

## *The Shirk Family: Preserving a Family Legacy*

Former Oklahoma City mayor George Shirk was devoted to his community. During his tenure as mayor, beginning in 1964, he worked to redevelop Oklahoma City and helped shape downtown into the area we know today. Mr. Shirk's efforts to advance the city eventually led to the construction of the Kerr-McGee Tower, Liberty Tower and Myriad Botanical Gardens. He was also instrumental in the creation of the Historic Preservation Commission which is credited with saving the city's historic neighborhoods and buildings including the Colcord building, Overholser Mansion and Harn Homestead.

A first generation Oklahoman, George's parents John and Carrie came to Indian Territory in 1903. He and his sister, Lucyl, followed in their father's footsteps and attended the University of Oklahoma. George passed the bar exam in 1936 and joined his father's law firm of Shirk and Danner. Lucyl was a teacher in the Oklahoma City public schools for several years and in 1956 became executive director of



Carrie Shirk



George Shirk



Lucyl Shirk

the Oklahoma City Council of Camp Fire Girls, a position she held until her retirement in 1979.

Both George and Lucyl were passionate about Oklahoma history. George served as president of the Oklahoma Historical Society and authored several books and articles detailing the state's history, and Lucyl published a history of Oklahoma City that was used in Oklahoma public junior high schools.

In 1970, George and Lucyl established the Carrie Shirk Memorial Fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation in memory of their mother. The fund supports the Fund for Oklahoma City which addresses the changing needs and opportunities in the community. Upon George's death in 1977, a bequest in his estate further supported the fund, as well as a variety

of charitable organization endowments. Following Lucyl's death in 2008, memorial contributions benefited the fund, ensuring the Shirk family's legacy and devotion to Oklahoma City will continue to impact our community well into the future.