

Unconquered, by the great Apache artist Allan Houser, graces the front entrance to the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. Created to honor the tribe of which he was a member, this monumental bronze was Houser's final work.

Chapter Preview

TERMS

culture, diversity, rodeo,
powwow, ethnic group

Chapter 18

Celebrate Oklahoma!

We arrived where we are today because of the many and varied experiences in our state's past. Oklahoma's diverse cultures and geography have intertwined to create a unique and special state. Our individual and collective daily events have built upon each other to create the state that we have become.

Celebrations of the diversity of the Oklahoma experience and indomitable spirit of our people are held throughout the state. Many varied and fun resources combine real people and places with historic facts to make our history come alive. Hundreds of festivals, powwows, rodeos, museums, and historic sites tell the story of Oklahoma.

Signs of the Times

MUSEUM MUSES

Information about hundreds of Oklahoma attractions and events, museums, historic sites, and landmarks can be found by contacting the Oklahoma History Center and Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department. People in your community can also be great resources for local facts and lore.

FUN FACTS

In 1845, near Tahlequah, the Agricultural Society of the Cherokee Nation held the first fair in Oklahoma. Muskogee hosted the first “state” fair, called the Indian International Fair, in 1874. The first Oklahoma Territorial Fair was held in Oklahoma City in October 1892, and the first Oklahoma State Fair was held in the year of statehood, 1907.

TOURISM

Tourism’s \$6.1 million impact makes it Oklahoma’s third-largest industry. Some 76,000 people are employed in tourism. The industry includes state parks, golf courses, information centers, travel promotion, a weekly television program, an award-winning *Oklahoma Today* magazine, and film projects.

OKLAHOMA’S SIX COUNTRIES

For tourism purposes, Oklahoma is divided into six regions or “countries.” The regions are Red Carpet Country, in the northwest part of Oklahoma; Green Country, northeast; Kiamichi Country, southeast; Lake & Trail Country, south central; Great Plains Country, southwest; and Frontier Country, central. Each “country” has a wealth of events, activities, and attractions to explore.

Kaleidoscope of Events

As you read, look for

- the elements of culture,
- examples of the many festivals and events in our state,
- vocabulary terms **culture**, **diversity**, **rodeo**, and **powwow**.

Something Extra!

The rodeo is the only national spectator sport originating entirely within the United States.

The shaping and blending of cultures in Oklahoma

has been going on for hundreds of years. The word **culture** refers to the way of life of a group of people. Many cultures had already intertwined and melded before statehood, as our land was settled in a very piecemeal fashion.

Native Americans already living on the land were joined by other tribes who had been forced to relocate to the area. The Native Americans were soon joined by European Americans and African Americans as the land was opened to settlement. Others from Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America now also call Oklahoma home, making our state a melting pot of many and varied cultural traditions.

The process has not always been easy by any means. But through a great deal of effort on the parts of many, the result is a strong and proud state. The **diversity** of different ideas, customs, skills, arts, foods, and beliefs has produced a kaleidoscope of events. The numerous festivals and events held across Oklahoma throughout the year celebrate the many cultures and the unique history of our state.

Rodeos

One event that is held in virtually every part of the state is the **rodeo**. Today's rodeos have evolved from the informal contests American cowboys held at the end of the long cattle trails in the 1800s. Those contests included some of the many tasks that had to be performed



More than a hundred rodeos take place in Oklahoma throughout the year. Bull riding is just one of the events you'll see.



For over thirty years, Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show was the biggest and the best of all the touring wild west shows.

Folk musicians are the main draw at the Beavers Bend Folk Festival and Craft Show.

on the ranches—roping, horse breaking, riding, herding, branding, and more.

The early Spanish influence, including the cattlemen known as *vaqueros*, helped set the stage for the modern rodeo. As the open range and cattle drive era ended, many cowboys took jobs with the new wild west shows. The 101 Ranch Wild West Show and Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show both helped define the pageantry and showmanship of modern rodeo. Aspects of the wild west show were eventually combined with cowboy competitions that were held in many small towns.

Ranch rodeos in various locations preserve the heritage and lifestyle of the working ranch cowboy, as teams from actual ranches compete for bragging rights. The Old Settlers Picnic at Velma, first held in 1890, hosts what may be the oldest free open rodeo in Oklahoma.

Music

Music soothes the soul and is common to all cultures worldwide. Our rich cultural diversity results in a variety of musical tributes. Our festivals feature bluegrass, western swing, jazz, folk, country, pop, and other musical styles, plus fiddlers and square dancers. The Charlie Christian International Jazz Festival in Oklahoma City, the Woody Guthrie Folk Festival of Okemah, the Oklahoma Mozart International Festival in Bartlesville, and Bob Wills Day at the State Capitol are only a few of the many musical events held each year.





Native American Heritage

Our Native American heritage is celebrated throughout the year with a number of events. Modern powwows are a celebration of this heritage. **Powwows**, which usually last for several days, include singing, dancing, eating, and sometimes trading. The Kiowa hold a Black Leggings Society Dance in Anadarko and the annual Gourd Clan Powwow in Carnegie. At the Gourd Clan Powwow, tipis and arbors are set up near the bank of the Washita River, reminiscent of days long ago. The Tinker Inter-Tribal Council Powwow in Midwest City honors veteran warriors. Other powwows are held by the Tonkawa, Cherokee, Apache, Comanche, Quapaw, Sac and Fox, and many other tribes.

Many other events commemorate Oklahoma's Native American heritage. Muskogee is the site for events that celebrate the traditions of the Seminole, the Choctaw, and the Chickasaw. The Choctaw Storytelling Festival is held at Crowder. The American Indian Exposition at Anadarko has been a tradition for many years. Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival in Oklahoma City is one of the largest events of its kind in the United States. Okmulgee is the site for the celebration of the Muscogee Creek Nation. The "Trail of Tears Drama" at Tahlequah



Top: Native American dancers parade down the streets of Oklahoma City to open the annual Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival. **Above:** A craftsman at Tsa-La-Gi Ancient Village demonstrates the process of flint knapping to make stone tools.



depicts the triumphs and tragedies of a Cherokee family. The Kanuche Festival in Tahlequah features an ancient traditional food made with hickory nuts. The ancient skill of making stone tools, or flint knapping, is demonstrated at various locations in the state.

Spiro Mounds State Archaeological Park hosts many events during the year. Archaeologists believe the ancient people may have used some of the mounds to keep track of solar events and the changing of the seasons. Visitors can learn the history of the mounds during a one-mile walk and find out why they align with the solstice and equinox sunsets.

Battle Sites

Several Civil War battles were fought on Oklahoma soil. Period life can be seen at reenactments where you can hear the cannons as they might have sounded during battles. Walk through the camps of *sutlers* (those who sold food and other items to the soldiers) and the tents of soldiers. Hear historical speakers, and learn about life during this era. Reenactments of the Battle of Honey Springs near Checotah are usually held every three years, although a

special reenactment was held in 2013 to mark the 150th anniversary of the battle. The site commemorates the location of a Union army victory on July 17, 1863. A candlelight tour in Checotah includes a series of scenes depicting life in Indian Territory during the Civil War.

The Frontier Era

Explore a much earlier time of mountain men, trappers, fur traders, and craftsmen at the Traders Encampment at Woolaroc Ranch, Museum & Wildlife Preserve near Bartlesville. The Fort Washita Fur

Trade Rendezvous at Durant depicts the 1820-1840 fur trade era of the America West. Reenactors at the Dripping Springs Rendezvous in Okmulgee demonstrate frontier skills and crafts. In Tombstone Tales, historical reenactors portray some of the colorful individuals buried at the territorial Fort Reno Post Cemetery. The Saltfork Craftsmen Association and others demonstrate blacksmithing skills at various events throughout the state.

Learn about the lives of the early fur traders and frontiersmen at Woolaroc's Traders Encampment (top and above).

Harvest Celebrations

Harvest, the time when a ripened crop is gathered from the field, has been celebrated since prehistoric days. A successful crop meant food for the coming winter. Our agricultural heritage is celebrated around the state. A few of these events are the Silver City Antique Tractor, Engine and Equipment Show at Tuttle, the Oldies Club Tractor & Vehicle Show in Hennessey, the Pawnee Steam & Gas Engine Show, and Shawnee's Farming Heritage Festival. Lebanon in Marshall County hosts the Antique Iron Tractor & Implement Show. Golden Harvest Day at Colbert includes displays of antique tractors and implements and demonstrations of early-day farm life including threshing, binding, rock crushing, corn shelling, saw milling, hay baling, and plowing.

Fairs go hand in hand with harvest festivals. Community fairs provide entertainment and social gatherings, as well as an opportunity to earn bragging rights for having the "best" in crops or foods. One of the oldest community fairs in the state is the Mountain View Free Fair, which began in the early 1900s. Oklahoma City and Tulsa both have outstanding state fairs each year. Rides, midway games, exhibits from near and far, shows and music, and, of course, food are all a part of these fairs.

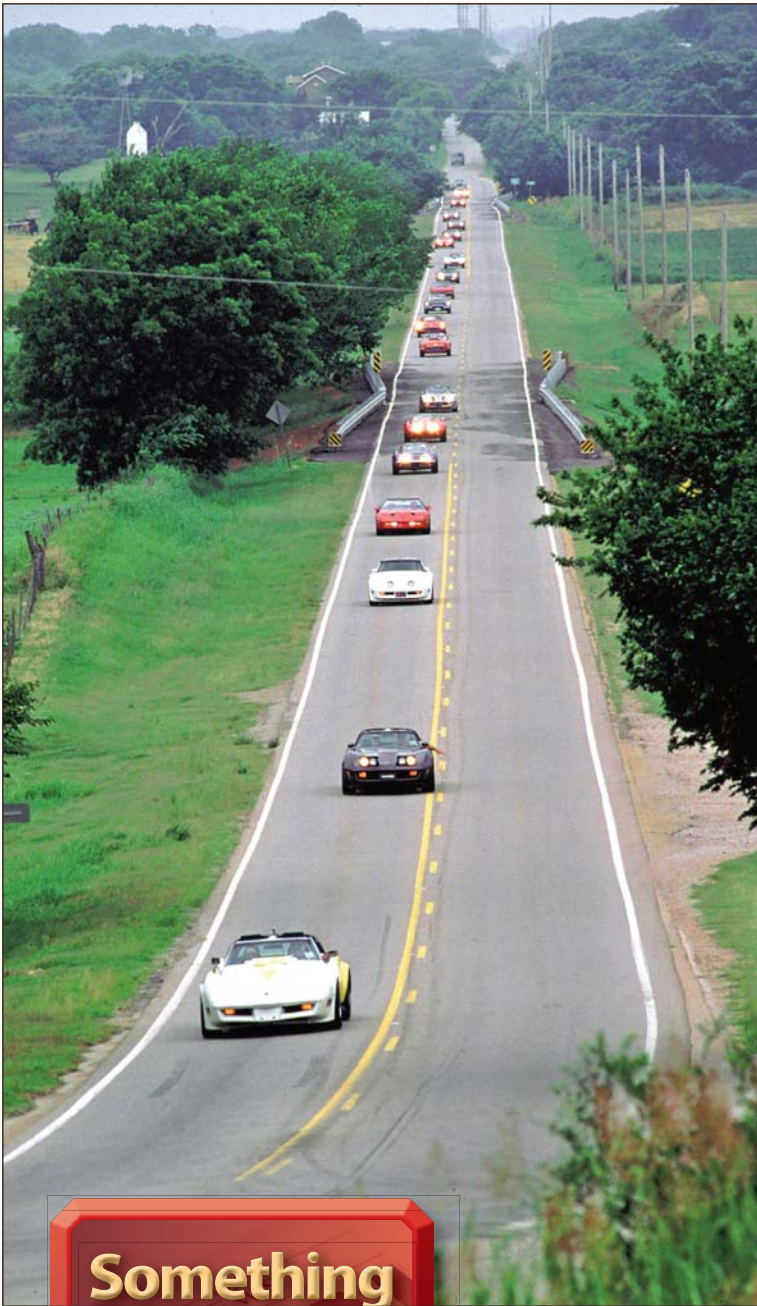
At some festivals, fabulous foods are the featured attraction—from chili to fruits to chocolate to even oysters. Prague and Yukon both celebrate their Czechoslovakian heritage with festivals that feature kolache pastry and kielbasa sausage. Chandler and Tuttle, both home to major dairies, have ice cream festivals. Jay has a huckleberry festival, while McCloud spotlights the blackberry. Both Porter and Stratford hold peach festivals. Sweet strawberries are the object of an annual festival at Stilwell. Rush Springs and Valliant are home to watermelon festivals. Celebrate Bristow's Lebanese heritage at Tabouleh Fest, or say "cheese" at the Watonga Cheese Festival. Community efforts at the Fried Onion Burger Day Festival at El Reno result in a record-setting hamburger weighing over 850 pounds and measuring 8.5 feet in diameter. Grape festivals are growing in popularity as vineyards become more widespread. Tasty catfish are featured at the National Hook N' Cook-Off at Afton and the Keystone Catfish Festival in Cleveland. You can see a form of molasses being produced at the Sorghum Festival in Wewoka. The Fantastic Oyster Fry in Frederick has been held since 1952 and offers fresh oysters from the Gulf of Mexico. Norman's Chocolate Festival offers mouth-watering delicacies. Pawhuska hosts the National Indian Taco Championship. Cordell celebrates fall with a Pumpkin Festival. The year can be topped off with a sip of wassail at Guthrie when the town recreates a Victorian holiday in December.



Pawhuska is host to the International Indian Taco Championship each year in May. Festival goers are in for a treat!

Something Extra!

The Okmulgee Pecan Festival's pecan pie holds the Guinness Book of World Records title for the largest pecan pie ever baked—over 40 feet in diameter and weighing more than 35,000 pounds.



Something Extra!

U.S. Route 66 is also known as “the Main Street of America” and “the Will Rogers Highway.”

Trails and Rails

Trails and roads have crisscrossed the land we know as Oklahoma for hundreds of years. The Chisholm Trail Museum Living History Days in Kingfisher includes Civil War soldiers, homesteaders, cowboys, and more. Duncan celebrates another leg of the famous trail at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center. Vici spotlights the Great Western Trail. Cimarron County features the Santa Fe Trail Daze. The Oklahoma Bicycling Society sponsors the Tour de Trees in Eufaula for those who want a more leisurely view of the countryside.

Railroads are celebrated at the Santa Fe Depot in Shawnee. Railroad Day in Muskogee was first held in 1904, and it continues to this day as Railroad Day at Three Rivers Museum, Muskogee.

More miles of the famed Route 66 highway run through Oklahoma than any other state. Many communities in the state honor the “Mother Road.” Sapulpa and Vinita are two of the many towns that have Route 66 special events, which often include car shows and road cruises.

Vintage aircraft can be viewed at the Will Rogers Fly-In in Oologah, and Fairview has hosted fly-ins for over sixty years. The Oklahoma Museum of Flying at the Wiley Post Airport in Bethany hosts Warbirds over Oklahoma.

Flora and Fauna

Bats, snakes, and birds—oh my! The abundance of wildlife, some that live here year round and some that migrate through, is the object of special events in every corner of the state. Watches for the majestic eagle are held at various locations, and Vian hosts a loon watch. Boiling Springs State Park, Freedom, and Jet have Watchable Wildlife Weekends. Mexican free-tailed bats are the objects of bat watches at the Selman Caves near Freedom. Grove hosts the Pelican Festival. The “Fangtastic” Rattlesnake Hunt is an annual event in Waurika, as are similar hunts in Waynoka, Okeene, and Apache. Fishing derbies held at our many lakes and waterways are also commonplace. Where else but Antlers would host a Deer Festival?



A rose is a rose, unless it's at the Rose Rock Festival at Noble. Beautiful flowers are the reason for the Azalea Festival in Muskogee, Dogwood Days Festival in Idabel, Magnolia Festival in Durant, Carnegie's Canna Festival, and the Lavender Festival at Apache. Dig for selenite crystals at the Birding and Crystal Festival at Jet. Enjoy the Sand Fest at Waynoka, and sand drag racing at Little Sahara State Park.

Other Celebrations

Some of our many colorful cultures are spotlighted in festivals throughout the state. Several communities hold Germanfests where the food fare features schnitzel sandwiches, bratwurst, sauerkraut, and apple strudel. The Scottish Games and Gathering in Tulsa is a multiclaim event with Celtic crafts, pipe and drum competitions, Highland dancing, and Scottish foods. Oklahoma City hosts the Irish Arts Oklahoma Feis, a Gaelic event with costumes and Irish step dancers. McAlester celebrates with the Italian Festival. Lawton, with its International Festival, is one of many cities that spotlight their variety of cultures.

Something Extra!

Oklahoma's largest film festival, dead-CENTER, has featured thousands of films since it began in 2001. The festival's name comes from its geographic location, which is "essentially... In the dead center of everything." The Oklahoma City event is one of the twenty "coolest" festivals in the world according to Movie-Maker magazine.

Sand drag racers compete at Little Sahara State Park at Waynoka.

Oklahoma Mysteries

Bigfoot Festival

Deep in the heart of the Kiamichi Mountains in southeastern Oklahoma where the flora and fauna are lush, you will find an abundance of opinions on the existence of a very large creature known as “Bigfoot.” In spite of not always agreeing on whether such a thing does exist, Honobia residents celebrate the possibility with the Honobia Bigfoot Fall Festival. The festival includes storytellers, searches for Bigfoot, games, music, arts and crafts, and food.

Bigfoot (sometimes called “Sasquatch”) stories have echoed through the mountains for years, not only in Oklahoma, but also in the logging camps in the Pacific Northwest. The eight-foot-tall (or twelve-foot in some stories), hairy, apelike creatures leave trails and evidence for those who believe. Recorded stories of Bigfoot sightings in Oklahoma have been around since 1849, when the manlike beast was seen by a trapper along the Little River near Eagletown. Other “sightings” have been reported through the years in the thickly forested areas of the state. Then there are those who consider it an eight-foot tall tale of fun folklore. In any event, it’s reason enough for a fall festival.

Something Extra!

The name of the oil well that was drilled under the State Capitol building is “Petunia” because it was originally drilled in a flower bed.

the Green Corn Festival, while Washington has a Monarch Migration & Butterfly Festival. Robbers Cave Fall Festival at Wilburton draws hundreds of law-abiding people.

Guthrie, the state’s first capital, celebrates statehood each year on November 16. There’s a reenactment of the inauguration of Oklahoma’s first governor, Charles N. Haskell, and the symbolic wedding of Miss Indian Territory and Mr. Oklahoma Territory.

These are only a few of the festivals and events that take place each year in our special state. Our festivals and events are not only fun, but they also tell us much about our great state.

The Cimarron Territory Celebration in Beaver and the Cherokee Strip Celebration in Enid honor early settlers to those areas. Famous folks are featured at the Wiley Post Festival in Maysville, Erick’s Roger Miller Festival, Woody Guthrie Free Folk Festival in Okemah, and Muskogee’s Bass Reeves Legacy Walking Tour. The Nettie Davenport Day Celebration in Davenport highlights that community’s heritage. Wetumka turned disappointment into celebration with Sucker Day Festival. Hartshorne features cheap eats, gangsters, hobos, and street performers at the Hard Times Festival. Oil reigns as king at Black Gold Days in Glenpool and the Oil Patch Jamboree in Drumright, but cotton is king at Frederick’s Cotton Festival. The stately forest is celebrated at Wright City’s Lumberjax Festival.

The Lesser Prairie Chicken Festival is at Woodward. Bixby hosts

It’s Your Turn

1. Name two elements of culture.
2. Give two examples of Oklahoma festivals that celebrate other cultures.

Section 2

Museums and Historic Sites

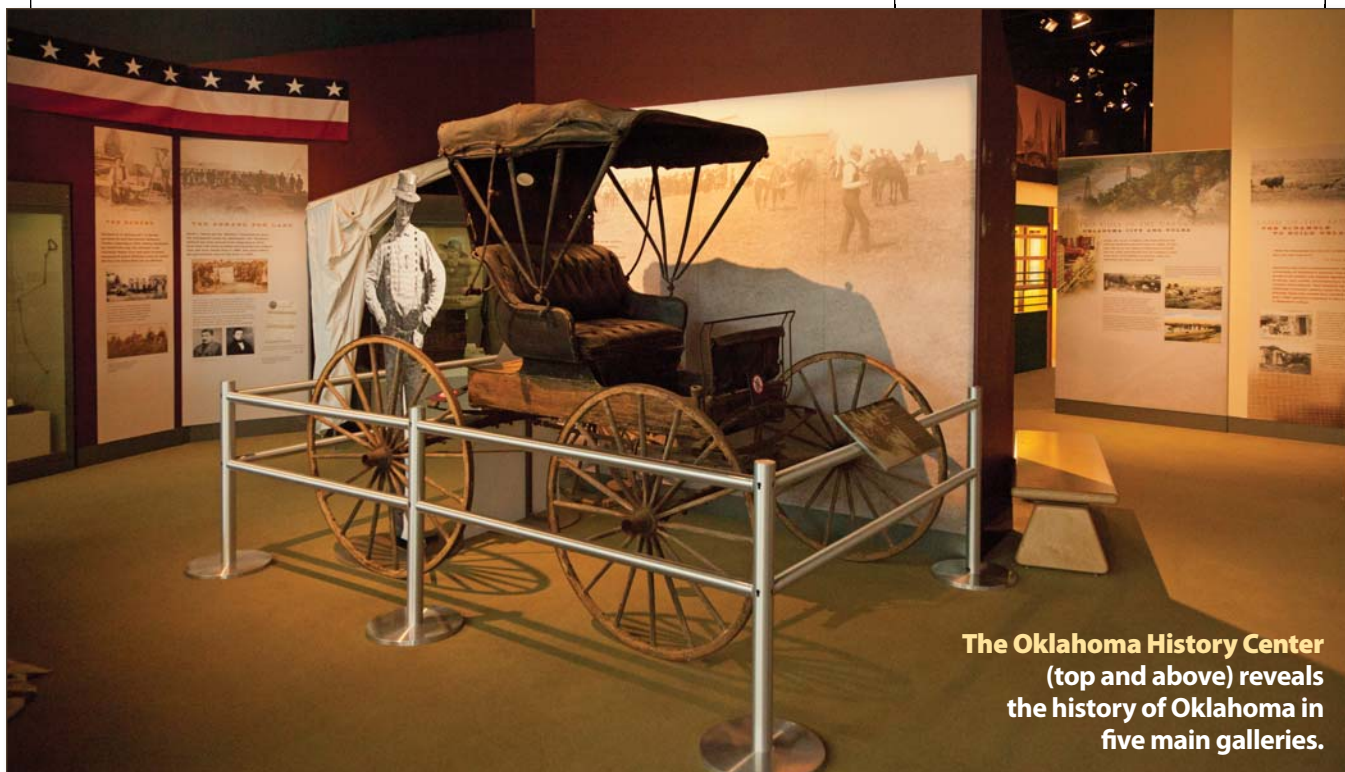
As you read, look for

- examples of the many museums and historic sites in the state.

Oklahoma is also a treasure trove of historic sites and museums.

Historic sites are locations where important events took place. Museums provide a snapshot of our cultural and natural heritage, and they offer an interactive way to better understand our history. Museums of all sizes can be found in every part of the state. Many museums offer online virtual tours for those who can't visit them in person.

The state-of-the-art Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City celebrates the varied events and experiences that make us Oklahomans. The story of our colorful shared heritage unfolds in five main galleries, rotating current exhibits, online exhibits, and outdoor displays.



The Oklahoma History Center (top and above) reveals the history of Oklahoma in five main galleries.



Exhibits in Oklahoma museums cover the spectrum from everyday living to once-in-a-lifetime events. Some unique items include “Little Rascals” memorabilia at Leedey, windmills at Shattuck, the Dewey County jail, items from the movie *Twister* at Wakita, an exhibition on lawyer and gunfighter Temple Houston (son of Sam Houston of Texas) at Woodward, information about the first Boy Scout troop at Pawhuska, items from the movie *Dick Tracy* at Pawnee, Chelsea’s pre-cut Sears Roebuck home, the 1929 Coleman Theatre in Miami built for \$600,000 in 1929, Pawnee Bill’s Ranch near Pawnee, and an actual World War II submarine, the USS *Batfish*, at Muskogee.



Top: This fossil Gomphotherium, an early member of the elephant family, is on display at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. **Above:** An ancient dugout canoe is on display at Spiro Mounds.

Prehistory

Discover what Oklahoma was like some 300 million years ago at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History in Norman when you walk among the dinosaurs. Other exhibits depict how the early people in Oklahoma lived. Ancient artifacts of the Caddo and Choctaw people and a cast skeleton of a colossal dinosaur found nearby can be seen in the Museum of the Red River in Idabel. The fascinating culture of the prehistoric Caddoan people is interpreted at the Spiro Mounds Archaeological State Park in Le Flore County. Dinosaur tracks can be seen near the Black Mesa in the Panhandle when you explore the Kenton Mercantile or the Cimarron Heritage Center in Boise City. Ancient artifacts and fossils can be found in many other museums in the state.

If you’re interested in world history, visit the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art in Shawnee. There you’ll see art objects from Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Middle Ages, and Renaissance cultures, including two mummies, plus Native American, African/Oceanic, and Eastern cultural artifacts.

Native American

Tribal museums and cultural centers help tell the Native American story in Oklahoma. Visitors can tour the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah year round, while the Tsa-La-Gi Ancient Village living museum is open during summer months. The world-class Chickasaw Cultural Center near Sulphur celebrates and shares the culture and heritage of the Chickasaw. You can find tribal museums for the Delaware, Wichita, and Apache Indians in Anadarko. Muskogee is home to the Five Civilized Tribes Museum and the Atalua Lodge Museum. Other tribal museums include the Seminole Nation Museum in Wewoka, the Kiowa Tribal Museum in Carnegie, the Osage Tribal Museum in



Pawhuska, and Bigheart Museum in Barnsdall. When completed, the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum in Oklahoma City will share the unique experience of the American Indian.

Frontier Era

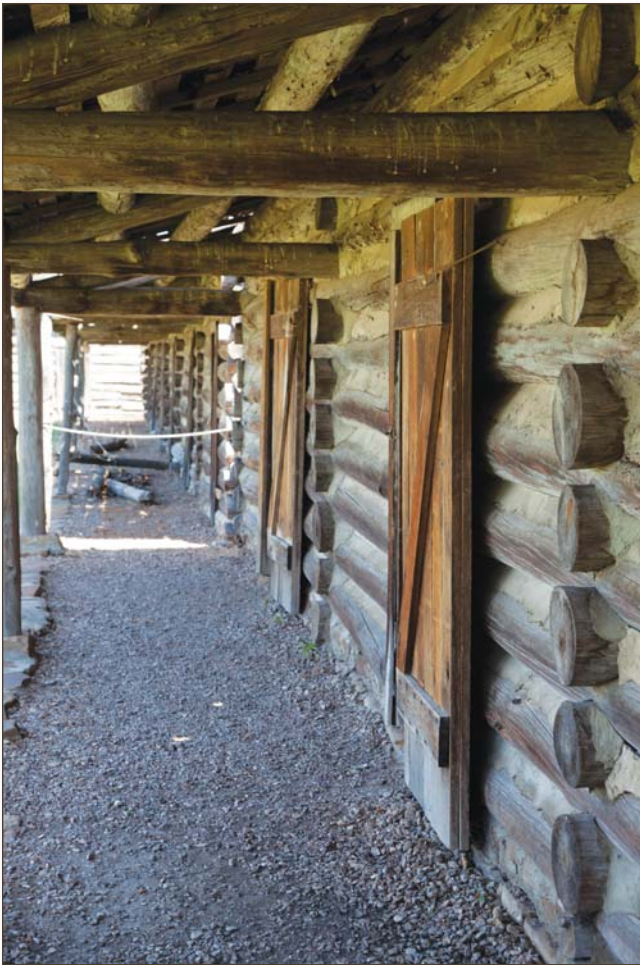
The Three Rivers Museum in Muskogee preserves the multi-ethnic history and heritage of an important era in Oklahoma's early commercial history. The history of the Chouteau family is intertwined with the Three Rivers area, as told in the Chouteau Memorial Museum in Salina. One

of the many early-day explorers in Oklahoma was writer Washington Irving, whose trail through our state is revisited at Ripley.

The reverent Washita Battlefield National Historic Site in Roger Mills County interprets the fateful events of November 27, 1868, when Lt. Col. George A. Custer and the 7th U.S. Cavalry attacked the Southern



Top: You can see a basketmaking demonstration at Tsa-La-Gi Ancient Village. **Above:** Inchokka Traditional Village is a highlight of the Chickasaw Cultural Center.



Fort Gibson Historic Site in the town of Fort Gibson includes a reconstruction of the original log fort as well as other buildings dating from as early as 1840.

Something Extra!

In the 1800s, women in Oklahoma sewed fishing weights into the hems of their long skirts because of the wind.

Cheyenne village of Chief Black Kettle. Life in a frontier fort during the mid-1800s can be relived at Fort Towson Historic Site in Choctaw County. Visitors can also walk through the nearby Doaksville Site, the former Choctaw Nation capital. Still an active army base, Fort Sill also has a storied history that's told in the Fort Sill Museum, which includes the guardhouse that held the Apache warrior, Geronimo. The home of the last chief of the Comanche, Quanah Parker, is located in nearby Cache. Fort Washita in Bryan County was built in 1841 to provide protection for the Choctaw and Chickasaw against enemy raids. Several period reenactments are held at the fort, and artifacts are on exhibit. Other 1800s posts, Fort Gibson and Fort Supply, also offer a look at frontier life, as does historic Fort Reno in Canadian County.

Civil War Sites

Several Civil War battles were fought on Oklahoma soil. The historic site of the Battle of Honey Springs, which was won by the Union army on July 17, 1863, is located near Checotah. The Union army of the frontier included not only white troops, but also a large number of Native Americans and the 1st Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a regiment recruited from former black slaves. Another historic site commemorates the Cabin Creek Battle near Adair, and the Confederate Memorial Museum at Atoka highlights the Battle of Middle Boggy.

Traveling

Follow the route of the trail over which thousands of cattle were moved in the heart of Oklahoma from Texas to Kansas at Chisholm Trail museums in Waurika, Duncan, and Kingfisher. The Jones & Plummer Trail Museum is in Beaver, and the Buffalo Museum includes artifacts and an exhibit on the Fort Dodge Trail Crossing.

A number of museums feature the 1893 Cherokee Strip Land Run, including those in Blackwell, Perry, Alva, Enid, and Grant and in Alfalfa County. A race like no other opened the Unassigned Lands on April 22, 1889, and that event is one of many spotlighted at the Oklahoma Territorial Museum in Guthrie.

Railroads played a large role in settling Oklahoma, and many depots became museums when tracks were abandoned. The MKT (Missouri, Kansas & Texas) Depot in Hominy, the Katy Depot in Checotah, the Frisco Depot in Hugo, and Santa Fe depots in Cheyenne and Waynoka are among several that serve as museums. Shawnee's Santa Fe Depot



Museum is in a spectacular 1903 Romanesque-style building. The Canadian County Museum complex in El Reno's Heritage Park includes the restored Rock Island Depot.

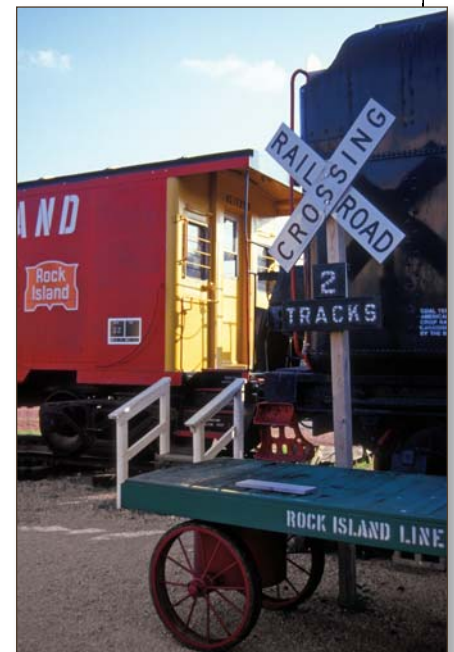
Route 66 museums in Elk City and Clinton, as well as Route 66 landmarks along the famed road, preserve a moment in the American experience.

African Americans

African Americans searching for new beginnings came to Oklahoma in record numbers, creating more all-black communities than anywhere else in the country. Boley, one of more than fifty all-black communities, features a historic district that was founded as a camp for black railroad workers, a historical museum, and the now-closed Farmers & Merchants State Bank, the site of an attempted robbery by gangster Pretty Boy Floyd.

Famous Oklahomans

Several museums are devoted to Oklahomans who have gained fame. These museums include the Will Rogers Memorial in Claremore, the Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum in Gene Autry, the Tom Mix Museum of Dewey, the Henry and Shirley Bellmon Library and Museum in Billings, the Governor Seay Mansion in Kingfisher, the T. B. Ferguson House of Watonga, the Peter Conser House in Hodgen,



Top: Clinton is home to a Route 66 museum. **Above:** El Reno's Canadian County Historical Museum includes the restored Rock Island Depot.



Top: Tulsa's Gilcrease Museum specializes in American Indian and western art. **Above:** The Philbrook Museum's rotunda features Auguste Rodin's *Adam*.

Sequoyah's Cabin near Sallisaw, the Jim Thorpe House at Yale, the White Hair Memorial near Ralston, and the museum of sagebrush artist Augusta Metcalfe in Durham.

Urban Regions

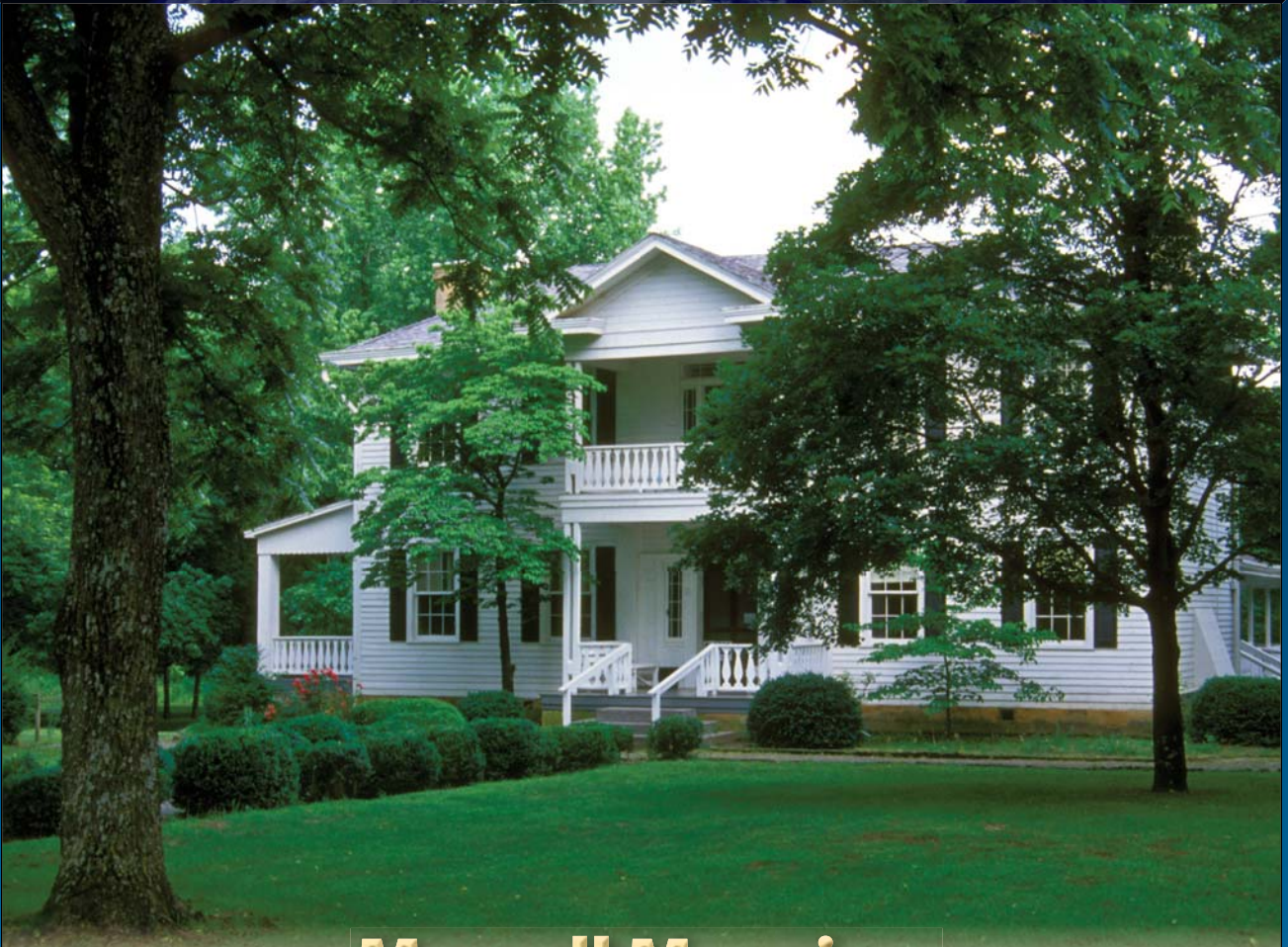
Tulsa is home to several world-class museums. These include the Philbrook Museum of Art, housed in the 1927 Tuscan-style estate of oilman Waite Phillips; the Gilcrease Museum collection of American Indian and western art; the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame, and the Geoscience Center.

Oklahoma City also has a variety of museums. There are the renowned National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum; the Harn Homestead, on land claimed during the Great Land Run of 1889; the 45th Infantry Division Museum; the Museum of Osteology with over 300 skeletons on display; the Oklahoma Railway Museum; the State Capitol; the Oklahoma City Museum of Art; the Firefighters Museum; and the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum. The last tells the story of the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Other Museums

Called "the Little Smithsonian," the Woolaroc Museum and Wildlife Preserve near Bartlesville, the country home of oil baron Frank Phillips, showcases outstanding paintings, sculptures, and artifacts. A replica of Oklahoma's first commercial oil well, the Nellie Johnstone #1, is also

Spotlight



Murrell Mansion

Among the thousands of Cherokee Indians who were forced to relocate to Indian Territory were George and Minerva Murrell. George was a native of Virginia. Minerva, niece of Principal Chief John Ross, was from a wealthy Cherokee-Scottish family. They married in 1834, two years before the beginning of the Trail of Tears march.

The Murrells built their plantation home in 1845 in Park Hill near Tahlequah. They called their home Hunter's House, because of George's love of foxhunting. Chief Ross built a home one-half mile east, called Rose Cottage. The two homes were a hub of social and

Although the area around the Murrell Mansion was occupied by both Union and Confederate forces, the Murrell Mansion escaped destruction.

political activity. The Murrells left their home in 1862 when Civil War skirmishes got close.

The restored mansion, the only remaining antebellum home in Oklahoma, contains original and period artifacts and furnishings. The home is open to the public. An annual Lawn Social recreates the early-day life at the plantation with skits and period dancing, music, and games.



found in Bartlesville, and Barnsdall has the Main Street Oil Well. Other commercial ventures also merit museums, such as the Coal County Historical and Mining Museum in Coalgate.

Enterprising journalists hauled printing presses by wagon and railroad across the forest and prairie, often setting up a newspaper shop in a tent. Guthrie's State Capital Publishing Museum exhibits many original territorial furnishings and printing equipment. Newspapers are also featured in the museums in Carmen, Collinsville, and Hominy.

Auto-related collections can be found at the Hajek Motorsports Museum (vintage dragsters) in Ames, the High Car Museum of Ponca City, and Darryl Starbird's National Rod & Custom Car Hall of Fame in Afton.

Sports and those who excelled in them are also highlighted. Venues include the Mickey Mantle Exhibit in Grove, Guthrie's Oklahoma Sports Mu-

seum with hundreds of items from over three hundred state athletes, and the National Softball Hall of Fame Museum in Oklahoma City.

The engineering marvel that created a port in landlocked Oklahoma can be seen at the Arkansas River Historical Society Museum in Catoosa. The history of the Arkansas River and McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and the Tulsa Port of Catoosa is a fascinating look at human possibilities.

Air and space museums can be found in both Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Oklahoma City is also home to the Ninety-Nines Museum of Women Pilots, an international aviation organization established in 1929 with Amelia Earhart as the first president. The Thomas P. Stafford (astronaut) Air and Space Museum is in Weatherford.

The fabric and heart of Oklahoma come from people like you, and a number of community museums show what everyday life was like for our grandparents and great-grandparents. These and so many other museums in our state are just waiting to be explored.



Top: The State Capital Publishing Museum in Guthrie tells the history of printing and publishing in Oklahoma. **Above:** Woolaroc Museum displays the twelve models submitted for the famous *Pioneer Woman* statue in Ponca City. This is the winning entry by Bryant Baker.

It's Your Turn

1. Name two museums that celebrate famous Oklahomans.
2. Name two historic sites that commemorate Oklahoma's frontier era.

Section 3

Ethnic Groups

As you read, look for

- the major ethnic groups in the state,
- vocabulary term **ethnic group**.

An ethnic group is a group of people who share common traditions, beliefs, and patterns of living that can include language, religion, customs, characteristics, history, and food. Many ethnic groups and individuals have come to Oklahoma seeking new beginnings or new opportunities.

French explorers, Jewish merchants, Polish miners, and hundreds of other groups and individuals have all had an impact on Oklahoma and have helped it become the great place to live that it is today. While the different groups celebrate their unique backgrounds, as a whole we celebrate our state. With each generation, our ethnic population contributes to our Oklahoma heritage.

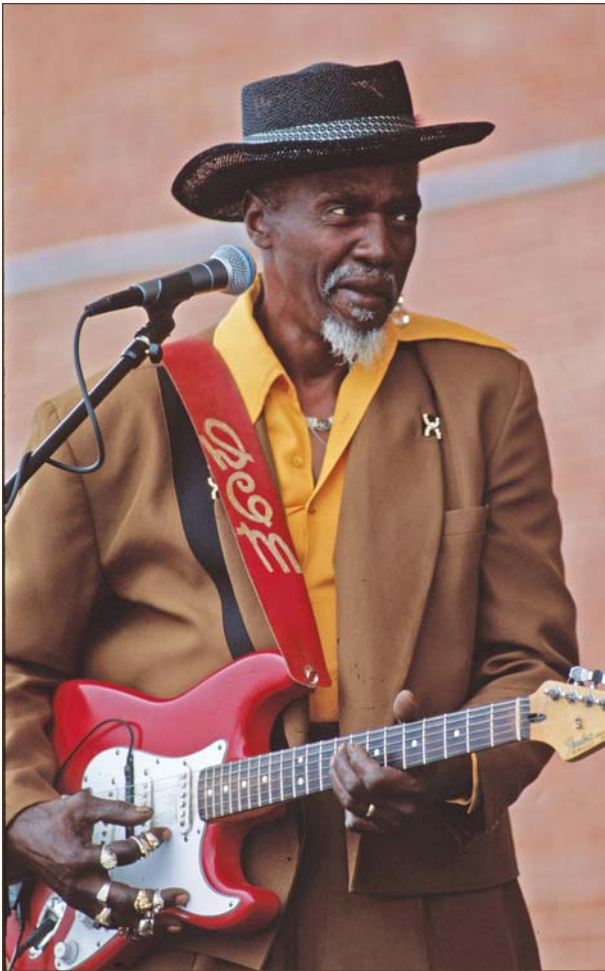
Native Americans

The name *Oklahoma* is derived from two Choctaw words, *okla* and *humma*, which combined mean “red people.” Oklahoma is home to the headquarters of thirty-nine different tribes and nations. Descendants of the original sixty-seven tribes that inhabited Indian Territory still live in the state, giving it the second-largest Native American population in the country (behind California). Tribal cultures vary greatly, and each tribe has its own traditions, beliefs, and native language.

Some of Oklahoma’s first tribes were the Wichita, Comanche, Plains Apache, and Quapaw. New cultures were introduced by the forced relocation of hundreds of American Indians. Some tribes were able to select their land in Indian Territory, but most were forced to live in certain areas. Indians adapted and changed, but they didn’t lose sight of their basic values. Festivals, museums, and cultural centers help the Indian nations pass along their proud heritage to younger generations.



Native American dancers dress in all their finery to compete at the Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival, held annually in Oklahoma City.



Blues music is one of the most significant African American contributions to our culture. It is the basis of both jazz and rock music. African Americans make up almost 8 percent of Oklahoma's population today.

African Americans

African Americans' arrival in Oklahoma spanned many years. Some came with early explorers; others came as slaves to Indian plantation owners. Some black troops saw action during the Civil War, and they later became known as the "buffalo soldiers."

It was estimated that 7,000 blacks lived in Indian Territory after the Civil War. Many former slaves came to the Territory after the war, when pamphlets promised a "black paradise." They came as settlers, farmers, workers, cowboys, and gunfighters. They built more than fifty all-black communities in Oklahoma. As with several rural Oklahoma communities, some of these towns no longer exist.

British and Irish

Many Europeans were already in America when white settlement in Oklahoma began in earnest in 1889. Because of intermarriage between Europeans and Indians, some people of British (including English, Scottish, and Welsh) and Irish descent came to Oklahoma during the early 1800s when the Five Tribes were resettled from the East. Others came as traders and trappers. Many early Irish served in military posts. After the Civil War, Scottish cattlemen leased Indian grassland, and some Irish

laborers helped build railroads or worked coal mines. British and Irish miners helped establish the coal industry in southeastern Oklahoma.

By 1900, there were 4,290 English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh in the Territory. Like most ethnic groups, many came as family units. Early-day British Protestants easily established themselves in the state. Hennessey and Deer Creek (Oklahoma County) were home to many early Irish residents. One Irishman changed the name of Edgewood in Chickasaw country to the Irish name of Erin Springs. In 1910, most of the British and Irish population was rural; by 1920, the majority resided in urban areas.

Italians

Italians first came to Oklahoma and the coal mines in 1875. While most Italians were miners in the counties of Pittsburg, Coal, Latimer, and Okmulgee, a small group moved to the Fort Cobb area to farm. A large number of Italians immigrated to the United States in the early 1900s. By 1910, over 2,500 lived in Oklahoma, with 85 percent of those living in coal-mining towns in southeastern Oklahoma, especially the McAlester and Krebs area. The Italian heritage is still celebrated in Krebs.

Some Italians left the mines to establish businesses such as grocery and dry goods stores, blacksmith shops, and restaurants. One fam-

ily started a macaroni factory in McAlester. Pietro Piegari changed his name to Pete Prichard and worked in the coalfields until an accident halted his mining career. He then started making and selling “Choc” (Choctaw) beer and later added Italian dishes to the business called “Pete’s Place.”

Germans and Germans from Russia

The largest number of foreign-born immigrants in Oklahoma were German in language and culture. Most came directly from Germany. Some were German-speaking people born in Switzerland or Austria; others were Germans who had lived as foreign colonists in Russia for many years. One in eight Oklahomans today claim German ancestry, which is more than any other ethnicity, including Native American.

The cheap land available in Oklahoma appealed to many Germans who had already migrated to America. The land runs, lotteries, and allotments attracted thousands of Germans, and they settled throughout the state, although a large number settled in ten north-central counties. Germans from Russia settled primarily in the western third of the region. Most of the Germans were farmers, and Germans from Russia were largely responsible for bringing wheat to the new land. Some Germans were shoe cobblers, cabinetmakers, butchers, bakers, watchmakers, and blacksmiths. Germans were known for their work ethic, but they also found time to form social clubs. Tulsa and Lawton continue to have active German clubs.

Czechoslovakians

The lure of land also brought Czech families to areas west, east, and north of Oklahoma City. This group was very successful at farming, and all members of their large families helped.

The Czechoslovakians partly immigrated to America to preserve their culture, which was being threatened in their home country. Polka music and good food are a continuing part of the Czech culture.

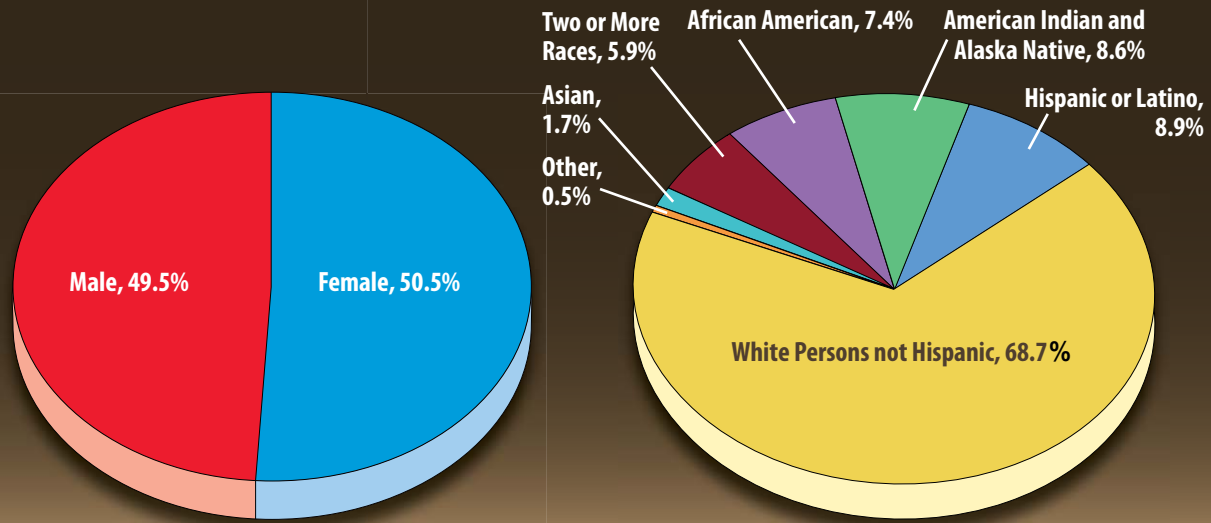
Hispanics

The Hispanic and Latino population started slowly, but it now ranks as one of the fastest-growing groups in Oklahoma. Indian raids brought some Mexicans into the area as captives in the 1800s. Poor economic



Top: Pete’s Place, founded by Italian immigrant Pietro Piegari, has been a Krebs institution since 1925. Above: Prague, in Lincoln County, was settled by immigrants from Czechoslovakia who named the town for the capital of Czechoslovakia.

Figure 20
Oklahoma's People, 2010



This Thai-Vietnamese restaurant is in Oklahoma City's growing Asian District. Beginning in 2010, Asians surpassed Hispanics as the most numerous immigrants to the United States.

conditions in Mexico led many to search for better opportunities in Oklahoma. Some of the first Hispanics who arrived after statehood worked as laborers in coal mines and on railroads, farms, and ranches.

Hispanics retain strong generational ties within their families. While Spanish may be spoken in some households, in others English is the main or only language spoken. Traditional Mexican food is part of many religious celebrations, and colorful fiestas are held for special days.

Asians and Pacific Islanders

Another population group that has seen significant growth includes Asians and Pacific Islanders. Chinese immigrants had made their way to America in the late 1800s, and a few were in Oklahoma by statehood. After the Vietnam War, many Vietnamese fled their country and were sponsored by groups across the United States. Some made new lives in Oklahoma, primarily in urban areas. Oklahoma City has a growing Asian District with a variety of businesses and shops.

It's Your Turn

1. Where does the word *Oklahoma* come from?
2. Which ethnic group(s) helped establish Oklahoma's coal industry?

A Celebration of Cultures



Immigrant Arrival

Before the widespread air travel of the twentieth century, the only way to cross the oceans to get to North America was by ship. The journey could take six to fourteen weeks across turbulent waters, often with inadequate food supplies (usually bread, biscuits, and potatoes) and rancid water. The ships were cramped and uncomfortable, and sometimes there were serious outbreaks of diseases. Thousands of Irish died of typhus on their way to America. Several ships were lost at sea due to fires and shipwrecks. In spite of the tremendous hardships, immigrants continued to pour into America.

Ships with immigrant passengers landed at various ports in the new country. From 1820 to 1892, more than 10 million people first set foot on American soil at Castle Garden in New York, America's first official immigration center. Another 22 million passengers entered the United States through Ellis Island and



Top: This is the main hall at Ellis Island, where millions of immigrants lined up for inspection upon their arrival. **Above:** Ellis Island has been undergoing restoration since 1982.

the Port of New York from 1892 to 1924. Access to these passenger lists is available online at www.castlegarden.org and www.ellisland.org.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

- The many cultures in Oklahoma are a blend of hundreds of years of settlement by many different peoples.
- Oklahoma’s vast diversity of cultures lends itself to a kaleidoscope of events celebrating the unique history of our state.
- Oklahoma’s American Indian heritage is celebrated through powwows, dances and dramas, storytelling festivals, the Red Earth Festival, and other events.
- Civil War battles and rendezvous are part of many reenactments held yearly.
- The earliest festivals throughout the world were a celebration of the harvest. The tradition continues in Oklahoma through festivals and community, county, and state fairs that feature crops, livestock, equipment, foods, fun, music, and crafts.
- Oklahoma is a treasure trove of museums and historic sites featuring prehistory, Native Americans, the West, ethnic groups, sports, and famous Oklahomans.
- Oklahoma has many ethnic groups including African Americans, Native Americans, Irish, British, Italians, Germans, Hispanics, Czechs, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and several others.

Vocabulary

Write a definition for the following words, showing that you understand the meaning of each word.

1. culture
2. diversity

3. ethnic group
4. powwow
5. rodeo

Understanding the Facts

1. How did rodeos become a part of our culture?
2. Where would you go to attend an Indian powwow? What would you expect to see there?
3. Identify four festivals that emphasize special crops grown in Oklahoma.
4. What famous highway that crossed Oklahoma was known as “the Mother Road”?
5. Name the largest museum in the state dedicated to the cowboy and the West.
6. To what ethnic group in Oklahoma do you belong?

Developing Critical Thinking

1. Why do you think Oklahoma would provide funds for an agency to promote Oklahoma’s culture?
2. Your town is celebrating a festival. What are the benefits this festival will provide for your community?
3. Explain how our state has benefited by having a diversity of cultural and ethnic groups.

Applying Your Skills

1. Interview three people from three ethnic groups other than your own. Name at least two things about their culture that are different from yours.
2. Family traditions are a part of our culture. Write a short description of a tradition of your family. This may be anything from going to a family reunion to visiting your grandmother on Thanksgiving to ordering pizza every Monday night.
3. Make a special-interest map of some of the Oklahoma festivals mentioned in this chapter. Mark each location with a symbol representing the festival (e.g., a strawberry for the Stilwell Strawberry Festival). Create a legend on your map identifying your symbols.
4. Create a brochure about Oklahoma culture and tourism that would be appropriate to send to other states to promote Oklahoma.
5. What event or activity, moment in history, etc., in your town or area of the state could be

the focus for a festival or celebration? Explain why you have chosen this and how you would celebrate.

6. Research one of the historical sites found in the region in which you live. Interview local residents about their knowledge of the site. Use local library or media center resources to find out more about the site.

Exploring Technology

1. Search the Internet for recipes from the different ethnic groups in Oklahoma and plan an International Food Festival featuring these dishes.
2. Using genealogy websites, such as usgenweb.org and rootsweb.com, create a family tree of your ancestors as far back as you can go. Include places where they were born if possible.

Building Skills

Conducting Interviews

Interviewing people who experienced Oklahoma history brings interest and information to our study of state history. When conducting an interview, follow the steps below to ensure that you get the information you want or need.

1. Before you schedule the interview, call or visit the person to get permission for the interview.
2. Plan and then write out the questions you will ask. You might start with *who*, *what*, and *where* questions.
3. Either write or tape-record the person's answers, after first asking and receiving permission to do so.
4. When you are finished, thank the person for the information.

5. Soon after the interview, go over your notes or listen to the tape recording. You may remember another point that was not included.

As is true in every time period, many people make contributions at the local level but never receive national or statewide acclaim for their efforts. Interview relatives or other responsible adults who have lived in your area for some time. Ask them for information about local citizens who have made contributions of note. Record the names and achievements of those individuals. Be sure to find out the essential information about the individual's achievements (time period, motives, obstacles faced, people who benefited, and so on). Bring the information to class to share.