AGS Ezine

Newsletter of the Arkansas Genealogical Society
Vol. 21, No. 8, November 2026
Chloe' Russell, Editor

Note from the Editor:

Greetings, fellow genealogists and family historians! This month's issue brings together opportunities to connect with fellow genealogists, explore Arkansas history, and preserve the stories of those who came before us. From our Kitchen Roundtable Talk, upcoming genealogical events, to the the history of the Treaty of New Echota and the Heritage House Museum, we hope you find something that inspires your own genealogical journey.

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Arkansas Genealogical Society
November 2026
Kitchen Roundtable Talk



Anne Orsi: Applying to Lineage Societies

Our Zoom discussion will be presented on **Tuesday, November 17, at 6:30 p.m.**, free of charge.

Lineage societies can be social clubs and can give us genealogical bragging rights. Whether we are documenting a Revolutionary War ancestor to participate in patriotic activities, joining an ethnic heritage society, or joining a society commemorating our ancestors' jobs, it's fun to belong to a group. Anne will talk about some of the most common lineage societies, how to apply for membership, and even suggest a few fun ones to join just for fun. From AGS's own Arkansas Ancestry certificates to the Jamestowne Society, and some interesting ones in between, the process tends to be very similar.

To register for this event, please use this link:

Join us online via Zoom.

Anne Orsi is an attorney and genealogist in practice in Little Rock, Arkansas. She has been the Registrar for the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in Arkansas since 2013 and reviews applications for the Arkansas Ancestry Certificates offered by the Arkansas Genealogical Society. Her mottos are "It's not hoarding if it's books. It's a library" and "I doxx dead people."

The Arkansas Genealogical Society hosts our Kitchen Roundtable Talks on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM Central Time. These are free Zoom Meetings, and all are welcome. Please visit our webpage at https://argensoc.org/kitchen/ for future topics and information.

November Events

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Monday, November 02
5:00pm - 7:00pm

Researching Chinese Ancestry with My China Roots - Boston Public Library (Virtual)
Wednesday, November 4, 2026
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

FALL VIRTUAL SEMINAR with/ David M. McCorkle Tennessee Genealogical Society
Saturday, November 07, 2026
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

2026 Genealogy Workshop featuring Dr. Margarita Lila Rosa - CALS Butler Center for Arkansas Studies (In Person)
Saturday, November 07
9:00am - 3:00pm

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Monday, November 09
5:00pm - 7:00pm

Genealogy Writing Workshop - Monthly Writing & Critique Group - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Wednesday, November 11
12:30pm - 2:00pm

UARK Special Collections – How to Use Research Services - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Thursday, November 12
6:00pm - 7:00pm

November Events

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Monday, November 16
5:00pm - 7:00pm

Arkansas Genealogical Society Kitchen Roundtable Talk
Tuesday, November 17
6:30

NotebookLM for Genealogists, with Robert Cameron Weir - Wisconsin State Genealogical Society
Tue Nov 17th (CST)

Taking a Deep Dive into Mexico - U.S. Border Crossing Records - Legacy Family Tree Webinars
Fri, Nov 20, 2026: 1:00 PM CST

Doing Time Prison Records as Genealogy Resources by Judy G. Russell JD CG CGL FUGA - Castle Rock Colorado Genealogical Society (CRCGS) (Virtual)
Sat Nov 21st 11:00am - 1:00pm (CST)

Volunteer Genealogy Assistance with DAR Members - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Monday, November 23
5:00pm - 7:00pm

DNA Basics 1: Introduction to DNA Testing - Pinellas Genealogy Society (Virtual)
Tue Nov 24th 10:00am - 11:30am (CST)

Break Down Genealogy Brick Walls - Fayetteville Public Library (In Person)
Wednesday, November 25
3:00pm - 4:00pm

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced

By Cherokee Nation citizen, Aimee Rose-Haynes

AimeeRoseHaynes.com



In the winter of 1835, a treaty was signed in the Cherokee capital of New Echota that would forever alter the course of Cherokee history. Known as the Treaty of New Echota, it claimed to transfer all Cherokee lands east of the Mississippi River to the United States in exchange for money and land in Indian Territory. What makes this treaty one of the most controversial documents in American history is not only what it demanded, but who did not agree to it.

The treaty was signed by a small faction of Cherokee leaders often called the Treaty Party. My ancestors were part of that group. They believed removal was coming either way, and that negotiating was the only chance to secure compensation, supplies, and some measure of protection for their people during the move. The agreement was not approved by the Cherokee National Council and it was not signed by Principal Chief John Ross, who represented the will of the majority. Even so, the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty in 1836 by a single-vote margin and then treated it as the legal basis for forced removal.

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced

Cherokee Resistance and the Protest That Followed

Cherokee opposition to the treaty was immediate and overwhelming. In 1836, thousands of Cherokee citizens signed formal petitions protesting the agreement, calling it fraudulent, unauthorized, and morally indefensible. These petitions argued that the treaty violated Cherokee law and sovereignty, stripped the Nation of its land without consent, and ignored the will of its people.

Under Cherokee law at the time, any individual who sold tribal land without the consent of the Nation could be declared an outlaw. This legal reality added another layer of tension to an already fractured political landscape. The Cherokee were not passive victims of removal. They used legal arguments, written protests, and appeals to Congress in an attempt to stop what they knew would be catastrophic.

Those efforts were ignored.

Removal Becomes Reality

By 1838, federal troops under General Winfield Scott began rounding up Cherokee families and placing them into stockades. The forced marches west that followed became known as the Trail of Tears, a journey marked by disease, hunger, exposure, and death. Thousands did not survive.

One of the most powerful personal accounts of this era comes from a 1937 interview with Elizabeth Watts, a full-blood Cherokee woman born in 1859 in the Cherokee Nation. Her family story preserves the lived experience behind the official records.

From what Elizabeth Elizabeth Watts later remembered through her family, many Cherokees had already watched white encroachment swallow up more and more of their land, and they feared the government would take what remained no matter what. In that mindset, negotiating felt like the only way to secure at least some compensation and provisions, rather than losing everything with nothing in return.

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced

Elizabeth's family carried personal memories of removal that were not abstract or political, but physical and immediate. Her mother, Nancy Tony-Miller, was born in 1837 near Memphis while her grandparents were camped on the east bank of the Mississippi River, waiting for floodwaters to recede. The family story describes groups stalled at the river for weeks, illness spreading through the camps, and deaths mounting around them. Nancy's birth was remembered as life arriving in the middle of tragedy, a child born while the people around her were burying loved ones and trying to survive.

Elizabeth also preserved how her grandparents explained the pressure that led to removal, describing fences destroyed, crops ruined, cattle killed, homes burned, and daily life made unbearable. In her telling, the Trail of Tears was not only grief, but hunger, exposure, humiliation, and the repeated loss of security. Those memories did not fade quickly. She said that what her grandparents endured lingered with them for the rest of their lives.

Even with this deep division among Cherokee leaders and families, the treaty itself was not approved by the Cherokee National Council and was not signed by Principal Chief John Ross, who represented the will of the majority. Despite that, the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty in 1836 by a single-vote margin and used it as the legal justification for forced removal.

Division Within the Nation

The Treaty of New Echota did more than remove the Cherokee from their homeland. It fractured the Nation internally. After removal, tensions between supporters of Chief Ross and members of the Treaty Party escalated. In 1839, several Treaty Party leaders were assassinated under the belief that they had committed treason under Cherokee law.

One signer, Stand Watie, narrowly escaped death. The violence that followed marked a period of internal conflict that would shape Cherokee politics for decades. Though later treaties attempted reconciliation, the wounds never fully healed.

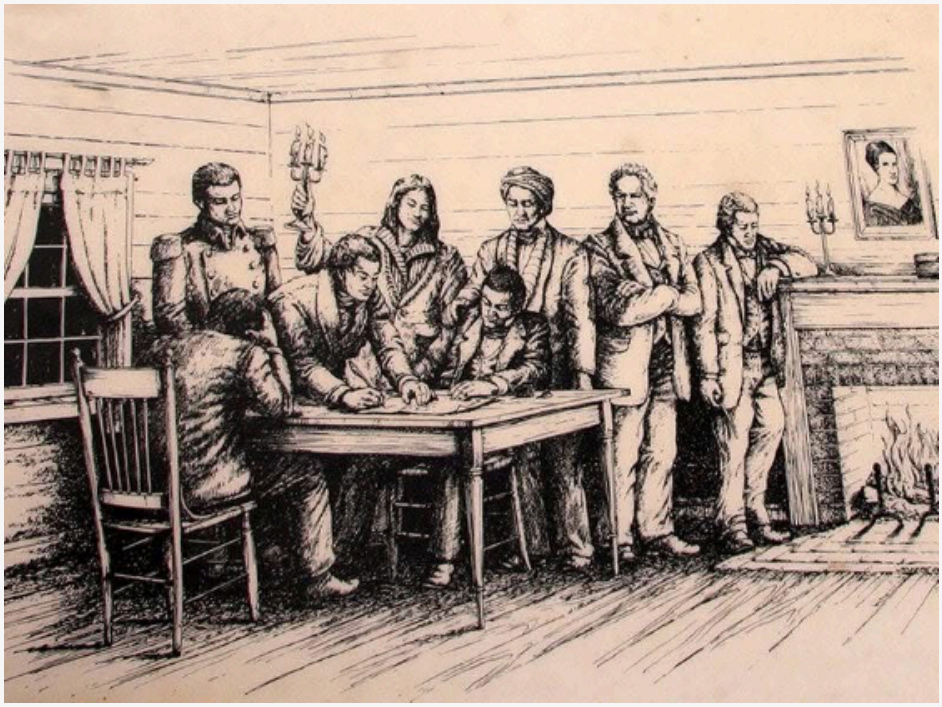
Ross and Watie would continue to stand on opposite sides of Cherokee politics through the Civil War, each believing they were acting in the best interests of their people. Their rivalry reflected a deeper truth about removal: there were no easy choices, only survival under impossible circumstances.

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced

The Treaty of New Echota is often taught as a political event, a document, a date on a timeline. But when paired with Cherokee voices like Elizabeth Watts, it becomes something more. It becomes a record of resistance, resilience, and remembrance.

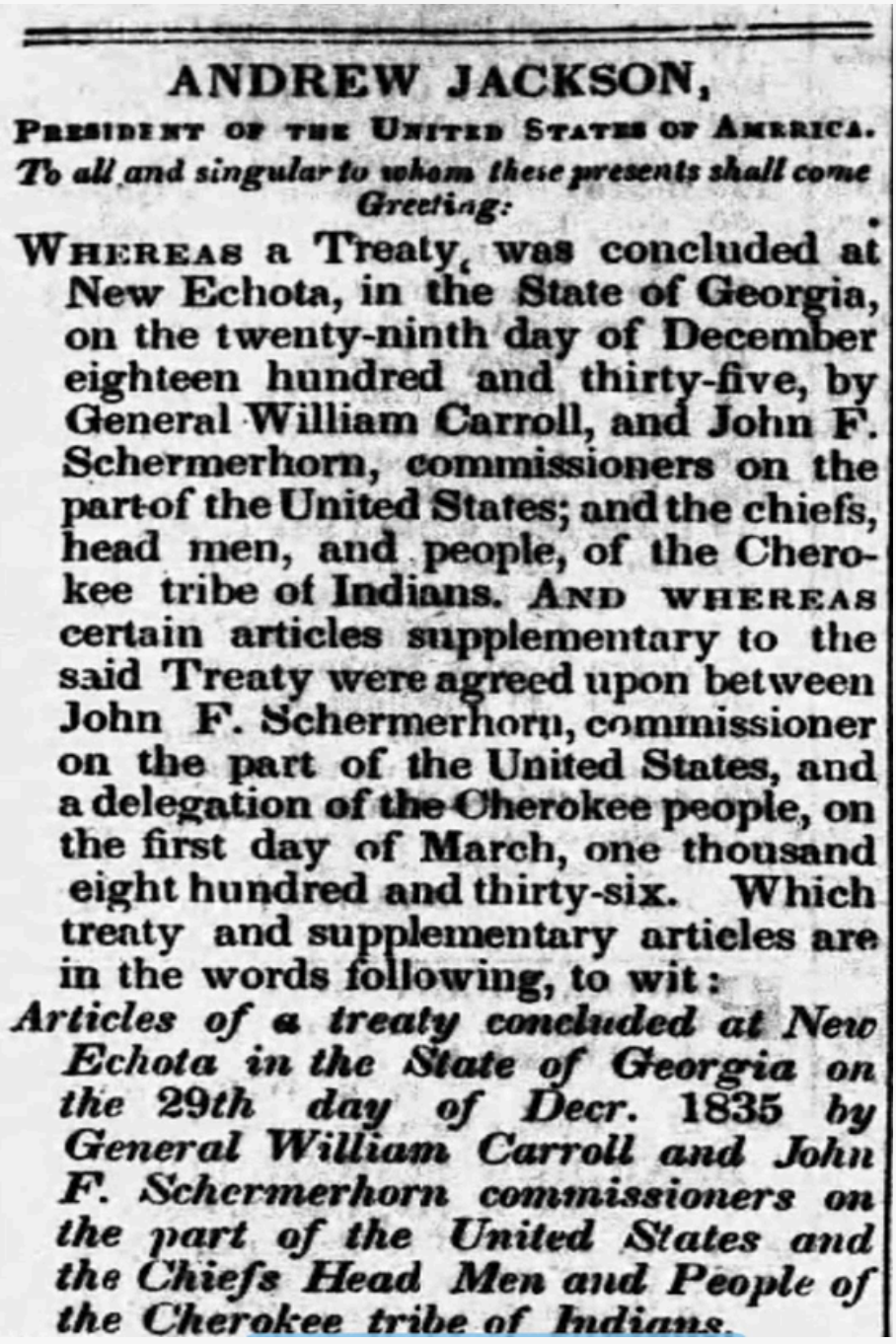
Cherokee people protested. They documented their opposition. They preserved their laws, culture, and identity even as they were forcibly displaced. Their descendants continue to carry these stories forward, ensuring that removal is remembered not as an unfortunate inevitability, but as a deliberate act resisted at every step.

The Trail of Tears did not begin with silence, and it did not end with it either.



The signing of the Treaty of New Echota on Dec. 29, 1835, is depicted at the New Echota Historic Site in Calhoun, Georgia. The signers are shown signing the treaty in the parlor of former Cherokee Phoenix Editor Elias Boudinot.

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced



ANDREW JACKSON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

To all and singular to whom these presents shall come Greeting:

WHEREAS a Treaty, was concluded at New Echota, in the State of Georgia, on the twenty-ninth day of December eighteen hundred and thirty-five, by General William Carroll, and John F. Schermerhorn, commissioners on the part of the United States; and the chiefs, head men, and people, of the Cherokee tribe of Indians. AND WHEREAS certain articles supplementary to the said Treaty were agreed upon between John F. Schermerhorn, commissioner on the part of the United States, and a delegation of the Cherokee people, on the first day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six. Which treaty and supplementary articles are in the words following, to wit:

Articles of a treaty concluded at New Echota in the State of Georgia on the 29th day of Decr. 1835 by General William Carroll and John F. Schermerhorn commissioners on the part of the United States and the Chiefs Head Men and People of the Cherokee tribe of Indians.

Portion of the article clipped from The Washington Union The Globe Washington, District of Columbia · Friday, May 27, 1836

The Treaty of New Echota and the Cherokee Voices that Refused to Be Silenced



Quote from Cherokee citizen Charles Hicks before leaving for Indian Territory

Volunteers Needed: Help Support Arkansas Genealogy

The Arkansas Genealogical Society is seeking volunteers to help produce our monthly Ezine and quarterly journal. Whether you enjoy genealogy, writing, editing, research, organization, or design, we have opportunities to match your interests and availability.

Monthly Ezine Opportunities

Ezine Project Manager (Approx. 10 hours/month)
Coordinate article submissions, communicate with contributors, obtain permissions, track deadlines, and help keep each issue on schedule.

Event Researcher (Approx. 5 hours/month)
Identify free genealogy and family history events in Arkansas and online for our monthly events section.

Content Writers (One article every other month)
Share genealogy tips, research experiences, event reviews, new tools, resources, and family history discoveries. We are seeking 2–3 volunteer writers.

Canva Designer
Use existing templates to create an attractive and engaging monthly Ezine.

Ezine Proofreaders (Approx. 2 hours/month)
Review each issue for grammar, accuracy, consistency, and readability before publication.

Quarterly Journal Opportunities

Journal Editor (Approx. 8–10 hours/quarter)
Coordinate the editorial process for each quarterly journal issue, working with contributors and the design team to ensure content is cohesive, engaging, accurate, and ready for publication.

Associate Editor (Approx. 5–8 hours/quarter)
Support the journal editor with reviewing submissions, communicating with contributors, and ensuring articles are accurate, engaging, and aligned with the journal's editorial standards.

Journal Designer (Adobe InDesign) (10–12 hours/quarter)
Design and layout our quarterly journal using curated content and established publication standards.

Journal Proofreader (Approx. 4 hours/quarter)
Perform a final review of the journal before publication to ensure quality and accuracy.

Heritage House Museum of Montgomery County

By Emilie J. Kinney

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Located in **Mount Ida (Montgomery County)**, the Heritage House Museum of Montgomery County (HHMMC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, officially incorporated in 1998. The museum is the culmination of R. R. (Dick) Whittington's dream of a repository of artifacts, archives, and photographs to honor the history and heritage of **Montgomery County**.

The Whittingtons were one of the families who settled this west-central Arkansas county, and members of each generation documented and recorded bits of local history. Dick Whittington perpetuated the family's keen interest in the past and, in the early 1970s, began recording interviews with locals regarding people, events, customs, and conditions of the past. A core group of interested county residents began researching and developing the organization of the **museum**. Whittington's nephews Bill and Richard Ray donated the land for the museum and were actively involved in construction as well as its later operation. Not only did Whittington pay for the construction of the building, but he also left an endowment to help support the museum's operation. The building was dedicated in 2000.

HHMMC has grown through the years by developing a quality **quartz** crystal and mineral exhibit, adding a rural general store, altering and improving the general exhibits in the main building, constructing an exhibit barn patterned after a Norman structure, relocating a 1940s Eleanor-style **outhouse** from **Pine Ridge (Montgomery County)**, and adding an 1880s log home moved to museum property from the Alamo (Montgomery County) community. A resource center is available to the public for genealogy research. Since the establishment of the museum, the "home place" environs around the log home have been expanded, a permanent exhibit honoring the county's timber industry history was constructed, and a tribute to **Lake Ouachita** has been developed. Ongoing promotions include the Memorial Brick Pathway and the annual commemorative Christmas ornament featuring varied county edifices or activities. The museum celebrates the annual Sorghum Festival (begun in 2010) the second weekend in October, with sorghum being made on site, complete with a mule-powered mill, as well as "old-timey" demonstrations and activities.

Heritage House Museum of Montgomery County

The Heritage House Museum is governed by a twelve-member board of directors who represent various communities throughout the county. It has a director and a collections coordinator on staff but depends upon its roster of volunteers in its daily operation. Each year, the board of directors selects an individual who contributed significantly to the museum as recipient of the Richard Rudell Whittington Award, which is presented at the Volunteer Recognition Dinner.

The museum asks families with county heritage to share items that reflect its past. Donations of artifacts, archives, and photographs have ensured interesting and varied exhibits. All accessioned items must have Montgomery County history and be dated from the 1800s to 1975. There is no admission charge to the museum.

For additional information:
Heritage House Museum of Montgomery County. **https://mountidamuseum.org** (accessed September 15, 2025).

"Museum a Vital Component in Preserving County's History." *Montgomery County, Arkansas, 2011 Visitor and Relocation Guide*, pp. 7, 10.

Emilie J. Kinney
Mount Ida, Arkansas

Honor Your Arkansas Ancestors

Did your ancestors help shape Arkansas history? The Arkansas Genealogical Society's Arkansas Ancestry Certificate Program offers a meaningful way to recognize and preserve your family's connection to the Natural State.

Researchers who successfully document an ancestor's residence in Arkansas—or service in an Arkansas Civil War unit—may apply for an official certificate commemorating their family's place in Arkansas history. Approved applications are permanently preserved through archival collections, and applicants' lineages are published in The Arkansas Family Historian.

Certificates are available in five categories: Colonial, Territorial, Antebellum, Nineteenth Century, and Civil War Ancestry. Whether your ancestors arrived before statehood or served during the Civil War, this program provides a lasting tribute to their legacy.

Download an application today and begin documenting your Arkansas roots.

Find more information here: https://argensoc.org/ancestry-certificate/



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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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