



OKLAHOMA HERITAGE Association
GAYLORD-PICKENS Museum

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Gaylord-Pickens Museum celebrates three years of hands-on heritage

OKLAHOMA CITY – With no collections and very few artifacts to speak of, the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum forces its visitors to rethink a typical Museum experience.

Designed to allow guests to experience Oklahoma’s history through its people, the Museum’s video-based exhibits, computer touch screens and voice recording booths showcase the lives and accomplishments of both famous and everyday Oklahomans who have impacted the country and world.

“From the moment our guests walk in the door and are greeted by a former governor, state trooper or home-grown rock band on a 60-inch plasma screen, they realize this Museum is a little different from others they have visited,” said Shannon L. Rich, president of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and the Gaylord-Pickens Museum. “Once past some initial uncertainty about a Museum based completely around interactive technology, guests of all ages become engaged in driving their own experiences.”

Opened in May 2007, the Museum will celebrate its three-year anniversary on Saturday, May 8 by offering free admission from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition to tours of the high-tech Museum, the celebration will include a book signing from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. for the Oklahoma Heritage Association publication *A History of the Governor’s Mansion* with authors Bob Burke and Betty Crow.

Throughout the day, I AM OKLAHOMA dress-up stations will allow children the opportunity to portray their favorite Oklahoma heroes honored in the Museum, like astronauts Shannon Lucid and Tom Stafford, ballerina Maria Tallchief and scientist Jordan Tang. A family-friendly arts and crafts station in conjunction with the current art exhibit *The Passionate Lenses of Yousef Khanfar* will also be available. Members of the Chickasaw Nation will participate by sharing stories and demonstrations that showcase the Chickasaw culture. Discounts will be offered in the Museum Store throughout the day, with several vendors on-site featuring special products and sales. The POPS mobile truck will offer refreshments for sale in the Museum’s parking lot.

“Offering free admission and a variety of our activities on our anniversary is our way of saying thanks for the support we’ve received from individuals and organizations across our state,” said Rich. “We encourage the community to come celebrate our ever-growing sense of Oklahoma pride and the opportunity we all have to make a positive impact on our state, which is truly what this Museum is about.”



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One of the Museum's main exhibits, the Oklahoma Through Its People Gallery, celebrates the five characteristics of an Oklahoman – perseverance, pioneer spirit, optimism, generosity and individualism – which were determined after surveying hundreds both in and outside the state. Custom exhibits were created for each of the characteristics, and each features six Oklahomans, past and present, who have displayed that attribute in their lives. Optimism features a touch screen video monitor, on which visitors match baby photos to adult photos of Oklahomans like Olympic gymnast Shannon Miller and baseball legend Mickey Mantle to view their stories. Pioneer Spirit features a 180 degree video screen, including vignettes on Jim Thorpe, one of the 20th century's greatest athletes, and Shannon Lucid, one of the first females accepted into NASA's space program.

“We constantly hear the phrase, both from our in-state and out-of-state visitors, ‘I didn't know he or she was from Oklahoma!’” said Rich.

But it's not just celebrity Oklahomans portrayed in this technology-driven Museum – everyday Oklahomans representing all walks of life are also honored.

“We have taken great strides to include people from a diverse range of industries, backgrounds, socio-economic status and age so that everyone who comes to the Museum will find someone with whom they can connect,” said Nance.

Other exhibits include the Chesapeake Oklahoma Theater, which plays a 12-minute film about everyday Oklahomans from across the state, and the ONEOK Tell Your Story exhibit, where visitors share and record stories about their own heritage through video prompts. Visitors can then e-mail the recording to themselves as a memento of their experience. The Oklahoma Hall of Fame gallery is a tribute to the individuals who have received Oklahoma's most prestigious honor. Visitors can search a database for photos, biographies and fun facts about all 635 inductees via computer touch screen stations.

The Museum is located at NW 13th Street and Shartel Avenue near downtown Oklahoma City. For more information on the May 8 anniversary celebration, the Museum itself or the Oklahoma Heritage Association, call 405.235.4458 or visit www.oklahomaheritage.com.

The Oklahoma Heritage Association preserves Oklahoma's unique history while promoting pride in our great state. Through each of its programs and the Gaylord-Pickens Museum, the Association honors our state's rich tradition by telling Oklahoma's story through its people.

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