

Moon Rocks, State Flag Flown in Space Part of Museum Collection

There's a little piece of the moon—several, actually—in Mississippi. Astronauts from the Apollo 11 moon flight in 1969 brought back rocks from the moon's surface. The small pieces of rock were encased in protective spheres and President Richard Nixon presented plaques with the rocks as well as small state flags that made the journey through space to all fifty states that same year. Mississippi governor John Bell Williams donated the plaque to the Department of Archives and History on December 23, 1969. Accompanying the plaque is the text, "These black chips are part of the Moon's surface picked up by Astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin."



In 1973, another plaque featuring a flag and a larger moon rock (pictured at right) was donated by NASA from the Apollo 17 moon mission. The plaque for the later acquisition reads "This fragment is a portion of a rock from the Taurus Littrow Valley of the Moon."



Although neither artifact is on display currently, appointments to view the moon rocks and flags at the Charlotte Capers Archives and History Building in downtown Jackson can be made for Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the Museum Division. To learn more, contact Cindy Gardner at 601-576-6901.

MDAH Completes Restoration of Civil War–Era Coker House



The Department of Archives and History has completed its restoration of one of the state's most significant structures associated with the Civil War. The Coker House is located on the southern portion of the Champion Hill battlefield, which is a National Historic Landmark. Fought on May 16, 1863, the battle was a pivotal engagement in the Vicksburg Campaign. The Coker House sustained fire from both Federal and Confederate artillery and served as a field hospital.

The Coker House was built in 1852 in the vernacular Greek Revival architecture style used in many planters' houses and town houses in the Deep South. The floor plan

involves the typical wide center hall with two matching rooms on either side.

Jackson architect Robert Parker Adams oversaw the restoration, which began December 1, 2008. The restoration incorporated

"... for over an hour we loaded our guns and killed each other as fast as we could. I've been in ... greater battles than Champion Hill, but only once did I see two lines of blue and gray stand close together and fire into each other's faces for an hour and a half."

Capt. Sam Byers, 5th Iowa Infantry

as much of the original materials of the house as could be saved. Interpretive signage placing the Battle of Champion Hill in the larger Vicksburg Campaign is being fabricated now and will be

installed later this fall.

The Coker House is located about three miles east of Edwards on Highway 467 in front of the Cal-Maine Foods plant. Visitors are welcome from sunup to sundown. There is no charge. For more information, call 601-446-6502.

BROADCAST PREMIERE!

Don't miss *Building Blocks* on Mississippi Public Broadcasting at 9 p.m. on August 25. The documentary on the reclamation of historic properties and cultural institutions on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the wake of Hurricane Katrina was produced by MDAH with support from a federal Preserve America grant.

AUGUST MDAH CALENDAR

GREENVILLE

Winterville Mounds

Highway 1 North
662-334-4684
info@wintervillemounds.com

Saturday, August 8, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. *Family Craft Day.* All ages will work together to make Native American pottery, jewelry, and dolls.

JACKSON

History Is Lunch Series

Noon–1 p.m., William F. Winter Archives and History Building
200 North Street
601-576-6998

Wednesday, August 5—James Hollandsworth presents “Unlikely Team of Rivals: W.E.B. Du Bois, Alfred Holt Stone, and Booker T. Washington.”

Wednesday, August 12—Architectural historian Todd Sanders will talk about and show

images from his new book, *Jackson's North State Street.*

Wednesday, August 26—Blues historian Scott Barretta and Joby Martin will discuss the Mississippi Blues Trail, which has dedicated more than seventy markers around the state.

Eudora Welty House
1119 Pinehurst Street
601-353-7762
info@eudoraweltyhouse.com

The Welty House is now offering tours on Tuesdays as well as Wednesday–Friday. Call to make your reservation.

NATCHEZ

Grand Village of the Natchez Indians
400 Jefferson Davis Blvd.
601-446-6502
info@natchezgrandvillage.com

Thursday, August 20, 6:30–8

p.m. *Black Indians: An American Story* will be shown, with a discussion of the film to follow. This documentary brings to light a forgotten part of America's past—the cultural and racial fusion of Native Americans and African Americans.

WASHINGTON

Historic Jefferson College
Highway 61 North
601-442-2901
info@jeffersoncollege.com

Saturday, August 15, 10–11:30 a.m. (ages 6–8) and 2–3:30 p.m. (ages 9–12). *EXPLORE! Rocks & Minerals.* Diamonds make great gifts, and talc is nice after a bath, but did you know they are the hardest and softest minerals? Find out how rocks are made and learn to identify different kinds. \$10 pre-registration required.

Mississippi History Store Closing Its Doors Next Month

The Mississippi History Store will close its main branch in the William F. Winter Archives and History Building on September 30 due to low sales. Most items in the store will be half-price beginning Monday, August 3.

Sale items will include Walter Anderson prints and posters, Mississippi memorabilia, holiday ornaments and decorations, and Mississippi books. For more information call 601-576-6921.

The store will maintain its branches in the Eudora Welty House and Old Capitol Museum and continue to take telephone and mail orders.

