

PCAHS
Pike County Archives &
History Society Newsletter

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Murfreesboro, Arkansas 71958

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Contributing Editor: Dee Baggett

Our Newsletter has no permanent address at this time but correspondence regarding queries, membership dues and any other information may be addressed to:

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NOTES from the EDITORS

This is our first newsletter. It has been in the talking stage for the past year. We are still not sure of the format and several other small details. We need a permanent logo and a name for our newsletter. Any suggestions will be welcomed. We would appreciate any constructive suggestions for the success of our newsletter.

The Pike County Archives and History Society meets the first Thursday night of each month from 6:30 until 9:30 in the Murfreesboro Municipal Building. The Municipal Building is located directly opposite the Murfreesboro Post Office. The 6:30 to 7:30 time period is set aside so that members and guests may exchange information on families, history, or ideas about methods of researching and to give everyone an opportunity to socialize once a month. Business meeting is held from 7:30 until 9:30. You will find on the last page of the newsletter a list of the Officers and information regarding membership dues.

BY LAWS

Upon request PCAHS By Laws may be viewed at the office of the PCAHS located on the third floor of the court house.

ATTENTION

Just back from the printers
and for sale from PCAHS

"THE EARLY HISTORY OF PIKE COUNTY ARKANSAS"
"The First One Hundred Years"

This book contains over 250 pages and has many photographs and interesting facts about early life in Pike County. Now fully indexed. Price is \$12.00 and all proceeds go to PCAHS. The \$12.00 price includes postage. Don't miss this great bargain! Contact any member of PCAHS or either of the Editors and order your copy.

BITS OF HISTORY

Pike County was originally a part of Hempstead and Clark Counties, both formed in 1818 by the legislature of Missouri. On November 1, 1833 the Territorial Legislature (Arkansas) passed on the organization of Pike County. Elijah Kelley and Henry Brewer were appointed as commissioners to find a seat of justice for the newly formed county. Asa Thompson was the only man living in the area at this time and a post office had been set up in the Thompson home and give the name of Zebulon. A log courthouse was quickly built with a small frame house for the clerk's office. Zebulon at that time was only a settlement which had been hacked out of the wilderness by a few hardy pioneers. In 1836 the year that Arkansas became a State the name Zebulon was changed to Murfreesborough (later Murfreesboro) and has remained the county seat until this day.

HISTORIC PLACES, COMMUNITIES & BUILDINGS

Pike County Courthouses 1836-1933

The first county courthouse was a log structure built in 1836. The first and original courthouse supposedly stood near the spot where the present courthouse now stands. In the spring of 1855 the original building burned and all the county records to that date were lost. In 1856 the county court ordered the erection of a new courthouse. The contract to build this new courthouse was given to Moses and Jackson Brock. It was a two-story frame building surmounted by a cupola. In 1895 the courthouse again burned destroying all records up to that date. In 1897 a brick building was built in the same location and stood until the county decided to build a new one which was completed in March of 1933. This is the courthouse that now stands in Murfreesboro the county seat of Pike County, Arkansas.

ACTIVITIES

Activities of the PCAHS include restoring and preserving the priceless history of Pike County, Arkansas. One such activity took place on the cold, wet and dreary Sunday morning of April 10, 1988. A number of the descendants of the Sparks family and some members of the PCAHS met at Keith Self's Chevron Station to start the journey to the Sparks Cemetery which is located on the banks of the Little Missouri River in Caney Fork township. This cemetery is on the property which was originally owned by Henry S. Sparks (1804-1864) an early settler of the Pike County area.

The journey to this sadly neglected and almost forgotten cemetery was nearly as difficult as the restoration and fencing that took place that day. After driving down a creek bed through some large ruts and gullies and over many small trees, it was finally decided that we would have to walk to reach our destination. Upon our arrival we cut down trees, dug fence posts holes, drove steel posts, and cleared underbrush. When lunch time arrived we shared a pot luck "feast" on the tail gate of a pick-up truck. After our lunch we stretched four foot long-fencing completely around the cemetery. We also installed a metal sign. All the material and labor was donated by PCAHS and some Sparks descendants.

Sixteen unmarked graves were found. One of the marked graves was a child Sarah Adaline Brown born March 1850 died October 23, 1852. Sarah Adaline Sparks was the daughter of Robert S. and Jane (Sparks) Brown was the daughter of Robert S. and Jane (Sparks) Brown and the granddaughter of Henry J. Sparks.

We ended our day wet, dirty and hungary but celebrated our days work and sense of accomplishment at "The Station" Restaurant, a historical building in Murfreesboro, drinking tea, coffee and colas. Everyone's help and encouragement was deeply appreciated.

WANTED

Interesting artifacts, memorabilia, etc. to display in our display case in the foyer of the Pike County Courthouse. This case is locked and reasonably protected. It now displays some of the relics pertaining to the history of Pike County, which includes letters, pictures, books, magazines and some loose papers. It needs new artifacts every three months. Please consider sharing your "finds" so that everyone can enjoy them. Look in "Mama's Old Trunk" or in the attic, you will be surprised at the wonderful things you will find. Everyone has at least a few old photographs, old tax receipts, class pictures. Perhaps you have a picture of the way "downtown" looked 50 years ago or a "book" that "Papa" kept the farm expenses recorded in when you were a child. Anything which depicts the way our families lived in the past is of interest.

ARCHIVES

A few of the things which can be found in our Archives:

The Pike County Arkansas Federal Census
Family Histories File
Old Newspapers
Photographs of People and Place of Pike County
Some early courthouse records dating from after the last fire 1895 to 1970
One tax book before the fire of 1895

SURNAME FILE

The Surname File is a 5x6 card file which lists each person's family surname with dates that are being researched. Please submit your Pike County family names so that other researchers will know you are working on a particular Surname. This Editor has received some of her best information using the Surname File to contact others working on the same Surname. Please submit your Pike County family names for the Surname File. Membership is not required to take advantage of this service. We will be happy to type the information on the file cards for you if you will submit your data.

QUERIES

All Queries FREE to Members

OLIVER GLOVER HENSON	Mrs. Altha Alder, P.O. Box 235, Soper, OK 74759 is researching the OLIVER, GLOVER, and HENSON surnames would appreciate any help.
HASLEY CROW WINGFIELD	Mrs. Linnie Brooks Mills, #7 Lakeshore Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78413 interested in any information on the HASLEY, CROW, or WINGFIELD families of Pike County, Arkansas.
ALFORD RAY	Mrs. Linda Meek, 3514 Baywood Drive, Shreveport, LA 71118 needs help and advise on researching the ALFORD and RAY families of Pike County, Arkansas.

FREE

Limited Time Offer

Dorothy Kennedy Partain, Co-Editor of the PCAHS and a genealogy researcher will do two hours of Free research for ALL members of the Pike County Archives and History Society at her convenience. ONE TIME ONLY to those who request it PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS ONLY. Free research by Mrs. Partain requires a self-addressed stamped #10 envelope plus copying and postage costs and of course sufficient information regarding family names, dates, etc. More research requires a donation to PCAHS. You may write to Dorothy if you need further information on this offer at the following address:

Dorothy Kennedy Partain
P.O. Box 238
Murfreesboro, AR 71958

TIPS ON RECEIVING ANSWERS TO YOUR QUERIES

ALWAYS include a self-addressed stamped #10 envelope in EVERY letter if you are requesting information.

TRY to keep your letter to one page. This is one of the most difficult things to do when requesting genealogical information.

Be SPECIFIC if possible regarding dates, places, etc. If you are vague about your request it is very likely that you will NOT receive an answer.

If you do receive an answer to your queries please remember to write the sender a THANK YOU. You never know when you may wish to have this person assist you again. If you were KIND they will not hesitate to help you the next time.

MORE FREE HELP FOR NEW MEMBERS

Dee (Hensley) Baggett has access to privately held papers dating back to the 1850's which pertain to Pike County, Arkansas. The majority of these records are for land transactions which took place in Pike County, Arkansas before the Civil War and after. This material has not been catalogued so it is difficult to know exactly what is contained in every record. The earliest record that has been found among these papers is the original land (patent) record issued to Seaborn Reed (Certificate No. 7024) recorded Vol. 14, page 368) from the General Land Office of the United States of America on 01 March 1855 and signed by President Franklin Pierce. A few of the other surnames which are used among these many records are: SPARKS, WISNER, MURDOCK, OSBORN, FRANKLIN, SLIGH, GLANTON, to name only a few. If any new member would like more information regarding these records, you may write to Mrs. Baggett as follows:

Dee Baggett
Rt. 3 Box 336-C
Amity, AR 71921

Please include a #10 self-addressed stamped envelope when requesting any information.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

"The Early History of Pike County, Arkansas"	\$ 12.00
1870 Pike County Arkansas Printed U.S. Census by Dorothy Kennedy Partain	15.00
The Diary (Family History) Carlton Denny of Delight	3.00
The Story of the Diamond Mine published 1989 by Bobbie Hendrix	6.00
The Old Time Chronicle by Karron Cox 1989 back issues when ordering the above back issues please specify the copy (month) you wish to receive	each copy only 2.00

All Proceeds Go to PCAHS

We would like to mention that the material which appears in the newsletter under the headings BITS OF HISTORY and HISTORIC PLACES, COMMUNITIES & BUILDINGS was obtained from pages 15 through 18 of the book which is available for sale from PCAHS: "THE EARLY HISTORY OF PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS". We hope that you will consider adding this book to your library.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

We hope that you have enjoyed this first issue of our newsletter and will considering becoming a new member if you are not already with us. We realize that there will be numerous mistakes made but we have tried to proof read and verify everything possible. Try to keep in mind that we have no paid staff - only dedicated volunteers - who have homes, families, jobs, just like you. Volunteers who give up their own time to try and preserve and restore the history of our county. This newsletter will not survive without your support and encouragement so please share your genealogical and historical material for publication and consider becoming a member of our Society.

If you have a family reunion planned for this spring or summer please contact one of our editors by mail or phone and give them the time, date, etc. so that we may publish this information for others who might be interested in attending and seeing old friends and making new ones.

If you have news or bits of interest for the newsletter please share it with us, we are always happy to hear from our members and readers. If you have suggestions which will make our newsletter better, make our membership grow, or are able to do volunteer research in our Archives we will appreciate your thoughts and help.

We hope that we will soon have representatives and members from all parts of our county and that this newsletter is only the first of many.

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