PRESERVING OUR HISTORY.
LOCATED IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BROKEN ARROW, NEAR THE SITE OF THE ORIGINAL TRAIN DEPOT, THE MUSEUM BROKEN ARROW’S MISSION IS TO BE A PLACE WHERE OUR COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER TO EXPLORE BROKEN ARROW’S PAST, APPRECIATE ITS PRESENT, AND IMAGINE ITS FUTURE.

Museum Hours:
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Sunday & Monday: closed

Follow us: @themuseumba  
400 S. Main Street, Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
https://www.brokenarrowmuseum.org/  
918-258-2616 Julie Antoshkiw-Brown, Executive Director
Museum admission is $5 per adult or $8 for two adults. Members and children under the age of 17 are always free.

THE MUSEUM BROKEN ARROW IS A NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION
Muscogee (Creek) Meeting Grounds and Jewelry: Muscogee (Creeks) are among the Five Tribes (Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, & Seminole). They held government meetings under structures like these. A “chokofa” is the round house, used for gatherings during cold weather. The other structures are called arbors, where families/clans gathered during ceremonial dances. The Muscogee (Creek) are a woodland tribe and lived in houses built from forest materials. When the United States forced the Muscogee (Creek) people to relocate to Indian Territory, from their homelands in Alabama and Georgia, they rebuilt their homes here from scratch. The Indian Removal is also known as The Trail of Tears.
Muscogee (Creek) Symbols and Clothing: The four circular designs shown here are ancient shell gorget designs of the Muscogee mound builder culture. They represent various native clans, strength, and warriors. The man pictured represents the transitional clothing of an 1830’s Muscogee (Creek).
Cabin: Cabins were the most common home built in Broken Arrow during the early years of settlement. Cabins were made using dovetailed oak logs, mud, sticks, and straw. This particular cabin was the Childers family home from 1861 to 1948 and is currently housed inside The Museum Broken Arrow. It was built by a man named Napoleon Bonaparte Childers; his son Ellis was born in the cabin in 1866. The Museum even has the stone threshold that Ellis Childers carved his name into over 100 years ago!
Map: This map represents Broken Arrow in the late 1800s. Just like in their old home country in the southeast, the Muscogee (Creeks) settled along rivers in Indian Territory. Broken Arrow Muscogee (Creeks) settled along the Arkansas River. These early settlements consisted of mission schools, churches, ceremonial grounds, farms, drygoods stores, post offices, and stickball yards. Part of the Sampson Chisholm Cattle Trail came through the area, which is presently Indian Springs.
Train & Depot: The United States’ decision to place the railroad through this particular area had a significant impact on all the communities around town such as; Elam, Fry, and Weer. Many decided to pick up their homes and business and move them into town, closer to the railroad. The MKT (Missouri Katy Texas) Railroad or “Katy” brought visitors and commerce to downtown Broken Arrow. Business owners wanted to benefit from being in the most exciting area of town. The Katy Railroad placement was the top reason the area was chosen to be the official townsite, Broken Arrow. The first passenger train arrived in Broken Arrow at 1:10 p.m., Saturday, July 4, 1903, which made for a thrilling first Independence Day. The last passenger train came through town in 1959.
Welcome Sign: Broken Arrow has been known for its roses since the early 1900s. Roses added beauty to the flat Oklahoma prairie landscape. Broken Arrow has its very own natural spring water on the south side of town. For many years, this natural spring, located in Ray Harral Nature Park, was the primary water source for the community.
Agriculture & Industry: The main crops grown in Broken Arrow were: corn, oats, and cotton. At one point, there was so much cotton being produced, four cotton gins were needed to process and store the overabundance! Coal mining was a critical industry here during the early days, as it provided a source of fuel for the community and employed many individuals. At one time, Broken Arrow had more Katy rail cars filled with coal than any other city in Oklahoma.
School Building & Mascot: Broken Arrow’s first public school building was completed in 1904 and located on North Main Street. Today this site is home to a newer building constructed in 1925 after a fire destroyed the original structure. Now known as “Central on Main,” Broken Arrow Public Schools still uses this building today. The tiger was chosen as Broken Arrow’s official school mascot in the 1920s, representing bravery, strength, and pride.
Charlie & Keys Hardware: Main Street businesses such as; banks, drugstores, dry goods stores, grocery stores, and newspapers were essential to family survival during the early days of Broken Arrow. Keys Hardware served as the community’s hardware store and as its boot and saddle shop. This life-sized horse statue named “Charlie,” displayed in Keys for many years, was a favorite of children and adults alike. Charlie has even made appearances on floats during Rooster Days parades. Now, Charlie lives at The Museum and is our most popular artifact!
KEYS
HARDWARE

Charlie
THE
Horse
Rooster Days Festival: The celebration of Rooster Days began in 1931, as there was a thriving poultry industry in Broken Arrow. This event was created to improve the local economy and mental health of citizens during the Great Depression. This event encouraged farmers to bring their excess roosters to market. During the first Rooster Days about 5,000 pounds of roosters, more than two tons, were sold. The Rooster Days of 1932 expanded into a city-wide celebration. It is now Oklahoma’s longest-running annual festival.
Welcome Broken Arrow's Annual Rooster Day Sat. May 9th
Cowboys & Rodeos: From moving longhorn cattle along the Sampson Chisholm Trail to roping and riding in rodeos, cowboys have played a significant role in Broken Arrow history. At one time, the Rooster Days Rodeo was the largest outdoor event in Oklahoma! Some of the best cowboys and cowgirls called Broken Arrow home.
Grain Elevator: Grain elevators have always been an essential part of the agricultural industry in Broken Arrow. There were several grain elevators and silos that held various crops for farmers. Early grain elevators held corn and wheat. This particular grain elevator built around 1959, is still standing on Main Street and is roughly 150 feet tall!
Auburn Cord Duesenberg Co. & Glenn Pray’s Cord 810: This building was a canning factory during WWII, and in 1963, it became the home of Glenn Pray’s (a former school teacher) automobile manufacturing company. ACD company is a functioning car factory to this day and still located right here in Broken Arrow, OK.
Community Helpers: Our police officers, fire crews, medical professionals, military, and educators are what help our city thrive. These are just a few of our fantastic community helpers. Did you know, our first firemen were in charge of naming our streets? The earliest police officers were a night marshal and one daytime officer. Broken Arrow’s best-known doctor was a man named Onis Franklin. He was a doctor in Indian Territory days and went to homes in a horse-drawn buggy. He opened his very own hospital in 1925. The old hospital building now houses our Military History Center. Many of the renowned WWII 45th Infantry “Thunderbirds” were from Broken Arrow, including Lt. Colonel Ernest Childers, a Muscogee (Creek) Medal of Honor recipient. The Thunderbirds had more Native Americans than any other division of the military at that time. Ernest was the grandson of the man who built the cabin pictured earlier in this book. And of course, none of these careers would be possible without our amazing teachers and educators!
Thank you community helpers.
Marmie Mouse: Have you ever noticed the little bronze mice statues scattered up and down Main Street? Well, that’s our Marmie Mouse! To learn more about Marmie read her book and keep up with her adventures on her Facebook or Instagram @marmieamouseonmainstreet
Marmie

Broken Arrow's Main Street Mouse
1828-1836: Broken Arrow band of Muscogee (Creek) settle here following removal from Alabama

1866: New treaties between the U.S. & the Five Tribes allow the first railroad to enter Indian Territory

1901: Coal mining begins in the area east of town called Evans

1902: The townsite is officially named Broken Arrow, & the first bank opens

1903: City Council meets for the first time, Broken Arrow Indian Territory is incorporated, the railroad finally reaches Broken Arrow

1904: Telephone service is brought to town, 1st Public School building is built

1906: Fire department is formed, natural gas is made available to residents as well as BA Electric Light Company services

1907: Broken Arrow, Indian Territory becomes Broken Arrow, Oklahoma as Oklahoma Territory & Indian Territory are combined & admitted to the Union.

1908: 1st graduating class of Broken Arrow Public Schools

1910: City waterworks supply homes & business with piped water from a large spring in town

1918: First paved streets in Broken Arrow due to Main Street becoming part of the new HWY 51

1932: First official Rooster Day & First Cotton Jubilee both held during the Depression

1949: Post office begins home delivery

1954: City Manager form of government was approved

1965: Broken Arrow Expressway opened which led to immediate growth

Thikachka which means "Broken Arrow" translates as an arrow with a river cane shaft, which was broken or snapped off the cane plant or "Broken Arrow." Thikachka was also the name of the Broken Arrow Muscogee-Creek town in Alabama on the Chattahoochee River.