

# PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA NEWS

Fall 2004 / v.11 / no.1

A joint project of the State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation Oklahoma



The University of Arts and Sciences of Oklahoma in Chickasha is the only college campus in Oklahoma designated as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.



## USAO receives Getty Grant for historic preservation

**H**istoric preservation at the University of Science and Arts in Chickasha, Oklahoma, got a \$75,000 boost this summer from the Getty Grant Program of Los Angeles, one of the largest supporters of visual arts in the country. The new research grant will enable USAO to survey its historic buildings and landscapes in conjunction with the development of its Master Site Plan. USAO was one of 25 colleges and universities nationwide to receive the prestigious Getty Grant this year. Since 2002, the Getty has awarded more than \$7 million to more than 50 colleges and universities in a nationwide effort to preserve historic buildings, sites and landscapes.

"Given the rigorous competition for funding, obtaining a Getty Campus Heritage Grant is a high honor in itself," said USAO President John Feaver. "We are deeply thankful to Getty for its confidence in the college."

This announcement is a critical "next step" in the arduous

process of restoring the architectural treasures at USAO, built by the most notable early Oklahoma architects but suffering from years of deferred maintenance, Feaver explained. "After the Oklahoma College for Women National Historic District was recognized by the National Park Service in 2001, we were equally thrilled and sobered by the challenge ahead: to tell the story effectively, pioneer new resources, craft meaningful plans, and to see the vision through."

A critical player on John Feaver's restoration team is Grant Writer Julie Bohannon. She gathered data from numerous sources to write the 27-page application to Getty.

"USAO has earned larger grants but none more important to me as this one from Getty," Bohannon said. "The momentum to restore USAO's historic campus is growing. Other foundations and private donors recognize the power of teamwork, and they will, I believe, embrace the USAO vision."

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*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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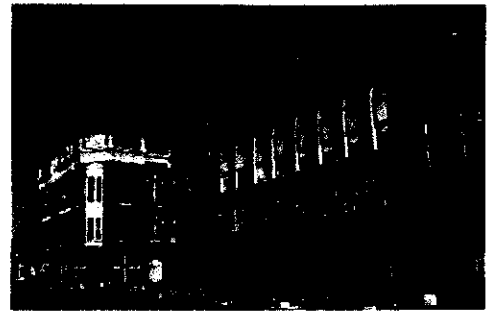
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## Know your preservation terminology: "Historic District"

Historic preservation, like any other field, has a specific vocabulary. If preservation leaders and advocates are to succeed, they must communicate effectively among themselves and with others. Such communication is dependent on the use and understanding of that vocabulary. For example, when you refer to your community's "historic district," what do you mean? Giving inaccurate information to a prospective property owner would have serious consequences for that individual, as well as discredit your local preservation effort.

### What is a "historic district?"

A historic district is a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A residential neighborhood, a downtown commercial district, a rural environment, or a concentration of archeological sites in a particular drainage area can all be considered historic districts.



Historic district in downtown Guthrie.

### Are there different meanings for the term "historic district?"

Yes. People may use the term "historic district" merely as a way to reference an older commercial or residential area that has no formal historic district designation associated with it. Or, the "historic district" may be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Or, it may be a locally designated "historic district" under a preservation zoning ordinance. In some cases a "historic district" may have both of these formal governmental designations.

### What does it mean to own property in a district listed in the National Register of Historic Places?

Owners of private property located within a National Register listed "historic district" can do whatever they wish with their property. If the property is income producing, the owner may qualify for federal tax incentives when the property is appropriately rehabilitated. If the owner uses federal funds to alter or demolish a property in a district listed in or eligible for the National Register, the State Historic Preservation Office must be given an opportunity to review and comment on the project in accordance with the Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

### What does it mean to own property in a district designated under a local historic preservation zoning ordinance?

While local historic preservation zoning ordinances vary from city to city, they generally have similar effects on owners of private property within the boundaries of "historic districts" designated under them. When a property owner plans to do something to the property that requires a building permit from the city government, the proposed work must first be approved by the local historic preservation review commission (a body appointed by the mayor). Such ordinances do not extend to the interior of the building. It is important to keep in mind that when there is no feasible alternative or when economic hardships can be demonstrated, even demolition of properties in such local "historic districts" is permitted.

### What if both these designations apply to a "historic district?"

The effects on owners described above for each formal designation will apply. There are no additional restrictions.

— *Melvina Heisch, State Deputy Director,  
Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office*

# SHPO seeks nominees for 2005 awards program

Know someone who has rehabilitated an important historic building in your community? Worked with a dedicated group of volunteers to save a historic property? Enjoyed a walking tour in a historic district? These and many more projects and activities contribute to the preservation of Oklahoma's heritage. Help the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) recognize these important accomplishments.

The SHPO is now accepting nominations for the 2005 Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation and the SHPO's Citation of Merit. The deadline for nominations is 5:00pm

Friday, December 3, and candidates will be notified in February 2005 about the results of the selection process. The awards will be presented at the banquet during Oklahoma's 17th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference in Stillwater from June 8-10, 2005.

The Shirk Memorial Award for Historic Preservation is given in recognition of historic preservation programs or activities that have had statewide impact. The SHPO's Citation of Merit is awarded for noteworthy accomplishments in historic preservation at the state or local level.

The SHPO will accept nominations in either electronic or hard copy format.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

for nomination forms/instructions:

Shea Otley

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sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us

or download directly from:

[www.okhistory.mus.ok.us/shpo/shpom.htm](http://www.okhistory.mus.ok.us/shpo/shpom.htm)

for awards criteria questions:

Melvena Heisch

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mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us

# Support Oklahoma tourism: Vote for the Cherokee Heritage Center

An Oklahoma non-profit organization suddenly received global attention when it was selected as a finalist for 2004 Sustainable Tourism Award. Presented by the Smithsonian Magazine and the Travelers Conservation Foundation, this prestigious award recognizes members of the travel and tourism industry who are committed to protecting the environment and its cultural treasures.

A panel of judges selected the Cherokee Heritage Center and five other international travel and tourism organizations that have made a tremendous impact in the fields of preservation or conservation. Now, people from around the world can vote on-line, through October 31, 2004 for their favorite organization. The organization receiving the most votes will be awarded \$20,000 to continue their efforts.

The Cherokee Heritage Center was selected for their commitment to preserving Cherokee history and culture and for the impact the heritage center has on the tourism industry.

"The Cherokee Heritage Center's impact to tourism and our economy is vital to the success of our area," said Randy Gibson, executive director of the Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce. "Each year we enjoy hosting more than 100,000 visitors directly because of the activities of the Cherokee Heritage Center. The economic impact generated through the center accounts for more than \$7.5 million and more than 150 jobs brought to the area."

The center hosts more than 50 annual events, two competitive arts shows, various attractions and the highly acclaimed "Trail of Tears" drama. Visitors to the center experience Cherokee history first hand through interactive exhibits, guided tours, traditional Cherokee classes, art, theater and numerous other events.

The Cherokee Heritage Center was chosen from numerous nominations from around the world. The

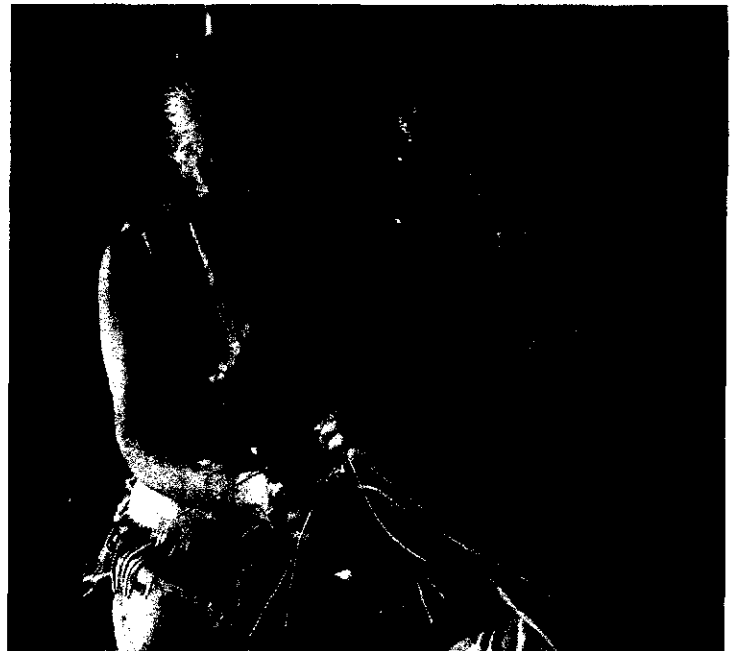


Photo courtesy of Cherokee Heritage Center.

organizations chosen to compete for this award are from North America, South America, China, Kenya and Ecuador.

"We are honored to be included among such an elite group of contenders," said Ami Maddocks, public affairs officer for the Cherokee Heritage Center. "Winning this award will not only impact our efforts here in Tahlequah, but it will have a huge impact on the travel and tourism industry in Oklahoma."

Visit [www.sustainabletourismawards.com/index.htm](http://www.sustainabletourismawards.com/index.htm) and support tourism in Oklahoma by voting for the Cherokee Heritage Center.

# Register now for SHPO's December workshops

The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce the schedule for the annual fall workshop series. Each workshop is devoted to one of the SHPO's federal preservation programs and is designed for preservation professionals, government agency representatives, and concerned citizens.

The sessions will be held Wednesday, December 1 through Friday, December 3 in the Shepherd Mall Activity Center, Suite 40B, Shepherd Mall, N.W. 23rd and Villa, Oklahoma City. The workshops are free, but the SHPO requests that you register by 5:00pm, Monday, November 22. Space is limited and will be reserved on a first-come basis.

Registered architects who attend these workshops can qualify for American Institute of Architects Continuing Education System (AIA/CES) learning units.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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SHPO

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for workshop content questions:

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mheisch@ok-history.mus.ok.us

to register for any or all of workshops  
(free, but must register by Nov. 22):

Shea Otley

(405)521-6249

sjotley@ok-history.mus.ok.us

### • Wednesday, December 1, 9:30AM–noon

*State and Local Governments as Preservation Partners in Oklahoma:  
The CLG Program*

The half-day workshop concerns the SHPO's Certified Local Governments Program (CLG). Local governments that enforce historic preservation zoning ordinances may qualify for CLG status. The workshop explains the eligibility criteria, certification process, and program benefits, including a share of the SHPO's annual federal funding from the U.S. Department of the Interior.

### • Wednesday, December 1, 1:30PM–4:30PM

*Guidelines and Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*

Owners of buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places may qualify for the 20% federal investment tax credit for certified rehabilitation. The topics that will be addressed include how to determine if a building is a certified historic structure, what guidelines must be followed in the rehabilitation work, and how to successfully complete the application process for certification of the rehabilitation.

### • Thursday, December 2, 9:30AM–5:00PM

*The Section 106 Review Process: A Workshop for Agency Officials  
and Cultural Resource Management Consultants*

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act provides that Federal agencies must consider the effect of their undertakings on archeological and historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Topics addressed in this day-long workshop include the basic requirements of Section 106, the regulations that went into effect August 5, 2004 which govern the process, how to determine National Register eligibility, what constitutes adverse effects, mitigating adverse effects, and streamlining Section 106 review.

### • Friday, December 3, 9:30AM–4:30PM

*Working with the National Register of Historic Places*

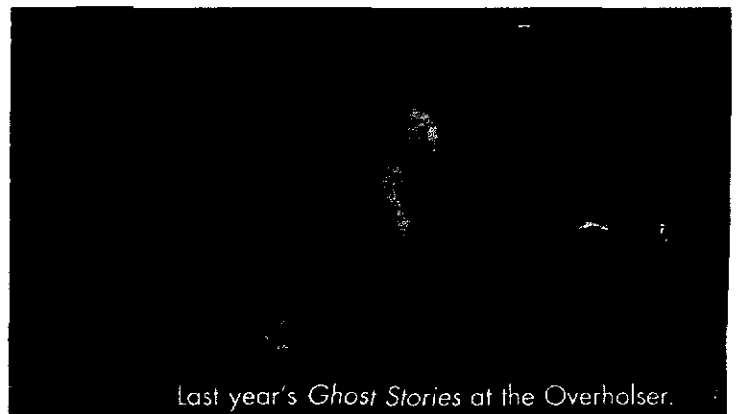
The National Register of Historic Places is the foundation of the SHPO's programs, and a basic understanding of the register is essential for those involved in historic preservation at all levels of government and in the private sector. The workshop provides detailed information about the National Register criteria, what listing means, the rights of property owners in the nomination process, tips for preparing successful nominations, and much more.

## Halloween at the Overholser

Join us for *Ghost Stories* at the Overholser Mansion on Friday and Saturday, October 22-23 from 7pm to 9pm. All ages are invited to tour the Overholser, and hear stories about the 100-year old mansion. With the help of visitors, a

paranormal group will conduct investigations. Cost is \$5 per person. Children under 6 are free. All proceeds benefit the Overholser Mansion.

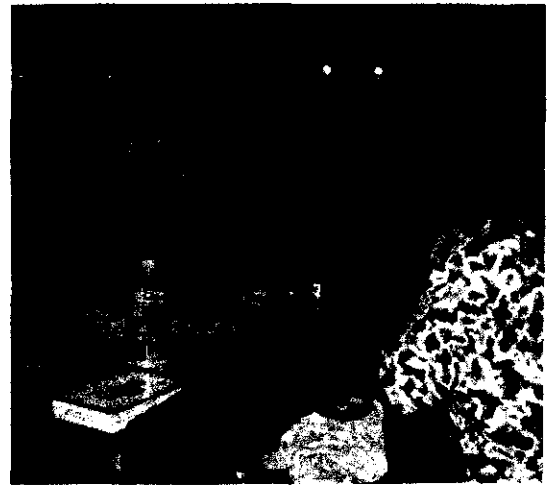
For more information, call (405)525-5325.



Last year's *Ghost Stories* at the Overholser.



(left to right) Shane Brown's photography exhibit; Denise Alexander at the Spotlight Theater in Tulsa; Larry Neal identifying artifacts during the "Ask the Archaeologists" Day at the Museum of the Red River.



## Preservation programs in your community

Each month, Preservation Oklahoma and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office sponsor programs across the state. These programs are an opportunity to share with the public preservation related topics, as well as hear about preservation projects across Oklahoma.

An exhibit of Shane Brown's photographs was held in August at the Overholser Mansion in Oklahoma City. Shane's photographs depict the cultural landscape in Oklahoma and other Great Plains state. He was the featured artist in September/October *Oklahoma Today* magazine.

Also in August, Dr. Robert Brooks, the State Archaeologist and Director of the Oklahoma Archaeological Survey presented "Preservation Archaeology: Protecting New Finds for the Future" in Idabel. Larry Neal of the

Oklahoma Archaeological Survey lead a team of professional archaeologists for "Ask the Archaeologists" Day, where the public was invited to bring in artifacts for identification. Henry Moy at the *Museum of the Red River* graciously hosted these events.

In September, the program made its way to Tulsa and the *Spotlight Theater*. Denise Alexander from the Southwest Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation spoke about the importance of preserving mid-twentieth century architecture. Many thanks to Larry Oliver and the Tulsa *Spotlighters* for hosting this event.

If your organization would be interested in hosting a program like these, please call Preservation Oklahoma at (405)525-5325 or [info@preserveok.org](mailto:info@preserveok.org).

## 110,000+ records added to the National Archaeological Database

The Archeology and Ethnography Program is pleased to announce that it has updated and provided a new look to the National Archeological Database, Reports (NADB-R) module at <http://web.cast.uark.edu/other/nps/nadb/nadb.mul.html>.

NADB-R is a publicly-accessible, national bibliographic database of gray literature reports on archeological investigations across the United States and its territories. A search on NADB-R is a critical first step in archeological

project planning, which helps reduce redundancy and increase efficiency in cultural resource management efforts. The National Park Service partners with the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) and the Center for *Advanced Spatial Technologies* (CAST) at the University of Arkansas to provide the public with NADB-R. The update adds over 110,000 records from 28 SHPOs, California Information Centers, and the Bureau of Reclamation and now includes over 350,000 records.

The two-year effort to update NADB-R has resulted in more accurate and up-to-date information.

The Oklahoma Archeological Survey prepared and provided database entries for Oklahoma as part of their ongoing programs under a cooperative agreement with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. Any agency or its consultants working with the Section 106 review process will find NADB-R helpful.

# Preservation Oklahoma awarded grants for neighborhood exhibit

Preservation Oklahoma is pleased to announce it has received a \$5000 grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, plus a \$2000 grant from the Oklahoma Arts Council. These grants will be used to assist in funding an exhibit on the architecture, social history and successful preservation of the Heritage Hills neighborhood.

"We are so pleased to have received these grants," says the organization's Executive Director, Heather Seifert. "This exhibit will help Preservation Oklahoma and the Overholser Mansion to develop and enhance our services and programs. We trust the same 'pioneer spirit' that brought Henry Overholser to the Heritage Hills neighborhood, will be evident in this exhibit."

Entitled "Pioneers to Preservation: The Legacy of Heritage Hills," the exhibit will begin with an opening reception on October 14, at 7:00pm in the Overholser Carriage House. The reception is free and open to the public. It will feature a presentation by Dr. Bob Blackburn, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The Oklahoma City Community Foundation was founded in 1969, and managed nearly \$440 million in assets and is ranked as one of the largest community foundation in the country. Governed by a 15-member board of trustees, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation's mission is to help donors meet the charitable

needs of the community through the development and administration of permanent endowment funds for non-profit organizations, scholarships and other charities. Grants are awarded three times a year to metropolitan area non-profit organizations. For more information about the Oklahoma City Community Foundation and its Community Grants Program, visit [www.occf.org](http://www.occf.org).

The Oklahoma Arts Council is a state agency whose mission is to improve lives through the arts by nurturing and supporting a thriving arts environment, which is essential to the quality of life, education and economic vitality for all Oklahomans.

## EXHIBIT INFORMATION

*Pioneers to Preservation: The Legacy of Heritage Hills*

October 14 - November 15, 2004

Overholser Mansion

1500 Northwest Fifteenth Street

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

(405)525-5325

*Opening Reception*

October 14, 7:00pm

Overholser Carriage House

Free and open to the public

## Oklahoma Rural Preservation Series: An introduction

When we scan the list of entries in the National Register of Historic Places and review standard sources about preservation successes and challenges, it is obvious that the focus of historic preservation efforts has long been on cities and large towns. But, there is currently an exciting trend toward preservation efforts for small communities and rural areas. Programs such as Main Street have helped stimulate an interest in historic preservation in Oklahoma small towns. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) makes special efforts to identify and nominate rural properties to the National Register and encourage appreciation for Oklahoma's agricultural heritage through the Oklahoma Centennial Farm and Ranch Program.

We see the same trend occurring nationwide. For example, the agenda for Forum 2004, the national conference



Round barn, built in 1898, in Arcadia, Oklahoma.

for historic preservation commissions, devotes an entire track to "Current Issues in Rural and Small Town Preservation" an all-day workshop in Farmland, Indiana. If national organizations such as the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions are now promoting opportunities in rural communities, then we will surely see

even more exciting preservation developments in small-town Oklahoma. Heritage tourism programs designed for rural areas and smaller communities, more sources of technical assistance made available, and many other opportunities emerging.

In the coming issues of *Preservation Oklahoma News*, we will share a series of articles devoted to preservation activities in rural communities, including an occasional article about conservation programs for farm and ranch lands. We hope to inform

*Preservation Oklahoma News* readers about what government agencies, non-profit organizations and individual citizens across the state are doing to develop and to promote preservation of our state's rich rural heritage.

— Glen Vaughn-Roberson,  
CLG Coordinator/  
Farm & Ranch Coordinator

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Preservation Oklahoma's goal is to encourage the preservation of Oklahoma's historic places through advocacy, education and leadership.

As a member, you become a part of a vital network of individuals and organizations working to rebuild communities, strengthen neighborhoods, restore historic properties ... you become a part of Oklahoma's future.

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## Preservation loses a longtime leader

excerpted from *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Friday, August 20, 2004  
by Gayle Ronan Sims, *Inquirer* Staff Writer

*Charles E. Peterson, 97, an eloquent and indefatigable spokesman for old buildings and their builders, died of an aneurysm at Pennsylvania Hospital.*

Mr. Peterson, who had lived in Society Hill since purchasing two rowhouses on Spruce Street for \$8,000 each in 1954, is credited with shaping historic preservation in Philadelphia and around the country. He came to Philadelphia in the early 1950s as a National Park Service architect for Independence National Historical Park and wrote the first study for the restoration of Carpenters' and Library Halls.

While creating the design of Independence National Historical Park, he was engaged in constant preservation skirmishes, trying to save the graceful buildings erected during the Colonial and Federal eras. He prowled the alleys in the area bounded by Front, Eighth, Walnut and Lombard Streets while documenting historical structures for the National Park Service.

Mr. Peterson is credited with dubbing the area "Society Hill" after discovering that William Penn's real estate group, the Free Society of Traders, had set up shop in the area in the late 17th century.

Mr. Peterson's most far-reaching work came a few decades

earlier, when he had just begun working for the National Park Service. But shortly after he started work, the Park Service broadened its activities to include historic properties on the East Coast, and Mr. Peterson was reassigned.

Mr. Peterson would often say, "I wanted to work outdoors in the West, and I ended up working indoors in the East," his longtime assistant, Hilda Sanchez, said.

In 1931, Mr. Peterson, who considered himself a restorationist, saved the Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia, the site of the British surrender in the Revolution. He subsequently worked on historic properties from Massachusetts to the Virgin Islands. In 1933, he established the Historic American Buildings Survey, the first nationwide program of the National Park Service to document and preserve historic structures.

Mr. Peterson won many awards, including the Louise du Pont Corwinshield, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's highest honor, bestowed upon him in 1965.

For the last two years, Mr. Peterson — who never really retired — had been confined to his home and office on Spruce Street.

"Every day, he wore pajamas, a robe and, always, a hat," said Sanchez, his assistant for 35 years. Niece Karin Peterson purchased new pajamas and a robe for Mr. Peterson for a party planned for August 23, which would have been his 98th birthday.

# PRESERVATION OKLAHOMA

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