Oklahoma Historical Society



FY2025
Annual Report







Our mission is to collect, preserve, and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma and its people.

The Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) was founded in May 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association. The new organization's purpose was to collect newspapers chronicling Oklahoma Territory.

More than 130 years after its founding, the OHS continues to collect, preserve, and share through museums and exhibits, archival collections and research centers, online resources and print publications, historic preservation, and grant programs.

Offerings include artifacts, photographs, documents and records, oral histories, audio, film and video, educational programs, and events. Though our flagship location is in Oklahoma City, we maintain museums, historic homes, forts, and battlefields across the state.

In July 2024, the OHS adopted a new Strategic Plan, setting a path for the future. As we continue to grow and innovate, we remain committed to protecting our heritage for all Oklahomans.

Oklahoma Historical Society

DESTINATION: HISTORY
Above: The Sutler's Store at Fort Towson Historic Site in Fort Towson, Education Day at the Sod House Museum near Aline, and the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City

Agency Leadership



Trait Thompson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Karen Whitecotton
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Trait Thompson
Executive Director

Karen Whitecotton
Deputy Executive Director

Chantry Banks
Director of Museums and Historic Sites

Jessica Brogdon
Director of Communications

Nicole Harvey
Director of the Oklahoma History Center Museum

Gabby Hosek
Chief Financial Officer and Legislative Liaison

Tad Jones
Director of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum

Jacob Krumwiede
Director of OKPOP

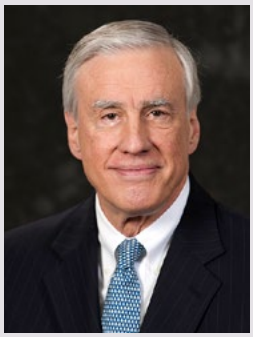
Lynda Ozan
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Dr. Matthew Pearce
State Historian

Angela Spindle
Director of Strategic Initiatives

Chad Williams
Director of Research

Board of Directors



Duke R. Ligon
PRESIDENT



Karen Keith
VICE-PRESIDENT



Donna Sharpe
TREASURER

T. S. Akers, Oklahoma City
Jack D. Baker, Oklahoma City
Randy L. Beutler, Weatherford
Michael Birdsong, Choctaw*
Cheryl Evans, Burlington*
Ken Fergeson, Altus*
Deena Fisher, Woodward
Billie Fogarty, Oklahoma City
Ann Hargis, Stillwater*
Karen Keith, Tulsa
Duke R. Ligon, Oklahoma City*
Patricia Loughlin, Stillwater
W. Carlisle Mabrey III, Tulsa*
Jonita Mullins, Muskogee
Shirley Ann Ballard Nero, Clearview*
Lindsay Robertson, Norman
Donna Sharpe, Checotah
David Sigmon, Bartlesville*
Kenneth Sivard, Idabel
Gregory R. Stidham, Checotah*
Kathy Taylor, Tulsa
Barbara Thompson, Oklahoma City
James R. Waldo, Oklahoma City*
Weldon Watson, Broken Arrow*
G. Harold Wright, Weatherford*

* appointed

The OHS is both an agency of the State of Oklahoma and a private membership organization governed by a 25-member Board of Directors. Twelve are appointed by the governor, and thirteen are elected by OHS members.



The Oklahoma Historical Society reached over 585,000 students, educators, history enthusiasts, and learners of all ages in FY2025.

$2,472,805
was contributed in donations, grants, memberships, and friends group support

$1,906,311
was generated in earned revenue

Although the Oklahoma Historical Society's operating appropriation is just 0.13% of the state's appropriated annual budget, we serve thousands of Oklahomans across the state.

VENTURING INTO THE PAST
Above: Visitors explore the Humphrey Heritage Village at the Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center in Enid.

Opposite page, left: Connecting with young guests at the Oklahoma History Center is just one of the many ways volunteers support the OHS mission. Right: The annual Chuck Wagon Gathering at The Chisholm in Kingfisher is a family favorite.

Connect with the Oklahoma Historical Society

6,382 members
supported the Oklahoma Historical Society

Our members enjoy free admission to museums and historic sites, special discounts, and subscriptions to *Mistletoe Leaves* bimonthly newsletter and *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* quarterly journal.

Visit okhistory.org/join to join or renew today!

144,041
followed @okhistory
on Facebook, X, and Instagram

Visit okhistory.org/social to discover even more ways to connect with the OHS on social media.

745 volunteers
contributed an incredible
25,293 hours
of volunteer service;
a monetary value of $879,943

16,136
subscribers to *EXTRA!*
weekly e-newsletter

Subscribe at okhistory.org/extra to receive email updates about upcoming events, new collections, and OHS programs and activities.





Historical Marker Survey

It's difficult to keep track of over 700 historical markers across Oklahoma! Some markers have been moved from their original location, while others have been damaged or may no longer exist. The OHS has undertaken a multi-year audit to document the location and condition of Oklahoma's historical markers. We have surveyed 248 markers since 2024. This work involves taking photographs, identifying the marker's material and sponsor, and updating our files and database. We also record latitude/longitude coordinates so that the public can more easily locate historical markers.

Visit okhistory.org/markers to get involved by alerting us to a marker that has been damaged or documenting a marker that is not in our database.

716
historical markers are included in our online database



OKLAHOMA'S FIRST TELEVISION STATION CHANNEL 4
The state's first television station launched on June 6, 1949, in Oklahoma City. In the 1950s, the station was the first in the nation to produce live from the field using a mobile unit, issued what is considered to be the first live on-air tornado warning, and began transmitting its own programs in color. Channel 4 has operated under the call signs WKY-TV, KTVY, and KFOR.

Dedicated in June 2025, this marker is located at 444 East Britton Road in Oklahoma City. It was sponsored by KFOR and the Oklahoma Historical Society.



COUNCIL GROVE
Located at 820 North MacArthur Boulevard in Oklahoma City, this marker recognizes a small piece of land with a lively history. Council Grove was the site of a trading post established by Jesse Chisholm, and the location of Johnson's Grove ranch, which became known as the first permanent settlement in present-day Oklahoma City. It was a meeting place for tribal nations, a source for wood to construct Fort Reno, and the location of a boomer camp. Parts of the 3.5-square-mile tract were opened to settlement in the 1889 land run; the remainder opened in 1899.

This marker was sponsored by the WesTen District and the Oklahoma Historical Society. It was dedicated in June 2025.

2025 Awards and Honors

Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame
Dr. Rachel Caroline Eaton (posthumous)
Carolyn G. Hanneman
Dr. Sarah Eppler Janda

Guardians of History
Senator Jo Anna Dossett
Representative John Pfeiffer

E. E. Dale Award for Outstanding Book on Oklahoma History
By the Fire We Carry: The Generations-Long Fight for Justice on Native Land, Rebecca Nagle (HarperCollins, 2024)

Linda Williams Reese Award for Outstanding Dissertation on Oklahoma History
"Indian Removal and the Native Nations of Northeast Oklahoma," Sheldon Yeakley, Oklahoma State University

Bruce T. Fisher Award for Outstanding Oklahoma History Project
"How did Oklahoma Become the Location of a Real-Life Lord of the Flies?," *How Curious* podcast, Rachel Hopkin, KGOU

Muriel H. Wright Award for Outstanding Article Published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*
"The Westmoreland Gang and the Outlaws of Keystone," (Winter 2024–25), Damon T. Cagle

William D. Pennington Award for Outstanding Social Studies Teacher
Lisa Burton, Keys Public Schools

Joseph B. Thoburn Award for Outstanding Student Historian
Kaylee Newman, Stilwell Public Schools

The Oklahoma Historical Society honors historians, educators, students, organizations, and legislators for their contributions relating to Oklahoma history.







Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame

The Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame recognizes distinguished and long-term contributions to the preservation, collection, interpretation, and dissemination of Oklahoma history. The 2025 inductees were author, editor, and archivist Carolyn G. Hanneman (left); author and professor Dr. Sarah Eppler Janda (center); and Cherokee educator and historian Dr. Rachel Caroline Eaton (right).



The Carlisle Arrow

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER EDITED AND PRINTED BY THE STUDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES INDIAN SCHOOL

VOLUME IX. CARLISLE, PA., DECEMBER 20, 1912. NUMBER 16

Carlisle Carries off High-Score Mark for 1912 Football Season

The Indians Conceded to Have Had One of the Very Strongest Teams Shown This Season—Sketches of the Individual P ers.

ON LAST Thanksgiving Day, when Carlisle overwhelmed Brown, 32-6, at Providence, R.I., the Indians closed probably the most successful football season in the history of the school. Only one game was lost, and that defeat was largely a gift to Pennsylvania by Dame Fortune, as it was generally recognized that Carlisle had the stronger team. Carlisle played more hard games than any other team, scored more points than any other team, and received more credit for having the most highly developed system of any other team. Only the Indian characteristic of being careless prevented an unbroken string of victories. More creditable, however, than the team's long string of victories has been the reputation the team has made for clean playing and sportsmanlike conduct while on and off the field, and it is a pleasure also to record that there has not appeared in any publication a word of criticism upon the making-up of the team nor of the eligibility of any of the players. The school can well feel proud of the fact that there was ground for absolutely no criticism along those lines. The team owes its success to the efficient coaching of Mr. Warner, to the able leadership of Captain Thorpe, and to the excellent spirit of cooperation which existed among the players, all of whom worked for the team's success rather than for individual glory. Another great help in the development of the team was the good work of the scrub team, under the able coaching of Mr. Lonestar Dietz, who made them a much stronger aggregation than usual, thus giving the first team good, hard practice in the daily scrimmages. The members of the team who won their C's and contributed most to the success of the team were as follows:

Roy Large, left end, is of the Shoshone tribe of Wyoming. He is 19 years old, weighs 148 pounds, and is 5 ft. 8 in. tall. He graduated from the scrub team in 1910, was a substitute last year, and his gradual improvement landed him a place on the team as a regular this year. He did good work throughout the season and should make a good record for himself hereafter. Joseph Guyon, left tackle, is a Chippewa from Minnesota; is 20 years old, 5 ft. 10 in. tall, and weighs 178 pounds. He came to Carlisle last fall too late to join the football squad, so that this was his first year at the game. The New York *Herald* and the

Stories Shared Through Collections

A remarkable donation from Guthrie's Oklahoma Sports Heritage Museum will ensure our state's sports history continues to be preserved. The Oklahoma Sports Heritage Collection (2024.123) contains over 100 boxes of artifacts and archival materials, including photographs, equipment, memorabilia, documents, and artwork. These items tell the stories of legends and emerging athletes who carry on Oklahoma's rich sports tradition.

NEW TO THE COLLECTION
This 1912 Carlisle Indian Industrial School newsletter recounts the talents of a young Jim Thorpe (Sac and Fox Nation), captain of their football team. Thorpe also excelled at baseball and track, and won Olympic gold in the 1912 decathlon and pentathlon events. He has been called the greatest athlete of the 20th century.

Visit the Oklahoma History Center Museum to see select items featured in the *Oklahoma Sports Heroes* exhibit.



NEW TO THE COLLECTION
These cleats were worn by renowned pitcher Allie Reynolds (Muscogee Nation). Born in Bethany, Reynolds pitched for the Cleveland Indians and the New York Yankees, and his fastball helped the Yankees secure six World Series titles. The cleats still carry dirt from historic Yankee Stadium.



NEW TO THE COLLECTION
Baseball cards, the quintessential sports collectible, show superstar Mickey Mantle at bat. The "Commerce Comet" led the New York Yankees to seven World Series titles thanks to his speed and mastery as a switch-hitter.



NEW TO THE COLLECTION
Images by Sayre photographer Grant Hosmer capture the history of Native Americans and the Sayre area (2025.026, Christopher Rouser Collection). Hosmer's studio operated from 1910 to around 1940, and his wife Juanita ran a millinery shop out of the location.

5,700 manuscript collections include correspondence, records, journals, and other materials documenting the history of Oklahoma's people and organizations

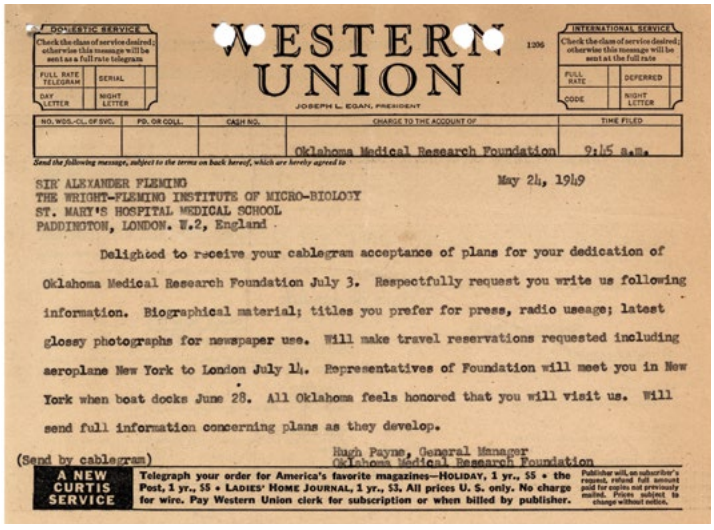
11 million
photographs preserved

Documenting Medical Innovation

A significant donation from the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) includes materials relating to the history of OMRF and medical research in Oklahoma. Founded in 1942, OMRF is an independent biomedical research organization. An OHS Research Center exhibit featured highlights from the collection, and digitization efforts are underway. This project was made possible by a grant from The Puterbaugh Foundation.

4,140
newspaper titles preserved

HISTORICAL COMMUNICATIONS
This 1949 telegram was sent to Sir Alexander Fleming, the Scottish scientist known for discovering penicillin (2024.058). The communication solidified plans for Fleming to dedicate OMRF's first building. That facility's construction was made possible through grassroots fundraising by physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, farmers, and volunteers, and it launched a new era of medical research in the state.



DOMESTIC SERVICE — Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent as a full rate telegram. FULL RATE TELEGRAM · SERIAL · DAY LETTER · NIGHT LETTER

WESTERN UNION

JOSEPH L. EGAN, PRESIDENT

1206

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE — Check the class of service desired; otherwise this message will be sent at the full rate. FULL RATE · DEFERRED · CODE · NIGHT LETTER

NO. WDS.-CL. OF SVC.	PD. OR COLL.	CASH NO.	CHARGE TO THE ACCOUNT OF	TIME FILED
			Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation	9:45 a.m.

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

May 24, 1949

SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING
THE WRIGHT-FLEMING INSTITUTE OF MICRO-BIOLOGY
ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL
PADDINGTON, LONDON. W.2, England

Delighted to receive your cablegram acceptance of plans for your dedication of Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation July 3. Respectfully request you write us following information. Biographical material; titles you prefer for press, radio useage; latest glossy photographs for newspaper use. Will make travel reservations requested including aeroplane New York to London July 14. Representatives of Foundation will meet you in New York when boat docks June 28. All Oklahoma feels honored that you will visit us. Will send full information concerning plans as they develop.

(Send by cablegram)

Hugh Payne, General Manager
Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation

A NEW CURTIS SERVICE — Telegraph your order for America's favorite magazines—HOLIDAY, 1 yr., $5 • the Post, 1 yr., $5 • LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, 1 yr., $3. All prices U. S. only. No charge for wire. Pay Western Union clerk for subscription or when billed by publisher.

Publisher will, on subscriber's request, refund full amount paid for copies not previously mailed. Prices subject to change without notice.



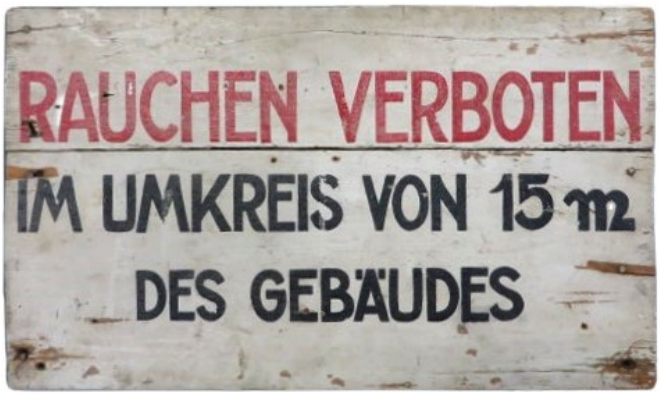
NEW TO THE COLLECTION
From group portraits and aerial views to Christmas greetings and horse shows, the Erma Jean Eason Collection (2024.157) documents 1940s Fort Reno. Horses were a significant part of the fort's history. From 1908 to 1948, it was one of only three Army Quartermaster Remount Stations, raising thousands of horses and mules for military use. Polo matches, horse shows, and horse races were popular activities for both visitors and those on base.

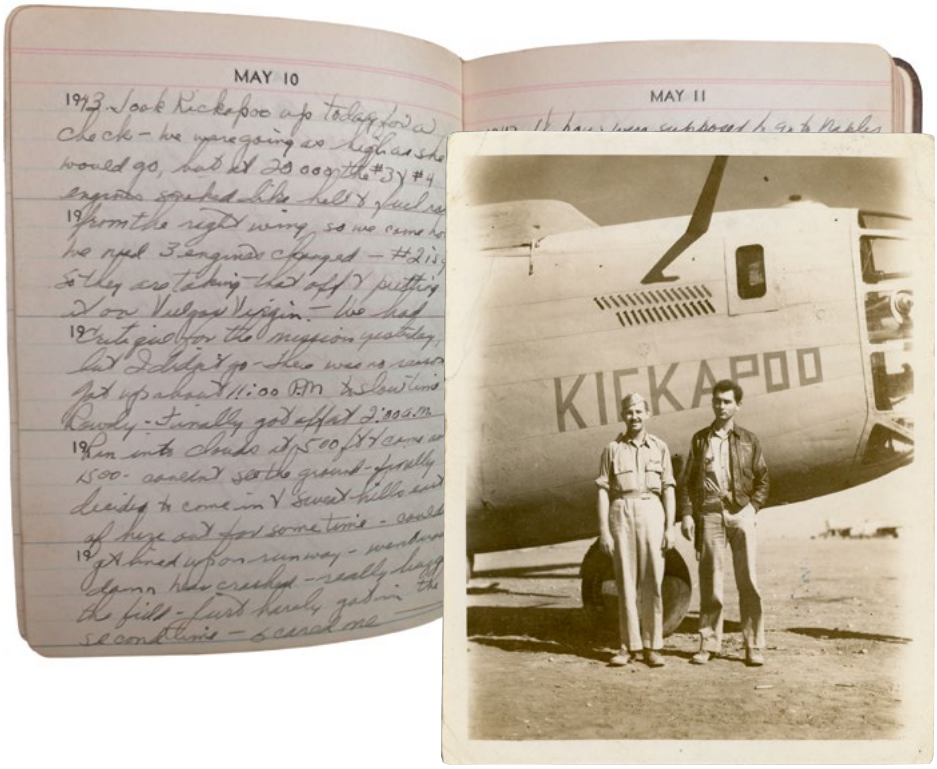
199,529
artifacts preserved

4,075
research inquiries answered from students, educators, scholars, family historians, and researchers

86,600
bound volumes are available in the Research Center

NEW TO THE COLLECTION
This wooden sign is a piece of World War II history from Camp Tonkawa in Kay County. The camp opened in 1943 and housed approximately 3,000 German prisoners of war. The sign's German message translates to "No smoking within 15 meters of this building" (2025.005).





NEW TO THE COLLECTION

The Paula Denson Collection chronicles the story of First Lieutenant Robert J. Nespor of Ponca City and his family. Nespor was a decorated pilot who served in World War II. In 1943, Nespor, his copilot, and most of his crew lost their lives in Libya on board the B-24D Kickapoo—the first casualties of Operation Tidal Wave.

Diaries, photographs, letters to and from home, communications from the government, as well as Nespor's Air Medal, Purple Heart, and service pins are part of this important collection (2024.134).

12,000
oral histories with over 2,300 on YouTube @OHSAudioArchives

1,100
film and video collections and more than 1,400 videos on YouTube @OHSfilm



COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT

A 1988 oral history with Sergeant Jake McNiece of Maysville is the most viewed video on our Audio Archives YouTube channel. Listen as he shares about the Great Depression, working as a fireman, and serving as a paratrooper in World War II.

During the war, McNiece led a demolition unit known as the Filthy Thirteen, whose exploits were inspiration for the 1967 classic *The Dirty Dozen* (1988.025, Oklahoma Historical Society Oral History Collection).

NEW TO THE COLLECTION

This Jack of the United States flew on the USS *Oklahoma City* (2024.112.002). Known as "the Okie Boat," the *Oklahoma City* was a light cruiser commissioned in 1942. It served in Japanese waters during World War II and saw use as a guided-missile cruiser during the 1950s.

In the 1960–1970s the ship patrolled the Pacific, participating in multiple operations and later assisting with evacuation of Vietnamese refugees. The USS *Oklahoma City* was decommissioned in 1979.





PAGEANT HISTORY
Jane Jayroe Gamble of Laverne donated this vintage gown, sticker, and other pieces relating to her pageant days and USO tour (2024.119). Gamble was crowned Miss America 1967, and her time with US troops in Vietnam made her the first Miss America to visit a combat zone. She went on to work as a TV news anchor and was appointed secretary of tourism and recreation by Governor Frank Keating.



CALLING DICK TRACY
Now at OKPOP, this two-way wrist radio prop was created for the 1990 film *Dick Tracy*. The iconic detective first appeared in the 1931 comic strip created by Chester Gould of Pawnee. Over the decades, a radio serial, comic books, TV series, and films followed the adventures of the crime-fighter and his unique gadgets.

1,130 new collections were added in FY2025

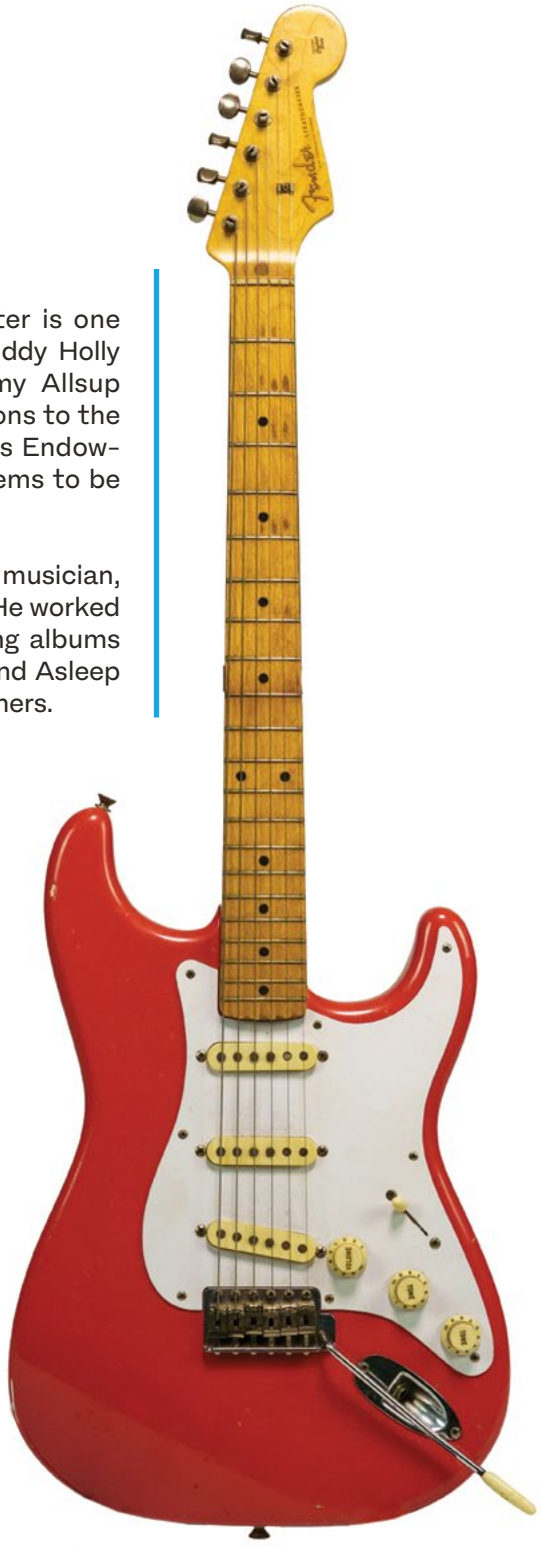
BLUEGRASS MASTER
This fiddle played by celebrated bluegrass musician Byron Berline was donated to OKPOP by his family.

During his prolific career, Berline performed with Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones, Elton John, Willie Nelson, The Eagles, Norman's own Vince Gill, and recorded with countless others.





LET'S HAVE A PARTY
A new collection of nearly 100 hand-painted posters and promotional materials from Cain's Ballroom includes this advertisement for music star Wanda Jackson of Maud. Dating from the 1940s to the 1960s, these signs now have a home at OKPOP (Larry Schaeffer Collection).



THE MUSIC LIVES ON
This 1958 Fender Stratocaster is one of two given by Fender to Buddy Holly and his lead guitarist, Tommy Allsup (2025.025). Thanks to donations to the Dr. Bob Blackburn Collections Endowment, it is now part of the items to be shared at OKPOP.

Allsup was a record producer, musician, and prolific session guitarist. He worked for Liberty Records, producing albums for Willie Nelson, Bob Wills, and Asleep at the Wheel, among many others.



THESE ARE THE COMICS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
Archie Goodwin was a prominent comic book writer, editor, and artist who worked for Marvel, DC Comics, and Epic Comics from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Among the artifacts in his extensive collection of over 3,000 pieces is the first issue of Marvel's *Star Wars* comic, for which Goodwin served as both writer and editor (2024.142).



TAKE IT AWAY, LEON

Now preserved by OKPOP, this 1955 Fender Quad-neck Stringmaster steel guitar was played by celebrated western swing guitarist Leon McAuliffe. McAuliffe joined Bob Wills in 1935 and played with the Texas Playboys until World War II. Later, McAuliffe led his own band called the Cimarron Boys.

This instrument is a custom color McAuliffe called "Cimarron red." One of several guitars he used during his career, this Stringmaster marked the beginning of McAuliffe's endorsement with Fender.



OKLAHOMA'S FAVORITE SON MEETS AMERICA'S FAVORITE MOUSE

The Will Rogers Memorial Museum in Claremore expanded their collection of sketches from the 1933 Disney cartoon *Mickey's Gala Premier* [*sic*]. The short features Hollywood elite at the premiere of Mickey's new film. Will Rogers lassos Mickey, pulling him to the stage to receive his congratulations and applause.



THE ART OF HISTORY

Oklahoma sculptor Paul Moore donated multiple items documenting his incredible art, including this bronze maquette depicting the 1901 auction of Lawton townsites (2024.140.001). The full-size sculpture can be seen in Lawton.

The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture

With more than 2,600 entries available for free online, the encyclopedia reveals the history of Oklahoma's events, people, places, cultures, and communities. Search entries by keyword, or browse by topic or time period. **Visit the encyclopedia at okhistory.org/enc to start your journey.**

Who are you reading about?

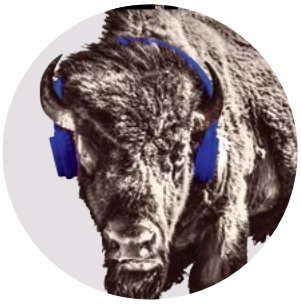
In FY2025, our most popular entries about people included tribal and civic leaders, creatives, outlaws, lawmen, and sports legends:

- Geronimo
- Bass Reeves
- John Ross
- S. E. Hinton
- Jim Thorpe
- "Pretty Boy" Floyd
- Merle Haggard
- Brad Pitt
- Montford T. Johnson
- The Selmon Brothers
- Clara Luper
- Wilson Rawls
- Mickey Mantle
- Belle Starr
- Will Rogers
- Sequoyah
- Reba McIntire
- Markwayne Mullin
- Barry Sanders
- William Boyd

2,676 entries are available at okhistory.org/enc



Chiricahua Apache leader Geronimo was the encyclopedia's most read about person in FY2025 (19587.1, Frank N. Harris Collection).



A Very OK Podcast

Listen in as OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson, Dr. Bob Blackburn, and guests explore a new topic each month. Recent episodes include the California Road, our state flag, Choctaw Code Talkers, Seminole history, and rock star Jesse Ed Davis. Check out *A Very OK Podcast* at okhistory.org/avokp or wherever you find podcasts.

12,480
podcast downloads in FY2025



Discover okhistory.org

The Oklahoma Historical Society's website offers resources for educators, genealogists, preservationists, researchers, and learners of all ages. While you're there, plan your visit to one of our museums or historic sites, and support the OHS by becoming a member!

6.6 million
pageviews on okhistory.org in FY2025



NOW AVAILABLE ON THE GATEWAY
Photographs by William J. Lenny and William L. Sawyers, who operated a studio in Purcell, Indian Territory, are now on The Gateway. Dating from 1889 to 1891, these images are part of the Joe and Frances Swallwell Collection. Shown here is Red Store in Fort Sill, Indian Territory (2616.030.51).

The Gateway to Oklahoma History

1,281,671
items available at gateway.okhistory.org

114,617
items were added in FY2025

The Gateway to Oklahoma History is your free online portal to historic photographs, newspapers, documents, maps, and more.



NOW AVAILABLE ON THE GATEWAY
Wichita interpreter Cora Carruth (Joe and Frances Swall-well Collection, 2616.030.31).

The Gateway to Oklahoma History also offers access to historical collections of more than 30 Oklahoma Historical Society partners.

Partners welcomed in FY2025:
Hunter's Home
International Pentecostal Holiness Church Archives
Oklahoma History Center Museum
Old Greer County Museum & Hall of Fame Inc.
Tryon Public Library


The Edmond Sun-Democrat.
PRESIDENT McKINLEY AND HIS CABINET.

NOW AVAILABLE ON THE GATEWAY
Thousands of issues of *The Edmond Sun* (and its associated titles) have been added to the newspaper's collection on The Gateway. Search and read more than 8,000 issues dating from 1892 to 2010.

More than 200 issues of the *Oklahoma Chinese News* are now online. Published monthly from 2001 to 2020, this title is the first Chinese-language newspaper on The Gateway.



Recent additions to The Gateway include issues of:

The Ardmore Statesman
The Bennington Tribune
The Berlin Venture
The Bixby Bulletin
The Collinsville News
The Collinsville News-Star
The Cushing Citizen
The Daily Ardmoreite
The Drumright Journal
Durant Daily Democrat
The Edmond Evening Sun
Edmond Sunday
The Eldorado Courier
The Greer County News
The Hitchcock Clarion
The Hobart Democrat-Chief
Kiowa County Democrat
The Lawton Constitution
Lawton Morning Press
The Norman Transcript
Nowata Daily Star
The Oklahoma Times-Journal
The Sayre Headlight
The Sayre Venture
Shawnee News-Star
Stroud American
Tulsa Daily Legal News



Oklahoma History Center Museum

Accreditation

In 2024, the Oklahoma History Center Museum in Oklahoma City again received accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, governments, funders, outside agencies, and the public. The museum was first accredited in 2014. To maintain accredited status, museums must undergo a review at least every 10 years.

Of the nation's estimated 33,000 museums, about 1,100 are accredited, and the Oklahoma History Center Museum is one of only 14 accredited museums in Oklahoma.

Museums for All

The Oklahoma History Center Museum is now part of the Museums for All initiative, which allows individuals with EBT cards, Oklahoma Fosters, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Oklahoma to visit the museum for a discounted rate. Museums for All is an initiative of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Learning and Engagement

Through field trips, living history, Oklahoma National History Day, outreach programs, and online resources, the Oklahoma History Center Museum sparks curiosity in learners. We support educators with free standards-based resource guides, lesson plans, hands-on learning materials, and professional development opportunities.

Visit okhistory.org/resources to start exploring.

15,624
served through
outreach programs

9,356
served through
in-house programs

Traveling Trunks

Hands-on trunks take learning to a new level for Oklahoma students. Each trunk includes artifacts students can interact with, lesson plans, activities, and books. Students gain insight into history and develop closer connections to the subject matter through these interactive resources. Trunks cover 27 topics, including migration (pictured here), pioneer life, space exploration, Oklahoma symbols, agriculture, the Civil War, the Dust Bowl and Great Depression, cowboys, oil and gas, and archaeology.

These engaging resources are available to teachers and librarians at no cost, thanks to the BancFirst Charitable Foundation.

23,286 served in FY2025 through the Traveling Trunk program

EDUCATOR FEEDBACK
"My students talk about the trunks we got all the time! They loved this experience and it made Social Studies learning so much more fun and engaging for them."



Oklahoma National History Day

Oklahoma National History Day is a learning opportunity for students in grades 6–12. Through research and analysis of source materials, they learn new skills and dig deep into history. Students showcase their work in a group or individual project in one of five formats: exhibits, performances, papers, documentaries, and websites.

School and regional contests are held in the spring. Each May, students from across Oklahoma compete in the state finals at the Oklahoma History Center.

In June 2025, Oklahoma was represented by 58 students and 18 teachers at the national contest in Washington, DC.

9,663 served in FY2025 through the Oklahoma National History Day program and events



Museums and Historic Sites

Atoka Museum and Civil War Cemetery, Atoka*
Cabin Creek Battlefield, Big Cabin
Cherokee Strip Museum and Rose Hill School, Perry*
Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center, Enid
The Chisholm, Kingfisher*
Fort Gibson Historic Site, Fort Gibson
Fort Supply Historic Site, Fort Supply*
Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson
Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy
Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion, Oklahoma City*
Honey Springs Battlefield, Checotah
Hunter's Home, Park Hill
Museum of the Western Prairie, Altus
Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma City
Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, Clinton
Oklahoma State Capitol Museum, Oklahoma City*
Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library, Guthrie
OKPOP Museum, Tulsa (under development)
Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, Pawnee
Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue, Ponca City
Sod House Museum, Aline
Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, Spiro
Tom Mix Museum, Dewey*
White Hair Memorial, Hominy
Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore

*affiliate

Journey through history at Oklahoma Historical Society museums, historic homes, forts, and battlefields across the state.

Sod House Turns 130

In December 2024, the Sod House Museum near Aline celebrated the 130th anniversary of Oklahoma's only remaining sod house built by a homesteader. Preserved inside the Sod House Museum, the furnished home offers a window into the life of early homesteaders.

In 1894 Marshal McCully built his "soddy," where he and his family lived until 1909. Sod houses were a practical option for those settling in areas with little timber. McCully's structure used blocks of buffalo grass for walls and plastered the interior with alkali clay. The roof was made of wooden poles topped with a foot of sod.



Fort Gibson Historic Hospital Opens to Visitors

In November 2024, the hospital at Fort Gibson Historic Site reopened to the public following a multi-phase renovation. Gallery spaces tell the story of the fort's medical staff, the illnesses that afflicted soldiers, and the treatments used to care for them. An orientation area and gift shop are also located in the historic building.

Originally constructed in the 1870s at a cost of $12,000, the hospital included offices, a dispensary, surgery, and a ward with 12 beds. It was the fourth hospital constructed to treat post personnel. The 1870s structure was an improvement over previous hospitals on base, designed with airy verandas encircling the building that brought fresh air and sunshine to recovering patients.

In later years, the hospital served as a weather station and a place of observation for the Signal Service. Today, while observations from the top of the building are no longer made, visitors can enjoy the view from the covered porches and open ward.

Located at 803 North Garrison Avenue in Fort Gibson, the hospital is just one of the historic structures visitors can explore at the site. Fort Gibson Historic Site is a National Historic Landmark.



REVITALIZED HISTORY
The hospital was a private residence for decades before the Oklahoma Historical Society acquired it in the 1980s. The first phase of rehabilitation was completed in 2017 and addressed the building's roof and structural integrity. The historic hospital now shares the story of Fort Gibson.



PRESERVATION HIGHLIGHT
Prairie House in Norman was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2024. Designed by Herb Greene for himself and his family, the home was completed in 1961. This distinctive structure is recognized as an exemplary work of organic architecture.

State Historic Preservation Office

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) works with citizens and groups throughout the state to identify, evaluate, and protect Oklahoma's diverse range of historic, architectural, and archaeological resources.

3,476
consultations and technical assistance requests answered

11,112
properties were evaluated for the presence of significant archaeological and/or historic resources in FY2025

Certified Local Governments

Certified Local Governments that enforce historic preservation ordinances and meet SHPO requirements are delegated certain responsibilities. These communities receive federal matching funds for the development of their local preservation program, and participate in the National Register of Historic Places nomination process.

City of Anadarko
City of Ardmore
City of Enid
City of Guthrie
City of Muskogee
City of Norman
City of Oklahoma City
City of Ponca City
City of Sapulpa
City of Tulsa

Oklahoma Centennial Farm & Ranch Program

Since 1989 the Oklahoma Centennial Farm & Ranch Program has recognized Oklahoma families who have continuously occupied their land for at least 100 years and carry out farming or ranching operations.

35 properties added

1,919 total properties recognized



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT
State Historic Preservation Office staff visited the Kerr Family Centennial Farm in Noble County to document this historic 1893 dugout.



In FY2025, the State Historic Preservation Office received 11 new project applications for the state and federal rehabilitation tax credit. Above is the Trademan's National Bank Building at 101 North Broadway in Oklahoma City. This residential building was certified by the National Park Service on June 3, 2025.

Tax Credits

State and federal tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings encourage revitalization of historic districts and individual structures. The State Historic Preservation Office is the initial point of contact for applicants and participates in the review of proposed rehabilitation projects.

49
Historic Tax Credit projects reviewed



NEW TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER
The Rock House in Harrah is a 20th-century Tudor Revival–style home constructed with fieldstone. It was designed and built by Frank Primm for him and his wife, Lillian. Construction occurred in phases, beginning with the garage apartment in 1930, followed by the rock garden, retaining walls, and pool. The main house was completed in 1942.

The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is a catalog of the buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects significant in our past. Listing in the National Register provides recognition, limited protection, and, in some cases, financial incentives for these important properties. The SHPO identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for this special designation.

1,437
Oklahoma districts, buildings, sites, and structures are included in the National Register of Historic Places

Section 106

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act stipulates that federal agencies must consider the effects of their undertakings on properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The SHPO assists federal agencies or their recipients of funding, license, or permits to determine if significant archaeological or historic resources are located within the project area and, if so, whether the undertaking will impact those properties.

3,064
Section 106 projects were reviewed in FY2025

Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program

The Oklahoma Heritage Preservation Grant Program provides funding to historical organizations as well as local and tribal governments. Funding opportunities between $1,000 and $25,000 support organizations in improving collections care, creating exhibits, and launching meaningful programs and initiatives to protect and promote our state's heritage.

$577,655
awarded to 40 grantees in 34 communities in FY2025



FUNDING IMPACT
Left: The Rogers County Historical Society is working to preserve the 1944 Fiddle House at the Ed Galloway Totem Pole Park in Foyil. Grant funds will ensure a conservation of the murals and a proper environment to protect the art.

Below: Grant funding will provide equipment for the digitization of the Stillwater Fire Department Collection at the Stillwater Public Library. Once finished, the collection will be made available online.

Since its launch in 2020, this grants-in-aid program has funded more than 230 projects and awarded over $3 million in grants.



324 events

provided opportunities to see Oklahoma history come alive











Event Highlights

Commemorating 100 Years of the Oklahoma State Flag, Oklahoma History Center

Heritage Breed Poultry and Sheep workshop, Hunter's Home

History Alive! on the Cherokee Strip, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center

Saving the Sacred webinar series, State Historic Preservation Office

Living History Education Day, Fort Towson Historic Site

Oklahoma Folklife Festival, Oklahoma History Center

First Friday OKPOP-INs, OKPOP Museum

Parlor Jam at Horizon Hill, The Chisholm

Blacksmithing Demonstrations, Cherokee Strip Museum and Rose Hill School

The Oklahoma History Symposium, Oklahoma History Center

Holiday Open House, Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue

Battle of Honey Springs Memorial Service, Honey Springs Battlefield

Will's Wild West Kids Camp, Will Rogers Memorial Museum

Old Fort Days, Fort Gibson Historic Site

"Finding your Native Roots: the Dawes Rolls" webinar, State Historic Preservation Office

Summer Solstice Walks, Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center

Winter Bake Day and Gingerbread Decorating, Fort Gibson Historic Site

Overnight at the Museum Will Rogers Memorial Museum

Spring on the Farm, Hunter's Home

Quilting workshops, Sod House Museum

Doaksville Candlelight Tours, Fort Towson Historic Site

Juneteenth program: "Black Lawmen in Indian Territory," Oklahoma History Center

Kate Barnard 150th Anniversary Celebration, Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library

Nature Journaling class, Honey Springs Battlefield

Picnic in the Village, Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center

Pawnee Bill's Original Wild West Show, Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum

Oklahoma Route 66 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Oklahoma Route 66 Museum

Thank you to our supporters

$50,000+

Cherokee Nation Cultural and Economic Development, LLC
Inasmuch Foundation
Kirkpatrick Family Fund
Oklahoma Route 66 Commission
Oklahoma Sports Heritage Museum

$10,000+

George Records
BancFirst Charitable Foundation

$5,000+

John and Jane Crain
Karl and Melinda Kinley
Barbara Klein
Linda and Duke R. Ligon
David Morgan
Larry and Polly Nichols
Phil and Gail Roberts
Chickasaw Nation
Oklahoma Humanities
Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Lee Fund

$2,500+

Ann Felton Gilliland
Ken Fergeson
Virginia Hellwege
Kenyon Morgan
Linda B. Simonton and Tom Rueb
James R. Waldo
Carolyn Watson Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation
Raymond H. Jr. and Bonnie B. Hefner Family Fund

$1,000+

T. S. and Aeriel Akers
L. F. Amis
Bill and Karen Anderson
Glenn and Arlene Ashmore
Keith Bailey
Jack D. Baker
Beatrix Barr
Lona A. Barrick
Lee and Sherry Beasley
Randy L. Beutler
Emily Busey-Templeton
Samonia Byford
Bob Carpenter
Mickey and Debbie Clagg
Tiajuana Cochnauer
Catherine Cosner
Jerry and Nancy Cotton
Jim and Christy Everest
Col. Bruce Ewing and Jo Ewing
Sally Ferrell
James Finch
Deena and Tom Fisher
John Fischer
William B. French
Gerald and Jane Jayroe Gamble
Jim and Cherrie Hampton
Burns and Ann Hargis
Rick and Debe Hauschild
Cliff and Leslie Hudson
Charles and Sharon Johnson
Don and Carol Kaspereit
Frank and Cathy Keating
Karen Keith
Tom and Jamie Kilpatrick
Michael and Joan Korenblit
Steve and Julie LaFollette
Paul and Judy Lambert
Leonard M. Logan IV
W. Carlisle Mabrey III
Marva Madison
Susan and Press Mahaffey
Wes and Sandy Milbourn
Susan Paschall
Barbara A. Reuter
J. B. and Patti Saunders
Clyde H. Schoolfield Jr.
Logan and Donna Sharpe
Don and Nelda Shaw
Dixie Sheridan
David L. Sigmon
Greg Stevens
John Stinson
Dr. John Stuemky
Judge Ralph G. Thompson and Barbara Thompson
Weldon and Cheryle Watson
Charles “Chuck” Wiggin
Laurie Williams
Ann Boulton Young
Alan and Deborah Loeffler Stewardship Fund
Downing Holdings, Inc.
George Washington’s Mount Vernon
Lynn J. Bilodeau, PLLC
Mustang Fuel Corporation
The Peyton Family Foundation
The Puterbaugh Foundation
Richard James Family Foundation
Scaramucci Foundation
Western Trail Historical Society, Museum of the Western Prairie

This publication is issued by the Oklahoma Historical Society as authorized by Executive Director Trait Thompson and is located at okhistory.org. This publication has been submitted in compliance with Section 3-114 of Title 65 of the Oklahoma Statutes.



okhistory.org

Oklahoma Historical Society

800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-521-2491

ON THE COVER
Front: Interpreters share history at the Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum in Pawnee.

Above: This photograph of early Inola is part of additions to the Jeffers Family Collection (2012.098). The collection also includes 1950s films of the Wagoner area and recordings of the first phone calls placed by the Jeffers family.