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Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits: Today and Tomorrow

From *Forum News*, January/February 2002, Vol. 8, No. 3

Federal tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic properties have been a major part of the preservation toolkit for so long that few in preservation today can remember – or even imagine – working without them.

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 established the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program in 1977. The program allowed owners of buildings certified as historic to take a federal tax reduction for the cost of doing a historically appropriate rehabilitation of an income-producing property. In 1981, the reduction was converted to a credit (currently set at 20 percent).

As the first 25 years of the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program comes to a close, it's a good time to look back – and to look forward.

When the tax credits were first introduced, they made many types of rehabilitation projects financially feasible for the first time ever. That attracted, and continues to bring in, an influx of private investment for preservation projects. Fran Mainella, director of the National Park Service, sums it up this way: "Before the tax incentives, few accepted the idea that reusing historic buildings could be

profitable. Today, few question it."

The fruits of this federal and private investment in preservation can be seen today throughout the nation, in countless finely restored buildings put to productive use, and in whole communities brought back to conditions of physical beauty and economic vitality. The National Park Service reports that since 1976 the Historic Preservation Tax Incentives have produced the following benefits for the nation:

- more than 29,000 historic properties have been rehabilitated and saved,
- more than \$25 billion in private investment has been invested in historic buildings,
- more than 60,000 units of low- and moderate-income housing have been created.

States, too, have recognized the benefits of tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic properties. Today, 45 states offer provisions in their tax codes – either real property tax relief or state income tax credits – that can benefit historic preservation. These statewide programs, along with local incentives, are combined with the federal credits, further helping to make projects financially viable.

Tax credit use in Oklahoma

by Catherine Montgomery
RA OK SHPO

Oklahoma has enjoyed the results of rehabilitation projects enabled by the Federal Tax Credit program since its beginning in 1976. To date nearly 100 million dollars worth of rehabilitation have qualified for the tax credits. Over 2 million square feet have been rehabilitated, and over 400 housing units have been recovered or created. The qualified projects represent 24 Oklahoma counties and 26 Oklahoma cities or towns. Each project has been accomplished in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. If you or someone you know has a historic building and would like to explore using the federal tax credits to help make rehabilitation possible, contact Catherine Montgomery, Historic Preservation Architect at the State Historic Preservation Office, (405) 522-4479 or cmontgomery@ok-history.mus.ok.us

UPCOMING

Please check out the Web site of Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. at www.preservationoklahoma.org. This Web site was made possible in part by a grant from the Kirkpatrick Foundation and the reduced rates of Charity Advantage, at www.charityadvantage.com if your nonprofit is interested in a quality Web site and operation at reduced cost.

As time permits, more features and articles will be placed on the site but for right now you can utilize it to get updates on future scheduled events on our most endangered lecture series. At the time of this printing, the schedule remains as follows:

October

3-10 Construction Lien Law in Oklahoma, "The Westin (26) 833-3959 or www.lorman.com to register

10-13 National Preservation Conference, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Cleveland, OH, www.nthp.org, conference@nthp.org or 800 944 6847

14-17 Trent Margrif will present on "Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties, 2002 List," Coweta, Mission Bell Museum, free and open to the public

18-18 United Teachers Association Conference, Ft. Smith, Arkansas

24-25 Regional Preservation Workshop, Woodward, OK, 800 234-3824 or woodwardms@pdi.net

24-27 The American Cultural Resources Association's Annual Conference, Savannah, GA, www.acra-crm.org

28-31 National Main Street Institute, Main Street Basic Building, Washington, D.C., www.mainstreet.org (202) 588-6219

November

13-15 Annual Brownfields Conference, Charlotte, NC, www.brownfields2002.com

15-16 Farm 2002 Conference, Kerr Center & Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, & Forestry, NCED Marriott Conference Center, Norman, OK, www.kerrcenter.com or (918) 647-9123

16-17 United Territory Arts & Humanities Council Festival, Broken Arrow Community Center, 1500 S. Main, Broken Arrow, OK, (918) 259-1772 Trent Margrif will also present a slide presentation on Oklahoma's most endangered Native American historic sites during this festival.

January

13-17 National Main Street Institute, Real Estate Development, D.C. www.mainstreet.org/institute.htm (202) 588-6219

February

27 National Main Street Institute, Professional Downtown Management, Economic Restructuring and Design Units, Washington, DC, www.mainstreet.org/institute.htm (202) 588-6219

April

14-16 National Preservation Institute, Section 106: An Introduction, Austin, TX (703) 765-0100 www.npi.org

June

21-26 20th World Archaeological Congress, Washington, DC www.american.edu/wac5

Oklahoma Main Street Center has new director

Linda Stinnett was named the new Director of the Oklahoma Main Street Center recently and the preservation community in Oklahoma wishes her the best in her new position.

Stinnett has been with the Commerce Department's Office of Community Development since 1999 and was a Regional Economic Development Director with the agency. She previously held the position of Woodward Main Street Manager. While she was the Director of the Woodward Chamber of Commerce, she won the 1997 Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce Executive of the Year Award.

The Oklahoma Main Street Program is a statewide downtown revitalization program providing training, resources and technical assistance to currently 36 active Main Street communities across Oklahoma.

To date, there has been over \$259 million in private reinvestment through the Oklahoma Main Street Program. There has been over \$67 million in public improvement projects for a total reinvestment of over \$326 million.

Over 2,250 facade renovations have been completed in Oklahoma downtowns, with more than 4,500 other building projects completed.

There have been over 2,400 new businesses opening or relocating into historic downtowns. A total net gain of nearly 7,700 jobs and 40,000

volunteer hours completed.

These figures are total summaries since 1986 and the beginning of the Oklahoma Main Street Program under the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

Starting with many small changes taking place over a period of years, Main Street builds local leadership and local commitment to care for and manage the area for many years. The groundwork laid by the local leadership demonstrates that the district is active and vital, attracting more and more investment into the area.

During the past 15 years, Oklahoma Main Street towns have made significant strides in the revitalization of their central business districts. The program is incremental and uses the National Main Street Center's proven four-point approach.

Main Street's preservation-based approach to business district revitalization has been nationally recognized as effectively scaled to the resources of small cities and urban neighborhood business districts. The self-help methodology builds pride through revitalizing the commercial core and enhancing the city's quality of life.

Check out past issues of the quarterly Oklahoma Main Street News at: <http://domino1.odoc.state.ok.us/newhome/mainst.nsf/pages/OklahomaMainStreetNews>

Corporate Good Neighbor Initiative

The Corporate Good Neighbor Initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation seeks to build on the positive efforts already underway to raise corporate awareness of community character and historic preservation, and alter the corporate expansion behavior of big-box discount stores, chains and franchises.

Significant among these ongoing efforts are the National Trust's own Chain Drugstore and Smart Growth Initiatives. The Initiative seeks to draw upon the lessons learned and expertise of programs such as these to first identify and then work constructively with new industry segments, chains, and impacted communities to advance the revitalization of historic downtowns and commercial districts and the protection of residential neighborhoods.

Here is how you can help. The Trust continues to seek your assistance in gathering both good/bad examples for each of the following research categories. Again, the primary focus is on big-box, chain and/or franchise activity, especially within historic downtowns, commercial districts, residential neighborhoods and historic or scenic areas. This runs the gamut of industries ranging from supermarkets, convenience stores and banks to malls, restaurant chains and retail

discounters.

- Examples of industry efforts, both successes and failures, to scale-down big-box stores
- Examples of industry/corporate adaptive reuse of historic buildings (especially recent examples)
- Examples of industry/corporate infill (both compatible and not)
- Examples of industry/corporate damage/demolition of historic buildings and historic/scenic places.

These examples need only be brief and the Trust will follow up if necessary to gather additional information.

The National Trust also continues to gather success stories relative to the Chain Drug Store Initiative and looks forward to featuring these soon on the Chain Drug Store pages of the National Trust Web site, www.nthp.org. They welcome any new stories you may have, both with and without National Trust direct involvement.

Cristina Prochilo, Northeast Office, will continue to be the point of contact for Chain Drug Stores. She can be reached at (617) 523-0885 and/or cristina_prochilo@nthp.org <mailto:cristina_prochilo@nthp.org>

Call for papers for OHS annual meeting

With the title "Tips to Temples: The Built Environment and Oklahomans' Sense of Place," the Oklahoma Historical Society is seeking papers and presentations for the OHS Annual Meeting, which will be held April 24, 25, and 26, 2003, in Guthrie, Oklahoma, one of the largest contiguous urban historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places and designated in 1999 as a National Historic Landmark.

Concurrent paper sessions will be held on Friday, April 25, and Saturday, April 26, from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm. Each presentation should be limited to 30 minutes in length.

The built environment is a reflection of and an outlet for the personal and collective expression of a people. The physical resources built by and for — and preserved by — Oklahomans reveal much about Oklahoma attitudes, beliefs, and heritage and instill state residents with pride, identity, and a sense of place and purpose.

The 2003 OHS Annual Meeting will explore the many types of expression in the built environment and how they shape and define who we are. Suitable topics might include commercial and residential buildings; seats of government; military installa-

tions; churches; schools; structures related to farming and ranching, railroads, extractive industries, highway transportation, river navigation, and flood control; places of play and entertainment such as museums, parks, sports arenas, and movie theaters; and even the broader contexts of town planning and design, the rise of gated communities, and development and design of retirement communities for an aging population.

These suggestions are not meant to be exclusive, and the program committee welcomes proposals on a wide range of topics. One-page proposals should include the title and 100-word description of the presentation and the name, address, phone number, and e-mail address of the presenter, plus a one-page c.v. or brief biographical sketch. Those who submit proposals will be notified of their status in late December or early January.

Please submit proposals by Monday, December 2, 2002, to: Annual Meeting Committee, Attn Connie G. Armstrong, Oklahoma Historical Society, 2100 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4997. Inquiries only: (405) 522-5239 or foxc@ok-history.mus.ok.us

Preservation awards nominations sought

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is seeking nominations for the 2003 Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation and for the State Historic Preservation Officer's Citation of Merit.

To obtain awards criteria and nomination forms contact Shea Otley at (405) 521-6249 or sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us. Indicate whether you want to receive the information in hard copy format or by e-mail. You may also obtain the criteria and nomination forms at www.ok-history.mus.ok.us. Just click on "Preservation" and then on "Recognition Programs."

The Shirk Award is presented to an individual, organization/agency, or firm that has made significant statewide contributions to the preservation of Oklahoma's historic properties. A few Shirk Award

recipients include the Oklahoma Main Street Program, the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, Southwestern Bell, and First Lady Cathy Keating.

The SHPO's Citation of Merit is presented in recognition of special contributions of individuals, organizations/agencies, and firms that support historic preservation efforts in their local communities or across the state.

The deadline for nominations is 5:00 pm, Monday, December 2. Award winners will be notified in February 2003, and the presentation ceremony will be during the Awards Banquet at Oklahoma's 15th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference in Miami (May 8-10).

Contact Melvena Heisch at (405) 522-4484 or mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us if you have questions about the SHPO's awards program.

UPCOMING SHPO ACTIVITIES

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will present its annual fall workshop series **December 4-6**. SHPO staff members will focus on their Certified Local Governments, Section 106 Review, Federal Investment Tax Credits, and National Register of Historic Places programs. The workshops will be held in the **Shepherd Mall Activity Center, Suite 65, Shepherd Mall, N. W. 23rd and Villa, Oklahoma City** and are designed for government agency representatives, preservation professionals, and individual preservationists. Detailed information packets will be distributed in each session. There are no fees for attending, but **please register by 5 pm, Wednesday, November 27** by contacting Shea Otley at (405) 521-6249 or sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

Registered architects will earn American Institute of Architects Continuing Education System (AIA/CES) Learning Unit Hours (LU Hours) for attending the workshops. These sessions will meet the AIA/CES Health, Safety, and Welfare (LSW) criteria. Contact Catherine Montgomery at (405) 522-4479 or catherinem@ok-history.mus.ok.us for information about AIA/CES credits.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE:

- **Wed., December 4** 9:30 am - 12 noon
State and Local Governments as Preservation Partners in Oklahoma: The CLG Program
- **Wed., December 4** 1:30 - 4:30 pm
Guidelines and Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
- **Thurs., December 5** 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
The Section 106 Review Process: What It Is and How It Works
- **Fri., December 6** 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Working with the National Register of Historic Places

DON'T FORGET ...

Oklahoma's 15th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference May 8-10, 2003, in Miami, OK.

National Council for Preservation Education

The National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) has over fifty member institutions scattered across the United States. It has developed guidelines for minimum standards in preservation education degree programs. It also sponsors internships, preservation conferences and publishes on a range of preservation topics and issues.

The NCPE Guide to Academic Programs in Historic Preservation and Allied Fields is provided as a reference source to assist prospective students in identifying various historic preservation education degree programs in the United States.

Further information may be obtained by contacting the particular institutions directly. If you are considering a career in historic preservation, or just interested in taking a few classes, please consult <http://www.uvm.edu/histpres/ncpe/chart.html>. The Applied History Program at Oklahoma State University is the only NCPE resource identified in Oklahoma, call Bill Bryans at (405) 744-5678, but you may also find classes available through the University of Oklahoma school of Architecture, Downtown College Consortium in Oklahoma City, or your local community college, tech center, or regional university.

Preservation Web sites

Looking for an up-to-date listing of National Register of Historic Places properties in Oklahoma? Need information about Oklahoma's programs to protect archeological sites? Searching for ideas about revitalizing Main Street? Searching for funding? Want easy access to technical preservation information or other topics to numerous to list? The chances are you can find just what you want on the Web.

Government agencies, professional organizations, and nonprofit preservation groups at the national, state, and local levels continue to develop their Web sites and provide the most current information about their programs and services. Here are just a few key sites for you to investigate.

OKLAHOMA STATEWIDE INFORMATION

- *Oklahoma Archeological Survey*
www.ou.edu/cas/archsur
- *Oklahoma Main Street Center, Oklahoma Department of Commerce*
www.odoc.state.ok.us
- *Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.*
www.preservationoklahoma.org
- *Oklahoma Route 66 Association*
www.oklahomaroute66.com
- *State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society*
www.ok-history.mus.ok.us (click on Preservation)

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES IN OKLAHOMA

- *The Criterion Group (serving Oklahoma City)*
www.criteriongroup.org
- *Tulsa Preservation Commission, City of Tulsa*
www.tulsapreservationcommission.org/

REGIONAL FOCUS WEB SITE

- *Plains Humanities Alliance, University of Nebraska (NEH funded to serve the Plains states, including Oklahoma):*
www.unl.edu/rcplains/

The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office also invites you to join our free listserve. It's as easy as sending an e-mail message, and you will receive current information about funding opportunities, public programs, and many other topics, as well as be able to post your own preservation-related messages for the list membership. Contact Melvena Heisch at (405) 522-4484 or mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us for information about how to join.

Federal Web sites listed on next page.

999 and counting

by Jim Gabbert, SHPO Architectural Historian

With the recent addition of four properties, Oklahoma is represented in the National Register of Historic Places by 999 listings.

On June 20 the Bank of Nashville, located in Nash, Grant County; the Grandfield Downtown Historic district in Tillman County; and the Yorktown Historic District in Tulsa were all added to the National Register. The 999th property in Oklahoma added to the Register is Robbers Cave State Park, listed on August 23.

The Bank of Nashville is a preservation success story in the making. One of the few commercial buildings left in Nash, the bank building had hosted a number of commercial concerns over the years. Recent years had seen the building fall into disrepair and threatened with demolition. The New Nashville Historical Preservation Association stepped in to save the building. Through their efforts, the building has been stabilized and rehabilitation has begun. The organization also sponsored the nomination of the bank to the National Register.



Bank of Nashville

The Grandfield Downtown Historic District is listed in the National Register for its significance in the commercial growth of the "Big Pasture" area of southwestern Oklahoma. The two blocks of buildings represent the heart of commercial activity in this agriculturally-oriented area. Grandfield is a Certified Local Government and used their CLG funds to prepare the nomination.

The Yorktown Historic District is a residential

neighborhood located between the NR-listed Swan Lake and Gillette districts. This neighborhood was developed intensively between 1921 and 1931 and reflects the growth of the middle class in Tulsa. The houses in the neighborhood are more modest in scale than in the more upscale neighboring historic districts. The intended occupants of Yorktown were the new middle class those who made their money as an indirect result of Tulsa's oil boom.

Robbers Cave State Park was conceived, planned, and constructed by the Oklahoma Planning and Resources Board and the National Park Service's state parks branch. It was one of a group of Oklahoma's original state parks, joining Boiling Springs, Osage Hills, Roman Nose, Lake Murray, Greenleaf, Beavers Bend, and Quartz Mountain.

The park was transformed from a small Boy Scout camp into a full service recreational facility by a company of Civilian Conservation Corps workers composed of World War veterans. A number of amenities were constructed including a boathouse, bathhouse, and a string of rustic cabins on a ridge overlooking the San Bois Mountains.

Robbers Cave State Park is significant for its intact collection of New Deal era resources and for the contribution the park has made in the recreational development of southeastern Oklahoma.

For information on these or other National Register properties, contact Jim Gabbert at (405) 522-4478 or e-mail at [<jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us>](mailto:jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us).



Robbers Cave State Park



*Grandfield
Downtown
Historic District*

SHPO's HFP-assisted projects under way

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) receives an annual allocation from the U. S. Department of the Interior's Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to support its programs and activities. Several of these efforts are conducted through partnership arrangements with universities, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

Projects funded from the FY 2002 HPF are now under way and include National Register nominations, surveys, Certified Local Governments activities, and public outreach and education.

The SHPO awarded seven matching grants to local governments and nonprofits for preparation of individual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. These included grants to the City of Coweta for the Mission Bell Museum Building, Downtown Cushing Revitalization Association for the American Legion Post 108 Building, Pitcher Mining Field Reunion Committee, Inc., for the Pitcher Mining Field Museum Building, The Prairie House Foundation (Duncan) for the W. T. Foreman Residence, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. for the Gold Dome Bank Building (Oklahoma City), City of Pawnee for the Pawnee Bathhouse, and City of Tahlequah for the Tahlequah Carnegie Library.

Grant recipients will retain professionally qualified consultants with the HPF assistance to prepare the formal National Register nomination packages.

Each year the SHPO solicits proposals from qualified partners to carry out archeological and architectural/historic survey projects. The information obtained from these systematic surveys is used by SHPO staff in its various programs, such as the Section 106 review process. Also, the data collected helps the SHPO determine where it should focus its priorities for National Register nominations and for future survey projects. The survey information is also used by other government entities, preservation professionals, and concerned citizens.

HPF-assisted survey projects starting this fall include the survey of Stillwater's College Gardens neighborhood and preparation of a National Register district nomination. Oklahoma State University's Department of Geography is the SHPO's partner in the effort, and Dr. Brad Bays is the project director. For more information about the College Gardens Project and National Register nomination projects, contact Jim Gabbert of the SHPO staff at (405) 522-4478 or jgabbert@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

The identification and evaluation of Oklahoma's archeological resources is another of the SHPO's critical responsibilities. Most of this work is done in cooperation with the Oklahoma Archeological Survey at the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Leeland Bement of the OAS is directing an archeological survey of Mesa Environments in Cimarron County under an HPF subgrant from the SHPO.

In addition to this survey project, the SHPO and the OAs work jointly under a cooperative

agreement to carry out the Section 106 review process in Oklahoma, and the SHPO uses a portion of its HPF to support the Survey's efforts to review federal undertakings for possible effects on prehistoric resources.

For information about the SHPO's archeological survey subgrants and the Section 106 process, contact Charles Wallis at (405) 521-6381 or cwallis@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

The SHPO passes through a minimum of 10% of its annual HPF award to Oklahoma's Certified Local Governments (CLGs). The CLGs match their share of the HPF and carry out a wide range of projects designed to strengthen their local preservation programs.

New CLG subgrant projects include the City of Anadarko's National Register nomination project for Randlet Park; the City of Ardmore's National Register nomination project for the Old Ardmore High School; the City of Cordell's project to prepare at least 20 "Historic Preservation Certification Application - Part 1s" for contributing buildings in the Courthouse Square Historic District to assist property owners pursuing the federal rehabilitation tax credits; the City of Enid's development and publication of a walking tour brochure for the Waverly Historic District; the City of Norman's National Register nomination projects for the Chataqua and Miller historic districts; the City of Oklahoma City's continued full-time staffing for administration of the local historic preservation zoning ordinance; the City of Okmulgee's publication of a new brochure about African-American contributions to the city's built environment and reprinting a walking tour brochure and the city's design guidelines; the City of Ponca City's National Register nomination project for the CME Church and publication of a brochure about Wentz Park; and the City of Tulsa's efforts to update its comprehensive historic preservation plan.

Further information about these projects and the CLG program is available from Glen Vaughn-Roberson at (405) 521-6387 or gvaughn-robertson@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

The SHPO has also entered into agreements for three critical public outreach and education programs.

The SHPO contracted with Miami Main Street for Oklahoma's 15th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference which will be held May 8-10, 2003, in Miami. Also with HPF assistance, the SHPO will continue its partnership with Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., to publish *Preservation Oklahoma News* and carry out the Oklahoma's Most Endangered Properties Program.

Finally, through a cooperative agreement with OSU's Department of Geography, an interactive Web site for Oklahoma's National Register properties will soon be online, and the computerization of the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory will be completed.

For information about these programs contact Melvena Heisch at 405/522-4484 or mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us.

FEDERAL AGENCIES AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation www.achp.gov
- American Institute of Architects www.aiaonline.com
- American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works <http://aic.stanford.edu>
- Great American Station Foundation www.stationfoundation.org
- Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml>
- Livable Communities Task Force www.house.gov/blumenauer/livable.htm
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions www.arches.uga.edu/~napc/
- National Center for Preservation Technology and Training www.ncptt.nps.gov
- National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers www.sso.org/ncshpo
- National Conference of State Legislatures Data Base (state preservation laws) www.ncsl.org/programs/arts/statehist_intro.htm
- National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse www.enhancements.org
- National Trust for Historic Preservation www.nthp.org
- National Park Service Cultural Programs www.cr.nps.gov/whatwedo.htm
- Preservation Action <http://www.preservationaction.org>
- Renewal Alliance www.senate.gov/~santorum/real/real.html
- Scenic America www.scenic.org
- Society for American Archaeology www.saa.org
- Society for Commercial Archeology www.sca-roadside.org
- Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse www.sprawlwatch.org
- Surface Transportation Policy Project www.istea.org

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All correspondence, materials, or address changes should be sent to: Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1408, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

Editors:
Trent Margrif, Executive Director
Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.
(405) 232-5747
Melvena Heisch, Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer
Oklahoma Historical Society
(405) 522-4484

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This program receives financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or handicap in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

Wichita Battlefield NHS to host symposium

The Washita Battlefield National Historic Site will conduct a symposium titled "Through the Eyes of History: Eyewitness Accounts of the Washita" on November 15-17. The symposium will recall, through storytelling and the visual arts, the events of November 27, 1868, at Chief Black Kettle's camp located along the Washita River when Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer attacked a sleeping Cheyenne village. The Battle of the Washita will be explored through the words of those most intimately acquainted with it including individuals from Black Kettle's camp and the military participants in the winter campaign of 1868-1869.

The Washita Battlefield is a past historic site on Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties List and became a National Historic Site of the National Park Service in 1996. The property northwest of Cheyenne on US-283 was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1966.

Most of the events will take place at Cheyenne High School and the battlefield site. A diverse group of speakers is planned as well. Preregistration is required and for more information or to register call National Park Service staff member Craig Moore at (580) 497-2742 or write Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, P.O. Box 890, Cheyenne, OK, 73628

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer approval process formalized

The National Park Service seeks comments on proposed regulations affecting Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO).

On August 12, the National Park Service published a proposed regulation that formalizes the process by which a tribe seeks approval to assume functions of a State Historic Preservation Officer with respect to tribal lands. Currently, Section 101(d)(2) of the National Historic Preservation Act states that the Secretary of Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, will determine if the tribe is capable of carrying out the functions it proposes to assume.

The proposed regulation is published in the Federal Register and is posted on the National Park Service website at: <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tribal/thpo.htm>. The Park Service will receive comments on the proposal until December 10, 2002. In addition, the Park Service is hosting meetings around the country where attendees will be able to ask questions or comment on the proposed regulation. Included in the meeting schedule is Oklahoma City on October 4.

For additional information, contact David Banks of the National Park Service at (202) 343-9518.

Become a Member of the Statewide Preservation Network ...

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., 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1408, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

Name _____

From (if gift) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-m _____

I would like to make an additional contribution to the Statewide Initiatives _____

- | | | | |
|--|---------|---|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Club | \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Indiv./Family | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$100 | | |

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

JOIN PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA NOW!

Recent losses near Holdenville, Wetumka, and Stroud

In spite of objections from a local group protesting the demolition of the National Register listed WPA gymnasium on the school campus, Moss School officials have voted and continued with their plan to tear down the stone gymnasium, and it has now been demolished.

Members of the Moss Public School System Board of Education falsely reported that the building was condemned in the past and a safety hazard. Community members and school alumnus rallied to restore the structure and preserve the history it represents and should be commended for their efforts. These residents formed a group known as Save Our School (S.O.S) and were vigilant in fighting for the preservation of the building.

Members of the group wanted to find a way to save the building, rather than see it leveled and the area turned into a parking facility for the school.

The Moss School superintendent was previously denied use of county equipment for demolition of the gym by the board of Hughes County Commissioners. There have also been bond proposals in the community that have addressed the project, but the voters of the school district rejected those bonds in the past on two occasions.

Preservation Oklahoma, and specifically former Board President Ralph McCalmont, provided funding in the past to create a brochure to be used by local concerned citizens to go door to door in efforts to increase community awareness on the importance of preserving the school and preventing its demolition.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Oklahoma, and local community members also looked into legal action to prevent the demolition of the property but these were not feasible nor would they have been effective.

Despite demolition, much credit is due to those that fought for the preservation of their memories and history represented in the historic WPA constructed Moss Gymnasium.

A fire gutted the historic Meadors Hotel in downtown Wetumka recently, the hotel on Main Street caught fire about 10 a.m. The cause is still under investigation and this property was likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Firefighters from nine neighboring cities helped fight the blaze and prevent it from spreading to a nearby bank and several other buildings. Built in 1924 during the oil boom, the Meadors Hotel has been vacant since the 1970s but was a prominent hotel in downtown Wetumka for several decades.

A fire of undetermined origin destroyed the oldest home in Lincoln County, the National Register-listed Moses Keokuk House located six miles south of Stroud, four miles southeast of Davenport. Also completely destroyed in the fire was a wood frame residential home nearby. Only sections of the Keokuk house walls remain. The fire could have started from an electrical short in an interior power box or from a lightning strike during a powerful storm. The frame house was the home of a couple that had been married for over 70 years and their home not only contained all of their household goods, but furniture and family treasures collected over a lifetime. Although unoccupied at the time, the Keokuk House also contained family heirlooms and keepsakes. The 130-year-old brick house had been the former home of Chief Moses Keokuk and played an important role in the history of the Sac and Fox Nation in Oklahoma.



Moss School gymnasium – no longer standing.

- **WPA-built Moss School gymnasium**
- **Meadors Hotel in Wetumka**
- **Moses Keokuk House near Stroud**

Regional preservation event in Woodward in Oct.

Woodward Main Street is hosting a two-day Regional Preservation Workshop Oct. 24-25 in Woodward. Main Streets and preservationists from Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma are invited and encouraged to attend. Cost is only \$10/day per person to cover basic supplies. The Workshop begins Thursday morning, with registration starting at 8:30 and the first lecture at 9:00. Speakers will include representatives from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., the Oklahoma Main Street Center and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Historic property owners and those that have an interest in historic preservation are invited to attend. Please contact the Woodward Main Street at (580) 254-8521 or preferably woodwardms@pldi.net for more information.

Although preservation efforts are still in the pioneering stages in much of the surrounding tri-state area, there are some notable exceptions. Among them is the over 10-year-long restoration of the National Register-listed Stine-Bradbury House. The rehabilitation of this property involved transportation enhancements, several Oklahoma foundations, and citizen and corporate financial support. A Grand Opening and reception will be held during the workshop at the Stine-Bradbury House. Hope to see you there.

Recent Donations

Cook/Thompson wedding

Larry Nichols, OKC \$100
 Anne Harris, Norman \$50
 Angie Burckhalter, OKC \$50
 Sandra Cassimus, OKC \$25
 Kristina & Stephen Kovash, OKC \$50
 Suzette & Kim Hatfield, OKC \$150
 Mike McDonald, OKC \$100
 Mr. & Mrs. Harrison Townes, Tulsa \$50
 Cynthia Little, OKC \$25
 Mike Cantrell, OKC \$100
 A.E. Basinger, Jr. \$25

\$250

Hiram Champlin, Enid
 Elliott + Associates Architects, OKC
 Jo Meacham, OKC
 Ruth Nelson Family Foundation, Tulsa
 Bret Carter, Ponca City
 Kay Wade, Guthrie
 Konrad Keese, OKC
 Raina & Stan Pelofsky, OKC

\$100

John Mabrey, Okmulgee
 Martin L.J. Newman, Tulsa
 Richard Ryerson, Alva
 Elizabeth Tolbert, OKC
 Ninette Allen-Maples, Tulsa
 Peter Walter, Tulsa
 First National Bank and Trust Company,
 Clinton
 Sydna Porter, Tulsa
 Jean & Everett Berry, Stillwater
 Jeff Hirzel, Guthrie
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\$50

Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma, Miami
 gh2 Gralla Architects, Tulsa
 McFarland Architects, Tulsa
 Woodward Main Street Program, Inc.,
 Woodward
 Langston University, Langston
 Tulsa Historical Society, Tulsa
 Dr. J. William Hood, OKC

More donations listed on next page.

Protecting an icon

by Kathy Dickson
 Oklahoma Historical Society

Standing 17 feet above her limestone pedestal, Oklahoma's *Pioneer Woman* has witnessed many changes as the prairie that once surrounded her has disappeared to make way for modern buildings and highways.

Sculptor Bryant Baker's heroic bronze statue of a young sunbonneted pioneer mother leading her son by the hand is a familiar landmark to most Oklahomans. Dedicated April 22, 1930, oilman and later Governor E.W. Marland presented the statue as a gift to the people of Oklahoma. She has endured Oklahoma's weather — ranging from blistering heat to steely sleet — for over 72 years, but the weather, along with good-intentioned but inappropriate past cleaning and repair efforts, have taken their toll.

Conservation efforts are now under way to clean, repair and protect the statue to ensure that the determination on her face will remain to remind and inspire future generations.

Patrick Rice of Objects Conservation from Chesterfield, MO, is undertaking this delicate work. Rice completed a conservation assessment in 1999 identifying treatment needs. Work on the statue and base will include removing much of the existing mortar, since it was applied during past repair efforts and is causing cracking, chipping and flaking.

In addition to the mortar being the wrong mix, large segments of mortar are missing allowing water to freely penetrate the base, and as Oklahoma's winter temperatures dip below freezing the expansion causes further damage.

Rice will also clean the limestone to remove stains and biological growths. The limestone must be desalinated since early cleaning of the statue included chemicals with a saline base that permeated the stone.

As for the pioneer woman and her son, both will receive a thorough cleaning to remove layers of dirt, grime and the remnants of previous protective layers. The son will also receive some shoe repairs to patch the three-inch crack in the heel of his left shoe.

Once the cleaning and repairs are completed

the statue will receive a new protective coating with a corrosion inhibitor followed by a layer of wax coating. The total project includes the installation of new lighting to spotlight the Pioneer Woman.

The Pioneer Woman Museum Advisory Board, which works with the Oklahoma Historical Society in support of the Pioneer Woman Museum, identified the conservation work as its top priority in 2001 and dedicated their work to raising the needed funds.

Numerous individuals made donations and participated in fund-raising events including major donations from the Peel Foundation, Helmerick Foundation, Conoco, and the City of Ponca City. Fund-raising efforts are continuing to establish an endowment fund for the continued maintenance of this National Register Property.

The statue needs to be cleaned and waxed once a year and requires a new protective coating about every five years depending upon the weather.

For information on becoming a part of this effort contact Valerie Haynes, Director of the Pioneer Woman Museum at (580) 765-6108 or via email at pjown@ok-history.mus.ok.us.



Historic Preservation Development Council

The Historic Preservation Development Council is a leadership organization for real estate developers and professionals engaged in tax-advantaged historic rehabilitation development that has been established as an affiliate of the National Housing & Rehabilitation Association, in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Every industry needs its own forum — a place

where active practitioners convene — on an ongoing basis to discuss issues of mutual concern, exchange information to help each other with projects, identify policy opportunities to further collective interests and organize advocacy activities. The HPDC has been created to fulfill this role for developers and related professionals involved in Certified Historic Rehabilitation. <http://www.housingonline.com/hpdc/index.htm>

Preservation aspects of the farm bill

This year, Congress approved a massive farm bill that included at least two provisions that will assist preservation activities in agricultural areas. These include the expansion of the Farmland Protection Program's criteria to allow archeological and cultural sites to qualify.

Information about this incentive is now available through a new Web page devoted to the farm bill created by the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at the Department of Agriculture. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmland/2002/index.html>

This site will continue to expand and grow in its informational capacities regarding the Farmland Protection Program, the Conservation of Private Grazing Program, and other aspects of the farm bill.

Historic barn preservation program

The Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for Rural Development will administer this program, and will make grants to or enter into contracts with state agencies and nonprofit organizations to carry out eligible projects. The program's goal is to help states protect historic barns that are at least 50 years old for continued agricultural use. State Departments of Agriculture, State Historic Preservation Officers, and nonprofits with experience in preserving historic barns are also eligible to receive funds to identify, document, and conduct research on the development and evaluation of appropriate techniques and best practices for protecting historic barns. However, the Historic Barn Preservation program has not been authorized a level of funding by Congress yet at this time.

Kuhlman Farm preserved

The Kuhlman farm is the home of one of Cleveland County's best-known pioneer families and lies on the northern edge of Norman, directly in the path of sprawling development moving south from Oklahoma City. The farm will be preserved through a conservation easement that will allow continued farming but prohibit commercial or residential development. The easement is being purchased by the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a nonprofit conservation organization detailed in last month's newsletter, using funds from the first federal Farmland Protection Program grant ever awarded in Oklahoma. The City of Norman is providing matching funds for the purchase of the easement.

The TPL will officially acquire the easement for conveyance to the Norman Area Land Conservancy (NALC), a Norman-based nonprofit organization.

This is a cornerstone property for TPL's Farm and Ranch Preservation Initiative and the NALC's efforts to protect prime agricultural land in the Little River Valley. In many respects, the Kuhlman Farm is a landmark project for agricultural and open space protection in Oklahoma. Among other firsts, this project represents the first acquisition in the City of Norman's greenbelt acquisition program, and the first municipal investment in an agricultural conservation easement anywhere in the state.

For more information on the project please contact Robert Gregory at (918) 645-0393.

Gold Dome outlook improves

Negotiations continue between Bank One and a prospective buyer for the sale of the "golden dome" property in Oklahoma City.

Over \$18,000 was received and has been exhausted by Preservation Oklahoma to cover costs of this preservation effort. Thank you to all citizens that contributed to this cause. The weekly protests on the corner of Classen and NW 23rd, citizen participation in public meetings, and financial contributions delayed property demolition and allowed time for a suitable buyer to step forward. Those interested can still purchase a shirt to save the dome. "Preserve, Protect, and Defend" T-shirts are on sale at "Nostalgia," located upstairs at the Colonies Market, 1116 NW 51 St., just west of Western in Oklahoma City Monday-Friday, 11-5, Saturday 10-5. Out-of-towners are in luck! Shirts can also be ordered by mail; please contact robymarn@earthlink.net, while supplies last.

Proceeds go to the legal defense fund of the gold dome and future preservation efforts in the city and state. To view the shirt design and for continued information go to www.savethedome.net



\$25

Harrison House, Guthrie
Capt. Margaret L. Deal-Saul, Lawton
(additional \$25 for statewide initiative)
Grant Wilson, San Francisco, CA
Sheryl Bolenbaugh, Nash
Martin Wing, Tulsa
Fred & Joyce Lucas, Watonga
John Calhoun, OKC
(additional \$25 to statewide initiative)
Charley & Sherrill Morris, Cordell
Marva Ellard, OKC
Steve & Lynn Garman, OKC
(additional \$25 to statewide initiative)
Louis Coleman, Idabel
James King, Tulsa
Evelyn Davis, OKC
Dr. Leroy Fischer, Stillwater
Courtney Baugher, Tulsa
Allen County Public Library, Ft. Wayne, IN
Sherri Vance, Yukon
(additional \$50 to statewide initiative)
David & Janet Battles, Tulsa
Robert Rorschach, Tulsa
Wade Burkholder, Coweta
Robert K. Erwin, OKC
Randy Marks, OKC
Robert Chenoweth, Enid
Jonathan Woltz, Weatherford
(additional \$5 towards statewide initiative)
Jennifer Galvin, Bartlesville
Tony Gibson, Ada
Sabra Tate, McAlester
Williams Co. Foundation, Tulsa (matching membership)
Dr. & Mrs. Charles Wesner, Norman
Bill Bryans, Stillwater
Mary Athens, Tulsa
(additional \$25 to statewide initiative)
Pamela Hodges, Sand Springs
Vanessa Drummond, Bartlesville
Ed Fretwell, OKC
Penny Wells, Ardmore
Arn Henderson, Norman

\$15

Lawrence Shaffer, Duncan
Rex M. Ball, Tulsa
Dale Reeder, OKC
Nina Payne, Elk City
John Lane, Ft. Smith, AR
Daniel Shorter, Alva
Harvey Crabtree, Nash
Roy Bynum, Jr. Indianola
Neil McElderry, Jr. Purcell
Sandra Waldo, Bartlesville
Loree M. Rice, Edmond
Robert Bell, Norman
Martha Logan, Woodward

\$10

Keith & Karen Hunter, Ponca City

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Preservation grants awarded

Forty-one proposals from communities across Oklahoma will receive funding grants under the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, or TEA 21. These grants total nearly \$12 million in federal money, and are being administered by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and were approved by the Oklahoma Transportation Commission.

Aside from trails, bicycle, traffic, and community gateway and streetscape improvements are some projects involving the preservation of historic buildings. Included is \$631,697 towards the rehabilitation of the WPA Chandler Armory for a Route 66 Interpretative Center and \$240,000 to Waynoka to improve interior space for its railroad and transportation museum in the Santa Fe Depot.

The Oklahoma Historical Society also received \$255,500 for the Choctaw-Chickasaw heritage corridor and several Oklahoma Main Street communities received funding to improve accessibility and promotion of their historic downtowns.

The Rogers County Historical Society recently received a grant from the M.R.&E. Hudson Foundation to continue the restoration of the Belvidere Mansion. John and Mary Bayless began construction on the three-story Victorian home in 1907. The mansion is open to the public Wednes-

day, Thursday, and Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm. Located at 109 North Chickasaw Avenue, the property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Oklahoma Historical Society has received a grant from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Program to develop a regional map of Civil War battlefields in Oklahoma and three other states. The area includes 10 Civil War battlefields, six museums, five historic sites, and seven cemeteries related to the Civil War.

The American Battlefield Protection Program works to protect significant battle sites of wars fought on American soil.

The most recent Preservation Services Fund (PSF) grants of the National Trust have been awarded to Preserve Pawhuska, Inc., to hire an architectural consultant for a feasibility study for the Triangle Building downtown. They will assess its current condition and provide a report with built plans and future uses for the property. The Triangle Building was included on "Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties" list this past year.

The Oklahoma Historical Society also received a grant from the National Trust for construction documents to assess damage and repair the roof of the State Capitol Museum in Guthrie.

Preservation grant opportunities

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation has announced a new online guide that outlines the range of historic preservation funding options that are currently available. Geared toward the preservation community and the general public, "Sources of Financial Assistance for Historic Preservation Projects," available at <http://www.achp.gov/funding.html>, emphasizes Federal funding while also touching upon state, tribal, local, and nonprofit funding opportunities. Details on sources of funding that can support preservation through other Federal programs will continue to be added to this guide.

In addition, visitors will find links to the Web sites of the various funding programs outlined in the guide.

The National Trust announces a request for proposals for the 2002-03 round of the Local Initiative and Collaborative Pilots Technical Assistance Grants. The purpose of this program is to build organizational capacity for nonprofit preservation groups and strengthen collaborations between national, state, and local partners related to strategic preservation outcomes. Initial funding includes a technical assistance grant of up to \$2,500 for strategic development.

Organizations accepted for this phase of the program will be invited to apply for a Challenge Grant of up to \$35,000. These programs are open to 501 (c)(3) nonprofit preservation organizations. The application deadline is Oct. 31, 2002.

If you have any questions please contact Lisa

Burcham at lisa_burcham@nthp.org or Megan Brown at megan_brown@nthp.org, (817) 332-4398.

Preservation Oklahoma is also interested in knowing how many local nonprofit preservation organizations exist in Oklahoma, so please also contact us if you are one.

Applications are now being accepted by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) for their 2003 grants in preservation. Grants, which are awarded on a competitive basis, must address critical challenges to the preservation of our nation's cultural heritage through the innovative application of advances in science and technology.

For more information about applying for grants, go the NCPTT Web site at www.ncptt.nps.gov or call (318) 356-7444

HistoricProperties.com wants to join in your efforts to preserve, protect and reuse our historic buildings. We would like to help you market your endangered and at risk properties to a national audience of owners, sellers and buyers of historic properties! Consider us the online marketplace for properties all across the USA built prior to 1950. We list all properties owned by nonprofit groups at **no charge**.

www.preservationdirectory.com also is a related Web site.

2003 Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties List **NOMINATION FORM**

Deadline is November 15, 2002

Only complete nominations will be considered.

In 1993, Preservation Oklahoma, Inc., launched a campaign to raise public awareness of the plight of threatened historic resources by publicizing an annual list of representative properties and working with groups trying to save them from destruction. A joint project with the Oklahoma Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Properties has been successful at focusing public attention, helping the advocates for selected properties, and, in some cases, stopping complete destruction of the resource.

The response from Oklahoma's historic preservation community and the statewide media has consistently been positive and encouraging.

We are eager to compile our 2003 Most Endangered List and would like, once again, to solicit your help in identifying good candidates to help represent the broad range of threatened significant resources we have in Oklahoma.

Please return this completed nomination form by November 15. If you have any questions please contact Trent Margrif at (405) 232-5747 or e-mail: info@preservationoklahoma.org. The selection committee will meet in November and the new list will be announced in January, 2003. Please promptly return this form and thank you for your participation.

Your Name _____

Your Mailing Address _____

Your Phone #, E-Mail or Local Preservation Group _____

Name of Endangered Property, National Register Status (If unsure of National Register eligibility, please contact SHPO at (405) 522-4478 to request determination.) _____

Contact Info on Current Property Owner _____

Nature of Threat to Property, Current Condition (good, poor, ruins, etc.) _____

Location (Address/City/County) and Brief Description of Property and Historic Importance: _____

Current Use of Site; Is There Existing Zoning or Proactive Regulations? _____

**AT LEAST TWO COLOR PHOTOS OF CURRENT CONDITION OF PROPERTY REQUIRED.
HISTORIC PHOTOS, INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND SLIDES ALSO APPRECIATED.**

These photographs and slides will be returned after a year's use if requested.

Please return this completed nomination form to:

PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA, INC.

120 N. Robinson, Suite 1408 • Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Saving Graves in Oklahoma

taken from www.savinggraves.com

Saving Graves is strongly committed to the preservation and protection of human burial sites from unauthorized and unwarranted disturbance, by man or nature.

Saving Graves was formed to educate and assist in the worldwide networking of people interested in protecting, restoring and preserving our historic cemeteries. We believe that the willful desecration or destruction of human burial sites is **unacceptable** in a civilized society. All over the globe, cemeteries have been

threatened by neglect, insufficient funds, inappropriate development or insensitive public policy. It is our primary objective to increase the awareness and highlight the importance of our historic cemeteries as sources of community and state pride, while promoting an attitude of reverence and respect, and encouraging the further preservation of these unique historical resources for future generations to appreciate and learn from. If society fails to appropriately and adequately deal with this issue through some

definitive action, whether legislative or otherwise, not only will genealogical and historical resources likely be irreparably harmed, but society will potentially lose a valuable resource for charting its inexorable course into annals of human history.

In Oklahoma, find out more at <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ok/state1/>, and read the following testimony.

Thomas Smith Cemetery - No Vampires Here!

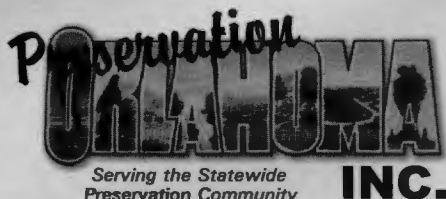
by Tabita Mallow
Saving Graves, Tulsa County

Since moving to Tulsa in 1996, I had been hearing about a "Vampire Cemetery" east of town. It was an urban legend. Eventually, thanks to a group called Ghost Safari, I found this place in February of this year.

On a cold February day, I armed myself with my camera, and trekked out to this lonely place on 41st St. and 209th E Ave. I missed the place twice because I couldn't see the headstones over the grass. I was saddened by what I found: unmarked graves, broken headstones, dug up graves, beer bottles and trash all over the place. (A.N. Peagues, of the last Creek Council members, is buried at Thomas Smith Cemetery among others.) I felt something had to be done. It wasn't until one night later this spring while searching for urban legends online I came across a way to do something

about this place through Saving Graves. I submitted it to the organization for help.

State coordinator, Linda Simpson, contacted me immediately. She introduced me to the support system that Saving Graves has set up for people like me. Since then, I have been on the news about this site, and raised awareness of the plight of this cemetery and others. I found family members to help me locate missing graves, and have been actively cleaning and restoring this cemetery. People have come out of the woodwork to lend a hand. Things are now moving fast and puzzle pieces are falling into place. Thomas Smith Cemetery truly IS a success story.



Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.
120 N. Robinson, Suite 1408
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