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## PROLOGUE

# Centennial Homecoming Weekend: A Family Affair

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Nearly everything scheduled for the fall semester bears the now-familiar Centennial flavor. And nearly everyone who works in and around the University of Oklahoma is involved in one or more special Centennial project or event. For the staffs of *Sooner Magazine* and OU Publications, that project has been the Centennial Commission's coffee table book, *Centennial: A Portrait of the University of Oklahoma*, slated for publication in October.

Initially the text was to consist of a brief overview, plus captions for Gil Jain's modern-day color photography and the historical pictures from the OU Western History Collections. But a project such as this tends to take on a life of its own. Soon we were awash in historical tidbits, many supplied by *Sooner Magazine* readers.

Several of the anecdotes contributed appear in the book; many others will continue to be incorporated in *Sooner Magazine* articles long after the Centennial ends. But all the submissions were invaluable in recreating the ambiance of the University through the decades. All are being assembled in a Centennial Collection for the OU Archives, to reappear from time to time whenever some wayward writer or bona fide historian waxes curious about OU's past.

Many of the people who have taken the time to jog our Sooner memories will not see their bylines in print, but our thanks go to them all: Al Alschuler, Blane Anderson, Larry Bledsoe, Nadine Borelli, Mrs. Buff Burtis, Leland N. Calvert, Jacqueline Carter, Jessie Lone Clarkson Gilkey, Mrs. R. Melton Cowen, Stella Garee Dean, Myra Veddar Foxworthy, Nolan Fuqua, Marilyn Myers Gardner, Marguerite Giezen-tanner, Everett F. Goins, Donald Harder, Darall and Aura Chapman Hawk, Ben G. Henneke, Puilla H. Hodges, Etta Belle Roberts Hopson, Jack W. James, Josephine Paxton Lar-

son, Melba H. Livermore, Arley Outland, Adelaide Paxton McCrimmon, Dorothy L. Powell, Bill Reno, Earl Eugene Ridgway, Charles D. Robinson, Robert N. Ross, Robert Shead, Jerry P. Smith and Huffman Walker.

Likewise helpful in personalizing OU history were the members of the Academy of Retired Professionals and their sponsor, W. David Steen. Particular thanks go to those who played a more direct role in preparation of the book: F. Grover Fulkerson, Maggie Green, Ruth David, Betty Quinlan, U.S. Sen. David L. Boren, Eugene Kendall, Prentice Gautt, Randy Splain-gard, Dan A. Davis, Lowell Dunham, J. Clayton Feaver, Helen Merkle, Frank Heaston, Harold Keith, Frank L. Dennis, Jeanne Malmberg, Kuyk Logan, Judith Henry Wall, Sharron Deax, Savoie Lottinville, R. Boyd Gunning, Paul F. Sharp, George and Cleo Cross, Carolyn G. Hart, Charles F. Long, Anona Adair, Jan Burton, Mike Treps, John Lovett, Louise Moore, J. R. Morris, and especially Barbara Tuttle.

When a book like this goes to the printer, the author immediately thinks of things that should have been mentioned. In this instance, one missing element that perhaps did not change history but that made it more endearing was the recurring thread of family that runs through the University's vital statistics. A number of Oklahoma-based families can count 20 to 30 OU degrees earned in just three or four generations. These families number among their members many of the University's staunchest supporters.

But the generational pattern is not restricted to alumni sending their children back to their alma mater. OU is a family affair for faculty and staff as well. Naturally enough, faculty and staff children tend to enroll in OU, and some of those who elected to go away to college have returned years later to

work for the University. Other "University brats" have become some of OU's most active alumni, for to them the University is always home.

The children of retired faculty and staff are being asked to join their parents, OU's former presidents, vice presidents, deans and regents at an "OU Family Reunion" luncheon in the Oklahoma Memorial Union Ballroom on Friday, November 9, during the Centennial Homecoming Weekend. Special guests will be the surviving spouses and children of deceased faculty and staff and the families whose names have lived on as buildings on the campus.

Compiling such an invitation list is a somewhat daunting task, and the Centennial committee is seeking the help of *Sooner Magazine* readers in locating the families of former faculty and staff who should be invited. Additional information and reservations for the \$7 luncheon can be obtained from Mary Lyle Weeks, OU Centennial Office, 900 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 73019, (405) 325-1701.

The "OU Family Reunion" is just one of many events planned for the gala Centennial Homecoming Weekend. There will be Friday night entertainment, a pre-game Saturday "Lunch on the Lawn," football, a post-game alumni buffet and dancing to "big band" sounds in the Union ballroom or contemporary music on the floors below, and food everywhere. Throughout the weekend, alumni will be treated to open houses and reunions of classes, special interest groups, fraternity and sorority members and old friends. Information on activities, tickets or accommodations is also available from the OU Centennial Office.

And if you are hungering for a copy of the Centennial book, a check for \$35, plus \$2 postage, to the same address will reserve your copy.

—CJB