

NOC Wilkin Hall rededicated and NOC Foundation gift announced at May 13 event

A rededication ceremony and laying of a new time capsule for the recently restored Northern Oklahoma College (NOC) Wilkin Hall, and the announcement of a gift to the NOC Foundation (NOCF), was held near the front steps of Wilkin on the Tonkawa campus Tuesday.

Sheri Snyder, vice president for development and community relations and executive director of the NOCF, served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Dr. Cheryl Evans, NOC president, delivered the opening remarks and Lynn Smith, chairman of the NOC Board of Regents, closed the ceremony with congratulatory remarks. Ron Chambers the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Masons of Oklahoma Grand Lodge presided over the rededication ceremony.

“The rededication ceremony of Wilkin Hall truly marks another historical day for Northern Oklahoma College as we celebrate the restoration of one of our beautiful historic buildings on the Tonkawa campus,” NOC President Dr. Cheryl Evans said in her opening remarks.

She said Northern began in 1901 as the University Preparatory School (UPS) to serve primarily as a “feeder” institution for the University of Oklahoma and in 1905 Tonkawa citizens along with then UPS President Kelley convinced the legislature that a companion building to Central Hall was needed to share the classroom load of 410 students, and \$60,000 was appropriated for Wilkin Hall, named after the Honorable James Wilkin, founding father of UPS. The original cornerstone ceremony for Wilkin, at that time the second building on campus, took place Nov. 13, 1905 under the direction of acting President George W. Finley.

“Over the past year the college has invested over one million dollars in the exterior rehabilitation of both Harold Hall and Wilkin Hall to restore its original grandeur. Under the direction of GH2 Architects, LLC of Tulsa and the construction of Hemphill Services, LLC of Broken Arrow, the exterior rehabilitation included the replacement and repair of existing soffits and cornices, dental work, stucco banding, brick work and columns including cleaning, sealing, tuck pointing and repair of expansion joints, and painting of the exterior components. In addition, Northern also replaced the windows of Harold Hall. As a result, the Oklahoma Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office has notified NOC, GH2 Architects, LLC and Hemphill Services, LLC that we will receive the 2014 State Historic Preservation Officers Citation of Merit Award on June 5.

“Completion of the exterior rehabilitation of both Harold Hall and Wilkin Hall directly aligns with the Northern Oklahoma College 2013 through 2018 Strategic Plan, goal number three to upgrade facilities for quality and efficiency, thus providing the best learning environment possible to assist students in reaching their career goals,” Evans said.

She explained that during this restoration process, the original time capsule was found and it was examined by the Oklahoma Historical Society Preservation Office to see if the contents could be salvaged but they could not. “Therefore we felt it fitting today as we have restored this charming building to have a rededication ceremony and replace the time capsule, Evans said.

The rededication ceremony included the Masonic cornerstone ritual, to bless the cornerstone of a public building, led by Chambers. Officers and members of both the Tonkawa local Masonic Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma participated in the ceremony. During the ceremony a list of items to be deposited in a time capsule was read.

The time capsule, to be placed in the cornerstone located at the northeast corner of the building, along with the items to be deposited in the capsule was on display at the ceremony. Among the many items to be placed in the capsule are a program of the ceremony; a NOC degree sheet, mission statement, list of regents, administrative council members, Foundation trustees, graduation programs, tuition and fee list and institutional profile; press release; NOC *Fact Book*, *Crimson Rambler*, external audit report and employee list; photos of the Tonkawa campus; NOC logo item (coasters); and a list of officers of the Tonkawa Masonic Lodge #157 A.F.&A.M. and other information and objects provided by the Masons. All of the items will be in print and digital images of the items will be included on a CD and USB flash drive with the exception of the logo items.

In addition to the rededication ceremony, a \$50,000 gift from the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma on behalf of the Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma was presented to the NOC Foundation by Charles L. Stuckey, president of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. The NOC and NOCF representatives who accepted the gift on behalf of the Foundation at the check presentation were Regent Smith, Dr. Evans, Snyder, NOCF Board chairman and Trustee John Martin, and Kirby Tickel-Hill, director of development and donor relations.

Regarding the rededication and gift Smith had this to say in his closing remarks, “I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma along with the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma for making this event possible.

“Our rededication ceremony symbolizes the completion of our restoration projects on the Tonkawa campus and your generous gift to the Foundation will make a transforming difference in the lives of our future students.

“The newly established fund will be entitled the ‘Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma Endowment in professional development and cultural enrichment.’ The primary purpose of this fund shall be to provide professional development programs for the students of Northern Oklahoma College attending our various locations in Tonkawa, Enid and Stillwater.

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This endowment fund is purposed to provide for quality educational and cultural programming, events, and activities for our students in order to enhance and promote life-long learning, fellowship, service, and professional growth opportunities. Equally exciting is that the establishment of this fund will support the College's Strategic Plan by enhancing the quality of life for our students as well as enhance in the areas of recruitment, retention, and graduation. We are very grateful for the generosity of the Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma and for them believing in our college mission.

"We want you to be assured that your investment will enhance the educational experiences for our students and improve the overall excellence of our programs and services. I would like to thank everyone here today for attendance and support of Northern Oklahoma College."

Serving over 5,000 students, NOC is a public two-year community college with campuses in Tonkawa, Enid and Stillwater. The college is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and offers associate degrees in three general areas: Arts, Science and Applied Science. The associate degree fulfills lower-division course work which is applicable towards a bachelor's degree.

Northern also has been selected by the Washington based Aspen Institute as one of the top 150 community colleges in the nation and the only one in Oklahoma. Northern was included in the top 120 in the two previous Aspen recognition of excellence programs in 2011 and 2013.

For more information about NOC or giving to the foundation, please contact the development office at 580.628.6208 or visit the NOC website at www.noc.edu.



During a ceremony held at Northern Oklahoma College Tonkawa campus, in front of the newly restored Wilkin Hall, Tuesday, a \$50,000 gift from the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma on behalf of the Masonic Fraternity of Oklahoma was presented to the NOC Foundation by Charles L. Stuckey, president of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma.

Pictured, from the left, are Dr. Cheryl Evans, NOC president; Sheri Snyder, vice president for development and community relations and executive director of the NOCF; Lynn Smith, chairman of the NOC Board of Regents; Stuckey, Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma president; Ron Chambers the most worshipful grand master of the Masons of Oklahoma Grand Lodge; John Martin NOCF trustee and Board chairman, and Kirby Tickel-Hill, director of development and donor relations. Standing behind them on the steps of Wilkin are

Masonic officers and members of the local Tonkawa Masonic Lodge and the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma. (NOC photo by Traci Dewey)



Recently restored Wilkin Hall
(NOC photo by Traci Dewey)

The rededication ceremony was held just east of the main entry steps of Wilkin

Hall by members and officers of the Oklahoma Grand Lodge and the Tonkawa Lodge. At the podium on the left is Charles L. Stuckey, president of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma, holding the ceremonial time capsule and next to him Oklahoma Lodge Grand Master Ron Chambers, who presided over the rededication ceremony. (NOC photo by Traci Dewey)

