

University of Oklahoma College of Law

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Foreward (Centennial Issue of the Oklahoma Law Review)

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FOREWORD

ANDREW M. COATS*

I am honored to write this Foreword to the centennial issue of the *Oklahoma Law Review*. Over its sixty-one years of existence, the *Oklahoma Law Review* has become a grand institution. It has improved the writing, research, and management skills of hundreds of law students and provided a wonderful guide to the law in Oklahoma and beyond to judges, practitioners, and legal scholars across America. In this centennial year for the College of Law, I extend warmest congratulations and thanks to all of those law students who have labored long to maintain the excellence of our law review.

This centennial year will be remembered as the most momentous in the history of the College.

Our centennial celebrations began in the summer of 2009 with our annual Oxford Summer Program. It was our 35th year at Oxford, the 100th year of the existence of our College, and the 500th anniversary of Brasenose College, our host institution.

Our guest for that celebration was the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of Canada. Chief Justice McLachlin spent a week with us there, along with Chief Judge Robert Henry of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit and longtime College of Law Board of Visitors Chair DeVier Pierson. Our law school was well represented. I attended along with our Oxford Summer Program Director, Professor Robert Spector, and faculty members Judith Maute and Taiawagi Helton. Our publicist, Jonella Frank ('79), came with us to do interviews for our various publications. Chief Justice McLachlin taught classes and visited informally with students and faculty.

The culmination of her visit was a champagne reception on the quadrangle lawn at Brasenose followed by a high-table dinner in the Great Hall. Chief

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Justice McLachlin was presented by Judge Henry, and she gave an eloquent address.

On October 1, we held our principal centennial celebration with a reception at the College of Law followed by a dinner at the Norman Embassy Suites Conference Center. United States Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy and his wife, Mary, traveled to Norman to lead the celebration. Justice Kennedy visited with students and faculty and taught a Constitutional Law class to all of our first-year students. At the conclusion of the dinner attended by more than 1800 students, faculty, and guests, OU President David L. Boren ('68) and Justice Kennedy held a fireside chat, which was truly memorable.

The capstone event for the centennial was a visit from the Chief Justice of the United States, John G. Roberts, Jr. This marked the first time in the history of Oklahoma that a sitting Chief Justice had come to our state.

Chief Justice Roberts dropped in on various classes and met with students informally. He lunched with the faculty and then delivered the centennial Henry Family Lecture in the Dick Bell Courtroom. The sponsors of the very successful Henry Family Lecture series, Chief Judge Robert Henry and Governor Brad Henry, were in attendance. Following the lecture, a reception for alumni, students, and special guests was held in the Sneed Lounge. Dinner in the Chapman Great Reading Room followed and was a memorable event to conclude our centennial celebrations.

The presence of these luminaries at our centennial celebration events is mostly attributable to the fact that I had traveled with them in the United Kingdom and Canada, and we had become well acquainted. Because of the friendships we had developed, I was able to persuade each of them to be a part of our centennial celebrations. In a sense, it was my "going away" present to our College.

One of the best things that happened during the year was the completion and publication of *The University of Oklahoma College of Law: A Centennial History*, a wonderful book written by Justice Steven Taylor ('74) and Robert Burke that brings to life the first 100 years of the College. For the first article of this centennial issue, Taylor and Burke have created a synopsis of the book that highlights some of the key figures and events in the law school's history.

In the second article, Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry ('88) discusses OU Law's tradition of cultivating good citizenship and emphasizes the school's mission of teaching more than just "black letter" law. Next is a reprint of a controversial 1912 *Harvard Law Review* article by the founder and first dean of the College of Law, Julien C. Monnet, denouncing a discriminatory "grandfather clause" in the Oklahoma Constitution that had the effect of disenfranchising African American citizens in the state. In a follow-up essay, Professor Harry Tepker analyzes the historical significance of Dean Monnet's

article and praises the Dean's defense of respect for the Constitution and the rule of law.

In the final centennial-themed article, Professor Cheryl Wattley details the story of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and her struggle to gain admission to the law school, explaining how Sipuel Fisher's personal courage and sacrifice advanced the movement for educational equality in the United States. The issue concludes with student articles by the top three members of the *Oklahoma Law Review* Editorial Board—Michael Brooks, Editor-in-Chief; Georgeann Royce, Managing Editor; and Michael Cromwell, Executive Articles Editor.

I hope you will enjoy this centennial issue of the *Oklahoma Law Review*. It marks a great time in the history of our College.

