

The Ruffian

Vol. 39 No. 1 (Summer 2022)

Newsletter of the Arkansas Historical Association

Fearlessly grappling with all the latest history doin's pertinent to the discerning Arkansawyer, about twice a year. Send news and events to kjones116@atu.edu.

President's Message

Greetings, AHA Members and Friends! I'm Rachel Patton, executive director of Preserve Arkansas and AHA's newly elected president. I hope you enjoyed the Arkansas Historical Association's 81st Annual Conference as much as I did. To minimize the spread of Covid-19, conference sessions were held virtually April 18-22. The week culminated with an in-person reception and awards banquet on Friday, April 22 at the open-air Jim Mosely Tabernacle at the Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center in western Pulaski County.

Guided by the theme "Natural States of Being: Gender and Sexuality in Arkansas History," conference presentations focused on pioneering Arkansas women and men, sexuality and power, notions of femininity and masculinity in shaping Arkansas's past, and the intersections of identities of race and gender. In reflection, I believe this theme generated thought-provoking sessions highlighting underrepresented communities, telling a more complete story of our collective past. The conference engaged with new audiences and presenters as well—something that is vitally important to the continued health of the AHA.

This year, the AHA presented three lifetime achievement awards to individuals who have made significant contributions to the study of Arkansas history. Susan Young was recognized for her devotion to the study and preservation of Arkansas history and dedicated service to the Arkansas Historical Association. James F. Willis was honored in absentia for his service to Arkansas history as a gifted teacher, rigorous scholar, and generous mentor. And Ben F. Johnson, III, was lauded for his pathbreaking scholarship in, and vigorous service to, Arkansas history. Additionally, twenty-four awards were bestowed upon individuals and organizations for outstanding scholarship, writing, editing, teaching, and advocacy.

Congratulations to our awardees, and kudos to the conference committee for another great event! If you were unable to attend the virtual sessions, or if you'd like to watch them again, the recordings are available on the AHA's YouTube channel:



"The other man was a stalwart ruffian called 'Arkansas,' who carried two revolvers in his belt and a bowie knife projecting from his boot, and who was always drunk and always suffering for a fight. But he was so feared, that nobody would accommodate him."

-Mark Twain, *Roughing It*

Arkansas Historical Association

President

Rachel Silva Patton, North Little Rock
rpatton@preservearkansas.org

Vice-President

Blake Perkins, Lynn blake.perkins2004@gmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer

Patrick Williams, Fayetteville pgwillia@uark.edu

Board of Trustees

Kwami Abdul-Bey, North Little Rock
kwami@wfymlc.org

John Beller, Cave City
jbeller@bkcc.net

Rodney Harris, Pochontas
rharris@williamsbu.edu

Kelly Houston Jones, Russellville
kjones116@atu.edu

Cherisse Jones-Branch, Jonesboro
crjones@astate.edu

Brian Mitchell, North Little Rock
bkmitchell@prodigy.net

Chris Mortenson, Arkadelphia
mortensonc@obu.edu

Glenn Mosenthin, Searcy
hgmosenthin@gmail.com

Janine Parry, Fayetteville
parry@uark.edu

Brian Robertson, Cabot
brianr@cals.org

Nathania Sawyer, Little Rock
nksawyer@yahoo.com

Stephanie Sims, Pine Bluff
simss@uapb.edu

Lisa Speer, Arkadelphia
speerl@obu.edu

Drew Ulrich, Helena-West Helena
drew.ulrich@arkansas.gov

Tom Wing, Cedarville
tom.wing@uafs.edu

Donna Ludlow, Fayetteville
Business Manager dludlow@uark.edu

<https://bit.ly/3Cvmp2i>.

It is my honor to serve as the president of the Arkansas Historical Association. Please contact me if you have ideas to improve the Association, or if you'd like to get more involved. I look forward to seeing you all in person at our 82nd Annual Conference, slated for April 13-15, 2023, at DeGray Lake Resort State Park. Until then, take care.

Kind Regards,
Rachel Patton

Rpatton@preservearkansas.org

Eighty-second Annual Conference Imminent

Save the date for our 2023 annual meeting, which will be held in person April 13-15. Thursday evening's reception will be held at the Historic Captain Henderson House, adjacent to the Henderson State University campus in Arkadelphia. Friday and Saturday's meals and presentations, as well as the annual banquet and awards ceremony will be held at DeGray Lake Resort State Park. The conference committee is hard at work planning historic site tours as well as soliciting presentations anchored by the theme "Amusing Arkansas: Sports and Leisure in the Natural State," which offers a chance to consider the history of Arkansans at play: in sports, outdoor recreation, arts, and hunting/fishing. Send proposals of approximately 200 words by October 28, 2022 to Brian K. Robertson, program chair, brianr@cals.org.

I Tell You What:

The ***Holman Heritage Community Center*** of Stuttgart, along with the ***Grand Prairie Historical Society***, dedicated a historical marker Saturday, July 2 on the grounds of the former Holman School. The event took place as part of an alumni reunion of Holman students. This school for African Americans, built in 1907, was first located at Porter and Lincoln Streets. It was rebuilt in 1924 with Rosenwald Foundation funding. The school moved again and took the name Holman in 1932. The first class attending that location graduated in 1942, and the last in 1970, after which time Stuttgart's schools were fully integrated. In 1996, the Holman Community Development Corporation began preserving the building as a cultural and historical landmark. Today the building serves as Holman Heritage Community Center. The historical marker, which interprets the School's significance as an education center for the area's African American community until 1970, was supported by a Curtis Sykes grant, funded by the Black History Commission of Arkansas.



Alumni and community members pose with the new Holman School marker. *Courtesy Glen Mosenthin.*

Buckle up, *Quarterly* connoisseurs. This editor announces, **in honor of the 80th year of publication of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly***, a series called "**Every AHQ**" in partnership with former trustee and bona fide *Quarterly* aficionado, Maylon Rice. "Every AHQ" (watch for #EveryAHQ online) will offer

information, analysis, and more casual thoughts on each *Quarterly* issue, including, when available, a discussion of the Association at the time of its publication. Presented in a blog style, taking one *AHQ* at a time, the series will kick off with Volume 1, Number 1, Spring 1942. A preview of some installments will be offered here in *The Ruffian*, while the whole sequence will have its home on the AHA website.

Among their many valuable contributions to safeguarding Arkansas's historic sites, **Preserve Arkansas** has long been featuring female feats in the field with their "Women in Preservation" program, a virtual speaker series that amplifies the work of women from a variety of backgrounds who strive to save Arkansas's historic places. All programs are free, thanks to generous support from DEMX Architecture, but advance registration is required. Upcoming presentations include Ruth O'Loughlin, site director at Lakeport Plantation in Chicot County on Tuesday, September 13th, at 3:30 p.m.; Renee Vanegas, Senior Associate, Deborah Berke Partners of NYC on October 11th, and Pam Beasley, Superintendent, Historic Washington State Park on November 15th. You can register for upcoming presentations and watch previous presentations at the following link: <https://preservearkansas.org/what-we-do/women-in-preservation/>.



We're thanking our lucky stars that the **Library of Congress's** "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers" project has piled on plenty more Arkansas newspapers to their list. "Chronicling America" is a website providing access to digitized newspaper pages, produced by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). NDNP, a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress, has been at work for years building this searchable database of U.S. newspapers. Head over to chroniclingamerica.loc.gov and enjoy hours of fun searching for your ancestors or historic gossip. The ads can be particularly entertaining to peruse, especially for students. Or, if you prefer to kick back and have your historic Arkansas newspaper fix delivered right to your feed without lifting (more than) a finger, simply follow the **Arkansas State Archives** on social media; the clips they share are always a hoot.

\$795 Model 85-4 f. o. b. Toledo

Overland

\$795 Model 85-4 f. o. b. Toledo

You Ought to Own This Car

Its possession will enrich your life and the lives of every member of your family.

The freedom and wider range of activity made possible by such a car are worth many times its price.

The price is by far the lowest at which so big and fine and comfortable a car ever sold.

Big—the wheelbase is 112 inches.

Fine—it's a beautifully finished, luxurious car.

Comfortable—it has cantilever springs and 4-inch tires.

Model 85-6, 35-40 horsepower six cylinder motor, 116-inch wheelbase—\$925.

Come in today—we can't get them as fast as we sell them—so order yours right away!

W. D. Mathis, Agt., Brinkley, Ark.
The Willys-Overland Company, Toledo, Ohio
"Made in U. S. A."

Advertisement in the Brinkley Argus, October 20, 1916, pulled from the Chronicling America site. Courtesy Library of Congress.

Y'all Come Out:

The **University of Arkansas at Monticello** will host a ribbon-cutting to mark the grand opening of the Taylor House at Hollywood on Wednesday, October 5, 2022, beginning at 10:00 a.m. For nearly a decade, UAM has worked with the **Division of Arkansas Heritage of the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism** to restore this, one of the oldest private residences in Arkansas. The Taylor House is a two-story log dogtrot, constructed as early as 1846, right on Bayou Bartholomew, the longest bayou in the world. At the height of their wealth, the Taylors farmed some 11,000 acres worked by over 100 enslaved African Americans. The restoration project was directed by Tommy Jameson Architects, assisted by Joan Gould of Preservation Matters. Speakers at the ribbon-cutting will include



The Taylor house in 1914. *Courtesy John Kyle Day.*

UAM Chancellor Peggy Doss and ADPHT Secretary Stacy Hurst. Refreshments and tours will be provided. For further information, contact John Kyle Day at 870-460-1887, day@uamont.edu or John Henris, Henris@uamont.edu. As if the ribbon-cutting at the Taylor House wasn't exciting enough, **Preserve Arkansas's** 2022 "Behind the Big House" program will be held there later in the year, in early December. Watch for details of that event to emerge on preservearkansas.org.

The **Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's** "Sandwiching in History" program continues to provide educational peeks at Arkansas's fascinating historic sites. Always held at noon early in the month, upcoming tours include the October 7th

walk-through of facilities constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps Company 1731 (V-CCC) at Petit Jean State Park. The company's "V" designation meant that it was composed of World War I veterans. From 1933 to 1938, the CCC built roads, trails, lodges, cabins, bridges, dams, pavilions, and other facilities at Petit Jean. Many of these structures and buildings are still used by the park today and stand as a testament to the CCC's superior craftsmanship. Fill another lunch hour on November 4th with a tour of the Historic Climber Motor Car Factory, which produced the only cars ever manufactured in Arkansas. View the full 2022 schedule here: <https://bit.ly/3cvYUeI>. We hear you can still participate in these events even if you packed pork rinds and cornbread instead of a sandwich. Each tour is made available on all of AHPP's social media platforms and are archived on their YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/3AWTuCV>.

Add to your spooky season calendar a night at **Old Washington State Park**. "Washington After Dark" tours will be offered on October 22nd and October 29th. Light your candle lanterns and accompany an interpretive guide through selected sites to hear about their "unexplained" happenings in history. At this year's event, the park hosts special guests--The InSpecters Paranormal Team ("educators by day, specter hunters by night!" according to their social media). The cost is \$15 and reservations are required. Each terrifying trek will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the 1874 Courthouse. Call the park at 870-983-2684 for more information.

Listen Here! <https://bit.ly/3pGVOYb>



Follow the link above to explore the Central Arkansas Library System's Bill Clinton Gubernatorial Audio Project. The folks at CALS set up this project to "ensure these materials are preserved and made available to educators, researchers, and the public in order to help future generations understand how Bill Clinton's policies and actions impacted Arkansas and the nation leading up to his 1992 United States presidential election victory."

Photograph by Sheila Bronfman, courtesy of CALS.

Finally, we offer the same request made in World War II-era issues of the AHQ:
"If you think it tolerable, speak kindly about it to your friends and invite them to join the Association."



Join the Arkansas Historical Association and receive four issues of the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* per year, as well as the Association's newsletter for the following rates:

Individual, one year for \$20; Individual, two year, for \$35;

Family, one year for \$30; Family, two year for \$45;

Foreign, one year for \$30; Student, one year, for \$15;

Contributing, one year, for \$50; Sustaining, one year for \$100;

Supporting, one year, for \$200;

Life Membership for \$500 (payable over three years)

Permanent Membership for \$1,000 (payable over five years)

Renewal and new memberships can be paid online using Paypal;
visit the AHA website arkansashistoricalassociation.org.
