

MISSISSIPPI HISTORY

NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

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More than \$3M in Grants Awarded

At a special meeting on December 4 the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History awarded more than \$3 million on behalf of the Community Heritage Preservation Grant program to twenty-two preservation and restoration projects from across the state. The Community Heritage Preservation Grant program, authorized and funded through the Mississippi Legislature, helps preserve and restore historic courthouses and schools and, in Certified Local Government communities, other historic properties. Over the life of the program the department has awarded more than \$35 million to 225 projects.

“The Legislature has saved hundreds of significant Mississippi properties through this program,” said MDAH director Katie Blount. “The Department of Archives and History is grate-

ful for the Legislature’s support and pleased to be able to help preserve these local treasures.”

The grant awards are as follows:

- **Auburn House, Natchez, Adams County—\$103,455.** For repair of balconies, columns, gutter system, re-glazing of windows, and new paint.

- **Magnolia Hall, Natchez, Adams County—\$209,707.** For restoration of exterior millwork, masonry, stucco, and plaster.

- **Mary Ricks Thornton Cultural Center, Kosciusko, Attala County—\$26,400.** For construction of new ADA-compliant restroom and exterior and interior ramps.

- **Bolivar County Courthouse, Cleveland, Bolivar County—\$128,000.** For restoration of the terracotta front entrance.

- **I.T. Montgomery Home,**



The former Meridian Police Station Headquarters, a Modernist building designed by Mississippian Chris Risher, received a grant for \$300,000.

- **Mound Bayou, Bolivar County—\$20,000.** For stabilization of the structure.

- **J.M. Ewing Administration Building, Wesson, Copiah County—\$100,000.** For roof repair and replacement.

- **Millsaps Hotel, Hazlehurst, Copiah County—\$110,160.** For termite treatment, interior

stabilization, and exterior masonry restoration.

- **Eaton School, Hattiesburg, Forrest County—\$200,000.** For exterior bracing.

- **South Forrest Attendance Center Auditorium, Brooklyn, Forrest County—\$217,248.** For roof and classroom remediation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MDAH Creates Evers Scholar Program

A new program at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History will facilitate increased use of the department’s holdings and the publication of original research findings. The Medgar and Myrlie Evers Research Scholars Program, a collaboration between MDAH and the Medgar and Myrlie

Evers Institute supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, encourages work in the history of civil and human rights at the state archives in Jackson.

A stipend of \$4,000 will be awarded to the Evers Scholar. The funds may be used to cover travel, housing, and other expenses, including costs

of research.

“The intent is to allow young university faculty and upper-level graduate students to settle in and complete a substantial project,” said Archives and Records Services director Julia Young. “You really need several weeks to take full advantage of the world-class civil

rights holdings of MDAH “

Candidates will submit a CV along with a detailed project description, sample of their work, breakdown of proposed expenses, and references. For an application and more information, visit, mdah.state.ms.us. Applications must be received by March 11, 2016.

Nominations Sought for Hall of Fame

Nominations are being sought for the 2016 class of the Mississippi Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame honors women and men who made noteworthy contributions to the state's history. Admission into the Hall of Fame is the most significant recognition granted by the state through the Department of Archives and History. Consideration for the Hall of Fame takes place only once every five years, at which time no more than five people may be elected.

The most recent additions, elected in 2011, were medical pioneer Arthur Guyton, civil rights leader Fannie Lou Hamer, groundbreaking judge Lucy Somerville Howorth, author Walker Percy, and musician Muddy Waters.

Any Mississippi—native or adopted—deceased at least five years may be nominated

for the Hall of Fame. Nominees are voted on by the nine-member Board of Trustees of the Department of Archives and History. The deadline for nominations is October 1, and elections will be held at a special meeting in December. The nomination form is on the MDAH website, mdah.state.ms.us.

The Hall of Fame was established in 1902, the department's first year of existence.

Early inductees included

L.Q.C. Lamar, U.S. Senator E.C. Walthall, and president



Portrait of 2011 inductee Lucy Somerville Howorth.

of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. Now the Hall of Fame

contains 128 distinguished Mississippians, including Gulf Coast artist Walter Anderson, author Eudora Welty, civil rights hero Medgar Evers, Choctaw chief Pushmataha, early feminist Nellie Nugent Somerville, physician Arthur C. Guyton, and federal judge Burnita Shelton Matthews.

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History is the second-oldest state department of archives and history in the United States. The department collects, preserves, and provides access to the archival resources of the state. In addition, the department administers various museums and historic sites, and oversees statewide programs for historic preservation, state and local government records management, and publications. For more information call 601-576-6850.

GRANTS, continued from p. 1

tion, and drainage and exterior work.

- **J.Z. George Elementary School, Jackson, Hinds County—\$120,428.** For window restoration.
- **LaPointe-Krebs House, Pascagoula, Jackson County—\$150,000.** For roof replacement and chimney repair.
- **Lauderdale County Courthouse, Meridian, Lauderdale County—\$94,056.** For roof replacement.
- **Former Meridian Police Station Headquarters, Meridian, Lauderdale County—\$300,000.** For new roofing system.
- **Leake County Courthouse, Carthage, Leake County—\$160,000.** For window restoration.
- **Elizabeth Cottage, Brookhaven, Lincoln County—\$77,720.** For restoration of second-floor bedrooms, bathroom, and hallway.
- **Hugh Craft Cottage, Holly Springs, Marshall County—\$61,000.** For exterior restoration.
- **Monroe County Archives and Elec-**

tions Annex, Aberdeen, Monroe County—\$147,549. For site work, roof replacement, and interior rehabilitation.

• **Marks Rosenwald School, Marks, Quitman County—\$260,000.** For reconstruction of the masonry, foundation, and roof frame, and new floors and roof.

• **Senatobia High School, Senatobia, Tate County—\$288,500.** For restoration of masonry and doors and new roof.

• **Tunica County Courthouse, Tunica, Tunica County—\$67,710.** For HVAC system boiler.

• **Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation, Vicksburg, Warren County—\$145,200.** For roof replacement.

• **Oakes African American Cultural Center, Yazoo City, Yazoo County—\$125,000.** For roof replacement and exterior repairs.

Grant awards are paid on a reimbursable basis upon the successful completion of the entire project or at the time of the completion 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.

In reviewing and evaluating the grants, the Board of Trustees of MDAH attempted to balance the geographical distribution of grant awards.

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, application for CLG status may be made to the National Park Service through the 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.

To learn more about the CLG program, contact Barry White in the Historic Preservation Division of MDAH, 601-576-6940 or by email at bwhite@mdah.state.ms.us.

Constitution, Flag in Traveling Exhibit

On December 10, 1817, Mississippi became the nation's twentieth state. In 2016 a new traveling exhibit featuring the first US flag to include the new state and Mississippi's first constitution will tour the state to celebrate the approaching bicentennial.

"Thousands of Mississippians will see these treasures in their courthouses, libraries, and other community spaces," said Mississippi Department of Archives and History director Katie Blount. "We are excited to partner with local groups in commemorating two hundred years of statehood by taking these incredibly significant artifacts directly to the people."

The state of Mississippi was founded upon the 1817 constitution. On March 1, 1817, President James Madison signed legislation enabling inhabitants of the western portion of the Mississippi Territory to form a constitution and state government, while the eastern part would become a new territory. Forty-eight convention delegates assembled near Natchez in Washington on July 7, drafting the constitution and, after weeks of deliberation, adopting it on August 15.

"It's amazing to look at the actual paper with the signatures of those early Mississippians," said MDAH Archives and Records Services director Julia Marks Young. "There is no substitute for the firsthand connection to history that original documents like this can give us."

The rare 20-star flag is one of only a handful known to exist. It was acquired by



MDAH in 2001 after having been discovered in an antique shop in Massachusetts. An extensive conservation was completed earlier this year on the large banner, funded by a grant from the Billups-Garth Foundation in Columbus and private donations. The flag has been mounted inside a frame to protect it and allow it to be displayed upright.

"There were only two United States flags used before this one," said MDAH director of collections Cindy Gardner. "The first had thirteen stars and stripes to represent the original colonies and flew from 1777 until 1795. The second flag added two stars and two stripes and flew until ours became the official United States Flag on April 13, 1818."

MDAH will deliver the flag and constitution along with interpretive signs and other

information and resources. The artifacts will be exhibited in each of ten communities for one to two days and will be accompanied by two MDAH staff. Communities interested in partnering with the department to host the exhibit can find site specifications and other details at the MDAH website, mdah.state.ms.us, or by contacting Cindy Gardner at cgardner@mdah.state.ms.us or 601-576-6901.

Natchez Literary, Cinema Celebration Feb. 26-27

"Natchez at 300: A River Runs by It" will be the title of the 27th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, which will honor the tricentennial of the founding of the city. Senior associate director of the Center for the Study of the American South William Ferris will present the keynote address on Friday, February 26, "The Mississippi River: Memory and Sense of Place." Other featured speakers that day include United States Senator Thad Cochran and scholars G. Douglas Inglis, Christopher

Morris, Jim Wiggins, Lynette Tanner, and Dennis Harried.

John M. Barry, author of *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927*, will be the keynote speaker on Saturday, February 27. Other presentations that day include the awarding of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award to journalist Jerry Mitchell and author Suzanne Marrs and a panel discussion moderated by University of Mississippi professor of history emeritus David Sansing.

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the Mississippi Humanities Council, and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, with support from Natchez National Historical Park.

Most programs of the NLCC are free of charge. Ticketed events on February 26 include a reception at the Natchez Museum of Afro-American Culture (\$10 at the door) and a musical interlude

at the historic Temple B'Nai Israel (\$10 at the door).

Ticketed events on February 27 include the luncheon "Be Inspired: The Mighty Mississippi and her Food" at the Carriage House at Stanton Hall, that will feature foods of the old Natchez District (\$30 per ticket) and a benefit cocktail buffet honoring speakers and award winners at the Elms (\$60).

For more information or to purchase tickets, call 601-446-1208 or email NLCC@colin.edu.

Evening of Literature, Theatre at Old Capitol

A one-night-only theatrical performance at the Old Capitol Museum will feature the work of some of the state's literary icons. Scenes from William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, Tennessee Williams, and Richard Wright will be performed alongside works from contemporary Mississippi writers such as Natasha Trethewey and John Grisham in "Mississippi Talking: An Evening with New Stage Theatre." The gala event will be held January 14 from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

"This is a wonderful way to experience literature, theater, and history together," said Old Capitol Museum director Lauren Miller. "From the humor of Willie Morris's grade-school reminiscence in *Good Ole Boy* to the determination of Margaret Walker's poem "For My People," this program demonstrates the scope and power of our state's writers."

The pieces will be performed by Chris Ambrose, Matthew Denton, Allison Heinz, and Bri Thomas from the New Stage Theatre Intern Company. "Some scenes include all four actors, while others feature only a single performer," said New

Stage education director Chris Roebuck. "Mississippi Talking is designed around minimal set pieces and relies on the performers' voices and bodies to tell the story, letting the audience fill in the details for themselves."

Conceived as a traveling show for school groups twenty-five years ago, Mississippi Talking has evolved with new selections and authors ranging from Shelby Foote to Beth Henley. This year's version was inspired by New Stage Theatre's main stage season, which has already featured Henley's *Crimes of the Heart* and Grisham's *A Time to Kill*.

"As we celebrate fifty seasons of New Stage we wanted to highlight Mississippi's rich storytelling and literary traditions," said New Stage artistic director Francine

Reynolds. "The slate of plays we've chosen celebrates the past and honors our Mississippi roots, and Mississippi Talking complements that focus."

Four of the ten authors featured in "Mississippi Talking" are also members of the Mississippi Hall of Fame—Faulkner, Welty, Williams, and Wright—which honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the state. Portraits of Hall of Fame members hang in the Senate Chamber and other areas of the Old Capitol.

In addition to the performance the evening includes wine and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets are \$40

each. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the performance will begin at 6 p.m. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 601-576-6920.



An Evening with
New Stage Theatre

January 14, 2016
5:30–8 p.m.

Donation Strengthens Gulf Coast Photo Holdings

Long-time postcard collector and Biloxi native Randy Randazzo has donated more than 5,000 postcards and negatives of south Mississippi to the Mississippi Department of Archives and history. This new collection provides a rare look at life at the turn of the twentieth century through 1960 with 4,322 color and black and white postcards of shipbuilding, hotels, hurricanes, agriculture, seafood factories, Camp Shelby, Keesler Air Base, and Ship Island. Back Bay factories, regatta races, the annual blessing of the fleet, and other moments largely lost to time are the subject of the 751 negatives from 1920s and 30s Biloxi and Gulf Coast.

"For many years we had heard about this premier collection of postcards documenting Mississippi's

Gulf Coast," said MDAH Archives and Records Services director Julia Marks Young. "The Randazzo Collection is a very generous donation and will be a superb addition to the department's holdings."

A ninth generation Biloxian, Randazzo credits his interest in history and collecting to an uncle. After an army career, graduate school in Texas, and a move to Atlanta, he began collecting postcards in 1992 when he came across a set of antique postcards of Biloxi and Pass Christian while Christmas shopping.

"I started seriously collecting in 1993 and for many years would arrange my travel schedule around postcard conventions," said Randazzo. "After twenty years and over 4,000 cards it was hard to find something I didn't have, and I was ready



MDAH Photo Curator Jeff Rogers examines postcards from the Randazzo Collection at the state archives.

to donate them. I was very impressed with the level of professionalism at the state archives and that they will be put online so people can access them but the cards will be safe from hurricanes."

The collection is currently being cataloged and will then be scanned. When complete, the Randazzo Collection will join the forty collections currently featured in MDAH's Digital Archives.

Underneath Capitol Dome? A Second Dome!

Lawson Newman, architect for the repair and restoration project underway at the Mississippi State Capitol, wrote the following piece for an exhibit on the building's domes that is on display at the site and that was funded by the Mississippi Legislature. It is reprinted here with permission.

When Theodore Link was selected to design Mississippi's new State Capitol at the turn of the twentieth century, he joined a relatively small group of architects who designed state capitols around the country and helped Americans better understand the function of government and the role it plays in our society.

During that era, as our nation's westward expansion slowed and its borders became more established, people began to identify more readily as Americans, as citizens not only of a state, but of a nation. The architecture of civic buildings came to be recognized as an important representation of this common identity, and American architects seemed to unanimously agree that its appropriate expression lay in a new application of the classical style of ancient Greece and Rome.

In neoclassical design, a building's form expresses, and even celebrates, its functional organization. The design of the Mississippi State Capitol expresses important ideas about the relationship of the branches of government to themselves and to the people they serve. When it was built, all three branches of state government (legislative, executive and judicial) as well as many departments were housed inside the capitol. In order to avoid implying that one branch was more powerful than another, each was given a space in the building designed to adequately serve its needs and appropriately express the dignity of its role.

Linking the capitol's various functions and serving as a grand, open, public space is the impressive central rotunda topped by the main dome. From outside and inside, the main dome draws attention to the rotunda and signifies the central role that the people of Mississippi play in their government.

With the construction of the dome at our nation's Capitol in 1863, large central domes came to be considered the defining architectural elements of civic buildings, especially state capitols. In his design for the Mississippi State Capitol's main dome, Link employed a strategy dating back to the Renaissance that utilizes what is often called

a "double shell" design to solve two problems inherent to the design of large domes.

"Double shell" refers to two layers, or shells, that compose the dome, one visible from inside and one from outside. The two

proportions for the dome's interior space and its exterior form. A drum also provides an ideal location for windows, which would be very difficult to incorporate in the surface of the dome itself. When the drum is surrounded



The exterior of the Mississippi State Capitol (above) shows the main dome, but the interior dome seen from the rotunda is actually a lower, second dome as illustrated by the cutaway drawing at right.

shells can be designed to help support each other, solving a structural challenge. The two shells also help resolve the conflict that arises from a need for different proportions on the dome's interior and exterior. In order to achieve the height necessary for viewing from a distance, a dome should rise high above the body of the building. When viewed from inside, though, a dome proportioned for exterior viewing would appear much too high. Conversely, a dome appropriately proportioned for interior viewing would appear too short and squat on the exterior. The double shell design allows the lower shell to be properly proportioned to the interior space it covers, while the outer shell can be properly proportioned for exterior viewing.

The Mississippi Capitol's main dome shares another characteristic with many other capitol domes: it sits on top of a cylindrical element called a drum. The drum provides the height needed to achieve the appropriate

by a colonnade like the one at the Mississippi Capitol, these windows allow natural light to filter into the rotunda.

Steel trusses support both shells of the Mississippi Capitol's dome. An ornamental plaster ceiling, suspended from the trusses above, forms the interior shell visible from the rotunda below. Interlocking glazed terracotta units, connected to the steel trusses below, form the visible surface of the dome's exterior shell.

As Theodore Link intended, the Mississippi State Capitol's main dome stands as its most impressive and memorable architectural element. The rotunda beneath links the various functions and spaces housed in the capitol and serves as its center of activity. As the building's chief public space, the rotunda symbolizes the central role Mississippi's citizens play in their government and its main dome reinforces this symbolism as it towers over the rest of the building.



Mild temperatures brought thousands of students and adults to the Native American Days program at Winterville Mounds on October 28-30. Participants included members of the Choctaw, Houma, and Sioux Nations, the Mississippi Natural Science Museum, and the Southern Traditional Archery Association.



Historical Society Conference March 3-5

The 2016 Mississippi Historical Society annual meeting will focus on preserving Mississippi history from the points of view of two professions—archivists and historians. Attendees will be able to choose in-depth presentations from between these two tracks. The conference will be held March 3-5 in Jackson.

“We are excited with what has been accomplished by partnerships between archivists, historians, and students from Phi Alpha Theta,” said Dennis J. Mitchell president of the Mississippi Historical Society. “We hope that these relationships provide a unique view for meeting attendees and that these relationships can continue into the future.”

At the Friday luncheon Victoria E. Bynum will present “The Free State of Jones: Legend, History, and—Soon—a Movie.” Bynum is distinguished professor emeritus of history at

Texas State University—San Marcos, and author of *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War*.

“I look forward to speaking to the Mississippi Historical Society about this fascinating Civil War insurrection and post-war mixed-race community that has long been misunderstood—or simply unknown—by most of the public,” said Bynum. “The true story of the Free State of Jones challenges the very core of Lost Cause history, bringing to life white landowning, non-slaveholding families who acted aggressively in their own interests—interests that did not coincide with those of slaveholders.”

Participants can tour the Eudora Welty House and Garden and the Medgar Evers Home Museum on Friday afternoon.

In February the society will announce the winner of the McLemore Prize for best Mis-

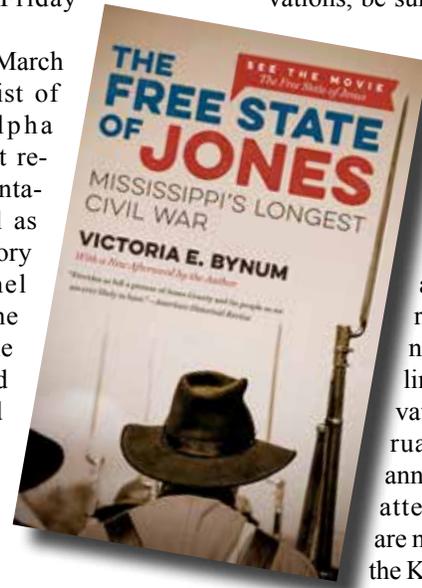
issippi History book, and that author will be the keynote speaker at the banquet on Friday evening.

Saturday, March 5, will consist of the Phi Alpha Theta student research presentations as well as a Local History Matters panel discussing the history of the King Edward Hotel and downtown Jackson. The Bettersworth Award for outstanding history teacher and other awards will be presented Saturday afternoon.

Rooms are reserved for Thursday evening, March 3 and Friday evening, March 4 at the

King Edward Hotel, 235 West Capitol Street in Jackson, 601-353-5464. When making reservations, be sure to specify

the MHS rate of \$129 plus tax for a single room and \$139 plus tax for a double room per night. Deadline for reservations is February 18. For annual meeting attendees who are not staying at the King Edward, daily event parking will be available at a current rate of \$7.00 plus tax per day. For more information call 601-576-6849 or email mhs@mdah.state.ms.us.



MDAH Online Teacher Resources Win Award

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History received the silver award in the Digital Education category of the Southeast Museums Conferences’s inaugural Technology Competition. The SEMC’s annual meeting was held in Jacksonville, Florida in October. MDAH education director Stacey Everett and assistant director Claire Gwaltney accepted the award for their online teaching unit *The World War II Home Front in Mississippi*.

The teaching unit is one of five available on MDAH’s website. Others include *Civil Rights in Mississippi*, *Freedom Riders: Journey for Change*, *Slavery in Mississippi*, *Winterville Mounds*,



United States Army officer identification card from the World War II Home Front in Mississippi teaching unit on the MDAH website.

and the *Native American Mississippian World*. More than forty single-day lesson plans on a variety of topics are also available.

MDAH has developed

these classroom lesson plans and teaching units for teachers of grades K-12. All include primary source materials and are interdisciplinary in nature. Each unit and plan is also

based on the Mississippi Department of Education Frameworks and Common Core Curriculum.

“These teaching units are great resources for all educators in the state,” Everett said. “We hope everyone will take advantage of them.”

The Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) is a nonprofit membership organization of museums, museum staff, independent professionals, and corporate partners. SEMC aims to provide opportunities for educational development and improve the interchange of ideas.

SEMC created the competition to recognize excellence in the use of technology by southeastern museums.

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Chris Goodwin, editor

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Katie Blount, director

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Preservation Grants**
- **Evers Scholar Program**
- **1817 Constitution, Rare US Flag To Travel**

HISTORY IS LUNCH CALENDAR

Programs in the *History Is Lunch* series are held noon Wednesdays in the William F. Winter Archives and History Building (WFW) or Old Capitol Museum (OCM). There is no admission charge.

For information call 601-576-6998 or email info@mdah.state.ms.us.

January 13—Jack Elliott Jr. will present “Tricentennial, Bicentennial—Fort Natchez and the Birth of Mississippi.” WFW

January 20—James G. Thomas Jr. will discuss his new book *Conversations with Barry Hannah*. Sales and signing to follow. WFW

January 27—Wirt Yerger will discuss his book *A Courageous Cause: A Personal Story of Modern Republicanism's Birth*

1956 to 1966 in Mississippi. Sales and signing to follow. WFW

February 3—Senator David L. Jordan will discuss his book *From the Mississippi Cotton Fields To the State Senate: A Memoir*. Sales and signing to follow. WFW

February 10—MDAH archivist Chloe Edwards will present “The Life of Paula Ackerman.” WFW

February 17—Clay Williams will present “The End of Spanish Rule and Beginning of Mississippi Territory.” WFW

February 24—C. Douglas Inglis will present “Colonial Mississippi in Spanish Archives.” WFW

2016 Welty Fellowship Nominations Invited

Applications are being accepted through February 26 for the 2016 Eudora Welty Research Fellowship to encourage and support use of the Eudora Welty Collection at MDAH in Jackson. One competitive fellowship of \$2,000 is

available to a student enrolled in a graduate program at an accredited college or university, with preference given to doctoral students.

For more information and an application, go to www.mdah.state.ms.us/fellowship.pdf.

Comments Sought on Preservation Programs

The MDAH Historic Preservation Division is developing its priorities and objectives for Fiscal Year 2016 Historic Preservation Fund-assisted programs. Suggestions and comments from the public in regard to proposed priorities, objectives, and projects are invited.

Annual grants-in-aid are made available through a competitive application process to Certified Local Governments. Historic preservation projects benefiting minorities and the disabled are encouraged. Address comments to Director, Historic Preservation Division, MDAH, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0571.