



# THE ARKANSAS ARCHIVIST

DECEMBER 2015

## *Peggy Lloyd Retires from Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives*

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**January 20—February 5**

*The Great War: Arkansas in World War I Exhibit*  
Jefferson County Historic Museum  
Pine Bluff

**January 18**

AHC Closed  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**February 1—February 25**

*African American Legislators Exhibit*  
Learning Resource Center  
College of the Ouachitas  
Malvern

**February 6**

*Little Rock School Desegregation: Then to Now*  
Black History Commission of Arkansas  
Symposium  
Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

This month we will be saying goodbye and wishing a happy retirement to Peggy Lloyd, a long-time advocate for the history of southwestern Arkansas. Peggy has worked in a number of capacities serving Arkansas's history community. Since 2005, she has been the Archival Manager at the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives (SARA) in Washington, Arkansas.



*Peggy (right) meets with the SARA Board in January 2012.*

Peggy plans to continue to be active in the history community after she retires. She has a number of projects that she will be pursuing in the field of historic preservation, which has always been a passion of hers. She will be devoting a lot of energy to nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places, helping to preserve historic buildings for future generations. Peggy will also commit more time to another of her passions — archaeology — as the incoming president of the Arkansas Archaeological Society. She will also be spending time researching and writing about historical topics that interest her.

In reflecting on her career in Arkansas history, Peggy says that what has amazed her about Arkansas history is that so much of it is about families. "Some of my favorite times at work have been those times when people would come in to search for their history and find nuggets that help

them flesh out their family's story," she observes. "I have found that the history of the United States is really the story of families. So, this makes what we've done vital to understanding our history."

AHC Director Dr. Lisa Speer says of Lloyd's retirement, "Peggy Lloyd has been a tireless advocate in the promotion of Arkansas history through her involvement with the Arkansas Historical Association, the Arkansas Archaeological Society, the Nevada County Depot Museum, as well as her work at SARA and with the SARA Foundation. While she is retiring from SARA, we're fortunate that she plans to continue to be an active member of the Arkansas history community."

SARA and the History Commission wish Peggy Lloyd well as she begins this new chapter of her life! Congratulations and happy retirement!

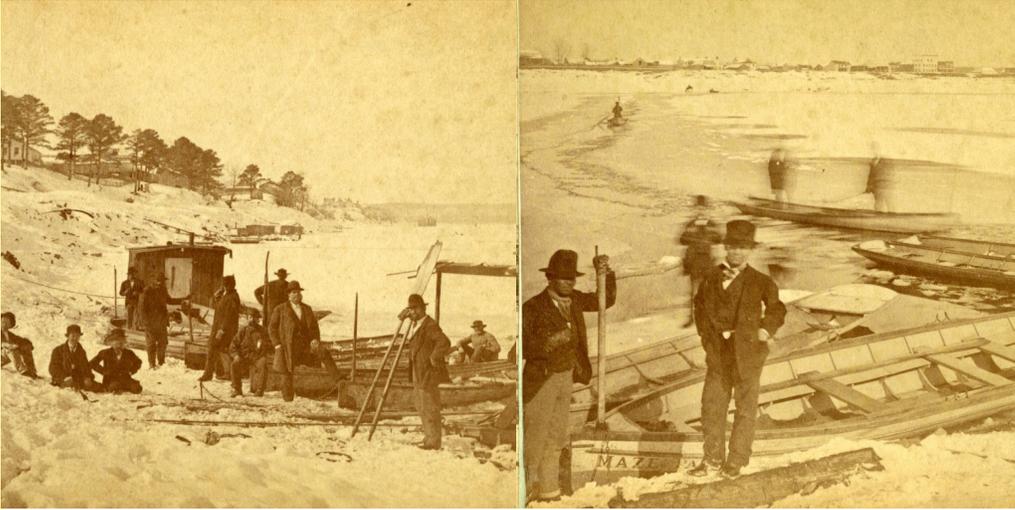
## *The AHC wishes you all a Happy New Year!*

The AHC has a number of New Years' greeting cards in our collection. Some of the more unique greeting cards are found in the Colonel James Villard Heidt Collection. Heidt was born in Georgia and entered the West Point military academy in 1892. After graduating, Heidt married Clara Hotze. He served in the Spanish American War and later became commanding officer at Fort Roots in 1912.

One of his last assignments in the military was to serve at Fort Clayton in the Panama Canal. In his collection, there are a number of greeting cards from his time in the Panama Canal as well as programs from some of the holiday activities on the military base. While we expect that most of the readers will not be in such exotic locations during this holiday season, we certainly wish each of you an enjoyable and happy holiday!



## The Year the Arkansas River Froze



Some of the more intriguing photographs in our collection are these photographs from January 1875. In the photographs, the men are attempting to break up the heavy ice on the Arkansas River with large poles.

Articles in the *Arkansas Gazette* during this time period indicate that river levels had fallen to dangerously low levels in some parts of the state due to the freezing conditions. In an era where river traffic was only rivaled by the railroad for importance, the river's navigability was vital to Arkansas's economic life.

The *Arkansas Gazette* reported on the efforts to break up the ice to allow the ships to use this artery. On January 17, the *Ashland* steamer from New Orleans was stuck in ice south of Little Rock. After the ship's crew worked for four hours in the icy sludge, the boat was finally able to make it into deeper water, only to find itself mired again hours later. The *Utah*, traveling from St. Louis to New Orleans with 300 bales of cotton in tow, also found itself stuck near the Little Rock.

Such were the challenges of travel in 19th century Arkansas. Not surprisingly, Arkansas merchants soon began to use railroads to ship goods rather than being at the mercy of the river.

## Black History Commission News

The Arkansas History Commission and the Black History Commission of Arkansas present

Little Rock School  
Desegregation  
From Then to Now  
February  
6th  
2016

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Mosaic Templar Cultural Center  
Little Rock, Arkansas  
Lunch will be provided



Registration is required by February 1st  
Call 501-682-6900 or email [history.commission@arkansas.gov](mailto:history.commission@arkansas.gov)  
Teachers may earn up to four professional development hours for attendance

On February 6, 2016, the Black History Commission of Arkansas and the Arkansas History Commission will sponsor a free seminar at the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock on the history of Little Rock's school desegregation. The event, titled "Little Rock School Desegregation from Then to Now", will feature a number of speakers who will give some insight into desegregation.

Dr. John Kirk, Director of the Institute of Race and Ethnicity at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, will give an overview of the history of desegregation in Little Rock. Dr. Kirk has written extensively about desegregation in Little Rock and will provide an interesting discussion of the topic. Dr. James Ross, Professor of History at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, will discuss the current struggles over

desegregation. Dr. Felicia Hobbs, Principal at Gibbs Elementary in Little Rock, will speak about her own experiences with segregation in Arkansas. John Walker, Arkansas State Representative in the General Assembly, will discuss some of the legal issues regarding desegregation.

Check-in begins at 9:15 a.m. Although the event is free, registration is required. Deadline for registration is February 2. Lunch will be provided. Teachers can earn up to 4 professional development hours for the event. Register by calling 501-682-6900 or emailing [history.commission@arkansas.gov](mailto:history.commission@arkansas.gov).

## KNOW YOUR COMMISSIONERS

### Arkansas History Commission

Ms. Mary Dillard	Malvern
Dr. Ruth Hawkins	Jonesboro
Mr. Michael Lindsey	Fayetteville
Mr. Robert McCarley	Little Rock
Ms. Elizabeth Robbins	Hot Springs
Dr. Robert Sherer	Little Rock
Mr. Michael Whitmore	Rogers

### Black History Commission of Arkansas

Ms. Carla Coleman	Little Rock
Rev. Barry Dobson	El Dorado
Ms. Joyce Gibson	Prescott
Dr. John W. Graves	Arkadelphia
Mr. Myron Jackson	Little Rock
Mr. James Lawson	Jacksonville
Rev. Frank Stewart	Conway

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## From the Director



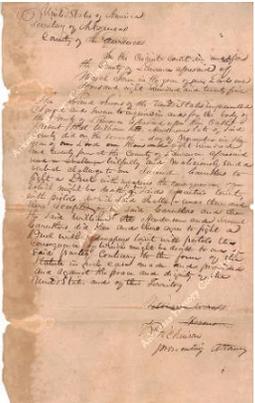
It might be cliché to devote a New Year's column to a reflection of the agency's accomplishments this year; but on those days when one feels as though they are running between fires with a leaky bucket, it's good to take a moment to consider that all the hard work, long days, and sleepless nights really do pay off. Among the many highlights of the History Commission's 2015 calendar year were:

- ◆ Celebrating of the bicentennial of Lawrence County on January 15<sup>th</sup> with an excellent day-long, grant-funded symposium
- ◆ Revising our 50+ year old legislation during the 90<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to provide fee-based research services for patrons who can't visit in person- thanks Representative Sabin and Senator Johnson for sponsoring our legislation!
- ◆ Celebrating the agency's 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 27<sup>th</sup> and unveiling an Arkansas photograph mural
- ◆ Receiving a major grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council to support a series of collaborative events with nine other Arkansas archival, historical and genealogical entities

- ◆ Being included in an episode of "Who Do You Think You Are?" featuring Memphis-native Ginnifer Goodwin (ABC's *Once Upon a Time*)
- ◆ Receiving generous ANCRC funding for a project to catch up on microfilming a backlog of Arkansas newspapers
- ◆ Completing the inventory of over 4,000 original recordings in the Ozark Folk Center Collection
- ◆ Finishing the 2014 ANCRC Governors' Papers Preservation Project
- ◆ Unveiling a new traveling exhibit to commemorate World War I at an excellent seminar on the same topic at the Patrick Henry Hays Senior Center
- ◆ Providing over \$35,000 in funding to thirteen worthy African-American history preservation and programming projects through the Curtis H. Sykes Memorial Grant Program
- ◆ Visiting a number of the state's educational co-ops and meeting Arkansas teachers to talk about primary sources and lesson plans at the AHC, thanks to a partnership with the Arkansas Humanities Council

These activities and accomplishments happened because of the support and efforts of a lot of dedicated people – our agency staff, the members of the Arkansas History Commission and the Black History Commission of Arkansas, as well as our colleagues, friends and supporters in allied groups and state agencies. Also essential was the support of grant-funding agencies like the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC), the Arkansas Humanities Council, the Department of Arkansas Heritage, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. I look forward to seeing what 2016 brings! Best wishes to all our readers for the New Year! — Lisa K. Speer

## News from NEARA



The core collection upon which NEARA was established is the Lawrence County Court records (collection number MSNE.0070) and it remains our most requested collection to date. These court records span from the founding of Lawrence County in 1815 as a part of the Missouri Territory until the Powhatan court house was closed in 1960. Specifically from 1819 to 1836, the court records demonstrate the growth of Territorial Arkansas into the 25<sup>th</sup> state of the union.

We are extremely fortunate to have a glimpse into this time period through the court records and are excited to share it online for the first

time through the AHC's newest digital collection: Territorial Arkansas Collection at <http://ahc.digital-ar.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16790coll6>. Explore life for early Arkansans through Lawrence County court records and other documents dating from 1819-1836. There's a wealth of information about society, culture, and economics, waiting to be found in each document. Even some famous Arkansans are included like William E. Woodruff, Richard Searcy, and Arkansas's third governor, Thomas Drew.

Whether you are doing historical or family research, delve into the Territorial Arkansas collection today! Periodic additions will be made to the digital collection, so remember to check for the addition of new documents. For even more Lawrence County territorial records, visit NEARA in person at 11 Seventh Street in Powhatan across from Powhatan Historic State Park. Please call 870-878-6521 or email [northeast.archives@arkansas.gov](mailto:northeast.archives@arkansas.gov) for additional information regarding this and other collections.

## News from SARA

This vintage Christmas postcard sends its greeting from the vault of the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives. It was mailed, from Nevada, Missouri, on December 22, 1909, to Mr. Charles Champlin in Kirksville, Missouri.

Champlin along with his wife Etta was a studying to be an osteopath at the American School of Osteopathy in Kirksville when his aunt sent him this Christmas greeting over a century ago. The osteopathic medical school, founded in 1892, was the first of its kind, and it was certainly unusual at the time for both a husband and wife to be seeking medical degrees.

Charles and Etta Champlin completed their training as osteopaths and by the time of World War I had come to Arkansas where they opened a practice in Hope. They were from Illinois originally but remained in Hope for many years until age and illness ended their careers. Dr. Charles died in 1959, and Dr. Etta in 1966. Both were buried in their native place of Hancock County, Illinois.

Dr. Etta lovingly saved albums of beautiful postcards that she and her husband received from friends and relatives around the turn of the century, probably the heyday of postcards. Dr. Etta's vintage cards still send forth their Christmas message from SARA in Historic Washington State Park. Merry Christmas to all and a Happy New Year!



## Staff Picks



Unidentified couple from the Gillam Collection

This month we highlight the choice of Archival Assistant Crystal Shurley, the Isaac T. Gillam Family Papers

Who was Isaac T. Gillam? He was an educator in Little Rock in the early 20th century. He had a background in education and was the principal at Miffin W. Gibbs High School and supervisor of African American schools in Little Rock. His father was one of the first African American legislators in Arkansas. His father sent him to Howard University and later he spent a year at Yale University. He served as an educator until his death in 1953.

Why is this collection significant? So much African American history has been lost over the years. Gillam was not only important for the development of education in Arkansas, but he was also an important figure in the African American community. He was one of the first members of the NAACP in Arkansas.

What kind of materials can be found in the collection? There are letters, photographs, and financial documents that present a full picture of African American life in Little Rock in the early 1900s.

## New at the AHC

### December Donations and Accessions

#### AHC

State Review Board Meeting, December 2, 2015:  
Cemeteries and the National Register of Historic Places  
ADPT Executive Director records, 9 cu. ft.  
James McDaniel Photograph collection, 6 items  
Arkansas Land Survey plats, 3 cu. ft.

#### NEARA

Scrapbook of NEA Newspaper articles, 1 vol.

#### SARA

Valree Bates collection, 0.25 cu. ft.  
El Dorado High School scrapbook, 1940s, 0.5 cu. ft.  
El Dorado High School scrapbook, 1949, 0.5 cu. ft.  
Columbus Baptist Church records, 2.5 cu. ft.

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/2015/12/december-2015-acquisitions-and.html>

and our [Facebook](#) page.

**We appreciate the generous support of our donors!**

**Earlier in this newsletter we talked about the winter of 1875 when the Arkansas River froze, causing the water level to drop. In the last few weeks, we have seen a lot of flooding in our state due to the heavy December rains. This month we present some of our more interesting photographs about floods. We hope that our readers will stay dry this winter!**



Flood refugee in a Red Cross infirmary, Forrest City, 1937



Underwater baseball park in Batesville, 1915



Flooding in downtown Conway, 1927



Flooding in Fort Smith, circa 1930s



Floating down the street in DeVal's Bluff, 1927