

A Little On Ownership Plats and Permission

By Chuck Marcum

One of the hardest and sometimes the most time consuming task when you find a hunt spot is getting in touch with the land owner for permission to get on his property. To know who you are looking for helps a whole lot. Even if there's a house on the property a lot of times nobody is at home. When you have a name you can track them down. Just about every County has a Land Ownership Plat Map Book. With these maps you can tell who owns the property. Each book contains the whole county. Each page or plat has a whole township on it, 36 sections or 36 square miles. Each section shows the property breakdowns and names of the owners. On the bottom of the page is the copyright date. You want to get the most recent map you can. You'd be surprised how often property changes hands. You can get a copy of a page at an Abstract or Real Estate Office. Usually they'll make you a copy or two for free. I have been in quite a few Real Estate Offices where the person working there didn't know what I was asking for. After describing the plat books to them they'd look around and find one. Some Abstract Offices sell the books usually for about \$40.00. The trick is getting an up to date one. I know Delaware County just put out a new one in 2000. There's a few thing you'll need to know to get the right plat. You'll have

to know what county your site is in, the township number, range number, and what section you are in. You can get all of this information off of maps. Make sure to look at where you are on the plat when you get your copy. If there is a letter there instead of a name make sure you ask for a copy of that townships index which is in the book and will match the letter up with the name. They use the letters on smaller pieces of property where they can't fit the name.

Another place to get ownership maps is at County Courthouses. In fact the most up to date records are at the County Assessors Office. They know exactly who owns what piece of property since they are collecting the tax money. Every County Assessors Office is set up differently the only thing they have in common is that they all overcharge you for copies. 8.5 x 11 and legal size copies are \$1.00 each while Kinkos is about 3 cents each. Be careful getting oversize copies at courthouses they're usually \$7.00 apiece. If you don't want to spend money on copy fees and your plats are out of date you can take the plat over to the Assessors Office, look at their up to date plat, and pencil in any changes. They can't charge you for looking at public records (not yet anyway).

Like I've mentioned every county is different. Tulsa County Assessors have

oversized plats which are divided into 1/4 sections which costs \$7.00 each or the whole section on the same size sheet for \$10.00. On both of these sheets they have account numbers instead of names. You then have to get on one of their computers, punch in the number to get the name and any other info you want. Remember you can look at the plat and the accounts in the computer for free. Rogers County has a web site. You can access their maps and accounts just by downloading a free viewer. The address is www.rogerscounty.org Hopefully more counties will have sites like this in the future. Osage County also makes their own oversize plat maps. Some counties will have one section on 8.5 x 11 sheets. I believe Creek and Delaware Counties are like that. All counties have assessment rolls or accounts where you might find an address to the land owner which will help you find them. With a name and address you could find their phone number, but I'd use that as a last resort it's a lot easier turning down somebody on the phone. Know the landowners name when you knock on their door, take your maps to the door with you to show you've researched the site, and maybe even give them a copy of an aerial or old map of their place. If you have a good spot located take the time to research it and you'll probably get on it.

