



NEWSLETTER

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Please note: our new mailing address is FASA, PO Box 31342, Little Rock, AR 72260

Friends of the Arkansas State Archives Indexing Project

One of the most important achievements of Friends of the Arkansas State Archives is the ongoing indexing of loose county court papers from Hempstead and now Cleveland County. Indexers meet on Tuesday mornings from 9 to noon in the Department of Arkansas Heritage Collections Management Facility at the northwest corner of La Harpe and Chester in downtown Little Rock. Archives staff members distribute document files to each volunteer who records every name in every file with its file number. At the Archives the indexed names and their file numbers are entered into a database. That database in time will facilitate access to these records



that is not possible now. Many more names are mentioned in the court records than are recorded in the index of the courthouse book. This kind of indexing is not something archivists normally do. Future researchers will benefit greatly from this indexing.

The records indexed so far range in date from before 1819 into the twentieth century. The earliest records from Hempstead County provided an historical understanding of the people, business, and happenings that were addressed by the court system in that territorial time period and into statehood. The Cleveland County records currently being indexed contain many revealing suits as well as criminal cases.

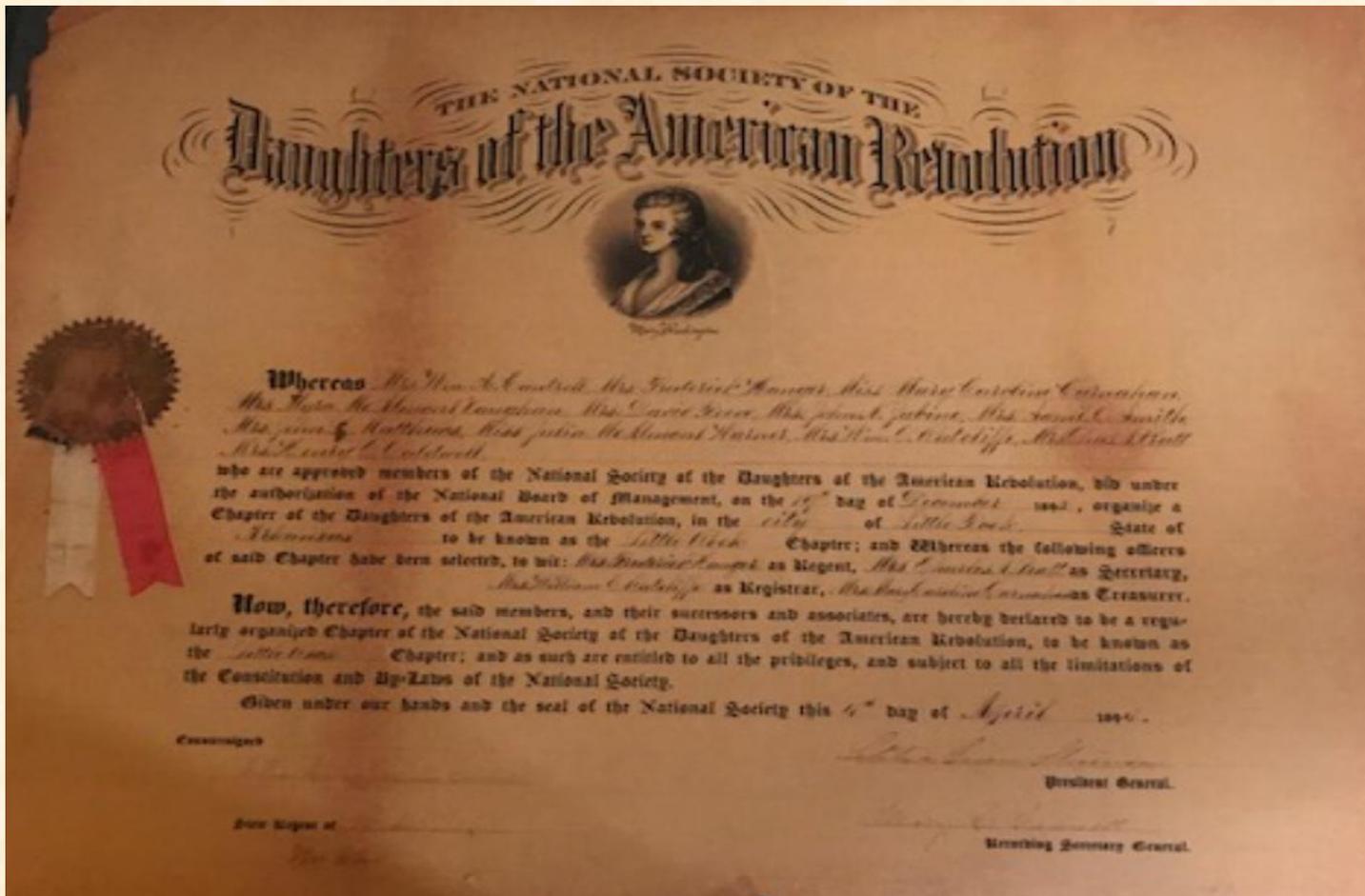
Left: Volunteers indexing loose court records.

In July the indexers were treated to a appreciation luncheon and a tour of the Archives. Besides good fellowship, indexers learned a lot about the research room and resources there as well as the various labs and vaults, the digitizing, the microfilming, and the conservation processes.

Additional indexers are always welcome. Besides learning a lot, the indexers enjoy a great deal of camaraderie, helping each other decipher and sharing odd, sensational, and amusing finds. If you are interested in helping with this project, please email susanb1995@aol.com.

The State Archives Works with DAR and the Old State House Muesum

Friends encourage researchers who are involved in historical or lineage groups to discover whether they have unknown or forgotten artifacts and documents housed in collections at the Archives.



ASA SMC 88.3 Charter for Little Rock Chapter of DAR

The Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated the the 125th anniversary of the Little Rock Chapter and the 100th anniversary of the Centennial Chapter which are now combined. The Arkansas State Archives provided the two original charters for the event at the Old State House Museum on November 17, 2019.

Report from the Board of Directors

The Board of Friends of the Arkansas State Archives met at the Archives on November 2, 2019.

Stuart Towns, our President, has announced his resignation from his office and the board for personal reasons. We thank Stuart for being a Life Member and for all he has done in support of the Archives and of Friends of the Archives. The Board will elect new officers in January.

Julienne Crawford, the acting Director of the Archives, outlined a multi-step revision of the Archives website and improved access to the archival information which may take another year to complete, but hopefully will streamline and simplify the site for users.

The Friends Speakers' Bureau is up and running. Stuart had worked diligently to contact organizations all over the state to propose Friends speak at their meetings. Our program about the Archives and the Friends organization was presented at the Hot Springs Village Genealogical Society on October 3 and received a very warm welcome, discussion and questions. The goal is to be able to continue to share the word about the Arkansas State Archives and the Friends organization throughout Arkansas. If you belong to one of the more than 100 local historical and genealogical societies across the state we would like to present a program to you as well as to civic clubs such as Rotary and heritage organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution. Expanding our membership base to create extensive citizen support for your State Archives is our goal.



Susan Boyle and Julienne Crawford with a new book for the Arkansas State Archives, donated by the Friends group.

One way Friends is supporting the Archives is through the purchase of books and other resources for their holdings. In the last few months your Friends organization has purchased and delivered to the Archives twenty-four volumes published by the University of Arkansas Press, the Garland County Historical Society and the Sharp County Historical Society. A number of additional volumes are on order from the Polk County Genealogical Society. Friends of the Arkansas State Archives attended the Arkansas Genealogical Society Conference on October 18 with a table in the vendor hall. Many Friends members stopped by and others joined or paid dues renewals. Many members of AGS are also members of Friends and vice versa as is the case with the Arkansas Historical Association, the DAR and other organizations.

The Friends Board voted to formally commend the Arkansas Genealogical Society for their support of the Archives Spring genealogical workshop in Historic Washington. Such workshops with paid speakers and meals are very expensive to host and AGS's help with this is greatly appreciated.

The board of Friends of the Archives has decided to establish an "Arkansas Historians Hall of Fame" to honor one or more Arkansas historians each year. A committee of Tom Dillard, Russell Baker, Gary Jones, and Richard Hartness was formed to work out the details. If you have any ideas for this project, please let us know.

The board will be purchasing roll-up table-top banners to make our event table more visible and will also look into the possibility of PayPal for paying dues. Let us know if you would like to pay your dues through PayPal. Dues renewal notices will be sent out in January.

November Pen to Podium Lecture Featured Joe David Rice

Joe David Rice and his books *Arkansas Backstories: Quirks, Characters, and Curiosities of the Natural State*, were stars at the Arkansas State Archives' November 12th Pen to Podium: Arkansas History Writers' lecture on Tuesday, November 12th at the Department of Arkansas Heritage building, 1100 North Street, Little Rock. The author and former Arkansas Department of Tourism Director has compiled two volumes in an A-Z format of interesting people, places, and events in Arkansas history that are appealing to everyone.



A nice crowd enjoyed snacks and drinks before listening to the talk which touched on items from both Volumes 1 and 2. Rice delivered with a great deal of humor and affection and the crowd responded with laughter, comments and questions. Rice's love of Arkansas and deep memory of Arkansas oddities and firsts shines through. He praised the Arkansas History Commission, now Arkansas State Archives, where he started researching more than 40 years ago. His books are clearly entertaining as well as enlightening.

The Friends of the Arkansas State Archives sponsored the event with the Archives by providing the drinks.

Above: Joe David Rice and Julienne Crawford with his two *Arkansas Backstories* volumes. Below: Rice addresses the lecture attendees.



Spotlight on a Friends Member Society

Perry County, Arkansas, Historical & Genealogical Society

The Perry County Court House was burned four times in the past. So many records are lost forever, and that was part of the reason the Perry County Historical & Genealogical Society was organized in January 1998 by Betty Burke, Jackie Myers, Elise Hill, Leroy Williams, John Pennington and Pearl Bowen Pennington.

The objects and goals of the Society were (1) to create and foster interest in genealogy, (2) to gather and preserve the genealogical and historical data through library and educational means, including lectures, discussions, and workshops and (3) to provide the public with genealogical source materials.

Bylaws were adopted in 1998 and two successful ancestral fairs and a workshop on how to trace your family history were held that year. In the following years major projects included collecting and transcribing Oral Histories, copying and publishing Bible Records and photographs, inventorying cemeteries, and publishing a history of the county: *Perry County, Arkansas: Its Land & People*, 596 pages published in 2004. Other publications by the Society include *Perry County, Arkansas Marriages 1881–1947*; *Perry County, Arkansas Marriages 1947–2000*; *Perry County, Arkansas Census of Cemeteries*; and *Perry County, Arkansas Collection of Obituaries*.

In 1999 Lynda Suffridge began publication of the *PCH&GS Newsletter* and served as editor for 17 years. Tim Nutt is now editor and often a speaker for the Society. Back issues of the *Newsletter* are available.

Buford Suffridge has served as President since 2003 and Beverly Doramus is now serving as secretary/treasurer. Buford writes a weekly column for the *Petit Jean Country Headlight, Perry County Edition* titled “Glimpses From the Past,” in which he abstracts articles from old issues of the *Perry County News*. He has written 1097 articles as of November 2019.

The PCH&GS meets the second Tuesday each month at the Milam Library in Perryville at 7:00 p.m., except in May, when Beverly Doramus hosts a picnic at Aplin, and in December when they have a Christmas Party at the Suffridge farm. The public is invited to all meetings and social events.

Membership in the society is \$15 a year and members receive four newsletters which contain more history of the county. Make check out to PCH&GS, PO Box 156, Perryville, AR 72116.

The Perry County Historical & Genealogical Society is proud to be a member society of Friends of the Arkansas State Archives and wishes to thank Tom Dillard for donating his recent speaker’s fee from our Society to extend our FASA membership for another two years!

Meet a Friends Director: Jeanne Rollberg

Jeanne Rollberg is a board member for the Friends of the Arkansas State Archives, the Arkansas Genealogical Society, and Swedish America Heritage Online.



Her work on the board includes oversight of the Facebook and Twitter feeds as well as other media outreach for the Friends. When she discovered in 2018 that nearly half of new researchers at the Archives in a recent survey were from out of state, “genealogy tourism” reflected in that national trend encouraged her to work with AGS, fellow Friends board member Gary Jones, and state agencies to promote interest in family history outreach for Arkansas. All three branches of the Archives report that family history requests lead client queries.

Jeanne is an editor for the National Genealogical Society Magazine, a member of NSDAR, and a member of Heritage Seekers Genealogy Club. She is the owner of American Dream Genealogy in Little Rock, and is originally from Green Cove Springs, Florida.

She holds a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Missouri, a history degree from Wesleyan College, and was a college journalism professor and administrator from 1981 to 2016. She taught at Texas A&M University and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she served for a time as director of the School of Mass Communication.

She was a public affairs program producer for KUAR-FM in Little Rock and a reporter for KTHV-TV. Her academic research concentrated on politics and journalism, local TV news, the Freedom of Information Act, and newspaper journalism.

Your Commissioners

Arkansas History Commission

Jimmy Bryant, Conway
Mary Dillard, Malvern
Ronald Fuller, Little Rock
Jason B. Hendren, Bentonville
Robert McCarley, Little Rock
Rodney Soubers, Mountain Home
Dr. Micheal Tarver, Clarksville

Black History Commission of Arkansas

Carla Hines Coleman, Little Rock
Elise Hampton, Conway
Dr. Jesse Hargrove, Alexander
Myron Jackson, Little Rock
Patricia Johnson, Pocahontas
Dr. Cherisse Jones Branch, Jonesboro
Rev. Frank H. Stewart, Conway

A Volunteer Opportunity

Have you ever wished you could volunteer at the Arkansas State Archives? This is your opportunity! Members of Friends have been gathering from 9:00 to noon on Tuesday mornings with Archives staff around a large conference table at the Department of Arkansas Heritage Collections Management Facility to index loose court records. Gloves and masks are provided. Some of the records indexed so far have been from the territorial period and represent all kinds of court cases from murders to lawsuits to slave sales. The volunteers help each other and share interesting finds. It is a marvelous learning experience, plus a great help to the Archives in trying to make these records available to the public. The CMF Building is on the northwest corner of La Harpe Boulevard and Chester Street. Turn left into the first drive way and continue around to the front door of the building. Please contact us at susanb1996@aol.com to become a Friends volunteer. —Susan G. Boyle, FASA Treasurer.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR ARKANSAS HISTORY!

The Friends of the Arkansas State Archives offers a variety of levels for supporting the mission of the State Archives:

___ Basic Level, \$10 ___ Sustaining Level, \$25 ___ Organization, \$35
___ Benevolent Level, \$50 ___ Lifetime Level, \$250 ___ Corporate Level, \$500

Name: _____ Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

Gift _____

Return membership form with check payable to the: Friends of the Arkansas State Archives, P. O. Box 31342, Little Rock, AR 72260. We will be communicating with you or your gift recipient via email.

FASA is a 501(c) (3) organization. Your donations and membership are tax deductible.

We Salute Our Life Members!

Thea Walden Baker
Nancy Bartlett
Bob Besom
Frank Bigger
James R. Bruce
Joann Cooper
Ron Fuller
Prof. John William Graves
Mary Heady

Sandra Hillier
Allison Holland
Cheryl Nichols
Gordon S. Rather Jr.
Maylon T. Rice
Elizabeth Robbins
Mrs. Roy Roe
Frances Ross
James B. Rule

Robert G. Sherer (dec.)
Kitty Clay Sloan
Rod Soubers
Dr. Lisa Speer
Dr. Frank Thibault
W. Stuart Towns
Linda Kay White
Leah Wilkinson



Mission of the Arkansas State Archives and its branches:

- Keep and care for the official archives of the State of Arkansas;
- Collect material bearing on the history of Arkansas from the earliest times;
- Copy and edit official records and other historical material; and
- Encourage historical work and research by the public.

The mission of the Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives (NEARA), a branch of the Arkansas State Archives, is to collect and preserve primary and secondary source materials pertaining to the history of northeast Arkansas and its people. NEARA also serves as a resource center for historical research focusing on the unique history, culture, and heritage of the area. NEARA opened in 2011, founded through a partnership between the Arkansas History Commission and Arkansas State Parks, and is located within Powhatan Historic State Park. NEARA collects material on a 16-county region in Northeast Arkansas, which includes the counties of: Baxter, Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Fulton, Greene, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, Randolph, Sharp, and Stone. Dr. Fatme Myuhtar-May serves as archival manager.

Email: northeast.archives@arkansas.gov. Phone: 870-878-6521.

The mission of the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives (SARA), a branch of the Arkansas State Archives, is to collect and preserve primary and secondary source materials pertaining to the history of southwest Arkansas and its people, and to serve as a resource center for historical research focusing on the unique history, culture, and heritage of the area. SARA, which was founded in 1978 as a project of the Hempstead County Historical Society, with assistance from the Arkansas History Commission, Historic Washington State Park, and the Pioneer Washington Restoration Foundation, is located within Historic Washington State Park. The Arkansas History Commission acquired SARA in 2005. SARA offers a variety of research resources related to a 12-county region in southwest Arkansas that includes the counties of Columbia, Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Ouachita, Pike, Polk, Sevier, and Union. Melissa Nesbitt is the archival manager.

Email: southwest.archives@arkansas.gov. Phone: 870-983-2633.

Board of Directors, Friends of the Arkansas State Archives

Lynda Suffridge, Vice President Tim Nutt, Secretary Susan Boyle, Treasurer

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Blake Perkins, Lynn
Sonny Rhodes, N. Little Rock
Jeanne Rollberg, Little Rock
Lynda Suffridge, N. Little Rock
Tamela Tenpenny-Lewis, Little Rock
Gary Walker, DeQueen

Getting Involved

Besides joining the Friends group, there are other ways you can support the preservation of Arkansas's documentary heritage:

- Contact public officials to encourage their support of the State and Regional Archives.
- Volunteer at the Archives for special projects, exhibits, research, and events.
- Join a Friends committee. You help with publicity, outreach, advocacy, and membership.
- Write articles for our newsletter, or assist with content for our Facebook page.

Membership Benefits

- Invitations to pre-register for Archives events prior to the general public.
- Receive newsletters from the Archives as well as the Friends organization.
- Opportunity to network with a community of professional and lay historians interested in preserving our state's history.
- Help the Friends support, promote, and strengthen the collections, services, and programs of the Arkansas State Archives.

Write us at P.O. Box 31342, Little Rock, AR 72260

Check out our website at ararchivesfriends.org

www.facebook.com/ARArchivesFriends

Visit us on Twitter at @FoASA

