

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## **Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places Announced**

Preservation Oklahoma, Inc. (POK) announced the 2016 list of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places at the Fire Alarm Building in Tulsa on Tuesday, April 5. Since 1993, Preservation Oklahoma has recognized historic sites across the state at risk of demolition or deterioration, raising awareness of the need to protect Oklahoma's historic resources. While inclusion on the list does not guarantee protection or funding, it can be a key component in mobilizing support for the preservation of historic sites.

"The Endangered Historic Places List is an effort to raise awareness about historic sites and preservation issues, but has also been a powerful mechanism for saving significant buildings," says Executive Director David Pettyjohn. "We hope that sites on this year's list will benefit from the attention garnered, and that Oklahomans will benefit from learning about the diverse pieces of our state's history represented."

This list was selected by a group of preservation professionals from nominations submitted by the public. An exhibit of the 2016 List will travel to numerous locations across the state in an effort to continue the discussion about the need to preserve these historic buildings. The event was generously sponsored by the Cherokee Nation and the Tulsa Foundation for Architecture. The traveling exhibit was generously funded by the Kirkpatrick Foundation and the Cherokee Nation.

The 2016 List of Oklahoma's Most Endangered Historic Places are:

**New Deal Structures, Statewide (Focus on Chandler Memorial School Building):** 2016 marks the 81st anniversary of the Works Progress Administration legislation and today, many of the structures constructed during this time have fallen into disrepair. One such building is the Chandler Memorial School Building. Completed in 1942, the building is the largest WPA-built school in Lincoln County and is constructed on native stone exhibiting the Moderne influence.

**Apuckshunubbee District Choctaw Chief's House, Swink:** The oldest remaining site in the Choctaw Nation, the Apuckshunubbee District Choctaw Chief's House was constructed in the 1830s. The cabin was allegedly constructed for Choctaw Chief Thomas LeFlore as a stipulation in the treaty that removed the Choctaws to Indian Territory. The house is a significant representative of early log construction in Indian Territory. It features hewn logs with square notches, stone chimneys, and a dog trot arrangement.

**Vannerson Homestead, Erick:** The Vannerson Homestead is one of the few remaining early settlement homesteads in Beckham County. Dugouts and sod houses were the most common housing form during this settlement period as building materials were in short supply. The Vannerson Homestead is a rare property in Oklahoma as it has two extant half-dugouts on the property.

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**First National Bank Building, Stratford:** The First National Bank Building in Stratford is a great example of the small building in downtowns that have failed to thrive following introduction of a highway that bypassed the downtown itself. Although the restoration of the building was started to house a historic museum for Stratford, history has shown that small-town historic museums do not fare well in this day. As the building continues to stand empty, the risk of damage (due to vandalism and damage to the property) increases and the loss of the building becomes more and more imminent.

**Mid-Century Architecture, Statewide:** Mid-Century Modern Architecture is known for its unique style and distinctive design elements. These unique characteristics have also presented a challenge to the proper rehabilitation of these important structures. An example is the Abundant Life Building in Tulsa designed by Cecil E. Stanfield. The 1957 building originally served as the Administrative Office of Oral Roberts University. Today, the building is vacant and plans have been presented to drastically alter its exterior.

**Rock Shelter Sites, Statewide:** For thousands of years people in Oklahoma took shelter from the elements under natural rock overhangs. These overhangs provided shelter ranging from a few square feet for dry sleeping to enough area for a fire, food storage, and a place to make tools and supplies. Rock shelters are found across the entire state, from southeastern Oklahoma to the Panhandle, and may have been occupied for just a few nights up to several months. Rock shelters contain some of the oldest undisturbed archaeological deposits in Oklahoma.

**Oklahoma Iron Works Building, Tulsa:** Located in Oklahoma's petroleum capital, the Oklahoma Iron Works Building is important for its association with two companies that played a vital role in the production of oil field equipment widely used in the state and beyond. Originally part of a much larger plant, a portion of the building was first constructed in 1911 as Oklahoma Iron Work's foundry and then greatly expanded over the next twenty-seven years.

**Oklahoma State Capitol, Oklahoma City:** Designed by Solomon Andrew Layton, the Oklahoma State Capitol was completed in 1917 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. In 2014, Governor Mary Fallin signed legislation that provided \$120 million in funding to address many needed repairs. Since that time, extensive work has been completed on the building. While this is welcomed news, more funding will be needed to properly restore this important Oklahoma building.

**Quanah Parker Star House, Cache:** Built around 1890, the Star House was built for renowned Comanche warrior, leader, and statesman Quanah Parker. Relocated to its current location in Cache, the home is visited by people from all over the world.

**Route 66, Hydro to Bridgeport and William H. Murray Bridge:** In western Oklahoma, the section of Route 66 from Bridgeport to Hydro is considered distinctive since it marks a change in geography by providing the first glimpse of the western plains. The section also contains the William H. Murray Bridge, also known as the Pony Bridge (due to the truss system it uses). Completed in 1934, the bridge is one of the most distinctive bridges of the road in Oklahoma due to its massive length.

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**About Preservation Oklahoma, Inc.:**

Preservation Oklahoma, Incorporated, is the state's only private, nonprofit membership organization that is dedicated to promoting, supporting, and coordinating historic preservation activities throughout the state. Preservation Oklahoma's mission is to promote preservation statewide. Founded in 1992, Preservation Oklahoma is a Statewide Partner with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and works on joint projects with the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

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