

# THE BUTLER BANNER

NEWSLETTER OF THE BUTLER CENTER FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES

Volume 11, Number 2

Spring 2009

## Butler Center Events

### Legacies & Lunch

June 3, 2009

Bob Ford and Jeannie Whyne discuss the process of creating a play from Whyne's research on the Wilson Plantation

July 1, 2009

Arkansas student winners of the national History Day competition discuss their winning projects

August 5, 2009

Marshall Grant, member of Johnny Cash and the Tennessee Two, discusses his memoir, *I Was There When It Happened: My Life with Johnny Cash*

### Teddy Roosevelt & Arkansas

J. French Hill: A Discussion of President Theodore Roosevelt and His Arkansas Connections. June 4, 2009, 6:30 p.m., Darragh Center, Main Library. A reception, sponsored by Delta Trust & Bank, will follow. RSVP to Kathryn Heller by June 2, at 501-320-5717 or kheller@cals.org. This event is free and open to the public.

### Art News

2nd Friday Art Night on June 12, 2009, will feature the Bruce Jackson exhibit *Portraits from Prison: A Collection of Photographs from Cummins Prison*, which is on display in the Arkansas Studies Institute Main Gallery through June 30, 2009. On the 2nd Friday of each month, the ASI Galleries remain open until 8 p.m. Visit [www.butlercenter.org/art](http://www.butlercenter.org/art) or call 501-320-5791 for more information.



Visit [www.butlercenter.org](http://www.butlercenter.org) for more information.

## ASI Galleries: Dramatic Debut



The Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) Galleries opened to the public with their first exhibit, titled *Portraits from Prison: A Collection of Photographs from Cummins Prison*. The exhibit showcases historical and contemporary photographs of Cummins Prison inmates from the collection of artist and author Bruce Jackson.

The photographs, which date from the early 1900s to the early 1970s, show male and female prisoners at Cummins Prison, which is located 28 miles south of Pine Bluff. The photos were acquired during a research trip to Cummins Prison, when a prisoner in charge of identification photographs told Jackson to "help himself" while leading him to a drawer

full of loose photos. Jackson has used these photographs in two books: *Killing Time: Life in the Arkansas Penitentiary* and *Pictures from a Drawer: Prison and the Art of Portraiture*. However, many of the photographs have never been displayed outside of book format; they are now being exhibited for the first time at the ASI Galleries.

Jackson also intends to donate the entire collection of more than one hundred prints to the Butler Center's permanent collection, an amazing gift both in artistic and historical terms that will greatly enrich the Butler Center's collection. This exhibition runs through June 30, 2009, and will be followed in early July by *Small Works on Paper*, an exhibit organized by the Arkansas Arts Council.

*Cont. on page 3*

## Genealogy Workshop Focuses on Research

The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, in conjunction with the Arkansas Genealogical Society (AGS), will host its eighth annual Genealogy Workshop. Featured speaker Beau Sharbrough will be introduced by the Butler Center's genealogy specialist, Rhonda Stewart. The workshop will be held Saturday, July 18, 2009, in the Darragh Center at the Main Library.

Sharbrough, a native of Houston, Texas, is known in genealogy communities for

his expertise in the creation and navigation of Internet sites for family researchers. He is the creator of both the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) website and the GENTECH website. Former president of GENTECH, Sharbrough has previously worked for online genealogy and history research tools



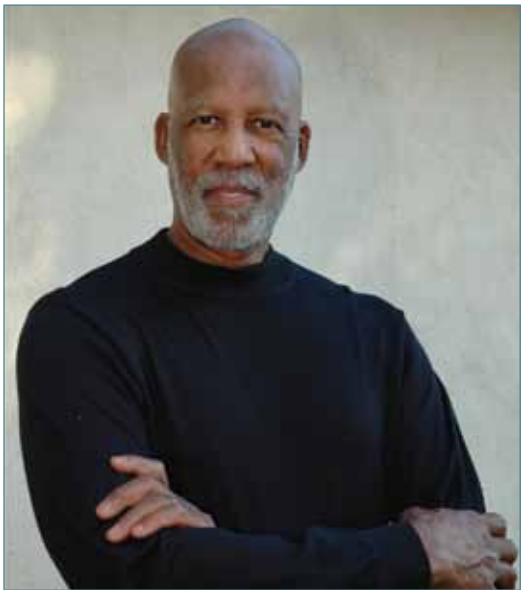
*Beau Sharbrough*

*Cont. on page 5*

# Butler Center Books Announces New Titles

Butler Center Books will release three new books in 2009, plus the paperback edition of former governor David Pryor's *A Pryor Commitment: The Autobiography of David Pryor*. The book program is now under the direction of Rod Lorenzen, a former journalist, who has worked with Butler Center Books for more than a year. As a former owner and operator of a Little Rock bookstore, Lorenzen is well versed in the publishing world and a great fit as head of the program.

The books to be published include the



Terrence Roberts

memoirs of a Little Rock Nine member, pictures and postcards of Arkansas throughout several decades, and wartime histories of Arkansans written by a previous Butler Center Books author—all important additions to Arkansas's historical literature.

*Lessons from Little Rock* by Little Rock Nine member Terrence Roberts illuminates the Central High School integration crisis and its effect on his family and himself.

Roberts's rich narrative and candid voice take readers through that rocky year, helping us realize that the historic events of the Little Rock desegregation crisis happened to real people—to children, parents, our fellow citizens.

Roberts, who graduated from California State University and earned a PhD in psychology from Southern Illinois University, now resides in California, where he owns and directs a management consulting firm. President Clinton presented Roberts with the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999. Roberts has been featured on *Good Morning America*, *The Today Show*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *The Rachel Maddow Show*, and NPR's *Tavis Smiley Show*.

*Main Street Arkansas: The Hearts of Arkansas Cities and Towns—as Portrayed in Postcards and Photographs* by Ray and Steven Hanley is a postcard and photographic tour of every section of Arkansas. Bill Worthen, director of the Historic Arkansas Museum, says, "Every corner of the state is included. It is a real treasure for travelers and celebrants of Arkansas and American history."

This visual history traces many towns' humble beginnings, with wooden-frame structures lining rutted dirt streets teeming with wagons, horses, and mules. The evolution of towns such as Walnut Ridge, Bentonville, Little Rock, and Lake Village, as well as tiny hamlets such as Black Rock and Ponca, unfolds before readers' eyes. Scenes from the 1950s feature stores such as Ben

Franklin, OTASCO, and Western Auto. Success stories of Main Street preservation and revitalization in El Dorado, Siloam Springs, Conway, and Harrison show how local elders have set an example for other towns.

Ray and Steven Hanley have published extensively from their research of Arkansas history as told through postcards. Traveling thousands of miles to collect and authenticate postcards, as well as take comparative photos, they are the undisputed authorities on historical postcards from Arkansas. They live in Little Rock.

A Butler Center Books veteran, Velma B. Woody brings us *Homefront Arkansas: Arkansans Face Wartime Past and*

*Present*. For almost two hundred years, Arkansans have been part of America's struggle to maintain democracy and keep the peace at home and around the globe. *Homefront Arkansas* shows how war has affected those at home as well as those who served as soldiers.

The short stories include characters such as a wounded Civil War soldier who stumbles onto a homestead after a battle at Poison Springs, forever changing the family living there; Arkansas volunteers who follow Teddy Roosevelt into the Spanish-American War, only to find troops crowded into a filthy camp as they wait to be shipped out; and an African-American girl who leaves her native state to escape persecution, only to find that a world war is threatening to envelop her new home in England. Woody's stories are set against the factual and compelling backdrop of Arkansas's storied history. Woody is also the author of *Bandits, Bears, and Backaches: A Collection of Short Stories Based on Arkansas History*.

Books published by the Butler Center are available through national and local book sellers, including River Market Books & Gifts. They may also be ordered through the distributor, the University of Arkansas Press in Fayetteville, at [www.uapress.com](http://www.uapress.com) or by calling 1-800-626-0090. For mail-order forms, please contact the Butler Center. ■

The *Butler Banner* is the quarterly newsletter of the **Butler Center for Arkansas Studies**

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# A Word from the Center

David Stricklin, Head of the Butler Center



Well, in my last column, I said we'd either have an announcement in the next *Butler Banner* about the date of our grand opening, or pictures of it,

having already held the event. If you've looked at pages 4 and 5, you've seen the pictures. We had the grand opening of the Arkansas Studies Institute on Saturday, March 21. It was truly a grand occasion, with five former Arkansas governors, one of whom used to be president of the United States, and representatives of three late governors. The event was a wonderful combination of immense good humor and devotion to the high calling of preserving and sharing Arkansas history.

We didn't have long to savor the experience, however, as we opened for business the following Monday morning at 9:00. Immediate comments and reactions were overwhelming and gratifying. The number of visitors to the research room we share with our colleagues from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's

Archives and Special Collections Program has doubled as compared to usage in our former research room. Many tour groups and folks wanting to hold meetings in the ASI have been excited by the beautiful space. A teacher who brought in a group of kids wrote to say, "The ASI and its staff make me glad to be an Arkansan." We are deeply grateful to be able to share this wonderful space with people who want to know more about Arkansas. It is a great pleasure to be open for service!

Also in these pages, you can see the results of the awards ceremony at the annual meeting of the Arkansas Historical Association in Magnolia. Butler Center staff members or projects won seven awards, including five for the *Pulaski County Historical Review*, which we publish under the editorship of Bob Razer, assisted by Kathryn Heller. Grif Stockley won the Ragsdale book prize, and the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas* won the Diamond Award. It was a big night for our colleagues.

Other big things are coming up, including the next step in our participation in a State Department-sponsored partnership

through UALR with Chinese cultural institutions. Seven officials of historical organizations in China visited the ASI for two days—two days after we opened—and got a lesson not only in how we do history in Arkansas but also in how we open a new building! They were especially intrigued by the more than 100 image panels we have in the ASI showing scenes from the state's history, most especially the one showing the original Wal-Mart store in Rogers.

We recently received an announcement of the admission of the next class of students in the Clinton School of Public Service, which holds classes and has offices in the ASI. Some of these thirty-six remarkable students, drawn from seventeen states and five foreign countries, have some tie to Arkansas. Many do not. Their experience as students will be different because a great deal of their class work will take place in our building. But I couldn't help thinking about the ways having classes in the ASI will change their very understanding of Arkansas, their appreciation for its history and identity, and their desire to share in its present and future. That is why we are here, both for the benefit of people who live in the state and for those from other places. We look forward to welcoming those students in the fall, and we look forward to welcoming you soon at the ASI! ■

*Cont. from ASI Galleries Debut, p.1*

In other art news, artist Roberta McGrath donated her painting *Controlled Chaos* to the CALS art program, and it is now installed in the new Nixon Library in Jacksonville. *Controlled Chaos*, a fun and colorful painting, is an exciting addition to the new branch.

Another notable event is the completion of the Arkansas River Valley Walking Map, located on the south side of the ASI along Count Pulaski Way. This colorful painting of the Arkansas River depicts the history of Arkansas as represented by artifacts and animals. It is highlighted with the names of cities, historically important sites, and geographic features along the river.

The ASI Retail Gallery is now open as well; formerly located in the Cox Creative Center, the gallery features artists from all over Arkansas who work in a wide variety of media and styles. ■



Arkansas Studies Institute's Arkansas Artists Retail Gallery



# ASI Grand Opening Ce

The Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) held its grand opening Saturday, March 21, 2009. The building officially opened to visitors and researchers the following Monday.

Ceremonies began Friday, March 20, with the dedication of a plaque commemorating the Jewish community and Concordia Hall. A Jewish community social center in the late 1880s, Concordia Hall was housed on the second floor of the Porbeck & Bowman building, which is now part of the ASI.

Saturday's celebration began with remarks from a group of distinguished speakers, including Joel Anderson, University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) chancellor; Governor Mike Beebe; Senator Dale Bumpers; Governor Jim Guy Tucker; President Bill Clinton; CALS board of trustees member Jimmie Lou Fisher; CALS board of trustees president Stanley Hill; Senator David Pryor; CALS director Bobby Roberts; and David Stricklin, head of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies.

After heartfelt remarks and many accolades for the library's staff and leaders, Governor Beebe was surprised by the unveiling of a walkway located on the first floor. The walkway is constructed using timber salvaged from an old bridge in Amagon, Beebe's hometown. Guests then enjoyed refreshments and tours of the building.



*Rabbi Eugene Levy (center), along with David Stricklin (left) and Jerry Klinger, representative of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation (right), unveiled the commemorative plaque located on the north side of the building, facing Rock Street.*

*"We're trying to do two things with this facility—one is to create a place where anybody who wants to know about Arkansas will have at their fingertips an immense amount of resources to do that. The other thing we're trying to do is stimulate the pursuit of further knowledge about the state's history."  
—David Stricklin*



## County Court Records Added to ASI Resources

More than 280 microfilm reels of court records from Pulaski County and Perry County have been added to the resources available in the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) Research Room. The Butler Center purchased all court records for the CALS service area available from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, and seeks to purchase court records on microfilm for all Arkansas counties. The collection of Arkansas county court records is intended specifically to add value to the ASI as a comprehensive research repository for students at

the Clinton School of Public Service and in the History Department of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Traditionally, genealogists have used court records to expand family histories beyond the names and dates found in census records. Arkansas county court records—including land records, probate records, tax records, and more—can illuminate ancestors' livelihoods and quality of life, as well give clues to what life was like in their communities. Broader historical research is increasingly utilizing local court records to illuminate political and social conditions.

The microfilm court records for Perry County cover the years 1821 to 1972 and for Pulaski County from 1819 to 1979. Online and print indexes are available in the ASI Research Room, and staff members will assist visitors and students in using the records for genealogy research and school assignments. ■

### Contact the Butler Center at the ASI!

Visit [www.butlercenter.org](http://www.butlercenter.org) and click on Contact Us for a list of Butler Center staff members' new phone numbers. Call (501) 320-5700 to reach the Arkansas Studies Institute Research Desk.

# celebration



View of the crowd gathered in the ASI Main gallery. Over 500 guests attended.

“We have to cherish what is ours...this is a big piece of what’s ours.”—Jim Guy Tucker



President Bill Clinton spoke to the crowd, praising the ASI and its historical value. Clinton’s gubernatorial papers are housed in the ASI.



Honored guests and speakers (from left to right): President Bill Clinton, Governor Jim Guy Tucker, Governor Mike Beebe, CALS board of trustees member Jimmie Lou Fisher, and CALS board of trustees president Stanley Hill.

“UALR is proud to have a presence in the Little Rock River Market as a partner with CALS in the Arkansas Studies Institute.”—Joel Anderson

Cont. from *Genealogy Workshop*, p.1  
such as Ancestry.com and Footnote.com. He writes regularly on technical topics in family history, with an occasional dose of humor, and maintains the RootsWorks.com website. He is the author of *Gene’s Anniversary Scrapbook*, a technical how-to manual for scrapbooking.

Genealogy Workshop attendees will learn about practical applications for family history research. Sharbrough will introduce the group to Footnote.com, a website of historical documents and social networking, and RootsWorks.com, where researchers can learn how to use the latest technical tools to easily maintain and navigate genealogy research. The group will also discuss the pros and cons of automatic research assistants

such as GenSmarts, Ancestry.com, and Internet search engines.

The workshop is free and open to the public. Registration is from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m., and the workshop begins at 9:30 a.m. Lunch is provided, and reservations are recommended. Contact the Arkansas Studies Institute at (501) 320-5700 or e-mail Rhonda Stewart at [rstewart@cals.org](mailto:rstewart@cals.org).

The FGS will host this year’s national conference, Passages Through Time, at the Little Rock Statehouse Convention Center, September 2–5. Topics for the Genealogy Workshop were chosen to tie in with topics at the national conference. The Butler Center will operate a booth during the conference to provide information available on public research resources. ■

## Be a Part of CALS’ History!

The Central Arkansas Library System (CALS) comprises 12 libraries in two counties. The history of CALS dates back to February 1, 1910, when the original Little Rock Public Library opened its doors. A written history of CALS and its impact on Central Arkansas is in progress. As part of that, we invite you to share your memories by completing a questionnaire. You may download a copy to print out and mail to us, or complete it online. A link to the survey can be found on the CALS website ([www.cals.org](http://www.cals.org)). Thank you for taking the time to be a part of our history. ■





# THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARKANSAS HISTORY & CULTURE

## 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.

### **Entries Needing Media (Photographs, etc.):**

Arkansas Negro Democratic Association  
Little Italy (Pulaski and Perry Counties)  
Camp Magnolia  
Nimrod P. Menifee  
Perry Wayne Ouzts  
Crop Circles  
Alonzo "Lonnie" Clayton  
Arkansas State Guard  
Assemblies of God  
Island 37  
Nelson Hackett  
Mary Victor (M. V.) Mayfield  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Harmonial Vegetarian Society  
Douglas Clyde Jones  
Edsel Ford  
Pond Creek National Wildlife Refuge  
Henry Rowe Schoolcraft  
Camp Aldersgate  
Church of God in Christ (COGIC)  
Panel of American Women  
Flu Epidemic of 1918  
Jean Baptiste Bénard de La Harpe

Atkins Pickle Company  
Command-Aire  
South Arkansas Arboretum  
O. C. Bailey  
Win "Skinny" Whipple  
Hiram Abiff Whittington  
Geleve Grice  
Eleanor de la Vergne Doss Risley  
C. D. Wright  
Jim McDougal

If you have pictures or other media, please contact Mike Keckhaver at [mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net](mailto:mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net)

### **Entries Needing Authors:**

Star City (Lincoln County)  
Caves and Cavers  
Missouri Bootheel  
Lady Baxter  
Glen Campbell

If you would like to write one of these entries, please contact Anna Lancaster at [alancaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net](mailto:alancaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net)

## Explorations of Arkansas History

Guy  
Lancaster

Arkansas history can sometimes be hard to beat in terms of the ridiculous. After all, this is the state where rival Baptist churches battled it out on the streets of Jonesboro, shooting up the town until Governor Harvey Parnell had to call out troops to restore order; where the General Assembly designated an actual sanctuary for the mythical White River Monster; where a former mayor of Searcy invented a miniature musical commode as a novelty and made money off of it—the list of historical farce goes on and on.

Hard to beat, this stuff, but we do try

at least once a year. I'm referring, of course, to our annual April Fool's Day entry. In 2007, we posted a piece on the Ouachitater Buffaloes, a group of water buffaloes living on the shores of Lake Ouachita. Last year, readers of the Encyclopedia learned about Bartleby Clown College, an institution for the training of circus performers that operated in Jonesboro during the 1950s. And this year, it was all about the Possum of Tomorrow Program—an initiative sponsored by the Arkansas Agriculture Department to encourage the mass breeding and con-

sumption of opossums—with Pokey O'Possum as its mascot.

As with all April Fool's Day jokes, someone invariably falls for it each year. But these people aren't gullible. They know that Arkansas history is so crazy, so populated by the daft and the dreamers, that literally anything can happen here. After all, if a legislative body can set aside a special reserve for an unseen monster, why would they not try to promote opossum farming? Just take a gander through the Encyclopedia of Arkansas. For the true Arkansas history buff, every day is April Fool's Day. ■



Left to right: AHA president Laura Miller, with EOA staffers Nathania Sawyer, Mike Keckhaver, and Mike Polston

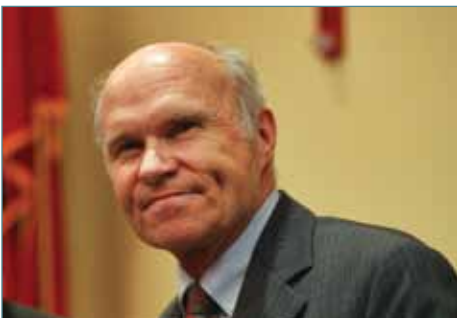
## Butler Center Staff in the Community Awards and Recognitions

**Mike Polston**, historian for the EOA, won Exhibit of the Year by the Arkansas Museum Association for “Every Four Years: Campaigning for the Presidency” as director of the museum at Cabot High School.

**Grif Stockley**, historian for the Butler Center, won several awards in 2009 including: the J. G. Ragsdale Book Award and the Walter Brown Award, both given by the Arkansas Historical Association (AHA). Stockley also participated as an author in the Arkansas Literary Festival.

**Jamie Metrailler**, archival assistant with the Bill Clinton State Government Project, was awarded the Pulaski County Historical Society’s F. Hampton Roy Award for 2009. The award article, “Skilled Workers in Little Rock’s Building Trades, Manufactories, and Railroads from 1871 to 1890,” appears in the Spring 2009 volume of the *Pulaski County Historical Review*.

**Bob Razer**, Archie House Fellow and editor of the *Pulaski County Historical*



Grif Stockley

*Review*. Razer helped the *Review* win the Walter L. Brown Award for Best County or Local Journal award and Best Graphics award given by the Arkansas Historical Association. Razer also won the Best Biography award for his article for the *Review* titled “Joe T. Robinson: The New Deal’s Majority Leader, 1933-1937,” also given by the AHA.

**Shirley Schuette**, archival assistant, tied in the Best Edited Document category for her article that appeared in the *Review* titled, “‘The Land is Good’: One Immigrant’s View of Territorial Arkansas, the Klingelhoef Letter of 1834.”

**The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture** staff won the Diamond Award, presented by the Arkansas Historical Association, for its outstanding efforts in the engaging EOA website, [www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net](http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net).

## Thad Caraway Exhibit in the ASI

The Arkansas Studies Institute is hosting the first stop of a traveling exhibit on Thaddeus Caraway, which shows a timeline of Caraway’s life. A former U.S. representative and U.S. senator, Caraway was a progressive champion of the poor who vigorously aided the people of Arkansas during the Great Depression.

University of Arkansas at Little Rock professor Dr. Cal Ledbetter funded the exhibit, which was researched and created by the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies. The exhibit will be placed in the Arkansas Humanities Council’s traveling exhibit collection. Contact the Arkansas Humanities Council at 501-320-5761 for information on hosting the exhibit or for further information.



Thaddeus Caraway exhibit in Concordia Hall

## BUTLER CENTER DONORS

### Gifts of Materials for Fall 2008

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Mike Polston (BASE)  
 Lee Rector, Nevada; In honor of University of Arkansas Foundation for Ron Robinson

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Henry M. Rector, 1st Marines, poses with a .30 caliber machine gun while manning a position in Korea. Rector, the great-grandson of Governor Henry Massie Rector, spent just over a year in Korea while serving as a corporal in an anti-tank company. In one letter home to his parents, in which he related some of his experiences during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign, he said, "If you read this and exaggerate it 10 times it still wouldn't be half as bad as it really was." The Korean War touched the lives of thousands of Arkansans, yet it has been little documented and little studied. The Butler Center's "FOR-GOTTEN: The Arkansas Korean War Project" seeks to fill the documentary void so that people have a better understanding and appreciation for that long-forgotten conflict.



Images from Our Collection