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*Special points of Interest:*

- Thanks to Retiring and Long time board members.
- Board Members and new additions.
- Rick Grant retiring after 38 years as First Baptist Pastor
- SCHHS decorates for Christmas
- Brandon Sutton to present program in January.

Steve Perdue, Editor



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**Saline County History & Heritage Society thanks board members for their service to the society.**

We have some great board members and I personally wanted to thank them for their service to the society. We are losing two long time board members who have decided to step back. George Akins has been a man of all trades and deeply loves the Saline County History & Heritage Society. There are not enough words to describe how much George means to our society. He has said he will still be around to help when he can. Thank you George for your service.



Shirley Coppock is one of a small number of charter members who has served SCHHS for many years. She has been 1st Vice President for many years and has been in charge of our programming and publicity. We will miss Shirley thank you for all you have done for SCHHS.



One of our board members Robert Edwards has worked tirelessly in organizing our supply room and making it easier to find items. We appreciate you Robert and all of your hard work.



Also we wanted to recognize our Secretary, Betty Walker, who has for many years in keeping our records up to date. Thank you Betty for your service to SCHHS.



Another SCHHS member who has served as President and is now serving as Editor of our journal The Saline. Marlo Bush Krueger does an excellent job on getting out the Saline and we appreciate her efforts for Saline County History and Heritage Society. Marlo needs your stories about Saline County please send them to her.



Wilson DuVall has served as President of SCHHS and now serves as 2nd Vice President. Thank you for your service Wilson.



## Other Board Members also contribute to SCHHS

I don't want to miss thanking our other board members who also give service to the Saline County History and Heritage Society, but also serve at other historical organizations in Saline County.

Dr. Russell Burton, retired Benton doctor, who serves also as Curator for the Bauxite Museum, serves on our Board of Directors and provides valuable service.

Also Kathy Lewallen of Bryant, and President of the Bryant Historical Society, serves on our Board of Directors as well. We appreciate her service.

We are happy to announce our new board members are first Pat McKinney who will be serving as our

Treasurer. Pat has served with the Daughters of the American Revolution local Benton chapter and we are very excited to have her on our board for 2024.

Also new to the Board is Sara Francis Bray McClain. Sara is a long time Benton resident and attended Benton High School. Sara also was a former business owner in downtown Benton. Sara will be serving as 1st Vice President and will be in charge of our programs for 2024. She has some great ideas for programs and our first program will be Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 pm at the archives and research room.

There will be more about this program elsewhere in this newsletter.



## SCHHS Decorates for Christmas

Thanks to Betty Walker and Steve Perdue the windows of SCHHS were decorated for the Christmas Season this year.

A Doll House, old dolls, Train, Ginger Bread men, Christmas tree, Sleigh, and trees, Christmas ornaments, and wreaths were a part of the decorations. A colorful wreath was put on

the society door.

Many people come downtown at Christmas time and it was a hope that people would see that SCHHS was involved in the city's efforts to decorate downtown Benton.



## Dr. Rick Grant pastor of First Baptist Church of Benton will be retiring after 38 years at the church in February

Dr. Rick Grant has decided to retire in February as senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Benton, Arkansas.

Rick is a native of Saline County and a graduate of Bauxite High School. He first came to First Baptist Church of Benton in 1986 as a youth minister and while at the church he attended college at Ouachita Baptist University and later Southwest Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has

Served the Lord and his community with dedicated service.

The reverend Clay Cunningham will become the new senior pastor when Dr. Grant retires.

First Baptist Church was organized on April 2, 1836, two months before Arkansas became a state.



## Brandon Sutton to be speaker on January 11 at 7:00 pm

The Bell Building in downtown Benton is without question the oldest building in downtown Benton. It was built in the 1880's and it was home to the J.K. Bell General Merchandise Company. In the 1940s a theater was installed in the upper floors and was called the Victory Theater. It showed "B" movies and many people in Benton were an eager audience.

The Building had a mural painted on it in the early 2000s and is one of great historic significance.

John Young, Benton businessman, owns the building and he recently asked Brandon Sutton who has worked on some historic buildings in downtown Benton to do

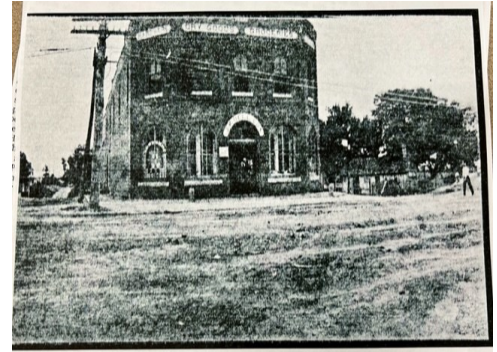
some work in the building. Brandon found some interesting information in the old theater.

Brandon will talk about his finds not only in the Bell Building, but in other areas as well.

This should be an interesting program. The program will be held on Thursday, January 11th at 7:00 pm at the SCHHS Archives and Family Research Center, located at 123 North Market Street in downtown Benton.

Come and bring a friend to the program. It is open to the public.

If the weather is bad, the program will be rescheduled to a later time.



## Visitors to SCHHS for the year 2023 come from many places.

As 2023 comes to an end it is always good to reflect on how we did as an organization.

We have had 191 people who signed the registration book in the archives and research room. The number of people who have attended our programs and signed the register is 216,

We have had people from eight different states including Arkansas. With Texas and California being the top states.

We have had ten members to help in the archives room.

Our dedicated members have provided hundreds of hours to the society in helping with research and answering questions about Saline County history.

Our Tuesday crew consists of Librarian Pauline Brown who has given years of help to people and Carolyn Wise who has done the same. Steve Perdue also comes in on Tuesdays. Our Wednesday crew consists of George Akins, Marlo Bush Krueger, and new board member Pat McKinney. Our Thursday crew consists of Emaline

Stroud and Steve Perdue. The society thanks all the volunteers for their dedication to the society.



# SALINE COUNTY HISTORY & HERITAGE SOCIETY

## Scenes of Saline County, Arkansas

P.O. Box 1712  
Benton, AR. 72018

Research Room  
123 North Market Street

Phone: (501) 778-3770  
Website: [www.schhs.us](http://www.schhs.us)



Congratulations to the Provincia de la sal, Daughters of the American Revolution on their 70th Anniversary

Saline County Chapter

## It is time to renew your membership for 2024

2024 is here and we need your new membership. Your membership in the Saline County History and Heritage Society is from January 1 to December 31.

If you wish to become a member and if you are receiving this newsletter you have been a member for 2023.

Our membership is \$25.00 a year for family membership, and \$50.00 for contributing and corporate membership, and \$100 a year for sustaining membership. If you

would like to join, you may send in your check made out to the Saline County History & Heritage Society (SCHHS), P.O. Box 1712, Benton, AR. 72018-1712.

You will soon be receiving a renewal notice and an envelope to renew. You may use the envelope.

You may also give a membership as a gift for someone who likes to read about history of the county.

