



News from the Prairie

SPRING 2024

PRESERVING OUR GRAND PRAIRIE REGION'S HISTORY

Post Museum Hosts April Quarterly Meeting

Arkansas Post Museum State Park was the venue for our spring meeting on Thursday, April 18th. The museum, founded in 1960 as Arkansas Post County Museum, was a result of efforts by several pioneer GPHS members to preserve the Post region's historical artifacts which didn't fit into the interpretive period of the new National Memorial. When the county could no longer carry the museum on its budget, Arkansas State Parks absorbed it into their system in 1997. The gathering was most enjoyable thanks to hosts Maria Jackson and Judy Hughes of the park staff. Society members were treated to a tour of the grounds where improvements are being made to the 1877 Refeld-Hinman dogtrot cabin. The John Peterson building, where the meeting was conducted, has also undergone various renovations. The Society's hospitality committee provided delicious cakes and pies for the social period prior to the meeting. During the business meeting members discussed taking part in improvements at Casscoe's Community Center. Signage in the Tichnor community was proposed as a way of honoring Medal of Honor recipients Sgt. Gilbert Collier and Col. Lloyd Burke, US Army, both of whom spent parts of their youth there. President Linda Fischer presented a certificate of appreciation in absentia to Shirley Young, who has been a Society member for sixty years. Glenn Mosenthin accepted the certificate on her behalf. He informed the gathering that the Arkansas Historical Association has chosen GPHS for two Walter L. Brown Awards—Best Newsletter in a 2023 County or Local Journal, and Best Business History for Wendell Stratton's article on the history of Stratton Seed Company of Stuttgart. Mosenthin and Stratton will be attending the award banquet on April 26 at Heber Springs. A moment of silence was observed in memory of longtime member John Cover.



Left—Pres. Linda Fischer presents a certificate of appreciation for Shirley Young's 60 years of membership to Director Glenn Mosenthin, who will forward it to her.



Facility Manager Maria Jackson addresses the meeting. *Courtesy of Judy Hughes.*



Grand Prairie Historical Society
Awards This Certificate of Appreciation to
Shirley Joyce Young

In recognition of her more than 60 years of
membership and service to this organization.

Presented this 18th day of April 2024.

Linda Fischer
Linda Fischer, President

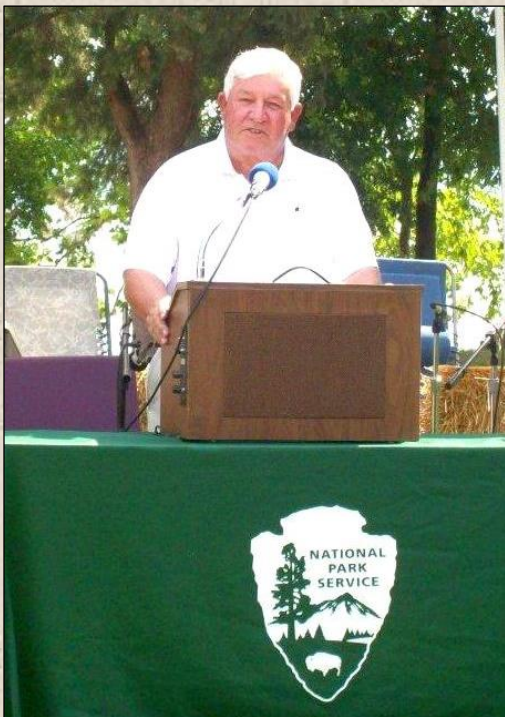
Glenn Mosenthin
Glenn Mosenthin, Director



Society President Linda Fischer presents a donation check for the County Record Book Preservation Committee to Arkansas County Circuit Clerk Sarah Merchant. From left to right are Bill Shrum, Raeann Braithwaite, Glenda Fread, Merchant, Fischer, Gay Rusk, and Travis Trice.

Society Mourns the Passing of Longtime Officer and Director John W. Cover

GPHS Director Emeritus John William Cover of Gillett passed away March 30, 2024 at the age of 82. He was born on December 9, 1941 in Arkansas County to Ted Cecil and Johnetta (Eason) Cover. He received a football scholarship to Southern State University in Magnolia. Upon graduating, John coached and taught in Wynne and Pocahontas, before returning home to engage in farming, from which he retired in 2006. Always active in his community, John was a member of Grand Prairie Historical Society for over fifty years, holding the offices of president, vice president, treasurer, and director. He served on various committees and was always willing to assist in any way the organization needed. John was also a member of the Gillett Farmers and Businessmen's Club, Gillett School Board, Gillett City Council, Gillett Cemetery Board, and the Federal Land Bank. He was a member of Gillett Methodist Church. John was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Linda (Place) Cover; his brother, Bob Cover; and his sister Joyce Gordon. He is survived by his sons, John David Cover (Claudette), and James Cover, both of Gillett; one grandson, Jacob Coburn Cover (Tiffany); two great-grandsons, Eli and Isaac Coburn; a brother-in-law, Scott Place (Karen); a sister-in-law, Leona Fletcher; and a host of nephews and nieces. Funeral services were held at Gillett Methodist Church on April 2, with burial in Gillett Cemetery.



Grand Prairie Historical Society officers, directors, and staff for 2024:

President	Linda Fischer, Stuttgart
Vice president	Gay Hampton Rusk, Stuttgart
Secretary	Jessie Walsh, Stuttgart
Treasurer	Raeann Braithwaite, Almyra
Directors	Claudia Haller Ahrens, Glenn Mosenthin, Bill Shrum, Tommy Strabala, Travis Trice, and Dr. Richard Wilson
Editorial staff	Glenn Mosenthin, journal and newsletter editor Ashli Ahrens, Raeann Braithwaite, and Glenn Mosenthin, Facebook administrators
Parliamentarian	Raeann Braithwaite
Audiovisual	Paul Braithwaite

The Arkansas Historical Association

by a vote of the Committee on Awards presents the

Award for Best Business History

Published in a County or Local Historical Journal in 2023 to

Wendell Stratton

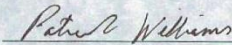
for his article

“Stratton Seed Company: 75 Years of Service to Agriculture”

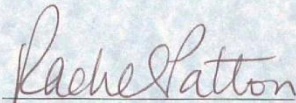
Published in *Historical Bulletin*
of the Grand Prairie Historical Society

April 26, 2024

Heber Springs, Arkansas



Patrick Williams
Secretary-Treasurer



Rachel Patton
President

The Arkansas Historical Association

by a vote of the Committee on Awards presents the

Award for Best Newsletter

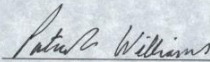
Published in 2023 by a group promoting the study of Arkansas history to

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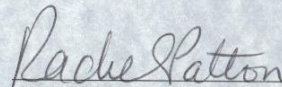
the publication of the Grand Prairie Historical Society
Glenn Mosenthin, Editor

April 26, 2024

Heber Springs, Arkansas



Patrick Williams
Secretary-Treasurer



Rachel Patton
President



And Now: The SCRIBBLE-IN!

...No demonstration this, on a balmy pre-commencement afternoon in the shade of Oak Court. A whim, an inspiration, the message out, and in they poured for the annual (publeezee, pardon THAT pun) scribble party. Messages of cheer, wrongs righted, apologies made, bantering exchanges, declarations of love undying—they'll bring a smile or a tear forty years hence when the 1970 Ricebird yearbook comes off the shelf in a nostalgic moment. Once again comes another pass of the baton, and a sadder and wiser older generation, as did the one before it, bids godspeed to the strong young hands now penning their epilogue to that most pleasant chapter of life. From now, it is striving, God willing, without strife. (LEADERphoto)

Members of the Stuttgart High School graduating class of 1970 gathered at classmate Gail Donath's home on a warm spring day for a yearbook signing party. The inimitable writing style of *Stuttgart Daily Leader* editor and GPHS co-founder Garner Allen is evident in the caption. The discerning eye will spot your present GPHS editor at upper left on this enjoyable and memorable day. *Daily Leader*.

Friends of the Arkansas Post Museum State Park

The purpose of the organization is to support and promote the mission of the Arkansas Post Museum by:

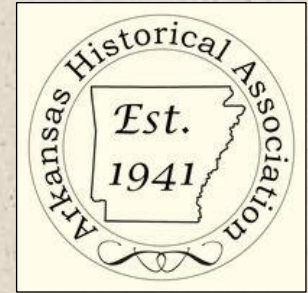
- Creating a reliable group of volunteers committed and trained to provide historical education, assistance in collection care and conservation, and clerical support within the framework of the Museum's goals.
- Assistance with preparing and providing educational materials and training for volunteers.
- Provide creative opportunities to educate the public in the Museum's areas of interest through assistance with exhibits, programs, tours, publications, special events, publicity, and other educational activities.
- Provide funding, material goods, services, and other support to enhance and expand the programs and operations of the Arkansas Post Museum.

Membership dues of \$25.00 are due yearly in October. To join the Friends group, send payment to Arkansas Post Museum State Park, c/o Maria Jackson, 5530 Hwy 165 South, Gillett, AR 72055. Please include your name, address, phone, and email. For more information, please contact the Museum at 870-548-2634 or email maria.jackson@arkansas.gov.

Arkansas Historical Association invites your membership!

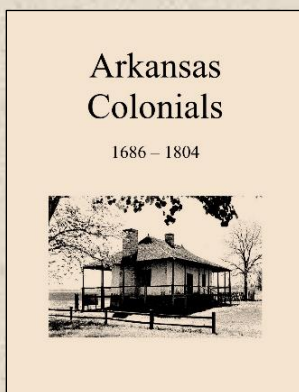
Our mission is to promote the preservation, understanding, writing, publishing, and teaching of Arkansas's rich history. Membership includes four annual issues of our Arkansas Historical Quarterly journal. Annual dues are:

- Individual, one year, \$25; Individual, two years, \$45
- Institutional, one year, \$25; Institutional, two years, \$45
- Family, one year, \$35; Family, two years, \$55
- Foreign, one year, \$35; Student, one year, \$15
- Contributing, one year, \$55; Sustaining, one year, \$100
- Supporting, one year, \$200
- Life Membership, \$500 (payable over three years)
- Permanent Membership, \$1,000 (payable over five years)

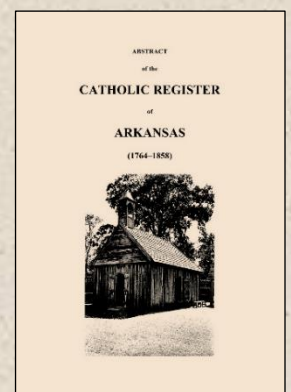


Renewal and new memberships may be paid securely online at www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org.

Arkansas Colonials 1686–1804: A Collection of French and Spanish Records Listing Early Europeans in Arkansas, compiled by Morris S. Arnold and Dorothy Jones Core, is available from GPHS for \$25 postpaid. This 104-page book was published by the Society in 1986 and includes censuses, militia, and other civil records from Arkansas Post in the French and Spanish periods. The book is indexed by surnames.



Abstract of the Catholic Register of Arkansas 1764–1858, compiled by Dorothy Jones Core, is available from GPHS for \$25 postpaid. This 100-page book is an abstract of baptisms, marriages, and burials by Catholic priests in the Parish of Arkansas, including the only records kept during the Spanish era. Accurate translations by language professor Nicole Wable Hatfield. Originally published in 1976, this indexed reference was long out of print. To order these reprinted editions, send payment to P.O. Box 15, Almyra, AR 72003 or order online at www.grandprairiehistory.org.



2024 Grand Prairie Historical Society meeting dates/places:

April 18, 6:30 p.m., Arkansas Post Museum State Park; July 18, 6:00, Phillips Community College (DeWitt), (annual potluck precedes general meeting); and October 17, 6:30, Arts Center of the Grand Prairie, Stuttgart.

GPHS household membership levels: Basic, \$25.00; Contributing, \$50.00; Supporting, \$100.00.

Grand Prairie Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization dedicated to promoting preservation and education of the heritage of Arkansas's Grand Prairie region.

Grand Prairie Historical Society

P. O. Box 15
Almyra, AR 72003
870-830-1425

www.grandprairiehistory.org

Officers

President: Linda Fischer
Vice-Pres: Gay Hampton Rusk
Secretary: Jessie Walsh
Treasurer: Raeann Braithwaite

Newsletter Editor

Glenn Mosenthin

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organization.