

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mar. 8, 2022

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Makenna Buckskin
Public Relations Director
(123)456-7890
email@email.com

Romanoff Family bequests Center for Russian Studies

NORMAN, Okla. — The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies has officially opened its doors thanks to a generous bequest of Princess Janet Romanoff of Russia. The estate gifted \$2 million to establish the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies and the Theodore N. Romanoff Professorship in Russian Studies is endowed in her late son's name. Included in the gift were items of significant historical, political and artistic value which established research opportunities and special collections.

The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies is dedicated to informing the University of Oklahoma community and the broader public about the history and culture of Russia, current events involving the Russian Federation, and Russia's actions on the world stage. The Center's mission is to promote the interdisciplinary study of the Russian Federation and its precursors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire. The Center hosts lectures, symposia, webinars and cultural events.

"We want to honor the intentions of the donor. Princess Janet Romanoff wanted to support the study of Russian culture and Russian history, so that's very important," said Dr. Melissa Stockdale, co-director of the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies.

Janet Schonwald married Prince Nikita Romanoff who was a descendant of the Russian Romanoff dynasty. Princess Janet was involved in many Russian-related philanthropic activities including the Russian Children's Welfare Society and the Russian Monuments and Culture Fund. Prince and Princess Romanoff also worked as informal cultural ambassadors to facilitate Russian and American relations.

"While the gift finally came through and the Center was created last year, my colleagues, Dr. Stockdale and Dr. Emily Johnson, have been working on these sorts of events for years. This is a pursuit of love in many ways, a passion of theirs," said Dr. Rebecca Cruise, Associate Dean of Student Services in the College of International and Area Studies.

To learn more about the Center, or to find upcoming events and webinars, visit ou.edu/cas/romanoff.

###

Media Pitch

I chose Kimberly Querry-Thompson because she commonly writes about OU news and local stories. She also has previously written about the Romanoff Center and other academic entities at OU.

To: Kimberly Querry-Thompson, KFOR

Subject: Russian royals gift \$2 million to OU Center for Russian Studies

Dear Kimberly,

After 300 years of rule, the Romanoff family ended their time in Russia escaping the Bolsheviks and other Soviet elites. Two generations later, Prince Nikita Romanoff met Janet Schonwald while they were both in post-graduate studies in the U.S. and rebuilt the legacy that had been overtaken. Princess Janet left her wealth to the University of Oklahoma to open a Center for Russian Studies, which will now bear her name.

The generous donation from the Romanoff estate is a great story for your station because this gift establishes the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies at the University of Oklahoma. The Center aims to promote the interdisciplinary study of the Russian Federation and its larger historical precursors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire. You can also educate the public on the philanthropic efforts of Princess Janet and the Romanoff family.

We are happy to help you develop this story of the Romanoffs and their life in Russian-American relations. The Center for Russian Studies is dedicated to informing the University community and the broader public about the history and culture of Russia, current events involving the Russian Federation, and Russia's actions on the world stage through webinars, lectures, symposia, and cultural events.

Feel free to contact me with any other questions. I would be happy to set up video, photo and interview opportunities to support your story. My direct line is (123)456-7890. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

Makenna Buckskin
Public Relations Director
(123)456-7890
makennabuckskin@ou.edu

To: 4@KFOR.com

Subject: Media Advisory: Center for Russian Studies receives \$2 million gift

Romanoff Center Media Advisory

For Immediate Release

Mar. 9, 2023

Romanoff Family estate gifts Center for Russian Studies

- What:** The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies has officially opened its doors thanks to a generous bequest of Princess Janet Romanoff. The Center promotes the interdisciplinary study of the Russian Federation and its precursors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire. The Center will be the only academic entity in the U.S. to bear the Romanoff name.
- Who:** Co-directors Dr. Melissa Stockdale and Dr. Emily Johnson have made statements about the Center and the gift, as well as other faculty members inside the Center. Information about the donor, Princess Janet Romanoff will be publicly available on the Center's website.
- Where:** The center is located in Kaufman Hall at the University of Oklahoma. The direct address is 780 Van Vleet Oval, Room 206, Norman, OK. The center is housed in the department of modern languages, literatures and linguistics.
- When:** The gift was announced Sep. 16, 2022 and it was approved by the OU Board of Regents on Sep. 15, 2022 during their Thursday meeting.
- How:** Information about the Center and the Romanoff family is publicly available through the Romanoff Center website at ou.edu/cas/romanoff. Faculty members can be reached in their offices in Kaufman Hall.

###

For More Information:
Makenna Buckskin
Public Relations Director
123-456-7890

Social Media News Release

Russian royal gifts \$2 million to Russian Studies Center

- **The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies will be the only academic entity in the U.S. to bear the Romanoff name**

Mar. 9, 2023: 11:00 a.m.

News Facts

- Princess Janet Romanoff gifted \$2 million to the Center to promote education and information.
- The center promotes the interdisciplinary study of the Russian Federation and its precursors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire.
- The Center will host lectures, symposia, webinars, and cultural events.
- Included in the gift were items of significant historical value which established research opportunities and special collections.
- Princess Janet Romanoff was born in Oklahoma City in 1933 to Emanuel Schonwald, an OU graduate.
- Princess Janet Romanoff earned a doctorate from Stanford University, where she met Prince Nikita Romanoff, a great-nephew of the last Russian emperor, Nicholas II.
- Princess Janet Romanoff was involved in many Russian-related philanthropic activities including the Russian Children's Welfare Society and the Russian Monuments and Culture Fund.
- Prince and Princess Romanoff worked as informal cultural ambassadors to facilitate Russian and American relations

Quotations

- "We want to honor the intentions of the donor. Princess Janet Romanoff wanted to support the study of Russian culture and Russian history, so that's very important," said Dr. Melissa Stockdale, co-director of the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies.
- "While the gift finally came through and the Center was created last year, my colleagues, Dr. Stockdale and Dr. Emily Johnson, have been working on these sorts of events for years. This is a pursuit of love in many ways, a passion of theirs," said Dr. Rebecca Cruise, Associate Dean of Student Services in the College of International and Area Studies and associate professor in International and Area Studies.

- "I was dumbfounded. Of course you're saying, there's a Princess Romanoff who wants to give Oklahoma money for Russian studies? How did that happen? Then we assumed it would be a fairly modest gift and we found out what a generous gift it was and it was like 'Oh my god what could we do with that?'" said Dr. Melissa Stockdale, co-director of the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies.

Multimedia

- 3 photos: [Prince and Princess Romanoff](#)
- 2 photos: [Kaufman and Ellison Halls on OU-Norman campus](#)
- 1 photo: [Romanoff Center faculty at first meeting](#)

Related Links

- [Romanoff Center for Russian Studies](#)
- [Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences](#)
- [More news about the Romanoff Center](#)
- [More about the Romanoff family](#)

About the Romanoff Center

- The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies was established in 2022 thanks to a generous gift from the estate of Princess Janet Romanoff. The Center has 2 directors, 10 faculty members and 5 associates.

For More Information

Makenna Buckskin
Public Relations Director
123-456-7890
makennabuckskin@ou.edu

Fact Sheet

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mar. 9, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Makenna Buckskin

Public Relations Director

(123)456-7890

makennabuckskin@ou.edu

Russian royal gifts \$2 million to Russian Studies Center

WHAT

- The estate of Russian Princess Janet Romanoff gifted \$2 million to establish the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies.
- The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies will be a part of the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences.
- The center promotes the interdisciplinary study of the Russian Federation and its precursors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire.
- Included in the gift were items of significant historical value which established research opportunities and special collections.
- Princess Janet Romanoff was involved in many Russian-related philanthropic activities including the Russian Children's Welfare Society and the Russian Monuments and Culture Fund.
- Princess Janet Romanoff earned a doctorate from Stanford University, where she met Prince Nikita Romanoff, a great-nephew of the last Russian emperor.

WHO

- Princess Janet Romanoff was born in Oklahoma in 1933 to Emanuel Schonwald, an OU graduate. She passed away in 2017 in Alexandria, Egypt where she was actively engaged in philanthropy, with a particular interest in supporting the education of Egyptian women.
- The Romanoff Center has 2 directors, 10 faculty members and 5 associates.
- Co-Directors Dr. Emily Johnson and Dr. Melissa Stockdale manage the activities of the Center

WHERE

- The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies is located in Kaufman Hall in Room 206, at 780 Van Vleet Oval.

WHEN

- The Romanoff Center for Russian Studies was officially established on Sep. 15, 2022 by the OU Board of Regents.

###

Backgrounder

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mar. 9, 2022

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Makenna Buckskin

Public Relations Director

(123)456-7890

makennabuckskin@ou.edu

Princess Janet Romanoff and the Romanoff Family

Princess Janet Romanoff is a member of the Russian royal Romanoff family, who ruled Russia for over 300 years, from 1613 to 1917. The rule of the Romanoff dynasty ended in 1917 during the First World War, when Tsar Nicholas II was forced to renounce his throne due to an uprising.

The estate of Princess Romanoff gifted \$2 million to the University of Oklahoma to establish the Romanoff Center for Russian Studies. The gift also established the Theodore N. Romanoff Professorship in Russian Studies in her son's name. Princess Romanoff also chose to house important historical documents at the University of Oklahoma, including glass negatives of official Romanoff family photos, correspondence relating to the Romanoff family's emigration from Russia, and a bound volume of Grand Duchess Xenia's diaries from World War I and the revolutionary period.

Princess Janet Romanoff, formerly Janet Schonwald, was born in 1933 to Emanuel Schonwald and Ethel Diamond. Emanuel Schonwald was an OU graduate who led a lucrative career in the oil industry. Princess Janet Romanoff went on to attend Barnard College where she graduated with a degree in Russian. She then attended Stanford University where she earned a PhD in Russian Literature in 1974.

During her time at Stanford, Princess Janet met Prince Nikita Romanoff, who was a graduate student in Russian history at the University of California at Berkeley. He completed an MA in Russian history and later taught history for a short time at San Francisco State University.

Prince Nikita Romanoff was born in England in 1923 to Prince Nikita Aleksandrovich Romanoff and Duchess Maria Illarionovna Vorontsova-Dashkova. Prince Nikita's father, grandmother and great-grandmother escaped from Russia in 1919 along with other family members.

Prince Nikita and Princess Janet Romanoff married in 1961 and had their only child, a son named Theodore, in 1974. Princess Janet spent most of her married life in New York

where she was actively involved in Russian-related philanthropic activities including the Russian Children's Welfare Society and the Russian Monuments and Culture Fund. Prince and Princess Romanoff also worked as informal cultural ambassadors to facilitate Russian and American relations.

Prince Theodore grew up to study classics and Egyptian and ancient languages at Columbia and Brown University. He eventually received an MA in Archaeology from Brown. Shortly after his father's death in 2007, Prince Theodore Romanoff passed away. As part of the Romanoff bequest, the Theodore N. Romanoff Professorship in Russian Studies is endowed in his name.

After the death of her husband and son, Princess Janet moved to Alexandria, Egypt where she continued her philanthropic work, with a particular interest in supporting the education of Egyptian women. Remembering her youth in Oklahoma with affection, and wanting to honor her son, Princess Janet Romanoff selected the university as the recipient of her legacy. She passed away in 2017.

###