



AGS Ezine

*Newsletter of the Arkansas Genealogical Society
Vol. 21, No. 7, October 2026
Chloe' Russell, Editor*

Note from the Editor:

Greetings, fellow genealogists and family historians! As the leaves begin to change and fall settles in, we hope you're finding new discoveries in your family history journey! This issue features our Kitchen Roundtable Talk, a calendar of upcoming events, DNA research, and our upcoming Fall Conference. Happy researching!

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Arkansas Genealogical Society

October 2026

Kitchen Roundtable Talk



Meridith Li - DIY Memory Lab, Digitizing Ancestral Photos, Films, and Documents

Join Meredith Li and learn how to utilize and locate local resources to digitize your ancestral photos, films, and documents. Many libraries and archives have this equipment available free of charge to assist you in your preservation journey.

To register for this event, please use this link:

[Join us online via Zoom.](#)

Our Zoom discussion will be presented on **Tuesday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m.**, free of charge.

Meredith Li is the DIY Memory Lab Coordinator for the Central Arkansas Library System. Originally from Little Rock, Arkansas, Meredith received their degree in sociology from Biola University. They've been working with the Central Arkansas Library System for four years, where they assist the public with digitizing their home movies and family photos, as well as provide Personal Archiving programs. They are the co-creator and co-leader of the Religious Community History Seminar 2025 and the Community History Seminar 2026, a series of educational programs that teach ten respective communities how to preserve, digitize, and record their histories.

Our monthly **Kitchen Roundtable Talks** cover diverse genealogical topics and methodologies, sparking lively online discussions among our engaged participants. This platform is a unique opportunity to establish meaningful connections with fellow genealogy enthusiasts, cultivate new friendships within the community, and link up with kindred spirits who share our passion for research.

We enthusiastically welcome suggestions from all participants for topics of interest and encourage volunteers to step forward as discussion leaders for subjects close to their hearts. As this initiative evolves, we anticipate refining it based on our collective experiences. Your active participation and invaluable feedback remain pivotal in shaping the future of our endeavors. For more information on our discussion topics, go to argensoc.org/kitchen.

October Events

[October 12 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm CDT](#)

The Midwest and the Great Migration - Heritage Seekers - Virtual

[Genealogy Classes - Beginning Genealogy](#)

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 Fort Smith Public Library

5:30pm-7:30pm

Genealogy Writing Workshop - Monthly Writing & Critique Group

Wednesday, October 14: 12:30pm - 2:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Ann Henry Board Room (3rd Floor)

[Was My William Smith in the Civil War?](#) - Allen County Public Library

Thursday, October 15

6:30pm - 7:30pm

The Genealogy of Institutions - Asylums, Orphanages & More

Friday, October 16: 11:00am - 12:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Ann Henry Board Room (3rd Floor)

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members

Monday, October 19: 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Genealogy Library (4th Floor)

[Archiving a Life Story: How to Preserve Family Records](#) (Hybrid) - Mid-Continent Public Library

Tue, Oct 20 2026

2:00pm - 3:00pm Central

Genealogy for Beginners

Friday, October 23: 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Adult Classroom 408 (4th Floor)

October Events

[The Freedmen's Bureau: African American Genealogy Workshop](#) - Mobile Public Library

Saturday, October 24, 2026

10:00am-12:00pm

[AAHGS 2026 1-Day Virtual Symposium](#): Research, Recover, Reclaim - Documenting Our Legacy with Evidence and Intention

Saturday, October 24, 2026

9:00 AM - 7:00 PM ET

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members

Monday, October 26: 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Genealogy Library (4th Floor)

[Between Two Sons—Daniel Boone during the American Revolution](#)

October 26 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm CDT - Heritage Seekers - Virtual

[Clues from the Cemetery](#) - Plano Public Library

Tuesday, October 27

7:00pm - 8:00pm

Break Down Genealogy Brick Walls

Wednesday, October 28: 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Fayetteville Public Library - Genealogy Library (4th Floor)

Y We Care about Your DNA!



Do you see yourself in the future of the AGS Early Arkansas Roots Project? We sure do and think you should too.

If you have not visited (y)our site (you know AGS works for you!), you should. Better yet, you should join the project if you have not already. We are growing an Arkansas family tree, and need ancestor branches. The project is especially seeking Y-DNA testers who had an ancestor born in Arkansas before 1920. All surnames are welcome.

Why Y, you ask.

Y-DNA traces the male patrilineal line—from son to father to father to father—back in time for hundreds (actually thousands) of years. These hundreds of years from the present day back to colonial times are important to crowd-sourcing living history. You are the living history of your ancestors. But—hey, hey!—you're also the embodiment of others' ancestors too. And that is a good thing.

As families grew and dispersed across this nation to settle in or pass through Arkansas, they left behind fathers and grandfathers and sons. Bringing family together is a goal of family history research, and with DNA we can attain goals for ourselves and help others reach theirs.

Consider the following sketch.

A potentially identified third great-grandfather (that's great, great, great) was born about 1792 in Charlotte County, Virginia. His age suggested he could have been in the War of 1812 but a search had been uncertain. Following the war, he married, and as so many were doing, they migrated. He was enumerated in 1820, 1830, 1840, and 1850 in Tennessee, in a southernmost county on the Alabama border. Records variously record his name as Johnson 5 and Johnston. Close enough, right?

Y We Care about Your DNA!

By 1860 he was gone. But where? He could have died. At nearly 70 years of age, he might have been considered deceased if not for a so-and-so fellow in so-so proximity. If he didn't die, he could have moved. He could have been widowed. And he could have remarried. And he could have had a second family with a younger wife who could have brought children to the marriage. Following custom, the youngsters could have taken the stepfather's surname. The census taker recorded everyone as Johnson. Consistent names soothe in a sly way of leading us on, but common ones can be a blippety pain to differentiate among same name holders.

So is the pain of childbirth. Leaps of faith as to who was his, hers, and theirs were flimsy guesses. Even the marriage was uncertain because the courthouse had burned during the Civil War. A reasonable question vexed us whether the new guy could be same old guy. Speculations cast as conclusions made their way onto message boards and mail lists which were copied and recopied into family trees.

Does any of this sound familiar?

As things turned out, the Virginian was not a widower at all. He and his only wife, married in 1816 and both still living, had migrated to Arkansas along with a married daughter's family.

What was nearly lost was not just our minds in dismantling a perceived ancestor who wasn't. What had also been almost lost was the real ancestor's identity, meaning his name at birth, his enlistment name, and his name at marriage—Johnston—and, importantly, his relationship to us.

Did you notice the -t?

Hardly anyone ever did. Or if they did, they didn't care. Apparently not even the bearer himself gave that little letter much of a nod since his children, one and all, opted for plain old Johnson. Family histories had passed down with nary a -t to be heard or seen. At least they were consistent.

If not for the sticklers in Washington City who for accuracy-sake thought a -t to cross needed to go along with the uncommon first name that had an -i to dot, we might still not realize a salient fact: Our ancestor led a double life. A Johnston signature one day might be a Johnson signature the next. A pension file begun in 1855 at age 63 tracked through two states, two decades, and two surnames. If a rose by any other name smells just as sweet, a wishy-washy surname can downright stink when nobody knows exactly who's who and who's not.

If we were the last family members to learn a not-so-trivial detail about the ancestor's real name, we are also the first generation to find out. An accumulation of questions about identity compelled a deep search for answers. The lapses and omissions were too great for traditional research to bridge on its own. Real relationships and a real family history could have gone undiscovered without help from genetic genealogy.

Y We Care about Your DNA!

Y-DNA testing is the most powerful tool we have to build pathways to the past to connect male lines, correct existing trees, AND find supporting documentary evidence.

And that is Y We Care about Your DNA and want you to care too!

Should you join the AGS Early Arkansas Roots Project? Definitely.

<https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/AGSEarlyArkansasRootsProject>

WHO CAN TEST?

Men may test themselves directly to find a paternal haplogroup and matches. They may also test a maternal first cousin male to discover a maternal grandfather's line. Women may test a father or a brother from a same father, a paternal uncle or paternal male cousin to find a paternal line.

Note: The fall sale at Family Tree DNA usually begins near the end of October. A Y-37 test is the most economical way to get a baseline haplogroup and list of matches. Upgrades can be added later to refine the matches.

Members Only Section

October 2026

New this year: Check your email for your discount code to **Heritage Books**.

www.heritagebooks.com

Heritage Books is one of America's leading distributors of genealogy and history titles. Our curated online catalog features over 10,000 books that we have published, as well as 6,000 titles from other publishers, spanning the United States and select works from Canada, Europe, Australia, and the Caribbean. Whether you're tracing a single surname or mapping an entire migration, you'll find resources to move your research forward.

Citation Builder Discount

Exclusive to our readers: If you would like to try Cite-Builder for a year, they are offering a 20% discount to our readers. Please use coupon code: **ARKGEN20** at checkout!

Submit Your Queries

Genealogical queries are always a popular feature of the Arkansas Family Historian. AGS members may submit as many Arkansas genealogical queries as they wish for publication in this quarterly during each year, without charge. The queries will appear in the order in which they are received. Each must relate to an Arkansas family or location. Be sure to mention the county or region of Arkansas where the family lived, as well as full names and dates. In addition, submitters must include contact information and email address, if possible. Queries may be submitted by using this link: <https://argensoc.org/query/>

Watch Kitchen Round Table Talk Recordings

When accessing: <https://argensoc.org/kitchen/> you should now notice the button to View Recordings. Click this button and log in to the website to view previous Kitchen Round Table Talks.

Kitchen Round Table Talks

[View recordings — AGS members only](#)

Arkansas Genealogical Society Fall Conference, Saturday, October 17, 2026

“Finding the Forgotten: Reconstructing Lives, Families, and Communities.”

Register Here - <https://argensoc.org/conference26/>

J. Mark Lowe, FUGA:

Locating “hard to find” Family with New Tools and Old Tested Methods

Famer, Rancher, or Sharecropper: Shaping a Profile for your Rural Ancestor

Dr. Deborah Abbott:

Cluster Genealogy: Finding Your Lost Ancestor

Using Manuscripts and Oral Collections in Your Genealogical Research

This is our schedule for the Conference:

Arkansas Genealogical Society Fall Conference 2026

Featuring J. Mark Lowe, FUGA and Dr. Deborah Abbott

Saturday, October 17, 2026, 8:30 AM- 2:45 PM

Central Standard Time



Join the Arkansas Genealogical Society for our annual Fall Conference, featuring renowned genealogists and educators, J. Mark Lowe, FUGA, and Dr. Deborah Abbott. They will each guide you in achieving your family history goals through engaging and informative sessions.

Conference Schedule:

- **8:30 AM:** Webinar Opens - Welcome Screen and Technical Check
- **9:00 AM:** Webinar Commencement
- **9:15 AM:** Session 1: J. Mark Lowe, FUGA - Locating “hard to find” Family with New Tools and Old Tested Methods
- **10:15 AM:** Break
- **10:30 AM:** Session 2: J. Mark Lowe, FUGA - Famer, Rancher, or Sharecropper: Shaping a Profile for your Rural Ancestor
- **11:30 AM:** Lunch Break
- **12:30 PM:** Session 3: Dr. Deborah Abbott-Cluster Genealogy: Finding Your Lost Ancestor
- **1:30 PM:** Break
- **1:45 PM:** Session 4: Dr. Deborah Abbott - Using Manuscripts and Oral Collections in Your Genealogical Research
- **2:45 PM:** Break - Instructions for Annual Meeting
- **3:00 PM:** Annual Meeting (Members Only)

J. Mark Lowe, FUGA

Locating 'hard to find' family with New Tools and Old Tested Methods:

How exciting it is to find anything about those invisible, elusive characters who seem to hide intentionally. Practice your skills with some new tools like "FS Free Text Search," Cross DB Searching, and old standards like Focused Reviews and Basic Searching. Hopefully, by implementing the tools, you can discover new records for your research.

Farmer, Rancher, or Sharecropper:

Shaping a profile for your Rural Ancestor Farming is a proud and honorable occupation. Develop a rich profile of your farming ancestor and community using available resources.

Dr. Deborah Abbott

Cluster Genealogy:

Finding Your Lost Ancestor Using several case studies, this session will introduce the importance of researching ancestors by using extended family members, friends, and community. Learn how to develop techniques and strategies that will help increase the chances of locating that long-lost ancestor.

Using Manuscript and Oral Collections in Your Genealogical Research:

Manuscripts are original records and are often overlooked sources. They serve as primary sources that provide first-hand documentation and evidence of events that shape the development of a society, community, and/or family. Because they are usually not completely indexed in the manner that we are accustomed to, it takes time and patience to sift through the various pieces of paper that you might find. Manuscripts can be found in a variety of repositories, from archives, public/private libraries, historical societies, and universities, etc. Knowing exactly where and what will be found in manuscript collections can be tricky, but when found, these records can create a gold mine of information pertaining to your ancestor(s) life.



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Genealogical-Society-inc](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Arkansas-Genealogical-Society-inc)



[ArGenSoc.org](https://www.ArGenSoc.org)

So, You Have Arkansas Roots?

*At our annual AGS member meeting, we voted to increase membership dues to **\$35 per year in January 2026.***

Members receive access to our quarterly publication, The Arkansas Family Historian, as well as many other benefits!

Sign up at argensoc.org/join-us!

AGS Ezine Administrative Stuff

Contributions: If you have news for The AGS Ezine, send it to ezine@argensoc.org.

AGS: To learn more about the Arkansas Genealogical Society, visit our website at www.argensoc.org

Subscribe: If you have friends and relatives who would like to receive The AGS Ezine, direct them to the 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.

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