

HIGHLIGHTS

THE WILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

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!”

Since our newsletter of last October, we have been planning for and achieving a few more of our dreams.

- Shortly after last October’s newsletter went out, we held our Annual Recognition Dinner. Beth Tucker was recognized as Volunteer of the Year. After retiring from the Courthouse in Ardmore, she became a volunteer in 2016 and has spent virtually every Friday since then at the Museum assisting in various research projects as well as greeting our visitors.
- Mindy Taylor, a volunteer since 2005 was awarded the Friend of the Museum award for serving as the Museum’s Genealogist during which she has accumulated and filed over 10,000 obituaries in the Museum, has compiled the WWII and Korea-Vietnam hardback books, prepares the weekly “Museum Memories” column for *The Wilson Post-Democrat*, as well as serving as a docent at least a couple of days a month.
- In late November highway signs were installed directing people to the Museum. We were approved for five signs—two on Highway 70 at both entrances into Wilson, with another on Highway 76 coming into Wilson from the south. Two others are on Highway 70A, closer to downtown Wilson. We greatly appreciate the financial assistance received from the City of Wilson, the Wilson Chamber of Commerce, and the Westheimer Family Foundation for this endeavor. The Westheimer Foundation also made it possible to replace the lettering on the outside of the Museum which had deteriorated due to its age.
- In December it was decided to devote a display case in the Museum to rotating displays—hoping to get members of the community more involved. Thus far, we have had displays of Jake Smith’s time spent in Afghanistan, Nita Segroves Santa’s, a display of Hewitt memorabilia and currently, a small collection of elephants. The items typically remain on display for a couple of months.
- January found the Museum closed for its annual cleaning and redoing some of the displays. Displays added were memorabilia of Dr. Noma Rector, Wilson’s churches, a Kate Galt Zaneis exhibit, and a collection of hats and cameras.

- In the spring we received a grant from the Chickasaw Nation to help with the publication of the history of Wilson that is being worked on; acquired the newly revised edition of Charles Walker's *Vignettes of Orr History*; finished the centennial monument with the addition of lights for evening viewing; and lost three of our very special and devoted members—Maudine Herrell, Billie Kerr and Cecil Sides.
- The Museum participated in the Wilson High School Alumni Dinner and Celebration in April with Dottie Stearns and Mindy Taylor taking Museum Store items to the event to be sold. It was an enjoyable evening as many who attended the dinner hadn't had an opportunity to visit the Museum. George and I also participated in the Zaneis Reunion by reporting on the Kate Galt Zaneis memorabilia received by the Museum, as well as promoting the history of Wilson book.
- In preparation for the upcoming Wilson history, George has worked diligently to acquire and scan more pictures for the Museum's collection. Thus, we have significantly enlarged the number of pictures from Wilson and the region in the Museum's archives.
- On the first of August, we held a planning retreat—focusing on what we wanted to achieve in the next year and beyond. First on the list was to create a historical calendar for 2019. This will be an on-going project with a new calendar to come out each year featuring different historical pictures. The calendars will be available at the Museum or they can be ordered on-line. Farah Bazzrea, Peggy Herrin, Dottie Stearns and Beth Tucker are working on this project.
- Two other projects initiated due to the planning retreat involved working more closely with the Wilson school system. Denise Holt and Mindy Taylor are working to have the school bring its students into the Museum on field trips so that they might learn more about the history of their hometown. Then, Farah Bazzrea, Dottie Stearns and Beth Tucker are working to establish a community award for which any graduating senior living in Wilson would be eligible. Plans include encouraging community service, and developing an interest in preserving some of Wilson's history. It is due to the efforts of all of our volunteers—Chris Hammett, Carolyn Fox, Juanette Meirs, Susan Pinches, Nita Segroves and Jackie Smith, in addition to those already mentioned—that we continue to achieve our dreams.
- A long-term project discussed was the possible establishment of an Elephant Museum in conjunction with the Museum. George and I have a collection of 3,500 unique elephants we have acquired through our travels throughout the world; we have donated these to the Museum in the hope more people will come to Wilson if we can establish a nice tourist attraction. This is a big project since it involves a large addition to the existing Museum and Museum Annex, renovation of part of the

existing Museum, acquisition of many more display cases, and the list goes on. While this could be an invaluable addition to Wilson, the question is “where will the money come from?”

- As for our Endowment, it is now valued at over \$250,000—a fact we are proud of, although we still want to see it grow. One way to assist is with your continued donations—they may be made expressly for the Endowment, or if you wish to honor or memorialize someone, those donations also go into the Endowment. Those honored or memorialized are listed in an album in the Museum along with the name of the donor. Alternatively, you can make an unrestricted donation to help with the operating expenses of the Society/Museum.
- Coming up on November 3rd is the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Wilson Historical Society—it was established on November 5, 1998, followed by the opening of the Museum on November 3, 2001. What a journey this has been; and we have all had so much fun that it seems like only yesterday it all began. In celebration, we are having dinner at Cafe Alley in Ardmore at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 3rd. If you are interested in attending, we need to have your reservations by no later than November 1st. They may be made by calling the Museum (580) 668-2505. Attendees will pay for their own meals with the exception of honored guests. We will be remembering our founders at that time.

Again, I thank each and everyone of you for your interest in and support of the Society/Museum for these past twenty years. What has been done could not have been done without all of you contributing in so many ways. We hope you will visit the Museum soon!

Help Make a Difference

Take out or renew your membership

Become a yearly sustaining sponsor

Donate your time, pictures or other memorabilia to the Museum

Make a donation to the Museum—either unrestricted or to the Endowment

Honor or memorialize loved ones by donations "in honor of" or "in memory of"

Help preserve Wilson's past and promote its future!

Wilson Historical Museum

1270 8th Street Wilson, OK 73463 (580) 668-2505

Museum hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday: 10 a.m.—4 p.m.

visit us at wilsonhistoricalmuseum.org