



The Choctaw Sun  
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# Lifestyles

www.choctawsun.com  
choctawsun@millry.net

## The treasures found through genealogy

**BUTLER** -- It was good to read in The Sun that students at CCHS are learning how to trace and record their family histories. Genealogy can be very frustrating or very rewarding, depending on the way one approaches it. If it becomes an obsession it can be frustrating. After all, the "chief end of man" is not to dig up and document all the ancestors, but to glorify God.

As we are now in a beautiful springtime approaching Easter this column will take a religious approach.

Genealogies are plentiful in the Bible. Reading the book of Numbers can numb your mind and put you to sleep. However the Gospel of Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus through Joseph to show that Jesus is the legal heir of Israel, and the Gospel of Luke traces his line through Mary to show Jesus' blood descent.

Most of us can only go back eight or 10 generations, or in some cases 15 or 16. Many lines that far back and further are based on probabilities that are unproven. However, I have learned the hard way that family lore is usually fairly accurate, documented or not.

Lost grave sites  
Choctaw County has lost much of its early history due to fires in the Probate Judge's Office in 1859 and again in 1871. Also devastating is the loss of family cemeteries. There are some still lying

### Needles in Hay Stacks

by Ann Harwell Gay

undisturbed in the woods, but many have had the markers turned over or destroyed by early logging operations. Some graves have full-grown trees in their midst.

A few of the known small cemeteries are the James Alonso Campbell family graves near Silas, The Bass graves at the old home site near Bladon and the Tombigbee River, The Joab Gaines family near Jachin, the Jesse Culp Locke graves, the Holland and Horn burials and the three Sims family gravesites near Toxey and Gilberttown.

The Horn cemetery came to light through an inquiry on the internet as to the location of the Horn home near Pushmataha. The inquirer sent information from a book which listed names of those buried in the long lost graves. Some of these names appeared in court records or tax records from the 1850s, but not

in our collections of cemetery records.

William and his second wife Mary Holland Horn lie in this undiscovered place, along with Thomas and Bethelda Horn, Dr. J.B. and Milliecent Cousins, and J.B. Jr. who died in 1860, Jonas Wood Crowell, son of Frank and Lou Crowell, and John Thomas, husband of Mary Crowell; William Henry and Parma Holland, Eliza Halsell/Halsey who died 1861, Frank Wood, a Campfield girl, and two African Americans Will Horn and Oliver Cousins.

**Sims War graves**  
The Sims War graves are in three locations, two near Gilberttown and one near Toxey. "The Prophet" Bob Sims' grave was marked some 30+ years after his lynching by a son who lived in Eastabuchie, MS. Later, in the 1990s, a grandson had markers placed for Bob's brother, John Sims,



The grave of the infamous Bob Sims

and Bob's son, Zacchaeus Bailey Sims, who were killed at Bladon Springs in August of 1891. This grandson said that everytime he placed markers on Sims graves they were vandalized or mysteriously damaged. The graves of the James Sims family, in a wooded place, no longer have their markers.

Some small family burial sites have been recorded, but there are

many more that have become lost. A man from Georgia cataloged the Wilkins and Sandy Creek cemeteries in the Southwest part of the county, and the late Jud Arrington left us good records of cemeteries in the Northern part, including the long forgotten Joab Gaines family plots just West of Highway 17 near Jachin. Arrington listed the Woodall cemetery as having graves for John M.

and Delia A. Dees Smith, along with W.A. and Martha A. Dees on the old Naheola Road at Pennington. In some Sumter County records, there is a mention of someone being buried in the Kenny graveyard in Choctaw County. We would like to find the location of this place, or discover if it is known by another name. There are many unmarked graves in the oldest part of the Bladon Springs cemetery. Anyone want to volunteer names for our county records?

There are two Zitterow burial sites. It would be wonderful to have a record of the people buried there. Some people are hunting the original location of the John Massey family marker, which was moved from its original location.

We solicit volunteers to catalog our African-American cemeteries. Although a few have been found on the internet and in Nova Law's African American cemeteries book, this is a project that is just "dying" to be tackled!

The Choctaw Co. Genealogical Society, though small in number, enjoys helping people find information. We welcome inquiries as long as they concern Choctaw County families. Send your questions, with as much information as possible as to names and dates, to snow1955@pinebelt.net, to panda@pinebelt.net, or cfh43@tds.net.



Submitted photo

## Members tour Bellingrath Gardens

**MOBILE** — Some members of the Honeysuckle Garden Club members enjoyed a day at Bellingrath Gardens near Mobile. Making the trip were Christine Nickell, Lois Rentz, Florine Pittman, Kathryn Nickell, Mary Coody and Lavon Bonner. They gathered at the Choctaw Co. Historical Museum in Gilberttown and boarded Christine Nickell's van. She read the 23rd Psalm and had prayer before the group left. The weather was great and the day just beautiful for the trip, members said. Upon arriving at the historic gardens, they toured the lovely grounds first. The flowers were beautiful and the azaleas were in full bloom. After the walk in the different gardens, they were ready for some relaxation so they boarded the boat and took a cruise down the river and later enjoyed a wonderful lunch .. at McDonalds! The next meeting of the Club will be in Bonner Town, USA at Lavon Bonner's home. Mrs. Wilma Newton from the Soil and Conservation Office will be the guest speaker.

## Spring Break youth and adult sewing workshop to be held at Civic Center

**BUTLER** — A free Spring Break Youth and Adult Sewing Workshop will be held on Monday, April 16th from 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., and Tuesday, April 17th from 8 a.m. until noon at the Butler Civic Center across from Hardee's.

Sponsored by the

Choctaw Co. Chamber of Commerce, Choctaw Co. Parks and Recreation Board, the See & Sew Community Sewing Bee and others, the workshop is open to youth (grades 5 and up) and adults, boys, girls, men and women are all welcome.

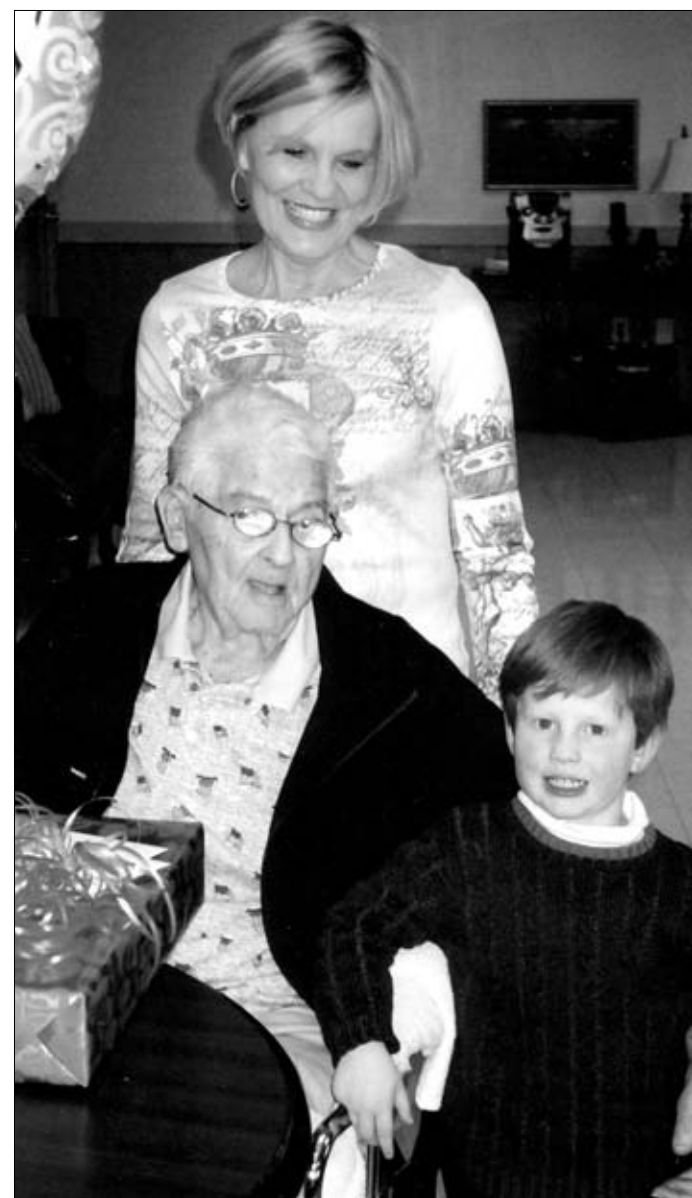
The See & Sew group

is dedicated to preserving the craft of sewing and to teaching the fundamentals of sewing to anyone who wishes to learn.

All participants are asked to bring with them a favorite item to decorate, such as a T-shirt, jeans, skirt, cap, etc.

To register, persons may call Linda Fluker at 2205-654-2039 or the Chamber at 205-459-3459.

You may also register by email at sjcomputer210@yahoo.com. The deadline to register is Thursday, April 12.



Submitted photo

## Celebrating 97!

**CHATOM** -- Coyette McIlwain celebrated his 97th birthday on February 17 at the Washington Co. Nursing home in Chatom. Family and friends were presented to celebrate the event, including his daughter Charlotte Balius of Dallas and his 4-year-old great-grandson Ethan Uribe.

## Calvary Crusaders taking orders for homemade breads

**BUTLER** — The 'Calvary Crusaders' Relay for Life team is taking orders for homemade bread and rolls to be delivered Friday, April 6th – just in time for Easter.

A bake sale will also be held from the ladies of the church at the Butler Spring Fling to be held on April 6 and 7 at the old Vanity Fair location. The ladies are also cooking that day as well.

All proceeds will go for Relay for Life. Orders can be emailed to bonner2696@yahoo.com, called to the church, or faxed to 459-3993.