
ALHA

ARKANSAS LIVING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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Fall 2010

The End of Another Year!

Ian Beard

ALHA President

Most of us are in the process of winding down our living history activities for the year—either going into hibernation for the winter or migrating to warmer climes for events. A few sites still have holiday themed activities ahead of them, but those are the final chapters of a busy fall season. If your year was like most, you will welcome the needed break!

It will be a short break, though. Planning for the spring season is already underway for most of you. Along with our usual busy schedule, there is an additional opportunity for living historians. As many of you know, historic sites and museums around the region are ramping up for the sesquicentennial of the US Civil War. The next four years promise an unprecedented schedule of events as we commemorate this momentous period in both our state's and nation's history.

But before we get fully engulfed by the spring season, I want to cordially invite you to attend the ALHA Annual Conference in Little Rock on February 25-27, 2011. This conference will also be momentous, at least for ALHA as an organization. The 2011 conference will be our fifth, and will mark the fifth anniversary of ALHA

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1860 Election Event at Historic Washington

as an organization. It will also mark a huge step for us, as we welcome the Mountain Plains and Southeastern Regions—representing twenty-six states and territories – of the Association of Living History, Farm, and Agriculture Museums (ALHFAM). The 2011 conference will offer all the great workshops and sessions you have come to expect from ALHA members, but in addition will include presenters from around the country. We will offer a greater amount and variety of programming than we ever have before. The conference also promises great networking opportunities with living historians from these two regions.

I think you will agree when you see the program that the conference committee has done a great job organizing everything. The program committee has accepted 11 pre-workshops and 17 concurrent sessions as part of this year's conference. There will be a half day of field trips to almost a dozen sites around central Arkansas. You will be able to enjoy workshops on the hallowed grounds of the Historic Arkansas Museum, meet in the legislative chambers of the Old State House, and dance in the replicated early twentieth century ballroom of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.

Despite the expanded program, the conference committee has done an excellent job keeping registration costs down. Through the generous support of the host museums and the Department of Arkansas Heritage, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Heart of Arkansas Tourism Association, and the Legacy Hotel you

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 15, 2011; 6pm—9pm

Trial by Jury Dinner

Historic Washington State Park

Justice is served and you are the jury. After enjoying an evening meal at Williams' Tavern Restaurant, guests will proceed to the 1836 Courthouse. There they will take part in a living history drama where they judge the guilt or innocence of a man accused of murder. The drama is based upon an actual 1844 trial that took place in the same courtroom. Dress casual or wear your favorite 19th-century costume. Reservations are required.

Admission: \$25 Adults, \$20, Children under 14

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January 22, 2010; 9am—12pm

Learning to Quilt: A Sampler Quilt Workshop

Powhatan Historic State Park

There is something inexpressibly satisfying about working with cloth, and quilting is a time-honored form of needlecraft. This workshop focuses on teaching, or practicing, piecing and quilting techniques by making a Sampler quilt. The 20-square quilt created through this workshop contains blocks especially chosen to familiarize you with different techniques. Full-sized patterns are given along with instructions and diagrams. The participant is responsible for the fabric; contact the park for specific amounts. This workshop will meet every month throughout the year to create this beautiful piece of American Tradition Admission: \$30

CONTACT:

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January 28-29, 2011

3rd Annual Fort Smith History Conference

Clayton House Museum

The Civil War in Arkansas: Voices from the Dust will be held at UA Fort Smith in the Reynolds Room. Special field trips and a Civil War Union surgeon performed by Doug Kidd will augment presentations on subjects which will include women and USCT.

Marth Siler

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Marthasiler@gmail.com

Heritage Day Celebration

D.J. Wallace, Director

Grant County Museum

Living history was the prevailing theme for the Grant County Museum's Heritage Day Celebration on November 6. One of the museum's goals for 2010 has been to increase the awareness within our local community of the wealth of history that our museum possesses and to generate more interest in the museum state-wide.

Plans for the Heritage Day began in July as invitations were sent to living history presenters, musical groups, re-enactment groups and arts and crafts artisans. Action Realty in Sheridan was secured as our official sponsor, while local businesses were solicited to help defray costs and expenses for the presenters. The *Sheridan Headlight* and *Arkansas Democrat—Gazette's Tri-Lakes Edition* provided invaluable coverage of the event to promote interest in our community.

On a crisp and amazingly beautiful autumn day our visitors arrived to find a wide variety of historical presentations. The day began with the formal dedication and opening of the Museum's Heritage Pavilion. As visitors left the Pavilion, local favorites, "the Sisters", performed their brand of gospel and old timey music in the Toler Chapel. As the ladies performed their songs from the 1800s they provided their listeners with not only a history of the songs and their origins, but taught them about the history of the instruments they were playing and how our forefathers utilized them in both secular and religious performances. After an excellent morning session, the group returned for an afternoon session on the porch of the historical Townhouse.

The Battle of Jenkins Ferry provided the backdrop for the Military Order of the Stars and Bars Re-enactors as they gave us a glimpse of the Grant County in the spring of 1864. Bill Turney and Andy Taylor gave their audience an up-close feel as to how it felt to be behind the firing of a Civil War cannon. Visitors not only got to hear and feel the blast of the cannon, but were even allowed to pull the firing cord and experience the recoil as the gun fired a charge. "Fire in the hole" indeed!

As the smoke from the cannon settle in the air, Doyle Taylor demonstrated how a Civil War doctor would attempt to save the lives of the soldiers as they were carried from the battle field to make shift hospitals in homes, barns, and even livery stables. Using every

See "Grant County" on page 5

January 29, 2011; 9am – 12pm

Pearl Stringing Workshop: Necklaces, Bracelets and Earrings

Historic Powhatan State Park

Freshwater pearls from the bottom of the Black River have been a large part of our local history, but what do you do with the pearls once their found? Join the staff at Powhatan Historic State Park to make beautiful necklaces, bracelets, or earrings from these milky white pearls and learn about the history of the freshwater pearling industry on the Black River. Space is limited; please register by January 26th to reserve your spot. *Admission: \$20 per necklace, \$10 per bracelet, \$5 per earring set.*

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February 8, 2011; 12pm – 1pm

Brown Bag Lunch Lecture: Arkansas's Anarchy Law and People of Color: An Unusual Case from 1934.

Old State House Museum

Dr. Kenneth Barnes of the UCA history department will discuss the case of a group of Asian organizers who came into northeastern Arkansas in the summer of 1934 to recruit members for a movement that encouraged African Americans to look to Japan as the protector of the "colored races." They specifically targeted places that had been active in the Marcus Garvey movement in the 1920s. In August of 1934 they organized chapters in Armored and Clear Lake in Mississippi County, which had both had divisions of Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association in the 20s. They were arrested along with two local black men and taken to jail in Blytheville, where they were charged and convicted of anarchy a few days later. The anarchy law had been on the books since the 20s and under the law they were found guilty of plotting to overthrow the governments of the state of Arkansas and the United States. The Justice Department even investigated in 1934 and sent a FBI field agent back to Blytheville after Pearl Harbor in 1942 to check to see if local black people in Mississippi County were supporting the enemy when we were at war with Japan. Drinks will be provided but bring your own lunch. Admission: Free.

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can attend the conference sessions and enjoy meals, field trips, evening activities, and even a stocked hospitality room for only \$60 a person. If you are coming from out of town, rooms at our host hotel, the Legacy, start at \$59. Our goal was to offer the best conference value at the most affordable price, and I hope you will be satisfied by the results.

With the end of the year and the upcoming conference we will also mark another change to ALHA. Fourth District Representative Billy Nations, Secretary Kristyn Watts, and myself as president will all be term-limited in 2011. As much as I have enjoyed serving this organization and watching it grow over the past five years, I look forward to the new ideas and directions the next president take ALHA. If you care about ALHA's mission and the local living history scene, I sincerely ask you to consider running for a board position or volunteering on a committee. This organization is only as good as the people who make up its membership and the individuals who are willing to take a leadership role. The next group of ALHA leaders could include you.



2010 ALHA Conference at Pocahontas

**CANDIDATES
REQUIRED!**

**THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ARE UP
FOR ELECTION**

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

REGION IV REPRESENTATIVE

For more information contact Barbara Ward at
barbara@arkansasheritage.gov

February 12, 2011; 9am – 1pm

Bubble, Bubble, Toil & Trouble:
Soapmaking Workshop
Historic Powhatan State Park

Creating soap is not a difficult process – no more challenging than following a recipe for pastry and turning into a pie. Come join us in learning the art of making soap with the cold-process method. Participants will receive a booklet with soap recipes, several bars of home-made soap, and the knowledge of how to become squeaky clean! The Registration fee of \$20 covers the cost of materials. Please bring protective clothing, as some materials used are caustic and can burn. Class size is limited; please register by February 5th to reserve your space.

Admission: \$20

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February 15, 2011; 12pm – 1pm

Brown Bag Lunch Lecture: Arkansas Contributions to R&B Music
Old State House Museum

Local music expert Stephen Koch from the Arkansongs radio show will explore the Arkansans who helped mold R&B music over the years.

Drinks will be provided but bring your own lunch.

Admission: Free.

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February 22, 2011; 12pm – 1pm

Brown Bag Lunch Lecture: William Furbush
Old State House Museum

Dr. Blake Wintory of Lakeport Plantation will discuss the interesting life of post-Civil War African-American politician William Furbush.

Drinks will be provided but bring your own lunch.

Admission: Free.

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**Put your event or program in the ALHA
Calendar. Send your Spring Event
submissions for the Winter newsletter by**

February 1.

Who's Who!!!

Billy Nations District IV Representative

Billy Nations is the District Four Representative for the Arkansas Living History Association (ALHA). District Four encompasses the same area as Congressional District Four, which includes the entire southwest corner of the state and most of the southern half of the state. It is one of the largest districts in size. The District Representative represents the membership of a particular region and is charged with developing workshops and living history opportunities for the members in the region. Billy is serving a second term as District Four Representative.



Billy Nations is the Chief Interpreter at Historic Washington State Park located in southwest Arkansas just eight miles north of Hope. He has been involved with living history for most of his life, and has worked at Historic Washington since the mid 1990s. He has also been strongly involved in Civil War Living History as a member of the cavalry.

The time period he focuses on is the nineteenth century. At Washington, the majority of the buildings at the park were built during the Antebellum Period and so he focuses on that time period. He is also an experienced bladesmith and teaches a Forging Workshop at the park.

available medicine at his disposal, the doctor or surgeon would provide life saving medical attention. When medicines were not available, home poultices were used to thwarts infections and to prevent further damage and even death.

Supporting the doctors in the 1800s were individuals who were simply called medicine women. Our Medicine Woman, as presented by Dyan Bohnert, did everything from assisting the doctor to “birthing” babies as a midwife. Dyan demonstrated how drugs could be created from common plants and herbs that had been used for hundreds of years to cure whatever ailed you. Norajeane Harrell was on hand to give us a fascinating glimpse into the role women played on the frontier and in the homes of the 1800s. She spoke about how her character had worked as a midwife and practiced women’s medicine. Norajeane talked about fashions on the frontier and modeled women’s clothing from that era.

Edgar Colvin, one of our MOSB re-enactors, provided a rather colorful display of flags that have flown over Arkansas in earlier times when Arkansas was only a territory and then later a state. Edgar conducted a very educational program as he discussed each flag and its history in Arkansas.

Many veterans of the Civil War, both Union and Confederate, left Arkansas after the war and traveled to the Midwest and western states. Earl Harrell, as a 1880s Wells Fargo agent, demonstrated how frontier justice often was determined by whoever could shoot the quickest and with the most accuracy. Earl fascinated his audience as he modeled the firearms used by lawman and sometimes outlaw, Wild Bill Hickok. One of Earl’s remembrances was how Wild Bill shot Davis Tutt at a distance of over 75 yards with a pistol; a spectacular shot with a pistol for that time. Wild Bill, who had served as a union Army Scout during the Civil War, was later killed by Jack McCall as he played poker in Deadwood, Dakota Territory. Earl displayed as one of his exhibits the infamous “dead man’s hand”, a pair of eights and aces Hickok was dealt just before McCall shot him. As you walked away from Earl Harrell you could almost see Wild Bill Hickok’s smile as he charmed his audience one more time.

The Museum Blacksmith Shop was open throughout the day with blacksmith Larry Layne continuing his demonstrations of how almost everything on the farm or ranch was made in the blacksmith shop. Working along with the blacksmith in the 1880s were craftsmen who applied their trades to provide necessities the blacksmith did not produce. Tom Walker provided an excellent demonstration of leather crafts and how leather was utilized by the early settlers of Arkansas. Michael Bethea demonstrated the art of rope making as he wove three strands of twine to make ropes strong enough to be used for any requirements on the farm or ranch. Visitors to Michael’s booth left the museum with their own “handmade” rope as a keepsake.

To provide a woman’s perspective on living in the 1800s, Ree Walker enticed her visitors with

homemade biscuits cooked in a dutch oven over an open fire. Butter for the biscuits was provided by Julie Bethea as she churned her own butter using ingredients used by her ancestors on the farm 100 years ago. Sharlene Richardson and Ree demonstrated an explained how women of the generation weaved their own thread and sewed the clothing for the entire family.

Electronics in Arkansas were presented by Tim Richardson who displayed a collection of vintage early 1900s radios and explained how each functioned and how they differed from present day electronics. Tim, who rebuilds antique radios, provided an excellent history of radios and how they have evolved over the last eighty years.

On the porch of the Masonic Lodge, Rita “Scooter” Layne entertained the children while teaching them how to make “wagon dolls.” Rita explained to her young audience that the dolls were made by the children to play with as they traveled by covered wagon as the families traveled out west to find land and to create a home. Before the day was up even the boys were designing their own toys with Rita’s help.

The Museum Board and Staff thank everyone involved in make the Heritage Day a success. We will look forward to continuing this activity as an annual event. If you missed the day, we hope you will set aside a few hours and visit us soon. A trip to the Grant County Museum is always a trip into history.



Exhibit at the Grant County Museum

2010 ALHA Officers

President	Ian Beard ian@arkansasheritage.org
Vice President	Barbara Ward barbara@arkansasheritage.org
Secretary	Kristyn Watts kristyn.watts@arkansas.gov
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District Representatives

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District 2	Ben Swadley ben.swadley@arkansas.gov
District 3	Pody Gay pgay@springdaleark.gov
District 4	Billy Nations billy.nations@arkansas.gov

Save the Date!

SEALHFAM & ALHA
CONFERENCE

February 25-27, 2011
Little Rock, AR

Download Conference Schedule at
www.arkansaslivinghistory.com/downloads

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ALHA
FACEBOOK PAGE!**



**SEE PICTURES AND
POSTS FROM OTHER
ALHA ACTIVITIES
AND EVENTS**

2010 Award Applications Available!!!

Outstanding Living History Event
&
Outstanding Living History
Program

Due
FEBRUARY 1, 2011

Download application at www.arkansaslivinghistory.com/downloads

Arkansas Living History Association 2010 Membership Registration

Name: _____
Institution: _____
Position: _____
Street: _____
City, State, ZIP: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
FAX: _____ Web site: _____

Type of Membership:

___ **Individual: \$12** Any adult, 18 yrs of age or older. The member shall have full voting privileges in the ALHA as a general member.

___ **Institutional: \$50** This includes 5 members with full voting privileges. \$10 per additional member over the first 5.

_____ Number of Additional Members X \$10 = _____

Please list the 5 members to receive the newsletter and their email addresses:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Help us learn more about you.

Periods of Interest: _____

Areas of Interest: _____

What you would like to receive from ALHA: (this will help us develop training opportunities, meetings, workshops, etc.)

Please make Checks Payable to: ALHA

Please send Registration along with Payment to:

Kristyn Watts, Secretary

PO Box 93

Powhatan. AR 72458