



Oklahoma
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Society

Mistletoe Leaves

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Governor Stitt signs bill for OHS site improvements



On August 10, 2022, OHS staff attended the ceremonial signing of House Bill 4099 with Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt. This \$46 million bond issue will address deferred maintenance needs and targeted improvements at 24 OHS museums and historic sites across the state.

Left to right: OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson; Interim CFO and Legislative Liaison Gabby Hosek; OHS Board President Dr. Deena Fisher; Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt; Will Rogers Memorial Museums Executive Director Tad Jones; Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. Executive Director Chantry Banks; and OHS Regional Director David Fowler (photo courtesy of Legislative Service Bureau Photographers).

Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program will open applications in September

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) will open applications for the 2022/2023 grant cycle of the Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program on Thursday, September 1, 2022. This grants-in-aid program will set aside \$600,000 to award grants ranging from \$500 to \$20,000 to municipal, county, or tribal governments and not-for-profit historical organizations, as well as the support groups for these entities. All not-for-profit applicants must be registered and in good standing with the Oklahoma secretary of state. The grants will be specific to four categories: collections, exhibits, programs, and capacity building.

The online application process will open Thursday, September 1, 2022, and close on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, at 5 p.m. For applicants wishing to receive optional draft application feedback, draft applications will be due Monday, October 3, 2022. Award announcements will be made in late January 2023.

The Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program was launched in 2019. "This grant program, now entering its fourth year of funding, continues to enable local communities to preserve and share their local history," said Nicole Harvey, director of strategic initiatives and the grants administrator at the OHS. "This program is an amazing opportunity for local and tribal governments and historical organizations, providing funds to move forward on projects that may not otherwise be possible."

Virtual, online workshops to inform the public about this program are scheduled for September 1 at 1 p.m. and September 12 at 10 a.m. To see the official rules for the program, as well as to sign up for the online workshops, please visit www.okhistory.org/grants or contact Nicole Harvey at 405-522-5202 or grants@okhistory.org.

"Presente in Oklahoma!" to explore Hispanic culture

September 15 to October 15 is Hispanic American Heritage Month. To celebrate the significant contributions of Latinos in the state of Oklahoma, the OHS Multicultural Office is planning "Presente in Oklahoma!" a panel discussion focusing on Hispanic history at the Oklahoma History Center on Tuesday, September 27, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The panel will consist of historians, scholars, and representatives from Hispanic families with deep roots in Oklahoma. During this event, speakers will share the complex history of Hispanic cultural development in the state, from the 1840s to more recent immigration to the state. Other activities will include a short-version fashion show coordinated by Yimma Kernes from Panama, and presentations about Charros and Escaramuzas in Oklahoma from Charrería El Roble. Several topics will be discussed, such as Mexicans in Oklahoma, Hispanics and Latinos in Oklahoma, and economics in Español. For more information about the event and registration, please call Saily Orellana at 405-522-5204. The event is sponsored by Supermercados Morelos.

Jim Thorpe reinstated as sole gold medalist

Jim Thorpe (Sac and Fox) swept the pentathlon and decathlon at the Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden, 110 years ago—the first Native American athlete to win an Olympic gold medal for the United States. Because he had previously been paid to play semiprofessional baseball, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) later stripped him of his amateur status and medals. In 1982, after a long campaign, his 1912 Olympic titles were reinstated as a co-champion. At that time, the Thorpe family entrusted his gold medals to the State of Oklahoma.

This year, on July 15, the long injustice surrounding his athletic achievements was finally corrected when the IOC officially restored Thorpe, naming him the sole gold medal winner in the 1912 Olympic Games's pentathlon and decathlon.

Both of Jim Thorpe's gold medals have been on display in the *We Are Who We Were* exhibit in the ONEOK Gallery at the Oklahoma History Center. His medals have had a storied life of their own, traveling on loan to the LBJ Library and the National Museum of the American Indian to name a few locations. They are now on loan to the National Archives Museum to be featured in the exhibit *All American: The Power of Sports*, opening in Washington, DC, on September 16. The reinstatement of Thorpe as the sole gold medal winner for both events in 1912 touches on one of the exhibit's themes—to take a closer look at the ability of sports "to break social barriers and protest injustice." The exhibit will remain open until January 7, 2024.



Detail of the painting of Jim Thorpe that hangs in the Oklahoma State Capitol, and an image of his 1912 medal (1992.068, Thorpe Medal Collection, OHS).



Director's Column

By Trait Thompson
Executive Director

Last year, the Oklahoma Historical Society embarked on a sweeping strategic planning initiative to chart the course of the agency for the next five to ten years. Realizing that one of the great pitfalls of leadership is to get trapped into putting out the fires of the moment instead of focusing on long-term planning, one of my first acts was to create a new position: the director of strategic initiatives. Nicole Harvey assumed that role and she has done a wonderful job.

At our strategic planning retreat last year, our division directors focused on creating outcome-based success statements. In short, these statements codify what success looks like for our agency in four key areas:

Staffing—The OHS provides staff with support, opportunities for development, and the resources to be successful in their work . . . so that we continue to attract and retain the top professionals.

Patrons—The OHS has a diverse, sustainable base of patrons who are actively sharing their positive experiences with OHS . . . so more people understand the value we provide and are enriched by their interactions with us.

Technology—The OHS utilizes the best available technology, both for internal users and external stakeholders . . . to maximize the effective delivery in accordance with our mission.

Money—The OHS is working to increase funding and diversify funding sources . . .

to ensure proper funding of agency initiatives, facilities, and staff.

Following the creation of these successful initiatives, we have developed a list of goals to help us on the road to achieving them. Each goal has been assigned to a cross-functional project team. Current goals include conducting a comparative salary study, formulating an employee satisfaction survey, getting all staff members access to Microsoft Office 365, creating a community outreach plan, and developing a roadmap to increase paid visitation at each site. With each successive completion of a goal, we will create a new one to continue our progression toward success.

A few weeks ago, about 35 OHS employees participated in our second strategic planning retreat. We spent our first half-day learning how to work better together as a team through the insight provided by the Enneagram personality assessment. There were several light bulb moments as people learned about their own tendencies, habits, and work preferences. In turn, these revelations helped our staff understand how to best communicate with their coworkers and how they prefer to tackle tasks.

Our second day at the retreat was facilitated by The Persimmon Group. We engaged in a Start, Stop, Keep exercise to have a conversation about those activities we should start doing, stop doing, or keep doing as an organization. We rounded out the day with a deep dive into learning the fundamentals of project management, which will be quite helpful as we continue to strive for success in the goals we have placed before ourselves.



Partnering with Prairie Surf Media

Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) Executive Director Trait Thompson and Director of Communications and Development Larry O'Dell recently met with Prairie Surf Media—an Oklahoma City-based global production company focused on multiplatform content creation, to learn about Prairie Surf's Oklahoma documentaries, capabilities, and plans. The company is currently producing a documentary about the historic Jewel Theater located in the Deep Deuce district of Oklahoma City.

The OHS staff shared many historical assets from the Research Division related to the history of Deep Deuce, the Black business and cultural district that thrived in Oklahoma City in the 1900s. Thompson and O'Dell also provided a tour of the extensive OHS archives and the Oklahoma History Center's *Realizing the Dream* exhibit featuring Black history in Oklahoma. The OHS is excited to serve as a resource for Prairie Surf and its talented filmmakers.

Development News

By Larry O'Dell

In August, the Oklahoma Historical Society launched its Annual Giving Campaign. The money raised in this effort funds OHS exhibits, events, and educational programming. The OHS has persevered through the past few difficult years with the support of our members and donors. This year's campaign will look different because of our new branding and logo, so don't miss it! The OHS depends on these donations to continue to provide quality historical content.

Another way to support the OHS is by becoming a member and encouraging others to purchase a membership. Please share the word about the benefits of becoming an OHS member, including access to museums and sites across Oklahoma. You can find a full list of the benefits of membership at okhistory.org/membership. These are exciting times as we upgrade our museums and sites using the bond funds that the Oklahoma Legislature approved for the OHS. We invite you to watch the progress. If you have any questions you can contact me at lodell@okhistory.org or 405-522-6676.



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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.

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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Evidence of Sooner homesteads documented in *Smith's First Directory*

Despite what is said in the Proclamation of March 23, 1889, the people who recorded homesteads in *Smith's First Directory of Oklahoma Territory* and the *Tract Books of Oklahoma* listed 1889 (and 1890) homesteads outside the boundaries of the Unassigned Lands. Remarkably, none of those homesteads outside the Unassigned Lands appear in the records of the counties that came to exist after the homesteads were filed, although the homesteads were allowed by the federal land offices.

Homestead National Park in Beatrice, Nebraska, has explored the specific history of the Homestead Act of 1862. The 1889ers outside the Unassigned Lands were in the Cherokee Outlet along Township 20 North, ranging from Payne to Major Counties. This would mean that people who participated in the Cherokee Outlet Land Run of 1893 would have found homesteads already begun!

The anomaly was researched and examined at the Oklahoma Historical Society with the help of retired UCO Professor Dr. Kenny Brown. These records are interesting in part because the federal government did not buy the Cherokee Outlet from the Cherokee Nation until 1892. For more information, search okhistory.org/research/smiths.



Celebrate International Archaeology Day

October is Archaeology Month in Oklahoma and internationally, and Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center will celebrate International Archaeology Day on Saturday, October 15, 2022, with a lecture, a guided walk, and many other activities. Lectures about the prehistory and history of this region will start at 11 a.m. There will also be a guided tour of the site at 2 p.m. led by manager Dennis Peterson. The regular exhibits will be available throughout the day as well. Expert flint knappers, or stone tool makers, will be on hand to show off their skills from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information on Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, please contact Dennis Peterson at 918-962-2062 or spiro@okhistory.org.

Bob Blackburn selected to join Oklahoma HoF

On Thursday, May 19, 2022, the Oklahoma Hall of Fame class of 2022 was announced, which includes Dr. Bob Blackburn. He served as the executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society from 1999 until 2021. The class will be formally inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame at the 95th annual Oklahoma Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony to be held on Thursday, November 17, at the Cox Business Convention Center in Tulsa.



The ceremony will include each living honoree's acceptance remarks and a video biography of each honoree. Many special tributes are planned for the 2022 class, including the unveiling of the honorees' portraits at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and Gaylord-Pickens Museum. Being inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame is Oklahoma's highest honor.

"I am deeply humbled by selection to the Oklahoma Hall of Fame for two reasons. One, I am well aware of and in awe of past recipients such as Will Rogers and Angie Debo whose stories help define the shape of Oklahoma history. Second, I believe in my heart that this honor should be shared by the mentors and colleagues I have worked with shoulder to shoulder over the last 42 years as we collected, preserved, and shared the history of our great state. I am pleased that this honor brings more attention to the mission and legacy of the Oklahoma Historical Society, the vessel that made my professional voyage possible," Blackburn stated.

Blackburn began his work for the Oklahoma Historical Society as an editor for *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* in 1980, eventually becoming deputy director for agency operations in 1990, and finally becoming the executive director in 1999. Blackburn was at the helm of the development and building of the Oklahoma History Center, the 215,000-square-foot museum and research center located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City.

At the Oklahoma Historical Society, it fills all of us with pride to know that Dr. Bob is being recognized for his tireless commitment to preserving the history of this great state.

The complete list of nominees is available at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, Gaylord-Pickens Museum website at oklahomahof.com/class-of-2022.

Come and Learn with Okey Drew author

On Saturday, October 22, from 1 to 3 p.m., the John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center of the Oklahoma Historical Society will host a Come and Learn program presented by Dr. Ameenah Fuller, author of the book *Okey Drew*. The event will take place in the Musser Learning Lab on the first floor of the Oklahoma History Center. Copies of the book will be for sale, and the author will be available for a book signing following the program. *Okey Drew* is the story of Fuller's ancestor—a Muscogee freedman who was denied citizenship in the Muscogee Nation. In the book, Fuller uses genealogical research to show the struggle of freedmen and includes the primary source material related to Okey Drew's experience.

Fuller is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, Seton Hall University School of Law, and New England College. She is the founder of the nonprofit Creek Freedmen Initiative, the Cornerstone of Black Wall Street Foundation based in Oklahoma City. She works as a consultant and devotes her spare time to writing and genealogical research.

The event is free, but preregistration is required. To register, call 405-522-5225 or email research@okhistory.org.

OHC offers Smithsonian Internship Program

The Oklahoma History Center (OHC) is participating in the Smithsonian Institution's (SI) Internship Program, which gives interns the opportunity to experience various facets of museum work. During their tenure at the OHC, the students will develop an e-exhibit as their project. That exhibit will then be displayed on the OHC website as well as the SI website when completed and approved.

"We are grateful to the Smithsonian Institution for allowing us to offer this program, which we feel positions us as a place of learning and academic growth for students nationwide," said OHC Director Dan Provo.

Sarah Dumas, director of education at the OHC, has a special appreciation for interns, as she began her career with the museum in that capacity. "We work very hard to ensure interns are well rounded in their experience here and acquire skills to help them in their future endeavors," she said. To inquire about an internship, visit okhistory.org/historycenter/interns.

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex. Smithsonian Internships provide workplace-based learning experiences for a wide range of educational and career paths.

OHS Calendar of autumn events, programs, and exhibits

September

- 1 *Working America: A Sam Comen Photography Exhibition* opens, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 1 *Drummond Heirlooms* exhibit opens, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 1 Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program online workshop (VIRTUAL), Oklahoma Historical Society
- 3 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 8 History OffCenter: Trivia Night at Angry Scotsman Brewing, Oklahoma City
- 9–10 “Musket Demo Day” living history program, Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
- 10 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 12 Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program online workshop (VIRTUAL), Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City
- 13 Tuesday Tunes featuring Hunter Thomas, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 15 Prairie to Palate outdoor dining experience and fundraiser, Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue, Ponca City
- 15 Thursday Night Lecture Series featuring Ted Reeds, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 16–17 “Traveling by Keelboat” living history program, Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
- 17 Will’s Cowboy Trader Days at the Ranch, Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah
- 17 “A Long Walk in the Sun: Mexican-American War Days,” Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson
- 17 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 17 Family Day at the Birthplace Ranch, Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah
- 17 “History of Masonic Temples in Oklahoma” presentation by T. S. Akers, Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
- 17 Let’s Talk About It: *The Log of a Cowboy: A Narrative of the Old Trail Days* (1903) by Andy Adams, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 21 Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 22 Autumnal Equinox Walks, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- 23–24 “Candles on Post” living history program, Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
- 24 Ice Cream Social, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
- 24 Movie Night featuring *Animal Crackers* (1930), Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 26 “Americana: A Musical Tour of the USA” Kilgen Organ performance featuring Jonas Nordwall, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 27 “Presente in Oklahoma!” panel discussion, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 30 *Drummond Heirlooms* exhibit closes, Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy

October

- 1 *Sun and Silver: Photography Before Statehood* exhibit closes, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 1 Annual Quilt Show opens, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 1 Cinnamon Roll Social, Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson



- 1 Family Farm Day, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 1–2 Heritage Hills Historic Homes Tour, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 5–8 Research Center Book Sale, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 6 OkNHD Library Day, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 8 Quilting workshop with Martha Ray, Sod House Museum, Aline
- 8 History and Haunts at the Overholser, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 13 Historic Preservation Review Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 14 Museum After Dark, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 15 Folklife Festival, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 15 Will’s Cowboy Trader Days at the Ranch, Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah
- 15 International Archaeology Day Celebration, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
- 15 Make and Take: Ammo Crate, Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
- 15 History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 15 Family Day at the Birthplace Ranch, Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah
- 15 History and Haunts at the Overholser, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 15 Let’s Talk About It: *Monte Walsh* (1963) by Jack Schaefer, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 19 Oklahoma Historical Society Executive Committee meeting, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 20 *Working America: A Sam Comen Photography Exhibition* closes, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
- 20 Thursday Night Lecture Series featuring Michael Williams and the story of Elmer McCurdy, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 22 Come and Learn: *Okey Drew* discussion and book signing with author Dr. Ameenah Fuller, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City



- 22 History and Haunts at the Overholser, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 25 “Shut the Door! Barns in Oklahoma: Oklahoma’s Special Purpose Barns and Farm Structures” webinar (VIRTUAL), State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City
- 26 Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 28 Movie Night featuring *An American Tail: Fievel Goes West* (1991), Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore
- 28 History and Haunts at the Overholser, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 29 Cemetery Symbols: Carved in Stone, Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
- 29 History and Haunts at the Overholser, Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City
- 29 Ghost Stories Candlelight Tour, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 30 Annual Quilt Show closes, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
- 31 Halloween Night at the Museum, Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore



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



Cast-Iron Cooking class first week of November

The Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher will host a Cast-Iron Cooking class on Saturday, November 5, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. In this casual, fun class, students will learn to care for and cook in cast-iron cookware. Participants will create a Dutch oven delight and participate in a group meal. The class will explore historical and modern recipes while learning backyard cooking skills.

This class is restricted to children ages 10 and older with an adult. The cost for the class is \$40 per pair and \$15 per extra participant. All materials needed for the class will be provided. Preregistration is required, and payment must be received to secure a spot. Space is limited.

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



Exhibit highlights the dignity of work in America

Working America: A Sam Comen Photography Exhibition is now open at the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center.

Working America is a meditation on American belonging and American becoming. It poetically acknowledges the lives and contributions of working men and women as a part of our country and our collective experience. In this exhibition, Sam Comen presents a series of portraits of American immigrants and first-generation Americans at work in small, skilled trades as icons of the American experience. The subjects share stories of economic independence and struggle, belonging and exclusion, faith and fear, and service to both community and family.

A variety of themes are explored in the portraits and accompanying interviews, including the dignity of work, inequity among immigrant nationalities, the political relevance of labor migrants, and the intergenerational legacies of inherited skills. The exhibition also investigates how the subjects learned new skills to adapt to their land of opportunity, as well as the relationship between a nation's identity and the identities of the individuals who comprise that nation.

This body of work has particular relevance in today's political landscape where antiimmigrant and proworker sentiments figure prominently. Comen has revisited some of his portrait subjects more recently to update their stories in the extraordinary context of the global pandemic and subsequently devastating economic hardship, adding new dimensions and timeliness to the project.

Sam Comen is a documentary portrait photographer from Los Angeles, California. His photographs have been collected by the Library of Congress, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and private collectors, and he is regularly commissioned by brands and publications internationally.

The exhibit will remain on display through Thursday, October 20. The Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center is located at 507 S. Fourth St. in Enid. For more information, please call 580-237-1907 or visit www.csrhc.org.

Virtually Vaudeville

A new, entertaining, 30-minute video has been produced by the Will Rogers Memorial Museum. *Virtually Vaudeville* captures the fundamental style of the vaudeville era during which Will Rogers performed. The video shows a performance by creative curator and interpreter Bart Taylor, who makes the presentation fun and informative.

Taking inspiration from one of Will Rogers's mentors—Dan Walker, a black cowboy and Clem Rogers's top ranch hand—and from trick roper Vincente Oropeza's performances at *Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows*, Taylor tells the story of how Will Rogers became an accomplished hand and roper. Viewers will also learn about Betty Blake Rogers, Will's wife.

The presentation was filmed on the Will Rogers Theater stage, primarily produced for those unable to make the trip to the Claremore museum. A Boulder, Colorado, senior citizens residential group was the first to view the virtual offering. "We can take Will's message to you, while also sharing our mission to collect, preserve, and share the life, wisdom, and humor of Will Rogers for all generations," Taylor said.

Museum Executive Director Tad Jones said the video was made possible through an ARPA grant from the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. To make arrangements for the presentation of the program via YouTube, visit www.willrogers.com, click on "Visit," then, "Group Tours/Speaker Request Form" to request *Virtually Vaudeville*.

History and Haunts at the Overholser Mansion

The Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion will open its doors multiple evenings in October for History and Haunts at the Overholser!

On Saturday, October 8, 15, 22, and 29, and also on Friday, October 28, the Overholser Mansion will be open for special afterhours tours at the historic home from 6 to 8 p.m. See the home in its nighttime splendor, learn the history of the home and its former occupants, and discover why some say they are still roaming the halls! The tour will give time for guests to explore the historic home on their own.

Tickets will go on sale for History and Haunts on September 9 for Preservation Oklahoma members and on September 16 for the general public. Tickets will be \$25 per person and each night is limited to 30 attendees; tickets are nonrefundable. Please visit preservationok.org/historyandhaunts to purchase tickets.



Fort Gibson living history programs this fall

Fort Gibson Historic Site is planning several living history programs throughout the month of September designed to bring the history of the site alive through fun and interactive activities and demonstrations.

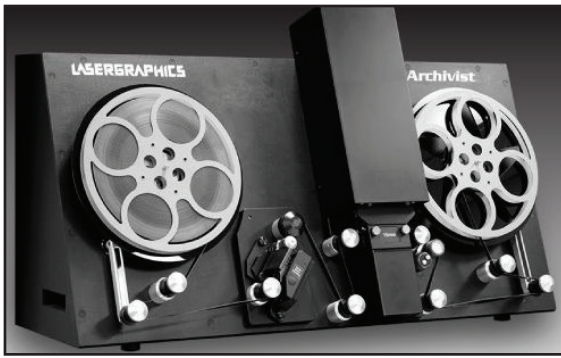
On September 9 and 10, the living history program will delve into the topic of muskets, which will include safe musket demonstrations. This program is included in the price of admission.

On September 16 and 17, join the Fort Gibson staff and volunteers at a riverside living history program to watch specialized historians demonstrate the operation of a keelboat. The tours to the Arkansas River will run at 10 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. on both days. These riverside demonstrations will showcase skills needed to operate a keelboat, which was the way goods and supplies were originally transported to Fort Gibson. Guests are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes for a short hike to the riverside to meet historians who will demonstrate the mechanical advantages of pulley systems in water travel and transport. Learn through interactive demonstrations how the speed of keelboats was measured before the advent of the speedometer. For more details or to learn how to purchase tickets to the keelboat demonstrations, visit the events section of the Fort Gibson Facebook page at facebook.com/fortgibsonhistoricsite.

On September 23 and 24, from 10 a.m. to noon, and again from 1 to 3 p.m., the last September living history program will focus on candle use at the military post. Visitors can watch a candle-making demonstration in the palisade kitchens while learning about the differences between candles made of beeswax and those made of tallow. This program is included in the price of admission.

There are many buildings to tour at the historic site including the commissary, bakehouse, magazine, and barracks as well as the many furnished rooms located within the palisade walls. Fort Gibson Historic Site is open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Call 918-478-4088 for more information.





New “archivist” in Research Division

The Research Division has a shiny new archiving tool to revolutionize OHS’s ability to digitize film. The LaserGraphics Archivist film machine was installed earlier this month. The state-of-the-art equipment has already proven its worth.

“What we initially thought was the biggest improvement is that it can do with magnetic sound, as well as warped film, however upon install and training it became clear it can do so much more,” said Film and Video Archivist Diane Wasser. In addition to magnetic sound, it can perform certain levels of color correction on either very old film, or film that has aged in a way that turned it pink or blue. “We digitized one reel that we were convinced was black-and-white, but the digitized file revealed it to be in full color!” added Wasser. The Archivist has a function that controls how quickly the film moves through the rollers so it can digitize film that is in good condition quicker than the old machine, but it can also digitize very damaged film at one frame per second. Until now, it has not been possible to load damaged reels of film onto the older equipment to see what they contain.

The Research Division would like to thank OHS administration for making the funding possible to upgrade our ability to digitize historic Oklahoma film. For more information about this new tool, contact Diane Wasser at 405-522-6674.

OkNHD Library Day

Every year, the Education Department of the Oklahoma History Center opens the OHS Research Center to teach key pointers about the process of preparing projects for Oklahoma National History Day (OkNHD). Those interested in taking part can take advantage of Library Day pop-up workshops to help in that process. This year, OkNHD Library Day is taking place on Thursday, October 6, 2022. OkNHD Library Day is free for teachers, students, and chaperones, and is a great way to network with others doing historical research. Registration for Library Day closes on September 29. For questions relating to OkNHD, contact Sarah Dumas at sdumas@okhistory.org or 405-522-0785.

“A Long Walk in the Sun”

Fort Towson Historic Site will host “A Long Walk in the Sun: Mexican-American War Days” on September 17 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This event will feature an encampment set in the 1846–1848 time period of the Mexican-American War, educational presentations, and opportunities to interact with experts in the fields of artillery, military life in the 1840s, early Oklahoma forts, and the Mexican-American War. Guests to the site will experience a glimpse of this underrepresented time period with sights, sounds, and smells to ignite the imagination.

During the Mexican-American War, Fort Towson was an important staging area for US forces. Troops gathered at the post to rest and resupply before marching south to Mexico, only three short miles away across the Red River. During this time, soldiers at Fort Towson participated in artillery drills, saber and pistol instruction, mounted patrols, and personal tasks required for life in a mobile military encampment.

Email fttowson@okhistory.org, call 580-873-2634, or message @FortTowsonHistoricSite on Facebook with any questions about this event. Learn more about the Fort Towson Historic Site at okhistory.org/forttowson. Fort Towson Historic Site is located north of US 70 near Fort Towson.



Cemetery Symbols: Carved in Stone

Join the Oklahoma History Center to explore the meaning behind historic gravestones on Saturday, October 29, from 1 to 3 p.m. Gravestones and cemeteries are rich in a language of symbols. By examining the grave markers, one can learn more than just the person’s name. This in-person class for ages 16 and up will provide the skills necessary to investigate the past through tombstones.

This program will take place in the Musser Learning Lab at the Oklahoma History Center. The cost is \$5 for OHS members and \$10 for nonmembers. Registration opens on September 17 and closes on October 20. The Oklahoma History Center is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City. Call 405-522-0765 or visit okhistory.org/historycenter for more information.



A whimsical photo entitled *Lahoma Potatoes* was created by Enright to boast of the success of a fictional potato harvest in the early 1900s.

The life and work of Barney P. Enright

Perry photographer Barney P. Enright is the subject of an exhibit at the Cherokee Strip Museum (CSM) in Perry about his life as a local lensman, complete with a variety of Enright’s photographic prints, period cameras, and period clothing.

The Enright family moved to Perry in 1910, establishing a farm northwest of town. Enright worked as a photographer for 30 years in Perry. Enright singularly documented the devastation of an April 20, 1912, tornado that caused untold damage to the town. Barney became the personal photographer of Pawnee Bill.

The exhibit will remain open through Saturday, December 17, 2022. Exhibit content for *Barney P. Enright, Photographer* is also available to view and read online at cherokee-strip-museum.org/Enright/bpEnright.htm. Research for this exhibit was provided by Cheryl DeJager and the late Perry historian and author Fred Beers. DeJager has loaned many Enright photographs for this special exhibition. For more information, contact the CSM by calling 580-336-2405.

Research Center Book Sale

The John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center is pleased to announce a fundraiser book sale October 5 to 8 at the Oklahoma History Center! All proceeds from the sale benefit the OHS Research Center. The book sale will be open from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Saturday hours will be 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This is your chance to shop rare and out-of-print books, genealogical materials, historical maps and photos, periodicals, posters, puzzles, vintage newspapers, and more! Just in time for the holidays, the Research Center will also be offering several framed items at 50 percent off the regular retail price. All proceeds from the book sale will support ongoing projects and programs of the Research Center.



I shot an elephant in my pajamas . . .

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore will host a Movie Night featuring the film *Animal Crackers* (1930) in its theater on Saturday, September 24, at 7 p.m. The film is the source of this famous joke, uttered by Groucho Marx: "One morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas . . . how he got in my pajamas, I'll never know."

Guests can enjoy free admission, popcorn, and drinks while watching the film. Seating is limited, so early arrival is suggested. This event is free to attend thanks to sponsorship by the Bank of Commerce. Please call 918-341-0719 for more information.

Kilgen fall season opening featuring Jonas Nordwall

The fall performance of the Kilgen Organ series will feature organist Jonas Nordwall, playing selections with the theme "Americana: A Musical Tour of the USA." This performance will be take place September 26 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Oklahoma History Center.

Portland, Oregon, native Jonas Nordwall is an internationally renowned virtuoso organist equally skilled in both traditional classical and modern/popular schools of musical performance. He has performed in North America, Japan, Europe, and China and has performed nine concert tours in Australia.

At 16, Nordwall performed for Sweden's King Gustav Adolf. In 1970 Nordwall graduated with a bachelor of music degree in organ performance from the University of Portland. Beginning in the mid-1960s, Nordwall was one of few organists professionally playing theater pipe organs. Since 1966 he has been a featured artist for many American Theatre Organ Society national and regional conventions. The society presented its Organist of the Year Award to Nordwall in 1987. Nordwall has produced over 30 highly acclaimed recordings.

To learn more about reserving tickets for this Kilgen performance, visit www.okhistory.org/historycenter/kilgen. Tickets are \$10 for Oklahoma Historical Society members and \$20 for nonmembers and may be reserved by calling 405-522-0765. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Reviving the story of Elmer McCurdy

On Thursday, October 20, at 7 p.m. the Will Rogers Memorial Museum will host a program featuring Michael Williams, curator at the Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library. Williams will give a presentation about Elmer McCurdy and the bizarre story of the Oklahoma outlaw turned sideshow mummy.



While filming an episode of the hit television show *The Six Million Dollar Man* entitled "The Carnival of Spies," at the Nu-Pike Amusement Park in Long Beach, California, a member of the crew knocked off the arm of a mannequin at the Laff-In-The-Dark Funhouse. While attempting to reattach the arm, the crew member noticed what looked to be a bone and, upon close inspection of the unclad body, he knew he was looking at the body of a man.

So begins the story of the Oklahoma outlaw mummy Elmer McCurdy—a story filled with outlaws, lawmen, sideshows, showmen, writers, artists, scientists, historians, and Broadway producers.

Williams is a curator at the Oklahoma Territorial Museum in Guthrie. He is a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma History/Museum Studies program. Williams has appeared in numerous documentaries and TV spots speaking about events and people in Oklahoma history. An avid trout fisherman and reader, he is always quick with an entertaining story. He lives in Oklahoma City with his two sons while continuing to find engaging ways to teach and share Oklahoma's history. Please call 918-341-0719 for more information.

Tuesday Tunes with local musician Hunter Thomas

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. will be hosting the last in a series of relaxed free summer concerts on Tuesday, September 13, from 6 to 8 p.m. Bring the family, picnic blankets, and chairs to listen to the musical stylings of Hunter Thomas. The easy acoustic set will be held on the lawn of the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion. This is a family-friendly event.

Guests are welcome to bring their own picnic basket to the event. Snow cones and other summer treats will be available for purchase during the concert.

The Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion is located at 405 NW 15th Street Oklahoma City. Call 405-525-5325 for more information about this free event.



Engraving of the Battle of Honey Springs (20655.63.364, Harper's Weekly and Frank Leslie's Illustrated Collection, OHS).

Union Soldiers Home Collection

By Jan H. Richardson

President James Madison, the fourth president of the United States, has often been called the Father of the US Constitution, but not many people know that he is also the president who initiated policies that, step-by-step, eventually led to the development of our current Veterans Administration. In 1811 Congress approved Madison's plan for a home for disabled navy veterans. Homes for army veterans were established starting in 1851. After the Civil War, the federal government expanded facilities for veterans, and in 1919 the Union Soldiers Home was opened in Oklahoma City. The home would later be open to former soldiers who had served in the Spanish-American War and World War I. The home closed in 1933, and the services provided were taken over by the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

The Union Soldiers Home Collection (M1988.025, 27 boxes, 2 oversize boxes), contains information on the day-to-day operation of the home, but also information about the individuals who lived there. The Oklahoma City Union Soldiers Home admitted not only the soldiers who fought to protect the Union, but also their wives. The names in the collection can be searched online at www.okhistory.org/research/unionhome, with the full applications being available in the Research Center.

The Union Soldiers Home Collection is available for viewing at the OHS's John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Appointments are encouraged. The Research Center is located inside the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. For more information call 405-522-5225 or email research@okhistory.org.

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

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PERIODICALS

Mistletoe Leaves

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Folklife Festival to showcase cultures and traditions



On Saturday, October 15, the Oklahoma History Center will host the annual Folklife Festival.

The Folklife Festival is designed to engage visitors with opportunities to experience other cultures and traditions. Visitors are there to participate in the activities, not just to observe. The festival's goals are to spark curiosity; catalyze intercultural exchange; create participatory experiences; and collaborate with cultural practitioners, communities, and heritage professionals.

Admission is free to the public, and the event will be held predominately outdoors on the OHC grounds. The OHC is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. The 2022 Folklife Festival is an education-focused event partially sponsored by Inasmuch Foundation.

To register your organization as a vendor or exhibitor for this event, please fill out the application form and a member of the Oklahoma History Center Education Department staff will contact you. The form can be found at okhistory.org/historycenter/folklifesignup.



Nine Tribes Tower added to the NRHP



Nine Tribes Tower, located at 205 B St. NE in Miami, Ottawa County, is locally significant for its association with Social History. The Miami City Council established the Miami Housing Authority (MHA) in December 1965 to provide safe and sanitary dwellings for low-income families and senior citizens by using federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Planning for public housing in Miami commenced in 1966, and the construction of Nine Tribes Tower began in 1970. Designed by Hudgins, Thompson, Ball, and Associates and built by Cowen Construction Company, Nine Tribes Tower opened in 1971 as the only low-income public housing project constructed for seniors by the MHA. During the planning stages, the MHA decided to name the building Nine Tribes Tower in honor of nine tribal nations with historic ties to Ottawa County: the Cherokee, Eastern Shawnee, Miami, Modoc, Ottawa, Peoria, Quapaw, Seneca-Cayuga, and Wyandotte. Upon opening, the building was at near full capacity, indicating that Nine Tribes Tower met the need for senior housing in Miami.

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is an honorific designation that provides recognition, limited protection, and, in some cases, financial incentives for these important properties. The State Historic Preservation Office identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for this special designation. For more information on the National Register, visit okhistory.org/shpo/nationalregister.

Naturalization Ceremony held at the History Center



On July 7, the Oklahoma Historical Society hosted a USCIS Naturalization Ceremony at the Oklahoma History Center. Individuals from 14 different countries took the Oath of Allegiance, which was administered by the Honorable Timothy D. DeGiusti. The new US citizens were seated in the Devon Great Hall under the replica of Wiley Post's *Winnie Mae* airplane.

They watched a prerecorded, televised announcement by US President Joseph R. Biden who stated, "It's dreams of immigrants like you that built America and continued to inject new energy, new vitality, new strength," welcoming them as US citizens.

Taking the Oath of Allegiance is the last of several steps taken through the USCIS in becoming a US citizen. The achievement was celebrated with family and friends in attendance.