

The Butler Banner

Newsletter of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

Volume 16, Number 1

Winter 2014

Butler Center Events

Art Exhibitions

Jan. 10–March 22, 2014

Butler Center Loft Gallery

Unusual Portraits: New Works
by Michael Warrick and David O'Brien

Explorations in portraiture
featuring sculpture and two-
dimensional works

March 14–May 24, 2014

Butler Center West Gallery

Exhibition by Studio Art Quilt Associates

Contemporary textile works
related to the folk-art quilt
tradition

March 14–June 21, 2014

Butler Center Underground Gallery

Exhibition by Arkansas Society of Printmakers

Prints in a variety of media

April 11–June 28, 2014

Butler Center Loft Gallery

Selected Works by Robert Reep

Eclectic works in mixed media

All exhibitions open during each
month's Second Friday Art Night
(2FAN), 5–8 p.m. in the Arkansas
Studies Institute building. Join us for
art, music, and refreshments!

Legacies & Lunch

Noon to 1 p.m.

Ron Robinson Theater, southwest
corner of Arcade Building,
100 River Market Ave.

Wed., Feb. 5, 2014

Grace Blagdon & David Ware
"Remembering the Brinkley
Academy"

Wed., March 5, 2014

Ann Early—"Arkansas Archeology"

Wed., April 2, 2014

Charlotte Schexnayder—an
interview with the former
newspaperwoman and state
representative

Finding Family Facts

A free genealogy course held the
second Monday of each month
Feb. 10, March 10, April 14
3:30 to 5 p.m. Room 204
401 President Clinton Ave.

Visit www.butlercenter.org
for more information.



An Arcade for a New Century



The Butler Center is pleased to be a part of a new venture in Little Rock's River Market District—the Arcade Building. A public-private partnership between the Central Arkansas Library System (CALS) and Moses Tucker Real Estate, the building houses a restaurant, shops, offices, and—most exciting for the Butler Center—archival facilities and the Ron Robinson

Theater. The Arcade Building is named after the earlier Arcade Building, which served as a downtown Little Rock shopping destination at Center and Louisiana Streets more than a century ago. An exhibit put together by our University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) partners in the Center for Arkansas History and Culture detailing the history the original Arcade, which was Arkansas's first enclosed mall, will be displayed in the new building's lobby.

Archivists from both the Butler Center and UALR, who have been housed since 2009 in the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building adjacent to the new structure, have processing space in the new building, with a dedicated walkway connecting the ASI to the Arcade Building for safe transportation of archival materials, which will still be stored in the ASI.

The Butler Center has many connections to the theater in the Arcade Building. First and foremost, the theater is named to honor Ron Robinson, Arkansiana collector and generous friend to CALS and the Butler Center. Robinson has donated a large collec-

Cont. on page 2



Installing one of the signs for the Rob Robinson Theater.

Arkansas and the Great War Site

World War I, the first major conflict of the twentieth century, lasted more than four years, involved fifteen nations, and resulted in the deaths of at least 8.5 million soldiers worldwide. July 28, 2014, will mark the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the war, and the Butler Center is pleased to announce the creation of *Arkansas and the Great War*, an online resource for researchers interested in learning more about Arkansas's involvement with the war.

Approximately 200,000 Arkansans registered for military service after the United States entered the war in 1917. Arkansas

was also home to Camp Pike (now Camp Joseph T. Robinson) in North Little Rock and Eberts Training Field in Lonoke County. Camp Pike began the war as the home of the 87th Infantry Division and later served as a replacement training facility after the division deployed to France. Eberts Field was one of the leading aviation training bases in the nation, training soldiers from around the country for military duty.

Highlights of the Butler Center's World War I-related collections include letters from a U.S. Marine, correspondence from a soldier who served in a balloon company (see page 4), correspondence of a soldier who served in a field

Cont. on page 2

Cont. from Arcade, p. 1

tion of Arkansas-related items to the Butler Center, including sheet music, recordings, and movie posters. The versatile, fully equipped 315-seat venue, which is part of the CALS Main Library campus, provides a space for musical performances (serving as a venue for the Butler Center's Arkansas Sounds music festival), speakers (including for CALS's Arkansas Literary Festival and other events), lectures (serving as the new space for the Butler Center's monthly lecture series, Legacies & Lunch), and films (acting as the flagship for the Little Rock Film



Brian Robertson moving archival materials through the walkway from the ASI Building to the new Arcade Building manuscript processing area.

Cont. from Great War, p. 1

hospital, photographs and materials from Camp Pike (see photo on back page) and Eberts Field, and draft registration records, as well as a wealth of secondary materials related to the war.

"The new website provides quick access to the finding aids for all of our materials related to World War I," said Brian Robertson, manager of the Research Services Division of the Butler Center. "A number of the primary materials have been digitized and placed in the site's digital gallery," Robertson added, "which allows researchers from around the world access to portions of our col-



Interior of the Ron Robinson Theater in the Arcade Building.

lection). As with other CALS meeting spaces, the theater will also be available for public use.

The lineup of January's opening events in the Ron Robinson Theater included Arkansas Sounds—sponsored events such as a documentary about Arkansas musician Levon Helm, a performance by his daughter Amy Helm, and a documentary about and performance by Arkansas rockabilly legend Sleepy LaBeef; performances by musicians and dancers from UALR; and several film nights coordinated by the Little Rock Film Festival. For more information, visit www.cals.lib.ar.us/ron-robinson-theater. ■



Dedicated walkway from the ASI Building (right) to the Arcade Building's manuscript processing area.

lections." The site also includes additional information such as links to related entries from the online Encyclopedia of

Arkansas History & Culture, a listing of pertinent microfilm holdings, and assorted complementary print and online resources.

The online resource *Arkansas and the Great War* joins *FORGOTTEN: The Arkansas Korean War Project* and *A Nation Divided: Arkansas and the Civil War*, two award-winning online collections created by the Butler Center to promote a better understanding and appreciation of Arkansas's military history. ■



A Word from the Center

David Stricklin, Manager of the Butler Center



It's humbling to get to the end of a long project and think about how many people worked to bring it about. Opening the Ron Robinson Theater, the new CALS performance and lecture space in the Arcade Building, is just such a project (see pages 1 and 2). CALS will use it for a vast array of programs, along with many other organizations that will come in for a day or an evening. The Butler Center will use it particularly for our Arkansas Sounds music festival—a late-September fixture and a moveable feast of Arkansas music year-round. We will welcome both well-known figures and rising stars, as well as a lot of people who just have something musical to say.

We will also move our monthly Legacies & Lunch lectures into the theater. The Main Library's Darragh Center has been the home of L&L since 1997, but we are excited about the range of media options in the new space. It will be a great place to present talks, show photographs, project films, and host discussions on Arkansas history. The projection equip-

ment in the theater is the highest rated of any in Arkansas by the Digital Cinema Institute. Films that were shot in digital formats, which means virtually anything produced in the last several years, will be extraordinary to watch in the new theater. It has a wonderful sound system—two in fact, one for films and another for music and spoken-word presentations.

This facility—where people can enjoy films, music, talks about Arkansas history, and more—is an ideal expression of the great variety of things Ron Robinson cares about and has shared with us through his gifts of collections on Arkansas music and film, politics and culture, business and the military. We couldn't be more pleased to be able to share both these wonderful collections and this fantastic theater, both of which reflect Ron's passions for Arkansas, for its history, and for sharing its story with everyone.

CALS Director Bobby Roberts was the conceptual master of the project, as he has been on so many initiatives for CALS, including the Butler Center. Little Rock voters, who approved the funding plan for CALS's part of the project, stepped up, as they have done so often when presented with the chance to have a great library system. The architects at AMR and the builders at Clark Contrac-

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tors, our partners Jimmy Moses and Rett Tucker at Moses Tucker Real Estate, and our friends at the Little Rock Film Festival, along with many others, deserve a big hand, both for their planning and work on the project and for their commitment to doing something great in downtown Little Rock. It's pretty fantastic. Come check it out! ■

Jewelry: It's What's for Valentine's Day



Butler
Center
Galleries
also offer:
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Joseph W. Cooper Papers Now Available

The Joseph W. Cooper Papers collection is now available to the public in the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building's research room. This collection contains documents related to the military service of Joe Cooper, including hundreds of letters to and from Cooper during World War I. The collection also includes documents from the 19th Balloon Company's World War I service, other family materials, and many photographs.

Joseph Whitaker (Joe) Cooper was born in Malvern, Arkansas, in 1889, to Joe W. Cooper Sr. and Clara Strong Cooper. Details from his early life are scarce. Cooper had four siblings: William H., Annie Maurice, Felix Downey, and Clara. He attended Hendrix College and the University of Arkansas. On his draft registration card, Cooper describes himself as a self-employed merchant; at that time he was proprietor of a men's store in Malvern.

Cooper enlisted in the U.S. Army on October 27, 1917, and entered training

at Leon Springs, Texas. Eventually, he joined the 19th Balloon Company (organized on January 24, 1918) as a supply officer and completed training at the Fort Omaha balloon school in Nebraska. While 110 balloon companies were created during World War I, only thirty-five—including Cooper's—made it to France. Seventeen of these companies eventually served at the front, performing duties such as reconnaissance, communication, aerial photography, and parachuting. Cooper arrived in France in November 1918, eight days before the signing of the armistice. He spent most of his time stationed in and around Bordeaux before returning to the United States and being honorably discharged on May 29, 1919. He describes his experiences with service and his impressions of the war in many of the letters in the collection.

After the war, Cooper joined the Home Life Insurance Company of Arkansas in 1926, opening a Memphis general agency for the company in 1929. He later joined the Union Central Life Insurance



Joseph W. Cooper

Company, where he worked until retirement in both Nebraska and Arkansas. Cooper married Ruth Moore in 1930, and

Cont. on next page

flash

... Butler Center Events in the Spotlight



Kay Goss talks about the life and career of Wilbur D. Mills at November's Legacies & Lunch.



Ruth Shepherd discusses *Arkansans Creating Just Communities* at December's Legacies & Lunch.



Kelly Houston Jones discusses slave resistance in Arkansas at January's Legacies & Lunch.



Cont. from Cooper Papers, p. 4

the couple had two children: Joe Jr. and William (Bill). A second large cache of correspondence in the collection follows the life of Joe Jr., particularly his time in college. Joe Jr. attended the University of Arkansas and the University of Tennessee before becoming a dentist. Other materials in the collection are related to Clara Cooper, Ruth Moore Cooper, and Bill Cooper, as well as additional extend-

ed family members.

Joseph W. Cooper died on October 29, 1961, at the age of seventy-two and is buried in Malvern. In addition to his time in the insurance business, he had served as president of the Arkansas Underwriters Association and had been a member of the Pulaski Heights Methodist Church board, a charter member of Riverdale Country Club, and a member of the American Legion. Cooper was a

32nd degree Mason and a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity for forty years.

The finding aid for the Joseph W. Cooper Papers can be accessed at www.arstudies.org or viewed in the ASI research room. Reflecting the Butler Center's focus on the legacy of World War I, documents from this collection are being digitized as part of the *Arkansas and the Great War* project (see page 1) and will be available online. ■

BASE Program to Include Younger Readers

In an effort to bring resources to more students, the Central Arkansas Library System (CALS) and the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies have expanded the BASE (Books for Arkansas Students' Education) program to include middle school students in addition to high school students.

BASE is an innovative book-exchange program that has been providing free books on Arkansas history and culture to public high schools across the state since 2007. BASE books are provided free of

charge to schools that register and select the materials from the inventory. Books are donated by the Friends of Central Arkansas Libraries (FOCAL) and individuals, or they are purchased through donated funds and grants provided through the Arkansas General Assembly.

Expanding the program to include middle school students is consistent with the Arkansas Department of Education's adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), with reading and writing process skills emphasizing historical content. Arkansas history content frameworks provide the curriculum skills basis for students, while the CCSS provide the process skills basis. For example, the CCSS standard for reading literacy in history/social studies states that by the end of the eighth grade, students should be able to read and comprehend 6-8 grade-level history/social studies texts independently and proficiently. Clearly, middle school students can benefit from the books provided by the BASE program.

To become involved in the BASE program, school librarians at public high schools and middle schools may register their schools by using the form found at www.basededucation.org. Points are distributed to school libraries based on the "Free/Reduced Lunch Count" so that

schools with greater need will have the ability to select more materials. After points are awarded, school librarians use the shopping cart catalog feature of the website to select titles from the inventory to add to their libraries. The inventory may consist of a single copy of a title or multiple copies, if available from donations or purchases.

The BASE website provides two bibliographies under the tab, "Core Collections." These are intended to help school librarians develop a materials collection to aid Arkansas history instruction and to help them prioritize the acquisition of titles, either through purchase as part of the normal library order or from selection from the BASE inventory. While any title included in BASE is a useful addition to a school library, books on these two lists represent "the best of the best" and would provide a solid foundation for a school library's Arkansas collection. The primary focus of these lists is Arkansas history, but significant works—both fiction and nonfiction—by noted writers from Arkansas are also included.

Donations of Arkansas books and funds to purchase them are a critical component of the program. Anyone interested in donating books or money to the BASE program should contact Bob Razer at the Butler Center at (501) 320-5727. ■



In the African American history class of Cynthia Mahomes Nunnley (*left*) at Little Rock Central High School, the students have a yearly genealogy assignment. As part of the Butler Center's educational outreach mission, genealogy expert Rhonda Stewart (*right*) offers a presentation titled "From the Civil War to Central High School: The Legacy of Richard Toombs," which follows her own family history. The students are encouraged to interview their families during the holidays and use the information to complete a family tree with details of their family history.



Arkansas
Literary
Festival

April 24 - 27, 2014
www.ArkansasLiteraryFestival.org

Author Readings
Workshops
Panel Discussions
Children's Events
Performances
Book Signings



THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARKANSAS HISTORY & CULTURE

WANTED: AUTHORS AND MEDIA

We need entries, photographs, documents, videos, 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.):

Arkadelphia Baptist Academy
Arkadelphia Presbyterian Academy
Morris Sheppard "Buzz" Arnold
Bellingrath House
Alvin Silas (Al) Bennett
Bethel Cemetery
Blackfish Lake Ferry Site
Caviar
William Henry (Willie) Davis
Dickinson-Moore House
Jeffrey Richardson (Jeff) Donaldson
Jonathan Drummond-Webb
Conrad Elsen
Ferguson House (Pine Bluff)
Flint Creek Power Plant
Greens at North Hills
L. C. Greenwood
Humphreys' Dairy Farm
Calvin Reville (Cal) Ledbetter Jr.
Lulu Alice Boyers Markwell
James W. Mason
Maxie Theatre
Melody Boys Quartet
Ouachita Avenue Historic District
Ozark Industrial College and School of Theology
Phillips County Penal Farm Historic District
Plum Point Energy Station
River Valley Arts Center
Frederick Hampton Roy Sr.
Ralph Downing Scott Sr.
Shady Lake CCC Bridges

Springdale Poultry Industry Historic District

Kenneth Gene (Ken) Stephens
Sulphur Springs Cemetery
Temple Meir Chayim
Wallace Bridge
John Gilbert Williams
Wingmead
World Championship Quartz Crystal Dig
C. D. Wright
Richard Nathaniel Wright
Wynne Wholesale Commercial Historic District
Yellowhammer
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

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

Entries Needing Authors:

Act 1220 of 2003 (a.k.a. Childhood Obesity Act)
Alliance Rubber Company
Arkansas Law Review
Peggy S. Bossmeyer
Jack Farris
Fighting Mad [Movie]
Monea College
John A. Murrell
Political Equality League

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

BUTLER CENTER DONORS

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David Stricklin & Sally Browder, *in memory of Carolyn LeMaster*

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Michael Taylor
Charles Witsell



Take a Southern Journey with Two New Butler Center Books

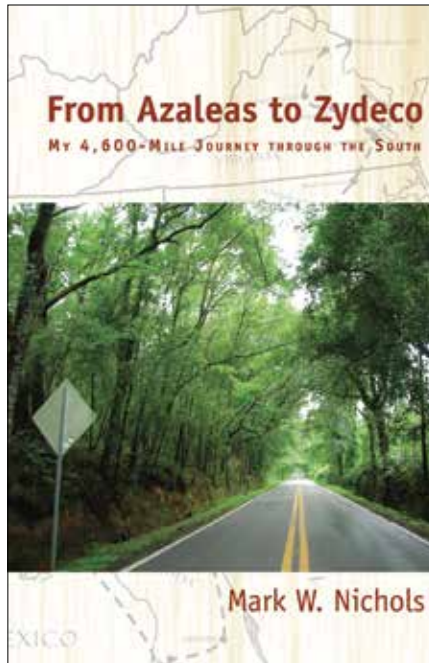
The Butler Center's publishing program now has more than forty books in print on Arkansas and regional history with the addition of two new titles for spring: *From Azaleas to Zydeco* by Little Rock attorney Mark W. Nichols and *"This Day We Marched Again"* edited by Mark K. Christ, one of the state's foremost authorities on the Civil War.

Inspired by a 1937 map and travelogue of a newspaperman's tour, Mark Nichols embarked on his own long journey into the unique cities of the South to write *From Azaleas to Zydeco: My 4,600-Mile Journey through the South* (\$22.50 paperback). Along the way, Nichols met beekeepers, cheese makers, crawfish "bawlers," duck callers, and a licensed alligator hunter, as well as entrepreneurs and politicians. His keen observations encompass the southern states from Virginia to Arkansas and points south, and he unpacks the unique qualities and history of every city he visits.

Mark Nichols was born in Knoxville, Tennessee. He received his law degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 1977 and received an LLM from New York University in 1980. Nichols has spent most of his life in the South and now lives in Little Rock.

During his stops in Arkansas, Nichols reports on such distinctive places as Crowley's Ridge, Hot Springs National Park, the Sunken Lands Wildlife Management Area, and the Grand Prairie. He visits the boyhood home of country legend Johnny Cash in a side trip to Dyess and also rolls into Little Rock to chat with Arkansas governor Mike Beebe. "It's easy to say that getting to meet so many interesting and wonderful people was the best part of the journey—because it's so

true," Nichols writes. "I know there are friendly people everywhere, but southern friendliness is different." His story embraces a wealth of southern charm from local characters, folklore, and customs to food, music, and dancing. Besides being just plain fun to read, Nichols's account of his journey gives readers a true taste of the flavor of the evolving modern South.



Representing another journey, albeit in wartime, *"This Day We Marched Again": A Union Soldier's Account of War in Arkansas and the Trans-Mississippi* (\$19.95 paperback) is the diary of Jacob Haas, a Union soldier from Wisconsin who saw extensive action in Arkansas and the Trans-Mississippi region.

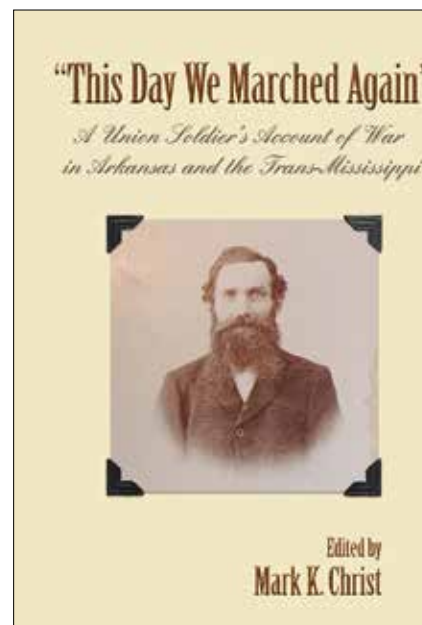
On September 17, 1861, the twenty-two-year-old Haas enlisted in the Sheboygan Tigers, a company of German immigrants that became Company A of the Ninth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. Over the next three years, Haas and his comrades marched thousands of miles and saw service in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and the Indian Territory, including pitched battles at Newtonia, Missouri, and Jenkins' Ferry, Arkansas.

Haas describes the war from the perspective of a private soldier and an immigrant as he marches through scorching summers and brutally cold winters to fight in some of the most sav-

age combat in the west. His diary shows us an extraordinary story of the valor and determination of a volunteer soldier. Though his health was ruined by war, Haas voiced no regrets for the price he paid to fight for his adopted country.

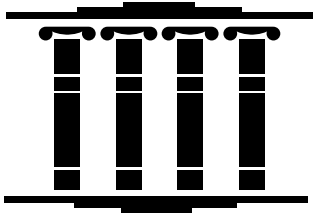
Noted Civil War author Walt Busch says the book is "an excellent firsthand account of battles, hangin' rebs, shootin' spies, stealin' cattle, and everything that goes along with a military campaign in the Trans-Mississippi. Mark Christ delivers a well-documented edit to this diary of a German infantryman from Wisconsin during the Civil War."

Mark Christ is outreach director for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program at the Department of Arkansas Heritage and has led the agency's battlefield preservation efforts since 1992. Christ is the author or editor of numerous books on Arkansas Civil War history, including *The Die Is Cast: Arkansas Goes to War, 1861*; *Rugged and Sublime: The Civil War in Arkansas*; and *"All Cut to Pieces and Gone to Hell": The Civil War, Race Relations, and the Battle of Poison Spring*. A graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma, Christ lives in Little Rock.



These and other books from the Butler Center are available at bookstores, including River Market Books & Gifts on the Main Library campus in Little Rock (501) 918-3093, from online retailers, and from the University of Arkansas Press (800) 626-0090. To see a complete list of Butler Center Books, visit www.butlercenter.org/publication. All proceeds from book

sales are used to assist the Butler Center in publishing great books about Arkansas history.



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Images from Our Collection



More than 21,000 American women served as nurses during World War I. The nurses shown here are enjoying recreation hour at the nurses' club at Camp Pike's base hospital. This is one of the many World War I photographs that will be exhibited online as part of the Butler Center's Arkansas and the Great War digital collection (see article on page 1).