

THE BUTLER BANNER

NEWSLETTER OF THE RICHARD C. BUTLER, SR. CENTER FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

Volume 3, Number 2

March 2000

LaRue and West Named Butler Fellows

Two outstanding Arkansas educators have been awarded Butler Fellowships by the Butler Center. Mrs. Maenette LaRue, who lives at Rudy and teaches at Alma Intermediate School, and George West, a Little Rock resident who teaches at the Arkansas School for Math and Sciences in Hot Springs, were feted at a reception on February 17th at the State Capitol—with former U.S. Senator David Pryor hosting.

As Butler Fellows, LaRue and West will serve yearlong appointments during which they will produce lesson plans on Arkansas history—and then demonstrate the use of the plans to other classroom teachers. The Fellowships carry a stipend of \$2500.

The lesson plans produced by the Fellows are placed on the Butler Center's webpage, and teachers can download the plans and use them in their classrooms. (The website can be accessed at <http://www.cals.lib.ar.us>)

A 24-year veteran of the Alma Public Schools, Mrs. LaRue currently teaches 5th grade social studies. Last year the Arkansas Historical Association awarded her the J. H. Atkinson Award for Excellence in Teaching Arkansas History. She is on the board of Teachers of Arkansas Studies Council [TASC], which she serves as co-chair for their award-winning workshop series. In 1999 the Arkansas Council for the Social Studies named her Social Studies Teacher of the Year.

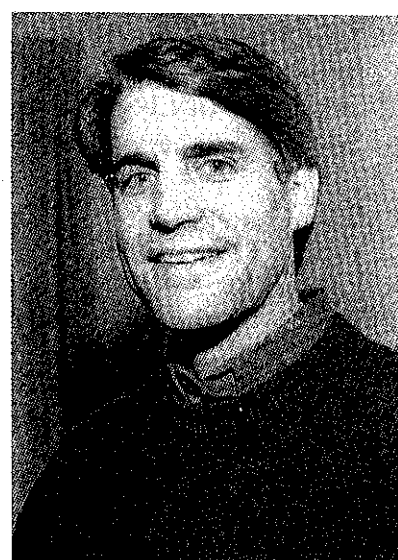
In addition to Arkansas history, Mrs. LaRue is widely recognized as a leader in the field of geographic education. In 1996 she was recognized as Elementary Geography Teacher of the Year by the Arkansas Geographic Alliance.

Tom Dillard, Butler Center Curator, was full of praise for Mrs. LaRue, noting that "Maenette's expertise in geography education will enable her to produce lesson plans that connect Arkansas history to the state's geography."

George West is a native of Little Rock. After graduating from Harvard University, he returned to Arkansas where he developed a deep interest in the region's culture and music. He conducted oral history interviews through the UALR oral history program, and later he and folklorist W. K. McNeill continued the work and produced two LP albums titled "Not Far From Here." Later, he produced several more documentary albums, including the last record of works by Almeda Riddle, a famed Ozarks singer.



Maenette LaRue



George West

Inside This Issue

Curator's Column	Page 2
Butler Center Acquires Photo Collection	Page 3
BC Honors Fellows	Page 3
A Look at Some Pamphlets	Page 4
Butler Center Hosts Book Signing	Page 5
Butlers Honored for Philanthropy	Page 6
New Employees Profiled	Page 7
John Gould Fletcher Conference Scheduled	Page 7
Memorials & Gifts	Page 8

West then moved from audio to video documentation. With Louis Guida he produced "Bear Dog, Bulldog," a collection of performances by storytellers and performers. Still later, his documentary titled "Now Lets Talk About Singing, Almeda Riddle Ozarks Singer" was broadcast on AETN public television.

West began his teaching career at Sheridan, and he later taught in Little Rock, before moving to the Math and Science School four years ago.

See "Fellows" on Page 3



Curator's Column

Tom W. Dillard

Recently the Butler Center co-sponsored a conference in Helena on the Elaine Race Riots of 1919. Despite our fears and trepidation, the conference not only accomplished its goal of drawing attention to this important historical event, but it went far, far beyond that. The Elaine Conference demonstrated that historical programming can serve not only to educate, but also to unify, to brush away the cobwebs that obscure the connections between the races

Frankly, it took some considerable fortitude to sign-on to this project. No part of the state is more racially divided than Phillips County. During the week before the conference county government was forced to close for several days due to a race-based impasse on the county quorum court. It was not a happy situation, to say the least.

Another factor mitigating against the conference was our incomplete knowledge of the actual facts of the riots and the aftermath. We knew enough to know at least 25 people died during the autumn of 1919, and possibly many more were killed and left in the canebrakes. We know all too well that twelve African-American men were railroaded through a series of charades masquerading as trials and sentenced to death.

So, with this background of confusion, historical doubt, and no small amount of racial uncertainty if not antagonism, the Butler Center joined the Phillips County Historical Society and the Delta Cultural Center in sponsoring the event.

On the day the event was to begin, I got to the conference site early. We were meeting in the restored Malco Theater on Cherry Street, which was empty when I entered. I stood on the stage and looked out over the empty seats—and I realized that we were meeting in a building that for much of its existence was a segregated theater! Would anyone, especially black folks, show up?

We were not expecting a large crowd for the conference. The major state newspaper failed to publish anything on the event until the day it started! And the weather was cold. In our pessimism we took only 100 programs and handouts to distribute.

Man, I was wrong! Before the evening program got underway, a sea of black and white citizens sat rocking in the theater seats—about 300 people. The next day, even more folks showed up. Total attendance was about 650 people!

And while we might have been neglected by the state press, other news outlets were fascinated by the event. The *Los Angeles Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the Associated Press, and other out-of-state newspapers sent reporters. (The local *Helena Daily World* did a good job too.)

Like everyone else in attendance, those reporters witnessed a population struggling to come to terms with an event that had been swept under the historical rug. Both black and white citizens took the floor to explain how their parents tried to protect them from the realization that a massacre had taken place in the verdant cotton fields of Phillips County.

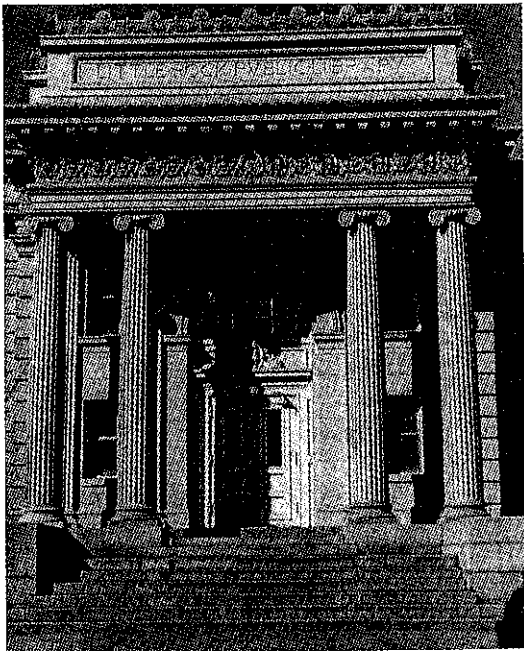
It was Grif Stockley, the keynote speaker, who did more than anyone to shed light on the violence. More importantly, Grif's pioneering research and new interpretation went a long way toward putting a human face on the participants in the court cases coming out of the riots.

Listeners heard Grif explain how black lawyer Scipio A. Jones of Little Rock put together a masterful defense of the twelve men sentenced to death. Jones emerges as a full fledged hero, but surprisingly, so do some of the white Arkansas lawyers—especially Edgar McHaney and Chancery Judge John E. Martineau. It was quite a treat to watch Mrs. Hazel Adams, Scipio Jones' granddaughter, and Jim McHaney, the grandson of Edgar McHaney, pose together seven decades after their grandfathers worked together to save twelve innocent black men.

Much remains to be done before Arkansas can fully exorcise the demon of racism. However, the conference in Helena was a good beginning—and I am proud the Butler Center could play a role in making it happen. Stay tuned for more developments.

The Butler Banner is the quarterly newsletter of the Richard C. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies. Central Arkansas Library System 100 Rock Street LittleRock, AR 72201 (501) 918-3056 (501) 375-7451-FAX arinfo@cals.lib.ar.us <http://www.cals.lib.ar.us> Timothy G. Nutt, Editor

Outstanding Photos Go To Butler Center



Little Rock Public Library Facade, circa 1955.
One of the photographs in the newly-acquired
Gene Hull Photograph Collection.

After a lifetime photographing Little Rock and Arkansas, Clifton E. "Gene" Hull of North Little Rock has donated his 1700 pictures and negatives to the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, a department of the Central Arkansas Library System.

Hull, a native of North Little Rock, took up photography just before World War II when he purchased a camera from the famed Izzy Itkowitz Pawn Shop in Little Rock. Throughout his long career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Hull carried his camera and took advantage of photo opportunities.

When Urban Renewal and urban sprawl hit the central Arkansas area after World War II, Hull used his camera to record buildings and neighborhoods that were being destroyed in the name of progress. Tom W. Dillard, Curator of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, referred to the Hull Photograph Collection as "the greatest single trove of available pictures documenting central Arkansas."

Dillard said the pictures are being cataloged, and they will be made available soon to researchers. Copies may be purchased through the Butler Center.

For more information, contact the Butler Center at 501-918-3056.

Reception Honors Butler Center Fellows, Old and New Former Senator David Pryor Serves as Host

The four original Butler Center Fellows and the Class of 2001 Fellows were honored at a reception held at in the Old Supreme Court Chambers on February 17, 2000. Former U.S. Senator David Pryor served as host.

During the reception, Butler Center Curator Tom Dillard and Senator Pryor praised the outgoing Butler Fellows for their hard work and commitment to the teaching of Arkansas history. Bonnie Haynie, of Bryant High School, Margaret Grimes, of Courtway Middle School in Conway, Beverly Ruthven of Baker Elementary in the Pulaski County Special School District, and Dr. Sondra Gordy from the University of Central Arkansas were each awarded a Butler Center Fellowship in 1999. As part of the program, they produced at least ten Arkansas history lesson plans on a variety of topics, ranging from the establishment of a German Catholic community in Conway to the pearl industry on the Black River. All of the lesson plans produced by the Fellows will eventually be placed on the Butler Center's web page (www.cals.lib.ar.us), allowing teachers from all over the world access to the materials.

Also at the reception, two new Fellows were announced. Maenette LaRue, from Alma Intermediate School, and George West, Arkansas School for Science and Mathematics, will also produced lesson plans suitable for the web page.

Present at the reception was Gertrude R. Butler, widow of the Butler Center's benefactor Richard C. Butler, Sr., as well as members of the Fellows' families.

"Fellows," continued from Page 1

In 1998 West was awarded a Fellowship by the American Memory Institute at the Library of Congress. From that experience he developed the "Arkansas Memory" project at the Math and Science School, a program which enabled his students to research and develop "web pages" on various aspects of Arkansas history. The Arkansas Memory project may be accessed through the Butler Center's website address cited above.

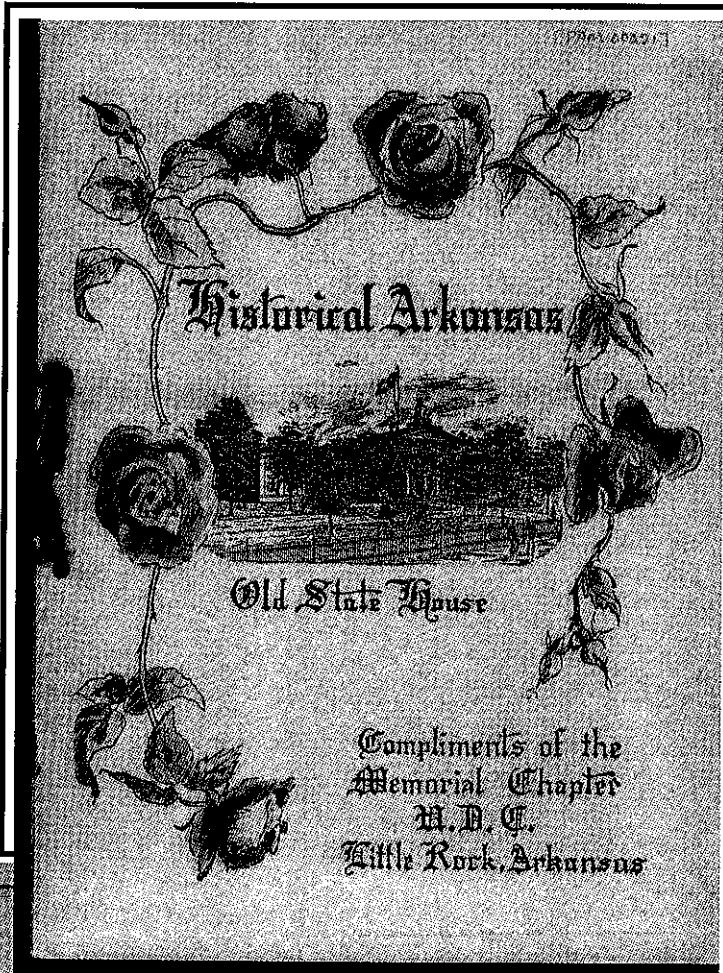
Readers wishing to suggest topics and resources for lesson plans should submit them to Tom Dillard at the Butler Center for transmittal to the Butler Fellows.



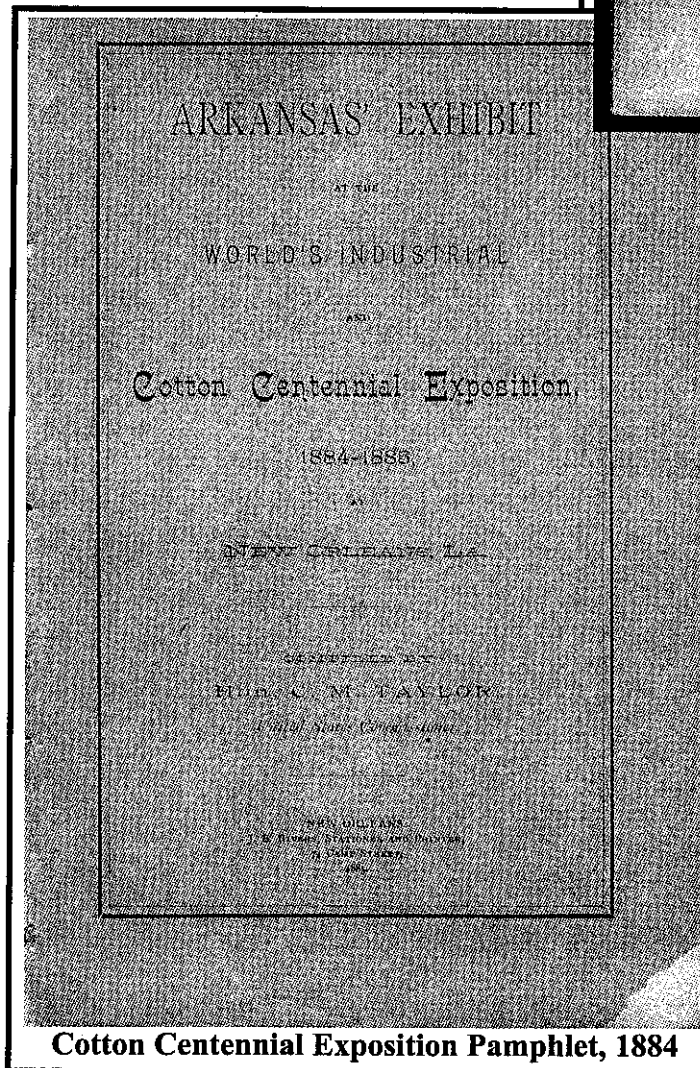
Front Row (l to r): Maenette LaRue, Bonnie Haynie, Gertie Butler, Beverly Ruthven
Back (l to r): Sen. David Pryor, George West, Sondra Gordy, Margaret Grimes. Photo by Brian Robertson.

Pamphlets, Pamphlets,

The Butler Center's pamphlet collection continues to grow. Tim Nutt, Deputy Curator, has been working diligently to place all of our pamphlets on the library's card catalog, allowing the same type of access to these under-used materials as books. The pamphlets are given subject headings just as are books. For example, if you look for a book on Pulaski County, the catalog will display citations for all of the books and pamphlets the Butler Center owns dealing with Pulaski County history. You can look for pamphlets through our catalog which can be accessed through the Internet at <http://www.cals.lib.ar.us>.



Old State House Pamphlet, circa 1920



Cotton Centennial Exposition Pamphlet, 1884

Currently, the Center's collection of pamphlets consists of over 3000 items. Here are a few samples of some of them. If you have a pamphlet you would like to donate, contact the Butler Center at 918-3056.

T • H • E
BUTLER
CENTER
FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

and More Pamphlets...

Re-building Christ Episcopal Church After Fire, circa 1939

Centennial Memorial Campaign

To Rebuild

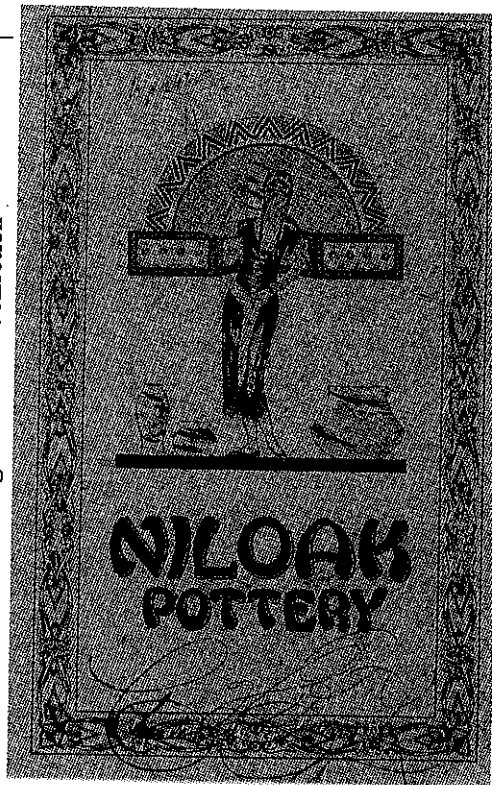
*Christ Episcopal
Church*

Little Rock, Ark.



The First Episcopal Parish
Established in Arkansas

Niloak Pottery Catalog, circa 1920.
From the Charles A. Brough Arkansas Collection



Vestal Nursery Catalog, 1915



Hot Springs Tourism Pamphlet, circa 1925

Book Signing to Celebrate Millennium Release of Three Books

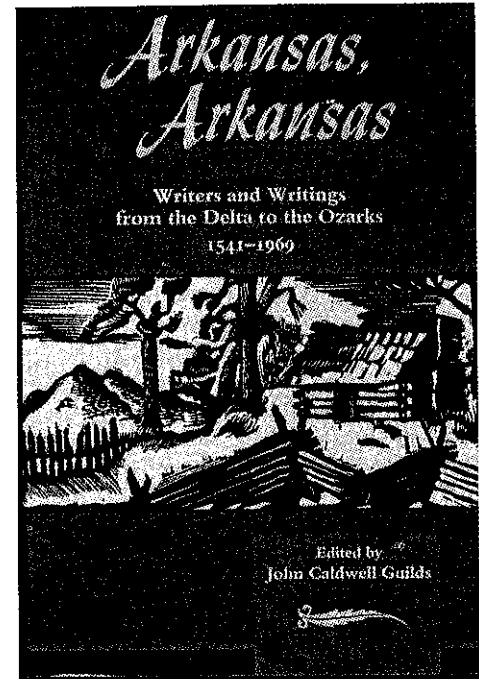
The Butler Center and the Central Arkansas Library System will host a book-signing on April 29th celebrating the release of three books on Arkansas history. The books were published by the University of Arkansas Press and will be available for purchase at the event.

Arkansas, Arkansas: Writers and Writings From the Delta to the Ozarks, 1541-Present, edited by John Caldwell Guilds, is a two-volume compilation of writings from around the state, which is testament to the rich and varied literary history of Arkansas. All living authors represented in *Arkansas, Arkansas* have been invited to appear.

Sentinels of History: Reflections on Arkansas Properties on the National Register of Historic Places is a collection of essays about historic and significant properties around the state. Mark Christ and Cathy Slater are co-editors.

Arkansas Biography: A Collection of Notable Lives, is a ten-year project, resulting in the most comprehensive biographical reference on the state's prominent individuals. The 180 contributors to this volume have written succinct biographical sketches that run the gamut of Arkansas history, from the Arkansas governor Homer Adkins to congressman Archibald Yell. Nancy Williams is the editor of this reference.

The book-signing is one event scheduled by the Butler Center to celebrate the passage of the new millennium. This historic event will not be repeated until the next millennium so mark your calendars.



Volume 1 of *Arkansas, Arkansas*. Get your copy autographed on April 29th.

Butlers Honored for Philanthropic Efforts

Gertrude and the late Richard C. Butler, Sr., benefactors of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, were recently awarded the 1999 "Roots and Wings" Arkansas Benefactor Award by the Arkansas Community Foundation.

The "Roots and Wings" Award was created in 1997 for the purpose of building philanthropy through recognitions and encouragement of benefactors whose generosity makes a significant difference for Arkansas.

According to the Foundation, the Butlers "have made a significant difference as benefactors throughout most of the twentieth century. They have made substantial gifts to statewide causes. An example we especially salute is the impact of their endowing the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies based at the Central Arkansas Library System. The Butlers' lives have been models of giving, as stewards of their time, their talents, and their treasure."

The staff of the Butler Center and the entire Central Arkansas Library System congratulate the Butler family on this honor and extend our sincerest appreciation for their support.



Hayes McClerkin, ACF Board Chair presents Gertrude Butler with the "Roots and Wings" Arkansas Benefactor Award, honoring Gertie and her late husband, Richard C. Butler, Sr. Mrs. Butler's brother Rollie Remmel, niece, Cathie Matthews, and ACF Board First Vice Chair Sandra Cherry look on.
Photo courtesy: Arkansas Community Foundation.

Two New Employees Join Butler Center Staff

The Butler Center is proud to welcome two new employees to our staff.

Cary Cox is the new programs coordinator. He will be in charge of coordinating the Butler Center's adult programming projects, which includes the successful "Legacies & Lunch" series, as well as special conferences and symposia. Cary received a B.A. degree in History from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and is currently working on a masters degree in Public History from UALR. He brings a number of years of historical research experience to his job with previous jobs including work with the Quapaw Quarter Association and the Secretary of State. Cary was also involved in the Arkansas Newspaper Project that was sponsored by the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the mid-1980s and the early 1990s.

Cary is married and is the father of a daughter and twin sons. He lives in Little Rock.

Jane Wilkerson, the Butler Center's new Clerk, is a graduate of UALR with a B.A. in history and is currently working towards a Pub-



Cary Cox, Butler Center's new Programming Coordinator

lic History degree with the university. Jane is in charge of the Butler Center's vertical file, as well as processing manuscript collections.

The Butler Center's total staff now includes seven persons. Tom Dillard, Tim Nutt, Linda McDowell, Brian Robertson, Rel Corbin, and Jordan Patty still remain on staff.



Jane Wilkerson, the Butler Center's new Clerk files periodicals

Attention All History Teachers!!!

Do you want to receive the Butler Banner and updates on new lesson plans by the Butler Center Fellows? If so, send your name, address, school, phone number and email address to us at the Butler Center. We'll add you to our list!

Conference to Highlight Pulitzer Prize-Winning Poet

The Butler Center will sponsor a conference commemorating the life and work of John Gould Fletcher, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, June 16-17, 2000 in the Darragh Center at the Main Library.

The conference will feature presentations on Fletcher's work and his association with various literary movements, including the Agrarians and Imagists. Little Rock natives will share their reminiscences of the poet, as well as his wife and fellow author, Charlie May Simon during a panel discussion. A play about Fletcher and Simon, entitled *An Evening at Johnswood*, will conclude the conference. The play and accompanying reception will be held at Johnswood, the former home of the two authors and the present home of Arkansas Supreme Court Justice Robert and Charlotte Brown.

John Gould Fletcher was born in 1886 to a prominent Little Rock family and grew up in the mansion built by Civil War General and poet Albert Pike, now occupied by the Decorative Arts Museum. After a brief period at Harvard University, Fletcher traveled and settled in Europe before returning to Arkansas in 1933. Three years later, he married Charlie May Hogue Simon, an author in her own right. In 1938, Fletcher was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for *Selected Poems*, a compilation of previous works. To date, Fletcher is the only Arkansan to win the Award for poetry. He was also the author of *Arkansas*. In 1950, Fletcher committed suicide near *Johnswood*, his and Simon's home outside of Little Rock.

The Fletcher branch in the Heights/Hillcrest area of Little Rock was the first branch of the Central Arkansas Library System and is named in honor of the poet. The Terry branch in West Little Rock is named for Fletcher's sister, Adolphine Fletcher Terry.

For more information about the conference, please call Cary Cox, the Butler Center's programming coordinator, at 918-3049.



John Gould Fletcher, circa 1941.

Photo courtesy:
Butler Center for Arkansas Studies,
Central Arkansas Library System

In Memory Of

Books and Materials

Richard C. Butler, Sr.

William M. Clark
M/M Sam Hodges
M/M Jack Holt, Jr.

Nita Stanley

QUEST Quilters

Henry DeLinde

Meredith DeWoody

First Baptist Church of Paragould

Darcy Howard

Barbara Shults

William V. Thaden

Henry Wilks

Miss Josephine Brown

Mrs. Earlene Butterworth
Lt. Samuel Cherry Chpt., D.A.C.

Mrs. Martha Bass

Bob and Muriel McCord

General Support

Ark. Pioneers-Pulaski County Association

Gertrude R. Butler

Dr. Richard B. Clark

M/M Frank Lambright

Dorothy Morris

QUEST Quilters, Inc.

**T • H • E
BUTLER
CENTER**

FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

Central Arkansas Library System

100 Rock Street

Little Rock, AR 72201

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LITTLE ROCK, AR
PERMIT NO. 183