

# Oklahoma Centennial Commission; See You in 50 Years

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The 100-year anniversary of Oklahoma's statehood was spectacular — and thanks should be (land)-rushed over to the Oklahoma Centennial Commission.

On Nov. 16, officials from the commission placed a time capsule on the grounds of an 18-syllable museum, the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum. The capsule capped-off a celebration worthy of over 1,000 planned events across the state and garnered national attention that even Carrie Underwood would idolize.

However, the Centennial preparations did not happen overnight. Groundwork for the one-of-a-kind celebration began the year Lennon met McCartney, the year Sputnik saw space, Elvis bought Graceland, Wham-O launched the 'Pluto Platter' (later known as the Frisbee) and also the year that Little Rock Central High became a racially integrated school due to Brown v. Board of Education. Yes, planning began in 1957.

Nov. 16, 1957, was not only the day Notre Dame beat OU 7-0, ending the still-standing record 47-game winning streak. It was also the day Oklahoma celebrated 50 years of statehood. During the Semi-Centennial Celebrations a time capsule was buried by civic leaders at the State Fair Park. In the capsule they placed newspaper articles and programs celebrating their Semi-Centennial celebrations and also inspirational letters to today's political and civic leaders.

According to Centennial Executive Director Blake Wade the artifacts in the Oklahoma Centennial Time Capsule also unveiled all the insights of the celebration. "The artifacts in this capsule tell the story of our lives during the Oklahoma Centennial," said Wade. "The Centennial commemoration was such an important event in our state's history that we felt it was necessary to ensure more artifacts, such as the Centennial book, are available to future generations."

Other items (soon-to-be-artifacts) encapsulated at the

Oklahoma Heritage Museum include: DVDs of the Centennial's premiere events (a DVD player also accompanied it), letters from Governor Brad Henry and Centennial planners as well as mementos from the Oklahoma Centennial Parade, the Spectacular and Statehood Day events.

Twelve Oklahoma children, ranging in age from 3 to 10, helped put the final touches on the event by adding a Centennial Band uniform, event pins and a crystal bell to the Time Capsule. To keep the Centennial Spirit going, the children have agreed to return for the event. When the time capsule is opened in 2052.

"We are so grateful to all of those whose work made the Centennial such a unique moment in our state's history," said Chairman of Centennial Projects and Events Lee Allan Smith. "We would also like to thank the Gaylord-Pickens Museum for creating an extraordinary exhibit to house the Centennial time capsule and memorabilia."

Sooner fans are glad OU didn't play on the same day this time around.



Blake Wade (left) and Lee Allan Smith (back right) join the newest generation of Oklahomans and Time Capsules, Inc., President Tom Marak in closing the Centennial Time Capsule at the Gaylord Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum. Photo provided