Hartford Music Company Collection Is Open to Researchers

The Hartford Music Company, located in Hartford (Sebastian County), was founded in 1918 by Eugene Monroe (E. M.) Bartlett—a businessman from Waynesville, Missouri, who wanted to publish gospel music. Specifically, he was interested in teaching people how to sight-read music using a shape-note system.

Shape-note singing systems began in the early 1800s as a way to teach congregational and community singers to read music without the aid of musical instruments. Each tone or interval on the musical scale is represented by a differently shaped note head (for example, the head for a “fa” note might be represented by a triangle and “la” by a square). By learning to recognize the intervals in this manner, song leaders could easily change the musical key of the song to suit the needs of the group.

Hartford Music Company songbooks, from the early 1900s to 1942. The early books were printed in Hartford under the name Central Music Company, the forerunner of Hartford.

Steve Stephens Papers Now Available

The Steve Stephens Papers (MSS 10-45) contain the personal papers of Steve Owen Stephens, best known as the host of Steve’s Show (an early dance-party show) on television station KTHV. Over many years, he has remained a familiar voice and face on radio and television.

Stephens was born Rufus James Stephens on April 22, 1930, to Owen Stephens and Allie Mae Stephens, owners of a restaurant and service station in Newport (Jackson County). His parents later owned a furniture store where Stephens worked while in school. He attended Castle Heights Military Academy and graduated from Newport High School.

After attending the University of Arkansas for two years, he left school to join the U.S. Marine Corps in 1950. Stephens left for Korea in December of 1952 and served one year in the Korean War beginning in January 1953 with the headquarters battalion of the 1st Marine Division. He was in Korea when the armistice was signed on July 27, 1953, and was discharged in 1954 after attaining the rank of sergeant.

Stephens returned to Newport and worked part-time as a broadcaster at radio station KNBY in Newport. That led to a job at KTHV, where he became the host of the dance-party show that became known as Steve’s Show (it was originally called Your Party). During the show’s run, from 1957 to 1964, it helped launch the careers of Arkansas musicians such as Conway Twitty, Charlie Rich, Johnny Cash, and Sonny Burgess.

From 1958 to 1965, he was the station’s weather...

Cont. on page 2
Cont. from Hartford Music, p. 1
were shipped all over the United States and were used at singing conventions and schools.

The forerunner of the Hartford Music Company was the Central Music Company, owned by songwriter Will M. Ramsey and David Moore. When Ramsey moved to Little Rock (Pulaski County) in 1918, Bartlett persuaded Moore and John A. McClung to partner with him in establishing the Hartford Music Company, with Moore as business manager. The companies merged in 1931 under the Hartford name. By 1931, the company was printing and shipping more than 100,000 books a year to thirty-five states and two foreign countries. A branch plant was established in Nacogdoches, Texas, where 20,000 books were published each year. Other branches were in Fort Smith (Sebastian County); Powell, Missouri; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Cullman, Alabama; and Houston, Texas.

Bartlett wrote most of the songs, though familiar hymns were added as fillers or by request. His most famous song that is still published is “Victory in Jesus.” Bartlett formed the Hartford Music Institute to coincide with the Hartford Music Company, hiring instructors to teach voice, piano, piano tuning, rudiments, harmony, and stringed instruments.

When Bartlett retired in 1931, John McClung became president and sole owner of the company. He had co-owned the company in the 1920s and bought it outright on February 20, 1931.

After McClung died in 1942, the company was sold to Floyd Hunter, Waldo Pool, Otis Echols, and Oliver Cooper, who moved it to Hot Springs (Garland County). Albert E. Brumley (who wrote “I’ll Fly Away”) bought the company in 1948 and moved it to Powell, Missouri.

The Hartford Music Company collection (MSS 14-22) contains hymnals published between 1908 and 1974 by the Hartford Music Company, Eureka Publishing Company, Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company, and other publishing companies, as well as photographs and miscellaneous materials from the Hartford Music Company. The collection, which has served as a “mini-museum” of the Hartford Music Company, was donated to the Butler Center in May 2014 by Thelma Jean (T. J.) McClung Gibson, daughter of John McClung.

The collection can be accessed in the Research Room of the Arkansas Studies Institute building, and the finding aid is available online here.

Cont. from Steve Stephens, p. 1


was active in several philanthropic efforts, including the March of Dimes, Lions World Services for the Blind, and the Arkansas Cancer Research Center. During his long and diverse career, he has come into contact with many celebrities, business people, and philanthropists. He retired in 1998 but continues to serve as a voice talent for numerous local and national radio and television commercials. He has hosted the “Biography Arkansas” segment for KUAR radio since the segment’s debut in 2005. Read more about Stephens on the EOA here.

This collection includes approximately 15.5 linear feet of correspondence, publicity materials, photographs, audio and video recordings, scrapbooks, and memorabilia related to Stephens’s various careers and philanthropic work from 1951 through 2011. The finding aid is available online here.

Steve Stephens also donated a collection (BC.KWP.19) to the Butler Center’s Forgotten: The Arkansas Korean War Project. The collection includes photographs and documents related to his service as a marine during the Korean War, as well as an oral history interview with Stephens from June 2, 2009. Both collections can be accessed in the Research Room of the Arkansas Studies Institute building, and the BC.KWP.19 finding aid is here.

Legacies & Lunch Noon – 1 p.m.

Wed., Aug. 5
Marcie Cohen Ferris—author of The Edible South and professor of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill will discuss Southern foodways. Presented with the Clinton School of Public Service; CALS Ron Robinson Theater

Wed., Sept. 2
David Bailin—artist and teacher to discuss the exhibition Disparate Acts Redux (on view in Butler Center Galleries Aug. 14—Oct. 31) and the importance of being part of a community of artists. Main Library’s Darragh Center

Wed., Oct. 7
Arkansas Sounds Gone By—selections from the Ron Robinson sheet music collection, such as The Arkansas Traveler, to be performed at this special musical presentation. Main Library’s Darragh Center

Finding Family Facts
A free genealogy course
Aug. 10, Sept. 17, Oct. 12
3:30 – 5 p.m. ASI Room 204, 401 President Clinton Ave.
A Word from the Center
David Stricklin, Manager of the Butler Center

For many years I was subject to the iron rule of the school calendar. I was either in school, the parent of school-aged kids, or teaching from about the time of the Spanish-American War—only a slight exaggeration—until I came to work for CALS in 2005. About this time of year, I still find myself thinking about back-to-school sales, getting school supplies, and (always) lunch boxes, even though I am long liberated from the semester system.

Our work at the Butler Center bears some relationship to the rhythms of the school year, though we certainly don’t slow down in the summer. Our work with teachers intensifies in many respects, both because of our annual seminar for teachers, described on page 9, and because of other professional-development events where we connect with those folks. For many months, we have spent a lot of time and effort getting ready to help teachers incorporate the latest curricular revisions pertaining to Arkansas history. In fact, through our education-outreach coordinator, Kay Bland, we have been involved in helping craft those revisions, which went into effect this summer. I’ve talked a lot about Kay in these pages, and I happen to be writing these words on her last day with us. We’re sad about her retirement, but we are intensely proud of the work she’s done for Arkansas teachers and for us. We originally thought the 2015 teacher seminar would be her swan song, but we followed that with some very exciting work with the U.S. Department of State and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art that we’ve talked about before and will talk about more in future issues of this newsletter. All of that is directly traceable to Kay’s work with us. We’ll feature in future issues her successor, George West, who is an award-winning teacher, and the ways he’s going to build on the great foundation we have built with Kay’s help. All that’s left to say about Kay now is thanks.

Thinking of teachers brings up the remarkable Legacies & Lunch experience we had in June, featured on page 6. It’s not unusual to have an event at a history organization about someone who has been dead longer than the person was alive, but it surely must be unusual to have one about someone who died at such an early age. We started a webpage to collect memories of Roosevelt Thompson, and I wrote a little something for it based on hearing so many teachers talk so movingly about a former student.

Speaking of retirements, I’d like to thank Holly Mathisen for her ten-plus years of service to the Butler Center and CALS and her constant good cheer and attitude of welcome, most recently in our art galleries. Almost twenty thousand people used our meeting rooms last year, and the vast majority of whom dealt with Holly in significant ways. Her enthusiasm for our work, and her friendship with Mr. Butler from an earlier part of her life, always added a great deal to our friendly presence. Thanks, Holly!

We’re about to open the fourth major exhibition of art from the remarkable collection Rosalie Santine Gould gave us from the World War II Japanese American internment camp at Rohwer. This one is work on textiles made by people held in the camp. This collection has attracted attention from people all over the country. In fact, I’m pictured here, with our art coordinator Colin Thompson, to the left, with a group of students from Chicago who visited under the sponsorship of the Japanese American Citizens League. Our connections around the country and beyond its borders continue to grow, especially among teachers, because of Rosalie’s great gift to us.

Check out what we’re doing through the many links provided in this eBanner. It’s a lot. Thanks, to all the people who make it possible for us to do this work!

BUTLER CENTER NEWS

Searching for Acts of Arkansas

Since territorial days, officials of Arkansas have directed the publication of the acts and regulations passed by the General Assembly. The acts of recent years are available online, but older ones remain available only in printed form. The Butler Center’s collection of the Acts of Arkansas is spotty, with many volumes missing. To assist future researchers, we are attempting to collect a complete run of the acts. We are hoping that someone reading this might possess a few volumes that could be donated to the Butler Center. One volume, ten volumes—whatever you may have. If you have any to donate, please contact Bob Razer at (501) 320-5727 or rleslie@cals.org to make arrangements.
Arkansas history, always at the heart of the Butler Center’s mission, continues to be the main theme this fall in three new books coming from our publishing division, Butler Center Books.

A Captive Audience: Voices of Japanese American Youth in World War II Arkansas

Editor Ali Welky has mined the Butler Center’s rich archives and other collections to compile an account of young Japanese Americans who were interned in camps near the small southeastern Arkansas towns of Rohwer and Jerome during World War II. *A Captive Audience*: Voices of Japanese American Youth in World War II Arkansas (ISBN 978-1-935106-86-9, paperback, $21.95) will be released in October.

Using archival primary material such as photographs, yearbooks, artwork, and first-person written accounts, *A Captive Audience* gives an inside look at the experiences of young people during the forced incarceration of Japanese Americans. Many young internees at the camps saw their families lose their homes, businesses, and possessions from their lives on the West Coast when the U.S. government rounded up and incarcerated people of Japanese descent after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Yet through all the chaos and heartbreak of the internment experience, young people often brought a unique perspective of hope and resiliency—going to school, having fun with friends, and even falling in love in these remote Arkansas camps, all within a perimeter of barbed wire and guard towers.

Intended for young-adult readers, this book explores important dimensions of Arkansas and U.S. history, including what it means to be an American, and gives readers a chance to consider how they would face situations of upheaval and strife.

Welky, who co-edited the Encyclopedia of Arkansas Music (Butler Center Books, 2013), is the assistant editor of the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture. She lives in Conway.

Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote

On the eve of the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote, we are pleased to announce the publication of Bernadette Cahill’s *Arkansas Women and the Right to Vote: The Little Rock Campaigns, 1868–1920* (ISBN 978-1-935106-82-1, paperback, $24.95).

Women from all over Arkansas—left out of the civil rights granted by the post—Civil War Reconstruction Amendments—took part in a long struggle to gain the primary civil right of American citizens: voting. The state’s capital city of Little Rock served as the focal point not only for suffrage work in Arkansas, but also for the state’s contribution to the nationwide nonviolent campaign for women’s suffrage that reached its climax between 1913 and 1920.

Based on original research, Cahill’s book relates the history of some of those who contributed to this victorious struggle, reveals long-forgotten photographs, includes a map of the locations of meetings and rallies, and provides a list of Arkansas suffragists who helped ensure that discrimination could no longer exclude women from participation in the political life of the state and nation.

Cahill is an independent scholar who has authored several books on travel and history, including extensive writing about women’s suffrage. Cahill is also an award-winning watercolorist. She lives in Rayville, Louisiana.

It’s Official! The Real Stories behind Arkansas’s State Symbols

For our third book for this fall, we called on Arkansas State Capitol historian David Ware to fill us in on some little-known history about the state of Arkansas and its emblems. His book is *It’s Official!: The Real Stories behind Arkansas’s State Symbols* (ISBN 978-1-935106-84-5, paperback, $21.95).

Since Arkansas’s creation as an inde-
pendent territory in 1819, its legislature has officially designated a wide assortment of symbols to represent the state. Some of these refer to economic mainstays, while others attest to the aspirations of those who saw a bright future for their extensive and varied community.

This volume’s essays examine each of Arkansas’s designated symbols, outlining their genesis, their significance at the time of their adoption, and their place in modern Arkansas. Combining political narratives, natural history, and the occasional “shaggy dog” story, Ware makes a case for considering the symbols as useful keys to understanding both the Arkansas that has been and the one it hopes to be.

Ware—who holds a PhD in American history from Arizona State University—has served as historian for the capitol since 2001. He lives in Little Rock.

Butler Center Books are available in bookstores, including River Market Books & Gifts on the Main Library campus, and online. For more on Butler Center Books, click here. For purchasing information, click here.

The University of Arkansas Press will also present new Arkansas-related titles this fall. Butler Center Books and the University of Arkansas Press share the mission of publishing works on the history and culture of Arkansas and the South. Two new books from UA Press, Defining the Delta and Slavery and Secession in Arkansas, will be particularly important to those interested in the history of Arkansas and its surrounding region.

Defining the Delta: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the Lower Mississippi River Delta, edited by Janelle Collins, collects fifteen essays describing and defining this important seven-state region that is bisected by and dependent on the Mississippi River. Collins, chair of the Department of English and Philosophy at Arkansas State University, was general editor of Arkansas Review: A Journal of Delta Studies from 2009 to 2013.

Slavery and Secession in Arkansas: A Documentary History, edited by James J. Gigantino II, collects accounts from primary-source documents that trace Arkansas’s tortuous road to secession and war. Gigantino teaches in the history department at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

For more information on these and other publications, visit UA Press.

EOA Expands Civil War Content

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture received its third grant from the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission in the late spring of 2015. Previous grants from the ACWSC have been used to develop more content relating to the military history of Arkansas from 1861 to 1865. This third grant will expand upon the work already done, aiding the EOA in adding entries on the events and people of the war, as well as noteworthy military steamships and more. To date, the EOA has put 183 Civil War–related entries online in relation to the two previous grants, but there is still much more to be added. If you are interested in writing one or more of these entries, click on the “Get Involved” tab on the EOA’s main page.

A Unique Partnership

Since 2008, the Butler Center and the Pulaski County Historical Society have joined together to publish the society’s award-winning quarterly journal, the Pulaski County Historical Review. This partnership is an important piece of the Butler Center’s mission to encourage research into the county’s history. The Butler Center’s Bob Razer serves as editor of the Review, and Butler Center employees are frequent contributors to its pages. Society members receive the journal as part of their membership. The society extends an invitation to all those interested in Arkansas’s past and present to join it in supporting and learning about local history. Information about the society and membership is available here.
Remembering Rosey

On Wednesday, June 3, 2015, the Butler Center honored the memory of Roosevelt Thompson with “Remembering Rosey: The Too-Brief Life of Roosevelt Thompson,” a special program at the CALS Ron Robinson Theater, presented in partnership with the Clinton School of Public Service. This program was held as part of the Butler Center’s monthly Legacies & Lunch lecture series.

Roosevelt Thompson was a gifted young man who was headed toward a bright future in public service before his death in an automobile accident in 1984. It was widely believed that Thompson was poised to become Arkansas’s first African American governor. This year is the 35th anniversary of Thompson’s graduation from Little Rock Central High School, where he was student body president, an All-Star football player, and a National Merit Scholar. At Legacies & Lunch, historic video footage of Thompson was shown, including interviews with Bill and Hillary Clinton about Thompson’s work with them as an intern. The program also featured a panel discussion with Elaine Dumas, one of Thompson’s teachers and mentors at Central High; Lee Thompson, his brother; and Beth Felton, his classmate at Central and a staff member at the CALS Roosevelt Thompson Library in Little Rock.

The Butler Center asked those who knew Thompson to send us their recollections and thoughts about this beloved Arkansan. Below is a sampling of those responses:

“My memories of him are much more on a religious level. We were members of the same church where his father was pastor. He was an exceptional young man. He was always studious with a very pleasant attitude and a catching smile. I also believe he would have been our first African American governor. We all were so proud of him but not as much as his father. He bubbled with pride whenever Rosey’s name was mentioned.”

— Shelia King-Bivens Thrower, former member of Cherry Street AME Zion Church Pine Bluff, AR

“Roosevelt Thompson was a senior when my class, the Class of 1982, entered Central High. As student body president, he was our student body leader both in formal settings such as on stage in the auditorium as well as informally in the hallowed halls of our new school. He was funny and self-deprecating as a leader, and he immediately made us newbies feel welcome and at home in that big school. He had a humble personal demeanor that was so endearing, because behind that humility lay a truly deep and brilliant soul. He also had a very goofy sense of humor and such a beautiful smile. In short, we underclassmen adored Roosevelt Thompson and we looked up to him more than he ever knew. He set a tone at Central High for us that we sought to meet for our entire tenure there. I hope we succeeded.

One way that Roosevelt impacted our class was that he set a very high standard for the types of colleges we should seek to attend. Part of this may be because he made getting into Yale look so easy, although I am sure it was not. He set a clear example for those of us who were motivated students, and we believed that we could gain acceptance at any college. Because of Roosevelt, we simply did not know differently—anything seemed possible. He left us with an expectation that we must shoot for the stars, as though it were our individual and personal duty as Little Rock Central High School graduates to show the world that kids from a school that had previously been part of a terrible chapter in civil rights history could in fact go out into the world and succeed. We carried this banner high. We got the message from Roosevelt’s sheer persona and demeanor—and he never had to speak that message—that we were to go out into the world and disprove common perceptions of Arkansas as backwards and racist and we were to succeed. I hope to God we have done that because, as it turned out after his tragic loss, he was also preparing us to attempt to carry his banner too.

I have thought many, many times over the years that America, and Arkansas in particular, would be a far better place if Roosevelt had survived.”

— Megan DeLamar Schroeder Texarkana, TX

“I was struck by the emotional power of the comments made by people who had taught Roosevelt Thompson, offered at our program on his life on June 3, 2015. An old friend of mine who is a teacher says he never enters a classroom without thinking of one of his great teachers from college, and you often hear tributes of teachers offered by former students. But I’ve never heard tributes of a former student offered so movingly by that student’s teachers. It was an honor to be in the room with those people.”

— David Stricklin

Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

At Yale, one of the most distinguished awards given to students is the Roosevelt L. Thompson Prize; it has been given to members of the senior class for commitment to public service every year since Thompson’s death. The auditorium of Little Rock Central High School was named after Thompson, and a scholarship in Thompson’s name is awarded to Central High students every year. A new branch of the Central Arkansas Library System named after Thompson opened at 38 Rahling Circle in west Little Rock on September 25, 2004. Read more about Roosevelt Thompson on the Encyclopedia of Arkansas.
...Butler Center Events in the Spotlight

For July’s Legacies & Lunch, author and photographer Bill Ward discussed his books about Conway and about the Arkansas River.

At May’s Legacies & Lunch, Chris Engholm discussed his experiences leading to his exhibition White River Memoirs.

In July, Etta Reed (left) and Dorothy Taylor visited the research room at the ASI building to find information on some local church history. They are pictured here with the Butler Center’s Rhonda Stewart (center).

Arkansas Sounds, May, featured the Wildflowers.

June’s Legacies & Lunch featured a panel discussion commemorating the life of Roosevelt Thompson.

In May, Butler Center Books launched its spring releases. Pictured here are Ray and Steven Hanley signing their book Arky and editors Mike Polston and Guy Lancaster, with contributors Steve Teske and David Sesser, signing their book To Can the Kaiser. CALS director and Arkansas history aficionado Bobby Roberts is getting his own copies signed.

Arkansas Sounds, July, featured Adam Faucett & the Tall Grass (pictured here) and Iron Tongue.
BUTLER CENTER DONORS

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Patricia Scott
David Stricklin & Sally Browder, in memory of Archie Moore Jr. for Arkansas Sounds

We need entries, photographs, documents, videos, maps, and audio clips to help make the EOA the most comprehensive and engaging resource on Arkansas history.

Entries Needing Media (photographs, etc.):
Alicia (Lawrence County)
Anthonyville (Crittenden County)
Arkadelphia Presbyterian Academy
Arkansas Entomological Society
Arkansas Political Science Association
Arkansas Scholarship Lottery
Avilla (Saline County)
Bachman’s Warbler
William Nelson Rector Beall
Lasker (Las) Bell
Blackfish Lake Ferry Site
Boswell School
Walter Lee Brown
Shawn Camp
Campbell Cemetery
Vertie Lee Glasgow Carter
CCC Company 749 Powder Magazine
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Florida Brothers Building
Bennie Fuller
Willard Badgett Gatewood Jr.
Herbert Richard (H. R.) Gibson
Frank Joseph Ginocchio
Greensboro (Craighead County)
Kathryn Hall-Trujillo
Ena Hartman
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Helena National Guard Armory
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Alexander Travis Hawthorn
Huff (Independence County)
Incoming Kingdom Missionary Unit
Indian Bay (Monroe County)
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Ricky Lane Jasper
Billy Farrel (Bill) Johnson
Glenn T. Johnson
Jones Bar-B-Q Diner
John Lawrence Markle
Marr's Creek Bridge
Deborah Myers Mathis
James McQueen McIntosh
Clifford E. Minton
Mitchellville (Desha County)
Monticello Post Office (Historic)
Jeffrey Ryan (Jeff) Nichols
Old U.S. Highway 67
Harold Robert Perry
Pigott National Guard Armory
Pocahontas Post Office (Historic)
Pottsville Citizens Bank
James Wesley Pruden Jr.
Rabbit Foot Lodge
Raggio (Lee County)
Reed (Desha County)
James Byron Reed
Benjamin Franklin Rice
William Leon Russell
Andrew Jackson Smith
Willis S. Smith
Snapp (Woodruff County)
John Stubblefield
Sue Bailey Thurman
Violet Cemetery
Jack Hearn Watson Jr.
Harold L. “Brother Hal” Webber
Ira James Kohath Wells
Lloyd Garrison Wheeler

Entries Needing Authors:
Act 76 of 1983 (a.k.a. Teacher Testing Law)
Arkansas Philological Association
American Cancer Society, Arkansas Chapters
Big Dam Bridge
Community Organizations Build Absolute Teamwork (COMBAT)
Erma Lee Glascio Davis
William Delford (Willie) Davis
Devil’s Knot [Book and Movie]
Easter Seals Arkansas
Fort Smith Tornado of 1898
Collins Hemingway
Hot Springs [Novel]
Labor Day Bombing of 1959
Robert Leflar
Little Rock Convention of Colored Citizens (1865)
Emma Kelly Rhodes
Phyllis Yvonne Stickney
Curtis Henry Sykes
George Tribou
W. G. Huxtable Pumping Plant
Wakarusa Music Festival
Samuel Woodrow Williams
Rufus King Young

If you would like to write one of these entries, please contact Guy Lancaster at glancaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net.
2015 Educator Summer Seminar Report

Fifty educators from across the state convened in Little Rock on June 11 to participate in the third annual educator summer seminar. Sponsored by the Arkansas Humanities Council, the Arkansas Historical Association, and the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies/CALS, the seminar had the theme “20th-Century Arkansas Women and Their Influence on the 21st Century.”

During the first session of the summer seminar, conducted in the Darragh Center of the Main Library at CALS, teachers were treated to a “visit” from Arkansas’s first female senator, Hattie Caraway—in the form of Dr. Nancy Hendricks. Session attendees were encouraged to use the performance technique as a model for classroom instruction or for development of entries in the annual Arkansas History Day Competition. They were also reminded to utilize the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture’s media and text entries on Senator Caraway.

For the next sessions, attendees moved across the street to the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building, where they heard from Stephanie Bayless, Butler Center archivist and author of a biography of Adolphine Fletcher Terry, Obliged to Help (Butler Center Books, 2011); all the teachers received a copy of the book.

Also at this session, teachers received copies of a sample teaching tool depicting “Women in Arkansas” in newspaper format donated by the Cabot Public Schools’ Museum of American History. Encyclopedia of Arkansas staff historian Mike Polston is curator of the museum.

The teachers toured the Research Room in the ASI, where Chris Stewart of the Butler Center and Kimberly Kaczenski of UALR explained utilization of the shared Butler Center/UALR online index and related the procedures for teacher-directed student visits.

Educators then traveled to the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center to learn about the cultural heritage of African American women. Teachers were provided a guided tour by Elvon Reed and staff.

Teachers learned about Charlotte Stephens, a longtime educator in the Little Rock School District. Attendees also reviewed an exhibit on the Black History Hall of Fame and noted Arkansas women honored for their accomplishments, including entrepreneur Fannie Rowell. Educators were encouraged over the course of the two days of the seminar to go back to their local communities and research women who have been or could be recognized for their achievements.

Educators then boarded the tour bus and traveled to the Arkansas History Commission, where they were hosted by the director of the commission, Dr. Lisa Speer.

Educators were invited to examine some of the artifacts pulled from the collections about Arkansas women, including photographs of Senator Hattie Caraway, along with diaries and scrapbooks of Arkansas women in many professions.

At a dinner presentation at Dave’s Place, David Stricklin, manager of the Butler Center, introduced George West, who will be taking Kay Bland’s position as Butler Center K-12 education coordinator after her retirement in August. West, who had attended the seminar for the previous two years, was a Little Rock Central High civics teacher and one of the lead teachers for the Central High Memory Project.

The dinner speaker, Dr. Gayle Seymour, who is an associate dean and professor of art history at the University of Central Arkansas, provided an engaging talk about the four female artists who participated in the Arkansas Post Office Murals Project as part of the New Deal during the Great Depression.

Continuing with the Depression-era theme about Arkansas women who made a difference, attendees heard a presentation the next day by Steven Teske, a Butler Center archivist who has written two collective biographies (which the attendees received) on famous Arkansans. The first, Natural State Notables (Butler Center Books, 2013), contains the story of Ruth Beall, who was the superintendent of Arkansas Children’s Hospital between 1934 and 1961.

Attendees also toured what is now the Museum of Discovery, founded by Bernie Babcock, whose biography is found in the second collection by Teske, Unvarnished Arkansas (Butler Center Books, 2012). Hosted by the educator at the museum, Samantha Sauer, the attendees were given a tour and lecture about objects being chosen for a timeline exhibit currently being curated.

The final session speaker was Elizabeth Hill, who shared the history of Arkansas women in her book A Splendid Piece of Work—1912–2012: One Hundred Years of Arkansas’s Home Demonstration and Extension Homemakers Clubs. Hill’s research shows that Arkansas women learned from Home Demonstration Clubs to grow, gather, and preserve produce from their gardens, helping their families recover from the Depression and support the troops during World War I and World War II. Attendees went home with copies of her book and ideas for researching women in their own histories.
The Arkansas Broadsides Collection (BC, MSS.99.35) contains a variety of broadsides that were used to announce such events as land sales, estate sales, public auctions, and the openings of the tax books in various counties across the state, covering years 1877 to 1940. Since notices of this nature usually have been discarded over time, this collection provides an interesting and informative research tool. The finding aid to the collection can be found here.