OK | Preservation Advocate



Four Buildings by...Blaine Imel

Plus

Documenting and Preserving Native American Places: Resources

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On the Cover: Gillespie Drilling Company Building, Cushing, Payne County. Photo: OKSHPO

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Four Buildings by...Blaine Imel

Blaine Imel entered The University of Oklahoma (OU) after World War II as result of the G.I. Bill. While attending OU, Imel studied under Bruce Goff. As with architecture programs at any university, students at OU learned compositional design, technical drawing, and participated in studio classes. Architecture programs of the day did very little to prepare students for the urban environment; however, Goff gave careful attention to formal problems of buildings needing to fit their environment. This gave his students an advantage over other programs in the United States.

Imel set up a practice with Bob Buchner and Jack Welch in Tulsa. It is during this period that Imel was asked to design homes for Cushing residents. There were many professionally employed residents who could afford architect-designed houses, and they chose to honor an architect from their hometown. In Cushing, he designed eight houses and one office building.

In his work throughout Oklahoma, the influence of his mentor, architect Bruce Goff, is demonstrated. Many of Imel's buildings reflect the organic architecture movement for which Goff is most famous. The most obvious characteristic is the geometric pattern in his designs with large, open interior spaces. Blaine Imel has left a distinctive mark on the Oklahoma architectural landscape.

- 1. Gillespie Drilling Company Building, Cushing: Designed ca. 1954, this Organic style building stands out in a sea of traditional historic buildings in Cushing. The polygonal design was constructed with walls of wood, glass, and oil drilling remnants; oil pipes serve as gutters and ornamental details. The interior is a continuous open space that can be closed off with doors. (See front cover)
- 2. Osher House, Tulsa: Built in 1962, the Osher House is located in the Bolewood Estates neighborhood in midtown. The house construction uses stucco, stone, glass cutlets, and colorful windows and exhibits Imel's common theme of an open floor plan. Locally it has often been referred to as the "Flintstone House."



Osher House, Tulsa, Tulsa County

3. Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Cushing: Completed in 1957, the church is a majestic A-frame with distinctive religious designs: eaves that resemble a religious hat; and brick pilasters that resemble a pipe organ. The domed skylights provide a warming hue on the interior, along with the wood paneling along the A-frame roof. Other Organic elements can be found in the protruding baptismal font, wood beam candle holders, and angled altar railings and ornamental elements.





Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Cushing, Payne County. Photo: Google Maps Rupel Jones Theater, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Cleveland County. Photo: Debra Green

4. Rupel Jones Theater, The University of Oklahoma campus, Norman: Constructed in 1965, in the New Formalism style, the theater is an update on classical design. The block-like structure with a flat roof, features unadorned walls, slender, accentuated columns, and large spans of glass. This style is common for civic and commercial buildings.

Blaine Imel's work spans 49 years of practicing modern and organic architecture on the Oklahoma landscape. His buildings and design philosophy continue to intrigue and inspire architects, historians, and modern architecture aficionados.

Written by Lynda Ozan, OKSHPO

HISTORIC PRESERVTION REVIEW COMMITTEE 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is pleased to announce the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Review Committee's (HPRC) meeting schedule for the 2025 calendar year. The HPRC's 2025 meetings will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, April 17, July 17, and October 16. The meetings are open to the public and will be held in the LeRoy H. Fischer Boardroom at the Oklahoma History Center at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. Meeting agendas, log-in details, and NRHP nominations under consideration will be available at okhistory.org/shpo/hprc.

Upcoming nominations for consideration at the January 16, 2025, HPRC meeting will be:

- James Carl, Sr. and Lucille Johnson Family House, Lawton, Comanche County
- Langston Jail, Langston, Logan County
- Moton School Campus Historic District, Taft, Muskogee County
- Old Union Agency Cemetery, Muskogee, Muskogee County
- Robert J. LaFortune Tower, Tulsa, Tulsa County

DOCUMENTING AND PRESERVING NATIVE AMERICAN PLACES: RESOURCE LIST

The following list of organizations, museums and cultural centers, and resource links is intended to provide a place to begin looking for information about tribal histories and tribal heritages. We wish to emphasize that the best resources for information about a community, Tribe, and/or Nation's history and heritage will be the community, Tribes, and/or Nations themselves.

Much of this collection of resources has been drawn directly from the Preserving Native American Places Resource List produced by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in collaboration with the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.

Organizations:

National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO) - www.nathpo.org Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) - www.nativeartsandcultures.org National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) - www.ncai.org

Native American Rights Fund (NARF) - narf.org

National Park Service Tribal Historic Preservation Program - www.nps.gov/orgs/1460/index.htm Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Leaders Directory - www.bia.gov/bia/ois/tribal-leaders-directory Oklahoma SHPO's Tribal Governments & THPO Contacts - www.okhistory.org/shpo/tribal106



Hayman Hall, Chilocco Indian Agricultural School, Newkirk, Kay County. Photo: OKSHPO

Museums and Cultural Centers:

National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) - americanindian.si.edu

First Americans Museum (FAM) - famok.org

Chickasaw Cultural Center - www.chickasawculturalcenter.com

Cherokee Heritage Center - <u>www.cherokee.org/visit-us/cherokee-heritage-center</u>

 $Choctaw \ Cultural \ Center - \underline{choctaw cultural center.com}$

Seminole Nation Museum - <u>seminolenationmuseum.orq</u>

Wahzhazhe Cultural Center - <u>www.osaqeculture.com/culture/cultural-center</u>

Wichita Tribal History Center - wichitatribe.com/culture/wichita-tribal-history-center

Quapaw Nation Tribal Museum - www.quapawtribe.com/108/Tribal-Museum

Additional Resources:

NATHPO NAGPRA Advocacy - www.nathpo.org/nagpra-advocacy

NATHPO Best Practices in Historic Preservation - <u>www.nathpo.org/assets/pdf/NATHPO_Best_Practices_</u>

Native Knowledge 360 Education Initiative (NMAI) - <u>americanindian.si.edu/nk360</u> Digi Treaties - <u>digitreaties.org</u>

National Trust for Historic Preservation "As Long as the Grass Grows and the Rivers Run: Native American Treaties Today. A Conversation with Della Warrior and David S. Ferriero" - stories/as-long-as-the-grass-grows-and-the-rivers-run-native-american-treaties-today

US Department of the Interior Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative - www.doi.gov/priorities/strengthening-indian-country/federal-indian-boarding-school-initiative

National Park Service Indigenous history theme studies - www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/indigenousstudy.htm

 $\label{lem:complete_complete_complete} \begin{tabular}{l} Traditional Cultural Properties Bulletin 38 - $\underline{www.nps.gov/subjects/national register/upload/NRB38-} \\ \underline{Completeweb.pdf} \end{tabular}$

BOEM Guidance Document on Characterizing Tribal Cultural Landscapes - www.boem.gov/sites/ default/files/environmental-stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/BOEM-2015-047.pdf

NOAA's Tribal Cultural Landscapes - <u>sanctuaries.noaa.gov/tribal-landscapes</u>

Preserving Native American Places - <u>savingplaces.org/preserving-native-american-places-by-will-cook</u> Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Native American Policies - <u>www.achp.gov/indian-tribes-and-native-hawaiians/initiatives/achp-native-american-policies</u>

Practice Note on Tribal Cultural Heritage Laws (Cultural Heritage Partners) - www.culturalheritagepartners.com/chp-attorneys-publish-practice-note-on-tribal-cultural-and-historic-preservation

The Power of Place: Traditional Cultural Places in the 21st Century - <u>youtu.be/mMQ_zv0VdY</u> Supporting Descendants Who are Saving Their Historic Places - <u>youtu.be/g9DxwxDGevw</u> Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum: A Discussion with the Seminole Tribe - <u>youtu.be/KBhMoX_MgfY</u>

CASE STUDY: WHAT IF I FIND HUMAN REMAINS ON MY PROPERTY?

Tammy and Chris were in their yard tilling the soil to put in a vegetable garden when Tammy spotted something unusual in the turned earth. She called out to Chris to stop the tiller and together they took a closer look. Tammy thought it looked like a bone; she reached out to pick it up, but Chris told her to stop. He was worried that the bone might be human, and he was sure they should contact the authorities before doing anything else. Tammy took out her phone and called the local sheriff's office to report what they had found.

While they waited for the sheriff to arrive, Chris searched online to see what it might mean if someone had been buried on their property. He found that burials on private property are not uncommon in Oklahoma. He also discovered that Oklahoma State Statutes protected burials and burial grounds, whether ancient or modern, and regardless of who owned the land.

While he was searching, Chris found contact information for the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (OKSHPO) and called. Staff at the office confirmed he and Tammy had already taken the most important steps: stopping the ground disturbance and contacting law enforcement.

Chris shared his contact information and the property address with staff at the OKSHPO who noted the location and committed to reviewing their records for relevant information on the property.

When the sheriff arrived, he investigated the surrounding area and observed other, smaller skeletal materials that Tammy and Chris had not noticed in the disturbed soil. Using a quarter as a scale, he took careful photographs of the exposed bones and then worked with the anthropologist at the regional Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OME).

The anthropologist was able to confirm the bones were human by reviewing the photographs sent by the sheriff. Tammy and Chris covered the area with a tarp and agreed to leave it undisturbed while the OME tested the exposed bone. After their tests, the anthropologist was able to confirm the bone was old and not related to an ongoing criminal investigation.

After looking into their records, staff with the OKSHPO reached back out to Chris. Late nineteenth century maps indicated a cemetery on the property that neither Tammy nor Chris had known was there. Using historical documents, the OKSHPO was able to help Tammy and Chris find information about the earlier occupants of the property who were buried there.

The OKSHPO reached out to the Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS). OAS was able to send a group of archaeologists with precise mapping equipment and a ground penetrating radar (GPR) – a machine that looked

and moved a lot like a lawnmower – to look for evidence of burials without disturbing the ground. The results of their GPR survey showed four anomalies consistent with burials. The archaeologists helped Tammy and Chris to mark off an area around the likely burials so the cemetery could be protected and preserved.

The OKSHPO helped Tammy and Chris to record this cemetery in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory (OLI). Knowing they did not want to disturb the burials of these earlier occupants, Tammy and Chris chose a new location for their vegetable garden on a different part of the



Ground penetrating radar (GPR). Photo: OKSHPO

property. They were relieved that they had taken quick action and avoided unknowingly doing greater damage to a cemetery, and they were gratified to have learned more about the larger history of their property.

What to do if you think you have discovered human remains:

- 1. Contact local law enforcement immediately and report what you have found.
- 2. Do not move or handle the remains.
- 3. Stop all digging/construction/ground disturbing activities immediately.
- 4. Contact the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (405-521-6249) and/or the Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS; 405-325-7211) as soon as possible.

Find more information about cemeteries and State Statutes protecting cemeteries and burials in OKSHPO Fact Sheet 9: www.okhistory.org/shpo/docs/fs9cem.pdf

Regional office contacts (OKC and Tulsa) for the Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner can be found here: oklahoma.gov/ocme.html

MID CENTURY MODERN UPDATE



Price Tower, Bartlesville

Currently the Frank Lloyd Wright Conservancy is fighting to defend the easement on the property. The building is currently closed. It has been placed on the auction block numerous times, but no auction has taken place. The Conservancy is working to ensure that the easement protections are enforced through the auction process, for both the building and its collection.

**Preservation easements are a conservation easement that projects properties that have historic, architectural or archaeological significance and can be used to preserve important natural land values that comprise the setting of the historic resource.

Price Tower, Bartlesville, Washington County. Photo: OKSHPO

Gold Dome (Citizens State Bank), Oklahoma City

The Gold Dome has a new owner that intends to convert the building into a concert venue. Over a 20 month period, the ownership (TempleLive and then Kismet Koncerts) worked with the SHPO and NPS in pursing tax credits. As their plans did not work with the tax credit program, they will be seeking other forms of funding that will allow them to add outdoor decks and needed renovations to accommodate the conversion.



Gold Dome (Citizens State Bank), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County. Photo: Loopnet

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, presents its 2025 calendar of events. There are no registration fees unless noted. All events will take place virtually, unless otherwise stated. For more information call 405-521-6249 or visit www.okhistory.org/shpo/events. Note: If you have a disability and need an accommodation, call 405-521-6249 at least two (2) days before the event.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES: Many of these programs meet the requirements for HSW hours/ State of Oklahoma's Board of Governors of Licensed Architects, Landscape Architects, and Interior Designers, and for PDH hours/Oklahoma State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. The SHPO will email certificates of attendance after the event upon request, and participants self-report or document their attendance per policies of the respective boards.

Please check our website for updates. www.okhistory.org/shpo/events SHPO Lunch & Learns are virtual only. Register online at www.okhistory.org/shpo/lunch-and-learns Themed Webinars are virtual only. Register online at www.okhistory.org/shpo/webinars

JANUARY 2025

- 1 SHPO Closed
- Historic Preservation Review Committee Meeting (1:30 p.m./Dr. Leroy H. Fischer Boardroom, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City; virtually via Teams)
- 20 SHPO Closed
- 21 SHPO Lunch and Learn: Care Before It's Gone (Unveiling the new SHPO State Plan) with Shea Otley and Lynda Ozan (12 p.m.)

FEBRUARY 2025

- 17 SHPO Closed
- 19 SHPO Lunch and Learn: Finding your Native Roots, the Dawes Rolls with Laura Martin (12 p.m.)
- Saving the Sacred: "Preserving America's-Stained Glass: Unveiling Challenges, Myths and Pathways to Sustainability" Megan McElfresh, Executive Director, The Stained Glass Association of America (2 p.m.)

MARCH 2025

25 SHPO Lunch and Learn: Helium Project, Texas to Kansas with Victoria Green Clow and Stantec (12 p.m.)

APRIL 2025

- TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial with Hans and Torrey Butzer (12 p.m.)
- Historic Preservation Review Committee Meeting (1:30 p.m./Dr. Leroy H. Fischer Boardroom, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City; virtually via Teams)
- Saving the Sacred: "Albatross or Asset: Adaptive Reuse of Sacred Places" Rochelle Stackhouse, Partners for Sacred Places (2 p.m.)

MAY 2025

Registration for all Workshops: www.okhistory.org/shpo/workshops

- 4 Oklahoma History Symposium: Oklahoma in Context (Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City)
- 13 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (10 a.m. 11 a.m.)
- 14 National Register of Historic Places Overview (10 a.m. 11 a.m.)
- 15 Best Submittal Practices: Section 106 & NRHP (10 a.m.-11 a.m.)
- 16 The Historic Preservation Tax Credit: A Case Study (10 a.m. 11 a.m.)
- 26 SHPO Closed

JUNE 2025

TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: The Secrets of the Sanborn Maps with Mike Kertok (12 p.m.)

JULY 2025

4 SHPO Closed

TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: NTHP Grant funding with Diana Maxwell and Nicole Vann (12 p.m.)

Historic Preservation Review Committee Meeting (1:30 p.m./Dr. Leroy H. Fischer Boardroom, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City; virtually via Teams)

AUGUST 2025

TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: The Battle of Turkey Springs with Gerry Robinson (12 p.m.)

SEPTEMBER 2025

1 SHPO Closed

TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: Lidar Technology with Jacob Bushong (12 p.m.)

OCTOBER 2025

Historic Preservation Review Committee Meeting (1:30 p.m./Dr. Leroy H. Fischer Boardroom, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City; virtually via Teams)

TBD SHPO Lunch and Learn: Historic Overlay Zoning: what is it and how does it work? With Kathryn Friddle and Felicity Good (12 p.m.)

NOVEMBER 2025 Registration for all workshops: www.okhistory.org/shpo/workshops

11 SHPO Closed

TBD Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

TBD Tax Credit: Overview

TBD National Register of Historic Places: Overview

27 SHPO Closed

28 SHPO Closed

DECEMBER 2025

24 SHPO Closed

25 SHPO Closed









L to R, clockwise: Tulsa Club Building, Atlas Life Building, Mayo Hotel, Atlas Statue/Atlas Life Building, City Hall/aloft. Tulsa, Oklahoma.

ADAPTIVE REUSE: FROM HISTORIC TO HOTEL

For the historically minded traveler, the opportunity to stay in a hotel that once had a different use can be an enjoyable experience. These buildings, perhaps once slated for demolition, are often excellent examples of adaptive reuse. The State Historic Preservation Office has selected examples across Oklahoma for your traveling pleasure. This issue will cover four buildings in Tulsa (photos on previous page).

City Hall, 200 Civic Center, Tulsa

Tulsa's City Hall Tower is located within the boundaries of the Tulsa Civic Center Historic District. Built ca. 1969 and designed by the firm Murray Jones Murray, the historically civic-oriented building reflects the Mid Century Modern Miesian aesthetics.

Planning for the Tulsa Civic Center Historic District began in the 1920s and was completed in 1969. The buildings in this complex were highly esteemed by the public, and they represent a public paradigm that celebrated the value of monumental civic buildings and exemplified modernist usage of space.

The building sat vacant for many years after the city relocated to their current facility. Thanks to TOCH, LLC and Starwood Hotels and Resorts, the 11-story structure is now the Aloft Tulsa Downtown Hotel. With 184 rooms adjusted to an existing building, room sizes vary. The top floor, which once served as the Mayor's Office, has been converted into suites with full kitchens. As the developers utilized historic tax credits, the floors, ceilings, marble walls, and exterior could not be altered. This building is a defining landmark on the Tulsa skyline.

Mayo Hotel, 115 West 5th, Tulsa

The Mayo Hotel is located in Tulsa's central business district. Built in 1925 for the Tulsa brothers John D. and Cass A. Mayo, George Winkler designed a 19-story building in the Art Deco style. The building boasts a base of two-story Doric columns with a terra cotta façade accentuated by stone etchings. The 600-room hotel featured modern amenities of the day including ceiling fans and Tulsa's first running ice water.

Upon opening, the hotel became the social hub of high society. With its champagne brunches and martini lunches, it was the place to see and be seen. The hotel closed in 1981 and fell into disrepair over the next 30 years.

The Snyder family purchased the building in 2001 and started the delicate operation of restoring the building to its former glory. Utilizing historic tax credits, the Mayo Hotel reopened the doors in 2009. The luxury hotel offers 102 guest rooms, 76 private residences, and a rental venue. The Mayo Hotel has returned to the status of "the place to see and be seen."

Tulsa Club Building, 115 East 5th, Tulsa

The Tulsa Club Building is located within the boundaries of the Oil Capital Historic District. Both George Winkler and Bruce Goff are credited with the design of the 1927 Art Deco Building. The building served as an urban escape for high society and accommodated the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce. Members enjoyed ornate, mosaic fireplaces, indoor recreation and the grand ballroom on the 9th floor.

The club dissolved in 1994 which resulted in the building changing hands numerous times. In 2010, the city repossessed the building. Regrettably, many random fires occurred throughout the years causing extensive damage to the interior.

Under new ownership, the building was converted, with the help of historic tax credits, into a 96-room boutique hotel. Located in Tulsa's Art Deco district, it is a grand example of the Art Deco style building with a new, exciting purpose.

Atlas Life Building, 415 South Boston Ave, Tulsa

The Atlas Life Building is a historic 12-story building in downtown Tulsa, Oklahoma. Designed by the firm Rush, Endacott and Rush, the building was completed in 1922 for the Atlas Life Insurance Company in the Art Deco style. The company's logo incorporated a figure of Atlas, a Titan of ancient Greek mythology, carrying the world on his back. A statue representing this is on top of the building facade. The company remained in business at this location until it was sold in 1991.

The building was purchased and adaptively converted into a 119-room hotel with a restaurant, fitness center, and other amenities. Both the lobby and the 7th floor of the hotel have been preserved in the original 1920's appearance while the remainder of the hotel has modern conveniences. Stop by to check out the original Atlas clock, elaborate ceiling and crown moldings, and marble floors that Tulsans have walked on for a century.

Come back in April to hear about the conversions to hotels in downtown Oklahoma City.

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL GRANT DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 15, 2025

The purpose of the Civil Rights Trail Grant is to assist organizations that highlight Oklahoma's contributions to the Civil Rights Movement by publicly honoring those involvements. The Oklahoma Historical Society's grant application will open on January 2, 2025, and will close at 5:00 p.m. on February 15, 2025. The Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Trustees will approve the awardees at their May 2, 2025, meeting. A virtual workshop including instructions for applying will be held January 3, 2025. For those interested in attending the virtual workshop or applying for the grant, please check the Oklahoma Historical Society's website on January 2, 2025.

www.okhistory.org/about/crt-grants

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION GRANTS

The SHPO announces its annual matching grants to state, local, tribal governments and nonprofit organizations for the preparation of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations. The SHPO has reserved \$12,000 of its FY 2025 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) allocation from the US Department of the Interior for the program. Applications are accepted February 1 through April 30. Each grant is limited to \$3,000, and the applicant must provide a nonfederal cash match of at least \$2,000. Grant recipients will use the grant funds and nonfederal match to retain an appropriately qualified professional to prepare a complete individual property nomination package for the NRHP. Applicants must be aware that \$5,000 (federal grant + nonfederal match) is only an estimate of the cost for such projects and that more than the minimum \$2,000 nonfederal match may be necessary to cover the consultant fee.

The NRHP is the catalog of our nation's significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, and landscapes important in our past. While listing is not a guarantee of preservation or financial assistance, the NRHP status of a property is often critical to the strategy for its preservation. The NRHP provides increased public awareness of these irreplaceable resources, provides limited protection for them, qualifies property owners for federal and state tax credits under certain circumstances, and may qualify the property owner for grant assistance when such programs are funded.

To obtain an application form, go to okhistory.org/nrgrant. You may also contact the SHPO at 405-521-6249.