Arkansas History Commission
ACT OF ARKANSAS, APRIL 27, 1905

THE ARKANSAS ARCHIVIST

SEPTEMBER 2015

AHC Celebrates Archives Month with Documentary Film Festival Oct. 10

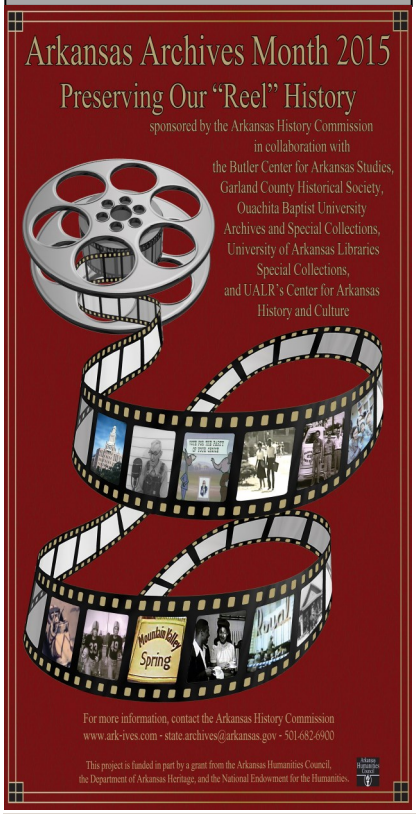
Calendar of Events

October 10
Arkansas's Reel History
Ron Robinson Theater,
Little Rock

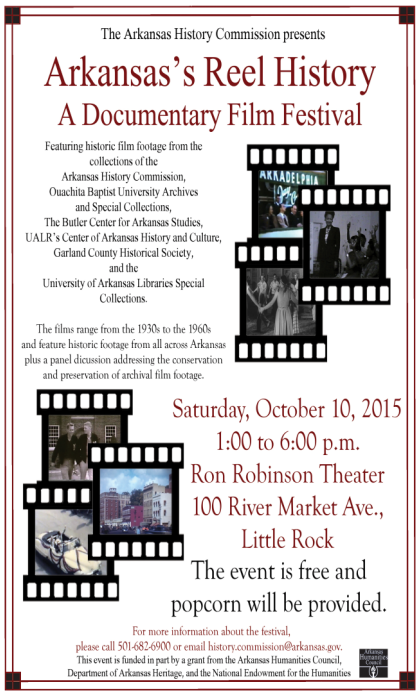
August 31—October 9
The Great War: Arkansas in World War I Exhibit
North Little Rock Heritage Center

September 21—October 13
Fought in Earnest: Civil War in Arkansas
Riley-Hickingbotham Library
Ouachita Baptist College,
Arkadelphia

October 17—November 14
The Great War: Arkansas in World War I Exhibit
Bob Herzfeld Memorial Library
Benton



One of the most overlooked primary sources available to historians are films. In October, the Arkansas History Commission hopes to shed light on historic films from a number of archival institutions around the state. On October 10 from 1-6 p.m. at the Ron Robinson Theater at 100 River Market Ave. in Little Rock, the AHC will join with Ouachita Baptist University Archives and Special Collections, the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, UALR's Center for Arkansas History and Culture, the Garland County Historical Society, and the University of Arkansas Libraries Special Collections, to present historically significant films from our collections.



Dates for the various films range from the 1930s through the 1960s and include historic footage from Dunbar High School in the 1940s, Nashville, Arkansas, in the 1950s, and footage from the "Battle of the Ravine" games between Henderson State University and Ouachita Baptist University from the 1940s.

The program will conclude with a panel discussion addressing the conservation and preservation of archival film footage in personal collections. "This is a new genre of event for the Arkansas History Commission," said AHC Director Dr. Lisa K. Speer. "We are excited to be collaborating with other Arkansas archives to present this film festival during Archives Month to promote the importance of preserving film and moving images before it's too late."

October is also American Archives Month. We are lucky to be living at a time in history in which we have a respect and understanding of our responsibility for collecting and preserving our documentary past. This has not always been the case in our history. For instance, Aeschylus, one of the greatest Greek dramatists of the ancient world, wrote ninety plays, and of those only six survive to this day. Many of Julius Caesar's personal writings did not survive the centuries. Wars, environmental damage, and simple neglect has resulted in the loss of significant parts of our human heritage. Perhaps our understanding of Caesar and his times would be different if those works had been preserved. And so, this is the duty and responsibility of the an archives.

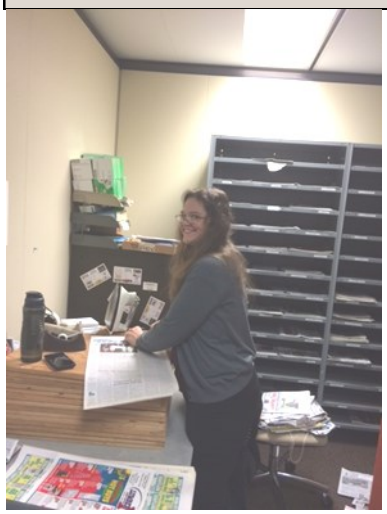
Every October since 2006, we have devoted a month to celebrating and acknowledging our debt to archives in helping us to understand our past. In an Archives Month proclamation signed on September 14, 2015, Governor Asa Hutchinson encouraged Arkansans to "discover the abundance of documentary treasures contained in our State's archival repositories." "Through these archives," Hutchinson declared, "every generation of Arkansan can study the history and learn from the experiences and accomplishments of our ancestors."

The AHC has created a poster to commemorate this year's Archives Month. "Preserving Our 'Reel' History," highlights an often overlooked archival source, films. According to the Film Foundation, an organization established by famed director Martin Scorsese to preserve moving images, almost half of all films made before 1950 are lost and as much as ninety percent of all silent films are gone forever. We hope that putting the emphasis on film preservation will bring attention to an often forgotten part of our archival heritage.

This year is also special in that the AHC has partnered with other archives to bring attention to the issue. "Archives Month marks the culmination of a year-long commemoration at the Arkansas History Commission of 110 years of collecting and preserving Arkansas history," noted Dr. Lisa Speer, AHC Director. "I can think of no more appropriate way to celebrate Archives Month, and bring our year of celebration to a close, than this film festival, which demonstrates the power of collaboration when archives work together for the common purposes of preserving Arkansas history and promoting it for the public that we all serve."

We are genuinely excited about the coming month and are grateful that we have such a good archival community in the state. We hope to see you all at the film festival on October 10!

AHC Welcomes Amy Gragert to Our Staff



A couple of months ago we told you about the grant that we received to take care of the backlog of newspapers that we needed to microfilm. Part of the grant was to hire new staff to assist with the project. We are glad to have Amy Gragert join our staff as extra help to work on the project. Amy's part in the project is to prepare newspapers to be filmed. This means making sure there are not any extra labels on the pages and that the papers are flat and not wrinkled. It is an important part of the process. Wrinkled paper can make a newspaper unreadable once it is filmed. This makes her job crucial to the task of filming the material.

Amy grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and later graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree in Historic Preservation from Southeast Missouri State University. She moved to Little Rock last year to study archives in the Public History program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Her thesis project is to process a collection of materials related to the 1969 and 1970 Arkansas Constitutional Convention. She also serves as Digital Lab Supervisor at the Center for Arkansas History and Culture at UALR.

Her favorite part of working at the AHC is that she is getting to do what she loves. "I like working with old things," she quips. "One of the great things about working at an archives is that not all of the material is about the rich or the powerful. There are lots of collections about just ordinary individuals. It is a great way to understand our world as a whole." She likes studying individuals. In her view, there are no small or secondary characters in our world's drama. Each person makes some contribution to the story. There is a parallel to her duties at the AHC. Her role is as vital to the AHC as is the process of filming the papers, developing the film, and labeling the boxes. We are glad that she is part of this project!

Black History Commission News

Mausoleum of John Edward Bush, co-founder of the Mosaic Templars of America, in the African American Oakland Fraternal Cemetery

The mission of the Black History Commission of Arkansas is to collect materials pertaining to African American history for the Arkansas History Commission, to encourage research in the state's African American history, and to cooperate with the Arkansas Department of Education to develop materials that support the teaching of African American history in our public schools.

Some of the records that have been collected for African American research are funeral home and cemetery records. One may ask how these records can help in my family research? Funeral home records list information such as: name of deceased, date and place of death, burial information, date and place of birth, name of informant, residence of deceased, names of family members such as spouse, children, and other relatives or friends and copy of obituary or notes used to prepare obituary and/or a list of newspapers where obituary was placed. Cemetery records and headstone inscriptions are also sources of birth and death information.

Page Mortuary, Dubisson Funeral Home Records, Hubble Funeral Home, Rowell-Parish Funeral Home, Wiley Funeral Home Records, Sims Mortuary, Cornish Funeral Home, Oakland-Fraternal Cemetery Records, and Fraternal Cemetery Records are just a few of the African American funeral home and cemetery records that have been collected and are available for your research here at the Arkansas History commission.

If you have such materials to donate or lend for copying, please contact Tatyana Oyinloye, African American History Program Coordinator, at 501.682.6892 or at tatyana.oyinloye@arkansas.gov.

Know your Commissioners

Arkansas History Commission

Ms. Mary Dillard	Malvern
Dr. Ray Granade	Arkadelphia
Dr. Ruth Hawkins	Jonesboro
Mr. Michael Lindsey	Fayetteville
Mr. Robert McCarley	Little Rock
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Black History Commission of Arkansas

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One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
501.682.6900
state.archives@Arkansas.gov
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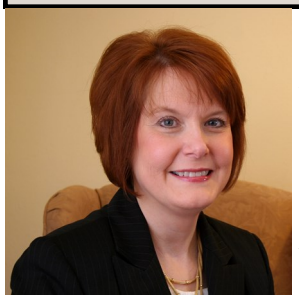
From the Director



Do you know what a SHRAB is? Or are you familiar with the AHRAB? If these acronyms are familiar to you, it's probably because you have applied for a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

The NHPRC, as it's more commonly known, is the grant-making arm of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), supporting a wide variety of projects that preserve, publish, and promote the use of documentary sources on United States history. Each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the territories has a SHRAB, or State Historical Records Advisory Board. SHRABs review grant proposals submitted to the NHPRC from their states, and often are involved in statewide planning for historical records. Statewide planning can include conducting surveys of historical records, as well as education and training programs for individuals who work with archival records. Some SHRABs have undertaken regrant programs with NHPRC funds to support a variety of records preservation projects within their states.

Between 1979 and 2014 in Arkansas, NHPRC funds have supported a variety of projects to inventory, assess, preserve and provide access to historical records held by various agencies. These projects have included processing the papers of former governors James Guy Tucker (UALR, 2014) and Orval Faubus (UA, Fayetteville, 1979), a statewide historical records survey (History Commission, 1983), and city and county records surveys (Jackson County, 1991; Phillips County, 1981; and Little Rock 1987), among other projects. In all, Arkansas has received a total of $277,242 from the NHPRC over the last 35 years, a relatively small amount in comparison with other states that have received millions of dollars in funding. So if you are an agency responsible for state, county, municipal, tribal, or other non-Federal records you may be eligible to apply for a grant from the NHPRC. As of September 2015, the NHPRC offers six categories of grants that focus on processing and preserving primary source materials, digitization of these resources, publication of documentary editions of historical records, preservation of electronic state records, and SHRAB programming.

More information about these grants, the application guidelines, and eligibility requirements can be found at: http://www.archives.gov/nhprc/. The Arkansas History Commission serves as the SHRAB for our state, and I serve as the state coordinator for the Arkansas Historical Records Advisory Board (AHRAB). If you have an idea for a grant project or would like additional information, you are welcome to contact me at lisa.speer@arkansas.gov. I look forward to seeing more funded Arkansas grants on the NHPRC projects list in the years to come!

News from NEARA

This summer, NEARA welcomes Matthew Clark back for his third summer of volunteering. A student at Jonesboro High School, Matt has logged more than 300 volunteer hours for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism – most at NEARA, the remainder at Powhatan Historic State Park and Lake Charles State Park.

This summer is one of great change for NEARA – we are weeding non-relevant books, adding many new ones to the collection, redecorating our research room, and adding new technology and capabilities to better serve our patrons. Of course, we will also continue with processing, preservation, and conservation projects. Matthew has assisted in many of these efforts.

Since its construction, NEARA has received many books that are unrelated to Arkansas. Matt's project for June was working with NEARA Archival Manager Dr. Lisa Perry to identify books that are not relevant to NEARA's mission and create a catalog of the titles for potential deaccessioning. Eventually, those books may be redistributed to more appropriate repositories.

In July, Matt assisted with redecorating our research room. Using frames donated by the Sellers family, NEARA staff hung reproductions of many of its photographs. Drawn from the Barney Sellers Collection, Tom McDonald Collection, Mammoth Spring Collection, Devoe Hedrick Collection, and the general photograph collection, these new exhibits will highlight some of the wonderful images of the people and places in Arkansas.

The AHC and NEARA values its volunteers and hopes Matthew's dedication will help to inspire others to join our efforts to help better serve our

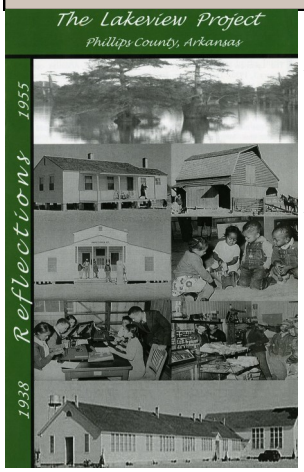
News from SARA

Women Take Over Political Power In Washington!! Well, in Washington, Arkansas, in 1934, that is. Washington achieved national notice for having an all-female town council and a lady mayor in 1934. Their picture, from the files of the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives, is to the right.

The ladies are (left to right): Miss Julia Deloney, Miss Ella Monroe, Miss Mary Catts, Mrs. Charlean Moss Williams—Mayor, Mrs. I. L. Pilkinton, Mrs. J. W. Butler and Miss Kathryn Holt. Julia Deloney (1898-1984), an alderwoman, married S. H. Smith, a local farmer, in 1935. Ella Monroe (1877-1961) served as the city recorder, worked in the local abstract company and never married. Mary Catts (1889-1952), an alderwoman, was the postmaster in Washington in 1930, a high school teacher later in her life and never married. Mrs. Ivison L. Pilkinton (1889-1955) was Virginia Louise Betts before her marriage. Alderwoman Pilkinton had five children and was a teacher. Her husband was in politics, serving in the Arkansas House in the 1930s, and her son James H. Pilkinton would become a well-known lawyer and judge in nearby Hope and would run for governor in the 1960s. Alderwoman Butler, born Lenore "Nolie" Trimble (1886-1966), had also been a teacher and worked as an assistant cashier in her husband's bank. The youngest alderwoman Kathryn Holt (1908-?) was a school teacher who married in 1939 and moved to Michigan.

The mayor front and center in the photo is Charlean Moss Williams (1868-1958). The wife of a grocery merchant, she was the mother of two daughters and a long-time advocate for the preservation and history of Washington. She published *"The Old Town Speaks"* in 1951 and lived to see the formation of the Pioneer Washington Restoration Foundation which led ultimately to Historic Washington State Park and the founding of the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives, now a branch of the Arkansas History Commission.

Staff Picks



This month we feature the pick of Archival Assistant Adrienne Jones. Her pick is a collection of oral histories given by former residents of the Lakeview Federal Resettlement Administration project.

What was the Lakeview Federal Resettlement Administration? During the Great Depression the Federal Resettlement Administration was set up to provide farmers land in which to farm. The Resettlement Administration set up communities for the farmers.

Why is Lakeview significant? There has been a lot of attention on other resettlement communities, like Dyess where Johnny Cash grew up. But, African American farmers were not allowed to settle in communities designated for white farmers. Lakeview was one of three farm communities earmarked for African Americans.

What is this collection? It is a collection of oral history interviews of people who lived in Lakeview in the 1930s. Many of them discuss their lives in the resettlement community and the challenges they faced.

How might researchers access the collection? The interviews are on compact disc and on audio cassette. In order to listen to the interviews, a researcher will need to visit our research room and we will provide a headset in order to listen to the recordings.

New at the AHC

August Donations and Accessions

AHC

Kentucky Marriages, 1797 – 1865, by G. Glenn Clift
Arkansas Highway Department Records, 8 cu. ft.

SARA

Musings on the Tree: A Personal Journey through 250 Years of America, by Tom White
My Ancestors: The Dosseys, by Mike T. Stanton
My Family: The McJunkins, by Mike T. Stanton
My Ancestors: Richardson-Lowery and Allied Families, by Mike T. Stanton

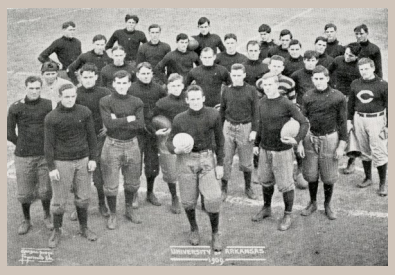
We always receive more material than we are able to list in our newsletter. For a full listing, see our blog (http://arkansasstatearchives.blogspot.com/2015/08/july-acquisitions-and-accessions.html) and our Facebook page.

We appreciate the generous support of our donors!

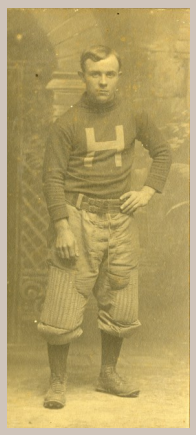
With the fall weather comes… football time! This month, we feature some of our favorite football pictures from our collection.

Arkansas State Normal School (later renamed the University of Central Arkansas) team demonstrating an offense formation.

St. Peter's School Bluejackets, 1947. Pine Bluff



Arkansas Cardinals, 1909. This team would go undefeated leading Coach Hugo Bezdek to proclaim that they played like a bunch of wild razorback hogs. The next year they would be renamed the Arkansas Razorbacks.



Unidentified athlete in Henderson State uniform, 1908.

Des Arc High School team, circa 1915.

Unidentified athlete from Amity High School, 1939.