



THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL OKLAHOMANS

BY DECLARING MARTIAL LAW THIRTY-FOUR TIMES DURING HIS tenure in office, Governor Alfalfa Bill Murray (No. 21) could certainly be said to wield influence in the state of Oklahoma. That Garth Brooks (No. 17) is the most popular musician in the world no doubt makes getting his phone calls returned a snap. But as we at *Oklahoma Today* discovered last spring, determining which Oklahomans have the most influence was a tricky bit of business. Mention Anita Hill's name, and the complicated issues of sexual harassment and Supreme Court confirmations are bound to follow. Hill just missed this list's final cut.

In May 1999, determined to name the fifty most influential Oklahomans of the century for this special Century in Review issue, *Oklahoma Today* editors commenced a mammoth research mission. After extensive vetting, we crafted a list of 120 biographies of men and women throughout the century who played significant roles in Oklahoma's political and financial worlds and the cultural and social scene. We whittled that number down to a manageable eighty candidates and asked state historian Bob Blackburn to review the list for any apparent omissions. Then in July 1999, we created a voting panel representing all walks of contemporary Oklahoma life and the editorial voice of *Oklahoma Today*. Assuring the confidentiality of each member's vote, we asked these men and women to eliminate thirty names on the ballot and rank the remaining fifty. Candidates on the ballot must have lived in this century and lived a significant portion of their lives in Oklahoma. The voters are listed below. Write-in candidates were allowed and were factored into the final statistical analysis, which was compiled by state statistician Doug Hawthorne.

Each voter returned his ballot after spending an exasperating several hours mulling the choices; the voting members of the editorial staff were not allowed to review other finished ballots before their own were completed. As federal judge and voting member Robert Henry remarked, "To pick the most influential is at best an informed guess and at worst pure personal preference. I would say that any Oklahoman listed in the top ten could easily be in the top three." Indeed. The voters had to rely on their own interpretation of the term "influence." Some called into account both national and global concerns; some based their judgment on the numbers of people personally affected by the candidate's lifetime. Civil rights symbol Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher, for example, unknown to many Oklahomans, ranks immediately above Garth Brooks, known to most every citizen in western civilization. In all of their splendor, glory, and controversy, we now present to you the fifty most influential Oklahomans of the twentieth century.

By Jennifer Breedlove & Steffie Corcoran

Bob Blackburn, Director, Oklahoma Historical Society; Sheilah Bright, Contributing Editor; Steffie Corcoran, Contributing Editor; Kelly Crow, former Editorial Assistant; Aimée Downs, Associate Editor; Joel Everett, Contributing Editor; David Fitzgerald, Contributing Editor; Doug Frantz, Mayor, City of Enid; Gordon Grice, Contributing Editor; Joan Henderson, Publisher; Robert Henry, Judge, United States Court of Appeals; Kirk Humphreys, Mayor, City of Oklahoma City; Jane Jayroe, Executive Director, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department; Frank Keating, Governor, State of Oklahoma; George Lang, Contributing Editor; Tom Luker, Contributing Editor; Louisa McCune, Editor in Chief; Maura McDermott, Contributing Editor; J.D. Merryweather, Contributing Editor; Barbara Palmer, former Contributing Editor; Lynn Peacher, 1998 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year; Russell Perry, Publisher, *The Black Chronicle*; Cecil Powell, Mayor, City of Lawton; Betty Price, Executive Director, Oklahoma Arts Council; Greg Pyle, Chief, Choctaw Nation; Susan Savage, Mayor, City of Tulsa; Kip Stratton, Contributing Editor; Michael Wallis, Contributing Editor; Nancy Woodard, Contributing Editor.



I. WILL ROGERS

"We can't all be heroes because someone has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by."

WILLIAM PENN ADAIR ROGERS WAS BORN NOVEMBER 4, 1879, on the family ranch near what would later become Oologah in Indian Territory. Though his parents were Methodists, he would never officially join a religious denomination. Instead, Will Rogers lived the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule. Yes, he would help establish a young congregation in a budding community called Beverly Hills, and he would financially support any range of religious institutions—from the Stephen S. Wise Synagogue in New York City to the Salvation Army. But for Rogers, people were his religion.

After a haphazard formal education in I.T. and nearby Missouri, Rogers "quit the school business" and hired on as cowboy, driving cattle from Texas to Kansas. Slowly his career emerged as he competed in rodeos and developed into a skilled lariat artist. Over the course of his show business career, he appeared in a Wild West show in South Africa and at the 1904 Saint Louis World's Fair. He was spotlighted in circuses in Australia and New Zealand, performed in New York City's original Madison Square Garden as part of the 1905 Horse Fair, toured the United States and Canada on vaudeville circuits, performed in Broadway musicals, and starred in the Ziegfeld Frolic, the Ziegfeld Follies, and ultimately in seventy-one motion pictures. He became filmdom's male box-office leader during the last three years of his life, topping even studios heavies Clark Gable, Fred Astaire, and James Cagney.

On the stage he starred in Eugene O'Neill's play *Ab, Wilderness* and gave a performance which could have run "forever," according to *Variety*. On radio, he was America's most widely listened to political analyst, and writing seven columns a week in some six hundred newspapers he was the most popular columnist of his day—on any given day Rogers could claim an audience of forty million, approximately one-third of all Americans. Rogers published six books, wrote many articles for the *Saturday Evening Post*, and in the pages of *Life* magazine, he waged a mock presidential campaign as standard bearer of a mythical Anti-Bunk party.

Will Rogers was a modest man. He lived comfortably but modestly, dressed modestly, and married Betty, a modest but important helpmate. They gave their children modest names: William, Mary, James, and Fred. Rogers drove a modest car, but spent money lavishly to help others. Whether rent money for an indigent actor or massive aid for Mississippi River flood victims or Florida hurricane sufferers, Rogers invariably volunteered his help, and it was said he would beat the Red Cross to a disaster scene, starting collections with his own hefty check.

Will Rogers is the only humorist to have his statue placed into Statuary Hall in the nation's capitol or to have his face on two United States and five foreign postage stamps. Numerous memorials, statues, buildings, schools, parks, hotels and motels, streets, and airports are named in his memory, as are a church, a navigational beacon, a ship, and even a nuclear-powered subma-

rine. Rogers's name was placed in nomination for the presidency at two national Democratic conventions, and he was made honorary mayor of Beverly Hills, California. In 1927 the National Press Club appointed him Congressman-at-Large while *Life* called him the "Unofficial President of the United States."

During the Great Depression, Will Rogers, by example and word, embodied all that could be right in America when all around seemed to be going wrong. President Franklin Roosevelt would say of Rogers: "He loved and was loved by the American people. His memory will ever be in benediction with the hosts of his countrymen who felt the spell of that kindly humor which, while seeing facts, could always laugh at fantasy ... In a time grown too solemn and sober, he brought his countrymen back to a sense of proportion."

Will Rogers was far more than a humorist. He was the voice of Americans and the conscience of an age. He spoke for those who had neither voice nor pulpit. With no political ideology to advocate or defend, he was free to observe and report without malice, for as there was none in his heart, there was none in his words.

It was Will Rogers—part Cherokee Indian and part cowboy, high school dropout and lifelong scholar, jester and philosopher, speaker and writer, a most astute observer of the world around him—who in his time was unquestionably the most respected and trusted man in the United States. Had he any political ambitions, he could have been elected to any office he sought. Presidents from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Delano Roosevelt quoted him in his day. He was invited twice to stay overnight at the White House—once by Republican President Calvin Coolidge, once by Democrat Franklin Roosevelt.

As a traveler, he knew America's pulse, and his daily newspaper comments kept a nation informed, amused, and thinking. After trips abroad, Rogers would report privately to presidents and publicly to his readers. Said Franklin Roosevelt: "Will Rogers' report was not only more humorous, it was more accurate than any I had received." Such unprecedented powers in a less principled man could have led to enormous mischief, but Will Rogers never once abused the trust America placed in him.

When Will Rogers died with pilot Wiley Post in a plane crash near Point Barrow, Alaska, on August 15, 1935, he had fulfilled his credo: "You're only on this earth for a very short time, so have a few laughs and don't take things too seriously—especially yourselves. Just kinder live your life so you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip."

—Bryan B. and Frances N. Sterling

Bryan and Frances Sterling have written eight books about Will Rogers, most recently Will Rogers: A Photobiography (Taylor Publishing, Dallas, Texas). The authors live in New York City. This portrait of Will Rogers is by artist Charles Banks Wilson. It hangs in the state capitol.

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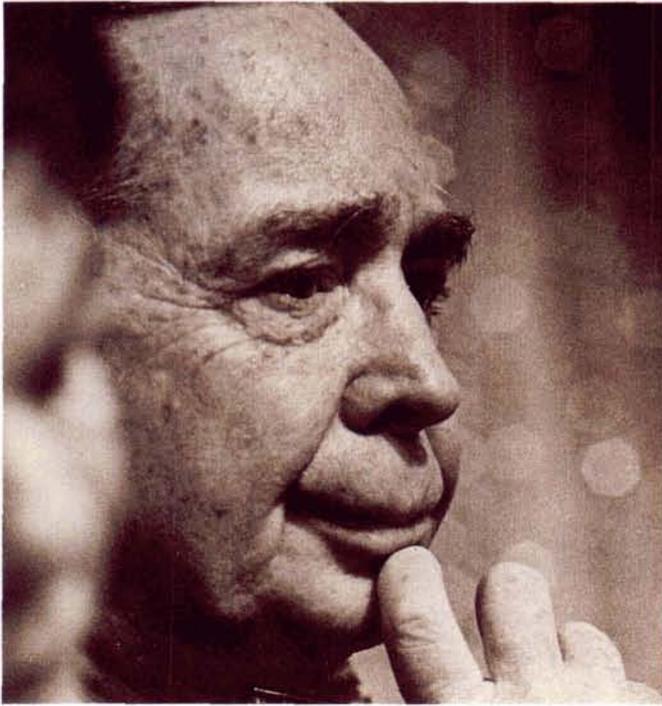


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2. CARL ALBERT

"After you've done something, you compete against that, and you compete against history."

Carl Albert's biography reads like a movie script describing the American dream. Born in 1908 in the Bolen-Darnell mining camp to a coal miner and raised in Bugtussle, he made his way to the most coveted position in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1971: Speaker of the House. He kept that position until his retirement in 1977, by which time he had served longer and held more power than any other Oklahoman, a claim that can still be made today. Albert was awarded a Rhodes scholarship after graduating from OU and spent three years studying at Oxford University, where he earned two law degrees. While serving in the army in World War II and rising to the rank of lieutenant

colonel, he married Mary Harmon, his wife of fifty-seven years. Later in his career he had the formidable task of presiding over Congress during Watergate. Albert's list of political accomplishments is extensive, but he will always be remembered as "the little giant from Little Dixie." He and his wife live in McAlester.



3. ROBERT S. KERR

"I'm just like you, only I struck oil."—1942 campaign slogan

Born in a log cabin in Ada, Robert Samuel Kerr was one of Oklahoma's most influential politicians and was considered at one time a prime presiden-

tial candidate. As senator, he served on the Finance and Public Works committees to create legislation favorable for his constituents, steering military and civilian projects to the state. His best-known political accomplishment is perhaps the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, designed to control floodwaters and allow navigation. He also headed up the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee during Kennedy's space race. According to one Associated Press writer at the time, "He is today one of the most powerful members of the Senate, and some even call him its uncrowned king." Kerr once revealed to his father that he had three lifetime ambitions: to have a family, to have a million dollars, and to be governor. After losing three children in childbirth along with his first wife, Kerr married the daughter of an oil man. Now in the oil business, he would co-found the Anderson & Kerr Drilling Company (now Kerr-McGee Corporation), where he would make his fortune. In 1942, Kerr claimed his first elective state office as governor. He worked to eradicate the state's negative image after the Great Depression, successfully bringing federal military money to the state during World War II while creating thousands of jobs for struggling farmers. Kerr died in 1963 after a heart attack at sixty-seven years of age.



4. JIM THORPE

"You never learn anything while you're talking."

Talented in every sport he attempted, the twenty-five-year-old age Sac & Fox athlete from Prague won both the pentathlon and decathlon during the 1912 Stockholm Olympics—a feat that has never been repeated. A year later, he was stripped of his medals because he played semi-pro baseball for two summers. Thorpe then played baseball for the New York Giants, and seven years later he embarked on a professional football career, making his mark as one of the all-time great players, though already past his prime. In 1950, the Associated Press voted him the greatest athlete of the first half of this century, and in 1999 ESPN ranked him the seventh-greatest athlete of the century. Thorpe died after his third heart attack in 1953 at age sixty-four. He had struggled to make ends meet since retiring from football in 1926, despite his phenomenal athletic accomplishments. Thirty years after his death, Thorpe's gold medals were returned to his family by the International Olympic Committee.



5. WOODY GUTHRIE

"Life has got a habit of not standing hitched. You got to ride it like you find it. You got to change with it."

An inspiration to folk singers past and present, Okemah native Woody Guthrie is best remembered for the song "This Land Is Your Land." But the story of how he came from less than humble beginnings to musical icon is just as impressive. Woodrow Wilson Guthrie was born in 1912, the son of a real-estate broker who had fallen on hard times. His mother suffered from Huntington's disease, a degenerative brain disorder that took her life

and would ultimately lead to Guthrie's demise as well. His sister Clara died in a suspicious house fire, adding to the tragedy of his youth. During the Dust Bowl, Guthrie traveled to California on railcars and thereafter devoted his career to writing songs about the common man. The struggles Guthrie witnessed firsthand are reflected in the more than one thousand songs he wrote, but perhaps the most lasting contribution of his music is the transformation of the folk ballad into a means of social protest. In 1967, after fifteen years of hospitalization, Guthrie died, leaving behind

three ex-wives and a musical legacy of hope and inspiration. Only three of his eight children survived him, two succumbing to Huntington's disease and three in separate automobile accidents.



6. WILEY POST

"We have great hopes that we may have helped bring the time closer when commercial aviation will span the seas and the land and bring all peoples closer together."

The legendary one-eyed aviator was the first to fly around the world alone, but Wiley Post's career in aviation might never have happened if not for the accident on an oil rig that cost him his left eye. The compensation allowed him to buy an old Curtiss Jenny biplane and pursue his lifelong dream of flying. In 1931, Post and Australian navigator Harold Gatty held the nation riveted for the eight days it took them to fly around the world. In Solomon, Alaska, near the end of their trip, the plane began to sink in the sand during takeoff to Fairbanks, and the propeller slammed into the beach. With a wrench, a broken-handled hammer, and a rock, Post

straightened the bent propeller blades and flew the now famous plane, *Winnie Mae*, on to Fairbanks. Post and Gatty were the nation's heroes on July 1, 1931, when they completed the most impressive aviation achievement to date. Two years later Post would become the first man to fly around the world solo. He also established many speed and altitude records and would likely have set many more had it not been for his untimely death in a plane crash with Will Rogers near Point Barrow, Alaska, in 1935.



7. MICKEY MANTLE

"I guess you could say I'm what this country is all about." The Mick, born in Spavinaw and raised in Commerce, is among the most legendary of baseball players. During his career with the New York Yankees, the switch-hitter set dozens of major-league records: MVP three times, most games played, and most at bats. Mantle's incredible strength was due in part to working with his father at the lead mines, where he smashed large rocks into small stones with a sledgehammer. Hugely popular with fans, Mantle was named to the Baseball Hall

of Fame in 1974. After a successful liver transplant, doctors discovered a cancer that would lead to Mantle's death in 1995. He was sixty-three.



8. FRANK PHILLIPS

"Those of us who have been more fortunate have a debt to society which I believe can best be paid by training and educating the youth of the nation."

Frank Phillips was a savvy businessman long before he founded Phillips Petroleum in Bartlesville in 1917. Born in Cherry County, Nebraska, he honed his business skills first as a barber, then as a banker. In 1905, Frank and his brother, L.E., moved to Bartlesville to begin the adventure that would lead to Phillips Petroleum, an international giant of petroleum products. Phillips could also lay claim to becoming the only white honorary chief of the Osage Indian Nation. Woolaroc, his rustic retreat in in Osage County, to this day continues the work that Phillips believed was so important—teaching future generations about history and nature. When Phillips died in 1950, he was buried at Woolaroc alongside his wife Jane.



9. DAVID BOREN

"Oklahoma has given me everything. You have seasons in your life. I'm at the point in my life when I can start giving back to Oklahoma."

David Boren, a Seminole native and Rhodes scholar, has had a distinguished political career as Oklahoma governor and U.S. Senator. As the youngest governor in the nation, Boren established several education programs between 1975 and 1979, including the first state funding for gifted and talented classes, the Scholar-Leadership Enrichment Program, and the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute. By the time he left office for the U.S. Senate, he had been called "one of America's most promising young leaders" by *Time*. In Washington, Boren led the fight for congressional campaign finance reform and for legislation discouraging abuses of power by administration and congressional staff. The 1988 *Almanac of American Politics* called him one of the five most effective members of the Senate. Since retiring from politics in 1994, Boren has served as president of his alma mater, the University of Oklahoma.



10. RALPH ELLISON

"If the word has the potency to revive and make us free, it has also the power to blind, imprison, and destroy."

Born and raised in Oklahoma City, Ralph Ellison is widely thought to have written the greatest African-American novel of the century. In 1952, he published his only finished novel, *Invisible Man*, which took an arduous seven years to write. Winner of the 1953 National Book Award, *Invisible Man* was named the nineteenth most influential novel of the century by the Modern Library Association in 1999. In 1969, Ellison received the highest civilian honor, the Medal of Freedom, by President Johnson. Last summer, *Juneteenth*, his unfinished second novel was published posthumously to widespread attention.



11. EDWARD K. GAYLORD

"We can earn respect and compel admiration if we put

forth all the ability of which we are capable."

Edward "E.K." Gaylord moved to Oklahoma in 1903 determined to own his own newspaper. At 29, with a \$5,000 investment, he began a publishing odyssey that would have a lasting effect on the young municipality of Oklahoma City. With fearless news judgment and keen instincts, he took *The Oklahoman* from a local publication to a national media giant during the seventy years he edited and published it. He also led the Oklahoma Publishing Company into the forefront of broadcasting, making it one of the most influential newspapers in the region. Gaylord never stopped working: at 100 years of age, he addressed a joint session of the Oklahoma legislature, and a year later he died after a full day's work at the office.



12. WILMA MANKILLER

"I believe in the old Cherokee injunction to 'be of a good mind.' Today it's called positive thinking."

The first woman Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, Wilma Pearl Mankiller has conquered many hardships in reaching her success. Born in

Tahlequah, her poverty-stricken family moved to San Francisco with a government promise of a better life. Things weren't actually better for her family, but Mankiller credits her lifelong role as a Native American and women's rights activist to the alienation and prejudice experienced while there. As chief of the Cherokee Nation from 1985 to 1995, she is credited with many improvements in employment, education, and health services. In 1993, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, and in 1998 she received the Medal of Freedom. At fifty-four, she lives near Stilwell, spending her time writing and working on women's issues.



13. THOMAS GILCREASE

"Every man must leave a track, and it might as well be a good one."

Because Thomas Gilcrease's mother was of Creek heritage, he was eligible for 160 acres of land during the government allotment at the turn of the century. The land became one of the state's prominent oil fields, and Gilcrease became a prominent oil man. On business travels to Europe, Gilcrease discovered a passion for the history and art of the American West, and in 1949 he opened a public gallery at his estate in Tulsa. The collection was threatened in the early Fifties when

declining oil prices created serious financial hardships for Gilcrease. But thanks to a group of concerned Tulsans, a government bond was issued to pay Gilcrease's debt. In return, he handed the collection over to the city and committed revenue from the oil property to the maintenance of the museum. In 1962 when Gilcrease died, the remainder of his art went to the Gilcrease Museum, which is widely considered one of the preeminent western art museums in the nation.



14. GENE AUTRY

"We're mighty lucky to be living in a country where they change the map to honor a cowboy—instead of to satisfy the greed of a dictator."

—Referring to Gene Autry, Oklahoma, which changed its name from Berwyn in 1941
Gene Autry, born in Texas, came to Ravia, Oklahoma, as a teenager. In 1928, Will Rogers spotted the young man in his early twenties singing at the telegraph station where he worked and suggested he give show business a try. The rest, as they say, is history. As the "Yodeling Cowboy" on KVOO in Tulsa, Autry

became a popular radio figure. A few years later, he signed with Republic Pictures and made his film debut in *In Old Santa Fe*. That next year, 1935, Autry helped create the musical western with his appearance in *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*, the first western written around the lead character's singing ability. Ninety-three films and two Grammys later, Autry retired, but not before earning five Hollywood stars—more than any other entertainer—for his work in motion pictures, radio, music recording, television, and live theater.



15. ANGIE DEBO

"I am sometimes asked to state my goals and ambitions in writing. I suppose I have only one: to discover truth and publish it."

A master researcher dedicated to the facts, however difficult they were to hear, Angie Debo wrote a number of histories, including *A History of the Indians of the United States*, most dealing with Oklahoma and Native Americans. She also made speeches and wrote articles for newspapers, encyclopedias, and periodicals. Later in life she joined the ACLU and

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lobbied Congress on behalf of Arizona's Native Americans and Alaskan natives. Debo received many awards for her work, including the American Historical Association's Award for Scholarly Distinction. She lived in Marshall until her death at age ninety-eight in 1988. In her will she left her papers, books, and literary rights to OSU in hopes that future students would find the materials useful.



16. ADA LOIS SIPUEL FISHER
"Desegregation came—painfully, begrudgingly, and slowly—but it did come."

A Chickasha native, Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher became one of the most integral pieces of the nation's civil rights puzzle in 1946 when, with the support of the NAACP, she attempted to enroll in OU's School of Law. Denied admission, she and attorney Thurgood Marshall successfully sued the university, which eventually led to the first integration in higher education in the state. In 1956 Fisher returned as a professor to Langston University, where she had graduated with honors eleven years earlier. She retired in 1987, having earned a second

master's degree in history from OU. In 1981, the Smithsonian Institution named Fisher one of the 150 most influential black women in history. She died in 1995 after a struggle with cancer.



17. GARTH BROOKS

"When I step out on stage each night, there's a thought running around in my head ... What if this was the last show I ever played? Is it the one I'd want to be remembered for?"

The youngest of six children, Yukon native Garth Brooks has become country music's biggest-selling superstar ever. Between 1989 and 1996, he sold sixty million albums and raked in record-breaking attendance at his concerts. He made American music history in 1991 when his third album, *Ropin' the Wind*, became the first country album to debut at number one on the Billboard pop charts. Brooks performed one of the most memorable concerts ever when in 1997 he played to 250,000 fans, the largest crowd to date at New York's Central Park (and 14.6 million television viewers). Outselling the Beatles and Michael Jackson, he has won every music industry award—including

Entertainer of the Decade for the 1990s. He is married to his college sweetheart, Sandy, and they have three daughters, Taylor Maine Pearl, August Anna, and Allie Colleen.



18. JEANE KIRKPATRICK

"There is no more important demand citizens of a democracy can and should make on their leaders than that they use power only in times, places, and manners prescribed by law and the Constitution."

This Democrat-turned-Republican from Duncan was the first woman ambassador to the United Nations, appointed by President Reagan to serve from 1981 to 1985. A Medal of Freedom winner and noted foreign and defense policy expert, she has gone from Georgetown University professor to syndicated *Los Angeles Times* columnist to White House cabinet member, helping shape U.S. foreign and defense policies for more than twenty years. She is currently the Director of Foreign and Defense Policy Studies at a Washington, D.C. think tank and has written numerous books and articles and appears frequently on television and radio.



19. JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN

"The new America in the twenty-first century will be primarily non-white, a place that George Washington would not recognize. By the year 2025, 'minority' will mean someone of European descent."

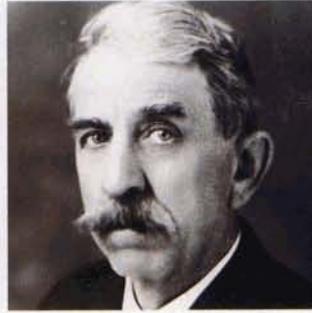
John Hope Franklin, a Rentiesville native, is among the nation's most respected historians. An expert on black history and the nineteenth-century South, Franklin has taught at some of the nation's most prestigious universities: Duke, Howard, and the University of Chicago. His best-known book, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, is now in its seventh edition. He has served on many national commissions, and most recently he is serving as a consultant for the Tulsa Race Riot Commission. Winner of the Medal of Freedom, Franklin was the first African American to serve as president of the American Historical Association. In 1978 he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and in 1997 into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame. He is currently Professor Emeritus of History at Duke University.

20. SHANNON LUCID

"[It was like] living in a camper in the back of your pickup with your kids...when it's raining and no one can get out."—On living in the Mir space shuttle

Born in China and raised in Bethany, Shannon Lucid, a biochemist and astronaut, was one of the first women astronauts recruited by NASA in 1978. In 1996, her 188 days on the Russian space station Mir set the record for longest U.S. space mission. At twenty years old, Lucid received her pilot's license, and she says becoming an astronaut gave her the

opportunity to pursue both of her passions—flying and science. In 1996, she became the first woman to receive the Congressional Space Medal of Honor and in 1997 was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Lucid still holds the U.S. single mission space flight endurance record. Since returning from her historic travels, she has continued her work with NASA, and she frequently speaks to groups about her experience in space. A resident of Houston, Lucid is an active-duty astronaut and looks forward to her next mission in space.



21. WILLIAM H. MURRAY

"I would much rather insult a man than deceive him."

The pioneer-spirited Alfalfa Bill Murray was a colorful populist political figure and governor in Oklahoma's early days. Born in Texas, he moved to Tishomingo in 1895. Anti-government, anti-institution, and anti-New

Deal, Murray inspired fierce devotion and equally fierce distaste. Many of his policies while in office were unusual, if not controversial. While governor of Oklahoma from 1931 to 1935, he activated the National Guard twenty-seven times and declared martial law another thirty-four times. In 1932, he lost the Democratic presidential nomination to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Murray opposed industrialization and urbanization, and throughout his career he promoted agriculture, even allowing vegetables to be grown for the hungry on the lawn of the state capitol. His promotion of alfalfa cultivation earned him his nickname. In the 1920s, he unsuccessfully attempted to establish an agricultural colony in Bolivia before returning to Oklahoma politics. Murray died in 1956. He was married and had five children.



22. LLOYD NOBLE

"In order to have things for one's self, one must join in the defense of those same things for others."

Lloyd Noble, an oil industry magnate from Ardmore, is perhaps best known for his generosity. Born the son of



pioneer merchants, he worked briefly as a teacher before serving in the first World War. He then studied law at OU but went into the oil business when oil was struck on his family farm. His company, Noble Drilling, was known for its leadership and innovation, and Lloyd Noble was known for his hard-working, generous nature. A stern boss, he was also quick to praise. Creating one of the first profit-sharing plans in the oil industry, he would offer an employee a share in a well and then loan him the

money to pay for it. His generosity didn't end with his own employees: for his part in the World War II effort, he accepted drilling contracts near the Arctic Circle and Great Britain, insisting that his company not take any profit. Then in 1945, he established the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, which to date has distributed about \$233 million in gifts to medical research, education, and the arts. After Noble's death in 1950, his children (Sam, Ed, and Ann) took over Noble Oil, which is still going strong today.

23. E.W. MARLAND

"I have slept in the derrick of many a discovery well—gone for a week at a time without even taking my boots off, wet to the skin in freezing weather, meals out of a dinner pail—and loved it for ... the sense of satisfaction that came from tapping a treasure house of nature, filled with liquid gold."

Ernest Whitworth "E.W."

Marland was born in Pennsylvania but made his mark in Ponca City, discovering oil and founding the Marland Oil Company (now Conoco) in 1911. It's believed that during the

1920s, Marland controlled one-tenth of the world's oil. Not only did he make a fortune with his rapidly expanding company, he was among the first to offer employees free medical and dental care, bonuses for oil discoveries, premiums for improvements, and easy stock purchases. The 1920s were a time of great excess for Marland; among other extravagances, he built two Italianate mansions. Following a hostile takeover of his company by J.P. Morgan & Company, he changed his focus to politics and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1932. After one term, he was elected governor of Oklahoma on a pro-Roosevelt platform. The Marland legacy is still apparent today, fifty-eight years after he died relatively broke. Many of the popular tourist sites in Ponca City bear the Marland name or some association to it.

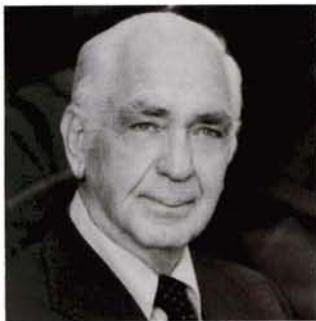


24. HENRY IBA

"We are not going to play them; they are going to play us."

The fourth-winningest coach in college basketball history, the Iron Duke—or Mr. Iba to all who knew him—coached at Oklahoma State

University for thirty-six years, winning two national titles in 1945 and 1946. Henry Iba later led the United States Olympic team to gold medals in the 1964 and 1968 Olympics and a silver medal in 1972 (he is the only person to coach three U.S. Olympic basketball teams). Even more regarded for his teaching style than his winning record, Iba's former players remember that practices were peppered with his wisdom on how to live a meaningful life. In 1968, Iba was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame.



25. JOHN KIRKPATRICK

"I don't believe I need to be remembered. I have a satisfaction to have done what I've done."

Considered one of the nation's most generous philanthropists, "The Admiral" John Kirkpatrick, founder of Kirkpatrick Oil Company, is credited with personally donating nearly \$80 million to various charities during the last four decades. Born in Oklahoma City in 1908, Kirkpatrick was the son of a dentist who helped establish the Oklahoma Dental Association. Before making his fortune in oil, he served in the navy during World War II, a career

earning him two Bronze Stars and the title of rear admiral. (As executive officer of the USS *Oklahoma City*, he invented a more accurate submarine gun sight.) Since founding the Kirkpatrick Foundation in 1955, his family has distributed millions of dollars to hundreds of non-profits in Oklahoma County. Kirkpatrick is still going strong at ninety-two, although the foundations continue under the guidance of his children and grandchildren. In 1995, Kirkpatrick received the Medal for Distinguished Philanthropy from the American Association of Museums.

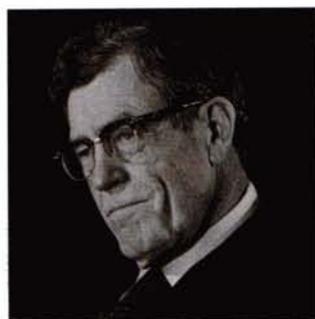


26. THOMAS P. STAFFORD

"The white, twisted clouds, and the endless shades of blue in the ocean make ... even your own breath disappear."

One of only twenty-four men who have been to the moon, Tom Stafford, a Weatherford native, helped pave the way for the first lunar landing while commanding *Apollo X* in 1969. His other missions include piloting *Gemini VI* in 1965 and commanding *Gemini IX* in 1966. His last space flight was in 1975 as commander of the *Apollo-Soyuz* test project

mission, the first American astronaut/Soviet cosmonaut space rendezvous. Upon retirement as lieutenant general of the Air Force, he had logged more than 500 space hours and 7,000 flight hours. In 1993, President Bush awarded him the Congressional Space Medal of Honor.



27. DEAN A. MCGEE

"If you start with able, talented, and skilled people on any project, you're three-fourths of the way home."

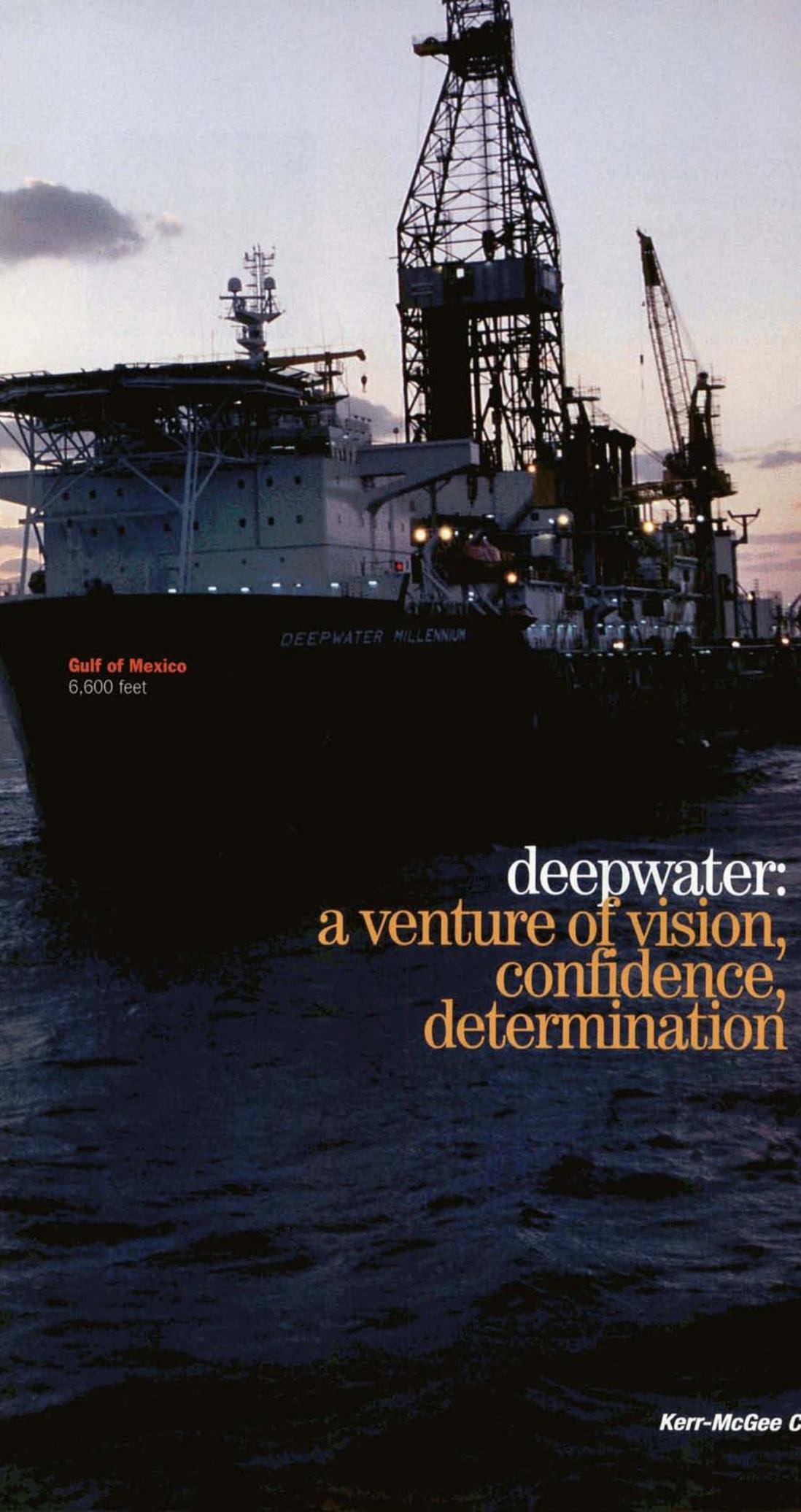
Dean McGee started his career in the energy industry with Phillips Petroleum and ended up the primary force behind the Kerr-McGee Corporation. McGee served the company in several capacities—namely Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer—between 1937 and his retirement in 1983. Called the "geological genius of Oklahoma oil fields," he was equally noted for civic and philanthropic endeavors, particularly with the Oklahoma City Medical Center and the Myriad Gardens Foundation. McGee died in 1989 at the age of eighty-five. As Senator Boren said, "Dean McGee lived a life that will continue to inspire and bring out the best in Oklahoma for years to come."



28. ADMIRAL WILLIAM J. CROWE JR.

"As you progress, nothing will stand you in better stead than a sense of humor. In a perfect world this would not be so important; we could be serious about every subject without harm. But unfortunately, life doesn't meet that criterion."

William Crowe Jr. came to Oklahoma from Kentucky at the age of four. Because his father, a native Oklahoman, was a firm believer in the power of education and the written word, he insisted that Crowe participate in debate at school, and the eloquence and rhetoric he learned there would become his well-known and respected trademark. In 1943, after a year at OU, Crowe joined the navy as an Annapolis cadet. Throughout his forty-seven years in the navy, he served as executive officer and commander of two submarines and also spent ten months in Vietnam. Crowe was commander of all U.S. forces in the Pacific from 1983 until 1985, when he was named chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President Reagan, a position he held under two presidents. From 1994 to 1999, Crowe served as ambassador to the United



Gulf of Mexico
6,600 feet

deepwater:
a venture of vision,
confidence,
determination

In 1947, a young Oklahoma City company drilled and completed the world's first commercially successful offshore well on Ship Shoal block 32 in the open water of the Gulf of Mexico – it was located in 18 feet of water, on a lease ten and a half miles off the coast of Louisiana.



Ship Shoal 18 feet

That company, known today as Kerr-McGee Corporation, is now one of the largest U.S.-based independent oil and gas companies in the world and starts out the new millennium with exploration and development operations in thousands of feet of water, hundreds of miles out to sea. Worldwide, about 72% of our undeveloped offshore acreage lies in water deeper than 1,000 feet. Kerr-McGee – a company of vision, confidence and determination – committed to the global search for deepwater oil and gas reserves.

Kerr-McGee Corporation



Kingdom, leaving the Brits with a lasting impression of the quick wit that made him a popular choice for the position. He is known to quote Winston Churchill and Will Rogers and for making snappy, yet diplomatic comebacks, even under the stress of being criticized. He is the highest-ranking military officer ever to come from Oklahoma.



29. BOB WILLS
“Play it, boys!”

A singer, songwriter, band leader, and fiddler, Bob Wills first learned to play jazz and the blues, later blending the styles into a western swing sound that he made popular in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Originally from Texas, he crossed the Red River into Oklahoma in 1934, finding success when he formed his own band, the Texas Playboys. The Playboys skyrocketed to fame as the most popular act in the Southwest, with a daily radio spot on Tulsa’s KVOO. In the mid 1940s, with high album sales and huge crowds at their dances, Wills became one of the highest-paid bandleaders in the country. By 1967, the band had broken up, though

Wills continued to perform. After several strokes, he died of pneumonia in 1975, but the fiddling sound he made popular can still be heard today. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1968.



30. KIOWA FIVE

“Painting is equipped with power and possibilities capable of immeasurable development.”

—Monroe Tsatoke

Originally “discovered” by Bureau of Indian Affairs staff member Susie Peters, these five Anadarko students—Spencer Asah, Jack Hokeah, Stephen Mopope, Monroe Tsatoke, and James Auchiah—were protégées of Oscar Brousse Jacobson, the first director of OU’s art museum and founder of the university’s art department. The Kiowa Five were the first Native American artists to receive international recognition after their showing at the International Art Exposition in Czechoslovakia in 1928. The flat, two-dimensional approach became known as the Kiowa style. Their paintings were recognizable by bright colors and symbolism, usually incorporating movement and drama to depict the artists’ culture and history.



31. BUD WILKINSON

“There is no substitute for desire to win, physical condition, and good athletics.”

Charles “Bud” Wilkinson, a Minnesota native, ushered in the winning football tradition at the University of Oklahoma as the team’s head coach and athletic director. From 1948 to 1963, he led the Sooners to three national championships (1950, 1955, and 1956), seventy-four straight conference victories, and the standing NCAA Division I record of forty-seven consecutive victories. As much a character builder as a coach, the graduation rate among Wilkinson’s student-athletes was 87.2 percent. After leaving OU in 1964, Wilkinson barely missed winning a seat in the U.S. Senate. He spent the next

twelve years as an analyst for ABC and was the head of President Kennedy’s Physical Fitness Program. Wilkinson died in 1994 at the age of seventy-seven.

32. THE BALLERINAS

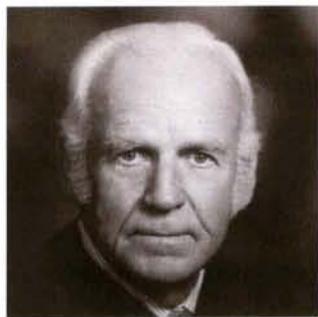
“Indians dance naturally. It’s a way of life. They dance to pray, to celebrate, to socialize.”

—Yvonne Chouteau

Five young Native American dancers defined grace and beauty in a traditionally European dance form in the 1940s. Yvonne Chouteau of Vinita, Rosella Hightower of Durwood, Moscelyne Larkin of Miami, and Maria and Marjorie Tallchief of Fairfax all studied together at the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, but each had distinct styles and talents as ballerinas. The women have been honored individually and as a group. In 1991, a twenty-foot mural was dedicated in the rotunda of the state capitol; in 1982, the “American Indian Ballerina” bronze was unveiled in Tulsa; and in 1997 the five women were named Oklahoma Treasures



by Governor Keating. Chouteau went on to found the dance department at OU and still teaches at the Chouteau-Terekhov Academy. Maria Tallchief, now the ballet director for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, co-created the New York City Ballet. Her sister Marjorie danced with the original Ballet Russe among others and retired from teaching in 1993. In the Fifties, Larkin founded the state's oldest professional ballet company, the Tulsa Ballet Theatre, and Hightower now teaches dance in France. Said Chouteau at the 1982 bronze unveiling, "It was as if we'd never been separated."



33. JUDGE LUTHER BOHANON

"Do right and fear no man." Luther Bohanon, a United States district judge from Oklahoma City, is probably the state's most influential jurist. Born in 1902 in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Bohanon earned his law license in 1927 and practiced general law until President Kennedy appointed him to the bench in 1961. A strict constitutionalist, his most controversial ruling involved integration and school busing. Many

students and parents protested, and some moved to different school districts to avoid the busing. Bohanon is also credited with implementing drastic changes to improve conditions at the state's prisons. Supporters and detractors alike note his conviction. He lives in Oklahoma City.

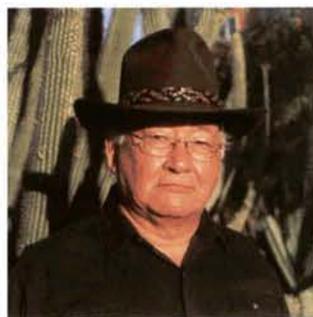


34. KATE BARNARD

"The labor of charity is like pouring water into a sieve. It is the weakest of weapons with which to combat poverty, crime, or disease."

More than a decade before women earned the right to vote, Catherine Ann "Kate" Barnard—who moved to Oklahoma City from Kansas in 1889—became politically active in early-day Oklahoma, fighting for shorter workdays, child labor laws, compulsory education, and other reforms. In 1907, she was elected state commissioner of charities and corrections, a political position specially created with her in mind, making her the first woman to hold office in Oklahoma. The same determined spirit and Christian charity that won her the election also cost her her job in 1915 when she

launched a crusade to protect Indian children taken advantage of by the government. Legislators turned against her, and funding for her agency was cut off, essentially doing away with her position. Barnard died in 1930, but it wasn't until the early 1980s that she received at least part of the recognition she deserved: her unmarked grave in Oklahoma City's Fairlawn Cemetery was identified with a stone inscribed, "Intrepid pioneer leader for social ethics in Oklahoma."

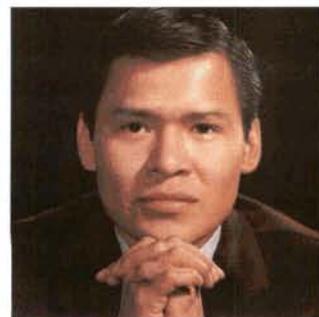


35. N. SCOTT MOMADAY

"These are people who have a kind of intrinsic love of language. They're born with it. It's a gift from God."

Navarre Scott Momaday, originally of Lawton, is perhaps the state's most acclaimed writer. The son of a painter and a children's story author, Momaday's destiny seemed clear from the start. Drawing from his Kiowa, English, and Cherokee heritage, he weaves his tales by focusing on the complexity of merging ancient traditions with the modern world. Momaday's career has been devoted to preserving the fragile oral tradition of the Indian

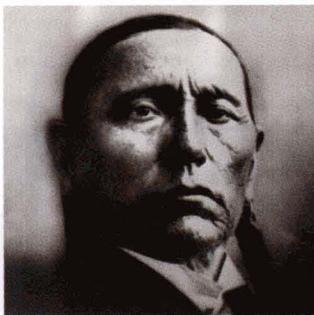
culture. Author of thirteen books, his *House Made of Dawn* won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1969. The same year, he was named Outstanding Indian of the Year by the American Indian Exposition. A respected novelist, essayist, poet, and painter, Momaday currently teaches at the University of Arizona.



36. JEROME TIGER

"When I'm gone and you hear the sound of a cricket, that will mean I am near."

Critics have referred to Jerome Tiger as the Goya or Rembrandt of Native American art because of his virtuosic ability to draw anything after merely glancing at it. In the five years of Tiger's tragically brief career, he received widespread critical acclaim, producing hundreds of paintings without any formal training. Growing up near Eufaula, Tiger was immersed in both his Creek-Seminole heritage as well as the white culture. He dropped out of high school and worked as a day laborer and ring fighter before deciding to pursue a career as an artist. Tiger died at the age of twenty-six of an accidental shooting.



37. QUANAH PARKER

“It is well, you have done a good thing in honor of a man who has tried to do right both to the people of his tribe and to his pale-faced friends.” —On Quanah, Texas, being named in his honor in 1884

Quanah Parker relocated to Fort Sill in 1875 after fighting a losing battle against frontier settlement in Texas. The son of a Comanche chief and a white woman, he resisted an 1867 treaty that confined the southern Plains Indians to a reservation where they were to conform to the white culture. In moving to Oklahoma, he was determined to make the most of the situation and quickly learned the white culture, though he refused to give up polygamy and his peyote religion. Parker became quite the businessman, earning money by negotiating grazing rights with cattlemen as well as investing in a railroad. At one time he was said to be the wealthiest Native American in North America. He later became a reservation judge and lobbied Congress on behalf of the Comanche Nation. Parker died in 1911. He had seven wives and twenty-five children.

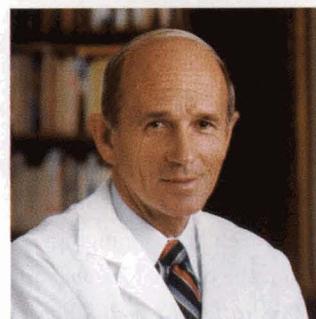


38. ALLAN HOUSER

“[Experimentation] is what keeps you alive. I’d get bored if I did the same things all the time.”

Allan Houser, a Chiricahua Apache, is one of the century’s most important sculptors. Recurring themes of mother and child, as well as Apache warriors, and fire dancers appeared in his work, but Houser experimented with different styles and art forms. Considered the “Patriarch of Native American Sculptors,” he developed a unique modern style, which has influenced many of the students he taught over twenty years. His murals appear in many

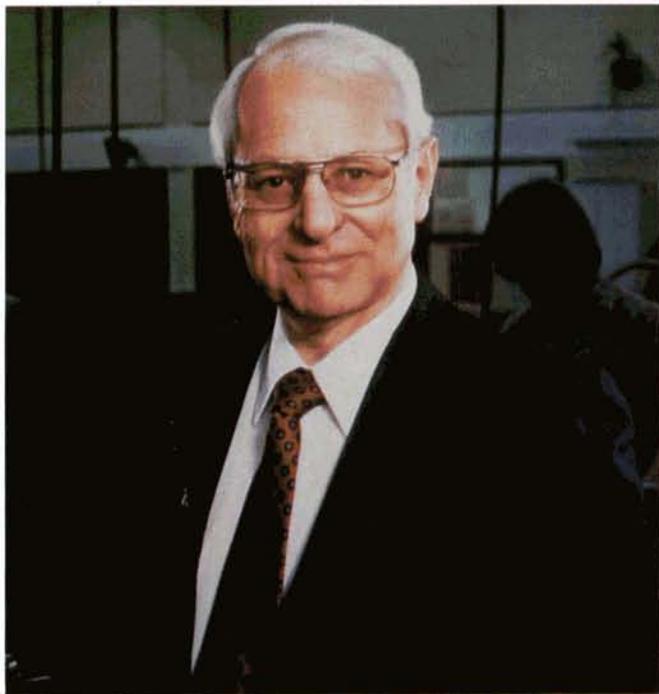
buildings, including the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., and the Southern Plains Indian Museum in Anadarko. When Houser left teaching in 1975 to devote himself fully to his art, he gained international recognition. His art appears in many collections, including the British Royal Collection, the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, and the White House. In 1992, President Bush awarded him the National Medal of Arts. He was also inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 1985. Houser died of cancer in 1994.



39. DR. KENNETH H. COOPER

“We have proven that it’s cheaper and easier to maintain good health than to regain it once it has been lost.”

Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper, the man who invented aerobics, was born and raised in Oklahoma City and earned his undergraduate and medical degrees from OU before enlisting in the Air



Force as a flight surgeon. He also holds a master's degree in public health from Harvard University. His research has fostered such medical advancements as the treadmill stress test to determine heart health and routine early screening for osteoporosis and breast and prostate cancers—not to mention the international fitness craze in the 1970s and 1980s. Cooper has written seventeen books, ranging from the original *Aerobics* in 1968 to *Dr. Kenneth Cooper's Antioxidant Revolution* in 1994 and his latest dose of advice, *Controlling Cholesterol the Natural Way*. At sixty-eight years old, Cooper still runs The Cooper Aerobics Center, the health and fitness complex in Dallas, Texas, he opened in 1970. The center includes a health club with more than 3,000 members and a research center.

40. FRANCIS TUTTLE

"Industry and education are economically related: the success of both requires that that relationship be positive and productive."

At his prime, Francis Tuttle was considered the international expert in the field of vocational-technical education. After graduating from OSU and teaching agriculture in Gotebo, the Wellston native served in the army at the end of World War II, later returning to his career as an educator. In the late 1960s, he became director of the Oklahoma Area Vocational-Technical school system located in Stillwater. In his twenty years there, Tuttle implemented many ideas, and his success brought international attention to the state, making it the model for vo-techs nationwide and for countries such as Sweden, the USSR, and China.



41. C.R. ANTHONY

"A store, a company, a man can only prosper in direct proportion to what he puts into his community, his country, and his life."

Charles Ross "The Chief" Anthony became one of the country's best-known workaholics when he pulled himself up from a childhood of poverty and tragedy to found "the friendliest store in town." Anthony was just twelve when he was orphaned. Then for six years, he worked odd jobs for a widow in Holdenville, Indian Territory. At nineteen, he began learning the merchant trade—his childhood dream—and entered into numerous joint ventures, some successful, some not. His first store opened in 1922 in Cushing under the Dixie Store name. From former partners such as J.C. Penney and J.P. Martin, he learned what did and didn't work in business, and he put into practice the policies that would make the C.R. Anthony Company a phenomenal success: hard work and civic duty. A major force in the building of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Anthony was known to

work sixteen-hour days seven days a week until his death in 1976 at the age of ninety-one.



42. STANLEY DRAPER

"What's forty years? The year 2000 is not tomorrow. It's this afternoon!"—In January 1960

During his forty-eight years with the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Stanley Draper provided the enthusiasm required to make the state's capital city what it is today—a dynamic metropolis. His vision led to the innovative programs of loan underwriting and annexation that drastically increased the city's jurisdiction, bringing projects like Tinker Air Force Base and I-40 to the city. He died in 1976 at the age of eighty-six.



43. ORAL ROBERTS

"I thought my heart would burst with joy. The City of Faith. What a name!"

The son of a Pentecostal minister, Oral Roberts has built a worldwide evangelical empire in Tulsa. In 1963, he

They say you can see forever in Oklahoma.

WE KNOW. THERE'S NO END IN SIGHT TO WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE.



By keeping our eyes focused on providing energy solutions that meet the changing needs of customers, Conoco has grown to become an international petroleum leader. Now, as we celebrate our 125th anniversary, we look forward to many more years of serving the people of Oklahoma. Through our vision and resourcefulness, there's no limit to what we can achieve in the new millennium.

founded Oral Roberts University, then went on to create the City of Faith, the failed medical center intended to merge faith healing and traditional medicine. Though more than eight million copies of his autobiography are in print, controversy has plagued Roberts's career, largely because of his claims that God speaks directly to him. At eighty-two, he is still active in his ministry, although his son has taken over as president of ORU. He lives in California.



44. HENRY G. BENNETT
"There are as many paths to progress as there are nations."
 Born in Arkansas in 1886, Henry Bennett provided the vision behind what would become Oklahoma State University. As president of the Oklahoma Agricultural & Mechanical College from 1928 until his death in 1951, OSU became an international force, particularly in agricultural research. The innovative Point Four program implemented by Bennett was one of the first international outreaches which provided technical assistance to underdeveloped nations. Bennett and his wife were killed in a plane crash over Iran while on a Point Four mission.



45. WAITE PHILLIPS
"Vision, faith, initiative, and diligence combine the best of the dreamer and the doer."
 Waite Phillips, the younger brother of Frank Phillips, also made his fortune in oil, but he is best remembered for the gifts he bestowed to his adopted Tulsa. After living at Villa Philbrook for only eleven years, Phillips and his wife Genevieve donated it to the city to be made into the city's first art museum and cultural center. The mansion was designed after an Italian country home and is considered an architectural masterpiece. Much of the art in the museum is western and Native American. Phillips had great respect for the Native Americans because he recognized that the oil fortunes at the time were made from Indian land, and he thought it necessary to help preserve their culture. The Philbrook Museum of Art is internationally recognized, but locally it is known as "Tulsa's Crown Jewel." Phillips's also made significant donations to the Boy Scouts and the City of Tulsa. As he loved to say, "The only things we keep permanently are those we give away."



46. PAUL AND T.E. BRANIFF
"He bought planes for pleasure. He had a marvelous time with it."—Paul Braniff's widow
 In the late 1920s, the Braniff brothers of Oklahoma City organized their own airline with Paul—who earned his pilot's license from Orville Wright)—serving as president and pilot, Thomas as the company's vice president. The airline began with one main route, shuttling petroleum employees from Oklahoma City to Tulsa and back. The company became the thirteenth-largest airline in the world, leading the industry in advances such as the introduction of flight attendants. The airline almost closed in the Thirties, but loyal employees offered to work for "hamburgers and bus fare." Business picked up in 1935 with successful mail carrier contracts. Thomas died in a private plane crash in 1954. Paul had already resigned from the company, but the airline retained the family name until its demise in 1982—the only commercial airline able to make that claim. Tom and Paul Braniff were both inducted into the Oklahoma Aviation and Space Hall of Fame in 1992.



47. CYRUS AVERY
"Safe roads and good water are the most important things in the world."
 Cyrus Avery, the "Father of the Mother Road," was serving as state highway commissioner in Tulsa when he had a vision—to build a Midwest to West cross-country roadway. Born in Pennsylvania, Avery's family moved to Oklahoma City in 1885. Avery later settled in Tulsa and worked as an insurance agent and realtor before joining the Good Road Association, the beginning of his journey to Route 66 fame. In 1913 Avery was elected highway commissioner of Tulsa County, and by 1921 he was president of the Highways Association of America. In 1924, the Secretary of Agriculture appointed him to be a consultant to the American Association of State Highway Officials. Two years later, when Avery sketched a highway from Chicago to Oklahoma City and on to Santa Monica, Route 66 became a reality. He later established the National U.S. Highway 66 Association and nicknamed the roadway, "The Main Street of America."



48. S.E. HINTON

"Whatever claims I have to being able to write come from reading everything I could get my hands on from the time I learned how."

When Susan Eloise Hinton's novel *The Outsiders* was first published in 1967, it became an instant classic with teenage readers and singularly established young adult literature as a legitimate genre. Hinton was just seventeen years old when she wrote the book, drawing upon her experiences growing up in Tulsa. Hinton's subsequent novels proved just as popular with readers and critics. She has written seven books and lives in Tulsa with her husband David Inhofe and son, Nick.



50. BARRY SWITZER

"Some people are born on third base and go through life thinking they hit a triple."

A native of Arkansas, Switzer rose to legend status as head coach of the University of Oklahoma Sooners during the 1970s and 1980s and more recently as the head coach of the Dallas Cowboys. Most believe he revolutionized the recruitment of minority athletes.

While at OU, Switzer's teams won national championships in 1974, 1975, and 1985. His Dallas Cowboys won the 1996 Super Bowl. He is only the second coach in history to win both a collegiate national championship and a Super Bowl. Since leaving the Cowboys, he has been working with HBO on a film version of his autobiography, *Bootlegger's Boy*. He lives in Norman.



49. CLARA LUPER

"I would like to be remembered for doing the best that I could with what I had."

Born in Okfuskee County in 1923, Clara Luper taught

for forty-one years in Oklahoma City public schools, but her most memorable role is that of civil rights activist. In 1958 she organized a sit-in at the Katz Drug Store lunch counter with thirteen of her students. The sit-in marked the beginning of Luper's key role in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. A resident of Oklahoma City, she remains active in the NAACP.

48 AND 50: THE OKLAHOMAN; 49: OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY