

THE BUTLER BANNER

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

Volume 8, Number 1

Spring, 2005

Lots Of New Faces At The Butler Center!

If you haven't been to the Butler Center or attended one of our programs recently, then you may not be aware of several personnel changes that have taken place in the past few months. As a general rule, historians don't like change and avoid it as much as possible. However, circumstances do change, people move on to new and different challenges, and the Butler Center is certainly not immune to the laws of nature!

As was announced in the last *Butler Banner*, our esteemed former curator, Tom Dillard, has taken on the exciting task of directing the Special Collections for the University of Arkansas Libraries in Fayetteville. Since then Tim Nutt, long-time library employee and deputy curator of the Butler Center, has also shifted gears and

moved up (literally, to the fourth floor!) to the Butler Center's Encyclopedia of Arkansas project as their managing editor and staff historian. Judy Rickard, our former office manager, has transferred to a position in CALS Accounting department, while Kelly Taylor, our former genealogy assistant, has accepted a great new opportunity as an archival assistant with the Clinton Presidential Library.

As we extend fond farewells and best wishes to Tom, Tim, Judy, and Kelly, we also take this opportunity to welcome each of our new colleagues to the Butler Center and hope you will do the same!

As the new head of the Butler Center, **David Stricklin** says that "my principal responsibility is to build on the great record of service

the Butler Center has created since it was founded in 1997." He comes to us from Lyon College in Batesville, where he taught history for nine years, directed local and regional history projects, and curated exhibits on Arkansas history at the Old Independence Regional Museum. Named 1999 Arkansas Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, David just finished two years as chair of the Arkansas Humanities Council Board of Directors.

David grew up in Cleburne, Texas, but assures us that he is now a tried-and-true Arkansan! He received Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Baylor University and earned his Ph.D. in history from Tulane. David is married to Sally Browder, a professor of psychology at Lyon College, and they have two daughters, Annie and Sarah.

Asked about outside interests, David replies, "When people ask me if I have any hobbies I say, 'I live in an old house,' and they smile and nod. I also enjoy playing music with people and going to concerts."

Chris Stewart says "I am more than excited to have been hired as the special collections librarian for the Butler Center. My job is to ensure that all our stories from our past are accessible and made part of the mainstream of information. I think the best place to do that is in a public library system. The public library, like jazz music and the Internet, is a great American invention, but it took me



New staff members welcomed to the Butler Center! (from left to right) David Stricklin, head of the BC; Rhonda Stewart, genealogy assistant; Holly Mathisen, administrative assistant; and Chris Stewart, special collections librarian.

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A Word From the Center

David Stricklin
Head of the Butler Center

What an honor to get to work at the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies! I've now got about a month under my belt, and I've told several people it's been pretty intense, kind of like trying to take a sip of water from a fire hose. That's because of the energy the Butler Center creates, the huge job it has to do, the goodwill and great reputation it enjoys, and the terrific people who come in every day to use its collections and offer us things to add to those collections.

I wrote Tom Dillard shortly after accepting the position and told him I knew I couldn't fill his shoes, but I'd try to fill half of one of them! Everything about the Butler Center, all those good things I mentioned before, came into play because of the hard work and visionary leadership of Tom, the support of Bobby Roberts and his colleagues in the administration of the Central Arkansas Library System, the dedication of Tim Nutt and the other great staff members who've worked in the Center over the years, and the generosity of our wonderful supporters. Those folks have given us books, manuscripts, and photographs and the funding necessary to make those materials available to people who want to learn more about Arkansas history and genealogy. The Butler Center has been a great steward of those precious gifts. Our pledge is to remain true to

the ideals the Center has embodied, the trust that justified those gifts in the first place

In coming issues of the *Butler Banner* and by other means, we'll keep you informed about a number of exciting things we're working on, including the remarkable progress on the online Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, which is set to debut in time for Arkansas Heritage Month in May 2006. We'll also let you know about the plans for expanding our space in the two buildings facing the River Market we were able to acquire through the bond election of last year. I won't say much about that now except to put one word in your mind: palace! It's going to be a great space for the use and expansion of our collections and for creating new partnerships with fine organizations whose purposes line up with ours.

I have a little photograph of Richard Butler, Sr., on my desk. I never got the chance to meet him, but I think he'd like what's been done at this place that bears his name. I'm going to try very hard to make sure we keep doing things that would make him proud.

Thanks for your support of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies!

David

New Faces (Continued from page 1)

about 12 years after graduating from Hendrix College with a philosophy degree to land in library school." Chris earned a Master's in Library Science from the University of Texas at Austin and gained archival experience as a librarian in the Guajardo Historical Collection in Laredo, Texas. Chris notes that "the friendships I made at Hendrix brought me back to Arkansas, and my interests have not changed much since my college days. I like to read good books, see compelling films, and hear great music, then spend the evening talking about them with my friends."

Rhonda Stewart joins the Butler Center staff as genealogy assistant. Rhonda received a Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Arkansas State University, and has completed coursework for her Master's in Public History from UALR. Her thesis is pending. She has documented her family roots in Little Rock to 1895 and in the state to 1825. Her work experience includes Pfeifer Camp, Shorter College, Central High School National Historic Site, and the Little Rock School District. Her spare time is spent with an extended family of over three hundred relatives.

Holly Mathisen is the Butler Center's new administrative assistant. A Little Rock native, Holly attended Hall High and earned a Bachelor's in English from Rhodes College in Memphis. She has more than 20 years combined experience in banking and non-profits. Holly began her career at Little Rock's First National Bank and was trust division manager for 12 years at Pulaski Bank and Trust. She then served as associate director of the United Methodist Foundation of Arkansas, and was privileged to meet and work with Richard C. Butler, Sr., who maintained an office in the Foundation's headquarters. Holly lives in Little Rock with husband Mark and their sons, Hill and Clayton. In her leisure time, she likes to read contemporary mysteries, cookbooks, and biographies. She also likes to cook, garden, and exercise.

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Cary Cox, Editor



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[Note: Volume 7 consisted of two editions, Numbers 1 & 2 (combined), and Number 3. There was not a Number 4.]

Books and Materials

Jamestowne Society
c/o Mrs. John Ochsner
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Dr. Marcus M. Key
Irvington, Virginia

Clifford E. Minton
Merrillville, Indiana

Randall M. Smith
Sierra Vista, Arizona

Norris P. Wood
Kingston, Rhode Island

Stewart Lillard
Charlotte, North Carolina

Jerome Hamner
Little Rock, Arkansas

Arlene LaGrone
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Arkansas
Genealogical Society**
Little Rock, Arkansas

Minola Jolley
North Little Rock, Ark.

David Stricklin
Little Rock, Arkansas

Jim McDaniel
Dallas, Texas

Howard Norton
Vilonia, Arkansas

Kathy Roberts
Little Rock, Arkansas

Lynn Frost
Little Rock, Arkansas

John Ragsdale
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Marilyn S. and
Charles L. Pearce**
Little Rock, Arkansas

William S. Boggess
Naples, Florida

Nancy Lowe
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Willie Oates,
Randy Oates, and
Debbie Erwin**
Little Rock, Arkansas

Phyllis Brandon
Little Rock, Arkansas

Jack Hill
Little Rock, Arkansas

Liza Ashley
Little Rock, Arkansas

Memorials

Wanda Pearson Denney
by Frances Jernigan
Little Rock, Arkansas

**Helen Wilkinson Bridges
Blanche Wolcott Patterson
Maxine Orem Ritchie
Betty Ellet Lile**

**Frances MacMillan James
Mary Olive Black
Sue Osborne Wayman
Flora Wilson Morrow**
by the Gilbert Marshall Chapter
of the Daughters of the
American Revolution

General Support

**Questers Territorial
Explorers**
Little Rock, Arkansas

~~ The Butler Center's 2005 Legacies and Lunch Schedule ~~

April 6

"Arkansas Autobiographies"
Robert McCord

May 4

"The Very Spirit of Destruction:
The Civil War in the Ozarks"
Thomas DeBlack

June 1

"The Truth About Lies (and Vice-Versa):
Vance Randolph Tells the World About the Ozarks"
Robert Cochran

July 6

"Travel and Lodging in the Tourism Age:
Arkansas' Tourist Courts"
Jill Curran

August 3

"Arkansas Autobiographies"
Parker Westbrook

September 7

"A Better Life in Rural Arkansas:
The Modernization of the Rural Home
In 20th-Century Arkansas"
Lynn Russell

October 5

"Arkansas Autobiographies"
Walt Coleman

November 2

"Arkansas Autobiographies"
Jimmie Lou Fisher

December 7

"Arkansas Autobiographies"
Alan Leveritt

All programs are held in the Darragh Center, Main Library ~ 12 Noon—1:00 p.m.
Bring your lunch; water & soft drinks provided. For more information call Cary Cox at (501) 918-3049.

A Recent Addition to the Butler Center's Photograph Collections



A sawmill in Grant County, Arkansas, early 1900s. Purchased with P.A.R.T. funds.

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FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

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