



Preservation Oklahoma News



The newsletter of Oklahoma's statewide preservation community.

January 2001

Volume 7, number 2

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Preservation Oklahoma unveils 2001 List of Most Endangered Historic Properties

On Saturday, January 6, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. announced its 2001 List of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties. The event, which took place at the First Presbyterian Church's historic Bernsen Community Life Center in downtown Tulsa, included a reception, the unveiling of the new list, and the seventh in a series of lectures in conjunction with the Most Endangered List traveling exhibit.

Approximately 40 Preservation Oklahoma members and members of the press were on hand as former executive director Robert K. Erwin supervised the unveiling, assisted by Preservation Oklahoma Board President Ralph McCalmont and several noted members of the preservation community: Stacey Bayles, executive director for the American Institute of Architects Eastern Oklahoma Chapter; Bret Carter, Preservation Oklahoma member and part of the Ponca City Preservation Commission; Susan Guthrie Dunham, Preservation Oklahoma board member and trustee for the National Trust for Historic Preservation; Marva Ellard, former Preservation Oklahoma board president and past chairman of the Oklahoma City Historical Preservation and Landmark Commission; Marty Newman, former president of Preservation Oklahoma, advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and former board member of Preservation Action; Catherine Montgomery, architect for the State Historic Preservation Office; and Todd Scott, architect for the Oklahoma Main Street Program. Also on hand for the unveiling were Tulsa Preservation Commissioner and previous Endangered List lecture series speaker Rex Ball, AICP, FAIA; Susan McCalmont, executive director for the Kirkpatrick Foundation of Oklahoma City; and Jerry Morris, representative from Congressman Steve Largent's Tulsa office.

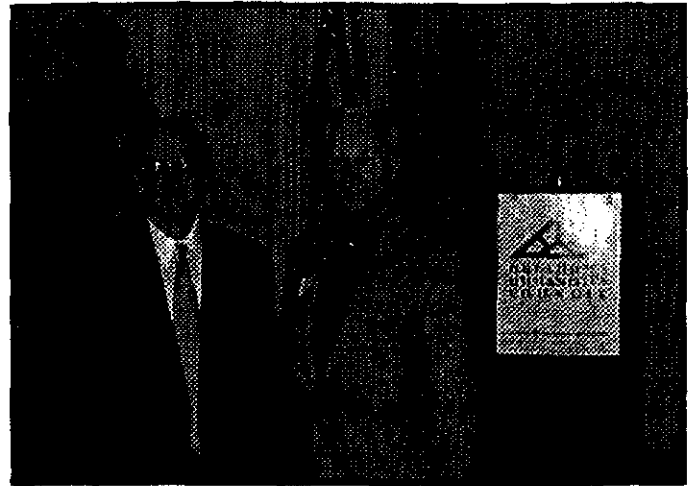
Fred Wiemer, who donated over 3,000 slides of Oklahoma properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places to the State Historic Preservation Office – archived as the Wiemer Collection, was the speaker for the lecture, seventh in a series underwritten in part by the Oklahoma Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Wiemer, who spent time over the last six months documenting Oklahoma county courthouses not included in the collection, presented a slide lecture on the history and threats to Oklahoma's historic county courthouses, which were included as a blanket listing on the 2000 Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties List.

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Preservation Oklahoma's cosponsors for the event in Tulsa included the American Institute of Architects Eastern Oklahoma Chapter, the First Presbyterian Church's Bernsen Community Life Center, Ralph McCalmont, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Tulsa Historical Society. Sponsors for the overall traveling exhibit program are the Oklahoma Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which also sponsored the lecture series, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

If you are interested in having your community participate in the traveling exhibit and lecture series program, contact Ralph McCalmont at (405) 232-5747.



POK Board President Ralph McCalmont and lecture series speaker Fred Wiemer

New List has three New, nine Familiar Entries

On Saturday, Jan. 6, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. announced its 2001 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties. The annual list of significant threatened properties is a joint project with the Oklahoma Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office.

The 2001 list includes three new properties and nine previously listed properties. The new listings are the Kimbrough Temple/CME Church in Ponca City, a category listing of Oklahoma's Historic Public School Buildings, and the Old Stroud School in Stroud. Retained from previous lists were the Galt-Franklin House at 400 Country Club Road in Ardmore, Carter County; the McLaughlin Mounds (Archaeological Site LT-11) in Latimer County; the Mayo Hotel in downtown Tulsa; a blanket listing of Oklahoma's Historic County Courthouses; the Skirvin Hotel in

downtown Oklahoma City; the Steele, Court, and Braniff buildings at 514, 518, and 522 South Main Mall in Tulsa; the Walnut Avenue Viaduct, which connects the historic Bricktown and Deep Deuce areas in Oklahoma City; the Wheelock Academy and Mission east of Millerton, McCurtain County; and the Central YMCA Building at 125 N.W. Fifth St. in Oklahoma City. The organization moved the Farmers' Exchange Tile Grain Elevator in Goltry, Alfalfa County and the Fort Sill Indian School Girls Dormitory near Lawton in Comanche County to its Watch List.

Preservation Oklahoma is a statewide nonprofit membership organization that works to encourage the preservation of Oklahoma's historic resources.

For more detail on the three new listings, see page five of this issue of *Preservation Oklahoma News*.

Advisory Council adopts new Regulations

In September, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation published notice of proposed suspension of their regulations (36 CFR, Part 800) that were adopted in June 1999. However, when the Council met on November 17, they decided against this action, partly due to the overwhelming number of public comments opposing suspension.

Also at the November 17 meeting, the Council adopted proposed revisions to these regulations and announced the revised regulations would be published for public comment in early December. As *Preservation Oklahoma News* went to press, the exact date for this publication was still unknown. For further details, visit the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Web site: www.achp.gov or watch for announcements on the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office's listserve.

Two Surveys Underway in Oklahoma

Beginning on October 1, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University began another series of architectural/historical surveys of Oklahoma towns. The two survey projects are concentrating on seven towns – Goodwell, Guymon, and Hooker in Texas County and Antlers, Broken Bow, Hugo, and Idabel in southeastern Oklahoma.

Brad Bays and Alison Greiner, both professors of geography at OSU, are the principal investigators. Bays is working in the panhandle towns while Greiner is covering the opposite corner of the state.

The purpose of the surveys is to identify those individual properties and districts that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, a sampling of properties that show the historical development of the area will be recorded. Vernacular house forms, commercial and industrial buildings, and other interesting properties will be catalogued with photographs and inventory forms. Once Bays and Greiner have completed this fieldwork, they will compile the information in a report that includes an historic context for each area, providing background on the history and development

of the towns. They will then put the surveyed properties into this context, showing how each reflects the period of development.

These survey reports are valuable tools that can be used by local governments for planning, as research tools for those interested in local history, or as reference guides for those interested in preparing National Register nominations. The SHPO relies on the information in these documents for many of its programs, most notably for the review of projects mandated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (as amended).

A number of factors go into choosing which towns to survey. The SHPO weighs internal needs, such as Section 106, as well as the likelihood of finding concentrations of National Register-eligible properties and getting a good geographic distribution of areas surveyed. These two survey project help us achieve all these goals.

For further information on the SHPO's Architectural/Historical Survey Program, or for information on the current or past surveys, call Jim Gabbert, SHPO architectural historian, at (405) 522-4478, or e-mail: jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

SHPO offers Grants for National Register Nominations

The State Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce that applications will be available on February 1 for its annual National Register Nomination Grants Program. Two application rounds will be conducted and the deadline for Round One is April 2 and for Round Two is June 1.

The grant funds are from the SHPO's FY2001 Historic Preservation Fund allocation from the U. S. Department of the Interior and are for the purpose of retaining a professionally qualified consultant to prepare individual property nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. The maximum grant amount is \$750. Applicants must provide a cash match from a nonfederal source. The required match for a \$750 grant is \$500.

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, and local or state government agencies. To request an application packet or further information, contact the SHPO at (405) 521-6249.

Eight new Oklahoma Listings in National Register

by Jim Gabbert, SHPO staff Architectural Historian

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce that eight new properties from Oklahoma have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The addition of the eight properties brings the current total to 969. The newly listed properties include four historic districts and four individual properties, representing resources in Cleveland, Lincoln, Pawnee, Payne, and Pottawatomie counties.

The four Cleveland County resources were nominated by the City of Norman as part of their Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Included are the Cleveland County Courthouse, the old Norman Public library, the old Norman Post Office, and resources in Abe Andrews Park.

The Cleveland County Courthouse was nominated for both its governmental and architectural significance. It is an excellent example of the mixture of Classical Revival and Art Deco motifs sometimes referred to as "PWA Deco" or "New Deal Deco." Designed by Walter Vahlberg, its construction in 1940 was funded by the Public Works Administration. The Norman City Park New Deal Resources District is composed of those buildings and structures located in the old Norman City Park (now Abe Andrews Park) that represent the work of a number of New Deal agencies. The pool, amphitheater, stone-lined ditch, and stone bridges are among the structures constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the National Youth Administration (NYA) in the 1930's. The park was nominated for its significance as a recreational center for the city and for the importance of these New Deal programs on the economics of the City of Norman. The old Norman Public Library, built in 1929 and designed by the firm of Hawk and Parr, was nominated as a good, local example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style of architecture and for its role in the educational development of Norman. The old Norman Post office, now used by the board of education, was built in 1933. It was designed in the Classical Revival style and remains one of the best examples in the city.

Located in Stroud, Lincoln County, the William Alfred Mensch Building was built in 1922. Utilizing a dressed stone facade, this single-story, Commercial Style building remains the best stone-front building in Stroud. It was recently rehabilitated utilizing the 20% federal investment tax credit available for certified rehabilitations of historic buildings. It is now used as a conference center.

The Pawnee Indian Agency and Boarding School Historic District, located on the outskirts of the city of Pawnee, includes those extant buildings that represent this important center of Pawnee life. The buildings comprising the district include a hospital, school, dormitories, and other structures, most made of locally quarried native stone.

The Perkins Downtown Historic District consists of one block of commercial buildings that make up the heart of this southern Payne County town. Perkins gained its importance as a

gateway to the development of the Iowa and Sac and Fox lands south of the Cimarron River. Utilizing stone, brick, and concrete, the buildings included within the district reflect the initial development and continued importance of Perkins to the surrounding area.

The Bell Street Historic District consists of one block of significant historic commercial buildings in downtown Shawnee. This one block district, centered on the brick-paved Bell Street, includes some of the more significant buildings in Shawnee, both architecturally and commercially. The buildings represented in the district span the history of Shawnee, from the late 19th century up to the 1947 Hombeck Theater. Both Perkins and Shawnee participate in the Oklahoma Main Street Program. The listing of their commercial districts reflects growing public awareness of the importance of historic downtowns.

The State Historic Preservation Office continues to work toward recognition for those places significant in Oklahoma's history. For more information on these or other National Register-listed properties, or the National Register of Historic Places program, call Jim Gabbert at (405) 522-4478, or e-mail him at jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.



Historic Buildings in downtown Perkins



The Mensch Building in Stroud

A Closer Look at the 2001 Most Endangered List's Three New Properties

The **Kimbrough Temple/CME Church** in Ponca City was built by community volunteers in 1946. An unusual structure with a modest, gabled, asphalt-shingle roof, the Kimbrough Temple's double-hung, two-over-two, stained-glass windows vary greatly in artistic design and the naturally-shaped, light-colored stone exterior is broken by dark brown rocks placed at the roofline between the windows. It is one of the few remaining structures in Ponca City's "Dixie Hill" section, once home to a library, school, and commercial district for the city's African-American population before segregation officially ended. The threat to the building actually began with the end of segregation: as African-Americans increasingly were welcomed into integrated neighborhoods, schools, and churches, the need for the buildings originally raised to serve them separately diminished. Ponca City's Historic Preservation Advisory Panel believes preservation of the Kimbrough Temple will encourage reinvestment in the section of town where it stands. The Kimbrough Temple is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance to Ponca City as a Minimalist Tudor Revival Style rock church building and for its role in the community's ethnic heritage.

Oklahoma's Historic Public School Buildings are included on the Most Endangered List as a rare blanket listing due to the increasing number of threatened buildings in this category. Public school buildings rank in the same class as churches, city halls, courthouses, and train depots in their architectural, cultural, and social impacts on the communities they serve. Whether they are grand edifices designed by prominent architects during boom periods or modest structures erected to provide employment during the Depression, all of these buildings play an integral part in our history. Unfortunately, public school buildings have become a prime target for demolition, usually for unclear reasons or simply the wrong reasons: usually deterioration due to deferred maintenance or environmental and safety concerns. In recent months, the fate of several historic school buildings across Oklahoma has

underscored the need to protect this resource group. The Old Moss School Gymnasium east of Holdenville, one of the first WPA projects in the state and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is threatened with demolition in favor of a new, prefab building more in keeping with the style of the others on the campus. The Thomas High School Building in Thomas, Custer County is the subject of an ongoing fight between preservationists and school officials who want to demolish the historic building despite its architectural significance, sound structure, and modern mechanical systems. In fall, 2000, one of Drumright's most significant buildings, the Washington School was demolished; when the school district sold it to a private owner, they placed no restrictions on the deed to protect it as an historic resource.

Previously included on the Most Endangered List, the **Old Stroud School** at West 7th and Old Stroud Road in Stroud, Lincoln County returns to the 2001 list because of its current precarious situation. A Works Progress Administration project built in 1937 out of local materials, it served as the original Stroud High School until the current high school's construction. On May 3, 1999, a series of extremely powerful storms cut wide swaths of destruction across Oklahoma. The tornado that hit Stroud tore off part of the Old Stroud School's roof and did extensive structural damage to the interior. In 2000, Preservation Oklahoma secured funding through the National Trust for Historic Preservation to hire a structural engineer to determine if the building could be salvaged. Thanks to this action, as well as the efforts of local preservationists and the Lincoln County Historical Society, the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority expressed willingness to quick-claim deed the property free and clear to an interested historic preservation organization. Unfortunately, state statutes disallow transfer of state property to a non-governmental entity. Unless a county or municipal government is willing to act as an intermediary, the transfer will not occur and the building will eventually be demolished. The Old Stroud School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.



The Kimbrough/AME Church in Ponca City



The Old Moss School Gymnasium: one of the state's many threatened historic public school resources

Calendar of Upcoming Historic Preservation Events

Unless otherwise noted, all State Historic Preservation Office workshops will be held in the Oklahoma Historical Society Boardroom, Wiley Post Historical Building, 2100 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, 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.

If you are interested in attending one of Preservation Oklahoma's events, call (405) 232-5747.

February 10

Endangered List Lecture Series: Todd Scott, architect and preservation planner, on current and past threats to Oklahoma City properties on the Most Endangered List (OKC)

May 17-19, 2001

Oklahoma's Thirteenth Annual Statewide Preservation Conference, Enid
Registration Fee

June

The following workshops will be held in the First United Methodist Church's Education Center, 802 North Fourth Street, Sayre.

- 27 *The Section 106 Review Process: Introduction and overview (9:30 a.m. - Noon)
Determination of Eligibility under Section 106 (1:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.)*
- 28 *Introduction to the National Register of Historic Places (9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.)*
- 29 *Federal Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (9:30 a.m. - Noon)
Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.)*

Enid set for Thirteenth Annual Statewide Preservation Conference

Oklahoma's 13th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference is set for May 17-19, 2001 in Enid. Conference cosponsors include the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); the Oklahoma Main Street Program; Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.; Main Street Enid, Inc.; and the City of Enid. Conference sessions will be held at the Cherokee Strip Conference Center, 123 West Maine.

Three concurrent tracks will be offered:

Track A – *The Future of Your Community's Past: working with the SHPO* will emphasize the SHPO's programs and how they support community revitalization efforts.

Track B – *Historic Preservation: whose job is it?* will feature sessions about how government agencies at all levels, nonprofit organizations, and individual citizens help preserve our nation's heritage.

Track C – *Foundations of Community Character* will include numerous case studies about the preservation and revitalization of churches, neighborhoods, schools, theaters, and other important community resources.

Instead of our usual keynote session, the program includes two plenary sessions, one on Friday and one on Saturday. In addition, the Saturday program will include roundtable discussions with conference speakers, exhibits, and hands-on activities. If you have a difficult time choosing between sessions on Thursday and Friday, on Saturday you will have a chance to talk with speakers you missed. The concluding plenary session features Don Rypkema, a nationally known expert on the strong positive economic impact of historic preservation. His session is guaranteed to end the conference on an enthusiastic note.

Also, Main Street Enid, Inc. and the City of Enid are planning several special tours and events that you will want to attend. Mark your calendars for May 17-19 and watch your mail in upcoming weeks for conference details.

Bits and Pieces:

National Trust Southwest Regional Office has new Staff

The Southwest Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which provides assistance to Oklahoma and several other states, has an entirely new staff.

Daniel Carey is the new director, replacing Jane Jenkins, who took a position in Boulder, CO. Carey is assisted by Megan Brown. Carey previously worked for the Southern Office of the National Trust. They may be reached at 500 West Main, Suite 1030, Ft. Worth, TX 76102, or by calling (817) 332-4398.

POK Executive Director takes new Position at OCU

On November 27, Robert K. Erwin, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.'s executive director since October of 1993, started a new position as News Services Director in the University Relations department of Oklahoma City University's Office of Institutional Advancement. Erwin will continue to follow the activity of the historic preservation community with interest. He is scheduled to speak at the Statewide Preservation Conference in Enid in May.

New National Register goal set by SHPO

To update Preservation Oklahoma News readers on the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)'s progress toward its goal of 1,000 Oklahoma entries in the National Register of Historic Places by December 31, 2000, the final number reached 961 entries, with nine nominations pending with the Keeper of the Register as we went to press.

Although this fell somewhat short of the stated goal, the SHPO remains committed to facilitating the entry of as many of Oklahoma's important archaeological and historic resources as possible in the National Register and greatly appreciates the agencies, individuals, and organizations that continue to work with them in this endeavor. The SHPO has set a new goal of 1,001 listings in the National Register by December 31, 2001. Watch future issues of Preservation Oklahoma News for progress reports.

To learn more about the National Register of Historic Places and how to prepare nominations, contact Jim Gabbert, SHPO architectural historian, at (405) 522-4478, or e-mail him at jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

Register Now for Sixth Art Deco World Congress

Don't forget, the Sixth World Congress on Art Deco will be held in Tulsa this April. If you are interested in attending this event, contact the Eastern Oklahoma Chapter of the American Institute for Architects at (918) 583-0013.



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 _____

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

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Club: \$1,000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor: \$100.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student: \$15.00 |
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Preservation Oklahoma News
Serving the Statewide Historic Preservation Community

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Women's Dinner Club of OKC

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Heritage Club - \$1,000.00+:

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Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.'s mission is to encourage the preservation of Oklahoma's historic places.

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Okmulgee Main Street

Stillwater:

Winfrey D. Houston
The Sheerar Museum
Stillwater Main Street

Late Breaking Historic Preservation News

The following stories continued to develop after Preservation Oklahoma News went to press. This is our most recent information as of the deadline for this insert.

Thomas High School

Local preservationists fighting to save the Thomas High School building from demolition were dealt a blow when an Oklahoma judge dismissed the suit filed on their behalf by Preservation Oklahoma board member Roger Rinehart of El Reno. The group filed suit to halt demolition plans for the building after a 2000 bond election's ballot led many voters to believe plans for the building had changed because the word "demolition" did not appear in its text.

YMCA Building

The Oklahoma City Board of Adjustment is set to re-hear an appeal by the owners of the historic YMCA Building of the Urban Design Commission's denial of a demolition permit. Sources tell Preservation Oklahoma that the board of adjustment may split two-to-two over the matter. Regardless of the hearing's outcome, all parties involved expect the matter will go to district court.

Walnut Avenue Viaduct

The Oklahoma City Council will make a final decision this month concerning the fate of the 1935 viaduct connecting Bricktown and Deep Deuce. Local preservationists still believe the council can be persuaded to keep the existing structure in place and replace only the materials that cannot be reused. Local media have reported that whether a viaduct or at-grade street is chosen by the council, the existing structure will likely be removed.

Mayo Hotel

The rejection by Tulsans of an ambitious funding plan to reinvest in downtown Tulsa has led to a decision by private investors to pull out of a proposed private-public partnership to rehabilitate the Mayo Hotel. This turn of events suggests that 2001 may pose the greatest threat to the Mayo Hotel since its inclusion on the Most Endangered List in 1993.