

Mississippi History

MDAH

NEWSLETTER

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Remembering the Jackson Movement

“If You’re Gon’ Be a Leader, Don’t Stay Behind”—Remembering the Jackson Movement continues programs through November.

On **Wednesday, August 9**, 7–8:30 p.m., at Woodworth Chapel, Tougaloo College, a **panel discussion** will be held, entitled “Area College Students in the Freedom Struggle: The Role of the NAACP’s Youth Chapter.” Panelists include James “Sam” Bradford, Constance Slaughter-Harvey, Dr. Hollis Watkins, Dr. Gene Young, Malcolm Shepard, Frankye Adams-Johnson, and Dr. T. W. Lewis. Moderating will be Tougaloo professor Charles H. Holmes.



Activist *Joyce Ladner* in Woodworth Chapel, Tougaloo College, after her release from prison. Photo by Matt Herron.

On **Friday, September 8**, 7–8 p.m., a **reception and photograph exhibit** will be held at the Eudora Welty Public Library in downtown Jackson. Exhibited will be **photographs of the Tougaloo Nine and the Jackson Movement** from the WLBT Newsfilm collection and the Tougaloo Collection, including the Tracy Sugarman Collection, of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Photos were selected by MDAH archivist and former Tougaloo College archivist Clarence Hunter.

The Tougaloo Nine were students from historically black Tougaloo College who made

headlines when they quietly sat in at the Jackson Public Library on State Street in downtown Jackson. At that time the main branch served only white citizens; blacks were served at the George Washington Carver Library on North Mill Street. On the morning of March 27, 1961, the Tougaloo Nine visited the Carver Library to request books they knew would be unavailable there, then proceeded to the main branch, where they found books and began to read, sitting at the library tables. When police arrived and ordered the students to go to the “black library,” they refused, and were arrested and held for more than

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History Is Lunch

July 26: Mississippi State University landscape architecture professor **Michael Seymour** will talk about **Victorian gardening in Mississippi and Louisiana**.

August 2: **George Dukes**, author and retired Millsaps professor, will discuss the formation of **Mississippi soil and climate zones** and how they determined in large part the history of the state, also **native flowering plants**.

August 16: **Edward Esau**, director of the **Adams County Courthouse Records Database**

project at the Historic Natchez Foundation, will discuss the project and **court cases from the late 1790s to the mid-twentieth century** involving such notable figures as Andrew Jackson, Noah Webster, James Madison, and James Monroe.

Sessions are held from **noon until 1 p.m. at the William F. Winter Building**, 200 North Street, one block from State, across from the War Memorial Building. Coffee and bottled water are provided. For more information, please call 601-576-6857.

Coming Up

Students K-4 will learn to wash clothes using a washboard and other nineteenth-century life skills at “**Growing Up in Mississippi, 1857–1888**,” offered at the **Manship House Museum, Jackson, Tuesdays and Thursdays, September 5–September 28**, 9 a.m.–2 p.m. Programs are free, but reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations, call 601-961-4724.

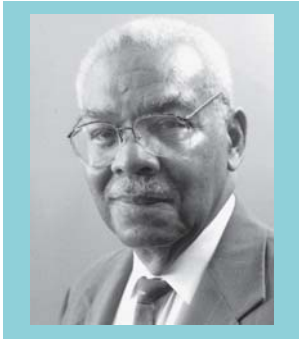
Vendors are invited to apply for spaces at the annual crafts fair, the **Copper Magnolia Festival and Flea Market**, to be held **Saturday, September 16**, at **Historic Jefferson College, Washington**. The Festival features handmade crafts, food, and music. For information call 601-442-2901. For a printable vendor application form, visit http://mdah.state.ms.us/admin/news/cmff06_app.pdf

MDAH director **H.T. Holmes** (left) presents retiring **Local Government Records Office director Bill Hanna** a \$1,000 check (from staff, Board, and friends) to go towards Hanna’s work with the needy at All Saints Episcopal Church, Jackson, where he is a deacon. Hanna had been employed at MDAH almost 26 years.



Longtime MDAH Trustee, Civil Rights Pioneer, Dies

Gilbert R. Mason, Sr., a member of the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History for more than twenty years, died on Friday, July 7, following a lengthy illness. The 77-year-old physician was a key figure in the integration of the public beaches of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, organizing the first wade-ins of the 1960s.



Mason worked to better the lives of African Americans in many areas—organizing voter registration drives, providing medical care, and working to integrate the schools. At the national level, Mason served as a school desegregation adviser to the Nixon administration.

Gilbert Rutledge Mason was born in Jackson on October 7, 1928. He earned his M.D. at Howard University in 1954 and in 1955 opened his medical practice in Biloxi, where he worked until retiring in 2002. In 2000 Mason published his memoir *Beaches, Blood, and Ballots: A Black Doctor's Civil Rights Struggle*, written with James Patterson Smith.

“Dr. Mason was my longtime friend and an inspiration to me,” said William F. Winter, president of the board of trustees. “His desire to improve his home state was boundless and he worked tirelessly to see a better day come.”

The MDAH papers of Gilbert R. Mason, Sr., of Biloxi, include correspondence, photographs, legal papers, social papers, reports, transcripts of oral histories, publications, and news clippings. The collection focuses on the activities of Dr. Mason during the civil rights movement and also contains considerable material concerning the Mason family history.

Remembering, continued

thirty-two hours.

The act of civil disobedience by the Tougaloo Nine at the State Street library was a watershed event in the civil rights movement in Mississippi, as it began the organized protests against the Jim Crow system in Jackson.

Remembering the Jackson Movement is sponsored by the Fannie Lou Hamer National Institute on Citizenship and Democracy, Jackson State University, Tougaloo College, MDAH, Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, and the Mississippi Humanities Council.

For a complete schedule of programs of *Remembering the Jackson Movement*, please visit jsums.edu/~hamer.institute or call 601-979-1564.

Florence Mars Papers

Florence Mars, who died in April 2006, donated her collection of photographic negatives, contact sheets, and original photographs to MDAH in 1982. The collection consists primarily of street scenes in Philadelphia and rural areas in Mississippi, and New Orleans architecture, parades, and jazz bands at Preservation Hall. Mars also donated papers related to her books, several phonodiscs, family photographs, and correspondence in March 1999.

National History Day

In March the Mississippi Junior Historical Society held Mississippi History Day at the University of Southern Mississippi. About 120 junior and senior high school students from across the state participated. Winners traveled to Washington, D.C., to compete at National History Day. Mississippi winners at National History Day are as follows: “The Woolworth Sit-In,” Outstanding State Junior Entry, presented by Elliot Harper, a student at Biloxi High School (teacher, Todd Boucher); and (senior group exhibit) “A Progressive Action for Desegregation,” Outstanding State Senior Entry, presented by Jayson Wirth, Ajay Mangal, James Gladden, Aaron Chu, students at Pascagoula High School (teacher, Elizabeth Green). Phyllis Jestice and Deanne Nuwer, history professors at the University of Southern Mississippi, are coordinators of Mississippi History Day and Mississippi entries in the competition. The Mississippi Historical Society and USM sponsor the Mississippi Junior Historical Society. For more information about National History Day, call Jestice or Nuwer at 601-266-4333.

The Blues in Claiborne County: From Rabbit Foot Minstrels to Blues and Cruise at Cultural Crossroads in Port Gibson continues through September 30. For more information, call 601-437-8905.