

Self-Guided tour of the Bartlesville Area History Museum

This guide was designed to help visitors enjoy their visit to the Bartlesville Area History Museum by contextualizing many of the topical displays featured in our permanent exhibit. As you make your way through the permanent exhibit using the numbered system, the information contained

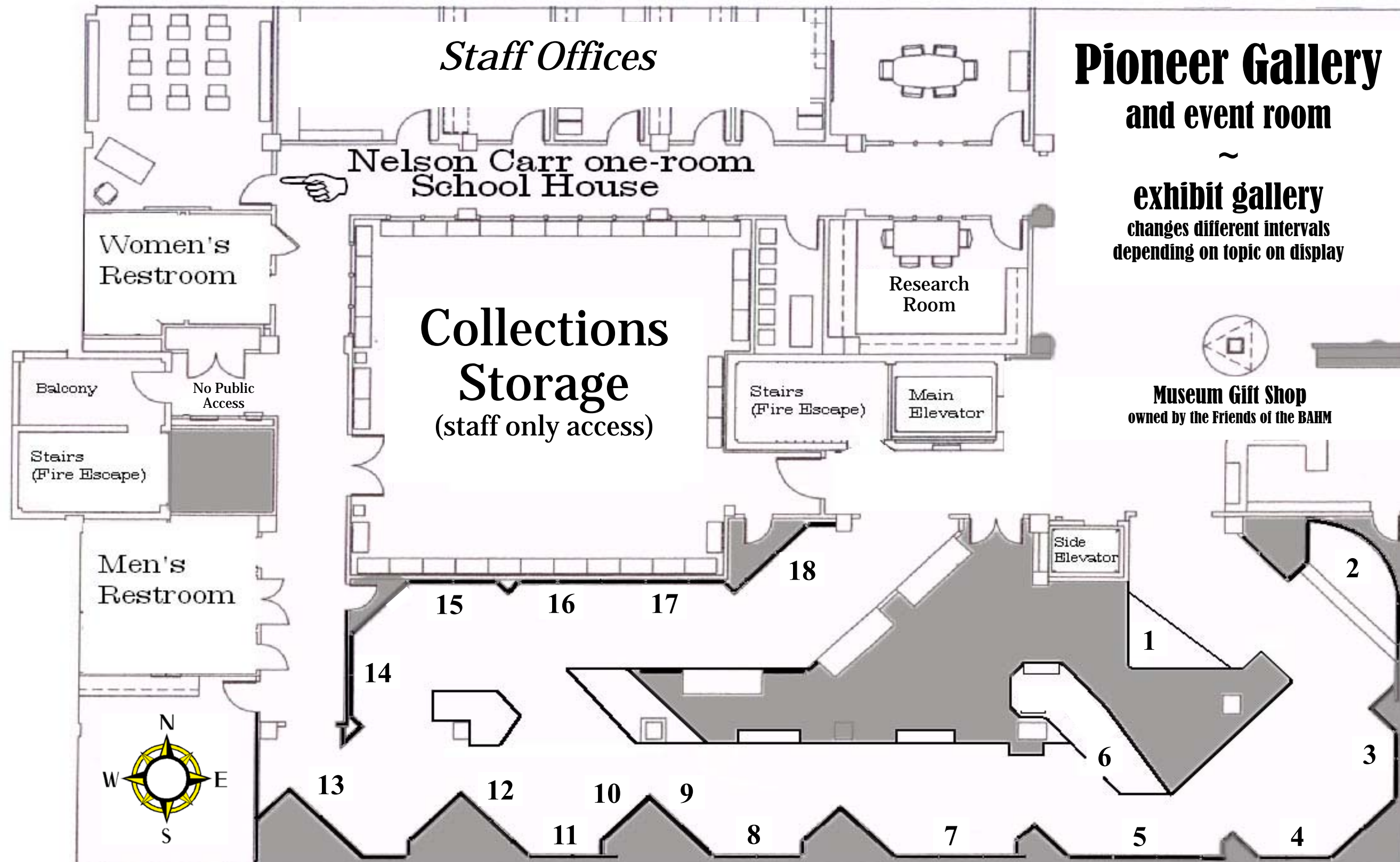
on the opposite side of this map will provide an expanded history on the topic before you.

We thank you for your visit to the Bartlesville Area History Museum, and our staff would be happy to assist you in any inquiries you might have about our rich local history.

**Bartlesville Area
History Museum**
401 Johnstone Ave
Bartlesville, OK
74003

Open 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Monday—Friday
**(Closed Saturday,
Sunday,
and Holidays)**

Admission is free and donations
are always welcome!
Suggested donation \$3.00



Permanent Gallery

1. Frank Griggs – After arriving in Bartlesville in 1908 Mr. Griggs for a short time worked for Photographer Oscar Drum and later started his own business. His career spanned over 70 years documenting local history through photography, leaving in excess of 200,000 photographs for the citizens of Washington County to enjoy, many of which are used in the museum for public viewing.

2. Osage Tribe of Indians– Originally came to Indian Territory with French traders in the 18th century and later relocated to a reservation in Kansas. Eventually they came back to the area because they were allowed to buy land cheap from the Cherokee Tribe who at that time inhabited the northern Oklahoma territory.

3. Cherokee – The Cherokee first arrived in the area as one of many tribes relocated on the Trail of Tears in the 1830s. The land set aside for the Cherokee was previously Osage territory; however, after the Cherokee sided with the Confederacy during the Civil War, they were forced to sell their land back to the Osage and Delaware as punishment during Reconstruction.

4. Delaware – Also known as the *Lenape*, the Delaware originally inhabited the land known now as the state of Delaware, and actually signed the first treaty between Europeans and Native Americans in 1682. After their arrival in this area in 1867 the Delaware had some problems validating their tribal status because of legal conflicts throughout the years. However, they have also contributed greatly to Bartlesville's development. They were absorbed into the Cherokee nation during Reconstruction.

5. Pioneer Leaders - Many of the pioneers featured on this panel married Native American women giving them license to live in tribal territory. Other avenues for gaining admission to the land included purchasing land permits, trading licenses, or buying admittance into the tribe. The first permanent white settler to the area was Nelson Carr, who established a gristmill on the Caney River. Jacob Bartles, whom the town is named for, bought the mill from Carr in 1875.

6. Carr Family Parlour –Nelson F. and Sarah Rogers Carr, a pioneer family who arrived in Indian Territory by 1867. Carr owned the first gristmill in the area and had a trading post. When the descendants of the late Paul and Ethel Johnson of rural Dewey, Oklahoma donated the furniture that originally belonged to he Carr's, this room was established in their honor. Included in the donation is Mr. Carr's desk, crafted before statehood by a Mr. Mikels, a

cabinetmaker in early day Bartlesville.

7. Natural Resources/Cattle, Farms & Ranches – Caney River, wildlife and abundant grasslands were enticing resources to Native Americans and early settlers. The river, once very clean was a source of recreation for local settlers. Local natural resources also provided prime territory for early settlers to establish ranches. Many famous pioneers of Bartlesville had personal ranches, including Nelson Carr, Jacob Bartles, William Johnstone, Richard Kane, and H.V. Foster.

8. Early Community –Jacob Bartles purchased Nelson Carr's gristmill and he expanded it to include a house and general store, among other things. Two of his employees, George Keeler and William Johnstone, left his employment in 1884 to form their own business. Their store, which is pictured in the center top of this display, was on the south side of the Caney River, opposite the Bartles mill and store. The Johnstone/Keeler store eventually caused a decline in Bartles sales and many people began settling on the south side of the river. There were now two communities in Bartlesville: North and South. The southern community incorporated as the town of Bartlesville in 1897. The biggest blow to Bartles business was when William Johnstone coerced the railroad to locate their depot on the south side of the Caney River favoring their business. In 1899 Jacob Bartles abandoned the community he helped to establish when he put his house and store on giant logs and rolled them three miles north, and founded the community of Dewey.

9. Education - Washington County has been fortunate to have a legacy of outstanding schooling, even before white settlers; the Cherokee laid the foundation for quality education when they established the first public school system in 1841 and Nelson Carr established a subscription school near his home in 1877. During the first part of the 20th century there were as many as 75 schools operating in the area, there were also early charter schools and church-based schools before public schools.

10. Churches - Charles Journeycake, an influential Delaware Baptist minister established the Alluwe Baptist Church in 1871, the first permanent church building in the area. Many denominations established churches in Washington County, and a "Fire Baptized Holiness," congregation in Ochelata. During the Great Depression, many local churches experienced financial problems and in 1937 well known Oil Baron Frank Phillips, paid off the debts of all of the Bartlesville churches.

11. Life and People - Early in the 20th Century many families began relocating to the booming community based around the Caney River and community organizations began to form. One such group, the Tuesday Club successfully pressured city officials to develop a local library. The project funded by a Carnegie Foundation grant for \$12,800. and it opened in March 1913. The Carnegie Library building still exists and is now the site of Kane, Kane, Kane and Roark law firm, located on Adams Boulevard.

12. Sports- In addition to civic organizations, athletic groups began forming as the community developed. A baseball field was built in 1906 and after many renovations (the most recent renovation - 1999) it remains active as the Bill Doenges Memorial Park Stadium. Bartlesville's biggest rival in many sporting events was understandably Dewey. Sports were a cordial way to continue the competitive rivalry generated by the development of the two towns.

Homes - Local businessmen made fortunes due to the oil boom and many built elegant homes for their families. Several located in the downtown area, specifically Cherokee Avenue. On this street you will see homes built for C.E. Burlingame, William Johnstone and the famous Frank Phillips Home. Nelson Carr's home, pictured in the background of this panel, was built in 1884 north of the early north-south communities of Bartlesville.

13. Businesses - Along with fancy homes and social organizations, the oil boom brought several businesses to the area. The local economy first centralized around the Bartles business and the Johnstone-Keeler store but eventually saw the development of Overlees Lumber, the Magnet newspaper, several banks, as well as ice delivery, brick and glass companies. These buttons will tell a brief story of early business in Bartlesville.

14. Oil & the Osage/Petroleum - Without a doubt, Bartlesville owes its economic development to the local oil industry, the first commercial oil well in Oklahoma was built here in 1897. The Nellie Johnstone oil well, named for William Johnstone's daughter, was drilled on the south edge of the Caney River. The oil boom brought several new settlers to the area and the Osage Tribe began leasing portions of their reservation for drilling, quickly making them the richest tribe in the nation.

15. Arrival of the Railroad - Early in the development of the town, Bartlesville was covered with oilrigs as seen in the picture to your left. The greatest advantage to the local oil industry was the arrival of the railroad in Washington County. When Mr. Johnstone convinced the railroad to post its depot on the south side of the Caney River, he effectively laid the foundation of the town's future development and offered free land near the railroad depot for prospective settlers. The last Santa Fe freight train left Bartlesville in 1971.

Zinc, Gas & Oil-related Industries - The local discovery of Natural Gas also lead to the development of several smelters in the area. The oil industry created separate job opportunities in selling drilling supplies, the Phillips Research Lab and the local US Bureau of Mines.

16. Social Life - In addition to organizations such as the Tuesday Club, a local chapter of the Boy Scouts was organized as well as the League of Women Voters, the Indian Territory Pioneers Association and the Musical Research Society. All of these organizations were very community oriented in their focus.

Aviation - Joe Bartles, son of Jacob Bartles gave land to the United States government to build planes and train pilots during World War I. Although the aircraft factory and flight school were shut down after the war this sparked local interest in aviation. Wiley Post, the figure standing to your left, developed the predecessor for the modern space suit and took off from the Bartlesville Airport in 1934 where he flew to a height of 55,000 feet.

17. Architecture - Most of the buildings in this panel are within walking distance of this museum, the Price Tower was Frank Lloyd Wright's only skyscraper to be completed. The Frank Phillips home is just a few blocks south on Cherokee Avenue and offers guided tours as well. The H.V. Foster Mansion, or "La Quinta", is currently the library at Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

Professionals – This display features several diverse professionals instrumental in the development of the community. L.E. Phillips, pictured at the top of the panel was Frank Phillips' brother, his role in the business was

financial and helping the company prosper through financial and organizational, while Frank was the face of the company.

18. Little-known Facts - This panel highlights early celebrities that came from the Washington County area. For further research regarding such figures (or Washington County history in general), our gift shop carries a variety of informative resources; additionally, the large map panel opposite the "Little-known facts" display contains literature and information regarding other local museums and places of interest.

Other Museum areas:

Pioneer Gallery – In contrast to our permanent exhibit, this area features themed temporary displays and exhibits which are rotated at least three times per year. Special museum events, such as lectures and premier gatherings, are held in the Pioneer Gallery as well.

Public Research Room – This collection of historical resources is available for research concerning Washington County history. City directories dating back to 1907, area and biography files, as well as an array of books covering a variety of specific historical topics. This room is locked for security reason but can be accessed by contacting a staff member.

Conference Room – Our conference room is also available to the public by appointment; any museum staff functions requiring use of this space will take precedence, so advance booking is helpful in preventing scheduling conflicts.

Nelson Carr one-room School House – This on-site replica of a 1910 school house is used year round to educate local elementary school children and tour groups about Washington County's development. Museum volunteers dressed as schoolmarm's guide visiting students through a lesson in a period-specific manner, using readers, individual writing slates, and rules commonly utilized by teachers of the era. When the school house is not being used by classrooms, it is open to the public for browsing.

Collections Room – We are privileged to be entrusted with historical artifacts donated by citizens throughout the years. Unfortunately, because of the limited space of the permanent exhibit, we are unable to display many of the items in our Collections. The collections area is a climate-controlled space designed to preserve the many priceless items donated to the museum, window panels have been specifically placed along the outer walls to allow guests visual access to this collection of history, used occasionally for an additional temporary exhibit area.