

THE BUTLER BANNER

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

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Butler Center Undertakes “Living Curriculum” to Improve Arkansas History Education

In an attempt to dramatically improve the teaching of Arkansas history, the Butler Center is launching a new program known as the “Arkansas Studies Living Curriculum.” It is designed to bring structure and continuity to the teaching of Arkansas history. Currently, the subject is taught on an *ad hoc* basis, with no continuity from one grade to the next.

In 1997 the Arkansas General Assembly adopted Act 787, which provides, among other things, that “beginning with the 1997-98 school year: (a) a unit of Arkansas history shall be taught as a social studies subject at each elementary grade level in every public elementary school in this state with greater emphasis at the 4th and 5th grade levels, and (b) at least one full semester of Arkansas history shall be taught to all students at the [secondary level].” The law also addresses teacher training as well as several other items.

In the six years since the passage of Act 787, Arkansas history education has improved very little. It is true that a one-semester course is being taught in more secondary schools, but it varies from place to place. According to Tom W. Dillard, Butler Center Curator and Chairman of the Arkansas History Education Coalition, “One cause of this lack of acceptance is that Arkansas history is not included in any of the various achievement tests which are the current rage in public school education.” Dillard added, “Extreme pressure is being applied to teachers throughout the state to raise performance on achievement tests—which often results in ‘teaching for the test.’”

The Living Curriculum will address the testing issue by structuring Arkansas history instruction so that it bolsters student performance in reading, writing, critical thinking, and even basic science and mathematics.

Another cause of the disregard for Arkansas history education is the lack of teaching materials. Most teach-

“Living Curriculum,” continued on Page 6

Butler Center Unveils New Black History Resource

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies has unveiled its latest research product, an historical database called “Arkansas Black History Online.” Tom W. Dillard, curator of the Butler Center, said “the new resource consists of a large amount of material documenting the history of black Arkansans—



everything from photographs to legal documents.”

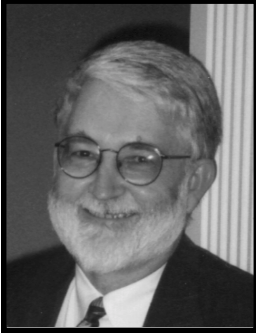
Arkansas Black History Online is believed to be the largest online collection in the state of materials relating to the history of Arkansas African-Americans. Anyone with access to the Internet can use the resource for free. The Butler Center’s website can be accessed at www.butlercenter.org. Users can download information at no charge.

This Internet resource gives emphasis to the history of black Arkansans prior to integration. It is intended as an introduction to the topic and to the materials available in the Butler Center. Much of the material in the database was drawn from the “Tom W. Dillard Black Arkansiana Materials” which Dillard collected over the past forty years and recently gave to the Butler

“Black History Online,” continued on Page 7

Inside This Issue

Curator’s Column	Page 2
Butler Center Welcomes New Employee	Page 3
Encyclopedia of Arkansas Project Underway	Page 3
Arkansas Jeopardy Time Again	Page 4
New Genealogical Materials Acquired By BC	Page 5
Rare Civil War Photograph Acquired	Page 6
Genealogy of Your House Workshop Scheduled	Page 7
Bank Presents Check to Encyclopedia Project	Page 7
Memorials & Gifts	Page 8



Curator's Column

Tom W. Dillard

The Butler Center has recently launched two major new programs that should have profound effects on Arkansas studies. In the last issue of the *Banner* we announced an initiative to develop an encyclopedia of Arkansas; in this issue we share our plans to develop a comprehensive curriculum to improve the teaching of Arkansas studies in the schools of the state.

Titled "The Arkansas Studies Living Curriculum," this project is designed to elevate Arkansas history from obscurity to the forefront of social studies education. To fully appreciate the importance of the Living Curriculum, one must understand the present sorry state of Arkansas history education.

Older Arkansans are often amazed to discover that Arkansas history is no longer a real part of the school curriculum. The subject was taught extensively before World War II, but during the 1950s Arkansas history was gradually de-emphasized. By the time of Arkansas' 150 anniversary of statehood in 1986, state history had declined to the point that a textbook was not

even available.

Though legislation was adopted in 1997 to require state history, things have not worked out as expected. Those of us behind the 1997 legislation naively believed a law would guarantee Arkansas history education in the future. Little did we know that adoption of a law must be followed by enforcement!

Since 1997 a large coalition of organizations, state agencies, businesses, and individuals have labored to elevate Arkansas history education by generating instructional materials and improving teacher training. Six years after the passage of the 1997 legislation, we still do not have a fully developed and integrated curriculum for Arkansas history. This Living Curriculum is, to put it frankly, an attempt to "jump start" Arkansas history education.

Even when good materials on Arkansas are available, it might not be used in any depth. Every teacher in Arkansas is under extreme pressure to focus on preparing students to pass various achievement tests, such as ACTAAP (Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Plan). This is especially a problem at the elementary school level. Arkansas history, unfortunately, is not included in the mandated achievement testing. During this "testing craze" the most we can hope to do is position Arkansas history so it will contribute to preparation for testing in areas such as reading, writing, and problem solving.

In addition, the State Department of Education requires that all curriculum content be keyed to a series of learning expectations called the "Curriculum Frameworks." While some individual teachers have the time and ability to adapt materials to fit the Frameworks, most do not. In short, there is no time for instruction that does

"This project is designed to elevate Arkansas history from obscurity to the forefront of social studies education. To fully appreciate the importance of the Living Curriculum, one must understand the present sorry state of Arkansas history education."

not directly contribute to raising scores on tests—and no room for materials that are not carefully keyed to the Frameworks.

We do not propose to develop a traditional set of Arkansas history textbooks, modernized by the addition of some digital trappings. For schools and teachers who wish to move beyond the traditional textbook, this curriculum will utilize a broad variety of approaches, including interactive compact discs and Web-based materials. For those more comfortable with printed materials, books will be produced, but all teachers and students will be encouraged to mine the extensive resources that are available on CDs and on-line. Perhaps most importantly, the Living Curriculum will constitute a program in reading and language arts as surely as they constitute a program in Arkansas history.

"Curator's Column," continued on Page 6

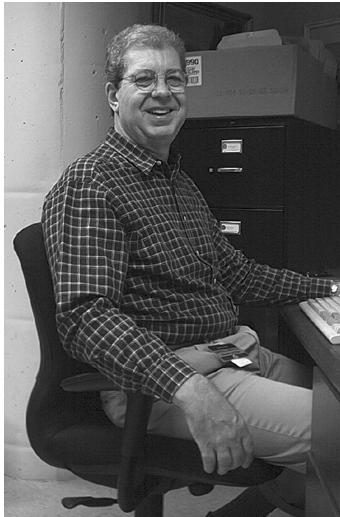
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Timothy G. Nutt, Editor



Butler Center Welcomes Two New Employees

The Butler Center welcomes two new employees. Don Wolfe, the new administrative assistant, is not only keeping the Butler Center staff organized, but also acting as financial liaison with the library's business office.

Don, a native of Illinois, received a business administration and economics degrees from Cornell College of Iowa. After serving in Vietnam, Don received a graduate degree in urban and regional planning from Texas A & M. Soon thereafter, he went to work with TCBY. Later, Don



worked for Acxiom Corporation before resigning to seek part-time employment in order to devote more time to his artwork.

An accomplished painter, Don's work has been exhibited around the South and Southwest.

Don and his wife Becky have a daughter and a son.

Don replaces Jennifer Udey, who resigned to pursue other career opportunities.

Kelly Taylor, the new Genealogy Assistant, is a native of Marianna. She graduated from Hendrix College with a bachelor's degree in History. Kelly comes to the Butler Center from the retail store Tuesday Morning.

In her spare time, Kelly enjoys puzzles, cross-stitch, and rock climbing. Her most recent accomplishment is supervising her



boyfriend's efforts to build a rock climbing wall in his back yard.

Kelly replaces Michael Hopper, who entered graduate school.

Both Kelly and Don bring enthusiasm to their jobs and are strong additions to the Butler Center staff. Please welcome Don and Kelly the next time you see them.

Encyclopedia of Arkansas Project Greeted With Enthusiasm Around State

Enthusiasm for the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas* was evident at the three meetings held thus far. The effort was launched with a preliminary planning meeting in early February. The meeting was well-attended with over 100 Arkansans from around the state gathering to learn about the project. Arkansas is one of the few states that does not have such an encyclopedia.

The preliminary meeting was held to begin planning the *Encyclopedia*, including identifying topics to be included. Tom W. Dillard, curator of the Butler Center and Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopedia*, said a good start was made toward compiling a list of Arkansas people, places, and

events to be featured. Plans call for a detailed online encyclopedia, with entries on each county, town, city, region, and historic site in the state; biographies of prominent Arkansans; brief descriptive articles on hundreds of individuals topics as well as larger essays analyzing broad subjects and time periods. The *Encyclopedia* will be heavily illustrated with photographs, maps, and other images, as well as audio and video clips.

Regional meetings have been organized so that as many people around the state will have the opportunity to provide their input and suggestions. Meetings were held in Springdale, Jonesboro, and Hope. Other cities in which regional meetings will be held include Mountain Home (April 17), Helena (April 19),



Monticello (April 25), Russellville (April 29), and Fort Smith (date to be announced).

Anyone wishing to volunteer, learn more about the project, or nominate a subject for inclusion should contact Tom W. Dillard, Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System, 100 Rock Street, Little Rock, AR 72201, or telephone Dillard at (501) 918-3056. The *Encyclopedia* project can also be emailed at eoac@comcast.net.

Arkansas Jeopardy is the Answer for Historical Fun

Third Annual Game Show Scheduled

A new king or queen of Arkansas trivia will be crowned on June 21, when the Butler Center hosts its third annual "Arkansas Jeopardy." The proceeds from the event benefit the Butler Center directly.

Everyone who wants to show their support for the Butler Center is invited to participate, whether as a contestant or an audience member. Audience members will not be asked questions, although there have been a few instances when excited on-lookers have shouted the answer.

Categories in "Arkansas Jeopardy" will cover any aspect of Arkansas history, including people, events, and places. No bit of information is too trivial for us to turn into a Jeopardy question. Three preliminary rounds will be held, and the winners from each match move on to the final game. Each contestant will receive a prize and the overall winner will become Arkansas Jeopardy royalty. In addition, the overall winner will receive an extra-special Arkansas-related prize. Skip Rutherford, Arkansas' pre-

mier game show host, will once again emcee the game.

Use the form below to register as a contestant or to buy tickets. A drawing of these forms will select the game participants. Deadline to register as a contestant is June 6, but general attendance tickets will be sold through June 20. Seating is limited, so order your tickets now! Tickets are \$20.00 each. Tickets are not required of contestants. A silent auction of Arkansas books and memorabilia will also be held.

Tom Dillard, Butler Center curator, urged all Arkansas history enthusiasts to attend, noting "Everyone, whether amateur or professional historian, has an opportunity to win Arkansas Jeopardy. This is your chance to show how much you know about Arkansas history."

Last year's Arkansas Jeopardy winner was Zack Mobley, an architect of Batesville.

For more information, contact Tim Nutt at 918-3055 or email timn@cals.lib.ar.us. Let's play Arkansas Jeopardy!

Some Previous Arkansas Jeopardy Questions To Get You In the Trivia Mood

1. This grass-roots candidate finished third to Bill Clinton in the 1992 General Election.
2. This Sebastian County town, despite the trend, has not changed its name to Peabody.
3. Born Frances Octavia Smith, this "Queen of the West" competed with Trigger for her husband's affections.
4. This femme fatale made Bill McArthur a widower and Tommy Robinson a Congressman.
5. Beginning just west of Salem in Fulton County, this 100-mile river "fruitfully" merges into the Black River.
6. This 1969 movie based on the Charles Portis novel stars John Wayne and Glen Campbell.
7. This U.S. Congressman and former governor was killed in the Battle of Buena Vista during the Mexican War.

ARKANSAS JEOPARDY REGISTRATION



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Number of Tickets _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

☐ I am the Grand Poo-Bah of Arkansas Trivia. I want to be a contestant and prove it.

☐ I do not want to humiliate myself in public, but others can do so. Enclosed is my \$20.00 per person.

Mail all inquiries and registration forms, along with a check, to:
Butler Center, Central Arkansas Library System, 100 Rock Street, Little Rock, AR 72201



Genealogically Speaking....

Linda McDowell
Genealogy Coordinator

The Genealogy Division of the Butler Center has added even more materials to help you discover your family history. Recently purchased materials include records from Arkansas, Texas, and Tennessee, as well as other states.

As mentioned in an earlier issue of *The Banner*, the 1930 United States Census was released by the National Archives and the Butler Center purchased the pertinent rolls of microfilm for our collection. To complement those reels and to aid researchers of other states, we acquired enumeration maps used by the National Archives in preparing the 1930 census.

The National Archives reproduced many maps in preparing the 1930 census. The Records Bureau of the Census acquired or created maps of each county and many towns and cities. In total, over 8,300 maps were used by the National Archives to define the boundaries of the 1930 census enumeration districts. Due to the wide variety of sources from which the maps originated, there is little uniformity in map scale, size or the number of sheets.

The maps are arranged alphabetically by state, then county, and thereafter by minor civil divisions. The Butler Center acquired eleven of the thirty-six available rolls of Enumeration District Maps microfilm. The eleven rolls include the states of: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Indiana (part), Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska (part), Texas, Utah, Vermont.

An important genealogical resource recently acquired are the Ar-

kansas mortality schedules for 1850-1880. The mortality schedules were taken as a part of the decennial census enumerations. The schedules provide details on people who had died within the year prior to taking the census. The schedules will provide the name, age, sex, color, occupation, birthplace, month and year of death, cause of death and other details. The mortality schedules were compiled for every census year from 1850 to 1900, but the last two were destroyed.

We are pleased to announce the availability of birth and death indexes from Tennessee and Texas. Available death indexes from the Volunteer State include the years 1908-1925. There is also an index available for births and deaths in Knoxville and Nashville for 1872-1878. Death indexes are available for Texas for 1908-1973

Records documenting Arkansas in the Civil War have also been purchased. These include:

- Compiled Service Records of

Arkansas Units Raised Directly by the Confederate Government

- Compiled Confederate Service Records, Missouri: Freeman's and Fristoe's Cavalry Regiments (recruited in Arkansas)

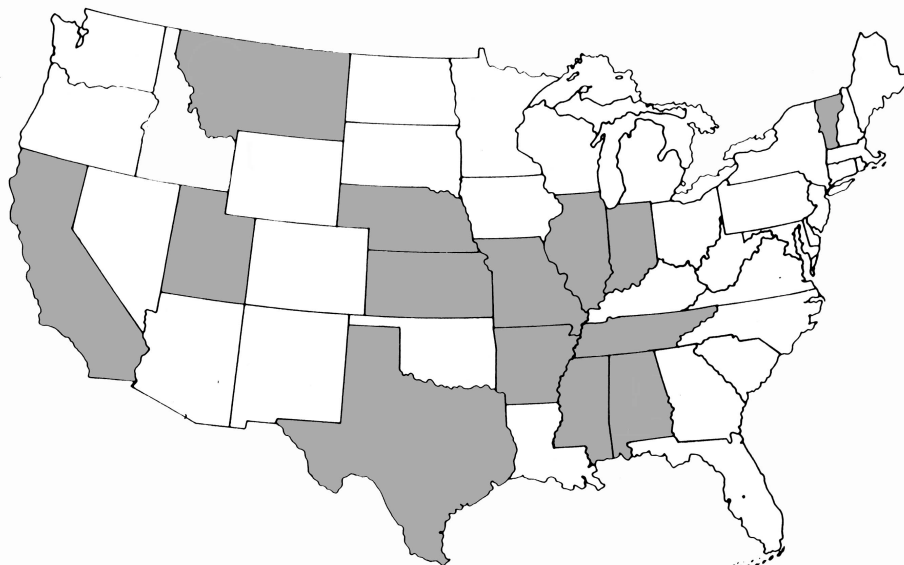
- Register of Prisoners at Little Rock, 1863-1865

- Returns from U.S. Military Posts, Arkansas: 1800-1916

- Compiled Records Showing Service of Military Units in Confederate Organizations

- Confederate States Army Casualties Reports, Arkansas

The Butler Center is continually striving to add quality genealogical materials to our collection. We invite you to visit the Butler Center and peruse the new additions to our collection. Researchers may also check the Butler Center's website for announcements of new materials. Our web address is www.butlercenter.org or through via www.cals.lib.ar.us.



States for Which New Genealogical Records are Available are Shaded

"Living Curriculum," continued from Page 1

ers of Arkansas history have never had a course in the subject themselves. In turn, this means that teachers are ill-prepared to develop instructional materials on their own. "Publishers," according to Dillard, "are reluctant to invest in Arkansas history teaching materials, since the market is so small." The Living Curriculum project will fill this void by producing a wide variety of both print and digital instructional materials.



The materials developed to implement the curriculum will be carefully researched and written to be appropriate for the various student grade levels. The curriculum will be designed to move seamlessly from kindergarten through middle school, and then go on to support secondary level and even college undergraduate courses. All components will be fully linked to the various requirements of the Arkansas Department of Education, and they will be designed to include applications in language arts, the sciences and mathematics, fine arts, and applied arts.

The Living Curriculum will also provide a means of connecting *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*, a statewide project now under development, to the schools.

Assisting the Butler Center in developing the curriculum is Dr. Charley Sandage, a former Arkansas history teacher and school and college administrator. Sandage, who has a doctorate in education, has collaborated with the Butler Center in past projects.

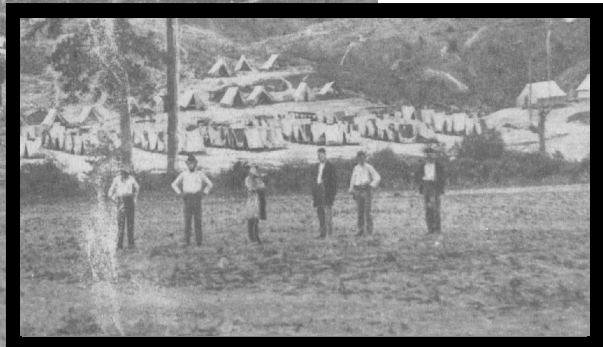
"Curator's Column," continued from Page 2

The Living Curriculum is also designed to provide a vital educational component to *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*, which we will be developing during the same time period. Without the development of these educational components, the Encyclopedia will not become an integral part of the educational program.

Raising funds to develop the Living Curriculum will be a daunting challenge for the Butler Center. I invite you to join us as the Butler Center makes a major effort to get Arkansas history into the school curriculum in a meaningful and comprehensive manner. If we fail to fix the problem, we face the prospect of more generations of Arkansans graduating from high school with no sense of themselves as a people. We cannot afford to fail!

Thank You
United Daughters
of the Confederacy
for
Roster of Confederate Soldiers
on CD-ROM

Butler Center Acquires Rare Civil War Photograph



Camp of the 29th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, Helena, 1863.

Closeup of Troops

Discover the Genealogy of Your House

Some people visit the Butler Center to trace their family histories. Others are curious about the history of their homes, yet do not know how or where to begin. To help researchers, the Butler Center is sponsoring a "Genealogy of Your House" workshop.

Featured presenters will discuss records available and useful for research, architectural styles, as well as a couple's experiences with restoring an historic house. Representatives from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program will give instructions on placing your house on the National Register of Historic Places as well as researching one's neighborhood.

The "Genealogy of Your House" workshop will be held July 19 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. A complete schedule of presentations and speakers will be included in the next issue of the Banner.

For more information on this workshop, contact Linda McDowell, Genealogy Coordinator at 501-918-3056.



"Online Project," continued from Page 1 Center.

Included in the online collection are biographies, oral history interviews with former slaves, periodical and newspaper articles, correspondence, legal documents, obituaries, and other historical research documents. Among the photographs in the collection are images of such notable black Arkansans as Maya Angelou and Scott Joplin. Other photos portray black businesses, schools, churches, homes, and a wide variety of other scenes and topics.

Among the documents included is a transcription of the oldest known Arkansas legal document, a French language 1725 bill of sale for a slave at Arkansas Post.

Other components of the database include a detailed bibliography, an overview of racial violence in the state, including a list of known lynchings; a listing of all black newspapers published in the state, and other materials.

The database was funded by gifts from Dolores M. Bruce of Little Rock and the Bridge Fund at the Arkansas Community Foundation.

Dillard said he expects the Butler Center will augment the collection over the next few years. Anyone having materials that might be suitable for inclusion in the database are urged to contact Dillard at 501-918-3056. The Butler Center has already received names of black schools that were not known at the time of the unveiling.

The Butler Center is a department of the Central Arkansas Library System. Its mission is to promote the study and understanding of Arkansas, its history, literature, arts, and culture. It is located on the third floor of the Main Library, 100 Rock Street, in Little Rock. For information on the online project, email arkinfo@cals.lib.ar.us.

Support for Encyclopedia of Arkansas Project Building



Pam Lamb, (third from left), presents Jill Curran, Project Director with a check from Regions Morgan Keegan Trust Department for the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Tim Nutt, Deputy Curator and Associate Editor (I) and Tom Dillard, Butler Center Curator and Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopedia* also accepted the check. Other early donors to the project include Dolores M. Bruce, Karen Potts, and Nan Snow. A full article on the *Encyclopedia* project appears on page 3.

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