



Preservation Oklahoma News



The newsletter of Oklahoma's statewide preservation community.

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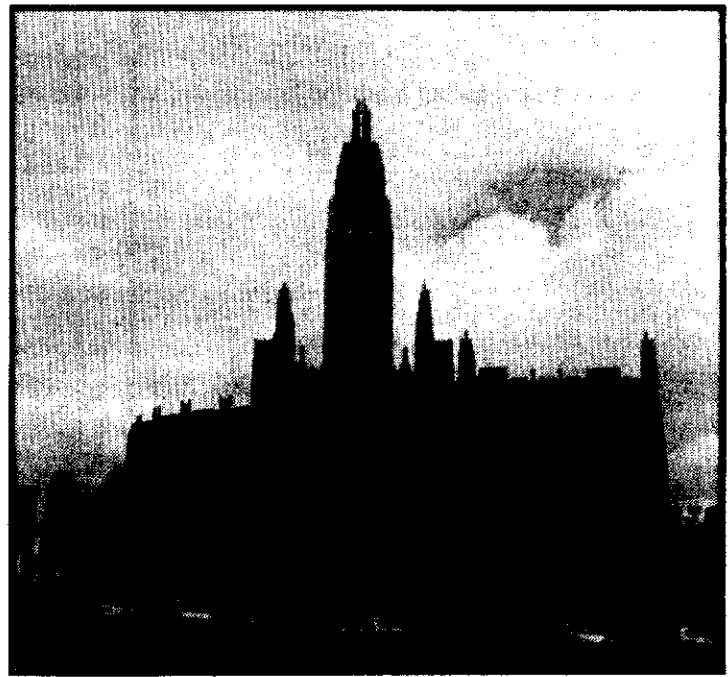
Two new National Historic Landmarks designated in Oklahoma

In January, U. S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt announced the designation of Tulsa's Boston Avenue Methodist Church and of the Guthrie Historic District as National Historic Landmarks (NHL). They bring the number of NHLs in Oklahoma to eighteen.

Using special funding from the National Park Service (NPS), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) hired Dianna Everett to prepare the Boston Avenue Methodist Church nomination. The city of Guthrie hired Susan Allen Kline to prepare the Guthrie nomination using a matching grant from the Certified Local Governments Program. Both new NHLs have been on the National Register of Historic Places for years.

The Boston Avenue Methodist Church NHL is architecturally significant in four areas: First, it is an outstanding example of the Art Deco style.

-continued on page two-



**Boston Avenue Methodist Church
National Historic Landmark**

Newly Designated NHLs, cont.

Second, it exemplifies the period's trend toward the application of new structural materials (steel) to the construction of a particular type of building (skyscrapers) and provides a rare example of an architect's application of this concept and material to a religious facility. Third, it illustrates the emerging trend in the functional design of churches elevating educational facilities to prominence almost equal to the sanctuary or worship center. Fourth, it is significant for the architect's use of artistic productions, specifically terra-cotta sculptures by Robert Garrison for the building's exterior.

The Guthrie NHL district includes primarily the central business district of Guthrie. As a result, the NHL boundaries are much smaller than the overall National Register district. The NHL district contains mostly two and three-story commercial buildings made of red brick and/or sandstone built between 1889 and 1910. This outstanding collection of late 19th and early 20th Century commercial architecture displays the aspirations of the city's founders to develop a city worthy of the distinction as the first and only territorial capital of Oklahoma (1890-1907) and then as the first state capital (1907-1910).

Guthrie also is significant for its association with the opening of the last frontier to non-Native American settlement and is representative of the attraction and opportunities that cities held for thousands of settlers who chose not to make their living from the land.

Oklahoma's other NHLs are: the Boley Historic District in the Town of Boley, Okfuskee County; Camp Nichols in Cimarron County; the Cherokee National Capitol in Tahlequah, Cherokee County; the Creek National Capitol in Okmulgee, Okmulgee County; the Deer Creek Site near Newkirk, Kay County; the Fort Gibson Historic Site in the town of Fort Gibson, Muskogee County; Fort Sill's Old Post Quadrangle and surrounding area in Comanche County; Fort Washita Historic Site in Bryan County; the E. W. Marland Mansion in Ponca City, Kay County; the McLemore Site in Washita County; the Murrell House in Park Hill, near Tahlequah; the 101 Ranch, southeast of Ponca City; Sequoyah's Cabin in Sequoyah County; the Stamper Site in Texas County; the Washita Battlefield in Roger Mills County; and the Wheelock Academy east of Millerton in McCurtain County.

For more information, contact the SHPO at (405) 521-6249.

Historic Depot in Guthrie saved from Demolition

As reported in our January issue, the Guthrie City Council overturned a ruling by the preservation commission rejecting a demolition permit application by the owner of the historic Rock Island Depot, a contributing resource to Guthrie's National Register district.

At a January press conference, Sonic Corporation, headquartered in Oklahoma City, announced a donation of \$75,000 to the Save Our Depot Foundation to be matched by other donors so the foundation could purchase the building. This represents the largest corporate contribution to historic preservation in the history of Oklahoma's movement and a strong commitment by Sonic Corporation to protecting the historic fabric of our state's communities.

Much of Guthrie's economic vitality is directly attributable to the preservation of its downtown historic district. Sonic Corporation deserves the praise and thanks of the entire statewide preservation community for setting such a strong example of good corporate citizenship.

Since Sonic's announcement, the Save Our Depot Foundation has raised the required matching donations and purchased the building. The fortunes of the historic Rock Island Depot have undergone a dramatic reversal partly due to protest of its impending demolition by the preservation community.

Prior to the announcement by Sonic, representatives from the historic preservation community, including Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., the State Historic Preservation Office, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation spoke at a public meeting organized by the Save Our Depot Foundation to try to identify ways to save the historic building. At this meeting, concerns were raised about the strength of Guthrie's historic preservation zoning ordinance. Because of Guthrie's significance, both nationally and statewide, the case set a dangerous precedent. Recognition of this concern led to a review and revision of the ordinance by two committees of local citizens and municipal government members, coordinated by City of Guthrie Special Projects Coordinator Melody Kellogg.

The groups studied strong contemporary ordinances from around the country in the process of revamping the Guthrie ordinance and plan to have legal experts from the National Trust review the redrafted document before submitting it to the Guthrie City Council for approval.

National Register lists Six Oklahoma Properties

by Jill Gray

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce the listing of six Oklahoma properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Langston University Cottage Row Historic District consists of five teacher cottages and three garages, built in 1930 and 1948, and the west entry gates, built in 1947. The district is significant for its association with African-American education in Oklahoma and for its architecture. Langston University was the first and only African-American college in the state and provided its students an educational opportunity unavailable elsewhere in segregated Oklahoma. The cottages are good examples of the Tudor Revival and Minimal Traditional styles and create a unique, cohesive area of the campus.

The New Cordell Courthouse Square Historic District is significant within the context of commerce, community planning and development, and architecture in New Cordell in Washita County. The district includes the entire original business district of the New Cordell Townsite, established in 1897, as well as two blocks on the north side of First Street. The district is significant for its association with the history of New Cordell's commercial development and contains most of the town's early examples of commercial architecture, offering some very good examples of different styles associated with the turn of the century and after. The square is also one of the few extant courthouse squares in the state of Oklahoma.



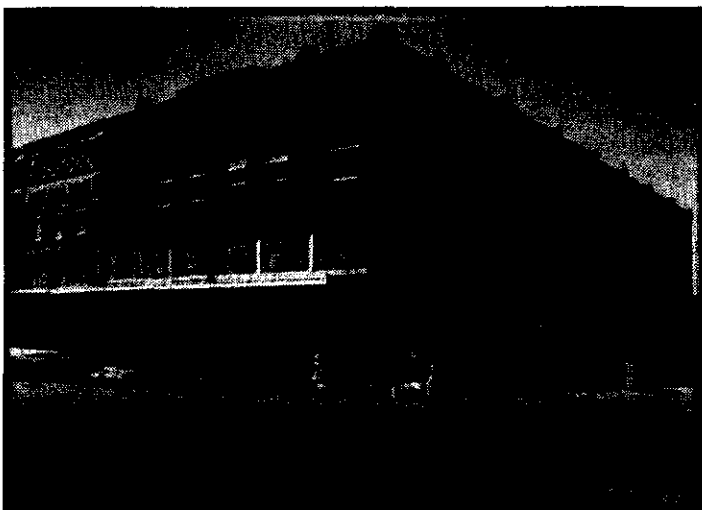
The Lake Okmulgee Dam Spillway Cascade

significant as an excellent, intact example of WPA architecture on a massive scale. Built of limestone quarried out of the hill directly east across the highway, it is the only such structure in Okmulgee County.

The Okmulgee Armory, built between 1935 and 1937, is significant for its role in the military preparedness of the Oklahoma National Guard. Architecturally, it is an excellent example of a WPA Standardized style building. The materials and workmanship evident in its masonry reflect both the goals of the WPA building program in Oklahoma and the practical considerations of using unskilled labor to construct large public buildings.

Constructed in 1941-42, **the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion** is a significant architectural representation of the WPA building style and methodology locally and in Oklahoma. It is the only example of WPA architecture for fairgrounds exposition purposes in Okmulgee and it is also the only such building in the county. The WPA constructed only nine livestock exposition-type buildings in Oklahoma. The Stock Pavilion is also one of the three largest WPA projects conducted in Okmulgee. Its building represents the last major federal government effort to enhance the economy of Okmulgee at the close of the pre-war era.

The Harmon Athletic Field, built in 1935-1936 and 1940, is architecturally significant as an intact example of WPA architecture and vernacular interpretation of the Craftsman style. Constructed of native limestone quarried locally, the complex is the only such resource in Okmulgee and is the county's largest and most intact stadium complex from the WPA era. The Athletic Field is a good example of WPA outdoor recreation facilities, which as a class are unique, both in Okmulgee and statewide.



The Washita County Courthouse Square

Several Okmulgee properties were listed partly for their association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA)'s activity in the county. The WPA bolstered the local, state, and national economies during the Great Depression through public works projects, which employed local, unemployed men.

Additionally, these properties each have other areas of significance:

The Lake Okmulgee Dam Spillway Cascade is a unique type of architecture. Built in 1939-1940, it is

SHPO continues to work toward its goal of 1,000 Oklahoma listings on the National Register by the end of the Year 2000. These properties bring the current total to 926. For more information on these properties or the National Register of Historic Places, contact Jill Gray at (405) 521-6387.

Battle continues to Save OKC Landmark

As reported in our January issue, preservationists in Oklahoma City are working to reverse a municipal government plan to demolish the historic viaduct on Walnut Avenue and replace it with a ground-level street.

Last December, the Planning Commission reviewed a request by the Oklahoma City Historical Preservation and Landmark Commission to designate as a local landmark the viaduct connecting historic N. E. 2nd Street (Deep Deuce) and Bricktown. Commonly known as the Walnut Avenue Bridge, the viaduct, built by the city around 1935, has two lanes for vehicles and pedestrian walkways on either side as well as a rich history. The viaduct played a major role in the daily lives of many African-American students who used it to reach Douglas High School. It also acted as part of the route for a number of civil rights marches from nearby historic Calvary Baptist Church to downtown Oklahoma City. It is also significant architecturally and for its associations with both the impact of railroads on local transportation development and its importance as the primary connection between the historical African-American community and the commercial warehouse district to its south now known as Bricktown.

In February, the Oklahoma City Planning Commission again reviewed the request for landmark status for the Walnut Avenue Bridge and voted five to four to reject the proposal. Among those dissenting were Nick Gales, the commission's chair; James Williams, the representative from Ward 7, where the structure is located; Betsy Brunsteter, an architect and Preservation Oklahoma member; and Helen Pape. The decision to reject landmark status for the viaduct ignored testimony from local citizens and preservation leaders, as well as documentation from Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. and the State Historic Preservation Office supporting its significance. Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Melvena Heisch sent a letter to Oklahoma City Mayor Kirk Humphreys stating that the bridge was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Preservation Oklahoma applied to the National Trust for Historic Preservation on behalf of those fighting to save the structure and received a grant from the Preservation Services Fund to defray the cost of an engineering study by Cornforth Associates. Copies of both the letter and of the study were provided to the planning commission in advance of the February meeting.

Opponents of retaining the structure argued that the proposed new construction would better facilitate traffic into Bricktown, ease traffic circulation problems during events, and provide more access to parking lots that will be created as part of the city's redevelopment project. In response, preservationists noted, first, that the new construction would not increase the number of traffic lanes entering or leaving Bricktown; second, since Bricktown is primarily a pedestrian experience, the value of redevelopment intended to facilitate faster automobile circulation through the district during events is dubious, at best; and, third, it would not provide any more access to new parking lots due to the incompatibility of the slope of the new street with lot entrances at the sites indicated on the city's renderings. Public records indicate that replacement of the viaduct with a street would actually

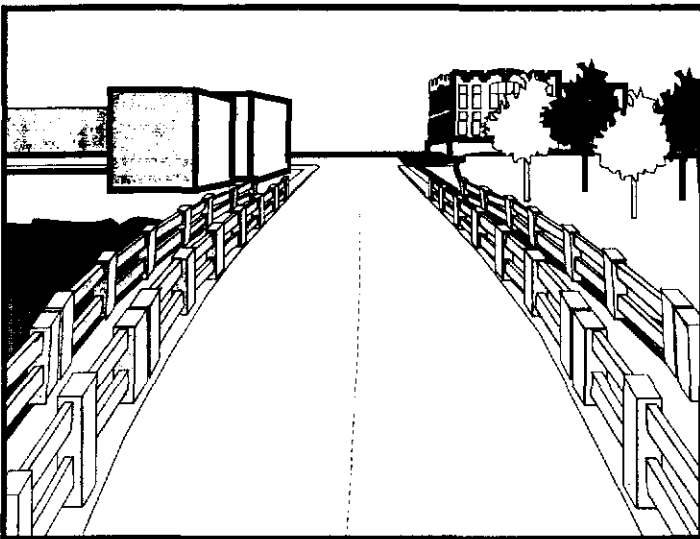
result in fewer spaces in the planned new Bricktown parking lots.

Most preservation battles turn on the bottom line and this one is no exception. The Cornforth Associates study concluded the viaduct could be restored at a cost of approximately \$2 million. Although it did not factor in ADA compliance, which would probably cost around \$100,000, the study's figures were intended to be high-end projections. The cost estimate for removal and new construction provided by City Engineer Paul Brum was \$1.35 million. However, this did not include the cost of raising existing railroad tracks to meet the grade of a new street or for construction of an at-grade railroad crossing, two things that would be required should the viaduct be replaced by a ground-level street. These requirements were verified in a teleconference discussion between Brunsteter and John Daugherty of the State Rail Programs at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. The additional costs for replacing the viaduct with new construction would raise the overall cost to around \$2.2 million, a figure that would meet or exceed the cost of restoring the existing structure.

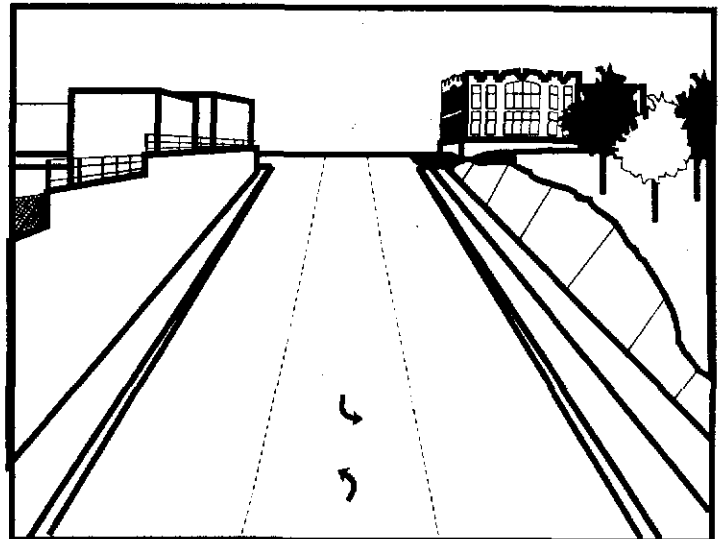
On March 23, a date for the hearing was placed on the city council's consent agenda. However, at the meeting, Councilman Jerry Foshee asked that it be removed from the consent agenda and called for a vote by the council to deny a hearing on the matter. His motion passed with only three dissenting votes, one by Councilwoman Willa Johnson, in whose ward the viaduct stands. Local preservationists, who had been told that setting a hearing date was a routine matter, expressed shock and outrage at the council's action.

Although getting the matter heard by council may be as simple as lobbying council members to reintroduce the request for a hearing, those working to save the structure are exploring every avenue open to them. One new discovery is that before the city can change to an at-grade railroad crossing, it will have to go through a lengthy application and hearing process through the Oklahoma Corporation Commission's Department of Railroads. The city's redevelopment proposal may be a hard sell, since building a crossing at-grade downgrades the safety of the line and there is currently a federal initiative underway to reduce the number of at-grade crossings by 25%.

Local preservationists still hope to convince the city council to reconsider its surprise decision not to hear the matter. Michael Smith, a member of Preservation Oklahoma, has worked diligently to impress upon the public that the city council must be convinced to overturn the Planning Commission's decision denying the structure protection as a local historical landmark. Smith is circulating a petition to present to the city council if it does address the issue. The Save the Bridge group is even planning to have an information booth at the annual Soul Bazaar at the Myriad Convention Center in May. Smith is encouraging people to write or e-mail their city councilpersons; he even has form letter samples available for that purpose. Smith is also distributing "Save the Bridge" buttons, which have been extremely useful in raising public awareness about the threat to the viaduct. He can be contacted at (405) 235-8238. The petition form is also available through Preservation Oklahoma.



Restored, the Walnut Avenue Viaduct would enhance nearby historic attractions



How the New Construction might Look; the City says a Brick Street would soften this Picture

Clock ticking for Muskogee High-Rise

Last December, NationsBank's Real Estate Services asked the Muskogee City Council for permission to demolish the seven-story Flynn-Ames Building downtown.

Although the Flynn-Ames Building, built in 1909, is probably ineligible for listing in the National Register in its current condition, the threat of its demolition galvanized Muskogee preservationists. Bryan Nestorick, a local activist, began an advocacy campaign for the building, initiating protests that received both print and television news coverage. Pete Carson, chairman of the Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission led the commission in a unanimous vote to designate the building a local landmark, motivated in part by concern that the city would issue a demolition permit in the absence of any kind of official protest.

NationsBank, which has a national reputation for supporting historic preservation, protested the commission's decision. In Tulsa, the company's Vice President for Asset Management and Real Estate Services Tom Duncan said their proposal resulted from eighteen months of analysis by the bank's corporate real estate service and Lincoln Property Company. "Frankly, we are in the business of banking, not the business of real estate," said Duncan.

The controversy put issuance of a demolition permit on hold while NationsBank and the City of Muskogee jointly reviewed the matter. In March, Duncan sent an offer to the Muskogee City Council to convey the title of the Flynn-Ames Building to the city. Among the conditions for this transfer of deed were requirements that the preservation commission withdraw its historic landmark designation and that the city issue the building permit "as previously submitted." NationsBank would take no action for 30 days, but would be free to proceed with demolition if nobody produced a redevelopment plan for the building that it found acceptable. A viable plan, according to Duncan, would include "an immediate and substantial cash investment."

For more information, contact Pete Carson, Muskogee Historic Preservation Commission, at (918) 683-3775.

Uniform Conservation Easement Act Introduced in State Legislature

As this issue of *Preservation Oklahoma News* went to press, we learned that the State House of Representatives would soon be voting on the Uniform Conservation Easement Act (Senate Bill 266). The bill is intended to permit nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies to accept conservation easements to protect unique buildings, historic homes, architectural landmarks, and cultural heritage sites in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma law permits conservation easements, but the procedure is cumbersome and expensive for property owners and preservation organizations. The bill simplifies the process. Oklahoma is one of only four states without a modern easement law.

According to its sponsors, the bill's conservation easements would be flexible and voluntary agreements between landowners and preservation organizations that could be tailored to meet both parties' unique needs. Landowners would retain title to and use of the property and the preservation groups charged with ensuring that the heritage features of the property are protected. The property could also be passed on to the owners' heirs. Donation of a conservation easement could significantly reduce estate taxes on a one-time basis and property taxes on a continuing basis, allowing an owner to keep a site intact. The donation could be structured to qualify as a tax-deductible gift to reduce the donor's federal income tax as well.

The proposed legislation is supposed to maximize the value of contributions to preservation organizations, maintain the local community's tax base by allowing title of the protected property to be retained by private taxpayers, and encourage owners of natural and historic properties to keep their holdings intact.

Since the deadline for the House's vote may not yet have passed when you receive this publication, readers may want to contact their State Representative and ask them to support Senate Bill 266. House: (800) 522-8502 (or, 521-2711 - local); Senate: (405) 524-0126.

Eleventh Annual Statewide Preservation Conference to be held in Woodward, May 6, 7, and 8

Follow us onto the plains of northwestern Oklahoma for our *Eleventh Annual Statewide Preservation Conference*. Preservationists from across Oklahoma will meet in Downtown Woodward May 6-8 to exchange ideas and consider issues critical to the preservation of our heritage. The theme for this year's conference is "Protecting the Irreplaceable."

Featured topics this year will include *Northwestern Oklahoma's Heritage and Its Preservation*, *How to Respond to a Preservation Crisis*, *Historic Houses and How to Preserve Them*, and *Success and Failure/Boom and Bust on Main Street*.

You won't want to miss any of the special conference events:

Thursday, May 6

- ⇒ *Woodward Main Street Walking Tour*: Experience an especially entertaining stroll through Woodward's historic downtown with tour guide Beverly White and enjoy a delicious luncheon on the grounds of the Stine House.
- ⇒ *Tour of Fort Supply Historic Site*: Take the short bus ride with tour guide Robert Rea to Fort Supply, an Oklahoma Historical Society-operated historic site, and visit the restored Fort Supply Guardhouse and other buildings from the site's early history and observe how several state agencies use Fort Supply's buildings.
- ⇒ *Opening Reception*: Be the guests of the Plains Indians and Pioneer Museum for wonderful food and for an evening of conversation with fellow preservationists. This special event is generously sponsored by MidFirst Bank. Arrive early and visit the museum's many exhibits.
- ⇒ *A Special Performance*: On Stage Woodward will present "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!" at 8:00 p.m. at the historic Woodward Arts Theatre. Tickets are \$15.00. To reserve tickets, call (580) 256-7120 and ask for Deanna or Jeanie.

Friday, May 7

- ⇒ *Parks and Breakfast Tour*: Enjoy a sunrise tour and earlybird's breakfast with your fellow conference participants, traveling by bus to Boiling Springs State Park and to Woodward's historic Crystal Beach.
- ⇒ *Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.'s Annual Meeting and Luncheon*: Join Oklahoma's statewide nonprofit organization for its annual update on its programs, including presentation of Oklahoma's 1999 Most Endangered Historic Properties List.
- ⇒ *Keynote Session*: Join all conference participants in the Woodward Arts Theatre for the keynote session. Our speaker will be F. Lawrence Oaks, Texas State Historic Preservation Officer and former Alabama SHPO. Mr. Oaks is a nationally recognized preservation leader and his presentation is entitled, "Renewing Preservation Partnerships for the Next Millennium."
- ⇒ *Banquet Reception*: Don't miss the special reception hosted by The Stock Exchange Bank just prior to the awards banquet.
- ⇒ *Awards Banquet*: The Oklahoma Historical Society presents the Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Officer's Citations of Merit, and National Register certificates. A special presentation will be made by the National Park Service to recognize Oklahoma's two new National Historic Landmarks. Representative Frank Lucas will provide special remarks.

Saturday, May 8

- ⇒ *Tour of Historic Waynoka*: Everyone will want to take this half-day trip to nearby Waynoka. You will visit WPA properties and the Santa Fe Depot and Reading Room (Harvey House), which is undergoing rehabilitation through an ISTE A grant from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

The event is sponsored by the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office; Oklahoma Main Street Program; Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.; Woodward Main Street, Inc.; Plains Indians and Pioneer Museum; Historic Fort Supply Foundation; Fort Supply Historic Site; Woodward Chamber of Commerce; Tourism and Convention Development Committee; Great Plains Preservation and Development Foundation; Woodward Arts and Theater Council, Inc.; MidFirst Bank; The Stock Exchange Bank; and McFarland Architects, PC.

Conference Guest Speakers

Karen Bode Baxter, former Main Street Project Manager and currently a preservation consultant, St. Louis, MO

Megan Bellue, Program Associate, Preservation Services Department, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D. C.

Howard Bergman, U. S. General Services Administration, Greater Southwest Region, Fort Worth, TX

Gary Geschwind, Engineer, Palo Alto, CA
Steve Kline, Preservation Architect, General Services Administration, Greater Southwest Region, Fort Worth, TX

Susan Allen Kline, Preservation Consultant, Fort Worth, TX

Donna Leahy, Business Coordinator, Preservation Services Department, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D. C.

F. Lawrence Oaks, State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission, Austin, TX

Bob Spude, U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Santa Fe, NM

Jeff Tully, Program Associate, Southwest Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Fort Worth, TX

Beverly White, National Trust Main Street Center, Washington, D. C.

Continuing Education Credit for Architects, Planners, and Realtors

Architects, planners and realtors who attend Oklahoma's Eleventh Annual Statewide Preservation Conference may qualify for continuing education credits. Members of the American Institute of Architects will earn AIA/CES learning units. Planners will receive American Institute of Certified Planners professional development hours. Realtors will earn Oklahoma Real Estate Commission continuing education units.

For further details about this special opportunity, contact Melvena Heisch at (405) 522-4484.

Conference Scholarships Available

Students interested in attending the Statewide Preservation Conference can receive a scholarship for the cost of their registration by making application to the State Historic Preservation Office at (405) 521-6249.

To be eligible, students must be enrolled in an Oklahoma institution of higher learning full-time for the Fall 1999 semester and pursuing a degree in archaeology, architecture, history, or other historic-preservation related field. The deadline for applications is April 23.

Chandler Armory removed from Most Endangered List

On March 23, the Chandler City Council voted in favor of a resolution to recognize the importance of the Old Chandler Armory, support restoration, apply for grant funding, and use it for city offices and a variety of community services, as well as to promote Route 66 and National Guard heritage tourism. Members of the Old Armory Restorers organization presented the resolution request.

According to local Preservation Oklahoma member Sally Ferrell, longtime preservation activist and former advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation for Oklahoma, "Now that its owner has formally 'adopted it,' the community feels confident that the historic resource is out of immediate danger. The Chandler National Guard Armory is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was the point of departure for soldiers in four major conflicts. In 1995, it was included in Preservation Oklahoma's Most Endangered List, but later moved to the Watch List when a local group formed to save it. The building was returned to Most Endangered List status in 1998 after the City of Chandler solicited bids for its demolition as part of a discussion with a convenience store developer.

"We are delighted to see another property included on our Most Endangered List saved from destruction," said Preservation Oklahoma president Marva Ellard of Oklahoma City. "Although the additional public scrutiny of these properties due to their inclusion on our list can be a powerful incentive for local action, it makes an enormous difference when there is strong action by the local preservation community, as in the case of the Chandler Armory."

Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties List is a joint project between Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. and the State Historic Preservation Office.

Oklahoma City designates Historical Landmark Districts

In February, Oklahoma City approved designation of its Heritage Hills East neighborhood under the historical landmark and preservation ordinance. The neighborhood includes some commercial properties. The residences are protected by historic preservation zoning and the other properties were designated a historical landmark district. The combination provides protection for the entire neighborhood. Lane Gross of the Planning Department said Heritage Hills East is an unusual application of the ordinance. "Few Oklahoma City neighborhoods have such a unique combination of buildings," said Gross.

In November of last year, Oklahoma City designated the Jefferson Park Historic District as its first Historical Landmark District. Since then, the city has also approved designation of the Paseo Historic District under the same provision of the ordinance. The protection of these neighborhoods by historic preservation zoning will help strengthen Oklahoma City's historic neighborhoods.

Tulsa's Hotel Ambassador plans Grand Re-Opening

Rehabilitation is nearly complete on the Hotel Ambassador, which was included in Preservation Oklahoma's 1996 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties. "It will reopen on May 1 as Tulsa's premier boutique four-star hotel with the The Chalkboard restaurant returning to the building's eastern end," said Hotel Ambassador representative Tracey Norvell. The Chalkboard was a favorite Tulsa dining spot while the Ambassador was still open. Many people have expressed as much nostalgia for the restaurant as for the building itself.

Developer Paul Coury conceived a plan for the much anticipated hotel grand opening to serve as a fund-raising opportunity for five Tulsa arts organizations. The event, *La Dolce Vita* ("The Sweet Life"), will be a cocktail reception hosted by the hotel to benefit the Gilcrease Museum, the Philbroom Museum of Art, the Tulsa Ballet, the Tulsa Philharmonic, and the Tulsa Opera. It is the first fundraiser to jointly benefit all five major arts organizations.

On February 18, a dessert reception to kick off the project was held at The Chalkboard for representatives of each organization. Coury, Hotel Ambassador general manager Allan Kronberg, and Chalkboard owner John Phillips guided guests on tours of the restaurant and hotel, both still under construction, as they explained the details of *La Dolce Vita*. In keeping with the planned event's theme, each organization at the reception received a hardhat filled with Italian chocolates and confections and tied with brightly colored ribbons similar to streamers that adorn a Maypole.

"We were extremely pleased with how enthusiastic and receptive each arts organization was," said Coury. "It should be a very memorable evening as we celebrate the arts and the rehabilitation of this elegant ten-story Art Deco building. Our goal is to attract 700 people and raise over \$100,000 in donations to the arts."

General Patrick J. Hurley first opened the hotel in 1929. Gen. Hurley was transferred to Washington, D. C. at the time of the Ambassador's initial opening and became Secretary of War for the Hoover Administration, the first Oklahoman to sit in a Presidential Cabinet. He later served as Ambassador to China, as the first U. S. Minister to New Zealand, and as Ambassador to Iran. Closed in 1987, after a period of use as senior retirement housing, the Ambassador Hotel had once been a temporary home for wealthy Tulsans building mansions in nearby Maple Ridge. Hurley's son, Wilson Hurley, a noted landscape artist with pieces on display at Tulsa's Gilcrease Museum, has been invited to be a special guest at the re-opening.

Tulsa Historical Society director Robert Powers applauded the rehabilitation undertaken by Coury and a group of Tulsa investors. "I view this as a stunning example of an economically viable undertaking that enhances and preserves a noteworthy historic structure," said Powers.

Persons interested in receiving an invitation to attend the May 1 benefit should contact the Hotel Ambassador Guest Relations at (918) 587-8200. For restaurant and catering information, call The Chalkboard at (918) 582-1964.



Once on Preservation Oklahoma's Most Endangered List, the Hotel Ambassador has made a dramatic turnaround.



The developers of the Hotel Ambassador have been extremely sensitive to its many elaborate features.

Ardmore and Sapulpa join CLG Program

The State Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce that the cities of Ardmore and Sapulpa have joined Oklahoma's Certified Local Governments (CLG) Program. The National Park Service accepted the SHPO's recommendation to certify Ardmore on December 29th, 1998, and Sapulpa on February 9th of this year, which brings the number of Oklahoma's participating cities to fourteen.

CLGs are delegated some of the SHPO's responsibilities, play a direct role in the nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and receive a federal matching grant from the SHPO's annual allocation from the U. S. Department of the Interior. The grant funds are used for a variety of projects and activities, including public education and outreach programs, preparation of National Register nominations, training of

local commission members and staff, and development of design guidelines.

Ardmore and Sapulpa, both Oklahoma Main Street communities, have strong downtown historic districts. Sapulpa has already extended the protection of its local zoning to its historic commercial district and Ardmore will soon also take up the issue.

To qualify as a CLG, a city must enforce a historic preservation zoning ordinance and maintain a qualified local review commission in accordance with the SHPO's guidelines. Ardmore and Sapulpa join Anadarko, Chickasha, Cordell, Enid, Grandfield, Guthrie, Norman, Oklahoma City, Okmulgee, Ponca City, Tahlequah, and Tulsa in the Oklahoma CLG Program. For more information, call Melvena Heisch at (405) 522-4484.

BancFirst Guthrie creates New Loan Pool

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. is pleased to announce the creation of a new historic preservation loan fund by BancFirst Guthrie. This \$100,000 loan pool is designated for historic rehabilitation projects at terms equal or better than new construction, according to BancFirst Guthrie's president LaVerne Dowding.

This new loan pool is another component in the continuing series of funding sources launched in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) through work by Preservation Oklahoma's Revolving Loan Funds Development Committee, chaired by board secretary Susan Guthrie Dunham of Oklahoma City. Work by committee members Dunham and Ralph McCalmont secured the agreement with BancFirst Guthrie to provide funding to qualified businesses and individuals in Logan County. Bank staff members familiar with and sensitive to the purpose of the fund will handle the loans. Preservation Oklahoma will be responsible for causing loan requests to this fund to receive a review and recommendation from the Logan County Historical Society or Guthrie Historic Preservation Commission as to the appropriateness of each applicant's work plan.

Applications to this fund will be available after April 26. Interested parties should contact Preservation Oklahoma at (405) 232-5747.

Announcement of MidFirst Bank Loan Fund expected this Spring

The Revolving Loan Funds Development Committee is also working with officials at MidFirst Bank to create a large pool of funds available at branches throughout that financial institution's market, according to Preservation Oklahoma board president and committee member Marva Ellard. "The bank has agreed to the program, which should create a fund of \$1-2 million for use in a large portion of Oklahoma," said Ellard. "Right now, we are finalizing the details, so we should be making an announcement in the next few weeks."

Since 1994, Preservation Oklahoma has participated in a joint project, co-sponsored by SHPO, to identify funding sources for historic preservation projects, plan an effective strategy to create availability of low interest loan funds statewide, and work toward their creation. Since then, the organization has finished the identification and planning segment and started launching funding sources with financial institution partners around Oklahoma. Currently, there are \$100,000 low-interest loan pools available in McLain and Okmulgee counties. "The BancFirst and MidFirst Bank loan funds should take us a huge step closer to our goals," said Ellard.

Future of Agra Bank Uncertain

The 1904 Agra Bank Building is still endangered. The Agra Historical and Preservation Society has received title to the building and members are discussing with city officials possible use as a senior citizens center. However, the group will meet Monday, April 26, at 8:00 p.m. at the Agra Methodist Church Annex to consider demolition or sale of the building. It has been fenced because of danger from weakening stone walls. It is built of native sandstone, 25' wide, two-story, and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, call Harold Pool at (918) 375-2338.

Awards/Grants Deadlines

Preservation Oklahoma has copies of all of the following, which you may obtain by calling (405) 232-5747.

- * Nominations for the National Trust's Preservation Honor Awards. (May 1 deadline.)
- Applications for National Trust Cultural Diversity Scholarships to attend its 53rd National Preservation Conference in October. (June 15 deadline.)
- * Applications to the Great American Station Foundation's financial support programs for those working on historic depots. Deadline is June 1.

SHPO to sponsor April Series of Wiemer Collection Slide Show/Lectures

Fred Wiemer, who donated more than 3,000 color slides of Oklahoma properties on the National Register of Historic Places, will speak at six Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) museums and sites in April, illustrating his lectures with the collection's slides. A Drumright native, Wiemer received his bachelor's and master's degrees in music, but his elective courses included art and architectural history. He received a Fulbright Scholarship to study music in Rome in 1965-67. Since then he has lived in New York City, working as a freelance editor for book publishers. He took all of the slides during extensive travels through Oklahoma, starting in the summer of 1990. The collection is an important resource for the State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) staff and clients.

In the spring of 1998, the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* published an article by Wiemer on his travels through Oklahoma in the 1990s titled "Learning from Oklahoma: Who We Are and where We Are."

Wiemer's presentation will offer a broad overview of Oklahoma homes and buildings of the 19th and early 20th centuries. It will be neither a chronological history nor a travelogue. Instead, the presentation will offer a wide variety of architectural examples arranged by construction materials such as wood, stone, brick, and stucco. In the words of Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Melvena Heisch, the buildings shown will include "the well-known and the unknown, the beautiful and the quirky," but all are listed on the National Register. "By the time the last slide is shown," said Heisch, "the viewers' image of Oklahoma should be forever changed."

The SHPO will sponsor the presentations, which all begin at 7:00 p.m.:

April 6 -- No Man's Land Museum, Goodwell.

April 7 -- Museum of the Cherokee Strip, Enid.

April 8 -- Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus.

April 13 -- Overholser Mansion Carriage House, Oklahoma City.

April 14 -- Pioneer Woman Museum, Ponca City.

April 15 -- George M. Murrell House, Park Hill (near Tahlequah).

The series will also include information on the OHS and the SHPO. For more information, call Melvena Heisch at (405) 522-4484.

Calendar of Upcoming Historic Preservation Events

The State Historic Preservation Office's June workshops will be held at the Hospitality and Training Center, Kiamichi Park, five miles east of Hugo on US-70, with no registration fee required. If you desire to attend any of these events but have a disability and need accommodation, please notify the SHPO at least three (3) days before the event. For more information, call (405) 521-6249.

May

- 6-8 Oklahoma's Eleventh Annual Statewide Preservation Conference, Woodward
Registration Fee
9-15 National Historic Preservation Week

June SHPO Workshop Series

- 23 Introduction to the Section 106 Review Process (9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon)
23 Determination of Eligibility under Section 106 (1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
24 Introduction to the National Register of Historic Places (9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
25 Federal Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (9:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon)
25 Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

October 19-24

National Historic Preservation Conference, Washington, D. C. (registration required through the National Trust for Historic Preservation)

Where is it?

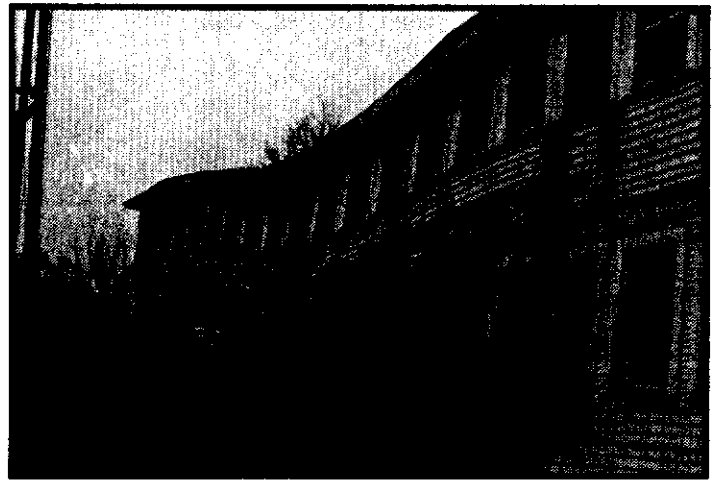
The last issue of *Preservation Oklahoma News* brought you a new feature. We received two responses that correctly identified it as a building at Fort Reno, but only one, Steve Davis of Oklahoma City, who knew it by name: the *Quartermaster's Building*.

Congratulations, Steve!

Now, try a new one. The photograph on the right is a detail of an historic building somewhere in Oklahoma. Can you name the building and its location?

Send your answers to:

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., P. O. Box 25043,
Oklahoma City, OK 73125-0043.



Bits and Pieces:

NEW SHPO STAFF MEMBER: The SHPO is pleased to welcome Jim Gabbert to its staff. Gabbert assumes the position of Architectural Historian on April 5 and will coordinate the SHPO's National Register and architectural/historic survey programs. Jim has an M. A. in Historic Preservation Administration from Eastern Michigan University and a B. A. in History/Geography from Indiana University. For the past three years, he has worked for the Indiana Historic Landmarks Foundation.

THANKS TO CINDY SAVAGE: The SHPO extends its appreciation to Cindy Savage for her dedicated service as its staff Architectural Historian. Cindy resigned her position in December to take care of new family responsibilities. The SHPO is pleased that she has taken a temporary part-time position to complete some special National Register projects.

NEW MAIN STREET DIRECTOR: Congratulations to Les Hall, who was recently named director of the Oklahoma Main Street Program. We all value Main Street as a preservation partner and look forward to working with Hall in his new role.

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION GRANTS: The SHPO will accept applications for Round II of its National Register Grants Program through June 1. For an application and other information, contact the SHPO at (405) 521-6249.

REINTRODUCTION OF HISTORIC HOMEOWNERSHIP ASSISTANCE ACT:

The National Trust's Department of Law and Public Policy informs us that soon Rep. Clay Shaw, Jr. (R-FL) and Sen. John Chafee (R-RI) plan to reintroduce the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act. Please contact your Members of Congress through the U. S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 225-3121 (House) or (202) 224-3121 (Senate) and tell them to cosponsor it upon its introduction.



Become a member of the statewide historic preservation network ...

JOIN PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA NOW!

Preservation Oklahoma's mission is to encourage the preservation of Oklahoma's historic places. Our strength lies in the working partnerships we have forged with people throughout Oklahoma. We welcome all people and organizations who care about the preservation of our historic and cultural resources. To join, complete the form below and send with payment to: Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., P. O. Box 25043, Oklahoma City, OK 73125-0043.

Name _____ From (if gift) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone/e-mail _____

If organizational membership, how many members in your organization? _____

- Heritage Club: \$1,000.00
- Sustaining: \$500.00
- Patron: \$250.00
- Sponsor: \$100.00
- Organization: \$50.00
- Partner: \$30.00
- Individual/Family: \$15.00

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) organization. Membership contributions are fully tax deductible.

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Preservation Oklahoma News
Serving the Statewide Historic Preservation Community

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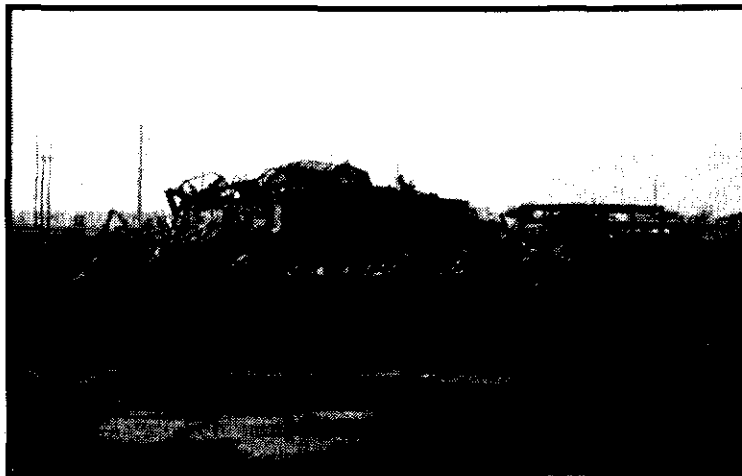
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During the last quarter, Guthrie received recognition as a National Historic Landmark. Several Preservation Oklahoma board members visited Natchez, Mississippi to attend a workshop on strengthening boards for statewide nonprofit organizations. The similarities between Guthrie and Natchez are striking. Both are visited by a large number of tourists, have great name recognition, and are blessed with remarkably intact historic resources. Both communities can count themselves extremely fortunate that the integrity of their historic fabric is intact largely due to a lack of financial means to demolish it all and put up strip malls and invite Interstate Highways through downtown.

Today in Oklahoma we have more than ever a need for vision. Although it is encouraging that city officials in both Tulsa and Oklahoma City recently participated in public discussions addressing Urban Sprawl, it is time to match these words to the challenges we face. What will it profit Clinton to lose two more important historic buildings so people can drive through town faster on a widened highway? If Muskogee loses one of the defining features of its historic downtown, will a parking lot be a great improvement over a vacant building? Will Oklahoma City's leaders allow the Walnut Avenue Bridge to be replaced by redevelopment that makes no sense either aesthetically or financially? What drives this mania for faster access and better parking at destinations increasingly devoid of interest? The historic preservation community in Oklahoma has plenty of work ahead.

For now, we can take comfort in the good news: rescue of the Rock Island Depot in Guthrie by Sonic Corporation, partnerships between the Choctaw Nation and preservationists to try to find ways to save a National Historic Landmark, the reopening of the once Most Endangered listed Hotel Ambassador in Tulsa. There's plenty more in the April issue.

On Friday, May 7, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. will hold its annual membership meeting and luncheon in Woodward in conjunction with the Eleventh Annual Statewide Preservation Conference. At that time, we will announce the nominations for the 1999-00 board of directors and officers. Attendees will get a firsthand look at our accomplishments during the last year and witness the unveiling of the new list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties.

We hope to see you in Woodward!

New and Renewed Memberships

Thank you all for your support!

Individual/Family - \$15.00:

Leonard F. Ball, *OKC*
Michael and Judith Bruce, *Guthrie*
Barbour Cox, *Chandler*
Randy Floyd, *OKC*

Mrs. Jack Gibson, *OKC*
Winfrey Houston, *Stillwater*
H. Cliff Ivester, *Sayre*
Kelly H. Kirby, *Tulsa*

Vergil and Nina Payne, *Cheyenne*
Robert L. Rorschach, *Tulsa*
Kathleen A. Settle, *Muskogee*
Susan Winchester, *Chickasha*

Partner - \$30.00:

John and Mary Athens, *Tulsa*
Edgar V. Springer, Jr., *Norman*

Sponsor - \$100.00:

William J. Legg, *OKC*

Organizational - \$50.00:

Patrick Sutherland, *Norman*

Patron - \$250.00:

Dave Huey, *Tulsa*

Special Donations

Caroline Patton, *Stillwater*
LeRoy H. Fischer, *Stillwater*