

The background of the cover is a photograph of a rugged, rocky landscape. In the upper right, there are light-colored, tan-colored rock formations. The lower half of the image is dominated by dark, shadowed rock faces. A bright light source, likely the sun, is visible on the left side, creating a starburst effect and casting long, sharp shadows across the rock surfaces. A semi-transparent blue rectangular box is centered in the upper half of the image, containing the title text. A thin white border is visible within the blue box.

Winter 2021

# OKPAN QUARTERLY

Volume 3 (Issue 2)

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# LETTER FROM OKPAN'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## DR. BONNIE PITBLADO

**Dear OQ Readers,**

It has been nearly a year since the Covid-19 pandemic infiltrated the fabric of our daily lives, creating turmoil, challenges, and heartache in communities worldwide. Individuals and institutions of every sort have been forced to adapt, and OKPAN is no exception. We are grateful, however, that one of our principal means for communicating for our audience—*OKPAN Quarterly*—has been distributed online since its inception. Writing the stories for this winter 2021 issue has provided a bit of normalcy for us, and we hope that reading them is a balm to your soul as well.

In our focal piece, we invite you to enjoy the introduction to the archaeologically themed photographic art of the late Corson Hirschfeld, a few of which we include here in all their visual splendor. If you like the images and are comfortable with a socially distanced and carefully regulated visit to the Sam Noble Museum of Oklahoma Natural History (SNMONH), you can [jump online](#) to make your reservation to see additional pieces in the current “Places of Power” exhibit. Be sure to do that soon, though, because this temporary exhibit closes on March 28.

You can also now [view a recording](#) of the January 21 OKPAN-SNMONH-sponsored virtual opening presentation, “What Makes a Sacred Place Sacred? Petroglyphs, Paintings and Ancient Dwellings in the Southwest and Hawai’i.” Delivered by Dr. Kelley Hays-Gilpin, a curator and professor at Northern Arizona University, the presentation provides nuanced context for understanding Hirschfeld’s splendid works.

The remaining contributions in this issue of *OQ* (1) explain why your kids—and you—may want to read children’s literature written by Indigenous authors and (2) overview what we think are terrific heritage-related educational resources available online. Teachers and parents who have found themselves teaching will find much to appreciate and use in both features.

Yours in heritage solidarity,

Bonnie Pitblado

OKPAN Executive Director,  
Robert E. and Virginia Bell  
Professor of Anthropological Archaeology,  
University of Oklahoma

# Winter Events Calendar

(Scroll down to see full list of events)

## February 2

World War I: Lessons and Legacies Exhibit

Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library, Guthrie, opens February 2

## February 2

A Place for All People: Introducing the National Museum of African American History and Culture Exhibit

Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library, Guthrie, opens February 2

## February 3

Antique Doll Exhibit

Fred and Addie Drummond Home, Hominy, concludes February 27

## February 4

Life at Hunter's Home: Voices of Enslaved People

Hunter's Home Online Event, concludes February 26





# IMAGES THAT LIVE

## THE LIFE AND WORKS OF CORSON HIRSCHFELD

By Delaney Cooley



*“Corson Hirschfeld has found places of power that survive by transcending the pragmatic and scientifically conceived needs of culture. They ignore the logic of needs.”*  
– Dennis Haley,  
Minneapolis



There are places across the landscape that draw people to them time and time again. They possess an inherent quality, perhaps difficult to name, that is powerful in nature. Some of these places are considered sacred by the communities that know them, and each interaction they have – construction, visit, or thought – becomes an integral part of that landscape’s history.

Corson Hirschfeld is one of the select few who has been able to capture the essence of these places in his work. Inspired by a petroglyph on the shore of Hawai’i’s O’ahu in 1979, Hirschfeld spent nearly a decade traveling to more than 20 countries where he photographed cultural landscapes and sites ranging from pyramids to stone monuments to mounds to rock art. Each has a history of spiritual significance to past communities and those living today, and he crafted this project to emphasize that relationship as well as the importance of preserving these places.

As the project developed, Hirschfeld found conventional photography limited his ability to capture life and movement of sacred sites, so he utilized a multi-media approach that brought texture to these images in a whole new way. His preferred technique utilized the matte-surface black and white imagery from a negative print before he would then color the image with dyes, watercolors, acrylics, and pencil. The results are well worth the effort as each image presents a breathtaking and personal experience of a visitor at the site.

The culmination of his efforts produced *Places of Power: Painted Photographs of Sacred Landscapes*, a stunning photograph series that has been featured in *Audubon*, *Archaeology*, BBC television, *National Geographic* books, *Southwest Art*, and now the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History in Norman. The exhibit is on display January 6th through March 28th on the museum’s second-floor Higginbotham

gallery. Visitors can explore more than 60 images from sacred sites around the world, including a number of pieces from the American Southwest and Pacific islands. Several of these images are featured in this issue of the OQ.

The exhibit is the first time Hirschfeld's work has been displayed since he passed away in April 2020. Following a long career as a studio owner in Cincinnati, he moved to Norman in 2006 to be with his wife, Tassie Hirschfeld, a medical anthropologist in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Oklahoma. Over the years, his photographs have been showcased at museums and galleries across the country, including the Smithsonian, and have appeared in magazines like *Natural History*, *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, *Smithsonian*, *Sports Illustrated*, *US*, and the *Washington Post Magazine*. Admirers of his work may also be interested in his photograph series *Objects of Myths and Mysteries*, a collection depicting objects of cultural significance currently residing in museums.

Outside of his art, Hirschfeld's accomplishments are as colorful and unique as his photographs. He is an author who has contributed pieces to scientific journals, consumer magazines, and museum newsletters. He's published several suspense novels, including *Aloha, Mr. Lucky* and *Freeze Dry*. Our readers may be particularly interested in *Too High*, a story that follows Hawaiian archaeologist Digger Fitz



*Corson Hirschfeld on assignment in the American Southwest.*

as he teams up with his herpetologist niece to solve a mystery involving rattlesnakes, archaeology, and murder. The quirky novel pulls from his real-life interests in archaeology and his experience as a herpetologist and the first editor of the *Journal of Herpetology*. It's this same passion, curiosity, and wit that are evident throughout his body of work.

To learn more about Corson Hirschfeld and his upcoming exhibit, visit [his personal website](#) and the [Sam Noble Museum's Exhibit page](#). Readers can also view a recording of the exhibit's opening presentation by Dr. Kelley Hays-Gilpin, "What Makes a Sacred Place Sacred?" by visiting [OKPAN's YouTube page](#). ■



*Hamakua District, Hawai'i. Shrine,  
Mauna Kea Adze Quarry.*





*Hovenweep, Colorado. Equinox  
sunset through sight hole in wall.*





*Cliff Palace, Mesa Verde  
National Park, Colorado.*



ART COULSON  
THE RELUCTANT  
STORYTELLER

I Will See  
You Again  
LISA BOIVIN

NICOLA T. CAMPBELL  
Words  
A Day with Yayah

# NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US.

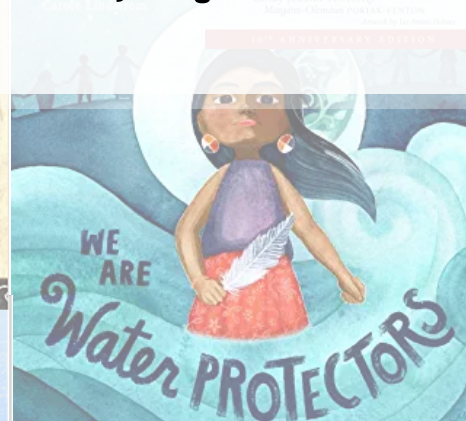
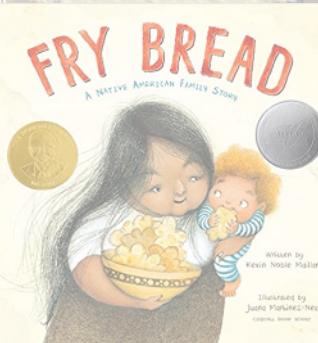
Why Archaeologists Should Be Reading Children's Literature  
By Indigenous Authors

By Kate Newton

LOUISE ERDRICH  
THE BIRCHBARK  
HOUSE



In My Anaaanas  
Amautik  
by Naahie Sammutriok  
Illustrated by  
Lenny Lialchenko



THE WOLF TRAIL  
AN OLD-TIME STORY, TOLD BY WOLVES  
A NOVEL BY  
THOMAS D. PEACOCK





*“All his thoughts, all his dreams were centered on the miraculous, endless possibilities opened up by a real, live, miniature Indian of his very own. It would be too terrible if the whole thing turned out to be some sort of mistake.” – The Indian in the Cupboard by Melissa Mathison*

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*“She looked as if she were smelling the smell of an Indian whenever she said the word. Ma despised Indians. She was afraid of them, too.”  
– Little House on the Prairie by Laura Ingalls Wilder*

Perhaps you read *The Indian in the Cupboard* and *Little House on the Prairie* when you were a child like I did. They were staples of mid-'90s curricula for 3rd and 4th grade students. Maybe like millions of other students across the country you read them aloud in the classroom, completed short quizzes covering the reading, and connected the dots appropriately when your teacher used them to bolster a social studies or history lesson.

I distinctly remember reading the first quote above aloud in class one day. After hearing it I glanced up to look at my friend Brian Yazzie, who along with myself, was the only kid in our vastly white and tiny northern Michigan school to identify as Native. What I remember is unremarkable. Brian didn't bat an eye. He didn't look up, blush, duck his head, get angry, nothing. I didn't say anything either. Everything went on as usual. The next kid picked up reading where the last left off. It was a day like any other day.

A lot has changed since the mid-'90s. *The Indian in the Cupboard* and *Little House on the Prairie* are no longer included in most curricula for school age kids, and if they

are referenced, it is often paired with a heavy dose of context and discussion of the overt racism present in each book. Yet along with the acknowledgment that such books had no place in the classroom, other books featuring Native and Indigenous peoples stepped into place behind them.

These new books were still written by and large by white people, and in the place of the clear and crass racism of their predecessors, was something the writer Thomas King (Cherokee) calls a “kinder, gentler racism,” superficially appearing to pay tribute to Indigenous cultures as well as their “legends and myths.” To put it bluntly, explicit racism was replaced by cultural appropriation, and the latter – accompanied by lovely art, sweet writing and a guise of respect – can be much more difficult to call out or confront.

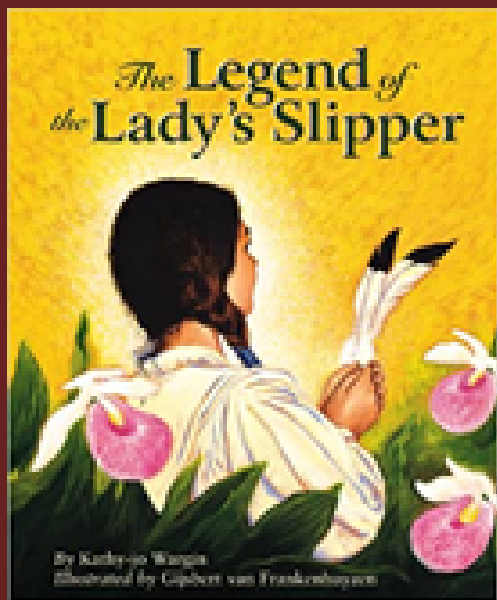
If you want an example of what I'm talking about, check out the popular books by writer Kathy Jo Wargin (a white woman), including titles such as, *The Legend of Sleeping Bear* and *The Legend of the Lady's Slipper*. These are the books that are often read aloud in classrooms

across the country today. After all, there just isn't much literature to choose from. Approximately half of US school children identify as people of color and yet less than 15% of books published for children today feature or even make mention of characters who identify similarly. Clearly, the problem hasn't been resolved.

So what does all this have to do with archaeology? A lot, actually. The parallels between the field of archaeology and the world of children's literature about Indigenous peoples are many. Archaeology tells the stories of the past. It is a predominately white field. The sto-

ries archaeologists tell, specifically those who work in North America, are the stories and histories of living communities today. In the vast majority of cases, they are not the archaeologists' stories. Both archaeologists and writers of children's literature are viewed as authority figures. This last point is especially driven home when it is teachers (whether grade-school teachers or college professors) who are the ones placing this information in the hands of those there to learn from them.

The real point though is this, the stories we're told as children become the stories we normalize as adults, and as adults, we in turn share them with the next generation, creating a potential cycle of misinformation. This cycle can even begin to feel like heritage. If we're not careful, we may become protective of our mistruths; after all they were given to us as children, they are sentimental.



*Cover of Kathy Jo Wargin's book, The Legend of the Lady's Slipper and an Amazon review by a third grade teacher praising the book.*

★★★★★ **Native American Studies**

Reviewed in the United States on December 15, 2012

**Verified Purchase**

I purchased this book to use as a mentor text to begin my classroom study on Native American legends. My students loved the book. Kathy-jo Wargin's books are never a disappointment and this one proved no different. It gives a complete telling on the Legend of the Lady's Slipper with beautiful illustrations to aid in learning. My third graders have read through the book several times on their own.

3 people found this helpful

So how do we tell ourselves and our children the right stories? The ones that speak truth and don't harm the communities that rightfully claim them as their own. The answer is wonderfully simple. We make room for those communities to tell their own stories on their terms, and we make a point to listen to them when they do. We read beyond the bounds of our field. We read writing by Indigenous people. We speak to their communities, and we build our plans for the future, be it an archaeological project or a curriculum for third graders, with them.

Fortunately, archaeology and children's lit seem to be moving in the right direction. Indigenous archae-

ology (archaeology by, for, and with Native peoples) is gaining serious traction and more Indigenous people are authoring books for children. If we lend our support to these changes, we may end up fostering a new kind of cycle where third graders don't pass off racism in the classroom as a blasé everyday occurrence and archaeologists don't think twice about working collaboratively and respectfully with Indigenous communities. After all, those kids in the classroom (any of them) may one day grow up to become archaeologists, so let's work to make sure the stories they end up telling are the right ones. ■

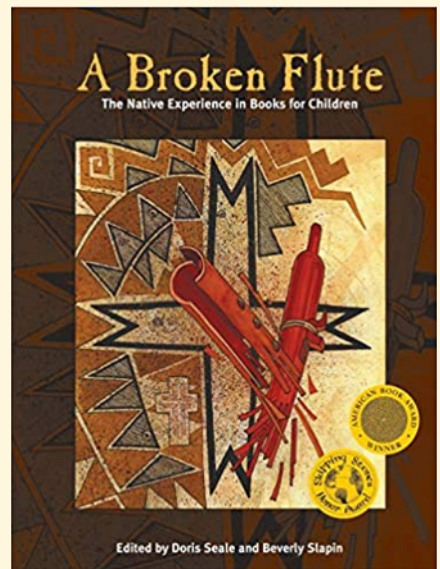
Looking for the right kind of books? Below are some excellent resources to explore:

Visit: [American Indians in Children's Literature](#). AICL is a vast database on nearly everything having to do with American Indian Children's Lit. The site was established in 2006 by Dr. Debbie Reese of Nambe Pueblo.

Read the [Recommended Reading List](#) by the First Nations Development Institute.

Visit [Oyate](#), a website and "a Native organization working to see that our lives and histories are portrayed with honesty and integrity, and that all people know our stories belong to us."

Finally, check out the book, [The Broken Flute: The Native Experience in Books for Children](#).



*\*The title page for this article is interactive and features highly recommended books from AICL. Click on any individual book cover to expand it.*



# **Heritage Education in the Time of COVID**

A review of educational resources by  
Sarah Luthman and Noah Place

# A Guide to Archaeology on the Web and Social Media

*Sarah Luthman, Public Archaeology Education Coordinator*

While browsing the Texas Public Archaeology Network website, I came across a link to [The Best of The Archaeology on Web & Social Media \(Lockdown Edition\)](#). This is a list of 19 different cultural institutions in the US and Canada that have put quite a bit of content online. This list was created by ArchaeoAnalytics, a company that promotes cultural heritage and digital content online, and it's much easier to digest than [their entire website](#) of hundreds of resources.

The list of 19 institutions includes blogs, Facebook pages, Instagram accounts, Twitter accounts, a YouTube channel, and podcasts. Although none of these sources provide information strictly about Oklahoma archaeology, they all do a beautiful job of showcasing artifacts, describing fieldwork, or interpreting historical buildings across the US and Canada.

Educators looking to get students interested in the past can find content about field methods, curation techniques, and artifact identification. Archaeologists will find job postings and suggestions for how to keep facilities and programs running during COVID lockdowns. Anyone with a personal interest in archaeology will find enough con-

tent about the US and Canada to keep them busy for months. If you are looking for something more specific, you can check out [ArchaeoAnalytics' main website](#) to search the social media accounts of over 500 US and Canadian Institutions.

Read on to learn about some of my favorites!



If you want to learn what life was like for George Washington and his family, visit the blog [Lives and Legacies](#). Started long before COVID, these entries investigate questions about George Washington's childhood at Ferry Farm, the house he built for his sister at Kenmore, the daily life of enslaved people who lived on these properties, and the visitors to George Washington's house. Recent topics include a summary of the fieldwork done at Ferry Farm during 2020, a description of how lab work was done at home during the pandemic, a comparison of the artistic styles



of the portraits at Kenmore, a linguistic analysis of the valedictions that George Washington used at the end of all of his letters, an investigation of tea ceremony etiquette, a historic document analysis concerning the important role of a prominent enslaved man named Billy, and a summary of the spy ring that helped George Washington transmit intelligence during the war. For anyone wanting to learn or teach about the American Revolution, life in the colonies, or architecture and art from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this blog is a gem.



One of the many Facebook pages featured on this short list is that of the [Arkansas Archeological Survey](#), which often works with our own survey here in Oklahoma to learn about sites along the border of our two great states. Recently, the Arkansas Archeological Survey has been posting a series of weekly videos celebrating International Archaeology Day 2020, mostly featuring the archaeologists at the various research stations throughout the state. Readers can check out one of their recent posts to learn about Arkansas's new State Archaeologist, Dr. Melissa Zabecki, who starts in January 2021. This

Facebook page reposts the Arkansas Archeological Society chapters' talks and news, shares information about recent fieldwork done by staff at the Survey, advertises job postings, and collaborates with other archaeologists to deliver interesting Zoom talks about regional archaeology topics.



If you prefer Twitter, check out the [San Diego Archaeological Center](#), a museum and curation facility that has posted original content frequently over the last several years. I really enjoy their weekly questions that ask followers to try to identify an object from their collections of pre-contact and historic artifacts. They also host regular “Living Room Lectures” and “Brown Bag Sessions” online with archaeologists who teach about everything from Renaissance medical practices to the search for Amelia Earhart’s missing plane. Posts earlier this fall also addressed field methods such as Ground Penetrating Radar and Dendrochronology. If you want a plethora of beautiful pictures with a limit of 280 characters, spend some time browsing this Twitter account.■



# Sam Noble Museum Provides Discovery Kits for the Classroom

*Noah Place, OKPAN Intern*

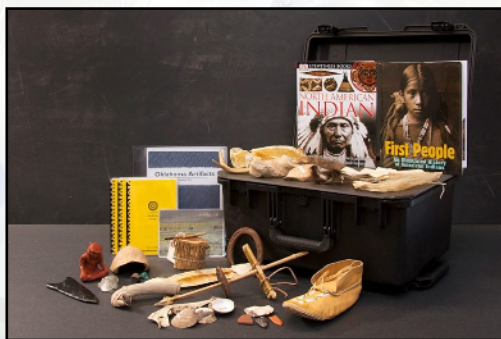
There are hundreds of resources available to help teachers incorporate archaeology into their classrooms, but we know just how challenging it can be to identify educational materials that engage students and meet the Oklahoma Education Standards. The Sam Noble Museum of Natural History provides the perfect solution. As part of their education programming, they have developed a series of Discovery Kits that bring museum science to K-12 classrooms across the state. Four of these kits directly discuss archaeology and culture right here in Oklahoma: “Celebrating Culture” (Grades K-2), “Oklahoma Artifacts” (Grades 3-5), “Digging in the Past” (Grades 6-8), and “Anthropology 101” (Grades 9-12). Read the following for more information and a brief summary of their “Digging in the Past” Discovery Kit.

The “Digging in the Past” Discovery Kit comes with several artifacts, including projectile points, pottery sherds, and bone tools. In addition to these artifacts, the Discovery Kit provides three activities that teachers can do with their students. First, there is a stratigraphy lesson where students will “excavate” artifacts to collect data from different time periods in Oklahoma history and learn how we can use an artifact’s location in the earth to determine if it is younger or older than other artifacts. The second activity addresses pottery reconstruction. Students are encouraged to use the pottery sherds from the artifacts included in the kit to reconstruct a broken ceramic pot and collect data on its design. After it is reconstructed, students identify which Oklahoma culture created the pot. The last activity is called “Trashcan Archaeology.” Archaeologists examine trash from the past, and in



this activity, students explore the modern relevance of this practice by reconstructing a household's activities from the contents of a modern trash can.

The best part about these kits is that they are free! They are available for two weeks at a time and can be shipped through the mail or picked up directly from the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. If neither of these is an option for teachers, this kit can also be downloaded digitally from the museum's website (visit Sam Noble [here](#)). The physical kits are available to classrooms and home-school educators but must be reserved through the museum in advance due to limited availability. ■



*With the "Oklahoma Artifacts" Discovery Kit, students learn about people who lived in Oklahoma in the past by investigating artifacts.*

The Sam Noble Museum's Discovery Kits cover eight science and social studies standards listed in the Oklahoma Academic Standards:

- 
1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
  2. Developing and using models
  3. Planning and carrying out investigations
  4. Analyzing and interpreting data
  5. Using mathematical and computational thinking
  6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions
  7. Engaging in argument from evidence
  8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information



## Oklahoma Research Award Recipient 2021

**Congratulations Alanis Ramos Berrios!**

The OAS grant will support Alanis, a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma, as she completes a study of the faunal material at the Bullcreek Site in the Oklahoma Panhandle. The site is a Late Paleoindian encampment that contains the remains of at least 26 different animal species. She will analyze these remains and complete a micro-residue analysis to reveal more about Paleoindian Plains culture.





# OKPAN FACES

Meet some of the new faces joining OKPAN's advisory board! We're pleased to introduce you to the talented crew that helps inform the work we do at OKPAN.



## BRANDI BETHKE

Brandi Bethke received her PhD from the University of Arizona and is currently the Laboratory Director for the Oklahoma Archeological Survey where she oversees the processing of collections for analysis and curation, student internship opportunities, and public outreach initiatives. Her research focuses on understanding interactions between humans, animals, and the landscape in the North American Plains from the Late Precontact Period to the present day. She is interested in the engagement of Indigenous communities with various forms of colonialism and the long-term consequences of these processes. Her most recent work has involved collaborative projects centered on bison hunting and processing activities, the adoption of horse pastoralism by the Native peoples of US and Canada, and the survivance of Indigenous cultural practices during the Reservation Period in Montana and Oklahoma.

# OKPAN FACES



## DEANNA BYRD

Deanna Byrd is a proud mother to three beautifully spirited children: Max, Emma, and Miles. She completed her education at the University of Oklahoma (BS) and Illinois State University (MS) with a concentration in Landscape Archaeology in the Dutch West Indies. Deanna has been with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Historic Preservation Department for five years. Deanna serves as the NAGPRA Liaison for her tribe, leading a systematic search for Choctaw ancestors in collections nationwide. She advocates for Tribal collaboration, meaningful consultation, and the respectful treatment of ancestral human remains prior to repatriation.



## KEVIN PIERCE WRIGHT

Pierce grew up in Virginia just across the river from Washington DC. He received his BA from Wake Forest University in 2015 and spent several summers excavating in North Carolina. After two years of Cultural Resource Management, Pierce received his Master's degree from the University of Alabama. During his studies, he had the opportunity to work with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Historic Preservation Department analyzing artifacts from Shomo Takali, an 18th-century Choctaw village. Pierce is currently a PhD student at the University of Oklahoma and hopes to find new ways to make archaeology publicly beneficial by blending archaeological science with traditional knowledge.



## The Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network's Mission Statement:

Bridging communities with a passion for the past through public education and outreach, research and teaching partnerships, and professional development opportunities.

### *OKPAN Quarterly Staff:*

Delaney Cooley - Editor-in-Chief

Kate Newton - Assistant Editor

*~ Letters to the editor may be sent to ~  
okpanquarterly@gmail.com*

Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter and visit our website, [okpan.org](http://okpan.org)!

