

**HIGHLIGHTS
OF
THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM
NOVEMBER 2013 – DECEMBER 2014**

CELEBRATING WILSON'S CENTENNIAL!

By
Carole Gandy Pinches

“To achieve all that is possible, we must attempt the impossible.
To be as much as we can be, we must dream of being more.”

Every year as I start to write this newsletter, I continue to ponder the meaning of the above quote and how it has applied to what we have accomplished as the Wilson Historical Society and what we still dream of for the future. Without our dedicated members and friends, we would not be where we are today. I am grateful to each and every one of you for your continued and loyal support.

Before listing some of our accomplishments for 2014, I will begin on a note of sadness. Most of you probably know that we lost my aunt, Anna Clark Cumpton, on June 1st. She had not felt well for sometime; nevertheless, her death came as a shock not only to her family but to the Historical Society as well. She and Carl had been staunch supporters of my dream for a Museum for many long years, and now they are both gone; they are greatly missed.

On a more positive note, we had a busy and exciting year. It began with an \$8,100 grant from the Jerome Westheimer Foundation for more bookcases for the Museum. These are sturdy, wooden bookcases that match almost identically the other display cases and bookcases we already had; some are double-sided, while others are single-sided, giving us a total of 170 linear feet of shelving space. This addition gave us an opportunity to do some rearranging in the Museum.

Our major focus was Wilson's Centennial. Since Wilson had been incorporated on November 5, 1914, it was decided to celebrate in grand style on November 5, 2014. However, there were other ways in which the Centennial was recognized during the year – a few are mentioned here:

- In March, the Wilson Public Library celebrated the Centennial with “A Step Back In Time” by inviting Ann Muncy, retired history/journalism teacher from Wilson, to speak on Wilson's history. Guests also enjoyed a slide presentation from the Wilson Historical Museum on Wilson's early days.
- In May, the Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Wilson Ministerial Alliance hosted a hamburger cookout with “popcorn preaching” – a large crowd attended.
- In June, the Church of Christ hosted a Centennial celebrating their church's one hundred years as well as Wilson's one hundred years. A luncheon was held with the Museum's slide show presented afterwards to a very enthusiastic and interested crowd.

- *The Centennial Cookbook: Honoring Wilson's Cooks from the Past* was published in the Fall due to the untiring efforts of Farah Bazzrea, Barbara Burris, George Pinches and Nita Segroves. This is an 8 ½ x11" hardbound book featuring almost 200 former and present Wilson cooks and over 525 recipes. It also includes stories about Wilson, ads from old Wilson papers and some pictures of Wilson. Purchasers of the historical cookbook have raved about it! We have sold over 250 copies and have additional copies for sale. If you haven't purchased a cookbook, you should do so now. It sells for \$45.00 plus \$3.83 sales tax (Oklahoma residents only); shipping and handling is \$7.00. The book may also be ordered from our website: whm@wilsonhistoricalmuseum.org.
- Then on November 5th, the City of Wilson and the Historical Society hosted the Centennial Celebration. It began with a parade, followed by a dinner of old-fashioned red-top stew, and a program featuring the ministers or their representative from the churches that have been in Wilson for 100 years – the Baptist, the Church of Christ, and the Methodist – each speaking about their early days and moving from Hewitt into Wilson. A beautiful 16-page Centennial brochure containing pictures and some of Wilson's early history was given to all guests; the celebration climaxed with a fireworks display put on by the Wilson and Dillard Fire Departments. *The Wilson Post-Democrat* even did a beautiful Centennial Edition of the paper for us.
- As a part of Wilson's Centennial, the Centennial/Mural Committee secured the services of Dr. Bob Palmer, an art professor at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond and his team of mural artists to come to Wilson to paint murals on some of Wilson's buildings. The project began the day after the Centennial Celebration. As a mural design artist, Dr. Palmer designs murals based, in part, on pictures of the town. There was enthusiastic financial support for the murals – with the result being that we now have beautiful murals on six buildings which add immensely to Wilson's beautification. (See enclosed pictures). Over \$30,000 was raised; we have paid Dr. Palmer, and have sufficient funds for a large plaque listing all the donors and those memorialized, and there are also funds to have lighting put on the murals so they may be seen at night as well as in the daytime. If funds remain after the plaque and lighting are completed, they will be used for a park in downtown Wilson.

Needless to say, 2014 was quite a year for not only the Wilson Historical Society/Museum, but for the City of Wilson; we appreciate immensely all those who helped in various ways to make this Centennial year so successful. And now, thinking ahead to the future, Mindy Taylor is still working on her Vietnam book, and I am still working on Wilson's history. Someday both of those books will be available for purchase.

Don't forget – you can help preserve the history of Wilson and the region by (1) donating pictures and artifacts to the Museum, (2) by renewing your membership or becoming a lifetime member, and (3) making donations to the Museum to help with operating expenses, or for our Endowment. Remember, we wouldn't be what we are today without your support and we look forward to your continued support in the future!

Thank You!