



## Arkansas Genealogical Society

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## AGS Ezine

Volume 12, No. 1, January, 2017

Johnny Mann, editor  
George Mitchell, list manager

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### *Happy New Year*

On the other hand, maybe a productive new year would be the better wish for a genealogist! Being productive and finding records makes for a happy genealogist.

How does one go about becoming productive? Sometimes we get lucky and find stuff, but there is no reason to depend on luck. We are genealogists and family history detectives. We know how to find records. How do we improve our chances of finding records and facts? You know the answer, WE PLAN. This topic has been covered more than once in past issues of the Ezine, and beginners as well as experienced genealogists benefit from hearing these ideas repeated. (Past issues of the Ezine are available on our website.) Since we are beginning a new year, it is time for us to be reminded of the importance of planning.

Would it be wise to bake a cake without a recipe? Would you begin a vacation by hopping in the car and start driving without a destination in mind? Why, then, would you begin a research project by just starting? I hate to admit it, but I have been guilty. Seems like the planning take more time than the research. It should.

There is no end to the books and web pages that will guide you through the planning process. I Googled "genealogy research plan template" and was rewarded with 105,000 results. Here are just three: [Family Tree Magazine](#), [FamilySearch](#), and the [Association of Professional Genealogists](#). Time to get to work.

#### **JOIN US!**

**If you are not a member,  
this is your official  
invitation to join AGS.**

[AGS Membership Application](#)

**If you are a member,  
look at the back of your  
*Arkansas Family Historian*.  
Your membership expires  
on the date printed under  
your name.**

**It may be time to renew  
your AGS membership dues!**

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## Tidbits —

Hotel reservations are open for the [FGS 2017 Conference](#), August 30 to September 2, in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Two conference hotels conveniently located near the David L. Lawrence Convention Center are offering reduced rates to conference attendees. Conference rates are available at both hotels Wednesday, August 23, to Friday, September 8 (subject to availability). Follow the link above to the FGS website for information and links to the hotels.

For those of us who have Irish ancestors, here is a website you may find useful: <http://www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/#gsc.tab=0>. The transcriptions are done by volunteers. Thanks to AGS board member, Mary Cooper Miller for this find.

## Coming Events

January 6, 2017

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's [Sandwiching in History](#) will be from 12 PM to 1 PM at Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas.

January 9, 2017

Genealogy Class at the [Butler Center for Arkansas Studies](#), 401 President Clinton Ave, Little Rock, Arkansas from 3:30 to 5:00. Contact Rhonda Stewart [rstewart@cal.lib.ar.us](mailto:rstewart@cal.lib.ar.us) for more information.

January 17, 2017

The Arkansas State Archives & Historic Arkansas Museum book lectures series feature Ken Barnes, who will present, *Anti-Catholicism in Arkansas: How Politicians, the Press, the Klan, and Religious Leaders Imagined an Enemy, 1910-1960*. It will be at the Arkansas Museum in Little Rock from 7 -8 pm.

January 23, 2017

[Heritage Seekers](#) meets at 6:30 at the Second Presbyterian Church at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock. The program will be the Austin Cemetery (near Cabot) Restoration by R.D. Keever.

January 28, 2017

Beginning Genealogy Class conducted by the Genealogy Society of Craighead County, Arkansas, at the Jonesboro Craighead Public Library from 10:00 to 3:00. There will be a two-hour session with a break for lunch followed by a second two-hour session. Please contact Nancy Matthews at 870-219-0535 or [nlmatthews@suddenlink.net](mailto:nlmatthews@suddenlink.net). The website is <http://www.gscca.net/>

## Coming Events continued

February 4, 2017

The [Genealogy Society of Craighead County, Arkansas](#) will hold a GENEALOGY NIGHT LOCK-IN from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Jonesboro Public Library.

February 27, 2017

[Heritage Seekers](#) meets at 6:30 at the Second Presbyterian Church at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock. Chris Stewart of the Butler Center will present a topic to be determined.

March 4, 2017

The Heritage Seekers will sponsor a Genealogy Research Day at the Butler Center.

March 18, 2017

The Saline County Public Library will host the annual “Genealogy For You Seminar”, Judy Russell presenting. See page 7.

March 27, 2017

Heritage Seekers normally meets at 6:30 at the Second Presbyterian Church at 600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock. The program will be *Fort Smith, Judge Parker and His Marshalls* by Brenda Veerhusen of the Heritage Seekers

April 20–22, 2017

*Great War, Great Changes* [Arkansas Historical Association](#) 76th Annual Conference (Pocahontas, Arkansas)

## Coming Events continued

May 10-13, 2017

The [National Genealogical Society's](#) 2017 Family History Conference will be held at the Raleigh Convention Center in Raleigh, NC. Conference registration began December 1, 2016. Hotels began accepting reservations for the conference on June 15, 2016.

June 8-10, 2017

7th annual [Genealogy Jamboree](#) and Pioneer Day in the Historic Town of Cumberland Gap, Tennessee.

July 23-28, 2017

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research](#) (IGHR) will be at the Georgia Center's UGA and Hotel Conference Center.

July 28 and 29, 2017

2017 International Germanic Genealogy Conference will be held in Minneapolis, MN, on July 28 and July 29, 2017, hosted by the [Germanic Genealogy Society](#). Click here for the [International Germanic Genealogy Conference flyer](#).

August 30-September 2, 2017

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

October 20-21, 2017

The Arkansas Genealogical Society 2017 Fall Conference will be at the Benton Event and Convention Center in Benton, Arkansas. D. Joshua Taylor is scheduled to present. Watch our website!

## Coming Events continued

May 2-5, 2018

The NGS 2018 Family History Conference will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The announcement was in the *NGS Monthly* from May 2016.

June 2–7, 2018

[The Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research](#) (IGHR) will be at the Georgia Center's UGA and Hotel Conference Center.

August 22-25, 2018

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

August 21-24, 2019

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Washington, D. C.

September 2-5, 2020

The [FGS](#) National Genealogy and Family History Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri.

## Genealogy for You Seminar

Genealogy for You: Judy G. Russell, The Legal Genealogist

March 13, 2017 from 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM, at Bob Herzfeld Memorial Library meeting room in Benton, Arkansas.



Registration begins January 2, 2017 at 8:00 AM. Register at the library.

Join us to welcome the Legal Genealogist, Judy G. Russell, with a full day of seminars! (There will be a lunch break, but it will be on your own.)

- From Blackstone to the Statutes at Large: How Knowing the Law Makes Us Better Genealogists
- "Don't Forget the Ladies": A Genealogist's Guide to Women and the Law
- No Vitals? No Problem!: Building a Family Through Circumstantial Evidence
- Facts, Photos, and Fair Use: Copyright Law for Genealogists

Julie Syler

(501) 778 - 4766 x1301

[julies@salinecountylibrary.org](mailto:julies@salinecountylibrary.org)

## Free Genealogy Lock-In

### **GENEALOGY LOCK-IN**

Genealogy Society of Craighead County Arkansas, 4th Winter Edition

Saturday, February 4, 2017

5:00 p.m. ~ 10:00 p.m.

Speaker: To Be Announced

Door Prizes & Snacks

Representatives from the following organizations will be available to answer your questions.  
Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives / History Commission  
Genealogy Society of Craighead County Arkansas

### **AGENDA**

5:00 p.m. Library closes to the public.

5:30 p.m. Introductions in the Round Room

10:00 pm. Event over until Saturday, July 15, 2017

Time Restraints removed from Computers

Search Genealogy Databases

GSCCA Members ready to assist

Bring photos of Craighead County People, Businesses, and Events  
to be scanned for the Digital Photo Archive

Remember, if you plan to snack (finger foods), please bring something to share.



## 2017 Pen to Podium Lecture Series

December 19, 2016, Press Release from the Arkansas State Archives

The Arkansas State Archives, in conjunction with its sister agency Historic Arkansas Museum, is launching a series of book lectures in 2017. The lecture series, Pen to Podium: Arkansas Historical Writers' Lecture Series, will be held quarterly and will feature Arkansas authors Ken Barnes, Elizabeth Hill, Brooks Blevins, and Erik Wright, Department of Arkansas Heritage Director Stacy Hurst announced today.

“This collaboration between our Department of Arkansas Heritage agencies is just one example of how we are working together to present our unique Arkansas history and culture to new audiences,” said Hurst.

The first lecture will be held from 7 - 8 p.m. on Tues., Jan. 17, at Historic Arkansas Museum in Little Rock and will feature Ken Barnes, who will present, *Anti-Catholicism in Arkansas: How Politicians, the Press, the Klan, and Religious Leaders Imagined an Enemy, 1910-1960*. Before the lecture, a reception sponsored by the Friends of the Arkansas State Archives will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the atrium of the museum.

The lecture is free but registration is required. Registration is limited and deadline for registration will be Fri., Jan. 13.

The Arkansas State Archives is an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage and is responsible for collecting and maintaining the largest publicly held collection of materials on Arkansas history in the world. The State Archives has two branch locations; the Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives is located in Powhatan, and the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives is located in Washington. Other agencies under the Department of Arkansas Heritage include the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, the Arkansas Arts Council, the Delta Cultural Center in Helena, the Old State House Museum, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, and the Historic Arkansas Museum.

For more information or to register, contact [events.archives@arkansas.gov](mailto:events.archives@arkansas.gov) or call 501-682-6900.

## Lessons Learned, and Lessons to Learn

The following is republished from Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library, No. 153, November 30, 2016. I receive these Gems by email each month. There is much more information in the newsletters that is not republished in the Ezine. You can subscribe at <http://lists.genealogycenter.info/mailman/listinfo/genealogygems>

Lessons Learned, and Lessons to Learn  
by Curt B. Witcher

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What a November of learning it has been. Regardless of one's party affiliation, there were few on election night that weren't honestly quite surprised by the nature of the results. And no matter which news outlet one chose to watch, almost as much time was spent musing about the question, "Why didn't we see this coming?" as there was about the actual election results. I believe there is a harbinger here--a harbinger of the challenges we in the historical research arena are facing and will increasingly face.

First, we must pay more attention to who is curating our data and how that curation is being done. When it comes to the records that document our heritage, whether the actual artifacts or the digital surrogates, we too often leave the care of those records and the dissemination of the information from those records in the hands of disinterested others. In many respects, we take the information provided as complete and accurate without any checking or analysis. And we assume it will be available forever, and maybe even persistently enhanced and updated.

A marquee example of twenty-first century flux in this arena is the Library of Congress' "American Memory" project <<https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>>. Once heralded as one of the best examples of a public-private partnership, "American Memory" is nowhere to be found directly on the new incarnation of the Library of Congress (LC) website. One can still access the aforementioned web page by conducting a site search across LC or by Googling it. At the aging "American Memory" webpage, among the shrinking number of subject headings and collections linked to those headings, one will find interesting notices such as, "Notice: Some Collections Have Moved" and "We've migrated some of our collections to new presentations. See the list or browse the full array of digital collections at [loc.gov/collections](https://loc.gov/collections)."

## Lessons Learned, and Lessons to Learn *continued*

When one clicks on the list of digital collections, that web space presents another version of the aforementioned notice in the following heading. “These Collections have been migrated to new presentations.” The explanatory information following that heading reads: “As a part of ongoing modernization, we’ve migrated some of our collections to new presentations. Collections that have been migrated no longer appear in internal American Memory search results and browse lists. To search all Library collections (including American Memory) please visit [loc.gov/search](http://loc.gov/search), or browse the full array of digitized collections at [loc.gov/collections](http://loc.gov/collections). You can also use the links below to go to the new presentations for single collections.”

“Migrated some of our collections to new presentations” is actually code for “we’ve removed these collections from the LC site and given responsibility for them back to partner organizations.” For example, clicking on the Edward S. Curtis’s North American Indian collection takes one to the Northwestern University web site. This is not necessarily a good thing or a bad thing--it's just a thing. What it does mean, though, is that researchers no longer have a consistent user interface, and the same type of federated search across all American Memory collections is no longer available. All that happens to our information without much notice on our part and not much willingness to truly be transparent on LC’s part. “Migrated to new presentations . . .”--really?

Second, we need to be consistently sober and responsible in our understanding of what we are actually looking at when we’re using any sources, including online sources. From the mid-1990s (yes, I am that old!) I have been telling researchers in The Genealogy Center and those who I meet at conferences and seminars around the country that there is absolutely nothing magic about the Internet, about online data. It is simply a different container for information, a container that is much more easily created, shared, and modified. So many more individuals and organizations can make never-widely-seen-before mountains of data and images available for use. And while the benefits of this not-so-new container or medium are quite numerous and wonderful, and those benefits have brought tens of millions of individuals to the exciting field of family history research, we need to be aware of the challenges.

One challenge is being lead to believe that everything is available online, or certainly everything of consequence is available online. Simply, clearly, completely not true. Our children’s children will not live long

## Lessons Learned, and Lessons to Learn *continued*

enough to see \*everything\* available online. When one listens to large information aggregators in the genealogy space talk about record sets, you will often hear the term “name rich” when evaluating whether to image a particular record set. That has nothing to do with ensuring everything in a particular archive is digitally captured and everything to do with whether there are enough names per image to provide the proper return on their investment. Again, not a good or bad thing, but a piece of the reality we should understand.

Using our recent elections as an example, most of us naively believed that the pollsters knew what they were doing and further, were doing an objective, thorough job. Did that ever turn out not to be the case. I have to wonder what kind of objective and thorough job we are doing in locating all available documents and data for our genealogical research endeavors. One of the newest kinds of “brick wall” situations we handle in The Genealogy Center are forms of “No one has posted a tree on Ancestry for my family, for this collateral line, for my immigrant ancestor--I am at a dead end.” And then we discover the individual has done precious little else than look on Ancestry. That’s not a brick wall at all, but rather a near complete lack of understanding about historical records and their creation as well as just what is available on Ancestry.

Some declare after looking in the FamilySearch catalog as well as in their online record and image sets that they have looked at everything and are at a brick wall. “FamilySearch has been to that county and they have filmed everything” is the lament. Rarely does FamilySearch, or any other information aggregator, capture all records when working in a particular archive. Some fuss and wring their hands about there being few to no territorial records available for our research, particularly when that research is further west of the original colonies. Yet skilled researchers who take the time to go to an archive and truly look for records, like what former records manager for the Supreme Court of Indiana, John Newman, is doing find many hundreds (yes hundreds!) of territorial era records for Indiana that are not yet discoverable and not yet available online.

Among the biggest challenges for us as genealogists is to maintain the evaluative rigor when we are using data, no matter where we find it. The age-old questions still apply. Where did this information come from? Am I seeing the whole document, or just a part, or just a transcription or translation? Is this the only document that evidences a particular event of interest? Are there other documents that provide con-

## Lessons Learned, and Lessons to Learn *continued*

text and insight for the original document found and the time period in which the data was gathered and the document created?

Let's learn some lessons from the less-than-rigorous processes we have evidenced of late. Let's seek out opportunities to increase our knowledge. Further on in this newsletter, my colleague Sara Allen provides a review of the New York Genealogical and Biographic Society's latest publication, "New York City Municipal Archives: An Authorized Guide for Family Historians." It's another fine publication from this great society, following on the heels of another great work they produced, "New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer." If one is doing research in New York, time must be taken to devour these sources to identify records, repositories, and strategies. Another fine example is Helen Leary's research guide to North Carolina. Her work is so good that studying its contents will help one be successful researching in nearly every state.

There are some amazing online learning opportunities. The FamilySearch wiki is nothing short of terrific. If you haven't used it, you're not really serious about learning, or about finding all the data possible. There are a number blogs that easily qualify to be part of one's learning opportunities. Some of the very best are listed below.

- \*\*Amy Johnson Crow -- [AmyJohnsonCrow.com](http://AmyJohnsonCrow.com)
- \*\*FamilySearch Blog -- [familysearch.org/blog/en/](http://familysearch.org/blog/en/)
- \*\*Judy Russell's Blog -- [legalgenealogist.com](http://legalgenealogist.com)
- \*\*Kathleen Brandt's a3Genealogy -- [blog.a3genealogy.com](http://blog.a3genealogy.com)
- \*\*Roberta Estes' DNAeXplained -- [dna-explained.com](http://dna-explained.com)

The more we understand about the process of research, the more aware we become of how fragile and impermanent records can be. With that understanding, we can all become better curators of the history in our hands.

## Reclaim The Records

The following was taken from [www.reclaimtherecords.org](http://www.reclaimtherecords.org). This organization appears to be valuable to the genealogy community. You can sign up for their newsletter, as well as read about the organization and listen to the founder's lecture at the 2016 IAJGS conference in Seattle, at the above link.

We're Reclaim the Records, a not-for-profit group of genealogists, historians, researchers, and open government advocates who are filing Freedom of Information requests to get public data released back into the public domain. We're collecting information about archivally important data sets that are not available online or on microfilm, and we're using Freedom of Information laws and Open Data initiatives to get copies of this information released back to the public.

We've started our work in archives, libraries, and government agencies in New York, New Jersey, and Missouri, and are expanding into different parts of the country, based on demand from people like you. Along the way, we'll be documenting everything we've learned about filing Freedom of Information Act requests, and creating a Do-It-Yourself guide for genealogists, open data fans, and others who want their state, local, and Federal records made more available.

Our goal is to get these record sets put online, for free, for everyone. Want to learn more? [Read our Frequently asked Questions](#).

The more recent announcement in their thirteenth newsletter is about a new lawsuit filed November 23, 2015, for the Missouri birth index and death index. If they win the lawsuit, this index will be free forever.

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## **Administrative Stuff**

**Contributions:** If you have news for the Ezine, send it! To [IdeasForAGS@gmail.com](mailto:IdeasForAGS@gmail.com) – Thanks!

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

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