



# Arkansas Historical Association Newsletter

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## AHA Welcomes New Board Members

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Each year new AHA board members are selected to replace outgoing trustees. At the annual membership conference held at Historic Washington, April 3-5, 2014, the AHA elected seven new board members. Terms are three years and members can serve two consecutive terms.

Maylon T. Rice (Fayetteville), a native of Warren, is an avid reader of Arkansas history. He has worked in the newspaper business in his native southeast Arkansas and northwest Arkansas. Rice became "hooked" on Arkansas history in 1969



New board members at the October 11 board meeting, Butler Center, Little Rock: back row (L to R) John Kyle Day, David Sesser, Maylon Rice; front (L to R) Story Matkin-Rawn and Susan Young. Not pictured are Rachel Silva and Elizabeth Jacoway.

See Board, page 2

## Universities Explore Johnny Cash's Arkansas Roots

The music of Arkansas-born legend Johnny Cash is well known across the globe, but, perhaps, less so, are his Arkansas roots. Two Arkansas universities recently launched projects highlighting Cash's boyhood and return to Arkansas. Arkansas State University on August 16, 2014 opened the Historic Dyess Colony: Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash; while the Center for Arkansas History & Culture, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, recently opened a temporary exhibit, *Johnny Cash: An Arkansas Icon*.

The Historic Dyess Colony is Arkansas State University's fourth Heritage Site in the Arkansas Delta. The Cash family, including three-year old J. R. Cash, left Kingsland in 1935 for the Dyess Colony in northeast Arkansas. The largest of Arkansas's twelve federal farm colonies, Dyess gave depression-era farmers a second chance to homestead between twenty



The Dyess Colony Administration Building, restored by Arkansas State University, holds exhibits interpreting the depression-era colony and is the starting point for tours of the Johnny Cash Boyhood Home. The building also holds offices for the town of Dyess.

See Cash, page 5

## New Board Members cont.

when his mentor and employer at the *Warren Eagle Democrat* challenged him to read the spring issue of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* “cover to cover.” Rice is currently working on a short history of the AHA for the 75th anniversary of the organization.

John Kyle Day (Monticello) is a native of Fayetteville. Dr. Day is an associate professor of history at the University of Arkansas, Monticello. He is the author of *The Southern Manifesto: Massive Resistance and the Fight to Preserve Segregation* (2014) and co-edited *Arkansas History: A Collegiate Reader* (2009). Day recalled his first experience in Arkansas history on the football field when he witnessed Pine Bluff Zebras’ running back Basil Shabazz, “the greatest player in Arkansas high school history,” run through the Fayetteville Bulldog defense “like a sieve.”

Rachel Silva (Little Rock), a native of Farmington, is the preservation outreach coordinator for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and current president of the Pulaski County Historical Society. Silva is a frequent contributor to the *AHQ* with “Arkansas Listings in the National Register of Historic Places.” In 2014 she won the Heritage Award at the Governor’s Conference on Tourism for her popular “Walks through History” series. Silva credits her interest in history to her maternal grandfather’s stories of farming at Hogeys and to great teachers like Farmington’s Bob Fulsom.

Susan Young (Springdale), a native of Fayetteville, previously served on the board from 2004 to 2010. During her first stint on the board she was frequently called upon to chair the program committee for the AHA’s annual conference; a role she has again taken on. Young is interested in anything Ozarks and serves on several boards, including the Arkansas Museum Association. She is most proud of her book on Tontitown’s history, *So Big, This Little Place* (2009).

Elizabeth Jacoway (Newport), a native of Little Rock, has lived in Jackson County for 36 years. Jacoway previously served on the board from 1983-1986 and currently is also a member of the *AHQ*’s editorial board. Her first memorable moment in Arkansas history was during the Little Rock school crisis, when she was in the 8th grade. That experience eventually led her to pen her proudest academic accomplishment: *Turn Away They Son: Little Rock, the Crisis that Shocked the Nation* (2007).

Story Matkin-Rawn (Conway) is a native of Little Rock and an assistant professor of history at the University of Central Arkansas. Dr. Matkin-Rawn’s first memorable experience doing history came with an internship under Pete Daniel at the National Museum of American History. Daniel directed her to research womanless weddings in Arkansas and grassroots organizations opposed to the desegregation of Little Rock Central High. She has published several articles in academic journals, but her proudest accomplishment is her work teaching Arkansas history to future teachers.

David Sesser (Arkadelphia) is a native of Natchez, Mississippi. He has worked at the Nevada County Depot & Museum and since 2008 has worked in Arkansas related special collections at the Huie Library, Henderson State University. Sesser is interested in Civil War and the history of higher education in Arkansas. He recently published *The Little Rock Arsenal Crisis: On the Precipice of the American Civil War* (2013).

### Arkansas Historical Association

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## Announcements and Upcoming Conferences

- The Nevada County Depot and Museum is seeking monetary donations for the acquisition of 448 acres of the Elkins' Ferry Battlefield, a nearly pristine site and National Historic Landmark associated with the Camden Expedition of 1864. The project has support from the Prescott-Nevada County Economic Development Foundation, the Conservation Fund, the Civil War Trust and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and has pledged of \$625,000, but still needs another \$325,000 to complete the acquisition. The AHA Board has recently approved a \$1000 donation to the fund. For more information, contact the Nevada County Depot and Museum at 870.887.5821 or visit [www.elkinsferry.weebly.com](http://www.elkinsferry.weebly.com).
- Each year the Pulaski County Historical Society bestows the F. Hampton Roy Award for the best unpublished research paper on Pulaski County. Deadline for submission is December 31. The author of the winning paper will receive \$300 and the paper will be published in the *Pulaski County Historical Review*. Contact Bob Razer, [rleslie@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:rleslie@cals.lib.ar.us), for more information
- The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has created a mini-website to host its education tools. The page offers free videos, podcasts, lesson plans, and other resources for teachers in Arkansas schools, focusing on the state's important historic places. Visit [ahppteachermaterials.weebly.com](http://ahppteachermaterials.weebly.com).
- "Freedom! Oh, Freedom!", a new exhibit at the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock explores the experience of African Americans during the Civil War and Reconstruction in Arkansas. Curated by Ronnie Nichols, the exhibit opens November 14 and closes December 31, 2015.
- The Arkansas Historical Association will meet April 9-11, 2015 in West Memphis for its 74th Annual Conference. With a theme of "To Bind up the Nation's Wounds" sessions will focus on health care, peacemaking or healing in Arkansas history, and serve as the final year of AHA's commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial.
- Center for Arkansas History & Culture, University of Arkansas at Little Rock opened *Johnny Cash: An Arkansas Icon* in the Underground Gallery of the Arkansas Studies Institute in downtown Little Rock. The exhibit runs through January 24, 2015 and features rare photographs of Cash in Arkansas from the Winthrop Rockefeller Collection as well as audio recordings of performances. For more information visit, [ualrexhibits.org/cash](http://ualrexhibits.org/cash).
- The Department of English and Philosophy at Arkansas State University has issued a call for papers and presentations for the twenty-first annual Delta Symposium April 8 – 11, 2015. This year's theme is "The South Goes to the Movies." Individual presentations on topics relevant to the history and culture of Arkansas and the Mississippi Deltas are welcome. The Delta Symposium features scholarship on blues and other musical expressions, and the symposium's focus also includes a wide variety of expressive forms that are resonant with Delta history and culture. For more information, visit [altweb.astate.edu/blues](http://altweb.astate.edu/blues).



Johnny Cash performing in Winthrop (Little River County), AR August 24, 1968. This photograph from the Winthrop Rockefeller Collection is one of many exhibited in the *Johnny Cash: Arkansas Icon* exhibit through January 24, 2015. Courtesy of Winthrop Rockefeller Collection, UALR Center for Arkansas History and Culture.



## Join the Arkansas Historical Association

Membership includes four issues of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* per year, as well as the Association's newsletter.

### Membership Levels

- ☐ Individual, one year.....\$20
- ☐ Individual, two year.....\$35
- ☐ Family, one year.....\$30
- ☐ Family, two year.....\$45
- ☐ Foreign, one year.....\$30
- ☐ Student, one year.....\$15
- ☐ Contributing, one year.....\$50
- ☐ Sustaining, one year.....\$100
- ☐ Supporting, one year.....\$200
- ☐ Life Membership.....\$500  
(payable over three years)
- ☐ Permanent Membership.....\$1,000  
(payable over five years)

### One-Year Corporate/Business Memberships

- ☐ Sponsor.....\$100
- ☐ Patron.....\$500
- ☐ Benefactor.....\$1000

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form along with payment to:

Arkansas Historical Association  
History Department, Old Main 416  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR 72701

Renewal and new memberships can be paid online using Paypal; visit the AHA website [arkansashistoricalassociation.org](http://arkansashistoricalassociation.org) and click "Membership."

## West Memphis to host 74th Annual Conference

The Arkansas Historical Association will hold its 74th annual conference on April 9-11, 2015 at West Memphis in venues throughout the town.

The conference theme for 2015, "To Bind up the Nation's Wounds," focuses on health care, peacemaking or healing in Arkansas history, as well as a final year to remember the Civil War in Arkansas.

This will be the first time the AHA has met in West Memphis. Paper sessions will be held at the West Memphis Civic Center and the Mid-

South Community College, while receptions will be held at Southland and West Memphis's historic downtown.

Programs and registration material will be mailed to AHA members in February 2015.



The Wilson Company Power & Light Company Ice Plant (built ca. 1930), a National Register Property, will be open for tours during the Thursday night reception in downtown West Memphis.



AHA President Tim Nutt

## President's Message

The Annual Conference Committee, led by Josh Williams, is hard at work planning next year's meeting in West Memphis. Simon Hosken is in charge of the local arrangements, while Susan Young is our program chair. It promises to be an exciting conference, and I hope you'll plan on attending April 9-11th. More information will be sent in the next few months.

Once again, I must thank Blake Wintory for the fine work he does on the *AHA Newsletter*. Having edited the newsletter myself, I know how difficult (and frustrating) it is to find enough copy to fill the pages. I ask that you help Blake by sending him news of exhibits, local history news, or any other tidbits that might be of interest to your fellow Arkansas history enthusiasts. Blake's email is [bwintory@astate.edu](mailto:bwintory@astate.edu).

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Donna Ludlow, the only paid employee of the Association. Donna works in the Association's office in Fayetteville on the University of Arkansas campus and keeps everything running smoothly. Likewise, Patrick Williams, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Association and editor of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*. Patrick does an excellent job and his leadership is one of the primary reasons why the *Quarterly* is so well-respected in the historical community. Of course, each of the Board members makes contributions to the Association, and I appreciate everyone's hard work.

Best wishes for the upcoming holiday season, and I look forward to seeing you all next year in West Memphis.

*Tim Nutt*

## Johnny Cash cont.

and forty acres of land. Homesteads also came with a modest five-room home and agriculture support buildings. The planned town center at Dyess featured a Greek Revival administration building, theater, school, hospital, cannery, and other service buildings. Arkansas State University acquired and restored the Dyess Administration Building, the Cash family home, and the remaining façade of the community theater. New interpretive exhibits in the Administration Building tell the story of the establishment of the colony, the 500 families that settled in Dyess, and the Cash family. The restored Cash family home sits nearly two miles from the Administration Building. ASU's Heritage Sites Program, led by Dr. Ruth Hawkins, took advice from Johnny Cash's two surviving siblings to furnish and replicate the interior of the home. Historic Dyess Colony is open Tuesdays through Saturdays with a \$10 admission fee. Tours are given from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and begin at the Administration Building. For more information visit [dyesscash.astate.edu](http://dyesscash.astate.edu).

On October 10, the Center for Arkansas History & Culture, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, unveiled *Johnny Cash: An Arkansas Icon*. Located in the Underground Gallery at the Arkansas Studies Institute, it features rare photographs of Cash in Arkansas and audio recordings of performances. Curated by Dr. Colin Woodward the exhibit argues Cash never severed his connections to Arkansas. Cash memorably returned to Arkansas in the late 1960s with a series of performances in support of Governor Winthrop Rockefeller's re-election campaign. His April 1969 performance at Cummins Prison continued Cash's support of prisoner rights and prison reform in Arkansas and the United States.

The free exhibit is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. until 6 pm. The exhibit closes January 24, 2015. The exhibit also has an virtual presence: [ualrexhibits.org/cash](http://ualrexhibits.org/cash). The exhibit website include extras like a full list of Cash's Arkansas performances and archival images of Cash in Arkansas from Winthrop Rockefeller Collection in the UALR Center for Arkansas History and Culture.

## AHA Awards

Each year the Arkansas Historical Association recognizes the best teaching, writing, and scholarship in Arkansas history. This last year the AHA added Best Newsletter published by a county or society or other entity working in Arkansas history to the Walter L. Brown Awards. This is the final year for the Charles O. Durnett Award, which honors the best manuscript on Arkansas Civil War History. For a complete list of requirements and nomination forms, visit the AHA website, [arkansashistoricalassociation.org](http://arkansashistoricalassociation.org).

### James H. Atkinson Award for Teaching of Arkansas History

For K-12 teachers; \$1,000 prize; deadline March 1, 2015.

### Susannah DeBlack Award

Honors best book on Arkansas history for a young audience; \$200 prize; deadline February 1, 2015.

### Charles O. Durnett Award

Best manuscript on Arkansas Civil War history; \$250 prize; deadline February 1, 2015. — Final Year

### J. G. Ragsdale Book Award

Best book-length nonfiction study of Arkansas history published in 2013 or 2014; \$1,000 prize; deadline January 1, 2014.

### Lucille Westbrook Local History Award

Best manuscript article on a local Arkansas subject; \$1,000 prize; deadline February 1, 2015.

### Violet B. Gingles Award

Best manuscript on any Arkansas topic; \$500 prize; deadline February 1, 2015.

### James L. Foster and Billy W. Beason Award

Best master's thesis or doctoral dissertation that addresses some aspect of Arkansas's history; prize \$250; deadline January 1, 2015.

### Diamond Award

Recognizes exceptional contribution to the study, preservation, or promotion of Arkansas history by an institution or individual. Nominations must be made through an AHA Board member; deadline December 1, 2014.

### NEARA Award

Best manuscript using primary and archival records, particularly the Lawrence County territorial papers (1815-1836), from the NorthEast Arkansas Regional Archives in Powhatan; \$1,000 prize; deadline February 1, 2015.



The AHA awarded a record six Lifetime Achievement Awards at the 2014 conference held at Historic Washington State Park. Pictured above are Wanda Gray, Dr. Jeannie Whayne, Ronnie Nichols, and Dr. Daniel Littlefield receiving a plaque recognizing their accomplishments from AHA President Tim Nutt. Awards to Sr. Henrietta Hockle and Dr. James W. Parins were awarded posthumously. Pat Wamble accepted on behalf of her sister and Dr. Marylyn Jackson Parins accepted on behalf of her husband.

### Walter L. Brown Awards for Arkansas County and Local Historical Journals

Deadlines February 1, 2015

Best County or Local Journal; \$100 prize

Best Article in a County or Local Journal; \$100 prize

Best Biography, Autobiography or Memoir

Best Family History

Best Church History

Best Community History

Best School History

Best Business History

Best Edited Documents

Best Use of Graphics

Best Newsletter





The Johnny Cash Boyhood Home is now part of Arkansas State University's Historic Dyess Colony. The house, built in 1935, was restored and furnished with the advice of Tommy Cash and Joanne Cash, Johnny's two living siblings. The Dyess Colony is the fourth ASU Heritage Site.