History, Civil Rights Museums Funded

The Department of Archives and History will oversee construction of the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Museum of Mississippi History, with the goal of opening both in 2017 as centerpieces of the state’s bicentennial celebration. The 2011 Legislature and Governor Haley Barbour worked together to provide $40 million in bond funding for the projects.

The Museum of Mississippi History will tell the story of the state from prehistory through the current day. The civil rights museum will focus on the period 1945–70 and tell the story of the struggle for equal rights and fair treatment under the law. The Mississippi Civil Rights Museum will be the nation’s first state-sponsored civil rights museum.

In his State of the State address in January, Governor Barbour recommended joining the Museum of Mississippi History that was being planned by MDAH with the proposed civil rights museum, allowing cost savings through shared collection storage areas, artifact conservation labs, classroom and auditorium space, parking garage, store, and other features. The department was given oversight of the civil rights museum with House Bill 1463, which also provided initial funding to construct the two museums and established their location in downtown Jackson on the same block as the William F. Winter Archives and History Building. Total cost of the two museums is expected to top $70 million, with a significant amount of the funding for exhibits coming from private sources.

“Governor Barbour and the Legislature could not have provided a more appropriate project to build the state’s bicentennial celebration around,” said MDAH board of trustees president Kane Ditto. “These two museums will give Mississippians the opportunity to look honestly at our past and with hope to our future.”

Although the projects are in different stages of development, plans are moving forward to design the buildings, gather artifacts, develop exhibits, and construct the museums and museum complex.

MUSEUM OF MISSISSIPPI HISTORY

The state history museum’s collection dates back to artifacts acquired in the early days of

New Database of Historic Resources Online

A new online resource provides unprecedented amounts of information on the state’s historic sites, from photographs and blueprints to professional reports to digital maps. In addition to basic architectural data, the department’s Historic Resources Database contains images of buildings across Mississippi, plus information such as drawings, newspaper clippings, and other historical documents related to the structures. Users can search by location, style, age, and other categories.

With more than twenty thousand images—and more being added daily—the database provides visual information that would otherwise be difficult or time-consuming to find. Thousands of documents that were previously available only as hard copies are now available with the click of a button. These include all of Mississippi’s National Register of Historic Places nominations, which contain photographs and a narrative history of each property.

“The HR Database is the Google of historic sites in Mississippi,” said MDAH chief architectural historian Jennifer Baughn. “It’s the place to start when researching a property.”

In 1998 staff in the department’s Historic Preservation Division began digitizing information from the more than 40,000 files relating to properties around the state to
Over $2 Million Awarded to Civil Rights Sites

The Delta courthouse where the Emmett Till murder trial was held, the Jackson home of NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers, and the Gulf Coast office of physician Gilbert Mason are among eleven sites across the state receiving grants from the Department of Archives and History. At its quarterly meeting Friday, July 22 the board of trustees approved more than $2 million in awards through the Mississippi Civil Rights Historical Sites program funded by the Mississippi Legislature.

The grant awards are as follows:

**Mississippi Freedom Trail Marker Program, statewide—$210,000 to Mississippi Development Authority**

- **Holy Family Catholic Church, Natchez.**
  - Dr. Gilbert R. Mason, Sr. Medical Office, Biloxi, Harrison County—$53,210 to the estate of Dr. Gilbert R. Mason, Sr., 670 Division St., Biloxi. The award will be used to stabilize the roof, reconstruct the reception desk, install a drinking fountain, and develop a permanent exhibit about Mason, who founded the Biloxi branch of the NAACP, initiated non-violent “wade-in” protests, filed the state’s first school desegregation lawsuit, and established his medical practice in the heart of the African American community of Biloxi.

**Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Department of Archives and History—$210,000 to Hattiesburg Convention Commission, 410 East 6th Street, Hattiesburg.**

- **Freedom Summer Eureka School.**
  - Field Office, Jackson, Hinds County—$208,104 to Farish Street/Main Street Project, 507-509 N. Farish Street, Jackson. The award will be used to stabilize the building that housed Evers’ office when he began work as Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP in 1954.

- **Fielder & Brooks Drug Store-COFO Center, Meridian, Lauderdale County—$210,000 to Freedom 64, Inc., 2505-2505 1/2 5th Street, Meridian.** The award will be used to stabilize the roof, windows, and doors, and restore the exterior of the building that was the work site of the three civil rights workers killed in Neshoba County in 1964. Michael Schwerner, and his wife Rita, along with James Chaney, set up the Meridian COFO Community Center on the second floor of the building.

- **Ben Roy’s Service Station, Money, Leflore County—$1,522,040 to Annette T. Morgan and Harry Ray Tribble, 27766 County Road 518, Money.** The award will be used to restore the interior, exterior, and grounds of the service station adjacent to Bryant Grocery, where Emmett Till allegedly whistled at a white woman.

- **Tallahatchie 2nd Dist. Courthouse, Summer, Tallahatchie County—$210,000 to Tallahatchie County Board of Supervisors.**

MUSEUMS, continued from p. 1

The 109-year-old Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Initially housed in the state capitol, the small but popular museum now allows visitors to view many of the state’s artifacts, fossilized bones, and even a ceremonial Polynesian head-dress. Over the decades the collection has expanded to grow and focus on materials directly related to the state’s history. MDAR now has the world’s finest collection of Mississippi artifacts, including a rare 1818 Twenty-Star U.S. flag, an original Bowie knife, slave-made quilts, and prehistoric Native American artifacts.

In 2009 the new history museum opened in the rehabilitated Old Capitol in downtown Jackson. While that site provided a grand setting, ongoing maintenance issues and limitations of a historic structure convinced the Mississippi Legislature that a new museum should be constructed for the state history museum. The Old Capitol would then be fully restored and opened to the public serving as a heritage museum interpreting the history of the building, which served as the seat of Mississippi’s government from 1839 until 1903.

In 1998 the Legislature authorized the department to begin planning a new Mississippi History ECD—a consortium composed of Eley Associates/Architects; Cooke Douglas Furtan Lemons, Ltd. Architects and Engineers; and Dale and Associates Architects—was selected to design the new Museum of Mississippi History building, which would be built by statute on the north end of the block where the William F. Winter Archives and History Building had been authorized for construction.

Funding priorities changed in August 2005 when Hurricane Katrina roared across the state, tearing the copper roof off the Old Capitol and driving rainwater into the historic building. The damage forced the museum’s immediate closing, and all staff and the entire collection had to be moved out of the building. The Legislature appropriated funds to renovate the Old Capitol Museum, and the department was authorized to complete that project in 2009.

But with the state and nation experiencing severe budget problems, funding for construction of the new state history museum was not forthcoming until 2011.

**CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM ADVISORY COMMISSION**

The bill that funded the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and Museum of Mississippi History also established the twenty-five-member Mississippi Civil Rights Museum Advisory Commission.

The group is chaired by former Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Fred Banks and includes appointees by the governor, lieutenant governor, and Speaker of House; presidents of the state’s colleges and universities; representatives from the Mississippi Development Authority, the Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, the Fannie Lou Hamer Institute, and the William F. Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation; and members of the Advisory Committee. The commission is charged with advising the Department of Archives and History and the ECD on plans for the civil rights museum.

ECD will oversee the design and construction of the two museums and will set the date for its inaugural meeting in August. The Advisory Commission endorsed cost estimates and concept designs for each project. Preliminary plans are for each museum to be multi-storied with more than 20,000 square feet of permanent exhibit space and 3,000 square feet of temporary exhibit space. Each museum will have its own director and staff and will share support staff.

In addition to the architectural firms that will be responsible for designing the two buildings, each museum will have a design firm for the exhibits, MDAD Museum Division director Lucy Allen.

The Department of Finance and Administration will issue requests for qualifications for exhibit designs for each museum.

Construction of the two museums, parking garage, and museum complex is scheduled to begin in 2013 and take three years.

**Book on Garden at Eudora Welty House Published**

A new book on the garden at the Eudora Welty House co-written by longtime MDARH consultant Susan Haltom has been published by University Press of Mississippi. Part garden guide, part history, and part biography, One Writer’s Garden: Eudora Welty’s Home Place follows the garden through the seasons using historical photographs, letters, journals, and other documents to examine the development of the garden and Welty’s relationship to it from the 1920s to the post-war years.

Although Welty frequently referred to the garden, “the book sheds new light on the importance of gardening and the natural world in Welty’s life and writing.”

“A lot of people didn’t believe that the garden meant as much to Eudora as it did to her mother,” said Haltom. “But that changed for me when I found a draft in her unpublished papers where she talks about discovering the story-teller’s point of view while watching a young prairie rose in the garden.”

That episode was the inspiration for Welty’s short story “A Curtain of Green.”

Copies of the book signed by Haltom, co-author Jane Roy Haltom, and photographer Langdon Clay, are available for $35 plus tax at the Education and Visitors Center of the Eudora Welty House.

The Eudora Welty House is located at 1119 Pinehurst Street. Tours are offered Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday by reservation. Admission is $10 for adults and $3 for students. The Education and Visitors Center, next door to the Welty House, is open free of charge Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Visitors Center features a short film on Welty, her large painting of the state fair, exhibits on the Pulitzer Prize-winning author, a reading room, and a gift shop. To book a tour or for more information contact the Eudora Welty House at 601-353-7762 or info@eudorawelthyouse.com.
**Historical Society Seeking Nominations**

The 2012 meeting of the Mississippi Historical Society will be held March 1-3 at Mississippi University for Women in Columbus. Every year the society awards prizes for outstanding work in interpreting, teaching, and preserving Mississippi history. Nominations are now being accepted for the following awards:

- The McLemore Prize, which carries with it a $700 stipend, is given for the best book on a subject related to Mississippi history or biography published the previous year.
- The John M. (Mike) Cross Award is given annually to an outstanding teacher of middle or high school history in Mississippi. The winning teacher receives a $300 cash award and is invited to the society’s guest at its annual meeting.
- The Frank E. Everett, Jr. Award is given annually as merited to a local historical organization that, as a member of the Federation of Mississippi Historical Societies, has made an outstanding contribution to the preservation and interpretation of local history. The winning society receives a $300 cash award.
- The Elbert R. Hilliard Oral History Award, which carries with it a $300 cash award, recognizes oral history projects exemplifying a distinguished collection, high-quality preservation, and proper use of oral history.
- The James T. Dawson Award is presented as merited to a local government in Mississippi with an exemplary records management program. A local government eligible for the award may be a municipality, a county, or a school district.
- The Dunbar Rowland Award, given in recognition of lifelong contributions to the study, interpretation, and preservation of Mississippi History and the B.L.C. Wailes Award for national distinction in the field of history, are presented as merited.
- The Riley Prize and the Glover Moore Award are awarded biennially for a doctoral dissertation and master’s thesis, respectively, on a topic in Mississippi history or biography completed within the previous two years.

Awards of Merit are presented annually to individuals or organizations for their outstanding archival, museum, or media interpretation work. All prizewinners will be invited to the society’s 2012 annual meeting to receive their awards. Submission guidelines are available online at mdah.state.ms.us/Public/search.aspx. For more information or to submit a nomination, email info@mshistoricalsociety.com or call 601-576-6545.

**Board of Trustees to Meet on Gulf Coast**

While on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for its regular quarterly board meeting Friday, October 28, the board of trustees of the Department of Archives and History and MDAH staff will tour properties rehabilitated through the popular Hurricane Relief Grant Program for Preservation. The United States Congress provided $26.1 million for the grant program to rehabilitate owner-occupied houses listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, as well as public and institutional landmarks of the local communities.

The day’s tour will begin Thursday morning. Stops will include the Bay St. Louis Little Theater, the Hancock County Courthouse, and the Randolph School in Pass Christian.* A public reception will follow at 5:30 p.m. at the Ohl-O’Keefe Museum of Art in Biloxi. Kane Ditto, president of the board of trustees, will present resolutions of commendation to local organizations and citizens for contributions to the preservation and interpretation of history. The MD AH board meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. on Friday at the new Biloxi Visitors Center on Highway 90.

Members of the board of trustees of the

**Colonial Ceramics Symposium Nov. 10-12 in Natchez**

A ceramics symposium organized by MDAH will examine French, Spanish, English, African American, and Native American pottery and the ways in which these traditions have influenced one another. “Colonial and Post-Colonial Ceramics of the Mississippi Delta” will be held Nov. 10-12 at the historic Eola Hotel in downtown Natchez. Presentations will address historic Indian ceramic traditions, research in France, and ceramics from southern slave houses, among other topics. All events associated with the conference are free and open to the public.

The conference will begin at 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 10, and be followed by a reception at Elm Court from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday’s presentations are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. and run throughout the day. A driving tour of archaeological sites in the Natchez area departs at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday. Sites include the Grand Village, Fort Rosalie, Emerald Mound, Mount Locust, and Spanish sites in Vidalia, Louisiana. During the conference participating artisans will display their works, including reproduction ceramic styles of Native American, French, English, and Spanish. Original and reproduction works will also be for sale.

The symposium is made possible with support from the Lower Mississippi Delta Regional Initiative of the National Park Service, with assistance from Cane River Creole National Historical Park and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Other sponsors include the Natchez National Historical Park, National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Southern Mississippi basketry museum shop.

For more information call: Jim Barnett 601-446-6502 or email info@natchezgrandvillage.com.
Native American Days, the annual program at Winterville Mounds celebrating American Indian culture, will be held November 2–5. The event features traditional dances, stories, and games, and crafts and foods will be for sale. Last year more than 2,000 students and adults attended during the four days of the festival.

Performers will include traditional Ho-Chunk dancer Coca Crepe and Cherokee storyteller Karen Cooper. Other activities will include face-painting and bead-stringing for children, archery demonstrations, and Native American games of stickball and chunky, which will be open to all corners.

A Special attraction on Friday, November 4, will be the Choctaw Elderly Social Dancers from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. On Saturday, November 5, there will be a live auction at noon, and at 1 p.m. a musical performance by Coca Crepe and the Cannas Bruelas band. Bring lawn chairs or blankets. Native American Days is free of charge. The event begins at 9 a.m. and runs through 4 p.m. each day. Performances will begin at 10 a.m. and run through 12:30 p.m. School groups should call ahead for a complete schedule of events when booking a field trip.

Winterville Mounds is a prehistoric ceremonial center built by a Native American civilization that thrived from about A.D. 1000 to 1450. Located at 2415 Highway 1 North, Greenville, the 42-acre park is open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. every day; the museum is open 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Mon.–Sat. and Sun. 1:30–5 p.m. Free of charge. For more information call 662-334-4684.

Inaugural Capers, Carr Black Awards Presented

Two Columbus organizations are the inaugural recipients of awards recognizing excellence in the preservation and interpretation of Mississippi history. The Department of Archives and History presented the Capers Award to the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library and the Carr Black Award to the Stephen D. Lee Home and Museum at a luncheon August 2 on the campus of Mississippi University for Women.

The Capers Award, which memorializes longtime MDAH director Charlotte Capers, recognizes smaller institutions or organizations whose mission is to acquire, preserve, and provide access to materials of enduring historical value. The award carries with it a $300 cash prize. The Columbus-Lowndes Public Library was praised for outstanding archival achievement and a strong commitment to the preservation of local history. The library’s extensive outreach services include local workshops on preservation topics such as processing/preservation and preserving photographs, an online catalog, and the Local History Announcements blog (http://lowndestribesarchivists.wordpress.com/). The library also partners with the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science on the annual “Tales from the Crypt” project.

The Carr Black Award, named in honor of author and former Old Capitol Museum director Patti Carr Black, recognizes outstanding work by Mississippi museums or individuals in preserving, interpreting, and presenting public aspects of Mississippi history, art, or culture. The award carries with it a $300 cash prize. The Carr Black Award was presented to Carolyn Burns Kaye, the caretaker of the Stephen D. Lee Home and Museum, for her work as researcher, collector, exhibit planner, and tour guide. Kaye travels throughout the region to promote the house and museum and recently produced a brochure about the house’s history. Her efforts have resulted in increased visitation.

Events throughout October celebrate Archaeology Month and Archaeology Month. The Mississippi Archaeology Expo is scheduled for Saturday, October 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Millsaps College campus in Jackson. Held each year during Archaeology Month, the expo, now in its fourth year, is a free, hands-on family fair for schoolchildren and adults. The event features fun, educational activities for all ages. This year there will be a special focus on the sesquicentennial anniversary of the Civil War, and reenactors will be on hand.

The Archaeology Expo will feature demonstrations of Native American storytelling, basket making, and dancing by members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. The public can learn to throw a spear using an atlatl—a device used to generate more velocity—as well as view demonstrations of Flintknapping, modern excavation techniques using a ground-penetrating radar, pottery making, and extensive artifact displays. The public is invited to bring their artifacts and archaeological items for identification by experts. There will be many activities for children, including a mock excavation, bead crafts, and a rock art wall.

“Most Mississippians don’t realize what incredibly rich and diverse archaeological resources we have,” said Pam Lieb, MDAH chief archaeologist. “We want people to get involved year round and Mississippi Archaeology Month is a way to get that started.”

The Expo is made possible with financial assistance from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council and the Mississippi Arts Commission, and co-sponsored by MDAH, Millsaps College, the Archaeological Institute of America, the U.S. Forest Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Department of Transportation, Mississippi Association of Professional Archaeologists, and the Mississippi Archaeological Association.

For more information, contact Pam Lieb at 601-576-6945. To see a listing of Archaeology Month events across the state, go to www.msarchaeology.org.

ARCHIVES MONTH

MDAH hopes to raise awareness about the preservation of historical and cultural records for Archives Month. This year’s theme “Freedom Mississippi: Stories of Courage” is being promoted by a commemorative poster featuring images of civil rights foot soldiers in the struggle to dismantle Mississippi’s color barrier.

Events include the ongoing exhibit “The Freedom Rides: Journey for Change” at the William F. Winter Archives and History Building, 200 North Street, Jackson, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 a.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The exhibit closes October 29.

The Mississippi Historical Records Advisory Board (MIRAB) Bookshelf for Archival Collections Care will be presented to the Local History/Geological Collection of the Harrison County Library System in conjunction with the MDAH Board of Trustees meeting on the Gulf Coast on October 28. The publications include titles such as “Managing the archival collection,” “Paper management, care, and emergency response for both professional and public audiences, and the selection is tailored to complement the recipient’s existing collections.

MIRAB will also donate a collections care-related volume to the Hancock County Library System, the Long Beach Public Library, and the Jackson-George Regional Library System.

Archives Month is sponsored by MIRAB and the Society of Mississippi Archivists through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. For more information on these events call 601-576-6850 or go to www.msarchivists.org.

African American Civil War Program at HJC a Success

The fourth annual Black and Blue Civil War Encampment took place Oct. 1 at Historic Jefferson College in Washington. The program took the theme “Civil War 150th Anniversary Commemoration,” and historians and reenactors told the story of the African American experience in Natchez during the Civil War. The event was organized by the Friends of Forks of the Road Society Inc. and co-sponsored by MDAH.
History Is Lunch programs are held at noon most Wednesdays in the William F. Winter Archives and History Building, 200 North Street, Jackson. There is no admission charge.

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

**October 19**—Old Capitol Museum staff will present “The Old Capitol: Present Meets Past.” To be held in the Old Capitol Museum.

**October 26**—writer Ellen Ann Fentress will present “Norma Fields: Pioneer Newspaperwoman.” To be held in the Old Capitol Museum.

**November 2**—Avery Rollins will present “The FBI Oral History Program in Mississippi.”

**November 9**—Northside Sun newspaper publisher Wyatt Emmerich will talk about his family’s history in publishing.

**November 16**—Sister Paulinus Oakes will discuss her book The Sisters of Mercy in Mississippi during the Civil War and Yellow Fever. To be held in the Old Capitol Museum.

**November 30**—Architectural historian Todd Sanders will present “Architects of Antebellum Mississippi.” To be held in the Old Capitol Museum.

---

**Former MHS President Arthur Kinnard Dies**

Dr. Arthur Henry Kinnard, Jr., died February 16, 2011, at the age of 77. Kinnard was a longtime professor of history at Mississippi Valley State University and past president of Utica Junior College. He and his wife, Ouida, were life members of the Mississippi Historical Society and regularly attended the annual meetings.

Kinnard was born on April 15, 1933. He served as president of the Mississippi Historical Society in 1999-2000. Kinnard also served from 1989 until his death as a volunteer member of the Mississippi Historic Preservation Professional Review Board.

“Arthur Kinnard was a distinguished scholar, a leader in Mississippi’s historical community, and a dear friend,” said Elbert R. Hilliard, MDAH director emeritus and secretary-treasurer for the Mississippi Historical Society, “His death is a great loss.”