

# Local History

*A Newsletter of the Federation of Mississippi Historical Societies*

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Winter 2004-2005



## FROM THE CHAIR

**Gail Tomlinson**

The Federation is indebted to several Advisory Committee members who drove to Jackson on October 16, 2004, and gave up some prime weekend time to join me in a planning session. Those in attendance included Sandra Boyd, Annis Dickerson, Mattie Sink, Patricia Weeks, and Patricia Young. Ex-officio members in attendance were Elbert Hilliard and Libby Aydelott, and Hank Holmes, Lucy Allen, and Cindy Gardner joined us from MDAH.

There was a lively discussion among the Advisory Committee members, and we accomplished a good deal. Proposed revisions to our bylaws were fine-tuned, and we discussed ways to increase membership and member services. I think you will see some exciting things

presented at the March 4, 2005, annual meeting in Jackson.

A big thanks to all who participated and for your dedication to the Federation.

In the meantime, I hope that you will continue to read the issues of *Local History* to obtain information on our efforts to have the Federation benefit the local historical societies throughout Mississippi. Also, please be alert to other mailings from the Federation; member services depend on your replies and support.

## 2004 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Gail Tomlinson, chairman	Gwen Washington
Annis Dickerson, vice chairman	Patricia Weeks
Maureen Simpson, secretary	Robert Willits
Sandra Boyd	Patricia Young
Mary Beth Farrell	<b>Ex-Officio:</b>
Bill Lyle	Libby Aydelott
Ann Simmons	Elbert R. Hilliard
Mattie Sink	Sharman Smith

## FEDERATION WORKSHOP

In conjunction with the annual meeting of the Mississippi Historical Society, the Federation will have its annual business meeting and workshop on March 4, 2005, in Jackson. The business meeting will begin at 8:15 a.m. and the workshop, *Prescriptions for a Healthy Historical Society*, will begin at 9:15 a.m. The workshop will highlight historic preservation, library management, and museum management. Cost is \$10 for Federation members and \$25 for non-members. For more information, contact Cindy Gardner at 601/576-6901.

***Save the date!***

## LOCAL HISTORY BOOKSTORE

We are developing a "Local History Bookstore" on the Federation's web page, [www.mdah.state.ms.us/admin/fmhs.html](http://www.mdah.state.ms.us/admin/fmhs.html). This book-store will be dedicated only to the books published by local historical societies that are current members of the Federation. Contact information for purchasing the publications will be provided. Send a list of your society's publications to Cindy Gardner to be included in order to take advantage of this great opportunity.

Also, the Old Capitol Shop has agreed to a special purchase rate of 20% (as opposed to the usual 40%) for the shop to purchase books from the Federation members. This is a great way for the local societies to have their books available in the Shop. For more information contact Melissa Taylor at 601/576-6933.

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## CONFERENCE DRAWS GOOD RESPONSE

Over 120 participants attended the oral history conference, *Telling the People's Story: From Tape and Transcript to Public Programs*, in Port Gibson September 17–19, 2004.



Paul Hendrickson, author of *Sons of Mississippi*, discussed how he came to write the book after discovering a photograph of seven Mississippi sheriffs assembled at Oxford to resist the entrance of James Meredith to the University of Mississippi. He decided to track down these men

and their descendants to see how attitudes toward race in Mississippi had changed. The book won the National Book Critics Circle award for general non-fiction in 2003.

Other speakers included Alan Trachtenberg, professor emeritus at Yale, who presented a slide show demonstrating how photographs tell stories, with or without accompanying narrative; Roland Freeman, freelance photographer from Washington, D.C., who talked about his need to interview African-American quilters and preservationists for his photographic exhibit and accompanying book, *A Communion of the Spirits*; and Emilye Crosby, associate professor at Geneseo College of SUNY, who discussed black and white attitudes toward the events of the Claiborne County civil rights movement, especially a boycott of white merchants launched in the 1960s. Her book, *A Little Taste of Freedom*, is forthcoming from the University of North Carolina Press.

Participants also attended workshops on using oral history in exhibits, on radio, CD-ROMs, and the internet, and in video, theater, and visual arts presentations. They also had the opportunity to attend readers theater performances of three scripts based on oral histories from the Claiborne County community.

The conference was co-sponsored by Mississippi Cultural Crossroads and the Miss-

issippi Humanities Council, with assistance from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the USM Center for Oral History and Traditional Culture.

Funding was provided in part by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the Mississippi Legislature, and the Mississippi Arts Commission.

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

The **Amite County Historical & Genealogical Society** has been formed and has applied for incorporation as a 501(c)3 organization.

The **Mississippi Humanities Council** announces the venues for *Key Ingredients: America by Food*, a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution. The exhibit, sponsored by the Mississippi Humanities Council with the Southern Foodways Alliance, will be on display at

- Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Gautier, October 18–November 11
- Delta State University, Cleveland, November 20–January 9
- Mississippi Cultural Crossroads, Port Gibson, January 17–February 13
- Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, February 19–March 19

The **Tate County Genealogical & Historical Society, Inc.**, has recently received a generous financial contribution and collection of books. This donation helped to renew the society's commitment to preserving Tate County's history.

The **Tishomingo County Historical & Genealogical Society** held the grand opening for the Tishomingo County Archives and Museum September 10 -11, 2004. It is estimated that about 600 people were in attendance. Congratulations!

## MHT EVENTS PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER

Join the Mississippi Heritage Trust (MHT) for what promises to be an informative and enjoyable weekend on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. MHT is hosting two events November 12–14, 2004, for historic preservationists, historians, and enthusiasts to showcase historic preservation in Mississippi.



The first event will be the *Cemetery Preservation Workshop* starting Friday, November 12, 2004, in Biloxi. Speakers from around the country will present talks on such topics as the cultural, historical, and

architectural importance of cemeteries, community involvement in cemetery preservation, maintenance of markers and monuments, planning of cemetery events, and causes of monument deterioration. The setting of this event will be the Biloxi cemetery, which contains 21,000 gravesites, some dating to 1811. After educational sessions throughout the day on Friday, the evening will feature a dinner theater with entertainment by local actors. Saturday begins the “hands-on” portion of the workshop, in which experts in cemetery preservation will assist participants in practicing techniques for preservation of monuments. Registration for the workshop will be \$70 for MHT members and \$95 for non-members.

***Let others know what activities  
your society is involved in.  
Send in your local history!***



*The Tullis-Toledano Manor, Biloxi, operates as a historic house museum and a recreational area.*

The second event on the Coast will be the *2004 Fall Insiders' Tour*, November 13–14, featuring Ocean Springs and Biloxi—home of the extraordinary, artistic Anderson family and historical figure Jefferson Davis. Local experts on the art, architecture, and culture of Biloxi and Ocean Springs will give guests a behind-the-scenes view of cemeteries, art and cultural museums, and historical collections. Insiders will be guests at beautiful homes and stately historic buildings, where they will enjoy fabulous local cuisine. Registration for this exclusive event will be \$225 for the weekend, with separate rates available for Saturday or Sunday only.

For more information on either event, contact MHT at 601/354-0200 or visit [www.mississippiheritage.com](http://www.mississippiheritage.com).

## WOLFSONIAN-FIU FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Wolfsonian-Florida International University is a museum and research center that promotes the examination of modern material culture. The focus of the Wolfsonian collection is North American and European decorative arts, propaganda, and industrial and graphic design of the period 1885-1945. Fellowships are intended to support full-time research, generally for a period of three to five weeks. Ph.D. candidates and holders of master's or doctoral degrees are eligible to apply. The application deadline is December 31, 2004. For information, contact the Wolfsonian at 305/535-2613 or visit [www.wolfsonian.fiu.edu/education/research/index.html](http://www.wolfsonian.fiu.edu/education/research/index.html).

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## November through March

**November 8**—The Mississippi Museums Association offers a workshop, *Using Your Museum's Gift Shop to Build Revenue*, at the Delta Blues Museum, Clarksdale. For more information call 662/287-3120.

**November 9 & 10**—The Mississippi Center for Nonprofits will sponsor *Grantwriting Fundamentals* in Tupelo. For more information call 601/968-0061.

**November 11**—The Mississippi Center for Nonprofits will sponsor *Starting a 501(c)3 and Easy, Effective Newsletters* in Jackson. For more information call 601/968-0061.

**November 15**—Deadline for registering for the the NSDAR Volunteer Field Genealogy Workshop that will be held March 8 - 9, 2005, in Jackson. For more information call 601/276-6210.

**November 16**—The Mississippi Center for Nonprofits will sponsor *Fundraising 101* in Greenville. For more information call 601/968-0061.

**December**—The holiday season will be observed through exhibits and events at many MDAH sites. For more information about events, contact MDAH Public Information at 601/576-6850.

**December 2**—The Mississippi Center for Nonprofits will sponsor *Creating a Marketable Identity for Your Agency* in Jackson. For more information call 601/968-0061.

**December 7**—The Mississippi Center for Nonprofits will sponsor *Easy, Effective Newsletters* in Gulfport. For more information call 601/968-0061.

**January 29–31**—The Mississippi Museums Association annual meeting will be held in Jackson. For more information call Cheryl Branyan at 601/442-2901.

**February 11, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.**—The Old Capitol Museum, Jackson is site of the annual *Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts*. For more information contact the Mississippi Arts Commission at 601/359-6030.

**March 3–5**—The Mississippi Historical Society will host its annual meeting in Jackson. For more information call 601/576-6849.

## NEW DIRECTOR NAMED

H.T. Holmes has been elected to serve as the new director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH). Holmes will succeed Elbert R. Hilliard, who is retiring on December 31, 2004, after thirty-one years as director. The search for Hilliard's successor began last year with the formation of a special committee of the Board of Trustees of MDAH.

Holmes, director of the department's Archives and Library division since 1988, began his association with MDAH in 1969 as a college intern. He went on to serve as oral historian, archivist, records analyst, manuscript curator, map curator, and head of the special collections section. A native of Winona, Holmes earned his B.A. in English from Millsaps College in 1973 and a master's degree in library science from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1982.

"I am honored to have been selected by the Board of Trustees for this position," said Holmes. "The number of projects the department is involved with continues to grow. I am excited by these opportunities, but it will be a tremendous task to maintain the levels of professionalism and service established by Mr. Hilliard."

**Please join the MDAH Board of Trustees for a public reception honoring Elbert R. Hilliard. The reception will be held Thursday, January 27, 2005, at 3 p.m. at the Old Capitol Museum, State Street at Capitol, Jackson.**