

Auto-Walking Tour of Okmulgee State Park's Historic Structures

A guide to some of Okmulgee State Park's
distinctive and important historic structures.



OKLAHOMA
STATE PARKS

Introduction

President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" program in 1933 gave meaningful work to millions of unemployed Americans. Through the New Deal, roads, bridges and dams were built; forests and shelter-belts were planted; and city, state and national park facilities were constructed. The New Deal provided the impetus for the development of Oklahoma's first state parks.

Two important programs within Roosevelt's New Deal were the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Both



programs provided jobs for many of the nation's unemployed. The chief purpose of the CCC was to conserve our country's natural resources and to provide employment and job training for youth. Most of the CCC camps consisted of unmarried men between the ages of 18 and 25. The CCC camps were supervised by the U.S. Army. The WPA enrollees were unemployed men who worked on projects that were located within, or near to, their community. The WPA built armories, city parks, repaired streets and bridges and many other community facilities.

At the time of the New Deal, the city of Okmulgee had already built some recreational facilities at its water supply lake. Okmulgee Recreational Area was dedicated as a municipal park on July 4, 1927. Seizing on



the historic opportunity offered by the New Deal, Okmulgee's community leaders secured CCC and WPA assistance in making additional recreational improvements at Okmulgee Lake. The

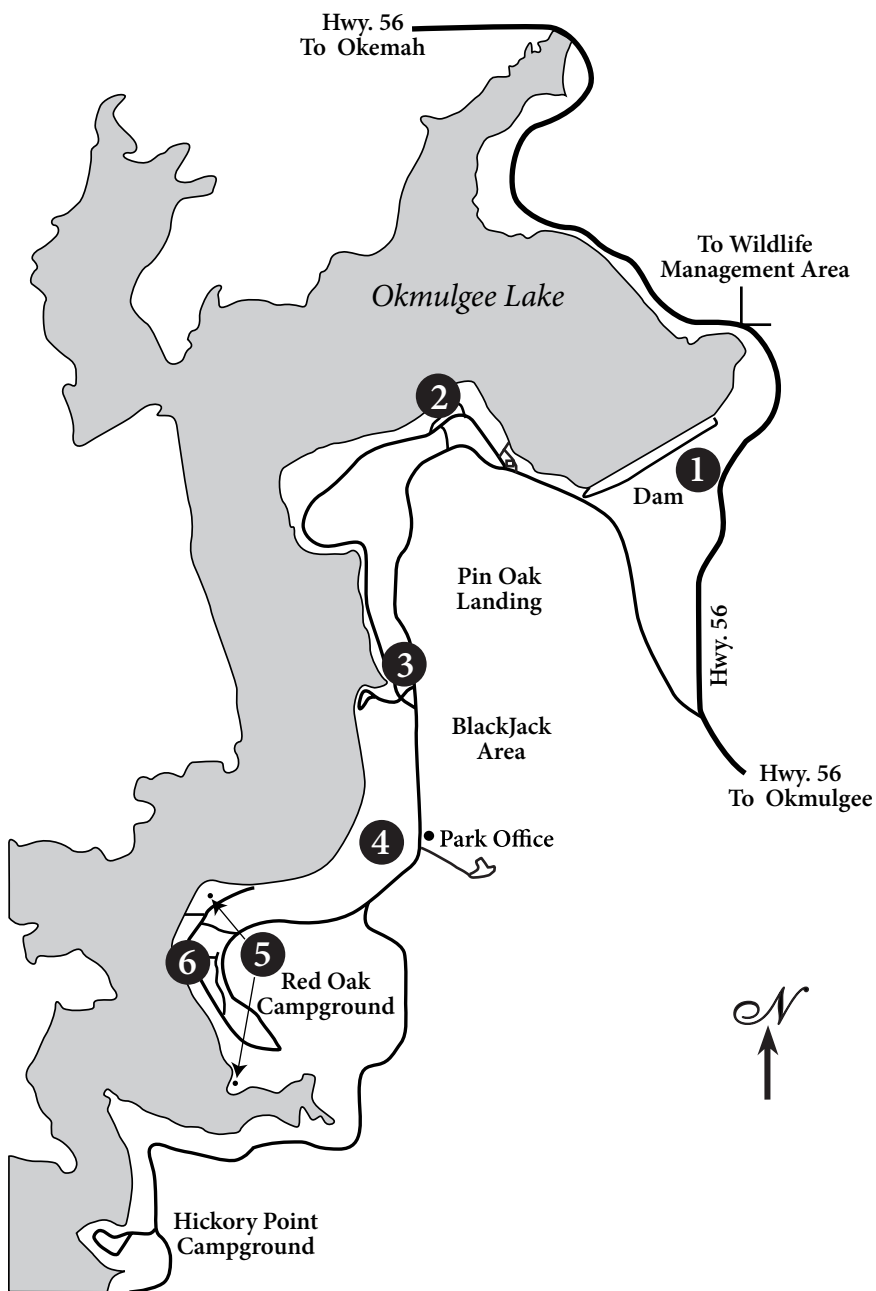


WPA also built a new dam that forms this water supply lake.

In 1963, the community of Okmulgee transferred this recreation area to the State of Oklahoma. Since that time Okmulgee State Park has provided its visitors with wonderful opportunities for outdoor recreation.

This pamphlet highlights a few of the many park facilities that were built by the WPA and the CCC during the 1930's. Sadly, only relics of some of these structures now remain. However, as shown by this pamphlet, there still are a number of facilities from the New Deal era that continue to serve park visitors. These structures serve as a testimony to the hard work and craftsmanship of the men who designed and built this park.





Description of the Auto and Walking Tour

This tour highlights some of Okmulgee State Park's historic CCC and WPA structures. Those facilities that are easily viewed from a car or that have a hard-surface walkway are listed in this pamphlet as (Easy View).

Please do not walk near to the picnic pavilions or other WPA facilities if they are being used by other park guests.

For Your Safety

Please be careful as you stop your vehicle and walk to each viewing station. Park your vehicle off of the roadway. Always be alert to traffic and never let children walk unattended. Always keep children at your side.

Station No. 1 Dam and Fish Hatchery

The WPA dam that forms Okmulgee Lake can be seen from either State Highway 56 or by walking the wetland trail, located near to the park entrance.

Along the wetland trail you can observe what remains of CCC-built ponds that were once part of a fish hatchery that served this lake.

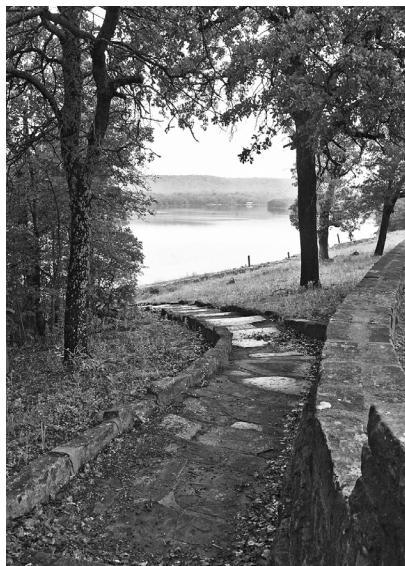
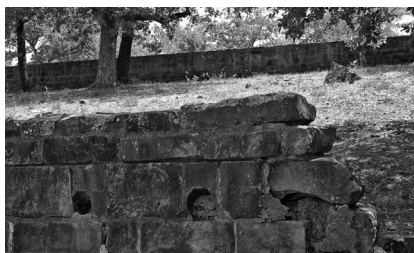


Station No. 2 Parking Lot – Overlook

This parking lot and overlook were built by the WPA and CCC. (Easy View)

Station No. 3 **Pin Oak Overlook**

Below you can observe the retaining wall and flagstone that was once part of a magnificent boathouse structure.



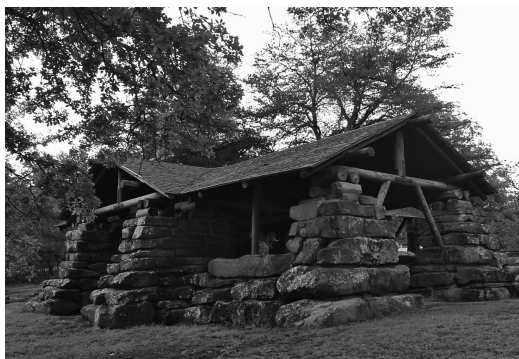
The boathouse was lost to a fire in the 1950's. The retaining wall is not stable; for your safety do not go near to this structure. (Easy View)

Station No. 4 Water Tower

Built by the WPA, this impressive water tower features a 6 foot high sandstone base. The steel tank is 50 feet high. (Easy View)

Station No. 5 **CCC Picnic Shelters**

Within the Red Oak Campground Area are two CCC constructed picnic shelters. Note the use of sandstone boulders and large timbers. These distinctive structures



were designed by National Park Service architects. These architects worked under the direction of Herbert Maier.



L. to R. Dr. Bumpus, Kenneth Charley and Herbert Maier at Norris Museum Construction within Yellowstone National Park, 1929. Courtesy of the National Parks Service.

Based on his design work in the 1920's at Yellowstone, Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks, Maier was highly acclaimed for his "rustic" park structures.

Maier's buildings were designed so as to blend into the landscape. (Easy View)



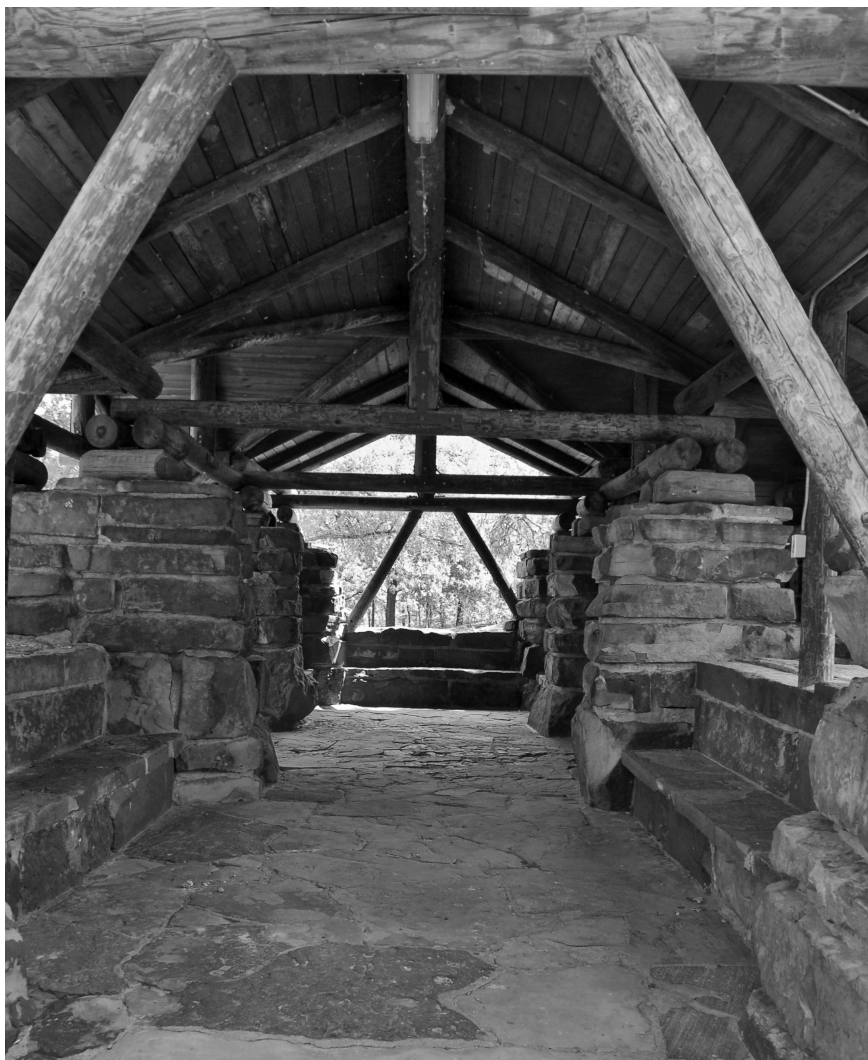
Station No. 6 Picnic Grills and Trails

Throughout Red Oak Campground are native stone picnic grills. (Easy View)



Also within the park's campground and picnic areas you may see stone steps that were part of a CCC-built walking trail.

Oak Leaf Nature Trail



**Interested in the Restoration and Preservation
of this Park's Historic Structures?**

**Contact Oklahoma State Parks at
(405) 230-8300**

**to find out ways that you can help to preserve
these irreplaceable structures.**