

OKLAHOMA MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

T I M E L I N E

1 9 5 2

Need for a state museums association first recognized and formally discussed.

1 9 6 0

Move to organize a state-wide museums association continued.

1 9 6 8

Third time is a charm! Formal workshops held, including "Exhibits for Small Museums: Function, Planning, and Building." These events will lead to the establishment of a formal association.

1 9 7 2

May 24, 1972 saw the official establishment of the Oklahoma Museums Association.
It's OMA's birthday!

1 9 7 6

OMA is officially recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, charitable nonprofit by the Internal Revenue Service.

We also hire our first coordinator through grant funds.

1 9 9 4

Stacy O'Daniel joins OMA as the Administrative & Programs Associate.

2 0 0 5

Brenda Granger joins OMA as its sixth Executive Director.

2 0 0 9

OMA begins tradition of attending annual AAM Advocacy Day in Washington to support Oklahoma museums on a federal level.

2 0 1 0

OMA begins annual reception at national American Alliance of Museums conference.

2 0 1 4

OMA partners with associations from Texas, Florida, Virginia, and California to develop a consortium of leading state museums associations working to impact the profession on a national level.

2 0 1 7

OMA continues to plan and work for the future of all of Oklahoma's 500+ museums. It comes full-circle by initiating a Community of Practice for small, rural, and isolated museums.

2 0 2 1

OMA begins preparations for celebrating a half-century of service to the Oklahoma museum community with a "Toast to 50 and Beyond" at the 2021 OMA annual conference in Shawnee.

2 0 2 2

OMA is 50 years old and growing stronger in its work to assist Oklahoma museums in their efforts to educate, inform, and entertain!

The idea

of an Oklahoma Museums Association actually began in 1952. That year, a group of 25 dedicated museum professionals and volunteers around Oklahoma came together and informally formed an association in support of Oklahoma museums. They believed "the need for such an association of people interested in preserving objects of the cultural and historic past of Oklahoma has long been recognized by leading minds in the state." Although there was great interest in forming a museums association at the time, no organization was ever developed.

There was a move to reorganize in 1960 and again in 1968. One for the first 1968 meeting topics was "Exhibits for Small Museums: Function, Planning and Building."

*"the need for such an association...
has long been recognized by leading minds
in the state"*

Then on May 24, 1972, twenty years after the initial first meeting of interested individuals, the Oklahoma Museums Association was officially established and incorporated with the Oklahoma Secretary of State as a nonprofit organization. ***We consider this our real birthday!***

According to the articles of incorporation, OMA was formed with the objective of promoting the welfare of museums and their advancement as educational institutions, as agencies of scientific research and as cultural centers; to foster continued improvement of the museum profession through the development and observance of high standards of ethics, conduct, education, and scholarly attainments; to increase and diffuse knowledge through meetings, reports, papers, discussions, publications and various media of publicity and communication; and to encourage cooperation among Oklahoma museums and those interested in them.

After incorporation, programming flourished and included starting a technical bulletin series as well as holding two meetings a year. The meeting agendas included a bus tour, cocktails, bar-b-que, music, mixing, short swap shop of ideas, and a quick annual meeting followed by lunch and another tour.

A few big milestones happened in 1976. First, OMA was recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3, tax exempt organization for educational and charitable purposes and Second, OMA hired its first coordinator thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the Oklahoma Arts and Humanities Council, which is now known as the Oklahoma Arts Council. The Oklahoma Arts Council is a tremendous supporter of OMA and has been a partner in our success since the beginning.

The Oklahoma Museums Association is the primary provider of training and technical information to staff, volunteers, board members and interested individuals for Oklahoma's over 500+ museums, historic sites, tribal cultural centers, and historical societies.

Over four decades since our creation, OMA is proud to continue with its mission of supporting Oklahoma museums in their efforts to educate, inform, and entertain. The OMA staff and board work statewide with museums and cultural organizations, and has a national reputation as one of the most active museum associations in the country.

We continually strive to add and improve our programs and services so that we can better serve our Oklahoma museums.

Oklahoma Museums Association
2020 Remington Place
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111
Phone 405.424.7757
www.OKMuseums.org



OKLAHOMA MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

FUN FACTS & FIGURES



OMA receives support from its:

- 17 Museum Partners
- 128 Individual members
- 139 Museum members
- 420 Designated members

FOR A TOTAL OF 704 MEMBERS!

The organizations that signed OMA's articles of incorporation in 1974 are:

Northwestern State College Museum
Oklahoma Historical Society Division of Museums
University of Oklahoma Stovall Museum of Science and History
Canadian County Historical Society
Fort Washita Site
City of Ponca City
Eastern Oklahoma Historical Society
Institute of the Great Plains
Nowata County Historical Society
Conners State College Museum
Sod House Site



Since 2009, OMA has sent representatives to Washington, DC to advocate at a national level for issues important to Oklahoma Museums.



Annually, OMA organizes a fall conference that brings hundreds of museum professionals together from across the Sooner State. The three-day event offers educational workshops, professional development, networking, and FUN! The conference is held in a different city each year so that attendees can experience the cultural and artistic diversity of Oklahoma.



As of December 2021, OMA serves 513 museums, historical societies, and cultural centers in over 200 communities across Oklahoma.

Since 2010, OMA's SMARTIES Trivia Night has been bringing together the best and brightest (well, more or less) in the Oklahoma museum world for a night of fun, fundraising, and frivolity to benefit the programs and services of OMA.



OMA is blessed with a gifted and dedicated staff.

Stacy O'Daniel [left] has been with us since 1994 and is the Administrative & Program Associate. She keeps the OMA office running smoothly and makes our programs and events the "Smartiest" in all the land!



Brenda Granger [above] has served as OMA Executive Director since 2005 and has taken OMA's championship of Oklahoma museums to a national level.

Since inception in 1974, OMA has had only six directors.

Robin Tryloff
Alvin O. Turner
Donald Bridgewater
Carolyn Pool
Cherie Cook
Brenda Granger

Beginning April 2018 OMA launches its inaugural nOMAdS travel program with a trip to Athens and the Greek Isles. The program is designed to connect museum professionals and supporters through a love of travel in culturally-rich environments. 2020 saw a ten-day trip to exciting and vibrant Ireland.



Brought together in 2014 at a "Museums United" workshop funded by IMLS, major museum associations from OK, TX, CA, VA, and FL saw an opportunity to connect and impact the museum profession on a national level. As an indirect result of their partnership, an IMLS funded grant, "Museums United – Phase 2" resulted in a new initiative, Coalition of State Museum Associations (COSMA), in which all state museum associations are working collaboratively under their auspices to develop critical tools and resources to help address strategic issues significant to the success and sustainability of American museums.

