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Obama has ties to Madison County

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The current national newscasts are filled with the names of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, the top two Democratic candidates for President of the United States of America.

The Clintons have been well known to Arkansas residents since the mid-1970s with Hillary Clinton serving as Arkansas' First Lady from 1979 to 1992 when her husband, Bill, was Governor of the State. The Clintons were married in Fayetteville on Oct. 11, 1975, and their daughter, Chelsea, was born in Little Rock on Feb. 27, 1980.

However, Obama also has roots that run deep in Northwest Arkansas. Obama's great-great-great-great-great grandparents were Nathaniel and Sarah (Ray) Bunch, who came to Arkansas about 1840 and settled near Dinsmore, about three miles south of Dry Fork. The community of Dinsmore is in the extreme northwest corner of Newton County and is only about a half-mile from both the Carroll and Madison County lines.

Nathaniel Bunch was born on April 23, 1793, in Virginia and served in the War of 1812 under General Andrew Jackson. Family legends say he took part in the Battle of New Orleans. Soldiers who served in the War of 1812 were given "land bounty certificates," which entitled them to claim 80 acres of land from the government, and it is believed that Nathaniel Bunch used his land bounty certificate to claim the land that he settled in Arkansas.

Anna Bunch, born in 1814, was the daughter of Nathaniel and Sarah. She married Samuel Thompson Allred in Tennessee and they moved their family to Newton County, Arkansas, about 1845. They were the great-great-great-great grandparents of Barack Obama.

Nathaniel and Sarah Bunch, Samuel and Anna (Bunch) Allred, and Samuel's parents, John and Phoebe (Thompson) Allred, are all buried at Liberty Cemetery near where the Bunch family settled at Dinsmore. There are many graves of the Bunch and Allred families in this cemetery, most of whom are relatives of Barack Obama.

Frances A. Allred, daughter of Samuel and Anna, was born in 1834 and married Joseph Samuel Wright. On Aug. 11, 1869, Margaret Bell Wright was born to Frances and Joseph. Margaret married Thomas C. McCurry in Chautaugua County, Kansas, on March 13, 1885. Margaret and Thomas McCurry were the great-great grandparents of Obama, and their daughter, Leona McCurry, married Rolla Charles Payne in 1922. Both Leona and Rolla were born in Kansas, lived there, and are buried there.

Obama's grandmother, Madelyn Lee Payne, was born to Leona and Rolla in October 1922, and married Stanley Armour Dunham in 1940. Their daughter, Shirley Ann Dunham, married Barack Hussein Obama, Sr., in 1960 but they were divorced in 1963.

Their son, Barack Hussein Obama, Jr., was born on Aug. 4, 1961, and is now an Illinois senator vying for the U.S. Presidency.

Barack Obama still has many cousins in this area, including the Bunch, Holt, Combs, Hargis, Wright, and Stamps families. Further information on the genealogy of Barack Obama can be found at the Madison County Genealogical and Historical Society.

NOTE: This item was reprinted with Joy Russell's permission. It was first published in *The Madison County Record* newspaper on February 13, 2008.

DISCLAIMER: This isn't meant as a political endorsement. We know politics is a delicate subject and we'll extend equal coverage to all other Presidential candidates with Arkansas roots. — DWA

Arkansas Civil Rights History Internet Database Launched

Diane Worrell

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark.—Historical materials documenting the changing nature of civil rights in Arkansas are now available free to the public through the Internet. Sponsored by the special collections department at the University of Arkansas Libraries, "Land of (Unequal) Opportunity: Documenting the Civil Rights Struggle in Arkansas" is an online resource of documents and images that trace the history of civil rights in the state. The web site, launched on February 1, contains more than 2,000 pages of documents, photographs, broadsides, pamphlets, drawings, cartoons and other images.

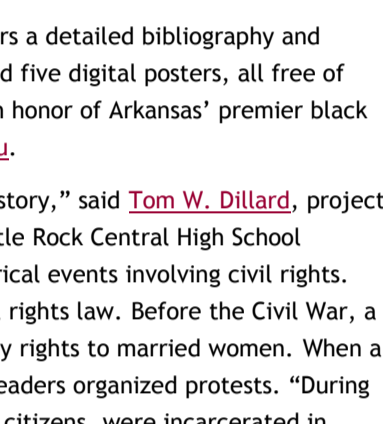
While the project emphasizes the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis and the rights of African American Arkansians, it covers all time periods and includes civil rights issues pertaining to women, homosexuals and the Japanese Americans held in Arkansas relocation camps during World War II. Users may browse the digital collection or search by keywords.

In addition to the documents and images, the Web site offers a detailed bibliography and timeline, 10 lesson plans for junior high school students, and five digital posters, all free of charge. The Web site server is named for Scipio A. Jones, in honor of Arkansas' premier black attorney and can be found online at: <http://Scipio.uark.edu>.

"Arkansas has a long and remarkably complex civil rights history," said [Tom W. Dillard](#), project director and head of special collections. While the 1957 Little Rock Central High School integration crisis is well known, it is just one of many historical events involving civil rights. Dillard noted that as early as 1868, Arkansas enacted a civil rights law. Before the Civil War, a few farsighted Arkansas leaders advocated granting property rights to married women. When a wave of segregation laws was enacted around 1900, black leaders organized protests. "During World War II, 16,000 Japanese Americans, mostly American citizens, were incarcerated in relocation camps in Arkansas - adding a unique aspect to our collective civil rights history," Dillard said. In more recent decades, Arkansas was the scene of a dramatic confrontation in the legislature over adoption of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution. The state has in more current decades begun to grapple with recognizing the rights of homosexual Arkansians and Spanish-speaking immigrants.

While the majority of the materials on the web site are held by the University of Arkansas special collections department, other institutions around the state also contributed materials, including the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies at the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock; the Riley-Hickingbotham Library at Ouachita Baptist University; Ottenheimer Library at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock; the Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas; the Arkansas History Commission; and the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives in Washington, Ark.

Funded in part by the Arkansas Humanities Council, the project is ongoing. Staff members in special collections will refine and add materials to the Web site. In addition to Dillard, the project staff also included [Timothy G. Nutt](#), Scot Oldham, Beth Juhl, Arthur Morgan, Anita Mysore, Todd Lewis, Cheri Pearce, Andrea Cantrell and [Molly Boyd](#).



Students participating in civil rights protest at Arkansas A&M College, Pine Bluff, ca. 1962, from the Orval E. Faubus collection

Black Confederate Pension Records

If it looks like we've got a theme going here in the ezine, remember February is Black History Month. Carolyn Earle Billingsley brought an item to our attention from The Epoch Times website, by Doris J. Posey, about [Black Confederate Pension Records](#). Click on the link to read this interesting article.

In the summer of 1911, the annual national Confederate Reunion was held in Little Rock. *The Arkansas Gazette* newspaper devoted a lot of ink to the events connected with the reunion. Among them was a meeting of former slaves who had served the Confederacy in various capacities during the War.

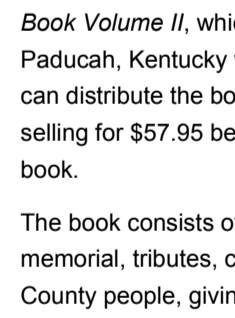
Official Records of the War of the Rebellion

On the subject of the War of Northern Aggression, [Russell P. Baker, CA](#), Archival Manager at the [Arkansas History Commission](#), our state archives, sends a note about an online source for the 128-volume set on the War: "I found a new online location for the set of Civil War books called the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion. It also has the famous and very useful atlas that goes with this set. The maps from the atlas can be enlarged and printed from this site, which is partly in color. Check it out: <http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/sources/records/>."

If you're interested in buying the set in electronic format, see [CivilWarAmerica.com](#)—they offer a DVD-ROM with the 128-volume Army set, the Navy set, plus the Atlas, Dyer's Compendium, Southern Historical Society Papers and a lot more for \$169.95 plus shipping or a CD-ROM with the 128-volume set for \$69.95 plus shipping. Guild Press of Indiana was the first to publish the OR in electronic format and it appears CivilWarAmerica.com has bought the rights to their material.

It's wonderful to see this important historical material within reach of everyone!

Nuts and Bolts of DNA Presentation



On Thursday, March 13, 2008, Buford Suffridge will speak to the Cleveland County Historical & Genealogical Society at the library in Rison, Arkansas, at 7 p.m. on "The Nuts & Bolts of DNA and Genealogy - Was Grandpa Really Grandpa?"

Don't miss this opportunity—Buford Suffridge is an engaging speaker and the drive to Rison may give you an opportunity to see a different part of Arkansas.

Join the LDS Indexing Program

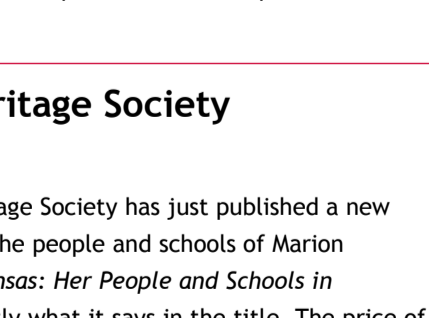
You are invited to learn to do Indexing in your own home! Attend the [Family Search Indexing Program](#) Workshop at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), 6110 T.P. White Road, Jacksonville, AR 72076, telephone 501/985-2501, on April 12, 2008, from 10 a.m. until 12 noon.

What is the Indexing Program? Volunteers extract family history information from digital images of historical documents to create searchable indexes that assist everyone in finding their ancestors. These records will be offered to the public for free.

For more information, contact [Whitney McLaughlin](#).

Trammel's Trace: From Arkansas to Texas

On Saturday, March 8th, [Gary Pinkerson](#), will present a program, [Trammel's Trace: From Arkansas to Texas](#), at the [Southwest Arkansas Regional Archive](#) in Washington, Ark. [Old Washington](#) is a state park full of historic buildings and SARA is home to an extensive archive of history for the Red River region.



This presentation will focus on Nicholas Trammel's time in Arkansas and the connection at Fulton, Ark., between the Southwest Trail across Arkansas and Trammel's Trace at the Great Bend of the Red River.

Mark your calendar! Saturday, March 8, from 10:30 a.m. until 12 noon. Admission is free and everyone is invited. For more information, contact Peggy Loyd at 870/983-2633. Click on the links above for more about SARA, Old Washington, and Trammel's Trace. To get a head start on the topic, see the [Encyclopedia of Arkansas entry on Trammel's Trace](#).

Greene County News

Kaye Holmes

The guest speaker for the [Greene County Historical & Genealogical Society](#) for March 13, 2008, at 7:30 PM will be Bob Branch, historian. He will be speaking about "The 125 Years History of Greene County". The meeting will be located at the Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, corner of 7th and Main Street, Paragould, AR 72450.

Greene County Historical & Genealogical Society is presently working on the *Family History Book Volume II*, which should go to press in the near future. Turner Publishing Company, Paducah, Kentucky will be publishing it and it should take approximately six months before we can distribute the book to those who have already purchased pre-sale orders. The book is selling for \$57.95 before publication and \$68.00 after publication. Shipping will be \$6.00 per book.

The book consists of histories of families, communities, churches, schools, businesses, farms, memorial, tributes, clubs, organizations and much more. The publication is written by Greene County people, giving emphasis to the importance of families in our heritage. If you are presently living in or have previously lived in Greene County, you won't want to be left out of this once-in-a-lifetime publication.

For details about the March 13 meeting or the upcoming book, contact [Kaye Holmes](#).

New Book from Garland County Historical Society

Garland County Historical Society has published a new volume by Gail Ashbrook titled, *Carved in Stone, Cast in Metal, Final Tributes, Sad Farewells, Selected Epitaphs From Cemeteries in Hot Springs*. It's filled with common and uncommon epitaphs—no names, just the sentiments, and it's entertaining. Well, if you have a genealogist's sense of humor, it's entertaining. Gail Ashbrook has compiled several volumes of cemetery inventories, all published by GCHS. She does meticulous work and these epitaphs and photos in her latest book are like the icing from the cemetery cakes.

Order your copy from GCHS, P O Box 21335, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71903, for \$12.00 plus \$4.00 shipping.

Here is my favorite epitaph from Gail's book: "He Lived Fast, Died Young, And Loved Very Hard."

Washington County Genealogical Society's activities

Northwest Arkansas Times newspaper published an article recently about Washington County Genealogical Society's plans to involve folks in family history. [Read the item](#) and visit the society's [website](#) to learn more about their activities.

Two upcoming meetings are:

- March 9, 2008-Marcia Conners will present a program on "Migrations Trails."
- April 13, 2008-WCAGS's 2nd annual "Genealogy Jeopardy." This year's teams will be Shiloh Museum and Marion Chapter DAR.

Meetings are held the second Sunday of every month at 2:00 p.m. at The Headquarters House on Dickson Street in Fayetteville.

New book from Marion County Heritage Society

Marion County Arkansas Heritage Society has just published a new compilation of photos about the people and schools of Marion County, *Marion County, Arkansas: Her People and Schools in Pictures*. It's filled with exactly what it says in the title. The price of the book is \$40.00 for the hardbound edition, or \$30.00 for softbound, plus \$7.00 shipping.

The first book in the series is *Marion County, Arkansas: Her People in Pictures*, and it's priced the same as the second.

There is a marvelous variety of photographs—from the stiffly posed formal portraits, to snapshots, and relatively recent pictures to old ones. The school pictures of the kids posed in formal groups are priceless.

To order, send a check to MCAHS, PO Box 761, Yellville, AR 72687, and be sure to specify which book you want. Membership in the group is \$12.00 per calendar year and their publication is the quarterly, *Bramble Bush*. For questions, contact [Vickie Roberts](#).

Administrative Stuff

To learn more about [Arkansas Genealogical Society](#), visit our website.

If you have friends and relatives who would like to receive this ezine, direct them to the [ezine sign-up link](#) on our website. Membership is not required to receive the AGS ezine, but we heartily encourage you to join our wonderful organization! [Membership details](#) are on our website.

If you have suggestions or comments about our ezine, rattle the editor's cage at desmond@ipa.net.

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