

Mississippi History

MDAH

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Mississippi's Landscapes: An Environmental History



Helm, Mississippi, during the 1927 Mississippi River flood, courtesy MDAH collection.

The Mississippi Historical Society's annual meeting will be held in Natchez **March 2-4**, and the program will explore topics related to **Mississippi's Landscapes: An Environmental History**. Historians James C. Cobb and Pete Daniel will be featured speakers, and tours will visit the William Johnson House and an exhibit, *Natchez in Historic Photographs*. For more information, visit the MDAH Web site home page and click on MHS Annual Meeting or call 601-576-6849.

History Is Lunch: February

February 1: Stuart Rockoff, historian, Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, "The Fall and Rise of the Jewish South, 1945-2005"

February 15: Joyce Dixon-Lawson, MDAH historian, African American Genealogy

February 22: Robert Parker Adams, Architect, P.A., "The Restoration of the Eudora Welty House"

The brown bag sessions are held **Wednesdays, noon-1 p.m.**,

at the **William F. Winter Archives and History Building**, 200 North Street, one block off State Street. Drinks are provided. For more information, call 601-576-6857.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Natchez Literary &
Cinema Celebration
February 23-26/
Eudora Welty House
Opening April 29-30**

Opening a Time Capsule: The Alfred Holt Stone Collection

Alfred Holt Stone, a Greenville native and prominent racial theorist, assembled during the first decade of the twentieth century a large collection of materials—3004 titles—on "The Negro and Cognate Subjects." African American historian Rayford Logan has described this period as the nadir of race relations in the United States; therefore delving into this collection is like opening a time capsule of a singular period in our nation's history. Stone donated the collection to MDAH in 1942.

In the past researchers have found the valuable collection intriguing but daunting, as the materials were not properly indexed. Now, thanks to efforts of James G. Hollandsworth, former dean of the Graduate School at the University of Southern Mississippi, a carefully annotated index is available in the MDAH Reading Room. The index will be posted on the MDAH Web site as part of the MDAH automated catalog (OPAC) in coming months.

Hollandsworth volunteered a half-day, five days a week, for fourteen months to complete the index. The bibliographic entries and annotations totaled almost 700 manuscript pages of WORD files that can be searched for individual names or words. Hollandsworth also assigned over 7,000 subject

codes to individual titles using 550 subject headings that correspond to Library of Congress practice.

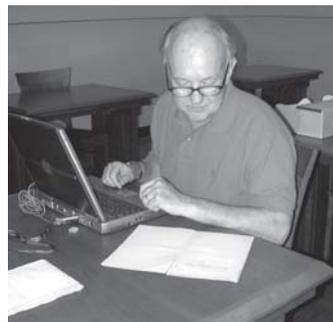
Scholars interested in ethnicity and African roots, race relations, slavery and abolitionism, and Jim Crow and civil rights will find the Stone Collection a treasure trove of primary sources.

A symposium beginning at 1 p.m. on April 8 at the William F. Winter MDAH Building, Jackson, will officially welcome the index and also examine the contents of the collection. Anne Webster, MDAH reference librarian, Hollandsworth, and former governor William F. Winter, who knew Stone when Stone was state tax collector in the 1950s, will offer comments.

The symposium's featured speaker will be John David Smith, the Charles H. Stone (no relation to Alfred Stone) Distinguished Professor of American History at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Smith's 1985 book *An*

Old Creed for the New South: Proslavery Ideology and Historiography, 1865-1918 explored racial theories and their impact on the New South. The symposium is free

and open to the public. For more information, please call 601-576-6857.



African American History: Essential Reading

American Legacy magazine suggests the following books (in this order) as the top ten essential readings in black history.

☞ *The Souls of Black Folk*, 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois

☞ *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*, Winthrop Jordan, 1968

☞ *The Myth of the Negro Past*, Melville Herskovits, 1941

☞ *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, Paula Giddings, 1984

☞ *Before the Mayflower*, Lerone Bennett, 1963

☞ *Blues People*, Amiri Baraka, 1963

☞ *Harlem Renaissance*, Nathan Huggins, 1971

☞ *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63*, Taylor Branch, 1988

☞ *Paul Robeson*, Martin Duberman, 1988

☞ *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present*, Jacqueline Jones, 1985.

The following additional volumes were suggested by the MDAH staff :

☞ *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, John Dittmer, 1994

☞ *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, and Ameri-*

can Slave/ My Bondage and My Freedom/Life and Times of Frederick Douglass

☞ *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880*, W. E. B. Du Bois, 1935

☞ *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, 1947*, or *Race and History*, 1990, John Hope Franklin

☞ *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*, Eugene Genovese, 1974

☞ *Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman*, Joyce Ladner, 1971

☞ *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow*, Leon F. Litwack, 1998

☞ *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow*, Neil R. McMillen, 1990

☞ *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw*, Theodore Rosengarten, 1975

☞ *Mississippi: The Closed Society*, James W. Silver, 1966

☞ *Up From Slavery*, Booker T. Washington, 1901

☞ *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890*, Vernon L. Wharton, 1947

☞ *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, 1933, or *The History of the Negro Church*, Carter G. Woodson, 1922

☞ *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, C. Vann Woodward, 1955

Black History Video

As part of its expanding outreach programs, the Museum of Mississippi History (formerly Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History) presents a tribute in the form of a thirty-minute video entitled "Black Mississippians Who Shaped Our History." It will be broadcast on Mississippi Public Broadcasting (check MPB calendars). Enrichment activities accompanying this program are available to teachers beginning February 1. To order materials, please email ocmuseum@mdah.state.ms.us or phone 601-576-6920.

Origins of Black History Month

In 1926, during the zenith of the Harlem Renaissance, historian Carter G. Woodson launched a movement to observe "Negro History Week." Woodson felt that an annual celebration of the achievements of the African American should occur during the month of February, since both the gifted abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln were born in that month. That week grew to a month, and now black history is integrated into all studies, although special attention is given it still in February. (Source: Biography Resource Center).

Clifford Farr Sessions, 1932-2006

Cliff Sessions, a wire service reporter who covered the civil rights struggle in its most tumultuous era in his native Mississippi, died December 24 in Biloxi.

A native of Bolton, he graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1955. As UPI bureau manager 1957-1964, Sessions and reporters at the Jackson office covered stories that local news organizations preferred to ignore: Freedom Rides, the Mack Charles Parker case, and the integration of the University of Mississippi. In early 1958, he broke the story that Mississippi's white Citizens' Councils had initiated a "white supremacy indoctrination campaign" in Mississippi high schools.

He became acquainted with Medgar Evers and in 1958 wrote the first in-depth profile of the emerging civil rights leader.

During the sixties he worked in the U.S. Justice Department and was spokesman in the aftermath of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

He co-founded *the National Journal* in 1969 and was deputy assistant secretary for public affairs at the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services).