



# THE ARKANSAS ARCHIVIST

FEBRUARY 2015

## *AHC and BHCA Present Program on African American Education*

### **BRINGING THE AHC TO YOU!**

*March 16—April 14  
Fought in Earnest  
College of the Ouachitas  
Malvern*

"The Roots of African American Education in Arkansas," cosponsored by the Black History Commission of Arkansas and the Arkansas History Commission was a huge success, with over 75 people in attendance. Among the presentations, Dr. Joseph Hale and Dr. Mary Jarrett presented an overview of the Jeanes Teacher program in the American South; and Peggy Lloyd spoke about Ila Upchurch, a Jeanes Teachers Supervisor in Arkansas. The Jeanes Supervisors Program began in 1908, founded by Quakers and named after Anna T.



*Attendees listen to Dr. Twillie's dramatization of the life of Charlotte Stephens.*

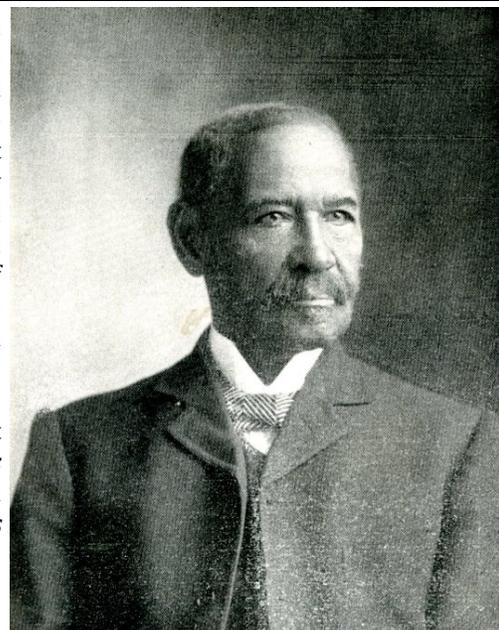
Jeanes, a wealthy donor who wished to aid in the education of African Americans in the South. Ms. Jeanes donated one million dollars to the . Amanda Paige spoke about the Colored Industrial Institute of Pine Bluff, a secular school supported by the Catholic Church in Arkansas and founded by Rev. John Michael Lucey, a former Confederate soldier. Rev. Lucey was considered progressive at the time for his views on African Americans and spoke out against separate coach laws and lynchings. The final program for the day was a spirited reenactment given by Dr. Gwendolyn Twillie of the life of Charlotte Stephens, the first African American teacher hired in the Little Rock School District.

One can never know what surprises to expect during these programs. For instance, during the question and answer portion one attendee was surprised to learn that he was the grandson of Ila Upchurch! Attendees not only walked away with a wealth of knowledge but teachers earned 4 professional development hours. If you are a teacher and missed this event there is still time to earn professional development hours at many of the other AHC sponsored seminars coming up this year. Keep watching for updates!

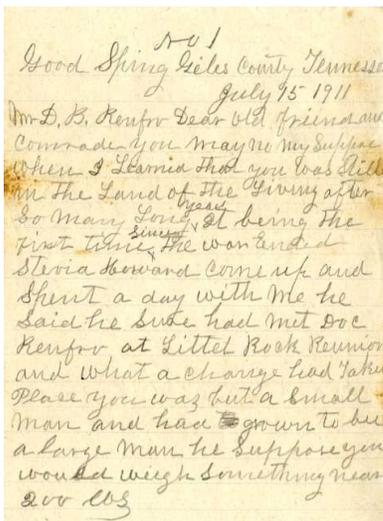
## *The AHC Celebrates the Legacy of an African American Pioneer*

As we celebrate Black History Month, it is important to stop and reflect on those African Americans who have contributed so much to our history. One such African American was Mifflin W. Gibbs. Gibbs was born Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1823. During the Gold Rush of the 1850s, Gibbs moved to California to take advantage of the opportunities to become rich. While there, Gibbs became involved in the movement to abolish slavery. At the end of the Civil War, he moved to Arkansas and became the first African American city judge for Little Rock in 1873. In fact, Gibbs was the first black judge in the entire United States. After Reconstruction, Gibbs continued to work as an attorney in Little Rock and in 1897, President William McKinley appointed Gibbs to become Consul to the country of Madagascar. Gibbs later returned to the United States where he died in 1915. Gibbs was long remembered as a statesman, and the Little Rock School District named the African American Gibbs High School and Gibbs Magnet Elementary after him.

The AHC has a number of materials about Gibbs in our collection. Probably the most notable is his 1902 autobiography, *Shadow and Light: An Autobiography with Reminiscences of the Last and Present Century*. Since he was prominent in Arkansas politics, his career can also be followed in the pages of Arkansas's newspapers, the *Arkansas Gazette*, the *Arkansas Democrat*, and the *Evening Republican*.



## Treasures from the Attic



This month we begin a new series based on items that staff members have in their own collections. The inaugural item from Archival Assistant Danyelle McNeill is a 1911 letter to her great-great grandfather from a person who served with him in the Civil War.

**What is the letter about?** The letter is from J.F. Hogg to my great-great grandfather, D.B. Renfro from July 1911. The two served together during the Civil War in the 32nd Tennessee Regiment. At the end of the war, Renfro was captured and sent to a prison camp in Indiana after the Battle of Atlanta. Mr. Hogg is writing to try to catch up after 50 years. Since the two had been separated at the end of the war, Hogg recounts his time during the last days of the war.

**How did you come to have the letter?** It has been passed down through the years. I'm the family historian, so I usually end up with these things.

**What is its connection to Arkansas history?** In 1911, Little Rock won the right to host the annual Confederate reunion. This was the largest crowd of people to ever assemble in the state up to that time. It was here at the reunion that another veteran noticed my great-great grandfather. After the reunion, the veteran returned home to Tennessee and told Mr. Hogg that he had seen my great-great grandfather. Mr. Hogg had thought that he was surely dead since he had not heard a thing about him in fifty years. So, because of this reunion, two old warriors got reacquainted.

**Do you know if he wrote him back?** I tracked down the descendants of Mr. Hogg and they did not have any letters from my great-great grandfather. He was a big letter writer, though, so it would not surprise me if he wrote back and the letter just did not survive.

**Is there anything that surprises you about the letter?** He spends a lot of time talking about living it up with the girls. He seems to have had a good time in the last days of the war. Also, his timeline was so specific, it is like he is reliving the whole time while he is writing it down. It might be inaccurate, but this is the way he remembered it.

## Black History Commission News



Curtis H. Sykes, 1930-2007. A lifelong educator, Sykes built his career on promoting African American history in Arkansas schools. Sykes was a charter member of the Black History Commission of Arkansas.

The Curtis H. Sykes Memorial Grant application deadline is fast approaching. The BHCA established the grant in honor of the late Curtis H. Sykes who was instrumental in establishing the BHCA and promoting African American history in Arkansas. Those interested in applying for the grant should familiarize themselves with the grant application guidelines. On March 14, the Black History Commission of Arkansas will be holding its quarterly grant writing workshop. During the workshop, attendees will learn about the grant writing process including how to fill out the application, how to write a budget for the project, and what types of projects the grant is intended to fund.

Successful applications have dealt with a wide range of African American history topics. One recent project funded by the grant was a project to create an inventory of historic items in the Daisy Bates house in order to help preserve those items for the future. Those interested in submitting an application are highly encouraged to attend the grant writing workshop on March 14, 2015. To register for the workshop, email Tatyana Oyinloye at [tatyana.oyinloye@arkansas.gov](mailto:tatyana.oyinloye@arkansas.gov) or call 501-682-6892. The deadline to register for the workshop is March 5, 2015. Registration is free.

## 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
Ms. Elizabeth Robbins	Hot Springs
Dr. Robert Sherer	Little Rock

### Black History

#### Commission of Arkansas

Mr. Marion Butler	Sherwood
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



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ONE CAPITOL MALL  
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201  
501.682.6900  
[STATE.ARCHIVES@ARKANSAS.GOV](mailto:STATE.ARCHIVES@ARKANSAS.GOV)  
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## From the Director



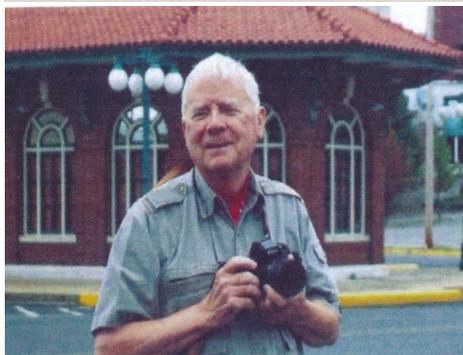
This year on April 27, the Arkansas History Commission celebrates the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its creation by the Arkansas General Assembly. You'll be hearing more about the AHC's impending birthday celebration in the next few issues of this newsletter; and in my column I'll be talking about the forces that contributed to the creation of state archives in the United States and ultimately in Arkansas. Did you know that Arkansas was one of the **first three states** to create an official state archives?

The establishment of these state archives reflected an awareness of the importance of preserving the historical record, growing since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century among professional historians. Some states, like Massachusetts, had well-established historical societies functioning as primary source repositories – the Massachusetts Historical Society was established in 1791. While in other states, historical documents were held in private libraries, and public records were scattered among the many creating agencies. In 1899, the American Historical Association launched a survey of records in public repositories through the newly established Public Archives Commission, which would survey state records from 1900-1917. Additionally, a growing concern in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century within southern states over the need to preserve materials documenting service to the state in the Civil War fueled the movement to create centralized state records repositories. Alabama and Mississippi emerged as pioneers in the founding of state archives in 1901 and 1902, respectively. The Alabama Plan, established by Thomas M. Owen, who would direct the Alabama Department of Archives and History for 20 years, was widely adopted by many of the first state archives, including Mississippi and Arkansas.

In Mississippi, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History emerged from the Mississippi Historical Society, founded in 1890 under the leadership of Dr. Franklin L. Riley, a professor of history and rhetoric at the University of Mississippi. The MDAH interviewed three candidates for its first director and ultimately selected Dunbar H. Rowland, an attorney from Coffeetown, Mississippi. One of the candidates not chosen was a professor of history at Mississippi College, and someone who would go on to an even greater leadership role in the years following: Charles Hillman Brough. Brough's biographer, Foy Lisenby, speculates that his lingering disappointment at not receiving the directorship of the MDAH factored into his relocating to Arkansas, where he was elected Governor in 1917. Next issue: Establishing the AHC.

—Dr. Lisa K. Speer

## News from NEARA



Walnut Ridge native Barney Sellers accumulated many honors in his lifetime. An early graduate in photojournalism from Arkansas State University, Sellers' career as a photographer for *The Commercial Appeal* [Memphis] spanned nearly four decades. A highly acclaimed and award-winning photographer for

his news photography and his rural scenes, Sellers was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for feature photography in 1973.

His private work photographing rural scenes and old structures played a large role in documenting the vernacular architecture of Arkansas and surrounding states. Focused on old barns, log cabins, bridges, and other early man-made structures, these photographs are all that survive of many of his subjects. For 27 years, Sellers' work was featured in a one-man photo show in Black Rock.

Sellers passed away in 2012 at his home in Desoto County, Mississippi, just one day after his 64<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. He leaves behind a widow, two sons, a daughter, and a treasure in photographs to mark his life. His photographic legacy will be preserved as the Barney Sellers Collection at the Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives. An initial donation reached NEARA on January 31, with more arriving in the near future. We are honored that his family has entrusted the Arkansas History Commission and the branch archives in Powhatan with his life's work.

## News from SARA

SARA recently received the PFC John D. Musgrave Collection of WW II documents, letters, medals, and effects. The collection is a reminder of the sacrifices made by many young Americans and their families in that period.

John Dempsey Musgrave was born in Texas to James Lee and Georgia Tennessee Musgrave in 1922. The family was originally from western Arkansas and returned to their native state in the 1930s and 40s. At twenty, John D. joined the US Army on Nov. 5, 1942, in Shreveport, Louisiana, and took his training at Camp Wolters, Mineral Wells, Texas. He left for the Pacific in 1944 and served in New Guinea and then in the Philippines. He was killed near Manila on March 5, 1945. The Purple Heart in the collection attests to his valor.



The cards and letters of condolence among the mementoes came from family, friends and even such luminaries as General Douglas MacArthur. The young soldier was buried in the Philippines in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial with over 44,000 of his countrymen. He was half a world away from the final resting place of his family members in the rural Duckett Cemetery in northern Howard County, Arkansas.

## Staff Picks



This month we feature Archival Assistant Crystal Shurley's choice, material from the Joseph Boone Hunter Collection.

Who was Joseph Boone Hunter? He was a Disciples of Christ missionary to Japan in the years

between the First and Second World Wars. During the Second World War, he worked as a chaplain at the Japanese Internment Camp in Rowher.

What does the collection contain? It contains a lot of photographs from his time as a missionary in Japan before the war. There are some interesting photographs of the damage from a devastating earthquake that struck Japan in the 1930s. Probably the most significant part of the collection in relation to Arkansas is probably the photographs from the Rowher Internment Camp.

Other than being a chaplain, were there other activities that are represented in the collection? Interestingly, he was involved during the War with a movement to make it illegal to detain Americans based on ethnic background. It was pretty clear that his time at the internment camp had a profound impact on him. He was working with others across the country to end the practice. One of the interesting things in the collection are audio tapes that he used to communicate with others in the drive to end the practice of interning Japanese Americans.

Are there other collections that are related that researchers might find interesting? We have a lot of photos from both the Rowher and Jerome Internment Camps. The Hazel Retherford Collection might be interesting. She was a teacher at both schools.

## New at the AHC

### January Donations and Accessions

#### AHC

Martha Sue Webb Collection, 4 cu. ft. and 1 silk dress  
Razorback 45s, three 45 RPM records  
Ark. Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board Records, 32 cu. ft.  
Edna Johnson Scrapbook, 1922 - 1959  
Arkansas State Board of Barber Examiners, 29 cu. ft.

#### SARA

The Drake Collection 4 cu. ft.  
The Pioneer Washington Restoration Financial Records, 1980-1991.  
0.4 cu. ft.  
The Pat Weaver Collection 2 cu. ft.  
John D. Musgrave Collection 1.5 cu. ft.  
The Hope Hardware Collection 8.5 cu. ft.  
Mark Keith Collection 0.5 cu. ft.  
Theo M. Sanders Blueprints of Camden High School  
Hempstead County Aerial Photographs Collection. 3 cu. ft.

#### NEARA

Lynn Morrow Map Collection, 5 maps  
Barney Sellers Collection, 5.75 cu. ft.

We always receive more material than we are able to list in our newsletter. For a full listing, see our webpage ([www.ark-ives.com](http://www.ark-ives.com)) and our Facebook page.

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

*The AHC has a collection of photographs of African Americans in Arkansas called the Persistence of the Spirit. There are hundreds of photographs in the collection.*

*In honor of Black History Month, here is a sampling of photos in the collection.*



Edith Irby Jones, first African American graduate from the University of Arkansas Medical School



Attorney and community leader Scipio Jones, circa 1900



Dr. C.M. Wade of St. Pythias Sanitarium in Hot Springs



Lottie Shackelford, first female mayor of Little Rock



Faculty of Branch Normal School, later renamed University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff



Daisy Bates being honored in Fayetteville