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Maria Beckham

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An outing to Cherokee Strip Museum of Perry was a long-lasting field trip

Fond Memories

By Maria Beckham

Every time I drive past an elementary school, memories of freedom and absence of pressure flood over me. I think back to the days of playing at recess and doing fun projects in class. At the end of the year, my class would go on a class picnic. Each year we went to a different place, and the class picnic I remember as the best is the year we went to the Cherokee Strip Museum. One of the reasons our teacher took us there is the open space on the grounds for us to exhaust our energy supplies, but there are more reasons than that to visit the Cherokee Strip Museum.

The best reason that a person could have to visit the museum is the historical value. The history of Oklahoma is shown throughout the museum. The large murals, artistically created, portray the life of the Indians before the white man came. An Indian teepee is also set up on the grounds for visitors to see. Eating a picnic lunch in a real Indian teepee was exciting for a child. Pictures of outlaws are also shown in the museum. This type of person put a fear in the life of the settlers. Many of the types of weapons used in the early days are also on exhibit in an area of the museum. Part of an old jail has been added to the buildings on the grounds.

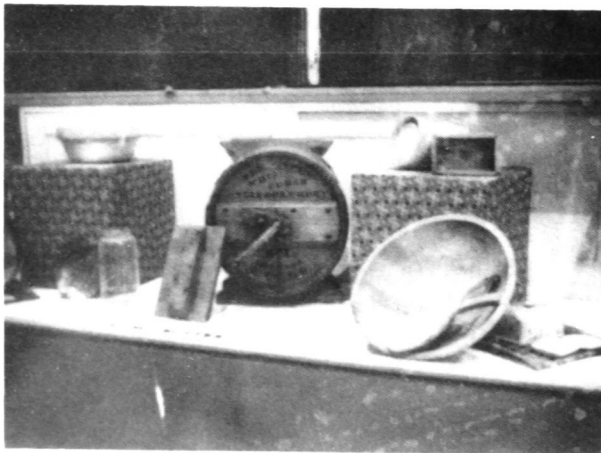
The one group of people that the Cherokee Strip Museum is most devoted to is the settlers of the area. There are many pictures and tintypes to show the hardships in the lives of the settlers. In different areas, the museum has set up an old-time doctor's office and an old-time dentist's office. All of the equipment for these displays was donated by the families of the men who practiced in Perry during the early days. Another exhibit is the first Ditch Witch trencher

manufactured at the plant in Perry. A one-room schoolhouse, which was moved to the museum grounds, is exhibited to demonstrate early-day school days. Another aspect of the settlers' lives is demonstrated in the implement barn, which houses the farm equipment from the early days.

Another reason to visit the museum is to see the wildlife housed on the grounds. The museum started out with one deer, which the school children fondly named Deer Delbert. After a year, Deer Delbert became lonely, and Deborah Doe was brought to the museum. In the spring of 1984, the deer added to the family with twin fawns. Birds are scattered throughout the grounds, too. There's a Chinese peacock that follows visitors wherever they go. Rabbits and squirrels also make their homes at the museum.

The beautiful scenery is another good reason to view the museum and its grounds. The area has many trees and a creek running through the grounds. The grounds are gorgeous as the sunlight breaks through the trees, and a picnic area is provided for the use of visitors to enjoy the museum. The scenery is so beautiful that some people have even gone back to hold their weddings there.

Every visitor to Perry should also make a visit to the Cherokee Strip Museum located just outside of town. The museum has many educational exhibits for everyone to view. The historical, biological, and ecological values play a large part in the education of a person. Therefore, it's very important for Western Oklahomans to further their education by visiting the Cherokee Strip Museum.



Samples of the many items on display.