

Preservation Oklahoma NEWS

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Preservation
OKLAHOMA 



2021 Most Endangered Places List Announced

Preservation Oklahoma is pleased to announce the 2021 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Places. POK aims to promote the places where Oklahoma history lives by bringing awareness to historic landmarks across the state. Although inclusion on the list does not guarantee protection or funding, recognition for these structures may increase restoration efforts and possibly ensure their longevity.

"Fortunately, no structures from our 2020 list have been demolished in the last year," POK Executive Director Chantry Banks said. "In fact, thanks to the list, the French-Parks home in Tahlequah is seeing new life and will be restored. Stories like these are why the list exists. Bringing awareness to our historic resources is so important and we are doing what we can to advocate for these landmarks. I'm excited for the diversity of list this year. There are all types of buildings representing much of the state."



Fire Station #1, Guthrie. Photo: Amanda Potter

The 2021 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Places include:

Fire Station #1, Guthrie

Housing Guthrie's first fire station, the building at 111 S. 2nd St in Guthrie, Oklahoma, is rich in history. First used by a local café, the building welcomed the Heim and Waite Hose Company in 1903. The building was then occupied by the Guthrie fire department until it was voted to be sold in 2005. Preserving this site would honor the countless hours of service and protection provided by the many fire fighters housed in this structure. Now vacant, the building is in fair condition. Many original features are still present including an advertising mural and wood hose tower. The hose tower was used for hanging and drying the cotton hose after the fire fighters returned on their horse-drawn fire apparatus. Fire Station #1 contributes to the Guthrie Historic District and Guthrie National Historic Landmark District.

article continued on page 4

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Yukon Mills. Photo: Preservation Oklahoma

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Mail all correspondence to Preservation Oklahoma.

SHPO May Workshops are Going Virtual!

Join us from **May 11-14, 2021**, as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS), and Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) share information for submitting a successful Section 106 project for review.

May's workshops are two-hour sessions Monday-Thursday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The entire workshop series will be online, and the live sessions will have ample opportunity for questions and discussion.

May 11th

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act - SHPO staff will review the basics of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This review will also include a summary of how to submit projects for review.

Presented by Lynda Ozan, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

May 12th

Oklahoma Archeological Survey and Section 106 - Oklahoma Archeological Survey staff will review how to submit archeological data to OAS as well as how to utilize their research.

Presented by Dr. Kary Stackelbeck, State Archeologist

May 13th

Archeological Survey Forms and Field Work - Oklahoma Archeological Survey staff will discuss how to complete the survey form and lead a discussion on field work.

Presented by Dr. Deb Green, Assistant State Archeologist

May 14th

Section 106 and Tribal Consultation - Oklahoma Department of Transportation will lead a discussion on how to complete Tribal Coordination for Section 106 purposes. This discussion is specific to the ODOT approach and includes some of their best practices.

Presented by Dr. Rhonda Fair, Tribal Coordinator (ODOT)

Registration is now open and available at <https://www.okhistory.org/shpo/workshopregistration>.

POK Receives Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant

The Oklahoma Historical Society is proud to announce that Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. has been awarded a grant through the Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program.

Preservation Oklahoma Inc. has been awarded \$9,068 that will fund a project geared toward enhancing the visitor experience and transitioning toward a self-guided tour option. This will include an informational pamphlet, carpet runners in sections of the house to allow guests to enter areas previously off limits due to original carpets, stanchions and ropes that will help direct the flow of tours and protect fragile objects, and the addition of an information stand in each room of the house with more historical interpretation of the rooms.

"We're thrilled to receive the Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant for 2021," said Chantry Banks, Preservation Oklahoma Inc. executive director. "Funds will allow for an improved visitor experience at the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, including new information signs and greater access to the mansion's second floor."

More information about the Oklahoma Heritage Grant Program is at <https://www.okhistory.org/about/grants>.



AbandonedOK.com

2021 Most Endangered Places List Announced

Tallchief Mansion. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma



Yukon Flour Mills. Photo: Preservation Oklahoma

Flour Mills, Yukon

An icon of the skyline, the elevators/flour mills flanking Route 66 have been the topic of much discussion about progress and preservation in the town of Yukon. Built around 1900, the mills are a staple of the community, so much so the high school mascot is "the Millers." Talk in the town is that the mills may be torn down to make room for a five-story, high-end office park, apartment building, and two multi-level parking garages. The mills are a source of pride for residents and the massive sign atop one of the mills was refurbished with donated funds a few years ago. The future is uncertain for the mills, as the sale is expected to close in October 2021.

Canadian County Jail and Stables, El Reno

The Canadian County Jail, designed by Solomon A. Layton and built in 1906, has deteriorated to the point that there are holes in the roof. Although in extremely poor condition, the building remains a striking example of the Italian Renaissance style as applied to a jail. The red brick stable, in better condition, is also a wonderful example of early 20th century functional architecture. As the oldest extant county buildings in Canadian County, the jail and stable would benefit from increased public awareness. The jail was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 and the stables added in 1995.



Canadian County Jail and Stables. Photo: Cynthia Savage

Tallchief Mansion, Fairfax

Alexander Tallchief was a member of the Osage Nation who obtained his wealth like many others in the Osage tribe through the 1920's oil boom. A 10-room structure constructed of terracotta bricks was built to sit on a hill overlooking the reservation in Fairfax, Oklahoma. This became known as Tallchief Mansion. Alexander Tallchief owned other buildings in Fairfax including a pool hall and the Tallchief Theatre which he designed and built in 1928. The mansion was the childhood home of Maria, born January 24, 1925, and Marjorie Tallchief, born on October 19, 1926. With their family wealth, the girls could afford music and dance lessons. It was discovered a short time later that Maria and Marjorie had an unbelievable talent for ballet. In 1933 the family decided to move to Los Angeles to pursue better opportunities for the dancers. The home stands today as a monument to the Osage Nation and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Old First National Bank. Photo: Gary Henry

Old First National Bank, Kingston

The First National Bank of Kingston was built in 1905. It was the second brick building built in, at that time, Helen, Indian Territory. The building served as a bank from 1905-1935 and was also a grocery store for many years. It is essentially in its original condition other than a few windows that were bricked over. After closure of the grocery store it sat empty for several years before seeing new life as a craft store. It was at one time nominated for inclusion in the National Register but the process was never completed. Old First National now sits empty, but it is for sale. It is in danger of destruction from neglect and disrepair.



Old City Jail. Photo: Ryan Fogle

Old City Jail, Oklahoma City

This building was constructed in 1935 as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program under President Roosevelt during the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. The Police Headquarters and Jail building plays a key part in keeping the story alive. From an architectural standpoint it has beautiful Art Deco details, a style celebrated by design enthusiasts as the golden era of architecture, a style which was demolished all too often in Oklahoma City amidst the Pei Plan. The building is the western-most building of the city's Civic Center, which includes the County Courthouse, Municipal Building, and Civic Center Music Hall. With the recent construction of a new Police Headquarters, the fate of the original building is uncertain. The police proposed demolishing it for additional parking to City Council in 2019, however a recent City Council meeting deferred any decisions until the end of the 2020.



Terral First United Methodist Church. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

First United Methodist Church, Terral

Not much is known about the builder or date of the First United Methodist Church (FUMC) in Terral, but it is a beautiful example of what many consider to be the most important buildings in any small town. The FUMC of Terral was a social center for many years, home to weddings, funerals, plays, youth clubs, dinners, and other community events.

(Continued on next page)

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Almost all of its contents remain in the property, something rarely seen in a building of this age and condition. The beautiful stained glass still hangs in the window; it is currently protected by plexiglass. Action does need to be taken to secure the building, as there are many access points to get inside. The current owner purchased the building around ten years ago with hopes of a renovation. Unfortunately, ill health has prevented restoration work, and he is currently looking to sell the church to someone who will help bring it back to its former glory.

Old City Hall, Theater, and Masonic Lodge, Heavener

A recent addition to the National Register of Historic Places, the Old City Hall/Masonic Lodge was built in 1928 in the neoclassical style. It is the only extant neoclassical style in Heavener as applied to buildings along the First Street corridor. Heavener's social history is entwined with that of the fraternal orders that bound businessmen and women together in social and public service. The building is in solid condition and there are hopes to restore the interior, including the theater where it can once again be a social center of the town.



Heavener Old City Hall and Masonic Lodge. Photo: Barbara Tyson

WWII Hangars, Chickasha Airport

Opened in 1941 as Wilson-Bonifils Field, the airport conducted contract basic flying training for the United States Army Air Forces. Flying training was performed with Fairchild PT-19s as the primary trainer. Around 8,000 troops were trained at Wilson-Bonifils as part of the 31st Flying Training Wing. During wartime, the airport had six grass runways. The airfield was deactivated in 1945 and turned over to civil control.

The WWII era hangars still standing are a testament to Oklahoma's important role in wartime training. They are eligible for listing in the National Register for Historic Places and are in fair condition. Preservation and renovation is needed on the hangars and public awareness may help keep the buildings standing for many more years.



WWII Hangars, Chickasha Airport. Photo: Bergundy Nelson

W.S. Kelly Merchandise, Cogar

This little building, sitting at the intersection of state highways 37 and 152, has seen a lot of action since it was built in the 1920s by Wilbur Kelly in the town of New Cogar. Legend has it Pretty Boy Floyd made frequent stops, along with other notorious crooks and bootleggers. The building has served as a general mercantile, grocery store, and gas station over the years, before closing its doors in 1980. All contents were left behind as well. For film buffs, the building can be seen in the 1988 Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise vehicle, *Rainman*. In 2020, The Abandoned Atlas Foundation began a small restoration project on the W.S. Kelly Merchandise building. They hope to preserve this little slice of history in Cogar and are currently accepting donations.



W.S. Kelly Merchandise. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

Virtual Oklahoma History Conference set for April 22-23

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

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

The conference schedule will include 11 live sessions as well as 11 on-demand sessions. Live sessions will include a presentation, followed by an opportunity for the virtual audience to ask questions of the speakers via the online chat. On-demand sessions are prerecorded presentations that will be available online beginning at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 22. Attendees may view these sessions at their convenience, and these also will be archived on the OHS website.

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

This virtual conference is free to attend, but preregistration is required. For a complete schedule and to register, please visit www.okhistory.org/conference. For conference or registration questions, please contact Angela Spindle at 405-522-0317 or aspindle@okhistory.org.

Preservation Oklahoma Offering Online Workshop

Preservation Oklahoma is offering a unique opportunity for a series of online videos from Old Home Rescue in Oklahoma City. The Wood Window Rescue Workshop will educate homeowners on how to restore most double hung windows and solve common wood window problems. This workshop is designed for all skill types to work and learn at their own pace in the comfort and safety of their own home with videos and pdf checklists, worksheets and guides using an intuitive online learning app. Participants will have one year from login to watch and re-watch videos and download pdf resources. Participants will also be invited to the Wood Window Rescue private Facebook group where they may ask the pros their questions not covered in the workshop.

Topics included are types and terms, double hung window anatomy, common problems, upper and lower sash install, hardware installation, and much more.

Course registration will begin May 1 and attendees will have access to the workshop for one year, beginning with first log-in date. The cost for attendees will be \$60. More information will be available at PreservationOK.org, or by contacting Chantry Banks at director@preservationok.org



Photo: Old Home Rescue

History from the Homestead: The Taylor-Spurgeon Ranch

Nelson and Almeda Taylor moved to “No Man’s Land” by wagon in March of 1890. Along the way, their son, Oliver, broke his arm after falling off a horse and was forced to ride in the wagon the rest of the way, much to his disappointment. Their first home was an old soddy they found until Nelson could find a place of their own. Eventually he met a Mr. Cantrell to whom he traded a team of horses for squatter’s rights to what would become the Taylor-Spurgeon Ranch in the Gate, Oklahoma, area. The property had a two-roomed soddy, a shed-barn, and a dug well, and the family grew kaffir corn and later wheat, milo, and millet. Eventually Nelson would plant peach trees, as well, which became a successful orchard.

The only fuel available to the family at the time was cow chips (or dried cow dung), and Almeda would take the children with her to pick up the chips and pile them up so the men could haul them to the house. One year as they were collecting the chips and piling them on the prairie, a group of cowboys came along and burned them for warmth before they could be hauled.

Salt for the stock was hauled from the Salt Plains, and eggs and butter were taken to Englewood, Kansas, to exchange for groceries and supplies. Mail came once a week, and included the Kansas City Star, their only source of information to the outside world; its cost was \$0.25 a year. There were no taxes in 1890 as the range was free, and a man’s brand was well respected. Nelson Taylor’s brand was NT on the left side.

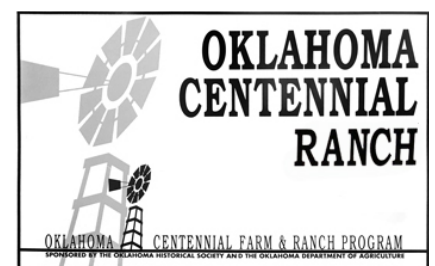
A common custom by 1909 was to hold a dance in a new home with wooden floors prior to the room partitions being placed. Musicians were brought in, including Oliver and Jim Taylor. Families would also gather in the groves along the streams for picnics, especially on the 4th of July. The day often consisted of a speech by a Civil War veteran, the children saying their “pieces,” and singing. There was always a large picnic dinner and sometimes even ice cream made with ice that was cut out the winter before and stored in caves.

Some minor inconveniences of the times for Almeda were the meager supply of cooking utensils and the beds. She had only two iron pots or kettles and a brass kettle that had to be scoured with vinegar and salt. The kettle was used to cook fruit. The beds were also a problem as they were only ticks (not the insect, but a linen or cotton bag filled with materials and sewn shut) and filled with clean hay or corn shucks, and an old feather bed. There were seldom springs but instead just slats under them. The soap for washing dishes and clothes was homemade lye made from saved bits of grease or cracklings.



Taylor-Spurgeon Ranch. Photo: State Historic Preservation Office

Nelson Taylor filed his claim on the property on October 24, 1892 and went to prove his claim in Woodward on September 24, 1899. His daughter, Viola (Taylor) Spurgeon-Johannsen, was born in his sod house on July 28, 1896. Taylor-Spurgeon Ranch became a centennial ranch in 1992.



New Signs Will Point the Way to Mother Road in Oklahoma

Travelers and Route 66 enthusiasts who “plan to motor west” will have an easier way to spot the Mother Road in Oklahoma. Revised historical route markers are going up over the next few months along key areas as one of the first visual cues that the state is getting ready for the upcoming Route 66 centennial celebrations in 2026.

The new design is the result of input from Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell, who is also the state’s Secretary of Tourism & Branding, the Oklahoma Route 66 Centennial Commission, the Oklahoma Historical Society, the Oklahoma Route 66 Association, the Route 66 Alliance and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

“Travelling on Route 66 and seeing the incredible history of this highway in person is a destination trip for people worldwide, and we are so incredibly fortunate to have this gem right here in our state,” Pinnell said. “These signs will help drivers easily identify areas of the Mother Road and bring new awareness to this transportation treasure in Oklahoma.”

The signs have a brown background which is used nationally to designate areas of cultural significance. The words “historic” and “route” will be in white letters, which is a change from the current design that uses black lettering. A historic font pays homage to the early version of the signs and the recognizable US-66 shield is featured.

“Oklahoma has more drivable miles of Route 66 than any other state, making it an easily accessible historic destination which will showcase the signs all around our state,” Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation Tim Gatz said. “These signs are a low-cost project that will have a major impact for everyone wanting to see what makes Route 66 so special.”

The original path of Route 66 traverses present-day highways, interstates and also local roads across the state. ODOT will continue to work with local communities who have an interest in placing signs along sections of the route along their city streets. Sign templates are already being made available to those cities wishing to partner in this centennial effort so they can create matching signs, and ongoing conversations will continue to help address route gaps and also how the sign initiative can help highlight the unique aspects of the route on local roads.

For the highway and interstate system statewide, ODOT has produced nearly 400 of the updated historical route markers in-house at a cost of about \$50 per sign for an estimated cost up to \$20,000 total. Over time, these will either replace older markers or be placed at additional locations to help point the way to local segments of the route.

Adjustments will continue to be made in this initial phase of signing the highway system. As the route also doubled in some areas between adjacent interstates and highways, the marker locations will be refined to point the way to secondary routes so that travelers can see what makes historic Route 66 in Oklahoma City and the entire state of Oklahoma “so pretty.”

For more information on historic Route 66, visit the Oklahoma Route 66 Association website at oklahomaroute66.com and also the Route 66 Alliance Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/route66alliance/> for more information on Route 66 and the upcoming Centennial.



Photo: Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation

NRHP Nomination Grants Available from SHPO

The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) announces its annual matching grants to state, local, and tribal governments and nonprofit organizations for the preparation of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations. The SHPO has reserved \$10,000 of its FY 2021 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) allocation from the U.S. Department of the Interior for the program. Applications are accepted February 1 through April 30. Each grant is limited to \$1,000, and the applicant must provide a nonfederal, cash match of at least \$700. Grant recipients will use the grant funds and nonfederal match to retain an appropriately qualified professional to prepare a complete individual property nomination package for the NRHP. Applicants must be aware that \$1,700 (federal grant + nonfederal match) is only an estimate of the cost for such projects and that more than the minimum \$700 nonfederal match may be necessary to cover the consultant fee. Consultants must consider the nature of the property proposed for nomination and many other factors as they develop their fee proposals.

The NRHP is the catalogue of our nation's significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, and landscapes important in our past. While listing is not a guarantee of preservation or of financial assistance, the NRHP status of a property is often critical to the strategy for its preservation. The NRHP provides increased public awareness of these irreplaceable resources, provides limited protection for them, qualifies property owners for federal and state tax credits under certain circumstances, and may qualify the property owner for grant assistance when such programs are funded.

To obtain an application form go to www.okhistory.org/shpo/nrgrant. You may also contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249.

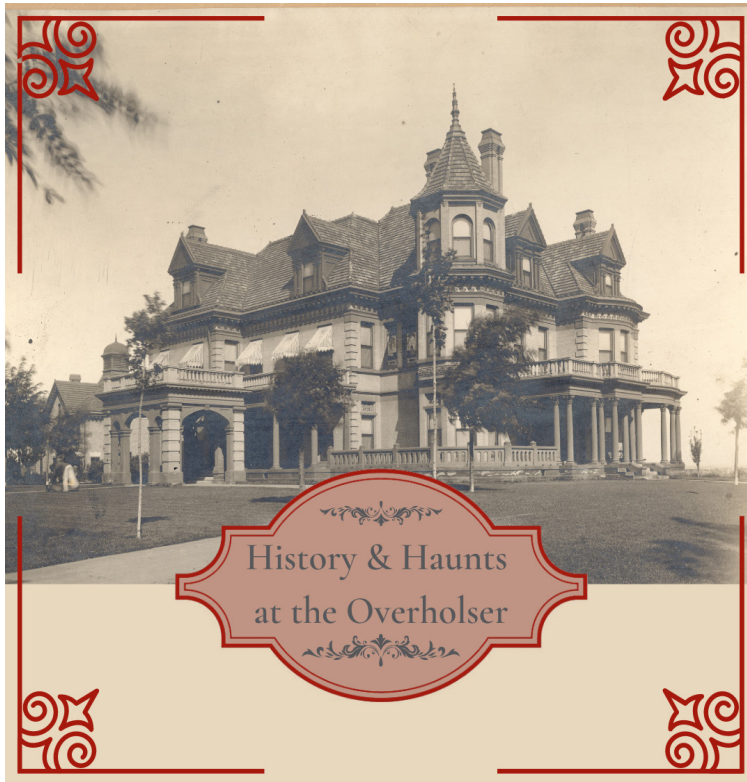
Oklahoma SHPO and COVID-19

Here we are, one year since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. One year of masks, social distancing, and other precautions to help keep our neighbors and ourselves COVID-19 free. The State Historic Preservation Office is continuing those precautions and reminds our guests to do the following:

- Make an appointment before coming into the SHPO office. It's always a good idea, even without COVID-19, to do this to make sure the person you want to visit with is available.
- Wear a mask. If you forget your mask, the SHPO office does have masks available for your use. There is also hand sanitizer available.
- Remember to stay at least six feet from each other. The SHPO conference room is set up to safely accommodate two people, and in situations where it is absolutely necessary, three people. If you need more people to attend your meeting, please contact SHPO staff to set up a virtual meeting via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

If you have any questions about the continued rules for COVID-19 in the SHPO office, please do not hesitate to contact us at 405-521-6249. Stay safe!

Upcoming Events at the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion



History and Haunts at the Overholser

A new event has begun at the Henry and Anna Overholser mansion. *History and Haunts at the Overholser* takes place the 4th Thursday of every month through September.

History and Haunts at the Overholser is a unique and special tour that explores some of the behind-the-scenes history and spaces not typically on a regular tour. Museum Coordinator Lisa Escalon will be leading this tour and will be sharing interesting stories of the home and the Overholser family history.

If haunts are more your style, guests will be able to explore the mansion on their own and discover if the inhabitants are active or if they've retired for the evening.

The tour is currently limited to twelve participants and the cost is \$20 per person. The tour begins at 7pm and lasts approximately one and a half hours.



Fashions of the Overholser

A special exhibit is coming to the Overholser this summer: *Fashions of the Overholser*. In coordination with the Oklahoma Historical Society, many items of clothing belonging to Anna Overholser and Henry lone Overholser Perry are making a return to the mansion.

Guests will be able to get an up-close look at fashions from the first half of the 20th century, which are currently archived at the Oklahoma History Center. Cocktail dresses, gowns, casual wear, shoes, and handbags will be on display, with accompanying information.

Guests are welcome to tour the home and fashions at their own pace and museum personnel will be on hand to answer any questions.

Please check the Overholser website and social media for dates and more information.

Urban Campout

After cancellation last year, Urban Campout is coming back in 2021! Join us for an evening under the stars on the grounds of the Overholser, back this fall. The evening will feature outdoor activities, a tour of the mansion, and sleeping under the Oklahoma sky! On-site security is provided. More information to follow.





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Help POK Preserve Oklahoma's Historic Treasures!

Historic structures, much like photographs and newspapers, tell the story of Oklahoma communities, linking the past to the present. They also provide economically vibrant locations for local businesses and residents. Since 1992, Preservation Oklahoma has worked to protect and preserve these structures through advocacy, education, and programming. By joining our efforts, you are supporting the protection of Oklahoma's unique and diverse history. Your support also assists in the preservation of the 1903 Henry Overholser Mansion, an Oklahoma City landmark and home of POK's offices.

Membership Benefits

Membership benefits include discounted tickets to POK events, complimentary tours of the Overholser Mansion, and invitations to our annual membership appreciation event.

Membership Levels:

Student	\$25
Individual	\$50
Family	\$100
Partner	\$500

To join, please visit <http://www.preservationok.org/become-a-member.html> and join through our secure online payment form. You can also join by calling the POK offices!