

THE DRUMRIGHT MUSEUM GUSHER

December 1, 2025/ Vol 36

sja PHOTOGRAPHY
Photographer: Sarah Matney, D.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE OIL PATCH



December 6
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Drumright Museum Lawn

First Friday Karaoke

December 6
Christmas Parade

The Polar Express

See Page 4
For More Information

DOWN AT THE DEPOT

Sarah's Oil – The Back Story

Hooray for Hollywood! And hooray for another true Oklahoma story being presented on the big screen. The recently released Amazon/MGM movie, "Sarah's Oil," is a wonderfully poignant history lesson, recounting the making of a millionaire, an eleven-year-old Black girl. This story takes place around 1913, at the beginning of the oil boom that created the Cushing-Drumright Oilfield. Many elements of this story are true and most importantly, worthy to be remembered and retold.

Here is the true story. Sarah Rector was born in 1902 at Twine (later named Taft), in Indian Territory, about seven miles west of Muskogee. Her ancestors were Muskogee Creek Freedmen, who had

received land allotments as required by the Dawes Allotment Act. The 160 acres that was allotted to Sarah was a rough, rocky parcel that was along the south side of the Cimarron River, north of the "Ragtown" that would become Drumright. The land was considered worthless, and her father attempted to sell it multiple times just to pay the taxes. But remarkably, oil was discovered here on Wheeler's farm by Tom Slick and speculators started buying leases all through this area. A well was drilled on Sarah's land and it produced a gusher. She was earning \$300 a day (equivalent to \$10,000 per day now)! But instantly, unscrupulous individuals came forward seeking to become her legal guardian. Her father



petitioned the court to become her legal guardian and he was denied. The court assigned a prominent white businessman to be her guardian, but he took her money. The Oklahoma state legislature declared her to be "white" so that she could ride on the train in a passenger car instead of in the freight car. She even received marriage proposals from white men, old enough to be her father. The world marveled at the attention this child received. After several guardian changes, she finally had a benevolent guardian who allowed money to flow to her parents for a better home, clothing and education for Sarah and her siblings. When Sarah reached 18 years of age, she took control of her own affairs. She moved to Kansas City and bought a mansion for her family. She lived well, married and later had three sons. Passing away in 1967, she is buried in the Blackjack Cemetery, located at Taft, Oklahoma.

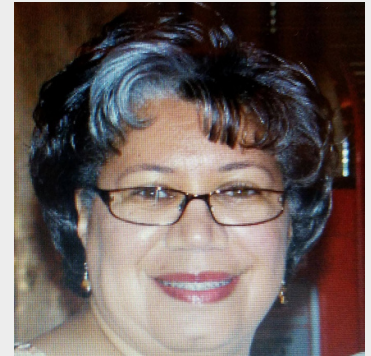
This case brought to light the problem of assigning white guardians to Black and native children. Like the tragedies of the Osage murders of this same period, there were other Creek and Freedmen families whose lives were in danger because of these land allotments and the huge sums of money involved with oil leases. This movie highlights the consequences of greed and the rewards of having a strong unyielding faith in God.

Publicity that preceded the opening of this movie made claims that Sarah's story centered in Glenpool. But down at the depot, we have photos of allotment maps showing the exact location of her land, along the south side of the Cimarron River, in an area that used to be known as the "Crow Bottoms." We also have photos of the lease signs that still bear her name. The movie leads you to believe that Sarah's home in Taft was just down the road from her land allotment. But it is about seventy-five miles from Taft to the Cimarron River north of Drumright. Also, the movie showed Sarah having total control and making all the decisions, but a little girl in that day, probably had no control over the decisions made by grown men.

If you haven't seen this movie yet, make your way to the theater now. There are several mentions of the Cushing-Drumright Oilfield and the Cimarron River, as well as mentions of Muskogee, Taft, and the Creek Nation. There are also some classic photographs showing the Cimarron River and the oil wells drilled in that area. There is even a mention of "Ragtown," where oilfield workers lived in tents and temporary storefronts had canvas roofs. Down at the depot, we have a display showing what "Ragtown" looked like back then. Come on by and let us show you

the real back story of "Sarah's Oil."

"The meek shall inherit the earth, but not the mineral rights." – J. Paul Getty

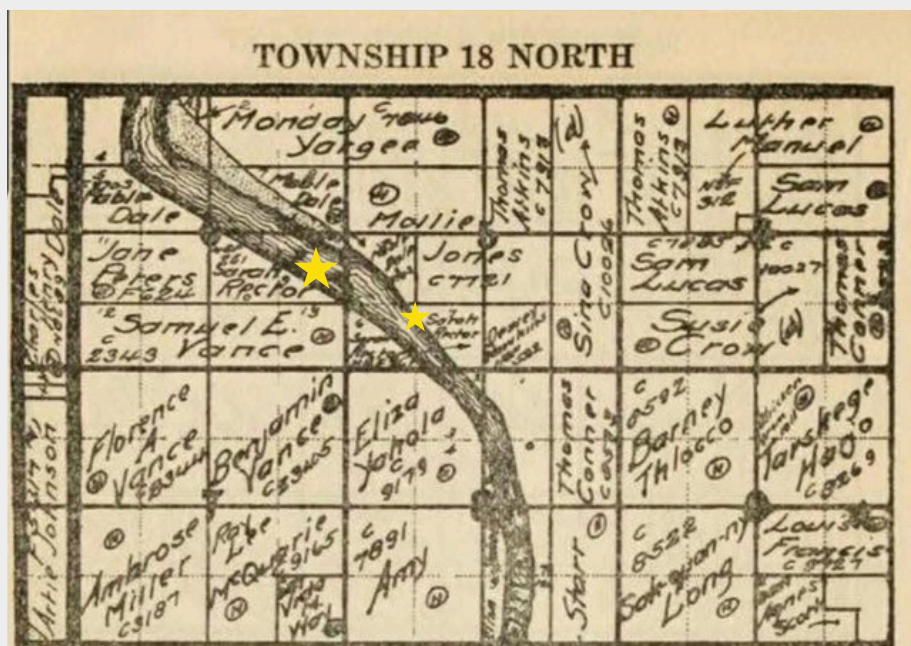




Sarah Rector around 1920.



Oil derricks along the Cimarron River, north of Drumright in 1914.



This is a portion of an allotment map showing Township 18 North. Note Sarah's name on 2 separate 80 acre parcels that include sections of the Cimarron River bottom.

Upcoming Events In The Oil Patch



Times for Polar Express

December 6th at 8pm

December 12th 3 shows 6pm, 7pm, 8pm

December 19th 3 shows 6pm, 7pm, 8pm

Obituaries

Larry Glenn Burditt

Larry was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on June 30, 1961 to the late Glenn Pierce Burditt & Barbara Sue (Pharoh) Burditt. He passed from this life in Tulsa on October 31, 2025 at the age of 64 years & 4 months. Larry was raised & educated in Drumright and was a 1979 graduate of Drumright High School. He attended college at Oklahoma State University studying Animal Science and then finished his Degree in Art at the University of Oklahoma. He married the love of his life Shirley Rae Gullett on January 9, 1982 and to this union their son Jason was born. Larry was a professor of Graphic Design at the University of Central Michigan until his retirement in 2022. He then moved back to Oklahoma and resided in Stillwater and then Cushing. He loved to create art whether it was spinning, weaving, fiber art or drawing. He is preceded in death by his Father: Glenn Burditt.

His remaining family includes his wife: Shirley Burditt of the home; Mother: Barbara Burditt of Oak Grove; Son: Jason Burditt & wife Samantha of Michigan; Grandchildren: Kira – Laytin – RaeLynn & Serenity; Brother: Kevin Burditt & wife Gala of Claremore; Sister: Kim Smith & Husband Joe of Cushing; Plus several Nieces, Nephews, other relatives and friends.



Obituaries

Victoria Rochelle McGuire

Victoria was born in Cushing, Oklahoma on February 13, 2002 to Kenneth Allen McGuire & Maria Ann Meade. She passed from this life on November 11, 2025 at the age of 23 years, 8 months and 29 days. Victoria was raised & educated in Drumright & was a 2020 graduate of Drumright High School. She had lived all of her life in this area. She was preceded in death by her Father: Kenneth McGuire; Grandparents: Ronnie & Sharon McGuire; & a Niece: Jaziah Rossiter

She is survived by her Mother: Maria Meade of Cushing; 2 Brothers: Kristerpher McGuire & Stable McGuire, both of Cushing; 2 Sisters: Holly McGuire & Stephanie McGuire; PLUS several Aunts - Uncles - Cousins - & other family members. Cremation services are entrusted to the care of Michael's Funeral Home of Drumright, Oklahoma.



Obituaries

Dorothy Naomi Miller (Frazier)

Dorothy Naomi Miller, a beloved resident of Coweta, passed away on October 27, 2025, at the age of 91 years, 3 months, and 25 days. Funeral services were held on October 31, 2025, in the memorial chapel of Michael's Funeral Home in Bristow, with interment following at Magnolia Memorial Gardens.

Born on July 2, 1934, in Bristow, Oklahoma, to Ernest C. Fraizer and Nancy Tennessee (Dowdy) Fraizer, Dorothy lived a full and vibrant life. She graduated from Bristow High School in 1952 and married Robert Austin Miller in 1955. They made their home in Bristow before moving to Sand Springs in the mid-1970s. After Robert's passing in 2004, Dorothy moved to Coweta, where she remained active in her retirement community, enjoying Bingo and jigsaw puzzles.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Robert, her brother Fred Fraizer, and her sister Colleen Sparks. She is survived by her children, Melinda Butler (Jody) of Mississippi, Susan Greene of Coweta, Frank Miller of Lost City, and Robert Miller (Melanie) of Florida; her grandchildren, Kyle, Kristen, Cody, Melodi, Luis, Shawn, Zane, and Anna; and her great-grandchildren, Zak, Frank, Dora, and Meli. She also leaves behind many nieces, nephews, cousins, and other family members.

Dorothy's warmth, kindness, and love for her family will be deeply missed by all who knew her.



*in
loving
memory*

Newsletter Designed By Carson Creative

