Arkansas Forestry Commission Collection Open to Researchers

Can you tell the difference between various species of tree seedlings? Did you know that “Smokey Bear” rather than “Smokey the Bear” is the proper way to refer to that beloved foe of forest fires? Are you surprised to learn that Arkansas’s first Miss America, Donna Axum, had her first pageant triumph when she was crowned Arkansas Forestry Queen in 1961? Have you ever seen photos of men at work in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps of the 1930s?

You can learn about these topics and more by perusing the materials in the Arkansas Forestry Commission Collection (BC. MSS.10.17) now available in the Research Room of the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI) building. If you hear that collection name and think, “Trees, trees, trees—how boring,” you couldn’t be more wrong.

Nearly one hundred years in the making, this collection contains more than 300 photographs, along with a small number of related documents. Images include the Little Rock High School 1919 championship football team; a family trip to the top of Pikes Peak in 1902; and Confederate Hall, built in Memphis, Tennessee, especially for that year’s Confederate Veterans’ Reunion.

The collection was donated to the Butler Center by Charles E. Hoffman Jr., grandson of Charles L. Hoffman and Emma Kirst Hoffman. Charles and Emma were married in 1900; they had two children: Charles Emmett Hoffman and Roslyn Hoffman Pritchett. The photographs span 100 years of the Kirst-Hoffman family.

Charles L. Hoffman was the son of Sebastian and Eustina Hoffman, who moved to Little Rock from California in 1880, when Charles was an infant. Sebastian, a native of Germany, operated a number of hotels in Little Rock. A small number of photographs in this collection are of the Hoffman family.

Charles’s wife, Emma Kirst Hoffman, was the daughter of Michael Kirst and Alvina Geyer Kirst. Michael emigrated from Germany to Wisconsin in 1856. He met Alvina while serving in Arkansas with the 27th Wisconsin Infantry and made his home in Little Rock after the war. He opened a grocery store in 1866 and later operated M. Kirst and Sons Grocery at Ninth and Main in partnership with his sons Walter and Fred.

The Kirst-Hoffman Family Collection contains photographs of Michael and Alvina and their family, of the Civil War veterans’ organizations Michael belonged to, and also of the Kirst family businesses and related business organizations. Other events depicted include a firemen’s picnic, the ladies’ aid of First Lutheran Church, and a gathering of the Arkansaw Travelers Cycle Club.
The core of this collection consists of more than 75,000 photographs, negatives, and slides representing the history of forestry of Arkansas. These images cover myriad subjects including AFC personnel, seedling nurseries, fairs and festivals, educational resources, volunteer fire departments, and urban forestry projects. Of particular interest are the more than 300 images of forestry-related activities of the CCC in Arkansas.

Containing material from 1909 to 2003 (with the bulk focusing on 1920–1970), the collection also includes official reports, maps, newsletters, and children’s educational programming materials.

For more information, view a complete listing of the collection’s contents online at by clicking here or visit the ASI Research Room to explore this one-of-a-kind collection.

In addition to their two sons, Michael and Alvina Kirst had five daughters: Alvina Ida Kirst Reichardt, Lillie Kirst Gloeckler, Annie Kirst Leiser, Jose-ephine Kirst Bell, and Emma Kirst Hoff- man. The Kirsts made frequent trips to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, to visit Michael’s family. The collection contains many casual photographs from these trips, as well as other family excursions. A large portion of this collection is made up of photographs of the Kirst daughters and their husbands, including their in-laws, such as the Gloeckler and Leiser families.

Charles Emmett Hoffman and his cousin Alvin Bell attended Little Rock High School at the same time and both played football. The collection includes both group and individual portraits by Shrad Photography of the 1918 and 1919 football teams. The families lived in the area near City Park (now MacArthur Park) in Little Rock, and many photographs depict time spent in the park.

Arkansaw Travelers Cycle Club, with Will Bell, Walter Kirst, and others posed with bicycles behind the Arsenal building at City Park, Little Rock; circa 1900.

The Kirst-Hoffman Family Collection provides a window, through documents and photographs, into one of Arkansas’s German American families, beginning at the time of the Civil War, showing how they came together from various parts of the country and made strong contributions to the business and social communities in Little Rock.

For more information, visit the ASI Research Room or view the finding aid on-line.
A Word from the Center
David Stricklin, Manager of the Butler Center

We’re very excited to offer this first “born-digital” Butler Center newsletter. For quite a while we’ve been sending out a digital version of the print newsletter, the Butler Banner. This new eBanner gives you a lot more to work with, especially the live links to some of our fabulous digital resources. Please click on those links (which appear in blue) and check out some of the wonders of Arkansas history our fine staff members (pictured here) have made available.

This time of year always involves a lot of wrapping-up from the previous year. I won’t go on and on with a lot of statistical evidence of the great year we had in 2014, but I want to pay special tribute to folks in a couple of areas. Our Research Services Division, which is where our archivists work, processed and made publicly available a staggering 75 manuscript collections. I spent all of 2014 bragging about the fact that they completed 57 collections in 2013. I’m almost embarrassed to go around reporting this latest news. Almost, but not quite. So, hats off to this excellent group of professionals, led by our chief archivist Brian Robertson and his first colleague Stephanie Bayless. Led by Colin Thompson and Shannon Holmes, our Butler Center Galleries staff also had a great year, setting all-time records for sales of the work of about 60 Arkansas artists we represent. We sell that art on consignment and fund a lot of the rest of our art operations with our part of the sales proceeds. I’m very proud of the work of our art staff. There were lots of other great things from last year, but that’s a little for now.

Our 2014 Butler Center Volunteer of the Year was Kate Buck, who has been working with our Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture project for about eight years. When she got the award, she said she felt a little uneasy about accepting it, in light of how enjoyable she finds working with the people on the EOA staff and the Butler Center as a whole. The direct quote was, “It’s a little like getting an award for eating chocolate.” Thanks, Kate, for your wonderful work and equally wonderful attitude.

And the rest of you, come see us, both in person and online!
Butler Center Books is pleased to announce the publication of three new titles for Spring 2015. To Can the Kaiser: Arkansas and the Great War, edited by Michael D. Polston and Guy Lancaster, will come out in May. Ray and Steven Hanley’s Arky: The Saga of the USS Arkansas will be published in March, as will our reissue of Calvin Collier’s classic study of the Third Arkansas Regiment “They’ll Do to Tie To!”: The Story of Hood’s Arkansas Toothpicks.

To Can the Kaiser: Arkansas and the Great War

On April 2, 1917, the United States officially entered a war that had been raging for nearly three years in Europe. Even though American involvement in the “Great War” lasted little more than a year and half, the changes it wrought were profound. More than 70,000 Arkansans served as soldiers during the war.

On the homefront, military bases such as Camp Pike and Eberts Field were built to train soldiers in the new technologies of warfare, while the American Red Cross provided civilians, especially women, with a way to support the troops. Wartime propaganda led to suspicions directed against Germans, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and African Americans in Arkansas, but war production proved a boon to the state in the form of greater demand for the state’s cotton, minerals, and timber. World War I connected Arkansas to the world in ways that changed the state and its people forever.

Michael Polston is staff historian for the online Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture (EOA), a project of the Butler Center. Guy Lancaster is editor of the EOA.

Ray Hanley and Steven Hanley of Little Rock have published numerous books based on their research of Arkansas history through vintage postcards and photographs, including Main Street Arkansas (Butler Center Books, 2009).

“Arky: The Saga of the USS Arkansas

While little has been written about the USS Arkansas, this battleship carried the state’s name through two world wars, a Mexican invasion, and into the dawn of the atomic age. The Arkansas, or “Arky,” which measured almost the length of two football fields, went to sea in 1911 and sailed the world until 1946, when it served as a target for the postwar atomic bomb tests in the South Pacific.

During its long service, the ship participated in the invasion of Vera Cruz, Mexico; served in World War I; helped Arkansas get an official flag; and assisted in the World War II battles at Normandy, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Highlighting the narrative with previously unpublished photos, the authors tell the ship’s unique story by referencing handwritten journals penciled in the midst of combat.

“Arky: The Saga of the USS Arkansas

Ray Hanley and Steven Hanley

They’ll Do to Tie To!”: The Story of Hood’s Arkansas Toothpicks

The Third Arkansas was one of the most distinguished and well-respected Confederate regiments of the Civil War. It was the only Arkansas regiment to serve the entire war in the east, where most of the major battles were fought. The men of the Third Arkansas acquired a reputation as tenacious fighters and were known for the long knives—“Arkansas toothpicks”—they carried. They found themselves in some of the fiercest fighting in the war in places such as the famous “sunken road” at Antietam and the Battle of Gettysburg. “They’ll Do to Tie To” was originally published in 1965.

Calvin L. Collier, a native of Surry County, Virginia, was a major in the U.S. Air Force and served at the Little Rock Air Force Base. His other books on the Civil War include The War Child’s Children and First In—Last Out.

For more info., visit our webpage.
For November’s Legacies & Lunch (in the Ron Robinson Theater in partnership with the Clinton School of Public Service), Troy Poteete spoke about how his years in tribal government have illuminated the threats to Cherokee sovereignty in the current political landscape.

Lyon College Pipe Band—Arkansas Sounds concert series, October.


Big Piph & Tomorrow Maybe—Arkansas Sounds concert series, November.

Meshugga Klezmer Band—Arkansas Sounds concert series, December holiday concert.

Velvet Kente Arkestra—Arkansas Sounds concert series, January.

December’s Legacies & Lunch featured Jim Ross and Deb Crow discussing the history of the Arkansas State Fair and Livestock Show.
BUTLER CENTER DONORS

Materials donations:
Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts
Stephanie Bayless
Owen W. Beard
William Beard & Holliace Beard-Hunting
Norma Blanton
Donald Campbell
Rebecca DeArmond-Huskey
John Deering
Pam Dunaway
Charles Field
Frances Fendler
Lucien Gilham
Marcella Goodwin
Laura Hunter
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Bill Jones
Ken King
Valeria Safford Knighton, Naperville, IL
Guy Lancaster
Yvonne Law
Gray LeMaster
Mara Lerverit
Bill Lindsey
Harry Loucks
Linda McDowell
Phillip McMath
Jo Melton
Pat Morgan, Memphis, TN
Freddie Nixon
Eugene Porter
Bob Razer
Paul Rhodes
Charles Roscopf
Mary Anne Salmond
Diann Sutherland & Craig Smith
David Stricklin & Sally Browder
Tim Taira
James Tyler
Lynnette Watts
Geoff Winningham
Charles Witsell
Gordon Wittenberg
Women’s Foundation of Arkansas

Monetary donations:
Arkansas Repertory Theatre, in support of Arkansas Sounds
Arkansas Pioneers Association, in memory of Ralph A. Treat
Robert Bailey, in support of the Butler Banner
Phyllis Brandon
Richard Butler
Denise Compton
Anthony and Hillary Davis, in support of Arkansas Sounds
Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, in support of Arkansas Sounds
Carl Miller
Lynn Morrow
Winifred Robinson, in support of the Butler Banner
Arkansas Supporters of Bill (ASOB) for the Bill Clinton State Government Project
Julie Baldridge
Don K. Barnes
De Boyette
Jay & Robbie Bradford
Cathy Bradshaw
Judge Ellen Brantley
Sheila & Richard Bronfman
Mabel Brown
Marie Clinton Bruno
Chris & Mary Chris Burren
Sam & Charlie Cole Chaffin
Nancy Cockman
Lee & Barbara Colwell
Beth & Mike Coulson
Nate Coulier
Debra & Robert Crapo
Lloyd & Peggy Crossley
Cara Curry
Charlie Daniels
Robert & Lucille DeGostin
Martha Dixon
Burton & Beverly Elliott
George & Selena Ellis
Tina Eoff
Don & Patti Ernst
Jimmie Lou Fisher
Tracey Franks
Judy & Bill Gaddy
Diane Gilletland
Gail & Randy Goodrum
Kay Goss
Jane Gray-Todd
Peggy Harris
Wanda Hartz
Ann & Morris Henry
Betty Herron
Jean Hervey
Norman Hodges Jr.
Janie House
Carolyn & Joe Huber
Hal Humicott
Richard Hutchinson Jr.
Suzanne Jessup
Earl Jones Jr.
Ann & Wally Kamps
Thomas Keeffe
Stan Ligon
Beverly H. Lindsey
Neil Weaver Lyford & Bob Lyford
Joanne & Garth Martin
Melinda & Everette Martin
Virginia & Tommy McGhee
Kerry McKenney
Kathy & Lonnie McNatt
Jan & Vaughn McQuary
Linda Lou & H. T. Moore
Myra & Pat Moran
Pat Morgan
Anne Mourning
Robert Newcomb
Freddie Nixon
Jerry & Sarah Jo Parker
Geneva Pledger
Marva Prull
Patricia Qualls
Nancy Richards-Stower & Richard M. Stower
J. F. Robertson
Faye Rodgers
Paul & Mary Root
Skip Rutherford
Major General James Ryan
Charlotte T. Schexnayder
Bill Schroeder Jr.
Elaine Scott
Ray Scott
Amb. Terry Shumaker
Cathy & John Slater
Stephen & Lindsley Smith
Nan & Ken Snow
Carolyn & Jerry Staley
Dorothy D. Stuck
Debra L. Thomas
Kathy Van Lanningham
Beverly & Buddy Villines
Bill & Janis Walmsley
Richard Weiss
Margaret Whillock
Susan & Michael Whitacre
Nancy M. Wood
Dina Wood
Donna Kay Yeargan
Patricia Youngdahl

Church Records for the Butler Center

Pictured here are Steven Teske (left), pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church and archival assistant at the Butler Center; Judy Prange Smith, recording secretary of Immanuel Lutheran Church; and Bill Kling, president of Immanuel Lutheran Church. Judy and her brother Jim Prange visited the Butler Center this summer to look at photographs of their hometown, DeWitt, Arkansas, in the Anna Grace Bow-
Entries Needing Authors (photographs, etc.):
Arkadelphia Presbyterian Academy
Osro Cobb
Carl Richey “Cotton” Cordell
Corinth (Howard County)
Cotton Plant Academy
Incoming Kingdom Missionary Unit
Indian Bay (Monroe County)
Mitchellville (Desha County)
Raggio (Lee County)
Reed (Desha County)
James Byron Reed
Benjamin Franklin Rice

Yancopin (Desha County)
Yellowhammer
If you have photos or other media, please contact Mike Keckhaver at mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

Entries Needing Media (photographs, etc.):
Arkadelphia Presbyterian Academy
Osro Cobb
Carl Richey “Cotton” Cordell
Corinth (Howard County)
Cotton Plant Academy
Incoming Kingdom Missionary Unit
Indian Bay (Monroe County)
Mitchellville (Desha County)
Raggio (Lee County)
Reed (Desha County)
James Byron Reed
Benjamin Franklin Rice

Yancopin (Desha County)
Yellowhammer
If you have photos or other media, please contact Mike Keckhaver at mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

Congressional Roll Call at the Encyclopedia of Arkansas

If pressed to name some historic Arkansas senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress, most people will probably reach for a handful of twentieth-century Arkansas notables with such names as Joe T. Robinson, Hattie Caraway, Bill Fulbright, John McClellan, Wilbur Mills, Dale Bumpers, and David Pryor. Those were some of the big names, after all.

However, Arkansas has been represented by any number of figures whose careers have been less robust. At the extreme end, we have Lewis Ernest Sawyer. He proved himself Arkansas’s answer to President William Henry Harrison when he went to work in Congress on March 4, 1923, only to die two months later. But even that record of short service was beaten by Thomas Willoughby Newton, a Whig congressman, who served less than a month, February 6, 1847, to March 3, 1847, having been elected solely to finish the term of Archibald Yell.

This is not to say that Arkansas’s less well-known members of Congress have been ineffective. Robert Minor Wallace (1903–1911) worked to open the Red River to greater steamboat traffic, something that arguably helped Arkansas’s economy, while William Fadjo Cravens (1939–1949) managed, despite his low seniority, to direct some wartime federal spending to Arkansas in the form of ordnance plants. They may not be well remembered, but their accomplishments stand.

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas has been resolutely developing entries on all of Arkansas’s federal representatives and senators, without exception. Even the story of our more obscure members of Congress helps to illuminate the workings of government and allows us to understand the nature of citizenship all the more.

Also, as 2014 marked the 225th anniversary of the First Federal Congress, the Butler Center developed a list of the members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate from Arkansas, with links to all the available resources on each, including the EOA entry.
Inside Our eCollections

Forgotten: The Arkansas Korean War Project
Pak Kyong Saw and an unidentified Korean boy, unidentified location, Korea, ca. 1951–52; from the collection of Korean War veteran Lavern Penn, a native of Lynn, Arkansas

A Nation Divided: Arkansas and the Civil War
United Confederate Veterans Reunion Parade, Little Rock, May 18, 1911

Arkansas and the Great War
Bakery at base hospital, Camp Pike, ca. 1918

The Arkansas Vietnam War Project
Eddie Pannell, in Vietnam

This feature of our Butler eBanner invites readers to click their way into our many and varied digital resources. Featured this time are the Butler Center’s online collections of military history, which contain digitized photos, letters, and other historical material, much of it donated by veterans of the wars. Click on the link below the photo to view the corresponding digital collection.