

Preservation Oklahoma NEWS

July 2022
Volume XXVIII, Issue 4

The joint publication of the State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.

Preservation
OKLAHOMA 



2022 Most Endangered Places List Announced

Preservation Oklahoma is pleased to announce the 2022 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. POK seeks nominations from the public in October every year and a team of historic preservation professionals meet to decide what properties to include on the list. Although inclusion on the list does not guarantee protection or funding, recognition for these structures may increase restoration efforts and possibly ensure their longevity. A variety of property types were nominated from across the state. The 2022 list features a mix of commercial, religious, and educational sites ranging from pre-statehood to mid-century.

"I'm so pleased that all structures from our 2021 list are still standing," POK Executive Director Chantry Banks said. "Renewed interest in the W.S. Kelly Building in Cogar has led to a couple of cleanup days at the property and the mills in Yukon seem to be safe for the time being. We do need to keep our eye out for several properties. The old Canadian County Jail's roof is failing, allowing the elements in, and we still don't know the fate of Oklahoma City's Old City Jail. We will keep you updated on these properties as information becomes available."

The 2022 list of Most Endangered Places include:

Casa Grande Hotel, Elk City

An icon of downtown Elk City for over 90 years, this four-story, Spanish Eclectic style hotel was constructed in 1928 utilizing the design of the Oklahoma City firm of Hawk and Parr. Located on Route 66, it is the largest hotel directly on the route between Oklahoma City and Amarillo. It represents the high-water mark of first-class hotels along the route. Soon, this type of hotel was supplanted by the tourist court and the motel. Casa Grande was the site of the 1931 U.S. "66" Association's National Convention. It most recently served as a geology/oil and gas museum. Vandals and time have taken their toll on the building. It is in need of a new roof and tighter security. Casa Grande was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

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Casa Grande Hotel, Elk City. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK

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Ryerson Hall, NWOSU, Alva. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK

Preservation Oklahoma News, the newsletter of Oklahoma's historic preservation community, is published quarterly as a joint project of Preservation Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office.

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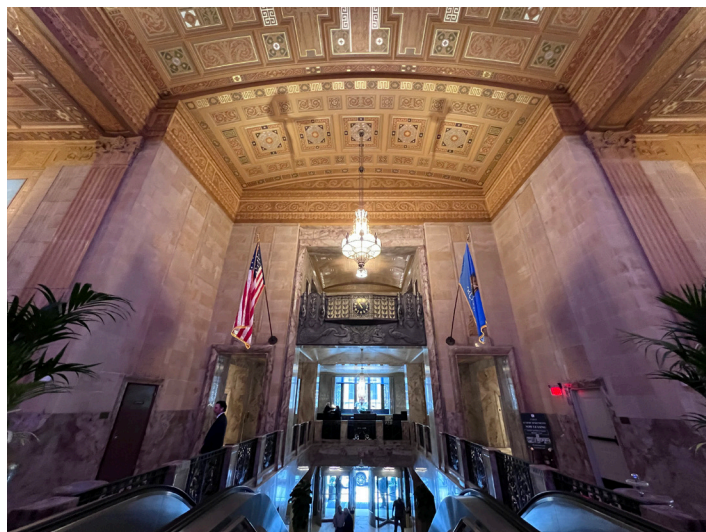
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Most Endangered Places Kickoff Event

Join us on Thursday, July 21, for the kickoff event for POK's 2022 Most Endangered Places. The event takes place from 5:30-7:30pm at Oklahoma City's iconic First National Center, 120 N. Robinson.

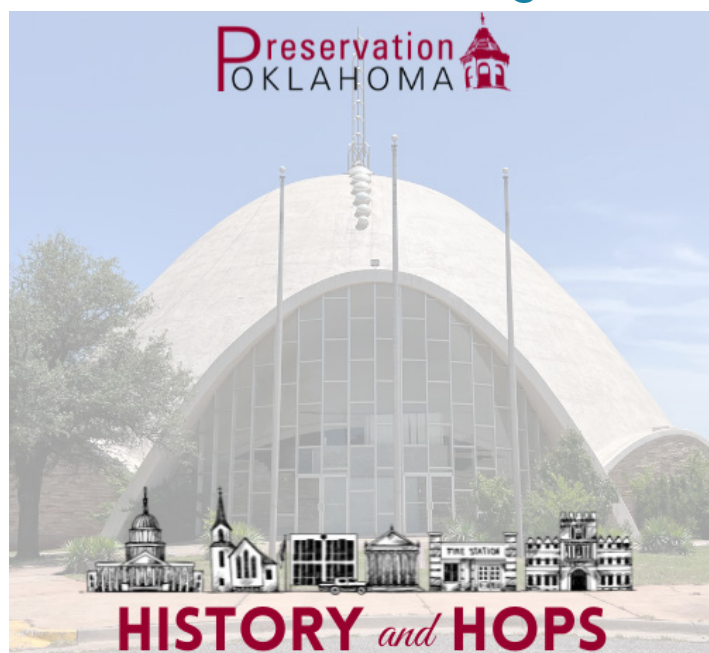
Recently reopened after a monumental restoration by Gary Brooks, the First National Center was built in 1931 and is a treasure of Art Deco architecture. The building languished for years before Mr. Brooks began a multi-year restoration. The First National Center was also included in Preservation Oklahoma's very first Most Endangered Places in 1993.

Tickets for the event are \$25/\$50 and are available now at www.PreservationOK.org/Shop. The kickoff event is sponsored by the First National Center and Prairie Nation Creative.



First National Center, Oklahoma City. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK

August History and Hops



First Christian Church, Oklahoma City. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK

Mid-Century Modern Architecture is the theme for August's History and Hops. Lynda Ozan, Deputy Director of the State Historic Preservation Office, will present.

Learn about our rich and dynamic collection of Mid-Mod architecture and why it is so prevalent across the state, from urban areas to rural communities while enjoying a local brew and snacks.

We'll also debut our new audio/visual equipment thanks to a grant from the Kirkpatrick Foundation.

History and Hops will take place on Friday, August 26, from 6-8pm. Tickets are free for members and \$5 for nonmembers and can be purchased at www.PreservationOK.org/Shop. The location of History and Hops will be the Carriage House of the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, 405 NW 15th St., in Oklahoma City.

Apply for National Trust Preservation Funds

Grants from National Trust Preservation Funds (NTPF) are intended to encourage preservation at the local level by supporting ongoing preservation work and by providing seed money for preservation projects. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for preservation projects, introduce the public to preservation concepts and techniques, and encourage financial participation by the private sector.

A small grant at the right time can go a long way and is often the catalyst that inspires a community to act on a preservation project. Grants generally start at \$2,500 and range up to \$5,000. The selection process is very competitive.

The next deadline for this program will be October 1, 2022.

Please visit <https://forum.savingplaces.org/build/funding/grant-seekers/preservation-funds> for more information and to begin the application process.



2022 Most Endangered Places List Announced

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Apache Museum, Apache. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK

Apache Museum, Apache

Constructed in 1902, this stone commercial building occupies a prominent corner in the town center. It helps define a picturesque intersection. It combines elements of two popular Victorian era styles, Romanesque and Queen Anne. The heavy, quarry faced stone walls are pierced with round arch fenestration and a typical canted entry. Above the entry is the corner turret, sheathed in pressed tin and capped with a conical roof. It currently is the home of the Apache Historical Society Museum. The north wall and area around the entry have both failed, and repairs have begun, but there is currently not enough funding to complete the project. The historical society has reached around 60% of their fundraising goal. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

Saddle Mountain Mission Church, Cache

On April 9, 1896, a thirty-one-year-old Baptist missionary from Canada named Isabel Crawford arrived at Saddle Mountain to establish a Baptist mission station. The congregation built and paid for a chapel that it dedicated in 1903. The mission was also the site of a large (and still active) cemetery. Clashes with Baptist officials eventually led to Crawford's forced transfer from Oklahoma in 1906.

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At her death in 1961 her body was returned to Oklahoma and buried in Saddle Mountain cemetery. The church was notable for the number of Kiowa missionaries and pastors it produced, including George Hunt, Ioleta McElhaney, and Sherman Chaddlesone. In 1963 the building was moved to a privately held amusement park called Eagle Park. It sits here today, alongside Quanah Parker's Star House. Both properties are in very poor condition. Action is being taken with Star House, and there are hopes to do the same with the chapel.



Saddle Mountain Mission Church, Cache. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

Griffin Memorial Hope Hall, Norman

Construction began in 1928 on Hope Hall at what was then called Central State Hospital. It was expanded and remodeled several times over the years. Originally used as a men's receiving ward, it also was home to a women's receiving ward, and later, a home for veterans experiencing PTSD and other mental health issues. As long-term mental health care became less of a priority, the need for a building of this size diminished. Hope Hall closed its doors in 2012. The future of the building is unknown. Griffin Memorial Hospital still operates on the grounds and the area is heavily monitored.



Hope Hall, Norman. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

Booker T. Washington School, Stillwater

African American and Afro-Indigenous people were among the earliest settlers in Indian Territory. In the first half of the 20th century there were more than fifty Black schools located throughout the state; most have already been demolished or lost. Booker T. Washington High School is one of the only three remaining examples and is the only one available for potential acquisition for preservation and interpretation. The building has been vacant and falling into disrepair for more than two decades, yet recent surveys show it to be in reasonably sound condition. It is prone to flooding, which largely accounts for its survival (the property has not been sold, so it remains standing). Increased awareness of this structure, its significance and the history it represents are crucial in telling the complete history of the state of Oklahoma.

Black history is underrepresented in the built landscape of Oklahoma. Buildings prominently associated with this history are less likely to have survived, either through re-development, demolition, or neglect. Architectural surveys have determined eligibility for National Register of Historic Places status. No nomination has yet been made because the building is owned by a private development firm; yet there is openness to preserving the building. Greater awareness of its importance to the community and national significance are needed. It is among the only remaining structures documenting the history of Black Stillwater.



Booker T. Washington School, Stillwater. Photo: Abandoned Atlas Foundation

Downtown Newkirk

Newkirk, the county seat of Kay County, was platted in 1893 and white settlers arrived in September of that year when the Cherokee Outlet was opened. By 1901 the downtown area had twenty imposing stone structures, most of them built of native limestone quarried east of the community.

The Newkirk Central Business District is a three-block area that includes the majority of the historic commercial development in the area. The district is comprised of one- and two-story structures, dating from 1894 to 1920. Most buildings are in the Romanesque Revival, Commercial, and Colonial Revival styles. It has been an Oklahoma Main Street Community since 1992 and was the first small town to receive the Oklahoma Main Street Award.

While many of the buildings remain structurally sound, the Mason Stanley Building is on the verge of collapse. The front façade is buckling between the first and second floors (a turnbuckle has not been maintained). Maintaining the integrity of the district is of the utmost importance.

In 1984 the Newkirk Central Business District was added to the National Register of Historic Places. *(Article continues)*



Downtown Newkirk. Photo: Alyssa McCleery

2022 Most Endangered Places List Announced

Tall Chief Theatre, Fairfax

Built in 1928 as both a Vaudeville and movie pictures theatre, the Tall Chief is a beautiful reminder of the not-so-distant past, when weekend plans were determined by what was on the marquee. While unassuming on the outside, the Tall Chief has a grand interior and seats 800 (half the population of the community).

Alex Tall Chief, father of world class ballerinas Maria and Marjorie Tallchief, built the theatre. At one point the Fairfax Police station was housed in a tiny office in the front. This was during the time of the story of *Killers of the Flower Moon*. A shoot out in front of the building left one of the murderers dead in the street while children were watching a Western inside! It last saw service as a theatre in 1960.

In 2017, a tornado ripped through Fairfax and did considerable damage to the roof. Help is needed to secure the interior from further deterioration.



Tall Chief Theatre, Fairfax. Photo: Carol Connor

Savoy Hotel, Nowata

The Savoy, constructed in 1909 on the town square, was a three-story, brick building where oil leases were signed and formal balls were held. The elegant hotel boasted sixty-two rooms, a telegraph office, billiards, and dining room. In 1915, radium water was discovered from a well drilled in town. The Savoy became a bathhouse where travelers would come, hoping to heal rheumatism, stomach trouble, malaria, nervous trouble, and skin diseases. In later years the building also served as a county hospital.

The building has been bought, sold, and renovated many times over the last century. With a decline in population and tourism, the hotel was abandoned in early 2000s. Another renovation commenced in 2009. A new roof was being installed when a worker fell to his death. Since then, no work has been done and the building is deteriorating.



Savoy Hotel, Nowata. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

Tulahassee

Tulahassee is considered the oldest of the surviving All-Black towns of Indian Territory. Tulahassee is one of more than fifty All-Black towns of Oklahoma and one of thirteen still existing. The town was incorporated in 1902 and platted in 1907.

In 1916 the African Methodist Episcopal Church established Flipper Davis College, the only private institution for African Americans in the state, at Tulahassee. The college, which occupied the old Tulahassee Mission, closed after the end of the 1935 session. The A. J. Mason Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. The Carter G. Woodson School is listed in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory as a resource related to African American history.

Today, around 100 residents call Tulahassee home. Not much remains of the original town, but it is important to recognize its history and contributions to the state.



Woodson School, Tulahassee. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma



Bryant Center, Oklahoma City. Photo: Abandoned Oklahoma

Bryant Center, Oklahoma City

Built in 1960, The Bryant Center was a hub for Oklahoma City's most prominent Black community. After sitting dilapidated for many years, its owner is pushing for the building to be granted historical significance and preserved from demolition.

Once housing a bowling alley, a restaurant and a dining club at its peak, what was formerly known as The Bryant Recreational Center has fallen into a state of disuse since the 1980s.

Over the years, despite the owner's best efforts, the former entertainment center has been grounds for trash dumping and homeless encampments. Graffiti covers much of the building as well.

The goal is to preserve the building for the benefit of the community. A new roof is needed but the walls are in decent condition.

Frisco Depot, Clayton

Clayton is in the Kiamichi Valley in Pushmataha County and is situated at the junction of U.S. Highway 271 and State Highway 2. The town was initially called Dexter, and a post office was established on March 31, 1894. The post office name was changed to Clayton on April 5, 1907. The St. Louis and San Francisco Railway had built a line through the Choctaw Nation from north to south in 1886–87, with Dexter/Clayton developing as a lumber mill town along the route from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Red River.

The Frisco Depot was built in 1889 and is one of the few remnants from the town's heyday as a lumber mill town. Almost all original features remain, although the shake roof was replaced with shingles at some point. The depot is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It appears to be in stable condition, but continued exposure to the elements will make preservation difficult.

We look forward to advocating for these properties over the next 12 months. Look for a traveling exhibition to begin later this year.



Frisco Depot, Clayton. Photo: Matthew Pearce, SHPO

Preservation Work Ongoing at Edwards Store



Edwards Store, November 2021. Photo: Matthew Pearce, SHPO

Preservation work continues at the Edwards Store near Red Oak, Latimer County. The dogtrot-style cabin, which is among the oldest buildings in Oklahoma, was first listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1972 at the statewide level of significance for commerce. Preservation Oklahoma named the property among the Five Most Endangered Historical Sites in Oklahoma in 2013, 2018, and 2019. In 2020, a new National Register nomination was prepared for the property. Listed as the Edwards-Hardaway Homestead and Cemetery, the nomination adds Ethnic Heritage: Native American as an area of significance and documents a stone-lined well shaft and a family cemetery in addition to the previously listed dogtrot cabin. Funding from the Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grants Program has been used for the ongoing preservation work.

(Article continues)

Preservation Work Ongoing at Edwards Store



Scale model of Edwards Store on display during Robbers Cave Fall Festival.
Photo: Matthew Pearce, SHPO



Collapsing sections of the porch roof were removed in November 2021. Photo: Matthew Pearce, SHPO

The Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program is a grants-in-aid program offered by the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) with the goal of encouraging the collection, preservation, and sharing of Oklahoma history at the grassroots level in all parts of the state. Open to tribal and municipal governments and not-for-profit historical organizations located in Oklahoma and registered with the Oklahoma Secretary of State, this grants program offers funding for projects focused on collections, exhibits, and programming.

Established in circa 1850, Edwards Store is located along the old Fort Smith to Boggy Depot Road and once served as a stop for stage drivers and passengers traveling along the Butterfield Overland Mail Route as it crossed Indian Territory between Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Colbert's Ferry. After the Civil War, Edwards Store served as the original post office for Red Oak, Indian Territory, until 1889, when the town relocated several miles southwest to a new site platted by the Choctaw Coal and Railway Company (later the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway).

In February 2020, the two stone chimneys at the cabin (built circa 1850 and 1870) were stabilized to address fears of their collapse. This work made use of Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program funding. Additional work is planned to level the foundation.

In October 2021, Matthew Pearce, OK/SHPO's National Register Coordinator, delivered a scale model of the dogtrot cabin to Wilburton for display during the annual Robbers Cave Fall Festival. The display sought to raise awareness and generate support for preservation work at Edwards Store.

In November 2021, Matthew Pearce and Kristina Wyckoff, Historical Archaeologist for OK/SHPO, toured the ongoing preservation work, which included LIDAR (light detection and ranging) scans of the cabin, removal of rotting sections from the roof, and the inspection of nearby locations for possible associated outbuildings.

In January 2022, preservation work included removing the remnants of interior finishes throughout the cabin, including molded carpet, peeling linoleum, and 1960s-era kitchen cabinets. The porch decking was removed, and in the process the stones supporting the porch were numbered, documented, and removed. Kristina Wyckoff returned to the Edwards Store site with fellow archaeologists Amanda Regnier and Brandi Bethke of the Oklahoma Archeological Survey to inspect the surfaces exposed by removal of the porch and decking for artifacts and features and to develop a plan for archaeological work to be conducted at the cabin site. Future archaeological investigations being considered for fall 2022 include high-accuracy Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping of the site features, non-invasive geophysical investigations, archaeological testing, and interviews.



Edwards Store in late January with porch decking and porch roofs removed.
Photo: Kristina Wyckoff, SHPO



Memorial Student Union, ECU. Photo: Lynda Ozan, SHPO

In Part III of our look at modern architecture on small Oklahoma campuses, we stop at East Central University (ECU) in Ada. Three normal schools were established in eastern Oklahoma in 1909, one of which was East Central College (now ECU). Three similar campuses were also established in western Oklahoma. Normal schools provided preparatory education, including two years of college leading to teacher certification. Ada's campus was the result of intensive lobbying which also included raising funds for faculty salaries so that classes could begin in the fall of 1909.

Surprisingly, unlike other universities around the state, ECU experienced unprecedented growth during the Great Depression. Lack of jobs contributed to increased enrollment as well as free tuition to in-state students. By 1940, ECU was the third largest institution in the state, only surpassed by The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. Growth and development on campus continued at a rapid rate. Upon entry into WWII, like other campuses around the state, enrollment dropped dramatically as many entered the military, war industries, and/or stayed on the family farm.

The end of the war brought students back to ECU but in a different capacity; G.I.s returned with families in tow. Family housing was readied for married students; funds for a new library were raised with construction completed in 1949; and a new student union was planned (completed in 1951). The 1950s witnessed a drastic physical change to campus led by local architect Albert Ross. Ross was a prolific architect in Oklahoma, opening his practice in Ada in 1921 and working through the 1970s.

Growth on campus resulted in striking modern architecture that carries common modern elements and stylistic details to rival any of the small or large campuses in the state.

(Article continues)

Designed by Albert Ross, the Memorial Student Union was built in 1951. The modernist design featured a ballroom, snack bar, recreation rooms, lounges, and bookstore which are still in use today. The exterior features multi-colored brick, geometric ornamental panels, reeding surrounding the entry, and exaggerated boxy elements of the modern style.

In 1953, Horace Mann/Faust Hall was constructed on a plot of land purchased from private owners adjacent (west) to campus. This classroom building features long, narrow rows of windows with cantilevered awnings. Entries feature large contrasting masonry panels with cantilevered awnings over the doors.

The Kathryn P. Boswell Memorial Chapel was completed in 1957. Designed in the Colonial Revival style, the church is a stripped down, modern version of a classical design. Executed in red brick, as opposed to classic wood clapboards, what would historically have been an open "porch" leading to the main doors and vestibule is a white masonry wall flush with the brick walls with a broken pediment above the door and no entablature details. The drum elements on the spire are also void of ornamentation. While classic in design, the ornamentation (or lack of) speaks volumes to modern architecture.

In the 1960s enrollment exploded with the arrival of the Baby Boomers. To accommodate the students, Briles Hall was constructed in 1962, Pontotoc Hall in 1964, and Pesagi Hall in 1965. Common modern details of the dorms include red brick walls accentuated by blond/white brick or other masonry units; wide overhanging eaves to create awnings; and a building design for the unusual topography. Six additional apartment buildings were constructed from 1963 to 1968 to house married students.

Since the mid-1960s, ECU has been regarded as a leader in the development of services for persons with disabilities. A 1966 federal grant was awarded to ECU to make campus barrier free, a national model for other campuses. Not only has the curriculum addressed the educational needs but the campus is a demonstration site for architectural barrier removal. Note the next time you are on campus how those barrier-free designs are incorporated into modern architectural design.



Horace Mann/Faust Hall, ECU. Photo: Lynda Ozan, SHPO



Kathryn P. Boswell Memorial Chapel, ECU. Photo: Lynda Ozan, SHPO



Residence Halls, ECU. Photo: Lynda Ozan, SHPO



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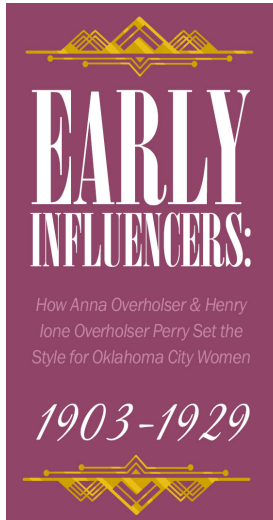
A trip to see the modern architecture of the ECU campus would not be complete without a stop at the "dome." The Kerr Activities Center, or Kerr Dome, was built due to the fact ECU had outgrown the use of an aging McBride Gym. President Wagner wanted a design that would be unique and attract visitors to ECU's campus. According to the planning committee, as the building would be located "downhill from the main campus" the roof would be its most prominent feature. An attractive roof was needed, and the committee settled on the geodesic dome. Kerr was modeled after a geodesic dome in Shreveport, Louisiana. Local architect Ray James drew the plans while United Builders in Shawnee constructed the building at a cost of \$859,460 in 1974. It has since become the most prominent landmark on campus and was named in honor of ECU alum, Oklahoma governor and U.S. senator, Robert S. Kerr.



Kerr Activities Center, ECU. Photo: Lynda Ozan, SHPO

The next time you are in Ada, stop by Eastern Oklahoma University and check out the buildings. You will be intrigued by the collection of mid-century modern architecture, many of which were designed by one architect, Albert Ross.

New Exhibit Now Open at the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion



A new exhibit, "Early Influencers: How Anna Overholser and Henry Lone Overholser Perry Set the Style for Oklahoma City Women, 1903–1929," is now open at the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion in Oklahoma City.

The exhibit will feature fashions and accessories worn by or inspired by Anna and Henry Lone that will be displayed on every floor of the historic home. A fashion timeline, as well as archival photos of the Overholser women and other trendsetters of the period, will be dotted throughout the displays. The exhibit is organized by Heather Franks with assistance from the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The exhibit will remain open through the summer until August 31.

Tuesday Tunes at the Mansion

Make plans to join us on the lawn of the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion this summer for Tuesday Tunes, a summer concert series featuring local musician, Hunter Thomas.

Guests are encouraged to bring a picnic, blankets, and chairs. Snow cones and other treats will also be available for purchase.

The dates for Tuesday Tunes are July 12, August 23, and September 13. The concert begins at 6pm and wraps up at 8pm. We hope to see you there!



Tuesday Tunes at the Overholser. Photo: Chantry Banks, POK



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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!