



Oklahoma State Penitentiary (located in McAlester, Oklahoma), the state's only maximum security facility, was officially locked down in February 1986 due to a riot that occurred in December 1985.

In order to provide work for the offenders, an industry program was developed. A tailor shop, shoe manufacturing plant and cane mill were among the first industry programs implemented.

As the population inside OSP grew, new housing units were added. The "F" cellhouse was added in 1937, and later the new cellhouse was constructed.

"BEHIND THE WALLS" PRISON RODEO

The McAlester News-Capital makes the first announcement of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary's First Annual Rodeo, advertised as the biggest "behind the walls" rodeo in the world, scheduled to be held October 12-13, 1940.

Of the four main housing units occupied, only the new cellhouse no longer exists. This unit was severely damaged in the riot of 1973, and was torn down in 1976. Later, a 50-man disciplinary unit was built west of the main institution. The offender population nicknamed this unit "The Rock."

The most costly prison riot in the history of the nation broke out on July 27, 1973. Damages were estimated to be between \$20 million and \$40 million.

A federal court in 1978 found conditions at the penitentiary unconstitutional. Consequently, four new housing units were built and in 1984 the aging "East" and "West" cellhouses were closed.

A special care unit was opened July 20, 1992, to ensure that the needs of special

BATTLES VS. ANDERSON

The lawsuit, Battles vs. Anderson, changed the history of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. The suit was filed April 24, 1972 by Bobby Battles, an offender serving time for Grand Larceny at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary out of Garvin County. The lawsuit created changes ranging from the operation of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections in its policies and procedures affecting the treatment and rehabilitation, medical care, education and training to the basic care of the State's offender population. Active supervision under the lawsuit was finally dismissed during Director Larry Meachum's term.

management offenders are met. This unit provides mental health care to offenders, thereby reducing the need for long-term hospitalization outside the facility.

The newest addition, "H" unit, provides new quarters for disciplinary segregation offenders, death row, and the lethal injection death chamber. "H" unit also houses administrative segregation and Level III general population offenders.



Prison guards taken at the construction of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester. Names of the guards in the picture are not known but they are believed to be some of the first guards at the prison.



Robert W. Dick was appointed as the first warden at OSP, prior to having any facilities in which to house offenders. His first act was to build temporary quarters or stockades to house the offenders who would construct the penitentiary. He served as warden from 1908 to 1916.

PROGRAMS

THINKING FOR A CHANGE

This program is designed to assist in the modification of negative behavior; helps the offender address criminal thinking and identifies triggers that lead to criminal behavior. It provides valuable techniques to think through problems as opposed to reacting.

LIFE SKILLS

Life Skills is a nine-component program which provides offenders information for developing and /or enhancing basic skills intended to help offenders function better upon re-entry into society.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The only educational program offered at this facility is GED, which is provided for offenders with accomplishments above the ninth grade level.