

Famous Citizens: The Will Rogers Memorial Museum Bus Tour

by David Dorman

ONE of many bus tours to be offered to POCI members attending next year's convention will venture along Historic Route 66 with a destination of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum in nearby Claremore, Oklahoma.

Will Rogers, born November 4, 1879, was an American stage and motion picture actor, vaudeville performer, American cowboy, humorist, newspaper columnist, and social commentator. At the Memorial, there is an extensive and

comprehensive collection of art and artifacts pertaining to his inspiring life, thoughtfully displayed within a 12-gallery museum. Special features include a children's area and 175-seat theater where classic movies starring Will Rogers are screened daily.

The Memorial's rotunda contains a famous sculpture of Will Rogers by artist Jo Davidson. Its pedestal is inscribed with what is perhaps Rogers' most famous quote, "...I never met a man I didn't like." The statue is another cast of the work which the artist created in 1938 and has repre-

sented the State of Oklahoma in the National Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol.

The tomb of Will Rogers sits outside the building, overlooking the city of Claremore. Other family members interred there include Roger's wife, Betty, three of their four children, and other family members.

Known as "Oklahoma's Favorite Son," Rogers was born to a Cherokee family in Indian Territory (now part of Oklahoma). As an entertainer and humorist, he traveled around



The Indian Nations Chapter is ready to welcome you to the 50th anniversary of POCI's International Convention. This milestone event will take place in Catoosa, Oklahoma, near Tulsa and adjacent to Interstate 44, from July 12-16, 2022.



the world three times, made 71 films (50 silent films and 21 "talkies"), and wrote more than 4,000 nationally syndicated newspaper columns.

By the mid-1930s, Rogers was hugely popular in the United States, recognized for his political wit while commanding one of the highest salaries in Hollywood. He died August 15th, 1935, along with aviator Wiley Post when their small airplane crashed in northern Alaska.

Another noted citizen hailing from Claremore, OK was playwright Lynn Riggs, perhaps best known for his 1930 play, *Green Grow the Lilacs*. This piece later provided the basis for Rodgers and Hammerstein's crowd-pleasing play, *Oklahoma!*

Lynn was born August 31, 1899 and died June 30, 1954. His mother was one-eighth Cherokee and, when he was just two years old, his mother secured his Cherokee allotment for him. He was able to draw on that allotment to help support his writing

and creativity. Riggs wrote 21 full-length plays, several short stories, poems, and a television script.

Next month, we'll unveil even more scheduled group tours and

convention activities. Meanwhile, make your plans now to join us in Catoosa, Oklahoma, from July 12-16, 2022, for the 50th Anniversary POCI convention! [IN](#)



A display at the museum replicates Roger's office.