

THE BUTLER BANNER

NEWSLETTER OF THE BUTLER CENTER FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

Volume 9, Number 2

Spring 2007



Calendar of Events

Legacies & Lunch

(First Wed. of every month at noon in the Darragh Center, Main Library)

April 4 - Burr Fancher and Diann Fancher, "The Mountain Meadows Massacre and Its Aftermath."

May 2 - Encyclopedia of Arkansas Staff: "The EOA, One Year Out."

James Cone

Rabbi Ira Sanders Lecture. James Cone has been hailed as the father of black liberation theology. April 4, 6:30 p.m. in the Darragh Center, Main Library.

Visit us online at www.butlercenter.org for more information.



Encyclopedia of Arkansas Section

More EOA news, photos, and updates – beginning on page 4.

A Half Century of Federal Supervision

We are pleased to announce that the papers of the federal Office of Desegregation Monitoring have been donated to the Butler Center, following the apparent culmination of a landmark case.

On February 23, 2007, U.S. District Judge Bill Wilson Jr. issued a ruling releasing the Little Rock School District from nearly fifty years of federal supervision. The judge determined that the district

was complying with a court-ordered desegregation plan, ending a case that traces its origins back to efforts to integrate Little Rock Central High School during the Faubus administration.

The office was founded in 1989 at the behest of the U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. For the first year of operation, the agency



Cont. on Page 2

Photo courtesy of the federal Office of Desegregation Monitoring

Church, War, and Ebenezer



Rev. Ebenezer S. Peake

*Little Rock, Arkansas
Jan 1865*

Excerpt from the Rev. Ebenezer S. Peake Collection

This new collection documenting the Civil War experience of Rev. Ebenezer S. Peake contains seventy-four personal letters, two small pocket diaries, and sixteen *carte de visite* photographs. It features several other assorted documents, including drafts of letters and a number of special orders issued from Union army headquarters in Little Rock. Peake was appointed chaplain of the 28th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment in 1862. The unit, which saw extensive service in Arkansas, participated in Gorman's 1863 expedition up the White River, was heavily involved at the Battle of Helena, and took

Cont. on Page 2

was named the Office of the Metropolitan Supervisor. Following that first year, it has been known as the Office of Desegregation Monitoring and has overseen the desegregation efforts of the Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County Special school districts. The voluminous collection includes correspondence, desegregation plans, monitoring reports, newspaper articles, financial reports, and a host of other items. Additional materials will be turned over to the Butler Center as the North Little Rock and Pulaski County Special school district cases progress through the courts.

On February 23, 2007, U.S. District Judge Bill Wilson Jr. issued a ruling releasing the Little Rock School District from nearly fifty years of federal supervision.

We are very excited to add these materials to our holdings. The collection will be a valuable resource for historians studying this important part of Arkansas history. ■

Contributed by Brian K. Robertson, Manuscripts Coordinator

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Volume 9, Number 2



Episcopal church in Helena used by Rev. Peake

part in Steele's campaign to capture Little Rock. The regiment later served on garrison duty at Pine Bluff. In the fall of 1864, Peake was appointed the refugee agent for Little Rock. The letters in the collection include descriptions of the Battle of Helena, regimental and religious duties, the capture of Confederate

The collection contains seventy-four personal letters, two small pocket diaries, and sixteen carte de visite

steam boats, action against guerillas, and dealings with prisoners of war and displaced citizens. Additional letters also document the regiment's service in the Yazoo Pass Expedition. ■

Do You Know Your Arkansas Biographies?

From Julie Adams to John Yancy, KUAR's *Biography Arkansas* program tests listeners' knowledge of famous Arkansas personalities. Each sixty-second program provides a series of hints and clues to help listeners figure out which famous (or infamous) Arkansas personality is being featured. The answers include people from politics, entertainment, sports, arts, literature, and the military. *Biography Arkansas* is sponsored in part by the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, and many of the people featured are included in entries on the Encyclopedia website (www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net). The spots play on FM 89 KUAR on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 5:19 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday at 7:49 a.m. ■



FM 89
K U A R
BIOGRAPHY ARKANSAS

Julie Adams * Maya Angelou * Bernie Babcock * T. H. Barton * Daisy Bates * James Black * Maurice "Footsie" Britt * Dee Brown * Helen Gurley Brown * Paul "Bear" Bryant * Lloyd "Scooter" Burke * Bob Burns * U.S. Senator Hattie Caraway * Bill Carr * Johnny Cash * William Jefferson Clinton * Robert Crittenden * Gen. William Darby * Gail Davis * Herman Davis * Jay "Dizzy"

Butler Center Fellow for 2007

One of Arkansas's foremost students of the interrelationship of history and genealogy, Carolyn Earle Billingsley, will work under a research fellowship with the Butler Center this year. She is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she was a Donaghey Scholar, and holds a Ph.D. in history from Rice University. She is also the author of a groundbreaking study applying kinship theory to Southern history, *Communities of Kinship: Antebellum Families and the Settlement of the Cotton Frontier*, published in 2004 by the University of Georgia Press.



During the term of the Butler Center fellowship, Billingsley will produce a manuscript of publishable quality, make a public presentation on a topic of her choosing, conduct continuing education for Butler Center staff members, and advise the Butler Center on collection development. ■

A Word from the Center David Stricklin, Head of the Butler Center



Exciting developments are coming soon to an Arkansas Studies Institute near you—well, fairly soon. If you check out the web cam we told you about in the last issue of the *Butler Banner*, you'll be able to see some progress on the west side of the building project for our new digs. Right now, "digs" is a good word because much of the work on the west side—the Rock Street side—is still underground. That's where the new building on the corner will be. From the web cam, you can't see the main thing lately occupying the attention of the builders, architects, and engineers, which is the structural and abatement work that these old buildings require. It's been a slow, expensive process, but we think the end results will be worth the trouble and the money.

Scarcely a day goes by that someone doesn't say some version of the following to me, "You know, you could have built a new building for a lot less money." That's nearly always the case with adaptive reuse, but I always say, "Hey, we're in the history business. We try to save things, not destroy them!"

To check the progress of the building, visit the CALS website at www.cals.org, click on the Arkansas Studies Institute rendering, and follow the instructions. Pretty soon, the builders will be "out of the ground," as

they say, and you'll be able to see some dramatic changes. The finished product will be a treasure for the Arkansas history community, a wonderful place to do research and attend events, and a terrific, spacious new home for the Butler Center and our partners from UALR.

In the next issue of the *Banner*, we'll tell about a couple of friends of the Butler Center and of Arkansas history efforts all over the state and what they're doing to create some wonderful spaces and services in the ASI facility. We'll tell about a couple of pretty interesting organizations that will share space with us in the ASI. We'll also tell about getting started on something we've been working on for two years, the creation of a digitally searchable audio archive we plan to share with Arkansas history students everywhere by means of our website, which itself is about to undergo some long-awaited upgrades. The first feature of the audio archive will be the creation of a home for the oral history interviews of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, for we are planning to use this exciting new tool not only to make our own recorded materials more accessible to researchers but also to make it easier to share materials created by other institutions.

It's an exciting time to be in the history business. Thanks for your support of the Butler Center and our work in Arkansas history! ■

James Cone

The Butler Center and CALS are honored to announce James Cone as the Rabbi Ira Sanders distinguished lecturer. Cone has been hailed as the father of black liberation theology. Reared in the small community of Bearden (Ouachita County), Cone experienced the social contradictions of white Christian racism and black Christian community. His childhood recognition of Sunday as the most segregated day of the week led to questions of theological integrity and Christian devotion.

Cone was called to ministry at age sixteen. Soon after, he attended Philander Smith Col-

lege, as well as Garrett Theological Seminary in Chicago. He then received his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Northwestern University. Cone currently teaches at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He remains an influential theologian, an important writer, and an inspiring preacher and teacher. ■

James Cone
Rabbi Ira Sanders Lecture
April 4, 6:30 p.m.
Darragh Center
Main Library



James Cone - photo courtesy of the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame.



THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARKANSAS HISTORY & CULTURE

Senior Editor's Column

Nathania
Sawyer



When I started my first job after college, I received a desk calendar as a gift from a vendor. It had a nice faux leather cover and my name stamped in gold on the front.

Each year, this vendor gave these personalized calendars as Christmas gifts, so I had a whole library of them by the time I left advertising. By then, I was a desk calendar addict. They were a shorthand version of a diary where I recorded project-due dates, meeting dates, birth dates, lunch dates, and (especially important) boy-girl dates. My husband and I are in the process of moving to a new house, and I recently found my stash of desk calendars in a storage box. The 2004, 2005, and 2006 calendars were at the top of the pile—my Encyclopedia of Arkansas years. As I flipped through the 2006 calendar, I kept thinking, “What a difference a year makes!”

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas is growing by leaps and bounds.

A year ago, my life was consumed by getting the Encyclopedia ready to launch to the public. Phone calls and meetings with the folks who designed the site at Aristotle, meetings with staff, with authors, with the editorial and oversight boards, and to-do lists that filled the provided space in my calendar and overflowed onto yellow Post-It notes. Don't get me wrong, we are still very busy adding new entries and media to the website and planning the expansion of the project. But I no longer carry around a brown paper sack in case I start hyperventilating!

One year later, life seems much more manageable, and the Encyclopedia of Arkansas is growing by leaps and bounds.

For example, in the last newsletter, I was excited to report that the website had received more than 1.1 million hits. Since last fall, that number has grown to more than 12 million.

I'm always amazed when I meet someone who hasn't heard about the Encyclopedia. I forget that even though the website has had almost 500,000 visitors, that's a tiny part of the aggregate population. We are looking for new ways to spread the word, and you can help. One of my goals is to put together a speaker's bureau of people around the state who can talk about the project to civic groups and at teacher in-service training. We are in the process of putting together a script and materials that can be adapted for these talks. If you are willing and able to participate in helping spread the word about the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, please contact me at (501) 918-3026 or nsawyer@encyclopediaofarkansas.net. ■

Recent EOA Donors

**Virginia and Dr. Ted Bailey Family
Foundation**, Little Rock

Wayne Boyce, Newport

Wayne and Janet Clark, Berryville

**Cranford, Johnson, Robinson, and
Woods**, Little Rock

Thomas O. Duncan, Arkadelphia

Kathleen Gammill, Houston, TX

Paul and Beth Gaylo, Greenwood

Mary Beth Glover-Wilson, Sheridan

A. Cleveland Harrison, Auburn

Phil and Annette Herrington,
Little Rock
In honor of Bobby Roberts

Rose Hogan, Little Rock

Clifton E. Hull, North Little Rock

Ben and Sherrel Johnson, El Dorado

James and Ellen Kane, Little Rock

Jake Lamkins, Fayetteville

Allyn Lord, Springdale

Lois Lawson Morris, Russellville

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Susan Parks-Spencer, Prairie Grove

Jim and Lillian Porter, Little Rock

Anne Prichard, Fayetteville

Cesar Rivera, Little Rock

Sam and Martha Sowell, Little Rock

David Stricklin and Sally Browder,
Little Rock

*In honor of Ron Robinson and
in memory of Daisy Tribble Jacoway*

Randell and Anna Templeton,
Little Rock

Mick and Hildie Terry, Little Rock

Lisa Wilder, Little Rock

Dennis Young, Texarkana

"I Didn't Know That About Arkansas"

Guest contributor: Guy Lancaster

Occasionally, an entry on someone I had never heard of falls upon my desk. Such was the case recently with the figure of John Hjaelmhof Sorensen, a nationally acclaimed cartoonist and advertising executive who set up shop in Little Rock after an extended stay in the Arkansas State Tuberculosis Sanatorium.

Sorensen, as it turns out, was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1924. He was a gifted artist and was selected to receive an art scholarship but had to go to work instead. During World War II, he was an agent in the Danish underground, using his job as an accountant to serve as a courier.

Sorensen moved to New York after the war, where he contracted tuberculosis. While being treated at Triborough Sanatorium, he met and married occupational therapist Betty Hunter, a native of Arkansas. The two left New York to head west but got no farther than Little



1954 Sorensen cartoon courtesy of Betty Adams.

Rock before Sorensen had to be hospitalized. He lived at the Arkansas State Tuberculosis Sanatorium for three years.

While recuperating, he returned to his passion for art and began sending out cartoons. He was eventually published in many major American magazines, including the *New Yorker*, *Playboy*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Soon, he set up his own advertising agency and was awarded several Clio's for his cartoon work in advertising. Sorensen also did advertising work for several state and national Republican campaigns.

From the Danish underground and disease to *Playboy* and politicians—Sorensen's story has it all. ■

WANTED

AUTHORS AND MEDIA

We need authors, photographs, documents, video, maps, and audio clips to help make the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture the most complete resource on Arkansas History available.

Entries Needing Media:

Joey Lauren Adams
Harold Edward Alexander
Arkansas Real Estate Bank
O. C. Bailey
William Ayers Crawford
Benjamin Crowley
Cedell Davis
Michael Disfarmer
E&M Studios and My Records
William Lee Gerig
Geleve Grice
Samuel George Hamblen
Hartford Music Company
Elizabeth Paisley Huckaby
King of Clubs
John Elvis Miller
Albert Rust
Bill Seiz
Gustave Joseph Shrader
Southwest Experimental Fast Oxide Reactor

George Francis Trapp

Earl Van Dorn

Grannis Vigil

Win "Skinny" Whipple

If you have pictures or other media, please contact Mike Keckhaver at mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

Entries Needing Authors:

Committee to Retain Our Segregated Schools (CROSS)
DeWitt (Arkansas County)
Great Migration
Nat Griswold
Little Rock (Pulaski County)
Winfield Scott Morgan
Yell County

If you would like to write one of these entries, please contact Anna Lancaster at alanaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

The Year That Never Was

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies presented two events in February that examined the “Lost Year” of 1958–59. Following the Central High Crisis, Little Rock high schools were shut down for an entire year, in resistance to immediate integration. This act locked out 3,665 black and white students from a public education.



Mitchell and Woods

Legacies and Lunch Program

Katherine Mitchell and Maud Woods delivered a moving first-hand account of the “Lost Year” at February’s Legacies and Lunch. In 1958–59, Mitchell was a student and Woods a teacher. Their stories illustrated the life-long consequences that one year of closed high schools had on Little Rock’s students and their teachers.

The “Lost Year” Documentary

With a packed house, the Butler Center showed a screening of the “Lost Year” documentary. The film was produced by Sandra Hubbard, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, and Sondra Gordy, associate professor of history at the University of Central Arkansas. The documentary weaves the individual stories of “Lost Year” students and teachers with a political and behind-the-scenes overview of the period.



Gordy and Hubbard

Newest Addition



The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies welcomes Anna Morshedi as our new programming and outreach coordinator. “I look forward to continuing the Butler Center’s trend of insightful and entertaining programming,” says Morshedi. “We have a busy spring and summer planned that is sure to please all!” ■

Follow-Up

A great majority of the Arkansas Boat-house Club (ABC) materials mentioned in the last issue were donated by Mary Worthen. Thanks, Mary! ■



School children come for a tour of the Butler Center

flash
...in the Spotlight



Minnijean Brown-Trickey converses with a “Lost Year” student



Bill Worthen discussing the bowie knife and the image of Arkansas at Legacies and Lunch



(Above: David Stricklin, John Gill, Bobby Roberts, David Gill, and Marjem Gill) Marjem Gill and children donated three maps in honor of John Gill’s seventieth birthday. (Children not pictured: Elizabeth Myers and Ward Gill)

Growth Continues

The Butler Center continues to grow and expand in many directions. To illustrate this, we have included our statistics from 2006. We also added 890 books, manuscripts, and microfilm documents to our collection this past year.



2005 2006
Number of programs offered.
A 55% increase.



2005 2006
Total program attendance.
A 48% increase.



2005 2006
Number of materials used.
A 3% increase.



2005 2006
People who walked through our doors.
A 14% increase.

BUTLER CENTER DONORS

DONATIONS TO THE BUTLER CENTER

Gertrude R. Butler, Little Rock

Marjem Gill and children, Little Rock
In honor of John P. Gill's 70th birthday

Grimsley and Carol Graham, Rogers
In honor of Peyton and Betty Brewer Rice

Keith and Frances Jernigan, Little Rock
In memory of Nell Wiggins

Robert I. McDonald, Little Rock
In memory of Helen Terry Marshall

Carl Miller Jr., Little Rock

Mary Delia Prather, Little Rock

Peyton Rice, Little Rock
In memory of Edwina Cook Brewer and
in honor of Betty Brewer Rice

Peyton and Betty Rice, Little Rock
In memory of Mary Ross Thomas

Skip and Billie Rutherford, Little Rock
In memory of former state senator
Q. Byrum Hurst Sr.

Lucette D. White, Gloucester, MA
In memory of Helen Terry Marshall

GIFTS OF MATERIALS TO THE BUTLER CENTER

Betty Sorenson Adams, Little Rock

Charlotte Hearn Anderson, Little Rock

Mary Louise Cantwell, Little Rock

Central Arkansas Radio Emergency Net

Milford H. Davis Jr. and Mary C. Davis,
Little Rock

Anne Dixon Bryant, Little Rock

Peter Dykema, Russellville

Joyce Franklin, Little Rock

Lynn Frost, Little Rock

Matt Gardner, Little Rock

Elena Giddings, Little Rock

J. Julius Griggs, North Little Rock

Ray Hanley, Little Rock

Virginia Henker, Little Rock

J. French Hill, Little Rock

Betsy Jacoway, Newport

Bettye Fowler Kerns, Little Rock

Little Rock Departmental Club

Nancy Lowe, Little Rock

Jeanne McDaniel, Little Rock

Dean Melen, Shelburne, VT

Sister Doris Moore, Little Rock

Freddie Nixon, Little Rock

Howard Norton, Vilonia

Nancy Olafson, North Little Rock

Ted Parkhurst, Little Rock

Mike Polston, Cabot

Bobby Roberts, Little Rock

Kathy Roberts, Little Rock

Jay Rogers, Little Rock

Loren J. Samons, Little Rock

Mary Scott, Little Rock

Rhonda Stewart, Little Rock

David Stricklin, Little Rock

Jeanette Strong, Yankee Hill, CA

Marc Turner, Hope

James B. Whitlow, Hoxie

Witsell Evans Rasco, Little Rock

Charles Witsell Jr., Little Rock

Mary Rimmel Wohlleb, Little Rock

Michael B. Wright, Little Rock

Concordia Hall Museum Plans Unveiled

The history of Arkansas is the history of a population made increasingly diverse through immigration. CALS and the Butler Center will create a museum in the new Arkansas Studies Institute complex that will focus attention on the many different people who have given Arkansas its distinctive character. The museum will explore the makeup of the population of Arkansas, the ongoing role immigration plays in the state's history, and the ways population diversity strengthened Arkansas. It is especially fitting to house the museum in what may be the oldest building in Arkansas associated with the Jewish community, a structure currently known as the Budget Office Building.

The Budget Office Building was constructed in 1882 by



Historic Probst and Hilb Threshold



*North Elevation of the Arkansas Studies Institute
(Concordia Hall Museum will be housed in the shaded building.)*

Max Hilb, who provided meeting space in it for the Concordia Association, the Jewish social organization of Central Arkansas. Jews in Arkansas have a poignant, personal connection to the immigrant experience. The Butler Center will create exhibits in the museum that focus on Arkansas Jewish history, the life and work of Max Hilb, and the Concordia Association, as well as the diverse populations of Arkansas. ■

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