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MDAH

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY**

**2022
ANNUAL REPORT**



The Defenders to Show at the Two Mississippi Museums

On February 24, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) premiered *The Defenders: How Lawyers Protected the Movement*. *The Defenders* focus on Mississippi lawyers who represented African Americans in the years leading up to and during the Civil Rights Movement. Few in number, and with limited resources, lawyers representing African Americans in Mississippi lost more cases than they won during the 1950s and 1960s. Though circumstances were difficult, hundreds of lawyers were inspired to work in Mississippi and transformed its legal infrastructure for future generations. Their work demanding equality of treatment under the law for Black citizens also changed the nation. Additionally, later in the year, Roderick Red delivered a History is Lunch on the topic.

Eleventh Moon Storytelling at Grand Village

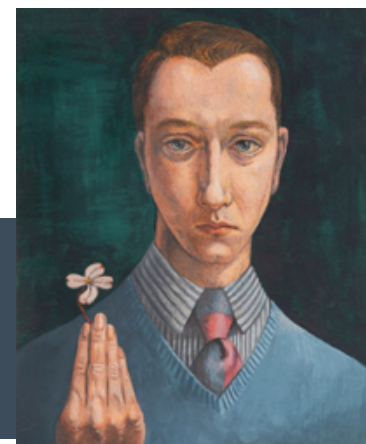
On January 29, visitors gathered around the fire at Grand Village of the Natchez Indians to hear storytellers share centuries-old stories about Native people and the Natural world. "We are excited to bring Eleventh Moon Storytelling back to the Grand Village," said Lance Harris, director of the site. "This program has entertained families for decades with some of the biggest attendance seen the last several times. This year's event will be special due to our excellent guest storytellers."

The Natchez Indians followed a lunar calendar that was measured by thirteen moons, or months. The month of January was referred to as Eleventh Moon or Cold Meal Moon.

Storytellers Eli Langley and Dan Isaac discussed and demonstrated the art of storying telling.

Eli Langley is a storyteller who grew up in southern Louisiana surrounded by Coshatta culture and language. In 2021 he was the first Coshatta Tribe member to graduate from Harvard University.

Dan Isaac is a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and a veteran of the United States Air Force. He works with young people teaching the Chahta Social Dances as well as other aspects of Choctaw culture including language, spiritual practices, traditions, and values.



Emerging Grace: Andrew Bucci's Early Works

The special exhibition *Emerging Grace: Andrew Bucci's Early Works* was in display in the lobby of the William F. Winter Archives & History Building during the winter months. The exhibition opened on January 12, the centennial birthday of Andrew Bucci. In honor of the special day, the first History is Lunch program of 2022 featured Margaret Bucci and Beth Batton, curator of the *Emerging Grace* exhibit.

"Andrew Bucci's lifelong involvement in the Mississippi arts community played a central role in his artistic journey and in his extraordinary creative legacy. It's a story that is richly documented in the sketchbooks, scrapbooks, and biographical materials that constitute the new Andrew Collection at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History," said the niece of Andrew Bucci, Margaret Bucci. "By donating these treasures to MDAH, Andrew's estate wishes to honor, preserve, and illuminate his life's work."

Former President Bill Clinton, Former Governor Haley Barbour to Honor Lives of Governor William and Elise Winter

On May 3, MDAH celebrated the lives of Governor William Winter and First Lady Elise Winter at the Two Mississippi Museums. Program speakers included President Bill Clinton, the forty-second president of the United States; former Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour; and former Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Reuben Anderson.

William F. Winter served as Governor of Mississippi from 1980 to 1984. He had previously been elected to the state legislature, and to the offices of the state tax collector, state treasurer, and lieutenant governor. His term as governor has been nationally acclaimed for the groundbreaking passage of education reform legislation. He was later appointed to President Bill Clinton's National Advisory Board on Race.



Jackson Mayor, Chokwe Antar Lumumba and President Bill Clinton

Throughout his political career, Elise Winter campaigned for William Winter, and she was a trusted advisor and policy advocate to her husband when he was elected to office. When Elise Winter was the state's First Lady, she helped shepherd her husband's key legislation and hosted social gatherings for prominent Mississippians at the Mississippi Governor's Mansion.

Elise Winter advocated for improving the living conditions of imprisoned people, worked to increase funding for state correctional institutions, and campaigned for the construction of a family visitor's center at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman and a separate prison for women in Pearl. She was the founder, fundraiser, and volunteer of the Jackson area chapter of Habitat for Humanity, which has constructed more than 600 homes in the metro area for those in need. Elise Winter was recognized for her steadfast commitment to volunteer services during the 2015 Governor's Initiative for Volunteer Excellence Awards.

William F. Winter joined the MDAH Board of Trustees in 1957. During his time as board president, Winter oversaw the opening of the Eudora Welty House and Garden, the restoration of the Old Capitol, and the construction of a state-of-the-art archives and history building that the state legislature named for him.



President Bill Clinton and Reuben Anderson

Winter also encouraged the department to strengthen its focus on African American history in Mississippi, acquiring significant collections of papers, mounting award-winning exhibits, and offering grants for the preservation of sites associated with African American history. Most notably, his close friendship with Myrlie Evers led to her decision to donate the Medgar and Myrile Evers Collection to MDAH in 2002.

The opening of the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in 2017 is Winter's greatest legacy at MDAH. Winter helped convince state leaders of the need to build the Two Mississippi Museums, and he was instrumental in securing public and private funds for the project.

MDAH director Katie Blount said, "These museums stand at the intersection of William Winter's greatest passions, history, education, and racial justice. Generations of young people will come here to experience the stories that have shaped our state and nation."



Elise Winter and Governor William F. Winter

Unita Blackwell Property Added to National Register of Historic Places

The Unita Blackwell Property, is the property of the first African American woman in the state elected to office of mayor, has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The United States Secretary of the Interior approved the addition upon the recommendation of the Mississippi National Register Review Board. The property consists of the Freedom House, the Ranch House, and the neighbor's shotgun house.

"I am ecstatic about this news. I am humbled that the family matriarch is being honored in this fashion," said the son of Blackwell, Jeremiah Blackwell Jr.

The Freedom House was Blackwell's primary residence and was used to host numerous

civil rights meetings between the years of 1964-1970. The Freedom House hosted many groups associated with the Civil Rights Movement as well as the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The Ranch House was added for its association to Blackwell's productive life during her career as mayor of Mayersville, and its use for political work sessions and meeting during her Mayorship. Lastly, the neighbor's shotgun house was added for its architectural significance and association to the civil rights leaders.

Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition The Negro Motorist Green Book Opens at the Civil Rights, State History Museums

The *Negro Motorist Green Book* exhibit opened in July at the Two Mississippi Museums. This exhibition offers an immersive look at the reality of travel for African Americans in mid-century America and how the annual guide served as an indispensable resource for the nation's rising African American middle class. The exhibition was developed by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services (SITES) in collaboration with award-winning author, photographer, and cultural documentarian, Candacy Taylor, and made possible through the support of Exxon Mobil Corporation.

The exhibition includes artifacts from business signs and postcards to historic footage, images, and firsthand accounts to convey not only the apprehension felt by African American travelers, but also the resilience, innovation, and elegance of people choosing to live a full American existence. Mississippi artifacts include items from the historic Riverside Hotel in Clarksdale, Hotel E.F. Young Jr. in Meridian, and many more locations listed in a Mississippi Green Book.



Unita Blackwell



MDAH Announces the Opening of The Welty Family Papers

In honor of Eudora Welty's 113th birthday on April 13, a previously restricted series of Welty's family papers are now open to the public. "The letters in the series begin with the courtship of my grandparents," said Welty's niece Mary Alice White. "Also included are personal papers of the family, Eudora's correspondence with family members, and papers and letters from my father, uncles, and other family members. Because these letters were not technically the property of Eudora—they belong to the letter writer—I think Eudora wanted them sealed to respect the privacy of those still living." *The Eudora Welty Collection, Series 45: Welty Family Papers* was restricted to the public, in accordance with Welty's will, for twenty years after her death. "In these new materials, we grow close to Welty's parents; her siblings and their families; her grandmother and great-grandmother and their children. Through their intimate and everyday interactions with one another, we also come to know so much more about the woman and the writer, Eudora Welty," said Welty scholar and affiliate professor at the College of Charleston Harriett Pollack.

Carter Burns Elected to MDAH Board of Trustees



Carter Burns, executive director of the Historic Natchez Foundation (HNF), has been elected to the board of trustees of the MDAH. The action took place at the regular meeting of the MDAH Board of Trustees on Friday, January 21. His nomination will be submitted to the Mississippi State Senate for confirmation.

"We are excited to welcome Carter Burns to the MDAH Board," said board president Spence Flatgard. "Not only does he have deep roots in Natchez, but he brings valuable expertise in historic preservation. With MDAH focused on two major projects in Natchez—at Historic Jefferson College and Grand Village of the Natchez Indians—Burns will be a tremendous asset to the board."

A Natchez native, Burns has served as the executive director of the HNF for three years, where he is responsible for all staffing, operations, and programs. He holds a

bachelor of arts in English from Millsaps College, a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law, and a master of historic preservation from the University of Georgia. He is a former board member of the Mississippi Heritage Trust and currently serves on the board of the Mississippi Historical Society and the National Preservation Partners Network.

Burns succeeds Helen Smith, who retired after two years on the board. Throughout her board service, Smith offered strong support and encouragement to the MDAH staff. Board nominees must be confirmed by the state senate. Members serve six-year terms. The other members of the board are Nancy Carpenter, Columbus; Betsey Hamilton, New Albany; Web Heidelberg, Hattiesburg, Edmond E. Huges Jr., Ocean Springs; and Mark Keenum, Starkville.

Web Heidelberg Retires from MDAH Board, TJ Taylor Elected



Web Heidelberg retired from the Board of Trustees of the MDAH during its regular meeting in Natchez on Friday, October 21, 2022. Arnold "TJ" Taylor of Madison was elected to the board during the meeting to fill the unexpired term of Edmond Huges, who stepped down earlier this year. Taylor's nomination will be submitted to the Mississippi Senate for confirmation.

Heidelberg served on the MDAH Board of Trustees for twelve years. He has been an active leader in preservation, serving on the boards of the Mississippi Heritage Trust and the Mississippi Historical Society. Heidelberg served as the president of the Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association in 2011 and has served on the National Register of Historic Places Review Board since 2012. He was involved in the restoration of several properties in the Hattiesburg community, including Saenger Theater and the Forrest County Courthouse.

"Web's continued dedication to preserving our state's historic resources is both remarkable and unwavering," said MDAH director Katie Blount. "He and his wife Michelle, will be greatly missed by his board colleagues and the MDAH staff."

TJ Taylor is the executive director of the Mississippi Cable Telecommunications Association. He formerly served as counsel, policy advisor, and policy director for House Speaker Philip Gunn. In 2020, Speaker Gunn appointed Taylor to the Commission to Redesign the Mississippi State Flag.

"TJ has a strong interest in our state's history, and has even made history as a member of the Flag Commission," said MDAH board president Spencer Flatgard. "He is highly regarded by our state's leadership, and I am thrilled he has agreed to join our Board."

Taylor earned his Juris Doctorate from the Mississippi College School of Law and is a member of the Mississippi Bar. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Historical Society.

2022 Eudora Welty Fellow Named



Pamela J. Merryman, a doctoral student at Southern Methodist University, has been named the 2022 Eudora Welty Fellow. Merryman will use archival holdings at MDAH to research how Eudora Welty constructed her identity in her writing.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to conduct research in the Eudora Welty services and am grateful to those who make the Eudora Welty Research Fellowship possible," said the 2022 Welty Fellowship recipient. "Through my research in the Welty archives, I hope to gain a deeper and broader knowledge of the personal inspiration and creative process that went into Welty's writing of her only children's book, *The Shoe Bird*. Ultimately, I seek to note how this entertaining tale of Arturo the Parrot and the bird community who gather from all over the world to learn about the power and value of communication, love, memory, and freedom—provides insight into Welty's other literary works that also explore these vital aspects of the human experience.

After receiving her BA in secondary education from Howard Payne University, Merryman completed her MA in liberal arts at Southern Methodist University where she is currently working toward her PhD. Merryman will use the \$5,000 fellowship to cover travel, housing, and other expenses incurred while doing primary research at the William F. Winter Archives and History Building in Jackson.

Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum Celebrates 5 Years

Since opening on December 9, 2017, more than half a million people have visited the Two Mississippi Museums. "In celebrating this fifth anniversary, we acknowledge the wealth of opportunity and wisdom these museums give us," said Pamela D.C. Junior, director of the Two Mississippi Museums. "More than 500,000 people have come together to listen, investigate, learn, and reflect on our Mississippi History. We look forward to continuing this journey with all of you, for many more years to come!"

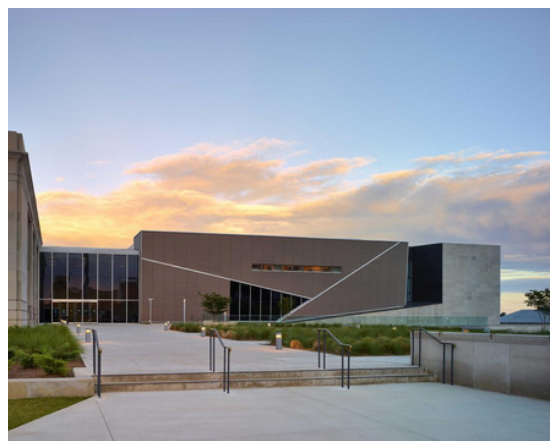
The Mississippi Legislature funded the construction of the \$100 million Two Mississippi Museums along with generous support from private donors. A significant early contribution from W. K. Kellogg Foundation was critical to attracting additional support from others.

"The Two Mississippi Museums preserve the painful stories and truths of our ancestors and are a testament to the deep resolve we have to heal our communities," said Rhea Williams-Bishop, director of Mississippi and New Orleans programming for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. "We are excited to celebrate the museum's anniversary and help ensure everyone can learn our rich and complex history."

The anniversary celebration also will give visitors an opportunity to see the special exhibit *The World of Marty Stuart* before it closes. The exhibit includes hundreds of items never shown before in the state, including Marty's first guitar, original handwritten manuscripts by Hank Williams, guitars from Merle Haggard and Pops Staples, costumes from Porter Wagoner and Dolly Parton, personal items from Johnny Cash, including his first black performance suit, and much more.



Top left: Museum Director Pamela Junior, Top right: Executive Director Katie Blount, Bottom Center: Lauryn Jefferson



MDAH to Host Women in Country Music: Songs and Conversation Event

US Country 96 and MDAH collaborated to host Women in Country Music: Songs and Conversations this past September. "Country music is about stories," said Traci Lee, program director of US Country 96. "I'm so excited that we're part of an event that gives the women in our industry an opportunity to tell the stories that make them who they are and shape our format."

Inspired by The World of Marty Start special exhibit, this event will celebrate country music and spotlight female country music performers, creating a conversation about identity, musical influences, and the next steps in the future of our country music.

The event will feature a panel discussion moderated by Traci Lee and acoustic performances from country performers Hannah Everharrt—an up-and-coming country music artist inspired by souls and blues music and nicknamed "The Country Katy Perry" on American Idol—the sibling trio Track45—Jenna, Ben, and KK Johnson—who have songwriting credits from Justin Timberlake, Charlie Puth, Dierks Bentley, Weezer, Lee Brice, HARDY, and Lauren Alaina.

Grand Village of the Natchez Indians Hosts Native American Fashion Designer

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians hosted the Native American Influence on Modern Design in December. This program featured Indigenous textile artist and fashion designer Tina Benavente. Lance Harris, the director of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians shared beforehand, "Tina's presentation will be a fascinating look at the intersection of Native American heritage and fashion." Not only did Tina Benavente discuss how her heritage influences her work, she also shared design examples at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians.

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians was the main ceremonial mound center of the Natchez people from 1682 until 1730. The 128-acre National Historic Landmark features three mounds, a plaza, a nature trail, a museum, and a store. Administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the Grand Village is located at 400 Jefferson Davis Boulevard and is open free of charge to the public 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and Sundays from 1:30 to 5 p.m.

Intro to Military Research Workshop

MDAH hosted a workshop with Jeff Giambrone, a historic resource specialist, to teach community members how to trace their military family tree with the available resources at MDAH. "For anyone doing research into a Mississippi relative's military history, a trip to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History is vital," said Giambrone.

MDAH staff taught participants how to use military records of Mississippi soldiers from the American Revolution to World War II such as service records, pensions, grave registration cards, World War I draft registration forms, statement of service cards, and World War II discharge records that are available in the MDAH archival collections.

Giambrone is currently employed as a historian at MDAH. He earned his BA in history from Mississippi State University and an MA in history from Mississippi College. He has led numerous introductory genealogy workshops and enjoys helping curious participants research their family roots.

MDAH PROJECTS



Historic Jefferson College

This year, MDAH worked with A&M Engineering to resolve an erosion problem on the site of Historic Jefferson College. Soil testing was conducted by Burns, Cooley, Dennis Inc., while A&M produced a scope of work and construction documents to stop the erosion. In October, Delaney Construction in Natchez was awarded the job and began working to fill the erosion site.

Additionally, Natchez Inc., in conjunction with Entergy, hosted a reception thanking supporters, local officials, and legislators for their continued and future assistance in Adams County. Timed to coincide with the annual Natchez Balloon Festival, a hot air balloon was on site to entertain the guests. MDAH director Katie Blount toured legislators and local officials around the site detailing its historic nature and plans for the site's future use and exhibits and how Historic Jefferson College fits into the Southwest Mississippi Initiative.



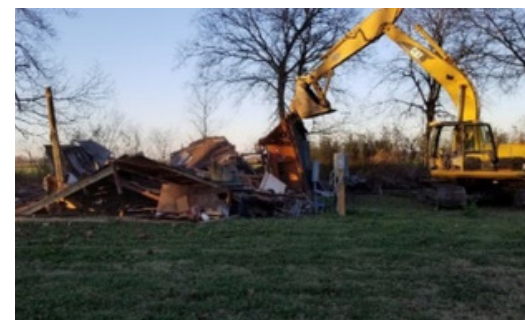
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Work in Archaeology Collections

MDAH continued its work to meet our responsibilities under NAGPRA. MDAH continued its Repatriate Mississippi initiative by continuing consultation with both Harvard and Brown universities, where Mg Cook traveled to speak about MDAH priorities. Additionally, archaeology staff from both Historic Preservation and Museum divisions consulted with tribes on the removal of NAGPRA objects from display at the Museum of Mississippi History.

In other NAGPRA work, the department has filed three notices of inventory completion in the Federal Register, including at least 53 ancestors and 33 lots of funerary objects. Following Meg Cook's departure from MDAH in September, responsibility for the state-owned archaeological collections was transferred to the Historic Preservation Division under the supervision of the Chief Archaeologist. Continuing its commitment to working with tribal partners, MDAH hosted the inaugural Tribal Summit, a three-day event co-sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, and the US Forest Service. The event allowed both state and federal agencies the opportunity to meet face-to-face with Mississippi's tribal descendants communities.

Winterville Mounds Project

Construction on the Mounds at Winterville began in the spring of 2022 to repair and stabilize Mound A. During this time, the grounds at Winterville Mounds continued to be available to the public, although the visitor center/museum remained closed. In September, Museum Division staff met with representatives from DFA, Brown and Root, and architects from Beard & Riser in preparation for interior renovation work to begin in the Winterville Mounds Visitor Center. Earthmoving and stabilization work continued throughout the year on Mound A.



Over \$3M in Preservation Grants Awarded

At its regular meeting on January 21, the board of trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, awarded over \$3 million on behalf of the Community Heritage Preservation Grant program, authorized and funded by the Mississippi Legislature, which helps preserve and restore historic courthouses and schools in Certified Local Government communities and other historic properties.

"The Legislature has saved hundreds of significant Mississippi properties through this program," said MDAH director Katie Blount. "The Department of Archives and History is grateful for the Legislature's support and pleased to be able to help preserve these local treasures."

The grant awards are as follows:

Auburn, Natchez, Adams County-\$234,192

Portico columns, Billiard Hall, and Duncan Pavilion restoration

Alcorn Country Courthouse, Corinth, Alcorn County-\$150,000

Courtroom and interior restoration

Carrollton Water Tower, Carrollton, Carroll County-\$47,784

Repaint

Chickasaw County Courthouse, Huston, Chickasaw County-\$214,690

Window Replacement

Saenger Theater, Hattiesburg, Forrest County-\$250,000

Interior restoration

Holmes County Courthouse, Lexington, Holmes County-\$276,630

Second-floor courtroom restoration; masonry repointing

Fulton Grammar School, Fulton, Itawamba County-\$93,860

Roof repairs

Jefferson Davis County Courthouse, Prentiss, Jefferson Davis County-\$220,800

Roof repairs

Madison Country Jail (Old), Canton, Madison-\$54,456

Roof and interior repairs

Columbia Waterworks, Columbia, Marion County-\$274,027

ADA restrooms; HVAC & electrical installation, interior paint

Booker T. Washington School, Philadelphia, Neshoba County-\$115,200

Gym floor and bleacher repairs

Noxubee County Library, Macon, Noxubee County-\$80,000

Roof restoration; masonry and plaster repairs

McCormick Administration Building, Senatobia, Tate County-\$264,000

Exterior and window restoration; masonry repairs

Bowmar Elementary School, Vicksburg, Warren County-\$100,000

Overall site drainage repairs; masonry wall stabilization

The grant awards continued:

Edna M. Scott Elementary, Leland, Washington County-\$167,920
Exterior repairs; masonry wall stabilization

Wilkinson County Courthouse, Woodville, Wilkinson County-\$168,000
Clock Tower Stabilization

Yalobusha County Courthouse, Water Valley, Yalobusha County-\$191,275
Window Restoration

Grant awards are paid on a reimbursable basis upon the successful completion of the entire project or at the time of pre-established phases of the project. Prior to application, all buildings must have been designated Mississippi Landmarks. Only county or municipal governments, school districts, and nonprofit organizations granted section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service may submit applications.

To become a Certified Local Government, a community must adopt a preservation ordinance establishing a preservation commission in accordance with federal and state guidelines. Once the commission has been established, an application for CLG status may be made to the National Parks Services through the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. MDAH works closely with local government officials and citizens to help them create and manage a workable local historic preservation program.

MDAH Receives \$50,000 grant from the Nissan Foundation to Support Field Trips to State History, Civil Rights Museums

The Nissan Foundation has awarded a \$50,000 grant to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History to support field trips to the Two Mississippi Museums. "We are grateful to the Nissan Foundation for their support of our field trip program," said Katie Blount. "School children are one of our most important audiences. The foundation's generosity will help more students experience what Governor William Winter called the state's largest classroom."

"We are proud to award MDAH a grant for the unique programming it's offering community members at a time in our history when conversations about race, ethnicity, bias, education, and solutions are at the forefront," said Chandra Vasser President of the Nissan Foundation and Nissan's first-ever Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer.

The funds will be used to defray costs such as admission, travel, and on-site lunches for students. To reserve or learn more about field trips at the Two Mississippi Museums, contact Stephanie King, field trips coordinator, at sking@mdah.ms.gov.

Museum hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. The Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum—Two Mississippi Museums—are located at 222 North Street in Jackson. For more information visit the MDAH Facebook page or email info@mdah.ms.gov.

The Nissan Foundation is awarding a total of \$848,000 in grants to 33 nonprofit organizations for its 2022 grant cycle. The nonprofit recipients are located in Southern California, Tennessee, Texas, Central Mississippi, southeast Michigan, and the New York and Atlanta metro areas—all locations where Nissan has an operational presence.

As part of its 30th-anniversary commemoration, the Nissan Foundation has been profiling the work of many of its grantees through written and video storytelling. The anniversary year will culminate with a symposium bringing together Nissan Foundation grantees and thought leaders for dialogue around the foundation's mission of building community by valuing cultural diversity.

MDAH STATISTICS

MDAH Volunteers

During 2022, MDAH volunteers served a total of 5,270 total hours. The labor value of this service is \$157,839.50 based upon the Independent Sector's current value placed on a volunteer hour of \$29.95. There were a total of 90 individual volunteers and 1 service group.

Volunteers served within three divisions of the department:

Archives and Records Services: 216 hours

Historic Preservation: 739 hours

Museum: 4,310 hours

MDAH Division Statistics

Archives and Record Services Division

Onsite patrons: 1,391

Offsite inquiries answered: 13,677

Attendees at public programs: 925

Items digitized: 21,216

Electronic assets processed (gigabytes): 125,026

Museum Division

Eudora Wetly House & Garden: 6,273

Governor's Mansion: 1,938

Grand Village of the Natchez Indians: 17,001

Historic Jefferson College: 100

Two Mississippi Museum: 66,887