



Footprints

"Every man must leave tracks and they might as well be good ones." - Thomas Gilcrease

November 2025

President's Letter

What a busy month October was! I think it's accurate to say that it's the busiest month that the museum and the Gillies have had since the closure. Gillies signed up to help with Scrollathon and participated in the very first session on October 6. I so enjoyed the Ladd Brothers, the scroll making process, and the storytelling skills of my fellow Gillies as they shared the meanings of their personal scrolls!

Then came the Family Festival on October 11. What a pleasure to see visitors at the museum again, especially the young ones visiting the museum for the first time! All ages enjoyed art, music, and food under the big tent, and participated by making their own scrolls inside our beautiful new building.

Docents also had the opportunity to assist with an event on October 21 as Trust Company of Oklahoma hosted clients for tours of the new building. I couldn't attend but heard from those that helped with the event how enjoyable it was to talk with excited visitors to the new museum and to hear the music of a string quartet inside the new building.

Also in the month of October, Social Media and Marketing Coordinator Maddy Witt prepared a brand new PowerPoint presentation, "Welcome to the New Gilcrease," and docents gave the presentation to three Tulsa community groups: TEE (Tulsa Executive Exchange) on October 1; the Southwest Tulsa Historical Society on October 16; and the OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute)-OSU Tulsa Town Hall series on October 20. Let us know if you know of a community group that wants to "tour" the new building via PowerPoint!

We have lots coming up in November as well, as you will see in this issue of *Footprints*. On Wednesday, November 5, the museum's first Gillies Artist-in-Residence, Stephen Towns, will speak at the Lorton Performing Arts Center at TU. Register [here](#) for the event. Gilcrease members may also attend a coffee and Q&A session with Stephen Towns on Thursday, November 6, at HCAR. Register [here](#) for that event. Executive Director Brian Lee Whisenhunt will be the speaker at the November 7 Gillies/Docent meeting, and some new Gilcrease staff members will also be introduced. Exciting days are ahead!

Becky Hatchett
Gillies President





**Mah-to-toh-pa, the Four Bears
by George Catlin**

“In George Catlin and Sir Thomas Phillipps we encounter two fascinating characters, both of whom were major cultural figures in their own time and both of whom made lasting contributions to history.”

--Joan Carpenter Troccoli (Institute Director at Gilcrease Museum, January 1992-June 1995)

Much of the following comes from an article published in “Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship,” a journal of the American Library Association. You can read the entire article, “George Catlin and Sir Thomas Phillipps: A Nineteenth-Century Friendship,” written by Joan Carpenter Troccoli, [here](#).

George Catlin

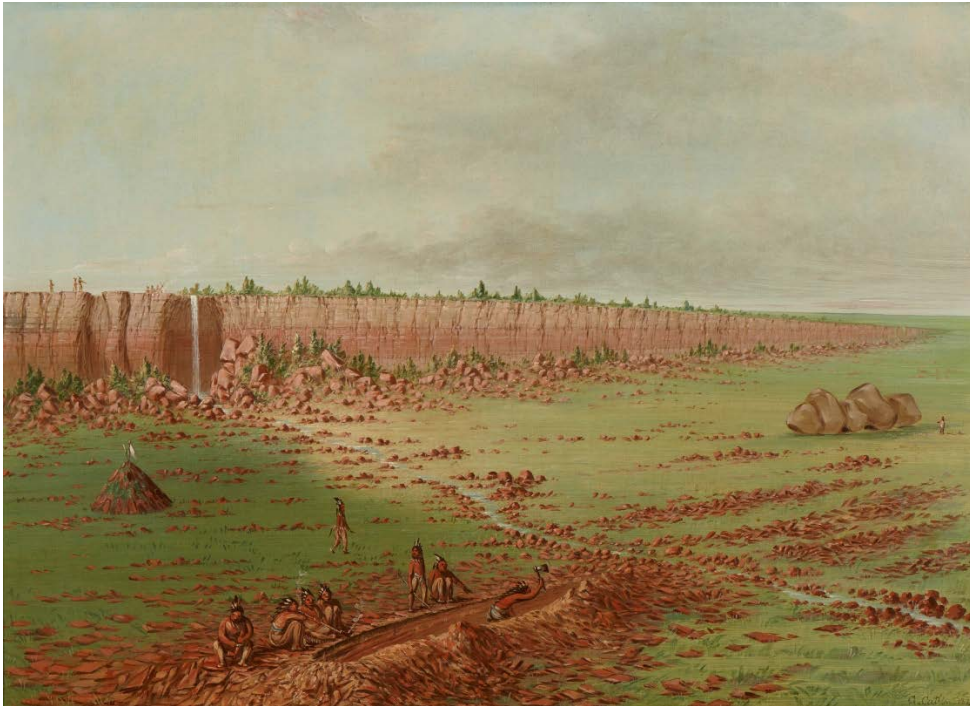
- Catlin was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1796, the 5th of fourteen children.
- He was educated as a lawyer, but his ambition was to be an artist. Quitting the law after about a year, he learned the basics of painting in Philadelphia and New York.
- In the 1820s he decided to devote himself to painting the Indigenous people of America.
- Between 1830 and 1836 Catlin made five journeys in the trans-Mississippi West, including a visit to Indian Territory, which later became Oklahoma, in 1834. While many artists merely painted the West and its inhabitants from their studios in the East (and their imaginations), Catlin “introduced the idea of making art about the West *in* the West.”
- “The artistic result of [Catlin’s] travels was [the] Indian Gallery, which eventually included 600 portraits, landscapes, and scenes of Indian life, as well as native artifacts. In the late 1830s, Catlin toured eastern cities with his collection and began a campaign to sell the Indian Gallery to the federal government. Congress was not interested, so Catlin decided to take the Indian Gallery abroad.”
- In 1840 Catlin made plans to publish an illustrated edition of the reports he had sent to a New York newspaper from various western outposts during his travels of the 1830s. His publication *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians* would become one of the most influential books ever written about the American West.

Sir Thomas Phillipps

- “Sir Thomas Phillipps has been described as the greatest book collector of all time, a man who suffered from the ‘most advanced case of bibliomania’ in history. He accumulated the largest collection of unpublished historical material ever assembled by a single person--over 60,000 manuscripts--and, late in life, he also acquired 50,000 printed books, after deciding that he needed to have ‘one copy of every Book in the World.’”
- “Between 1820 and his death in 1872, Phillipps invested in his library between £200,000 and £250,000--the equivalent of 1.2 million mid-19th-century dollars... In the process, he fundamentally changed the nature of book collecting, transforming it from a rather modest hobby practiced by a few dilettantes to a professionalized pursuit in which great sums of money could be at stake.”
- Phillipps was born in 1792, the son of Thomas Phillipps Sr., a manufacturer of calico, from a relationship with a woman named Hannah Walton, to whom he was not married. His father’s business success made it possible for Phillipps Jr. “to pursue a more gentlemanly calling.” His mother “was permitted to have little contact with her son, which has led at least one Freudian scholar to suggest that a lack of maternal affection caused Phillipps's collecting mania.”
- Phillipps was educated at Oxford, and in his mid-twenties he married Henrietta Molyneux, who came from a far more distinguished family than he did. In 1821, his aristocratic father-in-law arranged for him to be made a baronet.
- Phillipps was not very likeable; he has been described as “vain, selfish, dogmatic, obstinate, litigious and bigoted”; he also had a terrible temper that only got worse as he aged.
- “The contrast between the attention Phillipps devoted to his collection and the lack of care he gave to his home was a source of wonder for many of his visitors as well as a continuous plague to his family. By the mid-1840s, almost every room in the house at Middle Hill was jammed from floor to ceiling with boxes of manuscripts. Phillipps's purchases arrived with such frequency that he often did not open the shipping crates until years after they were delivered.”
- In the 1820s he established his own printing press at his estate at Middle Hill in Worcestershire. Though very proud of his Middle Hill Press and his skills as an editor, the products of his press were described as “amateurish,” while his skills as an editor were terrible; “most of the manuscripts he transcribed and printed are full of errors.”

Catlin and Phillipps: A Nineteenth Century Friendship

- Catlin and Phillipps first met in the summer of 1840 after Catlin had had a very successful winter and spring in London exhibiting his Indian Gallery. Phillipps offered to publish Catlin’s *Letters and Notes*, but the project fell through because of Catlin’s lack of funds. “It was probably a blessing that Catlin was unable to finance the book when Phillipps was so eager to publish it, because the books of the Middle Hill Press are alarmingly inconsistent in quality.”
- In the late 1840s while Phillipps still possessed a substantial fortune, although his funds were not always accessible because they were tied up in inherited property that couldn’t be sold. “Between 1848 and 1854, Phillipps provided critical financial help for Catlin, whose mounting debts kept him in perpetual crisis. The only problem with having Phillipps as a patron was that he himself was always short of funds...”
- Phillipps's first documented purchase from Catlin was a painting of the Red Pipestone Quarry in Minnesota, which the artist delivered in November 1848.

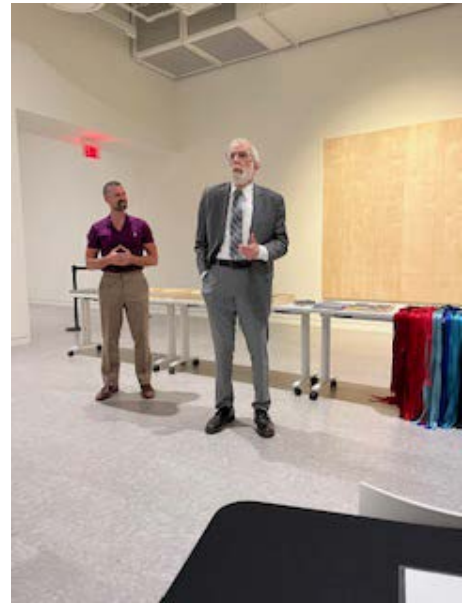


- Loans from Phillipps to Catlin were repaid with paintings. “Catlin agreed to this proposition with relief, but little did he know how hard he would work to pay off his debt. He made the mistake of letting Phillipps determine the nature of the commission. Catlin probably thought that Phillipps wanted a few pictures of the size of the Pipestone Quarry (19 x 26 inches), but Sir Thomas had something a bit more comprehensive in mind. He made up a list of fifty-five pictures in the Indian Gallery that he wanted Catlin to copy for him; fifty, he thought, would satisfy the debt, and he would pay extra for the other five. Each painting would measure 11 by 14 inches. Catlin would receive about \$10 for each of them.” [Catlin would eventually go to debtors’ prison in 1852.]
- After 1854 the friendship between Catlin and Phillipps became more distant. Their final exchange of letters in 1860 consisted of a request from Catlin for a loan and the subsequent rejection from Phillipps whose “Purse” was “dreadfully low.”

Catlin and Phillipps in the Gilcrease Collection

- The friendship of George Catlin and Sir Thomas Phillipps is chronicled in over one hundred letters, most of which are now in the collections of Gilcrease Museum.
- At Gilcrease Museum there is a copy of the most famous book published by the Middle Hill Press-- Phillipps's catalog of his own collection, printed in bits and pieces between 1824 and 1871. This very rare volume “is a mishmash of different sizes and colors of paper, and its lack of organization is a nightmare for researchers, who must read the entire book in order to locate a single item.”
- The acquisition of *Pipestone Quarry* marked the beginning of Phillipps's Indian Gallery, now entirely in the collection of Gilcrease Museum, which grew over the next few years to include more than sixty oil paintings, seventy individual watercolors, and an album containing fifty more watercolors.
- Today, manuscripts from Phillipps's collection are widely scattered in many of the great libraries of Europe and America, including the Gilcrease Museum Library. “At the end of World War II, the London bookselling firm of William H. Robinson purchased what remained of [Phillipps’] library (and it was quite a bit) for £100,000 and carried on its dispersal in both private and auction sales. It was from this firm that Thomas Gilcrease purchased Gilcrease Museum's Catlin paintings and watercolors in 1946 and 1947.”

Scrollathon: Gillies Style, October 6, 2025



Family Festival October 11, 2025



ANNUAL EDDIE FAYE GATES PROGRAM FEATURING **Stephen Towns**

NOV. 5 • 7 P.M.

LORTON PERFORMANCE CENTER



November 5, 2025 at 7pm
Lorton Performing Arts Center, University of Tulsa

Join Gilcrease Museum for the **Annual Eddie Faye Gates Program** featuring nationally renowned artist **Stephen Towns**, the museum's inaugural **Gillies Artist-in-Residence**.

Towns will reflect on his time in Tulsa exploring the **Eddie Faye Gates Tulsa Race Massacre Collection** and visiting sites throughout the historic Greenwood District. His lecture will consider how these stories of resilience and remembrance inform his ongoing artistic practice and inspire new creative work.

This annual program honors educator and historian **Eddie Faye Gates (1934–2021)**, whose lifelong dedication to documenting the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre continues to shape our understanding of history and community.



Member-only event: Coffee with Stephen Towns

November 6, 10am | Helmerich Center for American Research

Join us for an informal Q&A session with **Stephen Towns**; **Alex Mann**, Director of Curatorial Affairs; and **Aaron Schoenfeldt**, the 2025-26 Duane H. King Postdoctoral Fellow. Enjoy light refreshments and explore curated items in the reading room with exclusive small-group access.

Reception and reading room access begins at 10am, and the program will begin at 11:30am.

Members, Log in to Register [here](#), or RSVP at 918.596.2780 or Gilcrease-rsvp@utulsa.edu. Space is limited.



Gillies Cook!

Jason Ashley's Dark Chocolate Oatmeal Toffee Cookies

Originally published in the *Tulsa World*

Contributed by Deb Glass

Makes about 30-something medium-to-large-sized cookies

- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2-1/2 cups blended oatmeal (measure oatmeal and blend in blender to a fine powder)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups pecans
- 2 cups dark chocolate chips
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 bag of Heath toffee bar pieces (difficult to find; substitute 4-5 cut-up Heath bars)

1. Blend oatmeal in blender to a fine powder, then set aside.
2. Cream the butter and both sugars. Add eggs and vanilla; mix together with flour, oatmeal, salt, baking powder and soda. Add chocolate chips, toffee pieces and pecans.
3. Place on cookie sheet (an inch or two apart, but I've never known it to matter too much, as long as you're not overcrowding). Bake for 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees.



Docents' Corner

Alana Trisler, Docent Chair

Dear Gillies and Docents,

We hope you can all make it to the **November 7** Gillies and Docents' Meeting as all eyes will be on our Gilcrease Director and presenter, Brian Lee Whisenhunt. Brian will have a full agenda of information to share with us including updates on current museum work, upcoming activities, introduction of new staff members, and hopefully the BIG reveal of Gilcrease's new rebranding – and anything else he cares to share at this point. You won't want to miss this!

Further down the road:

December: As always, No Gillies/Docents' Meeting in December.

January: Our guest speaker will be Aaron Schoenfelt, the 2025-26 Duane H. King Postdoctoral Fellow, who is also the newly-elected President of the Guardians (volunteers) at the Museum of Tulsa History. His work at Gilcrease focuses on the legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

For all Gillies/Docents Meetings:

Refreshments at 9:30

Meeting begins at 10:00

PACCAR Classroom in HCAR

Reminder: As you know, for this 2025-2026 Gillies year, we are easing into required hours for both Gillies and Docents:

- **Non-Docent Gillies** are required to earn **10 hours of service** for the 2025-2026 year in any service capacity.
- **Docents** are also required to earn **10 hours of service with at least 8 of those hours coming from attending 4 Gillies/Docents' meetings.** (2 hours are earned for each meeting.) The remaining 2 hours may come from additional Gillies/Docents' meetings or other service areas.

“Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

- Pablo Picasso



Turkeys

by Woodrow Wilson Crumbo



Christmas Tea

December 2, 2025

2-4 p.m.

@ Harwelden Mansion

Gillies and Friends are invited to join together for Christmas Tea. Enjoy an afternoon of music, beauty, and a tea party in the mansion. Wear your brightest holiday togs and your biggest smile. Take a stroll through the mansion. Hear a year end report of Gillie involvement. Cost: \$55 per person covers venue, servers, tea service, and décor.

I need to borrow tablecloths for tables: 1-60", 3-48" and white napkins. If you can provide this call me by Nov.15. All reservations should be paid by cash or check made out to Cindy Strasheim by November 21. Questions? 402-469-5357



On view through December 13. The Oklahoma Center for the Humanities is thrilled to present **A Retrospective**, a native fashion exhibit designed and hand-crafted by Chickasaw-Choctaw weaver, **Margaret Roach Wheeler**.

Wheeler honors the spirit of her great-great-grandmother, Mahota, and a legacy of creative Chickasaw women. Margaret has become known internationally as a painter, sculptor, educator, Native historian and award-winning weaver. From her earliest business in handwoven fashions to creative textiles to the field of fine arts, Margaret's art and work continue today in selling original handwovens and in the national brand of Mahota Textiles, both collaborations with the Chickasaw Nation. It is this legacy of Mahota, Nancy Mahota, grandmother Juel and mother Rubey – centuries of tradition and craftsmanship handed down through generations of Indigenous makers. Through her detailed historical research and creative innovation, Margaret connects the inspiration of our ancestors to all of us in a modern world.

This exhibit runs October 3 – December 13, 2025, at UTulsa's 101 Archer in the South Gallery. Our galleries are open Wednesdays through Saturdays from noon until 5 p.m. Special closures for private events will be announced on our social media pages. As always, admission is free, and open to students, faculty, staff and public.



On October 6 artist Minisa Crumbo Halsey was inducted into the Tulsa Hall of Fame, along with her husband, music agent Jim Halsey. Click on the link below to hear Halsey's interview on Voices of Oklahoma about her father, Woody Crumbo.

[MINISA CRUMBO HALSEY](#)

Native American artist

Daughter of the groundbreaking Native American artist Woody Crumbo celebrates her father's legacy.

Service Area	September Hours	October Hours
Anthropology	20	26
Archives	68	68
Board of Directors	30	22
Conservation	45	41
Continuing Education	22	11
Digitization	21	12
Docent Training/Preparation	0	43
Executive Committee	8	5
Footprints Newsletter	17	16
Gilcrease Forum	56	0
Gillies General Membership Meeting	59	0
Gillies Library Chair	1	0
Public Programs	0	163
Speaking of Gilcrease Presentations	40	55
Speaking of Gilcrease Training	4	0
Technology	0	2
Travel	27	3
TOTAL	418	467

Mark Your Calendar

Executive Committee Meeting	Friday, November 7	@8:30 a.m.	Jackson Room/HCAR
Docent Meeting	Friday, November 7	@10:00 a.m.	PACCAR/HCAR
	Refreshments	@ 9:30 a.m.	HCAR
BOD Meeting	Thursday, November 13	@10:00 a.m.	Zoom

Stephen Towns

Lecture	Wednesday, November 5	@7:00 p.m.	Lorton Hall at TU
Member Coffee	Thursday, November 6	@ 10 a.m.	HCAR
Christmas Tea	Tuesday, December 2	@2-4 p.m.	Harwelden Mansion

Secretary's Report

No changes were made to the membership roster during October.

A get well card was sent to Alana Trisler.

Sympathy cards were sent to Nancy Laughrey and Pam Brown (Dale Brown's wife).

Please send changes in contact information (address, phone and email) as well as news about a Gillies who is ill to Gillies Secretary Julie Gentz at julie.gentz55@gmail.com.