

# THE BUTLER BANNER

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

Volume 6, Number 3

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## Butler Center to Celebrate Centennial of Flight at October Conference

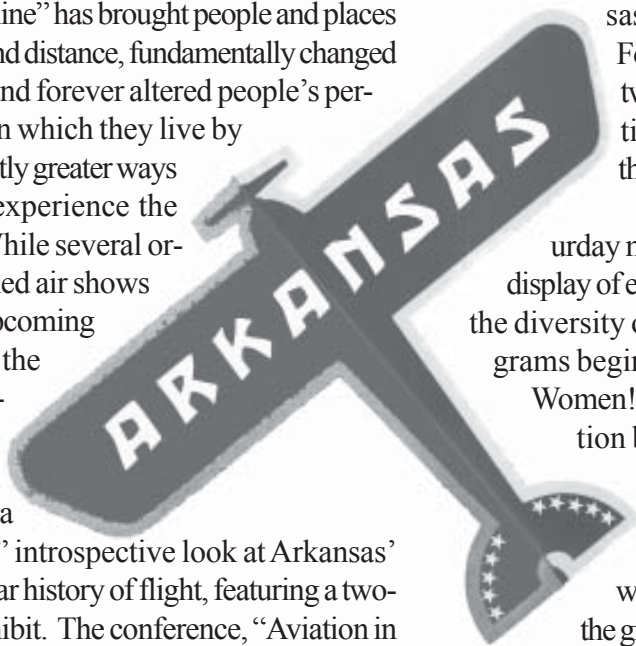
Since that fateful day, nearly one hundred years ago, when the Wright brothers proved that humans could literally fly like eagles, the development of aviation has profoundly influenced society and the course of history. The proverbial “flying machine” has brought people and places closer together in time and distance, fundamentally changed the nature of warfare, and forever altered people’s perspective of the world in which they live by providing them with vastly greater ways and opportunities to experience the world around them. While several organizations have planned air shows to commemorate the upcoming centennial of aviation, the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System, is planning a more “down-to-earth,” introspective look at Arkansas’ place in the hundred-year history of flight, featuring a two-day conference and exhibit. The conference, “Aviation in Arkansas: Celebrating the Centennial of Flight,” will be held Friday evening and Saturday, October 24 – 25, 2003, in the Darragh Center auditorium at the Main Library, 100 Rock Street, in Little Rock’s River Market district. The conference is free; advance registration is requested.

The conference will begin on Friday evening, October 24, at 7:00 pm with a reception and display of exhibits highlighting Arkansas’ role in the history of aviation. Along with items from the Butler Center’s collections, objects and documents will be displayed from the Arkansas Aviation Historical Society’s Jay Miller Collection, Aerospace Education Center, McArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, Arkansas Air Museum, Rogers Historical Museum, and private individuals. Following the reception, Mr. Richard N. Holbert, president of Central Flying Service and a founder of the Arkansas Aviation Historical Society and Aerospace Education Center, will present the keynote program, entitled “From Flying Machine

Charlie to Falcon Jet: A Brief History of Aviation in Arkansas.” Holbert will chronicle the evolution of aviation in Arkansas, from the mid-1870s when the Wright brothers were just young boys, to the present, in which Arkansas boasts two national airports, the Air Force’s primary cargo supply training base, two internationally-respected jet modification factories, and other examples of a thriving aviation industry.

The conference will continue on Saturday morning, October 25, at 9:00 am with the display of exhibits and several programs highlighting the diversity of Arkansas’ aviation history. The programs begin with “Those Daring Young Men (and Women!) In Their Flying Machines,” a presentation by Mr. Dave Wallis, a former mayor of Pine Bluff and a respected businessman, local historian, and aviation enthusiast. Wallis will examine the brave men and women who dared to help aviation get off the ground, literally and figuratively, in the early decades of the twentieth century. Next, Dr. William M. Smith, Jr. will present “The Right Plane at the Wrong Time: The Command-Aire Aircraft Company.” Smith, Associate athletic director for communications at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and president of the board of Fayetteville’s Arkansas Air Museum, will discuss the story of Command-Aire, a Little Rock aircraft company that produced award-winning, affordable airplanes but was ruined by the Great Depression. Also scheduled for the morning session is Mr. Thomas E. “Pete” Jordon, director of the Arkansas Post State Museum, who will present “Courage and Daring in the Call to Duty: Arkansas’ Military Aviators,” a look at the many brave Arkansans who answered democracy’s call to duty and sometimes gave their lives for it, serving in command and battle in all types of aircraft, including bombers, fighters, cargo, and rescue planes.

(See “Aviation,” on Page 6)





## Curator's Column

Tom W. Dillard

Of all the projects the Butler Center has undertaken, none is more important than our "Arkansas Studies Living Curriculum." And, unfortunately, no project is more difficult to explain!

One purpose of the Living Curriculum is to "jump start" Arkansas history instruction in the schools. And to appreciate why this is needed one must understand how, over time, our schools came to relegate Arkansas history to the fringes of the curriculum.

The second purpose is to craft an instructional program that will affect positively how young Arkansans view their state and themselves as Arkansans.

Finally, the Living Curriculum will bolster education in general by using the study of state and local history as a means for improving student performance on achievement tests. Here is a brief summary of each of these points.

Anyone following the 20-year struggle to get Arkansas history into the schools might be surprised to learn that the effort did not end successfully six

years ago when the state legislature mandated the subject by law. Act 787 of 1997, which cleared both houses of the Legislature with huge margins, mandated that Arkansas history be integrated into the elementary school social studies curriculum followed by a one-semester course at the secondary level.

While some schools have done an outstanding job in implementing Act 787, many more have given it lip service only. For example, even though the legislation requires schools to provide "in service" training for their teachers, very few have done so. This is a major shortcoming when one considers that over 90% of the teachers of Arkansas history have never had a college course in the subject.

Another major problem is the lack of good instructional materials. A recent survey of selected teachers around the state showed that many are so frustrated with the lack of good instructional tools that they are creating their own. This lack of materials is especially acute at the elementary grades when textbooks are less useful. Regardless, the only elementary-level Arkansas history textbook went out of print recently.

Unfortunately, Act 787 does not require that Arkansas history be included in achievement testing. During the six years since the adoption of Act 787 Arkansas has embarked on a massive testing program—in an attempt to measure educational attainment and to identify problem areas. The sad fact is that since Arkansas history is not included in the testing and it is not emphasized by teachers who are under pressure to improve student scores in math, reading, and writing.

Finally, we do not now have an Arkansas history curriculum, meaning an integrated course of study that starts at the kindergarten level and system-

atically proceeds through each grade level.

The Butler Center's Living Curriculum will address all of these problems, and at the same time position Arkansas studies to serve as a tool for teaching "across the curriculum." The Living Curriculum staff will develop, over three years, a comprehensive course of study that will start with pre-literate kindergartners and carry them through junior high school. All teaching materials will be carefully designed to be age-appropriate, interesting, and grounded in good learning practice.

Arkansas history education can be used to improve student achievement in other subjects. I view state and local history as a "laboratory course," meaning it is a class whereby all the disciplines can come into play. While the Arkansas history course can never replace good instruction in math, or science, or writing, it can serve as a means for reinforcing attainment in all these disciplines and more.

Finally, I believe state history can help children develop a sense of self worth as Arkansans. An appropriate sense of state pride will help us as we try to grapple with the problems facing our state. For example, young Arkansans need to know the significant role our state has played in building the nation.

The state of Arkansas spends well over \$1 billion each year on education. Still, our educational attainment levels are pathetic. I believe we should invest the \$500,000 needed to develop the Living Curriculum with the realization that before we can educate our children we must help them raise their hopes and expectations.

Please join the effort to help make sure that no future generation of young Arkansans is denied its heritage. Contact me today at (501) 918-3054 or email [tomd@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:tomd@cals.lib.ar.us).

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Timothy G. Nutt, Editor



## Art Notes

Reita Walker Miller  
Arkansas Art Coordinator



Ellen Stern, daughter of the late Dr. Howard Seymour Stern, recently donated sixty artworks by her father to the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies art collection. Included among these sixty pieces are prize winning watercolor paintings, prints and photographs. Howard Stern died last year at the age of 91.

Howard was a surgeon, painter, photographer, writer, poet, world traveler, gunsmith and machinist, Renaissance man, and friend. He never started anything at which he didn't eventually excel.

He was educated in the Little Rock public schools and attended Washington University at St. Louis, Little Rock Junior College (now UALR), and the University of Arkansas School of Medicine, where he received his doctorate in 1936.

In 1948 Howard and his family moved to Pine Bluff, Arkansas where he continued his surgical practice until he retired in 1980. He was then able to pursue his true love of painting and photography.

Howard's work is in collections in the United States as well as Europe. He was a past president of the regional Mid-Southern Watercolorists Society, as well as a Signature Member of the National Watercolor Society in California. For several years Howard was an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain.

Howard was an expert marksman with both rifle and pistol, winning many trophies with guns he made in his own shop. He was a founder of the Ar-

kansas Muzzle Loading Association, which holds an annual Founder's Trophy Match in his name.

*A Lifetime Looking*, his memoir published in 1994 by August House, with George West, is an oral history. It's



"Self-Portrait," 1996  
Lithograph on Paper

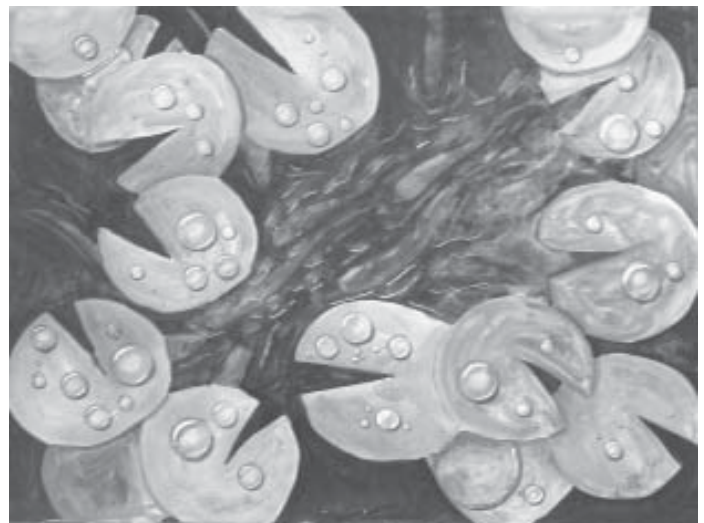
a personal account of the art of Howard Stern, told through excerpts from taped conversations with him and other people from different times and places in his life. George West said, "The goal of this approach was to show Howard's works of an art in a larger dimension—as part of the personal events and relationships in his life and also in terms of the styles and moods of changing times." Ellen Stern, editor of the book, has said the experience producing a book about one's parent was a rare and remarkable experience.

Townsend Wolfe, former Director and Chief Curator of the Arkansas Arts Cen-

ter in Little Rock, said in the Introduction to, *A Lifetime Looking*, "Howard's humanity flows in his photographs and paintings. The works are of one eye and sensibility. They represent the man, Howard Stern, who is a spirit without constraint."

To see more of Dr. Howard Stern's prolific lifetime of work, you will find *A Lifetime Looking* available to check out at the Central Arkansas Library System.

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies and the Central Arkansas Library System are very appreciative of such generous donors as Ellen Stern. The addition of these sixty works adds greatly to the depth of our Arkansas art collection and to a greater understanding of the creative spirit in Arkansas past and present. If you have any questions about donating work, or about our collection, please contact Reita Walker Miller, Arkansas Art Coordinator at (501) 918-3090 or [reitam@cal.lib.ar.us](mailto:reitam@cal.lib.ar.us)



"Surface Feeders #3," 1970  
Watercolor on Paper



## New Collection Documents Antebellum Arkansas

One of the Butler Center's most historically significant manuscript collections has been processed and is available for research use. Donated by a descendent, the Smith Family Papers contain a virtual goldmine of information relating to Arkansas' antebellum past.

In 1843 Col. Maurice Smith journeyed from Fayette County, Tennessee to Dallas County, Arkansas with the hope of starting a new life for his family. Col. Smith, a native of Caswell County, North Carolina, ventured into the recently created state with Dr. W.B. Langley and Cornelia (Smith) Langley, his son-in-law and daughter, and their overseers and slaves. In October the group arrived at the hamlet of Tulip, where a new home was soon built. Smith subsequently returned to Tennessee, where he spent the following year, 1844, disposing of his lands and preparing his family for the movement to Arkansas. In October of that year the entire family made the arduous trip westward and soon settled into life at Tulip, known as "The Athens of Arkansas." Thus began the enduring legacy of one Arkansas family.

The papers consist of letters, an au-



Annie Maurice Smith



Col. Maurice Smith

tobiography, various publications, photographs, and other materials pertaining to the Smith family. The bulk of the collection is 19<sup>th</sup> century correspondence among various family members. Col. Smith was a devout Methodist, and a great deal of information can be gleaned from the materials about the denomination. The collection also covers such topics as education, early reminiscences, slavery, economic conditions, the Civil War, and agriculture. Additional items within the papers include genealogical information, financial notes and receipts, newspaper clip-

pings, and memorabilia.

The Smith Family Papers were processed by Manuscripts Coordinator Brian K. Robertson. The collection is catalogued as MSS 02-20. The finding aid, a detailed listing of contents, facilitates use of the collection. The finding aid may be accessed in the Butler Center's research room or on the Internet at [www.butlercenter.org](http://www.butlercenter.org). For more information on the Smith Family Papers or other Butler Center collections contact Brian Robertson at 501-918-3094 or [brianr@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:brianr@cals.lib.ar.us)

### Butler Center Advisory Board Member Dies

The Butler Center and the historical community lost one of its most loyal supporters recently when Peg Newton Smith died peacefully in her sleep on July 20, 2003.

Peg was born in Little Rock to Evelyn Hempstead and Thomas Newton, III on February 10, 1915. Her family history is a who's who of Arkansas history: Her grandfather was famed historian Fay Hempstead while other ancestors were namesakes of Hempstead and Newton counties. Peg grew up in the Packett House on Lincoln Avenue (Cantrell), one of houses built during the Reconstruction era in an area then known as Carpetbaggers Row due to the

number of Northern-born politicians living there.

Throughout her life, Peg was an avid preservationist and a staunch supporter of all things historical. She served on the Historic Arkansas Museum Commission and the Mt. Holly Cemetery Board for many years. She was a charter member of the Butler Center Advisory Board.

Before Peg recently moved from her home of 50 years on Cantrell Road to a new apartment in West Little Rock, she promised to give the Butler Center an historical item a day and she kept that promise. Peg will be greatly missed.



Peg at the Butler Center's Christmas Luncheon, 2002

## Arkansas Humanities Council Records Acquired by Butler Center

The Butler Center's biggest collection to date has been processed and is available to researchers. The Arkansas Humanities Council (AHC) Records contain both administrative and project materials dating back to the organization's creation in 1974. Of special interest to researchers are the files of the various projects proposed to the Council. Both accepted and rejected proposals are inventoried in the collection.

The Arkansas Humanities Council works under the aegis of the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH). During the early 1970s, the NEH created the Division of State Programs with the idea that state councils could make better decisions concerning local expenditures of federal funds. Accordingly, in 1974, the Arkansas Humanities Council began to provide financial support for projects documenting the cultural and historical



legacy of the state. In order to get people involved in preservation and research, the Council used several effective public program formats involving local citizens, such as reading/discussion groups for public library patrons, museum exhibits on topics concerning Arkansas prehistory or history, the collection of local oral histories on numerous cultural topics, and many others. The "Persistence of the Spirit" project on African-Arkansans and the documentary "When You Make a Good Crop: Italians in the Delta" were both funded by the Arkansas Humanities Council. The Arkansas Human-

ities Council Records provide detailed information on these and many other projects.

The Butler Center holdings of the AHC administrative records acquaint the researcher not only with detailed Council business, but also with the decision making process in project approval. The Arkansas Humanities Council Records have been accessioned as MSS 98-19 and are available for research in the Butler Center. A detailed finding aid to the collection can be found on the Butler Center web page at [www.butlercenter.org](http://www.butlercenter.org) or in the Center's research room. The collection was processed by Manuscripts Assistant John Lawrence Smith.

For more information about the Arkansas Humanities Council Records or any other manuscript collection held by the Butler Center, contact Brian K. Robertson, Manuscripts Coordinator at (501) 918-3094 or [brianr@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:brianr@cals.lib.ar.us).

## Arkansas Book Guys Bound for Little Rock Show

The Arkansas Books Guys are returning for their second annual show on November 22, 2003. The two bibliohunks (Tom Dillard and Tim Nutt) will once again evaluate, appraise, and discuss rare and not-so-rare Arkansas books. Arkansas authors and collectors will also be interviewed.

The Arkansas Book Guys are modeled on National Public Radio's "Book Guys" Allen Styeck and Mike Cuthbert, who will be in Little Rock on November 6, 2003.

More information on the Arkansas Book Guys' show will be mailed in the upcoming months. Watch your mailbox!

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



(“Aviation,” Continued from Page 1)

This year the Butler Center is expanding its usual conference schedule by offering a luncheon program, featuring the engaging and fascinating experiences of Mr. Isaac T. Gillam, IV. In “Reminiscences and Reflections of a Little Rock Boy Turned Space Shuttle Pioneer,” Gillam will share stories about growing up in Little Rock and a career that eventually led him to oversee the early years of NASA’s space shuttle program. The luncheon program is free; a catered boxed lunch may be ordered in advance for a \$5 charge.

Following lunch, Ms. Allyn Lord, assistant director of the Rogers Historical Museum, will share the story of one of Arkansas’ most remarkable women with her presentation of “Arkansas’ Aviatrix Extraordinaire: Louise McPhetridge Thaden.” Thaden became one of America’s greatest flyers of the 1930s when she beat her more famous male counterparts to win that era’s most famous prize, the Bendix Trophy, in 1936. The conference will conclude with a program on one of Arkansas’ most important aviation and economic in-

## Arkansas Jeopardy Contestants Study



Sondra Gordy, 2003 Arkansas Jeopardy Champion, and Ben Johnson refresh their trivia knowledge prior to the games. Johnson was third in the Championship Round. Don Baker placed second.

stitutions, the Little Rock Air Force Base. Tech Sergeant Devin Driskell, historian of the LRAFB’s 314<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, will explore the successful efforts of central Arkansas business leaders to attract a permanent military installation and its accompanying economic benefits to the area, as well as the base’s years as part of the nation’s

Strategic Air Command.

For more information, please call Cary Cox at (501) 918-3049, or e-mail him at [caryc@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:caryc@cals.lib.ar.us).



### Aviation in Arkansas Conference Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve me a box lunch at \$5.00 each:

Ham  Turkey  Roast Beef  Chicken Salad  Vegetarian

Please send reservations (along with a check if ordering lunch) to:

Butler Center, CALS, 100 Rock Street, Little Rock, AR 72201.

Contact Cary Cox at 501-918-3049 or [caryc@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:caryc@cals.lib.ar.us) for more information.





## Books and Materials

### In Memoriam

**Gov. Frank White**

Cherry H. Light  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Peg Smith**

Geri Chandler  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Tom & Mary Dillard**

Little Rock, Arkansas

**Anne Connerley Fowler**

Little Rock, Arkansas

**Carolyn L. Newbern**

Little Rock, Arkansas

**Esther D. Nixon**

Jacksonville, Arkansas

### In Honor Of

**Nan Snow**

Dorothy D. Stuck  
Hot Springs, Arkansas

## Encyclopedia of Arkansas

**Thomas O. Duncan**

Arkadelphia, Arkansas

**Jeanne M. McDaniel**

Little Rock, Arkansas

**Jean & Don Riley**

North Little Rock, Arkansas

**Bonnie A. Routon**

Hope, Arkansas

**Jessie M. Ehlers**

Little Rock, Arkansas

**Henry Wilks**

Marianna, Arkansas

**In Memory of Peg Smith**

Susan Pfeifer  
Little Rock, Arkansas

## P.A.R.T. Endowment Fund

**In Memory of Peg Smith**

**Dr. & Mrs. Cal Ledbetter**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Mr. & Mrs. Fred Schmutz**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Mr. & Mrs. Samuel B. Caruthers, Jr.**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Mr. & Mrs. C. Brantly Buck**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**James A. McLarty, III**  
Newport, Arkansas

**Valerie Thwing & Bob Razer**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Bobby Roberts**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Dr. & Mrs. George Ackerman**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society Arkansas Chapter**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

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Conway, Arkansas

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**James Corallo**  
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Little Rock, Arkansas

**Paul Dolle**  
Rogers, Arkansas

**Thomas O. Duncan**  
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Lamar, Arkansas

**Dr. Laurie Fisher**  
Lamar, Arkansas

**Raymond Fitzgibbon**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Eleanor Frank**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Louis & Elsie Freund Estate**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Shirley Houser Galloway**  
Bakersfield, California

**Mort Gitelman**  
Fayetteville, Arkansas

**Mary Ann & Wayne Glenn**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Ray Hanley**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Jean Harris**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Dr. Fred O. Henker**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Heritage Seekers**  
North Little Rock, Arkansas

**Gene Hull**  
North Little Rock, Arkansas

**Freed S. Little**  
Houston, Texas

**Magale Library**  
Southern Arkansas University  
Magnolia, Arkansas

**Memphis-Shelby County Public Library**  
Memphis, Tennessee

**Ruth Mitchell**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Archie Moore, Jr.**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Freddie Nixon**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Howard Norton**  
Vilonia, Arkansas

**Victor Oliver**  
Bismarck, Arkansas

**Wendy Pennington**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Mike Polston**  
Cabot, Arkansas

**Bob Razer**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Ruth H. Red**  
Mabelvale, Arkansas

**Tom Reed**  
Chicago, Illinois

**Mary Ellen Sanders**  
Camden, Arkansas

**Bill Sayger**  
Biscoe, Arkansas

**Mamie Van Hoose Sayre**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Nan Selz**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Jeff Sharp**  
Odenton, Maryland

**South Arkansas Historical Foundation**  
El Dorado, Arkansas

**Ellen Stern**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Lucille Swann**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Ralph Wilcox**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Billie Sue Wilson**  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas

**Mary Worthen**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Floyd Zula**  
Fullerton, California

## Rice Art Conservation Fund

**G. Grimsley Graham, Jr.**

**Carol Graham**  
Rogers, Arkansas

**In Memory of Peg Smith**

**Peyton & Betty Rice**  
Little Rock, Arkansas

## Photographic Exhibit on Display at Showcase Arkansas Gallery

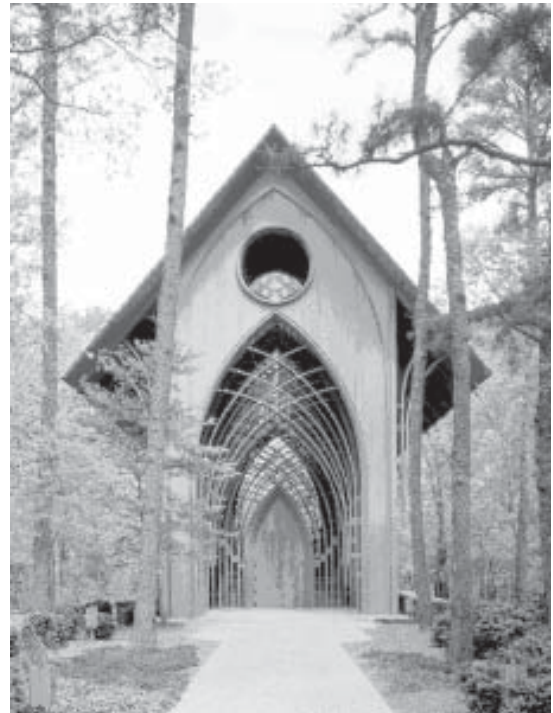
Photographs by architectural photographer Tod Swiecichowski are on exhibit in the Showcase Arkansas Art Gallery. The "It Takes an Image" exhibit features fifty color images of Arkansas buildings and landscapes.

Tod Swiecichowski grew up in Milwaukee, Wisc. After living in Atlanta, Ga., he moved to Little Rock twelve years ago. He works throughout the country as an architectural photographer. Much of his award winning work was photographed for the American Institute of Architects design award programs as well as for print and publication.

He is a past recipient of the Foster-Harris Memorial Award at the Arkansas Repertory Theatre where he has donated and shown his work for the past nine years.

Swiecichowski's photographs will be for sale during the exhibit with 30% of the proceeds going to benefit the Butler Center's art conservation and acquisition program.

The photographic exhibit may be viewed Monday -Friday, 9:00-5:00 or Saturday 9-4:00 in the Showcase Arkansas Gallery, which is located on the third floor of the Cox Creative Center on the Main Library's campus. The "It Takes an Image" photograph exhibit will remain open through October 18, 2003. For further information, contact Reita Walker Miller at (501) 918-3090 or email [reitam@cals.lib.ar.us](mailto:reitam@cals.lib.ar.us).



Mildred B. Cooper Chapel  
Bella Vista, Arkansas

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