and conserve archival and museum artifact collections.

All proceeds from the Dr. Bob Blackburn Collections Endowment will be dedicated to pursuing and preserving collections. Since 1893 the OHS has relied on the generosity of donors to build collections, but this endowment will enable us to acquire artifacts and archival collections in a more deliberate, purposeful way. When a collection with a significant connection to Oklahoma becomes available, the OHS will have the ability to act, thanks to this new collections endowment.

Any contribution, no matter the size, will help protect our heritage. Founding members who give to the endowment at levels of \$10,000 and above by December 2022 will be recognized on a donor list inside the Oklahoma History Center. To give to the endowment, please contact Larry O'Dell at 405-522-6676 or lodell@okhistory.org.



## From the OHS Archives: The Bill Alexander Collection

By Jan H. Richardson

Easter 2021 marks the 96th anniversary of the Prince of Peace Pageant in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. The pageant was the creation of Reverend Anthony Wallock, a Congregational minister in Lawton who staged the first play on a hillside with his Sunday School class as the actors. The pageant rapidly grew from an audience of 200 in 1926 to 100,000 by the end of the 1930s. During the Great Depression, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration built a number of structures associated with events described in the Gospels, as well as a chapel to be used as a setting for the pageant. Ellanore McIntosh Alexander, a Comanche County native, participated in the Easter pageant during the 1940s and continued to attend and support the pageant for the next 40 years. In memory of Ellanore, her son, Bill Alexander, donated her collection of memorabilia from the productions—including programs, postcards, articles, and newspaper clippings—to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The Bill Alexander Collection (1 legal box) is available for viewing at the OHS's John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Please note that all visitors are required to wear masks. Due to restrictions related to COVID-19, an appointment is required. The Research Center is located inside the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. For more information or to view the collection call 405-522-5225 or email [research@okhistory.org](mailto:research@okhistory.org).

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



Easter pageant, c. 1930s (Alvin Rucker Collection, OHS)



## Documentaries at the Oklahoma History Center

Mark your calendars to join the Oklahoma History Center (OHC) for two upcoming documentary films to be shown in the Chesapeake Event Center and Gallery at the OHC.

On Saturday, March 27, from 1 to 3 p.m. the OHC will show *The Harvey Girls: Opportunity Bound*. Celebrate Women's History Month by exploring the story of how more than 10,000 brave young women made the unusual decision to leave home and travel to the West to work as waitresses along the railroad, opening the doors of opportunity in that region to women. Participants will learn about Oklahoma's own Harvey Houses and the impact that the Harvey Girls made on the progress of women in the state.

The OHC will highlight the work of the National Park Service on Saturday, April 17, from 1 to 3 p.m. with a viewing of the Smithsonian film *America's National Parks at 100*. The National Park Service has been active for more than a century preserving and protecting more than 400 units across America, from the wild and natural to the man-made and historic. Take a tour through iconic Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon, and discover smaller hidden treasures throughout the country as this film explores the agency's evolution over the past century. Through rarely seen footage and stunning aerial views, this documentary celebrates the sites and stories of the national landmarks that reflect the past, present, and future of the United States.

The cost to attend these film screenings is included in regular admission to the Oklahoma History Center. For more information, please call 405-522-0765.



Santa Fe Depot and Harvey House in Waynoka, c. 1910 (Frank L. Saunders Collection, OHS)



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PERIODICALS

## Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grants awarded

The Oklahoma Historical Society is proud to announce that 40 historical organizations have been awarded a grant through the Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program. Applications were submitted in November 2020 and, following a review by both an OHS staff committee and a subcommittee of the OHS Board of Directors, the following organizations were approved for funding by the OHS Board of Directors at the January 2021 quarterly board meeting:

95th Division Foundation; Chickasha Public Library; Chisholm Trail Museum, Inc.; Claremore Museum of History; Cleveland County Historical Society and Moore-Lindsay Historic House Museum; Drumright Historical Society; Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma; Edmond Historic Preservation Trust; Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma; Friends of Fort Gibson Foundation; Friends of Fort Towson, Inc.; Friends of Historic Fort Supply; Friends of Rentiesville Blues Inc.; Friends of the Murrell Home; Friends of the Pawnee Bill Ranch Association; Grady County Historical Society; Greenwood Community Development Corporation/Historic Black Wall Street; Keystone Crossroads Historical Society; Landmark for all Generations, Inc.; Lawton Public Library; LeFlore County Historical Society; Military History Center; Modoc Nation; Museum of Horseshoeing Inc.; Okeene Historic Preservation Group; Oklahoma Sports Museum Association; Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma; Plains Indians and Pioneers Museum; Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.; Rogers County Historical Society, Inc.; Seminole Nation Museum; Southern Nazarene University; Stillwater History Museum at the Sheerar; The Edwards Store, Inc.; Three Rivers Museum of Muskogee; Top of Oklahoma Historical Society Museum; Town of Colony, OK; Town of McCurtain; U.S. Cavalry Association; and Western Trail Historical Society.

A total of just over \$460,000 in grant funds will be distributed, with projects ranging from collections care and exhibit development to strategic planning and educational programming. “This is only the second year for this grant program. As organizations are successfully wrapping up their grant projects from last year and as we see the quality of the applications that came in this year, it continues to be clear that there is a strong need for this type of funding for local organizations,” said Nicole Harvey, OHS grants administrator.

The Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program is a grants-in-aid program offered by the Oklahoma Historical Society with a goal of encouraging the collection, preservation, and sharing of Oklahoma history at the grassroots level in all parts of the state. Open to tribal and municipal governments and not-for-profit historical organizations located in Oklahoma, this grants program offers funding ranging from \$1,000 to \$20,000 for projects focused on collections, exhibits, and programming. Applications for this annual program open in the fall and award announcements are made in January. For more information visit [www.okhistory.org/grants](http://www.okhistory.org/grants).

**During the first year of the grants program, the City of Wagoner received \$20,000 to fund the purchase of the Shirle Lamb Williams Collection, now housed at the Wagoner Historical Museum.**



Smithsonian Affiliations  
Membership Program

## Spiro Mounds to host Vernal Equinox Walks

Celebrate the beginning of spring at Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center. On Friday, March 19, there will be a series of guided Vernal Equinox Walks where visitors can learn about the spring equinox. There will be walks at 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m., led by archaeologist and site manager Dennis Peterson.

Each walk will take about two hours and require a mile of easy walking. 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 tell the history of excavations, Native ceremonies and stories, tales of the unusual happenings associated with the mounds, and answer questions.

There is a small fee for this series of tours of \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. This will be in addition to the regular entrance fee. Check or cash is accepted, but credit cards are not accepted. OHS and Spiro Mounds Development Association members pay no regular admission fees.

Due to the continuing precautions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visitors are required to wear a mask and maintain social distancing. A maximum of 10 people will be allowed inside the center at any one time, although more can explore the trails. We ask everyone to be patient as staff may need to rotate visitors in and out of the center to fulfill this requirement. In response to COVID-19 and for the protection of our patrons, the annual Family Kite Flite Day has been canceled.

The center is located three miles east of Spiro on Highway 9/271 and four miles north on Lock and Dam Road. For more information or to schedule a group or school tour during the Equinox Walks or another time, please call 918-962-2062 or email [spiro@okhistory.org](mailto:spiro@okhistory.org).