

MISSISSIPPI HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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Mississippi History Newsletter over the years



The *Mississippi History Newsletter* is back! We hope you like its fresh, new look. As you can see from the images above, the newsletter has changed many times over its 59 years of publication. But whether edited by Charlotte Capers, Chrissy Wilson, or Chris Goodwin, it has consistently delivered the news of MDAH in a clear, thoughtful voice. With Sarah Campbell as the new editor, the newsletter will continue in that tradition, now publishing every March, July, and November.

Please let us know how you like the new *Mississippi History Newsletter*. And as always, thank you for your interest and your support.



Katie Blount
Director
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Katie Blount



MDAH Launches Program for Title I Schools to Visit Two Mississippi Museums

The Two Mississippi Museums—the Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum—saw a jump in student visitors this autumn after MDAH began offering scholarships to offset costs for Title I schools.

“Our goal is to make sure that every student in this state has an opportunity to see these world-class museums,” said Katie Blount, MDAH director. “We are thankful to our partners, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Cline Tours, Inc., for helping make this vision a reality.”

In the first few months of the program, more than 500 students from fourteen schools visited the Two Mississippi Museums and forty-nine more schools are scheduled to visit before the end of the academic year.

MDAH is offering the following:

- Students who attend the Biloxi Public School District, Jackson Public School District, or Sunflower Consolidated School District are eligible for free admission to the museums. These admission grants are

funded through an endowment established by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

- MDAH is also partnering with Cline Tours to provide free transportation for students in Mississippi school districts that are located within a fifty-mile radius of Cline Tours’ bus hubs in Ridgeland, Oxford, Starkville, Hattiesburg, McComb, and Memphis.
- MDAH has limited additional funds available for other Title I schools. Eligible schools should contact MDAH school visits coordinator Stephanie King for more information.

“We are excited to work with school districts and administrators to bring their students to the Two Mississippi Museums,” said Stephanie King, MDAH student visits coordinator. “It’s not too late to book your field trip for the 2019-2020 school year.”

For more information about this program or to schedule your visit, contact Stephanie King at 601-576-6795 or sking@mdah.ms.gov.

“ We are grateful (to MDAH) for helping 100 of our students immerse themselves in Mississippi history. As we begin to study the civil rights era, the powerful images the students experienced will help engage them in a much deeper way. ”

- Carlous Smith, Mississippi studies teacher, Florence Middle School



Missing Mound Discovered in Natchez

One of Mississippi's historic sites has a surprising new find.

High-tech research methods coupled with clues from eighteenth-century maps led to the discovery this summer of a “missing mound” at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians. “Long thought to be a three-mound site, we now have evidence that Grand Village had at least four mounds,” said Lance Harris, the site’s director.

A battle between the French colonial army and the Natchez Indians took place on the mound site in 1729, and maps related to the French occupation were recently found online, making them accessible to researchers.

A team of archaeologists—Tony Boudreaux, director of the University of Mississippi Center for Archaeological Research (UMCAR), Vin Steponaitis, a professor at the University of North Carolina, and Harris—used the maps to create a research plan, the implementation of which was funded in large part by the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service.

Boudreaux and Stephen Harris of UMCAR used remote sensing and ground penetrating radar to survey deep into the soil. They discovered an anomaly buried underneath flood deposits. Soil scientists found evidence of redeposited soil, confirming the exact place of a missing mound at the Grand Village.

“A fully realized excavation in the anomaly area confirmed a found mound—complete with historic era artifacts,” Harris said.

Researchers are confident that they have confirmed the location of a mound, but they still want to find a trench dug by the French to move their artillery through the site and the location of another mound.

“The research at Grand Village is ongoing,” said Harris. “With the information from this new research and a new slate of interpretation for the site, the Grand Village will help to tell a more complete story of the Natchez people.”



New Museum Division Director Announced

Cindy Gardner is the new director of the Museum Division which oversees all operations of MDAH’s museum sites. She succeeds Lucy Allen, who retired after forty-one years of service to the department. Gardner received her BA in history from Stetson University and holds three certificates from the Mississippi State Personnel Board’s Certified Public Manager program. Gardner has served with MDAH for over twenty years, beginning as a collections registrar at the Old Capitol Museum in 1999.

“I am honored to lead this division and support the agency’s mission of our museums by encouraging more programs, improving exhibits and new interpretation within the sites for the public to enjoy.”

Gardner has significant experience in museum leadership. She recently served as the administrator of the Two Mississippi Museums. In 2017, Gardner served as project manager in the development and construction of the Two Mississippi Museums. She previously served as director of collections for both the Old Capitol Museum and the MDAH Museum Division. Gardner was recognized for her leadership in advancing the museum profession at the Southeastern Museum Conference in 2018.

Gardner has an interest in working with historic artifacts. One of her favorite exhibits to manage was Outposts of Majestic Spain in 2000 at the Old Capitol Museum. She is excited about new exhibits such as Mississippi Distilled, which tells the story of alcohol in the state, and the future Mississippi Made exhibit featuring artists, inventors, and musicians.

“Each of our sites has its own niche from Grand Village of the Natchez Indians to Eudora Welty House & Garden,” said Gardner. “I look forward to working with the all of the museums.”

Program Highlights



Old Capitol Bowl at the Old Capitol Museum



Native American Days at Winterville Mounds



History Happy Hour at the Two Mississippi Museums



Live Jazz at the Eudora Welty House & Garden



Educator Evening at the Two Mississippi Museums



History Is Lunch at the Two Mississippi Museums

Social Media Campaign Assists Windsor Ruins Stabilization Project

In June, MDAH launched a social media campaign seeking photographs of the Windsor Ruins site taken between 1942 and 1971 to determine when its 45-foot-tall masonry columns were lost. Staff are using the submissions to establish a timeline of past column collapses and predict when future collapses may occur.

The mansion was originally built with twenty-nine columns, and it was believed that some of the missing columns were lost during the 1890 fire that destroyed the residence. A 2017 study of the site showed that three of the missing columns were still standing as late as 1910.

“We received dozens of notable submissions, but the most significant were the family photos of Ruthie Drake Fahey,” said Mingo Tingle, chief of MDAH Technical Preservation Services. “Fahey’s family photos, which were likely taken circa 1900, contain what may be the oldest known photos of the site. They show that one column in particular we thought had already collapsed was still standing.”

Preservation staff are using the information to conserve and stabilize the remaining twenty-three columns and five partial columns. More than a century of exposure to the elements has caused erosion to the masonry columns and fracturing of the cast iron capitals.

“We are in the design phase of the Windsor Ruins stabilization project, but we are hoping to begin work at the site in the spring of 2020,” said Tingle.

Windsor Plantation was built for Smith Coffee Daniell II in 1861. The house, one of the largest private residences in the state before the Civil War, was constructed near the town of Bruinsburg, where Union soldiers crossed the Mississippi River to begin their attack on Vicksburg.

Windsor Ruins was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971, acquired by MDAH in 1974, and designated a Mississippi Landmark in 1985.



Digitization Project Makes Mississippi Newspapers Available Online for Free

Researchers from around the world now have free online access to hundreds of Mississippi newspapers. MDAH participated in the National Digital Newspaper Program, a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to digitize newspapers across the country. The publications are accessible through the Library of Congress on its Chronicling America website, along with papers from other participating states.

“More than 307,000 pages of out-of-copyright Mississippi newspapers are currently online, with approximately 18,000 more pages expected to go online in the next two months,” said Mississippi Digital Newspaper Project coordinator Jo-Miles Seely. “This resource is for students, genealogists, local officials, journalists, documentary producers, and anyone who loves reading and learning about history.”

MDAH has the most extensive collection of Mississippi newspapers in the state, housing more than 13,000 microfilm rolls of papers in its archival collections. NEH provided funding for the Mississippi digitization project through three, two-year grants.

The collection includes titles published between 1820 and 1963 in fifty-three of the state’s eighty-two counties. Ninety antebellum titles, including papers published in Canton, Carrollton, Columbus, Holly Springs, Kosciusko, Port Gibson, Yazoo City, and Woodville, are online.

Access the newspapers at chroniclingamerica.loc.gov.

Newly Digitized

Unidentified seafood industry workers on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This image from the Randy Randazzo Collection is one of 1,083 acquired by donor Randy Randazzo's uncle, Walter Fountain, who was a Biloxi historian. The name of the photographer is not known.

Other items in the collection recently digitized and available in the MDAH online catalog include postcards, ephemera, and photographic prints, providing a rare look at life on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and south Mississippi from the turn of the twentieth century into the 1970s.



New Acquisition

Jerry W. Keahey Sr. donated his Graflex Speed Graphic 2 1/4 x 3 1/4 camera to MDAH. Images taken with the camera include several group photographs of the Tougaloo Nine, student activists who attempted to integrate the Jackson Municipal Library in 1961.

VISITATION TO THE TWO MISSISSIPPI MUSEUMS SINCE OPENING

HOW MANY VISITORS OVERALL? **349,512**
AS OF 9.30.2019

FROM HOW MANY FOREIGN COUNTRIES?

61

WHAT ARE THE TOP FIVE COUNTRIES
OTHER THAN THE U.S.?



HOW MANY STATES? **ALL 50**

WHAT ARE THE TOP FIVE STATES
OTHER THAN MISSISSIPPI?



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Sarah Campbell, editor

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Department of Archives and History
Katie Blount, director

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In Memoriam

Thad Cochran, (1937-2019), represented Mississippi in the U.S. Senate from 1978 to 2018, longtime supporter of historic preservation and the work of MDAH

Nathan H. Jones, (1914-2019), World War II veteran, civil rights activist from Claiborne County

Dr. Kenneth Graham McCarty, (1935-2019), professor emeritus of history at the University of Southern Mississippi, longtime editor of the *Journal of Mississippi History*, past president of the Mississippi Historical Society

Dr. David Sansing, (1933-2019), author, professor emeritus of history at the University of Mississippi, past president of the Mississippi Historical Society

Mark Your Calendar

Christmas by Candlelight Tour

Friday, December 6, 2019, 4:30-8 p.m.

Celebrate the holiday season with a tour of MDAH sites in Jackson.

Hiram Revels Anniversary

Tuesday, February 11, 2020, 5-7 p.m.

To mark the 150th Anniversary of the first African American elected to Congress, Columbia University historian Eric Foner will discuss this historic achievement at the Old Capitol Museum in Jackson.

Mississippi Distilled: Piety, Prohibition, and Politics

March 21-October 31, 2020

This new exhibit at the Two Mississippi Museums in Jackson will explore the state's tumultuous relationship with alcohol throughout its history.