



Historical Markers



Tulsa Oklahoma

BFC/RCT/TCL/THS

Tulsa, Oklahoma is the birthplace of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Here are several noteworthy landmarks and points of interest from the early years and the people who were instrumental to the movement.

FOUNDER: OWEN C. CASH RUPERT I. HALL



Dedicated - Tulsa "The Number 1" Chapter - April 19, 1998

CORINNE D
1892 - 1987

OWEN C.
1892 - 1953

Researched and written by Society Historian Grady Kerr

The Tulsa Club

**115 East 5th Street /
Northwest Corner of 5th and
Cincinnati**

Built in 1923, it stands 11 stories tall
It was an exclusive club that catered to the
rich oil men of Oklahoma

The singers meet here because Rupert Hall
was a member and made the arrangements.
It was a member's only / special invitation
type of business

The was the site of the first meeting (April
11, 1938) of what would become the first
chapter of SPEBSQSA

26 men attended this songfest

The meeting was held in open air up on the
roof in what was called the "Roof Garden".
It was later called the "Sky Terrace".

It closed on February 1994

Closed for many years, it has escaped
demolition many times.

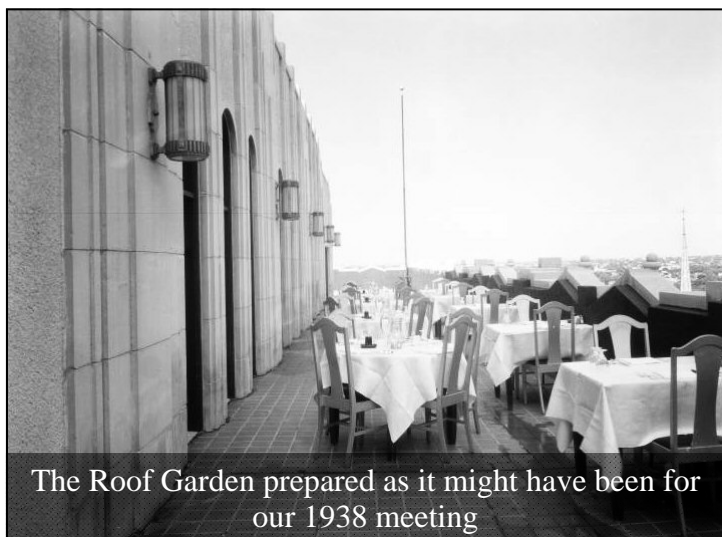
Its future is still in doubt.

(see article page 12)



The Tulsa Club Building in the late 20s

The Tulsa Club had top-notch chefs who made this
cake modeled after their building



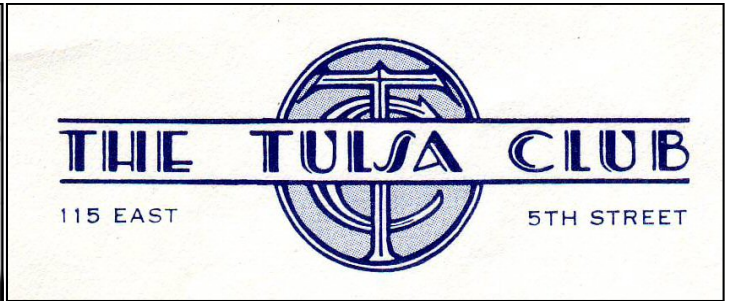
The Roof Garden prepared as it might have been for
our 1938 meeting



Society Historian Grady Kerr standing
on the historic spot in 1989



Tulsa Club Party - Ladies Night - with Society Founder **OC Cash**, Tulsa Club Manager **Phil Cannon**, Tulsa Mayor **Clearance Veale** and a special Society logo cake.



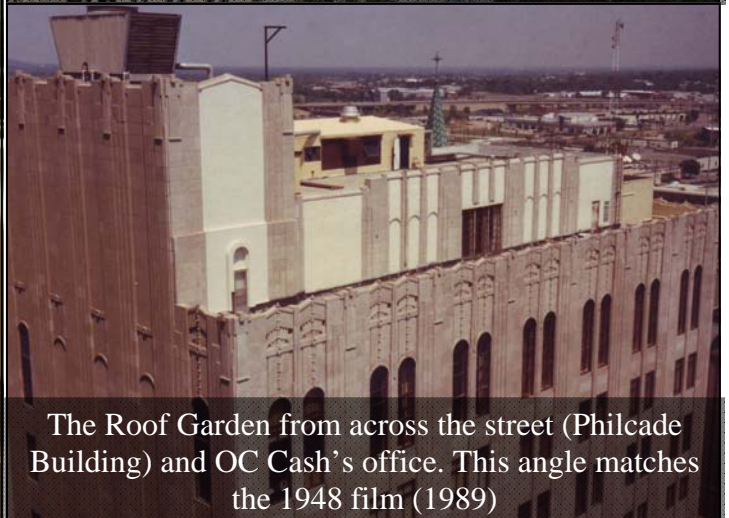
The Roof Garden facing SW (1989)



The Roof Garden from above facing NE (1989)



The Tulsa Club Building from the street facing west



The Roof Garden from across the street (Philcade Building) and OC Cash's office. This angle matches the 1948 film (1989)

Cash's Office

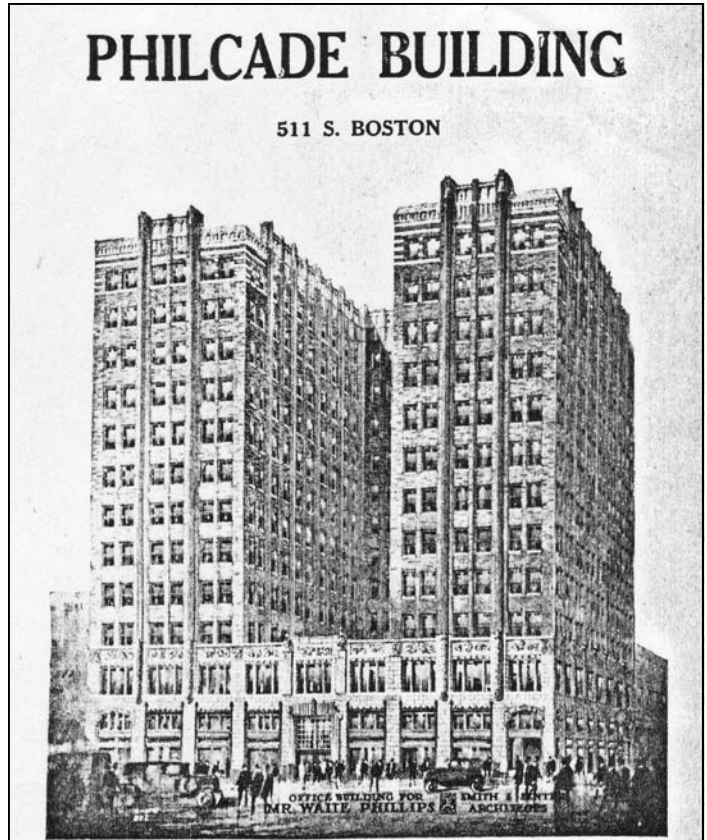
Philcade Building

511 South Boston

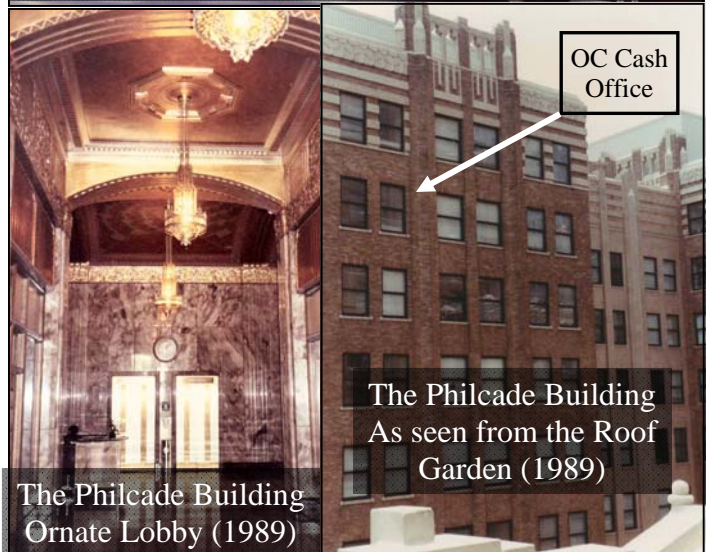
Room #1230 - NE Tower/NE

Corner (now two rooms)

OC Cash was a tax attorney for Stanolind Oil & Gas – they took up the 3rd, 4th and 7th thru 13th floors of the Philcade Building. Cash's office was on the 12th floor (room 1230). In 1948, during the Society's 10th anniversary a short film was made to recreate the first meeting on the Roof Garden. One shot was taken from across the street from his office window.



The Philcade Building North Entrance (1989)



The Philcade Building Ornate Lobby (1989)

The Philcade Building As seen from the Roof Garden (1989)



The Philcade Building North Side (1989)

Hotel Tulsa

3rd and Cincinnati Demolished 1972

(its now the site for the Performing Arts Center)

Site of second meeting April 18, 1938
Apparently some Tulsa Club members complained of the “noise” during the April 11th songfest so they moved to the Hotel Tulsa the next week.
70 men showed up.



Credits

Written & Researched
by
Grady Kerr
BHS Historian

Photos by:
Greg Olds
Beryl Ford
Grady Kerr
Truman Netherton

Alvin Plaza Hotel

**7th and Main
Imploded 1976**

By May 31st the newly formed group began meeting at the **Alvin Plaza Hotel** and hosting 75 to 150 men weekly. This group would soon become known as the **Tulsa # 1 Chapter** and continue to meet at the Alvin for 37 years. It was imploded on December 19, 1976.



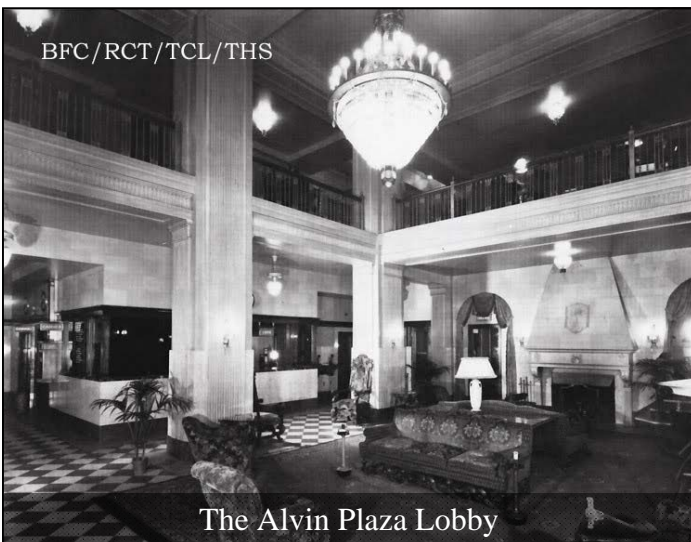
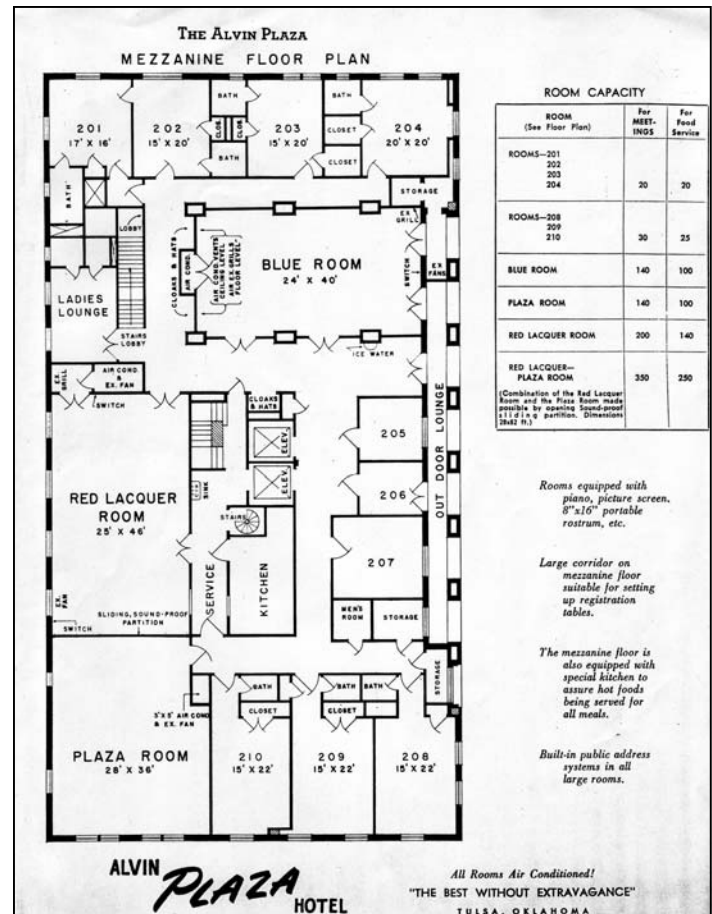
The Alvin Mezzanine Level over looking 7th street - singing on this level allowed the sound to be heard on the street May 31, 1938

The gathering of May 31st, 1938 was possibly the most important single event in the history of the society. Sixty three singers met on the Mezzanine level of the Alvin. In the heat of the early summer night the windows were opened to the street.

To understand this event one must also be aware of the concern of the police department with spontaneous groups on the streets even years after the panic of the race riots in downtown Tulsa in (1921).

Reportedly, there was such a sound coming from the Alvin, passersby on the way home stopped to listen, and cars began to pull over. Such a commotion was caused, a rare traffic jam resulted. Apparently someone (some jokingly rumored it was O.C.) called the cops. **Ralph Martin**, a reporter for the Daily World, followed a policeman upstairs to the singers' songfest to discover the source of the "riot". Even before the traffic jam was dispersed. The new story that resulted made the wire service and spread throughout the country and spawned new chapters. See article page 18.

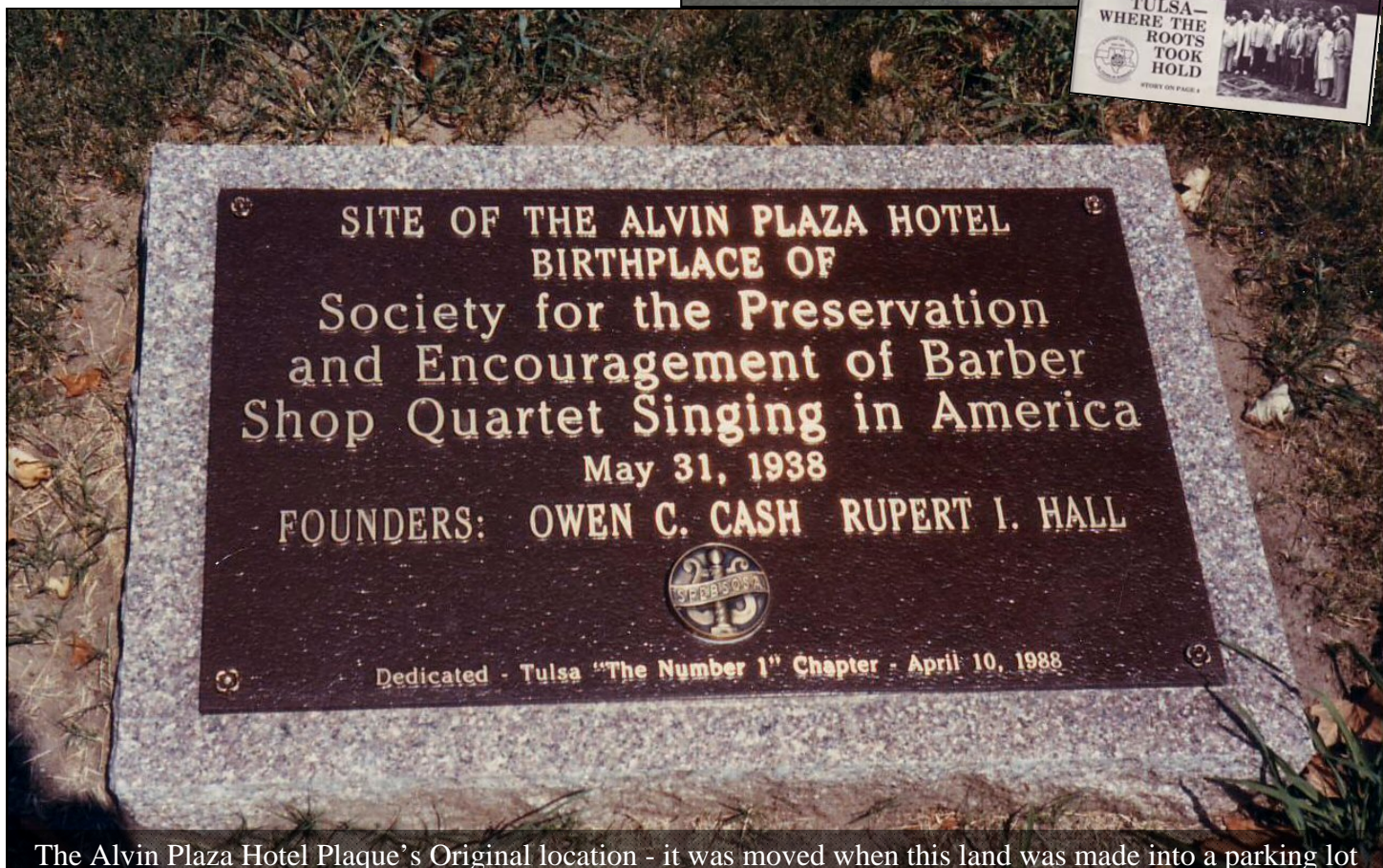
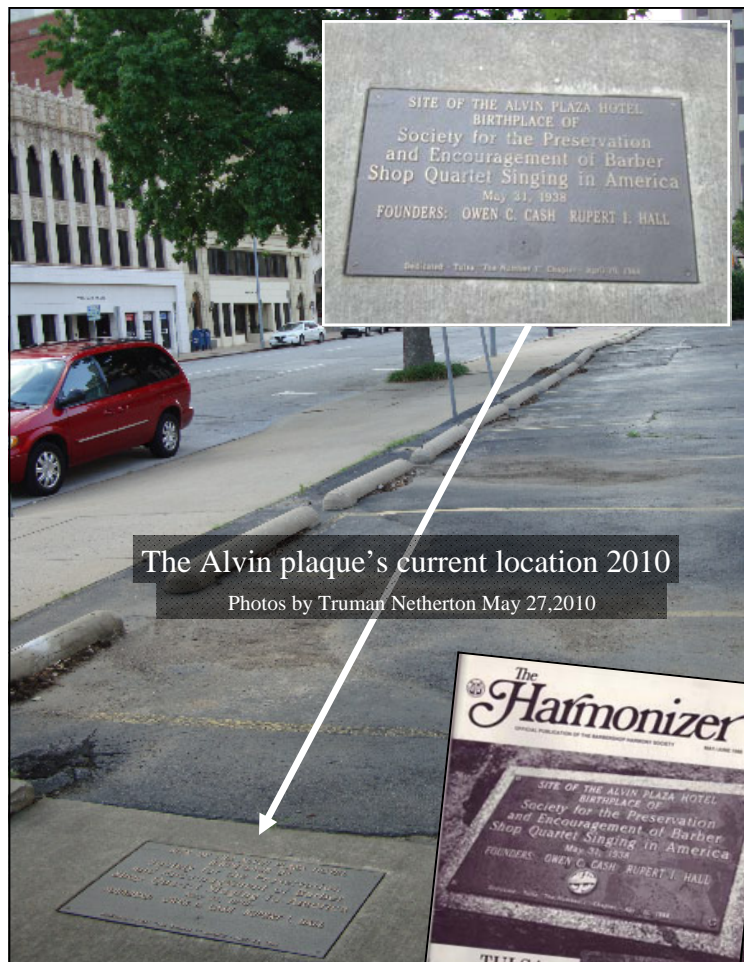
Most believe they met in the BLUE room.



Alvin Plaza Hotel Plaque

Northeast corner of the
intersection on Main and 7th
Streets

An historical plaque was dedicated on April
10, 1988. The plaque is now set in the
sidewalk on the Northeast corner of the
intersection on Main and 7th Streets.



The Alvin Plaza Hotel Plaque's Original location - it was moved when this land was made into a parking lot

Old Central High School

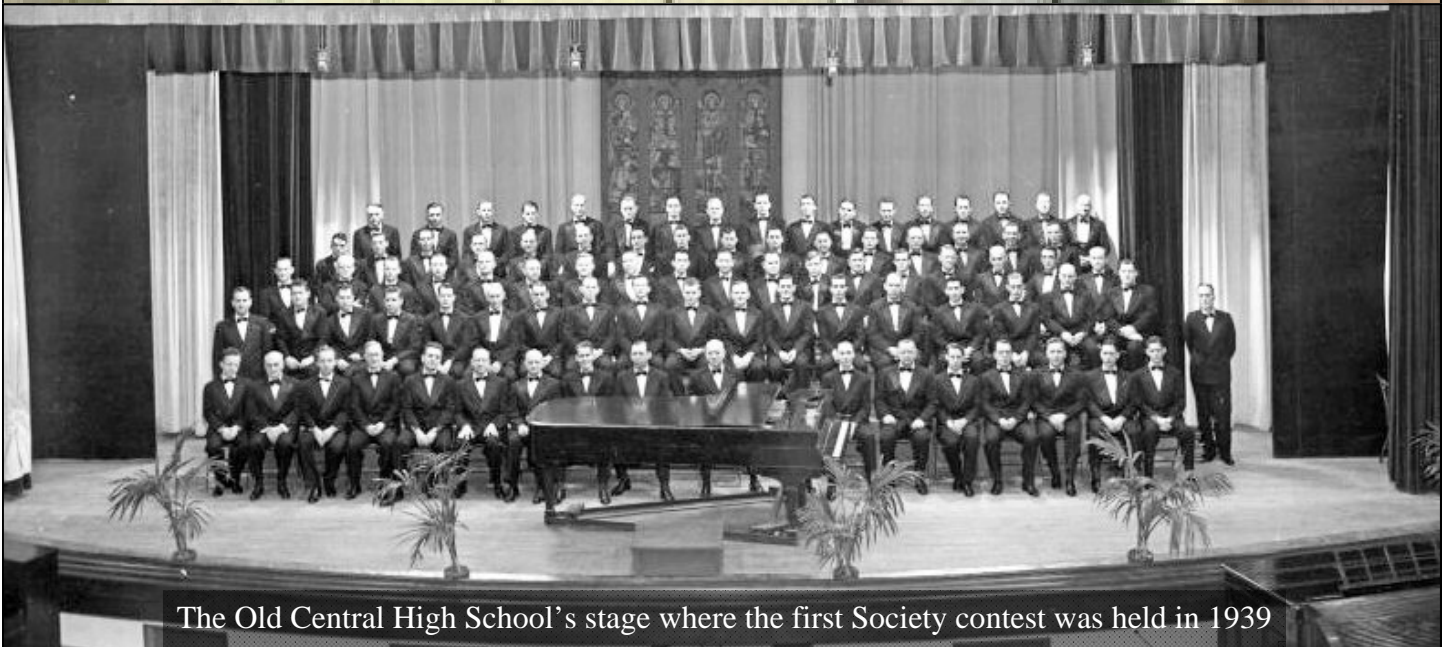
212 East 6th Street (6th between S. Cincinnati & S. Detroit)

From 1916 - 1976

(now Public Service Company of Oklahoma Building)

The site of the 1939 National Quartet contest

(first Society Convention - Bartlesville Barflies Win)



The Old Central High School's stage where the first Society contest was held in 1939

OC Cash Homes

1228 East 27th Street

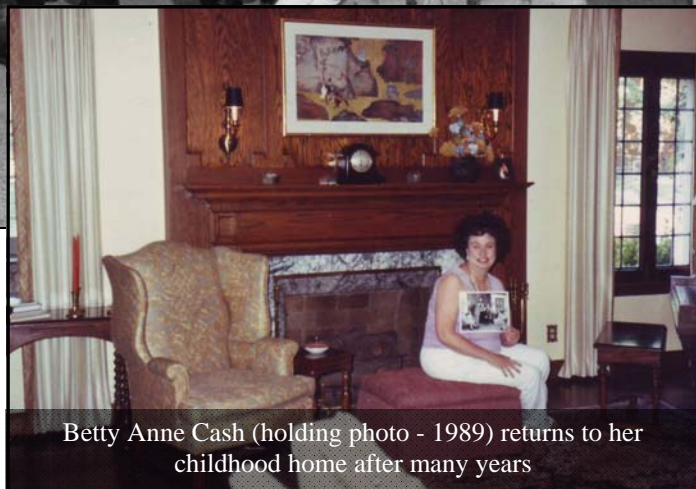


Staged photo of The Okie Four (OC Cash, bari) rehearsing in Cash Family home on 27th Street with wives looking on.



Daughter, Betty Anne Cash

Other Homes
2515 East 28th Street (1938)
2712 31st Street



Betty Anne Cash (holding photo - 1989) returns to her childhood home after many years

Gravesites

Memorial Park Cemetery

51st & Memorial Drive

918.627.0220

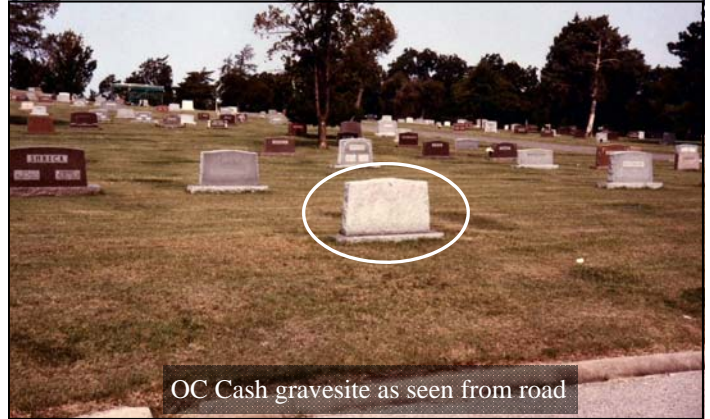
Park open from 7am -7:30pm

Office 8a-5p

Rupert Hall

Section 5 / Lot 21 / Space 4

Polly (wife)

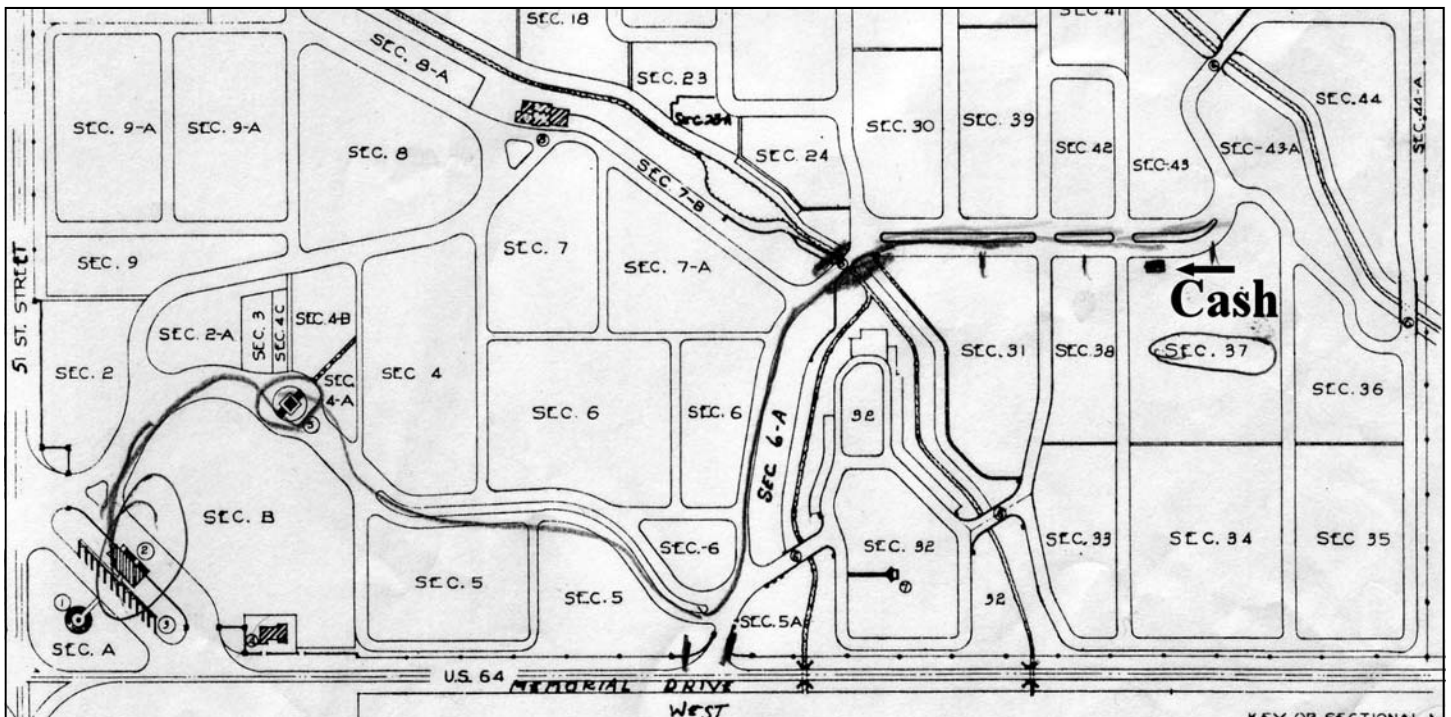


OC Cash gravesite as seen from road

OC Cash

Section 37 / Lot 33 / Space 2/3

Corrine (wife) / Idris Cash (sister) / Betty Anne (daughter)





City authority eyes Tulsa Club Building acquisition

The downtown building has been vacant for more than a decade

BY P.J. LASSEK
The Tulsa World
Feb. 11, 2009

The Tulsa Development Authority is researching whether it can acquire the vacant Tulsa Club Building to assist the city in addressing its status as a downtown nuisance.

“We don’t know whether we can even do this,” authority Chairman Carl Bracy said. “The city’s goal is to get the building up to code and back into production.”

During a Tuesday work session, the authority was given an update on the 11-story building that has been vacant for more than a decade.

The building at 115 E. Fifth St. not only is in violation of fire, electrical and plumbing codes but has safety and health issues, as well, city officials said.

Assistant City Attorney Bob Edmiston told the authority media that coverage about the building has led to a misunderstanding of what the city actually can do with the property.

“Right now, it’s simply wrapped up in litigation,” he said.

The city has struggled since 2007 to get the building’s owner, Carl J. Morony of California, to address the nuisances voluntarily and bring the property up to building codes.

Two legal actions are pending — a foreclosure filed by the city on an unpaid \$331,815 default judgment for failure to remediate building-code issues and a motion by Morony to vacate that judgment.

Edmiston said that if Morony pays the \$331,815 judgment or the judge vacates it, that would dissolve the foreclosure action.



Continued next page

The abatement order, however, would remain until Morony took the necessary action to satisfy the code issues.

If a foreclosure is granted, the property would be sold at a sheriff's sale, as required by state statute, he said.

City officials have speculated that the needed improvements likely would cost less than the \$331,815 judgment.

"All the city wants is for Mr. Morony to make the code improvements," Edmiston said.

In November 2007, the property was declared a public nuisance, an order of abatement was issued, and \$1,000-a-day civil penalties were imposed.

"It just was not envisioned that this sort of situation would happen," Hermiston said.



"The whole point of remedial civil penalties is to remedy the situation," he said. "Surely if we put a \$1,000 a day for each day it's a nuisance, these people would jump in here and take care of it, but that just hasn't happened with Mr. Morony. This is an anomaly."

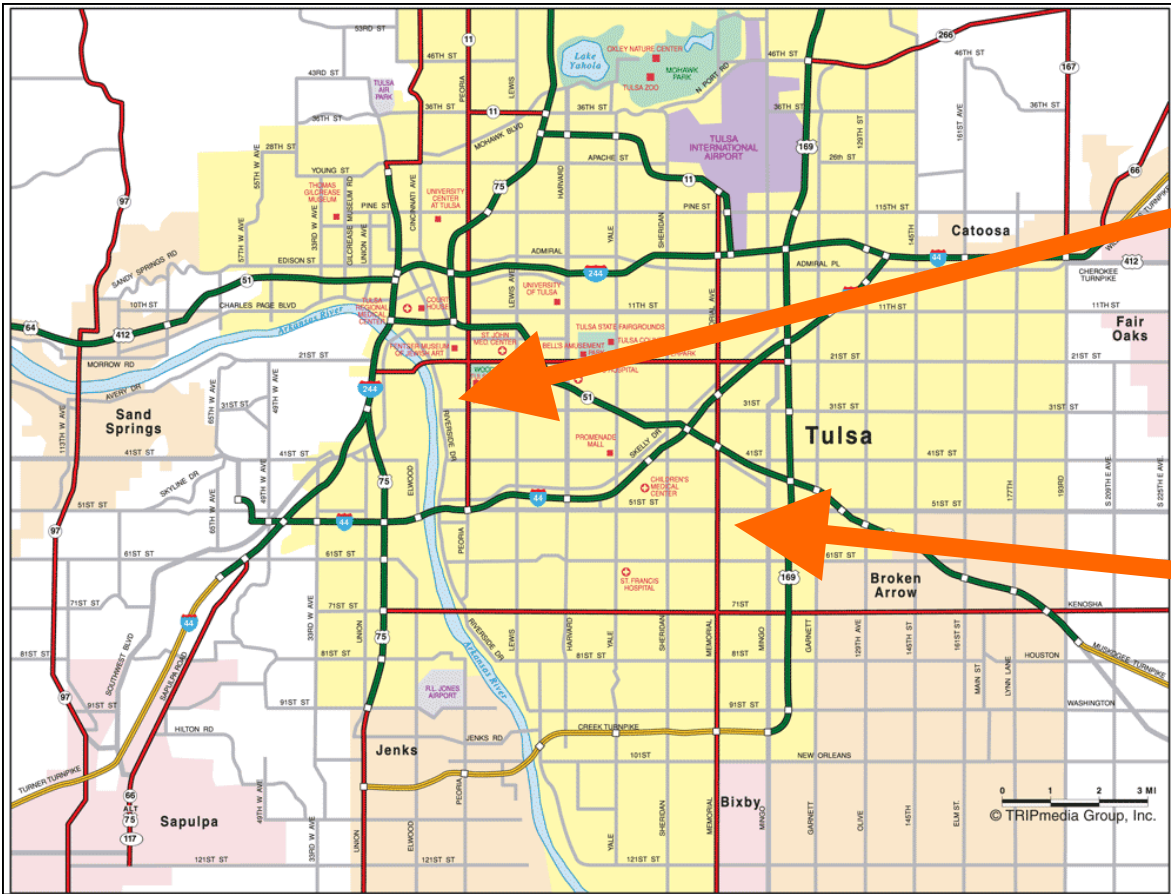
Kevin Cox, supervisor of neighborhood services for the city, said the city continues to monitor the building on a regular basis to ensure that it is secured.

"We don't want a fire to get started inside and have it become a safety hazard for the surrounding buildings or for firefighters who may have to enter it," he said.

P.J. Lassek 581-8382
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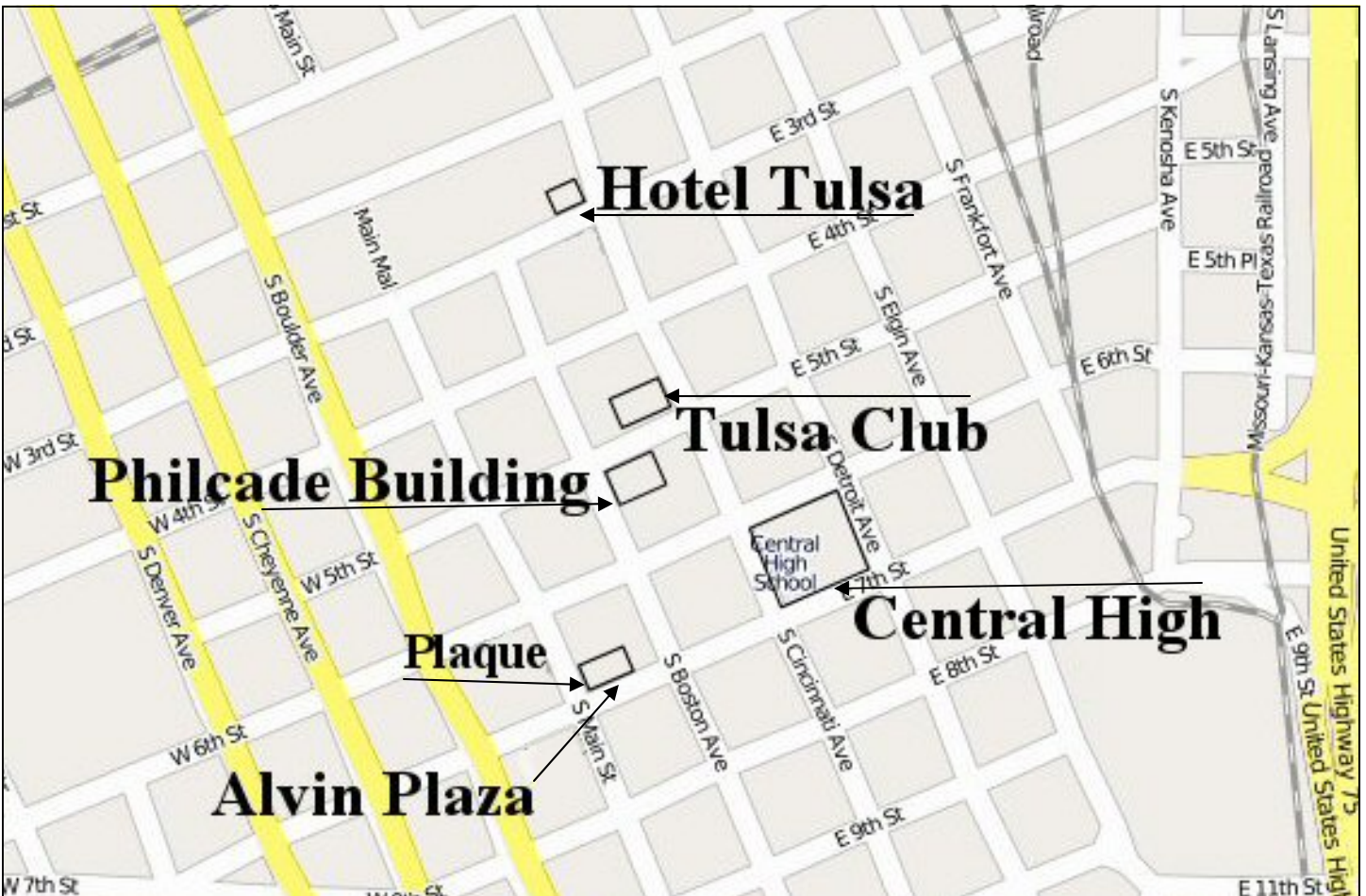






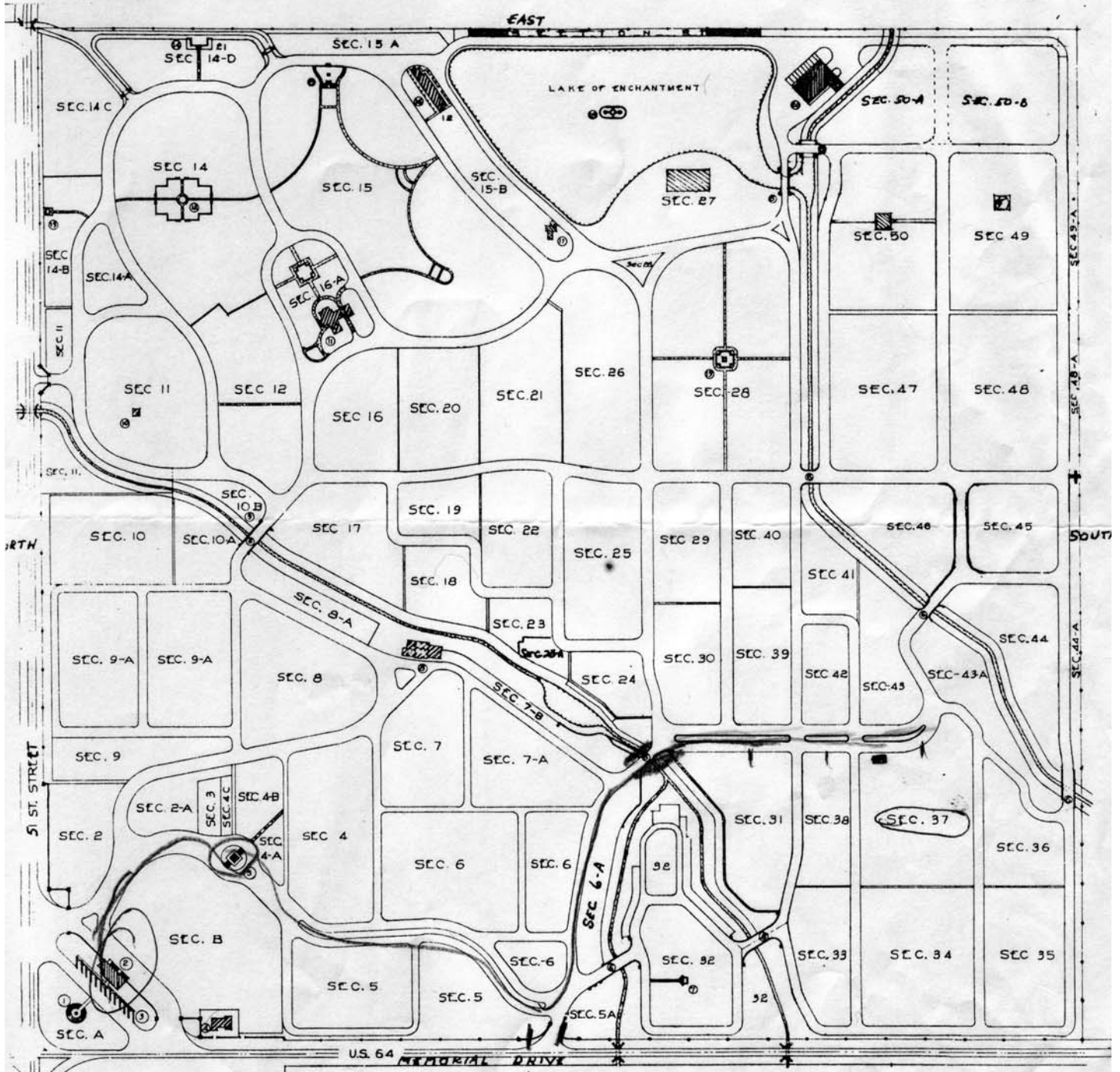
Cash House
27th Street

Memorial Park Cemetery
51st Street



For information on purchasing spaces or memorials, please contact the main office, or call 627-0220.

1. _____ Sec. 37 Lot 33 Space (1-2)
2. _____ Sec. _____ Lot _____ Space _____
3. _____ Sec. _____ Lot _____ Space _____
4. _____ Sec. _____ Lot _____ Space _____
5. _____ Sec. _____ Lot _____ Space _____
6. _____ Sec. _____ Lot _____ Space _____



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Flag Pole | 12 Stone Garden inclosure of estates |
| 2 Administration Building | 13 Holy Bible |
| 3 Parking Stalls | 14 Baby Land Memorial |
| 4 Sexton Residence | 15 Christus Statue |
| 5 Chime Tower | 16 Roof Garden Mausoleum |
| 6 Stone Bridge | 17 Coral Stone Powder House |
| 7 Anna Laura Wishing Chair | 18 Coral Stone Fountain Electrical Display |
| 8 Lawn and internet equipment building | 19 Terrace crypts - Memorial of 4 Apostles |
| 9 Urn Garden | 20 Equipment Building - 60' X 100' |
| 10 American Legion Monument | 21 Spillway - 80' per minute capacity |
| 11 Chapel and Crematory | 22 Soil Storage Building |

KEY OR SECTIONAL MEMORIAL PARK.
TULSA, OKLAHOMA.
SCALE 1" = 100'
N

TULSA DAILY WORLD

The Only Newspaper in Tulsa With Complete Associated Press Trunk Wire Service

FINAL HOME EDITION

TULSA, OKLAHOMA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 1938

12 PAGES

No, No Folks—You're Wrong! That Was Musical History in the Making

Tulsa's Barber Shop Singers Tune Up Just For Fun

By RALPH MARTIN
Of The World Staff

A LITTLE YELLOW moon as thin as a fingernail paring was hanging in the purple sky Tuesday night as certain astonished Tulsa citizens coagulated along Main and Seventh at the base of the Alvin hotel.

Maybe they didn't know it—maybe they still won't believe it—but they were listening to musical history in the making.

The mighty sounds emanating from the French and lavender halls above were of such strength and volume as to cause one staid and settled taxpayer to voice the consensus fermenting in the group—

"Hell," he muttered in a tone of voice compounded of equal parts of alarm, astonishment and admiration, "has broken loose in the henhouse."

But it was not hell in the henhouse. Instead it was the aardvark's camisole—it was the berries—it was the mellifluous voices of the S.P.E.B.S.S.A. in action.

* * *

THE BROTHERHOOD of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America were congregated 63 strong in their sixth meeting and exercising the inalienable right of all American males to harmonize while imbibing beer.

National recognition was plucking at their sleeves as they vocalized, but as one man the warbling brethren paid it absolutely no mind.

O. C. Cash, who together with I. S. Hall, collaborated in hatching out this organizational idea in the first instance, revealed that in spite of the fact the

fraternity is less than two months old, it is begetting progeny in the form of local chapters in other cities with all the prolificacy of a roe shad hatching eggs.

The national magazine, Time, was clamoring Monday and Tuesday for further details, the Chicago Tribune had a newshawk hatching up a feature story, and the Associated Press up in Topeka was insisting on additional details to go with their story of the starting of a local chapter in that city.

But Tuesday night the pick, the pink and the perfection of local male bards gathered and sang soulfully and with not the slightest sign of self-consciousness.

* * *

THE WARBLING WAS led by that prize package of pandemonium, "Tubby" Young, who wears a rotund shape which could arouse enthusiasm in nobody but a circus owner, but who nevertheless possesses a base voice which sounds like somebody throwing big rocks in a deep well.

The song hit of the evening was a touching rendition of the "Old Gray Mare," sung with acrobatic adam's apples and realistic sound effects by S. M. (Puny) Blevens, who is an attenuated young man possessing lots of longitude but notably shy as to latitude.

There were tenors as mellow as aged wine casks, top tenors which would make you cry, baritones as full in tone as a Stradivarius, and basses as low as a rat's heel in the bottom of a deep cellar. Various talented persons took turn-about abusing a piano.

After a full hour of singing such favorites as "Roll Them Bones," "Down by the Old Mill Stream," "My Wild Irish Rose," "Sweet Adeline," "Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," the brotherhood called a momentary halt by singing the theme song of the organization, "The Old Songs," and went in to eat.

Sidewalk Crowds Gape And Wonder—But Nobody Cares

* * *

AN ATTEMPT WAS made to rake up some competition singing between various tables where a cold lunch and beer was being devastated, but it ended in a flat failure. Each time a table would start a little bit of individual singing, all other singers found themselves unable to resist the urge to join in.

"Puny" Blevens was conscripted as emergency chairman and welcomed the delegation from Bartlesville, headed by "High Grade" Cunningham. A report was called for from the "nominating quartet," headed by Fred Graves, but Mr. Graves was conspicuously absent.

An investigation revealed that he had gone out to mobilize an additional supply of beer and had somehow failed to return. It was decided that an election will be conducted by mail and ballots from each member will elect a president, a vice president and secretary-treasurer for the charter member organization.

Judge Edgar Shook of Kansas City, originator of the chapter in that city, has indicated that plans will soon be complete to invite the national brotherhood in its first country-wide meeting there. Tentative plans are being outlined to invite Bing Crosby, who first gained recognition as a baritone in a barber shop quartet from Seattle.

The gathering carried on as gaily as busting bubbles in a champagne bottle until the small hours and eventually broke up when all voices became as weak as a gnat with the lumbago and the brethren departed for home after singing "Sweet Adeline" and exchanging mutual commitments that a "wonderful time was had by all."