



AGS Ezine

Newsletter of the Arkansas Genealogical Society Vol. 15 No. 10 October 2020

Jane A. Wilkerson, Jeanne Rollberg, and Andria Yakoubian

editors

Brandon Ryan, list manager

Coming Events

October 16-17, 2020

2020 AGS Fall Seminar: Cancelled
Due to the current COVID-19
(Coronavirus)

Benton Event Center, Benton
Arkansas. For more information
go to [https://](https://www.agsgenealogy.org/)

www.agsgenealogy.org/
<https://www.agsgenealogy.org/>

Click on link below for information on other events around

New Book Explores DNA Testing

How has DNA testing affected your family's life? The Central Arkansas Library System provided an online presentation in September about *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are* by Libby Copeland, published in March 2020.

Copeland explored the benefits of consumer DNA testing to both find relatives and discover paternity, and also discussed the ways companies have commodified and extended the uses of the tests.

Copeland said that serious genealogy researchers are probably less daunted by unwelcome surprises in DNA outcomes than sometime hobbyists or those who casually received DNA tests as birthday or Christmas presents. Online support groups on Facebook and elsewhere have sprung up for those who discover, but are rejected by, "outside" family members after DNA testing. She said that it is usually life changing when DNA evidence emerges showing that a person has been deceived about biological heritage. Conversely, happy family reunions of lost siblings or adoptees with parents have positively changed lives in the DNA era.

She cautioned that "ethnicity estimates" that are periodically updated as more people test are generally considered somewhat imprecise when compared with actual individual DNA matches. Many people have been led by family lore to believe they were from countries far from the actual countries of origin. She noted that the fairly rare use of consumer testing results by law enforcement --not an originally intended use--has created state privacy laws stipulating how DNA may be used, people withdrawing their samples, and that some DNA sites have also been hacked. The speed of new knowledge related to DNA testing makes it hard to keep up with the science and with its ethical implications, Copeland said.

Delta Genealogy Trail

If you are exploring Arkansas roots tourism during the fall, you may enjoy the new Arkansas Delta Byways genealogy trail. <https://deltabyways.com/travel/genealogy-trail/>

As the web site with photos explains, “The Arkansas Delta holds a treasure trove of resources for the avid genealogist, as well as the curious hobbyist who is shaking the family tree or those who just like roaming around historic cemeteries. The 15 Delta Byways counties boast public libraries with helpful staff, knowledgeable historical and genealogical societies, courthouse records, and university libraries with archives and special collections. The region also has some of the state's oldest cemeteries, along with burials of some colorful famous and infamous characters. The resources below will get you started, as well as provide a glimpse of just a few of the region's interesting cemeteries.”

The website showcases each library, courthouse, historical society, university archives, and cemeteries for reference. As you find information about your own ancestors, you can see Senator Hattie Caraway's grave and the gravesite of "the world's largest man," Big Jim Tarver, who was in the circus as well as being a farmer.

In his prime, Tarver was over 8 feet tall and weighed 460 pounds. The gravesite is at Crittenden Memorial Park near Marion.

Are You an Arkansas Mayflower Descendant?



Many Mayflower descendants don't yet know that they are or are still wondering. A new database to celebrate the voyage of the Mayflower and its estimated 10 million descendants in America and 35 million worldwide has been developed.

In this 400th year anniversary, there's a free online database that provides access to Mayflower Society member applications and documented family trees so people can more easily verify their Mayflower connections.

FamilySearch International, AmericanAncestors, and the General Society of Mayflower Descendants have together developed it. The new verified records, which include over 1 million images, are searchable at FamilySearch.org/Mayflower and AmericanAncestors.org. To take a virtual tour of the Mayflower, visit familysearch.org.

Meet the Board

Mary Russell-Evans

Mary is a lifelong, (self-taught) gardener- a FIFTH generation Arkansas (Ozark) farmer/gardener. Raised on a chicken farm in Washington County, east of Springdale, where she learned to dig in the dirt. Farming and plants are in her DNA. She is also known as the Arkansas Garden Goddess.



Mary has been a floral designer/florist for 40 years, including 5 years as a floral designer for The Texas Rose Festival. Worked for 10 years in a retail nursery as assistant- manager/plant buyer and still works part time at Christmas (27 years). Her own part-time garden business became full time over 20 years ago.

She has worked on the board of the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show for 30 years serving as the show's "theme garden" designer and all aspects of making it happen, as well as the speaker manager. Mary wrote the "Back Page: Only in Arkansas" column for Arkansas Gardener Magazine. A Master Gardener in Pulaski County for 30 years.

Mary has been the floral/garden instructor for Arkansas Extended Learning Center for 24 years. She also teaches gardening and floral design classes at local nurseries, plant societies, garden clubs, tv spots, garden tour expert, garden shows, state parks and Master Gardener trainings around (mostly) Arkansas.

Besides gardens, her other interests are dogs, road trips, genealogy, history, national parks, wildlife refuges, botanical gardens, historic gardens, photography and the Civil War. Mary has done genealogy since she was a small girl in the family barn in eastern Washington County and Carroll County, Arkansas. She spent hours in the barn in an old trunk full of land deeds, photographs, letters and family artifacts. She is the current keeper of this same trunk with all the contents- near and dear to her heart. In 1980 she decided to start interviewing – writing down- all the old folks while they were still "available." Her "Arkansas History Commission" card is dated 1982.

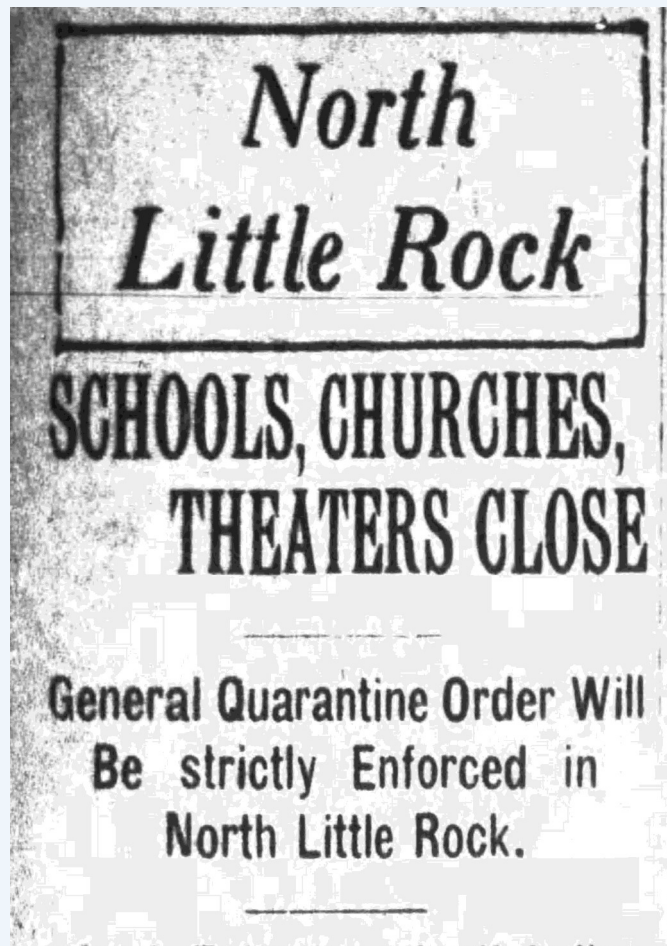
Mary is eligible for "First Families" of every southern state, except Mississippi, when she gets around to all the paperwork, including Daughters of The Republic of Texas (DRT). Some paternal lines were in NW AR early as 1820s.

She's had much pleasure from walking in the footsteps of the ancestors- some footsteps include: Natchez Trace, Cumberland Gap, Old Spanish Trail, Southwest Trail, Trail of Tears, Mountain Meadows Massacre wagon train re-enactments and Fort Russell (1812) in Illinois. Pertinent Civil War sites- Shiloh, Parker's Crossroads, Stones River, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, Little Rock, Wilson's Creek, Mansfield and Pleasant Hill (Red River Expedition), Jenkins Ferry and Andersonville. She has been dabbling in DNA since 2009. She has attended many FGS, IGHR, NGS, GRIP, and other smaller state workshops. She started going to Heritage Seekers Genealogy Club (Little Rock) about 2004. Currently she is the secretary, gopher, all-purpose, email person. Mary also serves on the board of the Arkansas Genealogical Society.

102 Years Ago This Month

It was announced this week that Regal Cinemas would close its doors in the U.S. for the second time. Schools are also forced to face the question of closing and going virtual. The pandemic has affected all of our lives, but did you know our ancestors faced the same questions over a hundred years ago?

Arkansas Gazette,
8 October 1918



Administrative Stuff

Contributions: If you have news for the Ezine, send it! To agscontributions@gmail.com —Thanks!

AGS: To learn more about [Arkansas Genealogical Society](http://www.agsgenealogy.org), visit our website at <http://www.agsgenealogy.org>

Subscribe: 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.

Comments: If you have suggestions or comments about our ezine, contact ezine@agsgenealogy.org

Un-subscribe: To remove yourself from the AGS Ezine list, [click here](#).

Credit: Items in this ezine are copyrighted by the editors or the author of the piece. If you want to reprint any of the items in this ezine, please give us credit, citing Arkansas Genealogical Society Ezine, (the date), edited by Jane A. Wilkerson, Jeanne Rollberg, and Andria Yakoubian.