



Lakeport Pillars Newsletter

Lake Village, Arkansas

Fall 2016

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Lakeport Plantation in 2016

2016 has been another busy year at Lakeport. Visitors to Lakeport have come from 34 states and 10 countries, and 6 continents (sorry Antarctica).

Our popular Lakeport Legacies concluded its



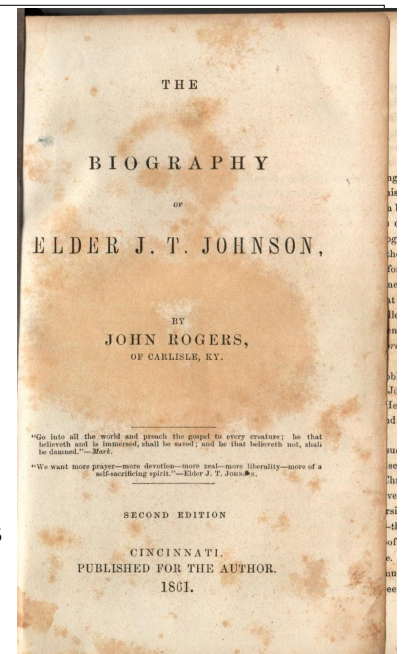
Cat Pearsall donated this grandfather clock built by her father Robley L. Johnson (1908-1991). Pearsall's donation included a ca. 1900 cabinet original to the house and papers related to the gin lot.

fourth year of lectures on local history. Beginning in March, we dug deep into the Delta's history with presentations on the geology of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley, the life and family of African American politician James Worthington Mason, the lives of five Italian-American immigrant sisters, the Arkansas Delta's Mid-Century Modern architecture, the history of the Mississippi Capitol Building, and concluded with a talk on new research by Lakeport Director, Blake Wintory, into the

Civil War pension files of local men (former slaves) who served in the U.S. Colored Troops.

The research in pension files has focused on former slaves in Chicot County, Arkansas and Washington County, Mississippi. Thus far, Wintory has found files for former Chicot County slaves on the Peak Plantation on Grand Lake (Matthew Johnson) and the plantation of James Robinson on Lake Chicot (Besty Johnson and her son Franklin Johnson). The files can be an important resource for telling the story of slaves and slavery at Lakeport.

Lakeport, with our sister sites, participated in the Blue Star Museum Program through the National Endowment for the Arts. The program offers free admission to active duty military personnel and



The Biography of Elder J. T. Johnson (1861, 2nd ed.) is one of 56 books donated by Verlinda Henning. The donation included 76 letters mostly from the 1930s and 1940s, Dr. Victor Johnson's medical bag, among other items.

their families.

We also received several important donations in 2016. Verlinda Johnson Henning of Memphis donated a number of books, letters and other items that made their way from Lakeport to Greenville to Memphis between 1917 and 1927. Verlinda is the great-granddaughter of Lycurgus and Lydia Johnson and the granddaughter of Victor Johnson.

Lakeport also received a surprise in late August. Olivia Spragins of Mississippi donated several boxes of letters and photographs that had belonged to Annie Marshall and Cave Johnson. The donation compliments an earlier donation of dishes, letters, and other artifacts Mrs. Spragins made in 2006.

Catherine Johnson Pearsall, also a great-granddaughter of Lakeport's original occupants, made a donation of letters and two pieces of furniture. In September, Lakeport Director, Blake Wintory, flew to Spokane, Washington and drove the precious items back to Lakeport.

The Museum of Chicot County unfortunately closed its doors in 2015. Lakeport acquired papers and scrapbooks related to the history of Chicot County for its collection. We are saddened by the loss of this institution, but pleased to add local history to our research collection.

Also in 2015, Lakeport published *Chicot County* in the Images of America series by Arcadia Publishing. Authored by Blake Wintory, the book tells the story of the county through vintage photos and includes chapters on the county's three principle towns (Dermott, Lake Village, and Eudora) as well as chapters on the county's early years, Lake Chicot, and rural life. All proceeds benefit the Lakeport Plantation.

Join the Lakeport Pillars: Friends of Lakeport

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- ☐ Heritage • \$500-999
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- ☐ Museum Benefactor • \$10,000+

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Send this form along with payment to:

Lakeport Plantation

601 Hwy 142

Lake Village, AR 71653

Donations can also be made to

<https://www.astate.edu/a/advancement/give-now/>

In the "Other" box, please designate your gift to **"Lakeport Plantation."**



This 1895 image of Lydia Taylor Johnson is now part of Lakeport's permanent collection. Donated by Mrs. Olivia Spragins in 2016, the image is one of two of Lydia in the dozens of photographs, letters, and other items that once belonged to Lydia's son Cave and his wife Annie Marshall Johnson. Mrs. Olivia Spragins held onto Annie Marshall and Cave Johnson's letters, photographs and other items for decades before making donations to Lakeport in 2006 and 2016. The above photo was taken in St. Louis in 1895, where Lydia's sister, Mary Jane Taylor Cable, lived. Lydia, who died in 1898 at her Lakeport home, outlived her husband, Lycurgus, by 22 years.



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An Arkansas State University Heritage Site
<http://lakeport.astate.edu>



The Lakeport Plantation house is an Arkansas State University Heritage Site. Built in 1859 for Lycurgus and Lydia Johnson, it is one of Arkansas's premiere historic structures. The Greek Revival structure is now the only remaining antebellum plantation home in Arkansas on the Mississippi River. The house was added to the National Register in 1974 and was gifted to Arkansas State University in 2001 by the Sam Epstein-Angel Family. Restored by Arkansas State University, the home is open to the public.



"Chicot County Plantation Home Is Added to National Register" February 11, 1975. Arkansas Gazette.
2015.002.0029 MOCCA Collection Lakeport Plantation.