



Muskogee County Genealogical Society Quarterly

Volume 29 Issue I

March, 2012

EXCITING SOCIETY CHANGES IN 2012

Your society board of directors has been busy this past year, planning for several new changes for the upcoming year. Some of the changes are to prevent an increase in cost of living and others are specifically made to bring our society into the digital age. Most of these changes have been addressed in the Muskogee County Genealogical Society Newsletter. Barbara Downs is the editor of this publication.

Previous ar-Grant Foreman Room, Index-published as separate entities inquiries will be given the the members-only section.

"Bringing our Society into the Digital Age"

articles that presented lists such as New Books in the es to marriage, deaths and funeral homes will be on the MCGS website. Any non-member making opportunity to join the membership and access to

The quarterly will continue to be published four times a year. However, instead of the printed 34-page paper copy, it will now be available only on a "members-only" section of the Muskogee County Genealogical Society website. It will be smaller in size, only about ten pages, and only contain articles and pictures pertaining to the history of the area and its people. Any member who would want a hard copy is permitted to print it from their own home computer.

I know there are going to be many questions and I have probably omitted some of the information regarding these changes. Please feel free to contact the officers of the society board of directors.

Nancy Stanton Lasater
Quarterly Editor, 2012



Picture Credits: Left by Jere Harris,
Center and right photos are by Carol Rice.
All taken 2 Apr 2012.

Uncle Sam came to celebrate the release of his "1940 United States Federal Census" on April 2, 2012. Enjoy other pictures from the party held in the Local History and Genealogy Department at the Muskogee Public Library. Hostesses for the bash were Nancy Calhoun (center), department supervisor and Jere Harris (right), Library Assistant. These ladies did a bang up job. See other "40's" pictures in this issue.

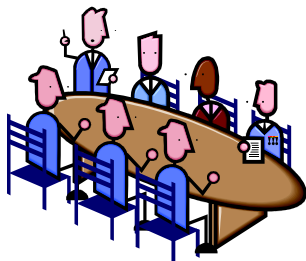
Muskogee County Genealogical & Historical Society

OUR PURPOSE:

The MCGS was formed in 1983 for the purpose of promoting the general study of genealogy through workshops, seminars, and monthly programs; and to discover and preserve any material that may establish or illustrate the history of Indian Territory and Muskogee County and its families.

BOARD MEMBERS:

President, Jere Harris;
Vice President, Alissa Gage;
Secretary, Stacy Blundell;
Treasurer, Mary Downing;
Past President, Sue Tolbert;
Newsletter Editor: Barbara Downs
Quarterly Editor, Nancy Lasater.



Appointed positions: Research, Barbara Downs; Publications, Sue Tolbert. Liaisons are: Three Rivers Museum, Sue Tolbert; Muskogee Public Library, Nancy Calhoun

MEETINGS

MCGS meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month (except July and August) at the Muskogee Public Library, 801 West Okmulgee, Muskogee, OK. The Board of Directors meetings are held the third Tuesday at 5:30 PM at the library. All members are invited to attend the Board meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in MCGS is open to anyone promoting the purpose of the Society. Individual or family membership is \$20 per year due each January 1.

OUR RESEARCH POLICY:

Outlined on our website or you may write to us for a Research Request Form at:

Muskogee County Genealogical Society
c/o Muskogee Public Library
801 West Okmulgee,
Muskogee, OK 74401

BOOKS

MCGS publishes books of genealogical interest focused on Muskogee County and Muskogee Indian Territory. A current price list of our publications is provided on our website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~okmuscg/index.htm> or write or email us for a list.

QUARTERLY

The MCGS Quarterly is published online four times a year: March, June, September, and December. Back issues of the Quarterly are available. Check our website for current issue prices and postage.

REMEMBER THESE?



Pictures

Travel Bag & Coat by Carol Rice

Hats by Jere Harris.

Brief History of Muskogee's Oil Boom

By Linda Sue Moore

Excerpted from her book Grant Foreman, A Biography.

Published by lulu.com, 2010, 427 Pages.

According to Robert Gregory's account, "The search for oil in Oklahoma began in the 1870s, although the first commercial well was not brought in until 1897, at Bartlesville. Two years later, on June 24, 1901, oil was discovered at Red Fork, four miles west of Tulsa. It was named the Sue Bland. It did not last. The discovery well that made it go was Ida Glenn #1, roaring in about dawn on November 22, 1905." (1)

Grant Foreman, writing later in a history of Muskogee, says the first oil well was actually before the 1897 date and not in Bartlesville:

"Some of Muskogee's far-sighted citizens believed they were living in an oil country, and under the laws of the Creek Nation a company called the Creek Oil and Gas Company was incorporated September 19, 1895. The incorporators were A.P. McKellop, Thomas J. Adams, and Taylor Chissoe, citizens of the Creek Nation; and L.J. Baker, F.C. Hubbard, and J.M. Givens of Muskogee. The company drilled a well near Severs' gin on the east side of the railroad near the south edge of the Katy pond in Muskogee, and there was much excitement on October 30, 1896, when at a depth of twelve hundred feet oil was discovered. However, marketing facilities were lacking, and no use was made of the find except to indicate the region as a possible oil field." (2)

During the interim, investors became interested: "Having seen a specimen of our oil and description of Muskogee and the oil and gas field of the Indian Territory, Harry Raymond, a wealthy and prominent New York banker, senior member of the firm of Raymond, Pynchon and Co.; Frank C. Henderson, a New York capitalist and business man; and Charles H. Hammett, late of Chicago, came to this place, and after looking over our city and examining the oil fields of the Creek and Cherokee nations, were so pleased with this and surrounding country that they at once, through Thomas & Foreman, attorneys of Muskogee, organized the Superior Oil and Gas Co. of Muskogee. Henderson will act as president, Raymond as vice-president, Hammett as treasurer, and Grant Foreman as secretary. They proceeded to acquire a number of valuable oil leases. As soon as their leases are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, the company will proceed with great vigor and tireless energy in development work. Being men of practically unlimited capital and New York and Chicago push, we expect soon to see paying results." (3)

In October, 1903, what turned out to be a small pool was hit by the Pioneer Gas and Oil Company, on Lot 9, Block 309, in the southeast part of the city. Block 309 is two blocks south of South Side Boulevard and two blocks east of Cherokee at Kalamazoo. There were a number of wells drilled mostly in this area of Muskogee. For a few years, a forest of derricks was to be seen.

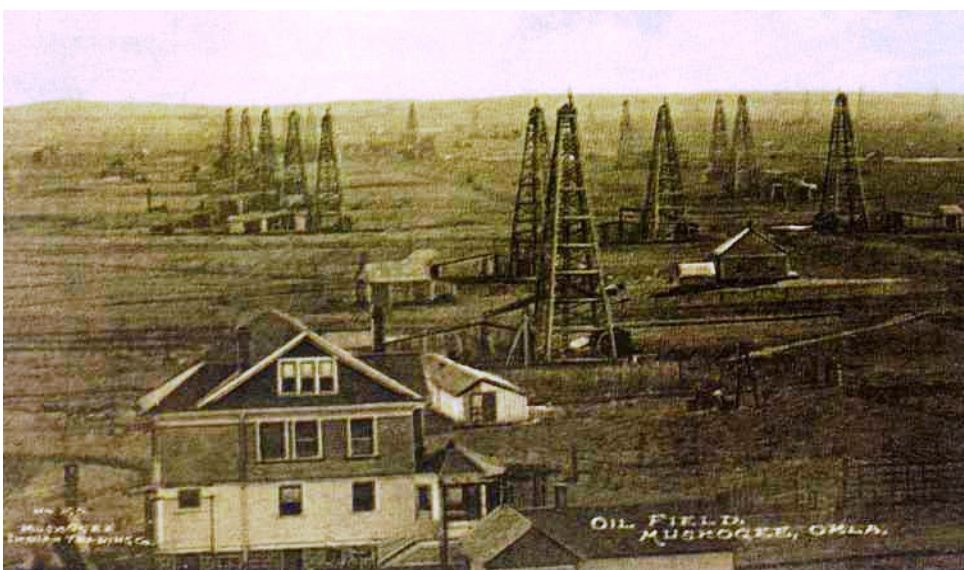


Photo 1 : Oil in Muskogee, early postcard (Three Rivers Museum)

One of the many small oil companies that sprang up was the Eureka Oil and Gas Company. Judge John Robert Thomas and his law partner, Grant Foreman, were among the major stockholders. They gave all their friends and relatives the opportunity to invest in order to raise the money necessary to begin drilling. One of those investors was Grant's father. So the good news spread back home to Grant's hometown newspaper, *The Evening Republican*, of White Hall, Illinois, which had a small article in the May 9, 1904 issue:

"Grant Foreman is secretary Eureka Oil and Gas Co. of Muskogee, I.T. The well was struck last week yields 150 barrels per day. The company is now sinking a second well. The field is a new one and very promising. The Standard Oil Co. will erect a storage tank and buy the entire output." (4)

The correspondence that Grant handled included all of the business of operations. It dealt with selling and transferring shares of stock; arranging for lumber, pipe, rope, and other materials from oil well suppliers; answering questions from customers about shipping to them all over the country, either by the barrel or by the oil tank carload via railway, and sending letters to stockholders when "assessments" were charged for operational expenses.

The Articles of Incorporation in February, 1903 show 35 initial investors with John R. Thomas at 20 shares, Grant and Carolyn Foreman at 10 shares each, S.M. Rutherford at 40 shares, and J.D. Wood also at 40. B.A. Randle, J.A. Holstein, Jake Peterman, and James H. Kee each held 20 shares. All the others held 5, 10, or 15 shares each. Their declared purpose was:

"To engage in the business of buying, selling and leasing town lots in the City of Muskogee, and lands in the Indian Territory, for oil and gas wells and coal mines, and any business pursuant to that end."

Grant was elected Secretary of the Company and the records are kept in his handwriting. In May and June, 1904, the company borrowed some money to buy Lots 2 and 3 in Block 349 and pay Pioneer Oil Co. to drill. They sold stock and hired W.N. Dougherty to operate the well and supervise field work for 30 days, then W.A. Aggers was hired on a contract for \$632. They leased several other properties and employed A.B.

Smith to drill on Lot 4, Blk. 352. By July, they were drilling Well #5 and selling it to Prairie Oil and Gas Company.

One letter Grant answered on June 18 from a customer requesting a price quote, he said:

“As we are a new Company and have sold very little of our oil, we do not know what price to name. We know that we have considerable oil and that it is of the highest and best quality. We can probably furnish 100 barrels per day from our one producing well. We expect another well in by Monday noon, and another within fifteen days.”

During the summer and fall of 1904, their oil was selling for between 60 and 87 cents per barrel. A financial statement produced in August, 1904, the company had five producing wells, over \$10,000 in capital stock. (5)

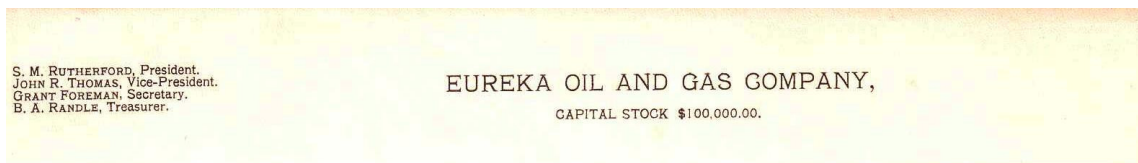


Photo 2 : Letterhead for Eureka Oil and Gas Company



Photo 3 : Well taken by Grant Foreman Photo 4 : Judge Thomas beside an oil tank

“In March, 1905, Charles T. Madison organized the Muskogee Oil Refining Company. Through 1907 oil continued to be a fascinating and profitable subject of business enterprise in Muskogee. The small pool discovered within the limits of the city had added something to the wealth of the town before production inevitably played out. The Muskogee Oil Refinery became the property of Pure Oil Company but in the 1930’s it was closed and abandoned because it could not compete with larger companies.” (6)

A historical roadside marker stands near the site on Highway 69 South out of Muskogee between Border and Hancock streets to mark the State's first refinery.



Photo 5: Historical Marker (Author's File)

During the active years, they conducted business, most correspondence written by Grant Foreman. By spring of 1905, the Company was not doing well and a vote on May 19, was to sell vacant property and withdraw another 10% assessment on the stockholders they had planned. In December, 1905 and January, 1906, they voted to approve the sale of property, name and seal of the Corporation, to George W. Barnes, Jr. of Canadian Valley Trust, and convey deeds for Lot 18, Blk. 331; East 90', Lot 2 and W 10' Lot 3, Blk. 349; and South 50' of Lot 3, Blk. 352.

In July, 1909, the Treasurer reported funds of \$664.10. C.A. Cook was paid \$150 for legal services and \$450 was distributed among the sureties who paid the final balance of \$847.80 on a loan for over \$6,000 borrowed in February, 1905. (7) Grant Foreman and Judge Thomas were among those named. Thus, ended the Eureka Oil & Gas Co.

Additional Bibliography by Footnotes

- (1) Gregory, Robert. Oil in Oklahoma. Muskogee, Okla.: Published by James C. Leake, 1976, P. 1.
- (2) & (6) Foreman, Grant. Muskogee, The Biography of an Oklahoma Town. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943, P 88, 138.
- (3, 4, 5, 6, 7) Thomas-Foreman Historic Home Collection of papers and photographs.

Nothing brings a smile to a researcher's face like finding an index.

Muskogee researchers will have more to smile about now, thanks to the devotion of a society member. Volunteer Sherry Jackson completed her work "Divorce Index from the U.S. Superior Court Records for Muskogee County" after over six months of immersing herself in Microfilm 1963605-1963665, covering the years from statehood until the middle 1920s.

It will be available online through the Muskogee County Genealogy Society and is also being bound in book form for the Genealogy and Local History Department at Muskogee Public Library.

To complete the Excel document, Sherry read through each document to find every name mentioned. These include not only the plaintiff and defendant, but she also found the other names mentioned. These include the children, other family members, witnesses, and may even include the names of other parties listed in an extra marital affair. The only names not listed were the judge, sheriff and other officials. "Some of these were pretty juicy," being held during a time period when a cause had to be presented for a divorce to be granted. The majority of these included spousal abuse, followed by abandonment and adultery.

The information often included marriage date and place, the places the couple lived during their marriage, and the children's birthdates or ages and birth places. "Finding a person listed in there records puts you at a certain time, which can lead to other information. That's why I listed witnesses," says Sherry.

While almost all the index is for divorces, there is one which deals with a "breach of contract" which involved a child born to the couple. Breaking the engagement after the woman became pregnant, the man married another woman. After she won, he filed an appeal, complaining that she had brought the baby, which closely resembled him, to court and the jurors had played with the child while the judge and lawyers were in session, thus giving her an unfair advantage.

Sherry has been interested in her family history since she asked her grandmother questions as a young girl. When she graduated from high school, she went to visit a cousin who had the family Bible. She still has a page of that Bible. Her interest grew in 1993

when an uncle decided to retire and waned to research their family tree. When he approached her, she had more information than he did. They started working together and she has been working earnestly since that time.

Her skills were perfect for the project. She took typing in high school, reaching a skill level of 75-80 words per minute. However, like most of us, she says, "If I ever typed numbers, I slowed down." That was before she went to work at a bank and all she typed were numbers. Her last position outside the family business was as administrative assistant to the president of BOK at Sand Springs. She's kept her typing skills up and put them to constant use on the index project.

They continue to get lots of use as she has begun a new project: putting the library's Muskogee Phoenix obituary files into an Excel document so they can be accessed online on the Muskogee Genealogy Society's website.

Since Sherry has only lived in Muskogee for six years and her family background is elsewhere, her research won't benefit from the project. But hundreds of other researchers will be aided by her selfless donation of time and skills in creating this index.

Researching in the Muskogee area is greatly enhanced through the devotion of time, skills, and eyesight by dedicated individuals who have created indexes for newspapers, obituaries, biographies and other materials.

Interview and Picture by Nancy Calhoun

(Article reprinted from Muskogee County Genealogical Society Quarterly, Vol. 25, Issue 1, March, 2008)

Editor's Note: As of January 2012, the project started by Sherry, of indexing the obituary notices from the Muskogee Daily Phoenix has been completed. Several additional volunteers finished the index and the result is a searchable, alphabetical list, organized by the year of death. It is now available on the Muskogee County Genealogical Society website and covers the years from statehood (1907) through the current date.



BRUSHY MOUNTAIN SPRINGS
INDIAN PIONEER PAPERS
Vol. 8 Page 450, May 15, 1937

By Miss Ella Robinson
Research Field Worker

Among the well known springs in the Cherokee Nation during Indian Territory days was the Brushy Mountain Springs. They are located eight miles southeast of Muskogee. The large content of iron in the water rendered it health giving properties and made it a popular resort to those in need of a change of water.

Situated on the side of a hill with plenty of shade and drainage rendered it an ideal camping place. Prior to the Civil War, the Cherokees within a radius of fifty miles, came to camp and stayed during the entire summer. After crops were finished there was time for rest and relaxation. Particularly those who lived in the low lands where the water supply became polluted. Families came bringing with them such furniture needed to live in some degree of comfort. Live chickens and the family cow, which were quite necessary to the children of the families, were often brought. They erected substantial camps, stayed all summer and went home improved in health due, they thought, to the fine water.

The "Springs" was also an ideal place for public meetings, religious and political. They were conveniently located being nearly half way between the settlement of Frozen Rock, Gooseneck and the Spaniard Creek and Webbers Falls. During a political campaign it was the scene of many gatherings, two days' picnics including a barbecue, were popular. That furnished an opportunity for each candidate to tell the citizens just why he should be elected to office and of the deplorable condition into which the country would collapse should they fail to elect him.

The land on which the "Springs" are located was public domain in early Territory days. Then an improvement was made at the foot of the hill, near the main "Springs" and a log house was erected by a man named Pettit, who afterwards sold the claim to Dr. Charles Harris, a young Cherokee physician who came with his family to Indian Territory in the early 70's. He built a substantial four-room residence on the side of the hill where he lived, using the log house for an office for many years. As there was no telephone system in those days, a doctor could live in the country as conveniently as he could live in the town. One did not "call" for a doctor, they went for him.

The "Springs" also furnished an ideal setting for camp meetings. The Methodist Church was the predominating church at that time and the meetings were always held under the auspices of that church. Conducted by the

circuit rider with the assistance of the pastor of the Methodist Church of Muskogee. The meetings were held for a two weeks duration the latter part of August. To a colony of people who were already there, there came those to attend the meeting. Substantial camps were erected. Some had tents and brought a cooking stove, bedsteads, dishes, in fact, a complete equipment for house keeping. Others built camps of small poles with a wagon shed for a roof and a brush shed made a porch. A generous supply of food including live chickens and fresh vegetables from home, made it possible to serve well balanced meals every day.

As Muskogee was a dusty little village with no paved streets and a water supply from wagons, many families who could not go away for a summer vacation, did the next best thing and went to Brushy Mountain and camped for the entire summer. The men who could not leave their businesses in town, drove back and forth daily. Among the prominent families that were annual campers at the "Springs" was Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Spaulding and children, Dr. and Mrs. J. O. Callahan. Time did not hang heavy for the ladies of the colony as they took their sewing machines and made the children's school clothes. Caught up on their reading and fancy work and resting as well.

Nothing delighted their friends more than to be asked to spend the day with them. ON Sunday morning, Sunday school was held under the arbor erected at the beginning of each summer for all religious services. Mrs. Spaulding who taught a class in the Methodist Church in town, always had a class there. After the death of Dr. Harris, the property passed out of the family. The Harris cemetery is in sight of the house of Dr. Charles Harris with his mother, one sister and several brothers lie buried there.

The "Springs" which were so popular in those days has been allowed to fall into disuse and one a mile's distance from the original "Springs" on land owned by Mr. and Mrs. Will Evans is (in) condition and furnishes drinking water for many Muskogee people. The water is delivered to their homes by Mr. Charles Jobe of Muskogee.

Submitted by Barbara Downs

Muskogee County Marriage Records Index (Cont'd from Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2011). Currently, this index is complete through Grooms surnames beginning with "O". As each is completed, it is forwarded to be posted on the Muskogee County Genealogical website. The original marriage record can be obtained by submitting a Research Request form, available at the site.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| Berry, Charles | Bright, Emma | 482 | U | 147 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Clarence | Waggener, Ruth | 480 | R | 167 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Cornelius B. | Haskins, Ida | 477 | K | 399 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, D. D. | Lawson, Minnie | 476 | J | 12 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, D. D. | Fly, Ola | 477 | L | 98 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, E. C. | Merriell, Mary | 478 | M | 271 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, E. D. | James, Lulu | 480 | Q | 61 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, E. E. | Bunch, Lurette | 480 | P | 431 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Frank M. | Duncan, Emma | 473 | C | 113 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Isaac G. | Wells, Nell | 483 | W | 369 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, J. M. | Cream, Leora | 476 | H | 112 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, James H. | Alberty, Roxie D. | 477 | J | 456 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, James R. | Davis, Minnie R. | 481 | S | 213 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Jas. F. | Perry, Litha | 476 | H | 270 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, John C. | Norvell, Mary | 480 | P | 444 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, O. B. | Harris, Willie | 480 | P | 330 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Pleasant | Sanders, Easter | 478 | L | 470 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, R. W. | Shipley, Lula | 478 | L | 301 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, S. A. | Allen, Amedia | 478 | M | 417 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Virgil | James, Emma K. | 472 | B-1 | 189 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, W. O. | Thrasher, Grace | 475 | F | 497 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, Walter | Richards, Ella | 474 | F | 227 | 1890-1907 |
| Berry, William | Docking, Ellen | 478 | M | 49 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Aaron | Sanders, Ellen, Mrs. | 482 | U | 309 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Ben F. | Ashford, Martha A. | 472 | B-1 | 139 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Buford | Burrows, May | 484 | X | 177 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Chas. A. | Ramsey, Malinda | 476 | H | 216 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Frank | Blankenship, Clementine | 474 | F | 123 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Harrison | Freeman, Cella | 482 | U | 238 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, J. T. | Rockwell, Hannah | 473 | D | 353 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Jas. | Alberty, Elnora | 476 | I | 316 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Joseph | Jimboy, Hepsy | 480 | P | 56 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Newman | Green, Louisa | 481 | T | 172 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Newman | Scott, Lucinda | 484 | X | 33 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Oscar | Hall, Carrie | 482 | U | 464 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, P. D. | Jackson, Cora | 477 | J | 403 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Pleasant | Grayson, Janetta M. | 479 | O | 190 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Polk D. | Fanshel, Callisia | 474 | E | 355 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Samuel | Thorp, Fanny | 479 | O | 378 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Samuel | Hall, Etta | 480 | R | 1 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, Theo | Wilson, Rilla | 473 | D | 102 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, W. T. | Posey, Mary | 482 | T | 287 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryhill, William | Self, Clara | 474 | F | 190 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryman, E. M. | Colbert, Cleo | 479 | N | 331 | 1890-1907 |
| Berryman, John B. | Hyatt, Bessie | 480 | P | 411 | 1890-1907 |



Quarterly Articles Needed

As of January, 2012 current and future news regarding Muskogee County Genealogical Society activities will be displayed in the newly established Society Newsletter, with Barbara Downs as the editor.

Nancy Lasater will continue to be the editor of the Society Quarterly and would like to encourage all members to submit their personal stories or historical information that will assist others in with genealogical research. Occasionally there will also be articles submitted by some non-members who have created publications that can aid these researchers.

However, Nancy would like to encourage anyone whose has an article to submit it at any time. While it may not be published in the current quarterly, the information will be saved for future issues. Those received by the 15th of the respective months of March, June, September and December will be published in that current issue at the end of the month.

Originally submitted to Barbara Downs,

Society E-Newsletter Editor



Please visit these Muskogee County Websites:

[Muskogee County-UsGenWeb](#); [Muskogee County History and Genealogy](#); [Three Rivers Museum](#); [Five Civilized Tribes Museum](#); [USS Batfish](#); [Boynton Historical Society](#); Webmaster: Sue Tolbert