



# News from the Prairie

SUMMER 2024

PRESERVING OUR GRAND PRAIRIE REGION'S HISTORY

## Grand Prairie Historians Meet and Eat in DeWitt

Grand Prairie Historical Society held their summer quarterly meeting and annual potluck dinner at the DeWitt campus of Phillips Community College on the evening of July 18. Around forty members and guests were on hand. A program on the history of Immanuel School and its notable graduates was given by former educator Janice Streeter of the Citizens for Immanuel organization. Arkansas County Circuit Clerk Sarah Merchant exhibited an array of court record books dating back to the early 1800s, which were professionally restored and preserved through the financial support of GPHS and other organizations and individuals. A report was given by Superintendent Ron Fields of Arkansas Post National Memorial, who outlined plans for “Ghosts of the Past” in October. Makena Munger, exhibit and artifact coordinator for the Museum of the Arkansas Grand Prairie, reported on the success of their recent Slovaktown program and the plans for the museum’s 50th anniversary.



Photo: GPHS President Linda Fischer (left) with presenter Janice Streeter.

In old business, Barbara Menard reported on a project to erect a marker plaque to recognize and commemorate the Tichnor community’s two Medal of Honor recipients, Gilbert Collier and Lloyd “Scooter” Burke. She mentioned several locations being considered and asked for more donations towards the marker. In new business, Steve Stillwell solicited information on people who played in local bands from the 1950s-1970s. He is working toward writing an article on the subject.

Clara Jane Timmerman, director of Stuttgart Public Library, informed attendees that the library is hosting a watch party on Saturday, October 19, at which a live teleconference from the Arkansas Genealogy Society will feature a program by Cyndi Ingle, the nationally known family history researcher. Ingle is publisher of the “Cyndi’s List” website. GPHS will cosponsor

the event by catering a lunch for attendees. A call for new memberships was made by Director Claudia Ahrens, who asked attendees to encourage others to join our organization.

President Fischer passed around an image from the newly digitized Scull & Morgan Store ledger from 1809–1810. The book from the Arkansas Post Museum’s Henry Haizlip Collection is one of the oldest such records in existence from a mercantile store west of the Mississippi. The Arkansas State Archives recently conserved and filmed the ancient ledger. It may be viewed at their Little Rock facility. As the meeting wrapped up, door prizes were won by Paul Braithwaite, Wilbur Wallace, Laura Beth Place and Ron Fields. The fall meeting will be held at the Grand Prairie Arts Center in Stuttgart, October 17 at 7:00. Our presenter will be Barbara Holt-Bryant, on various aspects of the Keaton Township Project. She is the author of *Community Midwives: Return to Keaton Township*, and *Faith, Family and Farming: History of Arkansas County Black Farmers*. For more information on the Keaton Township Project, see <https://www.keatontownshipproject.org/home>.



# Old SHS Cornerstone Yields Its Trove of City History

*Stuttgart Daily Leader*, March 28, 1968

Fifty-six years, four months and 25 days. Turn back time's pages to November 3, 1911, date of the laying of the cornerstone of Stuttgart High School—second one built by early citizens of the Prairie. It was to replace what Superintendent John G. Rossman wrote was in 1888 “. . . a modern school building.” Rossman admired and appreciated the Prairie people of '88 for their faith in the area and in themselves when they collected enough money, “mostly by donations” to erect the first school. It was two stories high, containing two rooms and a hall below and the same above.<sup>1</sup>

“First school was taught in 1889. Four teachers received \$150 per month for a term of four months,” Rossman reported. They added to the building as the need arose and bought more land in 1907. But in 1910 the board bought one and one-half blocks of ground in “the highest and most beautiful part of the city and are now making arrangements to erect a modern structure to cost not less than \$45,000,” said the superintendent in an *Announcements* booklet of forty pages covering the school year 1911–12. That booklet was placed in the cornerstone sealed November 3, 1911 in the building at 9th and Lowe. It was taken out of its small concrete vault Thursday morning along with a dozen other items, all yellowed and aged, but in good condition.

There was a six by nine inch American flag; a handwritten list of all faculty members and students in all grades for 1911–12, tied with maroon and white ribbon; a 16-page booklet *Facts About Stuttgart and the Grand Prairie*; a two-page handwritten explanation of the S.I.A. (School Improvement Association—a forerunner of P.T.A.) and two S.I.A. buttons; three calling cards for Mrs. Clay Williams, Mrs. T. C. Brady, and Mrs. J. M. Kennedy; and three newspapers. One newspaper, the *Free Press*, dated October 19, 1911, carried a story on page two with a one-column headline “Cornerstone Laying.” Calling the structure a \$50,000 building, the story reported the function was to be at 2:30 p.m. Friday, November 3. State Superintendent George B. Cook was to be the main speaker. Business firms were to be asked to close for a couple of hours while ceremonies were underway.

The *Daily Arkansawyer* for November 2, 1911 outlined the program in a brief story on page three, but reported Cook could not come because of illness and a deputy would represent him. The program: Invocation, Rev. Mr. Coleman; singing, “The Public School,” by intermediate and grade schools; address; singing “Our Flag,” by primary grades; selection, Oscar Groshart, representing the high school, singing “The High School Alma Mater Song”; laying of cornerstone; dedication, Miss Nora Hill. G. W. Fagan was president of the board of education at the time. Members were J. C. Wilcox, Paul Buerkle, W. W. Dunn, John L. Ingram, and C. C. Williams. Rossman was superintendent and also taught Latin and mathematics. Others on the faculty were Miss Carrie Moore, English; Miss Bessie Shirkey [grades] 7–8; Miss Ella Shirkey, 6; Miss Florence Mock, 5; Miss Lena Goodwin, 4; Miss Dora White, 3; Miss Leona King, 2; and Miss Julia Shannon, primary.

Entire enrollment of 1910–11 was reported. The high school roster reported some names familiar today, including Daisy Brierton, Albert and Minnie Oberly, all seniors; Birdie Brierton, junior; Verne Tindall, and Lucille Morphew. Total high school enrollment for the year was 42, with five seniors, nine juniors, nine sophomores and 19 freshmen. A list of alumni was included, showing their employment and locations as of 1911. Earliest was the class of 1896, with Bess Shirkey, school teacher, Stuttgart; Mabelle Hutchinson, elocutionist, Stuttgart; and Marvin MacKinzie, merchant, Almyra. The class of '97 included Ray Underwood, banker, Stuttgart; Ella Shirkey, school teacher, Stuttgart; and Arthur Bunn, physician, Humphrey.

Ed. note—The face of the building's cornerstone was damaged by an errant wrecking ball while the school was being demolished in early 1968. The inscription read “Stuttgart High School—1911—Directors, G. W. Fagan, W. W. Dunn, J. L. Ingram, J. C. Wilcox, P. J. Buerkle, C. C. Williams. M. Seligman, Architect; W. E. Haines & J. I. Porter, Contractors.”

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<sup>1</sup> As is now known, the first school in Stuttgart was built near the southwest corner of Fourth and Main Streets in the early 1880s. The Stuttgart School, opened in 1889, was located at Fourth and Leslie Streets and, after the opening of the 1911 Stuttgart School at Ninth and Lowe Streets, served as the first Arkansas County (Northern District) courthouse beginning in 1913. In 1928, the building on Fourth Street was razed and replaced by the Julia Shannon Grade School. At the same time, the present courthouse was built at Third and College Streets.



## High School Bowl Team Has Victorious Beginning

By Glenn Mosenthin, *Stuttgart Daily Leader*, February 6, 1970

Stuttgart's High School Bowl Team finished with a 2-1 record Thursday, January 29, after a 255-150 loss to Arkadelphia. This was Stuttgart's third consecutive bowl appearance, as they won their first two matches, defeating Wynne 180-120 January 15 and trouncing Sheridan with a come from behind effort 175-125 January 22. Team members were captain, Robert Mills, Clarence Trice, Kathy Robertson, Richard Young, and alternate Jennifer Jeter. All five are seniors. These students had been coached since Christmas by Mr. and Mrs. Charles King. Captain Mills, when asked what single asset they valued the most in their successes, replied "all of us read a lot." The highlights of their hard work were the weekly tapings of the show at the KARK-TV studio in Little Rock. These programs were then broadcast the following Sundays. Robert, the son of Mrs. Sylvia Mills, is a National Merit Semi-finalist. He plans to attend Michigan State University and study automotive engineering. Among Robert's interests are sports cars and reading.

Richard, whose parents are the Rev. and Mrs. Richard Young Sr., thinks he will attend Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia and go into pre-med courses. Richard's interests include painting and writing. Clarence, the nephew of Mrs. Margaret Trice Lee, plans to attend the University of Arkansas, where he will take business administration courses preparatory to law school. Outside of school, he enjoys DeMolay and sports. Kathy, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Robertson, lists as her main interests sewing, cooking, and knitting. She hopes to go to Arkansas State University with a possible major in English. Jennifer, who was chosen alternate, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Jeter. She will attend the University of Arkansas and possibly go into political science. Her interests include skiing and sailing.

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## SHS Band Competes in Festival

By Glenn Mosenthin, *Stuttgart Daily Leader*, April 24, 1970

The Stuttgart High School Band, under the direction of Mr. Robert Gibson, competed Saturday, April 18 at the State Band Festival in Hot Springs. The band brought back two first divisions and a 2-minus rating for an overall first division in the competition. The band was judged on three numbers: Mad Major March, by Alford; Prelude and Fugue in G-minor by Bach; and Liturgical Music for Band, by Mailman. Judges and their ratings were: Oscar Barns, first division; F. B. Ward, first division; and Carl Barnett, second division. Two of the judges commented on the band's outstanding performance. "Good job . . . I enjoyed your band," was the congratulatory statement by Barns. Ward said of the band, ". . . I like the way you play . . . a very fine performance." When asked to comment, Mr. Gibson said "I was very pleased with the way the band played. Changing two numbers between region and state festivals is difficult, but the kids worked hard and I am proud of them. With this final rating the band brings to a close its competitive activities. During the past year the band participated in three other contests—the Memphis State University-sponsored Tri-State Marching Contest, the Helena Marching Contest, and the Regional Band Festival at Pine Bluff, and earned a first division in each. The last public performance by the band will be the Spring Concert, May 15.

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## Members Selected for Honor Society

By Glenn Mosenthin, *Stuttgart Daily Leader*, April 24, 1970

Fifteen new members were taken into the Stuttgart High Chapter of the National Honor Society Tuesday, March 31 in an assembly at the SHS gymnasium. The inductees and their parents are as follows: Seniors: Sherry Granderson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Granderson; Vanessa Konecny, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Konecny; Vivian Moore, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Moore; Becky Shook, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin L. Shook; and Regina Wilks, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Wilks. Juniors: Larry Conrad, son of



Mr. and Mrs. Herman Conrad; Joe Cox, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Cox; Steve Eichler, son of Mr. and Mrs. Orlando Eichler; Hope Hartz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marion Hartz; Charlene Inboden, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Inboden; Melinda Lawson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Lawson; Jim Lookadoo, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Lookadoo; Kim Oliphant, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rhett Oliphant; Dot Parker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Parker; and Janie Vester, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gene Vester. Don Cottey, president of the chapter, was master of ceremonies at the installation. Mrs. Jim Brasher is sponsor of the chapter.

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## Journalists Attend A-State Convention

Stuttgart School News Staff, *Stuttgart Daily Leader*, April 24, 1970

Approximately 325 students from 26 schools all over Arkansas met at Arkansas State University for the annual Invitational High School Journalism Day, Thursday, April 26. Stuttgart High School sent six representatives to Journalism Day this year. They were Seniors—Richard Hill, Glenn Mosenthin, Sherry Phifer, Jennifer Jeter, and Debbie Young. Juniors—Charlene Inboden and Dot Parker. Journalism Day began with registration at 8:30 a.m. There were nine contests held during the day. The first one, News Writing, began at 9:00 a.m. Stuttgart High School had three competitors in this category—Debbie Young, Dot Parker, and Charlene Inboden. At 10:00 a.m., Richard Hill, Glenn Mosenthin, and Sherry Phifer represented SHS in the Feature Writing Contest. The next category SHS participated in was Editorial Writing. We were represented in this area by Jennifer Jeter, Sherry Phifer, and Debbie Young. Richard Hill, Jennifer Jeter, and Glenn Mosenthin tried their hand in the Sports Writing Contest at 2:00 p.m.

The Newspaper Copy Reading Contest and Writing Radio-TV Commercials both took place at 2:00 p.m. SHS students Sherry Phifer, Charlene Inboden, and Dot Parker were entered in the Copy Reading Contest, while Dot Parker and Jennifer Jeter represented Stuttgart High in the Radio-TV Commercials Contest. The final contest, Headline Writing, was held at 2:30 p.m. Debbie Young, Charlene Inboden, and Dot Parker competed in this contest for SHS. The participating high schools had previously sent in two copies of their school paper to be judged. At 4:00 p.m., all participants in Journalism Day met at Wilson Auditorium for a presentation of awards. Stuttgart's Jennifer Jeter captured an honorable mention for her editorial writing and Debbie Young won third place in headline writing. A sweepstakes plaque was awarded to Conway High School for scoring the most points in the various contests. The SHS students were accompanied by their sponsor, Miss Anne Simpson. Mr. Earl Phifer helped with the students' transportation to and from Jonesboro.

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## Local Students Attend Journalism Meet

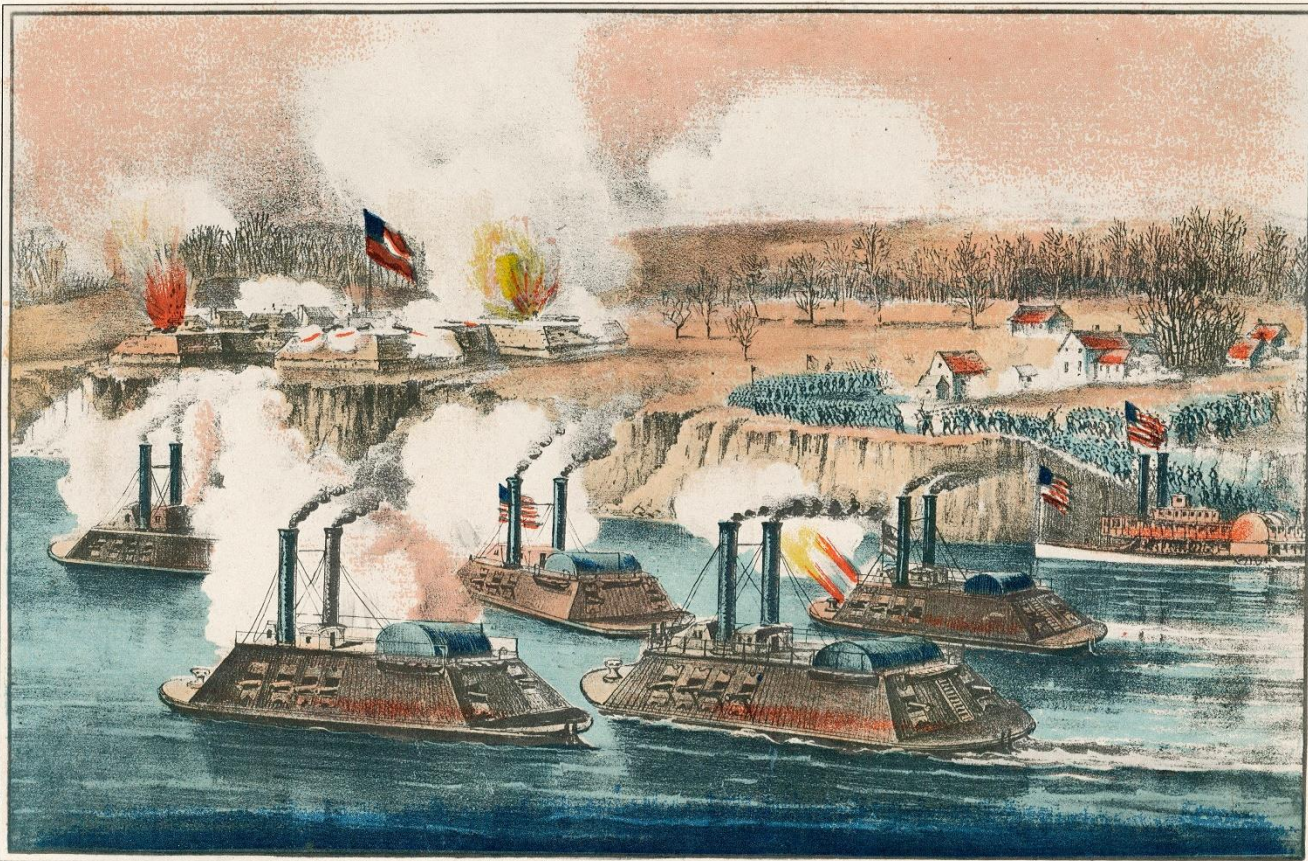
*Daily Leader & Arkansawyer* (Stuttgart), March 15, 1940

A group of local high school students, accompanied by Miss Margaret Cashdollar, Rice Bird and Annual sponsor, attended the annual High School Journalism Meet which was held at the senior high school in Little Rock today. This group includes members of the journalism class and the Rice Bird and senior annual staff. Those attending other than the sponsor were Danna Boucher, Jane Stewart, Maxine Cummings, Patsy Grundman, Sylvia Scroggins, Jane Barris, Buddy McMillan, Juanita Lancaster, Max Denman, Howard Rogers, Robert Shepherd, Maude Borman, Joan Nowlin, Lucille Oliver, Oberah Massie, Donna Marie Krumpfen, Edward Chrisp, Beverly Jeanne Glenn, Annabelle Wingo, Bob Tindall, and Rosemary Roach. Also accompanying the students were Melvin Scroggins, Mrs. Harold Glenn, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Oliver.

Journalism Day is held annually at the Little Rock Senior High School with members of the staff of various high school newspapers throughout the state as guests. Delegates register as soon as they arrive and then go to sectional meetings covering the various fields of newspaper work such as sports writing, editorial writing, and ad soliciting. In the afternoon a joint assembly is held at which all delegates are introduced. W. J. Lemke, head of the Journalism Department of the University of Arkansas, was the principal speaker at the meeting.

Ed. note—Your editor seems to have followed in his mother Beverly Glenn's footsteps, thirty years later.



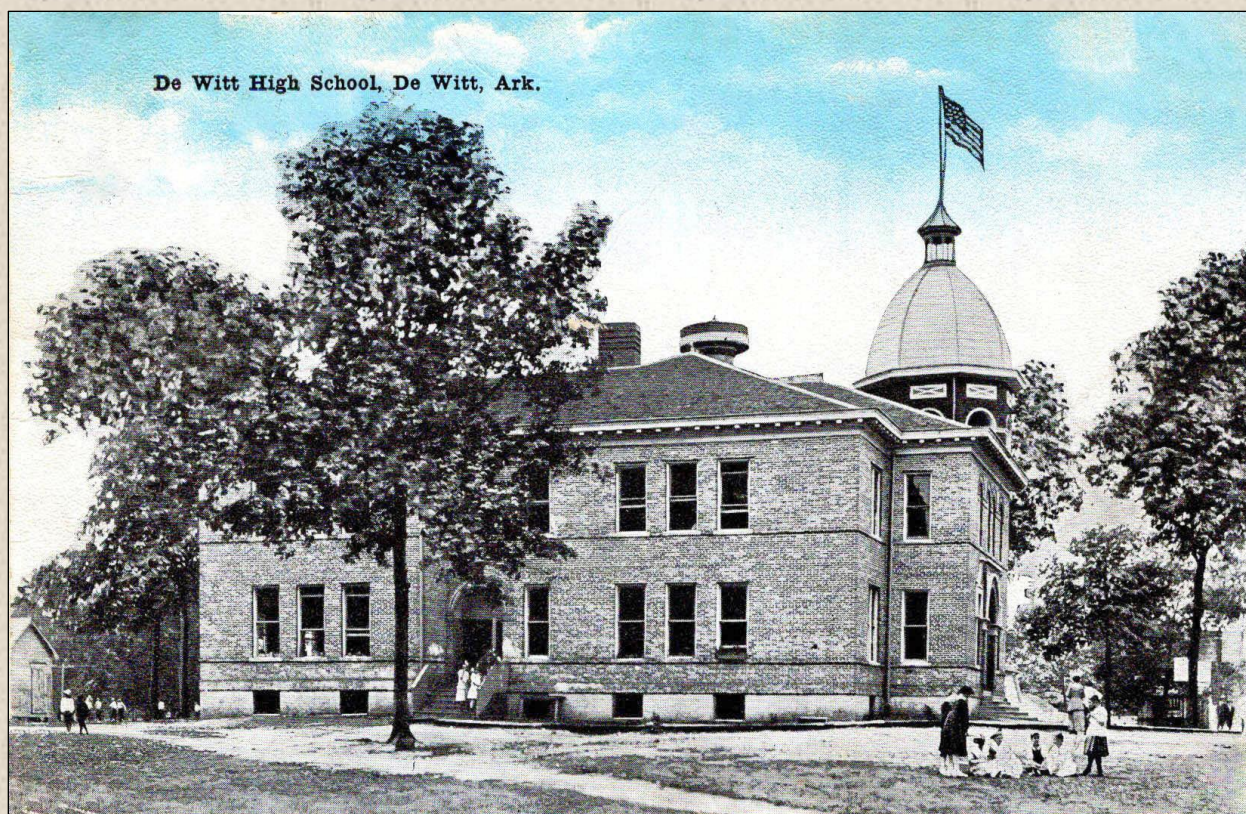


PUBLISHED BY CURRIER & IVES,

152 MASSAU ST NEW YORK.

**THE BOMBARDMENT AND CAPTURE OF FORT HINDMAN, ARKANSAS POST, ARK. JAN. 11<sup>TH</sup> 1863.**

*By the Gun-boats, commanded by Rear-Admiral D.D. Porter, and the Union-troops under Maj'-Genl. M. C. Cleburne; the number of Prisoners taken was 7000, being more than all the Federal forces in action, also 20 Guns, 8000 Stand of small arms and 200 army wagons, with herds of horses and mules.*

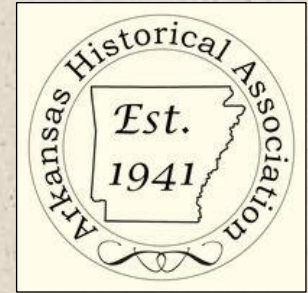




## Arkansas Historical Association invites your membership!

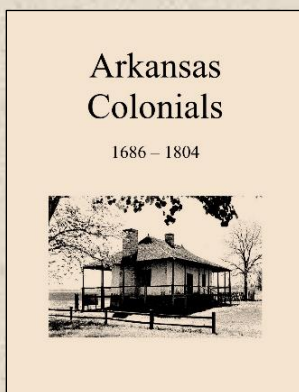
Our mission is to promote the preservation, understanding, writing, publishing, and teaching of Arkansas's rich history. Membership includes four annual issues of our Arkansas Historical Quarterly journal. Annual dues are:

- 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)

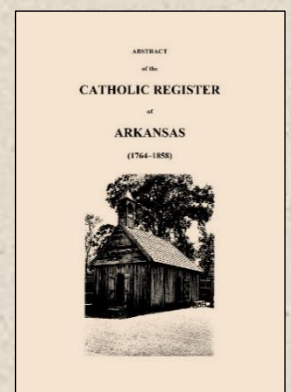


Renewal and new memberships may be paid securely online at [www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org](http://www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org).

*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](http://www.grandprairiehistory.org).



### Future Grand Prairie Historical Society meeting dates/places:

October 17, Arts Center of the Grand Prairie, Stuttgart; January 16, 2025, Museum of the Arkansas Grand Prairie, Stuttgart; April 17, County Courthouse, DeWitt; July 17, Phillips Community College, DeWitt.

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.

<b>Grand Prairie Historical Society</b> P. O. Box 15 Almyra, AR 72003 870-830-1425 <a href="http://www.grandprairiehistory.org">www.grandprairiehistory.org</a>	<b>Officers</b> President: Linda Fischer Vice-Pres: Gay Hampton Rusk Secretary: Jessie Walsh Treasurer: Raeann Braithwaite	<b>Newsletter Editor</b> Glenn Mosenthin  GPHS is a 501(c)(3) organization.
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# Arkansas State Archives

<https://www.arkansasheritage.com/arkansasstatearchives/home>



## Our Mission

The Arkansas State Archives' mission is to keep and care for the official archives of the State of Arkansas; collect material bearing on the history of Arkansas from the earliest times; copy and edit official records and other historical material; and encourage historical work and research by the public.

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and the 1st and 3rd Saturday  
of each month  
9 a.m.—12 p.m..  
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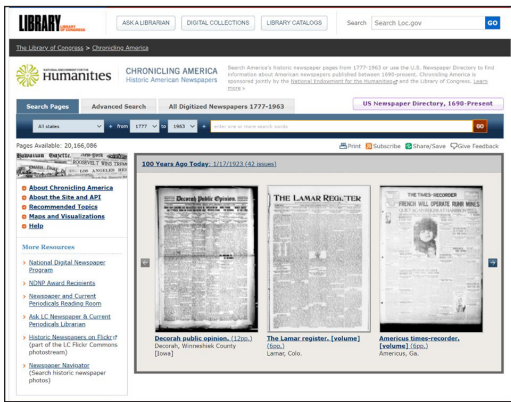
### Write Us

[state.archives@arkansas.gov](mailto:state.archives@arkansas.gov)



# Quick Guide to the Library of Congress's **Chronicling America**

Go to <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/> to start searching historic Arkansas newspapers.

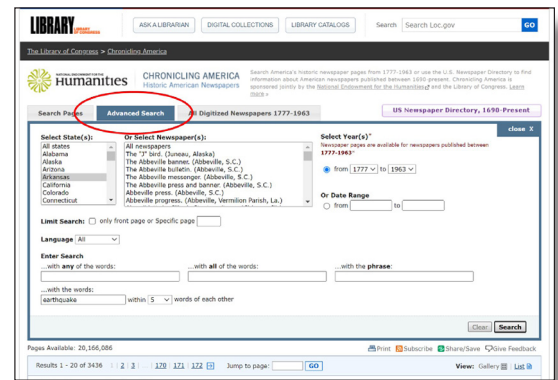


## Basic word or phrase search in Arkansas newspapers

- Click the “All states” drop down menu to select “Arkansas” and select a date range to search within.
- Type the words or phrase to search for in the text box and click “GO”. (You do not need to use “and” between keywords or use quotation marks (””) around a phrase.) The best way to narrow your focus is to choose one or two unique words or phrases, rather than a longer phrase. Keep in mind terminology for people, places, and things has changed over the years, so adjust search words as needed (ex. search for Indian rather than Native American).
- Filter your search results using the drop down “sort by” menu to view results by relevance, state, title or date.

## Advanced search options in Arkansas newspapers

- Search within just one or a few newspapers by selecting the newspaper name under “Select Newspaper(s).”
- Search within a specific date range by selecting the “Date Range” option and type in the dates you want to search or select the dates on the drop down calendar. This can be used to search specific date ranges like May to July in one year or for one day only (by setting the date range in the “from” and “to” dates to the same date).



## To customize how the words are searched:

- Typing in the “with any of the words” search box will show results for either of the words, not necessarily all the words together.
- Typing in the “with all of the words” search box will ensure that all the words you are searching will be on the page, though not in any order.
- Typing in the “with the phrase” search box will only show results of the exact phrase in order. This is the only search box that will show an exact phrase.

## To view all Arkansas newspapers and browse the issues:

- Click the “All Digitized Newspapers 1777-1963” tab and select “Arkansas” on the drop-down menu. To search for papers from a single ethnicity or language, select those from the drop-down menus. Then click “GO” on the right to see the results.
- The papers are listed in alphabetical order by title. Click a newspaper title to learn more about that paper and browse the issues.
- To browse by year and date, click the “Calendar View” link. In calendar view, you can change the year shown on the left under “Issues for.” To view an issue, click on one of the days that have a date highlighted in blue on the calendar.



For more tips, tricks, and tools for searching Chronicling America, download our comprehensive research guide.



The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Library of Congress. The Arkansas State Archives is a state partner for the NDNP. Content digitized as part of NDNP is freely available to the public at [chroniclingamerica.loc.gov](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/). Don't see a newspaper? Get in touch at [statearchives@arkansas.gov](mailto:statearchives@arkansas.gov).