

The ASA Offers its Help to National History Day Participants

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 8

Arkansas History Commission
Quarterly meeting
MAC building, 2nd floor conference

September 10

Southern Fried Schnitzel:
Arkansas German Foodways
Pulaski Tech Culinary Arts and
Hospitality Management Institute

September 14

State Agencies Records Preservation
Workshop
MAC Building, 4th Floor

September 17

Curtis H. Sykes Grant Program
Workshop
MAC Building, 2nd Floor

September 6-22

The Great War: Arkansas in World War I
College of the Ouachitas
Malvern

With another school year starting, we know that there are a number of teachers and students who are looking forward to the year ahead. There are so many upcoming interesting activities. One of the most exciting activities is the yearly History Day competition.

For several years, the State Archives has been committed to taking part in History Day. Many of our staff have been judges at state and regional contests. But beyond that, the archives has been a welcome source of primary documents that students use to make competition-winning projects. We hope to continue as a destination for students working on History Day projects. Students participating in History Day are able to tackle historical topics by presenting visual displays, creating television documentaries, websites, or making living history presentations.

Today, so much research can be done online. The Library of Congress' Chronicling America website provides historic newspapers from 1789 to 1922. A lot of census information is available through genealogy websites. Those websites, though useful, only can take students so far in their research. For instance, the Chronicling America website features no Arkansas newspapers, and the limited time frame for the website is not helpful to students researching more modern historic topics.

Since there is only so much material available online, sometimes it is necessary to do research the old fashioned way — visiting an archival facility. The State Archives takes pride in the fact that we have the largest collection of Arkansas related material in the entire world. This includes having a collection of county records and newspapers on microfilm. Even if the student's project is dealing with a non-Arkansas topic, he or she may find newspaper accounts or books in our collection on the topic.

The State Archives encourages teachers to think about how we might assist them in preparing students for History Day. One suggestion we have is that teachers organize a research expedition to one of our three facilities where the students conduct research on a pre-selected topic (an Arkansas person, place or event, for example). Our staff will work with the teacher prior to the field trip to identify topics in advance, to conduct preliminary research, and to identify questions for students to answer during the visit. Students will be divided into smaller groups to work on their research assignments, with individual staff members assisting each team.

Each year, a new theme is chosen for the year. This year, the History Day theme is "Taking a Stand in History." Students are encouraged to choose historical topics — from ancient to modern — and explore how those topics fit within that theme, using primary sources in their chosen style of interpretation. In short, the idea behind National History Day is to encourage students to develop an appreciation of history and to hone thinking skills using primary sources. For more information about National History Day, please visit <https://nhd.org/>.

We invite teachers to contact us to discuss ways that we might help students understand the role of research in exploring our past. For more information, or to schedule a visit for your class, please call Brian Irby, Archival Assistant for Education, at 501-682-6900.



Summer Intern at the ASA



For the past month, we have been pleased to have Michael Fondren on our staff as a part-time intern. Michael grew up in Foreman, Arkansas, and earned his BA in History from Southern Arkansas University. Michael is currently studying Public History at UALR, and would like to work in the field of archives following graduation. He expects to graduate in 2017. Michael sees history as being more than the study about the past. "It is really the story of life," he remarks. "I have found that the study of history allows me to be able to understand and learn about cultures other than my own."

While at the State Archives, Michael has worked on two projects — reprocessing the records of the State Council of Defense and creating transcriptions and metadata for Civil War documents formerly in the

"Doc a Day" online gallery. The State Council of Defense records reflected the work of Arkansas's chapter of a World War I era organization. The records were first processed in the 1930s by director Dallas Herndon. A new finding aid was needed to bring to light material on women and African Americans who contributed to the war effort. The Civil War documents are being migrated to the State Archives digital collections at <http://ahc.digital-ar.org/>.

We are glad to have Michael working with us this summer and encourage our student readers to consider doing their internships or volunteering at one of our three locations. For more information on internship opportunities with the State Archives, contact Dr. Lisa Speer at 501-682-6900 or email lisa.speer@arkansas.gov. We look forward to hearing from you!

KNOW YOUR COMMISSIONERS

Arkansas History Commission

<i>Ms. Mary Dillard</i>	<i>Malvern</i>
<i>Mr. Michael Lindsey</i>	<i>Fayetteville</i>
<i>Mr. Robert McCarley</i>	<i>Little Rock</i>
<i>Ms. Elizabeth Robbins</i>	<i>Hot Springs</i>
<i>Mr. Rodney Soubers</i>	<i>Mountain Home</i>
<i>Dr. Robert Sherer</i>	<i>Little Rock</i>
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Black History Commission of Arkansas

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<i>Mr. Myron Jackson</i>	<i>Little Rock</i>
<i>Rev. Frank Stewart</i>	<i>Conway</i>

Black History Commission News



Dr. Cherisse Jones-Branch

Arkansas Black History Commissioner Dr. **Cherisse Jones-Branch**, will present the annual address at the 46th Annual Celebration of the Southern Association for Women Historians on Friday, November 4, 2016, at the Southern Historical Association's annual meeting in St. Pete's Beach Florida. Her talk, "Been a Guinea Pig in this Race': Annie R. Zachary, Arkansas Homemaker, Farmer, and Politician," is based in part on resources available at the Arkansas State Archives.

If you are passionate about a project and lack the money to make it a reality, please consider applying for the **Curtis H. Sykes Memorial Grant Program**. The program is designed to assist in funding projects relating to African American history in Arkansas. Crucial to creating a successful grant is attending the free grant workshop being held at the ASA on September 17 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. There will be a presentation and explanation of guidelines for the Curtis H. Sykes Memorial Grant Program. While attendance at the grant workshop is not currently a requirement to receive funding, the Black History Commission of Arkansas highly encourages potential applicants to attend these sessions prior to submitting an application. Commission members will be on hand at the workshop to answer questions about grants. To register for the workshop, contact Tatyana.Oyinloye@arkansas.gov or call 501-682-6892.

Arkansas
Records Catalog
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HOURS: 8 AM-4:30 PM, MON-SAT
CLOSED STATE HOLIDAYS

From the Director



Dr. Lisa K. Speer

During the first week in August, I attended the Council of State Archivists meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. The meeting of the 56 state and territorial archivists is held every year in conjunction with another larger archival conference, either the Society of American Archivists or NAGARA, the National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators. This year's joint meeting was with SAA, and was jam-packed with informative sessions on everything from digital preservation to how authors of historical romance genre novels use archival sources to find inspiration. Hmm? Perhaps an audience we hadn't thought about trying to reach with our treasure trove of documents!

One of the most significant "take aways" of the conference for me was a document drafted and approved by the Council of State Archivists pertaining to the *minimal criteria* that state and territorial governments should provide to state archives to function appropriately. The prefatory statement of the CoSA document notes that "State archival programs ensure preservation of records that document functions and actions of government; maintain public accountability and support transparency; protect and support the rights of the individuals; furnish public access to government records, and provide evidence of the past to support the work of government and the interests of its citizens."

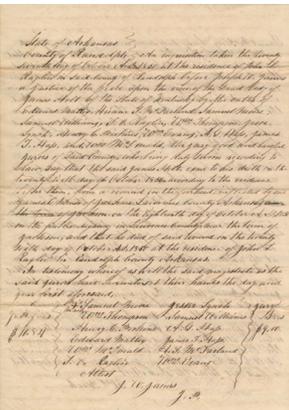
The statement calls for state and territorial governments to provide at least the following four criteria to state archives to support mission critical functions:

- ◆ Appropriate legislation, mandates and policies
- ◆ Opportunities to employ professional expertise in the preservation and management of all state government records
- ◆ Appropriate facilities and facilities management
- ◆ Sufficient human and fiscal resources to support the archives mission

As I look ahead to the 2017 legislative session, it is my hope that our Arkansas lawmakers will look favorably upon the budget request for the State Archives, and consider the important services we provide to state government and to the people of Arkansas. To read the full text of CoSA's [statement on state archives](https://www.statearchivists.org/), and view other useful resources on caring for official records, visit: <https://www.statearchivists.org/>.

— Dr. Lisa K. Speer

News from NEARA

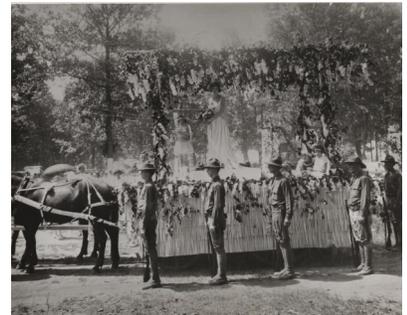


One of the great rewards of this job is helping people find those lost connections to the past. Perhaps the most rewarding experience I've had was a request from a woman whose family got stuck at an ancestor who left his family behind in Kentucky to purchase land near Smithville. The family never heard from him again. In 2013, a great-great granddaughter found a brief article in an online version of a newspaper that referred to two men being sentenced to hang for the murder of her ancestor.

When this woman contacted me, she only had his name, James Holt, a date, and the names of the men convicted of the murder. She hoped to locate a grave for her ancestor. While we were unable to locate a grave, we were able to piece together a narrative for his last days. Holt had been in a store in Jackson where he encountered a couple of men, Samuel McGehee and James Minor. They followed him when he left the store, robbed him, hit him in the head with a gun, and left him for dead. Holt managed to make it to the home of John L. Raglin in Randolph County. While there, he filed a complaint with the local justice of the peace. The complaint included a detailed inventory of everything he was carrying at the time of his robbery. Holt died a few days later as a result of his head wound, still at the home where he sought refuge following his attack.

News from SARA

Summertime conjures up thoughts of many activities—swimming, camping, and backyard barbecues just to name a few, and the tastes of summer are unlike any other season in Arkansas with fresh home-grown fruits and vegetables. One of the more popular summer fruits is the watermelon, and Hope,



Arkansas, is well-known for growing giant ones. During August, summer tastes and activities are combined in this Southwest Arkansas town at the annual Watermelon Festival. What started as a local contest in the early 1900s became an organized festival in 1926 complete with a parade and a Watermelon Queen pageant. The festival drew fifteen thousand people to Hope that first year. In SARA's collections is a photograph of the first queen, Laurine Lewis, wearing a white satin gown, who stands on her float with her maids. The float is guarded by National Guardsmen. Though the festival wasn't continuous after the 1920s, it was reorganized in the 1970s and today has become an annual tradition in Southwest Arkansas. The format of the festival may have changed from the early days, but the modern day version still boasts a number of family oriented events such as arts, crafts, and food vendors, musical entertainment, and of course plenty of melon oriented activities such as a melon toss, watermelon eating contest, and seed spitting contest. Summertime is a great time in Arkansas to savor the flavors and fun!

The ASA Welcomes Jessica Erwin



This month we are welcoming Jessica Erwin to our staff as an Archival Assistant.

Jessica is a graduate of Arkansas Tech where she received her Bachelor's in Fine Arts. A few years later she entered the Public History program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock where she studied archival methods. When it came time to write her thesis,

she fell back to her earlier love of the arts and chose to write about regional crafts in the Ozarks region.

Jessica will be working with our map collection in order to make them more accessible online. Since maps are among the most popular items in our collections, our patrons no doubt appreciate her work.

Jessica's favorite time period is the 1950s to the 1960s. "It was such a great period of change in America," she notes. "There were so many things going on at once that contributed to where we are as a country today, from the Civil Rights Movement to Little Rock becoming more modern."

Jessica's main career goal is to make archival materials more accessible. "I want to de-mystify the archives," she explains. "I'd like to see the barriers between academic research and the public broken down." We are glad to include her on our team and look forward to working with her in the future.

New at the ASA

August Donations and Accessions

ASA

- L.C. and Daisy Bates Museum Foundation grant report, 1 cu. ft.
- Jessie Louisa McCain cabinet card, n.d., 1 item
- Ralph Bunche Neighbor Association grant report and supplementary materials, 0.1 cu. ft.
- African American Arts in Arkansas (DVD), 3 items
- Postcards and photograph deaccessioned from Florida State Archives, 4 items
- William Eustace Beaumont papers, 0.25 cu. ft.
- Arkansas Railroad Club records, 12 cu. ft.
- Department of Arkansas Heritage records: Ghost Signs of Arkansas, 1 cu. ft.
- Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission records, 1 cu. ft.
- Arkansas Historic Preservation Program records, 14 cu. ft.
- Arkansas Historic Preservation Program records, 328 items
- Arkansas Historic Preservation Program records, 20 cu. ft.
- Main Street Arkansas records, 14 cu. ft.
- Arkansas Historic Preservation Program records, 2 cu. ft.
- Arkansas National Guard records, 47 cu. ft.

NEARA

- Photographs of the Opposition school and Lawrence County Institute/Sloan Hendrix Academy, 5 images

We always receive more material than we are able to list in our newsletter. For a full listing, see our blog

<http://arkansasstatearchives.blogspot.com/2016/08/august-2016-acquisitions-and-accessions.html>

We appreciate the generous support of our donors!

On September 10, we will be hosting our third annual foodways. This year, the focus is on the impact that German food and culture has had on Arkansas. We are completely out of reservations for the event. We were astonished and overjoyed by the overwhelming response we received. We are looking forward to a fun and informative day. To tide you over, here are a few photographs from our collection spotlighting German immigrants in Arkansas.



One of Little Rock's German language newspapers, The Arkansas Echo, February 4, 1892



German Day celebrants, Hot Springs, 1910



Workers at the Wehrfritz Machine and Supply Company, Little Rock, 1880



Emil Cornelius Wehrfritz, owner of the Union Machine Works in Little Rock, circa 1880