Oklahoma has long been famous for its cowboys, Indian culture, oil wells, winning sports records, and the variety of its scenery. Obviously, the state has been blessed with tremendous resources. How else could we have come so far in such a short time?

But the state's greatest resource is its people, best exemplified in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, Oklahoma! And with our new Miss America, Susan Powell.

Oklahoma Today salutes the state's rich heritage as we celebrate our silver anniversary and look forward to the next 25 years!

COMING IN THE SPRING ISSUE Although oil and water generally don't mix, the combination boosts a variety of entertainment in Green Country, from the bright lights of sophisticated Tulsa nightlife to the quiet joy of a float trip down a secluded river. Manufacturing and sports also are important in this area. Oklahoma Today spotlights Travel and Recreation in Northeastern Oklahoma in its next issue.
As fast as oil roared out of Oklahoma's mighty oil fields, the oilmen spun their fortunes into beauty.

Most had started with nothing and were hounded with hardship and failure as they wrestled their wealth out of the ground. Some lived lavishly; some lost their fortunes.

They had one thing in common. In flush times, most oilmen generously shared the profit of the earth.

Oklahoma oil money has financed museums, education, hospitals, churches, libraries, parks, civic, cultural and athletic facilities. Oil philanthropy threads through the state like an elaborate root system.

Today, Oklahoma is rich with what the poet called "a bunch of other men's flowers."

VILLA PHILBROOK

When Will Rogers saw the great hall of Villa Philbrook in Tulsa, he said, "I've been to Buckingham Palace, but it hasn't got anything on Waite Phillips' house."

The elegant Italian Renaissance mansion, with gold-plated faucets, was the home of a shy philanthropist whose favorite food was gooseberry pie. Outside the Sun Room he planted a magnolia tree so he could pick blossoms for his wife, Genevieve.

In 1936, the Phillipses donated the mansion, complete with their art collection, a Temple of Love (gazebo) and 23 acres of formal gardens to Tulsa as an art museum.

Villa Philbrook itself is the principal art object.
Most recently, oil corporations have provided glittering special exhibitions: Cities Service's "Gloria dell'Arte" Renaissance exhibition; Sun Oil's "A Century of French Masters" and Williams Companies' "Realism/Photo-Realism."

Philbrook Art Center's permanent collections include American Indian art, Chinese jades (from George Taber, the "Grand Old Man of the Petroleum Industry"), Standard Oil's collection of oil industry paintings and the Clubb Collection.

Laura Clubb, a Kaw City school teacher, built her private collection of 18th century oil paintings with income from the Burbank field. When she paid $12,500 for her first painting, "In the Pasture" by Van Marke, her cattleman husband said, "I could have bought a whole trainload of cattle for that."

Waite Phillips also gave 290 acres and $24,000 for Southern Hills Country Club, a ward to St. John's Hospital, the petroleum engineering school to the University of Tulsa and the New Mexico Scout Ranch to the Boy Scouts of America.

He gave posterity his philosophy: "The only thing we ever keep is that which we give away."

GILCREASE'S WESTERN ART

Thomas Gilcrease left Oklahoma as the custodian of "the world's greatest collection of Western art." He assembled his collection, pruned the shrubs and fed the birds on an Osage hill overlooking Tulsa. That skyline,
Outstanding western art and other collections are on display at Woolaroc Museum (above). Photo by Paul E. Lefebvre. The collections were begun by Frank Phillips (upper left), who enjoyed entertaining at his country retreat. Gathered for the Cowthieves and Outlaws Picnic in October 1928 are, from left, George Miller, owner of 101 Ranch; Chief Charles Brown of the Osage Nation; G. W. Lillie (Pawnee Bill), and State Sen. Gid Graham, Nowata (left). Guests are seated for a large dinner party in the lodge dining room (right). Photos from Woolaroc Museum.
he said, was "the only picture that cost me nothing."

The Gilcrease collection includes Western art (rich with the work of Frederick Remington and Charles Russell), anthropology (representing Indian cultures from ancient times) and a library of rare documents and books (a Thomas Jefferson letter, the original certified copy of the Declaration of Independence, the document authorizing Paul Revere's historic midnight ride).

Gilcrease assembled this collection himself in just 25 years. He was a self-taught connoisseur who financed his passion for culture from a wild-catting fortune derived from self-taught geology.

His boyhood in Indian Territory was a humble beginning bright with nuggets of good fortune. Born with club feet, the first of 14 children, Gilcrease lived in a Eufaula log cabin and studied in a one-room school with teacher Alex Posey, the celebrated Creek poet. At 14, his destiny changed with his 160-acre Creek allotment, which lay in the heart of the giant Glenn Pool.

Gilcrease, a man of "soft speech and silent steps," did not smoke, drink or swear. He was a cultured romantic (whose first painting was "Rural Courtship") and a multilingual who liked a picture that told a story.

**ART FROM HEAVEN AND EARTH**

Contemporary oilman John E. Kirkpatrick is a former sailor who has given Oklahoma the stars. The Kirkpatrick Planetarium is only one of the gifts from Rear Admiral Kirkpatrick and his wife, Eleanor.

Art from around the world, and science from the universe, are displayed in the Kirkpatrick Center in Oklahoma City's Lincoln Park. The Omniplex features the Enchanted Tree (illuminated by voice) and the Moon Swing (illustrating the moon's gravitational pull). The Air Space Museum includes a history of Oklahoma aviation. Three art galleries feature collections of African art (antique musical instruments and masks), American Indian art and crafts, and Japanese art (rare woodblock prints).

Diverse interests of art and science fit a man who was graduated from both the U.S. Naval Academy and the Harvard Graduate Business School. In active sea duty, Kirkpatrick almost served aboard an entire fleet (The USS Arizona, USS California, USS Cincinnati, USS North Carolina, USS Alaska and USS Oklahoma City) before coming ashore to found the Kirkpatrick Oil Company.

Since 1955 the Kirkpatrick Foundation has given more than $11.5 million to arts and sciences philanthropy. The gifts are as bright and varied as beads on a string, ranging from contributions for the Payne-Kirkpatrick Memorial for the "End of the Trail" sculpture in the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, to the Oklahoma City Zoo and Lyric Theatre.

**CITY HOME AND RUSTIC RANCH**

Heritage House in Oklahoma City was the 1920s gracious residence of Judge Robert A. Hefner, sheepherder, attorney, oilman, mayor of Ardmore and Oklahoma City, and Supreme Court Justice.

The Hefners furnished their Greek Revival Home with European art, antique furniture and Oriental rugs. The
Sun Room (remodeled for their 50th wedding anniversary) holds the magnificent collection of Meissen china. The second floor features Judge Hefner’s bell and cane collection. The third floor contains the Oklahoma Hall of Fame Galleries.

Bartlesville’s Frank Phillips entertained so many Eastern guests at rustic Woolaroc, folks thought it was becoming a dude ranch.

Today Woolaroc Museum includes one of the world’s finest collections of Indian blankets. In the 1920s, Woolaroc was a 4,000-acre country home and private game preserve for the barber who founded Phillips Petroleum Company. He had an elegant “dream house” in Bartlesville and an entire floor at New York’s Ambassador Hotel, but at Woolaroc he ate wild game, held an annual picnic for outlaws (Al Jennings and Henry Starr) and laid Oklahoma’s great outdoors at the feet of the famous (Edna Ferber, Herbert Hoover, Jimmy Doolittle).

THE PALACE ON THE PRAIRIE

Ponca City’s Palace on the Prairie was built for E. W. Marland, the flamboyant oilman who made — and lost — $100 million.

While he had money, he spent it like a reckless rajah. Today, his 55-room Italian Renaissance palace is open to the public. It cost $2.5 million to build in the 1920s and stands as a shimmering legacy of grandeur.

Once the Marland estate heard the sound of fox hunts and polo matches; today, college classes and business conferences meet here.

The gold-leaf mansion can be rented for special occasions; balls, weddings and receptions are held beneath the Waterford crystal chandeliers in the ballroom and below the Chinese Chippendale ceilings in the hall.

Sightseers touring the mansion step into Oklahoma history gilded by oil money from the Ponca City, Burbank and Tonkawa fields.

Marland was a gentleman tycoon who came to the raw prairie in 1908 wearing knickerbockers and spats. He hocked his gold watch and drilled eight dry holes before hitting oil.

As Oklahoma’s 10th governor, he left the Capitol grounds richer with landscaping (provided at his own expense by his Japanese gardener) and with producing oil derricks (provided by martial law).

He left Ponca City enriched by his first mansion (currently the Ponca City Cultural Center with 101 Ranch memorabilia) and the sunbonneted Pioneer Woman Statue (as a tribute to Marland’s idea of the true vanishing American).

Marland lost his fortune, but when he looked at the twinkling lights of Ponca City he said, “That is my life work. They can’t take that away from me.”

By Connie Cronley

Connie Cronley teaches journalism at the University of Tulsa and is a free-lance writer.

E. W. Marland poses in hunting attire, 1922 (left). Guests arrive for a social event at the Palace on the Prairie (above). Photos from Marland Mansion.
The face of the Oklahoma landscape has changed a great deal in the past couple of decades, and with it, a lot of our outdoor recreation. Huge, man-made lakes dot the countryside, a growing system of hiking trails winds through the state, and widely diversified public recreation areas offer varied outdoor experiences.

Even in the coldest months of winter, there's much to do in Oklahoma now — much more than could be found here some 25 seasons ago.

Winter fishing has become a big part of the Sooner State scene. Used to be, most Oklahoma fishermen hung up their tackle about the time the first duck season opened, and little thought was given to fishing until the first warming days of spring. Not any more.

A new phenomenon called "thermally heated lakes" has brought fantastic winter fishing to Oklahoma. We now have two such reservoirs with Konawa in the central part of the state and Sooner Lake, south of Ponca City.

Owned by the Oklahoma Gas and Electric Co., these lakes were created to cool huge coal-fired generating units. As a by-product, they provide superlative fishing, primarily for crappie, in some of the most bitter days of winter. Heated water is released back into the lakes, and anglers have no trouble finding 70-degree fishing water on days when the air temperature may be zero.

In addition to Konawa and Sooner,
Geese in flight near the Great Salt Plains Wildlife Refuge. Photo by Peggy Weems. White-tailed deer. Photo by Sam Powell.
Heated Lakes, Hiking Trails, Wildlife and Waterfowl

By Sam Powell

Sam Powell is outdoors editor for The Tulsa World and gives a daily outdoors report for KRMC, Tulsa.

there are many other spots where the year-round angler finds excellent sport. Huge Grand Lake has approximately 30 heated, enclosed crappie docks where such fishing is traditionally great.

Grand is the lake where “heated dock” angling began over three decades ago. It has since spread throughout the south and southwest, and Oklahoma now boasts many lakes which provide such facilities.

The location of these docks keeps changing, but last winter there were heated docks at Foss, Fort Cobb, Murray, Thunderbird, Eufaula, Texoma, Keystone, Gibson, Hudson, Oologah and Tenkiller lakes. Anglers can secure a list of such facilities by writing the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department in Oklahoma City.

Another type of fishing that has become a winter tradition concerns trout. Rainbow trout were first introduced in the early 1960s in the Illinois River below Lake Tenkiller. And about 10 seasons ago another beautiful little stream was added, strictly as a winter spot.

Anglers can now test their skill on rainbows at the Blue River in southern Oklahoma, too. This stream is located just northeast of Tishomingo, and here the trout season runs from the last Saturday in October until March 31. This is the time to fish the Blue, particularly where the stream is laced with waterfalls and little pools, and the fishing is a real quality outdoor experience.

Many now combine a goose hunting trip to the popular Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge with a trout outing on the Blue for a real winter-time bonus. There’s a special $3 trout license required to fish at either spot.

Oklahoma’s diverse terrain has proved increasingly attractive to hikers and backpackers in recent years. People are discovering that on their own two feet is one of the best possible ways to see the great outdoors, and a rapidly growing system of trails has resulted.

Oklahoma’s trail system now totals some 300 miles, ranging from really rugged backpacking routes through scenic, mountainous regions of the southeast to plenty of leisurely little “day hikes” around our popular lakes.

Those who doubt that Oklahoma offers anything unusual in outdoor recreation have obviously failed to negotiate huge sand dune areas in a dune buggy on off-road vehicle trails at the Little Sahara recreation area in the northwest.

Or, perhaps, walked along the Jean Pierre Chouteau hiking trail that follows the Arkansas Navigation System.

This trail, completed several years ago by the Corps of Engineers, is proving one of the most popular winter routes for hikers and backpackers. The Chouteau trail is a 57-mile route that begins near the Port of Catoosa and ends at Fort Gibson.

It leads explorers over some interesting and beautiful swamps and backwater country along the navigation channel. The corps has constructed more than a dozen large, swinging bridges spanning creeks and swampy areas along the channel. This is one of the most appealing winter hiking choices in eastern Oklahoma, and was part of the recently completed “Hike A Nation” program, in which a large number of backpackers came through Oklahoma on their way east to Washington, D.C.

More hiking and trail-riding choices are on line for Oklahoma all the time with the state currently being considered for a national trail. The Indian Nation Trail will be administered by the National Park Service, if approved. Trail enthusiasts in the state are pushing for its adoption, which would add approximately 200 miles to the system in Oklahoma.

Indicative of the changing outdoor recreation has been the growth of national wildlife refuges in the state. Five large Federal areas managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are now found in Oklahoma, with another soon to be added.

Most famous of these is the starkly beautiful, rugged Wichita Mountains Refuge, located northwest of Lawton. An area steeped in history, the huge refuge encompasses some 59,000 acres of rocky terrain.

Home to an amazing list of wildlife, everything from prairie dogs to elk with some authentic longhorn cattle thrown in, the Wichitas hold large numbers of migrating birds in the winter. Both bald and golden eagles can be seen there. The refuge staff, always accommodating to the visitor, stages birdwatching tours so the public can see different types of cold weather visitors plus other wildlife which stay there year-round.

All of these refuges are excellent spots to observe wildlife, but particularly bird life in fall and winter months. Salt Plains, located in the northwest, is a major Canada goose wintering area as is Washita in the extreme west. It’s located on Foss Lake, northwest of Clinton. Tishomingo is near the community of the same name, and holds large numbers of both ducks and Canada geese.

Sequoyah Refuge, northeast Oklahoma’s link in the system, is located on Kerr Reservoir, south of Vian and Sallisaw. It, too, is a major waterfowl wintering area, home for huge numbers of mallard ducks and several different
types of geese which normally remain there until spring.

Newest Federal refuge is at Optima in the Panhandle. Part of a large new lake, it is expected to be another major stop on the migrations of many types of waterfowl and migratory birds.

Oklahoma's vast acreage of man-made water is also part of an important hunting picture. As this issue is being distributed, Oklahoma waterfowlers are enjoying the second half of the 1980-81 duck and goose seasons, which most winters run into January.

While Oklahomans are a hot spot for waterfowling, other types of hunting remain excellent here, too.

Quail season runs until Feb. 1. Although this popular form of upland bird hunting has changed, we're still considered one of the premier bobwhite states. Hunting is good to excellent most seasons in western Oklahoma, and in recent winters many sportsmen have looked to the southeast.

Timber cutting practices in the southeast, while controversial on many counts, have been a real boon to quail hunters. Great numbers of birds are found on clear-cuts in that area now.

Probably no single type of outdoor sport has changed in the past 25 years like hunting for the whitetail deer. Through trapping and transplanting efforts by the Wildlife Department, deer are now found in all 77 counties, and the annual statewide harvest continues to climb.

In fact, the biggest trophy buck taken in 1979 was bagged almost within sight of the Oklahoma City skyline. A hunter claimed a huge whitetail in Oklahoma County.

Bowhunting has become tremendously popular, and approximately 30,000 archers will have hunted whitetail deer before those seasons close. The limit is two deer.

Wild turkey are also one of the bright spots on the Oklahoma hunting scene. This is a season that has come out of nowhere in the past 10 years or so.

We now have some tremendous, rapidly growing flocks of Eastern wild turkey in southeastern parts of the state, while Rio Grande turkeys are found in central and northern Oklahoma, and on west. The success ratio for turkey hunters here is one of the highest in the nation.

And, of course, you don't have to hunt or fish to enjoy the wide variety of outdoor experiences available. The winter recreation scene in Oklahoma is filled with activities for birdwatching, camping and wildlife viewing.

Many cities have active clubs, such as the Audubon Society, which stage regular birdwatching outings. Oklahoma has been among the top 10 states in the nation for migrating bald eagles for the past three winters.

These magnificent birds may be seen around lakes Keystone, Salt Plains, Tenkiller, Grand, all along the Arkansas Navigation System, and at the Federal refuges mentioned earlier.

Winter is an excellent time to pile the family in the car and enjoy a drive through some pretty Oklahoma countryside, looking for wildlife. It's the best time, really, as the lack of foliage makes both viewing and photography much easier.

Whether it's elk at the Wichitas, whitetail deer on a state-managed game area, or exotic animals at Woolaroc near Bartlesville, an afternoon spent watching wildlife always makes a fine outing.

It does not have to be a perfect, crisp fall day, or a sparkling spring afternoon. Our outdoor recreation has changed greatly over the years, and the outdoors-oriented family now finds that the calendar means only different things are available. Not that it's time to stay indoors waiting for another season to arrive.
Susan Powell

MISS AMERICA 1981

Parades in Tulsa, Elk City and Oklahoma City, hugs from Oklahoma City University's Surrey Singers and her voice teacher, Flo Birdwell, dedication of Miss America Garden at OCU and a kiss from an "older man"—it was all part of an enthusiastic welcome home for Elk City's Susan Powell, the state's third Miss America. Photos by Fred Marvel.
We sing songs about him. We imitate his way of dress. We tell stories about his bravery and his skill with the six shooter and the rope. He rides across our movie screens. His face stares at us from cigarette ads. He is the subject of works by great artists and of small boy's fantasies.

He is the American cowboy.

Perhaps no other group of individuals who settled the West has so captured the imagination of subsequent generations as these legendary figures who tended the herds and earned the reputation — deserved or otherwise — as slow-talkin', fast-shootin', trail-hardened hombres who met trouble head on.

The heyday of the historic cowboy was the years from 1865 to 1890 — the years when the cowboys moved the huge herds across the territory that was to become the state of Oklahoma, driving millions of cattle northward over the Chisholm and other cattle trails toward the rail centers in Kansas.

When Oklahoma was opened for settlement, it was only natural that cattle played an important part in its developing economy. The state’s central location, its mild climate, its immense grasslands all made it eminently suitable for raising cattle. And with the cattle came the cowboys — many of whom made Oklahoma their permanent home.

Oklahomans remember their cowboy forefathers fondly and have strived to preserve the Western traditions and the lore that cowboys brought to the state. The cowboy’s modern-day counterparts are part of one of Oklahoma’s major industries. Their riding, roping and bulldogging skills are kept alive by their 20th century cousins — the rodeo performers, many of whom hail from Oklahoma and participate in rodeos held around the state and across the nation. And the cowboy’s image and history are preserved in the Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center, which is located in Oklahoma’s capital city and serves as a

By Judith Wall

Judith Wall is a Norman free-lance writer.
repository for some of the country's greatest treasures of Western art.

There are still many individuals in Oklahoma who earn their living tending cattle. They are more likely to be called cattlemen or ranch hands than cowboys, and they no longer participate in the huge roundups and long trail drives of days gone by. But there are lots of cattle in Oklahoma — an estimated 5.5 million of them, with the state ranking among the top five beef cattle producing states in the nation. There are 67,000 cattle operations located throughout the state ranging from small backyard affairs to sprawling ranches whose inventories number in the thousands.

What has become high fashion in other parts of the country — jeans, Western shirts, high-heeled boots and broad-brimmed hats — has been the normal workaday attire for generations of Oklahomans. The largest Western wear store in the world is located in Oklahoma City.

But the buckboard has been replaced by the pickup truck. Very often, the cowboy's horse must take a back seat to a three-wheeled Honda or even a helicopter when it comes to tending the herds. And great numbers of the state's cattle are no longer maintained on ranches but in large feedlots that would cause yesterday's cowboy to shake his head in wonder.

The cattle truck and a modern highway system have replaced trail drives. Nowadays, when cattle need to be marketed, the state's cattlemen load them onto trucks and take them to the nearest stockyard. Many of the state's cattle are sold at the Oklahoma City Stockyards, the largest such facility in the nation with 1.5 million head of beef cattle sold there in 1979.

Not only has the cattle industry changed greatly over the years, but the cowboy's favorite pastime of rodeoing has come a long way since the days 'round the corral. From informal competitions to relieve the boredom of days spent with only cows for company, the rodeo has grown in size and popularity until it has become one of the most-attended sports in America, attracting millions of spectators to thousands of rodeos held each year in the United States.

Oklahoma rodeo enthusiasts claim it is the number one sport in the state, attracting more spectators than foot-
Sculpture by Robert Scriver, foreground, and Leonard McMurray is featured in the Rodeo Hall of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center. Photo by Paul E. Lefebvre.

ball or other athletic activities. This is difficult to verify, however, since no one counts spectators — or all of the rodeos. But there are hundreds of rodeos held each year in Oklahoma.

The International Rodeo Association, which is headquartered in Pauls Valley, sanctions 22 rodeos in the state each year. The Central State Rodeo Association, whose offices are located in Tulsa, sanctions more than 30 Oklahoma rodeos. There are also associations for high school and collegiate competitors, as well as an association for rodeo participants between the ages of eight and 15. Each level of competition has its own circuit of rodeos, many of which are sponsored by local roundup clubs.

Probably the best-known rodeoing group is the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, which sanctions 24 rodeos in the Sooner State including the National Finals Rodeo — the superbowl of the rodeo world. For the 16th year, this largest of all rodeos will be held in Oklahoma City. Cowboys and cowgirls from all over the country will compete for $551,000 in prize money and awards. In addition to the traditional events, Miss Rodeo America will be crowned and the seventh annual National Finals Rodeo Exposition, a Western trade show, will be held in conjunction with the rodeo, which takes place Dec. 6-14 in Oklahoma City’s Myriad Convention Center.

One of the greatest honors to be bestowed upon a rodeo cowboy or cowgirl is induction into the Rodeo Hall of Fame, which is located in the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center in Oklahoma City. The Rodeo Hall of Fame honors outstanding cowboy and cowgirl competitors and rodeo’s great promoters and producers in one of the largest display halls in America. Large cases contain the inductee’s trophies, saddles and other memorabilia. Each year the all-around cowboy has his portrait painted by a top artist as a gift to the Cowboy Hall of Fame by the R. J. Reynolds Company.

In addition, the National Cowboy Hall of Fame houses the Hall of Fame of Great Western Performers, honoring such past and present stars as Tom Mix, John Wayne, Amanda Blake, Roy Rogers, Joel McCrea and many others, thereby recognizing the part which the motion picture industry has played in preserving the image of the American West.

Each year, the board of trustees for the Cowboy Hall of Fame presents Western Heritage Awards, which are given to recognize excellence in Western films, literature and music.

But it is for the art of the American West that the Cowboy Hall of Fame is best known — and appropriately so — for this great hall houses one of the nation’s finest collections of Western art and stands at the center of the world of Western art. Works by such renowned artists as C. M. Russell, Frederick Remington, Charles Schreyvogel, Nicolai Fechin and Laura and Charles Frazer are included in this priceless collection and have helped immortalize the drama, the color and the everyday lives of cowboys and others who were a part of the old West.

White-faced Hereford cattle graze on a ranch in Osage County. Photo by Paul E. Lefebvre.
Perhaps no other institution has done more to encourage the flourishing field of Western art than the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Each June, the hall — through its National Academy of Western Art — sponsors a competition for Western artists with prizes offered in various categories and a purchase award of $18,000 going to the best work in the show. The academy also selects guest artists to exhibit at the hall, making it a living institution with constantly changing exhibits to enrich the fare offered by its permanent collection.

The 80,000 square-foot National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center is an impressive sight when first viewed by motorists traveling on U.S. Highway 66. Silhouetted against the Western sky, it is reminiscent of a gigantic grouping of pioneer tents or perhaps a circle of wagons surrounding a campfire. From its vantage point on Persimmon Hill, it overlooks a segment of the old Chisholm Trail and has become a symbol of the West for millions of cross-country travelers. Over four million have stopped to tour the hall since its opening in 1965.

A 33-foot bronze statue of Buffalo Bill overlooking the nearest highway makes the Cowboy Hall of Fame an even more impressive Oklahoma landmark — a landmark which serves as an appropriate memorial to the American cowboy and those other indomitable individuals who settled the vast land west of the Mississippi.

The cowboy occupies an unusual place in the saga of the American West. His mark on history was minimal. His economic contributions were strictly those of a hired laborer whose job was a lonely and dirty one. The time span of the historic cowboy was brief — only about 25 or 30 years. And his numbers were few when compared with other occupational groups.

But the cowboy is revered by many. Not even astronauts or statesmen or athletes or soldiers have been able to take his place as the American folk hero.

The cowboy is well-remembered in Oklahoma. Will Rogers, the state's most famous native son, was a cowboy. The state was home to many hardy souls who earned their living as cowpokes. Their descendants still live here, and those who follow in their footsteps still ride in the state's rodeos and live and work on ranches in all corners of Oklahoma.

"Freckles" Brown, Soper, became famous as the only cowboy to ever ride the famed Brahma bull, Tornado, in the rodeo arena. Photo by Fred Marvel.
Musical and State Song Say That Land We Belong To Is Grand

OKLAHOMA! O.K.

When composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II combined their talents for the first time, the result was a daringly different “cowboy” musical set in turn-of-the-century Indian territory.

The musical set off for out-of-town tryouts in New Haven and Boston titled inexplicably “Away We Go.”
The name was changed to “Oklahoma!” and by the time the play opened on Broadway on March 31, 1943, an exclamation point had been added.

Later, even Rodgers couldn’t recall exactly why, at the last moment, that exuberant mark of punctuation was hitched to the title, but for Oklahoma!, it proved to be prophecy of great things to come.

From a “no-chance” critical reception in New Haven, the show, a simple story of two men in love with the same girl, bowled over Broadway like a wind sweepin’ down the plain. Precedents were set that changed the face of musicals forever.

Previously most Broadway musicals had thin plots that halted when a song or dance started. Oklahoma! welded plot, song and dance together to the point that parts of the story couldn’t be told without that singing and dancing.

What’s more, instead of simply high-kicking chorus girls and tap dancers, Oklahoma! incorporated serious ballet, choreographed by Agnes de Mille.

Oklahoma! was the longest running musical comedy in the world until 1961. All its songs were radio hits. Financially, it was estimated that its backers realized a whopping 2,500 percent return on their investment.

On the eve of its closing on Broadway after 2,248 consecutive performances and a total attendance of close to 4.5 million, the Associated Press wrote:

“In its five years, it has broken more records, set more precedents and received more awards than any musical in theatrical history.”

The musical enjoyed a recent revival when it returned to a rousing welcome on Broadway last December.

Not bad for a show with the burning issue of who would take Laurey, the Belle of Claremore, to the box social, set in what the nation still considered the Dust Bowl.

Its beginnings were inauspicious.

The show was based on Green Grow the Lilacs by Claremore native Lynn Riggs, a not particularly popular play that had run only 64 performances.

The production was Rodgers’ first major effort without Lorenz Hart. And Hammerstein, although widely respected, hadn’t had a hit since the Thirties. Choreographer Agnes de Mille had never worked in a musical comedy.

And the show kicked musical comedy tradition in the teeth.

The humor was earthy, but there were no bawdy jokes to which New York audiences had become accustomed.

When the curtain opened, instead of a bevy of chorus girls, there was a lone woman — middle-aged at that — churning butter. When the chorus finally arrived 45 minutes into the show, the girls were wearing long skirts.

And perhaps most shocking of all, the menacing and moody hired hand, Jud Fry, was killed on stage.

In New Haven, one waggish critic wired back to New York: “No gals. No gags. No chance.”

But after opening night on Broadway, there was yet another negative: no tickets. Seeing Oklahoma! fast became a status symbol as the rush for tickets was compared to the Land Rush in the musical’s namesake state.

In his autobiography, Musical Stage, Rodgers recalls a hired hand on Hammerstein’s farm who had a son about to marry. He wanted his gift to the couple to be the opportunity to see Oklahoma! right after the ceremony. Certainly, Hammerstein would get the tickets. When was the wedding?

“The day you can get the tickets,” the farmer replied.

If Sooners are proud of a Broadway musical named for their state, their chests puff a mite fuller in knowing that the play’s inspiration and homespun flavor came not from Rodgers and Hammerstein, who began their project under an oak tree in Connecticut, but rather a native son, Lynn Riggs.

Born southwest of Claremore in 1899, the son of a cattle rancher, Riggs, who was part Cherokee, grew up with first hand insight of both the cowman and the farmer. When his mother died, he moved to town to live with his aunt, Mary Brice, who ran a boarding house. This hearty, loving woman was the inspiration for Oklahoma!’s Aunt Eller.

In Oklahoma! little is left of Riggs’ original plot and none of the original songs. What did remain is the major-
ity of Riggs' colorful characters, the setting and mood.

Rodgers writes in his autobiography: "We didn't want to begin with anything obvious, such as a barn dance with everyone a-whoopin' and a-hollerin'."

The solution lay in Riggs' opening of Green Grow the Lilacs. No gals. No gags. Just Aunt Eller on stage churning butter. When handsome Curly saunters on stage he is singing, Oh, What a Beautiful Morning. Again, the inspiration is pure Riggs. Just read the introduction to his first scene:

"It is a radiant summer morning several years ago, the kind of morning which, enveloping the shapes of the earth — men, cattle in the meadow, blades of young corn, streams — makes them seem to exist now for the first time, their images giving off a visible golden emanation that is partly a trick of the imagination focusing to keep alive a loveliness that might pass away."

With that type of material, it's not hard to understand how Hammerstein conjured his now famous phrases. The bright golden haze on the meadow... The cattle like statues... And the corn as high as an elephant's eye.

When New York Times critic Lewis Nichols first saw Rodgers and Hammerstein's premiere musical, he praised the song, Oklahoma, as one "the state in question would do well to seize as its anthem."

Gov. George Nigh was a teenager and sitting on his back porch overlooking the family chicken yard when he first heard Oklahoma.

"I was excited that a big Broadway producer would write a song about our state," he recalls. The excitement endured and when Nigh became a state legislator, he led the campaign to make Oklahoma the state song.

"The song reflected the pride and newness of our state and the rest of the nation had obviously accepted it as our song," Nigh says. But persuading his fellow lawmakers took a touch of show biz.

The day Nigh introduced the bill, another legislator got up, and eyes misty began to sing the old anthem penned by a Sooner pioneer. Other lawmakers rose and joined the emotional chorus. Nigh made a strategic retreat. But not for long.

He rounded up a local chorus and childhood friend, Ridge Bond, now a Tulsa who did a stint as Broadway's Curly, and headed back to the floor of the legislature.

The performers began with a medley of the show's tunes. With voices in crescendo, they concluded with a soaring chorus of Oklahoma. Nigh's victory was assured and in May 1953, a decade after Oklahoma! debuted on Broadway, Oklahoma had a new state song.

Count the tour groups, the revivals, the Academy-award winning movie, the albums and the countless high school and college productions, and there are few adult Americans in any state who aren't acquainted with "Oklahoma!" All have fallen for the charm of People Will Say We're In Love or the old-fashioned corn of I Can't Say No.

But it's Oklahomans themselves who have given their namesake musical a permanent home.

For the past five summers, Discoveryland, a 2,000-capacity outdoor amphitheater 15 minutes from downtown Tulsa, has produced Oklahoma! with such success that the theater has been designated the musical's National Outdoor Home. A collection of memorabilia from the Broadway, movie and local productions will be opened this summer.

And, according to Discoveryland general manager Bill Jeffers, Oklahoma! will run six nights a week during the entire 11-week season next summer instead of sharing the program with Dust On Her Petticoats as in previous seasons.

The Discoveryland show is fast becoming a major entertainment attraction and it's not hard to see why.

No Broadway set could compete with its natural setting, the trees and grass and the dust from the cowboys' horses hooves as they race over a hillside.

Under the Oklahoma stars, it's a chance to reaffirm what Lynn Riggs knew and Oscar Hammerstein conjured. That land that we belong to is grand.

"Oklahoma! O. K."
Indians, Indians everywhere! That's the story in Oklahoma.

More than 35 Indian tribes are represented in Oklahoma with a total population of 97,731 according to the 1970 census. In other words, Oklahoma has the largest Indian population derived from more tribes than any other single state in the union.

The very word Oklahoma was derived from two Choctaw words: "okla" meaning "people" and "humma" for "red." Thus, "Oklahoma" literally means "red people."

The many Indian place names, the council houses, the camp grounds, the...
Indian schools, the museums containing Indian exhibits, and the numerous historical sites related to Indians constantly remind the visitor of the strong Indian influence in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma owes much of its Indian population to President Andrew Jackson's ruthless drive to obtain more land for European settlement. Between 1820 and 1880 over 60 tribes were forced to migrate to Oklahoma. Among these were the five civilized tribes — the Creeks, Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws and Seminoles — who were driven from their lands in the southeast. They joined the tribes already here — the Wichitas, Caddoes, Kiowas, Comanches, Quapaws, Osages, and others.

The Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee deals with the history of these nations. Small separate museums in eastern Oklahoma also are maintained — the Creeks' at Okmulgee, the Choctaws' at Tuskahoma, the Chickasaws' at Tishomingo, the Cherokees' at Tahlequah and the Seminoles' at Wewoka.

Before removal to Oklahoma, Sequoyah, one of the great Indian geniuses of all time, created a syllabary of 85 characters and gave the Cherokees a written language. The tribe quickly recognized the value of this new tool, and in 1828 became the first Indian tribe to publish a newspaper, The Cherokee Phoenix.

After the Cherokee Nation reached Oklahoma, they established the first printing press in the area at Park Hill, near Tahlequah, Capitol of the Cherokee Nation. This press produced over 14 million pages in Cherokee and English — including a Cherokee grammar and a translation of the Bible.

Because of Sequoyah's tremendous accomplishment of producing a written language, the Cherokee Nation prior to Oklahoma statehood had an educational system which produced a Cherokee population 90 per cent literate in its native language and used bilingual materials to such an extent that Oklahoma Cherokees had a higher literacy level than the white population of either Texas or Arkansas.

The state's first newspaper, The Cherokee Advocate, was published at Tahlequah in 1844. The first institutions of free public education in Oklahoma were the Cherokee Male and Female Seminaries, established near Tahlequah in 1851.

Near Sallisaw, in a small state park, stands the one-room log cabin which was built and occupied by Sequoyah while he lived in Oklahoma. A well-done slide show in the curator's cabin tells the story of the development of the Cherokee language. A crafts building offers souvenirs.

Sequoyah is honored as one of the two persons representing Oklahoma in the National Statuary Hall in the Capitol Building, Washington, D.C., created in 1864 by an Act of Congress.

The war dance competition is exciting for all during the American Indian Exposition in Anadarko. The exposition will mark its 50th anniversary this summer. Photos by Fred Marvel.
The historic site of Custer's tragic attack on the Cheyennes and the Black Kettle Museum can be visited near Cheyenne.

By Joye R. Boulton

Joye R. Boulton is a Norman free-lance writer.
Pontiac along with Charles Curtis, a Kaw who became U.S. Vice President during the Hoover administration . . . Jim Thorpe, Sac and Fox and "the greatest athlete in the first half of the twentieth century" . . . and Major General Clarence Tinker, an Osage who died in combat in World War II at the Battle of Midway.

On a hill south of town lies Indian City. The feature here is a guided tour of each of eight different tribes' traditional housing — a Kiowa tipi, a Wichita grass house, a Pawnee earth lodge, an Apache wickiup, a Navajo hogan, and so on.

The museum features many interesting examples of beadwork and old photographs from this area.

During the winter months, you watch Indians in the shop busy with bead and feather work either for themselves or to sell to tourists.

During the summer, Plains tribes ceremonial dances are performed outdoors.

In the extreme western part of the state near Cheyenne are the Washita Battlefield and the Black Kettle Museum, which commemorates the life and death of the great Cheyenne Chief Black Kettle and members of his band. Largely women and children, the group was slain in 1868 by troops under Colonel George Custer who proceeded to his defeat at the Little Big Horn.

The two major cities of the state also have impressive Indian exhibits. The Oklahoma Historical Society Building in Oklahoma City holds Indian archives second only to those at Washington's Smithsonian Institution. The displays include the pipe used by the Delawares when they made their treaty with William Penn in 1683.

In Tulsa a remarkable collection of art documenting Oklahoma's Indian heritage is found in the Gilcrease Museum, founded by Thomas Gilcrease, a Creek. Equally intriguing is the superb collection of Indian pottery, basketry, costumes, and artifacts preserved in the Philbrook Museum, itself a remarkable architectural work in an estate setting.

North of Tulsa is found Woolaroc Museum, an impressive edifice which contains (along with much more) spectacular displays of prehistoric Indian relics taken from eastern Oklahoma's Spiro Mounds — one of the most remarkable archaeological sites in this part of the country.

That's the way it goes in Oklahoma: Indians, Indians everywhere! Another major asset of a very special state.
On one of those 100-plus days last August a busload of Japanese tourists stopped in at the Governor's Mansion for the regular Wednesday afternoon tour. As the guide pointed out different objects of historical significance, they discovered one touching their own history.

Displayed in the dining room of the official home of Oklahoma governors is the silver punch bowl from the USS Oklahoma, which was sunk at Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941. The punch bowl is part of the complete silver service which was removed from the ship before it sailed from the West Coast for its date with destiny.

"Was it a carrier?" the Japanese interpreter asked while telling his group about the USS Oklahoma.

"No, it was a battleship," came the reply, and he translated for the others, most of whom looked too young to remember.

The 36 Japanese tourists were among 120 visitors to the mansion that August Wednesday, a fairly light turnout considering that there were 3,000 one Wednesday afternoon. And more than 15,000 have toured the Governor's Mansion since George and Donna Nigh inaugurated the weekly tours in March 1979.

The Nighs were advised against having the weekly open house, but they did it anyway and have found that Oklahomans are more than a little curious about the governor, his family and the house they live in. One visitor even wanted to know which side of the kingsize bed the governor sleeps on. Another wanted to look under it. But mostly they're curious about the historic bedroom with a Victorian dresser and bed (circa 1850) which once belonged to Emperor Maximilian of Mexico. The antique furniture, donated by the David Price family, is on loan from the Oklahoma Historical Society.

They're curious, too, about the silver punch bowl from the Battleship Oklahoma, also on loan from the historical society, and a cabinetful of artifacts left by previous governors. It includes the Bible of Robert S. Kerr and the certificate to practice law issued to William H. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray on April 18, 1898.

The mansion is hardly a mansion. It's a big comfortable house. There were plans for a real mansion, costing $200,000 when the legislature in 1913 authorized the building of a home for the governor. But it was 1927 before another legislature appropriated the money, and then only $75,000. So plans were pared down to a comfortable 19-room home.

Gov. Henry Johnston and his family moved into the official residence in late September 1928. Mrs. Johnston used another $25,000 appropriation to furnish the home with practical and durable materials — walnut and mahogany furniture, damask draperies.
Japanese visitors examine a punch bowl from the USS Oklahoma while touring the Governor's mansion. Photos by Paul Lefebvre.
and overstuffed chairs and divans.

None of the original furniture remains. There is a hatrack with a pink marble shelf in the upstairs hallway. It was donated during the Johnston administration by Mamie L. Scott Hammonds.

Mrs. Nigh, who would like to have more period furniture in the mansion, has retrieved a half dozen chairs and a couple of tables from capitol storage. They were once part of the mansion furnishings, but she is unable to say if they were part of the original furniture. Most first families have moved furnishings in and out, storing those not to their tastes. Mrs. Nigh suspects that some of the original furniture may even have been sold in state auctions.

Most of the current furniture in the mansion belongs to the state, but the Nighs have moved in selected pieces, including bedroom furniture for themselves and their daughter.

Although there have been periodic repairs during the mansion’s 53 years, it was still in rundown condition when the Nighs moved in. They’ve spent about $100,000 on it, including such major projects as complete rewiring, installation of energy-efficient windows, new carpeting and sandblasting of the Indiana limestone exterior.

Private funding has added a $25,000 swimming pool in the shape of the state. A patio and latticed arbor poolside will provide additional space for entertaining.

So the official residence of Oklahomans is now, at least, presentable. It was not always so. For 24 years after construction, its west front entrance faced an unpaved street. And Gov. “Alfalfa Bill” Murray let the grass grow knee high and threatened to plant potatoes on its spacious grounds during the Depression. The grounds were later properly landscaped and are maintained by the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department.

The street was finally paved in 1952 after busloads of visitors, invited to receptions by Mrs. Willie Murray, bogged down in the mud. Willie, first lady to Gov. Johnston Murray, also undertook a repair program as did Jeannette Edmondson, a subsequent resident and now Secretary of State.

By 1965, the mansion was in disrepair again, and there was a move to build a new one. A special committee recommended an expenditure of $500,000 for a new mansion, but Gov. Dewey Bartlett pigeonholed the plan when he entered office, not wanting the appearance of building a new home for himself.

So Oklahoma’s first families make do with the official residence, which was inadequate from the start. The official dining room will seat only 12, and then extra tables have to be set up. And if there are more than 20 for dinner, tables are set up in the former ballroom on the third floor. Food must be brought from the first floor, and there is no elevator or dumb waiter to make it easier. And until recently, there was no restroom on the third floor.

Mrs. Nigh has mixed emotions about the governor’s mansion. She enjoys living there, but sometimes she feels like a lonely captive. There are guards, a high fence, and nobody drops in to see you — except on Wednesday afternoons. At first, Mrs. Nigh stayed home to greet the visitors, but she had to give that up. People wanted to stop and talk, and it slowed down the tours. So while Wednesday’s guests are poking around the mansion, Donna Nigh runs errands.

The Nighs are the first to have weekly tours of the governor’s mansion. Gov. and Mrs. Bellmon had “county” receptions, and the Johnston Murrays had periodic receptions.

Even though Mrs. Nigh can’t stay around on Wednesday afternoons, the welcome mat is still out for visitors. The mansion is located on N.E. 23rd, just east of the capitol. Winter tour hours are 1 to 4 p.m., and in summer they are 1 to 3 p.m. Hostess-guides are volunteers, mostly from Democratic Women’s Clubs across the state.
Books in Review

A Santa's bag of new books by Oklahoma authors to please most every taste is now in stores, just in time for holiday giving. Among the offerings are art and architecture, a coffee table book of southern beauty, a serious discussion of energy problems and novels about baseball and racehorses. But a saucy guide to Oklahoma restaurants may replace the traditional peppermint stick in many stockings this year.

THE LIFE AND ART OF JEROME TIGER: War to Peace, Death to Life by Peggy Tiger and Molly Babcock, Univ. of Okla. Press, $29.95, will be treasured by all who enjoy Indian art. Included is the largest collection of Tiger art ever assembled, most is privately owned, with 300 of his sketches and paintings, many in full-color in a large format.

Best of all, the authors (his widow and cousin) have given an intimate description of growing up within the rural Creek-Seminole Indian culture of contemporary Oklahoma. Few whites, even native Oklahomans, are aware of this lifestyle, invisible to the major- ity.

Frequent visitors of the Gilcrease Institute of History and Art in Tulsa will particularly appreciate WILLIAM ROBINSON LEIGH: Western Art by D. Duane Cummins, Univ. of Okla. Press, $19.95. The museum regularly rotates the 923 Leigh works in its collection.

Always on view in the Gilcrease galleries is a recreation of the artist's studio. A dramatic painting of a grizzly bear held at bay by a pack of hunting dogs from finishing off a hunter lying at his feet is displayed on a huge easel. This painting is among the 30 color plates included in the book.

Those who enjoy driving through residential areas when exploring a new town can make the same trip across the state in their own living room with OKLAHOMA HOMES: Past and Present by Charles R. Goins and John W. Morris, Univ. of Okla. Press, $25. But it won't be long before the reader will want to see many for her or himself.

Beautifully illustrated, the book includes many homes that are no longer in existence with most closed to the public. Most photographs are of private homes, covering each historical period from the tipi to the European villa to the futuristic solar house.

TULSA'S ART DECO by Carol Johnson, published by the Junior League of Tulsa, Inc., $15.95 and $40, demonstrates why Tulsa was known as Terra Cotta City among architects in the 1930s. An important aspect of Tulsa's history is reflected through its architecture. Many of the city's most famous buildings were constructed during the Art Deco period, 1925-1942. They are beautifully photographed by David Halpen.

THE AMERICAN SOUTH: Four Seasons of the Land by William A. Bake and James J. Kilpatrick, Oxmoor House Inc., $29.95, moves across the 14 southern states, catching glimpses of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Florida and Alabama seacoasts, Texas ranches and old Southern cities like San Antonio and New Orleans.

This stunningly beautiful book combines the best talents of photographer Bake and syndicated political columnist Kilpatrick, a native Oklahoman. If it has a flaw, it is too few photographs of Oklahoma.

How the United States got into its present energy mess and how it became so dependent on foreign oil are traced in AMERICA'S ENERGY FAMINE: Its Cause and Cure by Ruth Sheldon Knowles, Univ. of Okla. Press, $14.95.

The author, an internationally recognized petroleum specialist, also suggests how to reconcile the environment-energy conflict, what the United States needs to do to achieve energy self-sufficiency and the timetable required to do so.

You don't have to be a baseball fan to read SCREWBALLS by Tulsa Tribune columnist Jay Cronley, Doubleday, $10. Almost everyone should enjoy this hilarious account of contemporary major league baseball.

The cast of Screwballs is headed by Wilbur Moss, the newly signed manager, who thinks discipline and winning are everything. Actor Don Rickles has been signed to play this role in a movie to be made by Burt Sugarman.

The comedy is centered around Moss who loves baseball so much he'd play for fun and his ball players who are more involved with their personal contracts and agents.

THE RUNNING HORSES by Fred Grove, Doubleday, $10.95, captures the drama and excitement of quarter-horse racing at Ruidosa Downs. Former Oklahoman Grove spins a tale of suspense about racing and training on the small tracks at Stroud and Anadarko in his home state before moving on to the All-American Futurity in New Mexico.

Fledgling authors Elaine Kumin and Lyntha Weenser have collected comments about restaurants from hundreds of friends in WORD OF MOUTH EATING IN OKLAHOMA, $5.75. The guide lists nearly 500 places to eat in 185 state towns. Franchise and chain restaurants are not included.

The authors, who designed the book to lead the reader away from those "golden arches," consider finding the ultimate chicken-fried steak a serious pursuit, good barbecue a state treasure and the sign, Cafe, a beacon of hope and promise. Somehow, it's satisfying to know a good cafe exists in Gotebo.

EATING can be ordered from P.O. Box 2278, Norman, OK 73070. (Add $1 for postage).

Letter to the Editor

Editor:

Thank you for your recent letter inviting me to the celebration Jan. 7.

So many wonderful memories well up as I think of Paul Lefebvre and Bill Burchardt and our adventures together in putting out Oklahoma Today in the midst of union squabbles. (At one point we were forced to sneak everything out for a special printing in Texas in order to bring the maga- zine out at a critical point where we needed every bit of money to survive and some union had shut down the Oklahoma printing plant.) I also recall how critical was George Nigh's support in those days, when each legislative session the mossbuck would attempt to cut out the two-bit appropriation for Oklahoma Today,

THIRTY-TWO

OKLAHOMA TODAY
maintaining we should be self-supporting with advertising. It would, of course, have meant either the end of the magazine, or a dreadfully degraded thing that would have looked as tacky as too much of urban Oklahoma looks today, left to the aesthetics of the marketplace. We’d send out a call for help and George and the Jaycees would come riding to our rescue like the fabled Marines arriving just in time.

I regret none of it now, all that wonderful color and excitement of those days in an aspiring young state of such incredible variety, and the partnership of those two sterling characters, Paul and Bill.

I hope some special recognition is given to Raymond Gary. For it was Gary as governor who had both the vision and the common sense to demand this magazine be published and that it be done well, to excell Arizona Highways. And we did! Within the first few issues after I took over, I was a good editor and given Paul’s superb artwork, art direction, and dedication really far surpassing my own, the magazine was under way.

I remember how at those dark junctures when it just seemed we couldn’t go on — we’d have run out of money again and Bert somebody, the crusty and quite curious old Budget Director at the time, would advise me to close up shop. I’d go and see Gary and he would smile broadly, call Bert in, and tell him quietly that he expected Bert could find the money somewhere and he wanted to be sure I was given everything I needed. And Bert would be forced to agree that yes, there was a way, and would cough up the cash to keep us going.

I hope, too, all possible Indian artists will be honored at your ceremonies.

David Loye
Carmel, Calif.

David Loye was editor of Oklahoma Today from 1957 through 1959. He is now a research director in the Department of Psychiatry, UCLA School of Medicine, Los Angeles.

Today in Oklahoma

Plans for celebrating Oklahoma Today’s 25th Anniversary are almost complete. I hope that each of you will accept Gov. and Mrs. George Nigh’s invitation to the reception honoring all past contributors and others who have been involved with Oklahoma Today since its beginning.

Music from Oklahoma! will be performed by the stars of Tulsa’s Discoveryland.

We’ve turned into amateur detectives tracking down addresses of people who wrote for the magazine or who perhaps took a photo 15 or 20 years ago. Those we’ve missed need to contact this office.

If only half of our honored guests can attend, it should be quite a party! Indian artists Kelly Haney, Bill Flores and Willard Stone, ballerina Yvonne Chouteau, and writers Kent Ruth and Roy Stewart are among those who plan to attend.

We would like to honor our original subscribers who’ve been loyal throughout the years, so be sure to identify yourselves at the reception. And we also look forward to meeting many of our new readers.

Visitors to the Capitol can enjoy noontime entertainment of “Hansel and Gretel” and other music, a live tree with authentic German decorations, and a German children’s art exhibit Dec. 2-5. Even German food is to be served in the Capitol cafeteria this week.

It’s all part of Lt. Gov. Spencer Bernard’s annual observance of foreign countries during Christmas. Last year Mexico was featured.

Governors from the states of Kansas, Missouri, Louisiana and Texas joined Gov. George Nigh and Gov. Bill Clinton of Arkansas in celebrating the 10th anniversary of the McClellan-Kerr Waterway which runs through Oklahoma and Arkansas to the Mississippi River.

The affair was called “Waterway to the World” and featured ceremonies at six different ports from Tulsa to Fort Smith. The waterway has reaped tremendous economic benefits not only for Oklahoma and Arkansas but this entire region of the country.

Wouldn’t you know it? Somehow, we incorrectly identified one of the beautiful horses on page 21 in the center of the Fall 1980 issue. The horse is a world champion Pony of the Americas, Salty 3 Bars, with handler, Tommy Puffinbarger of Cherokee. We wrongly identified the horse as the world champion Appaloosa, On Cloud Nine, owned by Dr. William Bullock of Pine Ridge Farm, Yukon.

Our apologies to the owners and their horses!

Stumped for a unique Christmas gift for a very special couple? Gift certificates in any amount can be purchased at all seven of Oklahoma’s state resorts. So your gift could be exchanged for a winter holiday in a cozy cabin with a fireplace, hiking and fishing, or perhaps horseback riding, golf or dinner, depending on the amount. Certificates are sold at each lodge or you can call toll free, in-state 800-522-8565, surrounding states 800-654-8240.

Another truly Oklahoma gift is a pretty box of shelled pecan halves, tied with a bright ribbon. Or those wonderful peanuts grown in the southeastern part of the state.

Of course, our choice for the perfect Christmas present would have to be a gift subscription to Oklahoma Today! And it’s one you can afford for all your friends.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (required by 39 U.S.C. 3685 filed September 24, 1980, FOR OKLAHOMA TODAY MAGAZINE, publication number 347140, published quarterly, 1 issue quarterly by the State of Oklahoma, Tourism and Recreation Department at 502 Will Rogers Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma 73105. Editor: Sue Carter, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, 502 Will Rogers Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105.

Owner: State of Oklahoma, OKLAHOMA TODAY, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, 502 Will Rogers Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders or holders of 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None.

Extent and Nature of Circulation: (A) Total number of copies printed (not press run): 26,875 average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 25,000 single issue nearest filing date: (B) Paid circulation: 6,600 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 7,500 single issue nearest filing date: (C) Free circulation by mail, careless or other free means—samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 4,800 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 200 single issue nearest filing date: (D) Free distribution by mail, carelessness, or other free means—samples, complimentary, and other free copies: 50,000 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 21,500 single issue nearest filing date: (E) Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled or returned: 1,750 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3,000 single issue nearest filing date: (2) Returns from news agents: 3,500 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 3,000 single issue nearest filing date: (G) Total: 36,875 average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 25,000 single issue nearest filing date: (H) I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(Signed) Sue Carter, Editor.

Pursuant to the provisions of 39 U.S.C. 3685, I hereby request permission to mail Oklahoma Today at the reduced postage rates presently authorized.

(Signed) Sue Carter, Editor.
DRAMA

DECEMBER
1-Jan-4 "Cactus Flower," Gaslight Theatre, Okla City
3-13 "Of Mice and Men," Community Theatre, Woodward
4-6 "A Christmas Carol," Bartlesville Little Theatre, Bartlesville
4-13 The Night of Jan 16, Act II, Ada
4-14 Magic Mirrors, Black Liberated Arts Center, Okla City
4-20 The Stinging Man in Town," Cabaret Supper Theatre, Ft Sill
5 "The Magic Flute," Church Circuit Opera, Midwest City
5-12 Much Ado About Nothing," OU Theatre, Norman
5-20 Bum Yesterday," Jewell Box Theatre, Okla City
5-21 "100 in the Shade," Theatre Tulsa, Tulsa
5-24 Treasure Island," American Theatre Co, Tulsa
6 "Martha," Church Circuit Opera, Woodward
6 "Christmas Celebration," Okeene Playhouse, Okeene
8-10 Murder at Howard Johnson's," Ardmore Little Theatre, Ardmore
10-21 A Christmas Carol," Okla Theatre Center, Okla City
11-20 "Two Week One Night Stand," SoCGIC, Okla City
12-20 On Golden Pond," Community Theatre, Lawton
12-21 You Can't Take It With You," Community Playhouse, Norman
13-14 A Christmas Celebration, Southwest Playhouse, Clinton
19-20 Christmas Children's Theatre, Community Theatre, Gaymon

JANUARY
8-26 "Lu Ann Hampton Laverly Oberlander," Okla Theatre Center, Okla City
23-31 "The Subject At Rose," Ponca City Playhouse, Ponca City
29-Feb 8 "The Runner Stumbles," Town & Gown Theatre, Stillwater
30-Feb 8 "Cat On A Hot Tin Roof," Community Playhouse, Norman

FEBRUARY
4-5 "Emmy Williams as Charles Dickens," Theatre Tulsa, Tulsa
4-5 "Anything Goes," Ardmore Little Theatre, Ardmore
5-8 "Don Giovanni," OU Theatre, Norman
5-15 For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf," Black Liberated Arts Center, Okla City
5-22 The Goodbye People," Okla Theatre Center, Okla City
13-15 The Barrier of Souls," SoCGIC, Okla City
13-21 Witness For The Prosecution," Community Theatre, Lawton
13-21 Shadow Box," J. R. Jones Theatre, OU, Norman
13-22 Dark At The Top Of The Stairs," Community Playhouse, Broken Arrow
13-22 The Apple Tree," Community Theatre, Gaymon
13-Mar 8 The Alchemist," American Theatre Co, Tulsa
16-28 Our Town," Bartlesville Little Theatre, Bartlesville
16-March 1st Only Indian Left," American Indian Theatre, Tulsa
19-21 The Crucible," Act I, Ada
19-26 Kennedy's Children," SoCGIC, Okla City
19-Mar 7 The Palm Game," Cabaret Support Theatre, Ft Sill
20-26 The Music Man," Southwest Playhouse, Clinton
20-Mar 6 "The Diary," Theatre Tulsa, Tulsa
26-Mar 28 "The Rake," OU Theatre, Stillwater
27-28 A Theater Carnival," Community Theatre, El Reno
27-28 The Great Game Of Sherlock Holmes," Community Playhouse, Tahlequah

MARCH
5-8 J. B.,” OU, Okla City
12-29 Rashomon," Okla Theatre Center, Okla City
13-22 The Mouse That Roared," Community Playhouse, Norman
14 Dr Cook's Garden," Okeene Playhouse, Okeene
19-22 Fiddler On The Roof," Shortgrass Playhouse, Hobart
20-22 Bye, Bye, Birdie," OU, Okla City
20-24 "The Philadelphia Story," Jewell Box Theatre, Okla City
20-24 Little Mary Sunshine," Ponca City Playhouse, Ponca City
20-31 Taken In Marriage," American Theatre Co, Tulsa
22 Afton Chamber Players, Performing Arts Center, Tulsa

MUSIC/DANCE

DECEMBER
2 Kansas City Philharmonic, Phillips Univ, Enid
3-7 "Tango," Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
5 Country Music U.S.A. Concert, Civic Center, Okla City
6 Benny Goodman Big Band Patio, Pops Concert, Tulsa
7-9 Okla Symphony, Kirt vs Conducting, Okla City
8 The Messiah" with Okla Symphony, Phillips Univ, Enid
11 Sergio Lucas, Violinist, Philharmonic, Tulsa
12-13 "Movable Parts," Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
13-14 "The Nutcracker," Ballet Okla, Civic Center, Okla City
16 David Bradock, Tulsa Little Symphony, Tulsa
28 Afternoon Concert, Tulsa Little Symphony, Tulsa

JANUARY
16 Della Reese, Pops Concert, Okla City
26 Niccolò Zabete, Harpist, Philharmonic, Tulsa
27 "La Boheme," Texas Opera Theatre, OSU, Stillwater
24 Canadian Brass Quintet, OU, Norman
24-25 Okla Symphony, John Wright, Organist, Okla City

FEBRUARY
1 Afternoon Concert, Tulsa Little Symphony, Tulsa
2-4 "A New Day," OU, Stillwater
5 James Becco, Pianist, Philharmonic, Tulsa
6 A Evening of Cafe Porter, Pops Concert, Tulsa
7 Vincent Price, Lawton Philharmonic, Lawton
12 "American Dance Machine," Tulsa Ballet, Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
14 Eileen Farrell, Pops Concert, Tulsa
21-22 Okla Symphony, Horacio Gutierrez, Pianist, Okla City
22 New World String Quartet, Performing Arts Center, Tulsa
27 Ramsey Lewis Trio, Pops Concert, Okla City
28 Tulsa Ballet Theatre, Performing Arts Center, Tulsa

ARTS EXHIBITS

MARCH
5 Corintha Wixaraki & Leonard Braus, Philharmonic, Tulsa
7 Spring Spectacular, Ballet Okla, Civic Center, Okla City
10 "The Little Theatre," OKLA, OKLA, OKLA
13 Okla Symphony, Sir Charles Groove conducting, Okla City
14, 15 "La Boheme," Tulsa Opera, Tulsa
16, 17, 18 "The Beatles," Pops Concert, OKLA
18-20 Meet "The Beatles," Pops Concert, OKLA
20-22 Andre Previn & Pittsburgh Symphony, Philharmonic, Tulsa
27-24 An Evening of Ballet, J. R. Jones Theatre, OU, Norman
28, 29 Mason Williams, Pops Concert, Tulsa
29-29 Okla Symphony, Luis Herrera conducting, Okla City

RODEOS & HORSE EVENTS

DECEMBER
6, 14 National Finals Rodeo, Myriad, Okla City
9, 11, 12 Horse Farm Tour, Okla City

JANUARY
15-18 International Finals Rodeo, Assembly Center, Tulsa

SPECIAL EVENTS

DECEMBER
3-17 Boars Head Feast, NEOSU, Tahlequah
13 Mayor's Christmas Party, Civic Center, Okla City

JANUARY
7 Oklahoma Today's 25th Anniversary Reception, State Capitol, Okla City

FEBRUARY
17-18 Tourism and Recreation Industry Conference, Okla City
When you're talking football, you're talking Oklahoma, no matter what part of the world you're from. Always a tough contest every season is the OU-OSU game when all roads lead to Stillwater or Norman wherever the Cowboys and Sooners are playing.

Photo by Paul Lelebrec
Twenty-five years ago *Oklahoma Today* was established in an attempt to change a false image of Oklahoma as a desolate, dust-bowl state from which ragtag Okies were still fleeing westward toward California.

The terrible dust-bowl years of the late 1930s were long past; yet, in the middle 1950s the state was still burdened with the dust-bowl image. The dust bowl had included parts of Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and the Oklahoma Panhandle, but only Oklahoma got stuck with the dust-bowl stigma.

Part of the blame lay with John Steinbeck, whose novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, had so perfectly summed up the troubles of an Oklahoma migrant family in the Depression that no later image, however true, seemed to fit. The book appeared in 1939, the movie in 1940; yet in many people's minds the Okies of the middle 1950s were still fleeing their ravaged state.

Governor Raymond Gary, who took office in 1955, pushed the idea that a state magazine might change that image. “Too many people including Oklahomans looked upon Oklahoma as a backward state,” he recalled recently. “They remembered the state as it was portrayed in *The Grapes of Wrath*, a backward dust-bowl state. Of course this was not true. I wanted Oklahoma’s true image presented so I arranged for *Oklahoma Today* to be published. I wanted the nation to become acquainted with the new Oklahoma, a progressive, growing, developing state. I arranged for copies of the magazine to be mailed free to thousands of business executives, publishers and government officials through the nation.”

The first issue came out in January 1956 with a cover picture of a smiling baby bursting through a January calendar. It carried stories on the state’s industry and tourist attractions with rather routine photographs in black and white and black and blue duotone.

Editor John McWilliams wanted to go to color for the next issue and called in Paul E. Lefebvre, a young commercial artist, for help. Lefebvre, the magazine’s art director ever since, set the magazine on its course of printing luscious fullcolor pictures of the state’s lakes and rivers and mountains and grasslands which have been cut out and framed and hung on the walls of a generation of Oklahomans.

The new magazine was as welcome as a dipper of cold water to that mythical dust-bowl Okie. The back pages of succeeding issues carried glowing testimonials.

“I just read *Oklahoma Today* for the very first time,” wrote Lyman L. Bryan, a displaced Oklahoman in Detroit. “It’s a superbly edited, wonderfully written and very beautiful magazine, and it made me proud to be an Oklahoman.”

And Edward J. Cronin, secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts wrote: “Thank you for *Oklahoma Today*. I very much enjoyed reading it. The photography and art work are excellent. I was surprised to see all the water in Oklahoma. I was of the impression the only liquid available was oil.”

The early editors were all concerned with covering every corner of Oklahoma to point out that the state indeed had plenty of water and other natural resources. And they were doing it on shoestring budgets, writing their own stories, shooting their own pictures, arranging for free stories.

The magazine started out as a monthly but in economy moves was cut back to bimonthly for the second issue and to quarterly for the fall issue of 1957. McWilliams, a newspaperman who’d worked for the Daily Oklahoman and the Tulsa Tribune, remained as editor for one year and was replaced by Dave Loye, a TV writer-photographer. But when Bill Burghardt, a high school and college band master turned writer, became editor in 1960, he found the state’s negative image much the same.

“When I started out, no one in or out of Oklahoma thought it was beautiful,” he said. “I’d call people for a story, say I was from *Oklahoma Today*, and they’d say it was a shame you don’t have a beautiful state like Arizona so you could have a pretty magazine. In issue after issue I’d hear that, but then I didn’t hear it any more. I don’t think I heard it once in the last 12 years.

“I was trying to make everyone aware that Oklahoma was not a desert.
Limited by budget, Burchardt could pay only token prices for stories and pictures. “But at that time,” he said, “Oklahoma writers were so incensed at what they were reading about their state that they’d take the time to do an article or shoot a picture for us. Even the professionals who collected big money from other magazines would write free for us.”

Lefebvre agrees that the magazine has “never been a money-making deal for anybody.” In the early years printers often bid at cost to print the magazine so they could use it as a sample to draw in other color business. One printer told Lefebvre, “I want Oklahoma Today so I can wear it in my lapel.”

Another told him proudly, “You can thumb through the first volume of Oklahoma Today and see the history of color printing in Oklahoma.”

Once Lefebvre showed a copy of the magazine to the art director of the Saturday Evening Post, who told him, “This is fine, but where do you have it printed?”

“In Oklahoma City.”

The man shook his head. “I had no idea you had color facilities like that in Oklahoma City.”

An artist, Lefebvre didn’t even own a camera when he began work for the magazine, but said he soon found himself “wearing out automobiles” going over the state taking pictures. They used a lot of pictures because that was the only way they could make a quality magazine on a limited budget. In that way too, they could show Oklahoma as it truly was, in irrefutable, unretouched splendor.

“People were hungry for pictures of the state,” he said. “I’ve always been amazed at how many people in the Panhandle have never been in southeastern Oklahoma and can’t really believe all those hills and valleys, and how many people in southeastern Oklahoma have never been in the Panhandle. Now in traveling over the state I still see a lot of those old pictures framed in homes and libraries.”

Sue Carter, who became editor when Burchardt retired in October 1979, believes that the false image of Oklahoma has been corrected and now the magazine can take another step forward.

“People all over the country now accept the fact that Oklahoma is a beautiful state — tourism is our third largest industry — and our main purpose now is to point out the beautiful places for people to see and visit. Our long-term goal is to promote the state but with articles that will interest people and entertain them so they’ll go out and buy the magazine.”

From her first issue she concentrated on feature stories and used color pictures mainly to illustrate the stories. And with the autumn 1980 issue, the magazine went to a high gloss paper that gives more vivid detail to the color pages and a more modern, polished look to the magazine.

Governor George Nigh believes that the new format and new focus are necessary to bring the Oklahoma story up to date. Though a student of the state’s history, he wants to “get away from dwelling on Oklahoma’s past and instead tell the story of the great things happening in Oklahoma today.”

Nigh, a strong supporter of the magazine who as a legislator once helped stop an attempt to abolish it, feels that the magazine is a “key element in the promotion of Oklahoma.”

And Governor Gary, what does he think of the magazine after 25 years? “I feel the magazine has achieved the goal I had in mind,” he said. “I think it should continue to be published for as long as the state exists.”

By John Davis

John Davis is a Norman freelance writer.