The Times, They Are A Changing

On October 1, 2019, it was announced, Dr. David Stricklin would become the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Community Engagement for the Central Arkansas Library System (CALS). Glenn Whaley, the Roberts Library operational leader, took over as its Branch Manager. The library formally known as the Arkansas Studies Institute, includes the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies and the Gallery space. The libraries plan is to shift their resources to focus more on engaging with the local community.

Along with the name change, the Roberts library also announced that on December 2, the facility will cut back on the hours they are open to the public. The new hours were announced through leaflets.

For more information about the facility and their collections you can go to their website at https://robertslibrary.org/
Coming Events

April 4, 2020
Herritage Seekers Research Day, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. with a break, then 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Butler Center, 401 President Clinton Avenue, Little Rock. For more information go to https://heritageseekersar.weebly.com/

April 13, 2020
Finding Family Facts, presented by Rhonda Stewart, 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Roberts Library, 401 President Clinton Avenue, Little Rock.

May 14, 2020
Finding Family Facts, presented by Rhonda Stewart, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Nixon Library, 703 W. Main St., Jacksonville.

June 11, 2020
Finding Family Facts, presented by Rhonda Stewart, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Sanders Library, 10200 Johnson Dr., Sherwood.

July 9, 2020
Finding Family Facts, presented by Rhonda Stewart, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Rooker Library, 11 Otter Creek Court, Little Rock.

August 13, 2020
Finding Family Facts, presented by Rhonda Stewart, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Williams Library, 1800 Chester St., Little Rock.

Researching Birth Information

Republished From the Vault, Arkansas State Archives, a division of the Department of Arkansas Heritage, newsletter, November 26, 2019:

Little Rock Birth Records, September 1881, microfilm roll 4566, Pulaski County, courtesy of the Arkansas State Archives

When researchers come to the Arkansas State Archives, they frequently ask: “Do you have birth certificates?” Birth certificates can help genealogists locate vital information that helps trace family lineage, but the records are kept by the Arkansas Department of Health Vital Records, not the Arkansas State Archives.

Birth certificates can be difficult to find for several reasons. The state of Arkansas did not start maintaining birth records until 1914, so many people never had an official certificate. Plus, vital and medical records are not open to the public, which means researchers must use alternative methods to discover birth dates.

Luckily, the Arkansas State Archives houses records that can substitute for finding individual, historical birth certificates. Below are some research tips:

- Visit the Arkansas State Archives and look through our 15 published indexes that were put together by the Arkansas Genealogical Society. The indexes contain early births records filed between 1942 and 1967 for individuals born before 1914 and who needed proof of birth for Social Security. The Social Security Act was signed into law in 1935 and ongoing monthly benefits started in January 1940.

- Researchers should look at county records too. County governments sometimes house delayed birth records or certificates, which are birth certificates not filed within one year of the date of birth. The records contain the birth date, parents’ names and approximate place of birth. Researchers may also find birth records at the city level, such as Little Rock and Fort Smith. These city documents contain reported births within the city limits starting in 1881. The city birth records give genealogists the date of birth and parents’ names.
Researchers often can find a birth date by looking at U.S. Census records, which contain ages of people. Families can request census records on individuals from the U.S. Census for the years from 1950 to 2010. Individual census records from 1790 to 1940 are maintained by the national Archives and Records Administration. More information is available online.

Another great source for information are school census records. School Census records range from 1891 to 1978. They were done every year and include the birth date of school age children. The Arkansas State Archives has school census records for some counties for certain years on microfilm, but does not have them for all the counties in Arkansas. If the ASA does not have the records you are interested in then check with the county courthouse, although they may not have them either.

Church records can be helpful for baptismal records, but can sometimes be difficult to find. The ASA has some church records, but one can also contact the church, the parent parish to the church, or the Dioceses for these records.

If you know a date or date-range for the person’s birthday, you might find information by looking through newspapers for a birth announcement. The Arkansas State Archives houses thousands of newspapers that are easy to navigate through microfilm. The newspapers range from 1819 to present day.

The ASA also provides free access to Ancestry.com at each of its three branches. Various types of birth records from around the world are available through Ancestry.com. New records for Arkansas and other locations are continually being added, so if you have not found someone in the past continue to look in the future for those names as the new records might provide additional information.

There are various other sources available at the State Archives that may help researchers find an ancestor’s birth date or other genealogical information. Next month, we will look at how to locate marriage and divorce records, which can be used for tracing family histories. Marriage records, for example, often reveal maiden names, parents’ names and birth information.

Our staff is here to provide some research services and to help individuals start their genealogical research. Find more information about our services by contacting the Arkansas State Archives at 501-682-6900 or start researching by visiting our website. Researchers may also find records online through our online catalog.
Administrative Stuff

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

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