



“Abroad” Variety of Authors: International Authors Write for the *Encyclopedia*

What do Dr. John Kirk of England, Dr. Graeme Cope of Australia, and Dr. Jim Miller of Austria have in common? They are all international authors for the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Dr. Kirk wrote the entry on civil rights activist William Harold Flowers, Dr. Cope wrote two entries on the desegregation of Little Rock’s Central High School, and Dr. Miller wrote the entry on German adventurer Friedrich Gerstaecker. These authors were recommended to our editors based on their previous publications.



Dr. John Kirk

John Kirk hails from Egham, England, where he teaches twentieth-century U.S. history at Royal Holloway, University of London. He first became interested in William Harold Flowers while working on his PhD about black activism in Little Rock. Kirk says of his entry, “The most exciting thing about working on William Harold Flowers was uncovering the story of a ‘forgotten’ hero of the civil rights movement in Arkansas.” Flowers, a lawyer and judge from Pine Bluff, was a key leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was instrumental in the desegregation of the University of Arkansas Law School. Kirk spent sixteen months in Arkansas doing research and literally wrote the book on black activism in Little Rock: *Redefining the Color Line: Black Activism in Little Rock, Arkansas, 1940-1970*. He continues to write on Arkansas civil rights history and has published numerous articles, essays, and papers over the last twelve years. As of late, he has become increasingly interested in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and has written a book about him as well.

Graeme Cope writes from Melbourne, Australia. He served on the faculty at Deakin University where he was in charge of American history until early 2004 when he retired. He began his career in American studies “more or less by chance.” His two entries for the *Encyclopedia* deal with the Capital Citizens Council and the Mother’s League of Central High, both of which were active segregationist organizations working to prevent



Dr. Graeme Cope

integration at Central. Cope became interested in these topics because of a “general enthusiasm for things American” and because they allowed him to “explore the fascinating minutiae of history.” He did research in Arkansas for up to three months at a time. His interest in the desegregation of Central High continues, and he has published several articles on the subject in the *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*.

Jim Miller is a U.S. native now living in Graz, Austria. He is with the FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences in Graz, where he teaches in the Health Management in Tourism program. Miller also teaches courses in English, research methods, intercultural communication, cultural tourism, and rural tourism. He has always been interested in the history of the places he has lived, which is how he became interested in Friedrich Gerstaecker. Miller came to Arkansas in 1985 to take a position in the history department at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and a colleague “pointed out how important a chronicler of antebellum Arkansas [Gerstaecker] was.” Gerstaecker was a German native who wandered around the U.S. and kept extensive notes on his travels. His journals about backwoods life in Arkansas are invaluable resources because of his outsider’s perspective and the lack of other written records. Of particular interest to Miller is the information that Gerstaecker “provides about the lives of common people.” Miller translated and published a collection of Gerstaecker’s short stories and sketches, titled *In the Arkansas Backwoods: Tales and Sketches*, and has presented several papers on his importance to the history of Arkansas.



Dr. Jim Miller

These gifted authors’ entries not only add to the variety in the *Encyclopedia* but also show how widely supported the project is. Their unique backgrounds contribute to the extraordinary diversity of the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*. Project Coordinator Jill Curran says of Drs. Kirk, Cope, and Miller, “We are so pleased they agreed to write for the *Encyclopedia*. Because of their support, this is truly an international effort to record Arkansas’s heritage and make it available to the widest possible audience.” The *Encyclopedia* looks forward to including more authors from abroad, as well as gaining an international readership.

Multimedia Notes

Tim Nutt

I fear that the pile of media leads on my desk will soon topple over and bury me, and my coworkers will have to dispatch a St. Bernard to save me. But I do not want you to think I am disorganized; that pile of papers represents exciting leads and offers of media for use in the *Encyclopedia*.

One of the leads is with the B. F. Skinner Foundation in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Entries on two Arkansans, Marian Breland Bailey and Kellar Breland, detail their work with the famed behavioral scientist at the University of Minnesota. The Brelands later established the great Hot Springs institution, the I.Q. Zoo. The author of the two entries submitted some wonderful accompanying photographs, but I would love to find an image of these two Arkansans with Dr. Skinner.

As I was writing this column, Brian Westfall of the Corps of Engineers sent photographs he shot of the Caddo River to accompany his entry. So, not only did Brian help me clean my desk (since I can now put away my file on the Caddo River), but he also gave the *Encyclopedia* access to some unique new media. You too can help by sending me photographs you believe would enhance the *Encyclopedia*. Our website lists all the entries in progress and ones for which we are currently seeking authors. Because we need media to accompany every entry, this list will give you a better idea of the images I am seeking. I might already have an image in hand, but it never hurts to suggest something. Who knows, you might have the image I just sent that St. Bernard to find!

If you have any photos, video, or audio you feel would be appropriate, please contact me at (501) 918-3055 or tim@encyclopediaofarkansas.net. If your materials are used, you will receive a digital copy. All materials will be credited to you, and we will return them unharmed.

The *Arkansas Entry* is the quarterly newsletter of the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture Project.

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Coordinator's Column

Jill Curran



A subtitle for the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture* could be “Bringing Arkansas History to the World.”

Our cover story brings to mind the interesting interplay between the local and the global in the *Encyclopedia* itself, and in the huge effort to create it.

Certainly Arkansans have made their marks in the world. Many of our entries cover topics of international significance—James William Fulbright, Bill Clinton, and Wal-Mart, to name just a few. And as you’ve read, we have authors from across the globe writing about topics that had a real impact on local life here in Arkansas. I doubt their subjects would have predicted that a professor in England, Australia, or Austria would someday write their story, and that it would be instantly readable all around the world!

From Paris, Arkansas to Paris, France, the Internet brings the world to your desktop. Any website, large or small, can be accessed from anywhere

around the globe. The *Encyclopedia* will bring the stories of Arkansas and its heritage to the world, as well as to people right here in the Main Library in Little Rock, where the *Encyclopedia* is housed.

When we talk about the *Encyclopedia*, we tend to emphasize its value to Arkansans—especially Arkansas’s students. But we know that many of the *Encyclopedia*’s readers will never live in Arkansas and will likely never visit here. Some will never have even heard of Arkansas. (Don’t believe me? Name three of the *régions* of France. Or three of Australia’s states—and they speak English!)

The majority of the *Encyclopedia*’s readers will find us through Internet searches for The Browns, the Louisiana Purchase, and numerous other topics not directly related to Arkansas. So in a very real sense we are bringing local Arkansas history to the world, and the effort to do so is global. It makes the world feel much smaller. And reading through the list of hundreds—eventually thousands—of topics the *Encyclopedia* will cover can sure make Arkansas feel really big.

A Great Project and a Little Offer

By David Stricklin, Head of the Butler Center

I’ve had the honor of heading the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies since January, and it’s been an exciting several months. One of the really great things happening at the



David Stricklin

Butler Center is the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture* Project. The *Encyclopedia* is an energy and goodwill conduit connecting us to people who love Arkansas and its history, no matter where those people live. In fact, one of the most exciting things about the *Encyclopedia* is the fact that people anywhere will be able to connect with it on the Web. It’s quite amazing when you stop to think about it; at least it is for some-

body (that would be me!) who remembers the pre-Internet days. To think about making this vast storehouse of fabulous information available—for free—to interested people all over the world. Well, if you don’t think that’s exciting, we need to talk!

One of my jobs is getting the funding for the project, and I’ve got a little proposition for members of organizations, drawing on my twenty-five years of experience doing oral history interviews. For the rest of 2005, I will do a one-hour tape-recorded interview with one member of any organization giving at least \$1,000 to the encyclopedia. This could be at a fellowship dinner at a church or some such event or in the home of the interviewee, however the organization wants it. The interviewee might be a senior member of the organization the other members think highly of, the kind of person of whom

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Senior Editor's Column

Nathania Sawyer



I knew it would come. I knew it would be embarrassing. And sure enough, it showed up in my email inbox: "Dear Ms. Sawyer: This message is to remind

you that your entry for the *Encyclopedia* on Harry Scott Ashmore is due on..." Receiving a reminder of a commitment you have postponed is bad enough. Imagine receiving a reminder from yourself!

So, I shifted from my role as editor to my role as author. How hard could it be to zip off 750 words on Ashmore? After all, I did my master's research on him, presented a paper about him at a national journalism conference, and wrote his entry for the South Carolina encyclopedia. No problem.

Of course, I ran into the same problem many of our authors are struggling with: too much information, not enough space. I referred to my Author Guidelines to keep me on track:

♦ *Keep in mind that you are writing for an encyclopedia. The writing style should be straightforward, not rhetorical or expository.* There went all my artfully crafted sentences and twenty-dollar words. I focused on just-the-facts blended with a little anecdotal information to provide insight into his colorful personality.

♦ *Keep the focus on Arkansas.* My subject led a very diverse life, and I was tempted to try to cram in everything he ever did. Focusing on his years in Arkansas and his impact on the state helped me free up words to provide more detail on that period.

♦ *Avoid extensive lists of offices held, organization memberships, awards, honors, etc.* Another major space saver!

I found one very important tip for authors that we neglected to emphasize in the Author Guidelines. I'm adding it here and will update the guidelines.

♦ *Keep the focus on your subject.* Ashmore was a key player in the desegregation of Central High School in the 1950s. He also had a relationship with Orval Faubus that went from ally to adversary. I was tempted to include a lot of background information on the desegregation, Faubus, and other key people, but I kept in mind that they were being covered in separate entries. The linking feature of the *Encyclopedia* is a tremendous tool; it gives the reader the opportunity to find out more detail if needed without cluttering up the individual entries with background information. I was able to focus on the Ashmore-specific aspects, which should provide more insight for researchers trying to understand the big picture of the Central High crisis.

Like Cinderella (and many of our authors), I was pushing the midnight

hour when I hit the send button. As editor-turned-author, I commiserate with all our writers who think their subjects need more space, and that they need more time to do them justice. As an editor, I know that word limits and deadlines are essential to keeping the project on track. I hope you, as the final users, will give me feedback on my entry when the *Encyclopedia* launches!

Recent Contributors

Cesar Rivera
Little Rock
Lois L. Morris
Russellville

Fall Internships with the Encyclopedia

Open to undergraduate and graduate students. Deadline for applications is July 1. For more information and to print an application form, go to www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/student_participation.php.

Fact Checker Training

Our next session to train volunteer fact checkers will be held during the Arkansas Historical Association's annual conference—Friday, April 15 at DeGray State Park Lodge near Arkadelphia. For more information or to sign up, contact Tim Nutt at tim@encyclopediaofarkansas.net or (501) 918-3055.

The Encyclopedia of Arkansas Response Form

Yes, I would like to make the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture* the definitive reference on all things Arkansas. I would like to help in the following ways:

Name _____

Tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____.

Address _____

Tax-deductible pledge of \$ _____ payable in installments. Please contact me so we can set up a payment plan.

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I would like to volunteer my time and/or expertise. Please contact me.

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

Add my name to the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas* mailing list.

Return to:

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or Email: info@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

"I Didn't Know That About Arkansas"

Guest contributor: Jo Ann Bryan

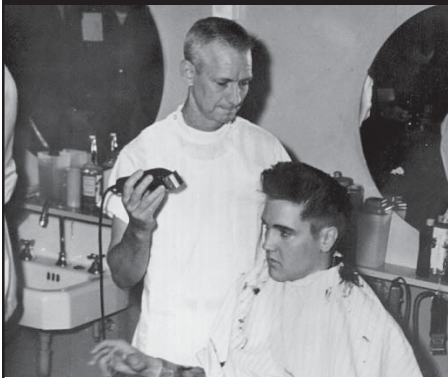


Photo courtesy of Joan Roper

Jo Ann Bryan, author of the coal mining and Sebastian County entries for the *Encyclopedia*, tells us what her friend, Jan Honeycutt, didn't know about Arkansas. Jan, a special education teacher at Beard Elementary in Fort Smith, discovered that Elvis Presley got his legendary GI crew cut at Fort Chaffee just east of Fort Smith on March 25, 1958. After being inducted into the army in Memphis, Elvis was sent to Fort Chaffee for "processing." Elvis's signature ducktail and rebellious sideburns were cut to military regulation in Building 803. According to the *Arkansas Gazette*, Elvis

had to pay sixty-five cents out of his own pocket for the haircut. At first he forgot to pay the barber, who had to call him back to collect. After the drastic cut, Presley said, "This is the shortest it's been in eight years." While at Fort Chaffee, Elvis also received his olive drab GI uniform and shots for tetanus, flu, and typhoid.

After Fort Chaffee, Soldier #53310761 spent six months in Fort Hood, Texas, for basic training. Fort Chaffee has seen the Hollywood limelight since Elvis's visit as well. Because the buildings date from the World War II era, the area has been the filming location for the World War II films *A Soldier's Story* (1984) and *Biloxi Blues* (1988).

Building 803, site of the famous haircut, was nearly demolished in 1997, but was saved through an effort by the local community. The Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority currently owns it, and funds are being collected for its renovation. One of the future possibilities for Building 803 involves turning it into a barbershop where tourists can get their hair cut at the same place Elvis did.

If you would like to be a guest contributor to "I Didn't Know That about Arkansas," please send your suggestion to Jill Curran at jcurran@encyclopediaofarkansas.net or call (501) 918-3022.

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everybody always says, "We really ought to get (fill in the name) on tape." I dare say everybody can think of somebody they'd like to honor this way, someone whose great stories they'd like to have preserved. And if you can find forty people to put up \$25, you've got the thousand. If you want to get in touch with me about the details, I'll be happy to talk with you about this offer. For instance, we'd have to ask the organization to provide for any travel expenses involved. And I'm mostly assuming we're talking about Arkansas, though if anybody wants me to go to Tuscany, I'll see what I can do!

In any event, I appreciate the many ways people have already supported the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture Project. We're definitely going to need more money to put it online and sustain its full development, but we're grateful for the many expressions of support and offers of help we've already received. It's a great project worthy of a great state!

You can contact David Stricklin at dstricklin@cals.lib.ar.us or (501) 918-3056.



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