

Director Chosen for Old Capitol

Clay Williams has been named director of the Old Capitol Museum. Williams has been with the Department of Archives and History since 1999, serving first as director of exhibits for the Old Capitol Museum, then as project liaison for the Old Capitol Restoration after Hurricane Katrina forced the site to close. As director he will oversee the restoration of the National Historic Landmark building and its reopening as a museum focusing on government in action.

“We could not have hoped for a better-prepared person for this position,” said Lucy Allen, MDAH Museum Division director. “Clay has worked on this project from the beginning, and no one is more knowledgeable about the restoration or the new museum.”

From 1999 to 2005 Williams oversaw the production of many award-winning exhibits for the Old Capitol Museum, including *Mississippi: Outpost of Majestic Spain, Re-*



membering Welty, Pride of the Fleet: The USS Mississippi, and Two Rivers Unleashed. He has worked closely with Formations, the Portland-based firm in charge of designing the exhibits for the museum.

Williams earned a bachelor's degree in political science in 1993 and a master's degree in history and public policy administration in 1995, both at Mississippi State University. Williams's first book, *Battle for the Southern Frontier: The Creek War and the War of 1812*, co-authored with former MDAH staff member Mike Bunn, will be published this month by The History Press.

Mound Rest Area Honors Former Director

The newly opened rest area on U.S. Highway 49 at the Pocahontas Indian mound has been named for three people instrumental in saving the historic site from development. The Capers-Blake-Scales rest area honors the late Charlotte Capers, director of the Department of Archives and History from 1955 to 1969; Ed Blake, a local historian who is writing a book on the small community and a longtime advocate of reopening the rest area; and Greg Scales, who is organizing volunteers to staff it.

“Without the intervention of Charlotte Capers decades ago when Highway 49 was being widened, this site would not exist today,” said Board of Trustees president emeritus William F. Winter. “We are grateful for the Department of Transportation for working with us to preserve the mound.”

The rest area was dedicated at a ceremony on April 16 attended by Winter, MDAH director H.T. Holmes, Native American tribal



representatives, Federal Highway Administration officials, and other distinguished guests.

Recent investigations place the Pocahontas mound between 600 and 1,000 years old. The mound, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was a burial and ceremonial site used by Indians who inhabited the region thousands of years ago.

HJC Draws Crowd for Black and Blue Civil War Event



More than 200 people came to Historic Jefferson College last month for living history demonstrations of the many aspects of the black experience during the Civil War. Historians and reenactors presented programs throughout the afternoon. Organizers hope to make it an annual event, and planning is underway for 2009.

Unique Flag-quilt Donated



A quilt made from a circa 1925 U.S. flag has been donated to MDAH by descendants of its maker. The quilt is thought to have been made by Alice Coker Bolling from a flag flown over the Mississippi State Capitol and given to her husband. Holding the quilt are (from left) family members Jill Marshall of Austin, Texas; Samuel B. Bolling II of Mobile, Alabama; Roxie Parks of Clinton, Mississippi; Susan Marshall and Pat Marshall of Austin; and Bettye Bolling of Mobile.

Bo Diddley, 1928–2008

Bo Diddley, a seminal figure in blues and rock and roll, died



June 1 at his home in Archer, Florida. Born Ellas Bates in McComb, Mississippi, on December 30, 1928, he took the name Ellis McDaniel after being adopted by his mother's cousin. When he was a boy his

family moved to Chicago, and it was there he developed his distinctive rhythmic guitar style that would influence generations of musicians.

Diddley was honored twice in 2007 by his native state, receiving a Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts and being featured on a Mississippi Blues Trail marker in his hometown honoring him "as a founder of rock and roll."

MDAH Calendar of Events

JACKSON

History is Lunch Series
Noon–1 p.m. at the William F. Winter Archives and History Building
200 North Street
601-576-6998

Wednesday, July 9—
Author Noel Polk, professor of English at Mississippi State University, will discuss his father's distinctive southern ways.

Wednesday, July 23—
University of North Carolina–Greensboro professor of history Charles Bolton will discuss the biography of William F. Winter he is writing.

Manship House Museum
420 E. Fortification
601-961-4724

Monday, July 14, 21, and 28, 10-11 a.m.—Summer

Workshops for Children.
Learn about life in the nineteenth century through crafts and hands-on activities. For ages 5–12. Free, reservations required.

GREENVILLE

Winterville Mounds
Highway 1 North
662-334-4684

Monday–Friday, July 7–11, 10 a.m.–noon—Winterville Adventures, a series of workshops for children ages 6–12. Free of charge.

WASHINGTON

Historic Jefferson College
Highway 61 North
601-442-2901

July 9–11—Civil War Adventure Camp, for children ages 9–12. Free of charge.

Editor retiring after three decades

Chrissy Wilson retired June 30 after thirty years of service to MDAH and twenty years as editor of this newsletter. Taking the helm from legendary founding editor Charlotte Capers, Wilson faced a readership who expected more than just news and events of the department. She rose to the challenge, offering book reviews, dispatches from the music world, and compelling photographs of life in Mississippi. She will return to MDAH in August to oversee several special projects, including the popular History is Lunch Series.