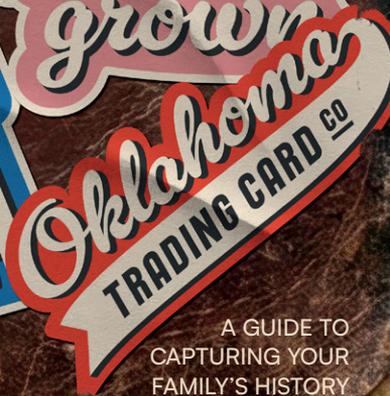


THE ULTIMATE
storykeeper's
field guide
FOR OKLAHOMA HISTORIANS



A GUIDE TO
CAPTURING YOUR
FAMILY'S HISTORY

Preparation

- Find a “Soft” Room:** Choose a space with carpets, curtains, or cushions to absorb echoes and prevent a “hollow” sound.
- Silence the Scene:** Turn off humming appliances, ceiling fans, and air conditioners before you hit record.
- Test the Distance:** Record a ten-second “mic check” with the phone 12 inches from the storyteller’s mouth to ensure the audio is good.
- Monitor the Levels:** Watch the waveform on your screen to make sure the “mountains” stay consistent and don’t hit the very top of the display.
- Make Backups:** Once finished, upload the file to a cloud service like Google Drive or email it to yourself so it’s safe if your device is lost.

Pro Tips

- Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Start your prompts with “How did it feel...” or “Why do you think...” to avoid simple yes or no answers.
- Embrace Silence:** If they pause to think, don’t jump in immediately; the best memories often follow a few seconds of quiet.
- Follow the Rabbit Trails:** If a story takes an unexpected turn, stay with it—the unscripted moments are usually the “Golden Nuggets.”
- Request Sensory Details:** Ask what they smelled (like rain on hot dust) or heard to make the recorded memory feel three-dimensional.
- Don’t Distract:** Use nods and smiles to encourage them instead of vocal affirmations that might blur the audio.
- Ask for Names:** When they mention a friend or a local shop, ask them to say the name clearly so the history is preserved accurately.

Early Years

What is your very first memory of an Oklahoma summer?

What was the most popular “hangout” spot in your town when you were a teenager?

What was the first car you ever owned, and where was the first place you drove it?

What was a typical Saturday like for you when you were ten years old?

Storms & Survival

Where were you during the most memorable storm or tornado of your life?

What is a story your parents or grandparents told you about the Great Depression or the Dust Bowl?

Tell me about a time you saw your community come together to help a neighbor in need.

What is the hardest thing you’ve ever had to do, and how did living here help you through it?

Local Traditions

What is the “secret ingredient” in your favorite family recipe?

Is there a local legend or “tall tale” from your town that everyone used to talk about?

What was the best meal you ever had at a local Oklahoma “hole-in-the-wall” restaurant?

What are the sounds or smells that immediately make you feel like you are home?

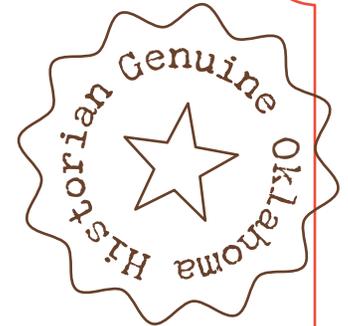
Looking Forward

What is one thing about Oklahoma that you hope never changes?

What is the most important piece of advice you want to pass down to the next generation?

If you could go back and tell your 18-year-old self one thing, what would it be?

How do you want to be remembered by this family fifty years from now?



CERTIFICATE OF ORAL HISTORY

This document certifies that the
stories of _____ were
officially recorded and preserved on
_____ by _____.

Storyteller

Interviewer

