



**35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Incorporation  
1972 – 2007**

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# OMA History

The Oklahoma Museums Association (OMA) is a non-profit organization serving Oklahoma's museum community. OMA was incorporated in 1972 with the state of Oklahoma, although its service predates 1972. OMA plays an active leadership role by offering a variety of services and programming including workshops and seminars, networking opportunities and projects that increase public awareness of Oklahoma's 300+ museums, historical societies, historic sites, zoos and botanical gardens, historic houses, living history museums, tribal cultural centers and other museum-related institutions.

The beginning of OMA goes back to the 1940's. References in early records note that during the 1960s, OMA experienced several periods of inactivity and reorganization. Very few records prior to the 1960's exist for the organization.

The mission of the Oklahoma Museums Association is to support Oklahoma museums in their efforts to educate, inform and entertain. OMA fulfills its mission by: 1) developing resources to fulfill the mission; 2) building networks among members and seeking collaborations with like-minded organizations; 3) encouraging public awareness of the existence, purposes and value of museums; 4) providing services that promote the professional growth of museum employees, volunteers and board members; and 5) advocating on behalf of museums.

Throughout the history of OMA, two continuous elements always have been present. First, the Oklahoma Museums Association has served its members well with networking, publications, workshops, professional referrals, seminars, Web resources, an annual conference and much more! Second, many individuals have given of their time, energy and financial resources to make OMA a strong museum service organization for the entire state. OMA appreciates this commitment by its many members, donors, board of directors and the Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC).

The following pages are a time line of 35+ years of OMA history and highlights.

# OMA Timeline

## 1960's

- 1960 In October, a meeting was held to organize the Oklahoma Museums Association.
- 1961 On May 13, the first official OMA meeting was held at the Stovall Museum, Norman. Twenty-two members from twelve museums attended.
- 1968 In the spring, OMA reorganized after several years of inactivity.

## 1970's

- 1970 OMA's budget was \$60.
- 1971 Dues were \$2 individual and \$5 institution. The budget was \$100.
- 1972 OMA incorporated as an Oklahoma nonprofit organization.
- 1973 Dues increased to \$3 individual and \$10 institution.
- 1974 The budget was \$1100.
- 1975 An editor assisted with the newsletter. The budget was \$2600.
- 1976 Robin Tryloff was hired as the OMA Coordinator. A grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the Oklahoma Arts & Humanities Council funded the position. The office was located at the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS).
- 1977 Early in the year, the office moved to 518 NW 13th Street, Oklahoma City, in the Neighborhood Development and Conservation Center. A summer workshop on packing museum objects was presented. Membership totaled 150.
- 1978 In the spring, the office relocated to Guthrie. Alvin Turner was hired as OMA Director after serving as Interim Director. OMA offered a workshop on caring for textiles and leather. Oklahoma hosted the Mountain-Plains Museums Association (MPMA) Conference at the Skirvin Hotel in Oklahoma City.

## 1980's

- 1980 OMA sponsored workshops in Tulsa and Oklahoma City on volunteer programs. OMA participated in the first International Museums Day on May 18.

Members mourned the death of J. Keever Greer, Stovall Director and former OMA President, who had received the OMA's distinguished service award.

- 1981 Donald Bridgwater became the new Director of OMA. The OMA newsletter was renamed *MuseNEWS*.
- 1982 OMA staff and council members discussed plans for a traveling exhibits service which would be called OMATES. The organization explored the possible purchase of a historic building in Guthrie for its office.
- 1983 Donald Bridgwater announced his resignation in early spring and in fall, Carolyn Pool began working part-time as the new OMA Director. The office moved to the Kirkpatrick Center in Oklahoma City.
- 1984 The year started with OMA and OHS co-sponsoring a workshop on funding resources. OMA began touring a few exhibitions from the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities (OFH). Sam Olkinetzky received the OMA distinguished service award. OMA's budget had increased to almost \$20,000.
- 1985 OMA's membership totaled 95 and the budget had grown to almost \$33,000. The traveling exhibits service, funded by OFH, became known as TRACKS. A grant from the National Museum Act funded a two-day collections care workshop co-sponsored by OMA and OHS.
- 1986 The newsletter expanded to eight pages. OMA and OHS co-sponsored a two-day seminar on historic structures preservation. A committee was organized to develop guidelines for an awards program. OMA President Fred Myers appointed the initial committee to study a possible field service program. Committee members were Carolyn Pool, Kathy Dickson, Louis Coleman, Lois Malin and Mary Herron.
- 1987 A call for nominations was issued for the new awards program. OMA received a \$65,000 challenge grant from the Kerr Foundation to fund a field services program with OHS co-sponsoring the project. Pledges were received from the McCasland Foundation and the Kirkpatrick Foundation.
- 1988 The OMA volunteer consultant service had sixteen people offering their expertise to fellow members. Cherie Cook began working as the field services advisor and Sondra Kemnitzer was hired as the field service administrative

assistant. The purpose of the field service was to offer Oklahoma museums and historical societies technical information and assistance in collections preservation and management.

- 1989 This was a very busy year for OMA. Continuing its series of IMS-funded statewide seminars, OMA offered three statewide collections care training opportunities. A technical bulletin series in *MuseNEWS* was started. The field service conducted 42 on-site consultations and four regional workshops during the year. After months of planning, the Oklahoma museum community hosted the MPMA annual meeting. The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recognized the TRACKS traveling exhibits service as a *model* program. OMA received a planning grant to work with OFH to produce three museum education programs.

### 1990's

- 1990 The OMA budget had grown to \$113,000. Statewide seminars were presented on exhibit interpretation, label writing and care of paper materials. The field service offered an additional 19 regional workshops and 24 on-site consultations. The long-awaited publication, *THE SOURCE: A Museum Reference Manual* was available. Sondra Kemnitzer moved from the field service to the OMA office and began as TRACKS coordinator.
- 1991 OMA continued to serve its members by offering four statewide seminars, 12 regional workshops (in conjunction with the field service), technical bulletins, education programs and other services. In July, OHS received legislative approval to permanently fund the field service coordinator's position. A new Tribal Museum/Cultural Center Assistance Program was developed and provided on-site consultations. In October, former OMA President Fred Myers, Director of the Gilcrease Museum, passed away.
- 1992 At the September American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Annual Meeting, OMA and OFH were presented an Award of Merit for the Museum Education Programs project. During the year, OMA embarked upon a new project by coordinating the NEH funded *Many Peoples, One Land: The Oklahoma Experience* traveling exhibits project. OMA and OHS field service continued to provide statewide and regional workshops for members.

- 1993 In August, OMA Director Carolyn Pool announced her resignation effective in October. In September, the OMA Search Committee and Council announced they hired Cherie Cook as the new Director. The Council and membership approved a five-year long range plan for OMA. She began her new duties as Director and Carolyn Pool remained affiliated with OMA as Project Director for the Museums West project, a contracted service of OMA. In December, Carolyn Pool was presented with a Governor's Arts Award.
- 1994 On January 1, OMA began a new NEH funded project titled *Oklahoma: The Land and the People*. The purpose of the eighteen-month project was to provide professional training in exhibit planning, research, interpretation and design to staff and volunteer teams from eight Oklahoma museums. The training included seminars, independent study and on-site consultations. In March, OMA staff and volunteers began working on a second major project. The two-year Save Outdoor Sculpture (SOS!) project would focus on surveying Oklahoma's large variety of outdoor sculpture. In July, Stacy Shelton O'Daniel was named the new coordinator for the TRACKS program. At the conference, museum registrars gathered to establish a new OMA standing professional committee, OKRA (Oklahoma Registrar's Association). By the end of the year, OMA members had successfully raised \$2,500 to match a challenge grant from the Kirkpatrick Foundation for the start of an OMA endowment fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.
- 1995 Following the Murrah Federal Building bombing on April 19, OMA coordinated the city-wide *Day for Children* event. In June, the NEH project on exhibits was completed and the eight participating museums had openings for their exhibitions. In August, OMA lost a friend and colleague, Laura McDonagh Streich, to cancer. Laura was Curator at the Pioneer Woman Museum and on the OMA Council since 1992. Kathy Dickson of the Oklahoma Historical Society received the OMA Award for Service to the Profession. In October, the American Association of Museums (AAM) presented its prestigious Medal for Distinguished Philanthropy to John Kirkpatrick. OMA had joined with the Omniplex Science Museum in nominating Mr. Kirkpatrick for the national honor.

- 1996 In April, a two-day workshop on caring for historic photographs was presented. Museums set up tables promoting museums week at the capitol as part of Museums Week. OMA held a joint conference with the MPMA in Guthrie. In June, museum educators gathered to start an OMA standing professional committee called OKME (Oklahoma Museums Educators). Sandra Stratton was presented with the OMA service award, now titled the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession. OMA completed its survey of over 300 outdoor sculptures as part of the national SOS! project.
- 1997 OMA offered its first information fair for college students interested in a career in the museum profession. A membership campaign netted more than 80 new members, taking the membership over 300. Dr. Bob Blackburn was presented with the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession.
- 1998 OMA moved to new office space within the Omniplex Science Museum. A new Web site was launched, [www.okmuseums.org](http://www.okmuseums.org). Looking toward the future, the Council held a planning retreat in Guthrie. OMA consulted with the Oklahoma Watercolor Association regarding their traveling exhibit. OMA became a member of a nationwide state museum association group, National Alliance of State Museum Associations. Edward Linenthal was the keynote speaker at the conference with the topic, *Controversy in Exhibits*. Professional development for the year included touring techniques as well as school and museum collaborations. Mary Herron received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession
- 1999 The year started with OMA receiving an IMLS grant for the Oklahoma Museums for the Millennium pilot project which involved 12 communities, museums, libraries and schools. Carolyn Pool was presented the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession. The lending library was updated. OMA workshops included traveling exhibits, museum security and care of ceramics. New membership levels were established. The Council approved a retirement plan for the staff and Stacy began working full-time.

## 2000's

- 2000 A Council retreat produced significant recommended bylaws changes including renaming the governing body from a Council to a Board of Directors, replacing district alternate positions on the board with at-large members and adopting a new mission statement, which the OMA members approved - *The Oklahoma Museums Association exists to support Oklahoma museums in their efforts to educate, inform, and entertain.* OMA offered, for the first time scholarships to workshops. The workshop topics were the care of wood and basket collections, museum education and the value to a community and materials for storage, packing and exhibition collections. Robert Powers received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession. OMA launched a new collections management training course for small museums called MARC (Museum Accessioning and Registration Course). Two cooperative advertisements for museums were placed in Oklahoma Today and Frontier Country. OMA began looking toward the state centennial.
- 2001 OMA continued to work on gaining state sales tax exemption for all of Oklahoma's museums including hiring a lobbyist to work on the bill, which unfortunately did not pass. OMA partnered with the MPMA to offer a joint conference in Tulsa. A new and popular addition to the Web site was job announcements. OMA workshops included the topics of museum missions, interactive learning and mannequins.
- 2002 OMA distributed a series of 30 PSA's to 100 radio stations. OMA was involved in the Candidates for Governor Forum on Public Funding for the Arts. OMA debuted a new Web site, logo and colors of raspberry and blue. OMA workshops included the topics of photo archives and technology, internet marketing and outcome-based evaluation. OMA was a sponsor of the Governor's Conference on Tourism and started a members-only event, MIX. OKRA started a bi-monthly electronic newsletter, a mid-winter meeting and online community.
- 2003 As part of Oklahoma Museums Week, OMA sent a series of news releases focusing on how OMA serves museums in the state. The OMA workshops were on volunteer recruitment and management, interpreting art and artifacts as well as PastPerfect museum software. OMA was a co-sponsor in three Department of

Library forums as well as the first-ever Oklahoma Archives Week. Technical bulletin #41 was added, *Guide to Emergency Management Supplies, Services and Resources*. Julie Droke received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession. The OMA board elected not to continue the contract for the TRACKS traveling exhibit program and focus staff efforts on the OMA mission, programs and services.

- 2004 OMA launched a new membership brochure, thanks to a grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. The first-ever OMA annual campaign kicked-off at the conference. Workshops included a two-day disaster preparedness seminar, collections policy and programs for baby boomers. A formal MARC Course curriculum was developed. OMA partnered with ExhibitsUSA and OAC for a project titled *Oklahoma Museums Initiative*. The Investment Committee began the groundwork for an Investment Policy. Long time Executive Director, Cherie Cook, left OMA on December 31. The members and board of OMA publicly thanked Cherie for her eleven years. Brenda Granger was named as her replacement. Stacy O'Daniel celebrated ten years and Cherie Cook received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession.
- 2005 The year started with a survey to Oklahoma museums asking their needs for future OMA programming. OMA programming and services continued to grow and the audience reached 75 of the 77 Oklahoma counties and 224 communities. Professional training included MARC, museum movement techniques, label writing and quality educational programming. Membership expert, Dana Hines, presented a workshop. A third SPC committee was approved, OKMADA (Oklahoma Membership and Development Association). OMA actively co-sponsored Oklahoma Museums Week, Tourism Week, Archives Week and Governor's Conference on Tourism. OMA contributed to the Southeastern Museums Conference fund for museums affected by Hurricane Katrina. A MIX event was held. Michael Bruce received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for Service to the Profession. The OMA conference expanded with a town hall meeting, job announcements and comment corner.
- 2006 AAM along with OMA and the Governor, declared 2006 as Year of the Museum. OMA began processing OMA registrations, memberships and

- donations online. OMA started using fundraising software to track donor contributions. The fiscal year changed to July-June. OMA continued to work on the sales tax exemption bill, which failed, again. OMA partnered with the Mid-America Arts Alliance on an IMLS Leadership Grant for the HELP program for small museums. The OMA board adopted an extensive Fiscal Operation Policy which included a document destruction statement and whistleblower protection. Professional development workshops included the MARC program, planning programs for the Oklahoma centennial, engaging educators and conservation. OMA coordinated the education venue at the annual Governor's SeptemberFest. Doris McGranahan received the Laura McDonagh Streich Award for the Service to the Profession. OMA gave 33 scholarships representing 24 institutions. OMA participated in the first-ever Destination Makeover at the Washington Irving Trail Museum. Two popular M!X events were held. OMA finished the year by approving a new logo.
- 2007 This year marks the anniversary of 100 years of Oklahoma statehood and thirty-five years of the incorporation of OMA. The OMA board adopted a Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Statement and board job descriptions. Another project was redistricting the OMA districts for better representation. Workshops included MARC, volunteers, program evaluations, collections policies and grant writing. OMA and the Museum of the Red River held a reception at the AAM annual meeting for members and friends. An updated Web site was launched and included a blog. Focus groups were used to determine future programming. OMA joined the Federal Formula Grant Coalition to increase federal museum funding by the year 2009. OMA partnered with organizations on workshops throughout the year including a conference on Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums. OMA received the Oklahoma Heritage Association's Edward L. & Thelma Gaylord Oklahoma Territory Award for Preservation of State and Local History. The OMA membership is 430 and the annual budget is just under \$200,000.

*OMA history compiled by Cherie Cook in 1997 and Brenda Granger in 2007*

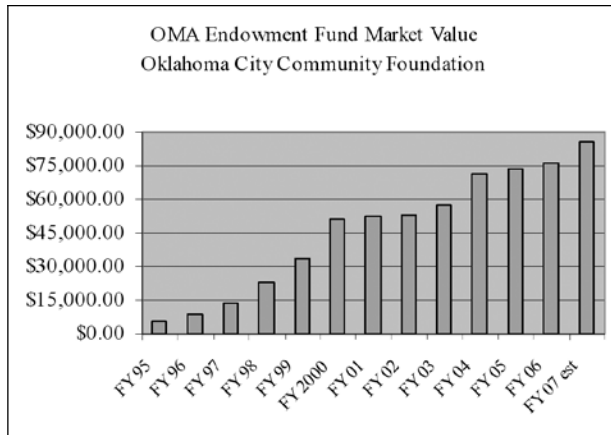
# OMA Programs and Services

OMA, a museum service organization, is the primary provider of professional development training and technical information to staff and volunteers of Oklahoma's 300 museums, historical societies, historic sites, zoos and botanical gardens, historic houses, living history museums, tribal cultural centers and other museum-related institutions. The OMA office is located in the Omniplex Science Museum in Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma Museums Association programs and services include:

- Networking - opportunities for museum staff and volunteers to develop a network
- Quarterly Newsletter - *MuseNEWS*
- Annual Fall Conference - 2.5 days of sessions, workshops, and events
- Workshops and Seminars - training opportunities
- Museum Accessioning and Registration of Collections (MARC) Course
- Traveling Art Exhibitions - exhibits sponsored OAC
- Office Referrals and Consultations - OMA staff can provide help with questions
- Lending Library - more than 350 books and other materials available for loan
- Technical Bulletin Series - published regularly
- Annual Awards Program - recognizes individual service and institutions
- Standing Professional Committees – online community
- Professional Liaison - representation to local, regional, and national associations
- Advocate - OMA represents its members on the state, regional and national levels regarding issues of concern to the Oklahoma museum community
- E-list - announcements and updates sent to OMA members via e-mail
- MIX Events - annual networking event for members
- Web Site - easy access to OMA information and resources
- Affinity Programs - a way to support OMA through merchandise purchases
- E-Mentor Program - eligibility to participate
- Scholarship Opportunities - members can apply for scholarships

# Leave Your Legacy in OMA



Please assist with the future of the Oklahoma Museums Association by considering the following two opportunities. First, donations to the Endowment Fund are accepted and appreciated. Donations may be made online at the giving page at [www.okmuseums.org](http://www.okmuseums.org) or you can send a check to the OMA office marked for the endowment fund. Second, OMA would appreciate you remembering the organization in your will. If you are interested in leaving OMA a charitable bequest, the language in your will should contain the following: I/We give the Oklahoma Museums Association (EIN 73-1004791) a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, the following money or asset (describe here) to benefit their charitable purpose.

*OMA encourages you to consult your estate planner, tax professional or attorney when preparing your charitable bequest*

# OMA Leadership

## *OMA Presidents*

ca 1966	Marvin Tong, Institute of the Great Plains, Lawton
1967-69	J. Keever Greer, Stovall Museum, Norman
1970-72	Bill Pitts, Northwestern State College, Alva
1973-75	Ralph Jones, Oklahoma Historical Society, OKC
1976-77	Martin Hagerstrand, Cherokee National Hist Society, Tahlequah
1978-79	Sam Olkinetzky, OU Museum of Art, Norman
1980-83	Jesse G. Wright, Jr., Philbrook, Tulsa
1984-85	William Hommel, Kirkpatrick Center, OKC
1986-88	Fred Myers, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa
1989-90	Kathy Dickson, Oklahoma Historical Society, OKC
1991-92	Christine Knop Kallenberger, Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa
1993-94	Richard Ryan, Ft. Gibson Military Park, Ft. Gibson
1995-96	Robert Powers, Tulsa Historical Society, Tulsa
1997-98	Nancy Lowe-Clark, Greater Southwest Historical Museum, Ardmore
1999-2000	Valerie Haynes, Guthrie Museum Complex, Guthrie
2001-02	Melissa Owens, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, OKC
2003-04	Michael Bruce, Guthrie Museum Complex, Guthrie
2005-06	Ken Busby, Arts & Humanities Council of Tulsa, Tulsa
2007-08	Marci Donaho, Jasmine Moran Children's Museum, Seminole

## *OMA Executive Directors*

1976-77	Robin Tryloff
1978-80	Alvin O. Turner
1981-83	Donald Bridgwater
1983-93	Carolyn Garrett Pool
1993-2004	Cherie Cook
2005-present	Brenda Granger

*OMA Support Staff* Karen Redman, Ann Hoyt, Gylynn Maranville, Sondra Kemnitzer and Stacy O'Daniel *Note: incomplete list of support staff*

# OMA Governance

## *OMA Board of Directors, 2007*

Marci Donaho, President, Jasmine Moran Children's Museum, Seminole  
Deborah Burke, Vice President, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa  
Gena Timberman Howard, Esq, Secretary, American Indian Cultural Center, OKC  
David Anderson, Treasurer, Creek Council House Museum, Okmulgee  
Ken Busby, Immediate Past President, Arts & Humanities Council of Tulsa, Tulsa

Julie Baird, Leonardo's Discovery Warehouse, Enid  
Susan Baley, Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, Norman  
Dr. Bill Bryans, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater  
Bert Castro, Oklahoma City Zoological Park and Botanical Garden, OKC  
Tobie Cunningham, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa  
Melanie Davidson, Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, Norman  
Ken Fullbright, Santa Fe Depot Museum, Shawnee  
John Hernandez, Museum of the Great Plains, Lawton  
Sue Linder-Linsley, Chickasaw Cultural Center, Ada  
Kristin Mravinec, Greater Southwest Historical Museum, Ardmore  
Dan Provo, Oklahoma Museum of History, Oklahoma City  
Michelle Finch-Walker, Forest Heritage Center, Broken Bow  
Kari Watkins, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, OKC

## Standing Professional Committee Representatives

Lynne Roller, OKME Rep, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, OKC  
Delaynna Trim, OKRA Rep, Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art, Shawnee  
Stacey Weddington, OKMADA Rep, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, OKC

## *Founding OMA Council, 1972*

Sarah Ball, Canadian Co Hist Society  
Martha Blaine, Oklahoma Hist Society  
James Fricke, Fort Washita  
R. Pearl Golden, JM Davis Gun Museum  
J. Keever Greer, Stovall Museum  
I.C. Gunning, Eastern Okla Hist Soc  
Charles Hair, City of Ponca City

Gabrille W. Jones, Gilcrease Museum  
Ralph W. Jones, OHS  
Earl Metcalf, Sod House Site/OHS  
James Miles, Institute of the Great Plains  
Bill Pitts, NW State College Museum  
Henry A Secondine, Nowata Co. Hist Soc  
Charles Wallis, Connors State College Museum

# OMA Conferences

- 1968 Norman (*spring*) and National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Oklahoma City (*fall*)
- 1969 Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa (*spring*) and OHS, Oklahoma City (*fall*)
- 1970 Poteau (*spring*) and Claremore (*fall*)
- 1971 Oklahoma Arts & Science Foundation, Oklahoma City (*spring*) and Fort Washita (*fall*)
- 1972 Ponca City (*spring*) and Lawton (*fall*)
- 1973 Alva (*spring*) and Claremore (*fall*)
- 1974 Norman (*spring*) and Tahlequah (*fall*)
- 1975 Altus (*spring*) and Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City (*fall*)
- 1976 Stillwater (*spring*) and Poteau (*fall*)
- 1977 Ft. Sill Museum (*spring*)
- 1980 Oklahoma Territorial Museum, Guthrie (*spring*)
- 1981 Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa (*spring*) and Oklahoma Museum of Art, Oklahoma City (*fall*)
- 1982 Oklahoma Art Center & NW Holiday Inn, Oklahoma City (*fall*)
- 1983 Kirkpatrick Center, Oklahoma City
- 1984 Roman Nose Lodge, Watonga
- 1985 Westin Hotel, Tulsa
- 1986 Norman
- 1987 OSU, Stillwater
- 1988 Phillips Hotel, Bartlesville
- 1989 Marriott Hotel, Oklahoma City (in partnership with the MPMA conference)
- 1990 Marland Estate Conference Center, Ponca City
- 1991 Howard Johnson Hotel, Lawton
- 1992 Westin Hotel, Tulsa
- 1993 Cherokee Strip Conference Center, Enid
- 1994 Fountainhead Lodge, Eufaula
- 1995 Fifth Season Inn, Oklahoma City
- 1996 Harrison House, Guthrie (in partnership with MPMA conference)
- 1997 Northwest Inn, Woodward
- 1998 Lake Murray Resort, Ardmore
- 1999 Ramada Inn, Altus
- 2000 Holiday Inn, Norman
- 2001 Doubletree Hotel, Tulsa (in partnership with the MPMA conference)
- 2002 Forest Heritage Center, Broken Bow
- 2003 Simmons Center, Duncan
- 2004 Ramada Inn, Edmond
- 2005 Quartz Mountain, Lone Wolf
- 2006 Oklahoma City Zoological Park and Botanical Garden, Oklahoma City
- 2007 Elk City Civic Center, Elk City